

Shreyas replaces SKY as India's new T20I captain

NEW DELHI: Out of the national T20I set-up since December 2023, star batter Shreyas Iyer has been appointed as India's new T20I captain, replacing two-time World Cup winner Suryakumar Yadav, who has been dropped from the squad for the upcoming series in Ireland and England.

The selectors have also handed a maiden senior call-up to 15-year-old batting sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi as they begin building towards the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics and the next T20 World Cup.

Tilak Varma has been elevated to vice-captain, replacing Axar Patel in the leadership group.

Apart from Iyer and Sooryavanshi, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Ravi Bishnoi and Prince Yadav have also been

included in the squad. Rinku Singh and Kuldeep Yadav



miss out, while Hardik Pandya and Jasprit Bumrah have been rested.

The Ireland and England tour marks India's first T20I assignment since Suryakumar led the side to a successful defence of the T20 World

Cup title in March. However, with the next T20 World Cup



scheduled for 2028, the selectors have opted to move in a different direction.

"We've seen what he's done over last few years, leading different franchises," chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar said in Mumbai on Saturday. "He won the IPL title once, had a tougher season this year after a great start. He's seen everything that a captain possibly can.

Agarkar said Tilak Varma's consistent performances in T20Is over the last two years earned him the vice-

captaincy. "Shubman Gill was vice-captain leading into the T20 World Cup. When we made a call to have two wicketkeepers, he missed out. Then Axar was vice-captain, replacing Gill. But like Shreyas, we're looking at what is best for the next two-year cycle. Tilak is firstly a terrific player, it gives him an opportunity to learn on the job as well in case the need arises," Agarkar explained.

India T20I squad for Ireland and England

Shreyas Iyer (capt), Abhishek Sharma, Sanju Samson, Ishan Kishan, Shivam Dube, Tilak Varma (vc), Nitish Kumar Reddy, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Varun Chakravarthy, Ravi Bishnoi, Mohammed Siraj, Harshit Rana, Arshdeep Singh, Prince Yadav, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi

Bumrah named in India's squad for Asian Games 2026

NEW DELHI: Jasprit Bumrah will return to India's T20 setup for the 2026 Asian Games after being named in a full-strength 15-member squad for the tournament in Japan later this year.

The premier fast bowler has been rested from the upcoming T20I tours of Ireland and England as India prioritise their ODI preparations ahead of the 2027 World Cup.

However, the selectors have included him in the squad for the Asian Games, underlining the importance of defending the gold medal won in Hangzhou in 2023.

Bumrah replaces Mohammed Siraj, who is part of the Ireland and England T20I squads.

Praggnanandhaa wins Norway Chess title

CHENNAI: Capping in a spectacular show which was punctuated with two wins against World champion Magnus Carlsen, Indian Grand Master R Praggnanandhaa won the Norway Chess 2026 title with a final round classical victory at Oslo in Norway, with 18 points in ten 10 Rounds.

The event concluded in Oslo late on Friday night with a dramatic final round, as Praggnanandhaa Rameshbabu delivered a decisive classical victory to claim the title.

Entering the round half a point behind Wesley So, Chennai lad Praggnanandhaa knew that a victory would put him in a strong position to overtake the leader.

Facing Vincent Keymer

with the white pieces, the Indian GM made the most of his opportunity and con-

Wesley So, who had led the tournament heading into the final day, drew



verted a crucial win.

The full 3 points lifted Praggnanandhaa to 18 points and secured first place, reports received here on Saturday said.

his classical game against Alireza Firouzja after a balanced encounter. Wesley later prevailed in the Armageddon game, collecting the extra points.

KL Rahul, Gill centuries put India in command against Afghanistan

MULLANPUR: A commanding unbeaten century from Shubman Gill anchored India's dominance as the hosts reached 368 for 3 on the opening day of the one-off Test against Afghanistan at the Maharaja Yadavindra Singh International Cricket Stadium here on Saturday.

Gill remained unbeaten on 103 at stumps, holding the innings together after earlier centuries from KL Rahul and a fluent 81 from Sai Sudharsan, while Rishabh Pant added an unbeaten half-century to further strengthen India's control.

India, after opting to bat first, overcame early pressure to build sustained dominance through partnerships across the innings. Afghanistan created occasional chances but were unable to maintain discipline or convert key moments in

the field, despite two unsuccessful reviews that added to their frustration.

The visitors' first wasted opportunity came when Yashasvi Jaiswal was given a



reprieve early in the innings after a thick outside edge off Azmatullah Omarzai flew between slip and gully, with Abdul Malik only managing a fingertip touch at gully as the ball raced away.

There was another close

call involving Sudharsan, who appeared in slight doubt while facing Nangyalya Kharote. After earlier leaving deliveries outside off stump, he tentatively pressed forward again and an outside edge flew low to first slip. Rahmanullah Gurbaz reacted late and could only get fingertips to the chance.

KL Rahul also had an early scare in his innings when he was beaten by a sharp delivery from Ziaur Rahman Sharifi while attempting a cut shot. There was a strong appeal for a catch behind, with visible conviction from the fielders, but the umpire turned it down and Afghanistan chose not to review immediately. Replays later suggested a faint deflection.

Brief Scores: India 368/3 (Gill 103*, Rahul 100; Saleem 2/67) vs Afghanistan

Women's U18 Asia Cup

India women's team clinches bronze medal

KAKAMIGAHARA (JAPAN): The Indian U18 women's hockey team secured the bronze medal at the Women's U18 Asia Cup 2026 after registering a commanding 3-0 victory over Korea in the bronze medal match here on Saturday.

Sandeepa Kumari (2'), Captain Sweety Kujur (16') and Nousheen Naz (33') were on target as India capped off their campaign with an impressive podium finish. Determined to bounce back from their narrow shootout defeat against China in the semi-finals, India made a dream start and took the lead within the opening two minutes.

Sandeepa Kumari (2') showcased excellent composure in front of goal, produc-

ing a brilliant finish to give India the breakthrough and set the tone for the contest.

India continued to dominate possession and create opportunities in the attacking circle. Their persistence paid off in the 16th minute when Captain Sweety Kujur (16') found the back of the net with a field goal to double India's advantage heading into the second quarter. With a comfortable two-goal cushion, India maintained control after the break and further extended their lead in the 33rd minute. The tournament's top scorer, Nousheen Naz (33'), added her name to the scoresheet with a clinical field goal, taking her tally to 12 goals in the competition.

Messi could return in Argentina warm-ups

BUENOS AIRES: Lionel Messi could feature in Argentina's World Cup warm-up fixtures as he recovers from a hamstring injury, Albiceleste manager Lionel Scaloni said.

Messi was diagnosed with muscle fatigue in his left hamstring while playing for Inter Miami in a 6-4 MLS win over Philadelphia on May 24.

Scaloni said the eight-time Ballon d'Or winner might be available for Saturday's friendly against Honduras in College Station, Texas, or its final preparatory game against Iceland in Auburn, Alabama, on Tuesday.

French Open

Zverev, Cobolli set up final

PARIS: Alexander Zverev moved within one victory of his long-awaited first Grand Slam title after reaching the French Open final, where he will face Italy's Flavio Cobolli in a clash guaranteed to produce a first-time major champion.

Second seed Zverev defeated Czech youngster Jakub Mensik 7-5, 6-2, 3-6, 6-3, while Cobolli advanced to his maiden Grand Slam final after compatriot Matteo Arnaldi withdrew shortly before their semifinal due to illness on Friday.

The most experienced player among the four semifinalists, Zverev reached the fourth major final of his career.

The German is still

chasing his first Grand Slam title after finishing runner-up at the 2020 US Open, 2024 French Open and 2025 Australian Open. Against 20-year-old Mensik, Zverev stayed composed in key moments. The opening set remained tight until the German broke in the 11th game before serving it out 7-5.

Zverev then took control in the second set with two breaks, before Mensik responded in the third to claim his first break of the match, according to Xinhua.

The German regained momentum in the fourth set, racing to a 3-0 lead before closing out the victory to return to the Roland Garros final for the second time in three years.

Govt expands G-Sec reforms to attract foreign capital

NEW DELHI: The government has unveiled a series of reforms aimed at significantly increasing foreign participation in India's government securities (G-Sec) market-- a move expected to deepen domestic debt markets, attract long-term capital and strengthen the country's position as a preferred global investment destination.

The reforms include sweeping tax exemptions for foreign investors, expansion of the Fully Accessible Route (FAR) framework and relaxation of several investment restrictions, reflecting the government's broader strategy to integrate India's financial markets more closely with global

capital flows.

Under the new tax regime, foreign institutional investors (FIIs) and foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) will no longer have to pay tax on interest income earned from government securities or on capital gains arising from their sale, transfer, exchange or redemption. The exemptions will apply to income generated on or after April 1, 2026.

Previously, interest income from G-Seecs attracted a 20 per cent tax, while short-term capital gains were taxed at up to 30 per cent and long-term capital gains at 12.5 per cent.

Officials said the tax relief is expected to improve

the attractiveness of Indian sovereign debt among global investors, particularly large institutional investors such as pension funds, insurance companies and sovereign wealth funds that typically seek stable long-term returns. The government believes greater foreign participation in the G-Sec market will create an additional source of financing for infrastructure, manufacturing, urban development and climate-related projects while improving liquidity and efficiency in the bond market. According to official data, FPIs held government securities worth Rs 3.75 lakh crore as of May 12, 2026, accounting for 3.34 per cent of the

outstanding G-Sec stock of Rs 112.42 lakh crore. The bulk of these investments, amounting to Rs 3.21 lakh crore, came through the Fully Accessible Route, representing 6.74 per cent of the securities eligible under the scheme.

Recognising the growing popularity of FAR among global investors, the government has expanded the list of securities available under the route. New issuances of 15-year, 30-year and 40-year government securities, along with sovereign green bonds issued in FAR-eligible tenors, will now be accessible without the investment restrictions applicable under the general route.

Govt fixes standard pack sizes for edible oils

NEW DELHI: The Department of Consumer Affairs has prescribed standard pack sizes for edible oils under the Legal Metrology framework to help consumers compare prices more easily and make informed purchasing decisions.

The department has revised its Standard Operating Procedure (SoP), providing manufacturers, packers and importers a three-month transition period to comply with the new norms.

The approved standard pack sizes are 200 ml/g, 500 ml/g, 1 litre/kg, 2 litre/kg, 3 litre/kg, 4 litre/kg, 5 litre/kg, 15 litre/kg and 20 litre/kg. The norms will apply to major edible oils, including palm, soybean, sunflower, mustard, groundnut, sesame, rice bran, cottonseed and corn oil, as well as blended oils.

Industrial policy surge faces challenges: IMF

NEW DELHI: Governments across the world are increasingly turning to industrial policy to strengthen strategic sectors, secure supply chains and boost economic resilience in the face of geopolitical and economic shocks, but the success of such interventions remains far from guaranteed, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

In a recent analysis, the IMF noted that industrial policy — government measures aimed at supporting specific industries and firms — has witnessed a sharp resurgence since the COVID-19 pandemic and has accelerated further

amid growing geopolitical tensions and recent conflicts in the Middle East.

The Fund said the number of industrial policy interventions introduced globally last year was 2.5 times higher than the average seen before the pandemic.

According to the IMF, governments are increasingly using targeted support measures not only to improve competitiveness and address climate challenges but also to enhance

supply-chain resilience, strengthen national security and reduce dependence on geopolitical rivals. This marks a significant shift in the objectives of industrial policy compared to the post-2008 period.

The report observed that more than 52,000 industrial policy interventions have been recorded across 75 countries since 2009, highlighting the growing role of governments in shaping economic outcomes and strategic industries.

Tata Steel UK targets restart of hot strip mill

MUMBAI: Tata Steel has officially informed the stock exchange that it plans to restart the Hot Strip Mill at its Pickle Line facility at its Port Talbot site in Wales, by the middle of next week, after a fire incident earlier this week.

Separately, Tata Steel UK Ltd stated that work has begun on a full assessment of the fire affected area.

The incident temporarily took the hot strip mill offline, and its teams plan to restart it by the middle of next week.