



Shreyas Iyer Leaves India A Captaincy Hours Before Australia A Match, Exits From Team

New Delhi, 7 June: A sudden development took place in the India A team, just hours before the second First-Class match against Australia A, as Shreyas Iyer decided to quit the team's captaincy. Shreyas' last-minute exit from the team prompted the management to name Dhruv Jurel as the India A captain for the second red-ball game against Australia A. While Iyer or the team management didn't reveal the exact reason behind his sudden departure, it has been reported that the reason was a 'personal' one.

"Yes, Shreyas is taking a break and has returned to Mumbai. He has informed the selectors that he won't be able to play in the second four-day match against Australia A. However, he remains in fray for a spot in the



middle-order when the selectors meet to pick the squad for the West Indies series," a Times of India report quoted a source as saying.

Iyer did feature in the first India A match against Australia A, scoring 8 and 13 runs respectively. In the match, Iyer also seemingly became a victim of poor umpiring call against spinner Corey Rocchiccioli.

Despite Iyer's failure

with the bat, India A did well against Australia A in the last match. The team scored 531 runs after Australia put 532 on the board.

Iyer wasn't a part of the Indian team on the tour of England, nor was he picked for the Asia Cup 2025 assignment, in the T20I format. The batter is working hard to become a pivotal member of the team in all three formats. Iyer is already

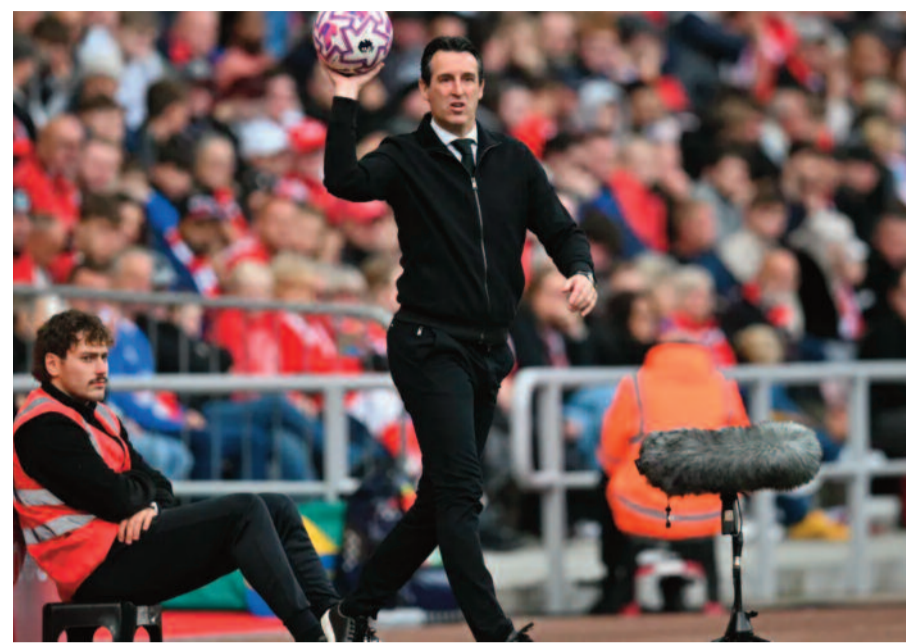
a mainstay in ODI cricket for the team, having played central role in the Champions Trophy triumph last year. However, he has found it tough to crack selection in the other two formats.

After India gunned down the target, Gambhir took to Instagram and posted visuals of Abhishek, Shubman and the Indian team and used one word to caption each post: "Fearless". Wishes continued to pour in with the BCCI vice-president joining in the celebrations.

"Congratulations Team India for defeating Pakistan once again in Asia Cup. Well done, Abhishek Sharma and @ShubmanGill. @BCCI #AsiaCupT20," Shukla wrote on X in his congratulatory post for captain Suryakumar Yadav and his troops. Former India all-

rounder Irfan Pathan didn't shy away from taking a direct jibe at the neighbouring nation and wrote on X, "Hanji, kesa raha Sunday?" In another post, he wrote, "Well done, team India. You are class above all the other teams."

Former cricketer-turned-commentator Sanjay Manjrekar felt even after an improved performance, India's quality was too much for Pakistan to handle and wrote on X, "Well done Abhishek, well done Gill, but let's not forget Dube's contribution today. Crucial. Pakistan was better tonight, but India just has too much ability! #AsiaCupT20." Abhishek and Gill's mentor, Yuvraj Singh, emphasised the value of the partnership that the duo forged and wrote on Instagram.



Unai Emery will hope a return to the Europa League this week serves as the spark plug that ignites Aston Villa's season.

Pakistan Women's Team Star Nashra Sundhu Copies Haris Rauf's '6' Gesture Against India, Triggers Row

New Delhi, 7 June: Not long after Pakistan men's team pacer Haris Rauf triggered a huge controversy with his 6-0 and plane-crashing gestures against India, women's international star Nashra Sundhu has pulled a similar antic.

Nashra Sundhu played for the Pakistan women's team in an ODI match against South Africa at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore on Monday. She picked up six wickets in the game, becoming the fastest Pakistani woman to take 100 wickets in ODI cricket. While her performance on the field was lauded by many, fans felt the six-finger gesture she flashed could have been avoided, given the current Asia Cup 2025 India-Pak controversy.

Sundhu also took to social media after the match and shared a photo of her six-finger gesture. "Alhamdulillah, Truly humbled to reach the milestone of 100 ODI wickets with a player of the match award. I am grateful to my family, teammates, and support staff for their constant support. Looking ahead with gratitude and determination," she wrote on X (formerly Twitter).

Fans in Pakistan quickly related her post to Haris Rauf's provocative gestures against India on Sunday. Since the conclusion of the Asia Cup Super 4 match between India and Pakistan on Sunday, Haris Rauf has received plenty of flak for his gestures on the field. Haris wasn't the only one; Pakistan opening batter Sahibzada Farhan also re-

sorted to an offensive 'AK47' celebration with his bat after completing his fifty in the game. Former India all-rounder Irfan Pathan, speaking on his YouTube channel, shredded the Pakistani players.

"I want to talk about the celebrations a little bit. Sahibzada Farhan, you know the tensions between the two

Pakistan's 2025 ODI form has been unusually poor: one analysis called 2025 Pakistan's worst-ever year in ODIs so far, with just 2 wins from 11 ODIs (an 18.18% win rate). That kind of calendar-year collapse is a clear driver of the "decline" narrative. The team has also slipped in ICC ODI rankings recently - Pakistan dropped a



sides. Haris Rauf, for that matter, I thought that he was a decent person. I met him in Australia a few years back. The gestures he made in the field yesterday were needless. It tells about both of their nature and what upbringing they come from," Irfan Pathan was quoted as saying on his YouTube channel.

"Play cricket in the field. To stoop down to a personal level is quite bad. And then you expect us not to talk about it, that is wrong. But I am not surprised at all. They are capable of doing these things. What you got to see on TV, that was bad itself, but the things that go on behind the scenes, the fans would be shocked if they got to know about it," he added.

Shahid Afridi Drags IPL Into Fakhar Zaman Dismissal Controversy, Questions Umpire's Integrity

New Delhi, 7 June: Living up to his reputation of making controversial remarks, former Pakistan captain Shahid Afridi made another stirring comment over Fakhar Zaman's dismissal in the Asia Cup 2025 Super 4 match against India. Zaman was given caught behind, on the bowling of Hardik Pandya, though some continue to believe that the ball bounced right in front of Indian wicket-keeper Sanju Samson, before going into his gloves.

Afridi, speaking on a Pakistani TV channel, said that the umpire decided to give the decision in India's favour as he also intends to do umpiring in the Indian Premier League. The caught-behind decision even went to the third umpire, who checked a few slow-motion replays before giving the call in the Indian team's favour. Walking back to the dressing room, Zaman expressed his displeasure at the third umpire's call. Afridi, too, feels the Pakistan opening batter was not out. "Unhone IPL me bhi toh umpiring karni hai [He has to umpire in the IPL too]," Afridi said on Samaa TV, suggesting that the umpire was biased towards



India. Former Pakistan batter Mohamamd Yusuf, who was also a part of the panel discussion, echoed Afridi's sentiments. "They didn't even check many angles. Fakhar had hit three fours and handled Bumrah with ease in the first over. His wicket was crucial for India," Yusuf asserted. Earlier, even Pakistan pace great Shoaib Akhtar had termed the third umpire's call to give Fakhar out, the 'wrong' one. "Fakhar wasn't out. With 26 cameras available, why did the third umpire only check two angles? If Fakhar had stayed, the match might have turned," he had said.

Pakistan's team manager, Naveed Akram Cheema, has reportedly written an email to the match ref-

eree and umpires, questioning the decision-making process that led to Fakhar being declared out.

A zoomer was employed, and after deliberating on the entire incident, the TV umpire adjudged that Samson's fingers were underneath the ball. Fakhar was in dismay and shook his head while returning to the dugout with a score of 15(9). He even had a brief chat with head coach Mike Hesson while climbing the stairs, who waved his hand while trying to express his displeasure about the umpire's decision. According to Samaa TV, the Pakistan management claimed the TV umpire did not examine all available angles before announcing its decision.

Deepti Sharma Jumps Two Spots To Fifth In Latest ICC ODI Rankings

New Delhi, 7 June: Performers in the build-up to the ICC Women's Cricket Cup have made significant climbs in the latest ICC ODI Women's Player Rankings. India's Deepti Sharma's pair of two-wicket hauls against Australia moved the Indian standout up two spots to fifth (651). With Pakistan taking on South Africa and India meeting Australia, players across the four countries enjoyed their moves, particularly with the bat, as runs flowed across the two series, according to the ICC website. Indian seamer Kranti Gaud (up 23 spots to 39th) continues her fine start to the international game, while England's Sophie Ecclestone (795 rating points) boasts an 85-point lead as the top-ranked ODI bowler ahead of the upcoming World Cup. South African Ayabonga Khaka moved three spots to 15th (548) after claiming 2/36 in Lahore in spite of unfavourable conditions. South Africa's batter Tazmin Brits made the most noteworthy move in the Women's ODI Batting Rankings, up 15 spots to sixth (669 rating points) with back-to-back unbeaten hundreds in the Proteas series win in Lahore. Brits in ODIs in the 2025 calendar averages 91.85, hitting 643 runs at a strike rate of 94.14. It continues a dramatic rise from the prolific Protea, having been the 73rd-ranked batter at the start of September 2023. Pakistan's Sidra Amin, meanwhile, made a 10-spot move of her own, having enjoyed a strong series herself, making 121 not out, 122 and 50 not out across the three matches.

India Squad For West Indies Tests: Karun Nair Likely To Be Replaced By RCB Star, Says Report

New Delhi, 7 June: India's squad for the home Test assignment against West Indies is likely to be announced on September 24, with a couple of changes expected to be made. One of the players whose place in the team is in grave danger is Karun Nair, a domestic stalwart who made his return to the national team on the tour of England, but couldn't produce the sort of performance that the management desired. With Rishabh Pant injured, Dhruv Jurel is set to be the No. 1 choice behind the stumps, while Narayan Jagadeesan is likely to be added to the roster as cover.

Against England, Nair ended up scoring 205 runs in eight innings, with an average of 25.6, while going past the fifty-mark on just one occasion. As per a report in Cricbuzz, Nair could see himself miss out on the 2-match

series, with Devdutt Padikkal being preferred over him for the middle-order spot. Though India only drew the England series 2-2, batters in



both teams put mountains of runs in the 5-match series. A whopping 7,000 runs were scored in the series, including 21 centuries and 29 half-centuries. In comparison to Nair, Padikkal has shown great form of late, scoring 150

against the touring Australia A side in Lucknow a few days ago. Nair, on the other hand, hasn't played competitive cricket since the conclu-



sion of the England tour.

There are talks over the place of Nitish Reddy's selection too. But, with there being no alternative to the pace-bowling all-rounder in red-ball cricket, the selectors are likely to persist with him.

Harbhajan Singh Mocks Pakistan With 'Greatest Rivalry' Jibe After Asia Cup 2025 Humiliation

New Delhi, 7 June: Former Indian cricket team spinner Harbhajan Singh took a brutal dig at Pakistan following their loss in the Asia Cup 2025 Super 4 clash. India completely outplayed Pakistan once again as the Suryakumar Yadav-led side registered a six-wicket victory. After the match, SKY asked the media to stop using the word 'rivalry' to describe India-Pakistan matches as India have won all seven of their previous encounters. Harbhajan took to social media to echo similar sentiments as he posted a picture with 'Greatest Rivalry' writ-

ten on it but replaced 'Greatest' with 'One-sided'.

Earlier, Suryakumar Yadav had urged everyone to stop calling the contests against Pakistan a meaningful "rivalry" given how his team has dominated the arch-foes, the most recent demolition act being the six-wicket triumph in a Super 4 match of the ongoing Asia Cup. India and Pakistan have faced each other 15 times in T20 Internationals, with the reigning world champions winning 12 of those encounters. After the comprehensive win on Sunday night here, the proverbial question on

the gulf between the two teams was thrown at Suryakumar by a senior Pakistani journalist. "Sir, my request is that we should now stop calling India vs Pakistan matches a rivalry," Suryakumar responded with a smile.

When the scribe clarified that he was referring to "standards, and not the rivalry", the Indian skipper said it hardly makes things any different. "Sir, rivalry and standard are all the same. Now what is a rivalry? If two teams have played 15 matches and it's 8-7, that's a rivalry. Here it's 13-1 (12-3) or something. There is no

contest," he said before winding up the media conference with a grin.

Replying to this, a panelist gave a very disturbing answer, "Mere khayal mein ya to ye karde ya kuch ladke firing hi kar dena idhar match he khatam karo kyuki confirm hai hum hareng. (I think either they should give it their all or the boys can do some firing and end the match because it's confirmed that we are losing from here)". To add fuel to the fire, the panelist even laughed after giving this remark about using violence in the gentlemen's game.

Unai Emery Seeks Europa League Lift With Aston Villa As Nottingham Forest End Long Absence

New Delhi, 7 June: Unai Emery will hope a return to the Europa League this week serves as the spark plug that ignites Aston Villa's season, while Nottingham Forest embark on their first European campaign in 30 years. Emery is the most successful manager in Europa League history, winning the title three times with Sevilla and once with Villarreal, but his Villa side have made a troubled start to the new campaign. Villa are winless through their first five Premier League games and had failed to even score before Sunday's 1-1 draw at 10-man Sunderland, which left Emery "frustrated and disappointed".

"Our start, we've not been doing well," admitted the Spaniard, who also took Arsenal to the Europa League final in 2019.

"There is still work to do; some players are adapting in the squad and our idea, and they will need time. "Other players were here last year and know how we want to build the team and how we were being successful in the last three years." Villa reached the quarter-finals of last season's Champions League before losing 5-4 on aggregate to eventual winners Paris Saint-Germain.

They missed out on qualifying again for Europe's top club competition on the final day of last season, with this their first appearance in the Europa League main draw since 2008-09. Villa begin at home to Bologna on Thursday in a repeat of their 2-0 win over the Italians in the Champions League last October.

Bologna have qualified

as winners of the Italian Cup, their first major trophy since 1974. Like Emery, Nottingham Forest's new boss also knows what it takes to win the Europa League. Ange Postecoglou, appointed by Forest earlier this month, steered Tottenham to a rare trophy last term as they beat Manchester United in the final.

He is searching for his first win at Forest following two defeats, including an early League Cup exit, and Saturday's 1-1 draw at Burnley. The Australian, sacked by Spurs in June after their worst Premier League season, took over from Nuno Espirito Santo and is trying to implement his more expansive style at Forest in the quest for silverware.

"I do like my teams to play exciting football and

score goals," Postecoglou said upon his arrival at the City Ground, the home of the 1979 and 1980 European Cup winners. "No apologies about that. That's just the way I am and the way I want to see my teams play."

Forest travel to Real Betis on Wednesday for their first European game since the quarter-finals of the 1995-96 UEFA Cup against Bayern Munich. Betis have former United winger Antony in their squad after the Brazilian rejoined the Spanish side on a five-year deal following a successful loan spell.

Led by former Manchester City and West Ham boss Manuel Pellegrini, Betis finished runners-up to Chelsea in the UEFA Conference League last season after reaching their first European

final. Celtic and Rangers both dropped into the second-tier competition after falling short in the Champions League play-off round last month.

Brendan Rodgers takes his Celtic team to Serbia on Wednesday to face Red Star Belgrade in a battle of former European champions. Embattled Rangers are off to their worst domestic start since 1978 and fans protested against manager Russell Martin during Saturday's League Cup win over Hibernian, which did little to quell the anger felt around Ibrox.

"I can't control any of it," Martin said, as fans delayed the game by hurling hundreds of coloured balls onto the pitch and called for his sacking. "At this football club, it becomes about one person really quickly," added Martin.