

## More confident hosts

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh inspired by their last game against South Africa, take on fancied India for the second time in the TVS Cup tri-nation tournament at the Bangabandhu National Stadium today.

Bangladesh scored 211 against the Proteas on Monday night after going 16 matches without putting 200 runs on the board. Besides, the otherwise brittle batting line-up lasted almost 50 overs. Although they eventually went down by 83 runs, the positive attitude displayed by the team's top-order, which has been a constant source of disappointment, surely would have boosted their confidence.

When they met in the opening match, Bangladesh had stumbled to 77 all out, their second lowest score in ODIs. But buoyed by the showing against the Proteas, Khaled Mahmud's men are eager to make a turnaround in the repeat clash.

To achieve that the message from the team management is simple, bat for 50 overs and score something in the region of 220-230.

"The boys showed that on Monday that they were capable of doing that

even batting under lights against the South Africans. It's now time to make that a habit," said Bangladesh coach Sarwar Imran while talking to reporters at the Hotel Sheraton lobby yesterday.

Bangladesh did not practice outdoors yesterday. After passing some time at the swimming pool in the morning, most of the Dhaka based players went home to have few hours with their families while the rest went out before they all assembled back at the hotel in the evening for a formal dinner.

But most of the players were mostly focused on today's match since they have started getting back the confidence they had lacked over the last few months.

"We have to bat in the same way for next few matches. And that's my concern because the batsmen are not technically very sound. They are still making lots of mistakes. They are still poor in shot selection, they have to know which ball to leave and which ball to hit," said Imran adding that what his team needed was to score 200-plus in the next five matches to regain faith in their abilities.

"You see, the way Javed got out on Monday was due to poor technique. He was too late in moving his bat and body. Besides his position was open chested which also slowed his move-

ment," added Imran.

He also observed that his boys lost the plot once they had South Africa under pressure.

"When South Africa went on the defensive, our batsmen failed to take advantage of that situation. They were unable to rotate the strike and take singles and find the gaps. We need to overcome this weakness. Sooner we do that the better it is for us," said the interim Bangladesh coach.

While Bangladesh looked desperate to erase the memories of the 199-run thrashing, the high-flying Indians are all set to field a weaker side.

With two wins in the bank and a place in the April 20 final virtually assured, the World Cup runners-up can afford the luxury of resting their inspirational leader Saurav Ganguly as well as left-arm paceman Zaheer Khan.

If Ganguly does not play then Virender Sehwag will have the privilege of leading a youthful Indian team.

Meanwhile, the Indians had a light practice session in the afternoon with only eight players. Ganguly and vice-captain Sehwag did not turn up at the nets.

Indian coach John Wright however declined to discuss the team's composition for tomorrow's match.

The former New Zealand opener only confirmed that pacer Zaheer Khan, who had a pulled hamstring,

would not play on Wednesday. Young Aavishker Salvi, who made his debut against Bangladesh last Friday, will replace him.

Wright did not rule out the possibility of promoting wicketkeeper Parthiv Patel to open the innings.

"He is a young talented guy who hardly gets the chance to bat. That's why we are thinking of putting him in the opening slot," said the Indian coach.

**TEAMS**  
**BANGLADESH** (from): Khaled Mahmud (captain), Javed Omar, Mohammad Ashraf, Habibul Bashar, Alok Kapali, Akram Khan, Mehrab Hossain, Khaled Mashud, Mohammad Rafique, Tareq Aziz Khan, Tapas Baishya, Manjurul Islam, Mehrab Hossain, Tushar Imran and Sanwar Hossain.  
**INDIA** (from): Virender Sehwag, Gautam Gambhir, Parthiv Patel, Mohammad Kaif, Yuvraj Singh, Dinesh Mongia, Ajit Agarkar, Aavishker Salvi, Sharandeep Singh, Amit Mishra, Sanjay Banger, Saurav Ganguly (captain), Zaheer Khan, Harbhajan Singh and Abhijit Kale  
**Umpires:** Billy Bowden (New Zealand) and MAkteruddin (Bangladesh)  
**Third umpire:** Shawkatur Rahman (Bangladesh)



IT'S MUCH BETTER HERE! The Bangladesh cricket team cooling off at the Hotel Sheraton swimming pool yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## All Wright

SPORTS REPORTER



India coach John Wright appears very happy with the way his team is playing these days.

Wright, who got his contract with the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) extended for a year last week, believed it was all about attitude that his team has developed in the last one year to establish themselves as one of the most exciting one-day teams in the world.

The New Zealander's contract with BCCI was to end after the World Cup. But Saurav Ganguly's men played brilliantly to be the beaten finalists in the tournament in South Africa last month which forced the authorities to hold him back.

Talking to a host of reporters during his team's net practice at the Bangabandhu National Stadium last evening, Wright said that cricket in India was going in the right direction.

"You can see the result of it by the performances of the youngsters. They have been drafted in the national side only recently and are playing really good even in the absence of stars like Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid, Javagal Srinath and Ashish Nehra.

"I am pretty happy with the way the young boys have fitted in. It's good for Indian cricket because they never played any higher than the A team level. There are few boys who



TRUST ME, I KNOW, I WAS A LEFT-HANDED OPENER TOO! India's coach John Wright shows back-foot defensive technique to young opener Gautam Gambhir at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## MSC, Abahani calling the shots



SPORTS REPORTER

Perennial rivals Mohammedan Sporting Club and Abahani were in commanding positions against their respective opponents at close of the third day's play of the Grameen-Phone Premier Super League yesterday.

Mohammedan need seven wickets against City Club going into the final day at the BKS ground in Savar for their second successive win.

Abahani also were in an identical position against Brothers Union at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium. A win could prove crucial in their pursuit to stay in the title race.

**CITY CLUB V MOHAMMEDAN**  
 City Club, who finished second behind leaders Victoria at the end of the first round, were struggling at 92-3 in their second innings after set to score 344 for victory.

In-form opener Moniruzzaman was carrying the City hopes with an unbeaten 53 after slow left-arm Enamul Hoque dismissed City's Pakistani Test cap Hasan Raja for 17.

Earlier, Mohammedan, resuming the day on 86-1 suffered a stunning second innings collapse instigated by pace sensation Mashrafe-bin Mortuza. Working hard to reclaim his place in the national team since a twisted ankle

forced him out of the World Cup, the country's fastest bowler captured five wickets for 46 runs to dismiss Mohammedan for 181 in their second innings.

**BROTHERSVABAHANI**  
 At the Fatullah Stadium, Brothers were 89 for three in their second innings responding to a massive Abahani total of 371-9. Abahani added 28 runs to their overnight score of 343 yesterday.

The Abahani first innings was built around two superb centuries by Imran Ahmed (121) and discarded national opener Al-Shahriar (105).

Brothers, who scored 212 in their first innings, needed another 70 runs to make Abahani bat again.

**SCOREBOARD**  
 Scoreboard on the third day of the two GrameenPhone Premier Super League matches held at different venues yesterday.

**Mohammedan vs City Club**  
 Venue: BKS  
**MOHAMMEDAN:** First innings 345 all out in 87 overs (Ehsanul 120, Naimur 66, Anwar 41; Alamgir 4/67, Mashrafe 2/60, Saifullah 2/73)  
**CITY CLUB:** First innings 181 all out in 62.3 overs (Mazharul 50, Moniruzzaman 36, Jamal 36, S Mehmd 7/45)  
**MOHAMMEDAN:** Second innings (Overnight 86 for 1 in 26 overs)  
 Nafeez c Mazharul b Mashrafe 58  
 Anwar c Faruque b Mashrafe 11  
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## Shaun with a difference

SPORTS REPORTER

Shaun Pollock said that he is enjoying his cricket more than when he was the South African captain.

The Proteas all-rounder said this while talking to a group of reporters at the hotel lobby yesterday evening.

Pollock said that he was not unhappy after being removed from the captaincy following South Africa's poor performance in the just concluded World Cup. Rather, he thinks it has helped him to concentrate more on his individual performance.

"I feel more relieved now," said

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## A torch-bearer of the masses

From relative obscurity, Makhaya Ntini has seen the highs and lows of being a cricketer at the highest level.

After the right-arm fast bowler got his big break in 1997 to tour Australia, he also earned himself a place in the Proteas' one-day squad during the tri-series down under.

However his world was blown apart two years later when the 26-year-old Ntini was accused of raping a young woman in South Africa.

It was the beginning of a harrowing ordeal for the right-arm speedster that severely curtailed his cricketing career. He was even forced to miss the World Cup in England held that year.

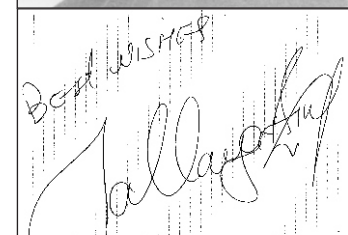
But Ntini continued his crusade to clear his name and eventually was acquitted of the charge after an appeal.

Despite serving a lengthy ban imposed by the United Cricket Board, Ntini impressed everybody in his comeback tournament in Sharjah a few seasons back.

His achievements have given renewed hope to the next generation of coloured cricketers in South Africa.

The very friendly cricketer spoke to LENN GANI OF THE DAILY STAR SPORT at the Sonargaon Hotel during a 'Meet the Press' session yesterday.

about to adjust his angle I'm already at the point of delivery by the second ball. You could say it's my way of communicating my thoughts to him.



Makhaya Ntini

**DSS:** Who has been the hardest batsman to bowl at and why?  
**MN:** If you talk about Test cricket then it has to be Steve Waugh. What can you say about him he's a class apart and very experienced batsman. So it's always a challenge for a young bowler like me to bowl at him. He loves to play the ball on the back foot. And in one-dayers there is only person that I most fear today and he's Adam Gilchrist. Simply because he is a batsman who holds no fear. It doesn't matter where you bowl or where you keep the fielders, he is

**DSS:** When bowling you always seem to be in a hurry. Is that part of your strategy and why?  
**MN:** It's to make sure a batsman gets no time to prepare mentally. He might be planning to play the shot one way but ends up hurriedly doing it a different way. So the moment he is

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## Sachin to have hand surgery



REUTERS/AFP, New Delhi

Sachin Tendulkar will undergo surgery later this month to rectify a long-term bone injury in his left hand, an Indian cricket official said on Tuesday.

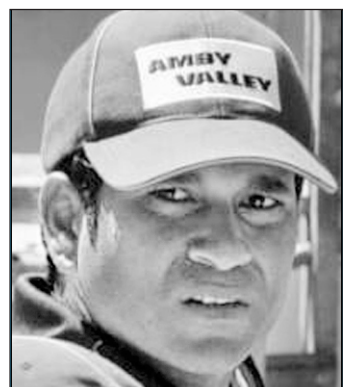
The top Indian batsman will have an operation in the United States in the last week of this month, said Amrith Mathur, communications manager of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).

Tendulkar, who turns 30 on April 24, will leave two days later for a six-week US sojourn during which he will have the surgery.

"It is a bone injury. He is expected to take about a month to recover," Mathur said.

Tendulkar developed pain in his left hand during the tour of New Zealand late last year, but continued to play and emerged the highest scorer at the recent World Cup with a record aggregate of 673 runs.

He opted out of the ongoing three-nation tournament in Bangladesh and with India not scheduled to play Test cricket till the home series against the Kiwis in October, Tendulkar has enough



SACHIN TENDULKAR

runs and 34 centuries. He also has 8,811 Test runs with 31 hundreds at an average of 57.58.

## Don't Americanise cricket

REUTERS, Georgetown

Australia captain Steve Waugh, whose team crushed West Indies by nine wickets in the first Test on Sunday, refused to criticise the umpiring in the match and said he did not want the sport to be Americanised.

The match was punctuated by a series of controversial decisions, with Sri Lanka's Asoka de Silva bearing the brunt of the blame.

But Waugh, celebrating his world record 157th Test appearance, said that uncertainty was part of the beauty of cricket.

"You don't want to end up with robots out there," said Waugh.

"We don't want the sport to be Americanised.

"We want to have controversy and we want to have something to talk about. That's why cricket is unique.

"I don't want to be too critical of the umpires, we all make mistakes."

Waugh said he was not worried about trying to stop West Indies captain Brian Lara, who made 110 on Saturday and was only out because he clipped his own wicket with the bat as he followed through on a shot.

"We were lucky to get that break but

we made the most of that luck and that's what great sides do," said Waugh, adding that he did not want to dwell on his own achievement.

"It's a team effort and we don't focus on one individual," he said.

Lara did his best to look on the bright side after the drubbing.

The Trinidadian, who was re-



STEVE WAUGH

stated as captain one week before the start of the Test after Carl Hooper's sacking, said he was

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## Sarwan returns for West Indies

AFP, Georgetown

Vice-Captain Ramnaresh Sarwan has rejoined the West Indies squad for the second Test match against Australia starting Saturday in Port of Spain after recovering from an injury to his left hand.

He passed a fitness test on Sunday and will boost home morale after the nine-wicket, four-day loss in the first Test here.

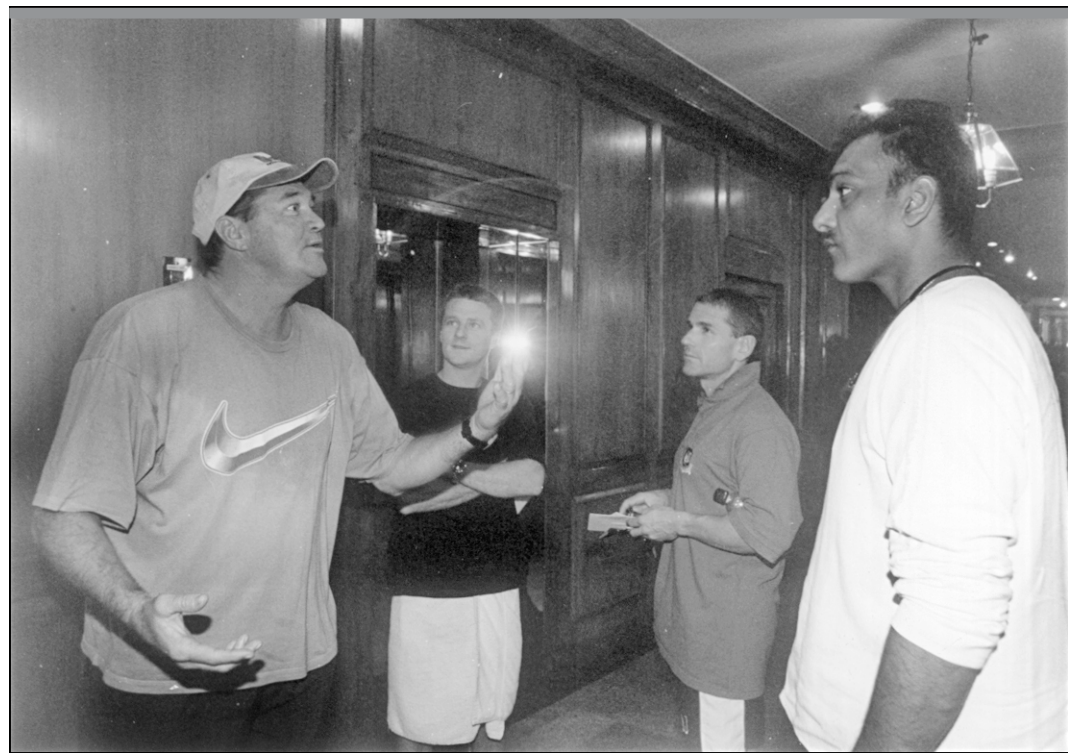
Also called up is 20-year-old off-spinner Omari Banks who becomes the first player from the small Leeward island of Anguilla to make it into a senior West Indies squad.

**SQUAD**  
 Brian Lara (captain), Ramnaresh Sarwan (vice-captain), Omari Banks, Carlton Baugh, David Bernard, Shivnarine Chanderpaul, Pedro Collins, Mervyn Dillon, Vasbert Drakes, Daren Ganga, Wavell Hinds, Ridley Jacobs, Jermaine Lawson, Marlon Samuels, Devon Smith.

## SORRY!

We made a mistake in our yesterday's edition by writing that Shaun Pollock was the man-of-the-match. In fact, it was Mohammad Ashraf of Bangladesh who won the award.

-- Sports Editor



YOU THINK YOU'RE A BETTER COMMENTATOR? Former South African off-spinner Pat Symcox (L) who has taken up commentary recently jokes with fellow commentator and ex-Indian star Ravi Shastri at the Hotel Sheraton lobby yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR