



# Sindhu faces nemesis An Se-young, Lakshya gets Chou test at Denmark Open

**ODENSE (DEN-MARK), OCT 12:** Two-time Olympic medallist P V Sindhu faces a daunting opening-round challenge against world No.1 and defending champion An Se-young as she sets out to lead the Indian challenge through a tricky draw at the USD 950,000 Denmark Open Super 750 tournament beginning here on Tuesday.

In the men's event, Lakshya Sen too has a tough one at hand as he takes on third seed Chou Tien Chen. Sindhu, a former world champion, arrives in Denmark with mixed recent results, having won the Japan Open Super 750 title in July before reaching the quarter-finals of last week's Arctic Open, where she went down fighting against Thailand's Ratchanok Intanon in three games.

What the 31-year-old would be concerned about is the fact that she has lost all her 10 previous clashes against An.

In men's singles, Lakshya will be keen to rediscover his best form after an underwhelming Asian Games individual campaign. His fortunes have oscillated wildly in the past two years.

Lakshya had finished runner-up at the All England Championships for the second time earlier this year, four years after his first final appearance in



2022.

He is also the only Indian men's singles player to have reached an Olympic semi-final in 2024.

However, Lakshya has recently been hampered by a back injury. He defeated Japan's Kodai Naraoka during the quarterfinals of men's team event at the Asian Games but lost in the round of 32 in the individual competition.

He will have to find his best form when he takes on Chou, who had beaten Ayush Shetty in three games at the Asian Games.

Ayush, meanwhile, will look to build on his breakthrough performances. The Indian won the US Open Super 300 title in 2025 and made headlines at this year's World Championships by stunning the then world No. 1 Shi Yuqi.

He faces Indonesia's Alwi Farhan, who defeated him in the pre-quarterfinals of the World Championships. Kidambi Srikanth, who returns to the tournament where he won the men's singles title in 2017, opens against France's Arnaud Merkle.

India's women's singles challenge also includes Tanvi Sharma, Ashmita Chaliha, Devika Sihag and Unnati Hooda.

Tanvi, who opens against Japan's Natsuki Nidaira, won her maiden BWF World Tour title at the Taipei Open in August. Ashmita, up against Bulgaria's Kaloyana Nalbantova, also arrives as a tour-level champion after winning the Korea Masters Super 300 in August.

Devika will cross swords with eighth seed Pornpawee

Chochuwong of Thailand, while Unnati takes on China's Han Qian Xi.

Unnati impressed at the Asian Games last month, reaching the quarterfinals after beating a top-10 opponent before pushing Japan's Akane Yamaguchi to three games.

In men's doubles, former world No. 1 pair of Satwik-sairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty will look to bounce back from their shock first-round exit from the Asian Games.

The Indian duo won the Singapore Open Super 750 title in May, ending a two-year wait for a tournament crown, before claiming the China Masters title last month.

The fifth seeds will open against China's He Ji Ting and Ren Xiang Yu. Treasa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand will spearhead India's women's doubles challenge after winning a historic bronze at the World Championships in August.

They reached the Asian Games quarterfinals before losing to Malaysia's Pearly Tan and Thinaah Muralitharan.

At Denmark, they open against Chinese Taipei's Yan Fei Chen and Hsieh Pei Shan.

Rutaparna Panda-Sweta-parna Panda is the other Indian pair in the draw and faces sixth seeds Bao Li Jing and Cao Zi Han of China.

# Ravya Raaj Sharma Wins Gold, Two Silver Medals at National Swimming Championship

**HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS JAMMU, OCT 12**

Ravya Raaj Sharma, daughter of Dr Rahul Sharma, has brought laurels by winning one gold and two silver medals at the 3rd Strategic Swimming National Championship held in New Delhi on October 10, 2026.

Competing in her age category, Ravya delivered an impressive performance in three events: 50-metre partner freestyle, 50-metre freestyle plus breaststroke, and 50-metre freestyle plus backstroke.

The championship was organised by the Strategic Swimming Federation of India, which is affiliated with the World Strategic Swimming Federation (WSSF).

Her achievement reflects her dedication, discipline



and passion for swimming. International Delhi Public School has encouraged her sporting journey, while her coach, David Sandhu, has

played an important role in nurturing her talent and helping her progress professionally.

Ravya's remarkable per-

formance has brought pride to her family, school and coach, marking another milestone in her sporting journey.

# Bandipora, Ganderbal advance to U-17 Football Championship Final after high-intensity Knockout Battles

**BARAMULLA, OCTOBER 12:** Bandipora and Ganderbal have qualified for the grand finale of the ongoing UT-Level Inter-District Football Competition for Under-17 Boys after an action-packed fourth day featuring fiercely contested quarter-final and semi-final encounters at different venues across Baramulla.

The championship is being organised by the Directorate of Youth Services and Sports, J&K, under the supervision of Anuradha Gupta, Director General, Youth Services and Sports, J&K, and hosted by the Department of Youth Services and Sports, District Baramulla.

The day witnessed remarkable performances, close contests and intense competition as the participating teams battled for places in the semi-finals and the coveted final.

At Synthetic Turf, Azad Ganj, Baramulla, Poonch defeated Kishtwar by 3-2 in a closely fought encounter to secure a place in the semi-finals. In the second quarter-final at the same venue, host district Baramulla registered a narrow 1-0 victory over Budgam, advancing to the last four.

At MET Ground, Sopore, Bandipora edged past Srinagar by 1-0 to book its semi-final berth, while Gan-



derbal delivered a convincing performance against Kupwara, securing a 3-1 victory to complete the semi-final lineup.

The semi-finals produced two thrilling contests, with both finalists emerging victorious through penalty shootouts after fiercely competitive encounters.

At MET Ground, Sopore, Bandipora faced Poonch in the first semi-final. After the match was decided by a penalty shootout, Bandipora prevailed 5-3 on

penalties, securing its place in the championship final.

In the second semi-final at HSS Hadipora, Ganderbal overcame host district Baramulla in another closely contested battle. Ganderbal won 5-4 on penalties to earn the second and final berth in the title clash.

Mushtaq Ahmad Pampori, District Youth Services and Sports Officer (DYSSO), Baramulla, congratulated both Bandipora and Ganderbal on qualify-

ing for the final. He extended his best wishes to the two teams and expressed hope that the concluding encounter would showcase the highest standards of sportsmanship, discipline and competitive spirit.

The grand finale of the championship is scheduled to be played tomorrow at St. Joseph's School Ground, Baramulla, where Bandipora and Ganderbal will compete for the Under-17 Boys' UT-Level Football title.

# West Indies had a plan for me, but I had to play better than that: Abhishek Sharma

**INDORE, OCT 12:** India opener Abhishek Sharma said he had to find ways to counter the West Indies' plans against him after smashing a 30-ball 69 to power India to a 14-run win in the third T20I here.

India took a 2-1 lead in the five-match series with Abhishek's quickfire knock, his 108-run stand for the second wicket with Ishan Kishan (37), and Arshdeep Singh's 3/44 setting up the victory in the third game here on Sunday.

Abhishek said the West Indies opening with off-spinner Roston Chase and their field placement on the off side prompted him to explore more scoring options.

"I wouldn't say it was deliberate, but it was there in my mind that they had a plan against me," Abhishek told reporters after the match when asked about his off-side strokes.

"(With the) off-spinner bowling against me, it was just a battle between him and me. I gave him respect in the first over because he is bowling really well in this series, so it is just the plan that went pretty well for me as well." "...because in the powerplay, I was trying to just get a few runs and they had a plan for me, and I had to play better than that," said Abhishek, who smacked six fours and five sixes in his innings.

He added, "I don't think and play deliberately. It just happens when I see the field placement, whenever they have a field placement which allows me to just give myself room and play those shots."

India restricted the West Indies to 209 for seven after being bowled out for 223. Abhishek said India wanted to be ruthless against the Caribbean side.



"West Indies is such a team that you can never say that the match is now on our side. This was on our mind because we saw in the last match that whichever batsman comes in, (with) the conditions that we have here, it is very easy for them to take the match to their side." "So that was in our mind even when we were losing wickets, we were saying that we would be ruthless thereon and we will not give them a single chance to come back," he said.

"The way (Shamar) Springer batted, I was really surprised by the way he played those shots; those weren't easy shots. You have to be ready all the time, (even) if they are at 50/5 as well, I think they have that capability to turn things around for themselves. In that case we were very much prepared this time."

Abhishek backed his Punjab teammate Naman Dhir, who claimed 2/39, to do well for India in the coming years.

"I've seen him from Under-14 days so I know how well he can bowl. You have to just tell him the plan; probably a bowler doesn't think too much at that moment when he has got hit for two sixes back-to-back." "We wanted to delay him a bit and wanted him to just bowl the best ball, that is his off spin. But I think the way he is bowling, he is going to do really well for India in the next few years as well." Abhishek said he would like to see Kishan more relaxed when he comes out to bat.

"... he doesn't laugh that easily while batting so I have to (first) make him laugh and relax him a little because he likes to be in that zone when he comes to bat," Abhishek said.

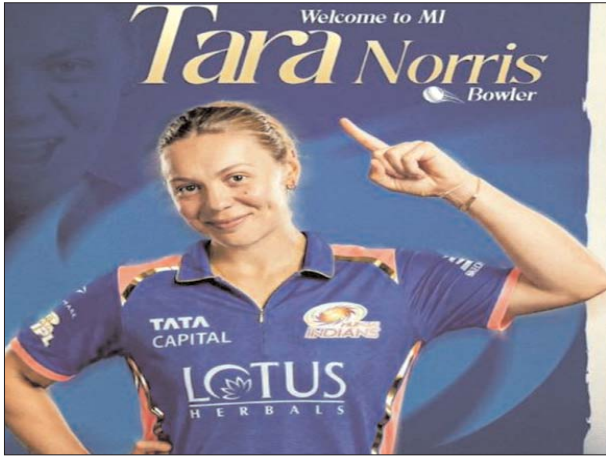
"But I feel there is a bonding between the two of us, we have had so many partnerships even in IPL. We understand each other pretty well and whenever Ishan comes in when one wicket is down, (initially) that little (amount of) pressure is there." "I always

want him to be released from that, and (that he) just plays the way he always plays and the way he has been doing for the past year it's just... we don't talk much about the conditions and everything when we are out there, we just enjoy each other's batting and just compliment each other, that's it," Abhishek added.

Reiterating the importance of preparation against bowlers, Abhishek said his role is to make the most of the powerplay.

"The preparation is really important. I feel personally, for me, if I want to just continue playing like this and that is the plan for the team," he said.

"If I just utilise the powerplay and if I want to continue (doing) that, the preparation really matters. It always depends on the teams and the bowlers I am going to face. Whenever I have time, it is very specific whichever bowler is going to plan (against me) and how I am going to execute my plan," Abhishek added.



**MUMBAI (MAHARASHTRA) [INDIA], OCTOBER 12 :** Mumbai Indians (MI) have acquired USA left-arm seamer Tara Norris from UP Warriorz (UPW) in a trade at her base price of INR 10 lakh ahead of the 2027 Women's Premier League (WPL) season.

Norris represented Delhi Capitals in the inaugural WPL season in 2023, where she became the first bowler in the tournament's history to claim a five-wicket haul. She returned figures of 5 for 29 against Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) at the Brabourne Stadium, dismissing the likes of Ellise Perry, Heather Knight and Richa Ghosh.

UP Warriorz signed Norris at the mega auction

ahead of the 2025 season, but she subsequently withdrew from the tournament to represent the USA in the Women's T20 World Cup Qualifier.

Norris' inclusion will give Mumbai Indians the flexi-

bility to field five overseas players in their playing XI, as players from Associate nations are exempt from the usual overseas-player limit.

The move will also mark her second stint with an MI

franchise, having represented MI London in the Women's Hundred earlier this year. In six appearances for MI London, Norris claimed four wickets at an economy rate of 7.83.

At Mumbai Indians, Norris will reunite with new head coach Luke Williams, having been part of the Southern Brave squad in the 2021 edition of The Hundred, when Williams served as an assistant coach to Charlotte Edwards.

Besides Norris, MI's pace-bowling options include Shabnim Ismail, Nat Sciver-Brunt, Amanjot Kaur and Nicola Carey. The franchise has won two titles in the WPL's first four seasons. (ANI)