

'THIS IS FOR WARNE'

Those with a taste for the confrontational side of cricket will remember that West Indies batsman Marlon Samuels was in the news in January 2013, when in the Big Bash League in Australia, he had an on-field altercation with retired Australian spin wizard Shane Warne.

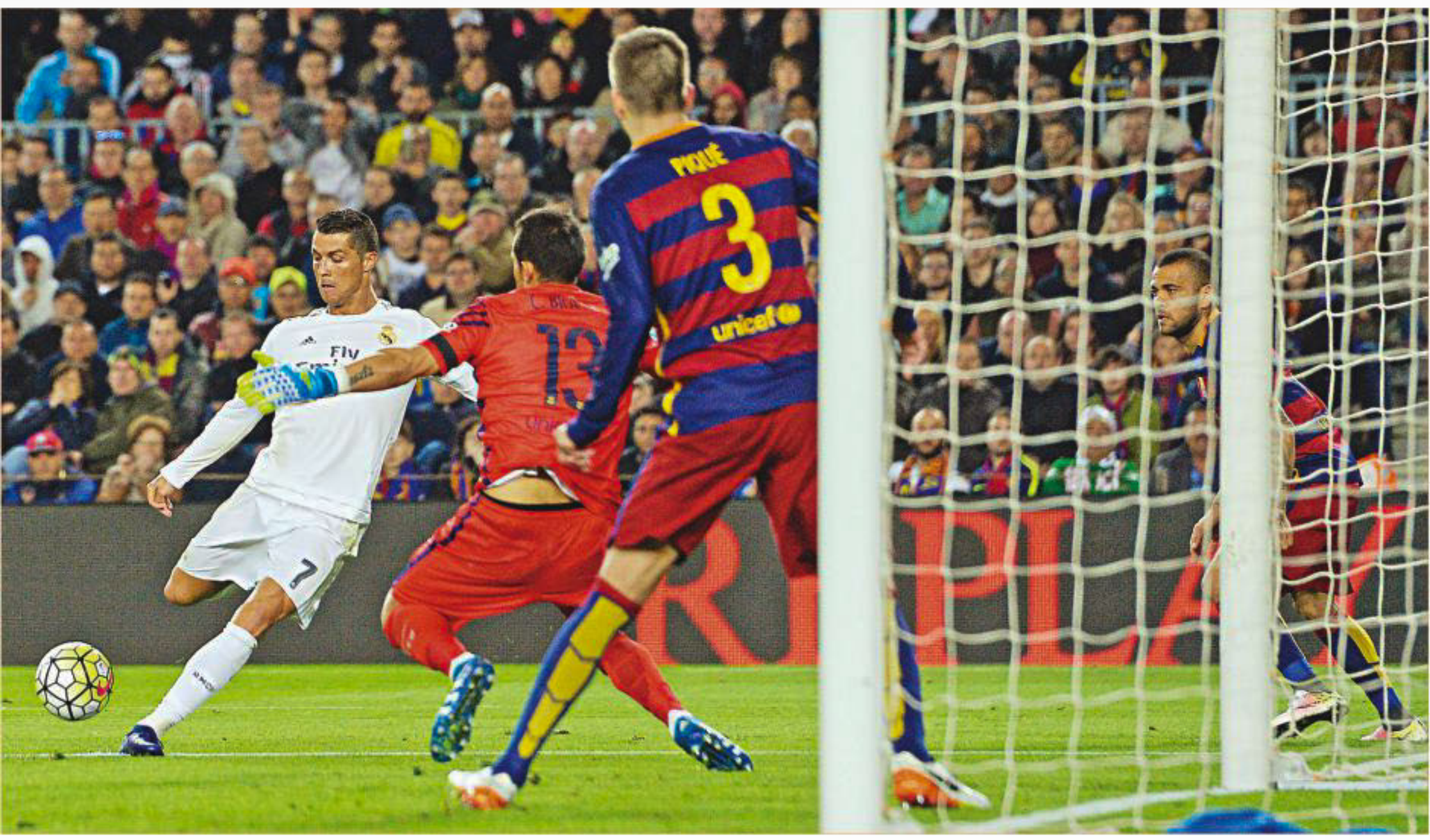
Warne perhaps has not forgotten that confrontation as he, in his capacity as a commentator, engaged in an extended lambasting of Samuels for the way he got out in the semifinal against India. Last night it turned out that Samuels, whose rousing innings are in sharp contrast to his sleepy demeanour, intimidated to the world

exactly what he thinks when he eventually does wake up.

"I woke up this morning with one thing on my mind," said the Jamaican during his player-of-the-match interview, having guided West Indies to a spectacular last-over win in the World Twenty20 final against England. "Shane Warne has been talking continuously and all I have to say, without talking, is this [the trophy] is for Shane Warne. I talk with my bat and not on the mic."

He may as well have dropped the mic then, but he didn't have to.

--STAR SPORT DESK



Real Madrid forward Cristiano Ronaldo (L) scored the all-important goal against arch-rivals Barcelona with a fantastic effort during their La Liga encounter at the Nou Camp on Saturday.

PHOTO: AFP

Maiden glory for Calypso queens

AFP, Kolkata



Powerful half-centuries from Hayley Matthews and skipper Stafanie Taylor fired the West Indies to their maiden women's World Twenty20 crown in a thrilling last-over win against Australia in Sunday's final in Kolkata.

Chasing a competitive 149 for a win against the three-time champions, West Indies rode a blistering 120-run opening stand between Matthews and Taylor to triumph with three balls to spare.

They won by eight wickets at the Eden Gardens as they picked up a first win against Australia in their ninth attempt.

Player of the match Matthews and Taylor acquired 16 runs off the sixth over. A destructive Matthews clobbered three sixes and six boundaries during her 45-ball blitz that made the Aussie bowling attack appear pedestrian.

Taylor played a more sedate but commanding innings to lead the Windies to an historic title after three previous failed semifinal attempts.

Leg-spinner Kristen Beams got Matthews caught at mid-wicket in the 16th over and 18 balls later Rene Farrell saw the back of Taylor but the wickets only proved to be minor hiccups on the Windies' road to victory.

Wild celebrations erupted from the Caribbean dugout as Britney Cooper hit the winning runs to script a new chapter in Windies women's cricket.

The Caribbean women danced with their male counterparts, who won the men's final later last night. The West Indies men completed a rare hat-trick after the Under-19 boys lifted the youth World Cup in February.

Earlier after electing to bat, skipper Meg Lanning and Elyse Villani helped Australia post 148 for five.

The Aussies lost opener Alyssa Healy early but a 77-run second wicket

partnership between Lanning (52) and Villani (52) set the tone for a formidable score.

SCORES IN BRIEF

AUSTRALIA: 148 for 5 in 20 overs (Villani 52, Lanning 52, Perry 28; Matthews 1-13, Dottin 2-33)

WEST INDIES: 149 for 2 in 19.3 overs (Matthews 66, Taylor 59, Dottin 18 not out; Farrell 1-35, Beams 1-27)

Result: West Indies won by 8 wickets.

Player-of-the-match: Hayley Matthews.

ROLL OF HONOUR

Year	Winners	Runners-up
2009	England	New Zealand
2010	Australia	New Zealand
2012	Australia	England
2014	Australia	England

Zizou's magnificent Cruyff turn

AFP, Barcelona



A night that began with a colourful homage to a legendary Barcelona player turned coach in Johan Cruyff, ended with Real Madrid's own version of a one-time playing great in Zinedine Zidane celebrating his first big victory in management.

Zidane's men swept aside a tiring Barca in the closing stages of Saturday's 2-1 El Clasico win at the Camp Nou to bring a remarkable 39-game unbeaten run by the European champions stretching back six months to an end.

Moreover, they did so having come from behind after Gerard Pique's header gave Barca an early second-half lead, and despite finishing with 10 men as captain Sergio Ramos was sent off for the 21st time in his career.

"Madrid needed a prestigious victory and a performance of the highest quality," said Madrid sports daily Marca on Sunday.

Karim Benzema and Cristiano Ronaldo got the goals, while Gareth Bale had another wrongly ruled out on a night when Madrid's 'BBC' outgunned Barca's triumvirate of Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez and Neymar.

Ronaldo's winner five minutes from time silenced critics of the three-time World Player of the Year that

despite his 42 goals this season, he hadn't produced in the big games.

Yet, it was Zidane who exited the Camp Nou with his credibility most enhanced after his first Clasico since taking his first senior managerial role back in January.

"Super Zidane" ran the front page of French sports paper L'Equipe back in his homeland. Madrid's hope in easing Zidane through the stages of assistant manager and then youth team coach was based in hoping he could be their Pep Guardiola.

An ardent disciple of Cruyff, Guardiola superseded the Dutch great as Barca's most successful ever coach with 14 trophies in a glorious four-year spell between 2008 and 2012.

Madrid's performance at the Camp Nou was far from the virtues of beautiful football extolled by Cruyff and Guardiola, or even Zidane in his playing days. However, it demonstrated Zidane's savvy and willingness to take big decisions.

Since losing 1-0 to local rivals Atletico Madrid last month after which he questioned his side's work-rate and mental strength, two players of similar characteristics to Zidane the player in James Rodriguez and Isco have been sidelined for the more defensive-minded Casemiro, who shone in midfield.

To his cost Rafael Benitez dropped the Brazilian in favour of Rodriguez as Barca won 4-0 at the Santiago Bernabeu earlier in the season.

This time round Madrid defended deep and rode their luck early on before exploiting Barca with their exhilarating speed on the counter-attack.

Despite defeat, Barca remain heavy favourites to win La Liga as they hold a six-point lead over Atletico Madrid with Real a further point back in third with seven games remaining.



A 90,000 strong crowd at the Nou Camp showed their respect for recently-deceased Barcelona legend Johan Cruyff ahead of El Clasico on Saturday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

However, ever since Zidane's appointment, Madrid have had one eye on salvaging their season in the Champions League, where they meet Wolfsburg in the first leg of their quarter-final on Wednesday.

As 10-time winners, Madrid's history is defined by the European Cup. So too was Zidane's career as a Real player thanks to his sensational

volley to win the 2002 final over Bayer Leverkusen.

"We know what we want to do in the Champions League," said Zidane.

"For confidence it is very important to win here for the rest of the season."

Madrid were always expected to see off Wolfsburg, but would now face any rematch with Barcelona or any of Europe's elite with far more belief than

before bursting Barca's bubble.

Before the match got underway, over 90,000 Barcelona fans took part in a spectacular display in honour of Johan Cruyff.

The display read "Thank you Johan" alongside a Barca jersey with the number 14 the Dutch great wore during his playing career.

Abahani held by Feni

SPORTS REPORTER



Feni Soccer Club, last season's runners-up, came from behind to hold Abahani to a 1-1 draw in their KFC Independence Cup encounter at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Substitute Chowmrin Rakhain canceled out a 45-minute strike by Sarra Camara five minutes from time to give Feni Soccer something to cheer about against the Sky Blues who consisted of 10 national players apart from a couple of quality foreign players.

Feni Soccer comparatively played well in the first half with former Abahani hitman Twum Frank of Ghana exposing the four-man backline marshalled by national defenders Wali Faisal, Ariful Islam, Tapu Barman and Shakil Ahmed time and again but Abahani goalkeeper Sultan Ahmed Shakil thwarted two attempts from point-blank range.

However, Shakil was to blame for the equaliser as the advancing goalkeeper brought down Twum Frank inside the box before former Abahani winger Chowmrin converted from the spot.

Abahani deployed three attackers -- Nigerian Sunday Chizoba, English Lee tuck

and Senegalese Camara -- who were mostly off colour in term of availing opportunities. There was also a lack of cohesion in the midfield, which failed to produce good passes to forwards throughout the match.

Feni could have taken the lead in the seventh minute but Akbar Hossain Ridon, snatching the ball from defender Ariful, struck straight at the goalkeeper while a close-range header from Guinean Camara Mahadou was brilliantly saved.

Abahani tried to launch attacks from both flanks and right-back Shakil Ahmed put a nice ball for Camara inside the box with goalkeeper Osman Gani to beat, but defender Zahirul Islam suddenly cleared the ball from behind to save Feni from a goal in the 37th minute. However seven minutes later Camara did not make a mistake and tapped home a square-pass from Jibon.

After resumption, Abahani kept pressing the opponents amid a drizzle and created a few good chances but neither Sunday nor Tuck availed those chances to double the lead, rather they had to concede the equaliser five minutes from time.

Sunday found a nice chance to restore the lead in the dying minute but goalkeeper Osman made a nice diving save to keep smiles on the faces of Feni Soccer intact.

Cesare breathes his last

AFP, Milan



AC Milan led the Serie A tributes to former defender and club legend Cesare Maldini, who died on Sunday at the age of 84.

Maldini, the father of 1990s club icon Paolo Maldini, made 412 appearances with the Rossoneri between 1954 and 1966, winning four league titles including a first 'scudetto' in his first season with the club.

Maldini had the honour of lifting the trophy at Wembley in 1963 when Milan became the first Italian club to win the European Cup, with victory over Eusebio-inspired Benfica.

He would play 14 times for Italy before hanging up his boots in 1966.

Maldini returned to Milan for an ill-fated spell as a coach, spending less than one season on the bench in 1973-1974, when Giovanni

Trapattoni was ushered in to take over.

A minute's silence was held before the Udinese v Napoli clash on Sunday and was due to be observed in the remaining league games.

Meanwhile, a statement by Milan said: "President Silvio Berlusconi and the rest of

the club will always remember his charisma, kindness and warm smile.

"The club sends its condolences to the Maldini family and the loss of such a key figure in Rossoneri history has left everyone at AC Milan moved and saddened."

Maldini senior eventually returned to coaching, taking over Italy ahead of the 1998 World Cup in France only to leave his post under a cloud after the tournament.

He returned to Milan to take a job as the club's chief scout and in March 2001 took over from coach Alberto Zaccheroni for the closing stages of the 2000-2001 season, overseeing the memorable 6-0 victory over Inter Milan.

CESARE MALDINI (1932-2016)



Martial's 13th lifts Red Devils

Foxes go seven clear at top

AFP, Manchester



Anthony Martial scored the only goal of the game as Manchester United beat Everton 1-0 in the Premier League at Old Trafford on Sunday to climb within a point of fourth-placed local rivals Manchester City.

Martial's 54th-minute strike gave the French striker his 13th goal of the season and helped United celebrate the fact that Old Trafford's south stand had been renamed in honour of club great Bobby Charlton in fine fashion.

Victory kept alive United boss Louis van Gaal's hopes of qualifying for the Champions League -- the top four clubs in England get a spot -- and thus satisfying the minimum demand on an Old Trafford manager.

This was United's fourth successive home win, a feat they managed for the first time since a six-match streak last April.

United have now won four of their last five league games, including the Manchester derby at the Etihad Stadium.

Martial broke the deadlock when he got on the end of a delightful passing move that started with Juan Mata, was enhanced by a neat backheel by Marcus Rashford and completed by the striker, who converted at the far post when Coleman failed to connect with an attempted clearance.

It was Manchester United's 1,000th home goal in the Premier League.

In the day's earlier game, Leicester City captain Wes Morgan scored his first goal in almost a year as the Premier League fairytale-title chasers edged Southampton 1-0 on Sunday to establish a potentially decisive seven-point lead.

Tottenham Hotspur's 1-1 draw at Liverpool on Saturday had given Claudio Ranieri's men an opportunity to strengthen their grip on first place and they duly took it courtesy of Morgan's 38th-minute header.

It was Leicester's fifth 1-0 victory in six matches and with just six games of the season remaining, the 132-year-old club's first ever top-flight title is now tantalisingly within sight.

The east Midlands side were bottom of the table a year ago, but require just 12 points from a possible 18 to complete one of the most sensational triumphs in football history.

Ronald Koeman's Southampton, who had two penalty appeals for handball turned away, remain seventh and face an uphill battle to force their way into the Europa League berth.

ASIAN CUP CHESS BD slip to fourth

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh slipped to the fourth from the second position in the Asian Nations Cup Chess after suffering a 3-1 defeat to the third seed Kazakhstan in the sixth round held in Abu Dhabi on Saturday.

Bangladesh, who shared second position along with China and Iran at the close of the fifth round, have eight points and they were playing against leaders India when this report was filed.

In the sixth round, GM Niaz Murshed defeated GM Jamabayev Rinat but GM Abdullah Al Rakib, GM Enamul Hossain Razib and IM Minhazuddin Sagor lost their respective bouts against GM Kazhgaleyev Murtas, GM Khusunudinov Rustam and GM Ismagambetov Anuar.

My goal was legal: Bale

AFP, Barcelona

Real Madrid star Gareth Bale insisted that referee Alejandro Jose Hernandez made a mistake in ruling out his goal against Barcelona in Saturday's El Clasico and said that the decision was a huge surprise.

"I can't believe it was disallowed. I made sure I didn't touch him because I know what the Spanish referees are like," said the winger. "It was a very bad

Afridi steps down as T20 captain

AFP, Islamabad



Shahid Afridi on Sunday announced he would step down as Pakistan's captain in the game's shortest format following his team's early exit from the World Twenty20 in which he was branded "absolutely clueless" by his manager.

The 36-year-old, nicknamed "Boom Boom" for his fierce hitting, had suffered a drop in form over the past two years and was unable to steer Pakistan through the group stages of the competition in India.

"Today I wish to inform my fans in Pakistan & all over the world that I am relinquishing the captaincy of the T20 Pakistani team of my own volition," he said in a statement.

Afridi was appointed T20 captain for the second time in 2014, with his contract set to expire following the World T20 in India in 2016.

He led the team to the semifinals of the same tournament in a previous stint as captain in 2010, but was removed a year later.

In 43 matches as captain, he led his team to 19 wins, 23 losses and one tie.

"For me it was a great honour to lead my country," he said. "I intend to continue to play the game for my country and league etc., and request my fans for kindly keep praying and supporting me for my best future performances for Pakistan (as a player)."

Afridi's tactical nous and off-field leadership had come under fire in two separate post-mortem reports prepared by team manager Intikhab Alam and head coach Waqar Younis.

"Much to our chagrin (Afridi) was a captain in his farewell event after a career spanning nearly 20 years, yet absolutely clueless in terms of on-field tactics and off-field leadership," wrote Alam in his assessment, which was widely leaked to the press.

On Wednesday, Afridi took to Facebook and Twitter to issue a one-minute video apology to the cricket-mad country but stopped short of announcing his retirement.

"Today, I, Shahid Afridi, apologise to the whole nation for not being able to fulfil the hopes of myself and my team," he said.



STAR ECONOMICAL BOWLER: West Indies spinner Samuel Badree provided breakthroughs against England in the World T20 final yesterday, recording figures of 2 for 16 in four overs.

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