

# Ravichandran Ashwin's wife pens heartfelt tribute after his sudden retirement

CHENNAI, DEC 21

India's ace spinner Ravichandran Ashwin's wife Prithi Narayanan has penned a heartfelt tribute for her husband following his recent retirement from the game, saying "it is time to set the burden of being you down" and embrace life beyond the game. Ashwin made a surprise announcement of his retirement after the drawn third Test at Brisbane. The veteran cricketer picked up just one wicket during the tour, including the 10-wicket loss at Adelaide.

The 38-year-old retired with a stellar record of 537 Test wickets at an average of 24, in addition to scoring 3,503 runs, including six centuries. He also claimed 156 wickets in ODIs and 72 in T20Is.

Describing her tribute as a "Love letter from a fan girl", Prithi wrote on Instagram: "Dear Ashwin, from not knowing how to put a kit bag together to following you to stadiums all over the world, rooting for you, watching you and learning from you, it has been an absolute pleasure. The world you introduced me to gave me the



privilege to watch and enjoy a sport that I love from close quarters.

"It also showed me how much passion, hardwork and discipline is needed to keep your head above water. And sometimes even that is not enough. I remember us talking about why you, R Ashwin, had to do all of this and a lot more to even stay relevant in the scheme of things." Ashwin, who debuted in 2011 against the West Indies, earned a reputation for his relentless pursuit of excellence. His near-equal tally of 269 wickets against right-handers and 268 against left-

handers highlights his versatility.

"How awards, the best of stats, the POMs, the accolades, the records didn't matter if you didn't sharpen your skill sets constantly and did not put in the work. Sometimes, nothing is enough," Prithi continued.

"As you end your wonderful international run, I only want to tell you that it's all good. It is all going to be good. It is time to set the burden of being you down. Live life on your terms, make space for those extra calories, make time for your family, make time to do absolutely nothing, share

memes all day, create a new bowling variation, bug our kids out of their minds. Just do it all." Prithi, who has been a constant companion on Ashwin's cricketing journey, reflected on his meticulous approach to his craft.

"When I saw Ashwin's PC, I thought of small and big moments. Many many memories over the last 13-14 years. The big wins, the MOS awards, the quiet silence in our room after an intense game, the sound of the shower running for much longer than usual on some evenings post play, the scratch of pencil over paper as he scribbled thoughts down, the constant streaming of footage videos when he is making a game plan, the calm of meditative breathing before leaving for each game, certain songs playing on repeat while he unwinds... "The times we wept in joy - after the CT final, after the MCG win, after the Sydney draw, The Gabba win, after making a comeback in T20s...the times we sat in silence and the times when we had our hearts broken," she wrote.

## New Zealand Cricket delegation in Pakistan to assess security arrangements ahead of ODI tri-series

KARACHI, DEC 21

New Zealand Cricket has sent a delegation to Pakistan to inspect security and other arrangements for a scheduled tri-series in January.

Besides hosts Pakistan and New Zealand, South Africa is the third team in the event.

Pakistan is hosting the multi-team event as a curtain raiser to the ICC Champions Trophy in February and March.

The New Zealand delegation, including security expert Reg Dickason and New Zealand Players' Association representative Brad Rodden are in Karachi and Lahore to discuss security arrangements and other preparations for the event.

Around the same time a high-powered delegation from the ICC has also arrived in Pakistan to inspect ongoing preparations and other arrangements for the eight-team Champions



Trophy.

The ICC delegation also visited the National Stadium in Karachi before going to Lahore and Rawalpindi.

A PCB official said the visits were routine ahead of major events as Pakistan was going to be the centre of top cricket teams in February and March.

The New Zealand and ICC delegations keenly inspected the ongoing renovation and facelift process at the stadiums in Karachi, Lahore and Rawalpindi on which the PCB is spending an amount of 12 billion rupees to get them ready for the Champions Trophy.

PCB Chairman Mohsin

Naqvi said on Friday that the board was ready to welcome and host all teams as construction work on the stadiums would be completed before given deadlines.

He also said that state level security would be in place for all the teams visiting Pakistan and he will supervise this personally as federal minister for interior.

The NZC delegation also visited Rawalpindi Stadium and Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium as part of their assessment.

Pakistan will host New Zealand and South Africa for an ODI tri-series just days before the Champions Trophy, slated to be held from February 19 to March 9.

## Tendulkar praises young girl's 'smooth, effortless' bowling on social media; Zaheer echoes admiration

NEW DELHI, DEC 21

Cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar has lauded a young girl's "smooth and effortless" bowling action, likening it to former India pacer Zaheer Khan, who too praised her technique in a social media exchange that created a lot of buzz.

On Friday, Tendulkar shared a video on 'X' featuring the young girl, Sushila Meena, delivering a ball with an extraordinarily fluid left-arm pace bowling action, reminiscent of Zaheer's signature style.

Tendulkar also tagged his longtime India



teammate Zaheer in his video, which was in slow motion. "Smooth, effortless, and lovely to watch! Sushila Meena's bowling action has shades of you, @ImZaheer. Do you see it too?" the Indian batting legend said in his post. The video highlights the immense raw talent emerging from rural

India, underscoring the country's potential in nurturing future cricket stars. The interaction between Tendulkar and Zaheer has drawn widespread attention on social media, garnering lakhs of views and an outpouring of appreciation for the young bowler.

## Mohun Bagan's unbeaten streak ends with 1-2 loss to FC Goa in ISL-XI

CALCUTTA, DEC 21

Mohun Bagan tasted defeat for the first time since September 28 when they lost 1-2 to FC Goa in the ISL-XI at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Fatorda, Goa, on Friday.

While Bagan's eight-match unbeaten run — it began with a 3-0 win over Mohammedan Sporting on October 5 — came to a grinding halt, Manolo Marquez's FC Goa extended their undefeated streak to seven games.

Exactly a year ago, on December 20, Bagan had suffered an identical 1-2 loss in a card-strewn ISL-X match at Mumbai City.

A brace by Brison Fernandes, in either half, helped the hosts secure all three points on Friday. In between, Dimitrios Petratos brought Bagan back into the game with a spot-kick.

Bagan remain on top of the table with 26 points from 12



matches. Bengaluru FC are second with 24 from 12.

Bagan were inefficient in attack as their forwards missed an array of chances, despite taking 12 shots as opposed to the nine by the home side.

The match started slow with both teams trying to wrestle for possession in midfield. However, FC Goa drew first blood with Fernandes coming up with a goal in the 12th

minute.

The young winger went head-on against Asish Rai on the left flank before unleashing his shot. However, the ball took a deflection off Tom Aldred's boot before nestling into the net, catching Vishal Kaith off-guard.

Despite the goal, Bagan continued dominating possession. But FC Goa held their lines brilliantly and were looking to hit on counter-

attacks. Brison and Mohammed Yasir, with their pace in the wide areas, were causing problems for Jose Molina's men.

Bagan's first shot on target came from a corner where Alberto Rodriguez rose highest to head the ball towards goal. However, goalkeeper Hrithik Tiwari was in a good position to gather the ball.

The best chance for the visitors fell to Petratos at the stroke of half-time. Manvir Singh delivered a brilliant cross from the right, but the Australian failed to make the right connection.

Bagan piled up more pressure at the start of the second half with Sahal Abdul Samad pulling the trigger from outside the box. However, goalkeeper Tiwari was equal to the task.

Bagan's persistence finally paid off when Petratos converted from the spot 10 minutes into the second half.

## Hockey in 2024: Consecutive Olympic medals, Sreejesh, Hockey India League make headlines

NEW DELHI, DEC 21

Back-to-back Olympic medals after a hiatus of 50 years and the revival of the much-awaited HIL lit up the year for Indian hockey which also saw one of its biggest stars walk into sunset after a glorious career.

With their third-place finish in the Paris Olympics this summer, the Harmanpreet Singh-led men's team proved that the historic bronze in the Tokyo Games three years ago was not a flash in the pan. The medal ensured the legendary PR Sreejesh, one of the team's biggest pillars for nearly two decades, got the send-off he deserved after he decided to retire from the sport. That he is now associated with the junior teams bodes well for Indian hockey as it seeks more success in the coming times. Before Tokyo and Paris, the last time the Indian hockey team won successive Olympic medals was at 1968 Mexico City and 1972 Munich Games.

Under chief coach Craig Fulton, the Indians had to alter their playing style, concentrating more on defence and relying on counters to build fast-paced attacks, and the players embraced the approach before the big event came calling.



The Indians played fearless hockey throughout the Games and the win against Great Britain in the quarterfinals, with 10 men, was a reflection of the players' mental toughness.

India played with a man less for nearly 43 minutes and eventually won the match in shoot-out thanks to resolute defending and PR Sreejesh's brilliance under the bar to progress to a second straight Olympic semifinals.

It was not just about defending, Fulton's team also showed their attacking prowess to stun mighty Australia 3-2 in their final pool game, ending a 52-year wait for a win over the formidable Kookaburras in the Olympics.

That victory held great

significance as it came against a side which mauled them 5-0 in a Test series Down Under earlier this year.

India's hopes of playing an Olympic final were dashed by Germany in a close contest but, within 24 hours, they regrouped and beat Spain 2-1 to clinch another podium finish, showing signs of a bright future.

Star performers

Many stars sparkled and some new ones emerged in the year gone by but none can come close to what old warhorse Harmanpreet and Sreejesh did for the team. The duo complemented each other on the field and played a massive role in the team's success.

While Sreejesh was as solid as ever in front of the post in his final hurrah, Harmanpreet was sturdy in the backline and ferocious with his dragflicks, finishing as the top scorer in Paris with 10 strikes from eight games.

Harmanpreet's exploits throughout the year, especially in Paris, won him his third FIH Male Hockey Player of the Year award. Among women, young Deepika emerged as a bright spot in 2024 and she not only is a fine striker but also a potent dragflicker.

Sreejesh's retirement Nicknamed 'The Wall of Indian hockey', Sreejesh has worked on his craft every day to become one of the world's top goalkeepers. So when he announced his decision to retire after the Games just after reaching Paris, it came as a shock for the entire sports fraternity. In his final hurrah also, he never put a foot wrong, making saves after saves to keep India in the hunt.

Revival of HIL The much-anticipated revival of the Hockey India League after a gap of seven years was the icing on the cake for the national sport as the event has been the biggest feeder line for players in the past, producing stars like Harmanpreet, Manpreet Singh and many others.

## Border-Gavaskar Trophy: Ravindra Jadeja urges top-order to fire in Boxing Day Test

MELBOURNE, DEC 21

Star India all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja on Saturday said lack of runs from the top-order builds pressure on the lower-order and called for an improved performance from the batting unit in the Boxing Day Test here.

Jadeja played a crucial role in the rain-hit third Test against Australia at Brisbane, scoring a gritty 77 in the first innings to help India secure a draw.

"Top-order runs are very important when you play outside India, especially in Australia and South Africa. When the top order doesn't score runs, the responsibility and

pressure increase on the lower order," Jadeja said during an interaction at the MCG. "Hopefully, the top-order and the middle-order do well in this Test. As a team, we need the top order to perform. If everyone contributes in the batting unit, the team will do well." India's top-order struggled in Brisbane, barring opener KL Rahul, who scored a valiant 84. The rest of the top and middle order crumbled, but Jadeja, playing his first match of the tour, kept India afloat.

The match was eventually saved by the last-wicket stand between Jasprit Bumrah and Akash Deep, who produced a heroic partnership to avoid the follow-on.

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**Corrigendum**  
 No. JID/II/2024-25/5318-5354  
 Dated: 19-12-2024

**Subject:** Extension of dates.

**Reference:** This office E-NIT No. 17 of 12/2024-25 issued vide endorsement No. JID/II/2024-25/5056-5092 Dated 07-12-2024. (Works figuring at S.No.10)

This is for the information of all the concerned that the bid opening and closing dates of above-mentioned works of this office E-NIT under reference are hereby extended due to poor response and the fresh dates are as under: -

i) Uploading stops on	:	23-12-2024	(06:00 PM)
ii) Tender opens on	:	24-12-2024	(12:00 Noon or Subjective)

**Please read GSTR-3B for the month of October-2024 instead of November-2024.**

All other terms and conditions of the above e-NIT shall remain the same.

**Sd/-**  
**(Er. Hafiz Ullah Reshi)**  
**Executive Engineer**  
**Irrigation Division No.II**  
**Jammu**

**DIP/J-8452/24**