

PV Sindhu knocked out in pre-quarterfinals as Indian challenge cut to just Ayush Shetty

NEW DELHI: Olympic medallist PV Sindhu's campaign at the Badminton Asia Championships 2026 in Ningbo, the People's Republic of China, ended in the second round on Thursday.

Up against China's Wang Zhi Yi, the current world No. 2 and a two-time former Asian champion, PV Sindhu lost 21-18, 21-8 in 46 minutes.

PV Sindhu, 13th in the badminton rankings, found herself trailing 14-9 in the opening but showed some grit against the local favourite to claw the scores back to 18-19.

However, the Indian badminton player couldn't follow through as Wang Zhi Yi stepped up to take the next couple of points and the win.

The second game was a lopsided affair in favour of the Chinese shuttler, who edged out Sindhu 4-3 in the



head-to-head record courtesy of Thursday's win.

Sindhu, who was returning to the court for the first time since January at the Ningbo meet, had survived a three-game affair against Wong Ling Ching of Malaysia in the opening round.

Meanwhile, Unnati Hooda, who had upset world No. 11 Supanida Katethong of Thailand in the first round on Wednesday, lost to Japan's Tomoka Miyazaki 21-17, 21-9 on Thursday, drawing the curtains on In-

dia's women's singles challenge.

One Indian player who managed to build on his opening round success was Ayush Shetty.

Having upset world No. 7 and reigning Asian Games champion Li Shi Feng in the opening round, Ayush Shetty looked equally convincing as he beat Chi Yu Jen of Chinese Taipei 21-16, 21-12 in 41 minutes to qualify for the men's singles quarter-finals.

Ayush Shetty, the 2025

US Open winner, will face Jonatan Christie of Indonesia, the gold medallist from 2024, next.

With HS Prannoy losing 21-12, 21-19 to China's Weng Hong Yang elsewhere, Shetty is now the only Indian challenge still alive in the competition.

India's mixed doubles run in Ningbo also folded with Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Crasto losing 21-13, 21-14 to world No. 4 Chen Tang Jie and Toh Ee Wei of Malaysia. Priya Konjengbam-Shruti Mishra lost 21-10, 21-13 to Japan's Yuki Fukushima and Mayu Matsumoto, bringing an end to India's women's doubles campaign at the continental championships.

Lakshya Sen bowed out in the opening round while Satwiksairaj Rankireddy-Chirag Shetty and Treeasa Jolly-Gayatri Gopichand had pulled out before the meet started.

Kevin Pietersen backs David Miller after DC's last-over heartbreak against GT

NEW DELHI: Former England captain Kevin Pietersen has backed David Miller after the South African left-hander came under heavy criticism for not taking Delhi Capitals (DC) over the line in their IPL 2026 match against Gujarat Titans (GT) on Wednesday.

The 44-year-old praised Miller for walking out to bat despite nursing a hand injury, adding that his ball striking was "absolutely unreal". "David Miller batted beautifully last night. His ball striking was absolutely unreal. Many wouldn't have gone back out to bat with his hand injury, but he did! The way he was batting, he wanted to finish the game and trusted himself. That Is Sport! At least he got us a great finish!" Pietersen wrote on X (formerly Twitter) on Thursday.

Miller became the centre of a fierce debate after a moment that split opinion down the middle - a brainfade to his critics, yet arguably a bold, calculated decision from a batsman who had been in absolute control against GT.

Rashid Khan non-committal about playing in Afghanistan's one-off Test vs India: 'There is no target in Test cricket'

NEW DELHI: Rashid Khan remains non-committal about featuring in Afghanistan's one-off Test against India that is scheduled to be played in Mullapur in June after the Indian Premier League (IPL). The star spinner said that he was advised by his doctor to stay away from red-ball cricket to prolong his career in the sport and that, along with the fact that Afghanistan don't play in the World Test Championship, has resulted in him having to put Test cricket on the backburner. "It's a little difficult in red ball, because that was the first thing which was told to me by the doctor, 'You have to stay away from red ball.' But I still played a Test against Zimbabwe," Rashid told reporters after starring in Gujarat Titan's one-run win over Delhi Capitals in the IPL on Thursday.

Rashid had been diagnosed with a back injury before the 2023 World Cup and since then, he has had to ration his appearances in Test cricket. Rashid last played in a Test against Zimbabwe in Janu-



ary 2025. Afghanistan won that match by 72 runs and Rashid was player of the match, taking a total of 11 wickets across the two innings. He bowled a total of 55 overs in that match, something that left his doctor "shocked".

"I bowled 67 (55) overs, which was crazy," said Rashid about the match in Bulawayo. "The doctor told me like, 'if you don't want to play cricket, you keep playing the red-ball cricket' because it's not going to support you. You won't be [there] for longer to play for Afghanistan and I still went and I still played and when he knew I bowled 67 [55] overs in one innings, in two innings, he was shocked. He

was 'no, you can't do that to yourself'. I will think about that." "ODIs, yes, I enjoy, and I'm in a good shape to play ODIs for a longer period of time for Afghanistan, but just to be careful with how many I play, and not to put too much load on myself, to be careful if I want to play for a longer period of time," he added.

Since becoming a Test-playing nation in 2017, Afghanistan have played 12 matches in the format and Rashid has featured in just six. He has taken 45 wickets, which is tied with former South Africa pacer Vernon Philander for second most wickets by a player in the history of Test cricket after playing six matches.



LG's Diary

Office of LG J&K @OfficeOfLGJandK · 4h
Chaired a high-level meeting and reviewed the preparedness for the 100-Day Intensive Campaign under 'Nasha Mukt Jammu Kashmir Abhiyaan'.



Office of LG J&K @OfficeOfLGJandK
Today, attended a musical opera depicting the revered legend of Mata Sukrala Devi at Jammu. This event encapsulates Goddess Sukrala's timeless message of true devotion remains incomplete without righteous action, while action devoid of devotion loses its essence.



Office of LG J&K @OfficeOfLGJandK
Attended musical opera 'Mata Sukrala Ki Kahani' at Jammu. Sharing my speech

youtu.be/IJgtwbh-y4



Indian Women's Hockey Team leaves for four-match series in Argentina

BENGALURU: The Indian Women's Hockey Team departed from Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru on Thursday evening for Buenos Aires, Argentina, where they will take on the hosts in a four-match series from 13th to 17th April 2026. Notably, Captain Salima Tete is unable to travel with the team due to illness, and in her absence, experienced forward Navneet Kaur will lead the side as stand-in Captain for the tour. The tour is set to play a crucial role in India's preparations for a packed international calendar ahead, including the FIH Women's World Cup and the Asian Games. The four-match series will provide the team with valuable high-intensity game time, while also allowing the coaching staff to assess combinations.

CM's Diary

Office of Chief Minister, J&K @CM_JnK · 1h
Chief Minister today inaugurated the Imam Al-Asr Maulana Anwar Shah Kashmiri (RA) Multi-Purpose Community Facility Centre at Umerhah, Buchpora, Srinagar.

In his address, the Chief Minister reiterated the Government's commitment to strengthening urban infrastructure and improving civic amenities in Srinagar to meet the needs of its growing population.



Office of Chief Minister, J&K @CM_JnK · 2h
#Highlights - Chief Minister urged newly appointed officials to serve with a strong sense of responsibility, assured them of full support, and encouraged them to seek guidance whenever required.



Office of Chief Minister, J&K @CM_JnK · 7h
Chief Minister today handed over appointment orders under SRO-43/RAS to 90 candidates from the Kashmir Division. A similar function was organised in Jammu earlier this week. Minister @aveddar786, Minister @satishshamajnk and Advisor to Chief Minister @nasirgami were also.



Office of Chief Minister, J&K @CM_JnK · 56m
#Highlights - Chief Minister addressed the gathering while handing over SRO-43/RAS appointment orders to 90 candidates from Kashmir Division.



Mini Sindarov... my own 50% version': Anish Giri's witty self-praise after beating Fabiano Caruana in Candidates

NEW DELHI: Dutch Grandmaster Anish Giri never fails to charm his way with his usual quick wit and humour. After beating American Grandmaster Fabiano Caruana in the ninth round of the Candidates Tournament, Anish moved into second place and within striking distance of the top spot, where Uzbek phenom Javokhir Sindarov has almost cemented his place with an extraordinary start to the event.

Anish won his second game in a row

after beating India's R Praggnanandhaa in the eighth round. He now has 5.5 points from 9 rounds, 1.5 points behind Sindarov, who has seven points.

When asked about his two back-to-back wins in the post-match press conference, Anish, with his usual quick wit, called himself "mini Sindarov."

"Two wins in a row! Mini Sindarov, yeah! It's my own 50 percent version of Sindarov, I guess," he said, referring to Sindarov's four consecutive wins in the

tournament.

While analysing the game he won against Caruana, Anish repeatedly called himself lucky. When Grandmaster Maurice Ashley pointed this out, he said: "I think I'm just being nice. I'm really happy and thrilled to win the game. I don't have any regrets. I'm just really happy to have won."

"I think I was a little bit unfortunate that the position after C5 is a draw. Because then it would have been a clean

win. After the game, you are already happy that you won, but then you are hoping that maybe it was also a clean win. It was a little annoying that I didn't clinch it here. But I had to win because of my mistake. It's not like I'm going to cry over that for too long," he added.

Giving the reasoning behind his thought, he said: "I think it's good news for both me and Javokhir. Well, he was probably more worried about Fabiano because he had more points earlier on, and

he was also the pre-tournament favourite. But okay, we will see. I was at some point thinking that he would win today. I don't know. Did you see if he was ever better today?" "So you see, he can make mistakes, but everything is possible. At this point, as long as mathematically you can still win a tournament, you have to go and do your job, as they say. But Javokhir is still in a good situation. He will probably be quite pissed not to have won today because this was... but it was also such

a strange game, to be honest. I didn't understand anything. Yeah, it was very strange," said Anish.

The Dutchman said as long as the tournament remains competitive, it is good for the viewers and the players who still have a mathematical chance. With five rounds remaining and a head-to-head clash against Sindarov still to come, Anish could mount a comeback and win his first Candidates tournament in his fourth appearance.

Quantum batteries edge closer to reality with new breakthrough

Scientists have developed a proof-of-concept quantum battery capable of charging, storing, and releasing energy, marking a major step toward a functional version of this technology.

Unlike conventional batteries that depend on chemical reactions, quantum batteries rely on quantum superposition and interactions between light and electrons. This approach could enable much faster charging and greater energy storage capacity.

Although fully operational quantum batteries are not yet available, progress like this could eventually reshape how energy is stored and used.

The study was led by CSIRO, Australia's national science agency, in collaboration with RMIT University and the University of Melbourne. The findings were published in *Light: Science & Applications*.

Study co-author and RMIT PhD candidate Daniel Tibben said the results reveal an unexpected benefit of quantum batteries. "Our study found quan-



tum batteries charge faster as they get larger, which is not how today's batteries work," Tibben said.

"It's a sign that quantum batteries could one day outperform conventional energy-storage technologies."

Co-author and RMIT Professor of Chemical Physics Daniel Gómez said the prototype represents the closest progress yet toward a working quantum battery.

"We demonstrated a device that can be charged, store that energy, and then discharge it," Gómez said.

"This is an exciting development in a rapidly growing interdisciplinary

field. Hopefully, quantum batteries will soon no longer be a theoretical idea but something that can be built in the lab."

Quantum batteries operate using principles of quantum mechanics, such as superposition and entanglement, instead of the chemical processes used in standard batteries.

The team's prototype is a small, layered organic device that can be wirelessly charged with a laser.

Study lead author and CSIRO Science Leader Dr. James Quach said the work highlights the potential of quantum-based energy systems.

AI's software development and central management needsa

The survey was based on the responses of 1,879 IT leaders, and warns that adoption of AI is in danger of running ahead of governance and integration. The shortfall is a gap between what IT leaders want agents to do and what their organisations can safely control. The report's authors urge companies to address the controls or guardrails on AI systems, and also stress the importance of integrating new, AI technology into an organisation's existing platforms.

OutSystems says 97% of its respondents are exploring some form of agentic strategy, with 49% of them describing their current abilities as "advanced" or "expert." Nearly half of those surveyed say that over half of agentic AI projects have moved from pilot into production, with Indian companies most successful in implementing the technology: 50% of Indian companies say their AI projects are 51% to 75% successful.

Companies are considering where agents should be deployed first, and under what controls, but although

"cost reduction or efficiency gains" is the most cited expectation for AI's effects, only 22% found their deployments most effective in that regard. Instead, the most effective area gains in a business stemmed from equipping software developers with AI tools described as "generative AI-assisted."

The report's geography and sector data show that transitions to AI agentic workflows are unevenly distributed. India stands out as the market with the highest share of users considering themselves "expert", while many organisations in Australia, Brazil, Germany, the Netherlands, the UK, and the US still identify as intermediate stage users. France and Germany are the most dubious of AI adoption, with Germany recording the highest share of leaders not using agentic AI in any form.

Financial services and technology show the most movement from pilot to production, with many implementations in core business functions. The sector can be considered as having the most clear line of sight from

automation to measurable returns in terms of income. The practical inference from the report's findings would be for slower-moving sectors to copy the implementation workflows employed by the fintech industry: Start with narrow, high-volume workflows where performance can be measured and failures can be contained, and focus on the IT function.

According to the survey, generative AI-assisted development is now common in nine of the ten countries surveyed, alongside traditional coding, outsourced development, and SaaS customisation. It undercuts the notion that enterprises are moving into an AI-native or all-AI stack. In fact, most organisations add agents and AI-generated code on top of the processes already proven effective in their development environments.

OutSystems finds that 48% of respondents see integration with legacy systems as the most important ability needed to expand agentic AI, and 38% say legacy systems are the main reason projects stall be-

tween pilot and production. Of the potential barriers to AI development that were offered as choices to the survey's participants, more than 40% cited integration difficulties and legacy fragmentation the most problematic. Organisations considering large data clean-up programmes (which many AI vendors advocate as a reason why deployments fail to reach production) may want to rethink, the report implies. The authors state agents can be built that can work well in complex data environments, as long as governance and integration are strengthened at the same time as AI implementation. Across the board, most sectors express "moderate trust" levels of agentic AI at around 50%, although responses from different business functions were not broken out in the survey results' figures.

The financial returns are manifest mostly in IT functions themselves. The report says the most explored use cases are IT operations, at 55%, and data analysis, at 52%. Workflow automation follows at 36%,

then customer experience at 33%. On realised return on investment, IT development and productivity lead by a margin, at 40%, ahead of operational efficiency at 22%. That distribution suggests that the first durable value from agentic AI is internal at developers' desks rather than in customer-facing environments. Customer-facing deployments may still make sense, but the report indicates they require more trust in system performance, stronger controls, better orchestration, and an ability to create watertight oversight mechanisms.

Trust in agentic AI, however, is improving. OutSystems reports that 73% of respondents express either high or moderate trust in letting agents to act autonomously, a rise of around 10% compared to a similar survey the company undertook last year. Trust in code or workflows generated by third-party AI tools is slightly lower, at 67%, a substantial increase from the prior year's figure, when only 40% 'mostly trusted' generative AI to write code without human help.