



A relaxed Bangladesh captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza enjoys his time in the lawn of Rutherford Hotel in Nelson yesterday. The Tigers will play their next game against Scotland here Thursday.

PHOTO: BCB



'Greatness is contagious'

BISHWAJIT ROY from Nelson

To be brutally honest, the start to our New Zealand tour wasn't the best. It took a long time for us to complete the check-in formalities at the Melbourne International Airport yesterday morning. It took us a while to explain to the lady behind the counter that an Australian visa was good enough to travel to New Zealand during the ICC World Cup.

After successfully managing to get past the consistent inquiries regarding our Bangladeshi passports, we boarded the aircraft. Thankfully there were no further obstacles to overcome. My companion and I in fact were expecting the Wellington wind -- which sometimes compels flights to get delayed and we even heard tales of pedestrians being

blown away by it -- to cause some trouble; thankfully though nothing of that sort happened.

The city welcomed us with a gentle breeze and brilliant sunshine. The eye-soothing hilly land-

we also met a middle-aged gentleman at the immigration office there. As soon as he heard that we were here for the World Cup, he smiled, worked his magic and let us through in a jiffy.

As we landed at the Wellington airport we looked for signs that made Wellington feel like it belonged to the rest of the continent. While we came across a few of the one with a big hoarding of New Zealand skipper Brendon McCullum, which had a slogan 'Greatness is contagious' was perhaps the one that caught our attention.

Up next on our schedule was a forty minute flight from Wellington to Nelson, where the Tigers will be squaring up against Scotland at the Saxton Oval. Nelson has a comparatively small airport and there were small hoardings on the roadside as well, to give the city a feel of the mega event.



World's Most Preferred Cement Brand from Switzerland

scape around the airport, almost at once, made us forget of our bitter experience at the Melbourne airport. As opposed to our departure,

POINTS TABLE						
Pool A						
	M	W	L	D	Pts	NRR
New Zealand	4	4	0	0	8	+3.589
Sri Lanka	4	3	1	0	6	+0.128
Bangladesh	3	1	1	1	3	+0.287
Australia	3	1	1	1	3	-0.305
Pool B						
India	3	3	0	0	6	+2.630
South Africa	3	2	1	0	4	+1.260
Ireland	2	2	0	0	4	+0.338
West Indies	4	2	2	0	4	-0.313
Zimbabwe	4	1	3	0	2	-0.723
Pakistan	3	1	2	0	2	-1.373
UAE	3	0	3	0	0	-1.326

Note: Top four in each group qualify for quarter-finals.

'Spin crucial vs Scotland'

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh middle order batsman Sabbir Rahman reckons that the Tigers use spin to win against Scotland in their fourth World Cup encounter at the Saxton Oval in Nelson this Thursday.

The batsman, who scored a half-century against Sri Lanka in the last match was confident that his side would regain following their defeat at the hands of the Lankans.

"There is no tension in our heads. We are just going to go out there and play our own natural game. If we can play our own game, we can beat any team. The Scots may be a bit weak in spin and we have a good attack, so maybe that can be the difference between the two teams," Sabbir told reporters at Nelson yesterday.

Bangladesh are yet to use an extra spinner in their line-up. So far Shakib Al Hasan and part-timers Mahmudullah Riyad and Sabbir have been handling the



SHAFIU ISLAM



SABIR RAHMAN

spin department.

For the game in Nelson however, the Tigers may just include slow left-arter Taijul Islam in the side and drop one of the eight batsmen in the team.

"To me my performance does not matter if my team loses. There is no point. For me it will be an achievement if I can help my team win with my performance," added Sabbir when asked about his innings against Sri Lanka.

While Sabbir hopes to build on

from his half-century, pacer Shafiu Islam hopes that he can get an opportunity in the team. The bowler who came in as a late replacement for Al-Amin Hossain, believes that he can reproduce the heroics that led Bangladesh to a win over Ireland in Dhaka in 2011.

"If I get an opportunity I will give my best, like the way I performed in the last World Cup. I want to do something special for my country," said Shafiu.

Mash awaits a fresh start against Scots

BISHWAJIT ROY from Nelson

Scenes from the 1999 World Cup match in Edinburgh stormed into Mashrafe Bin Mortaza's mind as soon as questions regarding Bangladesh's Scotland encounter, due to take place at the Saxton Oval this Thursday, were brought to the table.

And why shouldn't they? It was a historic moment for the Tigers; their first ever World Cup win. While he was yet to make a mark in international cricket back then, Mashrafe, however, could barely keep his emotions in check.

"I remember there was a festive gathering in my home town in Narail where we all paraded around. My intention was to join that parade. I still remember the innings of [Minhazul Abedin] Nannu bhai ... it was one of a kind," recalled the Tigers skipper.

Indeed, Minhazul's innings was one that many remember as though it happened yesterday. His unbeaten 68, which rescued Bangladesh from a nervous 97 for 6, and the partnerships he shared with the tail won many hearts back then.

Mashrafe also tried to recall Gavin Hamilton's 63, which almost took the game away from the Tigers. He was later run-out by Manjural Islam.

These were memories which Mashrafe jogged while spending a leisure time outside the team hotel. However, that wasn't the last time that Bangladesh played Scotland. They played two other ODIs against them in 2006 in Dhaka and Chittagong. The Tigers beat them by six wickets and 146 runs respectively.

The last encounter between the two sides took place at The Hague in 2012 and Bangladesh lost that T20I by 34 runs and

there are quite a few players from that side who are expected to feature against Bangladesh this Thursday.

Richie Berrington, who scored a remarkable century in that T20I is one of them.

Despite the fact that the teams have just played three ODIs and a T20I thus far, the teams, having observed each other in the World Cup will know each other well.

"I think they have a pace bowler [Iain Wardlaw] who bowled really well against New Zealand the other day and took three wickets," cautioned Mominul Haque, before he went out for a stroll in the city.

Mashrafe took a step further. He seems to have befriended their skipper and vice-captain.

"Honestly speaking their captain [Preston Mommsen] and vice-captain [Kyle Coetzer] are now well known to me as we talked during our helicopter ride on way to the opening ceremony in Melbourne from Sydney. We are working on them," explained the skipper.

The match is a must-win for the Tigers. A victory would not only keep their hopes of a quarterfinal berth alive but also help them maintain their third position on the table.

Many reckon that their below-par performance against Sri Lanka, which saw them spill a series of opportunities, came at the wrong time. Mashrafe however, brushed aside any sort of pressure and said that they were all positive.

"The team was upset after the 92-run defeat but in Nelson we are all looking forward to a fresh start. The important thing is that we had a positive approach against Sri Lanka. It didn't matter even if we got bowled out for 120... I just wanted the team to have a positive approach," said a confident Mashrafe.



Shakib Al Hasan is understandably disappointed for failing to live up to his reputation as the world's best all-rounder so far in the World Cup down under.

PHOTO: BCB

FAN ZONE

f/clemoncleardrink

শেখার স্বাদ
সুস্বাদু
Freshness



A true English patriot at England's match against Sri Lanka was left disappointed, but the Lankan was overjoyed. The Pakistanis joy was visible across the skies as they won their first match in this World Cup.



HARSHA BHOGLE: I find the criticism of Misbah very strange. It is like a family of ten complaining that the sole breadwinner isn't doing enough.

GRAHAM VICKERS: So disillusioned with the ECB. Is "harmony" in the dressing room worth losing fights on the field? Hang your heads.