



First T20I: Sooryavanshi sizzles as India finally open account in Shreyas Iyer-era

HARARE, , JULY 23:

Wonderkid Vaibhav Sooryavanshi smashed an 18-ball half century in his first innings of substance in international cricket as an all-round India outplayed Zimbabwe by seven wickets in the first T20 of the three match series here on Thursday.

Pacer Mayank Yadav made a successful return to international cricket as India restricted Zimbabwe to 125 for seven. India expectedly gunned down the target in 13.2 overs following a typical knock from Sooryavanshi (50 off 19) that included four boundaries and as many sixes.

It was also India's first win under new captain Shreyas Iyer, who endured a run of six losses in his first assignment in Ireland and England.

Sooryavanshi's much hyped international debut in England earlier this month did not go as per the script but made his familiarity with the venue count.

In his return to the ground where he made a memorable 80-ball 175 in the U-19 World Cup final earlier this year, the youngest to play for India displayed his rare talent that has been acknowledged by the cricketing world.

Abhishek Sharma (1 off 8) struggled at the other end, Sooryavanshi took down the Zimbabwe attack bit by bit.

He began with couple of breath-taking sixes off Richard Ngarava in the second over of the chase. The



first one was a one legged pull shot that sailed over deep square leg before he made a slight room to nonchalantly a dispatch a decent length ball over mid-off.

Blessing Muzarabani, who did not allow Sooryavanshi to free his arm initially, was also taken to the cleaners in fifth over when the 15-year-old smoked a 90m six down the ground.

He brought his fifty right after powerplay and a ball later he was caught at third man off Ngarava.

Following his dismissal, Ishan Kishan (35 off 24) and captain Shreyas Iyer (28 not out off 24) got the job done comfortably.

Earlier, Mayank Yadav cranked up serious pace from the get go in his first game for India since October 2024. He had opener Brian Bennett (0) caught behind off a peach the very first ball of the match, beating

the batter with a hard length ball that straightened slightly to take the outside edge. WorldNews Coverage

The on-field umpire did not hear the nick but a confident India got the decision in their favour via DRS.

Mayank, who had a surgery last year following a stress fracture, consistently hit speeds beyond 145 kmph. He targeted the back of a length area and often hurried the batters with his pace.

Extra pace had a role to play in his second wicket as Dion Myers (6) failed to time his pull shot in the fifth over.

Debutant Ashok Sharma, who went for couple of boundaries in his first over, stemmed the flow of runs in his following two overs.

Not familiar with the conditions, India captain Shreyas Iyer put the home in to bat. WorldNews Coverage

With Bennett's ball one dismissal, Zimbabwe felt instant pressure and their situation got worse by the powerplay as they struggled to 26 for three.

Sensing an opportunity to score against Shivam Dube, Zimbabwe skipper Sikandar Raza went for the release shot only to be caught at deep square leg, making it 32 for four in the eighth over.

Ryan Burl (26 off 35), Wessly Madhevere (38 off 34) and Tadiwanashe Marumani (27 not out off 20) were able to hang around for a while, helping their team cross the 120-run mark.

Marumani played some entertaining shots in the cove corner region.

Ravi Bishnoi, who had made a disastrous comeback in the UK, ended with tidy figures of 24 for one in his four overs.

CWG 2026: Mirabai Chanu urges Indian weightlifting contingent to 'stay relaxed' despite pressure

GLASGOW, JULY 23

(ANI): Olympic medallist Mirabai Chanu said she has encouraged the Indian weightlifting team to stay relaxed despite the pressure of competing at the 2026 Commonwealth Games being held from July 23 to August 2 in Glasgow here.

he weightlifting events at the Commonwealth Games 2026 are scheduled to take place from July 26 to 30 at the SEC Armadillo.

Chanu, the two-time Commonwealth Games gold medallist, will compete in the women's 48kg category, a division in which she has previously enjoyed significant success on the international stage.

Apart from Chanu, India's weightlifting team for the Commonwealth Games 2026 includes Gyaneshwari Yadav (53kg), Bindyarani Devi (58kg), Harjinder Kaur (69kg), Sanjana (77kg) and Martina Devi (+86kg), while the men's squad includes Rishikanta Singh (60kg), M Raja (65kg), Ajaya Babu (79kg), Dilbag Singh (94kg) and Lovepreet Singh (+110kg).

Speaking to ANI, Mirabai Chanu acknowledged that first-time competitors and high expectations for



medals add to the pressure, but emphasised focusing on training, performing well on the day, and giving their best, expressing confidence in the team's preparation.

She said, "I tell the whole team to stay relaxed. Everyone feels pressure, especially those who are competing for the first time. The boys and girls competing for the first time also feel pressure. On top of that, everyone in India expects more medals from weightlifting this time. So, there is pressure, but we will try our best to keep the pressure aside and perform the way we have trained. If we give a good performance on stage, then everyone can definitely win a medal in weightlifting. But as for the rest, who knows what will happen on that day? We'll see. But the

whole team is doing well, and we will give our all." WorldNews Coverage

Chanu said she advises new athletes to treat the Commonwealth Games like any other competition and avoid taking extra pressure. She encouraged them to stay relaxed, trust their preparation and compete with the same mindset as they do at World or Asian Championships.

"Some are new and haven't participated in many international competitions. But I try to tell them that the games are the same. It's not like the Games are different from Championships. If they think of them as different, it will create more pressure. So, I tell them that we have to compete just like we do on every stage, in every competition,

whether it's the Commonwealth, World, or Asian Championships. We have to fight the same way. There's no need to think or do anything extra. That's how I tell them to stay relaxed and work on everything with a relaxed mind," she said.

Chanu, one of India's most decorated weightlifters, has won three Commonwealth Games medals so far—gold in Gold Coast 2018 (48kg), gold in Birmingham 2022 (49kg) and silver in Glasgow 2014 (48kg).

A former world champion and Olympic silver medallist at Tokyo 2020, the 31-year-old last competed at the national championships in Modinagar in February, where she clinched the title in the 48kg category.

She, however, missed the Asian Weightlifting Championships in May as she recovered from a shoulder injury sustained earlier this year.

Chanu will be joined by fellow Birmingham 2022 medallists Bindyarani Devi and Harjinder Kaur, who will compete in the women's 58kg and 69kg categories respectively. Both had won silver medals in the previous edition of the Games.

with Lucknow, Dehradun and Greater Noida serving as venues, but they have never faced India in a home series here, according to the report.

For India, the T20I series is expected to fall between their Test tour of Sri Lanka and the Asian Games in Japan.

The second Test against Sri Lanka is scheduled to conclude on August 27, while the Asian Games are set to begin on September 24, a week after the final T20I against Afghanistan.

15th J&K Shooting Champ begins

**HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, JULY 23**

The 15th J&K UT Shooting Championship, organized by J&K Rifle Association (JKRA), commenced today at three venues of Shooting Range of the Directorate of Youth Services and Sports (DYSS), J&K, Mission Olympic Shooting Academy and NCC shooting range Nagrota, here.

The championship was declared open by Surinder Singh Sodhi, president JKRA in the presence of Kuldeep Singh Jamwal, chairman; Sharat Chander Singh, general secretary; Manu Pratap Singh Wazir, joint secretary and Arun Mansotra, treasurer JKRA as also Sukhdev Sharma, District (DYSS) Officer, Jammu.

The event is being organized under the aegis of the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) and in collaboration with DYSS J&K and sponsored by J&K Sports Council.

The JKRA president praised the growing enthusiasm for shooting among the



youth, describing it as "a sport of discipline, concentration and precision." He lauded the emerging talent and increasing participation which reflects the region's immense sporting potential.

Earlier, Sharat Chander Singh highlighted the support extended by the UT Government through J&K Sports Council and Department of youth Services and

Sports. He encouraged young shooters to strive for excellence and spoke about his continued efforts to promote the sport across Jammu & Kashmir and the country.

Over 200 shooters from across the UT are participating in the championship, under the supervision of organizing secretary, Sharat Chander Singh.

Kuldeep Singh Jamwal proposed the vote of thanks and expressed gratitude to the dignitaries, guests and shooters, for their support and presence in the event.

The technical penal for the event comprised Rajesh virdhy, Vishal Mehra, Pranav Sambyal, Sahil Sharma, Vijay Kumar, Surjeet Singh, Aman Singh, Renu Devi Vishal Sharma.

China Open: Sindhu bows out early; Ayush, Lakshya too lose

CHANGZHOU, JULY 23:

Indian badminton ace P V Sindhu squandered an early advantage to bow out of the China Open with a gruelling three-game loss to local favourite and world No. 4 Chen Yufei in the second round here on Thursday.

Ayush Shetty and Lakshya Sen, too, exited the tournament after losing their respective men's singles second-round matches.

Lakshya lost in straight games to Canada's Victor Lai 19-21, 11-21 while Ayush suffered a narrow three-game defeat to Ireland's Nhat Nguyen (21-15, 13-21, 20-22) after letting slip a 19-15 advantage in the decider.

Sindhu lost 21-16, 20-22, 18-21 in an energy-sapping contest that lasted nearly one and a half hours. The 30-year-old from Hyderabad had entered the tournament on a high after winning the Japan Open last week, ending a lengthy title drought.

After her match, Sindhu vented her frustration over getting inadequate time to recover between matches, taking to social media to criticise the scheduling.

That the match was going to be a closely fought affair



was evident from the opening game itself, in which Sindhu rallied from 7-13 to level the score at 16-16.

The Indian then reeled off five consecutive points to seize the early advantage. GeographicReference

However, it was Chen's turn to stage a comeback in the second game as Sindhu squandered four game points. Chen, the Tokyo Olympics gold medallist, took the second game 22-20 after clawing her way back from 16-20. The deciding

game was also evenly contested for the most part before Chen pulled away from 17-17 to seal the victory.

Sindhu had just 16 hours to prepare for her second-round match against Chen, while the Chinese star enjoyed more than a day's rest before the contest, giving her significantly more time to recover.

"About 16 hours for me between matches. 24+ hours for my dear friend Chen tomorrow after having a full day off before facing

me today," wrote the double Olympic medallist on 'X'.

The fourth-seeded Chen will next face seventh seed Ratchanok Intanon of Thailand in the quarterfinals on Friday, giving the Chinese one full day's rest before the clash. Sindhu highlighted this fact, saying: "Lovely to see recovery being given the importance it deserves. Funny how schedules have a way of taking care of recovery. I only wish they took care of everyone the same way."

At 13, swimming prodigy Pawani Bhatia makes Jalandhar proud with her victory run

JALANDHAR, JULY 23:

She's 13 years old and has already competed in four national championships, collected over 50 medals, and is now heading to another national tournament after recently being selected.

Jalandhar-based swimming prodigy Pawani Bhatia has recently won six more medals, making the city proud with her impressive achievements in swimming at the district, state and national levels.

Adding to her illustrious tally, Pawani won six medals—two gold, three silver and one bronze—at the 37th Sub Junior Punjab State Swimming Championship, held at Delhi Public School, Ferozepur, and organised by the Punjab

Swimming Association.

A Class VIII student at Police DAV Public School, Jalandhar, Pawani won gold medals in the 200m butterfly and the 4×100m medley relay. She secured silver medals in the 100m butterfly, 50m butterfly, and 50m breaststroke, along with a bronze medal in the 4×100m freestyle relay. She won these medals in the girls' 13–14 years age category.

The 13-year-old swimmer, daughter of physical education lecturer and swimming coach Raghuvendra Bhatia, started swimming when she was just three years old. In 2018, she won her first competition in Punjab at the age of five, on August 15, 2018.

She was later honoured by former Punjab Sports Minister Rana Gurmeet Singh Sodhi and the then Deputy Commissioner of Jalandhar.

Varinder Sharma, for her outstanding performance in sports. Pawani continued her winning streak in 2019 when, at the age of six, she won the North India Championship held in Chandigarh. World-News Coverage

Her father, Raghuvendra Bhatia, says, "We are very proud of Pawani's achievements. She took up swimming as a little girl, and her dedication amazes even me. She has competed despite having a fever, and whether it's sunny, rainy, or stormy, she remains unwaveringly committed to her practice schedule."

In 2023, Pawani participated in the 34th Sub Junior Punjab State Swimming Championship and won six medals—three gold and three silver.

She then represented Punjab at the 39th Sub Junior National Aquatic Championship, held in Bhubaneswar from August 16 to 20, 2023, and organised by the Odisha State Swimming Association under the aegis of the Swimming Federation of India.

At that time, she was only 10 years old. In the same year, she also won a gold medal at the DAV National Swimming Competition held in Noida and another gold medal at the Primary School Games State-Level Competition held in Mohali.

Afghanistan likely to host India for 3-match T20I series in Delhi

NEW DELHI, JULY 23:

Afghanistan are likely to host India in a three-match T20I series in Delhi in September, with the matches expected to be played at the Arun Jaitley Stadium on September 13, 15 and 17, according to ESPNcricinfo.

However, the schedule is yet to be officially confirmed.

The series would mark the first occasion when Afghanistan host India on Indian soil. Afghanistan have regularly played their home matches in India,

with Lucknow, Dehradun and Greater Noida serving as venues, but they have never faced India in a home series here, according to the report.

For India, the T20I series is expected to fall between their Test tour of Sri Lanka