



The price of failure!

AFP, Paris North Koreans risk being sent to the coal mines while Nigeria get slapped with a two-year ban from international football. England's World Cup flops should count themselves lucky that their most pressing concern is trial by tabloid.

Fans on the rise

REUTERS, Johannesburg The overall attendance at the World Cup could be the highest since the tournament was held in the United States 16 years ago, organisers said on Thursday.

Hodgson new Reds boss

AFP, Liverpool Fulham boss Roy Hodgson was named on Thursday as the new manager of Liverpool, signing a three-year contract on Merseyside, the Premier League club said.



ROY HODGSON

Cafu rates African sides

REUTERS, Johannesburg An African nation could win the World Cup in the future if the game continues on the right path, Brazil's World Cup-winning captain Cafu said on Thursday.



PHOTO: REUTERS

THIS IS NOT OVER THE LINE: Argentina's coach Diego Maradona saves the ball from going over the goal-line during a training session in Pretoria yesterday.

Fair & Lovely MAX Impression Moment skin care advertisement

Juve snap up Bonucci, Martinez

REUTERS, Milan Juventus continued the club's rebuilding for the new Italian season on Thursday by completing big-money deals for Bari centre-back Leonardo Bonucci and Catania midfielder Jorge Martinez.

Cabin fever hounds stars

INTERNET Sex, safaris, siestas, golf, and for want of anything better - PlayStation. The remaining eight teams at the football World Cup in South Africa are - when it comes to killing time, at least - already champions.

Figo hits out at Ronaldo too

INTERNET Former Portugal international Luis Figo criticised Cristiano Ronaldo on Wednesday, after the Real Madrid star's reaction to his country's last-16 exit against Spain.

CHANGING FOCUS

FIFA's reluctance to use technology to avoid refereeing errors has been grist to the mill of newspaper cartoonists. South Africa's Business Day newspaper couldn't resist a dig at FIFA's priorities.

COFFEE ITALIANO

Dethroned world champions Italy have already gone home but a bit of Italian flair remains at the World Cup nonetheless. Italian ex-footballer Nicola Caricola is supplying all World Cup stadiums with genuine Italian coffee.

EUSEBIO GOES SPANISH

Eusebio believes compatriot Cristiano Ronaldo underperformed at the World Cup in South Africa after Portugal crashed out at the Round of 16 stage at the hands of Spain.

SPANISH FANS PREFER LLORENTE

Spanish football fans prefer Fernando Llorente to Fernando Torres as the centre-forward of the World Cup team, to judge by two online polls published on Thursday.

PODOLSKI, OEZIL SKIP TRAINING

German players Lukas Podolski and Mesut Ozil skipped training on Thursday as a precautionary measure to be fit in time for their World Cup quarterfinal clash against Argentina on Saturday.



EUSEBIO



LLORENTE

Austria did not make it to the World Cup but enterprising Austrian opticians want to ensure that their country's referees have sharper eyes than those of their colleagues officiating in South Africa.

Germany players Lukas Podolski and Mesut Ozil skipped training on Thursday as a precautionary measure to be fit in time for their World Cup quarterfinal clash against Argentina on Saturday.

Podolski had broken off training on Wednesday, complaining about a minor muscle problem while playmaker Ozil remained in the team hotel, feeling unwell.

Cacau, who has been nursing an abdominal muscle strain and missed their second round win over England last week, was also absent. Coach Joachim Loew had said on Wednesday that the 29-year-old striker was doubtful for the match.