

India crush New Zealand to win third T20 World Cup title

Samson’s blitz and Bumrah’s brilliance power India to historic home triumph

- First team to defend T20 crown
- Sanju Samson scores blistering 89 off 46
- India posts 255-5 batting first
- Jasprit Bumrah takes 4-15 with yorkers
- New Zealand bowled out for 159

AFP | Ahmedabad

India won a record third T20 World Cup title and became the first team to defend their crown with a 96-run thumping of New Zealand in a lop-sided final yesterday.

Suryakumar Yadav’s India were also the first team to lift the trophy on home soil as over 86,000 fans celebrated at the Narendra Modi Stadium.

England and the West Indies have won two titles each.

Sanju Samson’s blistering 89 off 46 balls guided the co-hosts to 255-5 and Jasprit Bum-



India’s Sanju Samson (R) plays a shot as New Zealand’s wicketkeeper Tim Seifert fields

rah starred as New Zealand were bowled out for 159 in 19 overs.

Part-time spinner Abhishek Sharma claimed the final wicket of Jacob Duffy, securing a dominant victory.

Axar Patel struck two early

blows, including the dangerous Finn Allen for nine, with his left-arm spin.

Bumrah was again at his mesmerising best, delivering a succession of brilliant slower-ball yorkers to finish with figures of 4-15.

Opener Tim Seifert hit 52 off 26 balls but his departure in the ninth over off struggling spinner Varun Chakravarthy effectively ended the Black Caps’ slim hopes.

Wickets kept tumbling and Bumrah struck with successive

Scorecard
India 255 for 5 (Samson 89, Kishan 54, Abhishek 52, Neesham 3-46) beat New Zealand 159 (Seifert 52, Santner 43, Bumrah 4-15, Axar 3-27) by 96 runs

deliveries to bring up a hat-trick ball which was just about negotiated by Lockie Ferguson.

Skipper Mitchell Santner hit 43 but was never going to be able to prevent New Zealand from slipping to their second T20 World Cup final loss after they went down to Australia in 2021.

India exorcised the ghosts of the past at the same venue from when they were shocked by Australia in the 2023 ODI World Cup final.

Earlier, the in-form Samson, who hit 97 not out and 89 in his previous two innings to keep India in the tournament, hit five fours and eight sixes to thrill the raucous home crowd, which included former World Cup winning captains Rohit Sharma and MS Dhoni.

Samson’s opening stand of 98 with Abhishek, who plundered 52 off 21 balls, laid the platform for India to go on and

score more than 250 for a second straight match, after their seven-run semi-final win over England, and for the third time in the tournament.

Abhishek and Samson waited two overs before they launched a batting blitz to flay New Zealand’s attack to all parts of the ground during the powerplay.

Rachin Ravindra finally broke the partnership, having Abhishek caught behind off a wide delivery.

Samson was joined by Ishan Kishan, who hammered 54 off 25 balls with four fours and as many sixes.

Samson reached his third successive fifty and changed gears to hit Ravindra for three straight sixes.

Jimmy Neesham pulled things back for New Zealand with three wickets in one over to give them hope of keeping India to a gettable total.

He removed Samson, Kishan and Suryakumar for a duck -- the last two on successive balls.

But Shivam Dube finished with a flourish, blasting an unbeaten 26 off eight balls as he hit Neesham for three fours and two sixes in the 20th over, leaving New Zealand with far too much to do.

Messi bags 899th goal as Miami down DC United



Lionel Messi #10 of Inter Miami CF controls the ball

AFP | Miami

Lionel Messi moved to the brink of another goalscoring milestone as Inter Miami bagged their second win of the Major League Soccer season with a 2-1 victory over DC United on Saturday.

Messi, who scored twice in Miami’s Florida derby win over Orlando last week, bagged his third goal of the season with a deft chipped finish in the 27th minute at Baltimore’s M&T Bank Stadium in Baltimore.

The Argentine superstar’s 80th goal for Miami takes his career tally to 899, leaving him just one away from reaching the 900-goal milestone.

The eight-time Ballon D’Or winner, who turns 39 in June, scored 672 goals for Barcelona

earlier in his career and 32 at Paris Saint-Germain, with a further 115 international goals for Argentina.

Saturday’s win moved the reigning MLS champions up the Eastern Conference standings into third place with six points from three games.

Miami, who on Thursday were guests of President Donald Trump at a White House reception, took the lead in the 17th minute with a superb curling shot from the edge of the area by Messi’s Argentina team-mate Rodrigo De Paul.

Messi then doubled Miami’s lead 10 minutes later, latching on to a sublime through ball from Mateo Silvestri and dinking a first-time finish over the advancing DC United goalkeeper Sean Johnson.

King’s Cup 49th Edition: Semi-Final Line-Up Complete

TDT | Manama

The final four of the 49th His Majesty the King’s Cup is now complete following Saturday night’s quarter-finals. Riffa and Al Ahli booked their semi-final places, joining holders Al Khaldiya and defending league champions Muharraq. Riffa defeated Bahrain Club 4-1, while Al Ahli overcame Al Ettifaq 4-1 on penalties after a 2-2 draw.

At Khalifa Sports City, seven-time winners Riffa quickly imposed themselves from the first whistle. Dejan Georgijevic struck inside the first minute with a low left-footed finish into the bottom-left corner. In the 31st minute, Wellington Moreira lofted a pass to Samuel Conceicao Toscas, who cleverly backheeled the ball to Ali Madan, doubling the lead. Georgijevic then scored a third from close



Al Ahli celebrate penalty shootout win over Al Ettifaq

range following a cross from Vinicius Vargas dos Santos, and substitute Ebrahim Al Khattal volleyed in a Sayed Redha Isaac in the 63rd minute. Bahrain Club’s only goal came from an own goal by Ali Haram in the

76th minute, leaving Mohamed Mashaan’s side comfortably through.

Meanwhile, at Bahrain National Stadium, Al Ahli were made to work for their win against Al Ettifaq. The First Di-

vision leaders went ahead in the 12th minute through Ahmed Al Din, only for Al Ahli to equalise from a penalty by Abdulla Al Hashash in the 21st minute, awarded after Fabrice Onana was fouled in the box. Victor de Oliveira then put Al Ahli ahead with a tap-in assisted by Joao Maia, with VAR confirming the goal. In the final moments, Abdelghafour Mehri scored a penalty for handball to level the score, but he was sent off in the 99th minute for a second yellow card. As both sides canceled each other out and went to shootouts, Al Ahli went on to convert all four of their penalties, while Ettifaq missed two, sealing a 4-1 victory.

The semi-final line-up is now set: Riffa face holders Al Khaldiya, while league champions Muharraq take on Al Ahli, setting up the last four of the 49th King’s Cup.

Villarreal down Elche to stay on Atletico’s tail

AFP | London

Villarreal beat Elche 2-1 yesterday to keep pace with Atletico Madrid in the battle for third in La Liga.

After Atletico, third, beat Real Sociedad on Saturday, Marcelino Garcia Toral’s Yellow Submarine, fourth, pulled level on 54 points.

Tajon Buchanan and Santiago Mourino’s first-half goals were

reward for a dominant performance by Villarreal, although Andre Silva pulled one back late on to make the hosts sweat.

“We relaxed a bit, until the 70th minute we were dominating the game, then we suffered until the end and that can’t happen,” Mourino told Movistar.

Villarreal had a host of chances in the first half but Elche goalkeeper Matias Dituero made several good saves to keep Nico-



Villarreal’s Uruguayan defender Santiago Mourino celebrates scoring

las Pepe and Georges Mikautadze at bay.

Elche started the season superbly but are yet to win in 2026 or away from home across the campaign and have slumped to 17th, one point above the drop zone.

“I think with a bit more time we could have got level, we finished in the way we should have played the whole game,” said Silva.