

Bucchi Babu Invitation Tournament

Paras slams ton; Abid, Kawal hit fifties as J&K gains vital 1st innings lead

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
CHENNAI: Sublimity, solidity, elegance and brilliance was on display as skipper Paras Dogra slammed a fabulous century after early hiccups, while Abid Mushtaq and Kawal Preet Singh scored magnificent fifties to guide Jammu and Kashmir gain a vital slender lead over Odisha in the ongoing Bucchi Babu Invitation Cricket Tournament, being organised by Tamil Nadu Cricket Association (TNCA) at SSN Chennai.

Replying to Odisha's first innings score of 314 runs,

J&K after losing early four wickets, rode on a batting brilliance from the trio of Paras Dogra, Abid Mushtaq and Kawal Preet Singh to score 330 in 86.5 overs, thus gaining a slender 16-run lead.

Paras scored 141 runs off 218 balls, studded with 15 fours and 4 sixes, while Abid once again proved his all-round ability by scoring 71 runs off 101 balls with 6 fours and 2 sixes and Kawal Preet contributed 50 runs off 83 balls with 6 boundaries.

Syed Tuffel Ahammed was the most successful bowler,

who took 4 wickets by conceding 116 runs in 25.5 overs, while Govind Poddar bagged 3 wickets. Rajesh Mohanty and Piyush Panjgrahi claimed one wicket each.

Odisha, in the second essay were 6/1 in 4 balls at stumps on day-2. Opener OMT Munde was the baater to be dismissed by Umran Malik in the very first over.

Earlier, on day-1 put into bat, Odisha had managed to score 314 runs, with Rajesh Dhupar scoring 104 runs..

For J&K, left-arm spinners-- Vanshaj Sharma and Abid Mushtaq had taken 4

wickets each, while Umran Malik had taken 2 wickets.

"While top-order led to victory in earlier two matches, middle-order led by skipper Paras Dogra made merry with the bat to ensure first innings lead against Odisha. Masterly century by Dogra assisted by fine contributions from Kawal Preet and Abid were the other highlights. Well played," tweeted Member Administration JKCA, Brig Anil Gupta.

Cricket Operations JKCA, Mithun Manhas lauded the efforts of the team for its good show under unshakeable skipper.

‘His bat just kept getting wider’: Wood picks Rohit as toughest Indian batter

**■ AGENCY**  
LONDON: England pacer Mark Wood has picked Rohit Sharma as the most difficult Indian player he has bowled to in his career so far, saying his bat gives the impression of "getting just wider" when in full flow.

Wood, who has missed the intensely-fought five-match Test series against India at home due to a knee injury, is targeting a return to action with Durham in the County Championship in September ahead of the Ashes series this winter.

Speaking on The Overlap Cricket podcast, Wood gave his view on who have been the hardest batters he has faced while playing against India.

"Yeah, in different stages of my career, I would say Rohit Sharma. Difficult because against the short ball, you feel like you, for myself, I've got a chance of getting him out, but also if he's on that day, he smokes it.

"So, he was difficult. I always felt like his bat was big, just kept getting wider," Wood said.

Wood, one of the fastest bowlers in recent years with an ability to consistently bowl in excess of 145 kmph, also rates Virat Kohli and Rishabh Pant highly.

"Kohli, obviously. Unbelievable competitor, someone that I felt you have this weakness of fourth, fifth stump, drag him in. We seem to never miss him when I bowl him there. So, that was difficult," he said.

While Rohit and Kohli have retired from T20Is and Test cricket, both remain active in the ODI format.

Speaking about Pant, Wood highlighted the wicketkeeper-batter's fearlessness as his biggest strength.

"I think you've got to hold your nerve. That's basically what I would say. He can be so unpredictable that it plays into his hands. If you're the

same all the time, he's got such a good eye, he hits it where he wants. You need to mix it up with a slower ball, a high bounce; or a fast yorker," Wood said of Pant.

The pacer said he wants to turn out for Durham in red-ball matches to test himself before the team leaves for Australia for the Ashes starting November 21 in Perth.

"I'm hoping to play for Durham as there are a couple of games in September - so I'll try and play one or two of those," Wood told Betfair's Stick to Cricket podcast.

"The injury is alright. It was 50/50 whether I was going to make the India Test but I was bowling at Lord's and then, the next day, my knee swelled up again so I had it drained and since then it's just been about taking things easy looking ahead to the winter."

England are yet to name their Ashes squad but Wood is very much a part of their plans for the big tour.

Cabinet approves India’s 2030 CWG bid, says Ahmedabad ideal host with world-class stadiums

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
NEW DELHI: The union cabinet, headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Wednesday approved India's bid to host the 2030 Commonwealth Games, naming Ahmedabad as the "ideal" venue because of its "world class stadiums, cutting-edge training facilities, and a passionate sporting culture".

The decision comes days after the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) gave its nod to the proposal after a submission of the 'Expression of Interest' in March.

"The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved the proposal of the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports for submission of bid for the Commonwealth Games (CWG) 2030," stated a release from the Press Information Bureau.

"It also gave its approval to

sign the Host Collaboration Agreement (HCA) along with the required Guarantees from concerned Ministries, Departments and Authorities and sanction of required grant-in-aid to Gujarat Government, in case the bid gets accepted," the release added.

August 31 is the last date to submit the bid for the event and the IOA is expected to complete the formalities in the next 48 hours. India last hosted the CWG in 2010.

The General Assembly of Commonwealth Sport will decide the host country in the last week of November in Glasgow. India's chances of bagging the event have brightened as Canada has pulled out of the race citing budgetary constraints.

The PIB statement after the cabinet meeting stated that Ahmedabad would be the ideal host city for the Games.



Students during visit to Varanasi.

speakers, students explored leadership as a journey of self-awareness, empathy, and teamwork. Cultural presentations including Kathak, mime, and puppetry added to the enriching experience.

Arti Chowdhary, Managing

Director, KCPS, congratulated the participants, stating, "Such global opportunities foster confidence, creativity, and leadership in our students, preparing them to become responsible citizens of tomorrow."

Asia Cup hockey: Chinese Taipei, Bangladesh arrive to complete eight-team lineup

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
BIHAR: The Chinese Taipei and Bangladesh men's hockey teams landed here on Wednesday, completing the eight-team lineup for the upcoming Hero Asia Cup with the players exuding confidence of competitive performances in the continental showpiece event.

The event is set to commence on Friday with three-time winners India and defending champions South Korea likely favourites to lift the title. Pakistan and

Oman have pulled out of the tournament and have been replaced by Bangladesh and Kazakhstan.

Chinese Taipei, ranked 38th in the world, will be playing in the tournament only for the second time after making their debut in 2013.

Chinese Taipei have been drawn in Pool B alongside Korea, Bangladesh, and Malaysia. They will open their campaign against Korea on Friday, followed by matches against Bangladesh on Saturday

and Malaysia on September 1. "Playing in India, where hockey is followed so passionately, is a wonderful experience for all of us. Our focus will be to enjoy every match we play in this prestigious tournament while giving our absolute best on the field," said Chinese Taipei captain Chun-Yu Chang.

During the 2013 Asia Cup, Chinese Taipei had lost all their three pool matches to finish last in the group.

"It is a matter of great pride to represent our country, especially as this is only

our second appearance in the history of the Asia Cup. We want to make the most of this opportunity, learn from the challenges, and showcase the fighting spirit of our team," he added.

Bangladesh, ranked 29th in the world, are among the most regular sides in the competition's history, having featured in every edition of the Asia Cup since its inception in 1982.

This time around, Bangladesh have replaced Pakistan and will set their campaign in motion with the Pool B match against Malaysia on Friday.

Jodhamal Shines at Inter-School Youth Tech Fest Season-II

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: Jodhamal Public School announced its remarkable victory as the Overall Champion at the prestigious Inter-School Youth Tech Fest Season-II 2025, hosted by KC International School.

The fest brought together the brightest tech-savvy students from across the region, and Jodhamal emerged as the Best School with stellar performances in multiple categories.

The competition featured a wide range of events including Coding, Graphic

Designing, Tech Quiz, SMAQQ Academic Quiz Battle, Online Gaming, Innovation challenge etc. and many leading schools of Jammu province participated. Our students displayed outstanding creativity, technical knowledge, and teamwork throughout the fest.

Team of 37 young tech enthusiasts from Jodhamal participated and exhibited their technical and innovative skills and bagged numerous awards in various categories - E-Card Design - 3rd( Agastya 7D), MS- Pant-1st (Yashasva Pathania

5C),Video Editing - 3rd( Agrim Grover and Sarthika Gupta Class 9), SMAQQ Academic Quiz Battle- Class 6 Advay Sharma (1st) and Sharavan Sharma (2nd),SMAQQ Class 7 Guransh Singh (3rd ), SMAQQ Class 10 Krishna (1st) and Mahit Singh (2nd) , Valorant Online Game - 2nd , Aarush, Ojas, Tanish , Saud Rizwan(class 12 )and Shaun Sharma (class 11).

Our school secured the highest cumulative points, earning the coveted Overall Champion Trophy, and bringing great pride to our studentsand

staff.

This victory is a testament to their talent, hard work, and the guidance of our dedicated faculty.

The Trustee, Nandan Kuthiala, Director, Arati Kuthiala, Principal , Dr. Deep Khare and Vice Principal, Amita Arora congratulated the team and their mentors Sheetan Pathania(HOD), Akriti Sethi and other faculty of Computer Department for their noteworthy achievement and encouraged the young minds to renovate their knowledge into skills for the future.

Gill, Rohit continue to top ODI batting chart

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
DUBAI: Indian batting mainstays Shubman Gill and Rohit Sharma continued to remain at the top of the rankings for ODI batters with Virat Kohli at number four, even as Australian players made big gains after feasting on South Africa in the recent series finale in Mackay.

Gill (784 rating points) and Rohit (756) held the number one and number two spot respectively with Pakistan's Babar Azam (739) rounding out the top three. Kohli has got 736 points.

The Indians have not featured in ODIs in recent months but Kuldeep Yadav (650) and Ravindra Jadeja (616) still remained static at number three and number nine in the latest ODI rankings for bowlers.

While Rohit and Kohli have retired from T20Is and Test cricket, both remain active in the ODI format.

Both Rohit and Kohli last played ODIs in February 2025 during the ICC Champions Trophy in the UAE, where they played pivotal roles in India's title-winning campaign.

Australia amassed an imposing 431/2 in the 50-over match at Mackay with a trio of their batters in Travis Head (142), Mitch



Marsh (100) and Cameron Green (118 not out) cashing in with a century.

All three made good ground on the rankings as a result, with Head gaining one place to move to equal 11th, Marsh jumping four rungs to move to 44th and Green rising a whopping 40 slots to be 78th.

Australian teammate Josh Inglis also made ground on the list, with the right-hander improving 23 spots to move to 64th as a result of his innings of 87 during the second match of the series against the Proteas.

The competition is tighter at the top of the rankings for ODI bowlers, with Sri Lanka spinner Maheesh Theekshana joining fellow tweaker Keshav Maharaj at the top on 671 rating points

following the completion of the series between South Africa and Australia.

Maharaj lost ground after picking up figures of 1/57 in the series finale, with his rating dropping equal with Theekshana even as the Sri Lankan spinner didn't feature across the week.

The biggest mover on the ODI rankings for bowlers came via Lungi Ngidi, with the South Africa speedster gaining six places to move to 28th following his series-high seven scalps across the three games against Australia.

Australia duo Sean Abbott (up nine places to equal 48th) and Nathan Ellis (up 21 spots to 65th) also made ground on the list for following some decent showings during the series with the Proteas.

FSD conducts food safety enforcement drives

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
SHOPIAN: The Food Safety department (FSD) Shopian conducted a targeted enforcement drive today across meat/mutton shops within the district.

The operation aimed at ensuring compliance with food safety and hygiene regulations, safeguarding public health, and curbing

violations in the meat/mutton trade.

During inspection, 09 FBOs (Food Business Operators) were compounded under section 69 of FSS Act for violations observed during the drive.

Four FBOs were recommended for action under the unsanitary conditions provisions of the Act in

the court of the Adjudicating Officer (ADC) under food safety.

Several shopkeepers were warned that continuing non-compliance would result in stricter consequences.

Shopkeepers were urged to maintain high standards of hygiene and adhere strictly to all regu-

latory provisions, besides they were also cautioned against hanging carcasses outside the shop, to maintain proper market hygiene and regulatory compliance.

The department reiterated its commitment to ensuring safe and wholesome meat products for consumers.

Non-compliance with food safety standards carries consequences under the FSS Act, 2006, and may lead to penalties, closures and other legal actions.

Consumers were encouraged to report any suspected food safety violations to help protect public health.

J&K Ball Badminton Association revises dates for Sub-Junior National Selection Trials

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
SRINAGAR: The Jammu & Kashmir Ball Badminton Association has announced revised dates for the "My Youth My Pride" Selection Trials and 21-day Residential Coaching Camp ahead of the 44th Sub-Junior National Ball Badminton Championship for Boys and Girls 2025-26, scheduled to be held in Dindigul, Tamil Nadu, from September 25 to 28, 2025.

According to the Association, the Selection Trials will now be conducted on August 29, 2025, at 2:00 PM at Gindun Sports Stadium, Raj Bagh, Srinagar. This will be followed by a 21-day Residential Coaching Camp from August 30 to September 19, 2025, at the same venue. Officials said the revision was made to provide young players another opportunity to participate, as previous trials witnessed comparatively low turnout. The step aims to ensure that more talented players from across the region get a chance to compete for national representation.

All district units of J&K UT Ball Badminton have been requested to submit entries by August 29, 2025, before 11:00 AM. Players may register by contacting the General Secretary at 9682365877 or through SMS/WhatsApp with their name, parentage, date of birth, and district.

Mandatory documents for participation include district-level and UT-level Ball Badminton certificates, two passport-size photographs, and both original and photocopy of age proof.

The Association has urged young players to take full advantage of this revised schedule and showcase their skills on the national stage.

World Para Athletics C’ships: Dharambir, Preeti named India’s flag bearers

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
NEW DELHI: Dharambir and Preeti Pal were on Wednesday named India's flag bearers for the upcoming World Para Athletics Championships as the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) unveiled the official team jersey here with 30 days to go for the event.

The championships, to be held in New Delhi from September 27 to October 5, will see a 73-member Indian contingent in action on home soil.

Dharambir, who won gold in the men's club throw F51 event at the Paris 2024 Paralympics, and Preeti, who clinched two bronze medals, will lead the contingent at the opening ceremony.

"Carrying the Indian

flag at this championship is a tremendous honour. After the experience in Paris, I am more motivated than ever to give my best and make the entire nation proud.

This new jersey will be a symbol of our unity and fighting spirit," he said.

Preeti added, "Winning medals at the Paralympics showed me the power of perseverance and belief. Wearing the team India jersey is a proud moment, and I am excited to compete on home ground and inspire the next generation of para athletes across the country."

The jersey launch was attended by tournament brand ambassador and actress Kangana Ranaut, PCI president Devendra Jhajharia, Paul

President Murmu felicitates Durand Cup champions NorthEast United FC

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
NEW DELHI: President Droupadi Murmu on Wednesday felicitated NorthEast United FC after their title triumph in the recently-concluded Durand Cup, Asia's oldest football tournament.

Murmu also presented the President's Cup -- one of the three iconic trophies awarded to the champions -- to the NEUFC team at the Rashtrapati Bhavan here.

Instituted in 1956 by India's first president Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the President's Cup has stood as a symbol of excellence and honour, reinforcing the tournament's deep ties with the nation's heritage.

The ceremony not only celebrated NEUFC's achievement but also highlighted the enduring legacy of the Indian armed forces in nurturing football and strengthening national unity.

The president handed over the trophy to NEUFC owner John Abraham, captain Redeem Tlang and CEO Mandar Tamhane in the presence of dignitaries and members of the Durand Football Tournament Society and the Durand Cup organising committee.

Speaking on behalf of the club, Abraham expressed his gratitude to the president for the recognition and lauded the Indian armed forces for their role in preserving the Durand Cup's legacy.

He particularly commended the Eastern Command for elevating the tournament to new heights and for their dedicated efforts in nurturing football talent across the east and northeast, thereby contributing significantly to the growth of Indian football.

The ceremony concluded with a commemorative group photograph of the president with the victorious team and the organising committees.