

## Van Marwijk blasts Robben treatment

AFP, The Hague

Netherlands coach Bert van Marwijk has strongly criticised the "scandalous" treatment in Germany of Arjen Robben, during the Oranje's friendly match against his club Bayern Munich.

"It's scandalous the way in which Arjen was treated on Tuesday in Munich. Arjen was really down about it but I hope that he will emerge stronger from the experience," van Marwijk told the Dutch news agency ANP.

Robben, who missed an extra-time penalty in the Champions League final against Chelsea on Saturday when the score was 1-1, was repeatedly booed by a section of the 33,000 fans who came to see the match.

Dutch team-mates, including former Bayern star Mark van Bommel, agreed that Robben was unfairly treated.

"It's shocking what happened to Arjen. And no club officials seemed to want to do anything about it. If I were him, I be asking myself whether I still want to play for the club," said van Bommel.

Dutch playmaker Wesley Sneijder even told ANP that Robben "could join Inter Milan whenever he likes". Robben, however, only recently extended his contract at Bayern until 2015.

Bayern later apologised for Robben's treatment, saying it viewed the fans' behaviour "with astonishment, irritation and disappointment".



Spanish goalkeeper Iker Casillas dives for the ball during a training session to prepare for the Euro 2012 championship in Schruns yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Spain suffer Villa blow

REUTERS, Madrid



Barcelona striker David Villa ruled himself out of the running for a place in Spain's squad for Euro 2012 on Tuesday after failing to fully recover from a broken leg.

Villa, Spain's all-time leading scorer, broke his left leg while competing in the Club World Cup with Barca in December, and has not played a competitive match since then.

"I tried right to the end but I wasn't able to get to 100 per cent for the Euros," Villa said on his official Twitter feed.

"Today I called the coach to tell him. It was the most honest thing to do. Thanks to all of you for your support."

The Spanish football federation (RFEF) broke the news with an earlier statement.

"After failing to achieve the desired progress in recent training sessions, Villa spoke with Del Bosque," the RFEF said.

(He) told him although he would like to be with the team in Poland and Ukraine, his physical state 'isn't the best' for a competition like the Euros.

"The RFEF and Spain's coaching staff wish the player all the best in his recovery and hope he will return soon to the national team, and value the effort made by David to get back to full fitness."

Villa has scored 51 goals in 82 national team appearances for Spain helping them victory at Euro 2008 and in the World Cup finals in 2010.

His Spanish international teammates were quick to send messages of support on their Twitter accounts.

Barcelona's Cesc Fabregas wrote: "Keep your spirits up, you are a star. You have been and will continue being the best goal-scorer in the national team."

Chelsea winger Juan Mata wrote: "You have proved again you are an example, we will miss you a lot. You will soon be back scoring goals."

Barca's doctors had already said he would not make the King's Cup final on Friday, when Pep Guardiola's side take on Athletic Bilbao.

Del Bosque named a provisional squad for Euro 2012 last week which included many fringe players, and added Chelsea duo Fernando Torres and Mata on Monday after they helped their side win the Champions League final.

Del Bosque delayed naming any Barca and Bilbao players until after the Cup final. He set May 27 as his deadline for deciding his final 23-man squad, when attention will focus in particular on their forward line without Villa.

Torres, Valencia's Roberto Soldado, Sevilla's Alvaro Negredo and Atletico Madrid's Adrian Lopez are already in the squad, while Bilbao's Fernando Llorente and possibly Barca's Pedro are expected to be called up, with others making way.

Spain won all eight of their qualifiers for Euro 2012 and are in Group C for the finals along with Italy, against who they play their opening game on June 10, Republic of Ireland and Croatia.

## Inter to open schools in Indonesia

AFP, Jakarta

Inter Milan will open football schools in Indonesia, the club said in the capital Jakarta on Wednesday, following a trend started by Arsenal and Liverpool.

"We are planning to build several football schools here," club chief executive Ernesto Paolillo told reporters through a local translator.

"Indonesia is very important for us because the country has a lot of Inter Milan fans," he said, without giving further details of the plan.

Local media showed images of the team arriving at the airport in Jakarta, where throngs of fans greeted them. The club claims to have 15 million fans in the country of 240 million people.

The team will play a friendly Thursday evening against an all-star Indonesian team made up of players from the national team, elite leagues and the under-23 youth team.

They will play the same team in a second friendly on Saturday.

"It's the first time I've been to this country and it's a real honour," said captain Javier Zanetti.

"Thank you for the warmth you've shown. It's been a tough season but we hope to make our fans happy, at least over the next few days."

## Drogba talks on track

Football

AFP, Shanghai

Shanghai Shenhua's talks with Didier Drogba are continuing "just as planned", a report said Wednesday, raising expectations the striker will move to China after announcing his departure from Chelsea.

Shenhua, bankrolled by colourful videogame mogul Zhu Jun, signed Drogba's ex-Chelsea team-mate Nicolas Anelka in December and they have been in talks with the Ivory Coast international since at least January.

"As of now, Shenhua's negotiations with Drogba are continuing just as planned," Zhu told the Oriental Sports Daily.

Drogba, 34, revealed he was quitting English Premier league Chelsea on Tuesday, just days after his match-winning performance in the Champions League final against Bayern Munich.

Drogba scored a late equaliser as well as the decisive spot-kick in the penalty shoot-out. Since joining Chelsea from Marseille in 2004, he has tallied 157 goals in 341 appearances, helping the club win 10 trophies.

"It has been a very difficult decision for

me to make and I am very proud of what we have achieved, but the time is right for a new challenge for me," he told Chelsea's website.

Drogba would be the latest star signing for China's increasingly big-spending Super League, after World Cup-winning coach Marcello Lippi joined Guangzhou Evergrande last week.

But Anelka's move has not been without its problems. Last week he threatened to quit Shenhua over the club's plans to hire a new head coach, according to local media.

"If there is still no one to support me and (they) continue to play little tricks behind my back... then I will quickly decide whether or not to retire," the Frenchman told the Xinmin Evening News.

Club owner Zhu has written to Anelka's agent and lawyer asking for an explanation, the Oriental Sports Daily said.

In April, Shenhua sacked French coach Jean Tigana, then the highest profile manager to work in China, after just a handful of games and replaced him with a makeshift set-up including Anelka as player-coach.

They are now tipped to be targeting Sergio Daniel Batista, who led Argentina to Olympic gold in 2008, as their new manager.

## Japan blank Azerbaijan

AFP, Fukuroi

Asian champions Japan whipped Azerbaijan 2-0 in a friendly at home Wednesday to boost their morale before opening their final World Cup qualifying campaign next month.

Borussia Dortmund midfielder Shinji Kagawa, now hunted by Manchester United, opened the scoring just before half-time and Stuttgart striker Shinji Okazaki made it two up near the hour mark.

Japan coach Alberto Zaccheroni, worried after they lost their final two matches in Asia's next-to-last qualifying round, fielded nine Europe-based players including CSKA Moscow midfielder Keisuke Honda in the first team.

Japan will fight three World Cup qualifiers in June.

## Jose relishes challenge

REUTERS, Madrid



Jose Mourinho said he was motivated by the challenges ahead at Real Madrid after agreeing a two-year contract extension on Tuesday which tied him to the Spanish champions until 2016.

"I've loved the professional experience I've had of working for different clubs in different countries and cultures," the Portuguese said in an interview published on the club's website (www.realmadrid.com).

"It's different for me now because I'm thinking about a club long-term. (Real) has been more demanding and has forced me to do my absolute best due to the difficulties I have had to face."

"I've had to improve as a coach and a professional. I think it is the perfect challenge for the next four years. I need these great challenges at this time in my career."

Mourinho, the self-styled 'Special

One', joined Real from Inter Milan in 2010 on a four-year deal and led them to victory in the King's Cup final in his first season, the club's first cup triumph in 18 years.

They won their first La Liga title for four years this month, smashing league records along the way and ending Barcelona's domestic dominance.

Real set a new points record of 100 from 38 games, beating the previous best of 99 achieved by Pep Guardiola's side in 2009, and broke the league's goal-scoring record of 107 set by the Whites in 1989-90 by finding the net 121 times.

On a personal level, the league title was Mourinho's seventh after winning two in Portugal with Porto, two in England with Chelsea and two in Italy with Inter.

Mourinho's next big challenge is to win a 10th European Cup for Real, and his third with a different club after Champions League successes with Porto in 2004 and Inter in 2010.

Real have fallen in the semifinals to Barcelona and Bayern Munich in his two

years in charge. The last time they reached the final four before then was 2003.

"I've always said we have to improve collectively and individually, and that we must play football to win both games and supporters," Mourinho added.

"I'm sure Real gained many supporters this year because we played the best football in the world despite not winning the Champions League. But we did win the toughest league title with fantastic football. We have to keep it up."

The 49-year-old has fought for and won unprecedented freedom and power as their coach with the full backing of club president Florentino Perez. His new commitment to Real ended any speculation that he might be lured away elsewhere.

The show of unity and strength at the world's richest club by revenue comes at a moment when their great rivals Barcelona appear to be entering a period of transition.

Mourinho's opposite number Guardiola has decided to step down at the end of the season after winning 13 trophies in four years at the Nou Camp.

### SPORTS POLL

Do you think Pybus is a good choice as Bangladesh coach?

Yes 56.3%  
No 43.7%

TOTAL VOTES: 142

### WEEKLY QUESTION

Who has been the best player in the IPL?

Visit the sports page of www.thedailystar.net to cast vote

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### What to WATCH

ESPN  
Sportscenter India  
Sports News  
Live at 8:30pm

### DAY'S EVENT

Bangladesh Premier League  
Muktijoddha v Arambagh  
Time: 6:00pm  
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium



Formula One driver Michael Schumacher (C) plays with a ball as Nico Rosberg and Lukas Podolski (R) look on before a training session of the German national team in Turrettes yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Loew banks on Goetze

AFP, Berlin



Teenage rising star Mario Goetze has been dubbed Germany's Lionel Messi and despite an injury-hit 2012, coach Joachim Loew has said he plans to give him a key role at Euro 2012.

Goetze only turns 20 on June 3, six days before the Germans begin their Group B campaign against Portugal in Lviv, Ukraine.

Having joined his hometown club as an eight-year-old, he made his Bundesliga debut in November 2009 and was part of the Borussia Dortmund squad crowned German champions for the last two seasons.

In October 2010, Goetze became Germany's second-youngest player to make his debut, just five months after turning 18.

Great vision and the ability to put teammates into goal-scoring positions with an array of passes, the attacking midfielder has already proved he can lead Germany's attack, despite his tender years.

He announced his arrival last August with two stand-out performances.

Dazzling in Dortmund's opening game of the season as Hamburg were hammered 3-1, Goetze scored one goal and creating another as German daily Bild ran the headline "Goetzlich", a play on words meaning "Divine" in German.

"We call him 'Goetzinho'," admitted Dortmund midfielder Sven Bender.

"He raises the standard of those around him, he controls the ball as though he has a magnet in his boot."

Five days after humbling Hamburg, Goetze made his first start for Germany and orchestrated the 3-2 friendly win over Brazil in Stuttgart as he over-shadowed the south Americans and scored his first international goal.

He backed that up with the final goal in the 6-2 rout of Austria at the start of September which confirmed Germany's Euro 2012 place.

"He's impossible to stop. You don't get any better than him," Germany's former World Cup winning coach and captain Franz Beckenbauer enthused. "His ability is like Lionel Messi's, as well as his understanding of the game and technique."

"On top of that, he plays by instinct -- just like Messi."

Beckenbauer was not alone: Matthias Sammer, technical director of the German football federation (DFB), went as far as to say Goetze is one of the best talents football-mad Germany has produced.

"He's an exceptional player: fast, creative and with extraordinary technical abilities," said Sammer. "He's one of the most talented players we've ever had."

But Goetze -- whose performances have bagged him a 1.5-million-euro (1.2-million-pound, \$1.9 million) endorsement deal with sportswear firm Nike as well as interest from top European clubs -- comes into Euro 2012 lacking match fitness.

A muscle tear and groin problems forced him out of action for four months at the start of 2012.

He was involved in all of Dortmund's last three league games and Loew has said he will play a key part in his plans to take a trophy back to Germany after a 16-year absence and will be more than just a replacement.