

Gill's classy ton, Shami's fifer power India to victory

Mohammed becomes fastest Indian bowler to reach 200 ODI wickets, Rohit second fastest to complete 11,000 runs in ODI

PICS: PTI



Shubman Gill celebrates his century during a One Day International (ODI) match of the ICC Champions Trophy against Bangladesh, at Dubai International Cricket Stadium, in Dubai, UAE, on Thursday. (Right) Mohammed Shami celebrates after taking a five-wicket haul

PTI, DUBAI: Shubman Gill was more artisan than artist en route to his eighth ODI hundred after Mohammed Shami's satisfying five-wicket haul, propelling India to a workmanlike six-wicket win over Bangladesh in their Champions Trophy opener, here, on Thursday.

Gill's unbeaten innings (101, 129b, 9x4, 2x6) had a mirror image in Bangladesh innings through Towhid Hridoy's 100 (118b) that lifted them to 228 from the depths of 35 for five after batting by choice.

But India negated various pressure points, including a sluggish surface, during their chase effectively through Gill's knock full of substance, and ended up at 231 for four in 46.3 overs.

It's also a nerve-settling victory for India ahead of

their much-awaited clash against a more accomplished Pakistan at the same venue on February 23. Gill, the world's No. 1 ODI batter, played a massive role in it, dishing out a century which was more remarkable for its restraint than the customary flair.

It was also a reflection of his growing stature as

India's new generation batting star. India captain Rohit Sharma became the second fastest batter after compatriot Virat Kohli to complete 11,000 runs in One-day Internationals. The seasoned opener reached the mark in his 270th game, and is the second fastest behind Kohli in terms of innings.

Chasing a modest 229, openers Rohit Sharma (41, 36b) and Gill gave India a rollicking start.

Earlier, India also found another shining shard of positive in Shami's outing.

Shami also eased a lot of worries over the absence of injured pace ace Jasprit Bumrah with a five for 53 effort, and during the spell he also became the fastest Indian bowler to reach 200 ODI wickets.

SCOREBOARD

Bangladesh: Tanzid Hasan c Rahul b Patel 25, Soumya Sarkar c Rahul b Shami 0, *Najmul Hossain Shanto c Kohli b Rana 0, Mehidy Hasan Miraz c Gill b Shami 5, Towhid Hridoy c Shami b Rana 100, Mushfiqur Rahim c Rahul b Patel 0, Jaker Ali c Kohli b Shami 68, Rishad Hossain c Pandya b Rana 18, Tanzim Hasan Sakib b Shami 0, Taskin Ahmed c Iyer b Shami 3, Mustafizur Rahman not out 0. **Extras:** 9. **Total:** 228-10. **Fall of wickets:** 1-1, 2-2, 26-3, 35-4, 35-5, 189-6, 214-7, 215-8, 228-9, 228-10. **Bowling:** Mohammed Shami 10-0-53-5, Harshit Rana 7-4-0-31-3, Axar Patel 9-1-43-2, Hardik Pandya 4-0-20-0, Ravindra Jadeja 9-0-37-0, Kuldeep Yadav 10-0-43-0.

India: *Rohit Sharma c Hossain b Ahmed 41, Shubman Gill not out 101, Virat Kohli c Sarkar b Hossain 22, Shreyas Iyer c Shanto b Rahman 15, Axar Patel c and b Hossain 8, KL Rahul not out 41. **Extras:** 3. **Total:** 231-4. **Fall of wickets:** 69-1, 112-2, 133-3, 144-4. **Bowling:** Taskin Ahmed 9-0-36-1, Mustafizur Rahman 9-0-62-1, Tanzim Hasan Sakib 8-3-0-58-0, Mehidy Hasan Miraz 10-0-37-0, Rishad Hossain 10-0-38-2.

Man-of-the-match: Shubman Gill

Rohit praises 'classy' Gill, Shami

PTI, DUBAI: Skipper Rohit Sharma showered praise on his deputy Shubman Gill and veteran pacer Mohammed Shami for coming up with game-changing performances against Bangladesh in India's Champions Trophy opener against Bangladesh here on Thursday.

"We've been in that situation many times before and like I said many times (in the past), there's a lot of experience in that dressing room to handle that composure where it's needed and KL (Rahul) and (Shubman) Gill at the end were quite composed," Rohit said during the post-match presentation.

Rohit heaped praise on player of the match Gill.

CAPTAIN TALK

"Gill, we know the class that he has, he's been batting brilliantly of late and today what he showed us with the bat shouldn't surprise anyone," he said.

"What was good to see that he was there till the end to make sure that he sees off the game," Rohit added.

Rohit also lauded Shami for his five-for that helped the pacer to complete 200 wickets in ODIs.

"Yeah, very happy for him. (It has been a) long time waiting, we obviously know what he brings to us," Rohit said.

"The quality that he has, the kind of match winner he is developing himself into for us, every time we throw the ball at him he's got something up his sleeves, which is always nice and we need guys like these to stand up in big moments," he added.

Rohit said India expect the pitch here at the Dubai International Stadium to remain slow for their next Champions Trophy clash against Pakistan on February 23.

Proteas aim to shed chokers tag

PTI, KARACHI: Debutants Afghanistan will aim to continue their impressive rise in white-ball cricket, while South Africa will once again attempt to shed the 'chokers' tag when the two sides kick off their Champions Trophy campaign here on Friday.

PREVIEW

The inaugural Champions Trophy in 1998, which was called the Knockout Trophy at that time, remains the only ICC men's senior title that South Africa have secured despite having produced some of the world's greatest cricketers, especially in limited-overs format.

The Proteas boast of a well-balanced squad with a formidable batting lineup.

While skipper Temba Bavuma, Tony de Zorzi, Rassie van der Dussen, and Aiden Markram will anchor

the top order, the big-hitting trio of Heinrich Klaasen, David Miller and Tristan Stubbs are well-equipped to provide the final flourish.

South Africa's biggest challenge heading into the tournament is their depleted bowling attack as key pacers Anrich Nortje, Nandre Burger, and Gerald Coetzee ruled out due to injuries.

Known for his pace, aggression, and the knack of striking at crucial moments, Kagiso Rabada will be the Proteas' key weapon

in both the powerplay and death overs.

Marco Jansen, too, will be expected to step up significantly. His ability to build pressure and deliver impactful spells will be crucial.

Meanwhile, Lungi Ngidi will be looking to rediscover his rhythm and confidence after a below-par showing in the recent tri-series. In the spin department, Keshav Maharaj and Tabraiz Shamsi will have vital roles.

SQUADS

South Africa: Temba Bavuma (c), Tony de Zorzi, Marco Jansen, Heinrich Klaasen, Keshav Maharaj, Aiden Markram, David Miller, Wiaan Mulder, Lungi Ngidi, Kagiso Rabada, Ryan Rickelton, Tabraiz Shamsi, Tristan Stubbs, Rassie van der Dussen, Corbin Bosch.

Afghanistan: Hashmatullah Shahidi (c), Ibrahim Zadran, Rahmanullah Gurbaz, Sediqullah Atal, Rahmat Shah, Ikram Alikhil, Gulbadin Naib, Azmatullah Omarzai, Mohammad Nabi, Rashid Khan, Nangyal Kharoti, Noor Ahmad, Fazalhaq Farooqi, Farid Malik, Naveed Zadran.

Match starts 2.30 pm IST

Advani clinches 14th Asian Championship title

PTI, DOHA: Indian cue sports maestro Pankaj Advani has once again showcased his brilliance on the international stage, capturing an unprecedented 14th gold medal at the Asian Snooker Championship here.

The triumph comes just days after he won the National Snooker Championship in Indore, proving yet again why he remains the country's most celebrated cueist.

Advani's victory in Doha adds to an already staggering list of accolades. He now holds five Asian snooker titles (across 15-red, 6-reds, and team formats) alongside nine Asian billiards titles, and his two Asian Games gold medals (2006, 2010) further



highlight his dominance.

With this latest win, he inches closer to an unprecedented achievement -- winning the National, Asian, and World Snooker Championships in a single calendar year. Having already accomplished this feat in billiards, completing it in snooker would make him the only

player in history to do so in both disciplines.

The final against Iran's Amir Sarkhosh was a battle of champions. Sarkhosh, a former Asian and world IBSF 6-red snooker champion, struck first, seizing an early lead. But Advani, known for his composure under pressure, responded in style.

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