Live from 08:00 pm **SONY SIX England vs South Africa** 3rd Test, Day 5 Live from 04:00 pm

### **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 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

against the wall at the moment in the T20 format and there is no other way than this from situation.

you need to give us some time. I am 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.



# '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

**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,

everything that was ballooned in the air. their favour by simply being the better 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

**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

mistakes. They deserved to be champions." Pakistan's Mohammad Rizwan could not Unlike Pakistan, they grabbed deny how Sri Lanka turned the odds in team on all fronts.

"Winning after seven years, It feels so good. One and a half years ago, we were nowhere. Now we are a different team with youngsters. I feel so good," Sri Lanka pacer Chamika Karunaratne could not hide what the triumph meant for the island nation whose economic and political conditions had hit the nadir.

From starting the tournament with an eight-wicket thumping at the hands of Afghanistan to going on to finally acquiring the bragging rights as the deserved champions of Asia, Sri Lanka went on to prove that, more than anything, more than having a handful of matchwinners in the side, all that mattered was

## ASIA CUP saw rivalries renewed

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI from Dubai

The sight of Bangladesh skipper Shakib Al Hasan talking to his Pakistani counterpart Babar Azam during a practice session at the ICC Academy in Dubai, when the Tigers were still in the tournament, would have caught the imagination of most travelling journalists from both nations who came to cover the 2022 Asia Cup. Neither Shakib nor Babar can ill afford to come together in such a way even during bilateral series, but the atmosphere at this Asia Cup has seen plenty of

smiles and congeniality between opposite camps. Throughout the Asia Cup, such interactions between star players give the vibe that there is eagerness to build friendships and learn on developing their game, surpassing the rivalry that exists at a cricketing level.

How Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma or Rishabh Pant were asking Shaheen Shah Afridi regarding his injury, or Rashid Khan and Mohammad Nabi sharing jokes with the Pakistan squad, all induced good spirits when the tournament began. Afridi even asked this reporter 'Kemon Achhen' in Bangla, showing the cultural mixing has been on point and afforded by all the teams sharing the ICC Academy for their practice sessions.

Rivalries were, however, renewed when the fireworks began. India beat Pakistan in a nervy game during the group stage, where the players did not even let the political situation between the countries disturb the personal relations between them. Bangladesh umpire Masudur Rahman Mukul, who had the honour of officiating both the intensely competitive India-Pakistan games this tournament, later told The Daily Star how the respect flowed between the sides but the body language remained aggressive. The rivalry that saw the biggest boost during the tournament was, of course, the one between Bangladesh-Sri Lanka. Dasun Shanaka had said that Bangladesh did not have any world-class bowlers apart from Shakib and Mustafizur Rahman.

A war of words ensued in the media with Bangladesh team director Khaled Mahmud then coming to a press conference ahead of the crucial group stage match against Sri Lanka and saying that at least Bangladesh had two while Sri Lanka had none. That resulted in Sri Lanka's legendary former star Mahela Jayawardena coming to social media to tell the Lankans to put in a world-class performance.

Following a tightly fought contest between the sides, the passion and rivalry, which had seen its peak during the Nidahas Trophy in 2018, was reignited. There were jibes on social media from Sri Lanka stars while Bangladesh felt the heat of not doing the job in the death overs with the ball. Even as the two sides played things down after the game, the incidents left plenty of ammunition for the rivalry to gear on.

Afghanistan and Pakistan fans have a history of being both friendly and rowdy together. At Sharjah, during the tight-rope match that was decided by the two sixes from Pakistan's Naseem Shah in the end, tempers flared on the pitch with Pakistan's Asif Ali reacting badly to a send-off from Fareed Ahmad. Meanwhile, videos circulated on social media had shown fans engaging in violence. However, the Stadium authorities did not confirm the development.

With so much congeniality around during the tournament, the heat of the battle getting to players further showed the real flavour of a tournament such as the Asia Cup and the current one saw more catalysts for excitement in the future editions.

### Karunaratne 2-33) Result: Sri Lanka won by 23 runs. Player-of-the-match: Bhanuka Rajapaksa.

may talk about Wanindu Hasaranga's 17th

Player-of-the-series: Wanindu Hasaranga.

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

## the difference was the discipline shown by think of toss. And then they hurt us for our Dasun Shanaka's troops while fielding in the outfield.

moments of the game, the one aspect of toss, then they are not a champion team. to play as a team, just as their coach had the Sri Lanka side in the final that made Sri Lanka were that today, they didn't said.

# Swiatek's fulfilment on and off court

**AGENCIES** 

2019.

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

Swiatek believes her ability to block out distractions, and mould her gameplan to



that she has become a mentally tougher

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

suit matches as they are evolving is a sign—able to have her cake and eat it at the U.S. 7-6(5) on Saturday to claim a massive \$2.6

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 World number one Iga Swiatek was tournament, beat Tunisian Ons Jabeur 6-2,

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"

