

While India and the world are recovering from the cowardly acts of terrorism that rocked all of Mumbai, the cricket world has sent a strong statement to these and others like them – “We will not run...we are not scared”.

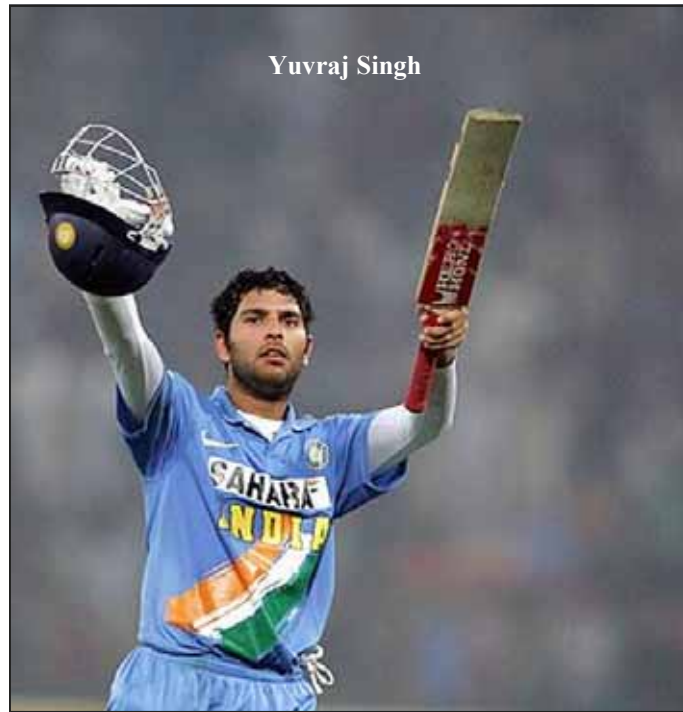
The English cricket team was in India, having lost the ODI rubber to India. They were a witness to all the macabre scenes that were played (albeit a little too much) out on Indian TV. They were shocked, as all of us were, and decided to leave the country prematurely so that they could regroup and assess the security situation and then decide on a course of action.

A little known fact is that the English team was in the Taj Hotel (which was desecrated in these attacks) and they had left all of their Test gear at the hotel, hoping to pick it up once they returned to Mumbai for the Test match.

The ECB sent a security advisor to visit the 2 Test sites, Chennai and Mohali, and after he passed them as secure venues, the British cricket team, which was practicing in the UAE, flew into Chennai and played the 1st test. No matter what the outcome of the series is, the English team must be commended for continuing with the Test match series.

The first test match was the first serious test that the Indian team has had in the recent past. *Ganguly* was replaced by *Yuvraj Singh* who is playing sublime cricket right now. *Mishra*, the young leggie was also included.

England won the toss, elected to bat and were off to a great start, and thanks to a century by *Andrew Strauss* they were get-



Yuvraj Singh

ting ready to bat India out of the game when *Zaheer Khan* combined with *Ishant Sharma* and had them all out for 316.

India, I think, was a little overconfident going in and once *Sehwag* fails, the innings seems to lose a little momentum. The struggling *Dravid* failed to impress and other than a little rear guard action from *Dhoni* and *Harbhajan*, there was no spark to the whole knock and the Indians were bowled out for 241.

The England 2nd innings started with a lead

of 75 and thanks to centuries by *Andrew Strauss* (he scored a century in each inning) and *Collingwood*, they were in a great position to bat India thoroughly out of the game.

The Indian bowlers struck back magnificently and managed to contain and get the English batsmen out. England declared at 311/9 and left India with a little bit of the 3rd session on Day 4 and all of Day 5 to try and chase this highly improbable total of 387 runs.

Sehwag was on fire and a quick fire 83, a great opening stand of a 100+ and an intelligent partnership between *Yuvraj* and *Tendulkar* took the Indians to an amazing victory.

Tendulkar in the process scored his 40th century and got a personal monkey off his back. Previously, on two occasions, one in the West Indies and once against Pakistan, he had gotten the team to the brink of victory and with the loss of his wicket, India had collapsed and

lost the game. He was there at the end of this game and hit the winning runs.

Yuvraj, out of favor for the longer format, may have played a defining Innings for his tenure as a test player.

All in all, a wonderful victory for cricket and it was very touching that all the players in their acceptance speeches had Mumbai on their mind.

Happy Holidays to all and may the New Year bring much happiness to all.

Cartoon Strip: small hands



By Nidhi Chanani