



## Praggnanandhaa triumphs at Norway Chess in historic first for India

**OSLO, JUN 06:** Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa etched his name in the history books as he became the first Indian to win the prestigious Norway Chess title with a final-round victory over Germany's Vincent Keymer here, capping off a brilliant campaign in style.

Praggnanandhaa, who began the final day in third place with 15 points, delivered when it mattered the most, securing a classical win worth three full points to finish on 18 points and clinch one of the most coveted trophies in elite chess.

In doing so, the 20-year-old Chennai player achieved a feat that had eluded even Indian chess legend Viswanathan Anand and reigning world champion D Gukesh among others, since the tournament's inception in 2013.

Competing in Norway Chess for only the second time, Praggnanandhaa endured a slow start in the elite six-player field before gath-



ering momentum in the second half of the event to secure four wins on the trot.

His campaign was highlighted by a remarkable achievement — defeating seven-time Norway Chess champion and World No. 1 Magnus Carlsen twice in classical chess — a rare accomplishment that underlined his determination to bounce back from the disappointment of an underwhelming Candidates Tournament in Paphos earlier this year.

As reigning world champion Gukesh fell out of con-

tention in the closing stages, Praggnanandhaa ensured that India's challenge remained alive, ultimately carrying it all the way to the title.

The result was made possible after American Grandmaster Wesley So, who led the standings with 15.5 points heading into the final round, was held to a draw in his classical game against Alireza Firouzja, sending their contest into an Armageddon tie-break.

That outcome opened the door for Praggnanandhaa, who knew that a classical

victory over Keymer would propel him to the top of the standings and secure a landmark title.

Although Wesley So went on to win the Armageddon tie-break, the victory was worth only 1.5 points, taking his tally to 17 points — one short of Praggnanandhaa's winning total of 18.

Alireza, who had also entered the final round with title hopes, finished third with 15.5 points.

Meanwhile, Gukesh's disappointing campaign continued as his third appearance in the tournament ended without the breakthrough he had hoped for in a year when he is set to defend his world title against challenger Javokhir Sindarov.

In the final round, Carlsen, playing with the white pieces, defeated the 20-year-old Indian in a classical game to collect three full points. However, the victory was not enough to propel the Norwegian great into title contention, as he finished fifth in the standings with 13 points.

## 3-Day Inter-Zonal District Level Tournament 2026 witnesses enthusiastic participation

**HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS  
JAMMU, JUNE 06**

The third day of the Inter-Zonal District Level Tournament 2026, organized by Youth Services & Sports Doda, witnessed enthusiastic participation, competitive spirit and impressive performances by young athletes from across the district.

The day's events featured Boys U/17 Kabaddi and boys cycling competitions across all age groups, with participants from 10 zones of the District taking part. The competitions showcased remarkable talent, endurance, discipline and sportsmanship.

The highlight of the day



was the Boys U/17 Kabaddi Final, where Zone Bheaderwah emerged victorious after defeating Zone Assar in a thrilling and closely contested match to claim the championship trophy.

The cycling events also witnessed spirited participation, with young cyclists demonstrating excellent

stamina and determination.

Officials of the Youth Services & Sports Department appreciated the efforts of all participants, coaches, technical officials and organizing staff for ensuring the smooth and successful conduct of the competitions.

They reiterated that such tournaments play a signifi-

cant role in promoting sports culture, teamwork, discipline and healthy competition among the youth.

The Inter-Zonal District Level Tournament 2026 will continue with more sporting events in the coming days, providing a platform for young athletes to showcase their abilities and

## Shreyas Iyer takes T20I captaincy, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi breaks Sachin Tendulkar's record

**MUMBAI, JUNE 06:** Winds of change swept across India's T20I set-up as Shreyas Iyer on Saturday took over the captaincy from Suryakumar Yadav, and wonder kid Vaibhav Sooryavanshi found a place in the squad for the twin tour of Ireland and England.

At 15 years and 71 days old, Sooryavanshi becomes the youngest ever player to feature in an Indian cricket team, surpassing the long-standing record held by the great Sachin Tendulkar.

India will travel to Ireland for two T20Is (June 26 and 28), followed by a five-match T20I series against England between July 1 and 11.

Shreyas has returned to the national T20 side for the first time after a match against Australia at Bengaluru on December 3, 2023.

His impressive leadership credentials in the IPL — leading KKR to title in 2024 and PBKS to final in 2025 — along with two seasons of consistent outings with the bat prompted the selectors to zero in on Shreyas to replace T20 World Cup 2026 winning captain Suryakumar.

Middle-order batter Tilak



Varma will be Shreyas' deputy, while pacer Prince Yadav, who had an impressive season for Lucknow Super Giants, was drafted for the series against England and Ireland.

Sooryavanshi's inclusion was a foregone conclusion after the 15-year-old bagged the Orange Cap in 2026, scoring 776 runs with a hundred and five fifties at a strike rate of 237.30.

India squad for Ireland and England T20 series:

Shreyas Iyer ©, Abhishek Sharma, Sanju Samson, Ishan Kishan, Shivam Dube, Tilak Varma (vc), Nitish Kumar Reddy, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Varun Chakravarthy, Ravi Bishnoi, Mohammad Siraj, Harshit Rana, Arshdeep Singh, Prince Yadav, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi.

India squad for Asian Games: Shreyas Iyer ©, Abhishek Sharma, Sanju Samson, Ishan Kishan, Shivam Dube, Tilak Varma (VC),

Reddy, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Varun Chakravarthy, Ravi Bishnoi, Rana, Arshdeep Singh, Jasprit Bumrah and Vaibhav Sooryavanshi.

India squad for multi day matches in Sri Lanka: Dhruv Jurel (c&wk), Sai Sudharsan, Devdutt Padikkal (vc), Rituraj Gaikwad, Harsh, Saransh, Gurnoor Brar, Auqib Nabi, Yash Thakur, N Jagadeesan, Aman Mokade, Sheikh Rashid and Ansari.

## Asian Games gold-winning archer Prathamesh Jawkar accepts 2-year ban for whereabouts failures

**NEW DELHI, JUNE 06:** Prathamesh, a part of the 2022 Asian Games compound team gold winning trio that includes Ojas Pravin Deotale and Abhishek Verma, committed three whereabouts failures within a 12-month period.

He was not named in the 12-member Indian archery squad for the Asian Games in Japan in September-October.

"The ITA reports that archer Prathamesh Samadhan Jawkar has agreed to the consequences imposed for his ADRV under Article 2.4 of the WA anti-doping rules," the ITA, which looks after anti-doping-related matters on behalf of World



Archery, said in a statement. "...The athlete did not challenge the ADRV and agreed with the consequences proposed by the ITA. Accordingly, the case was resolved via an acceptance of consequences.

"The athlete's period of ineligibility is from 19 April 2026 until 18 April 2028. Additionally, all of the athlete's individual competitive results from 1 October 2025 onwards are disqualified including forfeiture of medals,

points and prizes."

The decision can be challenged before the appeals division of the Court of Arbitration for Sport by the parties with a right of appeal in accordance with Article 13.2.3 of the World Archery anti-doping rules.

Athletes included in a Registered Testing Pool (RTP), such as Prathamesh, have the obligation to provide daily whereabouts as well as a specific daily 60-minute time slot where they will be available for testing.

The purpose is to allow anti-doping organisations to locate athletes for unannounced out-of-competition testing.

## Promotion of cricket in Chenab Region ADC Bheaderwah discusses Action Plan with BCCI President

**HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS  
JAMMU, JUNE 06**

Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Bheaderwah Sunil Bhutyal today held a comprehensive meeting with President Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) Mithun Manhas to discuss the promotion of cricket and the strengthening of sports infrastructure across the Chenab region.

During the interaction, they deliberated on a range of measures for nurturing young cricketing talent and expanding opportunities for aspiring players from the districts of Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban.

The discussion focused on improving cricket facilities, developing quality playing grounds, organizing coaching camps and creating a structured pathway for talented youth to compete at



higher levels.

The meeting was attended by the stakeholders from the cricket fraternity, sports administrators, coaches and local representatives, who shared valuable

suggestions regarding the development of cricket infrastructure and the identification of emerging talent from remote and rural areas. Emphasis was laid on encouraging greater partic-

ipation of youth in sports as a means of promoting fitness, discipline and positive engagement.

ADC Sunil Bhutyal highlighted the immense sports potential of the Chenab region and stressed the need for coordinated efforts between government agencies and cricketing bodies to provide modern facilities and exposure to local players.

BCCI President Mithun Manhas assured full support for initiatives aimed at strengthening grassroots cricket and expressed confidence that the region possesses significant talent capable of excelling at the national level. The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to work towards creating a vibrant cricketing ecosystem and enhancing sports infrastructure across the Chenab Valley.

## Yashasvi Jaiswal replaces injured Virat Kohli for ODI series against Afghanistan

**BENGALURU, JUNE 06:** India have called up Yashasvi Jaiswal to their squad for the three-match, one-day international series against Afghanistan as a replacement for Virat Kohli, who has been ruled out due to injury, the country's cricket board (BCCI) said on Saturday.

Veteran Kohli, who has quit test cricket and T20 internationals, had been included in India's squad last month.

However, he appeared to pick up a hamstring injury while playing for Royal Challengers Bengaluru in their five-wicket win over Gujarat Titans in the Indian Premier League final last week, which saw them secure a second consecutive title.

India host Afghanistan in three ODIs scheduled for June 14, 17 and 20, before travelling to England for a three-match series in July, which Kohli could feature in.

"With Virat at this point, it's just been less than a week since he injured himself in the (IPL) finals. We don't know the timelines yet," selection panel chairman Ajit Agarkar told



reporters. "But it looks like he might be fit for that Eng-

land one-day series. It's not a definitive answer, so don't hold me to it. I

haven't had a clear timeline from the physio yet."