



Army's first woman canoeist bags India's first international gold in canoeing

NEW DELHI, APR 20: The first woman canoeist to join the Indian Army has blazed a trail, bagging the country's first gold medal at an international event in the high-intensity paddling sport.

Havildar Megha Pradeep clinched two golds in the C1 200-meters and C1 500-meters category, and a silver in the C2 500-meters category at 2026 Canoe Sprint Asian Games Test Event in Miyoshi City, the Army said on Monday.

The event is a key qualifier for the 2026 Asian Games that are scheduled to be held in Japan, in which 45 countries are expected to participate.

In 2025, Oinam Binita Chanu from Odisha had won gold in kayaking at Canoe Sprint International President Cup in Uttarakhand, in which 21 countries had participated. Another woman kayaker, Prachi Yadav, won a gold in 2023 Asian Para Games for athletes with physical disabilities.

Canoeing and kayaking are different in the sense that the design of the boats and the seating positions are different. Canoes are open and use a single-bladed paddle while kayaks are closed-top and use a double-bladed paddle. All these have a bearing on balance, speed and manoeuvrability.

Besides Megha, two Army



paddlers outshone at the meet, with Naib Subedar Sunil Singh bagging the gold in C1 200-m and C1 500-m, and Subedar Raju Rawat getting the silver in C2 500-m.

A C1 event is a high-speed flatwater race where one paddler kneels in a canoe and uses a single-bladed paddle to propel the boat, whereas a C2 event involves two paddlers in an open canoe, requiring synchronised power.

Canoe sprint is an extremely intense discipline requiring elite cardiovascular endurance, explosive power and exceptional balance as the athletes have to kneel in a narrow, unstable boat and paddle on only one side.

The athletes had trained

at the Army Kayaking and Canoeing Node, which is managed by Bengal Engineer Group and Centre at Roorkee in Uttarakhand.

Megha became the first female athlete recruited into the Army Kayak and Canoe Node, marking a historic step for women in Indian water sports as part of the Army's drive to enrol promising women sportspersons after entry into the rank and file was opened for females in 2022 under the Agnipath scheme.

Her defining breakthrough came at the 2024 Asian Canoe Sprint Championships in Tokyo, where she won a bronze medal in the women's C1 500-m event, opening India's medal tally and establishing herself among Asia's elite

canoeists.

While Megha has won gold medals at national events, the 21-year old's international rise began with a silver medal at 2023 Junior Asian Canoe Sprint Championships and a bronze in the women's C1 500-m at the 2024 Asian Canoe Sprint Championships in Tokyo.

At 2025 U23 World Championships in Portugal, she became the first Indian woman to reach the C1 500-m finals. Though she finished 17th, it was a historic milestone for Indian canoeing on the global stage.

Several women sportspersons recruited into the Army have also performed well in other disciplines, bagging gold in international events like boxing.

Majid's Hat-Trick Heroics Steal Show

5-wicket haul powers Shine Star to massive win

**HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, APR 20**

In a thrilling display of all-round excellence, Shine Star Cricket Club registered a commanding victory over Rajouri Titans in the ongoing 1st Jammu Lochan T20 Cricket Tournament, being organised by the Jammu and Kashmir Masters Games Association at Maulana Azad Stadium here today.

After winning the toss, Shine Star Club elected to bat first and posted a formidable total of 192 runs for the loss of 9 wickets in the allotted 20 overs. Varun Kumar led the charge with a blistering 46 runs off just 23 balls, smashing four sixes and three boundaries. Majid Hussain contributed a valuable 40 runs off 32 balls, while Nishant Kumar chipped in with 23 runs off 15 deliveries. Rafiq added a quick 18 runs, laced with four boundaries, to push the total to a challenging score.

For Rajouri Titans, Imran, Mukesh, and Faizal Dev claimed two wickets each, while Shahid and Umesh picked up one wicket apiece.

In reply, Rajouri Titans faltered under pressure and were bowled out for a mere



68 runs in 10.3 overs. Shine Star's bowling attack proved too strong, with Majid Hussain delivering a sensational spell. He claimed 5 wickets for just 18 runs in his four overs, including the first hat-trick of the tournament, turning the match decisively in his team's favour.

For his outstanding all-

round performance, Majid Hussain was deservedly declared Man of the Match. The award was presented by Praval Sharma, Handball national player and General Secretary J&K Pickle Ball Association, along with Shri Dayal Singh (SGCT), Weightlifting Coach in J&K

Games Gold Medalist, and Executive Member of JK-MGA.

Shine Star Club's emphatic win and Majid Hussain's remarkable feat added a memorable chapter to the ongoing tournament, highlighting the competitive spirit and rising talent in the region.

Archer Prathamesh Jawkar gets two-year ban for whereabouts failures, out till April 2028

NEW DELHI, APR 20: Indian compound archer Prathamesh Jawkar has agreed to a two-year suspension for three whereabouts failures.

Prathamesh will now serve the suspension from April 19, and can return to active competition only after April 18, 2028. "I consulted a few lawyers and I was briefed that I should admit my fault as this was the easiest way forward for me. I signed my consent yesterday," said the archer, who was part of the trio — including Ojas Pravin Deotale and Abhishek Verma — that won the compound team gold at the 2023 Asian Games.

International Testing Agency (ITA) had served him a notice of charge for failing to file his whereabouts three times in the last 12 months. He has been served a notice under Article 2.4 of the anti-doping rules for a whereabouts filing violation, which requires athletes to file their whereabouts for out-of-competition testing.



Prathamesh had missed filing his whereabouts in January, July and October last year. "I was late both in January and October, when I had turned off all the notifications on my phone. I had replied to the second failure that I was not sure about my whereabouts in July because we had to travel to Italy and there was a delay in the issuance of visas. Obviously, they did not agree with my explanation,"

Prathamesh said, explaining his side of the story.

Athletes who are part of the registered testing pool (RTP) have to routinely update their whereabouts in Anti-Doping Administration and Management System (ADAMS), where they must submit their whereabouts information with specific dates and times for the next three months. If the whereabouts change, the athlete has to update the in-

formation on ADAMS.

The talented archer, who had a stellar 2023 season, winning two gold medals — individual at 2023 Shanghai World Cup and team in Paris the same year — and a team bronze medal at 2023 Medellin World Cup, said this suspension will make him stronger.

"What has happened has happened now. I will not stop practising and I will not lose hope," he said.

Sunrisers Hyderabad eye home edge as Delhi Capitals chase consistency in mid-table IPL clash

HYDERABAD, APR 20: Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) will look to make home advantage count when they take on inconsistent Delhi Capitals (DC) in a mid-table clash of the Indian Premier League here on Tuesday.

Both teams sit on six points, though fourth-placed Sunrisers Hyderabad are marginally ahead, having played a game more and boasting a superior Net Run Rate.

SRH, the narrative has been one of gradual correction. In the absence of skipper Pat Cummins, who has linked up with the squad but remains unavailable for this game, their bowling unit initially looked thin.

But over the last two games, a relatively unheralded group has stepped up. Names like Praful Hinge, Sakib Husain and Shivang Kumar have seized their opportunity, injecting both energy and control into the attack.

Hinge's standout performance against Rajasthan Royals was followed by a collective bowling effort, led by Eshan Malinga, against Chennai Super Kings, where SRH delivered a clinical exhibition of death bowling, helping them secure back-to-back wins at home. That resurgence with the ball has been central to their recent momentum.

However, the same cannot be said of their batting. SRH's approach remains aggressively high-risk, but the returns have been inconsistent. Openers Travis Head and Abhishek Sharma, along with stand-in captain Ishan Kishan, have not quite clicked together.



The lack of collective starts has repeatedly exposed the middle order. As a result, the burden has largely fallen on Heinrich Klaassen. The South African has often walked in after the fall of quick wickets, forcing him to rebuild before launching.

While capable of devastating acceleration, Klaassen has had to curb his natural instincts early, making his job significantly harder.

Delhi Capitals, meanwhile, have inconsistency issues of their own.

Their experienced players like KL Rahul, Pathum Nissanka and Tristan Stubbs have been among the runs, but the team would need bigger contributions from them, especially on batting-friendly surfaces.

Sameer Rizvi, after starring in DC's opening two matches, has slipped into a lean patch with single-digit scores in the last three games.

Their bowling attack, however, is built on variety and flexibility. In the absence of Mitchell Starc, who was the team's standout performer last season, South African pacer Lungi Ngidi has led the attack well,

combining economy with wicket-taking ability, claiming seven wickets in five games.

Skipper Axar Patel has also been economical, providing control through the middle overs. However, star left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav is yet to deliver as per expectations, while pacers Mukesh Kumar and T Natarajan have shown promise in patches.

The Teams (from):

Sunrisers Hyderabad: Ishan Kishan (c & wk), Abhishek Sharma, Amit Kumar, Salil Arora, Brydon Carse, Harsh Dubey, Krains Fuletra, Travis Head, Praful Hinge, Heinrich Klaassen, Liam Livingstone, Eshan Malinga, Kamindu Mendis, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Harshal Patel, David Payne, Sakib Hussain, Shivang Mavi, Shivang Kumar, Ravichandran Smaran, Onkar Tarmale, Jaydev Unadkat, Aniket Verma, Zee-shan Ansari.

Delhi Capitals: Axar Patel ©, K.L. Rahul, Karun Nair, David Miller, Pathum Nissanka, Sahil Parakh, Prithvi Shaw, Abhishek Porel, Tristan Stubbs, Sameer Rizvi, Ashutosh Sharma, Vipraj Nigam, Ajay Mandal, Tripu-

rana Vijay, Madhav Tiwari, Auqib Dar, Nitish Rana, Mitchell Starc, T. Natarajan, Mukesh Kumar, Dushmantha Chameera, Lungisani Ngidi, Kyle Jamieson, Kuldeep Yadav.

Match starts at 7.30pm.

Tilak Varma, Ashwani Kumar star as Mumbai Indians outclass Gujarat Titans by 99 runs

AHMEDABAD, APRIL 20: Mumbai Indians (MI) registered a commanding 99-run victory over Gujarat Titans (GT) after an all-round performance, with Tilak Varma's maiden IPL century powering them to a strong total before the bowlers dismantled the opposition's batting lineup in the IPL 2026 clash on Monday night.

Chasing 200 for win, Gujarat got off to a disastrous start as opener Sai Sudharsan was dismissed for a golden duck. The left-handed batter fell to Jasprit Bumrah on the very first ball of the innings.

In the very next over, skipper Pandya trapped LBW wicketkeeper-batter Jos Buttler for just five runs, leaving GT reeling at 19/2.

At the end of four overs, Gujarat had moved to 35/2. In the fourth ball of the fifth over, left-arm seamer Ashwani Kumar claimed the key wicket of captain Shubman Gill for 14. By

the end of six overs, GT had limped to 45/3.

Gujarat's troubles deepened as Mitchell Santner made a double breakthrough in the eighth over. The left-arm spinner first dismissed Washington Sundar for 26 and then sent Glenn Phillips back for 6, reducing Gujarat to 56/5. At the end of the 10th over, the hosts were struggling at 71/5.

The wickets continued to tumble for Gujarat as Ashwani Kumar struck again, removing Rahul Tewatia for eight. With that dismissal, GT slipped further to 79/6 after 11 overs.

In the 13th over, Ashwani struck twice in quick succession, dismissing Rashid Khan for 4 and Shahrukh Khan for 17, as Gujarat were reduced to 86/8.

In the 16th over, AM Ghazanfar claimed a double strike, dismissing Kagiso Rabada for 12 and Mohammed Siraj for a duck, as Gujarat

were bowled out for 100. The hosts eventually suffered a comprehensive 99-run defeat in the one-sided contest.

For Mumbai, Ashwani claimed a four-wicket haul (4/24). Ghazanfar (2/17) and Santner (2/16) took two wickets apiece.

Earlier, a blistering maiden IPL ton by Tilak Varma took the MI to a strong total of 199/5. Sent into bat by Gujarat, the five-time champion endured a shaky start. Their struggles began in the second over when opener Danish Malewar was trapped LBW by Kagiso Rabada for only two runs.

While MI reached 21/1 by the end of the third over, Rabada struck again, removing the previous match's centurion, Quinton de Kock, for 13. By the fifth over, the MI were reeling at 32/2.

Rabada's dominance continued in the sixth over as he claimed his third

victim, clean bowled Suryakumar Yadav for 15. This crucial breakthrough left the MI at 46/3 by the end of the power play, firmly putting the five-time champions on the back foot.

By the 10th over, Naman Dhir and Tilak Varma had stabilised the innings, pushing the score to 75/3. However, just as the duo began to shift the momentum, Prasadh Krishna broke the stand in the 13th over.

The speedster claimed the vital wicket of Dhir, who fell for a brisk 45 off 32 deliveries — an innings punctuated by six boundaries and a six. After the end of the 16th over, Tilak Varma and skipper Hardik Pandya took their side to 126/4.

Mumbai then shifted gears as Tilak Varma and Hardik Pandya launched a late-innings assault. The pair took 15 runs off Rashid Khan in the 17th over before ruthlessly dismantling Ashok Sharma for 26 runs in the 18th.