

Active chess

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka University Chess Club is going to organise Kazi Mahbub Hossain Memorial Active Chess Tournament from 19th to 25th of November.

The tournament will be held in Swiss League system and is open for all. Prize money of Tk 30,000 will be distributed among winners in three categories. First round games will be held at 3:00 pm at the science cafeteria of Karjon Hall on the 19th.

Bangladesh

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Hori Sarkar finished 11th clearing 2.10 metre, three position above Sajib, who finished 14th out of 17 competitors.

Sumita Rani, another Bangladeshi participant in the meet, could not take part in her 100m hurdles because of the late arrival at the venue.

After the visa crisis, Bangladeshi team accompanied by Bangladesh Athletic Federation treasurer Mizanur Rahman, reached China on the opening day (Nov 11) of the championship.

"We wasted two hours at the airport. We thought someone from the authority would receive us to take us to the venue and later we travelled to the venue in our own initiative and lost few hours because of language barrier. However, we reached the venue, but in the meantime, women's heat of 100m hurdle was finished and Sumita could not take part in the meet," said Mizanur Rahman after returning from China yesterday.

High jumper Sajib is considered as a hope of bringing laurels from the 11th South Asian Games clinching the gold medal in the High Jump event, but the fact is that the Sri Lankan and Indian jumper are far ahead of Sajib.

"It is not possible for Sajib to clear 2.23 metre in this SA Games, he at least needs five years to clear the height of Wizefekara," said Mizanur. "If any officials can dream with Sajib, it is simply a daydream. But if he is guided properly in the next three months, then he can clinch the silver medal in the SA Games."

The organisers also hope that Sumita would clinch 100m hurdle gold medal in the SA Games after she set a national record in the summer meet to finish the distance clocking 13.80 seconds.

Under-19s

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show of fast bowling as he ripped through the batting order taking four wickets for 27 including the wicket of danger man Shangwe (38). Mahrawiza (39) was once again the top-scorer for Zimbabwe but his effort proved too little as the visitors lost their last three wickets for a single run leaving them 21 runs short of the target with a 65 balls unused.

TALK TURKEY
Rameez Raja
(Former Pakistan cricket captain)
"Sachin Tendulkar is so graceful that youngsters will follow him in the years to come. His records will remain in the books, and may be overhauled, but his grace would be unmatched."

Praising the Indian batting master on the anniversary of his Test debut against Pakistan twenty years ago on Sunday.

Did U Know?
In 1999, a Manchester City fan threw an asthma inhaler on to the pitch during a disappointing home draw against Northampton.

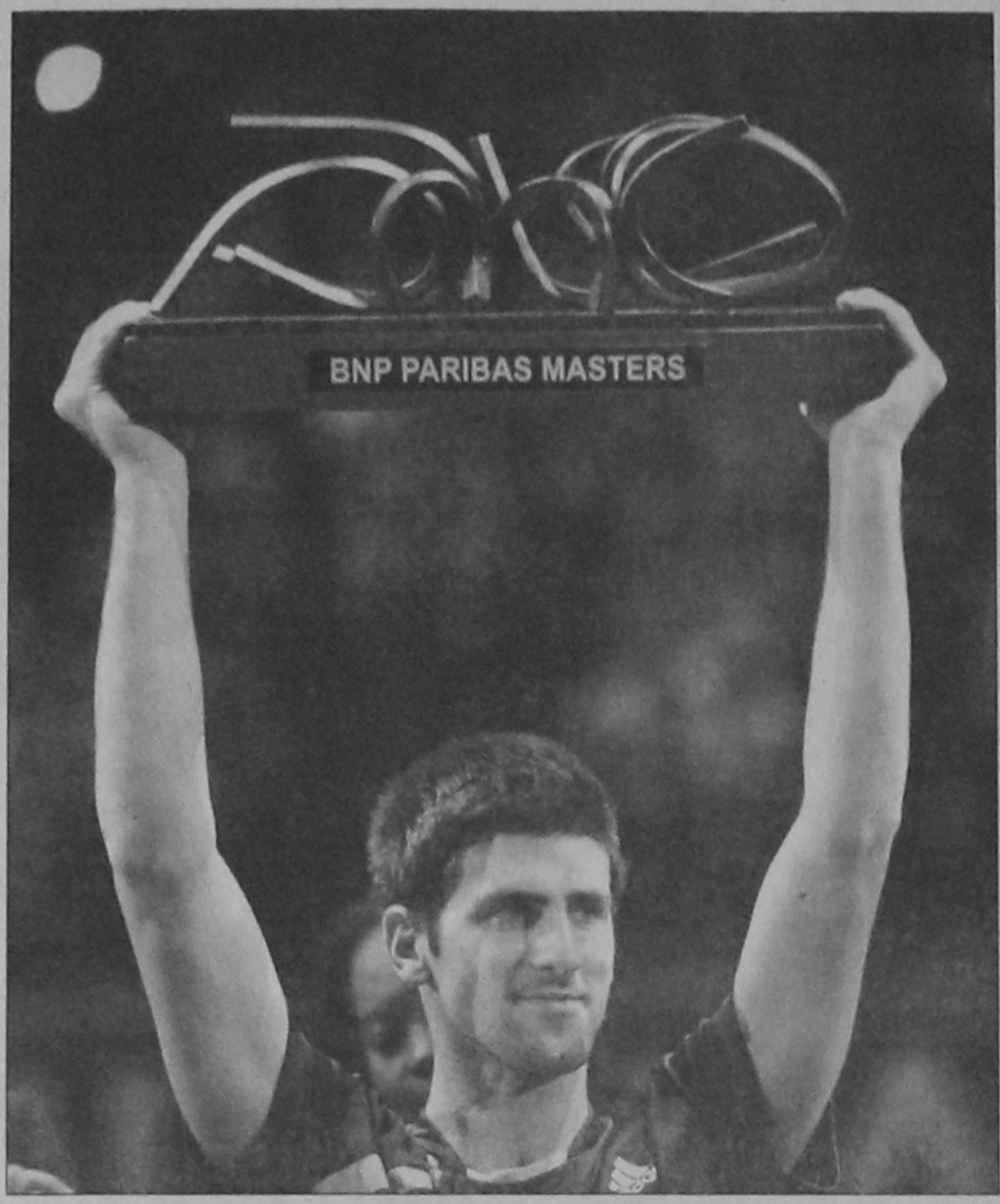


PHOTO: AFP
Serbian Novak Djokovic holds aloft the winner's trophy after beating Frenchman Gael Monfils in the Paris Indoor Masters final on Sunday. Djokovic won 6-2, 5-7, 7-6.

Djokovic downs Monfils

Tennis

AFP, Paris

Novak Djokovic of Serbia secured back-to-back ATP titles on Sunday by edging past battling Frenchman Gael Monfils 6-2, 5-7, 7-6 in a thrilling Paris Masters final.

The win was the first for Djokovic in the Masters Series this year following four runner-up finishes and it will send him into the season-ending ATP Tour World Finals in London from November 22-29 as the favourite for many.

But it remains to be seen just how much his efforts here this week, and throughout the year, have taken out of him after he completed a tour-leading 94th match of the season.

At 6-2, 3-0 up Djokovic appeared to be cruising toward his first Paris Masters title, but a combination of fatigue on his part and bravado from Monfils saw the home favourite claw his way back into the match.

The 22-year-old Serb again looked set for victory when he led 4-1 in the decider but again Monfils battled back to level at 4-4 and the final went all the way to a tie-break.

Djokovic led from the start in that, bagged an early mini-break and held on to clinch the title in two hours and 43 minutes when Monfils double faulted with the Serb 6-3 ahead.

The third seed, who won the ATP tournament in Basel last week by defeating Roger Federer in the final, dominated the 30-minute-long first set, breaking Monfils in the fourth and eighth games.

Monfils, who was playing in his first Masters Series final in his home city, tried to dig deep at the start of the second, saving one break point in the second game, but Djokovic converted on

his second opportunity to lead 2-0.

The Serb looked on course for a comfortable win at 3-0 up, only for Monfils to gather his forces and go on the attack.

He finally managed to put some pressure on the Djokovic serve and converted his first break point of the match when the Serb netted a stinging forehand drive on the volley.

That electrified the packed 15,000 Bercy arena crowd and they had more to cheer in the following game as 'La Monf', as the 23-year-old is affectionately known in France, held serve to love to draw level at 3-3.

Djokovic suddenly looked unsettled and a couple of unforced errors set up another break point for Monfils which the Serb erased with a big forehand wide followed by an easy volley into an empty court.

Two games later the Frenchman had another break point, but again Djokovic drew him out wide and this time Monfils at full stretch was forced to hit wide.

The tide had clearly turned, though, and two more break points followed for Monfils. He converted the second of these by forcing a mistake from a stunned Djokovic with a stinging service return that caught the baseline.

Monfils served out to level the set scores, sparking another round of crowd-pleasing chest-thumping from the Paris showman.

The final set was a thriller with both players fighting both physical and mental fatigue.

Djokovic twice broke serve and twice Monfils battled back to level the scores, leaving the title to be won and lost in a tie-break in which the Serb's experience of big finals proved crucial.

It was Djokovic's fifth ATP title of the year and keeps alive his hopes of overtaking Rafael Nadal for the world number two spot in the London finals.

FIFA punishes Diego

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media to focus more on the national team's coach than their president. Maradona is also a hugely lucrative draw, if not a particularly successful man, to have in charge.

Maradona's assistant, Alejandro Mancuso, will take charge when Argentina face the Catalonia "national" team in a prospective friendly on 22 December in Barcelona and will also assume control if a proposed friendly against the Czech Republic is confirmed for 16 December. Maradona will be back in charge by the time the next formal international break comes round in

March.

Despite boasting arguably the world's best player in Lionel Messi, Maradona's time in charge of the Argentina has been a largely disastrous one. He fell out with Juan Roman Riquelme, despite once naming him as his footballing successor something he also did with Javier Saviola, Pablo Aimar and Messi and the playmaker has refused to return to the squad. Maradona has used 78 players since taking charge just over a year ago.

Maradona's relationship with Carlos Bilardo, his coach at Mexico '86, also soured.

Bilardo was employed as technical director to provide support for Maradona, only for the coach to demand he spend games in the stands "with a suit and tie on". In the relieved aftermath of the win over Uruguay, with emotions running high, the pair embraced and appeared to have settled their differences. But Maradona has continued to say he wants complete control over all footballing decisions.

FIFA's officials had to decide if Maradona had breached Article 58 of FIFA's discipline code by "[offending] the dignity of a person or group of persons through contemptuous, discriminatory or denigratory words". That offence carries a mandatory five-match stadium ban which, if applied to competitive matches, would have sidelined him until after the World Cup quarterfinals stage. However, Maradona was judged by Article 57 relating to "offensive gestures or language".

ESS finish runners-up

SPORTS REPORTER

European Standard School emerged group runners-up to play the platinum round in the 3rd KAF International Youth Cricket Carnival in Malaysia.

In the eight-a-side with seven overs per side matches, ESS recorded three straight wins against Kinrara Cricket Academy, Kajang High School and Perak Cricket Association before going down against Cricket Federation of India in the group final match.

The Platinum round kicks off today.

Dravid, Dhoni

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increase India's woes.

Dravid and Yuvraj lifted the total to 105 by lunch and then took the attack to the Sri Lankans in a spectacular counter-attack when play resumed.

Dravid hit three boundaries in one over from Welegedara and Yuvraj reached his half-century with two consecutive fours off Angelo Mathews.

Yuvraj was dismissed midway through the afternoon session when he played early to Muttiah Muralidaran and the top edge spooned for an easy catch to Tillakaratne Dilshan in the covers.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the opening day of the first Test between India and Sri Lanka at the Sardar Patel Stadium in Ahmedabad on Monday:

INDIA: First innings

Gambhir b Welegedara 1

Schawaglbw Welegedara 16

Dravid not out 177

Ratna wins gold in 10m

SPORTS REPORTER

Sharmi Aktar Ratna clinched the gold medal in the women's 10m Air-Rifles event on the concluding day of the 2nd National Air Gun Championship at the National Shooting Complex in Gulshan yesterday.

Ratna of Ansar VDP Shooting Club carried her training performance into the competition to score 494.6 out of 500 in the hard contest with Syeda Sadia Sultana and Tripti Datta.

Sadia from Chittagong Rifles Club made 493.8 to finish just ahead of third-placed Tripti of BSKP Shooting Club, who scored 492.1.

Star shooter Asif Hossain, scored 687.1 points to finish third in his pet 10m Air Rifles event. Islamabad SA Games gold medalist Sharmi Aktar of Rajbari Rifles Club disappointed all to finish fourth making 491.7 points.

In the men's 10m Air Pistol, Nadimul Islam of Saver Sena Shooting Club bagged gold shooting 653.2 while Selim Azad from Army Shooting Club finished behind Nadim to score 649.9 points.

Mohammad Alamgir from Chittagong Rifles Club got the bronze shooting 643.3 points out of 700.

Meanwhile, BSKP Shooting Club emerged champions in the two-day meet with two golds, two silvers and one bronze while Dhaka Rifles Club finished runners-up with two golds and one bronze.

BOA seeks

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State Minister for Youth and Sports Ahad Ali Sarkar, who is also the convenor of the 11th SA Games steering committee, and chairman of parliamentary standing committee on Youth and Sports Zahid Ahsan Russel were present on the occasion.

Selectors

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It was learnt that the selectors have some reservations over a few conditions such as work hours and period of contract. Selectors are opposed to the proposal of office timing of 9am to 5pm and they have also expressed their desire to get the contract run till 2011 World Cup so that they can work with a team.

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Proteas wallop Eng

Cricket

AFP, Centurion

Graeme Smith and Loots Bosman went on a hitting spree as South Africa gained a crushing 84-run win over England in the second and final Twenty20 international at SuperSport Park on Sunday.

Smith and Bosman shared a world record opening partnership of 170 off 81 balls in a South African total of 241 for six, the second highest in Twenty20 internationals.

England, who won the rain-affected first match on Friday by just one run, struggled to 157 for 8 in reply.

Stand-in England captain Alastair Cook had a baptism of fire as sixes flew into the crowd. A total of 17 sixes and 19 fours were hit in the innings.

Smith hit six sixes and eight fours as he made 88 off 44 balls, while Bosman cleared the boundary nine times and hit four fours in making 94 of 45 deliveries.

Only 14 runs were scored off the first three overs before Smith and Bosman went on the rampage, with 21 runs off Sajid Mahmood's first over.

Ironically, Smith was bowled off a free hit delivery after a no-ball, while Bosman was caught at mid-off in the same over off a second no-ball.

Another 72 runs were scored off the next four overs as Cook rotated his bowlers without success.

With his regular bowlers taking a hammering, Cook turned to part-time spinner Joe

Denly, who had Smith caught at long-on off his first ball.

Three more batsmen, including man of the match Bosman, fell to catches in the deep as South Africa tried to maintain the momentum of the opening partnership.

Smith said he was pleased with a clinical performance by South Africa.

"I was disappointed on Friday night when the rain came down because I thought we could have got home there too. We started well with the bat and I was most impressed with the bowlers," he said.

Cook was leading England because Paul Collingwood was ruled out with a back injury.

"Smith and Bosman took the game away from us," said Cook. "The margins for error were very slim, especially the way they played."

But Cook said England would take heart from having shared the series 1-1, after winning by one run on the Duckworth/Lewis method in Johannesburg last Friday.

"We'll take that into another form of the game," he said of a five-match one-day series starting in Johannesburg on Friday.

Collingwood's injury meant an earlier-than-planned return to action for star batsman Kevin Pietersen, who had not been expected to play before a 50-overs match against South Africa A after joining the touring party late following heel surgery.

Pietersen made 29 off 19 balls, second only to Jonathan Trott, who top-scored with 51.

South Africa's total was the highest in a Twenty20 match between Test nations and second only to the 260 for six made by Sri Lanka against Kenya in the 2007 World Twenty20 in Johannesburg.

Vettori fit for Tests

Cricket

AFP, Wellington

New Zealand's hopes for the three-Test series against Pakistan have been boosted by news Monday that captain Daniel Vettori has been cleared of injury fears.

Vettori suffered a mild concussion in the one-day series against Pakistan in Abu Dhabi and did not go on to play in the two Twenty20 matches in Dubai.

"He is feeling significantly better and will be available to play in the first Test starting on 24 November," New Zealand Cricketers said in a statement.

Vettori also has a shoulder injury and was examined Monday by a specialist, who found some structural damage, although it was not expected to affect his ability to bowl.

"Physiotherapy rehabilitation exercises will assist with the ongoing management of this

injury. It will not affect his availability for the Test series," the statement said.

But the news was gloomier for pace bowler Kyle Mills, who is expected to be ruled out from playing for at least four months, with hopes he will be back for the ICC World Twenty20 starting in April.

Mills is expected to undergo surgery in the next two weeks for an injury to his left shoulder. He will also have an operation on a chronic injury to his right knee, which