



Gambhir backs Dube's promotion, says only openers' spots are 'permanent' in T20s

RANCHI, OCT 10: India head coach Gautam Gambhir has defended Shivam Dube's promotion to No. 4 position despite the all-rounder's failure to make an impact against the West Indies in the second T20 International here, reiterating that flexibility in the batting order remains central to the team's approach in the format.

Promoted to No. 4 in place of inform skipper Shreyas Iyer following the departure of Ishan Kishan, Dube laboured to seven off 10 balls before becoming the third victim of West Indies off-spinner Roston Chase in the middle overs.

"We have used him like this for a long time, including during the World Cup and before it. It is not as though this was a one-off decision today," Gambhir said at the post-match media interaction at the JSCA Stadium.

Despite Chase's success against left-handed batters, India backed Dube to counter the spin.

In hindsight, India may have missed out on 20-odd runs after losing wickets in successive overs, with top-scorer Sanju Samson also departing soon after.

Iyer and Tilak Varma, however, made up for it and provided the late fireworks to power India to 249 for five despite the loss of momentum in the middle overs.

The West Indies then pulled off a record chase, reaching the target in just 18.3 overs to level the five-match series 1-1.

Gambhir stood by the decision to promote Dube, stressing that India would continue to keep their batting order flexible.

"This is international cricket. Sometimes things go your way, and sometimes they don't.

"We lost momentum today, but we have also gained a lot of momentum by sending him in at No. 4, where he has taken on the opposition bowlers," the coach said.

"More importantly, I think we have always been flexible with our batting or-



der, and we will continue to do that. I have always said since taking over that in T20 cricket, only the openers are permanent. The rest of the batting order should remain flexible."

Not shrugging off defeat Gambhir refused to attribute India's defeat solely to the difficult bowling conditions, saying the team needed to find ways to defend big totals on flat pitches with dew.

"You don't shrug off any defeat. If you want to keep improving, you don't want to sweep anything under the carpet. We are a world champion team, so we want to keep improving.

"Obviously, these are tough conditions to bowl in. We know that bowling on flat wickets with dew is difficult, but we need to figure out a way to stop the opposition, especially when they have lost two wickets in the first over and then three in the first six overs," he said.

"Obviously, it was tough, but credit to the West Indies for the way Shai Hope (102 not out) and Sherfane Rutherford (84) batted. We know they are world class batters, especially in this format. It was tough for us, but we are going to keep improving."

While India's spinners struggled to make an impact, Chase's clever variations in line proved effective.

However, one of India's major positives was the fiery opening spell from tearaway

pacer Mayank Yadav, who consistently clocked speeds above 140 kmph and rattled the West Indies top order.

Mayank dismissed Kamil Pooran and Shimron Hetmyer off successive deliveries in the opening over before cleaning up Rovman Powell with a delivery clocked at 149 kmph.

Gambhir, however, refused to read too much into the early breakthroughs.

"I have played enough cricket to know that games are not decided in the first over. Obviously, the West Indies are a strong T20 side. We respect them, and we know how dangerous they are.

"Games are not won or lost in the first over. A game of cricket is won or lost by the way you play consistently over the course of 40 overs."

Gambhir further backed Mayank to stick to his natural strength of bowling with good pace. "A fast bowler should bowl like a fast bowler. He is not a slower bowler.

"If you can bowl at 150 kmph, bowl at 150. If you can bowl at 120, bowl at 120. When you are playing as a fast bowler, it is your duty to bowl fast, like a fast bowler," he said. "That is what he did today, and that is why he was successful."

Asked whether India wanted better pitches after the high-scoring contest, following his earlier observation that the Guwahati sur-

face was also a featherbed, Gambhir said: "Don't you want a good competition between the bat and the ball? Of course, we want what you want.

"If you want to see sixes and fours, we want to see that as well. If you want an even contest between bat and ball, we want that too.

"The bowlers are our bowlers. They are not foreign bowlers. Their careers are at stake as well. They have worked hard, just like everyone else in the dressing room. If there is an even contest between bat and ball, it will be good. We will get to see better cricket."

Not blaming anyone toss proved significant in the dewy conditions, while Mayank's dropped catch of Rutherford early in the innings also proved costly.

Gambhir, however, refused to blame either factor, insisting that India had to take responsibility for failing to defend a total of 250.

"I don't blame anyone, and I don't blame anything. The bottom line is that we could not defend 250. They batted extremely well, and they deserved to win.

"We still have a lot of work to do because, when you play against dangerous teams like the West Indies, you need to figure out how to defend a total, especially when you lose the toss," he said.

"The toss is not in your hands, and catches get dropped in sport.

came alive in some style to beat Chola Chiefs comprehensively without dropping a single set. The Marathas, led by Mike Schloesser and anchored by Dhiraj Bommadevara under time pressure, beat Chiefs 6-0 for their first win of the tournament, while Chiefs have now suffered two defeats in three matches.

Schloesser, nicknamed 'Mr. Perfect', lived up to the billing as he shot 10s with all six arrows for Marathas.

The Chiefs stuck to their tactic from Day 2 as they opted for their compound archers to shoot back-to-back at the start of the set. But Chikitha Taniparthi's two 9s meant they couldn't impose the same sort of scoreboard pressure on their opponents. Marathas' recurve archers shot a couple of 8s but their compound archers had done enough to ensure they take the first set 74-73.

In the second set, Marathas' star recurve archer Dhiraj Bommadevara came up with a super 10 under pressure of the clock winding down and the Mighty Marathas took a 4-0 lead.

Sakeena Itoo inaugurates Multipurpose Indoor Sports Hall at GDC Frisal

**HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, OCT 10**

Education, Social Welfare, Minister for Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo, today inaugurated Multipurpose Indoor Sports Hall at Government Degree College (GDC), Frisal.

The occasion marked a significant milestone in the college's efforts to promote sports, physical fitness and the holistic development of students with the facility coming up at the estimated cost of Rs.1.94 crore.

The ceremony was attended by MLA Devsar Peerzada Feroze Ahmad Shah, Secretary in Higher Education Department Shafqat Iqbal, Nodal Principal Kashmir Division Colleges, Dr. Seema Naz, DPO, Zaheer Ahmad Kaifi, CEO, Kulgam Fayaz, Ahmad Mir, CMO, Dr. Showkat Ahmad Parray, Principals GDC, Frisal, D. H. Pora & Kilam, DSWO Rameez Ahmad Ganie BDO, and senior officers of the Higher Education Department, faculty members, local residents and students.

Speaking on the occasion, Sakeena Itoo highlighted the importance of quality educational infrastructure and the role of sports in



shaping confident, disciplined and responsible citizens. She called upon the College management to engage the students in a sports activities and other positive endeavours and channelise their potential in right direction so that they excel in their studies and contribute towards the best of the society.

Sakeena Itoo said that Multipurpose Indoor Sports Hall provided improved facilities for indoor games and encourage greater participation in sporting activities of the

students. MLA Devsar also addressed the gathering, emphasising the importance of educational institutions in empowering young people and creating opportunities for academic and extracurricular excellence. MLA also announced Digital X-Ray Machine worth Rs. 24 lakh for Primary Health Center (PHC) Frisal.

Earlier, in his welcome address, Dr. Fayaz Ahmad Butt, Principal, GDC Frisal, welcomed the distinguished guests and expressed gratitude to the Minister and

other dignitaries for their presence.

He highlighted the importance of sports infrastructure in fostering discipline, teamwork, physical well-being and the all-round development of students.

The programme also featured cultural performances by students. The programme also included the felicitation of students for their achievements, recognizing their dedication and bringing attention to the importance of encouraging young talent.

YSS hosts U-17, U-19 Girls' Kurash Trial Selection under Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan

**HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, OCT 10**

The Department of Youth Services and Sports (YSS) Poonch today organised Inter-Zone District-Level Trial-cum-Selection Competitions for Under-17 and Under-19 girls in the discipline of Kurash and under the banner of the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan.

A total of 36 young female sportspersons from different zones of the district participated in the selection trials, demonstrating their sporting skills, enthusiasm and commitment to excellence.

The event aimed to identify talented players for further representation at higher-level competitions, while encouraging girls to actively participate in sports and physical activities.

Alongside the sports activities, various zones across District Poonch continued to organise programmes under the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan, with around 1,122 individuals taking part in anti-drug awareness initiatives. These activities highlighted the importance of sports, fitness and a healthy lifestyle in preventing substance



abuse and promoting a drug-free society.

The entire programme was conducted under the overall supervision of District Youth Services and Sports Officer Poonch, Mohd Qasim, with the guidance and coordination of

Activity In-charge Vijay Kumar Sharma.

The Department reiterated its commitment to promoting sports among young people, encouraging greater participation of girls in sporting disciplines and strengthening the ongoing

campaign against drug abuse through sports and awareness activities.

The initiative reflects the department's continued efforts towards building a healthy, active and drug-free society in District Poonch.

Archery Premier League: Prithviraaj Yodhas clinch stunning 'Sudden Death' win against Chero Archers

HYDERABAD, OCTOBER 10: The full extent of the Archery Premier League's thrill was witnessed on Day three of the second season as Prithviraaj Yodhas handed Chero Archers their first defeat in a match that required multiple 'Sudden Death' situations to decide the winner here on Saturday.

In the day's first match, Mighty Marathas finally registered their first win of the season by beating Chola Chiefs 6-0. In the third match, defending champions Rajputana Royals suffered back-to-back defeats as they went down against Kakatiya Knights, who received plenty of backing from the local crowd at People's Plaza on Necklace Road, as per a press release.

In what was the match of the day, and the season so far, Yodhas first had to make it 4-4 in regulation time by winning Set 4 against the in-form Archers. In the first tiebreaker – APL's unique hit-or-miss shootout – saw all four archers from both teams shoot outside the inner yellow ring, which registered as 'misses'. Then,



the match went into Sudden Death with one archer from each side alternating to decide the winner on an immediate hit-or-miss basis, and it was Mexican recurve star Matias Grande who nailed the inner-ring hit to win it for Yodhas in the third Sudden Death while Prithika Pradeep couldn't do the same for her side.

For Chero, Kumkum Mohod – featuring for the first time after her Asian Games golden run – hit some impressive arrows but it was not enough for their side.

"This is a very small target. A little bit of luck, it was a good shot. In the first season it was smaller, and this time, it is more achievable I think. We are happy with

the win. Honestly, it is a very special feeling, but it is not who gets the arrow to win the match, it is a team win," Grande said after the match.

The world's first franchise-based archery league, APL, is initiated by the Archery Association of India and comprises six teams and a total of 48 archers, with 36 Indians and 12 elite international stars. The league, taking place at People's Plaza in Hyderabad, will culminate on October 18 with the grand finale featuring the top four teams in the semifinals, followed by the title clash.

Earlier in the day, after losing both their opening matches, Mighty Marathas