



WE WILL WELCOME INDIA IF THEY COME TO PAKISTAN TO PLAY THE ASIA CUP 2020.
I think we have always welcomed them in Pakistan. Cricket, in fact, sports is the only way to bridge gaps between countries," said Afridi.

ROBERTSON SHINES TO HELP SNOW LEOPARDS CONQUER AIZAWL



AIZAWL: Real Kashmir defeated former Hero I-League champions 2-0 at the JLN Stadium, Aizawl today (February 1, 2020), thanks to some gutsy defensive work and all-round display from Mason Robertson, who was rightly adjudged the Hero of the Match.

Real Kashmir scored their first goal early in the 16th minute through Higginbotham while their second goal came from Mason Robertson in the 82nd minute. With this win, Real Kashmir FC have now moved up to fifth with 12 points from 8 games while Aizawl FC stay

rooted to the tenth spot with 8 points from 9 games.

The first half began with the visitors Real Kashmir FC pressing hard for a lead. The English duo of Kallum Higginbotham and Mason Robertson ensured that the Aizawl defence was on their toes right from the first minute.

A few attempts for an early lead by the snow leopards went in vain thanks to the alert defending by the Aizawl defenders and their goalkeeper. However, as the game progressed the visitors tightened the screw and their efforts soon yielded

results, when a fantastic pass from Mason Robertson to Higginbotham, saw the latter make no mistakes in finding the back of the net in the 16th minute.

Aizawl did try making a comeback through a counter-attack in the very next minute, but lack of creativity inside the final third kept them away from finding that much-needed equaliser. The game thereafter saw both sides making an attempt to score but to no avail.

Aizawl tried to make a comeback in the final few minutes of the first half but some good

glovework from Phurba Lachenpa of Real Kashmir FC saw the visitors maintain their 1-0 lead as the first 45 minutes of the game came to an end.

The second half began with the visitors again pressing hard to consolidate their lead but were not able to convert any opportunity, while hosts Aizawl FC who looked scattered tried helplessly to find a much-needed equaliser. Stanley Rozario made a couple of quick changes in the 57th and 63rd minute

bringing in Paul Ramfangzauva and Nigerian attacker Justice Morgan at the expenses of Ramhlunchhunga and Abdoulaye Kanoute respectively.

This did bring in a welcome change to Aizawl's efforts who earned a handful of opportunities through setpieces but the finesse in the attacking third eluded them the equaliser. David Robertson made an interesting change in the 68th minute, having introduced Cote D'ivoirean Gnohere Krizo in place of scorer Kallum Higginbotham.

Eight minutes to the end of the

regulation time, this change paid dividends for David Robertson. A mistimed pass from Justice Morgan was intercepted by Krizo and the attacker rounded off two defenders to pass it to onrushing Mason Robertson. The Brit made no mistake in finding the back of the net to consolidate the Snow Leopard's lead.

Aizawl will have to quickly reassess their plans before they travel to Kalyani to face Quess East Bengal on February 7, 2020. Real Kashmir will travel all the way to Kozhikode to face Gokulam Kerala on the following day (February 8, 2020).

Deadline Day transfers

Latest news from Europe's top football leagues on transfer deadline day



UNITED CONFIRM IGHALO DEAL
Manchester United confirm deal to sign former Watford forward Odion Ighalo on loan from Chinese club Shanghai Shenhua.

"Manchester United can confirm that Odion Ighalo will join on loan from Shanghai Shenhua until the end of the season," the club said on its website.

Nigerian Ighalo, who offers cover for injured forward Marcus Rashford, has Premier League experience, having scored 33 goals in 82 games for Watford before moving to Chinese Super League club Changchun Yatai in 2017 for a reported 20 million pounds.

VILLA BRING IN SPANISH FORWARD BASTON
Premier League Aston Villa

brought in Spanish forward Borja Baston from Championship club Swansea City on a free transfer.

BRIGHTON SIGN LAMPTEY
Premier League Brighton & Hove Albion have signed 19-year-old defender Tariq Lamptey from Chelsea on undisclosed terms until June 2023.

MAN CITY'S ANGELINO JOINS RB LEIPZIG
Manchester City full back Angelino, who has been restricted to just 12 appearances this season, will spend the rest of the season on loan at RB Leipzig.

Dortmund snap up ex-Liverpool midfielder Can from Juventus.

Carrasco returns to Atletico after Chinese sojourn



PANDYA ruled out of NZ tests

WELLINGTON: India all-rounder Hardik Pandya has been ruled out of the two-match test series against New Zealand as he recovers from a back injury, the Indian cricket board (BCCI) said on Saturday.

Pandya underwent surgery on his lower back in October last year and had hoped he could return to the Indian squad for the New Zealand series. The 26-year-old, however, failed to achieve full

fitness and will continue his rehabilitation at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) in Bengaluru.

"He travelled to London and was accompanied by NCA head physio Ashish Kaushik for a review by spinal surgeon Dr James Allibone," the BCCI said in a statement.

India will play two World Test Championship games in Wellington and Christchurch starting Feb. 21.

Barca sign \$44 million pair, Trincao and Fernandes

LONDON: Barcelona have snapped up Portuguese forward Francisco Trincao from Braga for 31 million euros (\$34 million), the Spanish champions said in a statement on Friday.

The club also announced the signing of 21-year-old Brazilian midfielder Matheus Fernandes from Palmeiras for a fee of seven million euros, which could reach 10 million with add-ons.

Trincao, 20, will join on July 1 and sign a contract until June 2025 containing a release clause of 500 million euros.

The forward made his top-flight debut for Braga last season and has made four league starts this campaign, scoring twice.

Defensive midfielder Fernandes, who has been capped at Under-17 and Under-20 level, will also join Barca on July 1 on a five-year deal, with a release clause of 300 million euros.



We will welcome India if they come to Pakistan for Asia Cup:
AFRIDI



KARAGHI: Uncertainty surrounds Indian team's visit of Pakistan for the event

Former Pakistan all-rounder Shahid Afridi has extended a gesture of goodwill towards the Indian cricket team as uncertainty surrounds the latter's visit to their neighbouring country for this year's Asia Cup.

While talking to ARY News, Afridi said that Pakistan is ready to welcome India if they come and play Asia Cup in Pakistan.

"We will welcome India if they come to Pakistan to play the Asia Cup 2020. I think we have always welcomed them in Pakistan. Cricket, in fact, sports is the only way to bridge gaps between countries," said Afridi.

Responding to a question about Asia Cup's hosting rights, Afridi said: "I think it's a decision of Asian Cricket Council, let's see what happens. Whoever hosts the event, cricket should continue."

It must be noted that, earlier, the

Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) had made it clear they will not participate in the Asia Cup, if the tournament takes place in Pakistan. Although, while speaking to Indo-Asian News Service (IANS), a BCCI official said that Indian board is open to the idea of playing at a neutral venue.

While speaking in an exclusive chat with Cricket Pakistan last week, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chief Executive Wasim Khan had said that Pakistan is considering playing the Asia Cup matches against India at a neutral venue.

"Under the current circumstances we do not think they [India] will come to Pakistan. We have the option of playing in the UAE in this regard," said Wasim.

BCCI also hosted the 2018 Asia Cup in UAE because of strained political relations between Pakistan and India, which made it difficult to obtain visas for the Men in Green players to play in India.