

India beat Sri Lanka by 41 runs to qualify for Final

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Online Desk: India has reached to the Final of the Asia Cup after they sealed a convincing 41-run victory against Sri Lanka in the Super Four clash of the tournament at R Premadasa Stadium, Colombo, on Tuesday. The other finalist will be decided in the upcoming Pakistan-Sri Lanka match of the Super Four on Thursday. Those who will win the match will face India in the Final on Sunday (September 17).

As a result, the match between Bangladesh and India, the last game of the Super Four, on September 15 will have no effect on qualifying for the Final as Bangladesh were knocked out of the race after the victory of India on Tuesday. Meanwhile, Sri Lanka were bowled out for 172 in 41.3 overs in replying to a meagre score of 213.

Indian bowlers Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammad Siraj kept their consistency by striking thrice in the Powerplay. Both were virtually unplayable, with Bumrah picking two. Kuldeep then struck twice in quick succession, including the fluent Sadeera Samarawickrama.

When Ravindra Jadeja enticed an edge off Sri Lankan captain Dasun Shanaka to Rohit in the slips, at 99 for six, the game was all but over. But Dhananjaya de Silva found an able ally in Dunith Wellalage to give the largest turnout a glimmer of hope. But the 63-run partnership was broken, thanks to Shubman Gill's sharp catch at mid-on to see de Silva's back. Kuldeep then ran through the tail to hand India a comfortable win.

Wellalage and Silva added highest 42 and 41 runs for the team after making the partnership in the middle. Kuldeep was the pick of the bowlers from India as he got four wickets haul where Bumrah and Jadeja picked up two wickets each, and both from Siraj and Hardik Pandya took one. Earlier, two Sri Lankan spinners Dunith Wellalage and Charith Asalanka came with devastating spells as their team bundled India out for a meager total of 213 runs.

India fell into a collapse by Sri Lankan spinners in spite of having a stormy start with skipper Rohit Sharma's fifty. The Indian captain along with Shubman Gill made an opening partnership of 80 runs in just 11 overs. After that, Wellalage came in the attack and sent Gill to the pavilion on his 19. The Sri Lankan youngster picked up the wickets of Virat Kohli (3 off 12) and Rohit Sharma (53 off 48) gradually in his next two overs of the spell.

Charith Asalanka joined him (Wellalage) and India kept losing wickets at regular intervals. Ishan Kishan (33 off 61) and KL Rahul (39 off 44) tried to resist the collapse in the middle but could not hold long enough. Axar Patel added 26 runs from 36 at the end, resulting the termination of the innings at 213 runs in 49.1 overs. All 10 wickets of India were bagged by the Sri Lankan spinners, with Dunith Wellalage getting five wickets and Charith Asalanka's four. Maheesh Theekshana picked up a wicket at the end. In this match, India benched Shardul Thakur replaced by Axar Patel. The Rohit Sharma-led side came to this clash after registering a big 228-run victory over arch-rivals Pakistan in their last match.

India (Playing XI): Rohit Sharma(c), Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli, KL Rahul(w), Ishan Kishan, Hardik Pandya, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj.

Sri Lanka (Playing XI): Pathum Nissanka, Dimuth Karunaratne, Kusal Mendis(w), Sadeera Samarawickrama, Charith Asalanka, Dhananjaya de Silva, Dasun Shanaka(c), Dunith Wellalage, Maheesh Theekshana, Kasun Rajitha, Matheesha Pathirana.