

Vieira 'gaffe' irks Italians

AFP, Irene

Holders Italy were astonished that France's Patrick Vieira and not an Italian player was asked to symbolically hand over the World Cup trophy at a pre-tournament concert, an official said on Saturday.

The president of the Italian football federation, Giancarlo Abete, said world governing body FIFA had made a "gaffe" by inviting the Senegalese-born Vieira to do the honours instead of a member of the Italian team which lifted the cup in 2006.

"Vieira didn't win that cup, Italy did," Abete said from Italy's training camp in South Africa.

At a concert held in Soweto on Thursday, Vieira -- a member of the French squad which won the 1998 World Cup -- handed over the famous trophy to tournament organising chief Danny Jordaan and FIFA Secretary-General Jerome Valcke.

Abete demanded an explanation from FIFA. "I think they will have no trouble in recognising they have made a gaffe," he said.

"This was a commercial event, in the best possible sense with the presence of several former players," he said. "But we received no formal invitation."

He added that Italy midfielder Andrea Pirlo was asked to attend but was unable to do so because he was receiving treatment for an injury.

"If we had been asked to send an official delegation I would have had no problem in responding positively," Abete said.

"At the federation, we have always supported promotional events for the World Cup."

Vieira, currently with English Premier League club Manchester City, played for France at the 1998, 2002 and 2006 World Cups, but has not been selected for this year's tournament.

Koren seals historic win

AGENCIES

Captain Robert Koren snatched the soft late goal that gave Slovenia a 1-0 victory over 10-man Algeria on Sunday and top place in Group C of the World Cup.

A dreadful mistake by Algeria goalkeeper Faouzi Chaouchi, who fumbled a harmless looking 79th minute shot from Slovenia captain Robert Koren, allowing

the ball to squirt through his arms into the bottom left hand corner of his net.

It was the first World Cup win for the East Europeans after three losses in their only previous appearance eight years ago and will offer hope ahead of tougher assignments against the United States and England.

Algeria had been reduced to 10 men when substitute Abdelkader Ghezzal was sent

off in the 73rd for handball having already been booked. He was only on the pitch for 15 minutes.

The first-half had offered little in terms of excitement as warm, clear conditions greeted the outsiders in a mini-league expected to be dominated by 1966 champions England and the United States, who drew 1-1 in Rustenburg the previous night.

A free kick in front of goal and outside the penalty area offered the North Africans the first chance and goalkeeper Samir Handanovic did well to tip over a Nadir Belhadji shot.

Chaouchi and Portsmouth midfielder Belhadji were fortunate starters for the 'Desert Foxes' as bans stemming from 2010 African Nations Cup red cards were dropped only this

week by the African Football Confederation.

The early exchanges had a heavy imprint of caution with ball retention the first priority for teams who reached the tournament at the expense of world top-20 ranked teams Russia and Egypt.

Spectators blowing plastic vuvuzela horns were creating a distinct South African atmosphere in a match featuring plenty of neat passing but a

paucity of goalmouth action.

Aleksander Radosavljevic was first to be cautioned after fouling Belhadji on 35 minutes and Slovenia had a scare soon after as a Rafik Halliche header off a corner went wide.

Chaouchi came to the rescue as half-time approached, acrobatically tipping over a dipping Valter Birsa shot as Slovenia moved up a couple of gears and also forced a couple of corners.

Hassan Yebda, a starter at the expense of off-form captain Yazid Mansouri and sporting peroxide blond hair, was at the heart of an impressive early second-half Algerian move that ended with a shot straight at Handanovic.

With no sign of a goal the coaches introduced new strikers, Ghezzal replacing Rafik Djebbour and Zlatan Ljubijankic coming on for Zlatko Dedic, whose goal eliminated Russia.

Halfway through the half and the game remained goalless although Italy-based Ghezzal was making an impact, getting on the end of

several crosses only to be let down by high headers.

Among the crowd at the 46,000-seat Peter Mokaba Stadium in this northern city was former superstar Zinedine Zidane, born in Marseille to Algerian parents and a World Cup winner with France 12 years ago. However, to his disappointment the team who he is assumed to be inclined to faced defeat.

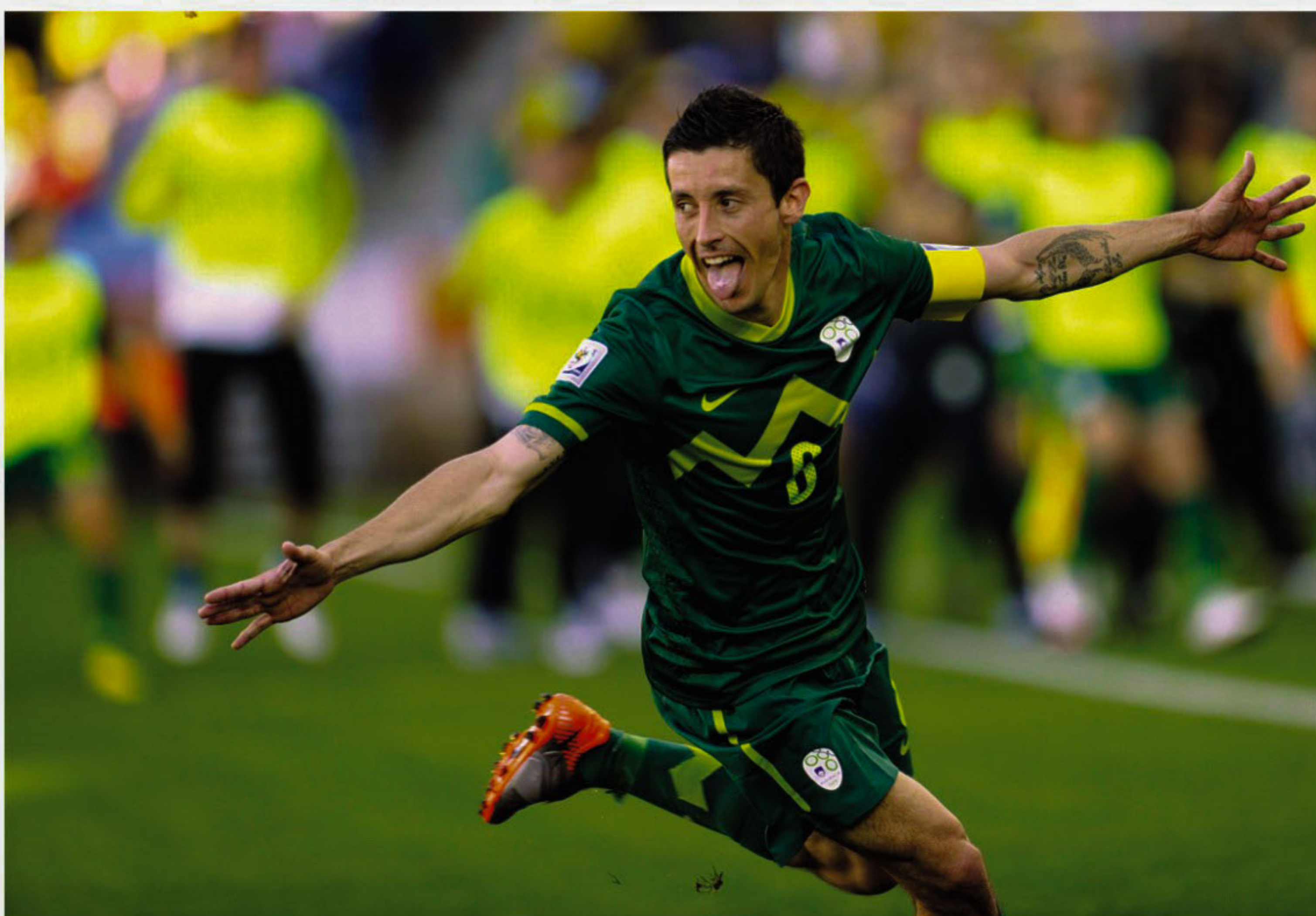


PHOTO: AFP

Slovenia captain Robert Koren flies into celebration mode after scoring the winner in his side's World Cup encounter against Algeria at Peter Mokaba Stadium in Polokwane yesterday.

KEY STATS	
Algeria	Slovenia
Shots (on target)	
10(2)	7(3)
Corners	
4	3
Possession	
48%	52%
Yellow Cards	
1	2
Red Cards	
1	0

SCORE BOARD	
ALGERIA 0 - 1 SLOVENIA KOREN 79	
Algeria (4-4-2): Faouzi Chaouchi, Anther Yahia, Madjid Bougherra, Rafik Halliche, Nadir Belhadji, Foued Kadir (Adlène Guédioura 82), Medhi Lacen, Karim Ziani, Hassan Yebda, Rafik Djebbour (Abdelkader Ghezzal 58), Karim Matmour (Rafik Saifi 80)	
Slovenia (4-4-2): Samir Handanovic, Miso Brecko, Marko Suler, Bostjan Cesar, Bojan Jokić, Andraz Kirm, Robert Koren, Aleksander Radosavljevic (Andrej Komac 87), Valter Birsa (Nejc Pecnik 84), Zlatko Dedic (Zlatan Ljubijankic 53), Milivoje Novakovic	
Venue: Peter Mokaba Stadium, Polokwane	
Attendance: 30,325	

PREVIEW

Champions, not favourites

REUTERS, Cape Town

Holders Italy, written off at home as no-hopers to retain their world title and traditionally slow starters, are in danger of being caught napping by in-form Paraguay in their Group F opener today.

Coach Marcello Lippi has kept faith with the bulk of the

ons could fail to advance but the Azzurri seem to be putting their faith in past pedigree rather than current talent.

"We have our traditions, our characteristics. If we put our army on the field we can compete with everyone," said captain Fabio Cannavaro,

Stars with a similar problem.

Antonio Di Natale, with 29 goals for Udinese as Serie A's top scorer this season, and Alberto Gilardino should carry the strike threat and the vastly experienced Lippi, unsurprisingly, is not concerned by the critics.

along the way.

Despite losing their main striker in qualifying, Salvador Cabanas, after he was shot in the head in Mexico City, they have maintained that form in warm-ups, drawing with Ivory Coast, losing narrowly to Ireland and beating North Korea and Greece.

Roque Santa Cruz remains their key striker, despite barely getting a game in the Premier League with Manchester City, but there is serious concern over fellow forward Oscar Cardozo.

The Benfica striker, who was joint top scorer in the Portuguese league this season as his club won the title, has an ankle injury and is almost certain to miss Monday's game.

Coach Gerardo Martino has a ready-made replacement in tall Argentina-born Borussia Dortmund striker Lucas Barrios, who has a Paraguayan mother and has scored three goals in three games since becoming eligible to play for the country.

Despite Paraguay's previous failures there is a real optimism about this campaign and a draw against Italy would be seen as the ideal start ahead of two winnable matches.

"I'm happy to start against Italy, I like the fact we're not defining anything against them," Martino told World Soccer magazine. "Whether the group turns out to be easy or difficult is up to us."



outstanding in the 2006 campaign but at 36 now looking past his sell-by date.

"The coach is trying lots of things and he will decide the best team for us but it's right for a coach to try things. Right now we don't know what he'll do."

All that experimentation means few observers in Italy likely have a clue about Lippi's likely side for Monday.

Midfielder Andrea Pirlo is out with a calf injury for the first two games while Daniele del Rossi missed Friday's 6-0 thrashing of the Gauteng All

"No team comes to the World Cup knowing exactly what they can do, you grow through the tournament," he said.

That is something Paraguay rarely have the luxury of experiencing having never got past the second round in their seven finals appearances, falling at the first hurdle four times.

This time, though, confidence is high after an impressive qualifying campaign in which they finished second and beat Brazil and Argentina

Cossu jets home

REUTERS, Irene

Holders Italy flew to Cape Town on Sunday for World Cup Group F opener against Paraguay but 24th man Andrea Cossu was jetting home.

The midfielder was brought to South Africa as a precaution in case Andrea Pirlo's calf problem became so serious that he needed to be replaced in the squad.

However, with the deadline approaching for Italy to make a squad change before their first match, a spokeswoman said Cossu had been allowed to leave given doctors hope Pirlo can be fit for the third group game against Slovakia on June 24.

Fellow midfielders Daniele De Rossi, Mauro Camoranesi and Claudio Marchisio are also all fit following minor knocks.

Vuvuzela days are numbered?

INTERNET

The controversial vuvuzelas could be banned from the World Cup in South Africa, confirmed organising chief Danny Jordaan.

Many players have already complained that the noise from the horns, which make a constant drone, are distracting and make life difficult for the teams.

"My teammates told me that last year it was hellish during the Confederations Cup," said Italy striker Giampaolo Pazzini.

"It may not look like it, but a football pitch is like a marketplace full of people shouting important instructions and the referee's whistle."

The sound has also irritated those back at home, as broadcasters around the world receive complaints about the vuvuzelas.

"If there are grounds to do so, yes," World Cup organising chief Jordaan told the BBC when asked if the vuvuzela could be banned.

"We did say that if any land on the pitch in anger we will take action. We've tried to get some order."

"We have asked for no vuvuzelas during national anthems or stadium announcements. It's difficult but we're trying to manage the best we can."



PHOTO: AFP

Italy captain Fabio Cannavaro (2nd from L) trains with teammates Salvatore Bocchetti (L), Simone Pepe and Fabio Quagliarella (R) at Irene's Southdowns College in Pretoria on Saturday. Cannavaro needs to lead Azzurris from the front when they start their title defence against Paraguay at 12.30am tonight.

RANGS TOSHIBA

World cup QUIZ 2010

...THIS CAN BE YOURS

ROUND 3, DRAW IN RAJSHAHI ON JUNE 16

PRIZES UP FOR GRABS (ROUNDS 1-5)

Prize	Item	Winner
1st	One 8 CFT Toshiba Refrigerator	YOU
2nd	One Toshin 24" LCD TV	YOU
3rd	One Toshiba 21" Colour TV	YOU
4th	One Toshin 21" Colour TV	YOU
5th	One Toshin Microwave Oven (23L)	and YOU

PRIZES FOR BUMPER ROUND

Prize	Item	Winner
1st	One Toshiba 32" LCD TV	YOU
2nd	One 15CFT Toshiba Refrigerator	YOU
3rd	One Toshin Heat & Cool AC (1Ton)	YOU
4th	One Toshin 24" LCD TV	YOU
5th	One 21" Toshin Colour TV	and YOU

(See May 23 issue of the Star Sport for competition information and rules)

Prizes for the audience (For First Five Rounds)

1st.	20L Toshin Microwave Oven
2nd.	14" Toshin Colour TV
3rd.	3 Toshiba DVD Players


Prizes for the audience (For Bumper Round)

1st.	Toshiba Washing Machine
2nd.	21" Toshin Colour TV
3rd.	20L Toshin Microwave Oven
4th.	Two Toshiba DVD Players

QUIZ SCHEDULE				
Round & Draw	Starts	Ends	Answers must reach by 12pm	Lucky Draw for prizes
3. Rajshahi	June 06	June 14	June 15	June 16
4. Khulna	June 15	June 23	June 25	June 29
5. Sylhet	June 24	July 02	July 04	July 06
Bumper Round, Dhaka	July 03	July 11	July 13	July 16

✂ The Daily Star -RANGS TOSHIBA World Cup Quiz, Round 3 Ends June 14, 2010

Tick (✓) the correct answers

1. Who is the captain of France in this year's World Cup?	Henry <input type="checkbox"/>	Evra <input type="checkbox"/>	Gallas <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Pele scored his first World Cup goal against	Wales <input type="checkbox"/>	Sweden <input type="checkbox"/>	Italy <input type="checkbox"/>
3. How many World Cup matches did Gary Lineker play?	18 <input type="checkbox"/>	15 <input type="checkbox"/>	12 <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Which stadium will host this year's World Cup final?	Ellis Park <input type="checkbox"/>	Soccer City <input type="checkbox"/>	Mandela Bay <input type="checkbox"/>
5. Who is this player?	 Lucio <input type="checkbox"/>	Marquez <input type="checkbox"/>	Branco <input type="checkbox"/>

Name (Mr/Mrs/Ms)..... Age.....

Father's name.....Occupation.....

Address.....

Telephone (if any).....Signature.....Date.....

Write with a ballpoint pen in clear BLOCK letters.
Cut along the dotted lines and mail to OR drop in the Quiz Box at The Daily Star, 19 Karwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215.
Rajshahi readers can also drop entries at Rangs Toshiba Showroom, Alo Patti More, Rajshahi.
You may send as many entries as you like. Envelopes of entries must be clearly marked "Star World Cup Quiz 3".

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