

SPORT

DHAKA THURSDAY NOVEMBER 11, 2010, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net

Drogba suffering from malaria

Chelsea striker Didier Drogba says he has had malaria for a month but is only now regaining full fitness because the illness was finally diagnosed on Monday. Drogba says he had to "adapt" his game away from scoring goals to concentrate on his team play because the intermittent fevers brought on by the illness sapped his strength. The Ivory Coast international has scored just once in the past month, netting the second goal from the penalty spot in a 4-1 home win over Spartak Moscow in the Champions League on November 3.



Ganguly's timely return

BISHWAJIT ROY

Sourav Ganguly took a few moments to recall that historic day when he went out to toss with Naimur Rahman 10 years ago at the Bangabandhu National Stadium. It was November 10, 2000; a memorable day for the country's cricket as Bangladesh began life as a Test-playing nation on that particular day.

"I must confess I can't remember why this day is significant," responded Ganguly when asked whether he could remember the day's importance.

The former India captain, who arrived yesterday to grace the ICC Cricket World Cup 2011 countdown function in Dhaka, dealt with the googly while speaking with the reporters at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport.

Once given a hint, he quickly recalled: "Yes, I can remember everything now. It was Bangladesh's inaugural Test match and they scored 400-plus runs in the first innings," replied Ganguly.

It was also a small piece of history as it was not just Ganguly's first Test as India's captain, but the first time in cricket history when two Bengali-speaking skippers led their sides.

India's most successful Test captain believed Bangladesh have improved a lot in the last 10 years since they have been elevated into the elite club.

"There were some good players in the squad when we played the first Test against them but there are a number of quality players in the team now. The recent performance against New Zealand showed the real sign of improvement," said Ganguly.

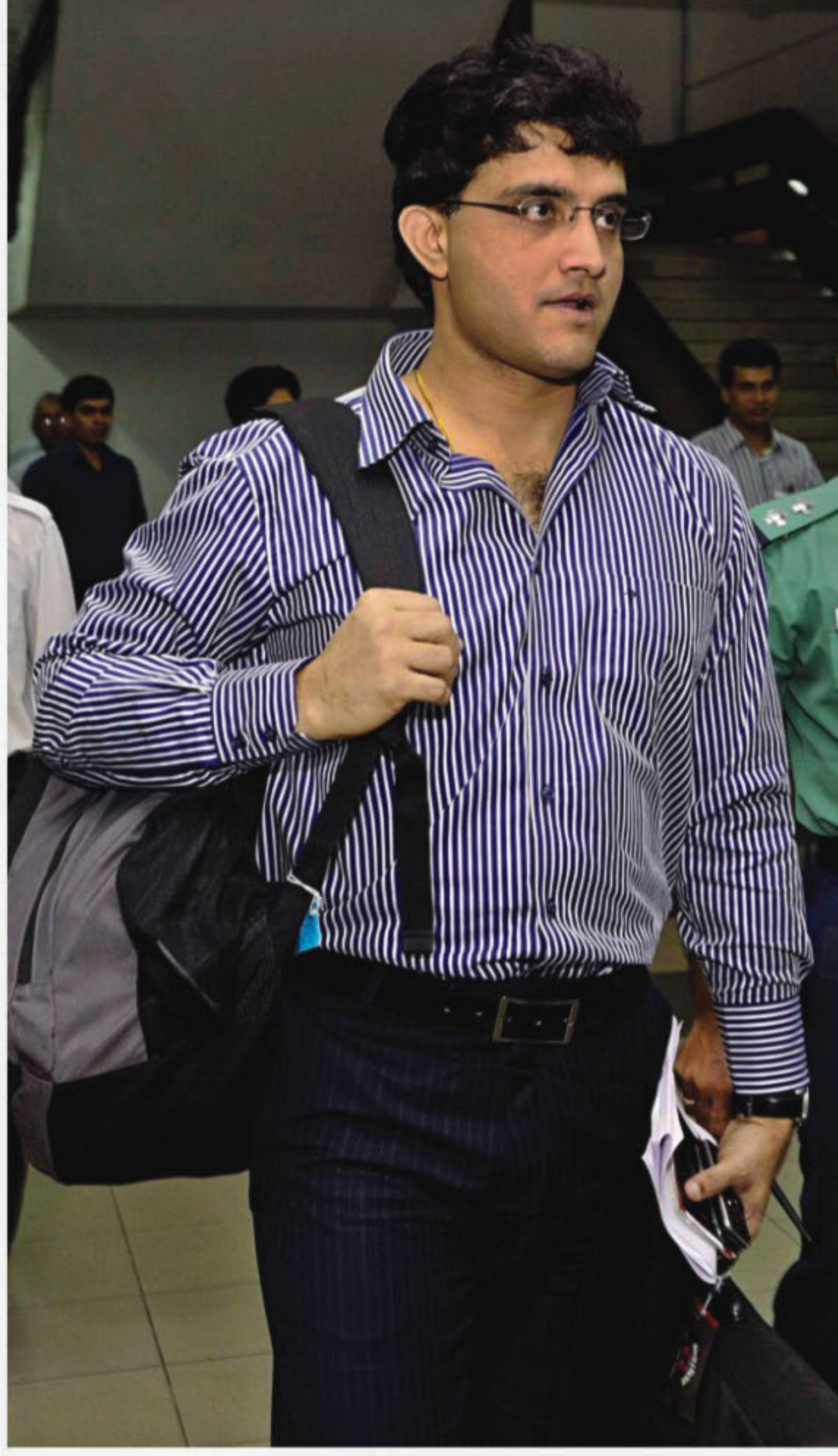
"I keenly follow Bangladesh cricket and watched all the matches against New Zealand. The 4-0 scoreline was amazing. I think their performance has significantly improved in the last one year. There are young players like Shakib [Al Hasan] and Tamim [Iqbal] who are showing their characters," he added.

"The good sign is that the players are performing but there are still a lot of areas they must improve on.

"I believe they will become a much better side soon if they continue their improvement. The improvement in the longer-version might not be satisfactory but you can't expect everything overnight," he said.

Ganguly was confident about Bangladesh's success in the upcoming World Cup as he thinks that the slow bowlers have an advantage in home conditions.

"Staging the World Cup and performing in it is a totally different thing. I firmly believe Bangladesh has the quality to play good cricket in the coming



Former India captain Sourav Ganguly arrives at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport yesterday. The great left-handed batsman came here to attend a ceremony to mark the start of 100-day countdown to the ICC Cricket World Cup 2011.

ICC CRICKET WORLD CUP HISTORY

The first men's cricket World Cup (the women's tournament was the first such global cricket event, held two years before) was held in England in the summer of 1975, when limited overs cricket was still a novelty, and a form of the game not taken too seriously by practitioners of the more serious business of Test cricket.

The format for the tournament would be unbelievable now with the whole tournament lasting a total of fifteen days and containing only eight teams. Of the eight, Sri Lanka and East Africa were not Test-playing nations. They qualified through the ICC Trophy.

At that time, one-day matches in England were played over 60 overs. The day of cricket itself was structured differently to what it is not. Along Test match lines, lunch was taken after 30 overs (2 hours) in the first innings, and tea taken at a similar stage of the second innings.

The teams were divided into two groups, playing each other once and the top two in each group progressing to the semifinals stage.

CHAMPIONS: WEST INDIES

Throughout they were the most dominant team in the tournament, obliterating every obstacle in their path to World Cup glory. The early seeds of West Indian dominance that prevailed over the best part of the next two decades were sown in this tournament. Clive Lloyd, the powerful left-handed batsman, commanded a team with an even mix of youth and experience, all brimming with talent.

With a top six comprising Fredericks, Greenidge, Kallicharan, Kanhai, Lloyd and Richards, the West Indian batting was in safe hands. Richards, the master blaster to be, was still in his first year of international cricket, and the brunt of the scoring was done by the likes of Kallicharan, Kanhai, Murray, Fredericks and Lloyd, who weighed in with a tour de force against Australia in the final. Kanhai was the old man of the side, and bowed out of international cricket after his sparkling half-century in the final.

It was their bowling, though, that did the most damage; they bowled their opponents out for less than 200 in three of their five matches. Their attack boasted 4 high-quality pace bowlers with the great Andy Roberts, the most economical bowler of the tournament, leading the charge with genuine pace and cunning. His opening partner, Bernard Julien was joint leading wicket-taker for the West Indies along with Keith Boyce, and second highest for the tournament. Vanburn Holder was a fast-medium bowler, unusual for a West Indian at a time when speed dominated. He was nonetheless a steady bowler relying on accuracy and determination. Clive Lloyd with his medium pacers, and Richards with his leg spin provided steady backup. Master spinner Lance Gibbs played in only one match - their opening encounter against Sri Lanka.

They breezed through to the final, and looked in trouble only once - during their one-wicket victory over Pakistan in the league stages. The final itself was a nail-biting affair after Australia threatened an unlikely victory with a 41-run 10th wicket stand, but glory was not to be denied the Caribbean Kings as they took the first World Cup by 17 runs, and set the stage for the dominance to follow.

Rajshahi saunter, Khulna stutter

Cricket SPORTS REPORTER

Khulna made heavy weather of their chase but still prevailed over Barisal by three wickets in their National Cricket League second phase game at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Rajshahi, on the other hand, had no such problems in their 79-run victory over Dhaka at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

The win made sure both teams drew level with Dhaka on eight points from seven outings (the first phase points are added to the second phase). Barisal are top of the table with 10 points from as many games.

KHULNA-BARISAL

Opener Nazmus Sadat's 71 held the Khulna innings together after Barisal set them a 214-run target. In his 93-ball knock, the left-hander hit five boundaries and two sixes, mainly playing a holding role while wickets fell whenever a partnership gathered pace.

Sadat himself was the seventh man out at the end of the 38th over when left-armers Monir Hossain trapped him in front. That could have spelt trouble for Khulna but Ziaur Rahman and Dollar Mahmud calmed their nerves with three timely blows, two of which were huge sixes by the towering Zia.

Shakib Al Hasan, playing in his second game,



Rajshahi players celebrate their victory over Dhaka in their National Cricket League match at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Tourism set for cricket boost

SPORTS REPORTER

In the quest of promoting Bangladesh's tourism as well as increasing the country's image, the Civil Aviation and Tourism Ministry has signed an agreement with the ICC Development Limited yesterday to become its local partner for Bangladesh's part of the 2011 ICC World Cup.

The nearly Tk 5 crore deal will allow the newly-formed Bangladesh Tourism Board to showcase co-hosts Bangladesh to the world during the World Cup eight matches to be played in Bangladesh.

As per the agreement, the board will receive the broadcast rights to showcase the country's brand and the beautiful Bangladesh theme in all ICC broadcasting and in all the products sponsored by the ICC and the official broadcast partners of ICC. TV channels Star Sports and ESPN, will consequently air television commercials on tourism in Bangladesh.

Campbell Jamieson, the ICC commercial general manager and Sarder Abul Kalam, a joint secretary of the Civil Aviation and Tourism Ministry, signed the agreement on behalf of their respective organisations at the Hotel Sheraton yesterday.

"It is a remarkable day as we have just started the relationship with the tourism board and I hope we will work closely with them to make the event an outstanding success," said Campbell after signing the agreement.

The officials of the tourism board unveiled a plan to emphasise the historical spots, sites, culture and products of Bangladesh to the world during the event. In this regard, the entire territory has been split into eight zones.

The board will also organise a presentation on the beautiful spots in the country for the foreign journalists and there are plans to take them to Sundarban. The plans also include setting up information booths and branding the airport, hotels and venues to help the tourists.

Bangladesh Cricket Board president AHM Mustafa Kamal said they have more plans to promote Bangladesh's tourism through cricket in the future by building a stadium in Cox's Bazar.

"Cricket has turned into a national event, which provides us the best opportunity to showcase the country to the world during the World Cup," said Kamal.

Civil aviation and Tourism secretary Shafique Alam Mehdi and World Cup 2011 central organising committee convener Mahbubul Anam also spoke on the occasion.

Bangladesh hoping against hope

SPORTS REPORTER

Smarting from two successive defeats, an injury-hit Bangladesh U23 football team will take on Hong Kong in their Group E last match of the 16th Asian Games at Huadu Stadium today.

Bangladesh's bid to qualify for the 16-team second round was all but shattered after losing to Uzbekistan and United Arab Emirates by identical 3-0 margins and they can only dream of playing the second round as one of the four best third-place finishers in the event of a hugely unlikely occurrence in the Group E matches today.

Bangladesh will have to win against Hong Kong by a huge margin and the 2004 champions Uzbekistan must lose to UAE also by very wide margin.

UAE and Hong Kong are level on four points each from two matches; Uzbekistan have three points from two outings and Bangladesh have none after two matches.

The statistic is also not in favour of Bangladesh, whose

THE FINAL COUNTDOWN

Counting today, there is exactly a hundred days left until India and Bangladesh square off against each other to mark the start of the ICC Cricket World Cup 2011.

February 19, 2011 has emerged a special day for sport aficionados and the general populace alike. For the first time ever, Bangladesh will be taking part in the World Cup not only as competitors but also as hosts. It will be a landmark achievement for the country. Public interest has consequently peaked and even as the official countdown for the World Cup begins, The Daily Star Sport also starts its very own World Cup countdown, with an in-depth trip down memory lane. Over the next century of days, we will bring you a wide variety of special stories, snippets and news items. First up though, we rewind back some thirty-five years to England in 1975 for what was then known as the Prudential Cup.

SPORTS POLL
WEEKLY QUESTION
Who do you think should be Bangladesh's captain in the World Cup?
Visit the sports page of www.thedailystar.net to cast vote
Follow The Daily Star Sport on twitter
www.twitter.com/dsport



Campbell Jamieson (L), International Cricket Council's commercial general manager, and Sarder Abul Kalam (R), a joint secretary of the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, exchange papers after signing an agreement for the latter to become ICC's Bangladesh partner in the ICC Cricket World Cup 2011 at the Sheraton Hotel yesterday.

A trip down memory lane

AFP, Guangzhou

The Asian Games have come a long way since the concept was formalised in New Delhi in 1949.

When they open in Guangzhou on Friday, more than 10,000 athletes from 45 countries will be involved, competing in a record 42 sports. It will be the biggest Asiad ever with a television audience of billions.

In contrast, the first Games in Delhi in 1951 attracted just 11 countries which took part in six sports.

The concept though gathered momentum and the 2nd Games in Manila in 1954 highlighted the tournament's growth, with eight additional countries and regions taking part, bringing the tally to 19.

Although cycling was dropped, there were now eight sports on the program,

with the addition of boxing, shooting and wrestling.

Korea, which has been one of the most successful teams at the Games, competed for the first time.

Four years later in Tokyo, the numbers had swollen to 1,422 athletes competing, with tennis, volleyball, table tennis, cycling and hockey taking the sports tally to 13.

This was also the first time a Torch Relay took place, adding ceremonial flair to the proceedings.

Japan continued its domination of the Games by topping the medals table.

Political unrest in Indonesia in 1962 saw the Jakarta Games reduced to 16 nations, but by 1966 the impetus was back again and the Bangkok Games were seen as a big success.

India famously beat arch-rival Pakistan by a solitary goal to take the hockey gold.

Bangkok again hosted the event in 1970 after South Korea, for political and financial reasons, pulled out and Thais,

still enthralled by the atmosphere of four years earlier, proved ecstatic about hosting it again.

Yachting made its debut, and in a repeat performance of its first Games, the host nation finished third in the medals table.

New ground was broken when Tehran was chosen to host the tournament in 1974. It was the largest Asian Games up till then with 25 countries and regions taking part, and the first time it was held in the Middle East.

Fencing and gymnastics were added and for the seventh consecutive Asian Games, Japan finished top of the medals table.

Back to Bangkok in 1978 when both Singapore and Islamabad pulled out as hosts for financial and political reasons.

Archery and bowling were added, which helped boost the number of competitors to more than 3,800.

Once again Japan was triumphant, but China and Korea were closing the gap, with Japanese domination approaching its end.