



Auqib on way to national colours as J&K set to lift Ranji Trophy

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, FEB 27

Auqib Nabi has fulfilled needed criterion to be part of the team India with his splendid bowling that led J&K to dominate the eight-time Champion Karnataka on all fronts with final almost finished in their favour and team waiting for the historic moments to receive maiden glittering Silver Ranji Trophy tomorrow at KSCA Stadium, Hubli.

The day-four play witnessed mighty Karnataka sinking to the bowling pressure and J&K emerging as new leader of India's domestic cricket. Lakhs of people back home in J&K wait for the historic moments when J&K to be declared winner, considering the huge first innings lead.

Earlier, Auqib made yet another fifer to plot Karnataka collapse and top the table and become highest wicket taker in Ranji Trophy this season with 60 wickets. Infact, the five-wicket haul was his seventh of the season and the 15th of his Ranji career, underlining a remarkable run in domestic cricket. In the process, Auqib became only the third pacer in the tournament's 92-year history to claim 60 wickets in



single season.

Earlier, during the fourth-day play, Karnataka could not do much and the whole side bowled out adding only 75 runs losing remaining five wickets at a total of 293 runs. It was opener Mayank Agarwal, who saved Karnataka from humiliations, contributing 160 runs to the total with Kruthik Krishna (36) being other prominent scorer. Besides Auqib's five wickets haul, Sunil Kumar and Yudhvir Singh shared two wickets each. Sahil Lotra bagged the other wicket.

In reply, J&K, in their second innings, were better placed at 186 for four in 57 overs with an overall lead of

477 runs at stumps. Lost two early wickets of Yawer Hassan and Shubham Pundir for just 11 runs, opener, Qamran Iqbal and Paras Dogra stabilised innings. Qamran kept the one end intact and was batting at 94 with Sahil Lotra (16) at stumps. Abdul Samad contributed 32 runs. M Parsidh took two wickets while V Vyshak and Shreyas Gopal shared one each for Karnataka.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister J&K, Omar Abdullah has already left for the venue to witness the history in making with J&K lifting the maiden Ranji Trophy tomorrow. He tweeted: On our way to Hubli to

cheer the J&K cricket team. They have already made lakhs of people so very proud of their achievement by reaching the final. I'm really looking forward to spending the day in the stands cheering them on.

Former India skipper and ex-BCCI president, Sourav Ganguly was all praise for Auqib Nabi. In a tweet on X, Ganguly said, "J&K has shown the world that efforts and intent can do. They have made that region so proud of them...tuff environment makes tuff people. Auqib Nabi on his way to national colours...England is the place to start in the summer."

Inter-Block District Level Cricket Championship MC Baderwah clinches U/17 title; Block Changa lifts U/19 trophy

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, FEB 27

Municipal Committee (MC) Baderwah emerged victorious in the Boys Under-17 category, while Block Changa lifted the Boys Under-19 trophy at the Inter-Block District Level Cricket Championship "Leagues of Classics", the final matches of which were held today.

Block Thathri and Block Assar secured the runners-up positions in the U/17 and U/19 categories respectively.

The third day of the second phase of the tournament featured high-octane cricketing action at Government Degree College Baderwah and University Campus Baderwah, drawing enthusiastic participation and support from players and spectators alike.

The championship is being organized by the District Youth Services and Sports (YSS) Doda under the aegis of the Directorate of Youth Services and Sports J&K, with the objective of promoting athletic excellence, discipline, teamwork and a vibrant sporting culture



among the youth of the district.

The Under-17 final saw an exciting contest between MC Baderwah and Block Thathri. After winning the toss, MC Baderwah opted to bat first and posted a competitive total of 133 runs.

Humam Ahmad delivered an outstanding performance, scoring a blistering 61 runs off 28 balls, while Salman provided strong

support with 51 runs off 26 balls. For Block Thathri, Umar claimed one wicket.

Chasing the target, Block Thathri fought hard but fell short, enabling MC Baderwah to secure a convincing 19-run victory through disciplined teamwork and strategic game-play.

The Boys Under-19 final between Block Changa and Block Assar turned into a nail-biting encounter that was ultimately decided in a

Super Over. Demonstrating remarkable composure under pressure, Block Changa emerged victorious to claim the U/19 championship title. The tournament was smoothly conducted and officiated by an experienced panel of Youth Services and Sports officials, including PELs, PEMs, PETs, REKs, TRs, ground staff and NYCs, ensuring fair play and professional management throughout the event.

LegaXy launches LegaXy Sports Academy as Indian sports stars come together to strengthen school-level sports education

NEW DELHI [INDIA],
FEBRUARY 27 (ANI):

LegaXy, a leading sports management and entertainment brand, along with Indian sportsmen Harshit Rana, Yuzvendra Chahal, Ishant Sharma, Umesh Yadav, Puja Tomar, Neetu Chandra Srivastava and Pratima Singh, on Friday announced the launch of LegaXy Sports Academy, a school-focused initiative aimed at strengthening structured sports education by integrating elite athletic training with academic excellence.

Designed to work closely with schools, the academy offers structured in-school, after-school, and high-performance training programmes that prioritise fundamentals, fitness, and mindset development, while ensuring children remain fully engaged with their academic education, according to a release.

"Over the years, our work across the sports ecosystem has highlighted a strong opportunity to strengthen sports education at the school level," said Aneesh Gautam, Co-Founder and Director of Talent, LegaXy.

"Too often, young athletes navigate their formative years without clear pathways or long-term guidance. LegaXy Sports Academy has been created to bring clarity, professional systems, and athlete-led mentorship into early-stage development, without forcing children to choose between sport and studies. Our focus is on building sustainable talent pipelines, where young athletes receive the right guidance, exposure, and performance support from the very beginning," he added.

Speaking about his involvement as a co-founder,



Harshit Rana, an Indian Cricketer said, "Good training always starts with strong fundamentals. What attracted me here is the emphasis on pressure-free learning. Children train regularly, parents see progress, schools see discipline, and kids enjoy learning. There are no shortcuts, only long-term growth."

Yuzvendra Chahal, Indian Cricketer and Co-founder, added, "Cricket has taught me patience, adaptability, and the importance of enjoying the game while constantly improving. What I appreciate about LegaXy Sports Academy is its focus on structured learning without unnecessary pressure on young athletes. When children get the right guidance early, they not only develop skills but also confidence, discipline, and a positive mindset that benefits them far beyond sport."

For Ishant Sharma, Indian International Cricketer and Co-founder, the decision was driven by the need to create environments that prioritise character over outcomes. "Sport has always been more than winning for me. It teaches patience, discipline, and resilience. At LegaXy Sports Academy, children can train in a safe, structured envi-

ronment, enjoy the process, and grow the right way. That is how strong individuals are built."

Umesh Yadav, Indian Fast Bowler and Co-Founder, added, "The circumstances I grew up in and the path my career took changed my life through cricket. When children get the right guidance at the right age, everything changes. That belief is what brought me to LegaXy Sports Academy. The focus here is on basics, fitness, and mindset. The discipline and confidence children build stay with them long after they stop playing."

The academy follows a scientific Long-Term Athlete Development framework across eight sports, including cricket, football, basketball, table tennis, badminton, swimming, taekwondo, and martial arts. Along with mentorship from professional athletes and experienced coaches, the approach focuses on early talent identification and progressive development pathways, allowing students to pursue sport without compromising academic progress.

Puja Tomar, International Mixed Martial Artist and Co-founder, said, "Strength is not aggression.

It is confidence and control. Structured training helps children develop discipline, self-respect, and self-confidence. Schools benefit from organised programmes, parents feel assured about safety, and children carry these values with them for life." Pratima Singh, International Basketball Player and Co-founder, added, "Team sports build leadership and teamwork from a young age. Children learn how to grow together, communicate better, and support each other. These lessons go far beyond sport. That is real education."

Neetu Chandra Srivastava, National-level Taekwondo Practitioner, Actor and Co-founder, said, "Sport shaped my discipline and confidence from a young age. Structured training in schools builds teamwork, self-belief, and resilience. At LegaXy Sports Academy, children develop these qualities while enjoying the process, and that balance stays with them for life." The launch of LegaXy Sports Academy forms part of LegaXy Impact, the organisation's commitment to building inclusive, purpose-driven initiatives that strengthen India's grassroots sports ecosystem. (ANI)

Pratika, Harmanpreet fifties help India post 251/9 against Australia in 2nd women's ODI

HOBART, FEB 27: Opener Pratika Rawal (52) and skipper Harmanpreet Kaur (54) struck important half-centuries to help India post a challenging 251/9 against Australia in the second women's ODI here on Friday.

Pratika's 52 (off 81 balls with six fours) was instrumental in giving India a strong start but Harmanpreet's 54 off 70 balls (2 fours, 1 six) was even more crucial after a stutter in the middle overs, given that the ODI world champions are 0-1 behind in the three-match series against hosts Australia.

Rawal provided a strong start with a 78-run partnership with Smriti Mandhana (31) as India looked to make the most of good batting conditions.

However, some ordinary shot selection landed the Indians in trouble for the second consecutive time in the



series.

Mandhana missed a paddle sweep and Ashleigh Gardner's (2/39) delivery hit her leg-stump, while Jemimah Rodrigues (11) played a loose shot outside the off-stump to be caught behind on an innocuous delivery from Annabel Suther-

land (2/37).

Deepti Sharma (1) was caught at deep midwicket in her bid to get off the blocks quickly off Alana King (2/41), who also pinned the dangerous Richa Ghosh leg-before for 22.

To her credit, Kashvee Gautam (25) put on a vital

55-run stand for the seventh wicket with Harmanpreet which took India past the 200-run mark.

Brief scores: India Women 251/9 in 20 overs (Pratika Rawal 52, Harmanpreet Kaur 54; Annabel Sutherland 2/37) vs Australia.

Australia Women score easy win against India in second ODI, take 2-0 lead in three-match series

BRISBANE [AUSTRALIA],
FEBRUARY 27 (ANI): Australia Women secured a commanding five-wicket win over India Women in the second ODI of the ongoing three-match series at the Bellerive Oval on Friday.

he Australian team reached the winning target of 252 runs in the 37th over.

Georgia Voll was named Player of the Match for her outstanding century that helped her side to a comfortable win. Australia are now 2-0 ahead in the three-match series.

Batting first, opener Pratika Rawal scored 52 off 81 deliveries, including six fours. Left-handed batter Smriti Mandhana departed after scoring 31 off 37 balls, with four boundaries.

Captain Harmanpreet Kaur (54 off 70, with two fours and one six) and Kashvee Gautam (25 off 34 balls, with two fours) also chipped in with the bat as India were restricted to 251/9 in 50 overs.

For the hosts, Megan Schutt (1/46), Annabel Sutherland (2/37), Ashleigh Gardner (2/39), Alana King (2/41), and Nicola Carey (1/55) were among



the wicket-takers.

Chasing 252, captain Alysa Healy departed after scoring 6 off 10 balls, with one four. Phoeba Litchfield (80 off 62 balls, with 11 fours and one six) played a fantastic knock.

Wicketkeeper-batter Beth Mooney scored 31 off 34 balls, with five fours. Georgia Voll played a match-winning

knock of 101 off 82 balls, with 13 fours and one six as Australia Women chased the target in 36.1 overs.

For India, Kashvee Gautam (2/47), Kranti Gaud (1/54), and Deepti Sharma (2/32) took wickets.

The third and final ODI between the two countries will be held on March 1 at the Bellerive Oval in Hobart. (ANI)