



Pranavi eyes Major title, Olympics medal after Asian Games gold

CHANDIGARH, OCT 09: Winning India's first-ever gold medal in women's golf at the Asian Games has made Pranavi Urs hungry for greater success, and the 23-year-old is targeting an Olympic medal or a Major title.

During an interaction facilitated by Sports Authority of India (SAI) Media, she said, "There are going to be multiple winners after me. But I'm the one who kind of set that record. So that means the world to me. I think it's slowly sinking in. It hasn't sunk in yet fully. Because, I mean, I'm still getting a lot of these messages and calls and a lot of interviews and stuff, which is very unusual for me. It's a little overwhelming, but it's great to be the first one to do it."

"Olympics maybe or a Major. The Asian Games is done, domestic and international tours, including the Ladies European Tour (LET), will take place, but now the target is to achieve



something big," she added.

The qualification period for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games officially began on June 8 and will conclude on June 5, 2028, with the final 60-player field to be determined by the Olympic Golf Rankings (OGR) standings at the time

of the deadline.

Pranavi is not only a believer in hard work but also relies heavily on manifestation. Her experience at the Hangzhou Asian Games three years ago and her work with a psychologist helped her manage pressure during her gold-winning perfor-

mance.

"I've been working with my psychologist for years now. And I think at the end of the day, that's the goal, right? To kind of keep calm when you're nervous and, you know, to kind of stick to your game plan. Just not think about anything else and just kind of focus on what you need to do and what's in your control more than the outcome," said Pranavi. Pranavi will next compete at the Women's Indian Open from October 22 at the DLF Golf and Country Club in Gurugram and has three more LET events lined up this year.

She is also eager to meet her idol, Rory McIlroy, when the former world No. 1 comes to Delhi for the DP World India Championship.

"I have asked my sources if they can arrange an interaction with him (McIlroy). More than the opportunity to show him my gold medal, I will be nervous about meeting him," said Pranavi.

From torn shoes to Asian gold: Karnal's daughter-in-law Neha sets sights on Olympics glory

KARNAL, OCT 09: Neha, who was part of the Indian women's hockey team that won gold at the recently concluded Asian Games in Japan, began her hockey journey without proper shoes. Her inspiring story is a testament to determination, hard work and perseverance.

After winning gold with the Indian women's hockey team, Neha, Karnal's daughter-in-law, received a grand welcome in the city on Friday.

Recalling her early struggles, Neha said she did not even have proper shoes when she began playing hockey. Her teacher stepped in and provided her with a pair, enabling her to continue playing. She believes timely support at the grassroots level could have helped prevent the injuries she suffered early in her career.

She urged governments to provide budding athletes with proper facilities, equipment and support so that financial constraints do not stand in the way of their dreams.

Neha said her focus had always been on winning gold, and the team had finally achieved its long-awaited goal. Her next ambition is to win Olympic gold.

"My dream is to win an Olympic gold medal," she said while interacting with mediapersons at the BJP district office, Karan Kamal,



where party leaders and workers, including Mayor Renu Bala Gupta and district president Parveen Lather, welcomed her.

Neha described the victory as one of the most memorable moments of her career and dedicated the medal to her family, crediting their constant support for enabling her to continue playing after marriage.

"Our entire team played with full determination, and we achieved our goal," she said, recalling how the players celebrated together in the dressing room after their victory.

Recalling the final against China, Neha said the opposition was a strong side, but India remained confident of victory. She attributed the win to teamwork, discipline and the ability to remain fo-

cused under pressure.

"China is a good team, but we worked together as a unit. There is pressure in such matches, but once you step onto the field, you have to concentrate on your game. That is exactly what we did," she said.

Her husband, Sunil Yadav, a hockey player and an auditor with the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) in Delhi, recalled her dedication and relentless efforts to reach the international stage.

"Neha belongs to Sonapat, and we got married in November 2024. She devotes most of her time to training and practice. Before marriage, she practised in Sonapat and later continued in Karnal," he said.

"Both families supported her a lot. After marriage,

she told me she wanted to continue playing hockey, and my family fully supported her," he added.

Neha's father died earlier, and her mother worked in a factory to raise her three daughters. Despite these challenges, Neha continued pursuing her sporting ambitions and eventually achieved a milestone that has made the country proud.

For the family, the gold medal represents more than a sporting achievement. "It is the reward for years of perseverance, sacrifice and belief in Neha's talent," a family member said.

Mayor Renu Bala Gupta congratulated Neha and her family, praising her achievement for bringing laurels to Karnal.

Baramulla Kicks Off UT-Level U-17 Football Showdown

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS JAMMU, OCT 09

The UT-Level Inter-District Provincial-Level Football Championship for Under-17 Boys commenced today at St. Joseph's School Ground, Baramulla, with teams representing 19 districts of Jammu and Kashmir competing for the coveted title.

The tournament, featuring 344 young footballers, is organised by the Directorate of Youth Services and Sports, J&K, under the supervision of the Director General, Anuradha Gupta and hosted by the Department of Youth Services and Sports, District Baramulla.

The championship was inaugurated by Pranjali Hazarika, ADDC Baramulla, in the presence of the 2IC, 112 Battalion BSF Baramulla, and Suresh Brittoo, Principal, St. Joseph's School, Baramulla.

Addressing the gathering, the ADDC appreciated the department's efforts in promoting grassroots sports and encouraged young footballers to uphold discipline, sportsmanship and the spirit of healthy competition.

Mushtaq Ahmad Pam-



pori, DYSSO Baramulla, reaffirmed the department's commitment to providing young athletes with competitive platforms to showcase their talent.

The Principal welcomed

the participants and highlighted the importance of sports in nurturing leadership, teamwork and character among students.

The competition will be conducted on a league basis

across five venues. In the opening encounter, hosts Baramulla delivered an impressive performance, defeating Doda 7-0 to begin their campaign on a winning note.

Inter-District UT-Level Thang-Ta Championship Inaugurated in Shopian

SHOPIAN, OCTOBER 09: The Inter-District UT-Level Thang-Ta Championship for All Age Group Girls was inaugurated today in Shopian.

The inaugural ceremony was attended by the District Youth Services & Sports Officer, Shopian, along with participants, coaches, technical officials, escort teachers and other officials associated with the event.

The championship aims to provide young athletes with a competitive platform to showcase their talent, discipline, skills and sporting spirit while promoting the traditional martial art of Thang-Ta among the youth of Jammu & Kashmir.

Addressing the gathering, the District Youth Services & Sports Officer, emphasized the importance of games and sports in the overall development of young people. He highlighted that participation in sports not only improves physical fitness but also inculcates discipline, confidence, teamwork, leadership and a sense of healthy



competition among students and youth.

He encouraged all participating players to display the true spirit of sportsmanship, respect their opponents and officials, and make the best use of the opportunity to learn and excel.

The championship brings together talented players from different districts of the Union Territory, providing them with an opportunity to compete at a higher level and further strengthen the sporting culture across Jammu & Kash-

mir. The event commenced with enthusiasm and sporting fervour, with all participating teams and officials contributing to the successful conduct of the championship.

Raipur to host India-Zimbabwe women's T20Is from October 16; tickets from Rs 250

RAIPUR, OCTOBER 9 : Raipur will host the three-match T20I series between India and Zimbabwe women's teams on October 16, 18 and 20, with tickets priced from Rs 250, Vijay Shah, Director of the Chhattisgarh State Cricket Association, announced on Friday.

All three matches will be played at the Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh International Cricket Stadium in Naya Raipur and are scheduled to begin at 7 pm.

Ticket sales will begin online on October 12 at 4 pm. Spectators can purchase a maximum of six tickets at a time, while digital tickets will be used for entry to the stadium. Spectators will be required to



scan the QR code on their tickets to gain entry.

A 'Series Ticket' covering all three matches will be available for Rs 499, while a 'Combo Ticket' for two matches will cost Rs 350.

Individual ticket prices have been fixed at Rs

3,500 for Platinum, Rs 2,500 for Gold and Rs 2,000 for Silver. A Corporate Box will cost Rs 70,000, while a single seat in the Corporate Box will be available for Rs 3,500.

Addressing a press conference, Shah also spoke

about the arrangements made in view of the National Green Tribunal's (NGT) directions concerning groundwater use at the stadium.

He said clearance had been received to host the matches and that a Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) had been installed at the venue. A flow meter has also been installed to monitor water usage on the ground.

The Indian team is scheduled to arrive in Raipur on October 11, while the Zimbabwe team will arrive on October 12. The Indian team will hold a practice session at 6 pm on October 12, followed by Zimbabwe's practice session on October 13.

Samson's 82, explosive knocks from Kishan, Iyer and Varma power India to 249/5 against West Indies

RANCHI, OCTOBER 9: Sanju Samson's 82 off 41 balls, along with crucial contributions from Ishan Kishan, Shreyas Iyer and Tilak Varma, powered India to 249/5, setting West Indies a target of 250 in the second T20I of the five-match series at the JSCA International Stadium in Ranchi on Friday.

West Indies captain Shai Hope opted to bowl after winning the toss, but India's batters attacked from the start and scored at more than 12 runs per over to finish at 249/5 in 20 overs.

India lost opener Abhishek Sharma early in the fourth over as he departed after scoring 20 runs off 12 balls. Despite Sharma's wicket, Samson took charge, attacking both pace and spin. He brought up his half-century in just 21

balls and went on to score 82 off 41 deliveries, hitting nine fours and four sixes.

Ishan Kishan continued the attack with 43 off 22 balls, including six fours and two sixes. Samson and Kishan added 97 runs off 43 balls for the second wicket, taking India past the 100-run mark in the ninth over.

Roston Chase brought West Indies back into the game by dismissing Kishan and Shivam Dube, who scored seven off 10 balls. Chase had figures of 3/24 in his four overs.

Shamar Springer then dismissed Samson in the 15th over. However, despite the wickets, captain and the centurion from the series opener, Shreyas Iyer, and Tilak Varma kept the scoring rate high.

Iyer and Varma combined to score 21 runs off the 18th over bowled by Shamar Springer as India reached 215/4 in 18 overs.

Shamar Joseph conceded 11 runs in the penultimate over before Tilak Varma attacked Shamar Springer in the final over, smashing three consecutive sixes to take 23 runs off it.

Shreyas Iyer was dismissed during the over, while new batter Naman Dhir hit a boundary off the final ball as India finished their innings at 249/5 in 20 overs.

Apart from Roston Chase, Shamar Springer was the only other wicket-taker for West Indies, claiming two wickets but conceding 64 runs in his four overs.