

# Namibia Today Sport

## Resolute India tame depleted Namibia

By Kayele M. Kambombo

**India tamed a robust Namibia in the international football friendly at the Ambedkar Stadium in New Delhi on Wednesday night.**

The 2-0 victory may have surprised even the die-hard fans of the home team, but then Namibia faltered where it mattered most even as India made the most of the fewer scoring opportunities.

An impressive Indian football team bounced back from back-to-back defeats as they blanked higher-ranked Namibia in their third international football friendly match of the month.

Having lost to Thailand in their earlier two matches on September 4 and 8 in Bangkok and in New Delhi respectively, India came up with a much improved show to beat their opponents ranked 44 places above them in the FIFA chart.

Ironically, the win came on a day when India dropped 22 places in the FIFA chart to 160th, one of the worst in the country's history.

Mehrajuddin Wadoo put India



Midfield action: India's Sunil Chetri gets one past Namibian Steven Goagab passes as skipper Baichung Bhutia watches.

in the lead in the 28<sup>th</sup> minute when his shot landed into the Namibian goal after deflecting from a defender while Anthony Pereira doubled the lead in the 54<sup>th</sup> minute with a gem of a goal with his curling free-kick from 30 yards finding the back of the net.

The win would boost the morale of Bob Houghton's boys in their preparation for the 2011 AFC Asian Cup as they are set to play more matches against higher ranked sides in the coming months.

India were clearly the better side with more cohesion and solidity in the defence while the

midfield and forward line looked much sharper inside the opposition box.

India also did well in set pieces with tall striker and captain Abhishek Yadav making problems for the opposition on a few occasions. The Namibians, who had come to India without at least a dozen of their foreign — mostly Europe — based players as Wednesday was not a FIFA match day, lacked the sharpness though their coach Tom Saintfiet had said that they have not played for four months as their premier league has remained dormant.

The Namibians, playing without eight of their professionals, lacked the accuracy to put the ball into the goal.

The Brave Warriors — as Namibia national team is also known — had an untiring utility distributor in Quinton Jacobs and an innovative worker upfront in Roger Katjiteo but many of Namibia's moves failed to be penetrative.

Michael Pienaar displayed excellent anticipation in cutting off some brilliant runs but it was India's day at its favourite ground. It was difficult to differentiate between the two sides in the first half with both making some fine attacking moves though the goal-bound shots were far and between. India, which made three changes in the starting lineup of their last match against Thailand on September 8 in New Delhi, seemed to have started picking up the form after playing two international friendly matches as they built up attacking moves with neat passes against their physically fitter opponents.



Namibian coach Tom Saintfiet

They were also helped by the surface which was much better than their last game as it was not raining that day. The back four of Surkumar Singh, Gouramangi Singh, Anwar Ali and Mahesh Gawli were impressive and they kept the attempts of their faster rivals at check. Surkumar was impressive at the right flank making his usual overlapping runs and sudden acceleration into the center of the park.

The Namibians came up with some threatening counters but ran into a tough defence and an agile Subrata Paul under the bar.

Namibian coach Tom Saintfiet was quoted by the lo-

cal (India) print media lamenting that "We played much better football but India scored a lucky goal."

"We have some very good natural players but they can't score goals. I could have shot the ball myself hundred times into the goal," said Saintfiet.

On the other hand, the delighted India coach Bob Houghton said "We showed good progress, worked hard, our passing looked improved. Overall, we were more organized". He also praised his defenders for an "excellent job".

India will play Vietnam and Yemen in Pune next month (*Additional info from The Hindu*).

## Desailly wants Black Stars job

By Michael oti Adjei

**Former France captain Marcel Desailly says he is interested in the vacant Ghana coaching job.**

The 42-year-old who was born in Ghana to Ghanaian parents, feels he is now ready to take charge of the Black Stars following Milovan Rajevac's exit.

Desailly was speaking on the local TV station Viasat.

"I am now ready to coach the Black Stars," said Desailly who had twice turned down approaches from the Ghana FA to take charge of the Black Stars.

But when asked on Wednesday evening by ex-Ghana international Tony Baffoe if he was up for it now, Desailly said he believes the time is right.



Desailly won the World Cup with France in 1998

The ex-AC Milan and Chelsea defender has no coaching background but his glorious playing career has ensured his name has been in the mix every time the Ghana job has become vacant.

He came to the attention of Ghanaians when he played

alongside Black Stars legend Abedi Pele in the 1993 Olympique Marseille Champions League winning team.

He then went on to win the title again with AC Milan before playing for Chelsea in the English Premier League.

He was also a World and

European Cup winner with France in 1998 and 2000.

These credentials make him the favourite choice of many Ghanaians including former Black Stars player Samuel Osei Kuffour.

"We have to take a Ghanaian but it just shouldn't be any local coach," Kuffour.

"It should be the sort of person who has respect, one who has seen it and done it before," he continued.

But Kuffour also identified other ex-players who he believes can do the job.

"Apart from Desailly, [we also have] C.K Akunnor or Mohammed Gargo who can all do it because they have been around and know what is going on." (*BBC Sport*)

## SA continue world rankings rise

**South Africa has moved up eight places to 58th in the latest Fifa world rankings.**

This follows victories over Ghana in a friendly and Niger in a Nations Cup qualifier.

It is the best placing for Bafana Bafana since 2007 and it takes them into the African top ten.

Elsewhere, Africa's top side Egypt remained in the world's top ten, while World Cup quarter-finalists Ghana climbed up three places to 20.

Cape Verde's Nations Cup qualifying win over Mali helped them to jump 31 places to 77th. It is a similar story for Guinea Bissau.

Their victory over Kenya in their first match since December 2007 lifts them 48 places to 140th.

World champions Spain remain top of the rankings.

**Africa's top ten:** 1. Egypt (9 worldwide) 2. Ghana (20 worldwide) 3. Ivory Coast (23 worldwide) 4. Gabon (31 worldwide) 5. Nigeria (34 worldwide) 6. Algeria (35 worldwide) 7. Cameroon (37 worldwide) 8. Burkina Faso (39 worldwide) 9. Tunisia (56 worldwide) 10. South Africa (58 worldwide).

**SADC Top 10:** During the current Fifa rankings for September 15, 2010 the top 10 Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) countries are ranked as follows: South Africa rank number 1 in SADC, 10 in Africa

and 58 in the world followed by Zambia (2, 14, 74); Malawi (3, 16, 78); Botswana (4, 19, 82); Mozambique (5, 20, 86); Angola (6, 23, 93); Namibia (7, 30, 116); Congo (8, 31, 117); Zimbabwe (9, 32, 118) and DRC (10, 35, 132).

The next Fifa ranking will be updated on October 20.

India that have just beaten Namibia last Wednesday in New Delhi is ranked 160 in the world and 30 in Asia Football Confederation (AFC), that is 44 places above them (Namibia) in the FIFA chart. This is disgraceful, to say the least.

## Valcke to Grace Tura Football for Hope Centre

**FIFA's Secretary General Jerome Valcke will lead a high-powered FIFA delegation to the inauguration of the Football for Hope (FFH) centre in Katutura next week.**

The FIFA Chief Administrator, Valcke will arrive in Namibia on Saturday 25 September to officiate at the opening of the Katutura Football for Hope Centre in Memory of Eunice Kennedy Shriver.

Arriving a day earlier will be Nicolas Maingot, Acting Director of Communications and Public Affairs and FIFA Southern Africa Development Officer Ashford Mamelodi, and the former is expected to address the media about the FFH and also the FIFA World Cup and FIFA in its entity.

FIFA and street football have established the Football for

Hope Movement as a key element of their existing strategic alliance to increase the impact of football as a tool for social development, peace and social change.

Namibia is part of the next five centers, after Khayelitsha Cape Town, to be built by FIFA and its strategic partner street football world in disadvantaged communities, with Kenya, Mali, Rwanda and Ghana to follow.

The FFH Centre will address crucial issues like health, education, and gender equality, peace-building and the environment as well as HIV and AIDS — considered being one of the greatest challenges faced by young people in Africa.

The world football governing body's 2010 World Cup community campaign will look to build 20 such centers across the African continent.