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## Bangladesh earn some respect

From Nizamuddin Ahmed at Dublin

MAY 21: Clontarf Cricket Stadium is some fifteen minutes' drive from Dublin city centre. This being just a small club, where rugby rules, facilities are very much wanting for an international cricket match. The Press Box in a tent with six openings covered with transparent plastic. Outside, the high wind rattled the large tent and there are fears of being swept away.

Not unlikely, considering the wet weather with which the day started. For once, well more than once, the weatherman seemed to have got it right. Showers were predicted throughout the day with occasional sunny breaks. ICC announced a delayed 11.15 am start, but that was followed by another downpour. Both team came on to the field at around 11 am to limber up. The sun finally smiled on the sparse crowd soon after.

In contrast to Chelmsford, the crowd here was predominantly non-Bangladeshi. Fewer flags, lesser support. Bangladesh Betar commentator Shamim Ashraf managed to

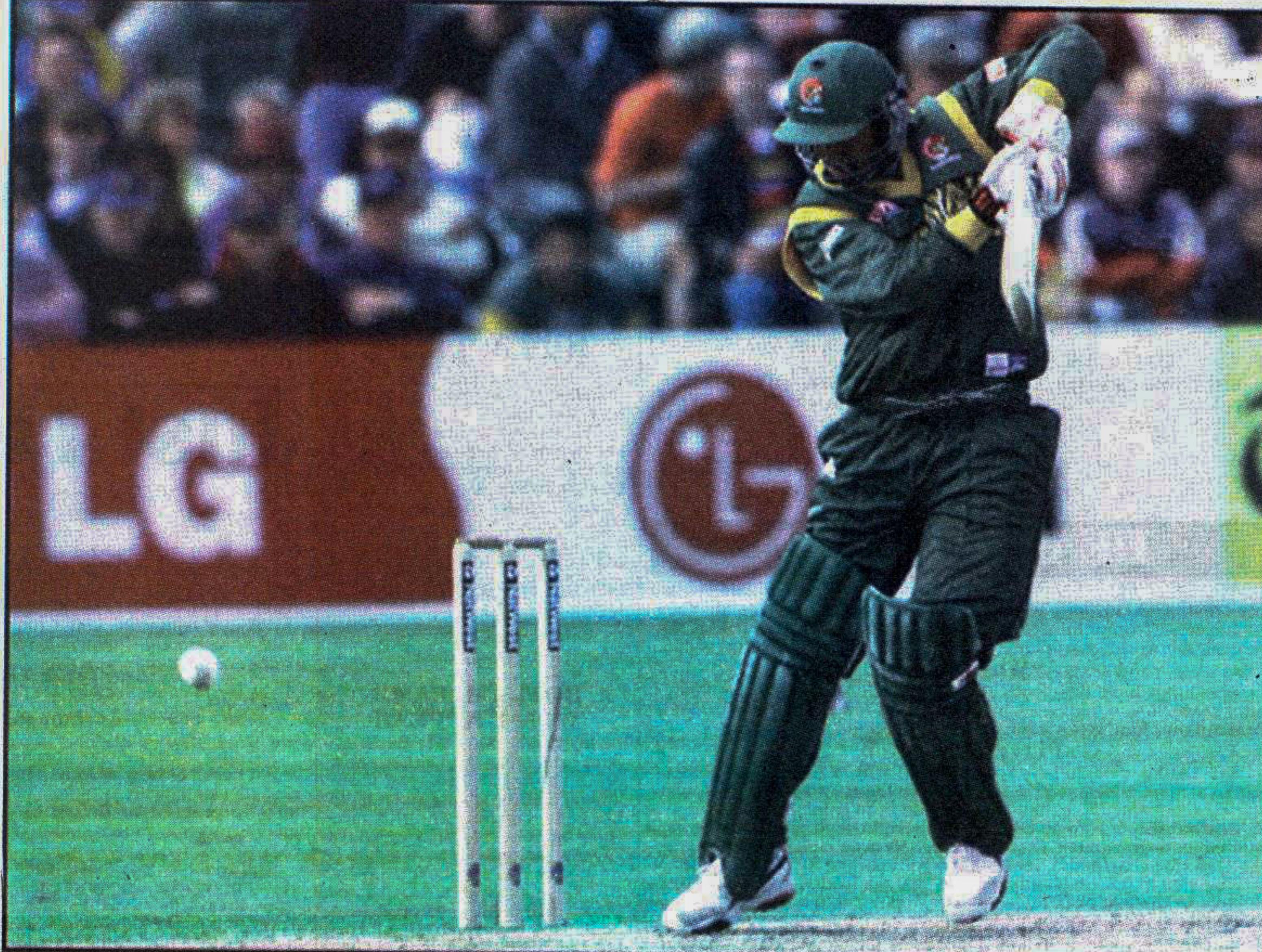
convince the hosts the need to fly a flag of the Asian nation as there was none. Finally, the red and green flag was flown on the same mast as that of the West Indians; the rugby club flag would not come down.

Bangladesh won the toss and, with the weather promised to be threatening, Aminul Islam elected to bat. But, opinion was divided whether he should have made the West Indies bat and let his bowlers take advantage of the windy conditions.

About a hundred Bangladeshis intermingled with the near by 3000 strong crowd when the match got off to a late start at 11.30. It was very windy and the umpires were having difficulty in keeping the balls on the stumps.

Walsh and Dillon opening the attack for the Caribbean did not appear to unnerve the Bangladeshi openers. Shahriar Hossain and Mehrab Hossain. Both the batsmen began by middling the ball until Shahriar failed to get out of the way of a rising delivery from Walsh. Campbell made no mistake.

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Bangladesh batsman Akram Khan cuts one to the fence. — AFP photo

## Lesson planned for Lord's

LONDON, May 21 (Reuters/Internet): Surrey cricket club plan to show their London rivals at Lord's how to stage a cricket carnival on Saturday when England meet South Africa at the Oval.

England's opening match against Sri Lanka was billed as a sell-out but dozens of the best seats at Lord's were left empty after members refused to pay for them. This time tickets unclaimed by Surrey members have been sold to the public.

"We wrote to the members in March telling them they had until April 12 to claim their tickets... On Saturday there will be a packed house," Surrey's chief executive Paul Sheldon said.

The Oval, a green oasis behind one of London's busiest road intersections, has always played second fiddle to Lord's, in wealthy St John's Wood north of the river Thames.

But it has none of the snobishness of cricket's "headquarters" where old school ties abound and women were admitted as members only recently - and then grudgingly.

The Surrey club has increased its capacity by 2,000 to 18,500 in time for Saturday's plum tie. Dozens of police will be drafted in, stretching the

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## Hot shots v hopeful hosts

LONDON, May 21: "Stay calm" is South Africa's motto in the 1999 cricket World Cup. Their equanimity will be tested again at the Oval on Saturday when they meet England in the tournament's biggest match so far, reports AFP.

The unbeaten South Africans, whose status as favourites was enhanced when closest rivals Australia were beaten by New Zealand in Cardiff, have already had to overcome several challenges to their character.

In both their group A matches there have been times, according to skipper Hansie Cronje, "when we could easily have lost our way."

South Africa lost both

tosses, against India and Sri Lanka, and both times made bad starts.

What's happened is in the past. You have got to stay calm and try and get on with winning.



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Against Sri Lanka, a seam-wicket, poor strokes and some dubious umpiring decisions combined to see them slump to 122 for eight.

Cronje said such situations were a test of a team's mettle. "It is no use feeling sorry for your

the game."

The theme was echoed by Bob Woolmer, who said: "Whatever happens, it is important that the players remain calm. That's the way you win games, you have to ride out these

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