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Vogts gets the nod

FRANKFURT, Germany, July 17: Berti Vogts, under fire for Germany's World Cup failure was confirmed Friday as national coach and given the task of rebuilding the side which lost to Bulgaria in the quarter finals, reports AFP.

The German Football Federation said in a statement that the "final decision" had been agreed between Vogts and federation president Egidius Braun.

The coach's first task will be to qualify Germany for the 1996 European Championships in England.

"I consider it an enormous personal challenge to have responsibility for rebuilding the team," said Vogts.

"It will be a difficult job, because young talent is a bit thin in the Bundesliga."

Vogts took over from Franz Beckenbauer who led the side to victory in the 1990 World Cup in Italy.

He has been under fierce attack from the public and the media, with the mass-circulation Bild typically headlining one recent issue. "On your bike Bert!"

Powers of WC

NEW DELHI, July 17: India's notorious power corporations pledged on Friday to provide uninterrupted electricity to football-mad Indians during the live broadcast of Sunday's World Cup final, reports AFP.

Power corporations in Bombay, Calcutta and New Delhi vowed there would be no blackouts when Italy and Brazil kick-off at the Rose Bowl at 1:00 am Indian time on Monday.

"We are ready," said a spokesman for the Calcutta electric supply board. "There will be no problems."

The overcrowded eastern metropolis, the hub of Indian football, has been festooned with posters of Brazilian players ahead of the final between the south Americans and the Italians.

The Delhi electric supply undertaking has also made preparations to ensure that screens do not suddenly go blank during the match.

"If necessary, we will divert electricity from other states on Sunday," a spokesman said.

In Bombay, engineers were keeping their fingers crossed after several days of fierce monsoon thunderstorms.

Irre television viewers have vented their anger on power stations in the past following outrages during broadcast of cricket or field hockey matches.

Technicians at the state-run Doordarshan television network, which has broadcast all of the World Cup matches live without a hitch so far, have been ordered not to "permit a single moment's disruption," station sources said.

Several television companies have set up mobile repair centres and some have even offered to provide free tune-ups of hazy sets ahead of Sunday's final.

"This is purely a humanitarian mission," said the chief executive of a leading television manufacturer.

India ranks 120th in international soccer and has never made it past the qualifying stages of the World Cup.

Aussie eyes on brink of elimination

DUBLIN, July 17: Australia faced elimination from the women's World Cup on Saturday after a 1-1 draw with Olympic champions Spain, reports Reuters.

The Australians took an early lead and dominated for most of the match but conceded a late Spanish goal and are now in danger of missing the semifinals.

With two Group A matches remaining, against Ireland on Monday and South Korea, the group leaders, on Wednesday, the Australians have now dropped three points in three games.

South Korea lead with five points, Argentina have four and Australia and Spain three each.

The South Koreans maintained their point advantage in the group by defeating hosts Ireland 2-0 and a beautifully taken goal by Argentine centre forward Vanina Oneto took Argentina ahead of Australia with their 1-0 victory over Russia.

For Spain, Saturday's match was the third successive draw and the team who have been out of form since the Barcelona Olympics, are not yet out of the reckoning.

The Australians took the lead in the 15th minute against Spain when Juliet Haslam's corner shot hit a defender's foot and Jenny Morris tucked the resulting penalty stroke into the top corner of Spain's goal.



Brazilian striker Bebeto juggles with a ball during a training session at the California State University at Fullerton on July 16.

— AFP photo

for the last four years, reports Reuters.

Since 1990, the featherweight forward had to live with the nightmare of his experience at the World Cup in Italy.

Expected to be one of the revelations of that tournament, Bebeto was relegated to the substitutes' bench, played in just seven minutes of one game and was then injured in a training session.

It was a bitter experience and one which has been nagging at the back of his mind ever since.

Four years on, he has finally proved that he can perform on the World Cup stage.

His partnership with fellow striker Romario has been one of the talking points of the 1994 finals. Although Bebeto has three goals to Romario's five, his movement off the ball, clever flicks and sheer speed make him a huge handful for defenders.

"I had a duty to myself following my experience in 1990," he said, adding that he never feared a repeat of the failure. "I knew that this time everything would work out. I have a lot of faith in God. I knew he wouldn't let me done."

Brazil coach Carlos Alberto Parreira has described the Bebeto-Romario partnership as

the best Brazilian attack since Pele and Tostao in 1970.

They are both enormously gifted players with tremendous ball skills," he said.

A quiet person off the pitch who likes to spend his time at home with his wife, three children and a collection of parrots and pedigree dogs, Bebeto began his career with the Rio de Janeiro club Flamengo in 1983.

He was so lightweight that he needed six months of muscular exercises to build up his frame.

Critics wondered where he would go from there. The answer was upwards, as quickly as he had come down.

At club level, he finally began to replay the investment Vasco had made in him.

Meanwhile, Falcao resigned after a disappointing performance in the Copa America, opening the Brazil door for Bebeto once again. He hasn't looked back since, scoring 18 goals for Brazil since 1992.

In 1992, he was bought by Spanish club side Deportivo La Coruna in a move which infuriated the Flamengo faithful.

Bebeto, who at that time had a reputation as a moaner, found it hard to settle at his new club and was sent off in his first game against Flamengo for fighting.

He lost his form and, just weeks before the 1990 World Cup final, his place in the Brazil team to Muller. His only appearance in the tournament was when he came on in the

83rd minute of the match against Costa Rica.

Two days later, he was injured in a clash with goalkeeper Carlos in a training session and his World Cup was over.

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