### Proud shuttler pair from Manipur in limelight

Manjit and Dingku bag under-21 boys' doubles silver medal



Shaping up: What started as playing for fun at a young age has propelled the duo of Khwairakpam Manjit Singh and Konthoujam Dingku Singh to greater heights. • RITU RAJ KONWAR

#### KHELO INDIA

Y.B. SARANGI GUWAHATI

The names Khwairakpam Manjit Singh and Konthoujam Dingku Singh provide a different flavour to badminton in the Khelo India Youth Games here.

It was a proud moment for the Manipuri shuttlers – who began by playing gully badminton and carried on their association to play for the school, State and the country – as they took the under-21 boys' doubles silver medal in

#### Rarity

It is a rarity considering that the State – which has produced top-class weightlifters, boxer, judokas and footballers – is not known for its badminton players.

"We used to play for fun. Our homes are very close to each other and we studied in the same class. All the while, we have played together. Since 2014, we have been winning medals in National championships and have represented the country in the Asian junior championships," Dingku, named after Asian Games gold medallist boxer Dingko Singh, told *The Hindu*.

"When we did well in doubles in under-17 and under-19 events, (international referee from our State) H. Gyanewar Singh spoke to Gopi Chand sir. We practised in Hyderabad for a month or so and beat senior players in a tournament. That's how we got selected for the Gopi Chand Academy. We have improved a lot after joining the

**Most important phase** According to Manjit, the two friends needed to be more

focused than ever. "This is the most important phase for us as we graduate to the senior level. We have to work hard to keep up our performance."

Following in the footsteps of Dingku and Manjit, two other talented shuttlers - Meiraba Luawang and Bidyasagar Salam - from Manipur have made their mark. Even then, the sport has not been able to garner much popularity.

"Only one or two individuals back badminton in Manipur. Otherwise, there is not much support. In 2014, we had requested one of our ministers to build a wooden floor indoor hall in Bishnupur but nothing has been done yet," said Manjit.

Nevertheless, nothing has dampened the spirit of the talented Manipuri pair which is out to prove its worth in the big league.

## England upbeat ahead of fourth Test

#### ENGLAND IN SA

 $\underbrace{\textbf{AGEN}\textbf{CE} \ \textbf{FRANCE-PRESSE}}_{\textbf{JOHANNESBURG}}$ 

England, fresh from its crushing defeat of South Africa in the third cricket Test, is looking strong favourite to claim a series-winning victory in the fourth and final match starting on Friday.

South Africa is still struggling to come to terms with the magnitude of the innings defeat in Port Elizabeth.

Barely three weeks ago, it seemed that South African cricket had turned a corner after a largely dismal 2019.

But the home side's victory in the first Test proved illusory.

"We're heading in the right direction," a confident England captain Joe Root said after the win in Port Elizabeth on Monday. "We've got a group of players who are willing to learn and we're very clear on how we want to play."

South Africa, by contrast, is beset with uncertainty.

The 11 that played in the first Test looked a solid combination but the side's struggles since then means that all 15 players in the squad for the Johannesburg Test at the Wanderers have at least a theoretical chance of making the team.

The loss through suspension of fast bowler Kagiso Rabada, the only black African to play in the first three Tests, has reduced the already limited options while at the same time complicated the debate about racial transformation.

Batsman Temba Bavuma seems certain to play, probably at the expense of the struggling Zubayr Hamza.

# Chose the right team and cause: Tendulkar

#### **BUSHFIRE CHARITY**

 $\underset{\text{NEW DELHI}}{\underline{\textbf{PRESS}}} \textbf{TRUST OF INDIA}$ 

Sachin Tendulkar on Wednesday hoped the charity match for Australia's bushfire victims goes a long way in providing relief and said he donned the coach's hat for the "right cause".

Tendulkar and West Indies bowling great Courtney Walsh are set to coach the star-studded Ricky Ponting XI and Shane Warne XI, respectively, in the match organised to raise funds for victims.

"Chose the right team and more importantly the right cause, my friend. Hope that the Bushfire

> CM YK

Cricket Bash will go a long way in providing relief to the people and wildlife in Australia," Tendulkar tweeted.

#### Legendary line-up

Tendulkar and Walsh will coach legends such as Ponting, Warne, Justin Langer, Adam Gilchrist, Brett Lee, Shane Watson, Alex Blackwell and Michael Clarke, among others.

On Tuesday, Ponting had tagged Tendulkar in a tweet saying: "How great is it to have @sachin\_rt taking part in the Bushfire Cricket Bash and giving up his time to come out for the cause. Picked the right team to coach too!"

### Memorable day for Apurvi and Divyansh

Clinch two gold medals in the air rifle events; Anjum wins bronze

#### SHOOTING

SPORTS BUREAU
INNSBRUCK

Apurvi Chandela and Divyansh Singh Panwar showed their preparedness for the season by winning two gold medals each in the women's and men's air rifle events with high scores in the Meyton Cup International shooting championship on Tuesday.

Apurvi was particularly impressive as she shot 251.4 in one final and improved it to 252.8 in the next. She had qualification scores of 630.1 and 631.4.

World Championship silver medallist Anjum Moudgil bagged the bronze in the first competition, after being level with Apurvi in qualification with 630.1.

Divyansh shot 249.7 in one final after 628.4 in qualification. In the second competition, he was phenomenal both in qualification and final with scores of 633.9 and 252.5 respectively.

In men's air pistol, Sagar won a gold, after shooting a modest 570 in qualification. The results: Men: Air rifle-2: 1. Divyansh

Singh Panwar 252.5 (633.9); 2. Petr Nymbursky (Cze) 250.1 (632.2); 3. Deepak Kumar 228.9 (628.8).

Air rifle-1: 1. Divyansh Singh

Panwar 249.7 (628.4); 2. Dane Sampsonn (Aus) 249.0 (628.3); 3. Deepak Kumar 228.3 (629.4). **Air pistol-2:** 1. Sagar 242.8 (570); 2. Jindrich Dubovy (Cze) 240.2 (576); 3. Aleksandar Todorov (Ger) 221.1 (570).

Air pistol-1: 1. Aleksandar Todorov (Ger) 242.9 (577); 2. Jindrich Dubovy (Cze) 239.7 (573); 3. Michael Heise (Ger) 218.7 (579); 4. Vikas Dhama 198.7 (198.7); 5. Sagar 179.5 (578).

Women: Air rifle-2: 1. Apurvi Chandela 252.8 (631.4); 2. Nina Christen (Sui) 251.9 (629.6); 3. Aneta Brabcova (Cze) 230.5 (629.4).

**Air rifle-1:** Apurvi Chandela 251.4 (630.1); 2. Seonaid Mcinttosh (GBR) 251.2 (629.7); 3. Anjum Moudgil 229.0 (630.1).

Junior men: Air rifle-2: 1. Kapil Dev 248.5 (624.1); 2. Rohit 247.4 (621.7); 3. Stefan Wadlegger (Aut) 226.2 (624.8); 4. Sandeep 205.2 (621.6); 6. Satyajeet Khandil 163.3 (621.1).

**Air rifle-1:** 1. Alex Hoberg (Aus) 252.3 (627.4); 2. Kapil Dev 250.5 (622.8); 3. Stefan Wadlegger (Aut) 227.6 (625.0).



**On the podium:** Apurvi, centre, took the top spot while Anjum, right, finished third. Seonaid Mcintosh won the silver.

#### Australia to host Indoor Cricket WC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Australia is set to host the 11th edition of the Indoor Cricket World Cup from October 10 to 17.

The tournament will be held at the state-of-the-art indoor cricket venues in Melbourne –Casey Stadium and CitiPower Centre, the World Indoor Cricket Federation announced.

Last held in Dubai in 2017, Australia is the reigning men's and women's champion and the host will be seeking to continue the run of never losing a World Cup in either division in the 25-year history of the tournament.

