

Love for cricket helped me fight off-field problems: Shami



BIRMINGHAM, AUG 2 - Indian pacer Mohammed Shami says his love for cricket helped him battle the off field problems that pegged him back a few months ago as he made an impressive comeback in the ongoing first Test against England here. On the opening day of the first Test here, Shami took 2-64 while R Ashwin returned with figures of 4 for 60 to help India restrict England to 285-9. It was a fine return for the 28-year-old Shami, who was accused of domestic violence and extra-marital affair by his wife some months back. He also sustained injuries after being involved in an accident and later missed the one-off Afghanistan Test for falling the yo-yo fitness test. (The tour of South Africa was a long time ago and there have been some off field issues after that. I had to fight a lot in between but my effort was that I have to keep doing what I love most and what is most important to me (cricket)," Shami said. "I wanted to just keep doing my job and then see what happens to the rest of the stuff in my life.

Whatever difficulties I face, first I wanted to play cricket and keep doing it. The result is in front of us." Shami, who was India's highest wicket-taker with 15 scalps in the 2-1 loss to South Africa, said he was satisfied with his and team's efforts on the field on the opening day. "As a bowling unit and as an individual I am very happy today. This is the thing I have worked hard for and we have been able to bring it forward successfully," he said. "There are ups and downs in life and in your family. But when playing for your country there is a responsibility and when you do that job properly, I think that's the best thing. So I am very happy with today." Joe Root struck his 41st Test half-century and put on 105 runs with Jonny Bairstow. Things were going fine until the third session when England collapsed from 216/3 to 285-9, losing six wickets for 69 runs. It was the 63rd over of the innings when Virat Kohli's direct throw ran out Root and that changed the momentum as England lost three wickets for eight runs in the next 25 balls. "In the morning the wicket was a little slower and

there was hard work for sure. On such wickets we have to maintain good line and length all day. It was a little tough initially because it was slow and a little damp. We didn't do anything extra during those overs," Shami said. "Initially when you bowl on such wickets here you get an idea how it will behave and you can come back if there is a good partnership. You bowl according to the wicket and batsmen, so as a captain or as a bowler, you get to think," he said. "You can assess situation as per the wicket, and that's how you choose your bowling unit and then work on the basis of that. So you cannot say that we missed or will miss an extra spinner." "We have to believe in the team selection and fight with the same group of bowlers,

instead of thinking what you don't have," said Shami. Shami also heaped praise on Ashwin (4/60) for registering his best figures in Test cricket across South Africa, England and Australia. "He bowled very well today. Usually in English conditions, you see fast bowlers doing well. For a spinner to come early in the spell and do so well, it gave us confidence too," Shami said. "Overall the fast bowlers did well and he combined well with us. So we didn't miss the second spinner as we had experience on our side and it can be seen in the results." Shami said playing together in the last few overseas tours has helped the team to produce a quality bowling unit. "Even when you are not able to take wickets, you dry up the runs. Ashwin bowled well from one end while the runs stopped from the other end to create pressure and the wickets came in the end," he said. "This is the quality of our bowling unit which we have gained after playing two or three successive tours together. We are very happy as a bowling unit. (PTI)

QUIZ Contest

CQ026

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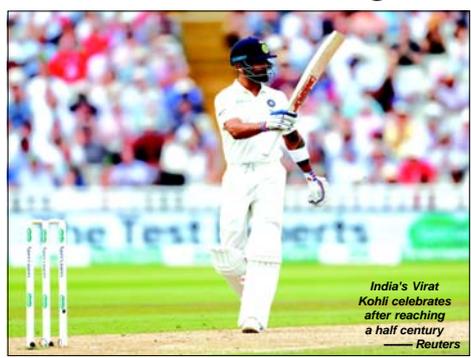
Saina,Ashwini-Satwik win;Srikanthloses in World Championship NANJING (CHINA), AUG 2 - India's star shuttler Saina Nehwal sailed into the women's singles quarterfinals but another medal hope, Kidambi Srikanth, crashed out of the World Championships after suffering a straight game loss here today. Saina, who had clinched a silver and a bronze at the 2015 and 2017 editions, downed 2013 champion Ratchanok Intanon of Thailand 21-16, 21-19 to set up a meeting with



Olympic champion and two-time world champion Carolina Marin of Spain. The Indian mixed doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Ashwini Ponnappa also stood one step away from a medal after pulling off a stunning 20-22, 14-21 victory over the Malaysian world no.7 combination of Goh Soon Huat and Shevon Jemie Lai.

INDIA VS ENGLAND, 1ST TEST, DAY 2

Kohli battles on England, scores 17th Fifty



and wicket-keeper Dinesh Karthik in quick succession against the lethal bowling from Ben Stokes and James Anderson duo. After Sam Curran wreaked havoc (three wickets in eight balls) in the morning session, it was Ben Stokes who bowled superbly in the second session of the day. The Durham all-rounder bowled with accurate line and length and got assistance from the pitch. Just before tea Sam Curran picked up Hardik Pandya with a beautiful in-swinging yorker. Earlier, England got bowled out in the second over of day 2, ending their innings on 287. The tail-enders could only add two runs to their overnight total. Ashwin was the most successful bowler for India in the first inning picking up four wickets. Joe Root (80) was the top scorer for England. Left-arm seamer Sam Curran rocked the Indian top order with a triple blow leaving the visitors reeling on 76 for three at lunch on the second day of the first Test. This was after England

finished their first innings at 287 with Mohammed Shami (3/64) taking the final wicket. Young Curran (2/26) came in as first change to remove openers Murali Vijay (20), Shikhar Dhawan (26) along with no.8 KL Rahul (4) in a space of eight deliveries as India went from a solid start of 50 for no loss to 89 for 3. At the break, skipper Virat Kohli was batting on 9 while his deputy Ajinkya Rahane was undebated on 8. India still trail by 211 runs. Vijay and Dhawan provided a good start seeing off the new ball pair of James Anderson (0/29 in 10 overs) and Stuart Broad (0/22 in 4 overs) for almost an hour. Virat Kohli and Hardik Pandya need to tire the English bowlers out. Virat Kohli and Hardik Pandya have spent quite some time in the middle now. They need to build a partnership and tire the English bowlers out. England continue to probe the outside off-stump line and it needs to be seen if Kohli and Pandya can hang on till tea.

BIRMINGHAM, AUG 2 - Skipper Virat Kohli (53 not-out) fought a lone battle as wickets continued to tumble from the other in the

post-lunch session as England held India on 180 for six at tea. Although, Hardik Pandya (22) stitched a crucial 48-run partnership with

the skipper for the seventh wicket but fell just before tea. Resuming the session at 76 for three, India lost vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane

India's Virat Kohli celebrates after reaching a half century — Reuters

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