



SAFF Championship 2023

Why in News?

Recently, India marked a remarkable victory in the **South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) Championship 2023 held in Bengaluru, Karnataka**, securing their **ninth title** by defeating Kuwait in a thrilling football match.

What is SAFF Championship?

▪ About:

- The SAFF Championship is an internationally recognized football tournament that brings together teams from the **South Asian subcontinent**. Organized by the **South Asian Football Federation (SAFF)**, one of the five sub-confederations under the **Asian Football Confederation (AFC)**.
 - **SAFF was formed in 1997** by founding Member Associations from **Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka**.
 - The SAFF Secretariat currently operates from **Dhaka, Bangladesh**.

▪ Origin and Evolution:

- **Founding members:**
 - India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Maldives.
- **Expansion:**
 - Bhutan joined in 2000, while Afghanistan became a member in 2005 before moving to the **Central Asian Football Association (CAFA)** in 2015.
- **Evolution:**
 - The South Asian football tournament started as the **South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Gold Cup in 1993**.
 - It was later renamed the **South Asian Gold Cup in 1995** and became the **SAFF Gold Cup from 1997 to 2005**.
 - Since **2008, it has been known as the SAFF Championship**.

▪ India's Performance:

- **Men's SAFF Championship:**
 - India has been a **powerhouse in the tournament**, reaching the **finals in all editions except 2003**.
 - India has won **nine men's SAFF Championship titles** out of the 14 editions. [//](#)

◦ **Women's SAFF Championship:**

- India has enjoyed success in the SAFF Championship, winning the inaugural edition in 2010 and subsequently securing victories in 2012, 2014, 2016, and 2019.

Women's SAFF Championship winners list

Edition	Winner	Runners up
Cox's Bazar 2010	India	Nepal
Colombo 2012	India	Nepal
Islamabad 2014	India	Nepal
Siliguri 2016	India	Bangladesh
Biratnagar 2019	India	Nepal
Kathmandu 2022	Bangladesh	Nepal

Source: TH

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