

# Gill era begins as India face Afghanistan in transition Test

**MULLANPUR:** A new era in Indian Test cricket begins today, June 6 as a Shubman Gill-led side steps into a transition phase, taking on Afghanistan in a one-off Test at the Maharaja Yadavindra Singh International Cricket Stadium in Mullanpur.

The match, which falls outside the ICC World Test Championship cycle, marks India's return to red-ball cricket after a break since November last year and comes at a time when the team is undergoing a generational shift with senior players Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma rested.

For Gill, the series represents an early test of leadership as he looks to consolidate his position as India's long-term Test captain while guiding a relatively young and reshaped squad. India have used the fixture to widen their bench strength, offering opportunities to several emerging players alongside established

names. India's batting line-up is expected to be anchored by KL Rahul



and Yashasvi Jaiswal at the top, followed by Sai Sudharsan, Gill, and Rishabh Pant in the middle order. The lower order features all-round options in Washington Sundar and Nitish Kumar Reddy, giving the side considerable depth even in the absence of senior stalwarts.

Gill comes into the contest in

strong form, having amassed 983 runs in nine Tests in 2025 at an average of 70.21. His prolific run included a historic 269 at Edgbaston, underlining his growing stature in the longest format.

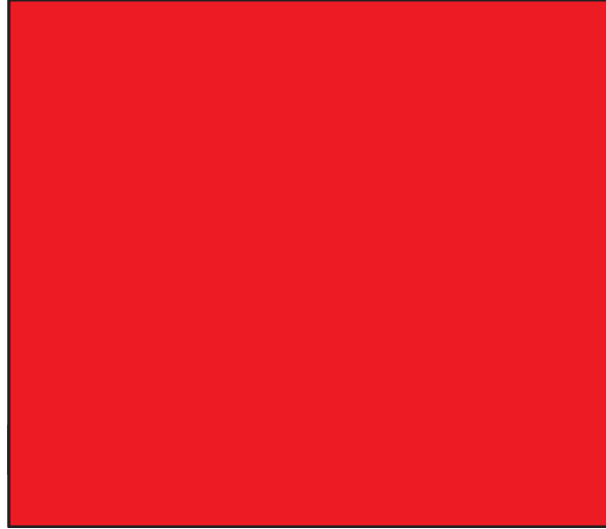
Afghanistan, led by Hashmatullah Shahidi, arrive with limited experience in Test cricket but with a core group that has shown flashes of resilience. Rahmat Shah remains their most reliable batter in the format, while Rahmanullah Gurbaz brings an aggressive edge at the top of the order.

However, Afghanistan's challenge is compounded by the absence of key spinners Rashid Khan and Mujeeb Ur Rahman from the Test setup, placing added responsibility on Qais Ahmad to lead the attack. Supporting bowlers Bilal Sami, Saleem Safi, Sharafuddin Ashraf and Nangyal Kharotai will need to work collectively to contain a strong Indian batting line-up.

## SAFF Women's C'ship

### India and B'desh clash again in final

**MARGAO:** Hosts India and defending champions Bangladesh will lock horns in the final of the SAFF Women's Championship 2026 at the Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium here in Goa today, June 6 in what promises to be a fitting conclusion to the tournament.



## French Open

### Henry Patten & Harri Heliövaara reach final

**PARIS:** Britain's Henry Patten and Finnish partner Harri Heliövaara moved a step closer to their first French Open men's doubles trophy together as they booked their place in today's (June 6) final.

The pair are yet to drop a set in Paris and continued their perfect run with a 6-3, 6-4 win against French duo Quentin Halys and Pierre-Hugues Herbert to reach their first Roland Garros final. Victory means they are now guaranteed to secure the number one spot as a pairing in the world rankings.

"It means a lot to us," said Patten. "I wish it meant more to the wider tennis world, but to us it's everything that we work towards."

"I join a long list of other Brits who have also done it, so it's amazing to now be in their company and join them as an ATP world number one. It's an incredible achievement for me."

They will face either top seeds Marcel Granollers of Spain and Argentina's Horacio Zeballos or Italian fifth seeds Simone Bolelli and Andrea Vavassori for the title, according to BBC Sport.

## Nasser Hussain predicts semi-finalists

**LONDON:** Former England captain and highly-respected commentator Nasser Hussain has revealed the teams he believes are best placed to feature in the semi-finals of the upcoming ICC Women's T20 World Cup.

Hussain dissected the T20 World Cup on the latest episode of The ICC Review and the pair agreed that this year's edition of the 20-over showcase looks the most open ever.

Hussain stuck his neck out and suggested six-time champions Australia, tournament hosts England, reigning ICC Women's Cricket World Cup winners India and reigning title holders New Zealand would be the four teams most likely to reach the knockout stages.

## FIFA World Cup Nagelsmann looks to restore glory for Germany

**MADRID:** Germany heads to the World Cup looking to move beyond the disappointments of 2018 and 2022 while a resilient Ecuador side that proved throughout qualifying it gives nothing away will provide a stern test to its Group E rivals.

Cote d'Ivoire also possesses enough quality to trouble any opponent, while Curacao is shaping up as one of the tournament's potential Cinderella stories.

Germany enters the World Cup looking to restore its reputation after group-stage exits in 2018 and 2022.

Former England striker Gary Lineker once said football was a game of 11 against 11, and in the end, the Germans win. However, that was not the case in the last two World Cups.

Coach Julian Nagelsmann now has the task of guiding Die Mannschaft back toward its old standards.

There were signs of progress at Euro 2024, where Germany pushed eventual champion Spain to extra time. Although it lost its opening World Cup qualifier to Slovakia, Germany recovered to win its next five matches, scoring 16 goals.

## Atgaon interlocking work to impact railway traffic

**BHUSAWAL:** Central Railway's Mumbai division will undertake a special traffic and power block between Asangaon and Thansit stations from 2 pm today, June 6 to 3 am on June 7 for commissioning a new electronic interlocking system and dismantling the old panel at Atgaon station.

The block will be carried out on the up and down North-East lines between Asangaon and Thansit stations, excluding both stations. As a result, several train services will be cancelled, short-terminated, rescheduled, diverted or regulated.

Among the major cancellations

today, June 6 are the CSMT-Dhule Express (11011), Dhule-CSMT Express (11012), CSMT-Manmad Panchavati Express (12109) and Manmad-CSMT Panchavati Express (12110). The Hazur Sahib Nanded-CSMT Express and Hingoli Deccan-CSMT Janshatabdi Express will be short-terminated at Manmad and Nashik Road respectively, while their return services will originate from those stations.

Several long-distance trains, including the Mumbai-Howrah Mail, Amritsar Express, Mahanagri Express and Kushinagar Express, will be rescheduled. A number of trains,

including the Kamayani Express, Dadar-Gorakhpur Special, Panvel-Gorakhpur Express and Devgiri Express, will be diverted via alternate routes through Pune. Railways have also announced regulation of several up-direction trains, resulting in delays ranging from 20 minutes to nearly two hours.

To assist affected passengers, alternative travel arrangements will be made for Mumbai-bound travellers whose trains are short-terminated at Nashik Road and Manmad. Special reservation counters will facilitate ticket refunds, while help desks will be set up at concerned stations.

## Govt announces major reforms to boost foreign investment

**NEW DELHI:** The Central Government on Friday announced a series of reforms aimed at attracting greater foreign investment into India's equity and government securities markets, while strengthening the country's position as a leading global investment destination.

The measures, announced by the Ministry of Finance, are expected to make investment in Indian markets easier, improve market access for overseas investors and encourage long-term foreign capital inflows.

As part of the reforms, individual Persons Resident Outside India (PROIs) will now be allowed to invest in equity instruments of listed Indian companies through the Portfolio Investment Scheme, a facility that was earlier available only to Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) and Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs).

The government has also increased the investment limit for an individ-

ual PROI from 5 per cent to 10 per cent in any listed company. The overall investment limit for all such investors has been raised from 10 per cent to 24 per cent.

According to the Finance Ministry, the move will simplify investment procedures, reduce compliance requirements and help attract a wider pool of foreign investors to Indian equity markets.

In another significant decision, the government has expanded the list of government securities available under the Fully Accessible Route (FAR) by including new issuances of 15-year, 30-year and 40-year government bonds, along with Sovereign Green Bonds in eligible tenors.

The government has also eased investment norms for Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) in government securities by removing restrictions related to short-term investments, concentration limits and security-wise investment limits.

