

SANGAKKARA STEERS SRI LANKA TO DRAMATIC WIN OVER INDIA

FATULLAH: Kumar Sangakkara hit a brilliant 103 as Sri Lanka survived anxious moments to overcome India by two wickets in a thrilling last-over finish yesterday, securing their second win in the Asia Cup.

The victory was set up by spinners Ajantha Mendis and Sachithra Senanayake, who shared seven wickets to restrict the reigning world champions to 264-9 in the day-night match in Fatullah.

But Sri Lanka lost wickets at regular intervals and were reduced to 216-7 in the 44th over when Thisara Perera helped Sangakkara add 42 crucial runs for the eighth wicket.

Left-handed Sangakkara, who hit 12 boundaries and a six in his 18th one-day century, fell in the penultimate over when just seven runs were needed for victory. But Mendis and Perera saw Sri Lanka through with four deliveries to spare in a nail-biting finish, giving their team a second win after they beat Pakistan in the tournament opener.

India, who won against Bangladesh, must defeat arch-rivals Pakistan in Dhaka on Sunday to stay in contention for a place in the final. Opener Shikhar Dhawan scored 94 as India, sent in to bat, moved to 175-2 in 35 overs before losing five wickets for 40 runs to slide to 215-7.

Big hitting by the lower order, including two sixes by last man Mohammed Shami off Mendis, lifted India past the 250-run mark.

Mendis, who replaced seamer Suranga

Lakmal for the match, justified his selection with four for 60, including the key scalps of Dhawan and stand-in captain Virat Kohli.

Off-spinner Senanayake finished with his best one-day figures of three for 41 as the Indians struggled against the turning ball on the slow wicket.

Kohli, leading India in the absence of the injured Mahendra Singh Dhoni, put on 97 for the second wicket with Dhawan after Rohit Sharma had been trapped leg-before by Senanayake for 13.

Kusal Perera and Lahiru Thirimanne gave Sri Lanka a flying start with a 80-run partnership for the first wicket by the 18th over.

Off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin removed both openers, trapping Thirimanne leg-before for 38 and then having Kusal Perera caught behind for 64.

India bounced back strongly when left-arm spinner Ravindra Jadeja dismissed Mahela Jayawardene and Dinesh Chandimal with consecutive deliveries to reduce Sri Lanka to 148-4 in the 32nd over.

Seamer Mohammad Shami, who conceded 42 runs in his first six overs, returned for a spell and trapped skipper Angelo Mathews leg-before with his second ball. Shami also had Senanayake caught at mid-wicket and Jadeja had Chaturanga de Silva leg-before as Sri Lanka slumped to 216-7.

Afghanistan will take on hosts Bangladesh in the next match in Fatullah today. —AFP



FATULLAH: Sri Lankan batsman Kumar Sangakkara plays a shot as Indian wicketkeeper Dinesh Karthik looks on during the fourth match of the Asia Cup one-day cricket tournament between India and Sri Lanka at the Khan Shaheb Osman Ali Stadium in Fatullah, on the outskirts of Dhaka yesterday. —AFP



SCOREBOARD

FATULLAH, Bangladesh: Full scoreboard of the Asia Cup one-day tournament between India and Sri Lanka in Fatullah yesterday:

India:

R. Sharma lbw b Senanayake	13
S. Dhawan b Mendis	94
V. Kohli b Mendis	48
A. Rahane c Thirimanne b Senanayake	22
A. Rayudu c K. Perera b de Silva	18
D. Karthik c de Silva b Mendis	4
R. Jadeja not out	22
S. Binny lbw b Senanayake	0
R. Ashwin b Malinga	18
B. Kumar st Sangakkara b Mendis	0
Mohammad Shami not out	14
Extras: (b4 lb1, w6)	11

Total (for nine wickets, 50 overs) 264
Fall of wickets: 1-33 (Sharma), 2-130 (Kohli), 3-175 (Rahane), 4-196 (Dhawan), 5-200 (Karthik), 6-214 (Rayudu), 7-215 (Binny), 8-245 (Ashwin), 9-247 (Kumar).

Bowling: Malinga 10-0-58-1 (w1), Mathews 3.2-1-9-0, Senanayake 10-0-41-3, T. Perera 6.4-0-40-0, Mendis 10-0-60-4 (w4), de Silva 10-0-51-1 (w1).

(Note: Mathews was injured after bowling two balls of his fourth over.

Thisara Perera completed the over)

Sri Lanka:

K. Perera c Karthik b Ashwin	64
L. Thirimanne lbw b Ashwin	38
K. Sangakkara c Ashwin b Shami	103
M. Jayawardene c Sharma b Jadeja	9
D. Chandimal b Jadeja	0
A. Mathews lbw b Shami	6
S. Senanayake c Sharma b Shami	12
C. de Silva lbw b Jadeja	9
T. Perera not out	11
A. Mendis not out	5
Extras: (lb7, w1)	8

Total (for eight wickets, 49.2 overs) 265
Fall of wickets: 1-80 (Thirimanne), 2-134 (K. Perera), 3-148 (Jayawardene), 4-148 (Chandimal), 5-165 (Mathews), 6-183 (Senanayake), 7-216 (de Silva), 8-258 (Sangakkara).

Bowling: Kumar 9.2-1-45-0, Shami 10-0-81-3, Ashwin 10-0-42-2, Binny 4-0-22-0, Jadeja 10-1-30-3 (w1), Rayudu 1-0-9-0, Sharma 5-0-29-0.

Sri Lanka won by two wickets.

WARNE FACTOR BIG AS AUSTRALIA SEEK ANSWERS

CAPE TOWN: Shane Warne's vast test experience has been well utilised by the Australian squad in the lead-up to the series-deciding third test against South Africa at Newlands in Cape Town today.

Captain Michael Clarke says the veteran of 145 test matches and arguably the greatest leg-spinner of all time has played a leading role in mentoring the team in his role as a consultant.

Clarke believes Warne's cricketing brain and infectious personality will help lift the squad after the demoralising 231-run loss in the second test in Port Elizabeth last Sunday.

"It's been fantastic having him around and great for me personally," Clarke told reporters on Friday. "I have a wonderful relationship with Warne and it's always nice to have him around, especially for those players

that have not spent a lot of time with him, they have had their eyes opened.

"The spinners really enjoyed the work he did with them yesterday (Thursday). He will do whatever it takes to get the players to bring the best out of themselves.

"I have said for a long time he is probably the best captain I have played under and his knowledge is like no other, He played 145 test matches

and knows the game very well." Clarke admits he is at a loss to explain why his bowlers failed to get the same reverse-swing as South Africa in the second test and expects it to be a factor again in Cape Town.

After claiming a 281-run win in the first test, Australia were on track for success in the second before paceman Dale Steyn took advantage of the conditions to fire his side to victory. —Reuters