



Sanju Samson, Nitish Reddy star as India thrash Afghanistan by 7 wickets to clinch series

NEW DELHI, SEP 15: *Sanju Samson's explosive 57 off 22 balls and Nitish Reddy's three-wicket haul powered India to a commanding seven-wicket win over Afghanistan in the second T20I here on Tuesday, giving the hosts an unassailable lead in the three-match series.*

Reddy returned with figures of 3/24, striking on the first ball of each of his three overs, as the Indian bowlers produced another disciplined show to restrict Afghanistan to 159 for 8.

India conceded just 64 between overs 7-14 to leave the Afghans struggling at 105 for six in 15 overs, as it was Mohammad Nabi (20) and Rashid Khan (28) who added crucial 48 runs off 28 balls to take them to a decent total in the end.

Chasing 160, openers Samson and Abhishek Sharma (39) brutalised Afghanistan bowlers with sensational hitting, amassing 82-1 in the mandatory powerplay to set the foundation as India eventually romped home in 14.5 overs.

If Abhishek was the protagonist in the opening T20, it was the 31-year-old Samson who clobbered seven fours and four maximums en route to his fastest fifty which came off 20 balls, displaying his immaculate timing and rich arsenal of strokes once again.

Afghanistan's ploy to open with spin at both ends backfired as Abhishek blasted Mujeeb Ur Rahman (3/37) for two fours in the first over, before pulling Nabi for a six in the second.

Samson then picked up a four off Azmatullah Omarzai before Abhishek deposited Nabi for his second six in the fourth over as runs came thick and fast.



The Kerala batter exploded in the fifth over as he flicked one off the hips for a six, and pumped one across cover before hitting another straight back over the bowler's head to rack up 20 runs off Omarzai.

Nabi was next in the firing line as Samson and Abhishek milked him for 27 runs with three sixes and two fours.

In seventh over, Rashid Khan (3/36) dismissed Abhishek, who failed to clear the ropes this time.

With 24,215 crowd in attendance at the Arun Jaitley stadium, Samson completed his fastest T20 fifty with another four off, and then pulled Rashid for another six.

But the wily spinner had the last laugh as Samson went for a lofted drive only to be caught by Nabi.

Ishan Kishan (38 not out off 23) and skipper Shreyas Iyer (11) then came together. An inside hit out over extra cover earned a six for the Indian skipper, but he fell next, with Ibrahim Zadran managing to hold

on to a catch after a fumble at slip as Rashid picked his third wicket.

Earlier, Jasprit Bumrah gave India the perfect start with a first-over maiden, while Arshdeep Singh dismissed Rahmanullah Gurbaz (0) for his second straight duck of the series in the next over.

Skipper Ibrahim Zadran (37) then carted the first two deliveries from Bumrah for boundaries, while Arshdeep was next hit for two boundaries by Zadran before Sediqullah Atal (12) glided one fine of the wicket for another four as Afghanistan recovered to 41 for one in the powerplay.

Afghanistan brought up their fifty in the eighth over but Reddy broke the partnership in his first ball after Zadran was holed out to Bishnoi at deep midwicket.

Bishnoi then dismissed Atal, who hit straight to Tilak Varma at long-off, as Afghanistan slipped to 59 for three in the 10th over.

Reddy once again struck in his first delivery of his second over, removing Gul-

badin Naib, who got a top edge after swinging across the line, with Samson completing the catch.

Bishnoi, however, dropped Omarzai (11) off Axar Patel (2/35) but the spinner did not have to wait long as he had the batter caught in his last over.

Arshdeep returned to end Rasooli's innings with Tilak taking a fine running catch at long-off.

That brought Nabi and Rashid together and they picked up a few boundaries to take them closer to 150-mark.

Nabi smashed a four and a six off Bishnoi, while Rashid, too, picked up fours off Bumrah and Arshdeep. He was particularly harsh on the left-arm seamer, creaming 16 runs with two fours and a six.

However, Bumrah removed Nabi in 19th over and then Reddy dismissed Rashid in the first ball of the last over. Noor Ahmed hit a six off the last ball as Afghanistan managed just three runs more than they scored in the first T20I.

Govt constitutes task force to bring back Formula 1 to India

NEW DELHI , SEPTEMBER 15 : The government has constituted a task force under NITI Aayog to examine the revival and development of Formula One and the broader motor-sports ecosystem in the country, with a focus on identifying challenges and formulating a coordinated roadmap for the sector.

The task force will undertake a comprehensive assessment of taxation-related issues and other challenges affecting the growth of motorsports in India.

The task force will also assess the potential international, economic, tourism and investment benefits of hosting motorsport events, while identifying key priorities, infrastructure requirements and operational needs for sustainable development of the sector.

It will further examine the need for a comprehensive policy framework and recommend suitable Public-Private Partnership (PPP) models to support the growth of motorsports.

The Task Force for Formula One Grand Prix feasibility assessment is chaired by Yugal Kishore Joshi, PD (YAS), NITI Aayog. The members of the Task Force include Kunal, Joint Secre-



tary, Department of Sports; Joint Secretary, Department of Commerce; Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tourism; representatives from CBIC and CBDT, Department of Revenue; representatives from Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra State Governments; representatives from Buddh International Circuit (BIC) and Madras International Circuit (MIC); President/Secretary General of the Federation of Motor Sports Clubs of India (FMSCI); a Technical Expert nominated by FMSCI;

and any other member co-opted by the Chairperson based on requirement.

The government is considering bringing back Formula 1 to the Buddh International Circuit, almost thirteen years after the last race was held at the track.

Union Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya also visited the Buddh International Circuit (BIC) in Greater Noida earlier this year, signalling potential plans to revive the Indian Grand Prix.

The Indian Grand Prix was previously held at the

Buddh International Circuit from 2011 to 2013, with Germany's Sebastian Vettel winning all three editions for Red Bull Racing.

The inaugural race, held on October 30, 2011, as the 17th round of the 2011 F1 season, also saw Vettel emerge victorious.

Grand Prix has not returned to the Formula One calendar since 2013. In addition to Formula 1, India hosted a MotoGP round in September 2023 at Buddh International Circuit. However, the races have not returned since.

Sree Charani breaks 800-points barrier as India stars rise in ICC T20I Rankings

NEW DELHI SEP 15: September 15: India's victorious Asia Cup triumph in Dubai has seen a host of their players make eye-catching improvements up the ICC Women's T20I Player Rankings.

India cruised to a 72-run victory over Sri Lanka in the final of the eight-team tournament to claim an unprecedented eighth Asia Cup title, and it was the likes of white-ball stars Shafali Verma, Deepti Sharma and Sree Charani that led the way, as per the ICC website.

Charani picked up four wickets in that title decider at Dubai International Cricket Stadium to finish with 12 scalps for the tournament, and the left-arm has broken new ground on the rankings for T20I bowlers, with the India spinner now joining an elite group that includes England tweaker



the first Indian bowler to surpass the 800-point barrier.

Only Australia fast bowler Megan Schutt (806) can lay claim to having reached a higher rating than Charani's 802 points on the rankings for T20I bowlers, with the India spinner now joining an elite group that includes England tweaker

Sophie Ecclestone (802) as the only female players to reach the magical 800-point mark.

And it is teammate Deepti Sharma who is now Charani's closest rival in the rankings, with the star all-rounder rising four places to move to second on the list for T20I bowlers following her 14 wickets at the Asia

Cup that included a spell of 3/19 in the final.

There is further joy for India on the rankings for T20I batters, with Shafali rising one spot to move to sixth on this star-studded list following her tournament best 236 runs at an average of 47.20. It also helped the right-hander make gains of five spots on the list for T20I all-rounders as she jumps to 15th.

It is still Australian duo Beth Mooney and Georgia Voll that hold sway at the top of the rankings for T20I batters, with Nigar Sultana (up one place to equal 20th), Imesha Dulani (up two spots to equal 20th), Sharmin Akhter Supta (up three rungs to equal 40th) and Shawaal Zulfiqar (up four slots to 45th) among the other players to make ground following some good performances at the Asia Cup.

Dean and Gagan end South American WRC3 campaign on positive note

CONCEPCIÓN (CHILE), SEPTEMBER 15 : TSI Racing's Dean Mascarenhas and co-driver Gagan Karumbaiiah ended their South American World Rally Championship campaign on a positive note with a top-8 finish and a stage win in the WRC3 class, completing back-to-back rallies in Paraguay and Chile.

Driving a Ford Fiesta Rally3 prepared by PH Sport, the reigning Indian National Rally Champions finished a creditable eighth in the WRC3 class n Rally Chile Biobío, a technically demanding event featuring twisty

gravel stages and winding forest tracks of the Biobío region, according to a press release.

A fortnight earlier, the Mangaluru-Kodagu pair were in contention for a WRC3 podium in Rally del Paraguay before an unfortunate accident forced them into a DNF with just one stage remaining.

For TSI Racing, the Paraguay and Chile rounds were part of a carefully planned programme aimed at providing the Indian duo with international experience in some of the toughest conditions on the WRC calendar.

Their WRC campaign began with Rally Islas Canarias in April, where they finished seventh in class, followed by an FIA European Rally Championship outing at Rally di Roma Capitale in July, where they finished 12th in Rally3.

Mohan Nagarajan, MD of Sidvin Energy Engineering, which backs TSI Racing, said the international campaign had delivered valuable experience for both the crew and the team.

“The three WRC rounds have given Dean, Gagan and the entire team a wealth of experience.

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Sultan Warriors Baramulla Win Greenlam Laminates BIG Premier League Opener

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 15: The Greenlam Laminates BIG Premier League 2026 opened today at Bakshi Stadium, Srinagar, with Sultan Warriors Baramulla registering a convincing seven-wicket victory over Valley Fresh Cold Chain in the opening match of the tournament.

The tournament is supported by Greenlam Laminates as Title Partner, Excise Department, J&K as Powered By Partner, J&K Forest Department, Qureshi Kabab Corner and Kanwal Spices as Co-Powered By Partners, J&K Bank as Official Banking Partner, Arsh Autos as Auto Partner, Le Delice as Food Partner, JK Sports Time as Streaming Partner, Rising Kashmir as Print Partner, The Country Side Resorts as Hospitality Partner, and Team Ideation as Event Partner.

The opening day of the Greenlam Laminates BIG Premier League 2026 was graced by Shri Satish Sharma, Hon'ble Cabinet

Minister, Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Shri Nasir Aslam Wani, Advisor to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, and Anubhav Sharma DGM (Sales), Greenlam Industries, along with representatives of the participating teams, partners and the organising team.

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Satish Sharma, Hon'ble Cabinet Minister, Government of Jammu and Kashmir, appreciated the initiative and said that sporting events of this nature provide young people with a positive platform to showcase their talent, discipline and competitive spirit. He congratulated the organisers, participating teams and players, and expressed hope that the Greenlam Laminates BIG Premier League would encourage more youngsters to take up cricket and contribute towards strengthening the sporting culture of Jammu and Kashmir.

Shri Nasir Aslam Wani, Advi-



sor to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, also

appreciated the initiative and said that such platforms play an

important role in promoting sports and providing opportuni-

ties to emerging talent. He congratulated 92.7 BIG FM, the Jammu & Kashmir Sports Council, partners and participating teams for bringing together the sporting community through the league and wished all the teams success for the tournament.

Sultan Warriors Baramulla won the toss and invited Valley Fresh Cold Chain to set the target. Chasing the total, Sultan Warriors Baramulla completed the run chase comfortably to secure a seven-wicket win and begin their campaign on a strong note.

Lakhan Bharti was the standout performer for Sultan Warriors Baramulla, scoring an impressive 72 runs and also claiming a wicket. For his all-round performance, Bharti was adjudged Player of the Match.

Speaking on the occasion, Vikrant Sharma, Cluster Head, Rest of North 1, 92.7 BIG FM, said, “A league of this scale is not created by one organisation

alone. It is created by a collective belief in sport, in our young talent and in the power of cricket to bring people together. The BIG Premier League is an effort to provide a meaningful platform to emerging cricketers and bring the sporting community together through the spirit of competition and teamwork.”

In the second match of the day, United Imports Srinagar took on Royal Goodwill Cricket Club. United Imports Srinagar won the toss and elected to field first, putting Royal Goodwill Cricket Club in to bat.

The Greenlam Laminates BIG Premier League 2026 is being organised by 92.7 BIG FM in collaboration with the Jammu & Kashmir Sports Council. The tournament features eight teams competing for the coveted title, with the league stage being played from September 15 to 20, followed by the quarter-finals on September 21, semi-finals on September 22 and the grand finale on September 23.