# Gritty Rahane revives India

Rahul too plays a good hand after Kohli and Pujara fall cheaply

#### INDIAN IN WI

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE NORTH SOUND (ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA)

Ajinkya Rahane's 18th halfcentury anchored India's revival to 134 for four at tea on the opening day of the first Test against the West Indies at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium here on Thursday.

India went into the Test with three fast bowlers - Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami and Ishant Sharma and one specialist spinner, with Ravindra Jadeja picked ahead of R. Ashwin.

Reduced to 25 for three by opening bowlers Kemar Roach and Shannon Gabriel after India was put in to bat, Rahane joined opening batsman K.L. Rahul in midmorning, the pair putting on 68 for the fourth wicket.

It took the off-spin of Roston Chase to separate them halfway through the afternoon session when Rahul, on 44, got a faint touch to an innocuous leg-side delivery for wicketkeeper Shai Hope to take a neat catch.

#### Third catch

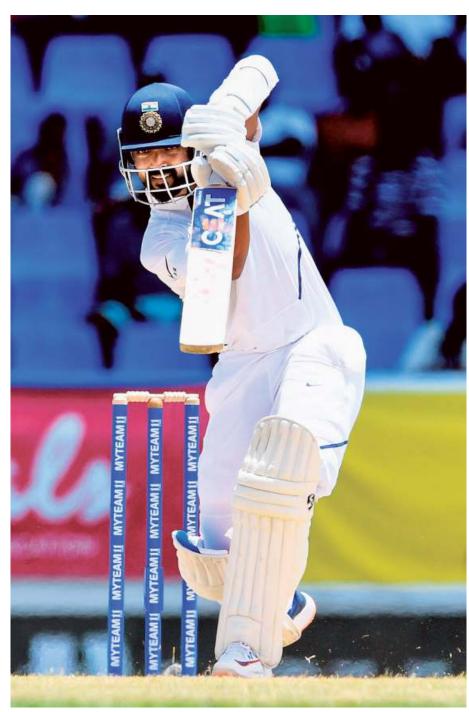
It was Hope's third catch of the innings in a role he would not have expected overnight as a lingering ankle injury to regular wicketkeeper Shane Dowrich ruled the first-choice gloveman out of the match.

With speculation over his continued value to the Indian team, given the increasing competitiveness for places in the batting order, Rahane underscored his worth as a gritty, determined campaigner. He was batting on 50, with Hanuma Vihari (18) giving him company at the break.

### **Double blow**

Early in the morning, Roach dismissed Mayank Agarwal and Cheteshwar Pujara in the fifth over of the day, while Gabriel accounted for the prized wicket of captain Virat Kohli.

While Gabriel lacked



Timely knock: Ajinkya Rahane got back amongst the runs with an unbeaten 50 at tea, after India was reduced to 25 for three. • AFP

Roach's persistent accuracy, his extra pace continued to challenge India's top order and brought him the reward of Kohli's wicket when the champion batsman, who made nine, attempted to guide a lifting delivery through backward-point only for debutant Shamarh Brooks to take a tumbling catch at gully.

### **SCOREBOARD**

INDIA – 1ST INNINGS

K.L. Rahul c Hope b Chase 44 (97b, 5x4), Mayank Agarwal c Hope b Roach 5 (13b. 1x4). Cheteshwar Pujara c Hope b Roach 2 (4b), Virat Kohli c Brooks b Gabriel 9 (12b, 2x4), Ajinkya Rahane (batting) 50 (122b, 7x4), Hanuma Vihari (batting) 18 (37b, 2x4); Extras (lb-5, nb-1): 6; Total (for four

wkts. in 47.2 overs, at tea): 134. **FALL OF WICKETS** 1-5 (Mayank, 4.2 overs), 2-7 (Pujara, 4.6), 3-25 (Kohli, 7.5), 4-93 (Rahul, 34.2).

**WEST INDIES BOWLING** Roach 11-4-24-2, Gabriel 10-2-38-1, Holder 12-7-21-0, Cummins 7.2-0-24-0, Chase 7-1-

Toss: West Indies.

## Rathour set to take over from Bangar

AMOL KARHADKAR

Vikram Rathour, former Inopening batsman-

turned-coach, is set to replace Sanjay Bangar as India's batting coach from the home series against South Africa next month.

While bowling coach B. Arun and fielding coach R. Sridhar are likely to continue, Rathour's inclusion is all but formalised.

On Thursday, after concluding an exhaustive fourday process that saw the selectors interviewing 88 candidates for six posts of the support staff, chief selector M.S.K. Prasad announced recommendations each for five posts, except the strength and conditioning coach.

#### To discuss commercials The shortlisted candidates

will discuss the commercial aspect and other formalities. including Conflict of Interest declarations, with the BCCI executives before being formally appointed till the T20 World Cup in India in November 2021.

Even before the BCCI invited applications, Rathour



Vikram Rathour. ■ FILE РНОТО

was widely tipped to replace Bangar, who took over midway through the tour of England in August 2014.

"Frankly speaking, if you see the last five years, there is definitely some improvement. Looking ahead to the Test Championship and two T20 World Cups, we thought there should be some freshness in that department. That's the reason we went ahead with Rathour as first choice," said Prasad.

#### **Need for change**

Even before India's World Cup semifinal exit, there were indications that Bangar, who has been rated highly by captain Virat Koli, will not be persisted with.

**Support Staff list** The recommendations for India's support staff:

Rathour, Sanjay Bangar, Mark

Ramprakash Bowling coach: B. Arun, Paras Mhambrey,

Venkatesh Prasad Fielding coach: R. Sridhar. Abhay Sharma, T. Dilip

Physio: Nitin Patel, Andrew Leipus, Vaibhav Daga Administrative manager:

V. Rajagopalan, Anand Yalvigi

Girish Dongre,

For strength and conditioning coach, the following candidates will be flown down to the NCA for a practical examination: Luke Woodhouse, Grant Luden, Rajnikanth Sivagnanam, Nick Webb and Anand Date

While admitting that the decision to replace him reflects "a mix" of stagnated batting line-up and need for a change, Prasad stressed that Bangar wasn't made the scapegoat.

"Let anybody say anything, we have conducted the interviews in the most honest and fair manner. We felt that Rathour was the first preference for us.'

Rathour couldn't be appointed as the NCA batting coach earlier this year, owing to an alleged conflict of interest. Being the brotherin-law of India's junior selection panel chief Aashish Kapoor had stalled his appointment. BCCI chief executive Rahul Johri clarified that the CoI issue has been taken care of.

"This was discussed at the CoA meeting too, when the CoA was presented the shortlisted candidates," Johri

"If his brother-in-law is the selector of the junior team, he is the batting coach of the senior team. I don't think there is any conflict."

Prasad clarified that the selection panel didn't really consult the team-management, but informally interacted with the Cricket Advisory Committee members before the rigorous process.

He also appealed that "going forward, with due regards to the Honourable Supreme Court's decision, it would be better if the CAC chairman is included in the support staff selection since the committee selects the head coach."

## 'Indian players fitter, but can improve on agility'

S. DINAKAR

It's shocking that Jonty Rhodes, that magnificent gravity-defying man, hasn't made the cut for the India fielding coach's job. His name isn't there in the shortlist of three

The fielding legend, who often brought sunshine and magic with him to the arena. earlier said here on Thursday that he had attended the first-ever job interview for the role of the India fielding coach on Tuesday.

A blithe spirit, who loved swinging to the rhythm of life, noted, "If I do not get the job, I will be disappointed but will still surf and dance to the music here."

Despite the BCCI snub, Rhodes' celebration of nature and its various hues will

continue. The 50-year-old South African is here to take part in TT Group's Surf-Yoga-Music festival on Covelong

He has taken a liking for the Indian people, places and culture. Rhodes follows Indian cricket closely too.

Rhodes has seen significant improvement in the Indian fielding standards. And he gives credit to the current Indian support staff. "The staff has worked really hard and the captain [Virat Kohli] certainly drives the fitness

No perfect technique The South African said there was no perfect technique in

fielding. "Fielding is a habit. If it's working, then don't fix

Looking ahead, Rhodes



Jonty Rhodes. ■PTI

said, "There are two T20 World Cups in successive years. Then, with the Test championship coming up, there are no dead rubbers any more. Every Test has its consequence and impacts the points table. Fielding can be the key."

Rhodes pointed out, "The

Indian players have got fitter, but they still can improve on agility. Fielding is also about lateral movement, I don't think the Indians are yet at their best in that." He added, "When you are

saving a run, changing your direction is very important. And away from home, slip catching is a major area for Turning his attention to

South Africa's upcoming tour of India, Rhodes felt the lack of a settled support staff could hurt the side on a difficult campaign.

He termed the departure of greats A.B. de Villiers, Dale Steyn and Hashim Amla as part of a cycle and added South Africa had to move on. Meanwhile, the discovery

of India continues for

### Meet Kohli the anchor



Pleased to see you, maan: Virat Kohli greets the legendary Viv Richards. • COURTESY: BCCI.TV

# Archer picks six as Australia crumbles

### THE ASHES

REUTERS

Jofra Archer's first five-wicket haul (six for 45) in Test cricket put England in command on a weather-affected opening day of the third Ashes Test at Headingley on Thursday as it bowled Australia out for 179.

Only four overs were possible in the morning session, but there was time for Australia opener Marcus Harris to fall to Archer for eight and Usman Khawaja was out shortly after lunch.

David Warner (61) settled

to lead the Australia recovery after another break in play before falling to Archer ;Travis Head and Matthew Wade departed for ducks.

Tim Paine and James Patwere dismissed

cheaply and Pat Cummins became Archer's fifth victim. Marnus Labuschagne was dismissed for 74 and Nathan Lyon was trapped lbw by Archer in the last over of the

### **SCOREBOARD**

AUSTRALIA –1ST INNINGS David Warner c Bairstow b Archer 61, Marcus Harris c Bair-

stow b Archer 8, Usman Khawaja c Bairstow b Broad 8, Marnus Labuschagne lbw b Stokes 74, Travis Head b Broad O, Matthew Wade b Archer O, Tim Paine lbw b Woakes 11, James Pattinson c Root b Archer 2, Pat Cummins c Bairstow b Archer O. Nathan Lvon lbw b

Archer 1, Josh Hazlewood (not out) 1; Extras (b-4, lb-2, nb-2, w-5): 13; Total (in 52.1 overs):

#### **FALL OF WICKETS** 1-12, 2-25, 3-136, 4-138, 5-

139, 6-162, 7-173, 8-174, 9-177. **ENGLAND BOWLING** Broad 14-4-32-2, Archer 17.1-

3-45-6, Woakes 12-4-51-1, Stokes 9-0-45-1. Toss: England



Fast and feared: The irrepressible Jofra Archer returned his maiden five-for in Tests on Thursday. • REUTERS

## Sindhu, Praneeth enter quarterfinals

Kidambi, Prannoy and Saina exit

## BADMINTON WORLDS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Two-time silver medallist P.V. Sindhu produced yet another commanding performance as she demolished Beiwen Zhang of United States 21-14, 21-6 in 34 minutes to advance to the quarterfinals of the BWF World Championships here on

Thursday. Sindhu will now face second seed Tai Tzu Ying of

Chinese Taipei. In men's singles, B. Sai Praneeth dished out a superlative performance to stun World No. 8 Anthony Sinisuka Ginting 21-19, 21-13 and progress to the quarterfinals reigning Asian Games champion Jonaton Christie.

However, K. Srikanth, H.S. Prannov and Saina Nehwal suffered defeats to bow out. Seeded seventh, Srikanth lost 21-14, 21-13 against Kantaphon Wangcharoen of Thailand in 40 minutes, while Prannoy's campaign ended with a loss at the hands of world No. 1 Kento Momota of Japan.

### Glimpses of brilliance

Prannoy showed glimpses of brilliance, especially in the opening game, but couldn't stop Momota from registering a 21-19, 21-12 win, his fifth victory over the Indian in as many encounters.

Saina Nehwal, seeded eighth, crashed out after a hard-fought 15-21, 27-25, 21-12 defeat to 12th seed Mia Blichfeldt of Denmark. The results (pre-quarterfi-

nals): Women: P.V. Sindhu bt Beiwen Zhang (USA) 21-14, Mia Blichfeldt (Den) bt Saina Nehwal 15-21, 27-25, 21-12. Men: B. Sai Praneeth bt Anthony Sinisuka Ginting (Ina) 21-19,

(Tha) bt K. Srikanth 21-14, Kento Momota (Jpn) bt H.S. Prannoy 21-19, 21-12.

21-13; Kantaphon Wangcharoen



Anthony Sinisuka Ginting with a stunning show. • AFP

# Pirates fall short against Warriors

### **PKL**

S. PRASANNA VENKATESAN

Captain Maninder Singh topscored with 10 points as Bengal Warriors beat Patna Pirates 35-26 in the ProKabaddi League (PKL) at the Nehru indoor stadium

Thursday. Pirates' over-reliance on captain Pardeep Narwal was to the fore again - he emerged the match's topscorer with 12 points, but got little support from his team. Mohammad Maghsoudlou, Pirates' next go-to raider, finished as the second-best scorer with only three points.

The day's most exciting bit of action was when Pardeep, raiding, jumped over Jeeva Kumar and touched

But, unfortunately, he

landed in a way that didn't help him flee instantly. In the seconds he took to stabilise himself, the defenders piled on him. The scores were level 11-11 at that point.

Jaideep, Vikas Jaglan and Monu pulled off a super tackle on Mohammad Nabibakhsh for Pirates to lead

With only three players

left for Pirates at 13-13, Vikas made an unsuccessful raid and Hadi Ostorak was put out in Maninder's raid for Warriors to be up 15-13. Pirates' lone raider, Jaideep, was then substituted by Purna Singh, who put out Baldev Singh in the last raid beWarriors led 15-14.

Warriors inflicted an allout on Pirates, putting out lone raider Ashish to lead

Pirates couldn't catch up with - or get ahead of -

Pardeep, remarkably, put out lone defender Prapanjan to help Pirates inflict an allout on Warriors and get to

The result: Bengal Warriors 35 (Maninder Singh 10) bt Patna



The highlight: Patna Pirates captain Pardeep Narwal provided the day's most exciting bit of action. ■ M. VEDHAN

### Davis Cup tie postponed

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

India's Davis Cup match against Pakistan, to be held in Islamabad on September 14-15, was on Thursday postponed to November after a security review by the **International Tennis** 

Federation. The ITF said it was postponing the tie under 'exceptional

circumstances.' "Following an indepth security review of the current situation in Pakistan by independent expert security advisors, the Davis Cup Committee has taken the decision to postpone the Davis Cup Asia/Oceania Group I tie between Pakistan and India in Islamabad, due to be played on 14-15 September," the ITF said in the statement.