

Arteta coy on Gyokeres move

Arsenal boss tight-lipped on Swedish striker, insists transfer window still holds possibilities

● **Arteta silent on Gyokeres talks**

● **£70m bid reportedly on the table**

● **Gyokeres scored 54 in 52 last season**

AFP | London

Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta was reluctant to talk yesterday about transfer target Viktor Gyokeres, but said there was “a lot of time left in the window” to

strengthen his squad.

“He’s not part of our group yet,” Arteta told reporters in Singapore of Sporting Lisbon’s Swedish striker ahead of pre-season friendlies against AC Milan and Newcastle United this week.

“And I don’t have anything concrete to offer to any player who is not part of the

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Viktor Gyokeres scored an astonishing 54 goals in 52 matches last season for Sporting, making him one of Europe’s most prolific strikers—and Arsenal’s top summer target to break a 21-year title drought

group yet,” he added.

English Premier League Arsenal have so far signed Kepa Arrizabalaga from Chelsea, Christian Norrgaard from

Brentford, Martin Zubimendi from Real Sociedad and, most recently, Noni Madueke from Chelsea.

Arteta is still looking to beef up his attacking options, with Arsenal reportedly offering a deal worth £70 million (\$94 million) for the prolific Gyokeres, who scored 54 goals in 52 games in Portugal last season.

“There’s still a lot of time in the transfer window, and we are still seeking the numbers,” said

Arteta

“We are short, and we have to improve the depth and quality of the squad.

“But for now, I’m focusing on the players we already have, and I’m very pleased with what I’ve seen so far.”

Arteta is acutely aware that Arsenal have not won the Premier League since 2004 and that his squad need to go one better after finishing second in each of the past three seasons.

“I don’t have to convince (the players) about winning the Premier League. I know how good they are, and we all want to take the next step,” said Arteta.

“Our job is to put ourselves in the best competitive position to achieve our goal. That’s our individual responsibility,” he added.

The North London side will play AC Milan in Singapore on Wednesday, followed by a clash with fellow Premier League side Newcastle on Sunday.

Arteta backs Arsenal’s handling of Partey departure

Arsenal boss Mikel Arteta yesterday defended the club’s handling of Thomas Partey’s departure after the Ghana international midfielder was arrested on suspicion of rape and sexual assault.

Arsenal did not offer the 32-year-old a new contract at the end of last season and days later he was charged by British police with five counts of rape and one count of sexual assault between 2021 and 2022.

Partey is due to appear before magistrates in London on August 5.

In a statement released on July 4, the day Partey was arrested, Arsenal said: “The player’s contract ended on June 30. Due to ongoing legal proceedings the club is unable to comment on the case.”

Arteta was asked during



Arsenal’s Thomas Partey (L) receives directions from manager Mikel Arteta

Arsenal’s pre-season tour of Singapore whether the allegations against Partey were the deciding factor in him being released.

The Spaniard said he was “100 percent” convinced that

Arsenal had followed the correct procedure, adding: “The club was very clear in its statement. There are a lot of legal matters that are very complicated so I cannot comment on any of that.”

Sporting Lisbon’s Swedish forward #09 Viktor Gyokeres celebrates with the trophy at the end of the ‘Taca de Portugal’ final

Bahrain crowns chess champions as momentum builds for September classic

● **Ayyad retains senior crown**

● **Youth shine in rapid format**

● **Classic finals scheduled in September**

TDI | Manama

The Bahrain Chess Federation has wrapped up four rounds of competitive action under its 2025 national chess championship cycle, awarding titles to the Kingdom’s brightest minds and paving the way for the Bahrain Classic in September.

Conducted under FIDE regulations with certified arbiters, the events drew over 170 players across youth and senior levels. According to His Excellency Anmar Ahmadi, President of the Bahrain Chess Federation and head of the organising committee, the results reflect growing national momentum for the sport.

Junior brilliance

On July 16th, 25 young players gathered at Fraser Suites Seef Mall for the Under-12 Rapid Championship. Ali Alabbas emerged undefeated with a perfect score of 7 points from 7 rounds. Ali Alqallaf



and Joudi Mansoor followed in second and third place, respectively. Abdulazeez Alaamer was named Best U10 player, while Hadi Hasan took the U8 title.

The following day saw 28 participants in the U18 Junior Rapid Championship, also held at Fraser Suites. Mahmood Almusawi claimed the title with an unbeaten run and 6 points. Nooh Rajab, also on 6, placed second based on tiebreaks. Ali Haider came third with 5.5 points. Best U16 and U14 awards went to Hashim Ali and Faisal Buhasan.



Senior strength

At Khalifa Sports City, from July 16th to 18th, the Bahrain Rapid Chess Championship concluded with Hussain Ayyad defending his national title in commanding style. Scoring 10.5 points from 11 rounds, Ayyad outpaced Maher Ayyad (9.5) and Zeyad Janahi (9). Sixty-four players took part.

Ayyad extended his dominance at the Blitz Championship on July 18th, also at Khalifa Sports City, where he remained undefeated with 10 points. Maher Ayyad followed with 9, and

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Bahrain’s top players, including Hussain Ayyad, compete regularly in FIDE-rated events, giving the Kingdom growing visibility in regional chess circles

Abdulaziz Faqeeti, in his best career showing, finished third on tie-break.

All eyes on September

The Bahrain Chess Federation will cap its 2025 season with the Bahrain Classic Chess Tournament from September 10th to 22nd.

The event will include an amateur division, chess analysis sessions, training workshops, and public lectures - broadening the appeal of chess beyond competition and reinforcing the Kingdom’s long-term chess strategy.