



T20 era has lowered patience of batters; triple tons declining: Harbhajan Singh

NEW DELHI, AUG 15:

The aggressive batting approach shaped by the T20 era has come at the expense of patience, said former India spinner Harbhajan Singh pointing to the dwindling number of marathon innings in the longest format by the younger crop of players.

He recalled an earlier generation of Test batters who could combine aggression with their ability to bat for long periods and build massive scores.

"In this era of T20s, the current generation do not possess the requisite patience like batters of yesteryears. There are very few who can grind it out and score a 250 or 300 in an innings because if you play so many shots, there will always be a chance of getting dismissed. Nowadays, very rarely would you see a batter scoring triple hundred in Tests," Harbhajan said in a podcast interview with PTI.

"Earlier there was Brian Lara, then Chris Gayle, Virender Sehwag, Matthew Hayden all of whom scored triple hundreds. Lara scored a 400. There was AB de Villiers and Jacques Kallis who hit big double centuries."

The most recent Test triple-centurions have been Pakistan's Azhar Ali in 2016, Australia's David Warner in 2019, England's Harry Brook in 2024 and South Africa's Wiaan Mulder in 2025, underlining



Harbhajan's point about how infrequently such innings are now being produced.

"When we started playing cricket, it was slightly slow-paced although it was consistent with the times that we were in. There were only a few batters who would deal in sixes."

Harbhajan, who made his India debut in 1998, said Australia were ahead of the curve in the way they approached Test batting in the early 2000s.

"If I look from 2001, Aussies were the only team that would score quickly in Tests, ahead of its times. Others played normal cricket and score 250 runs in a day whereas Australia would look at scoring 350 in a single day every time, they dominated."

He said the acceleration in Test cricket also forced bowlers, particularly spin-

ners, to adapt to increasingly attacking batting.

"As I started playing more and more, every year Test cricket as a format also moved forward and the pace of the game got faster, spinners needed to be more connected (clued in). If you didn't bring yourself up to speed against attacking games, you were bound to lag behind."

The former off-spinner said bowlers now need to think differently and find ways of forcing attacking batters to abandon their preferred shots.

"So you got to come with a different plan and different mindset, how to stack up those dot balls and try to make him play a different shot."

"So from then (2001) to now, Test cricket has seen a complete transformation as to how teams approach. If you look at how England

play the Tests (Bazball), they are trying to score 500 in a day and in that bid you can also get out for 70 or 80." Despite acknowledging the evolution of the format, Harbhajan said he still misses the uncertainty that characterised Test matches in the past.

"But I believe the charm of Test cricket was what we played back in the day. The match would go on for five days, and on the fifth day, you won't know which team would win."

Harbhajan also feels the rise of the Indian Premier League has altered the incentives for young cricketers, with the lucrative T20 tournament offering players a faster route to recognition and financial rewards.

He believes it has contributed to a shift in focus away from red-ball cricket.

"I believe focus has shifted a bit from red ball to white ball. Reason being that IPL is a huge platform which gets a player lime-light and also huge pay cheque. You become an overnight star and before you know, you play for India."

"In earlier times, people slogged for even 10 years to play for India. There were a lot of players who scored huge runs like Amol Muzumdar and Amarjeet Kaypee, who couldn't play for India. Because there was no place in the senior team."

Jemimah Rodrigues ruled out from India squad for Women's Asia Cup

NEW DELHI [INDIA], AUGUST 14:

India batter Jemimah Rodrigues has been ruled out of the upcoming Women's Asia Cup and Asian Games after suffering a high-grade right hamstring tear while playing in England's franchise-based cricket tournament, The Hundred, the BCCI said on Friday.

Rodrigues sustained the injury on August 3 while representing Southern Brave in The Hundred. She was subsequently assessed by the BCCI Medical Team at the Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru, where the extent of the injury was confirmed.

The 25-year-old will now miss India's campaigns at the Women's Asia Cup in the UAE and the Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, dealing a blow to the team's preparations for

two major T20 assignments.

The Women's Selection Committee has named Pratika Rawal as Rodrigues' replacement for the Asia Cup. Rawal returns to the India setup after featuring for India A recently.

The Women's Asia Cup will begin on August 28 in Dubai, with India opening its campaign against Thailand on August 30. India are placed in Group A alongside Thailand, Pakistan and Hong Kong, while Group B comprises Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, the UAE and Indonesia.

The tournament will be played in the T20 format, with the final scheduled for September 13.

Rodrigues' absence will also be felt at the Asian Games, where India will defend the women's cricket title won at Hangzhou 2023. Cricket at the

Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games will be played in the T20 format from September 17 to October 3.

India won the women's gold medal at the 2023 Asian Games, beating Sri Lanka in the final.

The BCCI is yet to provide a specific timeline for Rodrigues' return, with the batter now set to undergo rehabilitation for the hamstring injury.

India's updated Asia Cup squad: Harmanpreet Kaur (captain), Smriti Mandhana (vice-captain), Shafali Verma, Bharti Fulmali, Deepti Sharma, Richa Ghosh (wicket-keeper), G Kamalini (wicketkeeper), Arundhati Reddy, Prema Rawat, Radha Yadav, Sree Charani, Renuka Thakur, Nandni Sharma, Kranti Gaud and Pratika Rawal. (ANI)

Only way to survive is to attack him: Harbhajan on extraordinary Sooryavanshi

NEW DELHI, AUG 14:

India spin great Harbhajan Singh says Vaibhav Sooryavanshi's audacious stroke-play is unparalleled in international cricket and any bowler looking to stop the 15-year-old will have to adopt an aggressive approach as containing him is not an option.

Harbhajan believes Sooryavanshi is capable of sowing doubt in the mind of a bowler despite his tender age and low experience.

"Vaibhav Sooryavanshi is extraordinary. He is a unique player. I have not seen a player like him before, one who can dominate the world at 14-15 years of age," Harbhajan told PTI in a podcast interview.

The teenager became the youngest player in IPL history when he made his Rajasthan Royals debut at 14 in 2025 and soon after became the youngest batter to score a century in men's T20 cricket, smashing a 35-



ball hundred against Gujarat Titans.

His remarkable rise continued this year as he became the youngest player ever to make an international debut for India when he played against England at Old Trafford at the age of 15 years and 99 days.

Sooryavanshi blasted 175 off 80 balls against England in the Under-19 World Cup final, the highest individual score in the history of the tournament's finals, and was named Player of the

Tournament as India lifted the title.

During the IPL earlier this year, the Rajasthan Royals prodigy famously greeted world-class premier pacers Jasprit Bumrah and Pat Cummins by dispatching their very first deliveries to him for sixes.

"When the world's top bowlers are bowling to him, they are actually thinking about where to bowl. That itself is a big, big statement," Harbhajan said.

So how does one bowl to

someone who refuses to be overawed by the bowler's name, the occasion or the field?

"The only way to survive is to attack him. You go at him and you take his wicket," Harbhajan said.

"It may not work all the time. Sometimes you might even get smashed. He would've hit sixes. But that is part of the game. You have to accept that he's good."

Asked how he would bowl to Sooryavanshi in a power-play situation, the former India spinner said, "I won't set the field according to what he's doing. I'll set the field according to what I'm doing. If I bowl to escape, I won't be able to get him out."

"You go at him and you take his wicket. You might get success, you might not. That's just a matter of time. You have to accept that he's good."

"But still, the next ball should be about how to get him out," Harbhajan said.

LG Saxena inaugurates Multi-Purpose Hall and Indoor Shooting Range at District Police Lines, Choglamsar

LEH, AUGUST 14:

Lieutenant Governor, Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena, today inaugurated the Multi-Purpose Hall and Indoor Shooting Range- one of the highest shooting ranges in India- at District Police Lines, Choglamsar, aimed at strengthening the fitness, training, well-being and professional efficiency of Ladakh Police personnel, while creating new sporting opportunities for the youth and students of Ladakh.

The modern all-weather Multi-Purpose Hall has been designed keeping in view Ladakh's prolonged cold and dry winters. It will provide Police personnel facilities for badminton, table tennis, wrestling and taekwondo, besides serving as a venue for in-service training, refresher courses and professional capacity building, particularly during the winter months.

A major feature of the facility is the Indoor Shooting Range, established in collaboration with the Ladakh Shooting Association. Equipped for air rifle, air pistol and mock air pistol/dry-fire practice, the range will provide structured training to Police personnel as well as youth and students. Qualified coaches and technical support will be provided by the Ladakh Shooting Association, with training conducted in accordance with ISSF rules and regulations.

To encourage young people to take up shooting



sports, a one-month free promotional training course will also be offered to interested youth and students. The initiative aims to identify and nurture shooting talent and provide aspiring shooters with a platform to compete at national and international levels.

The facility, incorporating designs to maximise natural solar heat and improved energy efficiency, has been completed at a cost of approximately ₹10.48 crore.

Addressing the gathering, L-G Shri Saxena highlighted that the project forms part of the broader modernisation of Ladakh Police following the formation of the Union Territory. He informed that around 350 infrastructure works, including Police Stations, staff quarters and barracks, have been undertaken with support from the Central Government and UT Administration. Of 84 works targeted this year, the Lieu-

tenant Governor mentioned, 64 are scheduled for completion during the current year, with the remaining 20 targeted for completion in 2027.

The modernisation drive also includes solar water heaters, solar power plants, bore-well water supply and polycarbonate greenhouses for personnel posted in remote areas. Police mobility has been strengthened through replacement of obsolete vehicles, while satellite-based POLNET 2.0 is being extended to Police Stations and Posts to improve communication in remote areas.

The Lieutenant Governor highlighted that Ladakh Police is also strengthening its response to emerging security challenges. Mentioning that a dedicated Anti-Narcotic Task Force Police Station, established on February 20, 2026, has registered 10 NDPS cases so far, Shri Saxena mentioned that

steps are also underway to establish a dedicated Cyber Police Station to strengthen prevention and investigation of cyber-related offences.

The Lieutenant Governor also highlighted the focus on strengthening police manpower. After the recruitment of 796 Constables, recruitment for 40 Sub-Inspector posts is currently underway. Physical tests of 7,029 applicants were completed on August 9, with the written examination scheduled for the first week of October. Recruitment for another 331 Constable posts has also been initiated.

The Lieutenant Governor said the Multi-Purpose Hall represents an investment in a modern, professional and well-trained Police force, while the shooting range will provide Ladakh's youth with access to structured training and professional coaching.

Sri Lanka captain De Silva backs Niroshan Dickwella's inclusion in squad for first

GALLE [SRI LANKA], AUGUST 14:

Sri Lanka captain Dhananajaya de Silva has backed experienced wicketkeeper-batter Niroshan Dickwella to make an impact against India, saying his glove-work was the primary reason behind his call to the Test squad for the opening match of the two-Test series in Galle.

India and Sri Lanka will face off in the first Test of the series at the Galle International Cricket Stadium on Saturday, with both teams looking to strengthen their position in the ICC World Test Championship 2025-27 cycle.

"The only thing I have to tell Niroshan Dickwella is to keep well.

That's why he's in the team," de Silva said on the eve of the Test in the press conference.

Dickwella, who has played 54 Tests, returns to the Sri Lankan Test squad after spending the last few years out of the side. He has scored 2,757 Test runs at an average of 30.97, with a highest score of 96.

J&K Govt to constitute Departmental Committee to review S.O. 12 of 2022 for outstanding sportspersons appointments

JAMMU, AUGUST 13:

"The J&K Government shall constitute a Departmental Committee to review the Appointment of Outstanding Sports Persons Rules, commonly referred to as S.O. 12 of 2022 read with S.O. 412 of 2023, the Department of Youth Services and Sports said on Wednesday.

The Committee will examine the relevant provisions of the rules, practical implementation issues and suggestions received from stakeholders and will make appropriate recommendations in accordance with law.

The larger objective of the review, the Department stated, is to promote fairness, transparency and merit in the appointment of outstanding sportspersons. The review process shall be prospective in its approach and shall not, by itself, cast any aspersion upon candidates who have been selected in accordance with the rules applicable to them.

The decision to constitute

the Committee has been taken in light of various concerns and representations received by the Department in relation to the said rules.

As per the spokesperson of the Department of Youth Services and Sports, Minister for FCS&CA, IT, Youth Services and Sports, Science and Technology, Satish Sharma, had earlier listened to the grievances of a number of sportspersons on 24th of June 2026. Following this, a delegation of senior officers of the Government today met the protesting sportspersons and took detailed note of the grievances. While S.O. 12 of 2022 has been in force for several years and selections undertaken under the said framework have been processed in accordance with the rules applicable at the relevant time, the Government has taken cognisance of the demand for a review of the existing framework.

Reaffirming its position, the Department placed on record that the selections already made under the applicable rules have been processed in accordance

with the provisions of S.O. 12 of 2022 and the subsequent amendments/instructions applicable thereto. At the same time, the Government recognises the importance of addressing the genuine concerns raised by stakeholders in a fair, objective and transparent manner.

"All grievances and representations received by the Department concerning the selection process shall be examined objectively and in accordance with the applicable rules and established procedure. No genuine grievance will be ignored or left unattended. Each matter shall be considered on its facts and merits, without prejudice to the rights of any candidate and without compromising the integrity of the selection process," the Spokesperson maintained. He clarified that consideration of a grievance shall not, by itself, imply acceptance of the allegations or any finding of irregularity, and appropriate action, wherever warranted under the applicable rules, shall be taken only after due examination and verification.

The Department also re-

iterated its commitment to the strict and uniform implementation of the applicable Transfer Policy. The Youth Services and Sports Department shall undertake a review of the existing stay position of employees in the Department and take necessary measures for ensuring implementation of the Transfer Policy in accordance with the prescribed norms. The exercise shall be undertaken objectively, keeping in view administrative requirements, applicable rules and legitimate exemptions, wherever provided under the policy.

The Government reiterated that its objective is to ensure fairness, transparency, accountability and adherence to the rule of law, while protecting the legitimate interests of all stakeholders.

"The Government also appeals to all the concerned to place factual and verifiable information before the competent authorities and refrain from drawing conclusions or making allegations before the prescribed processes of examination and review are completed," added the Spokesperson.