

RSRM
X POWER TMT
THINK TOMORROW

NEYMAR JOINS MURAL CLUB

Kazan's mural artists were back to work again yesterday, painting the face of Neymar on a wall behind the Brazil team hotel. Neymar is the third footballer to receive the honour following Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo and Argentina's Lionel Messi.



আসল চিনিগুঁড়ার স্বাদ ও সুগন্ধ পেতে
চিনিগুঁড়া চাল একটাই অপশন

Star

DHAKA FRIDAY JULY 6, 2018, ASHAR 22, 1425 BS
e-mail: sports@thedailystar.net

SPORT



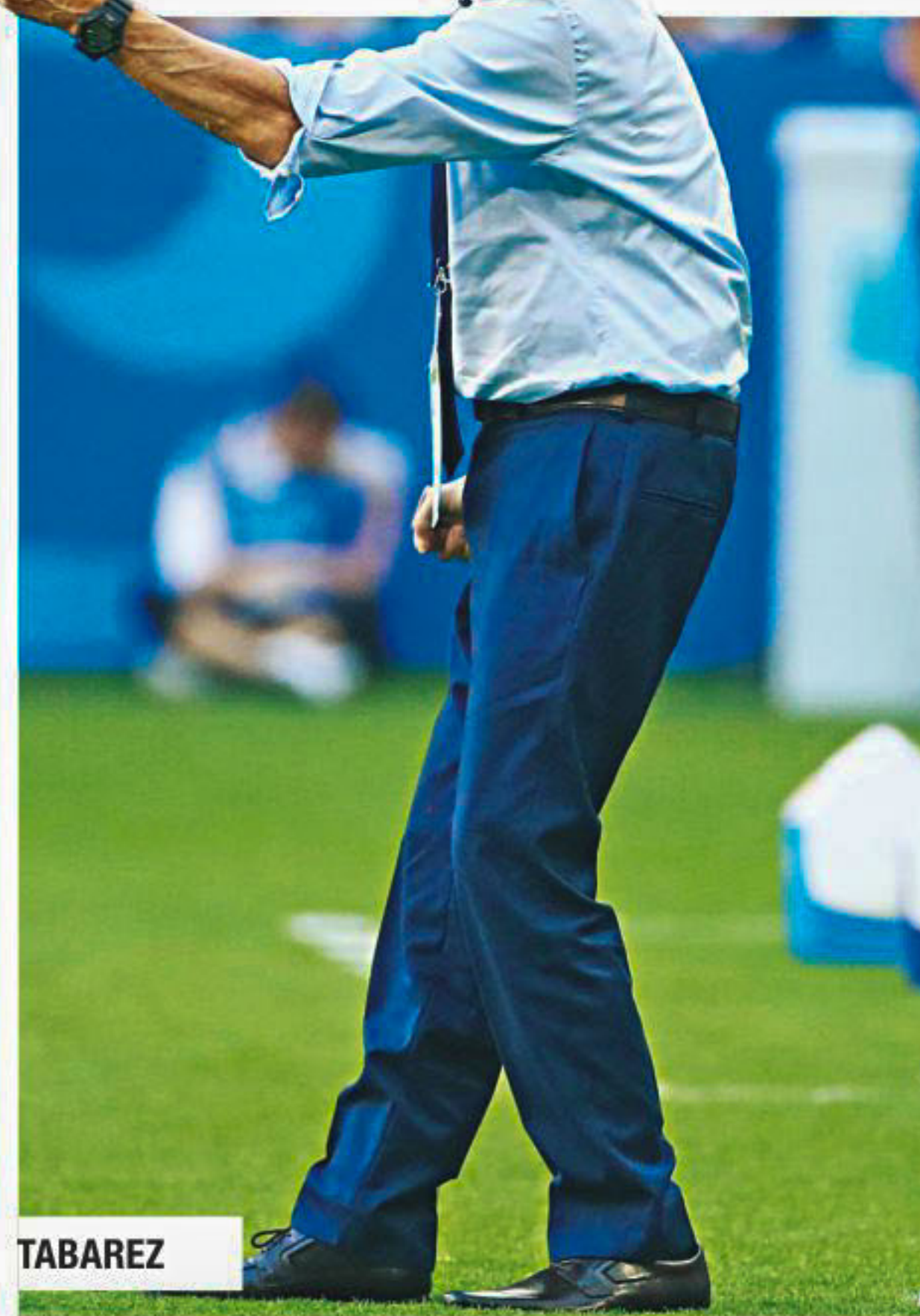
TITE



MARTINEZ



DESCHAMPS



TABAREZ

THE BATTLE OFF THE FIELD

FARAZ IHTESHAM

As the World Cup enters the quarterfinal stage, the intensity has gotten so high that it is felt not by the players alone but also by the tacticians in the dugout. In the first match French legend Didier Deschamps will face Uruguay's master tactician Oscar Tabarez, known as El Maestro, while Brazil's Tite will pit his wits against Belgium's Roberto Martinez.

DIDIER DESCHAMPS

Didier Deschamps won everything as a player, including captaining France to glory at the 1998 World Cup and Euro 2000. As a coach he took Monaco to the Champions League final in 2004 and ended Marseille's long wait to win a French title.

CHALLENGE: Deschamps has Kylian Mbappe, Antoine Griezmann, Ousmane Dembele, Olivier Giroud and Nabil Fekir in his squad. Yet he has struggled to settle on the perfect system to accommodate his attacking talents, and get the best out of Paul Pogba.

Observers outside France are especially baffled how a team with such an embarrassment of riches in attack cannot play like they did against Argentina more often. But as Spain great Xavi Hernandez pointed out in a recent interview with French newspaper Le Journal du Dimanche, it is simply that Deschamps has a style more akin to Diego Simeone than Pep Guardiola.

"He has not changed his ideas on becoming a coach: defensive solidity and counter-attack," Xavi said.

FORMATION: 4-2-3-1

OSCAR TABAREZ

Oscar Tabarez began his second stint as Uruguay coach in May 2006. Tabarez is still in charge 12 years on, having led them to two World Cup semifinals, one round of 16 and the Copa America title in 2011.

Not even ill-health has stopped the 71-year-old who was expected to resign in 2016 after he was diagnosed with a rare neurological disease known as Guillain-Barre syndrome but has carried on regardless with the help of a walking stick or electric wheelchair.

CHALLENGE: Tabarez has managed to retain Uruguay's renowned fighting spirit while curbing their wildest excesses.

Uruguay have the best disciplinary record of the eight quarterfinals with only one yellow card so far. Uruguay's watertight

defense is marshalled by Diego Godin while the firepower up-front is provided by Luis Suarez and Edinson Cavani.

"When we won the Copa America in 2011, we also took the fair play title and that was very significant," said Tabarez.

His approach is summed up by a message which adorns the wall of his house and is attributed to Che Guevara: "You must toughen yourself without losing tenderness."

FORMATION: 4-2-2-2

TITE

Tite's playing career was prematurely ended by a serious knee injury. Tite has spent nearly all his managerial career in Brazil, aside from two brief sojourns in the United Arab Emirates.

After Tite took over in June 2016, Brazil's defensive record under him has been remarkable, with only six goals conceded in 25 matches, and they have been just as miserly in Russia where they have only conceded one goal.

CHALLENGE: Tite has instilled an admirable collective discipline and his team are built on solid foundations. Brazil are looking to Italy for inspiration.

"Juventus have been champions for the last seven years, and only once without having the best defence," said Tite's assistant Sylvinho, the former Arsenal and Barcelona left-back, after the Mexico game.

"In such a short tournament, we want balance to be what characterises us, and that does not make us a defensive team."

History shows that the team with the best defence tends to win the trophy. And while Brazil have always possessed brilliant individuals (Neymar, Coutinho, Marcelo), they have also long since been pragmatists above all else.

FORMATION: 4-2-3-1

ROBERTO MARTINEZ

Roberto Martinez became Belgium's head coach in August 2016. Under his tutelage, the Red Devils became the first UEFA nation to

qualify for Russia 2018, and did so with an unbeaten record.

CHALLENGE: Martinez has been stuffing four prolific attackers into one starting 11. They are his four best players (Lukaku, Mertens, Hazard and De Bruyne) and four primary reasons Belgium seem closer than ever before to a World Cup title. Belgium are the tournament's top scorers with 12 goals.

For Friday's match, the tactics might be simpler according to Martinez.

"Against a team like Brazil, you must attack and defend with 11 players. We are not talking about a system but understanding what we must do when we have possession," the coach added.

"I don't think it will be a game with many secrets. We have to defend as well as we can and then cause them pain when we have the ball. It can be that simple and this squad is ready for that."

FORMATION: 3-4-2-1

The oddities of BD football



AL-AMIN from Kazan

The Bangladesh media contingent in Russia for the 2018 World Cup seems quite large when considering that the journalists hail from a non-participating nation. Understandably though, members of the group supported two South American teams, either Brazil or Argentina, both of whom have a massive fan following in Bangladesh. And this fact is also something that the Brazilian and Argentine fans, as well as their travelling reporters, are well aware of. Even if you come across a France, Uruguay, Germany or Mexico fan they will instantly acknowledge that the Selecao and Albiceleste have a strong fan base in Bangladesh.

The most frequent questions any fan or journalist may ask us after a brief conversation are: how popular is football in Bangladesh? Is it the number one sport in your country? Which are the most popular teams? Our inevitable answer is that 'it was very popular once and there were two outfits that were the most renowned'.

That of course elicited the query about what the number one sport is now. And our even more obvi-

ous answer was cricket. The moment you respond most pause for a while and then say with a smile: "Oh! The game that is played with a bat?" A more knowledgeable person, often a journalist, exclaims: "The game that is played

serious turn though when we were confronted by the most salient question: "Why has football lost popularity in your country? It is hard to understand why any other sport should become more popular when you have got the same

hardly mean that the success of a national team on the global stage is the sole guiding force behind the game's domestic popularity.

However, it was very difficult to describe the peculiar scenario of Bangladesh's domestic sports structure in general, let alone football in particular. It was also hard to explain how we have hardly any fans following any domestic sport, be it cricket or football. Our country's focus remains on creating a national identity and therefore cricket, the only sport to bring laurels from abroad, bears the whole nation's pride.

Football on the other hand, has become an international obsession. This generation of football fans are obsessed with the European Leagues, which they can enjoy for free on television. The World Cup comes every four years and with it unfolds a sharp divide in loyalty in our country. One group roots for Brazil while the other for Argentina with flags from either camp dominating the rooftops all over the country.

It was the same scenario for Bangladesh's domestic football circuit until the early 90s, when the game was a daily dose of entertainment, but that has now faded into memory.



over five days!"

It was then our turn to explain that there are three versions of cricket and that the shortest one lasts just about three hours, which is closer to the duration of a football game.

The conversation then took a

emotional attachment to football that we do."

Things do not become clearer when we say that cricket has provided successes for the country on the global stage. The counter argument is that only 32 countries qualify for the World Cup, so it can

Moscow to open new fan area

AGENCIES

Moscow will open a new fan area in the capital ahead of Russia's World Cup quarter final against Croatia, local officials said on Thursday citing heavy demand from soccer fans.

Russian fans are spellbound by the surprise success of the national team which has advanced to the quarterfinals.

The World Cup hosts' penalty shootout victory over Spain on Sunday prompted extraordinary scenes of street celebration in Moscow.

Moscow has one official FIFA fan zone located on the Sparrow Hills campus of Moscow State University.

"The fan zone is hugely popular. Tens of thousands of people are gathering to watch the games on Sparrow Hills. For fans' comfort we decided to organise an additional space to watch the games near the Spartak stadium," Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyenin wrote on Twitter.

The new fan area will open on Saturday afternoon, Sobyenin wrote on Twitter.

KAZAN MAYOR TELLS BOSSES TO TRIM WORKING HOURS

Kazan mayor Ilсур Metshin has advised employers in the city to shorten the working day on Friday, when the city hosts the World Cup quarterfinal between Belgium and Brazil.

"Kazan's heads of organisations have been recommended to end the working day at 2pm. The corresponding decree was signed by Mayor of Kazan Ilсур Metshin," said the mayor's office.



MOTION & EMOTION

01713091172
peugeot.com.bd



TODAY'S MATCHES

URUGUAY



FRANCE

Time: 8.00pm

BRAZIL



BELGIUM

Time: 12.00am [Saturday]

ALL TIMES BST