



Alpana Dubey shines at 6th Asian Yogasana Champ, wins 2 bronze medals for India in UAE

NEW DELHI, AUG 14: Alpana Dubey wins two bronze medals for Team India at the 6th Asian Yogasana Championship held in the Emirate of Fujairah, UAE.

Alpana won medals in both the Traditional Yoga and Artistic Yoga categories. She competed against 160 athletes from 16 countries, including China, Sri Lanka, South Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, and Iran.

The championship was held from August 9-10, 2025, at the Zayed Sports Complex, Fujairah, UAE. The event was conducted under the distinguished patronage of the UAE Ministry of Sports and in association with the UAE Yoga Committee and the Asian Yogasana Sport Federation (AYSF).

For the first time in history, a continental-level Yogasana championship was hosted in the Gulf region -- a milestone that not only reflects the rapid internationalisation of Yogasana as a sport, but also signifies the United Arab Emirates' rising leadership in the global wellness, cultural exchange, and sports diplomacy landscape.

The championship took place at



the renowned Zayed Sports Complex in the Sports City of Fujairah. A state-of-the-art venue known for hosting premier international sporting events, the complex provided an exceptional platform to showcase Yogasana on the world stage--honouring its traditional roots while embracing modern athletic excellence.

This landmark event reaffirms Yogasana's transformation into a globally recognised competitive discipline--one that transcends borders and bridges civilizational heritage through graceful athleticism. As the host nation, the UAE stands as a beacon of visionary progress, showcasing its commitment to fostering

intercultural collaboration, youth engagement, and holistic health on the world stage.

Over time, Alpana has excelled at major competitions, winning gold, silver, and bronze medals across multiple categories: Traditional Yoga, Artistic Yoga, and Rhythmic Yoga, as a solo performer, in pairs, and as part of a team. Her achievements span prestigious platforms, including the Uttar Pradesh Yogasana Sports Championship in Kanpur and Lucknow; the CBSE Cluster North Zone Inter-School Yogasana Competition; and the National Level Yoga Championships in Kolkata and Mumbai.

Recently, India hosted the 2nd Asian Yogasana Sport Championship at the KD Jadhav Indoor Wrestling Hall, Indira Gandhi Stadium in New Delhi, amidst much enthusiasm and fervour. Organised by Yogasana Bharat in collaboration with the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and the Sports Authority of India (SAI), the championship brings together top athletes from over 20 Asian nations to celebrate the spirit of Yogasana as a competitive sport.

Olympic hockey bronze medallist and sports icon Dr Vece Paes dies at 80

NEW DELHI, AUG 14: Dr Vece Paes, a member of the 1972 Munich Olympic Games bronze-winning Indian hockey team and father of legendary tennis player Leander Paes, died here on Thursday morning. He was 80 years old.

Paes, who was suffering from advanced stage of Parkinson's disease, was admitted to a city hospital on Tuesday morning.



Paes, who donned multiple hats in his long association with Indian sports, was a midfielder in the Indian hockey team.

He also played several sports such as football, cricket and rugby and served as the president of the Indian Rugby Football Union from 1996 to 2002.

A sports medicine doctor, he worked as a medical consultant with several sports bodies including the Asian Cricket Council, the Board of Control for Cricket in India and the Indian Davis Cup team.

Kho-Kho players to join PM Modi in Independence Day celebrations

NEW DELHI, AUG 14: In a historic first for the sport, Kho Kho players will join Prime Minister Narendra Modi to partake in the Independence Day ceremony at the Red Fort on August 15.

Celebrating the burgeoning growth of an indigenous sport, PM Modi has invited 30 of India's best Kho Kho players, fresh off the country's triumph in the maiden World Cup held in January 2025 in New Delhi, as per a release from UKK.

The inclusion of Kho Kho at such a significant national gathering also highlights how the government is elevating indigenous games. Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya has explicitly advocated for Kho Kho's inclusion in the Asian Games and the 2036 Olympics, calling it a "collective effort" involving players, federations, and the Sports Ministry to boost its international footprint.

The celebration also aligns with India's 2036 Olympic bid and the pitch to return Kho Kho to the Games exactly a century after its 1936 Berlin demonstration appearance.

Fifteen of these 30 players will be part of the player draft of the new season of Ultimate Kho Kho (UKK) beginning November 29. Since its inception in 2022, UKK with collaboration with Kho Kho Federation of India (KKFI) has provided a structured professional platform for Kho



Kho, giving players regular high-level competition and access to better training resources. Its modern format, faster gameplay, and national telecast have helped rekindle public interest in the sport while inspiring a new generation of players across the country. In season 3, for the first time, the league will feature international players, underscoring the sport's growing global footprint. Speaking on the occasion, Pratik Waikar said, "Being invited to the Red Fort for Independence Day is one of the proudest moments of my life. Winning the World Cup earlier this year was historic for us, but this honour from the nation shows that Kho Kho is finally getting the recognition it deserves. With the sport now reaching audiences across the world and international players set to join us in UKK Season 3, it feels like Kho Kho is stepping onto the

global stage in a way we've all dreamed of," as quoted from a release by UKK.

Among those honoured are the World Cup-winning players Pratik Waikar, Ramji Kashyap, Sachin Bhargo, Suyash Gargate, Gowtham M K, Rokeson Khuman, Nikhil B. Pabani Sabar, Akash Baliyan, Aditya Ganpule, Siva Reddy, Subramani, Mehul, Aniket Pote and Sumon Barman, whose performances have energised the sport's momentum at home and abroad.

With its fast pace, strategic depth, and deep cultural roots, Kho Kho has evolved from a schoolyard favourite to a professional sport with a growing international fan-base. UKK's expansion to include foreign players this season is seen as a crucial step in positioning the sport for both commercial growth and Olympic recognition.

Nicholas Pooran to lead Trinbago Knight Riders in CPL 2025

NEW DELHI, AUG 14: Trinbago Knight Riders (TKR) have announced Nicholas Pooran as their new captain for the upcoming Caribbean Premier League (CPL) 2025.

Pooran will take over the mantle of leadership from the legendary Kieron Pollard, who has led the side with distinction since 2019, guiding them to their record fourth title in 2020, as per a release from TKR.

Accepting the leadership role, Nicholas Pooran said, "It means a lot, first and foremost, to represent Trinbago Knight Riders. It is a privilege that I'm getting the opportunity to lead this franchise. I want to give it my best shot and hopefully make as many correct decisions as I can."

"It's a responsibility that has been passed on from (Dwayne) Bravo (2013 - 2019) to Pollard (2019 - 2024) and now to me. For me, the most satisfying thing is that Pollard is still playing, Sunil (Narine) and Andre (Russell) are here too. That's a lot of experience I can bank on. To lead them on the field - it means a lot to me," he said, as quoted from a release by TKR.

He recalled that he started his career at the age of 17 right here, playing for T&T Red Steel, where Bravo was the captain.

Pollard's reign as captain was marked by consistency and tactical brilliance. Between 2019 and 2024, under his leadership, the Trinbago Knight Riders



not only clinched the 2020 CPL title.

While handing over the reins, Kieron Pollard said, "I got an opportunity to lead my home franchise for the last six years, and it has been special walking out leading Trinbago Knight Riders in front of packed stadiums around the Caribbean. I believe grooming the next generation is very important. With Bravo coming on board this year as the new head coach, we felt this was the right time to get a new captain in."

"Pooran is homegrown, and I think this is the right opportunity for him. We've actually been preparing him for this over the years. I'm not sure how much longer I'll be playing, but I'm grateful for the chance to stay on the field and help Nicholas transition into this role. He's someone we've seen grow before our eyes, and he understands our values and principles. He understands our vision for playing cricket and the winning culture we aim to create, and he holds a lot of respect for many players worldwide. So for me, it

was an easy decision to hand over the captaincy to Pooran," Pollard said.

Pooran, the wicket-keeper-batter, has long been regarded as one of the best T20 players globally. He holds the record as the youngest player to debut in the CPL, making his first appearance in 2013 at the age of 17. Since then, he has carved an exceptional career, becoming one of the most destructive batters in the game, amassing over 9,000 runs across global T20 leagues.

Commenting on the development, Venky Mysore, CEO of Knight Rider Sports, said, "We are delighted that Nicholas Pooran will carry the leadership baton forward in a smooth transition from Kieron Pollard--our sincere thanks to Pollard for his leadership & contributions. Pooran understands our winning culture and the responsibility that comes with leading this franchise. As he teams up with head coach (Dwayne) Bravo, we are excited to see them teaming up for hopefully, another successful season for TKR"

In the 2024 season, Pooran was at his brilliant best for TKR, smashing 504 runs in 11 matches at an average of 56.00, reaffirming his ability to dominate any attack. His fearless approach, coupled with his sharp cricketing brain, makes him the ideal successor to carry forward the TKR winning culture, this time under the guidance of head coach Dwayne Bravo.

Sharing his thoughts on the transition, Dwayne Bravo said, "When it comes to leadership, it's important to plan for the future. Once I felt I had achieved enough as the captain of Red Steel (2013, 2014) and TKR (2015 to 2019), I wanted to identify the next best person to take over, ensuring the legacy continues and the franchise remains in safe hands. Pollard and I share similar values in life, on and off the field."

"In that same way, we are now transitioning to Pooran, who is someone who has been playing and learning a lot about cricket from us as players. He's the right choice, and this is the right time. Just like I did six years ago, Pollard has now decided to hand over the leadership to someone who we think is on the verge of being one of the greatest T20 players. We want to make sure that we're there to support him and give him everything he needs to embark on this journey," he added.

"Kohli the batsman in his pomp was unbelievable": Shastri reveals 36-year-old as "best player he coached"

NEW DELHI, AUG 14: Former Indian head coach Ravi Shastri named legendary batter Virat Kohli as the best player he coached for Team India, hailing his ability to "dominate, be the face, play hard, but play fair".

Virat, with whom Shastri had a great camaraderie as a captain-coach duo from 2017 to 2021, earned some high praise from the former all-rounder in a video on Sky Sports' YouTube Channel. Shastri also expressed awe over some of the "unreal" innings the superstar played in Australia, South Africa, and England.

"I would say Kohli, the batsman in his pomp, was unbelievable because in those five years when India were No. 1 in the red-ball format. Some of the innings he played in Australia, South Africa, England, across formats was unreal," said Shastri.

Virat he said, was the



player he identified as the "leader" of the team after MS Dhoni had retired.

"Once I took over the job, and once Dhoni had finished, he did a magnificent job. I think his first skills as a batsman, his ability to dominate, be in the face, play hard but play fair, and wanting to win and take the game forward," he added.

Speaking on his regrets as a head coach, Shastri said that while he has "no regrets whatsoever", the team was a "little unlucky"

"We should have won an ICC trophy. In that time, we had the team to do it,

but we still played some great cricket," he concluded.

Under Kohli-Shastri, India registered a semifinal finish in 2019 ICC Cricket World Cup and a runner-up finish in ICC World Test Championship 2019-21, losing the final to New Zealand.

In his peak years, from 2016-19, Virat had smashed 10,603 runs in just 164 matches and 186 innings at a mind-boggling average of 71.16, with 36 centuries and 46 fifties.

Under him, India became a powerful Test unit, with a brilliant crop of fast

bowlers consisting of Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami, Ishant Sharma, Umesh Yadav among others. As a Test batter from 2016-19, Virat dominated the scene, scoring 4,208 runs in 43 Tests at an average of 66.79. He managed 16 centuries and 10 fifties, scattered throughout the globe.

During these dominant years in international scene, his ability to produce masterclass knocks, especially in chase in South Africa, England, New Zealand and Australia (SENA) made him one of the most dependable batters for India.

However in 2020s, while his white-ball game was just as good if not better, his Test game was never the same and he called it quits from white clothing this May ahead of the England tour, with an average of just above 30 and only three Test centuries to show for since 2020-start.

Divya Deshmukh exits Women's Speed Chess Championship after defeat in quarterfinals

NEW DELHI, AUG 14: In her first tournament since a historic triumph at the FIDE World Cup, Divya Deshmukh went down fighting against World No. 1 Hou Yifan in the quarterfinals of the Women's Speed Chess Championship 2025 on Thursday.

The 19-year-old Divya, who became a Grandmaster after winning the World Cup in Georgia last month, lost 9.5-10.5 to the three-time World Champion from China.

Earlier, Divya had dominated Lei Tingjie 10-3 in



her opening-round clash.

R. Vaishali, the other Indian in the field, was eliminated after losing 6-8 to American IM Alice Lee in the first round.

After the first segment

(time control of five minutes with an increment of one second per move), Divya led 3-2. However, the 31-year-old Hou won the second segment (time control of three minutes with

a second's increment per move) 4-1 to take the lead. The Indian teenager fought back, clinching the final segment (time control of one minute with one second increment per move) 3.5-1.5 which meant that the match was tied at 7.5-7.5

The contest went into tiebreaks - a four-game playoff (1+1 format) - but the two players could still not be separated.

Finally, Hou beat Divya in a single bidding armageddon game to seal her spot in the semifinals.

to link up with the West Zone squad in Bengaluru for the Duleep Trophy.

SQUAD: Ankit Bawane (c), Ruturaj Gaikwad, Prithvi Shaw, Siddhesh Veer, Sachin Dhas, Arshin Kulkarni, Harshal Kate, Siddharth Mhatre, Saurabh Nawale (wk), Mandar Bhandari (wk), Ramakrishna Ghosh, Mukesh, Pradeep Dadhe, Vicky Ostwal, Hitesh Walunj, Prashant Solanki, Rajvardhan Hangargekar.



Shaw who had left Mumbai ahead of the season and joined Maharashtra.

However, both Gaikwad

and 'keeper Saurabh Nawale are expected to leave after playing one game, as they would need

NEW DELHI, AUG 14: India internationals Ruturaj Gaikwad and Prithvi Shaw were on Thursday named in Maharashtra's 17-member squad for the All India Buchi Babu Invitational Tournament to be played in Chennai from August 18 to September 9.

Ankit Bawane has been named captain of the squad.

It will be the first assignment for top-order batter