



French star Franck Ribery (L) shares a light moment with teammate Patrice Evra during a training session in Paris on Monday.

PHOTO: AFP

**Loew fancies Switzerland**

AFP, Frankfurt

Euro 2008 co-hosts Switzerland should be one of the favourites for the championships this June claimed Germany coach Joachim Loew.

Loew, who was assistant coach to Jurgen Klinsmann when Germany reached the 2006 World Cup semi-finals, made his claim just 48 hours away from his side taking on Switzerland in a friendly in Basel.

"It will be a very intense match," said Loew. "Because for me Switzerland is one of the pretenders to the European title."

"Swiss football has progressed hugely in the last 10-15 years, a lot of their players are playing in the major championships in Europe," added Loew, who knows Swiss football well having both played and coached there.

Loew said it was clear why this improvement had come about.

"What impresses me the most is the philosophy of the game that the Swiss football coaches have developed in all their representative sides."

Germany's clash with Switzerland will be their 800th international match - they played their first in 1908 - and the first of three in their build-up to the championships which Austria are also hosting and run from June 7-29.

The Germans will also play Belarus and Serbia on May 27 and 31 respectively.

Germany and Switzerland have met 49 times, with Germany winning on 35 occasions, the Swiss eight times and six finishing in draws.

Germany kick off their Euro campaign on June 8 in Klagenfurt, Austria, against Poland then face Croatia again in Klagenfurt on June 12 and round off their group matches with Austria in Vienna on June 16.

**'No crisis at Real'**

AFP, Madrid

Dutch international Arjen Robben on Monday denied suggestions of a crisis at Real Madrid after the Spanish side lost its second straight league match over the weekend.

"The defeat was a disappointment but we played really well and I don't think there is a crisis. What we have to do is remain strong and be conscious of what awaits us," the 24-year-old striker told a news conference.

The defending champions saw their lead over nearest rivals FC Barcelona shrink to four points after losing 3-2 to Valencia at home on Sunday.

**Egypt to host mighty Argentina**

AFP, Johannesburg

African champions Egypt host mighty Argentina Wednesday in the pick of a friendly programme designed to prepare teams for 2010 World Cup qualifiers.

Other high-profile fixtures involve the losing 2008 African Nations Cup semi-finalists with Ghana playing Mexico in England and Ivory Coast facing Tunisia in France.

Morocco, a major disappointment at the biennial African football showcase in Ghana, are away to Belgium while another fixture in France involves two fallen giants, Algeria and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Benin, whose second appearance at the Nations Cup this year brought only three more defeats, have combined a training camp in

**Spotlight on Beckham**

AFP, London

David Beckham will be firmly in the spotlight if he wins his 100th cap for England in Wednesday's friendly against France, but he is willing to retreat into the shadows if it helps Fabio Capello mount a serious challenge for the World Cup.

Beckham is poised to finally reach his century at the Stade de France in Paris and can expect a fitting fanfare for the achievement.

The LA Galaxy midfielder knows it might be the last time he is centre stage for England because the emergence of Blackburn's David Bentley, who shone in Capello's first match against Switzerland, could consign him to the bench sooner rather than later.

Beckham hasn't become a global icon without developing a keen sense of his own worth. But he is so keen to prolong his international career that even the prospect of being given a super-sub role doesn't faze him.

Joining Billy Wright, Sir Bobby Charlton, Bobby Moore and Peter Shilton in England's elite 100 cap club won't give Beckham any special status with Capello.

Beckham is well aware of that after being dropped by the Italian when the pair were at Real Madrid last season. But the former Manchester United star believes his experience can be invaluable as

Capello rebuilds.

"There are a lot of young players coming through, good players, and you have to accept sometimes that you're not going to start. But you'll accept anything if you're still part of the squad," Beckham said.

"I'm a very passionate person about playing for my country and I want that to continue as long as possible, whether I'm a squad player, a sub or a player who comes on and takes a free-kick."

"If I can play at the highest level, I want to be a part of that still."

"I have been playing for England for 11 years and I have the experience there. I've got a few more wrinkles now, maybe. But if I don't play some games I've got the experience to talk to the squad. As much as you want to look to the future, the past is also important."

Beckham has been through an emotional rollercoaster ride since making his debut in 1996. The lowest moment came when Steve McClaren called to tell him he was dropped two years ago.

"I thought my England career was over. Deep down, I hoped it wasn't but, deeper down, I felt I wasn't going to get the chance to play for my country again," Beckham said.

"It's been a roller-coaster with all of you guys for the last 11 years. There have been times when people have thought I've been great in games, and others when people have wondered why I'm doing such silly things on the field when people look up to you."

"Without my family and people like Sir Alex Ferguson and my teammates, particularly in 1998 after I was sent off at the World Cup, I might not have been able to get through that time."

Capello's iron rule over the England camp showed no signs of softening this week as he put his players through their paces in the snow at Arsenal's training ground.

He demanded the players involved in Sunday's big Premier League matches report on time and Beckham is convinced that hard-line stance will pay dividends in the long run.

"I've said since his appointment that he's, without doubt, the right man for the job," Beckham added. "He's got his own ways; he knows how to get teams playing. That's what our country needs. We need to get the confidence back of the nation and start by playing some good games."

"We've definitely got the right man for that. He's started off well. The regime has totally changed round and players have recognised that."

While Capello will demand maximum effort from England, France's players seem less enamoured of an unwanted distraction during the climax of domestic campaigns across Europe.

Thierry Henry, Patrick Vieira, Louis Saha, Bacary Sagna and Karim Benzema are all sidelined, leaving Beckham the centre of attention. For one more time at least.

**Records roll in Eindhoven**

AFP, Eindhoven

France's record-breaking sprinter Alain Bernard won the men's 50m freestyle here on Monday to cap a superb week as two more world records were set at the European championships.

Dutchwoman Marleen Veldhuis set a new women's 50m freestyle world record after clocking 24.09sec, beating the former best mark of 24.13 set by compatriot Inge De Bruijn at the Olympics on September 24 2000 in Sydney, Australia.

And Italy's Federica Pellegrini broke the world record in winning the women's 400m freestyle with 4min 15.33sec, to better the former best time of 4:02.13 set by France's Laure Manaudou on August 6 2006 in Budapest.

Bernard had broken the 50 metre mark on Sunday for his third world mark of the Eindhoven event.

The 24-year-old Bernard swam 21.50 seconds in his semifinal to beat Australian Eamon Sullivan's 21.56 set last month.

He also clocked 47.50 to win the 100m freestyle in Saturday's final, breaking his own mark of 47.60 seconds set in the semifinals on Friday. Dutchman Pieter van den Hoogenband set the old mark set at the 2000 Olympics.

In other events, Russia won the men's 4x100m medley relay in a new European record of 3:34.25 ahead of Croatia (3:36.32) and Sweden (3:36.85). Britain won the women's version of the same relay, also in a European best of 3:59.33, ahead of Russia (4:00.47) and the Netherlands (4:04.41).

And Germany's Janne Schaefer took the women's 50m breaststroke in 31.08sec ahead of Russia's Yuliya Efimova (31.41) and Mirna Jukic of Austria (31.59).

Meanwhile 13-year-old Tom Daley is the new European champion after winning the 10m platform title for Britain.

Daley produced flawless dives in rounds four and five, each earning four marks of 10 from the judges. His final round dive was less impressive but he had done enough to hold off Germany's Sascha Klein and Francesco Dell'Uomo, of Italy.

"It was just an absolutely amazing experience," Daley told BBC Sport. "I missed one of my dives and to still be able to get the 10s after that and to still bring myself up to get the gold medal, I really didn't expect it."

Daley, who will become the second-youngest male Olympian in British history after qualifying for Beijing, was only sixth after three rounds.

"Normally I can do that (third) dive a lot better and because I didn't, I did get a bit worried, and knew I had to turn it around."

"To finish up and be standing on the top of the podium with your national anthem playing is not something that happens every day," he added.

his punishment includes training with the Cairo club youth squad.

Argentina will lack injured Barcelona striker Lionel Messi, but have paid the 'Pharaohs' a complement of choosing a powerful squad including Liverpool midfielder Javier Mascherano, sent off against Manchester United last Sunday.

John Mensah from French club Rennes gets another chance to justify the claim of Ghana coach Claude Le Roy that he is among the best central defenders in the world when the 'Black Stars' play Mexico at the Craven Cottage home of Fulham.

Michael Essien of Chelsea, Sulejki Muntari of Portsmouth and Larvea Kingston of Hearts form a powerful midfield while striker Eric Bekoe from local club Asante Kotoko could get a chance to solve the lack of attacking firepower.

Former Germany defender Uli Stielke temporarily returns as coach of Didier Drogba-inspired Ivory Coast after missing the Nations Cup

to nurse his dying son in Hamburg.

Opponents Tunisia will lose long-serving French coach Roger Lemerre in mid-year as his contract was not renewed following a second successive quarterfinals exit from the Nations Cup.

Lemerre has included eight players from African Champions League title holders Etoile Sahel plus defenders Sabour Ben Frej and Seif Ghezal, who quit the 'Red Devils' after securing contracts in Europe following the Nations Cup.

Algeria coach Rabah Saadane has called up two France-born players, defender Fethi Harek and midfielder Brahim Hemdani, to face DR Congo, who may include Newcastle United teenage midfielder Kazenga LuaLua.

The second phase of qualifiers for the 2010 World Cup in South Africa and the African Nations Cup in Angola kick off on May 30 with 48 countries chasing 20 third round slots.

**Rio will lead England**

AFP, London

Rio Ferdinand will captain England in their international football friendly against France in Paris on Wednesday, the Football Association announced here on Tuesday.

**Donadoni issue distracts Italy**

AFP, Madrid

World champions Italy tackle Spain in a friendly in Elche on Wednesday with the issue of coach Roberto Donadoni's contract dominating the headlines.

This match could go some way to demonstrating which of these two sides, who will be among the favourites at Euro 2008 in Austria and Switzerland in June, is in the better shape to mount a title challenge.

But for Italy, the fate of Donadoni, whose contract runs out after the tournament, is threatening to distract them.

"I received an offer for a contract renewal and I said no because I don't like this type of contract," said Donadoni.

"This doesn't mean I will go to the European Championships less motivated: I will continue to earn my crust, indeed I've already earned my crust as national team coach, otherwise I wouldn't be here."

Donadoni had been offered a two-year contract extension, on the condition that he guided the team at least to the semifinals of Euro 2008.

That offer led many to conclude that the Italian Federation has little faith in Donadoni.

"Whether or not there is trust in me I can't say, it's something that is demonstrated every day in life," added Donadoni.

"Am I ruling out a future with the national team? I never rule out anything."

Even the players are thinking about Donadoni's contract rather than the match. AC Milan midfielder Gennaro Gattuso spoke out in support of the Azzurri coach.

"I can only tell him to look forward and don't think about it. He should just concentrate on doing well with Italy and then I think he'll get a new contract."

Donadoni has made some controversial decisions, though, such as leaving out the in-form pair Alessandro Del Piero and Antonio Cassano from his squad.

Veteran Juventus forward Del Piero has struggled to get a look in under Donadoni since the end of the last World Cup in 2006.

He has often been overlooked in favour of younger players, such as his Juve teammate Vincenzo Iaquinta, whom Del Piero is keeping on the bench for his club.

Cassano's omission is less surprising as he is currently serving a lengthy ban for throwing his shirt at a referee and Donadoni has often expressed doubts about Cassano's temperament.

Spain coach Luis Aragones could give a chance to some younger players as he tries out a number of options ahead of the finals.

Getafe midfielder Ruben de la Red could make his first appearance, as could Liverpool full-back Alvaro Arbeloa.

**Hiddink extends Russia stay**

REUTERS, Moscow

Guus Hiddink signed a new two-year contract on Monday to continue coaching Russia until the 2010 World Cup in South Africa.

"Hiddink signed his contract this evening," a spokesman for the Russian Football Union (RFU) told Reuters.

The Dutchman said he was pleased with the deal.

"It took a while but we are all happy now," said Hiddink. "I can now focus all my energy to prepare the team for Euro 2008 (in June)."

His initial contract was due to expire this July. Details of the new deal were not disclosed.

Hiddink, 61, who guided Russia to the Euro finals from a tough group that included Croatia and England, had been earning two million euros (\$2.9 million) a year, according to media reports.

His salary package is paid for by Chelsea's billionaire owner Roman Abramovich through his National Academy Fund.

The Dutchman agreed in principle to extend his contract in October on the eve of a Euro 2008 qualifier against England in Moscow but it took another five months for the two sides to work out the detail.

Most of the negotiations were focused on paying taxes.

Last year a Dutch court handed Hiddink a six-month suspended sentence and fined him 45,000 euros (\$59,270) after finding him guilty of tax fraud.

Hiddink said he wanted to pay his taxes in Russia but the Dutch authorities were also seeking their share.

"All the problems, including those tax issues, have been solved, said the RFU spokesman."

The deal ended media speculation the highly successful Dutchman, who led Netherlands and South Korea to the World Cup semi-finals in 1998 and 2002 respectively, would leave in July.

**Dunga looks to future**

AFP, London

Brazil coach Dunga will use Wednesday's friendly against Sweden in London to cast his eye over the young stars expected to emulate Ronaldo and Kaka.

Dunga has been determined to give an infusion of fresh blood to an aging Brazil squad since taking over after the 2006 World Cup and Ronaldo, Adriano, Cafu and Roberto Carlos have all been eased out already.

Ronaldo could be the next to go after Dunga left the under-performing Barcelona icon out of his 22-man squad for the Sweden match. And with AC Milan playmaker Kaka sidelined by a thigh injury, there will be an unfamiliar look to the Selecao at Arsenal's Emirates Stadium.

The match has been arranged to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Brazil's first World Cup final triumph. That 5-2 victory over Sweden in Stockholm made heroes of Pele, then a 17-year-old prodigy, and the brilliant

winger Garrincha.

They went on to win the tournament again four years later and have lifted the famous gold trophy five times in total. But Brazil's position as the game's pre-eminent force is in danger of slipping after a timid performance at the last World Cup in Germany.

Dunga knows exactly what is required to return to the summit after captaining Brazil's 1994 World Cup winners. As befits a man who made his name as a no-nonsense midfielder, he is keen to encourage a team-first ethic that demands the big names check their egos at the dressing room door.

So it is no surprise Dunga has turned to less-heralded players like Manchester City's Elano, Werder Bremen's Diego and Real Betis's Rafael Sorbis.

AC Milan striker Alexandre Pato has been widely tipped as the next Brazilian superstar and, with the Olympics and World Cup qualifiers on the horizon, Dunga is ready to take a close look at the teenager, as well as Liverpool midfielder Lucas.

"Ronaldo has been injured and is getting his form back so

it's important he gets back to his best for helping us out in June," Dunga said.

"We are trying to give more opportunities to Brazil-based players."

There is still room for a smattering of experience in Dunga's new-look squad and Chelsea defender Alex and Arsenal midfielder Gilberto Silva will need no introduction to the crowd at the Emirates.

Sweden will use the match as preparation for their forthcoming Euro 2008 challenge, but coach Lars Lagerback suffered a blow when Inter Milan striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic was ruled out with a knee problem.

"We spoke on Sunday and we agreed it is best for him to take the chance for some rehab and rest his knee," Lagerback said. "He's played on painkillers for a couple of matches now."

Sunderland striker Rade Prica will replace Ibrahimovic, while Mikael Dorsin has been called up to replace Wigan defender Erik Edman, who injured his knee ligaments in the 3-1 loss at Blackburn on Saturday.

**LEPRA Career Opportunities**

LEPRA Bangladesh is an international medical development organization based in UK has been working in Bangladesh since 2000 in close collaboration with the government of Bangladesh in TB, Leprosy and Lymphatic Filariasis. Due to expansion of our programme, applications are invited for the following positions based at Dhaka/Sirajgonj/Pabna/Natore field office.

**1. Project Coordinator- based at Dhaka : (1 Position)**

**Major Responsibilities:**

Reporting to the Country Director, the Project Operations Officer (POO) will be responsible for developing country level program strategies in the TB, Leprosy, Filarial, Health and Government issues for implementation. As a part of the Country management team POO leads and manages a group of professionals from different sectors and strives to embed the best practices in community. The other major responsibilities will include managing a multi sector team for programs monitoring and research and evaluation; Ensure implementation of approved project and quarterly project status reporting; Compilation and analysis of statistical data and writing narrative reports; Develop new project idea and writing concept notes; Facilitate project development workshop and training for LEPRA-Bangladesh (LB) staff; Ensuring regular monitoring, review and evaluation of LB projects; Timely planning and write-up of project Annual Plans, in accordance with LEPRA schedule; Ensuring client participation in the process of project development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation to the extent possible; Maintain good intra organization communication and information; Represent LB to the external organizations in absence of Country Director. This position is based at Bangladesh Country Office in Dhaka with frequent travel at fields.

**Requirements -**

- Masters in /Social Science/Development management/Public Health;
- At least 05 years work experience on Project management.
- Experience on project monitoring and evaluation (TB & Leprosy experience will be highly valued)
- Skills in developing data collection or survey instrument and methodology
- Ability to manage and work with other staff, both national and expatriate
- Ability to work on own initiative as well as part of a team
- Excellent verbal and written skills in English and Bengali
- A good grasp of basic computer skills, especially word processing, spreadsheets, power point and internet/email communications.
- Willing to work in a team;
- Capacity to maintain liaison with the GOB/NGO authorities.

Salary range: Taka 30,000 - 35,000/ Month (Gross) based upon on experience + other admissible benefits as per policy

**2. District Coordinator - based at Sirajgonj/Pabna/Natore : (02 Position)**

**Major Responsibilities:**

District Coordinator will be reportable to the Country Director and has overall responsibility on assigned district to ensure district planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting. As a dignified staff member of LEPRA Bangladesh, he/she will represent the project to the Government, donor agencies, different Technical Committees and Forums at local level. Directly and indirectly supervise, monitor and evaluate the staff performance of district team. Conduct regular staff meeting as per LEPRA-Bangladesh Yearly meeting plan. Responsible to manage all resources allocated for the district. Ensure timely monthly/quarterly and annually reporting at local and at country level.

**Requirements -**

- Masters in Social Science/Public health
- 03 years experience in mid level management position;
- Willing to visit field frequently by motorcycle;
- Should have supervision and monitoring skills;
- Experience with international NGO in health field will get preference;
- Experience in TB & Leprosy field will be added value;
- Must have computer literacy;
- Willing to work in a team;
- Capacity to maintain liaison with the GOB/NGO authorities.
- Communication skill in both English and Bangla.
- Driving motor cycle is must with valid driving licenses ;

Salary range: Taka 25,000 - 30,000/ Month (Gross) based upon on experience + other admissible benefits as per policy

**3. Physio Technician - based at Sirajgonj/Pabna/Natore (02 position)**

**Requirements -**

- Diploma in physiotherapy or equivalent degree in relevant subject from recognized institution.
- Age: not>30 years.
- Willing to work with TB/leprosy patients/Community/in a team.
- Experience in the relevant field; NGO is preferable
- Basic computer knowledge, English writing and speaking is also desirable.

Salary range: Taka 6,000 - 8,000/ Month (Gross) based upon on experience + other admissible benefits as per policy.

**4. Finance & Admin. Assistants - based at Sirajgonj/Pabna/Natore (03 Position)**

**Major Responsibilities:**

To prepare different kinds of financial and analytical report as per the requirement of the supervisor; Maintains books of accounts; Prepare report, budget and financial statement; Efficiency handle the Cash; Be responsible for all bills/invoices and money receipt and posted it in the software/cash book; Develop, maintain and keep contact with banks and take charge of the works relevant to the bank regarding business; To prepare cash and bank payments accounting to the supervisor instruction To count cash balance and of every month and compare it with the cash book. Also prepare and give report to the supervisor; To control all kinds of expenditure cost effectively; Do the other administrative work efficiently which are assigned by the concerned supervisor and obey the Organizational rules and regulations properly; Able to prepare monthly, Quarterly and annual financial report.

**Requirements -**

- Commerce graduate will be given preference;
- 02 years experience in similar position with any development organization.
- Able to prepare monthly, Quarterly and annual financial report.
- Able to operate Accounting software.
- Familiar with financial accounting system both manual and computerized.
- Communication skill in both English and Bangla.
- Good knowledge on vehicle Management, Logistic Management, Procurement Management.

Salary range: Taka 6,000 - 8,000/ Month (Gross) based upon on experience + other admissible benefits as per policy

Interested candidates are encouraged to apply with a complete CV mentioning two references, two copies of recent pp size photograph, Photocopies of all academic/experience certificates and driving license (For SL 1& 2) by 10, April 2008 to the following address. Please mention the name of the position on top of the envelop.

The Country Director, LEPRA Bangladesh, "Rupall Angon", Flat # B4, House # 30, Road # 9 & 10, Block # G., Banani, Dhaka -1213.

LEPRA Bangladesh is believed in equal opportunity for both male and female candidates. Any persuasion will disqualify the candidature.