

## High-flying Pakistan beat New Zealand

### South Africa thrash Windies after De Kock refuses to take knee



SHARJAH: New Zealand's cricketers celebrate the dismissal of Pakistan's Mohammad Rizwan (front second left) during the ICC men's Twenty20 World Cup cricket match at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium yesterday. — AFP

SHARJAH: Fast bowler Haris Rauf took a career best 4-22 to help Pakistan defeat New Zealand by five wickets and record their second successive win in the Twenty20 World Cup yesterday. Boosted by their brilliant performance in the 10-wicket rout of archrivals India on Sunday, Rauf inspired the 2009 champions to victory in front of a boisterous Sharjah crowd mainly comprised of Pakistani expats.

Devon Conway and Daryl Mitchell both scored 27 for New Zealand, while skipper Kane Williamson made a laborious 25 off 26 balls as New Zealand were held to a below-par 134-8. Veteran Shoaib Malik (27) and Asif Ali (26) came together with Pakistan wobbling at 87-5 and led the team to their target in 18.4 overs.

Pakistan had lost skipper Babar Azam to Tim Southee - bowled for nine in the sixth over - as the pacesetter took his 100th wicket in his 84th T20 international. He is only the third bowler behind Bangladesh's Shakib Al Hasan (117 in 92 T20Is) and Sri Lankan Lasith Malinga (107 in 84) to take 100 or more wickets in the format. Leg-spinner Ish Sodhi trapped both Fakhar Zaman (11) and Mohammad Rizwan leg-before to leave Pakistan reeling at 69-4. In between those two dismissals, Conway produced a brilliant diving catch at wide long-off to dismiss

Mohammad Hafeez who attempted to lift spinner Mitchell Santner out of the ground.

When Imad Wasim fell for 11, Pakistan still needed 47 off 31 deliveries. It was left to Asif - maligned for his continuous failures - to hit two sixes off Southee in the 17th over to bring down the target to 24 off the last three. Malik reduced that to nine in two overs by hitting a four and a six off Santner. Asif then smacked Boult for six before hitting the winning runs.

It was Rauf who did much of the damage with the ball against New Zealand - sent into bat on a sluggish pitch - improving on his previous best of 3-29, also against the same opponents last year. Pakistan applied the pressure right from the start as left-arm pacesetter Shaheen Shah Afridi, whose three wickets against India earned him player of the match, bowled a maiden first over.

New Zealand reached 36 without loss when Rauf bowled Martin Gupthill off his pads for 17. He also accounted for Conway and Glenn Phillips (13) in one over as New Zealand failed to lift the tempo at any stage. There were no boundaries in overs 14 to 16 as even Phillips - who hit most sixes in the T20 blast in England this year with 36 - failed to clear the boundary. Rauf also dismissed Santner (six) with the last ball of the final over. Shaheen finished with 1-21 while

spinners Hafeez and Imad also took a wicket each.

In the earlier match, South Africa hammered holders West Indies by eight wickets in a game overshadowed by Proteas star Quinton de Kock's refusal to take the knee prior to yesterday's Twenty20 World Cup clash. Aiden Markram smashed 51 to lead South Africa's chase of 144 in an unbeaten 83-run third-wicket stand with Rassie van der Dussen (43) to achieve their target with 10 balls to spare in the Super 12 contest.

South Africa bounced back from their opening loss to Australia, while two-time champions West Indies have lost both their matches. Cricket South Africa ordered its players to kneel in Dubai and lend their support to the anti-racism movement but De Kock pulled out of the game due to "personal reasons". Temba Bavuma's team took the knee after opting to field first. "When the news hit us it did kind of take us back as a team," Bavuma said of the decision by De Kock.

Opener Evin Lewis hit 56 in West Indies' 143-8 as they suffered another heavy loss, having made just 55 in a crushing defeat by England three days ago. Fast bowler Dwaine Pretorius took three wickets as West Indies again failed to fire after a painstaking 16 off 35 balls from Lendl Simmons at the top of the

order. Skipper Kieron Pollard hit a useful 20-ball 26 before falling to Pretorius, who was on a hat-trick only for Dwayne Bravo to hit a boundary.

After a sedate start, Lewis took the attack to South Africa by smashing boundaries off pace bowler Kagiso Rabada and spinner Markram, who opened the bowling. The left-handed Lewis reached his 10th T20 fifty with a six before getting out to Keshav Maharaj. Maharaj struck again with his left-arm spin to send back Nicholas Pooran for 12 and Rabada ended Simmons' struggle the following over.

West Indies dropped Chris Gayle from three to four in the batting order but the change in position barely helped as the big-hitter fell for 12. Anrich Nortje bowled the powerful Andre Russell for five and returned economical figures of 1-14 from his four overs of pace.

In reply, South Africa lost Bavuma, run out for two, but Reeza Hendricks and Van der Dussen put the innings back on track with their partnership of 57. Hendricks fell to Akeal Hosein for 39. Van der Dussen was joined by Markram and the two helped South Africa cruise across the line in a game that began with the shocking news of De Kock's pull-out. Markram brought up his fifty in 25 balls with a six off Russell and then hit the winning runs. — AFP

## Qatar expecting full house for debut Formula 1

DOHA: Qatar is expecting a capacity crowd for next month's inaugural Formula One grand prix after joining the circuit as a last-minute replacement, the country's motorsports chief told AFP. The resource-rich state will become the Gulf's latest F1 host after taking the place of the Australian Grand Prix, which was postponed and then cancelled over coronavirus restrictions.

By a "fortunate coincidence" the race falls on Nov 21, exactly a year before the country holds the opening game of the 2022 World Cup, said Qatar Motor and Motorcycle Federation president Abdulrahman Al-Mannai. "We're trying to maximize the occasion (and) we're trying to add more to the Formula One event," Mannai said in an interview. "I think we will see some nice surprises during the weekend of the Formula One," he added, without elaborating.

Qatar has been the target of protests by several national football teams over its treatment of foreign workers ahead of the World Cup, as part of a wave of social activism by athletes. But Formula One drivers will be free to "speak their minds" on controversial issues, Mannai said. "We are happy to support the drivers to speak their minds on their platforms," he said.

"We don't see it as an issue in Qatar because they're free to say whatever they want to say."

Reigning world champion Lewis Hamilton is a prominent voice in the Black Lives Matter movement and four-time title-winner Sebastian Vettel is another driver to champion social issues. The night event at the Losail International Circuit will be the first of three Gulf races to close the season, preceding Saudi Arabia's debut Grand Prix and the year's finale at Abu Dhabi. Bahrain is also an F1 host. Given the short time-frame, Qatar is working overtime to prepare even though Losail, a long-time MotoGP venue, needs only "cosmetic changes" to accommodate F1.

"Of course we're expecting it to be full, because ever since we announced the Formula One the demand has been off the charts," Mannai said. "The current procedures within Qatar allow us to have 100 percent capacity as long as individuals are vaccinated or they have proof that they have the Covid-19 antibodies," he added.

### Stepping in at short notice

The Gulf state has frequently been criticized over conditions for hundreds of thousands of laborers who have worked on construction sites including the World Cup stadiums. It has responded by removing rules that barred workers from changing employers, scrapping exit permit requirements and introduced a minimum wage of \$1.30 an hour.

The November race will be the start of a long F1 relationship with Qatar, as it has also signed a 10-year deal starting in 2023.



DOHA: Abdulrahman Al-Mannai, president of the Qatar Motor and Motorcycle Federation (QMMF), speaks during an interview in the Qatari capital. — AFP

"We stepped in at short notice, we wanted to help, but at the same time, we also wanted to have a long-term relationship with Formula One," Mannai said. "Having several rounds in the region is a fantastic opportunity - especially for younger people who love motorsports," he added.

"And having several rounds in the region is a way to inspire young people to get into the sport and practice it." Like other races in the largely alcohol-free region, there will be no champagne on the podium. "We have our own values and culture, and we respect the culture of others," Mannai said. "We will not use champagne or alcohol during the podium but will use an alternative to celebrate the podium for the drivers." — AFP

## FIFA urges nations to rehome Afghan athletes

DOHA: FIFA is calling on the international community to step up efforts to help permanently rehome Afghan athletes after the Taliban takeover of their country, its president Gianni Infantino said. More than 150 members of Afghanistan's sports community - including 50 female footballers and their families were evacuated this month with the help of Qatar, in coordination with the global football body.

Hundreds remain in Afghanistan, pleading for help to leave the country. "I really call on all the governments in Europe, in the rest of the world, to help us (in) getting a new house, a new home" for those evacuated, Infantino told AFP in an interview. "We cannot just talk about solidarity, we cannot just talk about helping. We have to do it concretely," he said in Doha. "They went through something that none of us can imagine, and we managed to get them out."

The Taliban overthrew Afghanistan's former US-backed government in August and have since been trying to win backing and financial support for their Islamist regime, promising a more flexible rule than last time. But with some women still effectively banned from work, fear of reprisals for practicing sport is widespread. And although they have yet to

publicize a formal policy on women in sport, the Taliban have made comments that indicate serious participation will be impossible.

When they last ruled Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001, the Taliban banned women from sporting activity and even going to matches. Sports stadiums were regularly used for public executions. The all-male Taliban government has shut down the ministry of women's affairs and replaced it with one that earned notoriety for enforcing religious doctrine during the hardliners' first stint in power. The Taliban have since denied the removal of the ministry, insisting they were "arranging a framework for it".

Joyce Cook, FIFA's chief social responsibility and education officer, said the 158 people from the sports community and their families would head from Doha to Albania until a permanent solution is reached. They are part of a list of 545 people who are seeking to leave, she said. "We really need countries to come forward now," Cook told AFP, adding that the "biggest challenge now is to find permanent countries" for their resettlement. "FIFA has 211 member associations, that's 211 countries, and we're calling on all of those countries to help us now." — AFP