Abhishek, Ishan top T20I batting rankings; Varun slips to No.2 among bowlers

New Delhi, (UNI)

India's triumphant campaign at the T20 World Cup 2026 has brought significant movement in the latest International Cricket Council T20I player rankings, with Abhishek Sharma and Ishan Kishan occupying the top two spots among batters, even as spinner Varun Chakravarthy slipped to No.2 in the bowling charts following the completion of the tournament.

Led by Suryakumar Yadav, India sealed a dominant 96-run victory over New Zealand in the final in Ahmedabad on Sunday to secure back-to-back titles and become the first side in history to win three T20 World Cup trophies since the tournament's inception. The emphatic triumph has been followed by a strong presence for Indian players in the updated rankings released by the ICC on Wednesday. India now boast the top two batters in the rankings.

Abhishek retained his position at the top of the batting charts after his quickfire half-century in the final. Close behind him is fellow left-hander Ishan, who climbed two places to No.2 following a prolific campaign in which he amassed 317 runs.

Kishan also achieved a new career-high rating and now trails Abhishek by just four rating points, underlining India's dominance at the top of the T20I batting rankings.

Several other players across teams also made gains following their performances at the World Cup. New Zealand wicketkeeper-batter Tim Seifert jumped four places to sixth, while England's Jacob Bethell surged 17 positions to 16th, both achieving the highest rankings of their careers after impressive displays during the tournament. New Zealand opener Finn Allen also climbed seven spots to 20th after scripting history with a 33-ball century in the semi-final against South Africa. Among other Indian batters, Sanju Samson moved up 18 places to 22nd following a series of impactful performances during the tournament, while Shivam Dube rose four positions to 27th after contributing valuable runs in India's title-winning campaign.

Having Watson, Russell as coaches is a blessing: KKR allrounder Ramandeep Singh ahead of IPL 2026

Kolkata, (UNI)

Kolkata Knight Riders' hard-hitter Ramandeep Singh has found fresh inspiration in the dugout ahead of IPL 2026, with the arrival of Shane Watson and Andre Russell as Assistant Coach and Power Coach respectively.

Since joining KKR in 2024, during which he was a part of the team that sealed their third IPL trophy, Ramandeep has contributed 172 runs at an impressive strike rate of 167.9, with 6 wickets already to his name.

More recently, Ramandeep lit up the 2025 Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy with 209 runs at a strike rate of 195 and 9 wickets across 10 matches, and he looks primed for his best season yet in Purple and Gold.

For his pre-season preparations, the 28-year-old is trying to tailor his game to the demands of each surface and scenario he expects to encounter. "My approach for this year is very situation-oriented. I am working on my understanding of potential scenarios every time I step in to bat, I am also trying to understand how the pitch is evolving and playing the right shots accordingly," he said.

Ramandeep's domestic exploits this season extended well beyond his batting. His performances with the ball underlined a growing confidence in his bowling capabilities as well, and he is eager to bring that same impact to the IPL. "If given the opportunity, I want to deliver as a bowler too, because I believe I have the capability to be an all-rounder. I am going to give my best on the field, and I am hopeful the results will follow," he added.

One of the most exciting developments around the Kolkata Knight Riders this season has been the addition of legendary all-rounders Shane Watson and Andre Russell in the coaching setup. For Ramandeep, the prospect of learning from two of the game's finest will be a huge opportunity to take his game to the next level. "Having them in the dugout is a blessing. I want to make the most of it and absorb as much as I can from them.

Yuki Bhambri, Sumit Nagal; Dhakshineswar Suresh to receive TAGG support

New Delhi, (UNI): The Mission Olympic Cell (MOC) under the Sports Authority of India (SAI) has approved financial assistance for leading Indian tennis players Yuki Bhambri and Sumit Nagal, while also recommending the inclusion of emerging player Dhakshineswar Suresh in the Target Asian Games Group (TAGG) during its 169th meeting. This has been done keeping in mind Indian Tennis players' preparations for key events such as the Asian Games 2026 and the second round of the Davis Cup 2026 Qualifiers.

The MOC approved a financial assistance package worth Rs 28.89 lakh for Bhambri to support his training and competition calendar from February to September 2026, covering his international schedule spanning 33 weeks (231 days) of ATP and Grand Slam competitions as well as training on the professional circuit.

Under TAGG, the approved assistance will support Bhambri for personal physiotherapy services, being put forward by his physio Daniel Hatch during training and competition days leading up to key national commitments such as the Davis Cup tie in September and the Asian Games 2026. Bhambri has been in excellent form internationally, having reached the Round 3 at the 2026 Australian Open and the semi-finals of the 2025 US Open in doubles competition. He is also currently ranked World No. 23 in doubles and Asian No. 1. The MOC also approved financial assistance worth Rs 27.51 lakh for Sumit Nagal to support his international training and competition programme from March to October 2026. Nagal's calendar includes participation in ATP Challenger events, ATP Tour events, ATP Masters 1000 tournaments, Grand Slams such as Roland Garros, Wimbledon and the US Open, as well as the Davis Cup 2nd round tie and Asian Games 2026. TAGG recommended Nagal's coaching support for 70 days from March to May 2026 through the Nensel Academy Tennis School, with coaches Sascha Nensel and Milos Galecic guiding the 28-year-old during the crucial training and competition period. Currently India's No. 1 singles player on the ATP rankings, Nagal is ranked World No. 282, with a career-high ranking of 68 in 2024.

Suryakumar Yadav relives T20 World Cup win, eyes on Los Angeles Olympic 2028

Mumbai, (UNI)

Captain Suryakumar Yadav believes India are laser focused on achieving greater heights as a team, rather than chasing individual glory. A quality which helped them earn a historic third ICC Men's T20 World Cup. On Sunday, India defeated New Zealand by 96 runs in Ahmedabad to become the first team to defend the Men's title since the tournament's inception. It was also the first time that a team won the Men's T20 World Cup at home. "It feels great, winning in back-to-back," Suryakumar said in an exclusive interview with ICC.

"We knew that this tournament was going to happen in India, so our preparations were spot on. We understood how the conditions will be, what we needed to do, how we wanted to play," he said.

"I think care is the right word, which I felt seeped into this team slowly when the tournament started, thinking about each other, what the team requires at a given point. This was the mantra for this year's edition," Suryakumar said.

"Not think about personal milestones, just think about what the team wants at that moment and play as per that," he said.

The defending champions had a bit of a rocky start, as they were reduced to 77/6 in the opening game against USA in Mumbai. With his team in trouble the captain stepped up and steered them to safety.

Hockey: India shift focus to title charge, face Italy in SF after sealing World Cup Berth

Hyderabad, (UNI)

The Indian Women's Hockey Team have secured their place at the FIH Hockey World Cup 2026, but the hosts are far from finished as they now turn their focus to winning the FIH Hockey World Cup Qualifiers 2026 Hyderabad, Telangana title. India will face Italy in the semi-final as they look to continue their strong run-in front of the home crowd.

India finished on top of Pool B with seven points from three matches and a superior goal difference over Scotland, who also collected seven points to finish second in the group. The hosts registered two wins and one draw in the pool stage.

India began their campaign with a dominant 4–0 win against Uruguay. In their second match, they played out a closely fought 2–2 draw against Scotland before concluding the group stage with a convincing 4–1 victory over Wales. With the resounding performances in the pool stage, India confirmed their qualification for the FIH Hockey World Cup 2026 through the tournament rule which awards a World Cup berth to the highest world-ranked team finishing fourth across the two qualifying events.

The Santiago leg of the qualifiers concluded earlier, where Chile, Australia and Ireland secured the three direct qualification spots. Japan finished fourth in Santiago and are currently ranked No. 15 in the world. With India ranked ninth globally, the hosts have at least ensured they will finish as the highest-ranked fourth-placed team across the two tournaments, thereby confirming their ticket to the World Cup. Having achieved one of their primary objectives, India will now look to maintain their momentum and push for the place in the Final when they take on Italy, who finished second in Pool A with four points after registering one win, one draw and one loss, giving the hosts a slight psychological edge ahead of the semi-final.

India will also look to build on the impressive form of forward Navneet Kaur, who is currently the joint top scorer of the tournament with four goals. She produced a standout performance in the final pool match against Wales, scoring a brilliant hat-trick to cap off the group stage in style.

Afghanistan series with Sri Lanka in UAE postponed

Kabul, (UNI)

Afghanistan's upcoming series against Sri Lanka in the United Arab Emirates has been postponed until the end of the year because of the current conflict in the Middle East.

The Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) confirmed that the bilateral series, scheduled to begin on 13 March in the UAE, has been rescheduled to the last quarter of 2026 "due to logistical challenges, including flight constraints arising from the ongoing regional situation".

Sharjah had been set to host three Twenty20 International matches on March 13, 15 and 17, with three one-day internationals to follow in Dubai on March 20, 22 and 25, according to BBC sport.

There has been widespread travel disruption across the region since the United States and Israel began launching air strikes on Iran earlier this month.

Though the UAE has reopened its airspace after a week of restrictions, four people were injured after two drones "fell in the vicinity" of Dubai International Airport early on Wednesday.

Earlier this week, the West Indies team announced they would return home from the men's T20 World Cup in India via commercial flights, after being stuck in Kolkata since they were eliminated from the tournament on March 1.

IGU plans 'Center of excellence', takes Golf to schools through 'Golf on Wheels'

New Delhi, (UNI)

To make Golf accessible to people from various sections of society and popularise the game among school children, the Indian Golf union (IGU) has initiated its innovative 'Golf on Wheels' programme.

Speaking to UNI on the sidelines of the press conference of the Hero Indian Open Golf tournament, Director General, IGU, Maj. Gen. Bibhuti Bhushan said "Not everyone can access or afford a Golf course membership, so obviously the Golf course has to reach them. So we are operating the 'Golf on Wheels' programme. Under this programme we have a Van which goes to schools that have a tie up with us. It introduces the students to the game. The van is equipped with Golf sets, a simulator, a cage and a launch monitor. All technical equipment in one vehicle, we have a coach going with the vehicle, then we train the PT teachers. It is being very well received."

He added that the IGU is currently planning to set up a Center of Excellence.

"If we are to do well in Golf, a Center of Excellence is required and we are planning to set up such a center that will be world class in every aspect. We have the talent, Aditi Ashok came forth at the Tokyo Olympics, once we have the systems in place, maybe in a decade or so Golf will be as big as cricket."

He said that accessibility to courses remains a big issue, pointing out that India still has very few Golf courses.

"Golf is still seen as a rich man's sport in our country. What we lack is the number of Golf courses. A small country like New Zealand has 140 golf courses, the US has 15,000 plus courses, and India has just 230 odd courses."

China notches opening win over Mali, Czech Republic thrashes South Sudan in FIBA Women's WC qualifiers

Wuhan, (UNI)

China kicked off its quest for a FIBA Women's World Cup spot with an 81-68 victory over Mali, while the Czech Republic crushed South Sudan 89-52 here on Wednesday.

Starting center Han Xu scored China's first nine points, but it was not until Yang Shuyu's jumper with 3:30 remaining in the first quarter that China built its first lead of the game. Towering teenager Zhang Ziyu's layup at the buzzer ended the first quarter at 20-20.

Fielding Han and Li Yueru, both of whom just returned from overseas leagues, China had a 9-0 run at the start of the second quarter en route to a 35-29 halftime lead.

Rokia Doumbia made two consecutive 3-pointers as Mali pulled within 43-42 midway through the third quarter, while Yang helped steady China with her own. The Chinese captain forced the opponents into a timeout with a fast break layup that set it 51-44, according to Xinhua.

Zhang showed her strength in the paint back into action, scoring four points in a row as China possessed a nine-point lead going into the final frame. Zhang's consistent under-basket play and Han's 3-pointer helped China stretch its lead to 12 points with seven minutes to play, and Li followed with another shot from 3-point range.

China maintained a double-digit advantage the rest of the way, and Li's three-point play with two minutes remaining effectively sealed the host's win. Li had a double-double of 21 points and 11 rebounds. Han and Yang chipped in 14 points apiece.

T20 World Cup Stars Suryakumar Yadav and Tilak Varma Make Strategic Investment in TRUZON Solar

Hyderabad: TRUZON Solar, a leading solar solutions provider operating under Suntek Energy Systems Pvt. Ltd., has announced a strategic investment from Suryakumar Yadav, captain of India's ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026-winning team, and Tilak Varma, a member of the same World Cup-winning squad. The investment further strengthens the company's growth trajectory in India's rapidly expanding renewable energy sector.

Charugundla Bhavani Suresh, Founder and Managing Director of TRUZON Solar, confirmed that both players have invested in the company, reflecting their confidence in the organisation's long-term vision and its contribution to India's clean energy transition.

"TRUZON Solar has completed more than 17 years in the solar energy industry, and throughout this journey our primary focus has been on delivering reliable solar solutions while maintaining one of the strongest after-sales service networks in the sector. The decision by Suryakumar Yadav and Tilak Varma to invest in our company reflects their trust in our vision and the credibility we have built in the renewable energy space," said Charugundla Bhavani Suresh.

"Solar energy today represents both an environmental responsibility and a national opportunity. At TRUZON Solar, our mission is to accelerate the adoption of clean energy solutions while continuing to build a trusted, service-driven solar brand from India," he added.

The company's growth journey has also attracted support from prominent personalities across industries.