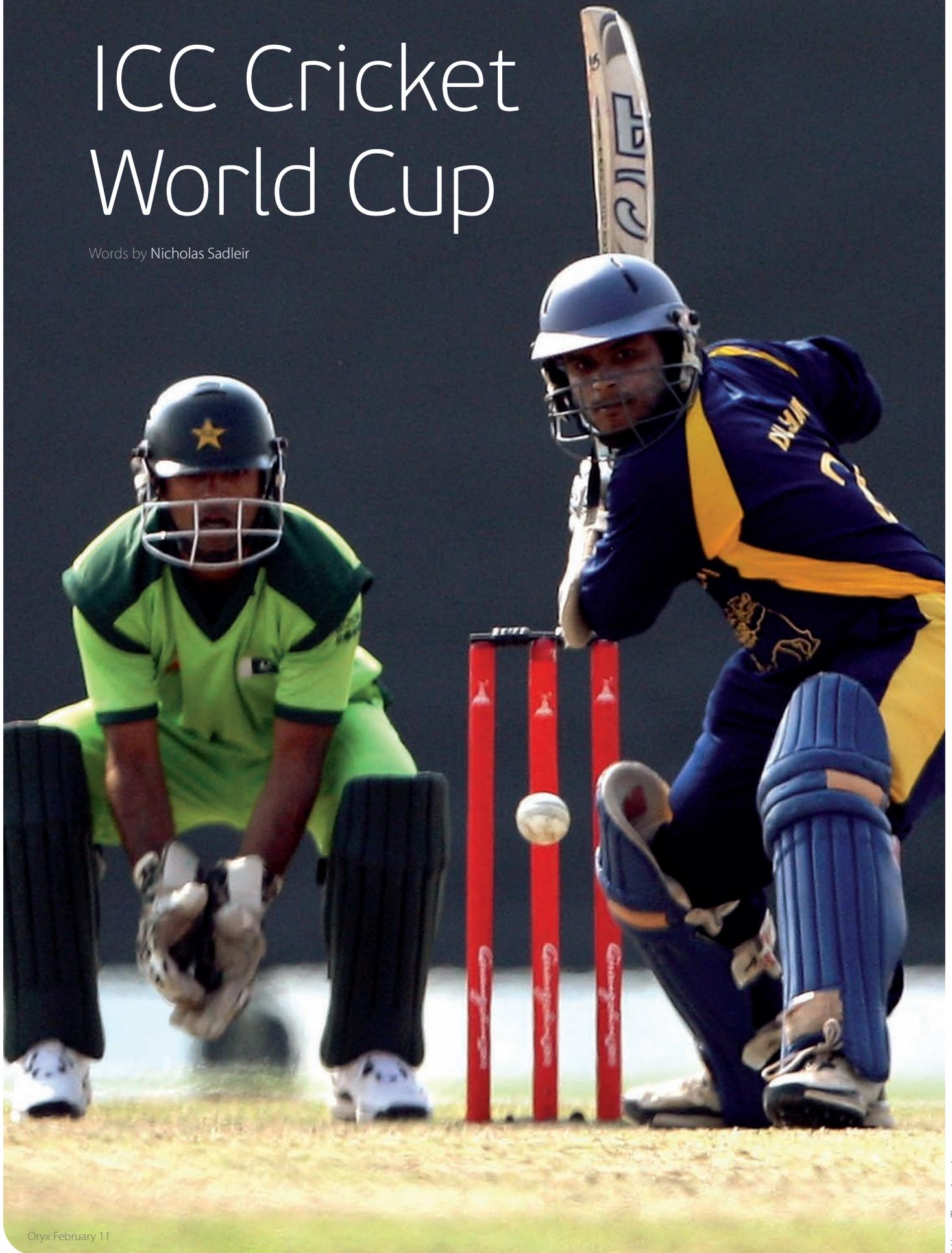


ICC Cricket World Cup

Words by Nicholas Sadleir





THIS MONTH INDIA, SRI LANKA, AND BANGLADESH

collectively play host to the 2011 Cricket World Cup – the cricketing world's premier tournament.

The six-week cricket feast will be hosted by 13 cities: **Ahmedabad**, **Bengaluru** (Bangalore), **Chennai** (Madras), **Kolkata** (Calcutta), **Mohali**, **Mumbai** (Bombay), **Nagpur**, and **New Delhi** (all in India); **Colombo**, **Hambantota**, and **Kandy** in Sri Lanka; and **Chittagong** and **Dhaka** in Bangladesh.

The World Cup sees 14 teams battling for supremacy in the One-Day International format of the game. Australia, Pakistan, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe, Canada, and Kenya feature in Group A, while India, South Africa, England, West Indies, Bangladesh, Ireland, and the Netherlands are the teams in Group B.

The tournament kicks off when India travels to Dhaka on February 19 to take on Bangladesh – the side that beat them in the 2007 World

Cup in the West Indies. Bangladesh, which has proved hard to beat at home, will relish the opportunity to upset the tournament favourites.

The final will be contested at the revamped Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai on April 2.

Tickets for the World Cup are available through the International Cricket Council (ICC), while Qatar Airways has a comprehensive flight network that will deliver you to numerous cities in the three countries.

As any cricket follower would know, the game has religion-like status on the Subcontinent. Attending a World Cup match at a stadium with 80,000 screaming fanatics may not be everybody's cup of tea, but for many it will prove the experience of a lifetime. The atmosphere at any international cricket match in the region is electric, and the World Cup is guaranteed to entertain both on and off the field.

The 2011 tournament will be the tenth in the history of World Cup Cricket. Reigning World Champion Australia has won it on four occasions, the West Indies came out on top twice, and India, Pakistan,

and Sri Lanka have each been victorious once.

South Africa, an excellent one-day side but repeatedly labelled as 'chokers', has never won the Cricket World Cup; neither has England. Australia clinched the last three Cups, but is low in confidence after recently losing the Test cricket Ashes to traditional rival England for the third time in succession. England's comfortable victory at last year's Twenty20 World Cup and its good showing at the Ashes will certainly inspire belief in its players that this year could be their turn for Cricket World Cup glory. But throw in the mercurial Pakistanis and the skilful Sri Lankans and the race for the trophy is wide open.

But more than just for the cricket itself, this World Cup represents a fantastic opportunity for visitors to explore Southern Asia. India's sights and sounds need little introduction; Sri Lanka was ranked number one in *The New York Times*' Places to see in 2010; and Bangladesh is a hidden gem of a tourist destination that boasts beautiful countryside, fantastic shopping opportunities, and an economy that is growing at a rapid rate. So miss this tournament at your peril. 🍀



MATCH OF THE TOURNAMENT?

Possibly the most anticipated game will be played between India and England at the iconic **Eden Gardens** in **Kolkata** on **February 27**. The rebuilt stadium, which will be filled to capacity with 82,000 spectators, could be no better venue for such an epic clash.

ONE DAY 101

For the uninitiated, One Day cricket is just that: it takes place over just a single day. With a limited time allocated to each team, the combatants play hard and fast to score as many runs as they can. The first team to bat does so in the afternoon, while usually the second team takes to the crease as the floodlights are turned on. The play is as colourful as the teams themselves, who ditch the traditional all-whites of Test cricket (which can take five days per match) in favour of multi-coloured outfits based on their national colours.



ICC Cricket World Cup 2011 schedule (by venue)

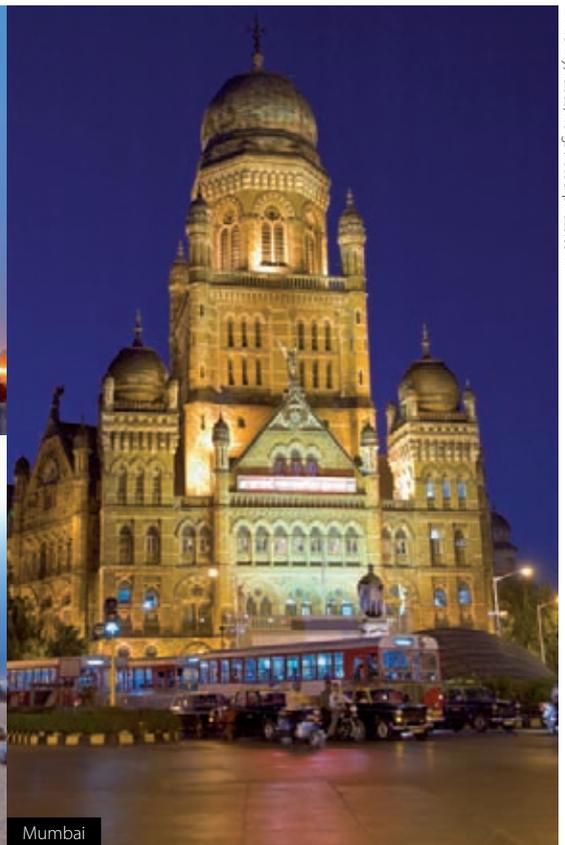
The first match of the ICC World Cup 2011 (match **1**) is between India and Bangladesh on February 19. The final (match **49**) of the six-week long tournament will be held at the rebuilt Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai on April 2.



Delhi



Chennai



Mumbai

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Connect

✈ To book flights to the ICC Cricket World Cup, go to www.qatarairways.com

ICC CRICKET WORLD CUP 2011 TEAMS:

GROUP A **CONNECT VIA DOHA**
 Australia **Melbourne**, daily flights
 Pakistan **Karachi**, daily flights
 Sri Lanka **Colombo**, 3 flights a day
 Kenya **Nairobi**, 2 flights a day
 New Zealand, Zimbabwe, and Canada.

GROUP B **CONNECT VIA DOHA**
 India **Ahmedabad**, daily flights
Bengaluru, daily flights
Chennai, daily flights
Mumbai, daily flights
Delhi, 2 flights a day
 South Africa **Cape Town**, 4 flights a week
Johannesburg, daily flights
 England **London**, 5 flights a day
Manchester, daily flights
 Bangladesh **Dhaka**, 11 flights a week
 West Indies, Netherlands, and Ireland.

India

Ahmedabad
 Sardar Patel Stadium

- 4.** February 21 (14.00)
Australia vs Zimbabwe
- 18.** March 4 (09.30)
New Zealand vs Zimbabwe
- 46.** March 26 (14.30)
Fourth Quarterfinal
(Group A4 vs Group B1)

Mohali
 Punjab Cricket Association Stadium

- 16.** March 3 (09.30)
South Africa vs Netherlands
- 27.** March 11 (09.30)
West Indies vs Ireland
- 48.** March 30 (14.30)
Second Semifinal
(Winner of Match **44** vs Winner of Match **46**)

Bengaluru
 M. Chinnaswamy Stadium

- 15.** March 2 (14.30)
England vs Ireland
- 21.** March 6 (14.30)
India vs Ireland
- 31.** March 13 (14.30)
Australia vs Kenya
- 35.** March 16 (14.30)
Australia vs Canada

Mumbai
 Wankhede Stadium

- 30.** March 13 (09.30)
New Zealand vs Canada
- 37.** March 18 (14.30)
Sri Lanka vs New Zealand
- 49.** April 2 (14.30)
Final
(Winner of Match **47** vs Winner of Match **48**)

Chennai
 M. A. Chidambaram Stadium

- 2.** February 20 (09.30)
New Zealand vs Kenya
- 22.** March 6 (09.30)
England vs South Africa
- 36.** March 17 (14.30)
England vs West Indies
- 42.** March 20 (14.30)
India vs West Indies

Nagpur
 Vidarbha Cricket Association Stadium

- 5.** February 22 (14.30)
England vs Netherlands
- 8.** February 25 (14.30)
Australia vs New Zealand
- 13.** February 28 (09.30)
Zimbabwe vs Canada
- 29.** March 12 (14.30)
India vs South Africa

Kolkata
 Eden Gardens

- 11.** February 27 (14.30)
India vs England
- 34.** March 15 (14.30)
South Africa vs Ireland
- 38.** March 18 (09.30)
Ireland vs Netherlands
- 41.** March 20 (09.30)
Zimbabwe vs Kenya

Delhi
 Feroz Shah Kotla Cricket Stadium

- 7.** February 24 (14.30)
South Africa vs West Indies
- 12.** February 28 (14.30)
West Indies vs Netherlands
- 23.** March 7 (14.30)
Kenya vs Canada
- 25.** March 9 (14.30)
India vs Netherlands

Connect Dhaka, Bangladesh ✈ Distance: 3,362 km ✈ Flight Time: 5 hours, 15 minutes ✈ Frequency: 11 flights a week



Dhaka



Bentota

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Bangladesh

Dhaka
Sher-e-Bangla
Cricket Stadium

1. February 19 (14.00)
India vs Bangladesh

9. February 25 (09.30)
Bangladesh vs Ireland

19. March 4 (14.30)
Bangladesh vs West Indies

40. March 19 (09.30)
Bangladesh vs South Africa

43. March 23 (14.30)
First Quarterfinal
(Group A1 vs Group B4)

45. March 25 (14.30)
Third Quarterfinal
(Group A3 vs Group B2)

Chittagong
Chittagong Divisional
Stadium

28. March 11 (14.30)
Bangladesh vs England

33. March 14 (14.30)
Bangladesh vs Netherlands



SHER-E-BANGLA CRICKET STADIUM, DHAKA

First named Mirpur Stadium, it was renamed after AK Fazlul Haque, one of the country's most renowned leaders and freedom fighters in the 1940s. Originally built for football and athletics, the government decided that the capital city needed a dedicated cricket ground. A metre of soil was excavated to remove all the red clay, with a maze of PVC piping installed. As such, Sher-e-Bangla is noted as having excellent drainage. It's been further upgraded ahead of the ICC World Cup.

Sri Lanka

Colombo
R. Premadasa Stadium

10. February 26 (14.30)
Sri Lanka vs Pakistan

14. March 1 (14.30)
Sri Lanka vs Kenya

17. March 3 (14.30)
Pakistan vs Canada

20. March 5 (14.30)
Sri Lanka vs Australia

39. March 19 (14.30)
Australia vs Pakistan

44. March 24 (14.30)
Second Quarterfinal
(Group A2 vs Group B3)

47. March 29 (14.30)
First Semifinal
(Winner of Match **43**
vs Winner of Match **45**)

Hambantota
Hambantota International
Cricket Stadium

3. February 20 (14.30)
Sri Lanka vs Canada

6. February 23 (14.30)
Pakistan vs Kenya

Kandy
Pallekele International
Cricket Stadium

24. March 8 (14.30)
Pakistan vs New Zealand

26. March 10 (14.30)
Sri Lanka vs Zimbabwe

32. March 14 (14.30)
Pakistan vs Zimbabwe



PALLEKELE INTERNATIONAL CRICKET STADIUM, KANDY

Just 30 minutes from Kandy in Sri Lanka's hill country, Pallekele's new ground was renamed in July 2010 as the Muttiah Muralitharan International Cricket Stadium to honour the legendary Sri Lankan spin bowler. Its design is based on SuperSport Park in Centurion, South Africa, and has a 35,000 capacity. Trivia: By dismissing Chris Gayle of the West Indies, Sri Lanka's Suranga Lakmal became the third bowler to take a wicket with the first ball bowled in a test match at a new venue. 🇱

Connect Colombo, Sri Lanka → Distance: 3,631 km → Flight Time: 4 hours, 55 minutes → Frequency: 3 flights a day