

India Great PR Sreejesh Asks ‘Uncomfortable Question’ After Hockey World Cup 2026 Exit: “Stop Hiding”

NEW DELHI: Legendary goalkeeper and two-time Olympic bronze medallist PR Sreejesh on Monday voiced his frustration over India’s underwhelming showing at the FIH World Cup, saying there must be “accountability” and that the global event cannot be treated as a “dress rehearsal.” The Indian men’s team lost 3-5 to Argentina in Amstelveen on Monday, extinguishing their wafer-thin hopes of reaching the semi-finals. The women’s team, meanwhile, succumbed to the pressure of a must-win game and were knocked out of semifinal contention after being held to a goalless draw by Australia on Saturday. A member of India’s bronze medal-winning teams at the 2020 Tokyo and 2024 Paris Olympics, Sreejesh said someone needs to ask the “difficult” and “uncomfortable” questions over the lacklustre performances.

“...Here’s the uncomfortable question: Are we building a team to PLAY good hockey, or a team capable of WINNING against the best in the world?” Sreejesh, India’s most successful hockey goalkeeper, wrote on ‘X’.



“Stop hiding behind ‘learning’, ‘good hockey’ and future tournaments. The World Cup is not a rehearsal. It is the World Cup. So who is going to ask the difficult questions? Who is going to demand accountability? And most importantly... Does anyone actually care?” he asked.

The Indian men’s team entered the World Cup on the back of an unimpressive Pro League campaign, finishing eighth among nine teams. However, there were renewed hopes of a better showing after the coaches and players offered positive

feedback on their preparations.

He said the upcoming Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya next month, where India are expected to challenge for a medal, should not be an excuse for taking the World Cup lightly.

“Don’t worry...the World Cup doesn’t matter. The Asian Games are coming. Win a medal there, and then we can start dreaming about LA 2028 (Olympics). Apparently, that’s enough to cover everything that went wrong at the World Cup,” wrote Sreejesh.

He also took a dig at

women’s chief coach Sjoerd Marjine for reportedly leaving the World Cup camp while it was in full swing, saying the players still fought hard and exceeded expectations.

“Women’s chief coach on holiday just before the World Cup — and the girls still fought their hearts out and exceeded expectations. Credit to the players. But where is the accountability? Do we really expect a team to perform at its best when the chief coach is away during the final phase of preparation?” he questioned.

Anaya Bangar Set To Return To Cricket After Clearance From Cricket Australia

MELBOURNE: Anaya Bangar, child of former India cricketer Sanjay Bangar, has received clearance to play female Community Cricket in Australia. Anaya underwent a gender affirming surgery in March this year. “It is a great day for me especially after knowing the fact that I can play cricket. There was a stage where I thought I would never play cricket again but thanks to Cricket Australia, it has given me another chance,” Anaya told The Indian Express. Anaya has previously played age-group cricket for Mumbai alongside Sarfaraz Khan and his brother Musheer Khan. However, in order to play ‘Elite Cricket’ like the Women’s Big Bash League, Anaya will have to fulfil the testosterone-related eligibility criteria.

According to the report, the ‘Transgender and Gender Diverse Players in Elite Cricket Policy’ of Cricket Australia requires a player’s serum testos-



terone to be below 10 nmol/L (nanomoles per litre) for a period of no less than 12 months to be eligible to play cricket.

Back in 2023, the International Cricket Council (ICC) decided to ban transgender players from playing elite women’s cricket if they have gone through male puberty.

“Your eligibility for Elite Cricket

from that date (March 2027) is conditional upon you providing a blood test upon your arrival in Australia confirming that your serum testosterone concentration remains below 10 nmol/L and that you continue to satisfy the Policy’s eligibility requirements,” Cricket Australia’s, Head of Integrity Jacqui Partridge stated in a letter to Anaya.

Morkel doesn’t rule out India enforcing follow-on as rain looms in Colombo

COLOMBO: India could enforce the follow-on against Sri Lanka in the second Test in Colombo if they have the chance, which will be going against recent convention while having an eye on the weather, with only 222 overs bowled across the first three days of the Test.

Sri Lanka ended day three needing 39 runs to take that decision out of India’s hands, with Sonal Dinusha, their best batter of the series, unbeaten on 85 and part of a ninth-wicket stand that has lasted for more than 15 overs. However, the second new ball was only 3.2 overs old, and had been creating more chances than the softer older one.

The last time Shubman Gill enforced the follow-on, India ended up bowling 118.5 overs on a dying Delhi pitch to dismiss West Indies for the second time, and had to go into the fifth day to chase down the target of 121. The motivation in Delhi may have been an early finish, but in Colombo, the weather is the top most on India’s mind.

“That will be the first prize... that we can get

those two wickets tomorrow early,” Morne Morkel, India’s bowling coach, said. “I know it’s a cliché thing, but you know, with the weather around and sometimes the time it takes with taking the covers on and off, we want to try and get as many overs as possible to the Sri Lankans.

So hopefully, we can get those wickets tomorrow and then be brave, put them in, and bowl well.”

Teams generally prefer to bat again in the third innings when they have the option to enforce the

follow-on so that they can bat the opposition out of the game and let the pitch deteriorate further so that the opposition has to bat in the worst conditions possible.

On evidence of day three, the pitch remained pretty good to bat on. India benefitted from a few wickets against the run of play and without any build-up. Still, they had to make do with just six wickets in 80.4 overs. They could use the same evidence to say they need as much time as possible to bowl Sri Lanka out a second time around.

Hull City End 52-Year Wait, Mikel Arteta Registers Landmark Win: Records Tumble On Premier League Gameweek 1

LONDON: The 2026/27 Premier League season got off to a dramatic start, with Gameweek 1 producing landmark results, late goals and a host of individual milestones. From Hull City’s historic victory over Manchester United to Liverpool extending their remarkable unbeaten run on the opening day and Arsenal beginning their title defence in style, the opening weekend delivered plenty of numbers that made headlines. Arsenal’s 3-0 victory over newly promoted Coventry City saw manager Mikel Arteta reach 150 Premier League wins. He reached the landmark in 249 games, putting him among an elite group of managers to record 150 Premier League victories in fewer than 250 matches.

The result also extended Arsenal’s remarkable record against promoted opposition. The Gunners are now unbeaten in 46 consecutive Premier League home games against promoted sides, with 41 wins and five draws. They have won their last 17 such matches, scoring 47 goals and conceding just nine.

Martin Odegaard also made an early impact, scoring in consecutive appearances for Arsenal for the first time since December 2023. His two goals this season have already surpassed his total of one goal in 36 appearances across all competitions last season.

One of the biggest shocks of the weekend came at Hull City, where the newly promoted side defeated Manchester United 2-0 despite United enjoying 71.6 per cent possession. It was United’s highest possession figure in a Premier League match since September 2023.

The defeat was historic as it marked the first time in Manchester United’s league history that they had lost their opening fixture to a newly promoted side. United have now lost their opening Premier League match in four of the last seven seasons.

Their attacking struggles were further highlighted by the fact that United have failed to score on the opening day in back-to-back Premier League seasons, despite registering a combined 43 shots across those matches.

Why was Prabath Jayasuriya sanctioned during IND vs SL 2nd Test

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka’s Prabath Jayasuriya was sanctioned and handed one demerit point for breaching the International Cricket Council’s (ICC) Code of Conduct during the match vs India on Day 2 of the 2nd Test. The Sri Lankan bowler who was sent out to bat at the end of Sunday when the light was growing dimmer, hit the boundary wedges with his bat in frustration on his way back to the pavilion after he was given LBW. The Sri Lankan players were already frustrated after they were forced to play under bad light with Jayasuriya even glaring at the umpires before walking off.

The ICC said Jayasuriya had been found to have breached Article 2.2 of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, relating to the “abuse of cricket equipment or clothing, ground equipment or fixtures and fittings during an International Match”. It was the first offence for the left-arm spinner during a 24-month period, the governing body said in a statement.

“Sri Lanka spinner Prabath Jayasuriya has become the third player to be sanctioned for an incident during the second ICC World

Test Championship contest against India after he was hit with an official reprimand following his dismissal in his side’s first innings,” the ICC said.

Jayasuriya admitted the offence and accepted the sanctions proposed by match referee Andy Pycroft.

On Monday, India opener Yashasvi Jaiswal and Sri Lanka fast bowler Asitha Fernando were fined 25 percent of their match fee and handed a demerit point each by the ICC for their heated confrontation on Day 1 of the second Test between the two sides. Jaiswal was given a send-off by Fernando, to which the latter reacted by walking up to the fast bowler and bumping heads with him.

“Both players were found to have breached Article 2.12 of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, which relates to “inappropriate physical contact with a Player, Player Support Personnel, Umpire, Match Referee or any other person (including a spectator during an International Match).” As a result, Jaiswal and Fernando were fined 25 per cent of their match fee and were handed one demerit point each,” said the ICC in its statement.

An England cricketer does have a public profile: Atherton on Carse row

With England Cricket Board dropping pacer Brydon Carse from the squad for the second Test against Pakistan at the Lords starting Thursday due to the pacer being handcuffed by Durham police outside a club in Derby on Saturday, the 31-year-old pacer became the third England cricketer this year to be removed from the England squad post such incidents including club visits. In June early this year, the then England captain Ben Stokes and his team-mate Gus Atkinson were dropped from the England team for the second Test against New Zealand after reports emerged that the duo’s involvement in a nightclub incident also involved Saracens rugby player Totoa Auvaa. Former England captain Michael Atherton has criticised the incident involving Carse and shared how the England manage-

ment including new Test captain Joe Root lifting off the team curfew needed more responsibility from the players.

“I’m not sure sportsmen should be held to a higher standard than anyone else, but an England cricketer does have a public profile and, therefore, has greater responsibility as a result. As a new captain setting out his expectations, Root could not have been clearer on that. Sanctimony may be the default reaction but should be avoided. Equally, sympathy should be in short supply given the broader context. Carse was in New Zealand and Australia as part of the squad whose discipline was questioned. First came Harry Brook, decked by a bouncer outside a nightclub before an ODI in Wellington. Then came Ben Duckett filmed the worse for wear in Noosa. Then came defeat, and the inevitable backlash, and then Stokes and



Atkinson during the New Zealand series. Context cannot be ignored. Among the raft of recent stories, there are some important differences, though. Unlike Brook in Wellington, this was after a

county match, not before an international, and Carse was not on England duty. Unlike Stokes, he was not breaking a curfew he had helped to put in place. That said, he now finds himself at

the mercy of not just the regulator but also a new captain and coach who will be keen to draw a line under such nonsense,” Atherton wrote in his column for The Times.

Carse, who was the leading wicket-taker for England in this year’s Ashes with a total of 22 wickets in the series, was seen in handcuffs in videos as reported by The Telegraph and other England media with local police authorities seen holding the pacer. In the video, former England captain Ben Stokes and Matthew Potts could be seen standing at a distance with their Durham team-mate in handcuffs. Later the local police authorities de-arrested Carse and the pacer left the area. “A man in his 30s was arrested on suspicion of being drunk and disorderly in Derby city centre on Saturday night, 22 August. However the man was de-arrested shortly

afterwards having agreed to leave the area,” the police statement read as reported by BBC.

Atherton had started his column highlighting the fact that Carse became the third such England cricketer to be removed from the England squad. While the former England captain wrote that it’s not clear what Carse did, Atherton also shared how the pacer was unlikely to escape sanctions. “The inevitable came to pass on Monday. Brydon Carse became the third England cricketer this summer to be removed from a Test match squad pending an investigation by the cricket regulator. It happened to Ben Stokes and Gus Atkinson against New Zealand, and Carse was unlikely to escape similar sanction once footage appeared of him being handcuffed by police outside a nightclub in Derby in the early hours of Sunday.

AI is taking away job opportunities of 22–25 year olds, Stanford study finds

AI is making it tougher for job seekers, but younger workers appear to be bearing the brunt of it. A recent Stanford study found that 22–25-year-olds are seeing significantly fewer employment opportunities in jobs highly exposed to AI compared with those in less AI-exposed fields, with a 19 per cent gap. In simple terms, young people entering in AI-related fields are facing difficulties to land a job.

The findings come from a recent study titled Canaries in the Coal Mine? Six Facts about the Recent Employment Effects of Artificial Intelligence by Stanford researchers Erik Brynjolfsson, Bharat Chandar and Ruyu Chen. The researchers analysed payroll data from ADP covering millions of US workers through June 2026.

The study found that employment among 22–25-year-olds in jobs most exposed to AI fell by



about 11 per cent between November 2022 and June 2026. In comparison, jobs less exposed to AI saw employment among people in the same age group grow by around 10 per cent, creating a 21-percentage-point difference.

The same trend was not seen among older workers. By June 2026, employment among 22–25-year-olds across the wider ADP sample was about 2 per cent lower than in November 2022, while employment among older workers grew. For those aged 35–40, it increased by as much as 11 per cent.

So, what is happening to younger workers?

Researchers found that companies are hiring fewer young people for jobs that are more exposed to AI, rather than simply laying off workers already in those roles. This decline in hiring began after 2022, around the time ChatGPT and other generative AI tools became widely available.

The researchers say this could be a warning sign for the future of young workers. Entry-level jobs are where people usually gain the experience needed to move into senior roles. If companies start hiring fewer junior workers, it could become harder for young people to move up

the career ladder. The study suggests this slowdown in entry-level hiring may be an early sign that AI is beginning to change that traditional career path. The study also found that AI does not affect all jobs in the same way. Employment fell mainly in jobs where AI is being used to automate tasks that people would otherwise do. In jobs where AI works alongside people and helps them do their work, employment opportunities have either remained consistent or grown, particularly among experienced professionals.

Why this shift? According to the researchers, one possible reason is that AI is better at handling routine and clearly defined tasks, which are often part of entry-level jobs. More experienced workers, on the other hand, bring skills and knowledge built through years of work and real-world experience, which AI may be more likely to support than replace.

SpaceX launches 27 Starlink satellites on 100th Falcon mission of 2026

SpaceX launched 27 Starlink internet satellites into low Earth orbit, marking the 100th Falcon rocket mission of 2026 and another milestone for the company’s rapidly increasing launch cadence.

A Falcon 9 rocket carrying the satellites lifted off from Vandenberg Space Force Base in California at 3.25 am EDT (12.55 pm IST). The mission was the 99th Falcon 9 launch of the year. The only other Falcon mission in 2026 was carried out by a Falcon Heavy, which launched the Viasat-3 F3 telecommunications satellite in April.

Reaching 100 Falcon missions this early in the year highlights SpaceX’s aggressive launch schedule. However, the company still has some way to go to match its annual record of 165 Falcon launches, set in 2025. All of those missions last year were performed by Falcon 9.

The Falcon 9’s reusable first-stage booster returned to Earth as planned after separating from the rocket. It landed on SpaceX’s drone ship Of Course I Still Love You in the Pacific Ocean approximately 8.5 minutes after liftoff.

The booster, designated B1100, completed its ninth flight, adding another successful reuse to SpaceX’s growing fleet of frequently flown Falcon 9 first stages.

While the booster headed back to Earth, the rocket’s upper stage contin-



ued carrying the 27 Starlink satellites towards their target orbit. The spacecraft were deployed on schedule, just under 62 minutes after liftoff.

The latest launch further expands Starlink, which has already grown into the world’s largest satellite constellation. More than 11,000 Starlink spacecraft are currently operational, according to data cited by Space.com.

Starlink satellites have also become SpaceX’s most common payload. Of the 99 Falcon 9 launches conducted in 2026, 76 have been dedicated to deploying Starlink spacecraft. SpaceX’s satellite ambitions extend far beyond the current constellation. The

company has said it wants to launch 1,00,000 next-generation Starlink V3 satellites in the coming years. These satellites are expected to be launched using SpaceX’s massive Starship rocket, which remains under development.

The growing number of Starlink launches reflects SpaceX’s effort to rapidly expand its satellite internet network and increase coverage and capacity. The latest mission also demonstrates the company’s continued reliance on Falcon 9’s reusable architecture, allowing individual boosters to fly multiple times and helping SpaceX maintain a high launch frequency.