#### By default, my foot!

By Zayd Almer Khan

Sri Lanka's victory against India on Wednesday cemented their position as one of the top cricketing nations in the world today. No more are they the minnows or the underdogs they, from now on will be one of the favourites, whatever the occasion.

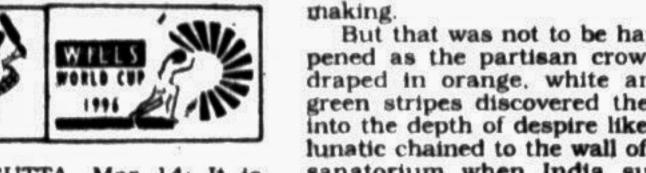
And the way they accomplished the triumph over the hosts was truly inspiring. especially for a budding crick eting minnow like Bangladesh. And it was equally humiliating for the hosts, for they were thrashed in the true sense of the word.

It was very disappointing when, after the shameless display by the partisan crowd, the words "Sri Lanka win by default" flashed on the TV screen. Their victory was anything but by default. They out played the sulking hosts in every aspect of the game.

It was a well deserving victory, and the official result does no justice to the Lankans' fantastic efforts. By default, my

## From hero to a zero

From Nizamuddin Ahmed



CALCUTTA, Mar 14: It is not very often that a colosseum-full citizenry, yearning for the blood of missing gladiators, are transformed into a volatile thugs as their heroes and all, fell from grace within a span of six hours. In the electrifying ambience of the Eden Gardens on Wednesday, in the dry heat of the sweltering afternoon. Jayasuriya and Kaluwirtharana ambled into the area like sacrificial goats into the slaughter-house.

The blood -thirsty frenzied fans got their till early;" preparations were afoot for a grand campfire around which would take place the midnight dance.

With restrictions for vehicular traffic around a half-mile parameter of the Eden, highhoping fans flocked like ants towards the cake of merry-

with EN-VITS

But that was not to be hap-

pened as the partisan crowd. draped in orange, white and green stripes discovered them into the depth of despire like a lunatic chained to the wall of a sanatorium when India suffered a dramatic collapse.

The crowd vented their fury by throwing bottles and stuffs but only a few among the plus 100 thousand capacity. Most of their anger came in the form of verbal abuses, targeted at Azhar, the name Bijlani ad-

#### Incitement thru Internet

COLOMBO, Mar 14: Expatriate Sri Lankans sent messages across the world on the Internet expressing pride and joy at their country's success in reaching the cricket World Cup final, reports Reuter.

New Boost powered

for even more energy

"I am really proud of you all for taking our little country to the top of the world," said Nuwan Samarahayake from Houston, Texas.

-Kapil Dev

mixing every now and then Accusation of bribery spending time with women friends and lower samples of moral turpitude-have-been lev-

elled against the Indian cricketers by the local press and the cricket samajdhara, on the street.

Extra police protection and delayed departure from the stadium were necessary to avert crowd trouble outside the Eden last night.

Whereas the day before the match, the Calcuttans were perhaps too tense to discuss cricket, today the weight is off their chest. Every nook and corner of the city is today reverberating with unkind words for Dalmiya, Azhar, Jadeya Mongia, and Sangita Bijlani There is even sympathy for Azhar's ex-wife Naureen and their children. To the superstitious Indians, all this is due to Naureen's curse.

The slogan in the street today is Gali gali me shore hai. Azharuddin chor hai. That sense at all up.

New Boost now

brings you even

and stamina. The

energy releasing

vitamin EN-VITS

### Shocking!

NEW DELHI, Mar 14: An Indian cricket fan committed suicide in the eastern state of West Bengal after Wednesday's World Cup semifinal loss to Sri Lanka, police said today, report agencies.

Ashoka Roy. 35, hanged himself in front of his television set in the West Bengal town of Debnagar moments after violence erupted following an Indian batting collapse at Calcutta's Eden Gardens.

The Press Trust of India news agency said scores of cricket fans in Debnagar took out protest processions following the Indian debacle.

In New Delhi, angry fans burned effigies of captain Mohammad Azharuddin tonight.

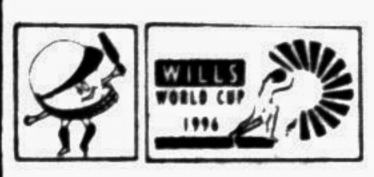
Groups of fans gathered on street corners in Calcutta shouting "down with Azharuddin" and "down with India" World Cup banners were set

Police had intervened in some southern areas of the city to bring the situation under control but there were no ar-

"Some (fans) even shouted slogans in favour of the Sri Lankans," said the agency.

# Salute to Lankan spirit

By Mahfuz Anam



The team brought India defeat, but the Calcutta crowds brought it shame. The forced cancellation of the game before the planned overs were complete was a shame that the Calcutta audience will have to live with for a long time. One can understand how deeply and thoroughly disappointed the crowd must have felt. It was not only the fact of losing in a World Cup semifinal, but losing the way India did. But still then, it is only a game, and above everything else, the 'spirit of cricket' must be held

I am a total novice about this fabulous game. The reason I dare to write today is not to discuss the technical excellence or the lack of it, of the game, but to salute the spirit of the Lankan team. Losing two wickets for one run, and the third at 35, any team in the world would withdrawn into a defensive strategy. But not

Ranatunga's boys. Aravinda de Silva captured the imagination of the viewers with his positive game and entertaining style. All his team mates followed it. What made the Lankan game so very enthralling was that they kept losing wickets and yet did not allow the spirit of the game to sag. They made it look like fun. And it was such fun watching them.

That is where the rest of the sub-continent has a lot to learn. While losing a game in Pakistan and India becomes a national crisis, the Lankans took the whole thing in the true sporting spirit. There is something in it, for us all to think about. I feel terribly sorry for the players in Pakistan and India. Because the expectation is so high, the level of disappointment is equally devastating. Imagine the psychological and emotional stress the players must have gone through when they were playing. And it that tension that made them crack

I think it is criminal the pressure the players of India and Pakistan are subjected to.

when the pressure became too

especially when they are playing each other. It becomes a national prestige issue, with political leaders getting involved. The result is that, just as victory becomes such a glorious affair, so also defeat a totally shattering nightmare. We know what the Latin Americans do about football. But there, it is the love of the game that dominates the spirit. In the sub-continent, especially between India and Pakistan, it defeating the opponent that takes precedence. It is not the emotional outburst in winning that I am bothered about, it is our inability to accept defeat properly, and then take it out on the players that I am concerned about. My objection is about the emotional stress that the cricketers are subjected to when a game lost.

This is again where the the Sri Lankan team has shown us the way. They played cricket as a game should be played with everything they have got. yet never forgetting for a moment that they are there to enjoy it, and also share their enjoyment with us, the spectators. Thank you Sri Lankan team for giving us such a fun

### Of the tested tormentors

CALCUTTA, Mar 14 (AFP): Sri Lankan Sanath Jayasuriya had already left his mark on the World Cup before the semifinals. But against India he unleashed a whirlwind.

If you had told him before the game here on Wednesday that he would play a key-role in inflaming the crowd, he would have imagined making a few quick runs at the top of the order.

He would never have expected to spark an Indian batung collapse with his parttime left-arm spin - nor spark a full-scale riot.

The 26-year-old left-hander, who made 79 off 76 balls against India in their earlier tournament meeting at New Delhi and an extraordinary man-of-the-match 82 off 44 balls in the quarterfinals against England, is an opening batsman who bowls a bit.

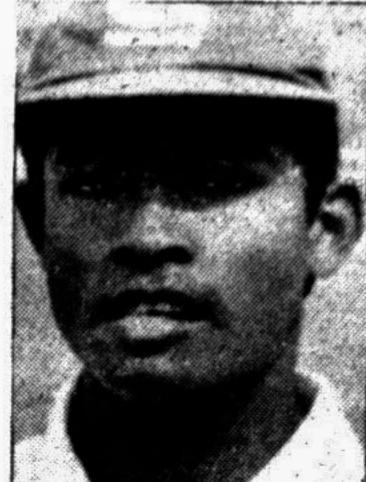
At Calcutta, he batted a bit - three balls, to be exact- before slashing to third man and joining opening partner Romesh Kaluwitharana in the pavilion after just four deliveries of the match.

Ball in hand, however, the bit player took on the leading role as he removed Sachin Tendulkar, Sanjay Manjrekar and Ajay Jadeja during seven extraordinary overs that cost just 12 runs.

That performance — with Jayasuriya adding a catch as well to dismiss Nayan Mongia was instrumental in taking Sri Lanka into their first World Cup final, as seven Indian wickets tumbled for 22 runs an all but ended the contest. The finish, when it came.



SANATH JAYASRURIYA



KALUWITHARANA

was provided by rioting fans at Eden Gardens, a full house of 110,000 spectators had seen enough of both Jayasuriya, celebrations and downcast Indian players with their bats between their legs and they unleashed a barrage of missiles that forced match officials to abandon the contest and award a Cup final place to Arjuna Ranatunga's jubilant side. Jayasuriya and Kaluwitharana, the only double pinch-

hitting combination in the tournament, will be hoping to get back among the runs again in Lahore on March 17, be it against Australia or the West Indies.

That remains their forte. Their exploits as the most devastating opening partnership at this World Cup have included 43 runs off three overs against Mohammad Azharud-din's side in the Group A game and 50 off four overs

against Kenya.

England skipper Michael
Atherton said the duo had helped take the one-day game to new heights with their policy of "Playing the first 15 overs like the last 15."

On Wednesday, they managed one run between them. Their first-over dismissals seemed to have totally undermined their side's chances.

But then the pair teamed up to remove danger man Tendulkar. Kaluwitharana stumping India's top batsman for 65, to turn the game's fate in their favour on Wednesday night. The Sri Lankan pair, it seems cannot be kept out of the news, whether at the crease or in the field.

### Lankans over the moon



COLOMBO, Mar 14: Warweary Sri Lankans today found some much needed respite in their-cricket team's whirlwind world win over India, report

agencies. Jubilant fans lit firecrackers and toasted their cricketing heroes late into the night after Sri Lanka completely outplayed India to enter the World Cup

Expatriate Sri Lankans shared their joy over the Internet with congratulatory messages streaming in from all over the world.

Sri Lanka has been beleaguered by an ethnic conflict with Tamil Tiger separatists since 1983.

The rebels blew up the central bank on January 31 killing almost 100 people and prompting the Australian and

team i

Damn

against Sri Lanka rather than visit the country.

The rebels, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, are fighting for a homeland for minority Tamils in the north and east of Sri Lanka. But cricket is played all over and by both the Tamils and majority Sinhales.

"Generally people here have separated the cricket from the war," said human rights worker father Harry Miller in the eastern war zone town of Batticaloa.

He is based at St Michael's College for Boys, the vast majority of whom are Tamils. They all wanted Sri Lanka to win", he said.

Sri Lanka's press bannerheadlined the national side's spectacular achievement of reaching its first World Cup final — than offered Indian spectators a few tips on good

behaviour. Sri Lanka's Industries Minister CV Gooneratne said hé considered it was a compliment that rioting Indian cials to abandon the semifinal on Wednesday, had thrown bottles, cans and fruit on to Eden Gardens.

"The spectators' brickbats were Sri Lanka's bouquets," the minister said. "Apples thrown will not keep the Sri Lankans away." That state-run Daily News

berated India's rioting fans on its front page for starting fires in the stands and throwing missiles at Sri Lankan offspinner Muttiah Muralitharan. "We invited the Indian spectators to come to Sri

Lanka and watch our cricket fans behave not only in victory. but in defeat," the Daily News said. "Well done Sri Lanka we are proud of you great sons." President Chandrika Ku-

maratunga was the first to congratulate the team, hoping Sri Lanka would be able to go all the way.

Businesses were at a standstill and some offices half desterted after the game began with almost every Sri Lankan glued to the television or radio.

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I D B W W R Z X Yesterday's Cryptoquip: 19TH-CENTURY AU-THOR AMAZINGLY ADAPTED TO COMPUTER AGE: E-MAIL ZOLA.

Today's Cryptoquip clue: V equals Y The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short

words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

