Return of the Zizou

Football

French star Zinedine Zidane on Wednesday announced that he is coming out of international retirement to help his country's flagging

World Cup campaign.
The 33-year-old Real Madrid midfielder guit the national team after Furo 2004 when France were knocked out in the quarter-finals but said on his website on Wednesday that he will be available for selection in the friendly against Cote d'Ivoire on August 17.

"I have decided to make a comeback and play for France, one year after I categorically stated I would never play again," said Zidane, a former World Footballer of the Year.

Zidane has played 93 times for the national team scoring 26 goals including two goals in the 1998 World

Cup final win against Brazil. He also played in the successful

Euro 2000 team but his last game was the 1-0 quarter-final defeat to Greece in Euro 2004.

"I will be in Montpellier", said Zidane referring to the venue of the match with Cote d'Ivoire.

France, the World Cup winners in 1998, are currently fourth in Group 4 of the qualifying campaign for the 2006 finals, three points behind leaders the Republic of Ireland.

Switzerland are second with 12 points with Israel in third spot on 11. France's next World Cup qualifi-

ers are against the Faroe Islands at home on September 3 and the Republic of Ireland in Dublin four Zidane also announced on his

website the return of compatriot, fellow midfielder Claude Makalele who plays for English champions, "Claude will also make his come-

back for the French side," he said. "For the very first time in my life

have decided to go back on my word which is very important for me. When

Inter Milan are set to complete the

signing of Luis Figo from Spanish

giants Real Madrid in the next 24

Sport the 32-year-old Portuguese

winger was due to fly from Irdning,

Austria -- where Real Madrid are

having a ten-day pre-season train-

ing camp -- to Milan on Thursday by

ing his fitness satisfied Inter's medi-

cal staff he would then be taken to

the club's offices in Palazzo Durini to

for Portugal's most capped player,

who still has a year left on his con-

No transfer fee will be involved

FIFA's World Player of the Year in

Inter director Gabriele Oriali said

"The only thing separating us

Figo was in Milan on Wednesday

for final negotiations with Inter

owner Massimo Moratti, but was

then called back to Irdning by Real

Madrid before the transfer could be

U-19 WOMEN'S HANDBALL

Jessore won both their Bengal

Plastic U-19 women's handball

tournament matches yesterday in

In the morning, Jessore blanked

Jamalpur 27-0 at the Dhanmondi

Women's Sports Complex before

beating Rangpur 27-8 in the after-

noon at the Dhaka handball ground.

beat Munshiganj 14-1, Chittagong

Mohanagari Krira Sanghstha edged

Khulna 13-11, Bagerhat defeated

Jamalpur 8-1 and Khulna beat

Munshiganj 10-5.

In other matches, Panchagarh

Two wins

SPORTS REPORTER

for Jessore

2001, Figo will reportedly earn a

total of 6.9 million euros over the

it was only a matter of time before

Figo became an Inter player.

completed.

now is land as he is in Austria."

two-year period at the Serie A club.

sian a two-vear contract

tract with Real Madrid.

The newspaper said that provid-

private jet before having a medical.

According to the Gazzetta dello

Inter set to

wrap up

Figo deal

very serious - today I have made the same decision but in reverse.

"Of course I am overwhelmed. Yes. I know I have put myself in a

position that many people will look at

closely and say: 'Why didn't he do

that earlier? Why now? Why did he wait so long?', "Raymond Domenech (the

national coach) has been to see me in Madrid two or three times.

"We have discussed it a lot together and he told me directly what



RELAX, I'M BACK! Real Madrid's French superstar Zinedine Zidane gestures during a training session in Las Rozas, near Madrid on Wednesday. Zidane announced on Thursday that he was coming out of international retirement to help his country's flagging World Cup campaign.

he wanted from me and Claude.

"To have spoken to the national coach was very important. I have thought about returning to play a lot since I retired.

"I don't want to go into too many details of why and how but I do want to point out that I am not returning to play for France as a sort of 'Zorro' or a saviour, just as a player who can help the French national team."

Domenech fuelled speculation of a return in March when he said that 'the door was open" for Zidane.

Zidane's comeback decision has come as a rush of adrenalin for Raymond Domenech who said in a press release on Wednesday that he was. "very satisfied."

"I am extremely happy that the national team can once again rely on the services of Zinedine Zidane and Claude Makalele, they are both players of great talent that have made it to the top level of professional football," Domenech said.

"Since I was selected, I have made sure I have chosen the best French players available for the squad.'

Domenech has had a bumpy ride since his appointment.

His World Cup qualifying cam-paign for Germany 2006 has seen France strike a goal drought.

Three goalless matches against Switzerland, Ireland and Isreal and a meagre five goals from six matches have sent out warning signals to the fans who are far from convinced their

team will even qualify for Germany. Zidane, FIFA World Player of the Year in 1998, 2000 and 2003, became the world's most expensive player in 2001 when he moved from Juventus to Real Madrid for 63.6 million dollars.

He has picked up three Italian and Spanish league winners med-als, as well as winning the Champions League in 2002 with

programme on Sheikh Kamal ends today

Abahani's

SPORTS REPORTER

Abahani Samorthok Goshthi's twoday programme to observe the 56th birth anniversary of the club's founder Sheikh Kamal will conclude today at their Dhanmondi club premises.

Tennis

REUTERS, Carlsbad

seed Nadia Petrova.

play during the match.

India's Sania Mirza provided the

upset of the second round at the

San Diego Classic on Wednesday

with a 6-2, 6-1 victory over fourth

Number 14 seed Daniela

Hantuchova was the other seed to

fall on Wednesday, losing 7-5, 4-6,

6-2 to doubles partner Ai Sugiyama

of Japan, while fifth seed Patty

Schnyder survived a 6-4, 6-7, 6-1

Sheikh Hasina, Leader of the Opposition and sister of late Kamal. will attend a discussion in the afternoon and will distribute Sheikh Kamal Gold Medals as chief guest.

A painting competition for school students and a milad was held yesterday on the first day of the programmes. Jatiya Party (Manju) . chairman Anwar Hossain Maniú distributed prizes as chief guest.

We won't ease up: Atapattu

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lankan captain Marvan Atapattu on Thursday warned rivals his team will not relax despite qualifying for the final of the triangular one-day cricket series.

Sri Lanka made it to the final after defeating India by four wickets at Dambulla on Wednesday for their third successive victory in the tournament also featuring the West

India have one win from three matches and the West Indies none from two.

The West Indies play Sri Lanka at the Premadasa Stadium here on Saturday and meet India the following day in the remaining two league games before the final on August 9.

"I don't think we will be complacent after qualifying for the final," said Atapattu.

"Our efforts have not been 100 per cent in one game. We need to work on that. We have performed as individuals, but not all of the them have performed in the same match. "We hope to do that in the final."

Atapattu was optimistic that key batsman Sanath Jayasuriya and left-arm seamer Chaminda Vaas will return for the final. "We did not want to risk him

(Jayasuriya) against India, but he is OK. Vaas is bowling off a shortened run-up and we are thinking of giving him a chance on Saturday," the Sri Lankan captain said. Jayasuriya is recovering from a

shoulder injury sustained while fielding during the opening game of the tournament last week, while Vaas has not figured in the three matches due a hamstring strain.

In contrast, India are struggling to find solutions to their batting and bowling problems in their first competition of the season.

Flintoff leads

But warne had his revenge and his 590th Test wicket when he bowled Strauss for 48 with a ball that spun back sharply and beat the lefthander's attempted forcing shot.

the second Test between England and Australia at Edgbaston here

ENGLAND: 1st innings Strauss b Warne Vaughan c Lee b Gillespie Bell c Gilchrist b Kasprowicz Pietersen not out Flintoff not out Extras: (lb-1, w-1, nb-11) Total: (For 4 wkts in 54 overs) 289 Fall of wickets: 1-112, 2-164, 3-170, 4-187

Gilchrist (wkt), Shane Warne, Brett Lee. Jason Gillespie, Michael Kasprowicz Toss: Australia

FROM PAGE 16

ing second half. Fullback Juku, who was unstoppable on the right flank, picked Ritu in the box but the forward cut it back to midfielder Rintu

players were chasing shadows afterwards as Arambagh, in spite of enjoying superior ball possession, failed to utilise their chances

Yellow cards: Arman Aziz, Donald (Mohammedan) and Ramjan, Ritu (Arambagh).

TEAMS MOHAMMEDAN: Biplab, Nazrul,

Kamal, Manju (Zahid) and Alfaz.

Referee: Tayab Hassan.

Sania shocks Petrova main draw, went all out with her forehand returns and was never threatened by the 2005 French

Mirza said nothing was easy playing a top-10 ranked player.

"I knew if I relaxed for a second she would have jumped on me," said Mirza, who will face Japan's Akikio Morigami in the next round. "I had a game plan in my mind and I'm glad I was able to do what I needed

"I believed I could do it, but I always knew that everyone is

match against Czech Kveta Ranked a career high 59, Mirza Playing with a right elbow strain, is almost sure to crack the top 50 in Petrova was unable to impose the next two weeks, achieving the herself against Mirza, who dictated goal she had set herself at the beginning of the year



his team's slow over rate before he

debating whether Dravid in his

prime batting form should take over

as captain permanently. The answer

will come when India tour Zimbabwe

where he bats in the order as long as

for Virender Sehwag, a hard-hitting

batsman capable of dominating any

Dravid's captaincy in the ongoing

an opener for the sake of the team

when I was captain," said Ganguly,

Ganguly is playing under Rahul

"I left my usual batting position of

attack with a wide range of strokes.

he serves his team's interests.

Ganguly says it does not matter

He was Tendulkar's regular

Cricket-mad India is already

successfully appealed.

later this month

tournament.

India's Sania Mirza executes a forehand during her Acura Classic match against Nadia Petrova of Russia on Wednesday. Mirza won 6-2, 6-1.

Courage his forte

Linking up with New Zealander John Wright, appointed India's first foreign coach, Ganguly moulded the likes of off spinner Harbhajan Singh and middle-order batsman Yuvraj Singh, who had been slammed for their poor attitude soon after their

He led India to their greatest Test series triumph in 2001 when they registered a stunning 2-1 comeback home series victory over champions Australia

He led the team to a creditable 1-1 Test series draw in England and a share of the Champions Trophy with hosts Sri Lanka in 2002 before guiding them to a fighting 1-1 test series draw in Australia in early

Ganguly then led India to an historic maiden Test series triumph against Pakistan in 2004, becoming India's most successful test captain He now has 19 wins.

However, injuries and poor batting form since then have led critics to question his selection, particularly after he sat out the last two games during a 2-1 home series

defeat by Australia last year The April ban was the latest in a

with a poor disciplinary record. for boorish behaviour. He was

seum

source

24 Photos

26 Insanity

28 Co-star

Bea

30 "Flying

31 Encom-

35 Parlor

Betty and

Down to

passing

pieces

Diamond

39 Simon or

series of infringements by a player

Ganguly was suspended from a one-daver each in 2000 and 2001

handed a two-Test ban in 2004 for

support

who returned to open on Wednesday in Tendulkar's absence "Sehwag was batting in the middle order and he was not per-

shower

Wes

Wing"

48 Mimic

50 Qtv.

forming consistently. So I thought if he fires at the top with Sachin, then I could bat at No 3. That will be the best combination for the team," said Ganguly. "When you are captain, you do

certain things in the team's interests. I may have missed out a bit on big scores, but the team succeeded in that period. I took the decision in the team's interests.'

career title, at Hyderabad beating four seeds on the way, beat the then world number seven Svetlana Kuznetsova in Dubai and made two other quarterfinals.

"A lot has happened since January," the 18-year-old added.

"I started this season losing in the second round of qualifying of

"I didn't expect so much to happen so soon, but I'm not complain-

French Open finalist Mary Pierce, playing her first match on hard courts since March, thrashed Germany's Anna-Lena Groenefeld, who was never able to establish her big serve or whipping return.

"I didn't expect to play that well because in your first match on a surface, you don't know what's going to happen," Pierce said of the 6-1. 6-1 victory.

"I was really happy today, especially with the first set. I took her seriously. From first point of match, I was ready to play."

In other matches, ninth-ranked Elena Likhovtseva recovered from a set down to beat Israel's Shahar Peer 0-6, 6-2, 6-4, while 10th seed Nathalie Dechy also came from a set down to beat Argentine Gisela Dulko 4-6, 7-5, 7-6.

Russia's 16th-ranked Dinara Safina also recovered from losing the first set to love to beat compatriot Alina Jidkova 0-6, 6-1, 6-0, while Italy's 17th seed Francesca Schiavone beat Anastassia Rodionova 6-2, 6-2 and Bulgaria's Sesil Karatantcheva beat Lisa Raymond of the US 7-6, 6-4.

All depends on Bond

REUTERS, Harare

New Zealand are banking on the return from injury of fast bowler Shane Bond for the first Test of a two-match series against Zimbabwe, starting in Harare on

The 30-year-old Bond, who suffered a second stress fracture in his back during last year's tour of England, has not played Test cricket since the tour of Sri Lanka in May

Although he bowled sparingly off a short run-up in net practice on Wednesday, New Zealand coach John Bracewell said the Kiwis were keen to unleash Bond on the struggling Zimbabweans.

"We've placed a few limits on him in training, but he's looking good and, if he gets selected, those limits fall away," Bracewell told Reuters.

"He bowled with genuine pace in the warm-up games (which New Zealand played in Namibia before

arriving in Zimbabwe on Tuesday).

"A fit fast bowler is what you want in any side.

BFF promises

after the national team and the under-23 team only. If we want to use them elsewhere, we will need a new contract. But they have promised us to give advice to local coaches at age-group level," said Salahuddin. "We will give him absolute free-

dom and all the support he needs." Bangladesh have used three Asian coaches and six from Europe in the past and when asked if the change would have any effect, Salahuddin said it would not be a

problem. "The difference between Europe and South America is in style only But most of the big European clubs are now being dominated by players from Latin America. So, I think it

won't be a problem.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer **ACROSS** 3 Sapporo 21 Time 1 Colossash

4 Stoolie

	combat-	43	Pitch		(Brit.	23	Nose
	ants	44	Slander		slang)	25	Seek
6	Symbol of	46	Summer	5	Sauna		restitutio
	slowness		on the		output	27	Affront
11	War		Seine	6	Erudite		(SI.)
12	Perpe-	47	Concep-		one	29	Glossy
	trate		tualize	7	Recessed		coatings
14	Diamond	49	On-tour		area	31	Caper
	official		staffer	8	Envoy	32	Lea
15	Lame	51	Urge		(Abbr.)	33	Ancient
16	Meadow	52	Wide-	9	Stain		galley
17	Mattress		spread	10	Easter	34	Father's
	filling	53	Makes		bouquet		Day
19	— Tin Tin		like Niobe	11	Selects		gift
20	Actress	54	Lots of		from a	36	"Little
	Kedrova		times		group		Shop
22	Big			13	Bivouac		of
	bucks, for	DC	NWO		array		Horrors"
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Solution time: 27 mins.

2 Large

41 Shout in a swimming-pool game Dance lesson 45 Runway for a sleigh

Passes

37 Director's QU H UQWY ITCKZ ETBP HW

EHQLRB, Q WCMMTWR

ETCKZ KQPR MRTMKR

LQM LYR WIHKRW

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF SOMEONE TAKES A PICTURE OF A CERAMIC DRINKING CUP, IS THAT A MUG FOR THE CAMERA?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: M equals P

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.

Umpire Cowie calls time **BBC ONLINE**, undated

New Zealand umpire Doug Cowie has announced his retirement from all forms of cricket after 20 years at first-class and Test levels

than 100 first-class games. His final international was the one-day match between New Zealand and Australia in Auckland in February. "Recent changes have placed

greater demands on umpires and

it's time to refocus my priorities,"

said Cowie.

Cowie, 58, officiated in 22 Tests

71 one-day internationals and more

Relief and joy in France Football The French press was ecstatic. Germany for next year's tourna-

Paris might not have beaten London for the 2012 Olympics but the French were patting themselves on the back Thursday for getting the next best thing -- Zizou. Zinedine Zidane, who became the world's most expensive foot-

baller when Real Madrid paid Juventus 63.6 million dollars for the playmaker four years ago, turned his back on the French national soccer team after the team were knocked out by Greece in the European Championship in 2004.

Since then France, the 1998 World Cup winners and 2000 European champions, have gone from bad to worse and are lying fourth in their qualifying table for the 2006 World Cup.

not qualify," French federation president Jean-Pierre Escalettes said on Tuesday. But his prayers were answered

"It would be a disaster if we did

"The Saviour." was Paris daily Le Parisien's front page banner head-

"He's back," trumpeted sports daily l'Equipe who added: "The sacred union is renewed. "Zizou is back," was France

Soir's front page headline.
Communist daily l'Humanite declared Zidane might not like being portraved as the saviour but there is no getting away from the fact.

to qualify for the next World Cup would be a another hammer blow to French sport," the paper said. Conservative daily Le Figaro

was the only one to raise doubts. hinting he might be past his best. "After having given so much to French football the amazing No 10 chose the right time to go," the paper

to qualify for Germany 2006 Zidane's U-turn would only underline how right he was to quit a year

And it added that if France did fail

France need to win in Ireland and Switzerland on September 7 and

Zidane, a second generation immigrant of Algerian extraction, has won 93 international caps for France, scoring 26 goals including two goals in the 1998 World Cup

When the three times FIFA World Player of the Year was injured for the 2002 World Cup France became the first defending champions to be knocked out without scoring a goal.

"After the 2012 Olympics, failing hoping to persuade another 33-

Thuram, to come out of retirement.

them 0-0. Arsenal's Thierry Henry and have been unable to repeat their club form for the national team and the French are praying Zizou can spark them into life.

Former Champions league

finalists Valencia thrashed Dutch

side Roda Kerkrade 4-0 on aggre-

on Wednesday.

AFP. Paris

Wednesday:

Belgrade (SEM)

Moscow (RUS)

(NOR)

(HUN)

gate after playing a goalless draw

THE DRAW

Revised draw for the third qualifying

round of the Champions League after the

conclusion of the second round on

Basel (SUI) v Werder Bremen (GER)

Artmedia Bratislava (SVK) v Partizan

Shakhtar Donetsk (UKR) v Inter Milan

Steaua Bucharest (ROM) v Rosenborg

Manchester United (ENG) v Debrecen

Liverpool (ENG, holders) v CSKA Sofia

Sporting Lisbon (POR) v Udinese (ITA)

Valerenga (NOR) v Club Brugge (BEL)

Rapid Vienna (AUT) v Lokomotiv

Anderlecht (BÉL) v Slavia Prague (CZE)

Wisla Krakow (POL) v Panathinaikos

Anorthosis (CYP) v Rangers (SCO)

Real Betis (ESP) v Monaco (FRA)

Brondby (DEN) v Ajax (NED)

Malmo (SWE) v FC Thun (SUI)

Everton (ENG) v Villarreal (ESP)

ÉHÀMPS <u>LEAGUE</u>

Magpies fly away

Football

The win gave the Spaniards a 4-2 aggregate win and left a 35,200

chance at playing in one of the three finals from which a place in the UEFA Cup will be up for grabs. "We defended poorly on two occasions and we were punished for it. We had several good

our night," said Souness. Deportivo goalkeeper, Jose Molina just after the half hour mark.

The black and white army battled away at Deportivo's defence and six minutes before the break they got their just reward when James Milner levelled the aggregate scores at 2-2.

Winger Pedro Munitis then put the Spanish Liga side in total control in the 48th minute when goalmouth confusion enabled the Spanish international to fire Deportivo 2-1

from the club's three new recruits, Mamadou Niang, Franck Ribery and Andres Mendoza Marseille's French rivals. Lens

Lazio 3-0 to win 4-1 on aggregate.

Robinho scores again for **Santos**

REUTERS. Rio de Janeiro

Real Madrid-bound Robinho scored his first goal for Santos since May as champions Santos moved to fourth in the Brazilian championships.

on Sunday after his club agreed to sell him to Real Madrid for \$30 million. The prodigious talent had refused to train or play during the drawn out negotiations with the Spanish club because he said he was not in the right frame of mind to play in Brazil.

Santos at the end of the month, was sent clear by Giovanni's flicked pass n the 51st minute and scored with a delicate chip over the advancing goalkeeper Clemer from the edge of the penalty area. It was his first goal for Santos since

1st leg August 9/10, 2nd leg August Winners go into the group stages

final win against Brazil.

Midfielder Claude Makalele who Chelsea has also announced he will

year-old, Juventus defender Lillian France have only scored five

goals in six World Cup qualifying matches and have drawn three of Juventus striker David Trezeguet

on Wednesday when the 33-year-October 8 to be sure of reaching old Zidane announced: "I'm back."

said ominously

Newcastle United were dumped out of Europe on Wednesday after a frustrating night that saw Graeme Souness's side lose 2-1 to Deportivo La Coruna in the semifinals of the Intertoto Cup.

crowd at St James's Park digesting another European disappointment. Last week's first leg clash in Spain saw Alan Shearer snatch an all important away goal to bring back home for the second leg and a

chances and their 'keeper made some excellent saves - but it wasn't Wednesday's bad-tempered clash saw Shearer and Diego Tristan pick up vellow cards for a goalmouth tussle involving

The home fans had six minutes to celebrate before they were dealt

on the night.

a major blow when Portuguese

midfielder Jorge Andrade levelled

Elsewhere, Marseille thumped

The French side's goals came

also qualified for the finals after smashing four goals past

Wolfsburg to win 4-0 on agregate. Hamburg won 3-0 on the night and 4-0 on aggregate after crushing Sigma Olomouc of the Czech Republic while Romanian minnows Clui booked their place in the finals after ditching Lithuanian side Zalgirus Vilnius.

Robinho only returned to the side

The 21-year-old, who will leave

the Libertadores Cup tie against Universidad de Chile on May 25.

plays for English champions play for France again and France coach Raymond Domenech was

Strauss faced 76 balls with 10 fours. **SCOREBOARD** Scoreboard at tea on the first day of

Trescothick c Gilchrist b Kasprowicz 90

To bat: G Jones, A Giles, Hoggard, S Jones, S Harmison 0 M R **Bowler** 11 Lee 72 Gillespie 15 2 64 63 Kasprowicz 11 3 Warne 89 AUSTRALIA: Justin Langer, Matthew Hayden, Ricky Ponting (capt), Damien Martyn, Michael Clarke, Simon Katich, Adam

MSC escape

the equaliser in the more entertain-

whose powerful drive went in off the legs of Mohammedan stopper The exhausted Mohammedan

Odaf, Hassan, Rony, Munna, Arman Aziz (Nakib), Donald (Khokon), ARAMBAGH: Shakil (Al Amin), Juku, Ramjan, Ghansah, Akram, Russel, Imrul, Faisal, Morshed (Rintu), Patrick and Ritu.