

Mahmud urges ‘365 days’ of patience

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh players were not the only ones to receive sticks from fans and the media following the debacle in the Asia Cup as the Tigers’ team director Khaled Mahmud Sujon also came under scrutiny, triggered by his aggressive responses made during the continental championship.

On Sunday’s episode of The Daily Star’s multimedia show, Non Striker’s End powered by Daraz, Mahmud opened up and discussed various topics, among which the Asia Cup was a prominent one.

Mahmud, one of the most influential members of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), urged for a year of patience and positivity from the fans and media in order to restore order and structure in the Tigers’ T20 outfit.

“We are not being patient enough. We often lose our cool following each failure. I admit the fact that Bangladesh’s back i s

against the wall at the moment in the T20 format and there is no other way than to improve from this situation. So, you need to give us some time. I am not saying that Bangladesh will achieve big in the upcoming World Cup but at the same time there is a possibility of doing well,” Mahmud told The Daily Star during the interview.

“I didn’t want many days. I just want 365 days. Just promise that you [media] won’t ask any negative questions to anyone, not even the board directors, coach, and selectors. I want everyone to have confidence in the team and the confidence to spread everywhere through the media, just like the negative news gets spread. So, I urge you to give us a year” Mahmud added.

The 51-year-old also blamed social media and mainstream media for twisting facts. He said that even someone like Shakib Al Hasan remains afraid of taking decisions for the same reason.

“Things get twisted in such a manner that even our players are afraid to give interviews to the media. They think that the news will be twisted which will eventually harm their career. It’s like the media is controlling their career and it’s wrong.

“They are unable to play with freedom because of Facebook, YouTube, and the media and even a person like Shakib is afraid of taking decisions. Shakib is the biggest name in Bangladesh cricket and even he thinks twice and asks me will it be right to make a tough call,” he said.

“The readers can watch the full interview on The Daily Star’s Facebook page and YouTube Channel.



Apart from displaying stellar fielding prowess, Sri Lanka showed composure under immense pressure. Led by player-of-the-match Bhanuka Rajapaksa’s 71 off 45 and player-of-the-series Wanindu Hasaranga’s exploits with the ball, Sri Lanka emerged as the better side on the night in the Asia Cup final in Dubai on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP

‘Sri Lanka deserved to be champions’

SPORTS REPORTER

‘It was a team effort,’ a very proud Sri Lanka coach Chris Silverwood said after his side’s Asia Cup triumph on Sunday.

Sri Lanka outclassed Pakistan, registering a 23-run win, to ensure their sixth Asia Cup title at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium and it indeed was a team effort that saw a young Sri Lankan side emerge as the champions of Asia.

A lot of moments could be pointed to as the turning point of the final. Some may point out how Bhanuka Rajapaksa’s valiant and unbeaten 45-ball 71 took Sri Lanka from a precarious 67 for five in 10 overs to a commanding 170 for six at the end of the 20 overs. Then again, some



the difference was the discipline shown by Dasun Shanaka’s troops while fielding in the outfield.

Unlike Pakistan, they grabbed everything that was ballooned in the air. They manned the boundary line like brave soldiers, diving for every ball shot their way – determined to not let anything go past them. They rushed in to stop every ball that was played in gaps to deny the Pakistani batters run the extra single.

Sri Lanka took a total of seven catches in the outfield, each with better conviction than the previous and under growing pressure.

Things, however, did not go Sri Lanka’s way at the beginning of the game. In a tournament when ‘win the toss and win the match’ almost became a trend, Shanaka saw the flip of the coin favour Babar Azam.

“I think if any team thinks about the toss, then they are not a champion team. Sri Lanka were that today, they didn’t

ROLL OF HONOUR WINNERS

1984: India, **1986:** Sri Lanka, **1988:** India, **1990-91:** India, **1995:** India, **1997:** Sri Lanka, **2000:** Pakistan, **2004:** Sri Lanka, **2008:** Sri Lanka, **2010:** India, **2012:** Pakistan, **2014:** Sri Lanka, **2016:** India, **2018:** India, **2022:** SRI LANKA

SCORES IN BRIEF

SRI LANKA

170 for 6 in 20 overs (de Silva 28, Rajapaksa 71 not out, Hasaranga 36, Karunaratne 14 not out; Naseem 1-40, Rauf 3-29, Shadab 1-28, Iftikhar 1-21)

PAKISTAN

147 all out in 20 overs (Rizwan 55, Ahmed 32; Theekshana 1-25, Madushan 4-34, Hasaranga 3-27, Karunaratne 2-33)

Result: Sri Lanka won by 23 runs.

Player-of-the-match: Bhanuka Rajapaksa.

Player-of-the-series: Wanindu Hasaranga.

may talk about Wanindu Hasaranga’s 17th over, in which he got the scalps of a set Mohammad Rizwan, and the dangerous Asif Ali and Khushdil Shah.

But regardless of all these crucial moments of the game, the one aspect of the Sri Lanka side in the final that made

Swiatek’s fulfilment on and off court

AGENCIES

Iga Swiatek believes “the sky is the limit” after she crowned her rise to the pinnacle of women’s tennis with a third Grand Slam title at the US Open on Saturday.

The 21-year-old Polish world number one claimed her second Grand Slam title of 2022 at Flushing Meadows, defeating Tunisia’s Ons Jabeur 6-2, 7-6 (7/5).

It was the latest staging post on a dazzling season which has provided ample evidence Swiatek is the front-runner to dominate the sport as it heads into the post-Serena Williams era.

Swiatek, whose favourite surface is clay, says the fact that she was able to triumph in New York could prove to be a psychological watershed for her game.

“It’s something that I wasn’t expecting for sure. It’s also like a confirmation for me that sky is the limit.”

On Saturday, Swiatek shrugged off the uniquely raucous New York crowd – chair umpire Louise Azemar Engzell made repeated calls for quiet amongst spectators which were routinely ignored – to close out her 10th straight victory in a final since 2019.

Swiatek believes her ability to block out distractions, and mould her gameplan to suit matches as they are evolving is a sign



that she has become a mentally tougher player.

“I’m mostly proud of the fact that mentally I’m not kind of breaking up in those important moments,” Swiatek said.

World number one Iga Swiatek was able to have her cake and eat it at the U.S.

Open after the Pole capped her campaign at a star-studded Flushing Meadows by collecting her third Grand Slam title.

She has enjoyed her brushes with New York’s celebrity scene during the tournament, beat Tunisian Ons Jabeur 6-2, 7-6(5) on Saturday to claim a massive \$2.6

million winner’s check.

However, tournament organisers had another reward for her, hiding a piece of tiramisu – one of her favourite treats – inside the trophy.

“I really appreciate it. Especially since I didn’t have anything to eat,” she said.

The two weeks of competition could scarcely have been sweeter for the Pole, who balanced her usual on-court seriousness with off-court fun.

She grabbed a photo with her idol Serena Williams, rubbed shoulders with Olympic gold medallist Lindsey Vonn and swooned at the sight of singer Seal.

“Actually after I met Seal, I was like, ‘Even if I’m going to lose right now I already won this tournament, because I got photo with him,’” said Swiatek.

“It’s something that it’s only going to happen probably in New York – yeah, because it’s New York.”

Swiatek, who has also won two French Open titles, fit right in with the city’s boisterous fans and was greeted on the Flushing Meadows Plaza for an ESPN interview with a roaring crowd of her compatriots after becoming the first Polish woman to win the tournament.

“The energy that they give me, it’s surreal,” she said.



I really tried but Iga didn’t make it easy for me. She deserved to win today. I don’t like her very much right now but it’s okay. I’m not someone that going to give up. I am sure I’m going to be in the final again.

Tunisia’s “Minister of Happiness”
Ons Jabeur

