

Brazil playmaker Kaka (C) is about to shoot as Felipe Melo (R) and Nilmar look on during practice at the Randburg High School in Johannesburg on Monday.

Brazil tackling anxiety

AP, Johannesburg



Brazil still have two weeks left before making its World Cup debut, and players are struggling to find ways to overcome their anxiety.

The Brazilians have been focused on the World Cup since arriving in South Africa last Thursday, but it won't be until June 15 that the tournament officially begins for

the five-time world champions. "As each day passes, the anxiety

increases," midfielder Felipe Melo said. "It's inevitable." Brazil have been preparing for the

World Cup since May 21, when nearly all players reported to the national team in the southern Brazilian city of Curitiba. last week, some played golf near the Copa America, the 2009 Confederations The team is already immersed in the team's hotel and others visited a shop-

World Cup atmosphere, but the opener against North Korea in Johannesburg seems in the far distance.

"Every day we are thinking about the World Cup," Felipe Melo said. "Things start going through your mind, you start dreaming about what's going to happen." Players will have a first taste of action

on Tuesday in a friendly against Zimbabwe in Harare, and Brazil also will face Tanzania on Sunday in Dar es Salaam. After debuting against the Koreans in two weeks, Brazil will play the Ivory Coast on June 20 and Portugal on June 25. The World Cup begins on June 11 with South Africa facing Mexico.

So far the players have been trying to get their minds off the World Cup by playing video games and other pastimes such as table tennis. In their only time off ping mall.

Brazil is trying to win its sixth World Cup title, the first since 2002 in South Korea and Japan. The players want to leave behind the bad impression of the elimination in Germany four years ago, when it fell to eventual runner-up France in the quarterfinals. "It's a lot of responsibility, you are

playing for your country, for millions and millions of people," Felipe Melo said.

Brazil enters the competition a favorite again even though Dunga left out from his squad stars such as Ronaldinho, Adriano and Ronaldo. He brought a revamped squad, with lesser-known players who helped the team achieve significant results since the coach took over after the 2006 World Cup.

Under Dunga, Brazil won the 2007

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

Drogba eyes golden boot

AFP, London



WC 2011

go on sale

The first phase of tickets for

the 2011 World Cup in India,

Sri Lanka and Bangladesh

have been put on sale follow-

ing a meeting of the tourna-

ment's Central Organising

Committee in Mumbai. The

tickets have been priced

affordably, with the cheapest

costing 20 cents US in Sri

Lanka, the committee said.

The tickets are available on the

promise we made that the

tickets would be affordable

and accessible," Sharad

Pawar, the ICC vice presi-

dent, said. The committee

said that in excess of 100,000

tickets were being released

for the first phase of online

SEE PAGE 18 COL 8

ticket sales.

"The prices confirm the

ICC's website from June 1.

tickets

CRICINFO

Ivory Coast captain Didier Drogba plans to live up to his reputation as the man for the big occasion by out-gunning his rivals for the World Cup golden boot.

Drogba is already

well-established as Chelsea's talisman on football's grandest stages after his seventh goal in six cup final appearances clinched a 1-0 victory over Portsmouth in this season's FA Cup final.

Now the 32-year-old striker believes he is capable of emulating those heroics with his country in South Africa.

Sven Goran Eriksson's side have been drawn in a group which would make less confident players quake in their boots as they prepare to face five-time world champions Brazil and a serious title strong chance," Drogba said. contender like Portugal.

But Drogba will lead the Ivory Coast into battle brimming with confidence after the best season of his life.

He finished ahead of Wayne Rooney as the Premier League's top scorer with 29 goals thanks to a title-clinching hattrick against Wigan on the final day of the Six goals against Manchester United,

Arsenal and Liverpool this season proved that even some of England's best defenders were no match for Drogba at his ferocious best. If he can continue that form over the

next month, the Ivory Coast have a chance of ending Africa's long wait for a first World Cup winner and Drogba is sure to be heading the tournament's scoring charts.

"I really hope so. If we can get through the group stages, I think we have a very

"It's important that we do well as a nation, but if I can win the World Cup Golden Boot as well, then it would be amazing."

The likes of Rooney, Lionel Messi, Fernando Torres and Luis Fabiano are likely to light up the tournament with their own unquestionable talents, but few can match Drogba's potent combination of muscular power and lethal finishing.

Not only is Drogba going into the World Cup bolstered by his role in Chelsea's first ever Premier League and FA Cup double, but he also has the additional motivation of making amends for his last appearance in the global showpiece.

In 2006 in Germany, Drogba was hampered by a knee injury as the Elephants failed to qualify from a tough group which included Argentina, Holland and Serbia.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

The official ball for the 2010 World Cup "Jabulani" "Let's party" in Zulu "Grip'n'Groove" profile The surface pattern creates an ideal aerodynamic performance 3D panels The eight panels The 11th official ball for the FIFA world cup

Some past designs 1930 - Uruguay

Brown leather

Black and white leather to show up on television

1970 - Mexico

1978 - Argentine "Tango" 20 triangles and

12 circles



is still on SPORTS REPORTER Abahani-Mohammedan clashes can never be of academic interest and it is no different today

The battle



when the cross-town rivals face off at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

The fate of this season's Bangladesh League had been sealed a week ago when Abahani confirmed their hattrick of titles with a 4-0 win over Farashganj. Mohammedan, on the other hand, will earn the dubious distinction of being runners-up for the third consecutive time, surely an unwanted tag for the Black & Whites.

As the perennial foes play their last league game, the usual appeal is ever present and both camps are excited to finish their campaign on a winning note, especially the Motijheel outfit who are in dire need of some satisfaction.

"We have already lost the championship but a win against Abahani can satisfy all of our players, officials and fans and we will definitely play for a win," said Mohammedan's stand-incaptain Wali Faisal, who joined Mohammedan this season from Abahani.

Mohammedan's attempt to take the professional league title home for the first time was dashed in spite of a strong team on paper.

The Black & Whites are looking forward to put an end to Abahani's 34-match unbeaten run in the Bangladesh League though they have never defeated them in the five previous encounters.

Mohammedan lost twice and drew the other three including this year's first showdown held on March 19.

But past records have little relevance when it's an Abahani-Mohammedan match as temperament, handling pressure and nerve play the important roles.

"It seems Mohammedan are determined to beat Abahani as they have nothing to lose after finishing behind us," said Abahani coach Amalesh Sen.

"But, it is always a prestigious battle for us and we never think alternative but to win against Mohammedan," added Sen.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1



PHOTO: AFP

Top model Naomi Campbell poses next to the travel case made by Vuitton to carry the FIFA World Cup trophy containing a replica during a presentation to the press in Paris on Tuesday. Vuitton was selected by the FIFA as the official designer of the trunk that will carry the solid 18-carat gold trophy to South Africa.

Daily Star-Rangs Toshiba quiz draw today

SPORTS REPORTER

The First Round Draw of The Daily Star-Rangs Toshiba World Cup Quiz will be held today at the BM College Auditorium in Barisal in the afternoon.

It is the first among six draws to be held in five divisional headquarters of the country including a Bumper Round draw to be held in the capital on July 16.

There is much anticipation about the function in the southern city and to play up the excitement, a colourful rally will be held in the city this morning.

Captain of Swadhin Bangla Football Dal Zakaria Pintoo will be the chief guest in the draw that will begin at 3.30pm.

The winners will receive an 8 CFT Toshiba refrigerator (first prize), Toshin 24" LCD TV (second prize), Toshiba 21' Colour TV (third prize), Toshin 21" Colour TV (fourth prize) and a Toshin microwave oven (fifth prize).

The audience will also hold a chance to win prizes like a 20L Toshin microwave oven, a 14" Toshin Colour TV and three Toshiba DVD players.



SuperSport1 French Open

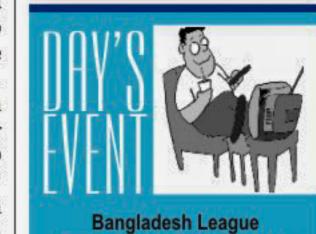
Men's and Women's Singles Quarterfinals Live from 6:00pm

SuperSport3 Friendly Internationals

Brazil v Zimbabwe Live at 7:00pm Paraguay v Greece Live at 10:00pm Serbia v Poland Live at 12:25am (Thursday)

ESPN

Sportscenter India Sports News Live at 8:30pm



Feni Soccer v Brothers Union

Time: 3:30pm Venue: Feni Stadium Abahani v Mohammedan Time: 4:00pm

Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium, Dhaka



Zidane starts a legacy

After a 60-year gap, the World Cup returned to its country of birth. Though the competition had been expanded to a rather bloated 32 teams, the return to France was to prove a great success.

Brazil were favourites, with striker Ronaldo, a non-playing sub in 1994, at the peak of his powers. Improbable pace, skill and goalscoring made him football's hottest property and richest player, endorsed by a whole host of companies. Denied the services of an injured Romario, Ronaldo would have to bear the striking burden. In the opening game, the holders overcame Scotland with some difficulty before soundly beating Morocco 3-0.

In the third group game, they took the lead late on against the dour Norwegians but were shocked by a late surge. Tore Andre Flo and a Kjetil Rekdal penalty landed Brazil with their first opening-round defeat since 1966. The hosts made short work of their group, beating South Africa, Saudi Arabia and Denmark, but the real story was Zinedine Zidane's dismissal against the Saudis, where the Mexican referee red-carded him for kicking out at Fuad Amin. The French would therefore be without their playmaker for their second-round match.

The Italians, for whom Roberto Baggio was making SEE PAGE 18 COL 2



LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

Newcomers Beanibazar Sporting Club have been relegated from the Bangladesh League when they suffered a 2-0 defeat at the hands of Rahmatganj MFS in their penultimate round game at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Beanibazar, who stayed at bottom of the 13-team points table with 17 points from 23 matches, will now play their final match against Muktijoddha Sangsad on Saturday.

The game was equally important for both Beanibazar and Rahmatganj, who also were in the red zone with 20 points from 22 matches at the start of the game, to avert the relegation and the latter posted their sixth victory to remain in top flight as Pusban Mollah gave Rahmatganj a six-minute lead before Nigerian striker Idris Kasirye sealed the fate of the game five minutes from time.

BARIDHARA'S FIRSTWIN

North Baridhara Club tasted first victory in the Bashundhara Senior Division Football League with a 2-0 win over T&T Club at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

After being held by Sunrise SC and Youngmen's Fakirerpool Club in the first two matches, Baridhara went ahead six minutes into the second-half with a strike from Zia, but their joy lasted only five minutes as Akhter Babu pulled the goal back in the 56th minute.

Bappi Hasan Murad then struck the winner in the 80th minute to give Baridhara first victory in three matches.

GRAMEEN-DANONE NATIONS CUP

Kushtia, Barguna, Rajbari and Thakurgaon emerged zonal champions to qualify for the eight-team finals of the Grameen-Danone Nations Cup football tournament at different venues yesterday.

Kushtia defeated Meherpur 2-0 in tiebreaker after the regulation time ended in a 1-1 draw at Meherpur Stadium, Barguna beat Chapainawabganj 3-2 in the penalty shootout after the game was **SEE PAGE 18 COL 1**

Tamim jumps to 25th place

CRICINFO

Tamim Iqbal ignited the fourth day's play at Lord's with a second-innings 103 and has now jumped six places among the world's leading batsmen to No.25, his highest ranking.

Tamim hit 55 in the first innings of the opening Test, making it five scores over fifty in his last six Test innings against England. His reward is a place in the top 30 list of batsmen which is still headed by India's Virender Sehwag.

England captain Andrew Strauss has returned to the top 20, and is the only England player in that select group, after scores of 83 and 82 in England's eight-wicket victory. Steven Finn, man of the match at Lord's, is rewarded for his nine wickets with a 48-place jump but, still only at No.48, England's latest fast bowler is still very much at the beginning of his career.

The Lord's pitch did not offer much for the spinners and Shakib Al Hasan, Bangladesh's top-ranked bowler, falling to

No.14.



St. Joseph, **Notre Dame** victors

SPORTS REPORTER

Four matches of the Inter-College Clear Men Confidence Cup football tournament were held at the Army Stadium in Banani yesterday.

St. Joseph High School and College, Notre Dame College, Residential Model School and College and Dhaka College won their respective matches.

In today's matches, St. Joseph will take on Notre Dame College while Dhaka College face Residential

Model.