

# Star SPORT

DHAKA SATURDAY MARCH 12, 2011, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net

## Drogba defends Toure

Didier Drogba on Thursday spoke out in defence of his Ivory Coast international teammate Kolo Toure and said his failed drug test was a "stupid mistake". Manchester City centre-back Toure, 29, was revealed to have tested positive for a banned substance last week and was subsequently suspended. "It would be a difficult situation for us (Ivory Coast) if he is banned because he is one of the most important players, one of the oldest, most experienced players," said Drogba, who was in Barcelona to promote his humanitarian foundation at the Global Sports Forum. --APF



**THE WALL REMOVED:** Bangladesh skipper Shakib Al Hasan (L) is relieved as he dismisses England's 'Mr. Dependable' Jonathan Trott (R) for 67 during their crucial World Cup clash at the Zohur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## A free lesson

MOHAMMAD ISAM from Chittagong

Shakib Al Hasan gave off an uneasy disposition as the Jonathan Trott-Eoin Morgan partnership blossomed, but his batsmen, especially those accompanying him in the middle-order, were given a lesson from the best seat in the house.

After the Bangladesh skipper's decision to bowl first was vindicated by three quick wickets and England's labored approach, the right-left duo rescued England from a wobbly 53 for three in 16.4 overs to a position from which they could have launched an assault but subsequently failed, only to make 225 in 49.4 overs.

But the highlight of the day for England was Trott and Morgan's 109-run fourth wicket stand in the space of just 22 overs, a stand vital to the team's cause and proof for the other batsmen in both sets of players that beautiful batting won't always do the job. The likes of Rokibul Hasan, Mushfiqur Rahim, Junaed Siddiqui, Naeem Islam and Mahmudullah must have kept an eye on the technique of the two batsmen while they were busy trying to get the duo back to the pavilion.

Trott came to the crease in the eighth over on the back of a similar 52 against South Africa, the unflappable right-hander then also holding the fort after England had slipped to 15 for four. During that innings, former England captain Michael Atherton commented that Trott has "no ego" in his batting. It was a significant remark and in those two words explained Trott's modus operandi and if further proof was required, just take a look at his boundary count.



In his 99-ball 67, Trott hit just two fours and the first one came off the 54th ball he faced, a classy flick through fine-leg and square-leg off Rubel Hossain's short delivery. In the game against South Africa, he struck his first boundary off the 38th ball he faced and in his 94-ball innings, he hit two more fours.

Arguments may rise as to how a batsman batting at three in a one-day game can bat so slowly and Trott's 78.48 strike-rate does say a lot about his batting ways but he has been seen to up the ante whenever required, his 126-ball 137 against Australia in Sydney earlier this year proof enough.

His left-handed batting partner during that partnership, Morgan, is also made of a different fabric. Once the fortress of Ireland's middle-order, Morgan now does the job for England with aplomb and though this was his first game of cricket in three months (after his finger injury in Australia), he slotted in fine. The left-hander from Dublin was in an attacking frame of mind and though he wasn't as speculative as Trott, he kept the odd one out with a firm block. Morgan is regarded as England's best one-day batsman in the last 18 months, surpassing bigger name players like Kevin Pietersen and superseding the likes of Andrew Strauss, Ian Bell and Paul Collingwood with his volume of match-winning knocks. His 72-ball 63 yesterday was another superb innings, delivered under the usual pressure but this time, his job was different as he had to rebuild the innings rather than finish a job.

Some of eight boundaries, (first of which

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## Support beyond borders

MOHAMMAD ISAM from Chittagong

You can fathom the sound that a 25,000-strong crowd would make at a ground like the beautifully decked Zohur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium. It sounds like waves crashing on the Patenga shores nearby and it's unending when the Tigers are on a roll both with bat and ball. But what we, at the ground, don't hear is the roar from thousands of miles away. An estimated six million Bangladeshis live across the world starting from Saudi Arabia to Malaysia to the Western countries like the United States and Canada.

While the audience here in Chittagong had to be content with a ground that is not spectator-friendly by any means (no shades, poor signposting and location to name a few), the people living outside Bangladesh have to deal with their own problems. The time difference is the major problem with telecast availability and pesky neighbors being some of the other troubles

that these folks face, just to watch a game of Bangladesh.

Ardina Rahman lives in Toronto with her family and the whole family woke up as early as 3.30am to catch the live coverage on pay-per-view. "There are four of us watching, my dad, sister and an uncle who lives upstairs. He gets up at 3:00 am to come down," she said.

"So far, thankfully, none of the neighbours have complained, but then they are Indians and Sri Lankans so they're up too I'm sure," she added.

Across Toronto, numerous other Bangladeshi expats are watching,

groups gathering there from as far as New York and Vancouver to watch the game with friends and family. Most keep track of the atmosphere at the ground with acquaintances, tweeting or sending messages on Facebook.

Here in Chittagong however, it is slightly different as the port city crowd had to wait in long queues after snaking around the stadium, located in the far end of an industrial area. Some of the people who have come here before know that there is only one entry but this time, they had to build a few more to let in paying viewers who had tickets that had to be checked.

Housewife Sabera Ferdous was carrying her three-year-old child as she tried to find her way to the Eastern Gallery. "I had to walk a long way, almost two kilometers," she said.

Another group from Comilla also came to Chittagong with tickets in hand but found out that they would be sitting separately rather than together. But they all came to cheer the Bangladesh cricket team, a passion that is shared across the globe.

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**TODAY'S MATCH**

**Match** India v South Africa

**Time** 3:00pm

**Venue** Nagpur



PHOTO: STAR

**NEMESIS ON THE ACT:** Eoin Morgan, England's ace batsman shapes up for a reverse sweep during his 63-run knock against Bangladesh at the Zohur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

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**India Vs South Africa**

The match that is most likely to decide who tops Group B is a tough one to call even though India has the advantage of playing at home. While India have wobbled but maintained their unbeaten run in the competition, South Africa looked the strongest until they collapsed to a shock defeat against England. Both teams have in-form batsmen with India edging out the Proteas because they bat deeper but Graeme Smith's team is clearly more balanced in the bowling department and there's no comparison when it comes to fielding standards. For India to win, they will hope Virender Sehwag fires while South Africa will be looking to open with Robin Peterson and hope that he can have as much success as the other left-arm spinners have had against India and in particular.

Moinul Hossain

Send your opinion in 100 words on Australia Vs Kenya match to [analysis11@ovi.com](mailto:analysis11@ovi.com). The best analysis will be published.

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