

# Kohli conjures up magical knock to script India's sensational win over Pakistan

## ■ AGENCY

MELBOURNE: Virat Kohli, the long lost conqueror, sang a perfect redemption song on the grandest stage with a magical knock that engineered India's colossal four-wicket win over arch-rivals Pakistan at the MCG, packed with over 90,000 boisterous fans, here on Sunday.

King Kohli, as his fans call him, conjured up a memorable unbeaten 82-run knock to anchor a chase of 160 which became tricky after India were left in tatters at 31 for 4.

The unlikely victory was scripted in the last over when fortunes of both teams waxed and waned until India, needing 16 to win, lost two wickets and yet was left with one run to score in the last ball.

And that happened only because of a wide, three byes and a no-ball as it became as dramatic as it could.

Hardik Pandya, the most important cog in India's T20 wheel, struck 40 off 37 balls in a partnership of 113 for the fifth wicket.

Kohli's ability to win matches for India had come under the scanner due to a prolonged lean patch and with his knock he proved that he remains one of the best chasers in world cricket -- something that his captain Rohit Sharma acknowledged after the heart-stopping

game.

"Well, it's a surreal atmosphere. I honestly have no words. I have no idea how that happened," Kohli said after his incredible knock.

"Hardik kept telling me, just believe we can stay till the end. I'm lost for words."

It started in the 19th over when Kohli smashed Haris Rauf for back-to-back sixes.

Cricket indeed is a leveller as Rauf, after 22 splendid deliveries bowled two bad ones and it changed the complexion of the game.

Asked about those sixes, the former India skipper said, "It's just instinctively I saw it, told myself to stay still. The one at long-on was unexpected, it was a back-of-a-length slower ball. The fine one, I just threw my bat at it."

Then he spoke about his best T20 knocks.

"Till today I said Mohali was my best T20 innings. Then I got 82 off 52, today I got 82 off 53. Both are just as special. Today I will count this one higher because of the magnitude of the occasion and the situation we were in."

With 16 needed off last six balls, Pandya holed out to Babar off Mohammed Nawaz and with rule of crossover non-existent, Dinesh Karthik faced his first delivery and took a single.

With 14 needed off three balls, Nawaz's juicy full-toss was dispatched for a six over square leg and it was called a no-ball after deliberation by on-field umpires.

Nawaz, the hero of Pakistan's Super 4 victory in the Asia Cup, by then had lost his nerves. Kohli was bowled off the no-ball but Kohli and Karthik ran three runs and equation became two from two.

Karthik was stumped by an alert Mohammed Rizwan in the penultimate ball, furthering adding to the last-over chaos and mayhem.

Ravichandran Ashwin was on strike and Nawaz bowled a wide. The scores were tied and Ashwin scored the most important boundary of his career in the final ball of the game to finish it off in style.

'Chak De India' reverberating around the MCG never sounded sweeter and Kohli seemed numb. He punched ground, took a long walk back, showed thumbs up to the crowd having restored India's supremacy at a global event.

But the script could have gone awry.

KL Rahul's struggles against extreme pace and his distinct lack of footwork, Rohit Sharma and Suryakumar Yadav getting out cheaply did upset the rhythm that was set by Pandya and Arshdeep when they restricted Pakistan to 159 for



8.

In no time, India were 31 for 4 and Kohli and Pandya needed to consolidate for the next four overs without losing wickets.

Pandya and Kohli, both disciples of the peerless Mahendra Singh Dhoni understand the grammar of chasing in T20 cricket and how to pace the innings.

Only when leg-spinner Shadab Khan came into operation did Pandya chance his arm and sent him soaring into the stands.

In Nawaz's next over, Kohli gave him the same treatment

while Pandya got his second six.

India needed 60 from last five overs but Rauf and Naseem gave only six runs each in the 16th and 17th over.

Earlier, Arshdeep bowled a dream first spell and Pandya displayed his true worth in the back-10 as India restricted Pakistan to a manageable 159 for eight.

If Arshdeep (3/32) removed skipper Babar Azam (0) and Rizwan (4) in his first two overs to set the tone, Pandya (3/30) rekindled memories of his Asia Cup heroics by consistently hitting hard lengths at

brisk pace, letting the pitch do the rest.

Iftikhar Ahmed (51) was the only batter who looked like taking the attack back to India as the spinners Ashwin and Axar Patel (1/21) did struggle a bit and it was designated sixth bowler Pandya who finished his full quota.

Shan Masood (52) struck a half-century but never looked comfortable during his 42-ball knock.

Exactly 364 days back, Babar and Rizwan had clinically decimated the Indian bowling attack for their biggest ever T20I victory against India.

But with the MCG track remaining under cover for a couple of days due to rain and subsequent underlying moisture apart from a liberal tinge of green in and around the good length area meant the hit opening pair wasn't supposed to make merry.

Bhuvneshwar Kumar (122) and Arshdeep knew that all they needed to do was to pitch the ball up and let the track do the rest.

Earlier bowl at an average speed of 130 kmph and they knew that their best chance to trouble the batters at that pace was to bowl fuller lengths.

A good first over by Bhuvneshwar where he consistently got late movement set the tone beautifully for Arshdeep to take over the baton and inflict a telling damp

## SCOREBOARD

### PAKISTAN

|                     |                                   |       |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|
| Mohammad Rizwan     | † c Kumar b Arshdeep Singh        | 04    |
| Babar Azam          | (c) lbw b Arshdeep Singh          | 00    |
| Shan Masood         | not out                           | 52    |
| Iftikhar Ahmed      | lbw b Mohammed Shami              | 51    |
| Shadab Khan         | c Yadav b Pandya                  | 05    |
| Haider Ali          | c Yadav b Pandya                  | 02    |
| Mohammad Nawaz      | c Karthik b Pandya                | 09    |
| Asif Ali            | c Karthik b Arshdeep Singh        | 02    |
| Shaeen Shah Afridi  | c & b Kumar                       | 16    |
| Haris Rauf          | not out                           | 06    |
| <b>Extras</b>       |                                   | 12    |
| <b>Total</b>        |                                   | 159/8 |
| <b>INDIA</b>        |                                   |       |
| KL Rahul            | b Naseem Shah                     | 04    |
| Rohit Sharma        | (c) c Iftikhar Ahmed b Haris Rauf | 04    |
| Virat Kohli         | not out                           | 82    |
| Suryakumar Yadav    | c †Mohd Rizwan b Haris Rauf       | 15    |
| Axar Patel          | run out (Babar Azam/†Mohd Rizwan) | 02    |
| Hardik Pandya       | c Babar Azam b Mohd Nawaz         | 40    |
| Dinesh Karthik      | † c †Mohd Rizwan b Mohd Nawaz     | 01    |
| Ravichandran Ashwin | not out                           | 01    |
| <b>Extras</b>       |                                   | 11    |
| <b>Total</b>        |                                   | 160/6 |

boundary took the easiest of catches.

Rohit's captaincy was spot-on as he didn't give Shami till the last over of Powerplay and brought a spinner (Ashwin) for the first time in the ninth over.

At the start of the back-10, Iftikhar in a space of five balls, hit four sixes and Shami (1/25), coming back for his second spell trapped him plumb in-front with a fuller delivery to end the 76-run third-wicket stand.

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## Martyrs Memorial Police Premier League inaugurated in Ganderbal

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

GANDERBAL: To commemorate the Police Martyrs, Ganderbal Police inaugurated Martyrs Memorial Police Premier League at Qamaria Sports Stadium, here on Sunday.

The theme of the tournament is to involve the youth of the area in sports activities and provide them a platform to showcase their abilities.

The matches were officiated by Ashok Singh and Girdhari Lal as the umpires, while Arun Zalpuri, Deepak Pandita, Raja Nadeem and Amit Bhat were the scorers. Ajay Peshin was the match referee.

The tournament is being held under the overall supervision of Chief Organiser Sarthak Khoda.

He also said that police



SSP Ganderbal Nikhil Borkar playing inaugural shot of Martyrs Memorial Police Premier League.

and stability in the region.

On the occasion, CO 24RR Vijay Reddy, ASP Ganderbal, DySP Hqrs Ganderbal and Social Activist & Cricketer Sayem Mustafa were also present.

## Vimarsh's brilliance overwhelms Wattal's radiance as Hill View, OTOD script wins in KPCL

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Brilliant Vimarsh Kaw overwhelmed radiant Puneet Wattal to guide Hill View Rajouri to a magnificent victory, while Lazit Sharma powered One Team One Dream (OTOD) XI to a convincing victory over their rivals in the ongoing Kashmiri Pandit Cricket League (KPCL) Season-III, being organised by Safran Cricket Club at Country Cricket Stadium Gharota, here.

In the first match, Hill View Rajouri got the better of Navreh Cricket Club (NCC) in an easy contest by a big margin of 29 runs.

Earlier, winning the toss and batting first, Hill View Rajouri scored a good total of 179 runs in the stipulated 20 overs, losing 7 wickets in the process. Vimarsh Kaw top scored with 58 runs off

36 deliveries, studded with 9 delectable boundaries, while Ankush Bhat, Vicky Raina and Sonu Zutshi contributed 33, 30 and 20 runs to the total respectively.

For Navreh Cricket Club, Vikas Pandita, Ajay Tickoo and Anil Raina took 2 wickets each, while Rakesh Dass claimed one wicket.

In reply, Navreh Cricket

Club managed to score 150 runs in 20 overs by losing 9 wickets, thus lost the match by a margin of 37 runs. Vikram (39), Vinayak (27), Ankush Bhat (20) and Ronak Razdan (19) were the main contributors. For OTOD XI, Rahul Jamwal, Ajay and Arun Zalpuri took 2 wickets each.

Winning the toss and batting first, OTOD XI scored a big total of 177 runs in the stipulated 20 overs, losing 7 wickets in the process. Lazit Sharma top scored with 47 runs off 41 balls, while Johny, Vikas and Ajay Kumar contributed 38, 31 and 17 runs to the total respectively.

For Habbakadal Warriors, Vinayak Pandita took 3 wickets, while Sagar Bhat bagged 2 and Amit Bhat

claimed 1 wicket.

In reply, Habbakadal Warriors scored 140 runs, thus lost the match by a margin of 37 runs. Vikram (39), Vinayak (27), Ankush Bhat (20) and Ronak Razdan (19) were the main contributors. For OTOD XI, Rahul Jamwal, Ajay and Arun Zalpuri took 2 wickets each.

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bat first but they lost to Rohit & Dr Sandeep in quick succession. Dr Satyankar and Dr Rajpal played sensibly and took score to 49 runs before Dr Rajpal was out on 17 runs. Zubair played a cameo of 31 runs in 23 balls & Dr Satyankar contributed 42 runs but wickets kept on tumbling and Sterling Reserves scored 134 for loss of 6 wickets in stipulated 20 overs.

From Game Changer, Captain Avinash Uttam took two wickets while Naveen Koul, Anehal, Udeep & Ravi shared one wicket apiece.

Chasing 135 runs to win, the opening pair of Game Changer Chamkor & Lakhbinder set the tone with fifty runs opening stand before Chamkor was out on 25 runs. Bowlers of Sterling Reserves made some inroads and took some wickets

but Lakhbinder took tall with his brilliant half century & was ably supported by Sachin. Game Changer reached the target loosing 5 wickets in 18.4 overs.

Lakhbinder was declared Man of the Match and Dr Rajpal Singh was declared Man of the Series.

Ashok Singh & Amit were Umpires & Sachin was the scorer in the final.

## Game Changer lifts Diwali Cup T20 Cricket Tournament at MA Stadium

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Game Changer lifted the maiden Diwali Cup T20 Cricket Tournament by defeating Sterling Reserves by five wickets in first ever day & night match played at picturesque MA Stadium Jammu.

General Secretary Chamber of Commerce and Industries Jammu, Gaurav Gupta was Chief Guest and Amit Gupta Corporator was Guest of

Honour.

The tournament was organised by Media Cricket Club Jammu in collaboration with Jammu and Kashmir Sports Council under My Youth My Pride campaign.

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## JK Public School Panjtirthi celebrates Diwali with excitement

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JAMMU: The pious festival of Diwali was celebrated at JK Public School (JKPS) Panjtirthi with devotion, enthusiasm and excitement. Sindhu Kohli commenced

the celebration and briefed the Jakians about rituals, beliefs, facts and mythological stories related to the festival. She urged the audience, "This Diwali let's lead this planet towards light