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DEEPIKA PADUKONE TALKS ABOUT SHAH RUKH KHAN-STARRER PATHAN, RATES HUSBAND RANVEER SINGH 2 OUT OF 10 ON THIS SKILL



DEEPIKA PADUKONE SAID SHE IS EXCITED TO BE ONBOARD OF PATHAN, WHICH STARS HER ALONGSIDE SHAH RUKH KHAN. DEEPIKA PADUKONE AND RANVEER SINGH OFTEN PRAISE EACH OTHER, AND DESERVEDLY SO. THE TWO HAVE SHARED SCREEN SPACE WITH EACH OTHER IN SEVERAL FILMS, INCLUDING THE RECENT RELEASE 83. BUT THERE IS ONE THING ABOUT RANVEER THAT DEEPIKA IS NOT IMPRESSED WITH – HIS SINGING SKILLS. DURING A RAPID FIRE ROUND WITH BOLLYWOOD HUNGAMA, DEEPIKA GAVE 2 OUT OF 10 TO RANVEER'S SINGING SKILLS. HOWEVER, SHE TAGGED HIS RAPPING SKILLS AS "FANTASTIC," POINTING OUT THAT SINGING IS DIFFERENT THAN RAPPING. BUT WHEN ASKED ABOUT HER TALENT OF SINGING, DEEPIKA STATED THAT SHE CANNOT SING AS WELL AS SHE WOULD WANT TO. WHEN ASKED TO RATE HER SINGING SKILLS ON 10, DEEPIKA SAID, "THOUGH MY HUSBAND WILL SAY 10 ON 10, MAYBE 6 OR 7." DEEPIKA ALSO SPOKE ABOUT PATHAN, WHICH SEES HER SHARING SCREEN SPACE WITH SHAH RUKH KHAN. THE FILM ALSO STARS JOHN ABRAHAM IN THE PIVOTAL ROLE. WHEN ASKED WHAT MADE HER SIGN THE FILM, DEEPIKA WAS QUICK TO ANSWER, "THE SCRIPT."

MOUNI ROY CONFIRMS SHE'S GETTING MARRIED, THANKS PAPARAZZI FOR THEIR WISHES



After days of speculation, Mouni Roy appears to have finally confirmed her impending wedding. The actor, who was spotted in Mumbai on Monday, reacted to the paparazzi when she was congratulated about tying the knot soon. She first tried to dodge the paps, but later said "thank you". Mouni Roy is reportedly set to marry her long-time-boyfriend Suraj Nambiar in Goa on January 27. The two are said to be dating since 2019. Mouni's industry friends and family members have already received their invites for the wedding, but have been asked to keep the event hush-hush, reports said. The venue for the winter afternoon beach ceremony is near North Goa's Vagator beach. Mouni and Suraj, who continue to remain tight-lipped about their relationship, will reportedly throw a lavish post wedding party on January 28. Mouni already celebrated her bachelorette party in Goa last month.

LOOP LAPETA IS A CLUTTER-BREAKING TAKE ON NEW AGE ROMANCE: TAAPSEE PANNU



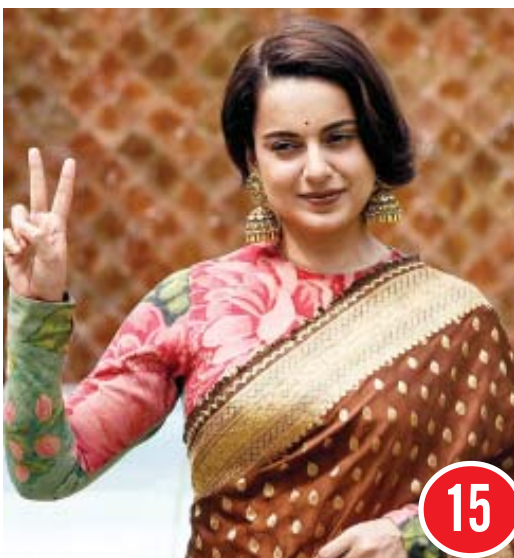
Actor Taapsee Pannu says she went for the script narration of Loop Lapeta, the Hindi remake of the 1998 German film Run Lola Run, with an intention to turn it down but was drawn to the central character. The upcoming Hindi thriller, helmed by Aakash Bhatia, follows an adventurous ride through a sticky situation where a girlfriend (Pannu) is on a mission to rescue her boyfriend (Tahir Raj Bhasin). In the film, Pannu's character is stuck in a time loop and gets multiple chances to save Bhasin's life. "I said yes to it (Loop Lapeta) instantly because it was so funny. Today, it makes you feel that this concept was made for India more than the German classic that it was. Hence, I ended up saying yes. The film is a clutter-breaking take on new age romance, a genre I am exploring for the first time," the actor told PTI in a Zoom interview. Taapsee said her initial hesitation with the film had to do with the fact that her 2019 film Game Over had already employed the time loop concept. "I had done a film called 'Game Over', which had something similar in it. I didn't want to repeat a concept in another film so I went with the intention to say no. I told the producer Atul (Kasbekar) that I haven't seen the original film but I know the basic storyline and concept."

RAFAEL NADAL MOVES INTO AUSTRALIAN OPEN SEMIFINALS



Rafael Nadal held off Denis Shapovalov 6-3, 6-4, 4-6, 3-6, 6-3 in four hours to reach the Australian Open semifinals for the seventh time and keep his bid on track for a men's-record 21st Grand Slam singles title. Nadal shares the record of 20 with Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic for most singles titles in men's tennis majors. Neither of those two are in Melbourne. Nadal was dominant for the first 2 1/2 sets against No. 14 Shapovalov, but appeared to be hampered at times by a stomach problem in the third and fourth sets. At a tournament where he's clinched the title only once (2009) and lost seven of his previous 13 quarterfinals — by far his worst conversion rate at any of the four major tournaments — Nadal suddenly looked vulnerable. But following a seven-minute break between the last point of the fourth set and his first serve in the fifth, he recovered sufficiently to hold and then break Shapovalov's serve for a 2-0 lead in the decider.

KANGANA: SOUTH SUPERSTARS SHOULD NOT ALLOW BOLLYWOOD TO CORRUPT THEM



KANGANA RANAUT HAS JOTTED DOWN SOME REASONS AS TO WHY SOUTH CONTENT AND SUPERSTARS ARE SUCH A RAGE AND ADDED THAT THEY SHOULD NOT ALLOW BOLLYWOOD TO CORRUPT THEM.

URVASHI RAUTELA BECOMES NATIONWIDE AMBASSADOR FOR 'MISSION PAANI JAL SHAKTI' WATER CAMPAIGN



ACTRESS URVASHI RAUTELA HAS BEEN NAMED AS THE NATIONWIDE AMBASSADOR FOR THE 'MISSION PAANI JAL SHAKTI' WATER CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN.

'GEHRAIYAAN' TRACK 'DOOBEY' PERSONIFIES THE RUSH OF FALLING IN LOVE



'DOOBEY', A TRACK PICTURISED ON ACTORS DEEPIKA PADUKONE AND SIDDHANT CHATURVEDI'S WHIRLWIND ROMANCE IN THE UPCOMING FILM 'GEHRAIYAAN', HAS BEEN UNVEILED ON MONDAY.

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DISSECTING THE REASONS BEHIND WHERE INDIA LOST THE ODI SERIES



INDIA HAD STARTED THEIR TOUR OF SOUTH AFRICA ON A BRIGHT NOTE, WINNING THE CENTURION TEST BY 113 RUNS. BUT AFTER THAT, SOUTH AFRICA CAME BACK TO WIN THE NEXT TWO TESTS AND TAKE THE SERIES 2-1.

PAKISTAN PACER SHAHEEN AFRIDI NAMED ICC MEN'S CRICKETER OF THE YEAR FOR 2021



PAKISTAN LEFT-ARM PACER SHAHEEN SHAH AFRIDI ON MONDAY WAS NAMED AS THE ICC MEN'S CRICKETER OF THE YEAR FOR 2021. AT 21 YEARS, AFRIDI IS THE YOUNGEST CRICKETER EVER TO GET THE SIR GARFIELD SOBERS TROPHY AND IS THE FIRST PAKISTANI PLAYER TO RECEIVE THE HONOUR AS WELL.



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KANGANA: SOUTH SUPERSTARS SHOULD NOT ALLOW BOLLYWOOD TO CORRUPT THEM

MUMBAI, (IANS) Actress Kangana Ranaut has jotted down some reasons as to why south content and superstars are such a rage and added that they should not allow Bollywood to corrupt them. After Allu Arjun-starrer 'Pushpa: The Rising' received a roaring response, Kangana took to her Instagram stories and shared the reason of South content's growing popularity. She wrote: "Some of the reasons why south content and superstars are such a rage: 1) They are deeply rooted in Indian culture 2) They love their families and relationships are conventional not weterinised 3) Their professionalism and passion is unparalleled."

'Gehraiyaan' track 'Doobey' personifies the rush of falling in love



MUMBAI, (IANS) 'Doobey', a track picturised on actors Deepika Padukone and Siddhant Chaturvedi's whirlwind romance in the upcoming film 'Gehraiyaan', has been unveiled on Monday. Written by Kausar Munir and sung by Lothika Jha, the sweet-flowing music of 'Doobey' is composed by OAFF and Savera and designed by Ankur Tewari. Speaking of the first song, Ankur shared: "From the onset I knew that the music of 'Gehraiyaan' had to be true to its story and allow the audiences to be absorbed into the world of these characters. 'Kabeer, Savera and our lyricist Kausar, have all done a phenomenal job at bringing in the youthful essence yet keeping the intrigue intact! And Lothika's vocals add the right amount of freshness and intensity to the song." Designed by Ankur, the alluring song is composed by Kabeer Kathpalia a.k.a OAFF and Savera, written by

Kangana added: "They should not allow Bollywood to corrupt them". The actress is currently busy with her production venture 'Tiku Weds Sheru'. Speaking about her work, Kangana is gearing up for her next 'Dhaakad', an action thriller, which was slated for an April 8, 2022 release. It has now been pushed to May 2022. She also has 'Tejas'. The movie revolves around a daring female pilot played by Kangana and is based on how women pilots can play a important role in keeping our nation safe from external forces. It is a tribute to the brave soldiers of the country.



Kausar Munir and sung by Lothika Jha. Adding further, OAFF says: "It was an incredible experience to work on this film and its music. The adoration that we have been receiving since the first teaser, has been extremely special and definitely humbling. "With 'Doobey', we wanted to recreate the feeling of freefalling; the heady rush of a new relationship, of being in love. Gehraiyaan truly a special album for each of us and we're really hoping the audience enjoys listening to it as much as we enjoyed creating it." Alongside Deepika and Siddhant, the film also features Ananya Panday and Dhairya Karwa as leads along with Naseeruddin Shah and Rajat Kapur in pivotal roles. Jointly produced by Viacom18 Studios and Dharma Productions in association with director Shakun Batra's Jouska Films, the movie will release on Amazon Prime Video on February 11.

Tiger Shroff recalls romancing the mic with his first single 'Unbelievable'

MUMBAI, (IANS) Bollywood action star Tiger Shroff recalled the first time he crooned the number "Unbelievable" on social media. Tiger on Sunday posted an old video of him singing the track on Instagram. In the caption, he wrote: "Trying to romance a mike for my first single #throwback #unbelievable" On the work front, Tiger, who is known for his perfect dance moves and martial art skills, will be next seen in "Heropanti 2" and "Ganapath". "Heropanti 2" is the sequel of Tiger's debut film where he was seen opposite another debutante back then, Kriti Sanon. As for "Heropanti 2", the film, written by Rajat Arora and produced by Nadiadwala Grandson Entertainment, is being helmed by choreographer actor Ahmed Khan and also stars Nawazuddin Siddiqui and Tara Sutaria. "Ganapath", is a dystopian thriller directed by Vikas Bahl ("Queen", 2014), which also stars Kriti and boasts of high-octane action sequences choreographed by international stunt directors. The film, produced by Vashu Bhagnani, Vikas Bahl, Deepshikha Deshmukh, and Jackky Bhagnani, has almost reached the finishing line in London after an extensive schedule.



SHILPA SHETTY'S RAPPING SKILLS SHOCK BADSHAH



MUMBAI, (IANS) Bollywood actress Shilpa Shetty shocked rapper Badshah after she rapped a few lines for him on the ninth season of the show 'India's Got Talent'. Shilpa shared the clip on Instagram and said that she would like to try rapping while Badshah made a face. Soon, the actress started singing lines from the song 'Kar gayi chull'. She forgot a few verses so the rapper helped her out. Shilpa is then heard telling Badshah: "Dekha mera hidden talent (did you see my hidden talent)?" To which, a not-so-impressed Badshah said: "Hidden he rehna chahiye (should have remained hidden)."

ANUSHKA, VIRAT BREAK SILENCE AS DAUGHTER VAMIKA'S PICS GO VIRAL



MUMBAI, (IANS) Celebrity power couple Anushka Sharma and Virat Kohli have come out with a statement after their toddler daughter Vamika was photographed at a cricket stadium and the pictures going viral on social media. Anushka said that she was caught off guard and did not know that the camera was on her and Vamika. The actress-producer took to her Instagram, where she shared the statement, saying: "Hi guys! We realise that our daughter's images were captured at the stadium yesterday and widely shared thereafter. We want to inform everyone that we were caught off guard and didn't know that the camera was on us. "Our stance and request on the matter stays the same. We would really appreciate it if Vamika's images are not clicked/published for reasons we have explained earlier." Virat shared the same note on his social media. Anushka and Virat have made multiple requests of not publishing pictures of Vamika to seek privacy for their child. A The couple got married in a hush-hush affair in 2017. They welcomed their daughter Vamika in January 2021.

KAPIL SHARMA TALKS ABOUT ONE THING HE LOVES MORE THAN COMEDY!



MUMBAI, (IANS) Star comedian and actor Kapil Sharma has opened up about one thing he loves more than comedy and that is his wife Ginni. He is gearing up for his comedy special 'Kapil Sharma: I'm Not Done Yet' on Netflix and spilled the beans on how he met the love of his life and what brought the two together. The duo tied the knot in 2018 and ever since then have been giving us major couple goals. The couple welcomed their first child in 2019 and their second was born last year. In a candid conversation, Kapil talked about their romantic tale and revealed why he initially felt it won't work out between them. Kapil said: "Ginni Jalandhar ke girls' college mei thi and was 3-4 years younger to me. Mai apna PG Diploma commercial arts mein pursue kar raha tha and was in need of pocket money (I was doing my PG Diploma in commercial arts and I was in need of pocket money). "I was always participating in theatre and visiting other colleges. Ginni was my student and really bright. "She was good at histrionics and skits and so I made her my assistant. Also, she hailed from a well-to-do family. I remember she would come in an expensive car every day to college and I would ride my scooter."

AYUSHMANN CALLS FOR ENDING PREJUDICES, SEXIST COMMENTS AGAINST WOMEN



MUMBAI, (IANS) Actor Ayushmann Khurrana on National Girl Child Day on Monday has requested fellow citizens to be more responsible towards breaking gender stereotypes so that a girl can truly get equal access as a boy. Ayushmann says, "Each of us have the responsibility of making gender-based discrimination a thing of the past and ensuring that every girl is regarded by families and communities with the same value and worth than any boy. "This National Girl Child Day let's start by breaking the gender stereotypes in our personal lives. Small actions count and contribute towards positive change in the long run." He adds, "It cannot be done without active involvement of men. So this message is also for you: Men and boys, let us pledge to call out sexist comments, jokes and prejudices whenever we come across them and ensure that girls and women are valued and respected everywhere."



Rajkummar, Bhumi's secret is out with 'Badhaai Do' trailer

MUMBAI, (IANS) The secret that actors Rajkummar Rao and Bhumi Pednekar were trying to keep, is finally out as the makers of the upcoming film 'Badhaai Do' released the trailer on Tuesday morning. The three-minute and six second trailer revolves around a marital setting between Rajkummar and Bhumi, only to know that there are a lot of secrets between these two to unfold. The two disclose the secrets to each other that they both are from the LGBTQ+ community. Getting into a marriage of convenience and living as roommates, is what leads to humorous situations between the pair, making this one a perfect family entertainer. It is not only high on comedy and emotions, but this family drama also

deals with a socially relevant subject, that we got a glimpse of in the trailer. The trailer was posted with a caption, "Witness the Atrangi wedding Satrangi setting of the year in the month of love! #BadhaaiDoTrailer out now. #BadhaaiDo coming out In Cinemas on 11th Feb, 2022" The movie directed by Harshavardhan Kulkarni, is one of the most eagerly awaited family entertainers releasing this year in cinemas. Besides Rajkummar and Bhumi, the family entertainer also boasts of an ensemble cast featuring talented actors like Seema Pahwa, Sheeba Chadha, Chum Darang, Lovleen Mishra, Nitish Pandey and Shashi Bhushan amongst others essaying pivotal roles & taking the narrative ahead. Junglee Pictures' 'Badhaai Do' releases on February 1.

URVASHI RAUTELA BECOMES NATIONWIDE AMBASSADOR FOR 'MISSION PAANI JAL SHAKTI' WATER CAMPAIGN

MUMBAI, (IANS) Actress Urvashi Rautela has been named as the nationwide ambassador for the 'Mission Paani Jal Shakti' water conservation campaign. The actress has fought against the water crisis through her Urvashi Rautela Foundation, the organisation she co-founded with her parents and which has helped hundreds of communities in Uttarakhand, Pauri, Garhwal and Haridwar to gain access to clean and safe water and sanitation. Urvashi said: "I'm thankful to be receiving all these world class opportunities in my life starting with judging Miss Universe 2021 to becoming a Jury at Dada Saheb Phalke international film festival & finally now. "With a population of 1.38 billion people, India is the second most populous country in the world. More than 6 per cent of this population lack access to safe water and about 15 per cent of India's population practice open defecation. "In India and around the world, millions are navigating the Covid pandemic with the added challenge of living without access to safe water. Now more than ever access to safe water is critical to the health of families in India." The actress said that her wish this year is to mobilise resources and share knowledge to increase access to improved sanitation and safe water as water is the Driving Force of All Nature. She also thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi on social media for giving her this opportunity. She wrote: "Thank you Prime Minister of India @narendramodi Ji & Minister of Jal Shakti Water Conservation @gssjodhpur Ji for giving me this world class opportunity." On the work front, Urvashi was last seen judging the Miss Universe Pageant 2021, and also bagged appreciation for her international song 'Versace Baby' alongside Arab superstar Mohamed Ramadan. Urvashi will be soon seen in the Jio studios web series 'Inspector Avinash' opposite Randeep Hooda in a lead role.



The actress is going to play the lead role in a bilingual thriller 'Black Rose' along with the Hindi remake of 'Thiruttu Payale 2'. Urvashi will be making a Tamil debut with 'The Legend' opposite Saravana and has also signed a three-film contract with Jio Studios and T-Series.

PRIYANKA CHOPRA, NICK JONAS 'WANT MORE KIDS'

LOS ANGELES, (IANS) Indian actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas and her American pop star husband Nick Jonas hope to have "at least two children". The 39-year-old actress recently announced the arrival of their first child, via a surrogate, and the loved-up couple intend to have even more kids in the coming years, reports femalefirst.co.uk. An insider told Us Weekly that friends of the celebrity duo are "excited" for the new parents, and the married couple are keen to have even more children in the future. The actress, who married the pop star in 2018, recently took to Instagram to announce the birth of their new baby. Priyanka said on the photo-sharing platform: "We are overjoyed to confirm that we have welcomed a baby via surrogate. We respectfully ask for privacy during this special time as we focus on our family." The Hollywood star has previously spoken about her ambition to have children. Priyanka said she's "very fond of children" and that she planned to have kids within the next decade. In 2018, she shared: "I am a very 'live in the today,' maximum 'live in the next two months' kind of person. But (in) 10 years, I definitely want to have kids. That is, it's going to happen in the next 10 years. Well, hopefully, earlier than that. "I'm very fond of children and I want to be able to do that." Priyanka and Nick were actually forced to spend much of 2021 apart, due to Covid travel restrictions. The actress recently confessed that the situation was "tough" for them to deal with at the time.

VARUN TREATS FANS WITH UNSEEN WEDDING PICS ON 1ST ANNIVERSARY WITH NATASHA



MUMBAI, (IANS) On his first wedding anniversary on Monday, actor Varun Dhawan treated his fans with a string of unseen pictures from his D-Day celebrations with his wife Natasha Dalal. Varun shared a slew of pictures on Instagram from the ceremony where the couple exchanged garlands. The 'Badlapur' actor captioned the image: "1". He then shared a few more pictures with his lady love Natasha and wrote: "To infinity and beyond - buzz lightyear." On the work front, Varun will next be seen in 'Bhediya' and 'Jug Jugg Jeeyo'.

SONAKSHI SINHA GIVES QUIRKY REPLY ON BEING ASKED ABOUT GETTING MARRIED



MUMBAI, (IANS) Actress Sonakshi Sinha gave a witty answer when she was asked about tying the knot during a question and answer session on social media. Sonakshi treated her fans with an interactive session, where she asked her fans "what did you get upto this weekend?" A user asked her: "Mam everyone is getting married when will you get married?" To which, Sonakshi gave a quirky reply: "Everyone is also getting Covid? Should I get that too?" Speaking about her upcoming work in cinema, Sonakshi was last seen in Ajay Devgn-starrer 'Bhuj: The Pride Of India'. The film also features Sanjay Dutt and Nora Fatehi. The actress is all set to make her web series debut with 'Fallen', where she plays a cop and will also be seen in 'Bulbul Tarang'.

MANUSHI CHHILLAR: WANTED TO CREATE PLATFORM TO BRINGS WOMEN ICONS TOGETHER



MUMBAI, (IANS) Former beauty queen and debutante Manushi Chhillar is launching a social media property named 'Limitless' that will see her speak to the country's most inspiring women icons. Manushi wants to bring out the backstories of these influential women and also find out what motivates them to constantly shatter gender stereotypes. Manushi says: "Growing up and even now, I've been in awe of so many women icons who are working incessantly to break the glass ceiling. They inspire fellow women across the world to dream big. "I always harboured the thought of creating a digital property that enables me to talk to these icons and help me get to know more about their lives, how their mind works and what inspires them."

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IT MEANS A LOT AS A PLAYER, SAYS BAVUMA ON 3-0 ODI WIN AGAINST INDIA |P17



SA VS IND: BIG THANK YOU BCCI, JAY SHAH, GANGULY AND THE INDIAN PLAYERS, SAYS GRAEME SMITH |P18

PAKISTAN PACER SHAHEEN AFRIDI NAMED ICC MEN'S CRICKETER OF THE YEAR FOR 2021 |P18



MidWeek Sports



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DISSECTING THE REASONS BEHIND WHERE INDIA LOST THE ODI SERIES

NEW DELHI, (IANS) India had started their tour of South Africa on a bright note, winning the Centurion Test by 113 runs. But after that, South Africa came back to win the next two Tests and take the series 2-1. One expected that with the ODI series, there will be a change in results. But the same script followed as India were blanked 3-0 by South Africa in the ODIs. Playing ODIs for the first time after July 2021 (for first-choice players, after March 2021), India were rusty and looked out of sorts in the 50-over matches. We dissect the reasons behind India's 3-0 loss in the ODIs against South Africa:

Batting returns not up to the mark

A quick glance at the batting cards of both teams will show the difference between South Africa and India. Three of the four highest run-scorers in the series were all from the hosts. Quinton de Kock topped the chart with 229 runs at an average of 76.33 and strike rate of 96.62 with a hundred and a fifty, Rassie van der Dussen at number two with 218 runs with a whopping average of 218.00 (was unbeaten twice in the series) and strike rate of 112.95 with a hundred and fifty and fifty as well. Skipper Temba Bavuma made 153 runs at an average of 51 and strike rate of 80.10, including a century in the first match. For India, Shikhar Dhawan was their top run-getter in the series, sandwiched between van der Dussen and Bavuma, making 169 runs at an average of 56.33 and strike rate of 86.66, with just two fifties. India's batters failed to aggregate 200 runs in the series. Moreover, no Indian batter got to the three-figure mark. While Dhawan and Kohli gave starts but were unable to make it big, the middle-order failed to stand up to the occasion and India's batting lost the plot from there. With the ODI series against West Indies at home in February, India will be hoping to fix the glitches in batting.

Middle overs muddle

It is no denying that India has a middle overs problem in batting, which was clearly illustrated in the ODIs against South Africa. In the first ODI, compared to South Africa's 171/2 in that stage, India were 148/6, unable to stop the wickets from falling and thus weren't able to make as many runs as they would have liked.

The script repeated when India batted first in the second ODI, making 160/5 in the middle overs phase. Then the script again repeated itself when chasing 288 on Sunday, India could muster 160/5 in the middle overs. Also, in terms of partnership, South Africa had at least a three-figure stand in every match of the series, something India did only once (in the second ODI).

Spinners outplayed

Much was expected of Ravichandran Ashwin's off-spin and Yuzvendra Chahal's leg-spin against South Africa. But they couldn't put up a good show as South Africa's spinners outplayed them. In a complete reversal of 2018, where Chahal and Kuldeep Yadav bamboozled the South Africa batters, here the Proteas' spinners were getting the better of India's batters. Overall, the troika of Tabraiz Shamsi, Keshav Maharaj and Aiden Markram took nine wickets in 65 overs while conceding 218 runs. On the other hand, combining Ashwin, Chahal, Jayant Yadav and Shreyas Iyer's numbers, India had just three wickets from spin in 32.1 overs while conceding 343 runs. In terms of pace, South Africa took 15 wickets while their Indian counterparts could get ten wickets. Clearly, the spin attack didn't do wonders for India.

India fined for slow over-rate after losing third ODI

India have been fined 40 per cent of their match fees for maintaining a slow over-rate against South Africa in the third and final ODI of the series in Cape Town on Sunday. In the match, India were bowled out for 283 in 49.2 overs while chasing 288 at the Newlands Cricket Ground, which meant South Africa won the series 3-0. "Andy Pycroft of the Emirates ICC Elite Panel of Match Referees imposed the sanction after KL Rahul's side was ruled to be two overs short of the target after time allowances were taken into consideration," said the International Cricket Council (ICC) in a statement. In accordance with Article 2.22 of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, which relates to minimum over-rate offences, players are fined 20 per cent of their match fee for every over their side fails to bowl in the allotted time. Rahul pleaded guilty to the offence and accepted the proposed sanction, so there was no need for a formal hearing. On-field umpires Marais Erasmus and Bongani Jele, third umpire Allauddien Palekar and fourth umpire Adrien Holdstock levelled the charge.

HAPPY WITH THE PROGRESSION OF THE SIDE, SAYS SA COACH BOUCHER

CAPE TOWN, (IANS) South African cricket head coach Mark Boucher said he was happy with the "progression" of the side, adding that the team had turned the corner following victories in the Test and ODI series against India.



On Sunday, the Proteas made a clean sweep of the three-match ODI series, scoring a thrilling four-run win against the tourists to add to the 2-1 Test series victory. It has been a massive turnaround for Boucher's team, which only a few months ago had lost an ODI to Ireland for the first time ever and had been humbled at home by Pakistan in the white-ball formats last summer. "We've been through the hard times and only once you've been through the hard times do you appreciate the good times," Boucher was quoted as saying by iol.co.za on Monday. "The progression has been great. I think we turned the corner a while ago from a team perspective but obviously we needed the results to back it up. We tried a few things in COVID times. We had to get a deeper squad. We gave a lot of opportunities to a lot of players and I think we are starting to reap the rewards now. We will appreciate this. This is just part of the journey of this team. We have a captain in Temba (Bavuma) who is demanding on results, which is good," added the former South African cricketer.

PAKISTAN CAPTAIN BABAR AZAM NAMED ICC MEN'S ODI CRICKETER OF THE YEAR FOR 2021

DUBAI, (IANS) Pakistan captain Babar Azam on Monday was named as ICC Men's ODI Cricketer of the Year for 2021. Azam beat competition from Bangladesh's Shakib al Hasan, South Africa's Janneman Malan and Ireland's Paul Sterling to win the award. Earlier, in this edition of the ICC awards, Azam was selected as the captain of the men's ODI and T20I elevens of the year 2021. "First of all, I am thankful for the fans for supporting me and cheering me on. After that, I am thankful to PCB and ICC and especially my Pakistan team for supporting and backing me. It wasn't possible without them. I feel proud to have such a good team. I am also thankful to my parents who prayed a lot (for my success)," said Azam in his acceptance speech. Azam might have played only six ODIs in 2021, but he made vital contributions in the two series that Pakistan played this year, scoring 405 runs in six matches at an average of 67.50 with two centuries. His best performance came in a losing cause in the final ODI against England. With the series already lost, Pakistan were playing for pride as well as crucial ICC Cricket World Cup Super League points in the third ODI at Birmingham. Put in to bat first, Pakistan posted 331, with Babar scoring close to half of the team's runs. Walking in to bat early in the innings, Babar strung a 92-run stand with Imam-ul-Haq to bail Pakistan out of trouble. "The best innings if you ask me is that 158, I scored against England which is also my highest score. I reckon it's the best innings of my career. I was actually struggling a bit at that time and needed a knock. I got it and it gave me a lot of confidence," said Azam about his knock.

IT MEANS A LOT AS A PLAYER, SAYS BAVUMA ON 3-0 ODI WIN AGAINST INDIA

CAPE TOWN, (IANS) South Africa captain Temba Bavuma said winning the ODI series 3-0 against India means a lot for him as a player. He added that defeating a strong India side at home speaks volumes of his captaincy in white-ball cricket.

After losing the Centurion Test, South Africa made a stunning comeback to win the Test series 2-1. That winning juggernaut continued when the Proteas blanked India 3-0 with a four-run win on Sunday. "For me, it means a lot as a player. Looking back at the series and knowing that I contributed significantly to the winning cause of the team, that makes it even more better. From a captaincy point of view, at the end of the day, you will always be judged on your record and to convincingly beat an Indian side, with players of their calibre and pedigree, that speaks a lot to my captaincy," said Bavuma while replying to a question from IANS in a virtual press conference.

"But things are still early within my career, from a leadership point of view. I will take the positives and acknowledge them but I will try very hard not to get ahead of myself," added Bavuma. Talking about the positive effects of captaining South Africa showing in his batting performances, Bavuma felt the leadership responsibility has brought some clarity to his own game.

"I enjoy the captaincy. It seems to have brought the benefit of that showing in my own performances too. Captaincy brings a lot of thinking and I enjoy the tactical side of things and that thinking extends to your own game too. "I suppose I am a bit more clearer in terms of what I want myself to do. I'm always trying to assess the situation and come up with plans to how to counter those situations. That's probably the reason why the form has come with the captaincy." Bavuma explained that it hasn't been an easy job in captaining South Africa with off-field issues hovering around. Head coach Mark Boucher has been charged with gross misconduct by Cricket South Africa (CSA) related to racism, especially after the Social Justice and Nation-Building (SJN) report was revealed.

INDIA TOUR OF SOUTH AFRICA



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ASIA CUP HOCKEY: INDIA BEAT SINGAPORE 9-1 TO CLINCH SEMIS BERTH

MUSCAT (OMAN), (IANS) India bounced back in style from their 0-2 defeat to Japan, thrashing Singapore 9-1 to book a place in the semi-finals of the Women's Asia Cup hockey championship here on Monday. By virtue of this win, India sealed a spot in the 2022 FIH Women's Hockey World Cup to be held in Spain and the Netherlands later this year. In what turned out to be a goal-fest, Gurjit Kaur (8', 37', 48') bagged a hat-trick, Monika (6', 17') and Jyoti (43', 58') scored a brace, while Vandana Katariya (8') and Mariana Kujur (10') contributed a goal each to India's comprehensive victory. Li Min Toh (43') scored the only goal for Singapore. India now take on South Korea in the semi-finals at the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex here on Wednesday (Jan 26). India were quick to get off the blocks in the first quarter, making inroads into Singapore's circle with a structured attack and dominating the possession throughout the first 15 minutes. The first goal came through Monika's clear-cut reverse flick in the 6th minute and in no time India went on to take a 3-0 lead, courtesy of goals from Vandana and Gurjit, who successfully converted a penalty corner in the 8th minute of the match. In the next minute, the Indians earned their second penalty corner but Deep Grace Ekka's attempt was saved by Singapore goalkeeper Yu Tong Liu, according to information reaching here. India bagged their fourth goal via young forward Mariana in the 10th minute. Pushing for more opportunities within the opponent's striking circle, India earned their third PC in the dying minutes of the first quarter, but Gurjit's attempt was blocked by Singapore's

defenders. The second quarter started similarly with India making moves in Singapore's half. They won a PC in the second minute of the second quarter. Experienced Monika, who set the tempo of the match, made no mistake to bag India's fifth and her second goal of the match. Despite trailing for most of the time, Singapore regained some strength to nullify India's attack and saved as many as two penalty corners in the latter part of the second quarter. The Savitaled India won two penalty corners in the initial minutes of the second half, but couldn't convert the chances to extend their lead. Continuing with their structured attack, India earned yet another PC, which was duly converted by drag-flick specialist Gurjit in the 37th minute of the match. After having recovered themselves in the defence, Singapore earned a hard-fought PC in the 43rd minute of the third quarter and managed to fetch the first goal with Li Min Toh's attempt. However, India responded straight away with a goal from Jyoti, who smartly found the back of the net through a cross from the left flank making the scoreline 7-1 at the end of the third quarter. Continuing to dominate the proceedings, India went on to add the eighth goal to their tally through Gurjit's PC conversion in the 48th minute. Minutes later, Gurjit got a chance to add the team's ninth and her fourth goal to the tally through back-to-back PCs but missed out on converting it. Jyoti, however, went on to add her second goal to India's scoreline in the 58th minute, thus ending the match with a 9-1 score.

SA VS IND: BIG THANK YOU BCCI, JAY SHAH, GANGULY AND THE INDIAN PLAYERS, SAYS GRAEME SMITH

CAPE TOWN, (IANS) South Africa's director of cricket Graeme Smith has thanked BCCI president Sourav Ganguly and secretary Jay Shah and the Indian team for showing 'faith' in Cricket South Africa (CSA) to organise the tour of the country, which concluded on Sunday. The tour was seen as a major financial boost for the struggling Cricket South Africa. India were touted as favourites to win a Test series in the Rainbow Nation against an inexperienced South African team. However, the visiting side went on to lose the Test series 1-2 and then fell to a 0-3 humiliation in the ODI series. As the tour came to an end, Smith took to Twitter to thank the Indian cricket board (BCCI) officials. "Big thank you @BCCI @JayShah @SGanguly99 and the Indian players and management for the faith you showed in SA cricket's ability to pull off a safe and successful tour. Your commitment at an uncertain time has set the example that a lot can follow," Smith wrote Twitter. Cricket South Africa has been struggling with financial problems for the past two years and it has been worsened by the Covid-19 pandemic. Earlier, England and Australia both cancelled their tours of the country after a spike in positive cases. Australia had postponed a three-match Test tour of South Africa -- due to Covid-19 risk -- last year. Whereas, England had returned home mid-way during the limited-overs series in South Africa after a COVID-19 outbreak in a bio-bubble arrangement in South Africa in December 2020.

PAKISTAN PACER SHAHEEN AFRIDI NAMED ICC MEN'S CRICKETER OF THE YEAR FOR 2021

DUBAI, (IANS) Pakistan left-arm pacer Shaheen Shah Afridi on Monday was named as the ICC men's Cricketer of the Year for 2021. At 21 years, Afridi is the youngest cricketer ever to get the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy and is the first Pakistani player to receive the honour as well. It is also the fourth individual trophy bagged by Pakistan in this edition of the ICC awards. The tall Pakistani quick was on fire throughout 2021, knocking some of the best batters over across all three formats of the game. Afridi had a year to remember in Tests and T20Is, reaching his peak during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup in UAE where he impressed one and all with his sheer speed and skills. "I tried to produce performances for Pakistan. In 2021, our team performed really well and we won some really good matches. I always try to produce good performances for Pakistan and will continue with my efforts. There is a lot of support for others in our team. We have gelled together and feel happy when we see our team-mates doing well," said Afridi in his acceptance speech. He would take seven wickets in six matches during the tournament in Pakistan's thrilling run to the semi-final. He ruled the shortest format of the game throughout the calendar year, scalping 23 wickets in 21 matches with his death bowling skills improving by leaps and bounds.



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