

# A collective non-effort

BISHWAJIT ROY



A batsman who scored a first-ball duck had to appear at the press meet yesterday to say all about his side's lacklustre efforts in the second and final Test. It was of course Bangladesh vice-captain Mohammad Ashraful.

The ace right-hander at least could claim that he showed the courage in facing all the uncomfortable questions from the reporters when his captain Habibul Bashar, for the second successive day, escaped to save his blushes.

While everybody were eagerly trying to know of Bashar's version about his outrageous decision to field first, the 34-year old skipper preferred to throw in his deputy into the heat giving him an impression of the tough times that are ahead. And what came from the future Bangladesh captain was all contradictory.

"Their bowlers did an excellent

job but our defence was also poor," was the explanation of his team's top-order collapse.

Although he dismissed that fatigue was behind the disaster, the ace right-hander however admitted that they learned another lesson of how tough Test cricket is.

"It is just another lesson for us that anything can happen in Test cricket," observed Ashraful.

What happened on the second day of the final Test at the Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday was not unexpected after Bangladesh think-tank's brainless decision of not batting first at the tailor-made pitch in hot and humid conditions.

India buried the home side under a mountain of runs (610-3dec) and then as expected, got the exhausted Bangladesh top-order out in the middle wanting to ensure that the Tigers had experienced their worst possible time in their return to Test cricket after 13 months.

After having fielded for almost two days under extreme heat, the local boys looked completely out of sorts when Rahul Dravid asked

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BANGLADESH-INDIA 2ND TEST SCOREBOARD					
Scoreboard at stumps on the second day of the second and final Test between Bangladesh and India at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur on Saturday: INDIA: First Innings (overnight 326-0)					
Dinesh Karthik c Habibul Bashar b Mashrafe Bin Mortaza	129	212	16	0	
Vasim Jaffer retired hurt	138	229	17	0	
Rahul Dravid c Javed Omar b Mohammad Rafique	129	176	15	1	
Sachin Tendulkar not out	122	226	8	1	
Sourav Ganguly c Rajin Saleh b Mohammad Rafique	15	32	1	0	
Mahendra Dhoni not out	51	50	3	4	
Extras: (b-7, lb-7, w-5, nb-7)	26				
Total: (For 3 wickets decl in 153 overs)	610				

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PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

NOWHERE TO HIDE: Bangladesh captain Habibul Bashar (C) walks back to the dressing room after he was out for just four runs on the second day of the second Test at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.



## Paolo Maldini

(AC Milan captain)  
*"This club has provided me with a lot of amazing emotions and this is another example. We've been the best team in Italy, Europe and the world over the last 20 years and the cycle hasn't ended yet. We've got something different to other clubs. We've had this special mentality for some time."*

After winning the UEFA Champions League title.



### BTV & NEO Sports

Bangladesh v India  
 Second Test, Day 3  
 Live from 10:00 am

### ESPN

England v West Indies  
 Second Test, Day 3  
 Live from 4:00 pm

### STAR Sports

French Open

First Round

Live from 8:00 pm

Primera Liga

Gimnastic v Atletico Madrid

Live from 11:00 pm

Sevilla v Zaragoza

Live from 1:00 am (Monday)



### Kai-Altech Super League Cricket

Abahani v Mohammedan

Venue: Fatullah Cricket Stadium

Victoria v Biman

Venue: BKSP

Sonargaon v Old DOHS

Venue: Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium

## Self-belief inspires Karthik

SPORTS REPORTER



Stadium, as it was the player's maiden Test hundred.

For master batsman Sachin Tendulkar (37th) and India skipper Rahul Dravid (24th) it was just another century in their prolific run spree in Test cricket but the 129-run innings of the Tamil Nadu batter meant much more than that.

Among all of the stalwarts the 21-year old batsman showed his character in tough conditions during his five and half an hour stay at the middle to give the impression that he could be a good solution for the struggling opening slot.

"I'm trying my best to become a very good opener," declared the

young batsman, who looks shy off the field but maintains a remarkable contrast of stroke making on it.

"I'm trying to be as consistent as possible and that can be done if I work a lot with my batting in terms of footwork and in terms of mindset. Another very important thing is the transition from ODI's to Tests. So, I am definitely working on that and I am happy with the way things are going now," he explained as the reason behind his success.

"Self-belief is definitely a big part in all this," he added.

Karthik had to leave the ground on the first day with cramps while not out on 82 runs and only returned to the field yesterday after his skipper Dravid was the first victim in the innings, to give the much-awaited breakthrough to the home team.

"It was tough because the condition was really hard and you know I was running a bit of a temperature. But I was taking it very

easy and I couldn't probably feel the cramps in my hamstring if I told myself to keep playing in a sense that I was close to my 100. It was important and I'm happy at the time," said the soft-spoken wicketkeeper-cum batsman.

Karthik had a lucky escape on the second day, after an early survival in the first day when wicket-keeper Khaled Mashud put him down, on 126, though he did not last long adding three more runs before miscuing a pull against Mashrafe Bin Mortaza that found Habibul Bashar at midwicket, took a cheeky single against Rafique to complete his hundred in 180 balls that contained thirteen sweetly-timed boundaries.

"Actually because the ball wasn't coming onto the bat it was not easy to play some shots which I should have played," he said.

Despite the fact that his side tightened the grip on the home team, Karthik was not ready to predict that they are going to finish

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## Pietersen plunders Windies



AFP, Leeds

Kevin Pietersen's maiden Test double century put England in a dominant position on the second day of the second Test against West Indies here Saturday.

His 226, the highest Test score by an England batsman for 17 years, was the centrepiece of the hosts' 570 for seven declared.

At tea, West Indies were 66 for two - still needing a further 305 to avoid the follow-on target of 371 after Ryan Sidebottom had taken his first Test wickets to remove both openers.

Devon Smith was 22 not out and Sylvester Joseph 13 not out.

West Indies' woes were compounded by the absence of captain Ramnaresh Sarwan from his usual No 4 spot after he was ruled unfit to bat following a shoulder injury while fielding Friday.

The tourists were already without senior batsman Shivnarine Chanderpaul, ruled out of this match with a right knee problem. Pietersen, who received good support from Matt Prior (75) in a sixth-wicket stand of 160, went to 200 with a two against Chris Gayle, the only spinner in an otherwise unthreatening all right-arm seam attack.

The South Africa-born batsman, fortunate to be stumped off a tight no-ball on 20, then lofted Gayle for six over long-off.

Liam Plunkett eased past his previous Test best of 28 against a tiring attack where pace bowlers

Daren Powell, Corey Collymore and Jerome Taylor all conceded more than 100 runs each.

Pietersen, 26, was eventually out when he carved medium-pace

Dwayne Bravo to Taylor at extra-cover, his exit prompting the declaration.

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PHOTO: AFP

England's Kevin Pietersen (L) celebrates his first double century during the second day of the second Test against the West Indies at Headingley yesterday.

### LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

Tangail reached the final of the Western Union under-18 National Football Championship after a hard-fought 2-1 win over Noakhali at the Sathkira Stadium yesterday.

After trailing to a second-half goal from Noakhali striker Shahidul Arif, Tangail created enough chances as Mohammad Awwal struck a penalty to level the scores in the 86th minute. After nine minutes of extra time, Rafiqul Islam struck the winner for Tangail in the 99th minute after seeing another penalty being smartly saved by Noakhali goalkeeper Didarul Islam.

A goalless first-half saw some chances created by Tangail but the game sprang to life when Tangail's Ripon Mia had his headed goal disallowed by the referee for having collided with the goalkeeper.

The second semifinal will be played today at the same venue between hosts Sathkira and BKSP.

### GRANDMASTERS CHESS

Local Grandmasters, International Masters and FIDE Masters along with other international Grandmasters will take part in the eighth United Insurance and Leasing Grandmaster Chess tournament at the NSC conference room from today.

The event will be held in ten rounds of Swiss League system and a total of 5,000 US dollars will be given as prize money.

All this was revealed at a press conference ahead of the event where president of Bangladesh

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## Vaughan savours comeback ton



AFP, Leeds

England captain Michael Vaughan said scoring a century on his return to Test cricket was as "fine a feeling as I've ever felt in the game".

Vaughan marked his return to the Test arena after 18 months on the sidelines with 103 in front of his Headingley home crowd -- something he said he felt "destined" to achieve -- as England scored 366 for five on the opening day of the second Test against West Indies here Friday.

The 32-year-old batsman hadn't played a Test since appearing against Pakistan in Lahore in December 2005 after a career-threatening knee injury and a hamstring problem left him a frustrated spectator.

And just when it seemed he was about to return to the team, a broken finger sustained while batting in the county championship kept him out of the side for the drawn first Test of this four-match series at Lord's.

But Vaughan made good on his decision to bat first after winning the toss with his 16th century in his 65th Test, his fourth against West Indies and first at this level at Headingley.

He wasn't alone with Kevin Pietersen, who put on 163 with his

captain, 130 not out at stumps.

"That's as fine a feeling as I've ever felt in the game, the England captain told reporters after stumps.

"It was almost destiny for me to get a hundred on comeback on my home ground. I had 18 months out of Test match cricket. I know I'm a good player, but you still have to go out there and do it.

"When you've had such a long lay-off, of course there are doubts in the back of your mind -- whether you're going to see the ball, whether you'll react, whether the feet are going to move under pressure.

"Probably the most pleasing aspect of today is that I scored a hundred under pressure.

He added: "To produce it under that pressure is why it stands with the innings I played at Old Trafford (when he scored 166 against Australia during the 2005 Ashes, his previous Test hundred). Both are very special."

Vaughan also paid tribute to the medical staff who helped him regain fitness. "The knee surgeon who did the operation was here today, and it was the only day he was going to come. Thanks to Nick London and all the ECB medical team for getting me back in this condition."

Looking at the match situation, Vaughan said: "We are in a great position as a team -- 366 for five on

the first day at Headingley."

And he readily acknowledged Pietersen's role in England's total. "He's a tremendous player. He has an effect on the opposition, because he's so confident in the way he plays and hits the ball in strange areas," Vaughan said after the South Africa-born batsman had scored his second Test hundred in as many innings after his 109 at Lord's and his eighth in all.

West Indies suffered two injury blows. Before play began senior batsman Shivnarine Chanderpaul was ruled out with tendonitis in his right knee.

And in the final session captain Ramnaresh Sarwan had to leave the field with a shoulder injury after falling heavily while trying to stop a boundary.

Sarwan was subsequently taken to hospital where he underwent a scan. "We still don't know what the scans will reveal but we are very optimistic he will be able to join us in this game," said West Indies vice-captain Daren Ganga.

"We are going to remain optimistic until we hear what's happening."

He added: "England are definitely in front but we are still in the game. Getting five wickets today (Friday) still puts us in the reckoning in terms of getting them out for a total we can overhaul."



IAN BOTHAM

recognition of outstanding public service."

Botham was inspired after visiting a hospital in Taunton, Somerset, to have treatment for a broken toe. He walked into a children's ward and was told they were dying of leukaemia. The fatality rate was 80 per cent then, but these days it is 20 per cent, thanks in part to research his efforts have helped to fund.

His first charity walk was in 1985, a 900-mile trek from John O'Groats to Land's End, and he was on another last year, after turning 50, when Cricinfo's Andrew Miller joined him for the London leg.

Miller recalls: "Botham's natural walking pace would put most of London's joggers to shame. By the end of the walk, Piers Morgan (the former Mirror editor) looked

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