

**BRAC BANK CUP
Pharma win in
Beximco battle**

SPORTS REPORTER
Beximco Pharma trounced Beximco Textiles 3-1 in the BRAC Bank Cup five-a-side football tournament at the International School Dhaka (ISD) indoor facilities yesterday.
Multimode Limited won a high-scoring match against Infra Blue Tech 5-4 while ICD put three past a goalless Malaysian Airlines.

**MSC election
on June 29**

SPORTS REPORTER
Mohammedan Sporting Club's annual general meeting and election, which were slated to be held on June 24, will now be held on June 29 at the club premises, announced club authorities yesterday.
All general members are also urged to pay their annual fees by July 15 to renew their membership.

**Hick's century
of centuries**

BBC ONLINE, undated
Batsman Graeme Hick made history on Thursday after becoming the first Worcestershire player to hit 100 centuries for the county.
And he joins only seven other players to have scored 100 first-class centuries for a single county.
He added the seven runs he needed to reach three figures on the second morning of the Championship match against Northamptonshire at New Road.
Hick, 40, a 65-Test veteran, made his Worcestershire debut in 1984.
He is now at eighth place in the all-time list of century-makers with 130 first-class tons -- one more than the legendary Sir Leonard Hutton.
Worcestershire's director of cricket Steve Rhodes was the first to pay tribute to his former teammate.
He said: "Graeme has achieved something that not many people can dream of doing. His hundredth hundred is a true reflection of what he has done for Worcestershire County Cricket Club over the course of his career."
"We all whole heartedly congratulate him on reaching this significant landmark."
The seven other players to score 100 centuries for their county are: JB Hobbs (Surrey, 144 centuries), CP Mead (Hampshire, 138), FE Woolley (Kent, 122), EH Hendren (Middlesex, 119), WR Hammond (Gloucestershire, 113), H Sutcliffe (Yorkshire, 112) and G Boycott (Yorkshire, 103).

Did U Know?
Italy '90 was not exactly a goal feast. Only 115 goals were scored, producing a meagre average of 2.21 goals per match, the lowest average ever.



Talk Turkey
Kevin Pietersen (England batsman)
"I don't want to be the next Viv Richards, I just want to be Kevin Pietersen, the best Kevin Pietersen can be."

What to Watch
TEN Sports
West Indies v India
Third Test, Day Two
Live at 8:00 pm



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Bangladesh Football Federation president SA Sultan (R) and TATA Group residential director Manzer Hussain shake hands with the players of TFA and BFF at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

Local boys impress

TFA-BFF training camp concludes

SPORTS REPORTER
After a one-day training stint under the Tata Football Academy (TFA) coach, the selected players from the just concluded National School Football competition showed impressive performance against the well-trained TFA team in an exhibition match at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium at Kamalapur yesterday.
Just before the kick-off, though, the absence of match officials created a lot of confusion as Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) apparently did not appoint anyone to conduct the match.
The trainee coaches then took the responsibility to avoid any more embarrassment.
The incident however could not dampen the spirited display of the

LEADING SCORERS

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(Angola), Fonseca (Mexico), Fred (Brazil), Frei (Switzerland), Frings (Germany), Gilardino (Italy), Golmohammadi (Iran), R Gomez (Costa Rica), Gyan (Ghana), Henry (France), Iaquineta (Italy), Ilic (Serbia-Montenegro), F Inzaghi (Italy), Jaidi (Tunisia), Jaziri (Tunisia), Kaka (Brazil), Kalou (Ivory Coast), Kalynychenko (Ukraine), Kaviendes (Ecuador), Koller (Czech Republic), B Kone (Ivory Coast), Lahm (Germany), Larsson (Sweden), Lee Chun-soo (South Korea), Ljungberg (Sweden), Maniche (Portugal), Materazzi (Italy), Messi (Argentina), Muntari (Tunisia), Mohamed Kader (Togo), Muntari (Ghana), Nakamura (Japan), Neuville (Germany), Park Ji-sung (South Korea), Pauleta (Portugal), Pirlo (Italy), Podolski (Germany), Raul (Spain), Rebrov (Ukraine), Robben (Netherlands), Rusof (Ukraine), Saviola (Argentina), Shevchenko (Ukraine), Simao Sabrosa (Portugal), Tevez (Argentina), Van Nistelrooy (Netherlands), Van Persie (Netherlands), Xabi Alonso (Spain), Zigic (Serbia-Montenegro), Zinha (Mexico)

WC BRIEFS

FROM PAGE 28
Lehmann stolen!
Municipal authorities in the western town of Kaiserlautern had to appeal for the return of German keeper Jens Lehmann after he went missing -- a cardboard cutout version, that is.
The lifesize cutout "has disappeared and perhaps even been stolen," a spokesman said.
For a better view
With Germany playing their match against Sweden in Munich fans in Berlin going to watch the game on the Fan-Mile by the Brandenburg Gate will get a better view with two more giant screens being brought in to take the total to nine as up to 750,000 fans are expected. Some 700,000 were there for their overspill from the game -- in Berlin -- against Ecuador.
Goblets in demand
Plastic goblets used to hold drink on the Hamburg Fan-Mile in the entertainment district of Sankt Pauli have turned into a collectors item. Fans have been taking them home and an estimated 45,000 have not been returned despite an offer of 1.50 euros if they are brought back. To bolster sagging stocks organisers have had to order 30,000 more goblets.
No fortune for soldiers
A group of German peacekeepers serving in the Democratic Republic of Congo found out that a soldier's life is not always a happy one in World Cup season after they found they were unable to watch their country's match against Ecuador on television. The match was broadcast live "but they were on duty all the time," their officer explained.

A new look

AFP, London
Umpires, line judges and ball boys and girls at this year's Wimbledon will all be decked out in navy blue and cream outfits carrying the logo of US fashion company Polo Ralph Lauren.
The 129-year-old tournament revealed on Wednesday that it has ditched its traditional purple and green outfits in favour of a sponsorship deal with the American company, which has become the tournament's official outfitter until 2010.
"We're always big believers in style and tradition but with innovation," said Ian Ritchie, the chief executive of Wimbledon organisers, the All England Club.

Ghana over

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second booking of the tournament.
TEAMS
GHANA: Richard Kingstone; John Pansil; Habib Mohamed; John Mensah; Illiasu Shilla; Stephen Appiah; Haminu Dramani (Alex Tachie-Mensah 80), Michael Essien, Derek Boateng (Otto Addo 46); Razak Pimpong, Matthew Amoah (Eric Addo 59).
Yellow card: Essien (5), Shilla (32), Mensah (81), Appiah (90+2)
USA: Kasey Keller; Steve Cherundolo (Eddie Johnson 61), Jimmy Conrad, Oguchi Onyewu, Carlos Bocanegra; Eddie Lewis (Bobby Convey 74), Claudio Reyna (Ben Olsen 40), Clint Dempsey, DaMarcus Beasley; Landon Donovan; Brian McBride.
Yellow card: Eddie Lewis (7)
Referee: M Merk (Germany)
Attendance: 41,000

Moment of truth

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the questions, they just do it."
Henry ended France's World Cup goal famine stretching back to their last World Cup win, the 3-0 triumph over Brazil in the '98 final, against South Korea.
And despite doom and gloom in the press back home, Domenech, who will use Manchester United's Mikael Silvestre to replace Abidal in defence, is upbeat.
"Our future depends on us beating Togo by two goals to go forward, that gives me hope, not pessimism. We're capable of scoring goals."
The French, who eked out a goalless draw in their opener against Switzerland, are the only top seeds yet to win.
Patrick Vieira, who had a goal disallowed in their last match, will take over the captain's armband from Zidane.
While France are missing their skipper Togo welcome back their after influential defender Jean-

**Olympic Day
Run today**

SPORTS REPORTER

The Olympic Day Run, organised by Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA), will be held today in the capital as part of the celebration of the International Olympic Day.
The run will start from the National Tennis Complex at Ramna at 7:30am and finish at the north gate of Bangabandhu National Stadium after running by the Fisheries Building, Foreign Ministry, National Press Club, Baitul Mokarram Mosque and the northern portion of the National Sports Council.
Sportsmen, organisers from different national sports federations are expected to join the run.
After the run, certificates from International Olympic Association will be distributed among the participants.
State Minister for youth and Sports Fazlur Rahman will inaugurate the run as chief guest while BOA president and Army chief Lt Gen Moeen U Ahmed will attend.

**Pak players
get pay rise**

AFP, Lahore
Pakistan's top cricketers received a 25 per cent pay rise and the promise of performance bonuses for their next three series and the 2007 World Cup, officials said Wednesday.
"We have given central contracts to 20 cricketers with a rise of 25 per cent, both in the central contracts and match fees," Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Shaharyar Khan told reporters.
Led by captain Inzamamul Haq, Pakistan's players last month demanded a pay rise and performance-related bonuses for next year's World Cup.
The players in A, B and C categories were previously getting monthly salaries of 3,750 dollars, 2,500 dollars and 1,250 dollars respectively under the central contracts announced last year.
There was growing speculation that fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar might not get a contract as he missed Pakistan's tours of India and the West Indies last year and against Sri Lanka this year through injury.
But Akhtar was among the top six players whose 'A' contracts were renewed.
Captain Inzamam, vice captain Younis Khan, Mohammad Yousuf, Abdul Razzaq and Shahid Afridi are also in the top category, while Mohammad Sami, Shoaib Malik, Kamran Akmal and Danish Kaneria are placed in the 'B' category.
Opener Yasir Hameed, off-spinner Arshad Khan and paceman Shabbir Ahmed missed out on the contracts introduced last year.

Italy send

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rasping effort was kept out by Czech's right hand.
The Czechs responded immediately with a swift counter-attack which put Nedved through on goal, but his shot was too close to Buffon.
Cannavaro's snapshot cleared the bar by inches, Mauro Camoranesi missed a free header and Totti drove straight at Cech.
Inzaghi shot wide soon after coming on for Alberto Gilardino before Buffon thwarted Nedved with a superbly lusing save.
As the Czechs pushed forward in search of a miracle, Italy hit them on the break three minutes from time as Inzaghi completed a 40-year run by rounding Cech and slotting home.
TEAMS
ITALY: Gianluigi Buffon; Gianluca Zambrotta, Alessandro Nesta (Marco Materazzi 17), Fabio Cannavaro, Fabio Grosso; Gennaro Gattuso, Andrea Pirlo, Simone Perrotta; Mauro Camoranesi (Simone Barone 74), Francesco Totti; Alberto Gilardino (Filippo Inzaghi 61).
Yellow card: Gattuso (31)
CZECH REPUBLIC: Petr Cech; Zdenek Grygera, Radoslav Kovac (Marek Heinz 78), David Rozehnal, Marek Jankulovski; Karel Poborsky (Jiri Stajner 46), Tomas Rosicky, Jan Polak, Pavel Nedved, Jaroslav Plasil; Milan Baros (David Jarolim 64).
Yellow card: Jan Polak (35)
Red card: Jan Polak (45+2)
Referee: B Archundina (Mexico)
Attendance: 50,000

Michel to leave

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to the second round of the World Cup.
"I took on the Ivory Coast job for the challenges it would give me," said Michel, who took France to the 1986 World Cup semifinals.
"I have taken a lot of hits to the face from the critics, but that is the name of the game. However, I know that I can still look myself in the mirror in the morning," added Michel, who has also coached Cameroon and Morocco at the World Cup finals but admitted recently he had coached enough in Africa.
Michel said that he could not comment on his new club.
"I can't say very much about my future, only that my target is to win the title with the club."
"If the Ivory Coast really want to be a top side then they have to put a stop to the defensive errors and take its chances more effectively."
"Sadly some of the players weren't at the peak of their form (a reference to Didier Drogha suspended for this match). But all in all it is good to have got the win," added Michel.
With the 2010 World Cup on their continent, in South Africa, Ivory Coast will have every chance to put the record straight.

Vieira wishes

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for Thierry whether he's alone up front or playing with David or somebody else," Vieira said. "He can score in both systems."
Vieira will not alone in celebrating his birthday on Friday since captain Zinedine Zidane turns 34 on the same day.
Zidane, who retires after the finals, is suspended for the final group game after being shown his second yellow card of the tournament in Sunday's match against South Korea, which will have been his last if France fail to qualify.
Vieira, however, said he was confident the ageing midfielder maestro would soon be back in action.
"A good win against Togo could be the sparkle we need," said Vieira, who should take over the captain's armband on Friday.
"If we go through, and I believe we will, I'm convinced we will then surprise many people."

**Turks delight in
German success**



AFP, Berlin

Turkey did not qualify for the World Cup, so Germany's Turks are backing Michael Ballack's "Mannschaft" - for the form, the fun and the off chance that one day one of their boys will play for their adopted home side.
In Berlin's Kreuzberg district, also known as "Little Istanbul", black, red and yellow flags are adorning the stands at the Turkish market, the kebab shops and the cafes where you can smoke a shisha pipe.
Yilmaz Kurt, who owns a kebab stand, is flying not one but two German flags from his car.
And every time Germany wins a match, he pulls on the white shirt of the national squad and drives down the "Ku'damm" boulevard honking his horn. The fact that he is Muslim does not stop him having a beer to celebrate.
"People give me strange looks," he says and shakes his head.
But Kenan Kolat, the head of Germany's Turkish community, says it is to be expected that the Turkish supporters would be at least as exuberant as the Germans have become watching their side storm into the last 16.
"Turks like to party. We taught the Germans how to do it."

THIRD EYE

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Messi and Carlos Tevez struck up a pairing with two-goal hero Maxi Rodriguez. With no central striker playing the direct game, the Argentines made matters a little too intricate and paid the price by failing to find the net. The Dutch were no better even with a front three pairing of Dirk Kuyt, Ruud van Nistelrooy and Robin van Persie.
In the end of it all though, both teams will be glad to have played out a draw with no major headaches or suspensions heading into the second round. It may not have proved for an overall great spectacle for the fans but this is the World Cup and results to matter. What this does is set up a picture game in the second round with Holland playing Portugal. Hopefully that will not fall as flat as this did. As for Argentina they will be glad to be paired with Central Americans Mexico.
And on the topic of both teams, they themselves played out a superbly entertaining game in the futuristic Arena Auf Schalke in Gelsenkirchen. The mind-boggling stadium hosted a pulsating encounter full of excitement and intrigue. The game exploded to life in the sixth minute with Maniche thumping home after a super run and pass from Simao Sabrosa. And the man who provided the assist also scored a goal from the penalty spot as Rafael Marquez somehow managed to handle inside the box under no pressure. The Mexicans came back via Fonseca and had Omar Bravo not receive a penalty and a one-on-one situation may well have ended up topping the group. Their reward for qualifying as second is a tie against the informant of the tournament.
There were two other games yesterday as Ivory Coast, Iran, Angola and Serbia and Montenegro all bid the tournament bye. The first team of the lot securing a 3-2 victory over Serbia and Montenegro -- a nation who shall never more play a part in the World Cup following their break-up in mid June. This was the first and last time they took part and it certainly was not a memorable experience.



**Blatter ponders
plastic pitches**

AFP, Berlin
Matches at the 2010 World Cup could take place on synthetic pitches, the president of FIFA Sepp Blatter said on Wednesday.
"In the future, it will be necessary to have pitches that can resist all weather conditions," Blatter told the Swiss news agency.
"This has to be studied further. We are in the process of collecting the information on this question. Perhaps at the 2010 World Cup in South Africa this stage will have been reached."
Blatter also admitted that there were problems being used with the grounds at this World Cup where some of the grass "is yellow rather than green."
"The stadiums with roofs which totally or partially cover the stands to protect the fans from rain and sun prevent the sun and the wind from getting to the grass," he said.

**Burdisso injury
worries Argentina**

AFP, Frankfurt
Argentina coach Jose Pekerman admitted he was concerned by the injury suffered by key defender Nicolas Burdisso in the 0-0 draw with the Netherlands here on Wednesday.
The player had to be substituted in the 24th minute of the World Cup Group C clash complaining of a knee injury.
"I am worried," said Perkerman. "We will have to see what the doctors say. I hope the injury is not too serious because the next match will come quickly."
The two-time world champions won Group C and will face Mexico for a place in the quarterfinals in Leipzig on Saturday.
Fabricio Coloccini replaced Burdisso in the game against the

But he is surprised at the ease with which the country's 2.7 million people of Turkish origin -- the world's biggest Turkish community outside Turkey -- have cast off past resentment and thrown their weight behind the Mannschaft.
He recalls that until recently it was not unusual to hear cheers ring out in Kreuzberg when somebody scored a goal against the Germans.
Kolatz supports two clubs -- Hertha Berlin and Fenerbahce Istanbul -- and he too has both a German and a Turkish flag on his car.
"My heart is for Turkey but my head is for Germany," is how he sums up his dual loyalties.
Fikret Ceylan, the manager of Kreuzberg's Turkiyemspor football club, points out that many Turks living here would not have been rooting for Germany if Turkey had qualified for the world's top sports event.
"But we live here, so why shouldn't we cheer with the people who share our day-to-day existence?" he said.
It has helped, Ceylan argued, that most of the German team is quite young and represents a new, more open generation.
"They don't have big mouths like they used to in the past."
But like many others he laments the fact that there is not a single player of Turkish origin in the team that has thrilled Germans by beating Costa Rica, Poland and Ecuador.
The side has two players of

**Shoaib unlikely
for England:**

Woolmer
PTI, Karachi
Pakistan coach Bob Woolmer on Thursday said Shoaib Akhtar was unlikely to take any part in the upcoming cricket Test series against England as speculated.
The Englishman said the latest scan on Shoaib's ankle had revealed that the swelling was still there and that his future would be jeopardised if made to play international cricket now.
"There is significant improvement but the swelling is still there. At the moment he can bowl only five overs in a day and if thrown in international cricket now, his future would be at stake," he told reporters after the team's training session.
Akhtar, who took 17 wickets against England late last year, was not selected for the tour for which the Pakistan team departs on June 25.
But the Pakistani team management was banking on an early recovery of Shoaib so that he could be picked as the 17th member of the team and play some part in the four-Test series.

BITS AND BOBS

Dutch.
Del Piero holding on to Scudetto
INTERNET, undated
The Juve captain has no intention of letting any of the past league titles go away.
With the Italian scandal going towards the revocation of the past two Scudetto, Alessandro Del Piero came out to defend these league titles he won.
"The Scudetto are like children. I'm keeping them all."
"In any case, I don't think it's the moment to talk about these things and anyway I'm very happy to have won league titles."
Juventus are risking Serie B or C1 if found guilty of match fixing.
Ribery rejects Arsenal and United
INTERNET, undated
Arsenal and Manchester United have reportedly failed in their attempts to sign Franck Ribery from Marseille.
The talented France international wanted to leave the Stade Velodrome but champions Lyon is his favoured destination.
"I wish to stay in France for two or three more seasons," he said. "For the wellbeing of my family and to play at the highest level, Lyon represents the ideal club for that."
"The challenge they offer me is more than interesting. Lyon is clearly my priority for next season."
Marseille are reluctant to sell to one of their direct rivals.
Petkovic open to China
AFP, Munich
Serbia and Montenegro's outgoing coach Ilija Petkovic indicated Wednesday that he was open to talk about the vacant coaching post for China's national side.
Petkovic, who had already announced he was stepping down before the 3-2 defeat by Ivory Coast, said after the match that throughout his career he never had expectations about being approached by anyone.
But, on being asked about being approached by Chinese officials, the 60-year-old said: "I will go back, have a rest and then we can talk. And then I will decide on what is best for me."
Petkovic, whose fellow Serb Bora Milutinovic took China to the 2002 finals, has repeatedly been linked with the post as China's coach in media reports, along with several other names.
China is aiming to build up its side for the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing.
I will be back to collect medal: Owen
INTERNET, undated
Injured England striker Michael Owen has vowed to return to Germany to collect his medal if his side win the World Cup.
The Newcastle star was ruled out of the tournament on Wednesday after sustaining a serious knee injury the day before against Sweden.
There are fresh reports that the former Liverpool and Real Madrid ace will be out for nine months.
But he told The Times: "My tournament might be over, but I still want that medal around my neck."
"I told Sven-Goran Eriksson that I would be back out for the World Cup final."
"It is strange to think that my farewell was the last I might see of Sven, a manager who has picked me whenever I have been available and for whom I have scored a lot of goals."
"But I haven't given up hope of seeing him again on July 9."