

From nearly quitting weightlifting to Olympics silver, Mirabai Chanu's

In India, when athletes choose their discipline, there's very little scientific process involved. In the case of Mirabai Chanu, silver medalist in women's 49kg weightlifting at Tokyo Olympics, it was no different. The youngest of six siblings living in Nongpok Kakehing, a village 45 km south of Manipur's capital Imphal, Mirabai displayed great strength as a kid. While picking firewood with her siblings, she used to lift a lot more than what her elder brother could. She didn't know about weightlifting at the time, but her mother saw the talent.

Mirabai wanted to be an archer but when she read about Kunjarani Devi, another iconic weightlifter from Manipur, the thought of being a weightlifter first crossed her mind. Her mother who was aware of her child's qualities instantly agreed and Mirabai's journey as a weightlifter began.

Given her strength at a young age, it all started well for the Manipuri weightlifter who shot to fame when she won a silver medal at the 2014 Commonwealth Games. Success at such an event at the international level propels an Indian athlete into the limeight and going into Rio Olympics she was considered a medal contender.

Rio heartbreak and battle with depression

But Mirabai couldn't live up to the expectations. In fact, she couldn't even complete the event. The failure almost became too much to take for the weightlifter who was just 21 at the time. Injuries didn't help her cause and post Rio she was depressed, contemplating quitting the sport.

"I kept thinking why I failed despite working so hard and was questioning myself. I was really disappointed and completely broken after Rio. I was so low that I had to seek the help of SAI psychologists," Mirabai had told reporters during an interaction before the Games.

"After talking to a psychologist I understood that it was my first Olympics and the pressure got to me. Slowly, I was able to focus on training again," Chanu added.

The comeback

Mirabai's problems weren't just mental and she knew she had a lot of work to be done. In the year after Rio, she got back to the drawing board. "I changed my train-



ing method, worked on my technique. In clean and jerk, we identified what part we needed to work on and strengthened that body part and movement," she said of the physical changes.

"Mentally, I tried not to take too much pressure on myself before competitions, and

treat the competition as different from training," she added.

It seemed to work. In 2017, Mirabai returned to the highest level, this time at the World Championships. Lifting 109 kgs in clean and jerk, the part which she had worked on, Mirabai stunned the world by winning gold and became the first Indian weightlifting champion in over 20 years.

After the setback at Rio, the world championship gold was a much-needed validation of her talent. There was no looking back after that. She turned the silver at the 2014 CWG into gold at the 2018 event with a total lift of 196kg.

At the 2019 World Championship, there was heartbreak again for Mirabai who finished fourth but this time her confidence didn't take a hit. Having previously overcome failures, Mirabai knew her way out of disappointments. In 2020, Mirabai bettered her World Championship mark of 201 kgs to lift 203 kgs in the national championships before pushing that to 205kgs at the Asian Championships where she won the bronze.

But in Tashkent, she did something that truly immortalised her in the sport's history. She lifted 119kgs in clean and jerk to set a world record. Mirabai was close to realising her full potential and there was just one final hurdle. The Olympics. A stage of her biggest disappointment.

Tokyo silver

But at Tokyo, Mirabai was relaxed and calm, a far cry from Rio where she was overcome by nerves. After a good performance in the snatch where she lifted 87kgs, her medal never seemed in doubt. She maintained her level in clean and jerk to win silver.

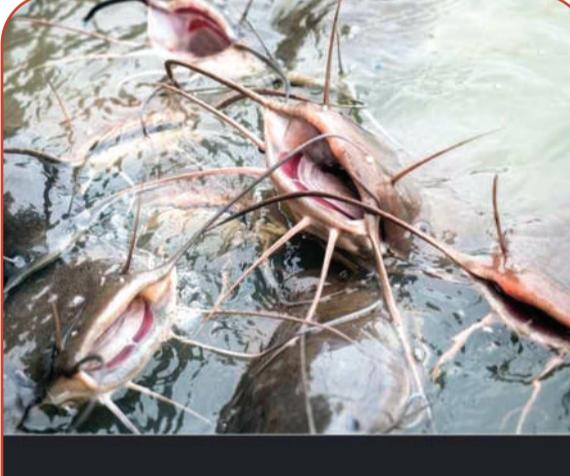
Her tale of redemption was complete. In five years, Mirabai had gone from heartbreak at Rio Olympics to almost quitting the sport to the Olympic podium. Mirabai always had the talent, something which even her mother had spotted at a young age, but the Manipuri weightlifter added the other necessary elements through sheer hard work to channelise her talent and ensure it was rewarded at the highest level. Every athlete that wins an Olympic medal is inspirational in one way or the other, but the contrast in Mirabai's two Olympic performances adds more credit to her remarkable turnaround.



Planarian worms are immortal & when cut in half, they will grow a new head or tail



50% of humans stop **growing** in height when they reach 16 years of age



Catfish have over 27,000 taste buds. Humans have around 7,000



The word **Astronaut** comes from the Greek words **astron nautes**, which means **star sailor**

THE FACT CORNER

BRAIN TEASERS

1 Q. Using only addition, how can you add eight 8s to get the number 1,000?

5 Q. I am an odd number. Take away a letter and I become even. What number am I?

2 Q. What 3 positive numbers give the same result when multiplied together as when added together?

6 Q. Peter is 54 years old, and his father Joe is 80. How many years ago was Joe three times the age of his son Peter?

3 Q. If you can purchase 8 eggs for 26 cents, how many can you buy for a cent and a quarter?

7 Q. There are several books on a bookshelf. If one book is the 4th from the left and 6th from the right, how many books are on the shelf?

4 Q. The ages of a father and son add up to 66. The father's age is the son's age reversed. How old could they be? (there are 3 possible solutions?)

8 Q. If it were two hours later, it would be half as long until midnight as it would be if it were an hour later. What time is it now?

6. 5 men, 10 children and 20 women.
5. 8.
4. 10 lbs.

3. Gordon 64 and Tony 48.

SOLUTIONS: 1. Thursday.
2. 40 socks.
3. Gordon 64 and Tony 48.

English Proverbs and Meanings

* **Let well alone.**
Do not interfere with something that is functioning properly or a calm situation.

* **Liars need good memories.**
People who do not tell the truth must be careful to remember what they say.

* **Loose lips sink ships.**
Disclosing important information (to the enemy or a competitor) could result in large losses.

* **Learn to walk before you run.**
Don't rush into doing some

thing until you know how to do it.

* **Beauty is only skin deep.**
A person's character is more important than their appearance.

* **Little strokes fell great oaks.**
If you divide a task into small parts, it becomes easier to do.

* **Least said soonest mended.**
The more discreet you are, the less damage you cause.

* **Let bygones be bygones.**
Let's forgive and forget past.

Pumpkin Flower Pakoda



Ingredients:
2 handfuls pumpkin flower
1/2 teaspoon sugar
4 cup mustard oil
200 gm gram flour
3 green chili
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon turmeric

8 cup water
2 onion
pumpkin flower as required
Method
Firstly, wash carefully all of the pumpkin's flowers and after that, cut them horizontally. After that, you need to soak all the flowers properly for some time. After soaking them, keep in a pot for later use. Secondly, peel the onions and cut them in round slices. After the onions, cut the green chillies properly. Thirdly, take a pot and take besan in the pot. Then mix six cups of waters with gram flour. Also mix baking soda, sugar, chilli, and turmeric with it. Mix it properly with your hand. Rub it properly for around 1-2 Minutes. After 1-2 minutes you mix now the onions. Rub again it with your hand. Now, go into your kitchen and start your oven. Take mustard oil in your frying pan. Now add all of the pumpkin's flowers in the gram flour. And rub properly all of their cutting flowers. Pick one by one and drop in your frying pan. Fry all of the flower for around 30 seconds. Finally, Your Pumpkin's Flower Pakora is ready to serve.

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Cloud Bread



Ingredients:
1 egg
1/2 tablespoon sugar
1 ounce cream cheese
1 tablespoon cream of tartar

Method
To prepare this simple recipe, preheat oven at 180° C and line a baking tray with a silicon sheet. Beat egg white with cream of tartar in a bowl till stiff peaks form. Mix together cream cheese and egg yolks in another bowl, until well combined and smooth. Gently fold in egg white mixture till well combined. Divide the egg mixture into 8 equal portions and put on the prepared tray. Spread to about 1/2 inch thickness. Place the tray in the preheated oven and bake for 15-20 minutes or till golden brown in colour. Remove from the oven and cool on a wire rack. Serve or store in an airtight container in the refrigerator.