

ROK's offer to DPRK

SEOUL, Jan 1: South Korea said today it had picked 10 cities to host the 2002 World Cup finals which it will share with Japan, but that the door remained open for North Korea to hold some matches, reports AFP.

"We had invited North Korea to participate with us in the World Cup, but we have not yet received anything official from them, and so we can't unilaterally include them," said a statement by the 2002 World Cup committee in Seoul.

But if North Korea decides to participate, then "we can at least let them stage one match," it said.

In a dramatic change in FIFA's position, president Joao Havelange said last month he would try to visit North Korea next year to offer the Stalinist country stage the chance to hold some matches.

Havelange also promised to invite North Korean leader Kim Jong Il and the next South Korean president to next year's World Cup opening ceremonies in France.

But FIFA has not yet had a reply from Pyongyang.

FIFA had earlier said it would be difficult to allow games in North Korea before the unification of the Korean peninsula.

South Korea's football association president Chung Mong-Joon, however, has pushed North Korea's possible participation since South Korea and Japan were named last year to hold the first-ever co-hosted World Cup.

The 2002 World Cup committee said it had chosen Seoul, Pusan, Taegu, Kwangju, Ulsan, Taejon, Inchon, Suwon, Chonju and Sogwipo in Cheju Island.

The committee was yet to make a final decision on Seoul, which had not yet submitted its stadium facility constructions plans.

Japan will host half the matches.

WTA's top 20

ST PETERSBURG, Florida, Jan 1: (Reuters): Top 20 women's tennis players, according to the WTA Tour rankings issued on Monday:

Player	Points
1. Hingis	6,264
2. Novotna	3,711
3. Davenport	3,661
4. Coetzer	3,131
5. Seles	2,988
6. Mjoli	2,867
7. Pierce	2,861
8. Spirle	2,494
9. Vicario	2,317
10. Fernandez	2,114
11. Tauziat	1,998
12. Martinez	1,987
13. Huber	1,822
14. Testud	1,811
15. McCarthy	1,497
16. Appelmaas	1,438
17. Raymond	1,434
18. Van Roost	1,393
19. Dragomir	1,323
20. Basuki	1,226

Yelena voted athlete-of-the-year

MOSCOW, Jan 1: Nordic skiing star Yelena Vialbe, winner of five titles at this year's World Championships, was Friday named as athlete-of-the-year in a poll of Russian sports journalists, reports AFP.

Four-time Olympic gold medalist Alexander Popov (swimming) was placed second and world super-heavyweight weightlifting champion Andrei Chemerkin finished third.

Vialbe completed the first clean sweep of the women's titles in 23 years at the World Championships in Trodheim, Norway.

Vialbe won golds in the 30km classic cross country, the 15km freestyle and the 5km classic as well as in the 10km pursuit and the 4.5km relay.

Tennis without Steffi

Please read "1997 turned out to be the most disastrous year for her but by 1996 she has won" The inadvertent mistake is regretted.

Sydney Test starts today



SYDNEY, Jan 1: (Reuters/AP): Failed Test batsman Michael Bevan looks set to resume his Test career as a bowler in a spin combination with Shane Warne in the second Test against South Africa, starting on Friday.

Both Australian captain Mark Taylor and South African counterpart Hansie Cronje believe the pitch at the Sydney Cricket Ground will assist the fast bowlers.

"You've got to have two or three spinners playing here," said Waugh, who will be making his landmark 100th Test appearance this weekend, becoming only the third Australian behind Allan Border and David Boon to achieve the feat.

"(Bevan) has been called into the squad because he's a talented spinner and I think that's the way to beat these guys (South Africans), particularly on this wicket," Waugh told the Australian newspaper on Thursday.

In his immediate post-match comments after the first Test, Cronje said Adams would be a strong candidate for selection.

"He can genuinely spin the ball and although it's possible to read him out of the hand, a batsman still has to play him," Cronje said.

Warne, who has reportedly been troubled by soreness in his shoulder this season, bowled a marathon 44 overs in South Africa's second innings, taking three wickets at a cost of 97 runs.

That heavy workload came on top of 42 overs — and three more wickets — in the first innings, prompting Australia to give Warne a day off from training on Wednesday.

In the corresponding match four years ago, Warne took 12 wickets but he was unable to prevent South Africa winning the match by five runs on the way to a drawn three-Test series.

South African coach Bob Woolmer said that Warne has a psychological hold over his star batsman Darryl Cullinan.

Cullinan has an average of 37 in Test matches, but less

than 13 against Australia and is set to be dropped for the second Test.

Cullinan's vulnerability to spin was highlighted by an average of 8.00 in three Tests in Pakistan in October.

Bevan has taken 27 wickets in 17 Tests at an average of 23.29 but his opportunities to bowl this season have been limited because of a back injury.

He has claimed only three first-class wickets for New South Wales at an average of 84.



MARK TAYLOR

Ironically, given his selection as a specialist bowler and his previous inclusion as a batsman, Bevan tops the Australian first-class batting averages with 578 runs at 96.33.

The likely teams (12th men to be named):

AUSTRALIA: Mark Taylor (captain), Matthew Elliott, Greg Blewett, Mark Waugh Steve Waugh, Ricky Ponting, Michael Bevan, Ian Healy, Paul Reiffel, Shane Warne, Michael Kasprowicz, Glenn McGrath.

SOUTH AFRICA: Gary Kirsten, Adam Bacher, Jacques Kallis, Darryl Cullinan, Hansie Cronje (captain), Brian McMillan, Shaun Pollock, Lance Klusener, David Richardson, Pat Symcox, Allan Donald, Paul Adams.

Gough misses Caribbean tour

LONDON, Jan 1: Injury-plagued pace bowler Darren Gough has pulled out of England's tour of the West Indies, this time with a hamstring injury, reports AP.

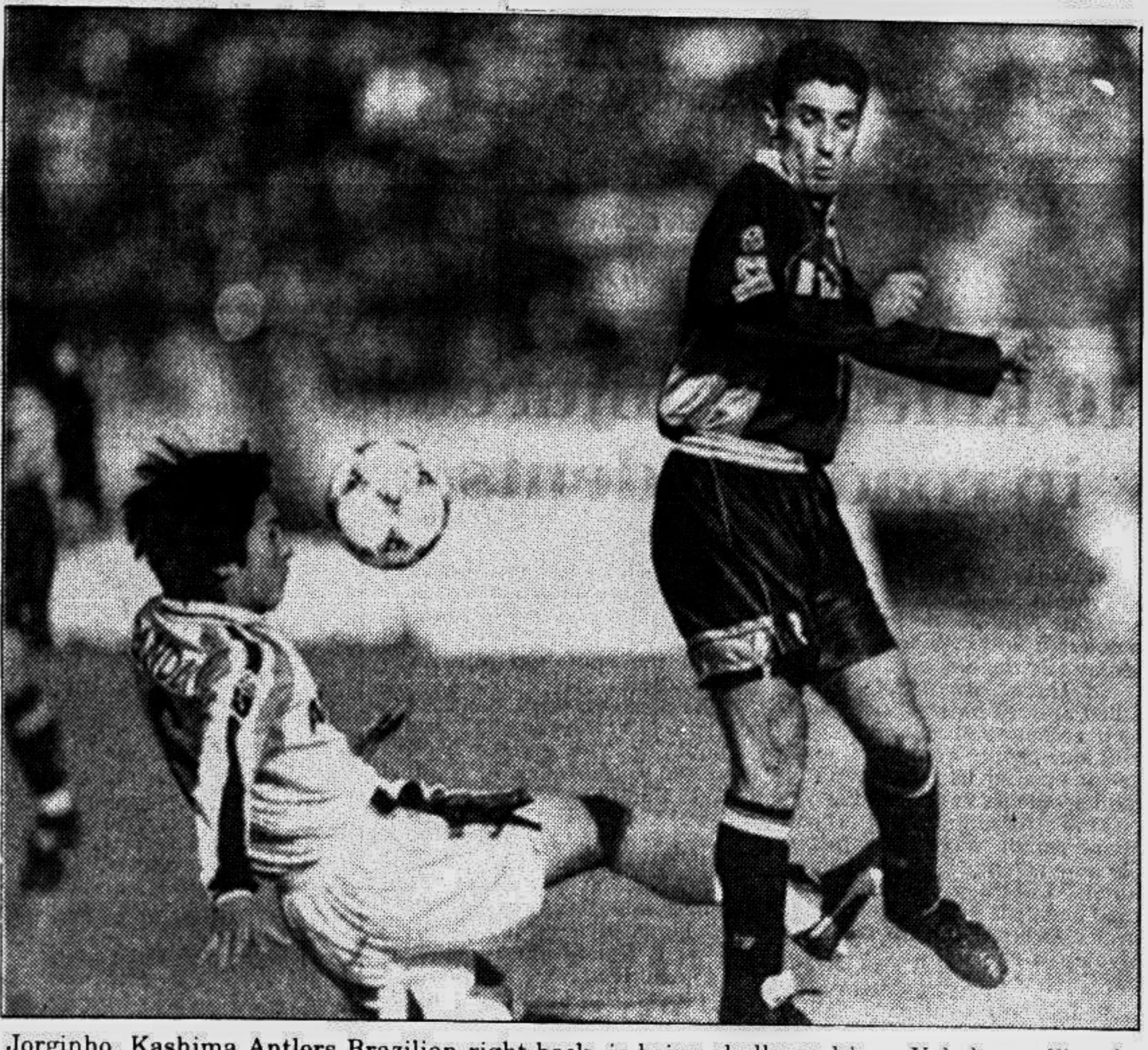
The 27-year-old Yorkshire bowler, who was expected to lead England's attack in the Caribbean, has a degenerative condition of the left hamstring tendon, an injury which has bothered him for several months.

His place in the squad, who will play five Tests and five one-day internationals, will be taken by Yorkshire teammate Chris Silverwood.

The powerfully-built Gough, who can bowl with genuine pace and gets great results with his inswinging yorker, has suffered from frequent injury problems over the past two seasons, such as shin splints and shoulder and back pains.

Because of this lingering injury, which flares up whenever he tries to run and bowl at full pace, he missed the last two tests of last season's Ashes series as well as the remainder of the country season.

Silverwood, a 22-year-old comparative newcomer who has been in Kenya with the England A team, will join up with the senior squad when they fly out to the West Indies on Saturday.



Jorginho, Kashima Antlers Brazilian right-back, is being challenged by a Yokohama Flugels defender during the final of the Emperor's Cup in Tokyo yesterday. Antlers won 3-0.

— AP/UNB photo

Hopman Cup begins tomorrow



PERTH, Jan 1: Spain are favourites to win the 900,000 Australian dollars (587,880 US) Hopman Cup mixed teams tennis tournament starting here Saturday, reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.

"I sincerely prayed for the success of the Nagano Olympics and for more snowfalls which have been limited apparently by the El Nino weather phenomena," reports AFP.