



## T20 World Cup: England beat Italy by 24 runs, qualify for Super Eights

KOLKATA, FEB 16:

England entered the Super Eights after a convincing 24-run victory over Italy in match 29 of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 held at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata on Monday.

The Harry Brook-led England opted to bat first after winning the toss and set a big target of 203 runs for the fellow European side. Then they successfully defended the target and won the match.

Phil Salt (28 off 15 balls) gave a blazing start, but Jos Buttler failed to score again and made just three runs before giving his wicket to Grant Stewart.

Jacob Bethell (23 off 20 balls) and Tom Banton (30 off 21 balls) contributed well with the bat. Sam Curran hit a couple of sixes and made 25 runs.

Coming to bat at number 7, Will Jacks made an unbeaten 53 off just 22 balls, which helped England cross the 200-run mark.

Stewart and Crishan Kalugamage took a couple of wickets each as JJ Smuts,



Ali Hasan and Ben Manenti shared one wicket each among them.

Chasing a big target of 203 runs, Italy were struck by two wickets in the first over when Jofra Archer dismissed Anthony Mosca and JJ Smuts for a duck.

Italian captain Harry Manenti made just 12 runs off

11 balls before losing his wicket to Jamie Overton.

His brother Ben Manenti (60 off 25 balls, with four 4s and six 6s) added 92 runs for the fourth wicket with Justin Mosca (43 off 32 balls, with the help of seven fours). Stewart's quick 45 runs in just 23 balls kept the Italian side in the fray, but

the English side displayed brilliant depth over skills to halt them at 178 runs in 20 overs. Will Jacks was named Player of the Match for his match-winning performance. Italy will play their last group-stage match against the West Indies on Thursday at the same venue. (ANI)

## Babar faces heat: Livid former Pakistan players demand his axing after India debacle

KARACHI, FEB 16:

Under-performing batting star Babar Azam found himself in the line of fire after Pakistan's 61-run loss to India in a T20 World Cup match as several former players in the country demanded his sacking alongside some other seniors.

Former captain Babar, senior spinner Shadab Khan and pace spearhead Shaheen Shah Afridi failed to come good in the lopsided contest in Colombo on Sunday night. While the Pakistani bowling was

taken apart by young opener Ishan Kishan (77 off 40), their batters were foxed by the combined might of India's top pacers and spinners.

"If it was in my hands, I would not pick Babar, Shadab and Shaheen again in the T20 team. They have had plenty of chances to come through for Pakistan but failed again yesterday," former captain Shahid Afridi said.

Afridi said it was time to groom younger players in the format. While Shaheen

was hammered for 31 runs in two overs, Babar was cleaned up by Axar Patel for five while attempting a slog even though his team was three down for 13 runs in a steep chase of 176.

Former skipper and batting great Javed Miandad was not even willing to speak elaborately on the loss but acknowledged that Pakistan's cricket team had been unable to fight under pressure.

"Bhai bade matches main hi players ko character dikhana padta hai, woh

hamare players nahi dekha paye" (In big matches, players have to show character. Unfortunately our players didn't show that character).

Mohammad Yousaf, another former captain who has always backed Babar, also said that the debacle should end the T20 careers of Babar and Shaheen.

"Time's up for Shaheen, Babar, and Shadab, Pakistan's T20 squad needs new performers, not empty wins against weaker sides," Yousaf posted on X.

## Snow Marathon "Run for Martyrs" held from Chinta to Jai Ghati in Bhaderwah

DODA, FEBRUARY

16: A Snow Marathon titled "Run for Martyrs" was successfully organised today from Chinta to Jai Ghati (Bhaderwah) by Khoonkhar 4 Rashtriya Rifles (4 RR) in collaboration with the District Administration Doda and the Bhaderwah Development Authority, paying a heartfelt tribute to the brave soldiers who sacrificed their lives in the service of the nation.

The marathon was flagged off at Chinta by District Development Council (DDC) Chairperson Doda, Dhananter Singh Kotwal along with Commanding Officer 4 RR, Yogesh Chouhan amid enthusiastic participation from locals, youth, senior citizens and army personnel.

Among those present on the occasion were the Deputy Commissioner Doda, Harvinder Singh; Vice Chairperson DDC Doda, Sangeeta Bhagat; Additional Deputy Commissioner Bhaderwah, Sunil Kumar Bhutyal; ASP Bhaderwah, Vinod Kumar; CEO Bhaderwah Development Authority, Sanjeev Sharma; CEO Doda, Bhushan Kumar; Lt. Col. Jevitesh Rajora (Border Roads Organisation); District Information Officer Doda, Abhimanyu Singh; Tehsildar, BMO, senior citizens, prominent citizens and officials from the Indian Army and civil administration.



A cultural programme was also organised at Jai Ghati (Bhaderwah), adding vibrancy and patriotic fervour to the commemorative event.

DDC Chairperson, Dhananter Singh Kotwal lauded the District Administration and 4 RR for organising a meaningful event in honour of the martyrs. He emphasized that such initiatives strengthen national pride and unity. He further highlighted India's rapid developmental progress, stating that sustained growth is a key driving force towards achieving the vision of a Viksit Bharat.

Deputy Commissioner

Doda, Harvinder Singh appreciated the enthusiastic participation of the runners and paid solemn tribute to the soldiers who lost their lives in an unfortunate accident last month, remembering their supreme sacrifice with deep respect. He also commended the efforts of Rashtriya Rifles, the Bhaderwah Development Authority and all stakeholders for making the event impactful. The DC Doda acknowledged the bravery, dedication and patriotism of army personnel, who continue to safeguard the nation and ensure public safety round the clock.

Commanding Officer 4

RR, Yogesh Chouhan appreciated all participants and expressed special gratitude to local residents who selflessly assisted in carrying injured army personnel for treatment following the recent accident. He noted that the relationship between the Army and the public has evolved significantly over time, transforming into one based on friendship, cooperation and mutual trust.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Bhaderwah, Sunil Kumar Bhutyal thanked participants for their dedication in making the event memorable and paid heartfelt tribute to the fallen soldiers.

## DYSSO Baramulla launches league of Classics with Block-Level Selection Trials across Multiple Sports

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS  
JAMMU, FEB 16

Under the League of Classics initiative, launched by the Directorate of Youth Services and Sports, under the banner of the Youth Engagement Programme 2026, District Youth Services & Sports Office (DYSSO) Baramulla is organising leagues in multiple sports disciplines including Volleyball, Football, and Cricket at the block level, aiming to identify, nurture, and promote young sporting talent from the grassroots.

District Youth Services and Sports Officer Baramulla has successfully kicked off the block-level selection trials across various zones of the district today. Selection trials were conducted in Block Baramulla, Block Singpora Patan, Block Tujar, Block Uri, Block Bijhama, Block Patan, Block Khore, and Block Tangmarg, witnessing an



overwhelming response from the youth.

Thousands of young aspirants in the 17-19 years age category participated with great enthusiasm, reflecting the growing sports culture and passion among the youth of the district.

The selection trials are scheduled to continue across all remaining blocks

of Baramulla district up to 19th February 2026.

scouting and preparation for higher-level tournaments.

District Youth Services & Sports Office reiterated its commitment to providing structured opportunities for young athletes and strengthening the sporting ecosystem across the district through such inclusive and progressive initiatives.

## Youth Engagement Programme 2026 kicks off with multi-sport trials in District Kishtwar

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS  
JAMMU, FEB 16

The Department of Youth Services & Sports, District Kishtwar has successfully ignited a vibrant grassroots sports movement across the district with the dynamic launch of the Youth Engagement Programme 2026 under the inspiring banner "League of Classics— Enjoy the Game."

The programme is being conducted under the directions of the Director General Youth Services & Sports J&K, Anuradha Gupta and the Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar, Pankaj Kumar Sharma.

The programme was held under the able supervision of Jaffer Haider Sheikh, DYSSO Kishtwar, whose visionary leadership and commitment to youth empowerment have played a pivotal role in mobilizing large-scale participation from rural and far-flung areas of the district.

The initiative aims to identify, nurture and promote young sporting talent from the remotest corners of the district, providing them with a structured platform to excel



at higher levels of competition.

As part of the programme, Block-Level Trial-cum-Selection Camps for Cricket, Football and Volleyball in the U/17 and U/19 Boys categories were conducted with overwhelming participation and enthusiasm from budding sports persons.

The selection trials for Panchayat Bhadat, Bhugra and Barot were successfully organized at HSS Bhadat, witnessing an impressive turnout of young athletes eager to showcase their skills.

The trials were conducted

under the observation of experienced Physical Education staff and technical experts, ensuring transparency, merit-based selection and adherence to proper sports guidelines.

Participants demonstrated exceptional discipline, sportsmanship and competitive spirit throughout the event.

The Youth Engagement Programme 2026 is envisioned as a transformative initiative designed to promote sports culture at the grassroots level, Identify hidden talent from rural and far-flung Panchayats, pro-

vide structured competitive exposure, strengthen block- and district-level teams for future competitions.

Officials emphasized that such initiatives not only foster physical fitness and teamwork but also channel the energy of youth towards constructive and nation-building activities.

The "League of Classics" is expected to further expand across various blocks of Kishtwar in the coming weeks, creating a strong sporting ecosystem and ensuring inclusive participation from every corner of the district.

## Khele Sanand Season 3 reaches halfway mark, inspires youth through holistic growth

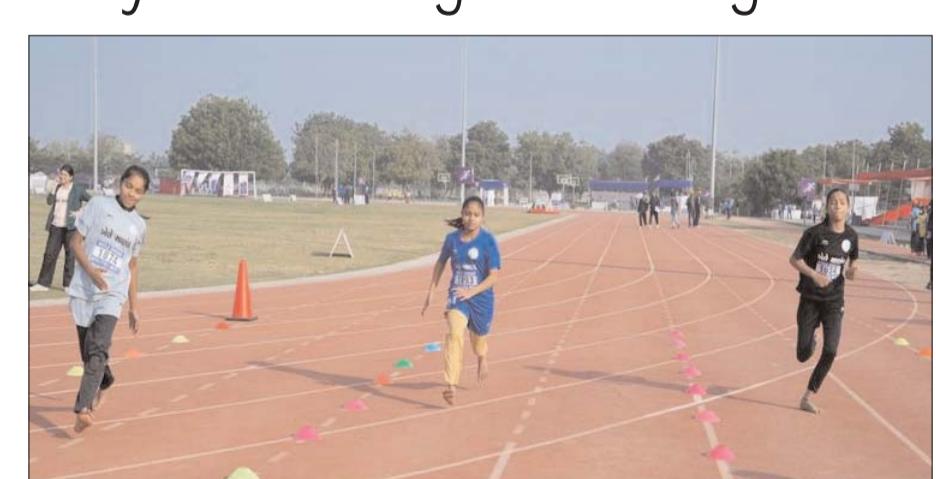
AHMEDABAD, FEB 16:

The Khele Sanand Season 3, which kicked off on September 17, 2025, has reached its halfway stage, marking a significant step in its mission to foster all-round growth among rural youth of Sanand Taluka, according to a release.

Season 3 of Khele Sanand has featured sports such as Kho Kho, Kabaddi, shooting, and volleyball, and hosted the Khele Sanand Athletics Meet 2025 in December last year. The event saw enthusiastic participation from young athletes across multiple villages, showcasing not only sporting talent but also teamwork, discipline, and community spirit.

A total of 7160 people have participated to date.

The Khele Sanand Athletics Meet has become a dynamic stage for local youth



to showcase speed, strength, and endurance. With sprints, distance runs, and field events drawing strong participation, Season 3 reinforces its holistic vision — promoting fitness, discipline, and spirited competition among young athletes.

Sarpanches, who have provided crucial logistical support, from organising venues and ensuring smooth transport to mobilising local resources and accommodating special dietary requirements. Their contribution has strengthened

seamlessly. With several matches still to be played, excitement continues to build as villages rally behind their teams. The second half of the season promises even more spirited performances, community bonding, and inspiring stories of young talent rising to the occasion.