

Sports Ministry recommends shuttler Sindhu for Padma Bhushan



P V thanks Sports Ministry

NEW DELHI, SEP 25 /- Olympic silver medalist shuttler P V Sindhu has been recommended for the prestigious Padma Bhushan, country's third highest civilian award, by the Sports Ministry here on Monday. "Yes, we have recommended Sindhu for Padma Bhushan," a Sports Ministry official told PTI. A two-time bronze medalist at World Championships, Sindhu has been simply unstoppable ever since becoming the first Indian to win a silver at Rio Games last year. The 22-year-old from Hyderabad clinched the 2016 China Open Super Series Premier, India Open Super Series, bagged a historic silver at the Glasgow World Championship last month before laying claim to her third Super Series title at Korea Open this month. A

three-time Macau Open champion, Sindhu also won the Syed Modi Grand Prix Gold in Lucknow this year. Riding on a series of good performances, Sindhu achieved a career-best world ranking of number two in April for a brief period. Last week, she climbed back to her number two position, following a good week at Seoul. In 2014, Sindhu won four bronze medals at the Commonwealth Games, Incheon Asian Games, Uber Cup and Asia Championship. In March 2015, Sindhu was awarded India's fourth highest civilian honour, the Padma Shri. Elated at being nominated for the country's third highest civilian honour - Padma Bhushan - Rio Olympics silver medalist shuttler P V Sindhu on Monday thanked the Sports

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Ministry for the recommendation. The 22-year-old Sindhu now joins former India cricket team captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni as the second sports person to be nominated for the prestigious award this year. "I am very happy that my

name has been recommended for the Padma Bhushan. I would like to thank the government and the Sports Ministry," Sindhu said. The Hyderabad player was conferred the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award - the highest sporting honour in India - in 2016 and the Padma Shri in 2015. Sindhu, who was also a silver medalist at the World Badminton Championships in Glasgow last month, recently beat Japan's Nozomi Okuhara to become the first Indian shuttler to clinch the Korea Open Super Series title. Sindhu, who recently sealed to the No.2 spot in women's singles of the Badminton World Federation (BWF) rankings was, however, stunned by Nozomi in the pre-quarterfinals of the Japan Open Super Series last week. (PTI)

Bumrah, Bhuvni are best death bowlers around: Smith

INDORE, SEP 25 /- Australia skipper Steve Smith has described Jasprit Bumrah and Bhuvneshwar Kumar as currently the best death bowlers after his team suffered a five-wicket loss in the third ODI, here.

Opener Aaron Finch (124) had propelled Australia to 242/2 in 38 overs with his fiery century but the visitors struggled to score briskly in slog overs and settle for 293-6. India then overhauled the target without fuss to take an unassailable 3-0 lead in the five-match ODI series. "I think a mixture of guys making probably the wrong decisions on the wrong balls. Also, some pretty well executed bowling. I think Bumrah and Bhuvni are probably two of the best death bowlers going around, particularly when the wicket sort of slows up a little bit as it did," a dejected Smith said after the match. "We still need to find a way. We set a template really well. The first 30 overs were magnificent. We set it up and we just weren't to execute it in the back end." Bumrah and Bhuvneshwar never allowed Australian batsmen to score freely despite having the opportunity to play aggressive cricket. Smith said it has actually become a "trend" for his side to get closer to winning games but they end up losing them. "We are quite often

getting ourselves in good positions but not taking advantage of those. Today was no different, first 30 overs. We continually address it. It's just hard to put your finger on it what we are actually doing or not doing to get the results we are after. Today, it was about

pretty ordinary. Not good enough for an Australian cricket. We need to start turning the results around and winning some games of cricket," he said. Asked if such defeats are concerns for Australia, leading up to Ashes series, Smith said nothing is better than winning. "It's a different format but I'll certainly like to start winning some games of cricket in every format to be honest. Our results haven't been good enough and we need to turn them around," he said. "I probably thought our first probably 38 overs with the bat was very good. That was kind of the template we were trying to set. If we got to 330-340, which we probably should have done, things certainly could have been different."

He said it is difficult to say that things would have been different if they had played Adam Zampa instead of Aston Agar. "You can have an argument for that. I thought Ashton (Agar) bowled well at times. Probably a little full to (Hardik) Pandya at times. He was obviously sent out to attack him. I thought that was our best chance of getting him out while he was trying to go after him. He didn't execute his skills as well we would have liked. And when he did get it right, he bowled a bit wider, bowled a bit shorter. That wasn't our day (PTI)



execution," he said. The Australian captain admitted that it indeed becomes hard to motivate the team after such defeats. "It's always hard when you lose. Particularly when you lose three-ill. We've got to continue to try and motivate them and get them up for the next two games. We've got to start winning games of cricket. We've lost 13 of the last 15 games we've played away with two being no results. That's

not good enough and we need to start winning some games of cricket in every format to be honest," Smith told reporters. "It's pretty ordinary. Not good enough for an Australian cricket team and we need to start turning the results around and winning some games. It's been a bit of a trend for this format and the Test format as well. We're quite often getting ourselves into good positions and we're not taking advantage of those and to-

Ravindra Jadeja dropped, Axar Patel returns for last 2 ODIs

NEW DELHI, SEP 25 /- Team India is having a whale time after sealing the five-match ODI series against Australia with an unassailable 3-0 lead. They still have two more ODIs to go and BCCI have announced the 15-member squad for the matches in Bengaluru and then in Nagpur. Well, to wit, left-arm spinner Axar Patel returns to the squad after staying on the sidelines for the last three matches owing to an ankle injury. Ergo, Ravindra Jadeja has been dropped, who was in fact, called forth owing to the former's injury. The rest of the squad remains the same. Shikhar Dhawan still remains at home and will miss out on the remainder of the campaign. It seems, Team India now have nine successive victories in ODIs under Virat Kohli's captaincy and with Indore victory they have momentarily reclaimed the No. 1 spot on the ICC ODI Team rankings chart.

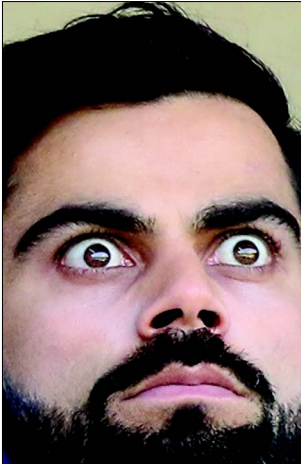
Steve Smith laments 'pretty ordinary' record in 2017

MELBOURNE, SEP 25 /- Steve Smith has said his side's record in 2017 is unacceptable for an Australian cricket team in the wake of the one-day international series loss to India. Australia's five-wicket defeat in Indore saw them fall 0-3 behind in the five-match series, and was their 11th loss in their past 13 ODIs away from home. The other two 1-0 of the last 15 games we've played away with two being no results. "That's not good enough and we need to start winning some games of cricket in every format to be honest," Smith told reporters. "It's pretty ordinary. Not good enough for an Australian cricket team and we need to start turning the results around and winning some games. It's been a bit of a trend for this format and the Test format as well. We're quite often getting ourselves into good positions and we're not taking advantage of those and to-



day was no different." Australia have won just three out of 17 matches across all three formats since the ODI series victory at home against Pakistan in January. Smith's men will be keen to break their win drought, mindful that an ODI series whitewash away to South Africa last year preceded the 1-2 Test series defeat against the same opponents on home soil. "It's always hard to take when you lose," Smith said. "As a captain, you've got to continue to try and motivate them and get them up for their next two games. We continually address it and it's just hard to put the finger on exactly what it is we're doing or not doing to get the results we're after." The fourth ODI is in Bengaluru on Thursday.

Kohli urges high-flying India to be 'ruthless'



NEW DELHI, SEP 25 /- Captain Virat Kohli has called on his players to be "ruthless" after the crushing one-day series win over Australia took India top of the world one-day rankings to add to their number one Test status.

A five-wicket win in the third game of the five-match series on Sunday gave India an unassailable 3-0 lead over Steve Smith's Australia.

It also stretched India's winning streak to a record 12 matches across all formats. Kohli's side has been on a roll for the past year since regaining the number one Test spot with a 3-0 home whitewash of New Zealand. The in-form captain has led from the front with 1,137 runs in 21-50 matches this year, ahead of South Africa's Faf du Plessis as the highest one-day scorer in 2017. Kohli praised his team after the latest win against the once mighty Australians, who have been outplayed in India. Smith's team also lost a Test series 1-0 in India this year. "Credit to the whole squad for the series win, but the journey stops only after the final game," said Kohli, the top ODI and T20 batsman in the International Cricket Council (ICC) ratings. "We may give opportunity to other players from now, but all 15 guys know that we got to be ruthless once we step onto the field." Kohli added. The series has seen new Indian stars emerge, with all-rounder Hardik Pandya and left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav making an instant impact. While Pandya's crucial 76 led the team's run chase in Indore, Yadav impressed with his maiden hat-trick in the second international. However, legendary spinner Bishan Singh Bedi believes India have not been tested by opposition teams, hearing the Champions Trophy final in June against Pakistan which they lost by 180 runs. India won 13 of their 15 Tests on home soil in the 2016-17 season and then went on to rout hosts Sri Lanka over nine games in all three formats. "Realistically speaking Indians are not even fielding their best XI and beating the opposition hands down, whether it is Sri Lanka or Australia," Bedi said. "We are loving the ratings, but if we are a little more pragmatic then you will realise that the Indian team in the last year or so haven't been stretched by the opposition. "Just that one game in the Champions Trophy final against Pakistan, other than that we have not seen them in a tight situation.

Rain threat looms large over fourth ODI

BENGALURU, Sep 25 /- Rain threat looms large over the fourth ODI between India and Australia in Thursday with the weathermen predicting spells of thundershowers in the next 24 to 48 hours. In the last 24 hours, many parts of the city had witnessed heavy rain with the met department recording a 54 mm of rainfall. As per weathermen, good rains of moderate to heavy intensity will continue in next 24 to 48 hours. The curators at the Chinnaswamy Stadium are taking every step to keep the pitch dry to avoid a shortened game. The stadium, however, has a cutting-edge technology to deal with wet conditions. The technology helps umpires to resume the match quickly even after heavy rain. Rains have been chasing both India and Australia. In Kolkata, both teams had to practice indoors. Indore, where last ODI was played, also had witnessed inclement weather, but fortunately, rains played truant. Rain also had interrupted the match at Chennai for two hours which forced umpires to reduce the match to 21 overs. India have already take an unassailable 3-0 lead in the five-match series with the victory in Indore yesterday. Upon their arrival later in the day, both teams are not expected to train.

U-17 World Cup a 'morale booster' for young footballers: Vijayan

KOCHI, SEP 25 /- India becoming a venue for the U-17 FIFA World Cup is going to be a huge morale booster for the young and upcoming footballers, said Indian football legend IM Vijayan. "The very fact that our country is staging this mega event in itself is going to be a morale booster for the young (footballers). With Kochi becoming one of the venues, this is a great blessing for our youth as this is a great experience," Vijayan told the media. Lauding KP Rahul, the only Keralaite in the India U-17 World Cup squad, Vijayan said, "He is really talented and has been doing his best in all the opportunities that

he has got." Vijayan is one of the most decorated Indian footballers of the late Mohan Bagan, East Bengal, JCT Mills and Churchill Brothers, who donned the Indian team jersey 79 times, scored 40 goals in his international career spanning 15 years. He last played in 2004 for his home team Kerala Police. Vijayan, who also represented Mohan Bagan, East Bengal, JCT Mills and Churchill Brothers, was the first footballer to be nominated as the Indian Player on three occasions. Incidentally, both Vijayan and Rahul had from Kerala's Thirissur district. The Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium here, which is the venue for

eight matches, is fully ready with the first two matches scheduled to take place on October 7. All the tickets for these two matches have been sold out. Brazil will lock horns with Spain at 5 pm on the opening day. DPR Korea take on Niger in the second match to be played at this stadium with a total capacity of 41,000. The match will begin at 8 pm. Spain will play against Niger on October 10. DPR Korea will lock horns with Brazil at 8 pm on the same day. The winners of the first two matches will play on October 13. The quarter-final match will be played on October 22.

Warne cleared over actress assault allegation

LONDON, SEPT 25 /- Australian cricket legend Shane Warne said he was "shocked" to be accused of assaulting an adult entertainment actress in a London nightclub after he was cleared of all allegations. Spin wizard Warne, 48, was questioned but subsequently released without charge, police said. "I was shocked to read the media stories circulating earlier today concerning a false allegation of assault," said Warne in a statement. "I have fully co-operated with the police, and they have now had the opportunity of seeing CCTV and speaking to witnesses. The police has confirmed to me that I have been cleared of the allegation and that no further action will be taken. This is now the end of the matter." Actress and model Valerie Fox had posted pictures of an apparent eye injury in the early hours of Saturday with the caption "Proud of yourself? Hitting a woman? Vile creature. (AFP)

