

Mbappe slams FFF boss for ‘disrespecting’ Zidane

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The Daily Morning Voice Online Desk: Kylian Mbappe on Sunday blasted as “disrespectful” comments made by the head of the French football federation (FFF) concerning former international Zinedine Zidane with the PSG superstar describing his fellow World Cup winner as a “legend”. “Zinedine Zidane, I wouldn’t even have taken his call on the phone,” FFF president Noel Le Graet quipped dismissively in an interview on French radio when asked whether Zidane had called him to express an interest in taking over as coach from Didier Deschamps.

Deschamps’ contract expired after the World Cup in Qatar where reigning champions France lost to Argentina in a penalty shootout after a thrilling final on December 18. However, Deschamps on Saturday signed a new deal until the 2026 World Cup. Asked whether Zidane, who won the 1998 World Cup as a player alongside Deschamps and was a runner-up in 2006, had called him in recent days, Le Graet dismissed the former Real Madrid coach as having been a potential candidate. “I wouldn’t even have taken his call,” Le Graet said. “To tell him what? ‘Hello sir, don’t worry, look for another club, I just agreed a contract with Didier’.”

However, Mbappe, who won the 2018 World Cup with France and was runner-up in Qatar, took exception to Le Graet’s tone. “Zidane is France, we don’t disrespect the legend like that...,” the Paris Saint-Germain forward wrote on Twitter. FFF boss Le Graet, 81, also responded curtly to reports of Zidane’s interest in coaching the Brazil team. “I would be surprised if he left for there,” he said. “He does what he wants, it does not concern me. I have never met him and we have never considered parting with Didier Deschamps. “He can go where he wants, to a club, he would have as many as he wants in Europe, a big club. A national side, I hardly believe this as far as I’m concerned.” Zidane left Real Madrid last year having won two La Liga titles and three consecutive Champions League titles as manager of the Spanish club. French sports minister Amelie Oudea-Castera later on Sunday demanded an apology from Le Graet for his comments which she said showed “a shameful lack of respect”.