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**Football
trumps oil
spills,
for Biden**

An unabashed US Vice President Joe Biden told President Barack Obama on Friday he was sorry for leaving him behind to manage the oil spill but was thrilled to be watching the World Cup. "I am honoured to be (here) representing the United States. The president is angry," Biden told a group of dignitaries at the U.S. consulate in Sandton,

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Star SPORT

DHAKA SATURDAY JUNE 12, 2010, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net



France captain Patrice Evra (L) retains the ball under pressure from three Uruguay players in their first round Group A match at the Green Point stadium in Cape Town yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Sterile France held by 10 men

SOCCERNET

Uruguay youngster Nicolas Lodeiro became the first player to be sent off at the 2010 World Cup as his side played out a 0-0 draw against a lacklustre France in Group A.

Raymond Domenech's side, who drew their first two group games in 2006 before going on to reach the final, struggled for ideas against a well-drilled South American outfit.

Winger Sidney Govou had by far the clearest chance to score for France in only the seventh minute, side-footing a Franck Ribery cross wide with the goal gaping. Uruguay even played the last nine minutes with ten men after substitute Nicolas Lodeiro's dismissal.

France, who are in South Africa thanks to William Gallas' highly controversial goal in their qualification play-off against the Republic of Ireland, left former captain Thierry Henry on the bench with Manchester United left-back Patrice Evra having inherited the armband.

Uruguay, meanwhile, boasted two of European club football's most potent goalscorers up front at Green Point Stadium in

SCORE BOARD

URUGUAY 0 - 0 FRANCE

Uruguay (5-3-2): Fernando Muslera, Diego Lugano, Diego Roberto Godin, Mauricio Victorino, Alvaro Pereira, Diego Ruso (Sebastian Eguren, 88), Maximiliano Pereira, Egidio Rios, Ignacio Gonzalez (Nicolas Lodeiro, 63), Luis Suarez (Sebastian Abreu, 74), Diego Forlan

France (4-3-3): Hugo Lloris, Bacary Sagna, Eric Abidal, William Gallas, Patrice Evra, Franck Ribery, Yoann Gourcuff (Florent Malouda, 75), Jeremy Toulalan, Abou Diaby, Sidney Govou (Andre-Pierre Gignac, 85), Nicolas Anelka (Thierry Henry, 72)

Red Card: Lodeiro 81

Venue: Green Point Stadium, Cape Town

KEY STATS

Uruguay	France
Shots (on target)	
6(3)	12(3)
Corners	
0	4
Possession	
43%	57%
Yellow Cards	
3	3

was cautioned for a cynical shirt pull while Ribery joined him in the book before the break.

France striker Nicolas Anelka headed over while at the other end a bending Forlan effort from the edge of the box forced Hugo Lloris to save.

Playmaker Yoann Gourcuff had two speculative efforts on goal as the half-time whistle approached.

Egidio Arevalo and Forlan both had chances early in the second half but neither could find the target for the two-time World Cup winning South Americans.

France were probing for the killer pass but Bordeaux talisman Gourcuff was repeatedly denied by a well-drilled Uruguay defence.

Mauricio Victorino was carded for a late lunge on Evra in the 59th minute and Ribery blasted wide from the resulting training-ground set-piece by Gourcuff.

Uruguay boss Oscar Tabarez sent on Lodeiro for Ignacio Gonzalez and he was booked within a minute. In the 66th minute Lloris dropped a catch under pressure from Suarez, who could not capitalise before Jeremy Toulalan was booked for a lunge on Uruguay wing-back

Alvaro Pereira two minutes later.

Domenech sacrificed Anelka to send on Henry in the 71st minute to the delight of the 64,100 crowd, which was mainly comprised of locals.

Forlan had a 73rd-minute sight of goal when he dragged a first-time effort wide from Suarez's flick-on, before his strike partner was swapped for veteran substitute Sebastian Abreu.

Domenech threw Chelsea's Florent Malouda on for the disappointing Gourcuff but still they were devoid of cutting edge. Lodeiro's hapless cameo was ended abruptly in the 81st minute when he was carded again for a late and high challenge on Bacary Sagna.

Domenech's last throw of the dice was to throw on Andre Pierre Gignac for Govou with five minutes left but even his predatory instincts were insufficient and French appeals for a penalty were dismissed when Henry's stab towards goal seemed to hit Victorino's lower arm in the 89th minute.

That, however, was as close as they came, with Henry hitting the wall from a free-kick and for the third World Cup in a row, France failed to win their opening game.

WORLD CUP POLL
What will be the result in the France-Uruguay match?

France wins **62.3%**
Uruguay wins **23.0%**
Draw **14.8%**

TOTAL VOTES: 161

TODAY'S POLL
Can USA spring a surprise against England?

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South Korea v Greece
Time: 5.30pm
Port Elizabeth

Argentina v Nigeria
Time: 8.00pm
Johannesburg

England v USA
Time: 12.30am
(Sunday)
Rustenburg

TODAY'S MATCHES

MAX Fairness for MAX Impression

Fair & Lovely

MAX Skin Lightening
MAX Spot Reduction
MAX Sun Protection

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A Mexican supporter talks on his mobile phone as he watches the gala opening ceremony of the FIFA World Cup at the Soccer City in Johannesburg yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

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Real Football 2010

SOUTH AFRICA