

India played like favourites, says Afridi

Painful to see Pakistan being thrashed by India : Imran Khan

BIRMINGHAM, JUN 5 /- Shahid Afridi was appalled by Pakistan's abject surrender but he credited India for their commanding show, saying the defending champions lived up to the favourites tag in their Champions Trophy opener here.

Afridi, a former Pakistan captain, said his country's drab show last night took away all the excitement from what was expected to be a high-voltage Group B encounter. The Indo-Pak Champions Trophy encounter failed to live up to its hype as Pakistan produced a forgettable performance at Edgbaston. As a Pakistani supporter, the drab show was a painful watch in his eyes. India once again proved that it has a stranglehold over its neighbour that it is in no mood to relinquish. Afridi wrote in a column for the ICC. "India started as the favourite and played the entire game in the same frame of mind. Even when it crumbled, simply," India launched their ICC Champions Trophy campaign with a resounding 124-run victory over Pakistan last night, extending their dominance over the arch-rivals in major ICC tournaments. Analysing the match, Afridi said India came hard on skipper Sarfraz Ahmed's shoddy game plan. "Sarfraz Ahmed was what was a crucial toss in tricky weather conditions. When rain is around, the team batting second gets a huge

advantage. Unfortunately though, a poor game plan and shoddy execution, besides abysmal fielding, nullified the advantage," he said. "Mohammad Amir bowled the UAE! Even Sarfraz thought he would strike with the new ball. Strangely though, Sarfraz handed the other new ball to Imad Wasim despite the overcast conditions. The tactic was perplexing for me since the match wasn't being played in the UAE! Even Sarfraz wanted to surprise India, he should have deployed his faster bowlers after an over or two from Imad." Afridi said Pakistan had allowed Indian openers Rohit Sharma and Shikhar Dhawan to settle early, and that is what Pakistan allowed them to do. "We thought the Indian openers negotiated Amir carefully, they gradually got their eye in against Imad. Pakistan missed a trick and for the rest of the Indian innings there was hardly a period where they looked troubled. "Virat Kohli and Yuvraj Singh then played a firing attack before Hardik Pandya's cameo turned the match totally in the defending champion's favour," Afridi added. Afridi also came hard on Pakistan's shoddy fielding effort. "Pakistan's fielding was

very ordinary too, with easy runs given away inside the circle besides the dropped chances, which made life tougher for the bowlers. The players looked tense and nervous despite the claims to the contrary before the start of the game," he said. Afridi was also scathing on his attack on the Pakistani batsmen, who could muster just 164 runs. "I feel that our batsmen are short on the skills side and freeze under pressure. The senior lot failed to cope with the increasing run-rate and got out after occupying the crease for long but barren durations. "There is simply no excuse for a 164-run score on a flat wicket where the opposition managed 319 with consummate ease," he said. (PTI)

A sterling batting display from the top order, combined with some good bowling, handed India an easy 124-run victory (DLS method) over Pakistan in their ICC Champions Trophy 2017 Group B opener at Edgbaston on Sunday. India scored 319 for 3 in their rain-truncated 48 overs and then dismissed Pakistan to 164 off 33.4 overs as the latter chased revised Duckworth-Lewis total of 289 off 41 overs. Dismayed by the performance of Sarfraz Ahmed and his boys, legendary Pakistan cricketer Imran Khan described the loss as painful. Imran Khan, now a politician, also went on to hit out at the Pakistan cricket

establishment in a series of tweets. Barring Azhar Ali (50) no other Pakistani batsman offered any real resistance as Indian captain Virat Kohli was in control of the match. Kohli was all praise for his team's batting performance and made a special mention of Hardik Pandya's brutal hitting at the end of the innings. "With the bat and the ball we were right up there, 9 out of 10. In the field we were 6 out of 10. If we tune that up to 8 or 9, we will be a very strong side in the tournament. I think this was a very complete performance starting the tournament," Kohli said at the post-match presentation.

IMRAN KHAN ON TWITTER

- Unless Pak cricket structure is totally revamped/reformed, despite an abundance of talent the gap between Pak & India will keep increasing.
- And we will keep facing disappointment by defeats such as the one today.
- Pak cricket cannot be fixed if the Chairman of the PCB is not appointed on professional merit.



We were below-par, loss to India a reality check: Arthur

BIRMINGHAM, JUN 5 /- Pakistan coach Mickey Arthur feels his team has given a "reality check" by India in the lost Champions Trophy clash here and the "below-par" show of the result of his players letting the occasion get the better of them. Arthur admitted that Pakistani players lacked self-belief and erred in executing simple plans. "We were below par. It's as simple as that. And it's a reality check of where we are in our one-day cricket at the moment," Arthur told reporters at the post-match press conference here. "We talk about setting the tone up front. But we didn't set tone up front. We had a couple of guys that were in the clouds at the start and that sets the tone. For us to have a performance as tentative as that, right from the start is a worry and the only thing I can think of is the magnitude of the occasion got to them." India launched their Champions Trophy campaign with a resounding 124-run victory over Pakistan on Sunday, extending their dominance over the arch-rivals in major ICC tournaments. Pakistan needed to win their final two games against Sri Lanka and South Africa to stand a chance of qualifying for the semifinals. "The guys tried as hard as they could. My issue is fear. My issue is getting out there and not looking to take the game on and just believing in themselves and believing that they can take the game on," Arthur said. "The worrying thing for me, and it has been for a period of time, is we just do the basics wrong. We



"We don't hit the keeper with our throws. We don't understand when to bowl our variations. We bowled a really good over and then we bowled a variation in our sixth ball and that's the ball that ended up going for a boundary"

do the simple things wrong. We drop simple catches. We don't run well enough between wickets," he lamented. An exasperated Arthur could barely hide his disappointment with his players, who floundered in almost every aspect of the game. "We don't hit the keeper with our throws. We don't understand when to bowl our variations. We bowled a really good over and then we bowled a variation in our sixth ball and that's the ball that ended up going for a boundary," he said. "So it's the simplicity of those things that are worrying me at the moment and our understanding of when to do

certain things. So that was disappointing. But we'll have to live with it," he added. "We selected a team that we thought could go out there and rattle the cages of India. Ultimately, our execution wasn't good enough today. We thought we had an attack that could really attack them and put them under pressure. And we didn't execute that at all." The shoddy performance, notwithstanding, Arthur defended Pakistan's record in recent times. "It's a total insult to say we're playing even worse. If you have a look at our records over the last year we've won two series. We've got ourselves from No. 9 to No. 8 in the rankings and our brand of cricket has changed," the South African insisted. "We had a poor game today. We're obviously trying our best and we're trying to change it. It's not going to happen overnight. We're trying every day. Every time we go down to training, we try and get the basics right. We didn't do it today. And that's disappointing." Asked whether yesterday's defeat will only take Pakistani cricket backward, the coach said: "In fact, something like this could take us forwards, for the simple reason that a lot of questions answered. "When we put a performance in like that we answer a lot of questions, and a lot of things become clearer for us in terms of how we take this team forward." Not just the big defeat, there are also concerns in the Pakistani camp over the fitness of several players like Mohammad Amir and Wahab Riaz.

Felt like a club batter in front of Yuvraj: Kohli

BIRMINGHAM, JUN 5 /- Indian captain Virat Kohli said he "felt like a club batter" when teammate Yuvraj Singh was in full flow in the ICC Champions Trophy win against Pakistan here, crediting the left-hander for taking the pressure off him.

Defending champions India started their Champions Trophy campaign with a resounding 124-run victory over arch-rivals Pakistan. Kohli and Yuvraj stood out in an all-round batting effort, propelling India to 319 for three after rain halted proceedings twice. Yuvraj smashed 53 off 32 balls, while Kohli made 81 off 68 deliveries. "The way he (Yuvraj) was hitting the ball, I felt like a club batter in front of him," Kohli told reporters at the post-match press conference. "...after I got to 50, I wasn't able to freely play and Yuvraj came in and took all the pressure off me. And the way he batted was the way only he can strike the ball, hitting low full tosses for fours and sixes, and even digging out yorkers for fours was outstanding. "I think that really deflated the opposition and that gave me a bit of time to settle in from the other end. When he got out, I took over. But I think his innings was a difference in the game," he added. While he was pleased with the win, Kohli was not impressed with India's fielding. "With the bat and ball, right up there - I would say nine out of 10. In the field we were still 6. It's a very strong performance, we've taken the confidence from the practice games." "We need to tighten our fielding to compete hard against the best teams," he said. The Indian batsmen remained focussed despite the rain breaks with Rohit Sharma (91 off 119), Shikhar Dhawan (68 off 65), Kohli and Yuvraj rising to the occasion in a game reduced to 48-overs-a-side affair. "I think the way Shikhar batted was really good to see. Rohit was taking a bit of time because, understandably so, he's come back after so long to international cricket. It's different but international runs are very different, against a quality bowling attack as well," Kohli said. "And

Hardik, 18 off five balls, was outstanding. We went with four seamers purely because we were playing Pakistan. They play spin really well, and most of them are right-handers. "In pressure situations, to have mid-on, mid-off up and hit hard lengths, gives us an advantage. Against other sides, we might use two spinners, depending on their strengths," he added. Asked what it meant to play against Pakistan given the continuing tensions between the two countries, Kohli chose to offer a diplomatic reply. "This one's done and dusted. We come here to play the sport. And that's all I can say to this. "Nonetheless, Kohli said, he does enjoy the competitiveness of Indo-Pak cricket rivalry. "They're a very competitive side. The atmosphere is

great. From that regard, as a cricketer, we really enjoyed this game, that's all I can say," he said. Reflecting on his own performance, Kohli said he let the momentum slip after reaching 40 and regretted trying too hard for big hits during his partnership with Yuvraj. "But when he got out, I decided to stay still and just back the strokes that have and a few connected, and that's what happens in this sport. Momentum comes your way, it goes away. But you've got to stay patient. And when it comes back, you've got to capitalise on it. So I believed in myself. I can get 30 off 10 balls as well in the end," he explained. Kohli credited Yuvraj for his knock as well. "Maybe I should have just let Yuvraj take the initiative at that stage, not try to hit from the other end. But when you're out there, you just want to get 15 runs for the team," he said. "It's a tricky situation. But glad I was able to see it through today and end on a high, probably ended up getting 15, 20 more runs than I needed. Purely because of the way he batted," Kohli added. Man-of-the-Match Yuvraj was happy that he could capitalise on the chances offered by the Pakistanis. "I thought we all batted really well. The openers gave us a good start. Virat finished well, and it gave me the opportunity to go and attack. You just have to go and back yourself, and tell the opposition that you're here to attack," he said. "I was lucky. I was dropped, but I capitalised and I was hitting it well. I finished well. India-Pakistan is always a big game, and I think it has set us up really well. Hopefully we'll take this confidence into the next game against Sri Lanka." On the decision to send Hardik Pandya ahead of Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Kohli said it was based on the former's ability to strike it big from the first ball itself which dictated the move. "It was unbelievable the way he came out. And we switched in the end. They asked whether we should send Hardik ahead of MS. And everyone agreed, because he just can strike the ball from ball one and has unbelievable ability," Kohli said. (PTI)



Virat Kohli gives Ahmed Shehzad a send-off after Bhuvaneshwar Kumar gets him out

England set for a tougher test against New Zealand

CARDIFF, JUN 5 /- After a comfortable outing in the tournament-opener, title favourites England are set to face a much stiffer test against New Zealand in a crucial Champions Trophy Group A fixture here tomorrow. There is a lot at stake for both the teams. England will put their one foot in the semifinals with a second successive win while New Zealand will aim for two full points after rain denied them a crack at Australia and the two teams settled for a point each in a game that produced no result. England could not have hoped for a better start to the tournament-opener, as they thrashed a lacklustre Bangladesh in the first match of the Champions Trophy on Thursday. How easily they chased down 385 was a timely warning to the other title con-

tenders. Joe Root strolled to a 10th ODI hundred while opener Alex Hales missed out on well-deserved hundred by five runs. Captain Eoin Morgan too began his campaign on a confident note, smashing an unbeaten 75 off 61 balls. He, however, would be a tad worried about the lean patch of opener Jason Roy, who has not crossed 20 in his last six ODI innings. The hosts will also have to deal with the absence of fast bowling all-rounder Chris Woakes, who was ruled out of the tournament with an injury after bowling just two overs against Bangladesh. Steven Finn has been named his replacement. Morgan might also bring back leggie Adil Rashid to add more variety to the bowling department. Nonetheless, an exciting contest is in the offing with

New Zealand showing a lot of promise against Australia. Captain Kane Williamson led from the front against the trans-Tasman rivals with a ninth ODI hundred. Luke Ronchi looked in ominous touch at the top of the order and alongside Martin Guphill, form a dangerous combination. The Black Caps led their way towards the end of the innings and they could be aiming to replicate that in the game tomorrow. Chasing 235 in 33 overs, Australia were put under severe pressure by New Zealand, reducing them to 53 for three in nine overs before rain had the final say. Their pace battery comprising Tim Southee, Adam Milne and Trent Boult, looked in good shape and would be vying to go here tomorrow.

Hello Readers,

Youngsters, especially those seeking jobs and running businesses are often faced with a problem in using correct English while speaking the language. For, there are usages in English language which pass for correct expressions, but they are actually incorrect and using them in our conversations may leave you red-faced.

And that is why we at the Echo of India, through a regular column have decided, in the best interest of our young readers, to start teaching correct usages of the language by giving examples of the incorrect ones as well as the correct sentences. And while providing the correct sentences we will also give explanations behind the corrections.

Hope it will help all our readers across all age groups improve on their communication skills so that they can have the courage and swagger to face all kinds of situations.

Kindly check the paper daily for update on your English.

Group Verbs (continued):

1. Bang around, bang on, bang up. The child banged around (moving around somewhere making a lot of noise) in the house keeping her parents on tenterhooks. The man banged on (talked at great length) this topic a lot.
2. The judge banged the accused up (put somebody in prison) for 5 years.
3. Bargain down, bargain for. The seller asked for a huge price for the shawl but she bargained the seller down (persuaded to bring the price down). I never bargained for (expected) such a misfortune at this juncture of life.
3. Bash up, bash out. The thief was bashed up (beaten up) by the crowd. The boy bashed out (wrote quickly) the essay in a very short time.

Speak English

Sports Minister Goel congratulates cricket team

NEW DELHI, JUN 5 /- Sports Minister Vijay Goel today congratulated the Indian cricket team for its win over Pakistan in the ICC Champions Trophy, terming it a "significant victory".

Defending champions India launched their campaign in the tournament with a 124-run victory over Pakistan in Birmingham. "It's a significant victory for the Indian team. I am very happy and I congratulate each and every member of the team for this spectacular victory over Pakistan," Goel said after the win. "It's a happy moment for all cricket loving Indians and I congratulate them," he added. (PTI)