**BEYOND THE BOUNDARY** 

## Sheer brilliance, little else besides

SHAKIL KASEM



When we are all done with the prosaic and mundane, and by that I mean the ubiquitous statistics icc cricket World Cup related to a cricket match, one element stands out; a brilliance so shining and glorious that it

shrouded all and everything into pale insignificance. Virender Sehwag played one of the most sublime of innings in one day cricket. World Cup 2011 was set alight at Mirpur and its odds on that we may not see the likes of this innings anywhere, least of all in the World Cup, for a very very long time.

The shadow of Sachin Tendulkar has been like a brooding cloudburst over the Indian batting lineup for years and years. For anyone to emerge from this shadow with any semblance of self respect unscathed is an achievement in itself. The time was here and now. Having run out Tendulkar who was looking so very ominous, Virender Sehwag had the stage all to himself. Those cliched expressions eulogising Sehwag's hand eye coordination, reflexes, et al, are just poor apologies to justify his stand-and-deliver style of power hitting; not so much power these days, as much as the manifestation of a buccaneering spirit gone amok. 175 of the most finely crafted gems were posted on the board as Sehwag subtly but surely molested an insipid and lacklustre Bangladesh attack. When he was eventually dismissed in the 48th over having hobbled his way in the butt end of his innings, anywhere else in the world he would have been applauded all the way to the physio's table. Alas, it was not to be; the partisan crowd, who were witness to one of the modern day classics of this game, failed to realise they were among the chosen ones who were lucky to have been at Mirpur that day. A shame, this realisation was not part of the plot.

Bangladesh is increasingly becoming a prisoner of its own shadow. Either it does not acknowledge its own potential, or it is simply petrified of looking at opportunities square in the eye. Having won the toss and electing to field meant the die was cast. This was a decision of a team determined to commit collective hara kiri. An attack with two raw and inexperienced pacers, a spinner short and two part timers turning their arms with what can charitably referred to as apologies for off spin, were expected to trouble the might of a batting line up which has been there, seen it all and even bought the T-shirt for this kind of a batting track. Predictably, all were put to the sword. Very rarely have all bowlers in an attack have averaged six plus in each over they had bowled. In keeping with the trend in our stock market very little heed was paid to the fundamentals of the game.

The Bangladesh run chase had begun in frenetic fashion. While all of India focussed on Tamim Iqbal, it was the attack from the flanks, namely the flailing bat of Imrul Kayes, that took India, in particular Sreesanth by surprise. In a complete reversal of roles, Imrul blasted Bangladesh to 50 in just 5 overs. Inexplicably Tamim never emerged from his shell and his 70 at the end of the day could have been translated into much had he played or been just his normal self. But the graffiti on the wall had read 370 and it was quite a long distance away from the reach of a team that was game and trying hard to atone for the sins of the afternoon. The night darkened, and the Tigers simply lost sight of their prey.



Sri Lanka batsman Mahela Jayawardene pulls one during his blitzkrieg hundred against Canada at the Suriyawewa Mahinda Rajapakse Stadium in Hambantota yesterday.

# SL annihilate Canada

AFP, Hambantota



Veteran batsman Mahela Jayawardene scored a sparkling ICC Cricket World Cup century as Sri Lanka crushed Canada by 210

runs in their opening World Cup match at Mahinda Rajapakse Stadium on Sunday.

The 33-year-old scored his 100 off 80 balls for his 13th one-day hundred -- his second in World Cups and the fourth fastest in the history of the event -- which boosted his team's total to 332-7, much to the enjoyment of a sell-out 35,000 crowd.

New-ball bowlers Nuwan Kulasekara (3-16) and Thisara Prerea (3-24) combined to bundle Canada out for 122 in 36.5 overs.

The lop-sided contest once again gave weight to the International Cricket Council's decision to cut

down the next World Cup -- to be cohosted by Australia and New Zealand in 2015 -- to the top 10 teams, minus minor nations.

Earlier in the day New Zealand

had mauled Kenya by 10 wickets in Chennai, after bowling out Kenya for just 69. Canada, who promised much by

putting up a valiant fight against England during their 16-run defeat in a warm-up last week, found the co-hosts too tough to handle in both batting and bowling in the Group A clash.

Skipper Kumar Sangakkara mixed up his bowling options as Canada lost wickets at regular intervals once their most experienced batsman John Davison had been bowled off Perera's first delivery of the second

Hard-hitting Rizwan Cheema top-scored with 37, including two

Muttiah Muralidaran, while skipper Ashish Bagai, with 22, showed some resistance.

with an invaluable third wicket partnership of 179 with Sangakkara, who made 92. Jayawardene and Sangakkara built on the platform set by opener

Tillakaratne Dilshan (50) after Sri Lanka won the toss at this new ground which became the 177th one-day venue. Jayawardene completed his hun-

dred with a single off spinner Davison after facing just 80 deliveries - the fastest by a Sri Lankan in the World Cup, beating Sanath Jayasuriya's 85-ball ton against Bangladesh at Port of Spain four years ago.

But Davison dismissed him in the

sixes off world record wicket taker same over, caught at short fine-leg after Jayawardene had hit nine boundaries and a six. Sri Lanka lost a cluster of wickets

Earlier, Jayawardene laid the in the death overs, but Angelo foundation for Sri Lanka's big total Mathews (21) and Thilan Samarwaweera (18 not out) ensured they got past 300. Dilshan (50) and Upul Tharanga

put on a quick 63 for the first wicket by the 12th over before a mix-up between the two sent Tharanga back, run out for 19. Dilshan fell just after scoring his

third World Cup half-century, holing out at deep cover to Davison after hitting eight boundaries off 59 deliv-

It was then left to Jayawardene and Sangakkara to punish a hapless Canadian attack, depleted by an injury to spearhead Henry Osinde who walked off the field due to a

**SEE PAGE 17 COL 8** 

conditions after the 117-run

defeat to India in a warm-up

after the India game," he

rest of the tournament. It is

pretty tough to get used to."

KENYA: 69 all out in 23.5

**SCORES IN BRIEF** 

"It had been tough for us

game last week.

### Mahela might go after WC

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka vice-captain Mahela Jayawardene said Sunday he may quit international cricket after the World Cup.

"This will be my fourth, and quite possibly, last World Cup, depending on form, fitness and the plans of the selectors in 2015," Jayawardene told the Sunday Times newspaper.

Jayawardene, 33, a stylish right-hand batsman, captained the side that reached the final of the 2007 World Cup when they lost to Australia, shattering their hopes of emulating the 1996 titlewinning team.

"In 2007, we played really well and came agnoisingly close to repeating the heroics of our 1996 team. We've lost some superstars, but gained a really talented group of cricketers," he said, referring to 1996 stars like Sanath Jayasuriya, Chaminda Vaas, who have been left out of the current

However, record bowler Muttiah Muralitharan remains the sole survivor of the 1996 dream team and will also be playing his last World Cup. Muralitharan announced his retirement from international cricket

last July. Sri Lanka were taking on Canada in their opening match on Sunday at the newly-built Mahinda Rajapakse Stadium in Hambantota.

Pakistan, Kenya, Australia, Zimbabwe and New Zealand make up Group A.

# New Zealand toy with Kenya

AFP, Chennai



New Zealand thrashed Kenya by 10 wickets in ICC Cricket World Cup the World Cup

on Sunday, making a mockery of the African nation's campaign to feature at the slimmed-down 2015 edition.

Fast bowler Hamish Bennett finished with 4-16, his best figures in nine oneday internationals, while Tim Southee and Jacob Oram took three wickets each to bowl out the minnows for just 69 off just 23.5 overs.

It was Kenya's lowest World Cup total and the fifth

worst in tournament history.

Their capitulation came at the worst possible time for the sport's second-tier nations with the International Cricket Council determined to have a 10-nation World Cup, instead of the current 14 teams, in four years' time.

New Zealand openers Martin Guptill (39) and Brendon McCullum (26) raced to the target in only eight overs to bring an early end to the game played before near-empty stands in 30-degree heat at the 50,000capacity Chidambaram

Stadium. Guptill hit two sixes and

knock. McCullum, batting in his favourite position, hit fours fours, three of them in what turned out to be the Jimmy Kamande.

wicket, it was the areas to bounce back in tough

five fours in his 32-ball New Zealand bowled," said Kamande. "We've got to be more positive in whatever we do. They came very hard at us. We have to learn from

"I don't think it was the the match, said it was good

### final over by Kenya captain this performance today." "Hopefully it won't get Bennett, named man-ofmuch hotter than this for the

### **TEN WORST WC TOTALS**

Team	Total	Opposition	Venue	WC edition
Canada	36	Sri Lanka	Paarl	2003
Canada	45	England	Manchester	1979
Namibia	45	Australia	Potchefstroom	2003
Scotland	68	West Indies	Leicester	1999
Kenya	69	New Zealand	Chennai	2011
Pakistan	74	England	Adelaide	1992
Ireland	77	Sri Lanka	St George's	2007
Bermuda	78	Sri Lanka	Port of Spain	2007
Namibia	84	Pakistan	Kimberley	2003
Sri Lanka	86	West Indies	Manchester	1975

Cultion	
2003	overs (Waters 16, Obuya 14,
1979	Patel 16 not out; Southee 3-
2003	13, Bennett 4-16, Oram 3-2)
1999 2011	NEW ZEALAND: 72 for no
	loss in 8 overs (Guptill 39 not
1992	out, McCullum 26 not out)
2007	Result: New Zealand won by
2007	10 wickets.
2003	Man-of-the-match: Hamish
1975	Bennett.

## Kiwis keep feet on the ground

AFP, Chennai



New Zealand skipper Daniel Vettori said his team must not lower their guard against tougher opposition after cantering to an easy ICC Cricket World Cup 10-wicket win over Kenya in the World Cup on

Kiwi fast bowlers skittled the hapless African nation for 69 in 23.5 overs before knocking off the required runs in just eight overs at the Chidambaram Stadium for a winning start to their campaign.

"We didn't expect that the game would get over so quickly," Vettori said. "It was nice. We are happy with how we performed. But we don't expect all other matches to be this

"I think bowling full and straight is going to be the key in this part of world. We will keep the same intensity for every game."

Hamish Bennett grabbed 4-16 off five overs while Tim Southee and Jacob Oram chipped in with three wickets each. The emphatic nature of win will set the Kiwis up nicely for

their next match against defending champions Australia in

Nagpur on February 25. "To be able to bowl this well and allow the batsmen to

form. Australia is one of the favourites for the competition so if we do well there we know we are in good stead."

tional Cricket Council (ICC) determined to have a 10nation World Cup, instead of the current 14 teams, in four

years' time. "It's for ICC to decide to play 10 teams or 15," said Kamande.

Kenya looking

for an answer

Kenya captain Jimmy

Kamande was left struggling

for answers after a 10-wicket

World Cup mauling at the

hands of New Zealand

nudged them closer to exile

from cricket's most exclu-

Sunday's match, which

was supposed to last 100

overs, was over in less than 32

as the Black Caps dismissed

Kenya for 69 before racing to

their target off just 48 balls at

It was Kenya's lowest

World Cup total and the fifth

worst in tournament history.

at the worst possible time for

the sport's second-tier

nations with the Interna-

Their capitulation came

the Chidambaram Stadium.

AFP, Chennai

sive club.



New Zealand pacer Hamish Bennett (2nd L) does high-five with a teammate after dismissing Steve Tikolo of Kenya during their one-sided match of the World Cup at the M.A. Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai yesterday. Kenya were bowled out for 69 which the Kiwis overhauled in 8 overs.

AFP

PHOTO:

have such a small chase is always pleasing," Vettori said. "It's pretty important for us to stand up there and per-