AFP, Brisbane

with a 1-0 win.

in the opening spell.

them," Kewell said.

Harry Kewell

scored another of

his big-match

Iraq and edge

Australia closer to

the final phase of

World Cup qualifying here Sunday

Croatia lifted Australia into the

second round of the 2006 World

minutes into the second half after

the home side had ridden their luck

created quite a few chances today

and a couple of balls went their way

but again we had a great 'keeper

(Mark Schwarzer) who stopped

anxieties with a well-taken header,

outjumping his marker Abdul Amir

draw in the final 10 minutes, with

Ali Hussein Rehema and Mulla

Mohammed Hawar denied by last-

French Open

Serb pair Ana Ivanovic and Jelena

Jankovic are on a French Open

collision course after both notched

up comfortable wins on Sunday to

Petra Cetkovska of the Czech

Republic 6-0, 6-0 while third seed

Jankovic outplayed Agnieszka

Radwanska of Poland 6-3, 7-6 (7/3).

will face off against each other in

One more win for each and they

The Belgrade pair are both

seeking their country's first Grand

Slam title in women's tennis on the

back of Novak Djokovic's break-

through win for the men at the

The 20-year-old Ivanovic, who is

starting to rival Maria Sharapova in

the glamour stakes, won at a canter

in a 54-minute long mismatch to

underline her potential winner

In four straight sets wins so far,

the Belgrade beauty has dropped

just 15 games as she bids to go one

better than last year in Paris where

she lost badly to the now retired

"It was much harder than it

"I played almost without a

mistake. She had a lot of chances,

but I stepped up and I was really

playing my game and making so

few unforced errors. I feel very

confident going onto the next

Ivanovic will play either Patty

Schnyder of Switzerland or

Katarina Srebotnik of Slovenia in

She is one of three players who

can dislodge Sharapova from the

world No.1 spot in Paris the others

being fellow Serb Jankovic and

following the sudden retirement of

Henin who had enjoyed a healthy

decided that she had had enough of

competitive tennis just short of her

Both Sharapova and fourth-

Third seeded Jankovic was too

seeded Kuznetsova play their

solid in the end for Polish young-

ster Radwanska, but she again had

trouble with pain in her right arm

and shoulder brought on, she says,

fourth round ties on Monday.

lead atop the rankings before she

That situation came about

Svetlana Kuznetsova of Russia.

Justine Henin in the final.

actually looked," she said.

round."

the quarterfinals.

26th birthday.

Australian Open in January.

Second seed Ivanovic blanked

reach the quarterfinals.

the semifinals.

Emerton's cross from the right.

injury-blighted seasons.

from the home crowd.

AFP, Paris

"I think we rode our luck. Iraq

Kewell, 29, whose goal against

Karimi restored after President's intervention

AFP, Tehran

Iranian football star Ali Karimi has been reinstated in the national squad after intervention from no less than President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and the grandson of revolutionary leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, media reported Sunday.

Karimi, a former Bayern Munich midfielder nicknamed the "Asian Maradona", had been dropped after launching a bitter attack on the Iranian football federation which he accused of having no planning.

But demands from football fan Ahmadinejad and Khomeini's most prominent living descendant, his grandson Hassan Khomeini, have prompted the federation to reverse its decision, the ISNA news agency reported.

The tumult comes ahead of Iran's World Cup qualifier against the United Arab Emirates in Tehran on Monday, a must win game for the Team Melli after a sluggish start

Karimi is unlikely to play as he is injured but national coach Ali Daei has said he will be welcomed back into the squad.

"The federation has definitely pardoned Ali Karimi. Whether he is part of the team depends on coaching decisions," ISNA quoted Iranian football federation official Mehdi Taj as saying.

Ahmadinejad gave the order on Friday after he visited the team's training camp.

Karimi, who currently plays for Al-Qatar had said: "The Iranian football federation is a federation without any appropriate plans and we are witnessing that Iranian football is moving backwards."



Serb pair cruises

Australia forward Harry Kewell (top) is slide-tackled by Iraq's Basem Abbas Gatea during their World Cup qualifying match in Brisbane yesterday.

Eto'o rebounds strongly

AFP, Johannesburg



Samuel Eto'o overcame an assault claim to score as Cameroon opened their challenge for a record sixth World Cup appearance with a 2-0 win over Cape Verde Islands

African superstar

Saturday. Barcelona striker Eto'o converted a penalty 10 minutes into the second half in Yaounde to

complete a comfortable triumph set up by an early goal from veteran defender Rigobert Song. A local radio reporter accused three-time African Footballer of the Year Eto'o of head butting him

limited media access to the 'Indomitable Lions'. Cameroon competed at the World Cup in 1982, 1990, when they became the first African quarterfinalists, 1994, 1998 and 2002 and are poised to dominate Group 1 in the second qualifying phase for the

2010 tournament in South Africa.

Romania were the

most impressive

of a slew of Euro

2008 qualifiers

Saturday as many

qualified for next

month's finals

EURO2008 of the top sides

went through their paces in warm-

While 2000 champions France

laboured to a goalless home draw

with Paraguay the Romanians

blasted four goals without reply

Both the French and Romania will

meet up in the finals as they are in the

Group of Death along with 1988

continental kings Holland and world

champions Italy, a group where the

least slip-up is likely to be punished

in their 3-1 win on Friday over

Belgium with Antonio Di Natale

twice on target along with Mauro

France, on the other hand, drew a

blank in Toulouse as they failed to

break down a tough Paraguayan side

in a match which drew historic

fm 89.6

The Italians did not fluff their lines

againsthapless Montenegro.

with elimination.

Camoranesi.

AFP, Paris

up games.

Friday after tempers flared over

Tanzania were surprisingly held 1-1 at home by Mauritius in the same group with Danny Mrwanda scoring a 70th-minute equaliser after Wesley Marquette had edged the Indian Ocean islanders in front before half-time. Namibia snatched a dramatic 2-

1 victory over Kenya in Windhoek thanks to a Costa Khaiseb goal 60 seconds from full-time in Group 2, which includes Guinea and Zimbabwe and is likely to be among the most fiercely contested.

Germany-based Oliver Risser put shock 2008 African Nations Cup qualifiers Namibia ahead after 17 minutes and Allan Watende levelled late in the first half for the 'Harambee Stars'.

Uganda, who came agonisingly close to reaching the Nations Cup in Ghana last January, battled to overcome minnows Niger 1-0 in a Group 3 showdown in Kampala courtesy of a goal 11 minutes into the second half from Ibrahim Sekagya.

Botswana fared even worse at home to Madagascar in Group 7, having to settle for a 0-0 draw after Pontsho Moloi thought he had scored in each half only to have

both efforts disallowed for offside.

Rwanda had better luck at home to Mauritania in Group 8 with Saidi Abedi converting a penalty and Bokota Labama also on target in the closing stages to complete a 3-0 victory set up by a first-half Olivier Karekezi goal.

Malawi brutally exposed the limitations of Djibouti, the lowest ranked of the 47 second round competitors, with six second-half goals that earned the central Africans an 8-1 win in Blantyre.

Russia-based Esau Kanyenda led the goal romp with a hat-trick and Elvis Kafoteka, Joseph Kamwendo, Moses Chavula, Robert Ngambi and Noel Mkandawire also scored for the 'Flames' in the Group 12 encounter.

Daya Hassan struck midway through the first half for Djibouti who are not strangers to humiliating losses having being overwhelmed 9-1 away to the Democratic Republic of Congo in a World Cup qualifier eight years ago.

The 2010 World Cup qualifiers double as eliminators for the Nations Cup in Angola the same year.

Romania impress

On Saturday nobody was willing shoes of Blanc as Thierry Henry and Karim Benzema drewa blank.

"There were some good points and some less good points," said coach Raymond Domenech. "The important thing is the squad players

Yet France, who lost Patrick Vieira to a thigh injury beforehand -- he will miss the start of the Euro -- were far from impressive as they failed to breach the Paraguayan wall which was even more solid than the 1998 variant.

at the break for another striker in Sidney Govou and also withdrew Henry to field newcomer Bafetimbi Gomis, two goals on his debut in midweek against Ecuador.

But all to no avail as Govou and Benzema could go no closer than

আজ দুপুর ২টা ১৫ মিনিটে

উপস্থাপনা : RJ নওশীন

shave the post. In other games, highly-fancied

victory over visitors Peru in Huelva.

Valencia striker David Villa found the net in the first half, Peru equalised after the break, and Villarreal defender Joan Capdevila added the winner in injury time.

Robinho lifts AFP, Seattle

Robinho's second-half strike lifted Brazil to a 3-2 victory over Canada here Saturday in a friendly tuneup for their upcoming qualifiers for the 2010 World Cup.

Robinho scored in the 63rd minute to break a 2-2 deadlock.

With the score knotted at 2-2, Canadian midfielder Julian De Guzman tried pass the ball back from just short of midfield, but his attempt sailed behind his intended target.

Robinho took it from there, collecting the ball, dribbling past goalkeeper Pat Onstad and drilling the ball into the back of the net.

De Guzman's 56th-minute goal had evened the match at 2-2.

Diego had opened the scoring for Brazil in the fourth minute, and Canada's Rob Friend equalized in the 11th. Luis Fabiano had put Brazil back in front in the 45th.

Despite De Guzman's one miscue, Canada coach Dale Mitchell had praise for the player.

"I thought he had an excellent game," Mitchell said. "He does a lot of work in midfield, he can distribute the ball, scored a good goal, perhaps could have had another one in the first half on his left foot.

"A mistake like that can happen to anybody, but, in general, another excellent performance from Julian De Guzman.

Brazilian coach Dunga credited both teams for a tightly contested

"It was a tough game," Dunga said. "We knew Canada is a very disciplined team. They have two or three plays that they repeat to perfection. It was a difficult game and a good test. Good preparation for Brazil.

The victory was a triumphant start for Brazil in their brief US tour, which will include a match against Venezuela in Foxboro, Massachusetts, on June 6.

It was also the first victory for Brazil against Canada in three meetings between the

two countries. In the Copa Confederaciones in 2001, they played to a goalless draw, and the drew 1-1 in a friendly at Edmonton, Canada, in 1994.

French stars play for Karembeu

Members of France's World Cupwinning 1998 squad including Zinedine Zidane reunited in New Caledonia at the weekend, thrilling a crowd of 10,000 with an easy 8-2 win over a team of Pacific stars. Zidane, a three-time world

footballer of the year, scored twice to spur Les Bleus to victory in Noumea on Saturday over the locals led by former French star and hometown hero Christian Karembeu, whose career was being celebrated.

"It was important for us to be here for Christian because he deserves this. He's truly a great guy -- even if we're really far from home, we did it for him," Zidane said.

Karembeu, 37, who retired in October 2005, told the cheering crowd: "Tonight, New Caledonia is the world champion!"

Also making the trip were Robert Pires, Bixente Lizarazu, Frank Leboeuf and Youri Djorkaeff. FIFA president Sepp Blatter was in

the stands for Saturday night's match.

"It's difficult to establish a fig-

ditch saves from Schwarzer.

"Today was not what we deserved. I am very happy with the three points but we gave too many chances away. We were lucky in that situation, so overall I am sure we can play much better," Australia coach Pim Verbeek said. Asian champions Iraq did not

even know they would be playing the Australians until FIFA reversed a decision on Thursday to suspend them from competition over political interference from their govern-Cup finals, grabbed the winner two ment. "Of course, it affected our play-

ers a lot, but we always play under pressure and we are the only football team in the world that plays outside of its country," Iraq coach Adnan Hamad said. Australia have seven points

from their three qualifiers and have not conceded a goal, while Iraq have just one point. Verbeek Skipper Kewell eased Australia's believes 10 points will be enough to advance to final qualifying. Sunday's defeat has all but

Haidar to nod home Brett killed off Iraq's chances of reaching the final phase of qualifying with It was the 10th goal in 32 interthree games left in the group. national appearances for Kewell,

"My team tried to win so we who is emerging from a couple of could get a second chance in the World Cup qualifiers, but there's Kewell was taken off with 13 still a chance for the Iraqi team and minutes left to rapturous applause I have faith in my team," Hamad Iraq came close to grabbing a said.

> the box seat to advance when they play their return World Cup quali-

As in her second round tie

against Marina Erakovic, the 23-

year-old needed extensive treat-

ment at the changeover when she

That seemed to work fine as on

Radwanska, the 2006 junior

Jankovic made her greater

experience in that and she com-

breaks of serve to level at 5-5, and being tired.

the restart she reeled off three

straight games to take a command-

champion at Roland Garros, rallied

to win four games in a row with two

then forced a tie-break.

fortably won through 7/3.

· was 6-3 and 2-1 up with a break in

by the heavy balls.

her favour.

ing 5-1 lead.

fier against Iraq in Dubai next weekend.

"It's going to be great next week It's going to be difficult with the heat, but we are well prepared, we know what we're going to deal with because we've been in Asia so we are going to be well equipped,

Kewell said. Iraq had three outstanding chances in the first half and Australia were fortunate not to concede a goal for the first time in three qualifying games.

Emad Mohammed rattled the bar in the fifth minute after goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer had punched clear a corner.

Emad later found himself unmarked in the box after sloppy Australian marking but his shot was deflected for a corner by

Schwarzer's leg in the 26th minute. And skipper Younis Mahmoud had a free header in the six-yard box, the chance going wide of

Schwarzer's right post. Kewell came in for special attention from the Iraqi defence and he was fouled three times, two of the offences leading to yellow cards for

defenders Rehema and Haidar. The Iraqis, like they did in their 3-1 win at last year's Asian Cup, frustrated the Australians with their stoppages during play and several times Socceroo players lost The victory has put Australia in their cool, remonstrating with Uzbekistan referee Ravshan Irmatov.

She will next go up against 19-

Born in the Canary Islands, but

"That was mostly due to pres-

"When I won the first set I was

sure and it had nothing to do with

able to be more relaxed. I want to

see how far I can go in this tourna-

currently based in Barcelona,

first Grand Slam tournament.

muscles were tight," she said.

winning 6-3, 6-2.

ment.

his national team for Switzerland on Sunday for the European championships which get underway on June 7.

Hiddink rules year-old Spanish qualifier Carla Suarez Navarro who upset the odds to reach the last eight in what is her

Suarez Navarro had too much power for Flavia Pennetta of Italy Russia to take charge of Chelsea. "During the first set I felt that my

Hiddink has been linked to the Stamford Bridge hotseat for the last year and the speculation intensified when Avram Grant was sacked last month.

The Dutchman has yet to sign a new contract with Russia but he ruled out a move to the Premier

2010World Cup. with Chelsea has been with (Roman) Abramovich about the devel-

Hiddink hinted at the reason he isn't keen to join Chelsea when he described the intense pressure put on managers there to win trophies

every year. year, I would imagine they would start

Hiddink believes Rijkaard would be the ideal man to deliver Roman Abramovich's desire for entertainment, as well as winning football.

"He could fit very well in this

Striker Ryan Babel has been ruled out of the Euro 2008 tournament ball officials said on Saturday.

Spanish outfit Sevilla as the youngster's replacement. Holland -- who won the tourna-

2008 campaign against Italy on June 9 and will play France four days later.

joins Milan

Italian fullback Gianluca Zambrotta, who played at Barcelona for two seasons, has joined AC Milan, the Italian first division club said on Saturday, without giving further contract

1999) and then particularly at Juventus (1999-2006). He left the Turin club in the

World Cup winner with Italy in 2006 and has played 71 times for his country, scoring two goals. On

Zambrotta's arrival at AC Milan will compensate for the departure of two fullbacks, Brazilians Cafu

Failure costs 20m euros

Roland Garros in Paris yesterday.



AFP, Rome

AC Milan vice-president Adriano Galliani claimed on Saturday that his team's failure to qualify for next season's Champions League has cost the club around 20 million

Despite beginning the season as the reigning European champions and claiming the Club World Cup in December, Milan finished the season fifth after a disastrous start to their league campaign left them with too much catching up

Fiorentina claimed fourth place and the final Champions League qualification spot, leaving Milan to compete in the UEFA Cup next

spread over two years." Milan have said their main priority next season is the title and

proving too expensive. The rossoneri have been linked with Barcelona pair Ronaldinho and Samuel Eto'o while they are widely expected to do a deal with

"There are good strikers. Their names are always the same six or

UEFA Cup," said Galliani.

result in a loss of 20 million euros

Genoa to bring Marco Borriello back to the club.

ure, it depends on how far you go in of those, Ronaldinho is among the either the Champions League or six or seven." "I think that losing (a lion euros for the Brazilian but that offer fell less than halfway short of Champions League place) can

they are searching for a world class striker to add to their books, but so far those that might be available are

seven, all with crazy price-tags," added Galliani. "Ronaldinho is potentially one next season.

though, who Galliani rates more highly than Brazilian Amauri, whom Juventus have just signed for more than 22 million euros.

Serbian star Ana Ivanovic waves to the crowd after winning against Czech

player Petra Cetkovska during their French Open fourth round match a

"Borriello scored 19 goals (last season), more than Amauri," insisted Galliani. "We still need a great striker to win the scudetto."

Milan have already bid 16 mil-

the 40 million euros Barcelona

imminent arrival of Borriello,

There is better news with the

Meanwhile, Milan announced they have let young French midfielder Yohann Gourcuff joined French outfit Bordeaux on loan

Glazers won't let C'Ron go

AFP, Manchester

Sir Alex Ferguson believes Manchester United's American owners would do anything in their power to keep Cristiano Ronaldo at

Old Trafford. Ferguson has spoken to the Glazer family about Real Madrid's attempt to sign Ronaldo, a transfer saga that has turned increasingly spiteful in recent weeks.

The United boss is furious that Real have so publicly tried to unsettle the Portugal winger. United have even threatened to report Real to FIFA, a move which prompted the Spanish champions to back off, but Ferguson is relieved to hear the Glazers back his hardline stance.

"I've had a couple of meetings with the Glazers. Their attitude is, 'To hell with them'. They'd sit a player in the stand, I'm telling you, absolutely no doubt about it, just to prove a point. Not to give in to these people," Ferguson said.

"They've got balls, I can tell you. I've been delighted with them in that respect.

"They've been good to this club, believe me. They have been brilliant owners." Ronaldo, meanwhile, said that

he intends to make a decision on his future in the coming days. "There'll be news shortly. I'll make a decision on my future in two or three days," the told journalists after Portugual's 2-0 Euro 2008

Saturday night. The Portuguese star leaves with

warm-up win over Georgia on

out Chelsea

AFP, London

Guus Hiddink insisted Sunday there was no chance of him leaving

League club by revealing he has agreed to stay on until after the "The only contact I have had

opment of Russian football."

"If they did not put so much pressure to get two or three cups every

to play even better," he said.

philosophy. He is very open person to the people he is working closely with," he said.

Babel out of Euro

AFP, Hoenderloo

starting next week after sustaining an injury in training, Dutch foot-The Liverpool forward is

thought to have ruptured his Achilles' tendon. Coach Marco van Basten named defender Khalid Boulahrouz of

ment 20 years ago -- open their Euro

Zambrotta

details. The 31-year-old Zambrotta therefore returns to the Serie A where he excelled at Bari (1997-

summer of 2006 for Barcelona following the match-fixing scandal which had rocked Italian football. Zambrotta was also crowned a

Monday he will fly with the Italian team to Austria for the June 7 to 29 Euro 2008 finals.

and Serginho.

আপনার প্রশ্ন অথবা অনুভূতি জানিয়ে SMS করন্দ ৮৯৬০ নম্বরে (kmn question) ইমেইল করুন: kmn@radiotodaydhaka.com পোন্ট বক্স : ৯০৩২ বনানী, ঢাকা

ফোন করুন: ০১৮১৯২২৮৯৬০ (অনুষ্ঠান চলাকালীন)

parallels with the 1998World Cup. On that occasion, it was Laurent Blanc who saved the day for Les Bleus

paved the way for ultimate glory, with the Italians dispatched along the or able to step into the goalscoring

with a late goal for the hosts in a

second-round encounter which

got some match minutes."

Domenech took off Franck Ribery

Croatia, who knocked England out in the qualifiers, drew 1-1 in Hungary -who had come off a win over Euro 2004 champions Greece - after Niko Kovac put through his own goal on the stroke of half time, having scored

the opener at the right end. Germany meanwhile had to come from a goal down to win 2-1 at home to Serbia as Joachim Loew's men thanked goals in the final 16 minutes from veteran striker Oliver Neuville and captain Michael Ballack, on a late freekick after Serbian midfielder Bosko Jankovic

had drawn first blood before the interval. Portugal scored a 2-0 home success over Georgia in Viseu courtesy of first half goals from Joao Moutinho and Simao Sabrosa, efforts which prompted coach Luiz Felipe Scolari to ring the changes after the interval as he replaced ten players, including Manchester United's Cristiano

Ronaldo, who gave way to club colleague Nani. In the late match, Spain had a 2-1

এ সপ্তাহের বিষয়

शीत्य त्नोन्धर्गर्ग

radio