The Daily Star

Luque keen on Spain return **REUTERS**, Madrid

Newcastle United forward Albert

Luque has said he is keen to return to Spain after struggling to establish himself in the Premier League.

Spanish media have linked the former Barcelona vouth team player with a possible move back to the Nou Camp, with the Primera Liga leaders having been hit by a series of injuries to key forwards recently.

"I want to return to Spain and if it is to a big club even better," Luque told daily Sport on Thursday.

"If it is true Barca are interested it would be an honour to play for a club like that. But I don't know anything about it. It would be between them and Newcastle to sort it out."

Luque, 28, left Deportivo Coruna for Newcastle in August last year, moving for a fee of 14 million euros on a five-year contract

But last season was blighted by injury and this year under Glenn Roeder he has made only three substitute appearances in the league as the side have slipped to near the foot of the table.

Terim disappointed

INTERNET, undated

Turkey Coach Fatih Terim believes his side could have defeated Italy in Wednesday's friendly test. "We missed a chance," stated the tacti-

The match, which was held in Bergamo in honour of the late Giacinto Facchetti, ended in a 1-1 draw, thanks to Antonio Di Natale and Marco Materazzi's own goal, both scored in the first half.

"It was a good match," said Terim after the game at the Stadio Azzurri d'Italia. "Especially in the second half my men were able to play as I had asked them to

"We are a young side and I am sure we will improve with every match," added the former Fiorentina, Milan and Galatasarav tactician. "Unfortunately we missed

a chance to defeat Italy. Turkish goalkeeper Rustu Recber injured himself after nine minutes and was forced to leave the pitch, replaced by Volkan Demirel.

"We will assess his conditions once we return home. Our first impression is that he may have hurt his ligaments.

"As to the 19-year-old Arda Turan, he is improving as the days go by -- he is an extraordinary talent

Amelia fancies



PHOTO: AFF Italy forward Antonio Di Natale (R) runs off in celebration along with teammate Mauro Camoranesi after scoring his goal against Turkey during their friendly match at Bergamo on Wednesday.

Friendly indeed!

thought that we did enough to win.

"I can take some positives. We

Donadoni handed midfielder

The hosts were the first to

Recber landed awkwardly after

showed the right spirit and battled

Christian Brocchi his international

debut, reward for his sparkling perfor-

threaten. Alberto Gilardino's crisp

volley tipped over the bar by Rustu

making a punched clearance in the

circumstances six minutes before

tions made by Jacek Bak and will

demand that UEFA launches an

investigation to find out the truth." a

proof from Bak or other sources"

Poland defender Bak was

reported by sports daily Przeglad

telephone call before the match.

Someone offered me a bribe in

return for helping Poland lose the

Dziennik, quoted him as saying he

has been "offered 10,000 euros to

foul a (Belgian) player in the Polish

five-time French champions Lvon

and another French side. Lens.

Bak, who has formerly played for

Another Polish newspaper,

match against Belgium."

penalty area"

statement said

nances for AC Milan this season.

televisior

hard.'

Recber.

Demirel.

halftime.

of the 18-vard box.

Football

AFP, Bergamo Marco Materazzi's own goal gave Turkey a prestigious 1-1 draw against world champions Italy in a fiercely contested friendly in Bergamo on

Wednesday Antonio Di Natale put an experimental Italy side ahead in the 39th minute after a terrible blunder by Turkey keeper Volkan Demirel.

But Italy's joy lasted just three minutes as Materazzi put through his own netwhen trying to cut out a cross. Chances were few and far between in an evenly-balanced second half and Turkey held on to

earn a highly respectable draw against the world-beating Azzurri. The friendly was arranged in honour of the late Giacinto Facchetti, the Bergamo-born former Inter Milan and Italy defender who passed away

The substitute keeper's poorlyearlier this year. directed drop-kick struck Italy striker Italy coach Roberto Donadoni Alberto Gilardino on the back of the admitted his side were given a run for leg, and the ball fell at Di Natale's feet. their money by the tenacious Turks. The Udinese striker couldn't believe "Turkey are a good side and they his luck and gratefully side-footed didn't allow us to play," he told RAI

investigated

European

football's ruling

into the net before Demirel could "There weren't many chances, but I recover

Semi-finalists at the 2002 World Cup, Turkey equalised three minutes later thanks to an equally generous

Ibrahim Uzulmez broke into the box with a purposeful run and his low cross was turned into the net by Materazzi's outstretched leg. Gilardino came close to restoring

Italy's lead in the final minute of the first half, but his chip from a tight angled curled wide of the post.

Alberto Aguilani came on at the start of the second half to make his Italy debut, one of several changes

ninth minute and was replaced by Fenerbahce teammate Volkan made by Donadoni. But the Roma midfielder's intro-Demirel was quickly called upon, duction made little impact and Turkey saving Di Natale's shot from the edge enjoyed more possession than Italy in the second half without breaching However, Demirel was to blame the Azzurri's well organized backline. for giving Italy the lead in farcical

The 1-1 result was the same as it was when they last met four years ago in a friendly held in Pescara.

Italy have never lost to Turkey in 10 meetings, winning seven and drawing three.

revenge

Football

REUTERS, Paris

Merkel in **Cottbus** ranks! REUTERS, Berlin

Sport

German Bundesliga club Energie Cottbus are looking forward to having a new big name on their books next year, when German Chancellor Angela Merkel will become an honorary member.

"We are really delighted we were able to get Angela Merkel for our club", Cottbus President Ulrich Lepsch said in a statement on the club's Web site on Wednesday. Cottbus are the only team from

the former communist east of Germany in the top division of the Bundesliga. Merkel grew up in the old East Germany.

'Cottbus are a beacon for the east," the club quoted Germany's first woman chancellor as saying. Merkel will officially become a

member at a home match in the New Year, the club said. Cottbus are in a respectable

their promotion last season. Gerhard Schroeder, the man Merkel replaced as Chancellor, is an

honorary member of Bundesliga rivals Borussia Dortmund.

Baros saves

Czech

blushes

REUTERS, Prague An injury-time equaliser by striker Milan Baros gave Czech Republic a 1-1 draw against Denmark in a friendly on Wednesday. The Danes thought they were

heading for victory after forward Peter Loevenkrands opened the scoring just before the half-hour by firing home from inside the area.

Daniel Jensen also missed a penalty for the visitors in injury time but t was Baros's late header that rewarded the Czechs for their at times desperate efforts to avoid defeat.

"I'm glad I could play and that I scored. Maybe this goal will help me get back." said Baros who has been off form for his club Aston Villa and was on the bench at Everton last Saturday.

In an otherwise dull game, with neither side able to hold on to the ball or set up clear chances, the injury-ravaged Czechs sorely missing their playmaker Tomas Rosicky.

Croat press salute samba star

pers, all of which carried large

pictures of the country's new hero.

brilliant striker who is going to

"With Eduardo, Croatia has a

"Eduardo is surely the best

However, there is a sting in the

tail to Da Silva's man-of-the-match

display, according to Vecernji, who

suggested such a "majestic spec-

tacle" could not be kept at club

champions Dinamo Zagreb for

very long with Europe's hawks

AFP. Zagreb

Croatian football has a new hero according

earned a 4-3 away win over Israel

Unbeaten Croatia top group E after four matches following the victory in Tel Aviv and are now looking directly down on Russia and England.

But it is an adopted son who is the toast of Zagreb in the papers. "The night of Eduardo Da Silva", "Eduardo guides Croatia to Euro 2008" and "Eduardo assures a visa for Europe" screamed the headlines of the major newspalooks assured

"With his qualities, Eduardo is too good for the Croatian league,' reasoned Vecernii

With 12 goals in 15 league encounters this season, Da Silva tops the scoring in the Croatian league and is rumoured to be wanted by PSV Eindhoven chief Ronald Koeman

He was dropped from former coach Zlatko Kranjcar's World Cup squad but new boss Slaven Bilic restored him to the line-up and has seen him score five times since. including goals against World champions Italy and England.

Dinamo coach Branko Ivankovic already seems resigned to losing Da Silva.

The Brazilian came to Zagreb as a 15-year-old in 1998. But now He said after the Israel match: 23 and starting to reach his prime, "He was fantastic, which makes me worry. Now we don't know how a move to one of Europe's more fashionable - and richer - leagues we're going to keep him."

No respite for the Spaniards

REUTERS, Madrid

Spain coach Luis Aragones was frustrated after his side's 1-0 friendly defeat at home to Romania on Wednesday left him with few positives to take into the return of Euro 2008 qualifying action next year.

Aragones put out an experimental side in Cadiz. with three players earning their first caps, but a 58thminute goal from Romanian striker Ciprian Marica condemned Spain to their third defeat in four outings.

"I think we have seen a first half among the best Spain have played. But when you lose you can never be satisfied," said Aragones.

"At first we dominated and created chances but their goal made us

what happens. The first half was an improve-

ment on the games when Spain lost to Northern Ireland and Sweden recently, as they moved the ball around quickly and with purpose.

David Silva of Valencia was the game's standout player as he probed down the left flank, but as time went on it was their traditional failings that came to the fore.

Despite dominating possession they failed to make it count against a well-organised Romanian defence, and they were hit on the break. "It is a worrying run we are on. No

international game is just a friendly,

qualification returns in March with crucial home matches against Denmark and Iceland. Spain are fifth in Group F, nine

points adrift of leaders Sweden, who have played a game more, and four behind second-placed Denmark.

did fans in the stadium who jeered

circling above

nervous, and they were stronger after that. In football if you don't kill the players off the pitch at the end. off games when you can, you see "Absolute disaster." said sports daily AS, while El Mundo said "This

Spanish side are losers" Barcelona-based sports daily Mundo Deportivo described the game as a "pathetic experiment," and added "drifting Spain have a

Spain's debutant midfielder complete lack of punch. Aragones has four months to come up with solutions before the serious business of Euro 2008

Aragones added. The Spanish media had a stronger take on the coach's tinkering, as

The France coach believed the game was more a preparation for next year's Euro 2008 qualifiers than a conclusion to 2006.

Football



bulge the opposition's net in many big matches to come," said sports to the press on paper Sportske Novosti Thursday after Brazilian-born Eduardo Da striker in this part of Europe ... Silva's hat-trick because every goal he scores is a masterpiece," added Vecernji List.

DHAKA FRIDAY NOVEMBER 17, 2006



ninth place in the table following

Milan move

INTERNET. undated

Livorno keeper Marco Amelia is keen to move to Milan next year in order to prove his quality.

The highly-rated shot-stopper is enioving life at Livorno but feels an offer to join the Rossoneri would be too good to turn down.

'I'd like to go there," he stated. "It's normal because we are talking about one of the world's strongest sides so I'm pleased my name is linked to them.

"Anyway, whoever wants me will have to talk with Livorno. "Would I be ready to go there

immediately? Yes, I'm at their disposal already in January.

"I feel good at Livorno but a team that are fourth and are getting good results cannot be criticised by their own president.

'Śo I think that if there is a possibility to leave, I'll do it."

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launch an investigation follow-2008 ing a player's claims of a

AFP, Paris

corruption attempt prior to a Euro 2008 qualifier on Wednesday.

Belgian football authorities on rule out that the call was made to Thursday demanded that UEFA Bak from an illegal gambling netlook into claims by Poland defender work Jacek Bak that he was offered a bribe to boost Belgium's chances of winning their Euro 2008 qualifier in Sportowy as saying: "I had a strange

Brussels Poland went on to beat Belgium 1-0.

On Thursday several newspapers in Poland reported that Bak had been asked by a mystery caller prior to the match if he would help prompt a penalty for the Belgians. Bak's claims have stunned the

Belgian football federation (URBSFA), which has demanded that UEFA investigate. "The URBSFA has taken note

By Eugene Sheffer

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warning

currently plays for Qatar side Al-Thursday morning of the declara-Rayyan Doha

The Belgian footbal said they will co-operate as much as World Cup runners-up France possible with UEFA in the affair. were happy to gain revenge for UEFA spokesman William Gaillard told the Belgian radio

Bribe allegations | France exact Greek

their Euro 2004 defeat when they rounded off an eventful year with a station RTBF they are "waiting on 1-0 win over Greece in a low-key friendly on Wednesday. Gaillard also said UEFA did not

Les Bleus needed a first-half goal by striker Thierry Henry to get past Otto Rehhagel's side, who beat France 1-0 in the quarterfinals in Portugal en route to winning the 2004 European championship.

"It feels good to have won this match because maybe we had a little revenge," winger Florent Malouda told reporters after the game.

Coach Raymond Domenech said: "Winning a game against the European champions is not easy. I would have been happier if we had scored more goals but sometimes you have to be content with what you have.'

'This year was marked by the World Cup final," he said. "Then, everything that happened before we got there is just an episode. To me. 2006 ended on July 9. After that, we moved on to 2008.

Chelsea midfielder Claude Makelele, who was rested in the second half after being substituted for Olympique Lyon's Alou Diarra, said: "I will only keep good memories from 2006. Today, this team has a true identity.

Retired playmaker Zinedine Zidane, who was sent off in the World Cup final defeat for headbutting Italy defender Marco Materazzi, received a standing ovation from the Stade de France on Wednesday in a tribute to the World Cup and European championship-winning players of 1998 and 2000.



Spanish striker Fernando Morientes lies on the ground in some pain following a hefty challenge in their friendly international against Romania in Cadiz on Wednesday.

7x3

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The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.



France midfielder Patrick Vieira (R) rides the challenge of Greece forward Georgios Samaras during their friendly match at the Stade de France in Paris on Wednesday,