

SPORT

The Daily Star

Thank you Romario keeps mum



REUTERS, Rio de Janeiro

Brazilian striker Romario has remained silent 24 hours after being left out of his country's squad for the World Cup finals starting at the end of the month.

Romario, who scored five goals when he helped Brazil win their fourth world title in 1994, had been expected to comment on his omission on Tuesday after training with his club Vasco da Gama.

But he failed to turn up and his spokesman Fernando Santana said that he had gone to see a doctor about a pain in his back.

"His mood is better than I would have been expected," said Santana. "He is happy that he is fully fit and has been averaging 1.1 goals a game.

Romario remains one of the world's most dangerous penalty area specialists at the age of 36 and Brazil coach Luiz Felipe Scolari has defied public opinion in refusing to pick him

On Tuesday, one newspaper produced a huge photo of Scolari on

2CO2 FIFA WORLD CUP

KOREA APAN

Brazil coach Luiz Felipe Scolari has

been dubbed "public enemy number

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

announced on Monday.

squad

its front page under the headline for the competition in Colombia "Brazil's public enemy number one." claiming he needed to have an eye Romario's only appearance operation but shortly afterwards since Scolari took over 11 months went on a tour to Mexico with Vasco. ago was in the 1-0 defeat by

This, according to the Brazilian Uruguay in a World Cup qualifier media, enraged Scolari. While Romario remained tight-

lipped, Sporting Lisbon striker Mario Jardel was lamenting his absence after a season in which he has been in excellent goalscoring form for his club.

"This is the biggest disappointment of my career and the saddest moment of my life," he was quoted as saying by the Estado News Agency, "I was having a marvellous year, it's a shame.

mance on the fact he had just

returned from injury and was still not

butting the Spanish club's coach

Javier Irureta in training.

Honduras.

Jardel made his name under Scolari when he played in the Gremio team which won the South American Libertadores Cup in 1995. But he has not been picked for

ROMARIO

Since then, Scolari has blamed "technical and tactical reasons" for Romario's absence but, in naming the squad on Monday, he also mentioned Romario's decision to drop out of last year's Copa America squad.

Scolari most hated?

last July.

match fit. Romario asked not to be picked



AFP, Rome

The brilliant international career of Brescia striker Roberto Baggio was effectively ended on Wednesday when Italy coach Giovanni Trapattoni did not name him in his 23-man squad for the World Cup.

Baggio may have defied doctors in returning to Italian First Division action before the end of the season just finished but his comeback stopped short of selection for the finals in Korea and Japan.

Baggio, adored by the media and fans but not always so popular with Brazil since a dismal display in the team-mates and coaches, had been ruled out for the season after injuring Copa America when he was in the ligaments in January but returned to team which suffered an infamous save Brescia from relegation with quarter-final defeat at the hands of three goals in their last three matches Jardel later blamed his perfor-

That fuelled the campaign for Trapattoni to include the 35-year-old but the coach resisted a sometimes overwhelming demand to re-instate Baggio, one of Italy's greatest World Cup stars - but one who failed to lift the ultimate prize.

Sadly the defining moment in Baggio's brilliant career came in 1994 when Italy faced Brazil in the 1994 final, the first decided by a

penalty shoot-out. Baggio, whose accuracy rate from the spot is second to none in Italy, skied his shot over Claudio Taffarel's crossbar, to ensure Brazil and not Italy would make history by

It was all the more cruel as Baggio had single-handedly carried Arrigo Sacchi's Italy to the threshold of glory, seeing them through games with Nigeria, Spain and Bulgaria before that final disappointment.

He scored both in the 2-1 win over Nigeria, the first in the 2-1 win over Spain and both in the semi-final 2-1 win over Bulgaria.

Cups for Baggio who had illuminated the 1990 edition in Italy with the best goal of the tournament against Czechoslovakia, adding another in the third-place play-off victory over England in Bari

when Italy fans chanted for Baggio instead of him calls sometimes heeded by coach Cesare Maldini Nonetheless Baggio scored goals against Chile and Austria.

Baggio, dubbed the 'divine ponytail' because of his hairstyle and his conversion to Buddhism, set a world record transfer fee in 1990 when he joined Juventus from Fiorentina

Ironically it was just as the club was emerging from years in the doldrums that the emergence of Del Piero persuaded coach Marcello Lippi to move Baggio out of the club, instead relying on the youngster and forwards Gianluca Vialli and Fabrizio Ravanelli.

speaking terms. After a career when Baggio had starred for Juve and both Milan clubs AC and Inter it seemed he was putting himself out to grass when he joined newlypromoted Brescia for the 2000/01

But his outstanding form began the media campaign for the player to be recalled, reaching a peak during the match in Parma last Autumn when Italy met Hungary still needing a draw to be sure of automatic qualification

After a nervous opening the Italy fans started chanting the name of Baggio and booing Del Piero who responded with the goal that took Italy to Japan.

Trapattoni delivered an astonishing broadside at Italy fans after that

match. "It's an unkind desture towards those who took us to the World Cup," bellowed Trapattoni, "This way we are damaging the national team. Remember that, Italians,"

Injury intervened, however, with the initial diagnosis ruling Baggio out of the World Cup.

But as it emerged that Baggio was recuperating quicker than expected Trapattoni moved guickly to stifle any debate by naming his seven attacking players on the eve of last month's friendly with Uruguay in Milan

It did not work. The campaign went from strength to strength but as Baggio's fans demonstrated outside talian footbal federationheadquarters on Wednesday Trapattoni's list finally brought down the curtain on the international career of one of Italy's

greatest footballers. Baggio had scored 27 goals in 55 appearances for the 'Azzurri', his last outing coming in 1999 in the 1-1 draw with Belarus

Tudor scare for Croatia INTERNET, Zagreb

Igor Tudor of Juventus might not be able to join Croatian national team at World Cup 2002, revealed national team coach Mirko Jozic.

Pointing out that without Tudor,

IGOR TUDOR Croatian team would be by 20 percent weaker, Jozic said Tudor would need to undergo ankle surgery. The 23-year-old defender Tudor

has been injured in Sunday's Serie A match when Juventus won champion's title. Croatian national team coach did not want to confirm whether Tudor has been definitely lost for the World Cup 2002

Blatter to be sued soon

REUTERS, Rotterdam down but regularly hits 98 percent. Eleven members of the 24-man 14-17 for rest and relaxation. Our FIFA executive committee are aim is to ensure a relaxed time for preparing to sue FIFA president the players and their families in total privacy," the resort's general man-

Sepp Blatter within the next 48 hours for "misuse of funds" in the Swiss courts. UEFA president Lennart

Johansson, a FIFA vice-president and a member of the executive committee, confirmed their action here before the UEFA Cup final between Feyenoord and Borussia Dortmund on Wednesday.

Johansson said: "Under Swiss law you are obliged to go to court if you are aware of a criminal act. If vou withhold that information you can be charged yourself.

"Following the report of (FIFA general-secretary) Michel Zen-Ruffinen to the executive committee on Friday, we are now obliged to act through the courts."

Johansson added the matter would be in the hands of a Swiss lawyer to present to magistrates in Zurich "within the next two days or

The executive committee members are acting following the report by Zen-Ruffinen who presented a 21-page dossier backed up with 300 pages of evidence in which he alleged mismanagement by Blatter who has vigorously denied any wrongdoing.

for England been taken over for the duration of 2002 FIFA WORLD CUP their stay and enjoys a high local KOREA APAN reputation

England's football squad will have to

brave scorching temperatures and

stifling humidity on the beach or by

the bar at the luxury Dubai hideout

chosen for a spot of relaxation

With a huge private stretch of

glorious white sand, the resort lies

along the trendiest shopping drag in

Dubai, a city-state that is one of the

seven members of the federation of

But players and their wives can

forget walking even a few hundred

vards to the boutiques and salons in

Temperatures at midday have

topped 45 degrees C (113 F) in the

shade for the last week and can be

expected to remain high as summer

Relative humidity swings up and

"The team is here between May

Apart from the beach, there are

two swimming pools, spa and

fitness facilities and seven tennis

courts set amid the magnificent lush

players and their families luxurious

secluded suites -- costing between

1.300 and 1.800 dollars a night --

overlooking private manicured

lawns and the turguoise waters of

in the Mediterranean-themed

Prasino's restaurant, which has

The guests will eat all their meals

Accommodation offers the

the United Arab Emirates.

the sauna-like conditions.

ager Doris Greif told AFP.

sets in.

gardens

the Gulf.

ahead of the World Cup.

Korea and Japan.

AFP, Dubai

Oasis heat

The Australian-led chefs however have not received any special dietary instructions from the FA, according to Greif

"There have been no funny requests. The FA came out on an inspection trip in January and deemed that everything was in order, including the food," Greif told AFP.

The Jumeirah Beach Club, an Strict security will be enforced oasis boasting 250 different types of during the team's stay, with Dubai tropical plant, was chosen by the police, whose officers' pitches the English Football Association (FA) English team will train on, offering for its intimate exclusivity and to assistance to man the gatehouse allow the players to acclimatise to and grounds. All non-members will the steamy conditions expected in be barred from entry.

"It's been very straightforward. They have taken all 50 suites, and there is only one point of entry, so it's relatively simple to control," Greif said

"We were chosen because of a combination of location, en route to Japan with hot weather conditions, and exclusivity, where disturbances will be at a minimum," the German said, insisting she had no split loyalties.

"The whole of Dubai is thrilled the team is coming here. We are justifiably proud to have been chosen as the venue for this very high profile

aroup. Greif hailed the FA's decision to come to Dubai as a major boost for the emirate as it tries to set out its stall as the region's premier leisure hub

"Their stay will succeed in getting more people from Germany, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, our main markets, to travel here.

"Dubai is an incredibly safe place with great facilities," but it suffered in the short term after the attacks in the United States last September simply because it was in the Middle East, she said.

With oil resources running out, Dubai has launched a multi-billion dollar tourism drive focused on resorts and shopping, and succeeds in attracting around 2.5 million visitors a vear

perfect condition before the act of

vandalism and now security has

Russia won't change base

2002 FIFA WORLD CUP KOREA APAN

AFP, Moscow

Russia have decided to stick with their original World Cup base after receiving assurances the training arounds vandalized with chemicals would be in top condition on the team's arrival, the country's football federation said on Wednedsay. Secretary general of the federation Vladimir Rodionov said authorities in Shimizu, 140km south west of Tokyo, confirmed they would do everything they could to ensure everything was back to normal by their May 26 arrival date. "We have received assurances from the Japanese that the pitches will be in a good enough condition for our training camp," Rodionov said.

been heightened at the venue. Police originally said they had no indication as to who might have carried out the attack but there was immediate speculation it might have been the work of ultra-nationalists protesting over Russia's occupation of disputed islands north of Japan. News of the incident broke on Tuesday, just a matter of weeks before the start of the May 31 to June 30 finals where Russia meet Belgium, Tunisia and Japan in first round Group H. Officials discovered brown marks on certain areas of the pitches on Saturday and then, two days later, they noticed brown and yellow lines and spots of dead grass on them. One line of dead grass extended for more than 150 metres (495 feet), and others zigzagged all

one" by a Brazilian newspaper for omitting 1994 World Cup star Romario from Brazil's World Cup The 36-year-old Vasco da Gama player, who was a hero in Brazil's fourth title-winning campaign in 185 1994, had hoped he would be included in Scolari's squad for the Korea and Japan showcase event which starts at the end of the month. Tuesday's edition of The Jornal dos Sports reported Scolari was World Cup," he said. "public enemy number one," and he had "declared war on all Brazilian LUIZ FELIPE SCOLARI fans" for not having included

Romario in the 23-man squad "Mr Scolari despises the opinbelieved Brazil would win the World

ions of fans," the paper said, sniping at Scolari for claiming to know better than 160 million Brazilian football The Jornal dos Sports newspaheadlines last week after head-

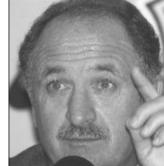
tone set in other publications. However a poll of 8,525 people

per said once again Scolari had

shown he was not fit to coach the

Brazilian team at a World Cup by

eaving out Romario which was the



television station GloboNews found that approximately 63 percent

Cup. The other notable absentee from Brazil's squad was Deportivo La Coruna's Djalminha, who hit the

could hope for.

this obligation to win. He added confidently the players had a real belief in themselves which would last throughout the May 31 to June 30 event after being asked what Brazilian supporters

Cisse gets coach's vote want to say and not draw comparisons with anyone else as to why

2002 FIFA WORLD CUP

O Globo newspaper said the Brazilian squad was for "good boys" adding the headbutt had a maior bearing on his omission. Elsewhere there were few surwinning a fourth World Cup.

It was the second of three World

But his appearance in France 98 with many claiming that his presence was detrimental to the form of Alessandro Del Piero, who has since admitted he was destabilised

prises in Monday's announcement. with Scolari sticking largely to the squad which played against Portugal in a friendly last month. Barcelona star Rivaldo was named in attack despite a persistent knee injury and erratic form at international level, while Inter

Milan's Ronaldo was also called up after a return to form and fitness.

Scolari added that there was as

usual a great deal of pressure on the team to do well. "I have an obligation to win the

"My son recently told me that winning is all that matters. It can only ever be like that because that's how

Brazilians are with football. There is

Baggio and Lippi are still not on season.



AFP, Paris

supporters

French coach Roger Lemerre said Wednesday he believed there was no risk in selecting unproven striker Diibril Cisse over the troubled but more experienced Nicolas Anelka for the World Cup finals squad.

The 20-year-old Auxerre star. who was the revelation of the season in France scoring 22 times as his club qualified for the Champions League, was preferred by Lemerre to Anelka, who was part of the Euro 2000 titlewinning squad, when he named his World Cup finals squad.

"When I called Anelka up for the friendly with Russia (a 0-0 draw) of course he was in my mind," Lemerre told L'Equipe.

"However I chose Cisse and I don't think it is a risk. "Cisse has made a huge impact

on the championship so where is the



PHOTO: AFP

French players Frank Leboeuf (1st row, L), Bixente Lizarazu (1st row, R), among others, participate in a mountain trek at Sainte Foy, in the French Alps on May 8. Eight French national team players took part there in an oxygenation training session ahead of the World Cup 2002 in Japan and South Korea.



DJIBRIL CISSE

"In fact it is not worth talking about the risk but of certainty that he will perform.

"I know what Anelka can do but I have no idea what Cisse can do at this level," he added Lemerre told L'Equipe newspa-

per he had always had Cisse in mind for his squad but had wanted him to keep playing in the Under-21 side rather than elevating him too soon. "I chose Cisse and that is all I

preferred him," the 60-year-old Lemerre said. "Cisse is part of a great Under-21

side and while I may have watched him as much as several others in that side there was always a chance he would be selected for the senior side," he added.

Lemerre, who emerged from the shadow of the 1998 World Cup winning coach Aime Jacquet by taking the Euro 2000 title and extended his contract to 2004 last Friday, said he had not wanted Cisse to be exposed to the full glare of the media spotlight too soon.

"I thought it was best to leave him in the surroundings that he was flourishing in both at international and club level.

"It was better he stayed with the players of his own age.

"However now he has risen so fast and come of age just like David Trezeguet, Thierry Henry and Anelka did in 1998 (Anelka didn't make the squad then either) and I have to wonder whether that would

have been the case if he had been playing for the France A side," he added

AFP, Madrid

heavy rain.

good

Kawaguchi.

Key encounter 1-0.

A makeshift Real Madrid side

proved too good for World Cup hosts

Japan in a World Cup warm-up

game here Tuesday, winning a low-

striker Edwin Congo on 27 minutes proved decisive, the Colombian

player pouncing from what looked

like an off-side position to score from

the important thing is the taking

"It's true that when you travel

Troussier guipped afterwards.

Japan coach Philippe

a Roberto Carlos freekick.

A goal from Real's reserve-team

Lemerre said he hoped Anelka, who has had a troubled time at his French club PSG scoring just three goals this season before being sent on loan to Liverpool, would bounce back from the setback of being left out

"All of his coaches would hope SO

"It was a pretty difficult thing to have to do to him and I will not forget what he has achieved with the French team.

"It is clear that on the pitch he contributes soemthing special and I hope he comes back into the international fold soon." he added.

Lemerre repudiated notions he should have discarded veterans such as Alain Boghossian and Youri Djorkaeff, who have had up and down seasons with fitness and form, for the fresher legs of France's footballer of the year in 2001 Eric Carriere

"It didn't have much of an impact on my selections," he said.

"Whether they played or didn't play the important thing was that I was thinking of them.

"For example Djorkaeff has always retained his talent, his speed and the vision and that is what counts," he added.

France open their campaign in defence of their title against debutants Senegal in Seoul on May 31.



Real Madrid superstar Luis Figo (L) under pressure from Japan's Toda during their friendly soccer game against drugs at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid late on May 7.

Real blow for Japan

to have better conditions 2002 FIFA WORLD CUP "In the first half I was a little bit KOREA JAPAN disappointed with certain players. There was a bit of Japanese timidity," said Troussier, who acknowl-edged the sodden conditions deval-

ued the match. "The pitch was unplayable, but

even so I was satisfied with the way we played, particularly the defence. "If we end up playing in conditions like this in Japan, then the match will have been useful," he

added Asked if he had been worried by the defeat with Japan's opening World Cup fixture against Belgium on June 4 less than a month way Troussier was typically blunt.

As expected Real rested several first choice players from their start-ing line-up at a Santiago Bernabeu "Whenever you lose you always look at what happened in your Stadium which had been soaked by defence. But I'm not anxious tonight after the way we played - and we didn't have our full strength team," Both Roberto Carlos and Portuguese star Luis Figo started for he added.

Both European based-stars Real, but were removed from the Hidetoshi Nakata and Shinji Ono fray after 33 minutes, making way for Raul Bravo and Valdo respecwere missing from Japan's squad for the Real game, but will join up with the Japanese for the friendly against Norway in Oslo on May 14.

Japan never really troubled the Real goal, and could have suffered a Among other candidates for the heavy defeat had not been for a final squad, Hiroshi Nanami, Ryuzo save by keeper Hitoshi Morioka, former Boca Juniors striker Sogahata, hoping to stake a claim in the absence of Yoshikatsu Naohiro Takahara and veteran Masashi Nakayama, Japan's only World Cup goalscorer, did not play in "Like Pierre de Coubertin said, Madrid

After returning to Japan on May 16, Troussier will announce the final squad for the World Cup on May 17 before challenging Sweden in the 12,000km for the honour of playing last warm-up game in Tokyo on May 25. against Real Madrid, you would like

hospitalised with stroke

Lobanovsky

AFP, Kiev

Legendary Dynamo Kiev coach Valery Lobanovsky suffered a stroke during their Ukrainian league match against Zaporozhie, the club said on Wednesday.

The Kiev outfit added he was in a stable condition but gave no other details, including the severity of the condition.

The 63-year-old, who is in his second highly successful stint at the club, was taken to hospital late on Tuesday night at Zaporozhie after the attack, which can lead to paralysis.

The club added the best specialists in the country had been summoned to treat the coach, who in his first spell led them to eight Soviet titles and two European Cup Winners Cup trophies in 1975 and 1986, was not in the best of health and has had recurring heart problems.

He almost fell unconscious or the bench following Kiev's 3-1 victory and the club's first vice-



VALERY LOBANOVSKY

president Igor Surkis went with him to the hospital while the rest of the

team flew back to Kiev. It wasn't the first time Lobanovsky had had a stroke.

Two years ago at Leverkusen the day before their Champions League match with the German side, he had a similar health crisis and had to watch the game from his hotel room.

Lobanovsky has coached Dynamo to the last five titles but is currently engaged in a duel for this year's crown with Shakhtar Donetsk.

He had a spell coaching in the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait, and resigned from his post as national boss after Germany beat them 5-2 on aggregate in a World Cup finals play-off last year.

Rodionov added Shimizu had a third pitch but that it was away from the training base, where both pitches were damaged.

over the field. The six-billion-yen (46.7-milliondollar) training base, built a year ago, also has a swimming pool and a huge, ultra-modern gym.

The football fields had been in

Nigeria to wait till last Onigbinde, brought in to replace



Amodu Shaibu who was sacked after failing to win the African Nations Cup in February, is still experimenting with dozens of plavers.

The Nigerian coach said posi-Nigeria will delay naming their tions in the Super Eagles were still World Cup squad until the May 21 up for grabs and that he may give FIFA deadline, coach Adegboye more players the opportunity to Onigbinde has said.

make the final 23-man list. They (FIFA) have given every-Nigeria face England, Sweden body until May 21 to submit their and Argentina in the first-round list," the Nigeria coach said on a group phase of the tournament, which starts on May 31.

Van Gaal back to Barca?

Football

AFP, Barcelona

Former Dutch national coach Louis van Gaal could be set for a return to former Spanish first division club Barcelona, it was reported on Tuesday.

Van Gaal has not worked since resigning as national coach when the Dutch failed to qualify for this year's World Cup finals but according to local sports papers Sport and El Mundo Deportivo he is favoured to replace current incumbent Carles Rexach.

Van Gaal, who made his name guiding Ajax to the 1995

Champions League trophy, coached Barca to two Spanish titles but was forced out two years ago owing to a mixture of poor results and tense relations with both the press and the fans.

The fans, who objected during his tenure to his bringing in nine Dutch players which earned the club the nickname Ajax of Barcelona, greeted rumours of his possible return at last Sunday's league match with banners

declaring 'No to van Gaal.' Barcelona have endured another trophyless season this term and will miss out on next season's Champions League if they lose this weekend and fifthplaced Celta Vigo win.

local radio programme. "I am going to utilise it to the last hour.

REUTERS, Agos, Nigeria