

India crush Pakistan in Asia Cup

Kuldeep Yadav leads spin attack as India chase down Pakistan target with ease

● India win by 7 wickets

● Kuldeep takes 3-18

● Pakistan all out for 127

● Suryakumar hits unbeaten 47

● Abhishek Sharma scores 31 (13 balls)

AFP | Dubai

Spinners led by Kuldeep Yadav helped India thrash Pakistan by seven wickets in the Asia Cup yesterday as the neighbours met on the cricket pitch for the first time since a military conflict between them in May.

Kuldeep returned figures of 3-18 and along with fellow spinner Axar Patel kept Pakistan down to 127-9 in a key Group A T20 clash in Dubai.

India lost two wickets after a fiery 31 off 13 balls from opener Abhishek Sharma, but skipper Suryakumar Yadav hit an unbeaten 47 to achieve the target



India's Axar Patel (R) celebrates with his captain Suryakumar Yadav after taking the wicket of Pakistan's captain Salman Agha

with 25 balls to spare.

Suryakumar put on 56 runs with left-hander Tilak Varma, who hit 31 before being bowled

by Saim Ayub.

The captain stood firm and hit the winning six as Indian fans celebrated at a stadium, which

had lot of empty seats, and the players from both teams went off without handshakes.

Abhishek came out roaring as



Despite the high-profile clash, large sections of seats remained empty in Dubai, and players walked off without exchanging handshakes after the match

he hit Pakistan pace spearhead Shaheen Shah Afridi for a four and a six and, despite the fall of Shubman Gill in the next over, kept up the charge.

Swashbuckling Abhishek cracked four boundaries and two sixes before he mistimed another attempt for a maximum to be caught at long-off off spinner Ayub.

India's bowlers set up the dominant win as Axar, who took 2-18, and Kuldeep combined to rattle the opposition batting, which suffered from a lack of partnerships.

Hardik Pandya struck in the

first over to dismiss opener Ayub for a golden duck and fellow quick Jasprit Bumrah sent back wicketkeeper-batsman Mohammad Harris for three.

Sahibzada Farhan, who top-scored with 40, attempted to rebuild the innings along with Fakhar Zaman, who made 17, in a partnership of 39.

Axar broke the stand with his left-arm spin as he got Zaman caught out and in his next over had skipper Salman Agha out for three.

Left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep came into the attack and struck twice on successive balls to pack off Hasan Nawaz (5) and Mohammad Nawaz (0) as Pakistan slipped to 64-6 inside 13 overs.

Wickets kept tumbling, but number nine Afridi took on the opposition attack with four sixes in his unbeaten 33 off 16 balls to push the total past 120 and play out Pakistan's full 20 overs.

India, with two wins from two, are nearly through to the next Super Fours stage of the tournament with their final group match against Oman on Friday.

Pakistan play hosts United Arab Emirates next and despite the defeat are expected to make the next stage.

Ethan Mbatpe strikes late to give Lille win over Toulouse



Lille's Ethan Mbatpe (L) celebrates with Benjamin Andre

AFP | Lille

Ethan Mbatpe, brother of France and Real Madrid superstar Kylian, scored deep into second-half added time as Lille fought from a goal down after regulation time to beat Toulouse 2-1 in Ligue 1 yesterday.

A 90th-minute penalty converted by former Tottenham midfielder Nabil Bentaleb had brought the hosts level before 18-year-old Mbatpe volleyed home eight minutes into injury time to seal the win.

Both goals came courtesy of late substitutes introduced by coach Bruno Genesio, with Toulouse down to 10 men after 80 minutes after midfielder Alexis Vossah's sending off.

Following his departure from Paris Saint-Germain in the wake of his elder brother's acrimonious free transfer to

Madrid, Mbatpe joined Lille in July last year.

The midfielder's first strike for the 2020/21 Ligue 1 winners came on his 11th league appearance as he ghosted in at the far post to thrash Ousmane Dembélé's stood-up cross past the helpless visiting goalkeeper.

Frank Magri opened the scoring for Toulouse early in the second period before Lille's late show.

The last-gasp win took Lille to the top of the Ligue 1 table, with 10 points from four outings.

The Mbatpes' former club and reigning champions PSG can reclaim top spot later yesterday should they beat Lens at home to extend their perfect start to the new campaign.

Lyon also boast a 100 percent record this season, and are in action in the day's final match away to Rennes.

Vuelta final stage abandoned due to pro-Palestinian protest, Vingegaard crowned

● Riders halted 56 kilometers from finish

● Thousands protest with flags, smoke flares

● Barriers knocked down, course invaded

AFP | Madrid

The final stage of the Vuelta a Espana was abandoned yesterday because of huge pro-Palestinian protests in Madrid, with Jonas Vingegaard crowned champion for the first time.

Thousands of protesters gathered in the Spanish capital, invading the course where the race was due to pass in the centre of Madrid, AFP journalists witnessed.

On Gran Via, where cyclists were due to pass multiple times, protesters knocked down barriers and marched into the road, some chanting for a boycott of Israel as green and red smoke filled the air.

Riders, around 56 kilometres from the finish of the race, came to a halt before the Vuelta was abandoned, with two-time Tour de France winner Vingegaard in the leader's red jersey, 1min 16sec ahead of second placed Joao Almeida ahead of the ceremonial final stage.

Organisers said there would be no podium presentation as is traditional at the end of the race to celebrate the winners.



Pro-Palestinians protesters demonstrate during the 21st and last stage of the Vuelta a Espana

Near Atocha, Madrid's central train station, police charged demonstrators and fired tear gas, but then let them walk into the road with the race soon called off.

The decision to abandon the stage was celebrated by protesters, who chanted that "Palestine won the Vuelta".

Various stages of the Vuelta had been shortened because of protests, largely against the Israel-Premier Tech team's participation.

The protests had also led to moments of tension in the three-week grand tour, including crashes.

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said before racing began yesterday that the protests

had filled him with "pride".

Several members of Spain's leftist government have publicly supported the movement in a country where backing for the Palestinian cause is strong.

Protests win out

Authorities ramped up security for the final stage in Madrid ahead of the expected large protests but could not stop the race from being abandoned.

Protesters chanted: "It's not a war, it's a genocide", and "no more killing innocent children".

Riders started the already-shortened 104-kilometre stretch from Alalpardo to Madrid in a relaxed way, taking turns to group at the front of the peloton with their team-mates



Instead of the traditional Madrid parade, Jonas Vingegaard's first Vuelta victory was confirmed without a podium – as protestors claimed the abandoned stage meant "Palestine won the Vuelta."

in celebratory fashion as the gruelling race drew towards its planned close.

Dane Vingegaard battled illness in the second week of the race but it had cleared up by the time of his solo charge up to the finish line on the Bola del Mundo mountain on Saturday which effectively sealed his victory.

Behind him, Portugal's Almeida and Briton Tom Pidcock secured their best ever grand tour finishes in second and third respectively.

On Saturday, protesters briefly breached reinforced security and attempted to block the road during the penultimate stage in the Guadarrama mountains, forcing cyclists to swerve around them. It was a sign of what was to follow yesterday.