



Cricket By: Javid Lateef And Here We Are ...

It is the eve of the World Cup as I pen this. The practice matches have had some bizarre results. All the fears that we have had about such a tournament being held in the Windies also seem to be coming true. Only time will tell whether I will be proven wrong or not, but I highly doubt it!

Let us start with the teams. Realistically, the minnows have no chance of winning the cup, but I think that Bangladesh and Kenya are

capable of an upset or two. Both teams have swashbuckling batsmen, who can change the course of any game and have the results to back them up. Their biggest problem has been stringing a few wins together, but not taking them seriously might end up hurting any of the more established teams.

As far as an open field is concerned, I believe that this World Cup has NO odds on favorite. The Aussies, who have dominated the shorter form of the game for almost a decade, seem to be on the decline. Their bowling has lost its incisive edge that it possessed in the last few World Cups. *Glenn McGrath* is an aging warhorse and will be shouldering the bowling. The absence of *Brett Lee* and *Shane Warne* is going to hurt Australia. They have lost the last two series they have played, and in a few games, after racking up a huge score, the bowlers could not contain the opposition. They will have the same problem in the World Cup and the rest of the field is sensing that their aura of invincibility is crumbling.

The south Asian teams seem to be performing well, of late. Sri Lanka, with *Jayasuriya Muralidharan* and *Jayawardhene* is always a threat. Their batting and bowling are well suited for the conditions in the Windies. They are always dangerous and if they make it to the 2nd stage of this World Cup, they can go all the way. Pakistan beat South Africa convincingly in a practice

match and seems to be ramping up well towards the first game against the Windies. The absence of *Asif* and *Shoaib Akhtar*, "The Nandrolene Twins", will be a big blow to Pakistan. It is the end of the road for *Akhtar*, but *Asif* is an immensely talented bowler. Pakistan's biggest deficiency will be their fielding, I feel, and it will cost them a game or two, but they are previous World Cup champions, like Sri Lanka and India, and are capable of making it to the final dance.

India seems to be getting their act together. I am very happy with the new ball attack. *Zaheer* and *Agarkar* are a great combination. The left-right combination is working well for the Indians. The batsmen have all struck a rich vein of form, in the recent past, and apart from *Sehwag*, all have runs under their belt. I believe with a little bit of luck, India is capable of surprising the whole field.

The host, West Indies, will have some rethinking and restructuring to do before the start of the World Cup. The batting just seems to collapse. The Indians bowled them out for 85 runs in a practice game and they have a lot of work ahead to rectify the situation. They have a lot of pressure playing at home, and I am curious to see how they handle the heat.

We then have South Africa, England and New Zealand to finish off the 'Elite Eight'. South Africa is now the #1 ranked team in the world. It has beaten every single team in the last few months and is on a roll. The players do have a reputation as being chokers, and are desperately trying to shake that image. England is an enigma wrapped in a riddle! They look like world beaters one day, and pathetically inept the next. *Collingwood* and *Pieterse* are in good nick and *Flintoff* is the game's best all-rounder. They have not had a happy time in the last few World Cups, and will be looking to change that. New Zealand is riding high right now. They demolished the Aussies at home and will be looking to continue that trend through the World Cup.

And that wraps it up for now ... **let the games begin.**




DJ Jafar's Music Scene The Best of Both Worlds!


Is Indian music the next big genre to take over the States? You better believe that it's already here! Indian music has contributed to a lot of different music groups that are played on the radio today. A perfect example is the mix of hip hop and reggaeton (Latin reggae). The larger segment of 2nd and 3rd generation Indian Americans has contributed largely to the increase of this music type and this is what I have been doing for some time now. The blend of beats and melodies is amazing. In 2005, the internationally acclaimed Latin artist, *Daddy Yankee* teamed up with an Indian singer by the name of *Deevani* and released "Mirame", a hard blend of reggae beats with an Indian melody. It uses a sample of *Eli re Eli* from the movie "Yaadein". This blend and a handful of others is setting the club scene ablaze. Remember where you heard it first. Until next month - here are your top ten club "bangaz" to keep your heads bobbing and your hearts pumping.


1. **Javeda Zindagi** ANWAR
2. **Main Jahan Ragoon** (Dhol Mix) NAMASTEY LONDON
3. **Leja Leja** (Remix) USTAD AND THE DIVAS
4. **Albela Albela** HONEYMOON TRAVELS
5. **Barso Re** GURU
6. **Chanda Re** EKLAVYA
7. **Salaam-E-Ishq** SALAAM-E-ISHQ
8. **Doorie** (House Mix)- ATIF ASLAM
9. **Ya Rabba** SALAAM-E-ISHQ
10. **Har Manzar** (Remix) BAABUL

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