



IND v PAK TRIVIA

1. When India and Pakistan met in the maiden edition of the Asia Cup in 1984, as many as four Pakistan batters were run-out in a failed run-chase after India posted 188 in 46 overs.

2. Shoaib Malik – whose brilliant all-round performance facilitated Pakistan's win against India in 2004 Asia Cup – could not make the cut in the Pakistan Asia Cup squad this time. The 40-year-old, who has scored most runs (168) for Pakistan against India in the format, has played the most T20s (9) from the two camps. However, India captain Rohit Sharma is set to match Malik's tally today.

3. While Rohit Sharma approaches 9k-plus runs, boasting a 40-plus average, in Asia Cup to join the likes of Sanath Jayasuriya, Kumar Sangakkara, Sachin Tendulkar and Shoaib Malik, his record in T20s against Pakistan remains dismal, with only 70 runs in 8 matches.

4. Virat Kohli has scored the most runs for India against Pakistan in T20s. The maestro has hit three fifties on his way to 311 runs with an average of 78. Kohli was the highest scorer for champions India in the 2016 Asia Cup, the last and only time the tournament featured the T20 format. On the bowling front, Irfan Pathan (6) and Umar Gul (11) leads the pack from their respective sides in India-Pakistan T20s.

5. The 2016 edition of the Asia Cup witnessed a nerve-wracking battle between Kohli and Pakistan pacer Mohammad Amir. Despite chasing a meagre 83, India were down at eight for three with Amir in sublime rhythm. However, India won by five wickets, courtesy of Kohli's 49. His consecutive fours off Amir, including a gorgeous cover drive, remain one of the highlights of the tournament.

6. In the 2010 edition, with India needing three to win off two balls off Amir in their chase of 268, the tension was at an all-time high. However, Harbhajan Singh's six over mid-wicket to seal the game made it an Asia Cup classic.

7. In 2014, with nine-down Pakistan requiring 10 off five balls, Shahid Afridi showcased the art of hitting big under immense pressure as he powered two sixes in the final over to secure victory for his side in Dhaka.



Pakistan captain Babar Azam will hope Mohammad Rizwan repeat his 2021 T20 World Cup heroics against India at the same Dubai International Cricket Stadium while India skipper Rohit Sharma will want his batting stalwart Virat Kohli to get back among runs when the old foes meet in their opening Asia Cup match tonight.

PHOTO: TWITTER

Revenge for India or glory for Pakistan?

AGENCIES

The India-Pakistan cricket rivalry is once again back in the spotlight, as the two arch-rivals are set to lock horns in a much-awaited clash at the Asia Cup 2022 on Sunday in Dubai.

Thanks to the political dispute between the two neighbouring countries, the India-Pakistan clash has turned into one of the most intense sports rivalries in the world, and whenever the two sides meet on the big stage, there is a different level of emotions and hype.

Not many from the frontline will concede it publicly but India will be keen to avenge their 2021 T20 World Cup thumping at the hands of Pakistan.

As Rohit Sharma and Babar Azam walk out for the toss in the second match of Asia Cup 2022 at the Dubai International Stadium, the memories of the last encounter between the two sides in last year's T20 World Cup at the same venue will be fresh in the minds of both players and fans.

India have a favourable head to head record against Pakistan in T20Is, having won four of the last five matches. However, when it mattered the most, in the first match for both teams in the last showpiece event, India faltered as Pakistan registered a sensational 10-wicket

win in which they hardly put a foot wrong.

The India-Pakistan rivalry has generally been more intense in the hearts and minds of supporters than the players. Battles have been fought on social media by fans who believe that a win on a cricket field is conclusive proof that one political system or one religion or one nation is superior to the other.

Over the years, there have been two separate games whenever the India and Pakistan teams have met. The one on the field is a competition between two talented sets of players trying their utmost to win, bringing into the frame professional pride. Off it, the game is symbolic of something else; war minus the shooting, to use George Orwell's memorable phrase.

But that's among fans. Players show more sense. The Pakistan Cricket Board released videos from the venue of players from the two countries greeting each other with warmth and inquiring after one another's families. For them it's business as usual.

One much anticipated aspect of tonight's game is Virat Kohli's form. Indian fans have been praying for a major contribution from Kohli, who bats at 3, in the team's win. This will be his 100th T20 international, making him only the second player (after New Zealand's Ross Taylor) to play 100 matches in each of

cricket's three formats.

India will again depend heavily on Rohit Sharma giving them a good start. His opening partner, KL Rahul, is undercooked after a long break since the IPL due to injury and Covid.

Suryakumar Yadav has dazzled and disappointed in equal measure in the middle order and it's anybody's guess which version turns up against Pakistan. Wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant and all-rounders Hardik Pandya and Ravindra Jadeja will be the likely lower middle order. That's exactly the same lineup that India had at the T20 World Cup against Pakistan.

Meanwhile, the man who blew away the Indian openers in their last meeting, the six-foot-six-inch left-armer Shaheen Shah Afridi, is out with a knee injury this time.

A right-arm pacer with a dodgy action, Mohammad Hasnain, replaces Afridi as an option to share the new ball with the pacy Harris Rauf.

In batting, for Pakistan, the onus once again will be on openers Mohammad Rizwan and Babar Azam, and to some extent on Fakhar Zaman who will bat at one drop.

If the Indian bowlers are successful in picking up a couple of early wickets, Pakistan can really find themselves in trouble.

FAMOUS QUOTES ON INDIA-PAKISTAN RIVALRY

"India playing Pakistan involves the sentiments of millions. You become a hero if you perform well ... you are portrayed as a villain if your team loses."

Pakistan great
WASIM AKRAM

"Beating Pakistan is always special because they are a tough team and we have a bit of a history regarding Pakistan."

India great
SACHIN TENDULKAR

"Any game against India is a pressure game because of the tensions and expectations associated with the match."

Pakistan great
IMRAN KHAN

"I don't want to say it's the biggest rivalry in sport, but I saw some stats which said the soccer World Cup final attracted 1.6 billion viewers and tomorrow is likely to get 1.5 billion. It doesn't get bigger than that. I am telling our players in the dressing room, 'you do something incredible; you will be remembered forever.'"

Former Pakistan coach
MICKEY ARTHUR
said ahead of 2019 WC game
against India.

"This rivalry is huge, it's very hard to put a finger and tell you how huge. It's probably bigger than the Ashes. As far as the Indians and Pakistanis go, I don't think they watch this game as a game of cricket. It's more of a border rivalry. They want to get one upon on each other. People put their emotions into the game."

For the players, it's all about keeping their emotions aside and trying to play the best way we can."

India spinner
RAVICHANDRAN ASHWIN

"To most, the clash between India and Pakistan is the only game that matters."

India great
SUNIL GAVASKAR

INFO

ZONE

INDIA

M W L NR

14 8 5 1

PAKISTAN

M W L NR

14 5 8 1

HEAD TO HEAD IN ASIA CUP

M W L NR

9 7 2 0

HEAD TO HEAD IN T20IS

M W L NR

9 2 7 0

Last meeting in T20Is: Dubai, October 24, 2021 in T20 World Cup. Pakistan won by 10 wickets. Last meeting in Asia Cup: Dubai, September 23, 2018 played in the ODI format.

Last meeting in Asia Cup: Dubai, September 23, 2018 played in the ODI format. India won by 9 wickets



HARDIK PANDYA

BOWLING
MATCHES: 67
WICKETS: 50
AVERAGE: 27.80
ECONOMY: 8.28
BEST BOWLING: 4/33

BATTING
MATCHES: 67
RUNS: 834
AVERAGE: 23.16
HS: 51
SR: 144.04



BABAR AZAM

BATTING
MATCHES: 74
RUNS: 2686
AVERAGE: 46
HS: 122
SR: 129



"No one can say that the players here [in the national squad] can't hit sixes and fours or that the players don't have any qualities. Those who came into the national squad, could only come this far after giving their 100 per cent. I think everyone has the quality to hit sixes and fours and demonstrate power-hitting in the matches."

Bangladesh opener
ANAMUL HAQUE BHUIYAN

Tactically flexible spinners to play key role

SPORTS REPORTER

Many may point out Bangladesh's weaknesses in the T20 format to be the lack of power hitting ability alongside their fragile top order, but one should also not forget that the Tigers spin-bowling department could prove to be decisive behind their success in the ongoing Asia Cup.

The Tigers, however, will surely miss a leg spinner in the squad. Among the five teams – Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Afghanistan – who directly qualified for the continental tournament, only Bangladesh do not possess a leggie in their ranks.

Both Afghanistan and Sri Lanka, who are pitted with Bangladesh in the same group, have world-class leggies in Rashid Khan and Wanindu Hasaranga, respectively, in their squads.

Shakib Al Hasan and his troop will have to be on top of their game to pass the first hurdle in Group B, so that they have one foot in the top four when Bangladesh, in their opening game, take on Afghanistan on August 30 in Sharjah.

The Tigers will have to rely on

the left-arm spin of Shakib, who is expected to lead the spin department, while the likes of Mahedi Hasan, Nasum Ahmed and Mehedi Hasan Miraz are the other specialist spinning options in the squad.

According to Bangladesh batter Shamsur Rahman, who played nine T20Is for the Tigers, it will be important for the Bangladeshi spinners to remain confident even if



things don't go in their favour during the game.

"Look, we know leg spinners play a huge role in modern day T20s and we will certainly miss a leg spinner on our side," Shamsur told The Daily Star during its multimedia show titled 'Non Striker's End' yesterday.

"But it is important for our existing spinners to be able to execute their plans in the middle, and I believe they have the ability."

"You have to be confident to be able to change the plan instantly and Shakib knows it very well. So it will be important for the other spinners like Nasum or Mahedi to contribute and create pressure on the opponent batters," Shamsur added.

Skipper Shakib also has some part-time off-spinning options in Mosaddek Hossain, Afif Hossain and Mahmudullah Riyad, who are expected to chip in with crucial overs and breakthroughs.

However, the small Sharjah ground, where the Tigers have never been able to win a game in the past, could test the Bangladeshi spinners, reckons Shamsur.

"It is important that every single member in the team plays their part. Suppose Afif gets the opportunity to bowl, he should make it count. Riyad Bhai and Mosaddek have the ability to give breakthroughs in crucial phases of an innings, Shamsur said.

"And since we will be facing Afghanistan in the opening game in the small Sharjah ground, it will be important for our spinners to have the plan B in store as the batters would try to utilise the short boundary and come hard right from the start."