

Rahul Bhatnagar replaces Injeti Srinivasin as Sports Ministry Secretary

HYDERABAD, OCT 12 /- India will be itching to bounce back from the thrashing they received in Perth when they take an edgy but resilient Australia in the series-deciding third and final T20 International here on Friday. India, who dominated Australia in the preceding ODI series, won the opening T20 comfortably before getting a rude shock in the second game. Despite the recent success India have had over Australia, Virat Kohli has maintained that the team from Down Under is always tough to beat. And with the thumping eight-wicket win over the hosts on Tuesday, Australia go into series decider with some serious momentum. India had a forgettable day at the Baraspara Stadium in all aspects of the department, the all-important toss. The highly-rated batsmen were found wanting against the bowlers in the first innings. Australian pacer Jason...

India eye improvement in series-decider

Behrendorf doing the bulk of the damage. Captain Kohli was out for a rare duck and he, along with the rest of the batting line-up, would be eager to make amends. India's new ball bowlers did alright in Guwahati but wrist spinners Yuzvendra Chahal and Kuldeep Yadav were taken to the cleaners by Moises Henriques and Travis Head, who shared a match-winning partnership of 109. Yadav especially bowled either too short or too full and the set batsmen did not have any difficulty in punishing the loose balls. However, the dew proved to be a factor with the ball not turning much in the Australian innings. Despite the hammering the spinners receive, it is unlikely that Kohli will make a change and bring in Axar Patel. Similar is the case in the pace department, which means veteran Ashish Nehra, who is set to announce his retirement in the next series, will sit out again. Australia did pull one...

back in the ODI series before eventually losing it 1-4. But the way they played on Tuesday, the same result and the same result was missing from their body language in the earlier games. David Warner has done so in the absence of regular captain Steve Smith, making optimum use of the resources at his disposal. Behrendorf made his job easier with a spectacular spell of swing bowling before Henriques rose to the occasion after being promoted to number three in the batting order. Leggie Adam Zampa, too played his part well with a twin strike in the middle overs and he would be expected to do the same tomorrow. While Warner has led effectively, he would surely love to be back among the runs after falling in the earlier two games. The pitch at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium is usually good for batting and fans will be expecting a run feast after...



Virat Kohli with his teammates during a practice session. File Photo

'Current team is one of the best in Indian football history'

BENGALURU, OCT 12 /- Praising India's qualification for the 2019 AFC Asian Cup, coach Stephen Constantine said the current team is one of the best in country's football history. "This is one of the best teams in the history of Indian football, if not the best," he told reporters after India beat Macau 4-1 in a qualifier match at Sree Kanteerava Stadium here on Wednesday night. India had thrashed Macau 4-1 in a Group A encounter which helped India to qualify for the Asian Cup for the fourth time. In 1964, India participated in the tournament for the first time and ended runners up. In 1984 and 2011, they crashed out in the group stage. Replying to a query, Constantine said he is extremely proud of the boys who had taken his demands earnestly, during training and practice sessions, before they qualified for the Asian Cup. "Thank my staff... everybody...

Kuldeep is a product of Kumble: Raina

MUMBAI, OCT 12 /- Praising Kuldeep Yadav for his recent exploits in international cricket, India discard Suresh Raina on Thursday said credit should be given to former head coach Anil Kumble for shaping the young spinner. "Kuldeep (Yadav) is doing very well and the credit goes to Anil Bhai (Anil Kumble). He worked really hard with him," Raina told reporters at an event here. "I was talking to him (Kuldeep) in the IPL and he always use to message Anil Bhai. He is the product of Anil Kumble. He (Kuldeep) has done well with (former Australian chinaman) Brad Hogg. He is the guy who will change everything in bowling department," he said. The 23-year-old chinaman from Kanpur was impressive in his debut Test series against Australia and also became the third Indian bowler to take a hat-trick in ODIs against the Aussies. The last series, Raina along with Olympian Kavita Raut launched the logo of Skechers Performance Go River Marathon which will be held on December 10. Raina has...

Nehra announces retirement, says always wanted to end on high

HYDERABAD, OCT 12 /- Veteran Indian pacer Ashish Nehra on Thursday decided to call time on his injury-ravaged career after next month's opening T20 against New Zealand at his home ground of Delhi, saying "it is always good to retire when people are asking why rather than why not." "I have spoken to the team management as well as the chairman of selectors committee that the game against New Zealand has come in Delhi. So it can't get bigger than retiring in front of your home fans where I played my first Ranji Trophy game 20 years ago," said Nehra. The 38-year-old has played 17 Tests, 120 ODIs and 26 T20 Internationals for the Indian national team. He has picked 44 Test wickets, besides 127 ODI and 34 T20 scalps. He could have played a lot more for the constant injuries. Nehra made his latest India comeback for the ongoing...

Mali enter knock-out round with 3-1 win over New Zealand

NEW DELHI, OCT 12 /- African champions Mali breezed into the knock-out rounds of the FIFA U-17 World Cup with a dominating 3-1 win over New Zealand in their final group game here today. Mali, the last edition's runners-up, took the lead in the 18th minute through Salam Jiddou who struck a 25-yard stunner. The first goal supplier Nehra made his latest India comeback for the ongoing T20 series against Australia but did not get a look-in in the first two games. He came into the series with the mindset of playing all matches but soon realised that the younger crop was fully ready to shoulder the responsibility. "When I came into the series, I came prepared to play all games. I spoke to the captain (Virat Kohli) and coach (Ravi Shastri) straightaway. My thinking is that I should be in the XI if I am available. If you see, I have played in all the T20 games in the past two years so I have my plans to them (team management)," said the Delhi veteran. Nehra said it was not a decision he made overnight and reached the conclusion after seeing the young pacers do well. "Bhuvneshwar is ready to shoulder the responsibility with the way he is bowling. Earlier, Bumrah and I were playing but now Bhuvni is doing well. And there is also no big event lined up in the next 5-6 months. I put my point of view and they all respect my decision," said Nehra. The left-arm fast bowler said he could have easily played international cricket for another year and also the next IPL. It is very important for me to know what people think about me in the dressing room. Sonow...

Siliguri: Baichung inaugurates Sports Station's maiden store



SILIGURI, OCT 12 /- "Sports Station", the multi-brand sportswear retail, has opened its very first store in Siliguri at City Centre Mall. The store was inaugurated by the popular Indian football sensation Baichung Bhutia recently. Launched in 2015, Sports Station is positioned as a Sports Specialty Brand Hub that brings the leading International Sportswear brands under one roof, and boasts of a powerful portfolio including Nike, Adidas, Skechers, Puma, Asics, Reebok and Lotto. Joram Lal, the retail partner for Sports Station, emphasized "Siliguri is rapidly developing in terms of its internal economy, overall development and growth in all spheres of life. The Hosur, Bangalore patterns of the people here are undergoing a period of transition, and hence Sports Station is considering this fast-changing...

Adapt quickly or be ready for harsh lesson in India: NZ coach

WELLINGTON, OCT 12 /- New Zealand coach Mike Hesson has sent out a clear warning to his team ahead of its tour of India - either adapt quickly to the conditions or get taught a harsh lesson by the world No.1 side. "Look, their record at home has been phenomenal in the last two or three years," said Hesson before leaving for India for a limited-overs series commencing on Thursday. "If you want us sitting out for the next two games, I am not going to sit out, for sure," India Captain Sunil Chhetri intervened. Replying to a query, Constantine said Baichung Singh was a good lifer Chhetri who scored the goal in second half with his help. "Baichung did what he was asked to do. After he was introduced, Sunil got the room to play with the ball and everyone knows, if he gets the room, he can be really dangerous," he said. It is important for us to adapt really quickly. India recently beat Australia 4-1 in a five-match ODI series to cement their number one spot in the ICC rankings. Nine squad members departed for India on Thursday, with the remaining six will be picked from the A side touring India at the moment. "The beauty of an A tour means we have already got people in India, adapting to conditions, so when they come in the stadium it will be familiar as they are going to be," he said. The coach said senior players, including captain Rohit Sharma, will have to rise to the challenge. "Obviously there is the dew factor, the conditions are all very different depending on the grounds you go to. Adapt quickly or be ready for harsh lesson in India: NZ coach...

beat Turkey 3-0 in their previous match. Paraguay topped the group with an all-win record. They beat Turkey 3-1 in Mumbai in the other Group B match today. New Zealand and Turkey ended their group engagements with one point each and failed to advance to the round of 16. The match, played in hot conditions, was dominated by Mali who had a ball possession of 61 per cent. They were fired as many as 36 shots at the goal out of which 10 were on target. New Zealand, meanwhile, had just four shots on target. New Zealand got the first attempt at the goal in the minute but captain Max Mata could not give proper direction to his shot in one-on-one situation with the Mali goalkeeper Youssouf Koita. Mata, who returned today after sitting out in previous match due to half-suspension, struck straight to the goalkeeper. As the initial chance for New Zealand went abegging, Mali gradually stamped their authority with Traore in the thick of action on many occasions. In lone such lightning run down the left flank, Traore got the better of a defender and then sent a square pass to Jiddou who struck a powerful right footer from 25 yards to dump it to the New Zealand net. Soon after, Jiddou could have scored his second goal of the match but he shot straight to goalkeeper after being sent in the clear by Traore into the New Zealand box. The second half was also dominated by Mali and they just took five minutes from the breather to double the lead. This time Traore cut in from the left and sent a curling right footer from the top of the box, beating a diving goalkeeper, to hit net. Mali were denied by the goalkeeper in the 65th minute as substitute Cheick Oumar Doucoure struck a header, narrowly missing the woodwork. Against the run of play, New Zealand pulled one back in the 72nd minute with second half suspender, Traore, sending a heading into an open goal after Mali goalkeeper was beaten by a high cross from the left by Elijah Just. Mali struck back and gave New Zealand a chance of a snatching a draw as the African side made it 3-1 in the 82nd minute Lassana Ndiaye. (PTI)