



PHOTO: COURTESY

Enthusiasts take a trip down the memory lane as they enjoy the daylong Dhaka Kite Festival on the bank of River Padma in Mawa, about 35 kilometers away from the capital, yesterday.

PCL time in Sharjah

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

The second version of the Port City League (PCL), the Bashundhara Cup T20 will kick off today at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium.

The start of this year's Twenty20 tournament was deferred by two days due to visa complications. The organisers failed to launch the tournament on March 26 as a number of players as well as the broadcasters didn't receive the required travel documents visa in time.

It was learnt that still there were few players waiting to get visa and the broadcasters were expected to land in the United Arab Emirates last night. However there is very slim chance that satellite channel ATN Bangla will be able to telecast the first match live between Chittagong Mohammedan and Top Sports Noakhali at 5pm Bangladesh time, but the organisers hoped that the opening ceremony and the second match between Dhaka Sports and Biman would be aired. Chittagong Tigers, Pirates of Chittagong, Brothers and Bengal Tigers are the other teams in the competition.

The organisers took the help of local experts so that ATN Bangla can beam the live coverage of the opening ceremony.

Despite all the mismanagement, the organisers were optimistic about the success of the tournament as PCL chairman AZM Nasiruddin

said that the image of the local Bangladesh community would be brightened if the tournament succeeded in Sharjah.

According to UNB, he said while addressing a press conference at the Ramada Hotel yesterday that they had to undergo some difficulties to obtain visas for the huge Bangladeshi contingent as the local authority was very cautious in issuing entry permits for their experience of some illegal immigrants among the Bangladesh community here.

The organisers were also impressed by the huge interest of the local Bangladeshis about the tournament. Nasir indicated that the tournament fixtures might be rescheduled considering the players' national duty ahead of the T20 World Cup and the T20 National League.

The tournament is an opportunity for the national cricketers to prepare themselves for the upcoming World T20 to be held in the West Indies and former Bangladesh skipper Mohammad Ashraful, who is captaining the Chittagong Mohammedan side, hoped that everybody would try their best in the tournament.

"It's a brilliant opportunity for the players ahead of the World T20. I hope it would be a very good tournament. I am looking forward to performing well in the tournament," said Ashraful while addressing at a pre-match press conference at Ramada Hotel yesterday.

"We don't have much experience in T20 game, so this kind of tournament is always helpful for us," he added.

Selectors on sticky wicket

MOHAMMAD ISAM



The national cricket selectors have two days to name the final squad for next month's World Twenty20 Championship in the West Indies, but the timing isn't ideal for them.

The Tigers have just finished playing a gruelling Test series against England at home and all of them have flown to Sharjah to play the Port City League but the delay of that tournament adds to the selectors' dilemma. If they want to pick any new player in the squad, they would have only a few matches to make a final decision. And with chief selector Rafiqul Alam saying yesterday that they have experimentation on their mind, this

could be a tight affair.

"We could experiment with one or two new faces as it is in different conditions and it's a different format. But the decision hasn't yet been taken since we have 2-3 days left," said Rafiqul.

"But we have to select the team and then see how they go about their job in the two T20 tournaments," he said.

The 30-man preliminary squad, announced on March 1, have the likes of Elias Sunny, Robiul Islam and Rony Talukder along with Jahirul Islam, who made his Test debut last week. Other domestic performers Aftab Ahmed, Alok Kapali, Nasir Hossain, Nazmul Hossain Milon, Faisal Hossain, Mohammad Mithun and Shamsur Rahman have also been included.

Among those, Aftab is at the forefront

for selection alongside Nazmul Hossain Milon. An all-rounder from Dhaka, Milon, has big-hitting abilities and always remains in the fringes whenever a Twenty20 team is being talked about.

A case for left-hander Faisal Hossain could be made since he has been a heavy scorer in the domestic scene, doing particularly well in the shorter versions.

While all these would make up the balance of the squad, a return for Mohammad Ashraful seems imminent. Even though the chief selector termed it 'still in the process', the right-handed batsman could not be far away from the selectors' mind.

Ashraful, playing for Chittagong Mohammedan in the PCL, must make the most of the tournament opener against

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Padma abuzz with kites

JESSICA MUDDITT

It was a day to behold for a few thousand sports enthusiasts who gathered in the sandy surrounding on the bank of River Padma at Mawa yesterday.

The otherwise tranquil setting, some 35 kilometers away from the capital, was abuzz with fanfare during the daylong kite festival with people enjoying every bit of it.

A kite cutting competition was held in the morning, which involves flying a special type of kite on the end of a sharp thread mixed with ground glass.

The aim was to slice the thread of the other kites so that

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BANGLA GAMES

WB finish first

SPORTS REPORTER

West Bengal athletes beat their Bangladeshi counterparts on the last day of the 3rd Indo-Bangladesh Bangla Games in Kolkata to finish ahead of the visitors on the final medals table. The local athletes who were trailing the visitors by 22-26 on gold count, snatched as many as 12 gold on the last day against a single to the visitors. West Bengal finished with 34 gold, 27 silver and 24 bronze to Bangladesh's 27 gold, 31 silver and 24 bronze.

After playing out 0-0 draw in their first two games, the Bangladeshi female booters conceded a 3-0 defeat against the hosts to lose the three match event 1-0. Aduri Khatun of West Bengal scored a hat-trick to give West Bengal an

easy victory.

Bangladesh's men's basketball were trailing their opponents in the third match of the three match series when rain put paid to the game. West Bengal were adjudged winners by dint of their wins in the first two games.

Kho kho gold was also taken by the hosts as they beat the tourists in 3-0 matches.

West Bengal also made a clean sweep in the men's and women's badminton singles too.

MEDALS TALLY

Team	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
West Bengal	34	27	24	85
Bangladesh	27	31	24	82

NZ v AUS, 2ND TEST, HAMILTON

Vettori leads NZ

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Daniel Vettori experienced the perfect start to his 100th Test after taking four wickets, running out Ricky Ponting and watching his side ruffle Australia on the first day of the second Test in Hamilton yesterday. New Zealand dismissed their highly-fancied opponents for 231 and then finished at 19 for 1 as they dream of levelling the two-game series.

Tim Southee accepted extra responsibility to back up his captain after the hosts picked two spinners and he provided a clever performance with 4 for 61. But the star was Vettori, who earned more worthy plaudits in a praise-heavy week, with 4 for 36 off 19.3 overs.

New Zealand benefited from a series of errors from the most qualified Australian batsmen and then swept

through the lower order in an unusual performance from the visitors. Simon Katich tried to hold the side together with 88, but when he fell two overs before tea, popping a catch off Vettori to short leg, his side was 180 for 5.

After the interval the wickets continued to spill, with New Zealand at one stage capturing three breakthroughs in eight balls. Southee, who had already dismissed Shane Watson (12)

and Michael Hussey (22), was on a hat-trick after Brad Haddin popped a simple caught-and-bowled chance from the last ball of his 16th over and he followed up by having Marcus North lbw for 9. In between Southee's blows, Vettori had watched Mitchell Johnson push a catch to bat pad.

Ryan Harris wasn't bothered by the prospect of being the third departure in a row and flicked a four to midwicket.

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PHOTO: INTERNET

New Zealand skipper and a veteran of 100 Tests Daniel Vettori exults after dismissing Australia's Simon Katich on 88 on the first day of Hamilton Test yesterday.

Easy win for Kolkata

CRICINFO, undated

Sourav Ganguly hit a composed half-century and Manoj Tiwary exploded after a slow start to boost Kolkata Knight Riders to 183, a total beyond the reach of a listless Kings XI Punjab. It was a mediocre game, especially from Punjab, who were so painfully slow that they fell out of the reckoning very early in the chase.

Yuvraj Singh and Manvinder Bisla hit a few boundaries early on in the piece but both fell to Ajit Agarkar - Manoj Tiwary held on to a splendid running catch at deep midwicket to remove Yuvraj - and the chase started to derail. Kumar Sangakkara and Mahela Jayawardene allowed the pressure to mount. They didn't go for any big shots and left themselves with too much to do in the end. With the run-rate mounting at an exponential rate, both fell while going for high-risk shots. Game over.

SCORES IN BRIEF

KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS: 183 for 5 in 20 overs (Ganguly 50, Tiwary 75 not out; Pathan 2 for 42, Srivastava 2 for 23)

KINGS XI PUNJAB: 144 for 6 in 20 overs (Sangakkara 30, Yuvraj Singh 24; Bond 2 for 24, Agarkar 2 for 32)

Result: Kolkata Knight Riders won by 39 runs.

Strauss asks Broad to keep Ashes cool

AFP, London

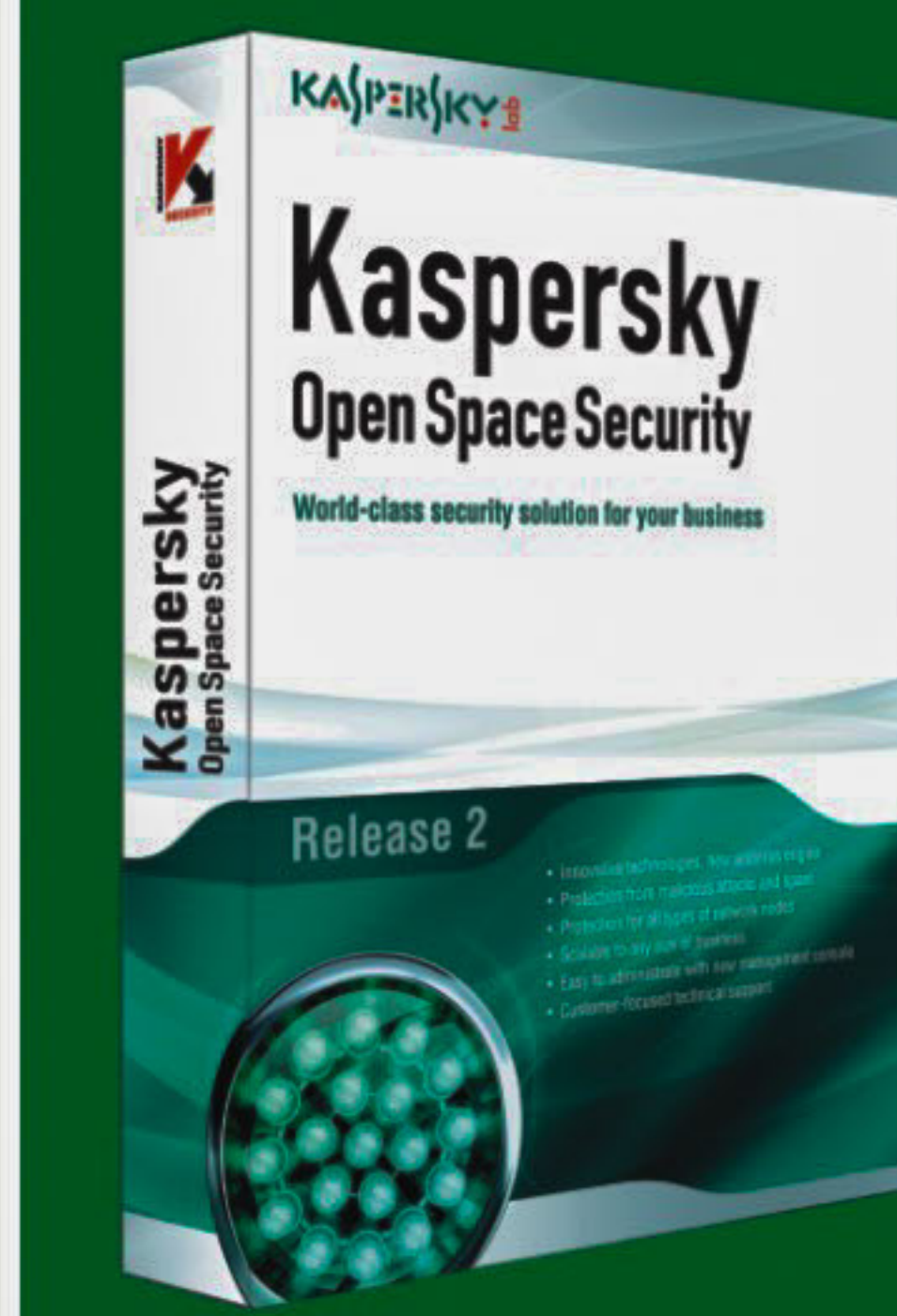
England skipper Andrew Strauss has warned fast bowler Stuart Broad to keep his fiery temper under control in the pressure cooker of the Ashes later this year.

Broad had to apologise to umpire Rod Tucker after failing to turn around for an lbw shout during the first Test against Bangladesh in Chittagong.

In the second Test, Broad appeared to LAUNCH 18 COL 4



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Live from 4:30pm
- Deccan Chargers v Mumbai Indians**
Live from 8:30pm
- STAR Sports**
Formula 1
Australian GP, Race Day
Live from 11:00am
- ESPN**
English Premiership
Burnley v Blackburn
Live from 4:55pm
- Liverpool v Sunderland**
Live from 8:55pm
- SuperSport3**
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