



Milk for Good



Mahmudullah Riyad was all smiles yesterday -- complementing the amazing weather as seen in the picture -- in Chattogram after scoring a magnificent fifty against Zimbabwe on Wednesday to help the Tigers reach the final of the ongoing T20I tri-series. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## There are too many selectors: Faruque

SPORTS REPORTER from Chattogram



The restlessness in Bangladesh's squad selection, seen most recently when the two-member selection panel of chief selector Minhajul Abedin and Habibul Bashar made substantial changes to Bangladesh's T20I tri-series squad in the wake of disappointing results, has raised a lot of questions.

Former chief selector Faruque Ahmed said that there was a lack of accountability from the selectors and added that there are more than six or seven selectors who are hampering the selection process. He had quit his post in 2016 after the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) changed the selection process to include the coach and two board members.

"I think the responsibility of team selection should be given to someone who can create his own accountability. We haven't seen any explanation in recent times from the selectors for picking a new player or even after dropping a player. I also think it is not expected that the selectors will be restless after the team loses. As we are not doing the job of selection properly, restlessness comes in where it seems like something is wrong after losing one or two games, and then many types of changes arise," former national captain Faruque told reporters in Chattogram yesterday.

The 53-year-old suggested that the selectors need to show some patience and give enough opportunities to a player.

"At the moment it seems like there are many selectors in the team and I don't know how



many of them form the team. If there is a two- or three-member selection panel then they could form a team by discussing carefully. Time will tell whether that young cricketer [Aminul Islam] plays well or not, but there must be a selector to back him.

"There are too many selectors -- there is a director-selector, manager-selector. You have operations as the selector and I think there are five to seven selectors altogether. When I resigned there were two selectors and Khaled Mahmud was the manager selector and then there was someone from operations for the coordination. In fact, there are actually many selectors; not just one. I would have stayed [as a selector] if it was positive but I think this rule won't work ultimately as when a player does well someone will come and try to take credit and when they fail, they will point fingers at each other," he said.

## Faith needed for the next step

MAZHAR UDDIN from Chattogram



Leg-spin has always been one of the toughest arts in cricket and unfortunately for young Bangladesh cricketers, there has been no great role model to look up to and be inspired to take up and master the craft.

Jubair Hossain was the last of the very few specialist leg-spinners in the country who, despite a dream start to his international career, faded away because of the absence of a nurturing environment and the sufficient opportunities required to groom a leg-spinner.

Because it is such a difficult art, wrist-spin is all about control and it has been difficult for even the best in the world to consistently bowl in the right areas and not bowl the off bad ball.

Leg-spinners can therefore be expensive as they leak a few runs in their quest for wickets, but it is a worthy tradeoff as wrist spin can often create trouble for batsman because of the increased revolutions typical to the style of bowling and the variations it brings into play.

There is a desperate search for this type of

bowler in Bangladesh because of how leg-spinners are playing vital roles in all formats for other countries.

Aminul Islam's inclusion in the squad came as a surprise, but the 19-year-old leg-spinner made a perfect debut and picked up two wickets, showing a lot of promise as he was also very economical against Zimbabwe on Wednesday.

However, being a proper middle-order batsman who scored 440 runs in the last Dhaka Premier League season for BKSP while managing to pick just one wicket, his courage and confidence was the key.

"Shakib [Al Hasan] bhai told me that as a leg-spinner you only have to bowl in the right areas for the possibility of something good happening. I kept that in mind and bowled in the right areas after observing the batsman," Aminul told reporters at the team hotel in Chattogram yesterday where the Tigers spent a rest day.

The youngster however got injured during his T20I debut against Zimbabwe on Wednesday and had to have three stitches on his left hand and there are concerns about whether Aminul may miss the rest of the series.

Even if Aminul does miss the next few matches and returns after recovering from injury, there will be a lot of challenges waiting for him with regards to handling pressure situations that has not as yet faced.

"I think self-control is a huge thing. I have seen who has done what in the past. I will try to control myself and look to improve day by day, match by match," said Aminul.

It will be important for the selectors, team management and also the board to properly groom Aminul and provide him enough time and make sure that he gets the opportunity to play domestic leagues regularly.

With leg-spinners thin on the ground, they will have to do away with the tendency towards stopgap solutions that sees a player being discarded if he does not prove himself albeit not being given enough opportunities -- examples of which abound in Bangladesh cricket.

For Aminul, it's just the beginning. He will need to learn and adapt to a lot of tough situations and whether Bangladesh have finally found a leg-spinner will depend on his willingness to work hard as well as the establishment's will to persist with the youngster.

## Masakadza to bid adieu in dead rubber today

SPORTS REPORTER

Although it is a dead rubber, the match between Afghanistan and Zimbabwe in the T20I tri-series at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram today will be a big occasion for Zimbabwe skipper Hamilton Masakadza.

The 36-year-old will be playing his last international game and will hope to make it a memorable outing by defeating Afghanistan today. The game will just be of academic interest as Zimbabwe's 39-run loss against Bangladesh on Wednesday had ended their hopes of making the final.

It would however be a tough ask for a Zimbabwean side who are yet to win a game in the tournament to beat an Afghan side in fine fettle. Afghanistan, who are unbeaten in the tournament so far, registered a comfortable 28-run win the last time the two sides met in the second game of the tournament in Dhaka last Saturday.



Leg-spinner Aminul Islam, who made his debut for Bangladesh on Wednesday against Zimbabwe, is doubtful for the rest of the ongoing T20I tri-series after sustaining an injury to his left hand while fielding against Zimbabwe. PHOTO: STAR

## 'Complicated technique, but extremely organized mindset'

Tendulkar analyses Smith's game

ICC



Sachin Tendulkar, who set a benchmark for batsmanship throughout his 24-year-long international career, praised Steve Smith, the top batsman in Tests right now, for his extraordinary comeback in red-ball cricket.

Tendulkar, for the most part of his career, was a dream wicket for any bowler and a nightmare for his opponents. So has Steve Smith been in the modern-day game, with his impeccable consistency in the longest format. The 30-year-old harried the England bowlers in the recent Ashes series -- just as he did in the previous edition Down Under -- aggregating 774 runs from seven innings at a staggering average of 110.57.

Both Tendulkar and Smith have earned comparisons to the legendary Don Bradman, too. While Tendulkar was hailed by Bradman himself for his batting style, Smith has matched the Australian great with his consistency, an average of 64.56 setting him apart from his peers.

Smith's batting style is unique, reflecting both unorthodoxy and genius. Tendulkar, in a social media post on Thursday, attempted to break down his batting during the Ashes.

"In the first Test, the English bowlers tried to get him caught behind the wickets with slips and gully in place," the Indian explained. "And Smith just shuffled across and exposed his leg stumps to cover the line, and was selective and smart in his approach. At Lord's, they had a leg-slip for him on occasions and a few short-pitched deliveries against Jofra Archer got him in trouble as he tried to cover the line with the weight on his back-foot."

Smith got hit by a vicious Archer bouncer in the first innings at Lord's and couldn't return to bat in the second innings,



SACHIN TENDULKAR

ultimately forced to miss the following Test at Headingley as he recovered from a delayed concussion. Tendulkar explained the ideal technique to deal with short-pitched stuff.

"The most important thing for any batsman is to keep the head position forward and wait leaning forward or marginally in-line," said the only player to feature in 200 Tests. "Smith got into bad positions and that's how he probably got hit."

However, the mark of a champion is the way in which he comes back fighting. Smith, returning for the fourth Test in Manchester, registered his fourth hundred of the series and, this time, converted it into a double.

Tendulkar was impressed with how Smith had resurrected his technique and approach. "In the final two Tests, he was leaving the ball while leaning forward, and looked in better positions," he said. "He worked on his technique very smartly. That is why I say, 'complicated technique, but extremely organised mindset.'"

## SL to go ahead with Pak tour

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's cricket board Thursday said it will go ahead with its tour of Pakistan despite fears that players could be the targets of terror attacks during the six-match visit.

Sri Lanka Cricket Secretary Mohan de Silva said they received the all-clear from the defence ministry to leave for Pakistan on Tuesday.

"We have the green light from the defence ministry," de Silva told AFP.

"The tour is on as we planned. I myself and our office bearers will also be accompanying the team."

Reports last week of a possible terror attack were referred to the defence ministry for investigation.

The Sri Lanka team was the target of an attack during a Test match in Pakistan's Lahore in March 2009, with six players injured when gunmen attacked their bus.

Six Pakistan policemen and two civilians were killed.

Since the attack, a majority of international teams have refused to tour the South Asian country.

Sri Lanka's first match in Lahore after that was one T20 game against Pakistan in October 2017.

De Silva visited Pakistan last month along with a security consultant to check out the arrangements made by the hosts.

## 'Kohli a great player indeed'

AGENCIES, New Delhi



Former Pakistan swashbuckling all-rounder Shahid Afridi praised Indian skipper Virat Kohli for his batting in the second T20I against South Africa and called him a 'great player'.

Afridi retweeted ICC's post and wrote, "Congratulations @imvKohli. You are a great player indeed, wish you continued success, keep entertaining cricket fans all around the world."

In the same match, Kohli surpassed Rohit Sharma's record and became the leading run-scorer in the T20I. Now, he has a total of 2441 runs in 71 games while Sharma has 2434 runs in 97 matches.

Interestingly, Kohli was awarded his 11th player of the match award after his awe-inspiring knock, which helped him tie with Afridi (11) on the second number in the all-time list after Afghanistan's Mohammad Nabi (12).

Former Australian cricketer and newly appointed Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) head coach Simon Katich has heaped praise on RCB skipper Kohli, saying the record of the batsman speaks for him and his contribution as a team player is well documented.

"His (Kohli) records speak for him. I have a huge amount of respect for what he has achieved not only as a player but also as the captain of India," Katich told.

"What I really like about him is the fact that he is super competitive,

because that's exactly what I am like and I love that," he added.

Meanwhile, Mike Hesson, who has been appointed as RCB Director, Cricket Operations, also lavished praise on Kohli and said: "He is as good as they get in world cricket."

"Last night, we saw another example of what an amazing player he is. He is a fine leader who leads with real spirit and passion," he added.

Kohli has also won high praise from his teammate pacer Deepak Chahar, who believes India skipper is a "next-level player" altogether.

"I don't know how Virat bhaiya (brother) manages to score these many runs and that too with such consistency. He is a next-level player," said Chahar at the post-match presser.



Captain Virat Kohli's unbeaten 72 off 52 balls helped India beat South Africa by seven wickets in the second match on Wednesday. In the same match, he surpassed Rohit Sharma's record and became the leading run-scorer in T20Is.

PHOTO: AFP