

# 'Superman Sanju' toast of India after T20 World Cup heroics

Opener's unbeaten 97 earns praise from cricket legends and teammates

● Tendulkar praises calm batting

● Samson has been in and out of team

● Media hail "game-changer" performance

AFP | Kolkata

India yesterday hailed Sanju Samson as a "game-changer" after the opener's batting masterclass in Kolkata took the defending champions into the T20 World Cup semi-finals.

Samson's unbeaten 97 led India's chase of 196 against the West Indies in the last Super Eights match to set up a semi-final against England in Mumbai on Thursday.

Samson paced his innings to perfection and had more than a billion India fans erupting in joy on Sunday night when he hit Ro-



six and four to complete the chase at Eden Gardens.

"Handling the final overs well in both innings gave us the edge," India's batting great Sachin Tendulkar wrote on X.

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SACHIN TENDULKAR

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Former India batsman Mohammad Kaif said: "Sanju Samson man for India in a do-or-die game. Focus is never on him but he proves to be the game-changer."

The 31-year-old Samson has been in and out of the Indian team and played just one group match against Na-



Despite debuting in 2015, Samson has played only 60 T20 internationals for India, making his match-winning innings a remarkable breakthrough after years of inconsistent selection opportunities

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Today was the day when he probably showed his full potential. I have always said that he is a world-class player. He is a great talent and hopefully he can kick on from now and we can see a lot more innings like this

GAUTAM GAMBHIR

"We all know how good a player Sanju is and it was all about backing him," Gambhir told reporters.

"Today was a day where he probably showed his true potential."

Samson, who made his debut in 2015, has played just 60 Twenty20 matches for India since.

"I always say, good things happen to good people who wait, who have a lot of patience," said India captain Suryakumar Yadav. "It's all his hard work."

South Africa face New Zealand in the first semi-final on Wednesday in Kolkata.

The final is in Ahmedabad on Sunday.

mibia in the absence of opener Abhishek Sharma.

India brought back Samson in their Super Eights match against Zimbabwe to break up the all left-handed opening partnership of Abhishek and Ishan Kishan.

India's media were lavish in their praise for Samson, who saved India from a humiliating early tournament exit on home soil.

"Superman Sanju rescues India," blazed the Times of India.

India coach Gautam Gambhir called Samson "world-class".

India's Sanju Samson prays as he celebrates his team's win against West Indies

## Arteta embraces Arsenal's 'Set-Piece FC' label after corners sink Chelsea

AFP | London

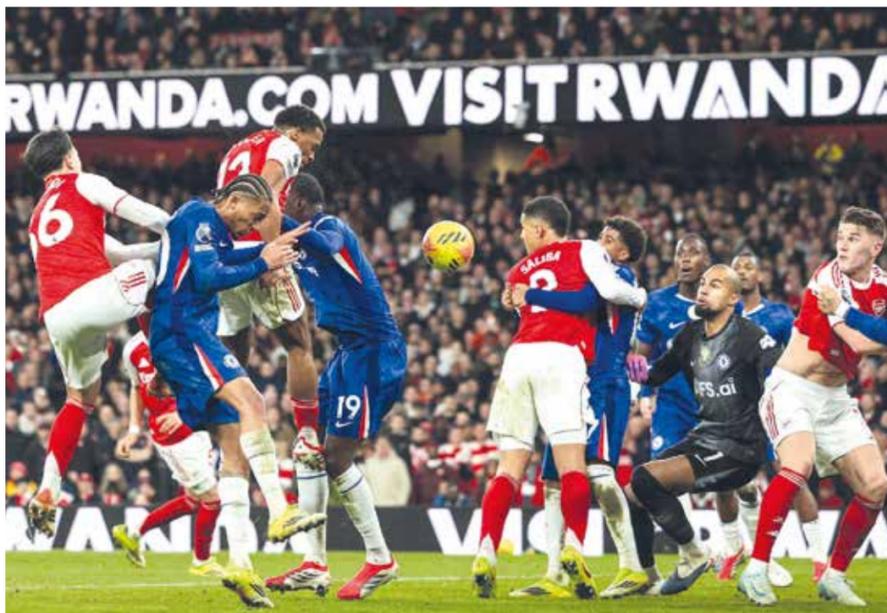
Mikel Arteta said Arsenal are happy to embrace their 'Set-Piece FC' nickname after using their deadly corner routines to seal a vital 2-1 win against Chelsea on Sunday.

Arteta's side moved five points clear at the top of the Premier League thanks to headers from William Saliba and Jurrien Timber at the Emirates Stadium.

The Gunners have scored 16 goals from corners this season -- equalling the Premier League record set by Oldham and West Bromwich Albion.

No wonder Arsenal's jubilant fans celebrated by chanting "set-piece again, ole, ole".

Chelsea also scored from a corner when Piero Hincapie headed Reece James' delivery into his own net on the stroke of half-time to cancel out Saliba's



Arsenal's Dutch defender #12 Jurrien Timber (3rd L) scores the team's second goal

opener.

That was a rare blemish for Arsenal when it comes to dead ball action as set-piece coach Nicolas Jover underlined his growing reputation with another masterclass.

As they chase a first English title since 2004, Arsenal's prowess at set-plays has emerged as their defining characteristic.

But not everyone is enamoured with the set-piece barrage fuelling their title charge.

Former Chelsea striker Chris Sutton was scathing about Arsenal's reliance on the tactic.

"Set-piece Arsenal, again. I think they are going to win it," Sutton told BBC Radio Five Live.

"If they get over the line, will they be the ugliest Premier League winning team in history? The performance wasn't there."

Yet Arteta has no qualms about emphasising the value of set-pieces.

"We knew the importance of the individual duels at set plays because Chelsea are a top side attacking and defending them," the Gunners boss said.

"Every team to be fair. There is so much quality at set pieces in the Premier League."

"It's very important. We have lost points to long throws and lately we haven't scored from many set-pieces. Today we did it. To have these options is great."

## Messi bags double as Miami battle back to down Orlando



Lionel Messi #10 of Inter Miami CF celebrates after scoring

AFP | Miami

Lionel Messi scored twice as Inter Miami fought back from 2-0 down to complete a 4-2 victory over Orlando City in Major League Soccer's Florida derby on Sunday.

Reigning MLS champions Miami, beaten in their season-opener last week, looked to be heading for another defeat after dominant Orlando raced into a 2-0 first-half lead in front of their home fans.

Croatian international winger Marco Pasalic opened the scoring after 18 minutes, sweeping in a low finish from Ivan Angulo's cross after Miami gave away possession in midfield.

Orlando made it 2-0 six minutes later after a surging run from right back Griffin Dorsey, who laid off into the path of Argentine striker Martin Ojeda

to bury the finish.

Miami rallied and both Messi and Argentina international team-mate Rodrigo DePaul went close to pulling a goal back midway through the first half.

De Paul saw his rasping long-range effort parried away from Orlando's Canadian international goalkeeper Maxime Crepeau in the 28th minute. Crepeau then pulled off another superb save to deny Messi inside the area moments later.

Yet the game was transformed after half-time, with substitute Mateo Silveti giving Miami a lifeline with a 25-yard screamer in the 49th minute. Messi then made it 2-2 eight minutes later, gathering the ball on the edge of the area and whipping a left foot shot past Crepeau.

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MIKEL ARTETA