

The Daily Star

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COMMITTED TO People's Right to Know

Hosts face Italy in semis

Argentina, Ukraine bow out

AFP, Hamburg
Luca Toni scored twice as Italy beat Ukraine 3-0 in the World Cup quarterfinal here yesterday to set up a mouth-watering last four clash against hosts Germany.

The first semifinal between Germany and Italy, which will be played in Dortmund on Tuesday, is a repeat of the 1982 final which the Italians won 3-1. Germany defeated Argentina 4-2 on penalties after their quarterfinal in Berlin ended 1-1 after extra-time.

Gianluca Zambrotta, who earlier this week flew back to Italy to visit his stricken former Juventus teammate Gianluca Pessotto after an apparent suicide attempt, gave the three-time champions an early lead with a left-footed shot.

Toni's close range header near the hour mark put the Azzurri firmly in the driving seat after a spell of heavy Ukraine pressure, and the giant Fiorentina marksman doubled his tally by tapping in Zambrotta's cross.

Italy's second goal came shortly after Gianluigi Buffon pulled off a superb save to deny Oleg Gusev, with Zambrotta blocking Anatoly Tymoschuk's follow-up on the goalkeeping.

Ukraine's Andriy Gusev's header hit the bar shortly after Toni had made it 2-0.

Ukraine striker Andriy Shevchenko, who spent seven years playing in Italy for AC Milan before signing for English champions Chelsea last month, was superbly snuffed out by a well-drilled Azzurri defence.

Midfielder Mauro Camoranesi, recalled to Italy's starting line-up to provide extra width on the right, threatened first, firing wide after a robust run through the middle in the fourth minute.

Germany-Argentina match report on sports pages

Italy went ahead through an unlikely source in the sixth minute. Zambrotta played a one-two with Francesco Totti before firing a low drive past Oleksandr Shovkovsky.

Ukraine came out fighting at the start of the second half and they might have levelled the score had it not been for Buffon's quick reflexes.

Gusev's downward header looked goobound, but the Italy keeper managed to claw the ball away and picked up a bump on the head in the process after falling back onto the post. Buffon came to Italy's rescue again when he palmed away Gusev's angled shot.

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Defender Gianluca Zambrotta (R) jumps in the air after scoring Italy's first goal against Ukraine as fellow midfielder Francesco Totti (C) joins to celebrate during their quarterfinal at the Hamburg stadium yesterday.

Angry soccer fans ransack two power stations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Football fans last night attacked and ransacked two power distribution stations in old Dhaka and in Keraniganj protesting power cuts during the Germany-Argentina World Cup Match.

Around 500 agitated people attacked a power distribution centre near Dhaka Central Jail at Nazimuddin Road around 9:30pm after the power went out 10 minutes into the first quarter-final football match.

They pelted bricks and ransacked some furniture of the power distribution centre, two vehicles of Dhaka Central Jail and shops and houses nearby.

The area turned into a battlefield as the soccer fans clashed with

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Huge arms seized in Haluaghat

Items include 31,500 bullets, 348 mortar shells, 20 grenades, 2 AK47 rifles: 3 tribals held

UNB, Mymensingh
Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) recovered a huge quantity of firearms and ammunition from Monikura village in Haluaghat upazila early yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, BDR Battalion Sector Commander Col Anisuzzaman led the operation at about 1:30am, recovered the arms and ammunition concealed in five plastic containers beneath the soil and arrested three tribal villagers.

The recovered arms and ammunition include two AK47 rifles, 20 hand grenades, one grenade launcher, 348 mortar shells, 81 magazines, about 31,500 bullets of AK47 rifles, and bomb-making devices.

BDR personnel arrested three indigenous people, Ashutosh Dibra, 45, Kobir Baji, 25, and Bimal Murmo, 30, of the village, 2-km from the Indian border of Gacchua under Tora district.

On their confession, the BDR men dug out the earthen floor of

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BTRC messes up mobile licence for operator

ABU SAEED KHAN
Despite paying the highest licence fees, Warid Telecom's entry into the fast growing mobile phone scene in Bangladesh seems poised to be jeopardised due to the telecoms regulator's repeated procedural flaws.

While processing the licence for Warid to work as the sixth operator, Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) has also compromised significant legal provisions, according to the documents obtained by The Daily Star.

BTRC performs two tasks: issuing licence to intending operator and allocating frequency before a company starts operating mobile phone service in Bangladesh.

It needs to be noted that unlike India the 100 percent foreign ownership is allowed in the telecoms sector of Bangladesh. Therefore, the wholly owned subsidiaries of foreign companies can run mobile phone business in the country.

The BTRC has, however, issued the "GSM mobile telecommunication services operator licence" to "Warid Telecom International LLC" on December 20, 2005. This company is located at "301, Dhabi Tower, Hamdan Street, Post Box 44222, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates," according to the licence.

The Daily Star has obtained a copy of this licence and there is no mention of Warid having any entity in Bangladesh in the form of registered office or subsidiary.

The BTRC has made its second blunder on March 1, 2006 when it allocated radio frequency to Warid Telecom, which is located in Baridhara, Dhaka. Whereas, this company obtained its trade licence on May 30, 2005 where it is shown located at Banani, Dhaka. Interestingly, its income tax certificate obtained on May 31, 2006 shows the company's address in Gulshan, Dhaka.

The present situation is Warid of Abu Dhabi, which has no entity in Bangladesh, holds the sixth mobile phone operating licence

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Govt let real culprits off, says Udichi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Raising questions over the government's sincerity in investigating the bomb attack on an Udichi conference in 1999, leaders of the cultural organisation demanded that the government net the real culprits and bring them to justice.

Leaders of Bangladesh Udichi Shilpi Goshthi announced a protest programme at a press conference held at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium yesterday, alleging that the government is letting the real culprits off.

A total of 10 people were killed and around 150 injured in the deadly attack on the 12th Udichi Conference in Jessore on March 7, 1999.

A Jessore court acquitted all 23 accused of the case on June 28.

In a written statement, Udichi General Secretary Mahmud Selim said if the government were sincere enough, it could have stayed the

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Israel pounds Gaza, setting interior ministry ablaze

Revokes residency rights of Hamas minister, 3 lawmakers

AFP, Gaza City
Israel blitzed Gaza from the air overnight, setting the interior ministry ablaze and killing a Palestinian fighter in the latest offensive aimed at freeing a soldier held by Palestinian militants.

As the international community appealed for restraint to prevent an escalation of the conflict, Egypt said Friday the ruling Hamas movement had agreed to secure the release of the soldier, but that Israel had so far not agreed to the conditions.

Israel stepped up its assault on Gaza overnight, causing the first Palestinian casualties since it launched a ground offensive early Wednesday, its biggest military operation since pulling out of the territory in September.

Israel pounded Gaza with 30 air raids, hitting the Hamas-run interior ministry, weapons depots, Hamas training camps and access roads, after suspending plans to send ground troops into the north of the territory.

It further ratcheted up the pressure on the Palestinian leadership by revoking the Jerusalem residency rights of a Hamas minister and three MPs, facing them with expulsion from the occupied eastern sector of the Holy City.

Israeli troops had rounded up scores of Hamas members the day before, including eight ministers -- a third of the Palestinian cabinet -- and lawmakers in a vast sweep condemned by Hamas as a declaration of "open war."

The Palestinian interior ministry issued a statement Friday condemning what it called Israel's "growing barbaric aggression" against the "defenceless Palestinian people, their institutions and infrastructure".

A fighter from the hardline group Islamic Jihad, which has been behind almost all bomb attacks against Israel over the past year, was killed in one of the Gaza air strikes.

The army said it had struck at militants who tried to fire an anti-tank missile at Israeli troops based around the disused Palestinian airport in Dahaniyeh in the southern Gaza Strip.

Another Palestinian was shot dead during an Israeli arrest operation in the West Bank Friday.

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Non-govt school, college, madrasa teachers' daylong strike today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Teachers and employees of non-government high schools, colleges and madrasas will observe a day-long strike today, protesting no allocation in the budget for fiscal 2006-07 to provide 100 per cent of their basic salaries from the government coffers.

Jatiya Shikshak Karmachari Front, a platform of non-government school, college and madrasa teachers and employees, called the strike on Thursday.

Non-government teachers and employees led by Front's Chief Coordinator Prof Kazi Faruque yesterday held a rally at the city's Muktangan, demanding an increase of 10 percent in existing salary from the existing 90 percent.

They said the alliance government has ignored the teacher community in its latest budget by

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EC admin limps as vital posts vacant for long

SHAKHAWAT LITON
With the parliamentary election around the corner, the Election Commission's (EC) administration is having a hard time to carry out its duties due to vacancies in a large number of crucial posts both at its central and field level management.

A senior official alone in the EC Secretariat has been virtually holding three vital posts of a joint secretary, an additional secretary and a secretary for longer than the last five months in the name of current charges.

Moreover, two posts of joint secretaries have also been vacant for a long time and two officers are now in current charge of the posts. A post of a deputy secretary has

also been vacant for a few months, sources said.

The situation at the field level administration is even worse. In divisional headquarters, eight posts of deputy election commissioners (DEC) out of nine, 18 posts of district election officers out of 83 and 133 posts of thana election officers out of 503 have been vacant for at least two years.

All the vacant posts are being filled on ad hoc basis. Although there are officials who are fit to be promoted to the vacant posts, the EC Secretariat made no move to form the departmental promotion committee comprising senior officials from the Ministry of Establishment and Finance, sources said.

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Govt conspiring to revive presidential system: Hasina

UNB, Dhaka
Opposition Leader Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the BNP-Jamaat alliance government is hatching a new conspiracy to switch over to presidential form of government by bringing amendment to the constitution.

"The alliance government is playing a new game with the country's presidential office and Jatiya Sangsad as part of its evil design, as they know the people will reject them in the next national elections," she said.

Hasina, also the Awami League president, was addressing a view exchange meeting at her Dhanmoo office with the party's grassroots-level leaders from Barisal, Jhalakathi and Bhola districts under Barisal Division.

She discussed with them the prevailing political situation in

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ROAD THRU' GRAVEYARD Protesters pull down structures again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Several thousand people from all over the capital again demonstrated yesterday and demolished the structures made for construction of a road over a few thousand graves in Azimpur Graveyard.

Angry demonstrators including people who have their relatives' graves in the graveyard also held a protest rally in the graveyard compound after the juma prayers.

The graveyard area was, however, heavily guarded by police and intelligence agencies suspecting trouble since the morning. At one stage, the demonstrators pulled down makeshift living quarters of the labourers and the storage shed for construction materials ignoring the police obstruction. They also brought out protest marches.

Faruk Ahmed, a local resident, said if needed they will sacrifice their lives but they will not let the road to be built. The demonstrators also urged the people to bring shovels and spades with them the

next Friday to demolish the pillars of the under-construction wall which is supposed to separate the under-construction road from the graveyard rendering the burial ground smaller than before.

About a hundred hooligans, allegedly deployed by lawmaker Pintu at the construction site to ensure building of the controversial road, at first tried to obstruct the demonstrators but later backed out.

At the rally, Golam Mostafa Monu, a local businessman, said the road has been planned to pocket money and not for any good as claimed by the pro-road people. Speakers at the rally also vehemently criticised Pintu for taking up the road project.

Mir Ashraf Ali Azam, a local ward commissioner, told The Daily Star that the mayor already cancelled the road project through the graveyard, so there is no reason for demonstrations. Regarding the demonstrators' demand for restoring the graveyard to its former

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Protesting construction of a road through the Azimpur graveyard, people coming to visit the graves of their near and dear ones dismantle the makeshift houses built at the site for the contractor and workers.