

## Helping BJP turned curse

**New Delhi(KCN):** Senior Saffron Lawmaker, Dilip Ray has landed in trouble for helping a BJP Veteran of Jharkhand.

Surprisingly, the former Union Coal Minister put in difficulties when the BJP led NDA Government at the helm and also Mr.Ray meanwhile an active leader of the Saffron Brigade.

His contribution to the Saffron party is known to all as besides he himself winning a tough Rourkela Assembly segment, Mr.Ray had played a crucial role behind winning of the lone BJP MP (Jual Oram) from Sundergarh district.

And Mr.Ray's close friend Mr.Oram is also a Cabinet Minister in the Narendra Modi Government when the CBI framed charges against his name.

The senior Law Maker had helped a BJP MP then even as he was in BJD headed by Naveen Patnaik.

Therefore, what was Mr.Ray's fault? He as the Union Minister of Coal, Mr.Ray had helped a BJP MP P K Agarwal.

When an Union Minister, Mr.Agarwal made a representation to him for the allocation of a Coal Block. "I had just forwarded the same to the department for re-examination, Mr.Ray told reporters adding that his role was confined to referring the petition for "re-examination which is a routine affair.

"The CBI has erroneously alleged that in view of my endorsement of the representation for re-examination, Castron, owned by senior BJP MPP K Agrawal was allotted a coal block whereas the fact is that the allotment of a coal block is decided by a screening committee comprising members from different ministries of the Central Government including those of coal, steel, finance, power, DIPP, forest and environment, chairman Coal India, chief secretary of the state concerned, chairman CMPDI," Mr.Ray said in the statement.

"I was advised by

my Legal Team not to seek a discharge (which would have only delayed the proceedings) and to volunteer myself for a speedy trial as I have



complete faith in the judicial system and have done no wrong in nearly four decades of my public life," Mr.Ray, who is now a sitting BJP MLA from Rourkela, said in a statement.

Stating that he has undergone immense agony due to his name having been dragged "unnecessarily" into the controversy, Mr.Ray said, "My political rivals know fully well that my conduct is above board and I have nothing to hide."

The case against him was made as a Minister of State (Independent charge) for coal in the NDA Government headed by erstwhile Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee in 1999.

The allocation was made by the screening committee, of which he was not a member, Mr.Ray said.

He claimed that the grant of this coal block in question was in fact recommended by the Jharkhand government in favour of Castron, as it was an abandoned coal block from which coal was regularly being looted by the coal mafia.

The State Government wanted legal utilisation of this block, Mr.Ray said.

He alleged that long after he returned to Odisha Politics, the "scam-ridden" UPA Government out of sheer political ven-

detta forced the CBI to dig out something to malign him and its predecessor NDA Government headed by Atal Behari Vajpayee and an FIR

In its charge sheet, CBI had alleged that the name of former BJP Rajya Sabha Member P K Agarwalla was not being recommended for prosecution as he has since expired.

In its charge sheet, CBI had said that CTL had applied in May 1998 to the MoC for allotment of Brahmadiha coal block and it was stated in the application that extracted coal shall be used by the firm for washery and power generation.

When the application came up for consideration, Coal India's views were sought, which in turn sought a report on the viability of coal block on various aspects from the Central Mine Planning and Design Institute Limited (CMPDIL).

CBI had alleged that on the basis of CMPDIL's report of August 1998, the CIL conveyed to MoC that as the coal block was an abandoned mine area and was full of water, it could be dangerous to ad-

joining properties of Central Coal Fields (CCL) where coal mining activities were being undertaken through underground mining method.

The report also said that mining coal from the block would be against safety norms and the mining statutes, the Agency said.

CBI alleged that when the report came to Mr.Gautam, he wrote to CIL seeking further clarification but CIL reiterated its earlier stand and also highlighted that the block was not in the list of identified captive coal blocks to be allocated.

On the basis of CIL's comment, Mr.Gautam proposed that it would not be possible to allot the coal mine to CTL, it said.

The Central Agency said the file was sent to Mr.Ray's office on April 23, 1999 and on May 12, 1999, CTL submitted a fresh representation to Mr.Ray stating that their application may be considered expeditiously.

It claimed that on May 13, 1999 the file

came to the then Coal Secretary from Mr.Ray's office with an endorsement that in light of representation received from CTL, the case may be re-examined.

CBI alleged that when the file again reached Mr.Gautam's desk, he made a note in which he "made a complete u-turn from his observations" given in the earlier note.

It alleged that on the basis of Gautam's note, the file came to Mr.Banerjee who approved it, after which the 14th screening committee recommended CTL for allocation of the coal block subject to relaxation of guidelines by MoC. On the basis of the approval accorded by Mr.Ray, a letter of allotment of Brahmadiha coal block in favour of CTL was issued on September 1, 1999 by the MoC.

CBI has alleged in its charge sheet that

despite strong objection raised by CIL and CMPDIL regarding allotment of the block, the screening committee and Mr.Ray proceeded ahead to allot the block to CTL.

It alleged that after allocation of the block, CTL started extracting coal illegally even without grant of any mine opening permission by the concerned authorities.

It said that as per a family settlement, all the shares of CTL stood transferred in favour of Mahender Kumar Agarwalla and his family members while the block so allocated stood transferred in favour of another firm CML of P K Agarwalla.

CBI also alleged that CML was also involved in illegal extraction of coal from the block without signing of a mining lease or obtaining mine opening permission.

## Naveen rejects infights

**Bhubaneswar (KCN):** Governing BJD Supremo and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik today rejected the allegations of infighting inside the party.

"I do not feel any infighting in the party. Where is infighting?" Mr.Patnaik asked while replying to the Media Men on his return from his five-day visit to the national capital.

When the Chief Minister was asked whether infighting in the regional outfit has been making the party weak, he said "Who says the party is going weak? I don't think its going weak at all? We are the largest party in the state. We have won four terms in a row."

When his attention was drawn on a Lead Article written by BJD MP Bhartuhari Mahatab where he indicated infighting in BJD, Mr.Patnaik said he has not gone through the Article.

On his visit to the residence of Ex-Prime Minister A B Vajpayee during his stay in

Delhi, Mr.Patnaik said "I heard Mr Vajpayee was not feeling well. So I paid a courtesy visit."

On claims made by a section of BJP leaders in Odisha that he wanted an alliance with the saffron party ahead of the 2019 general elections, the Chief Minister said "That is not correct."

Whether he has any plans to join the non-BJP parties to field a united opposition candidate in the ensuing presidential elections, he said "There are no plans yet. There were no discussions in New Delhi as far as I am concerned."

Replying to a question on the Maoist attack in Chhattisgarh and Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh's proposed meeting with the Chief Ministers of Naxal-hit states, Mr.Patnaik said "It (the killing of 26 security personnel in Sukma) is very tragic. We will wait for the invitation for the May 8 meeting from the Union Home Minister on this."



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# Vinod Khanna: The swashbuckling star of the 70s

Long before Akshay Kumar starred in Rustom - that won him the questionable National Award for Best Actor this year - there were several films based on the Nanavati case.

One of the better films came from Gulzar, the 1973 Achanak that was also one of Vinod Khanna's first lead roles. The word lead could be wrong here as it is still a film where the army officer played by Khanna, murders his wife and her paramour, and is in death row.

Shah Rukh Khan was at least two decades into the future and here was Khanna, making smooth transitions from hard core negative roles to ones with gray shades, on his way to becoming the swashbuckling star of the 70s, who at one point was believed to be the fiercest competition to Amitabh Bachchan.

Related Article  
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Veteran actor and BJP MP Vinod Khanna breathes his last at 70  
Long before Salim-Javed and Ramesh Sippy got together with Amitabh Bachchan and Dharmendra, along the way discovering Amjad Khan, there was Vinod Khanna's Mera Gaon Mera Desh. It was still

Vinod Khanna as villain phase.

India, there was K. Ramanlal's Elaan.

something his 70s nemesis Bachchan

The Godfather. Everybody gets it.

expressed sadness. She said what every casual fan says when the name Vinod Khanna is mentioned - he was the most good looking man of those times. He could have eaten up the Bachchans and Dharmendars for breakfast. She wonders if him joining the Rajneesh Ashram ate into his time and potential. He could have been so much more, she says, almost in regret. You'd agree with her if you watch, not any of his films, but simply, this commercial from decades ago for Baba Chewing Tobacco. It is literally a pitch for Vinod Khanna as James Bond (long before retired Bonds came down to India to star in tobacco commercials). An expensive car comes to a stop at an expensive hotel. A man with the product in hand walks briskly and gets down to the basement casino. We see only his silhouette. Women sipping cocktails, slotting machines, poker chips under the spell of gravity. And then his face turns and bathes in light as we recognize Vinod Khanna, in dinner suit and bow tie. All eyes on him as he takes a seat, gets a note from the mysterious lady at the counter and chews some tobacco. Then he goes all in.



But can you guess Vinod Khanna's name in Mera Gaon Mera Desh? He was Jabbar Singh, the local dacoit. Halwadaar Jaswant Singh played by Jayant, employs the released convict Ajit (Dharmendra) whose paths cross with Jabbar.

Themes from here simmer in several minds for a few years before going into the mixer with Once Upon a Time in The West and John Ford classics. The seed always belonged to Vinod Khanna.

Long before Shekhar Kapur's Mr.

What is common you ask? A film around the power of invisibility. Elaan is not a Vinod Khanna film. It is also not for the fainthearted. It is a film with the other Vinod-Mehra-in-the-lead, one who would soon be steamrolled by every major 70s star including his namesake in Elaan. Khanna is also not the main villain.

In a campy B-movie with Vinod Mehra and Rekha (in one of her earliest roles), all the charm is exuded by Khanna, playing the captain cool version of a wisecracking ruffian,

would play later in films like Sholay.

Long before today's new age directors started making 1970s Hindi film references (not counting Farah Khan's Main Hoon Naa), there was Dibakar Banerjee's Oye Lucky Lucky Oye. Anurag Kashyap may have referenced Deewar (and several others) in his Waseypur epics, especially in the is-it-ok-to-laugh-now-or-not scene with Nawazuddin Siddiqui, as he carves up his friend in unchecked rage, but then Deewar is like

Banerjee's delightful sophomore feature goes for the esoteric, beginning with Vinod Khanna. The film literally begins with Lahu Ke Do Rang's Chahiye Thoda Pyaar.

That's not all. In a moment in the film, Lucky, the happy-go-lucky con artist, is compared to Vinod Khanna himself. Wonder what Dharmendra made of that. Long before this writer was enamored by the world of cinema, there was his mother, one of the biggest Vinod Khanna fans. On hearing the news, she



Megha Ghosh

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## Nandan Nilekani joins Modi's bid to make India a cashless society

PM Narendra Modi has roped in UIDAI chairman and Infosys co-founder Nandan Nilekani for help in handling the transition from a hard cash society to a cashless one,

committee headed by Andhra Pradesh chief minister Chandrababu Naidu met for the first time last week, after which in an interview, Nilekani said, "India has the underlying

own smartphones and increasing the availability and use point-of-sale machines in local villages.

The committee is currently focusing on two key aspects: get-

makes transferring money as easy as sending a text message. According to Nilekani, boosting acceptance of this payments interface is achievable in weeks.

said that breaking down the problem into digestible chunks is the first step to solving it.

The committee is likely to meet again this week to look at how to approach those with limited access to technology. While suggesting that each category of phone users should have a different strategy, Nilekani said that while India has 250 million smartphone users, there are about 350 million who only have feature phones while another 350 million don't have a phone at all.

The real challenge is the 350 million people without phones, many of whom are poor. The plan is to attract all those enrolled in Aadhaar, and enlist the remaining, toward micro ATMs promoted by large Indian lenders which already have a presence in 1,30,000 village retail outlets or kirana stores. "There is a sense of urgency," said Nilekani.

However, getting the estimated one million new POS devices will take much longer, because of the need of a tender to purchase them. Nilekani, who lost the 2014 elections to a key member in PM Modi's cabinet,

ting more merchants to accept the United Payments Interface that has already been rolled out by major banks earlier this year in April, and procuring more point-of-sale devices.

The interface

digital financial architecture in place to get this going".

Nilekani, along with the other panel members, is working out ways to get more Indians to adopt digital mode of payments, by making use of their

to ease the woes of demonetisation. According to a Bloomberg report, Nilekani, a high-profile Congress member, has joined a panel to chart out a path to digital payments.

The 13-member

## Jio effect: Rules soon for telcos TRAI-ing new service

NEW DELHI(K-CN): Telecom regulator TRAI

Reliance Jio's stormy entry into the telecom sector. The

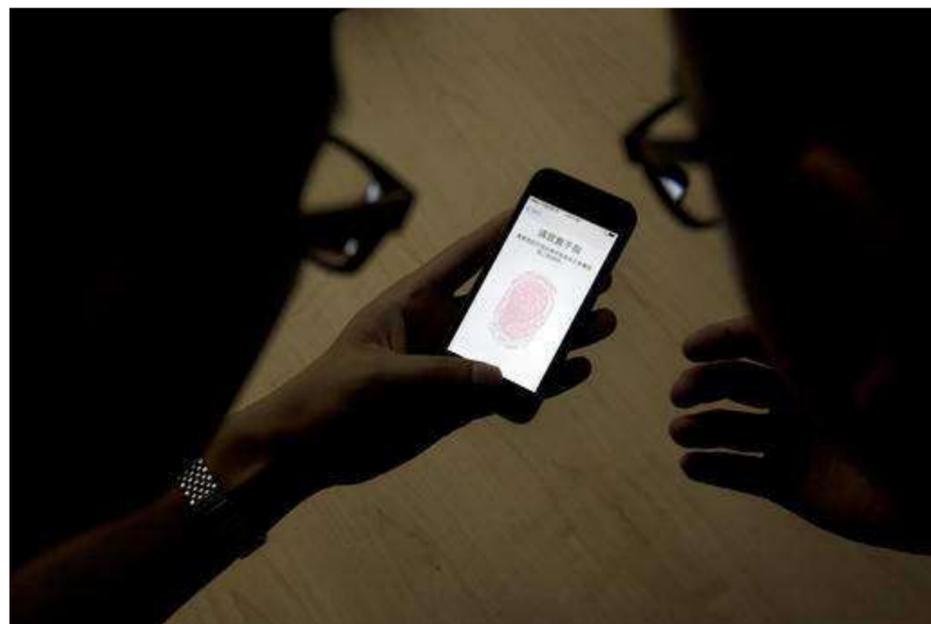
trial period by a new operator, as also the duration for such

cellular operators' body COAI had, last year, alleged that the

interconnection ports even during its test run of services.

Jio subsequently launched commercial operations in early September but amassed sizable number of subscribers during the trial period.

The incumbent operators under the aegis of Cellular Operators' Association of India (COAI) had alleged that Reliance Jio's testing of network was an effort to bypass regulations. It had demanded that Telecom Department and TRAI should define terms and conditions of what constitutes a test mode for a telco. Accordingly, a reference on the issue had been made by the Telecom Department to the regulator late last year. TRAI is now all set to start the work on the same.



plans to start by May this year industry-wide consultation on framing rules for new mobile operators testing their services prior to full-fledged commercial launch.

The issue of specific framework for trial services had cropped-up last year after newcomer

incumbent cellular operators had demanded that the dos and don'ts of such trial service needs to be clearly spelt out.

The upcoming consultation paper is expected to address issues like the number of subscribers that can be onboarded during the

network and service testing. Other issues could be whether the services can be given free of charge or not.

The consultation paper on the issue is likely to be issued by May, two people familiar with the matter told PTI.

It may be recalled that the

new entrant Reliance Jio was attempting to acquire customers by offering connection loaded with freebies, in the guise of a trial launch.

Reliance Jio, in turn, accused incumbent players like Bharti Airtel and Vodafone of not releasing sufficient

## Kotak Mahindra Bank Q4 Net jumps over 40 percent at Rs 976 crore

NEW DELHI(K-CN): Private sector

bank's asset quality, there was a marginal

2016-17, Kotak Mahindra Bank's net



lender Kotak Mahindra Bank's standalone net profit jumped 40.3 per cent to Rs 976.48 crore during the last quarter ended March 2017.

The bank had reported a net profit of Rs 695.78 crore in the corresponding quarter of 2015-16 fiscal.

Total standalone income rose by 9.9 per cent to Rs 5,434.65 crore during the concluding quarter of 2016-17 as against Rs 4,947.32 crore in 2015-16, the bank said in a regulatory filing.

Looking at

uptick in gross non-performing assets (NPAs) ratio at 2.59 per cent of the gross advances as on March 31, 2017 from 2.36 per cent a year ago.

Likewise, net NPAs or bad loans were 1.26 per cent of the net advances as on March 31, 2017, slightly up from 1.06 per cent a year ago.

Thus, provisions for bad loans and contingencies too were restricted to Rs 267.37 crore for the quarter, against Rs 200.41 crore a year earlier.

For full fiscal

profit increased to Rs 3,411.50 crore from Rs 2,089.78 crore.

Total income in the last fiscal was Rs 21,176.09 crore, up from Rs 18,996.42 crore a year ago.

At the board of directors meeting held today, lender has proposed a dividend of Rs 0.60 per share for 2016-17. Bank's assets size grew to Rs 214,589.96 crore as at the end of March 2017 from Rs 192,259.79 crore in the year-ago period.

The stock was trading 1.26 per cent higher at Rs 911.70 on BSE.

## Government to waive service tax on card transactions up to Rs 2,000

NEW DELHI(K-CN): Government will waive service tax on debit and credit card transactions of up to Rs 2,000 in a bid to promote digital transactions amid cash crunch follow-

this effect will be tabled by Finance Minister Arun Jaitley in Parliament.

Following demonetisation of old high value notes, there has been a cash crunch in the country

31 in different parts of the country.

The service tax notification of June 2012 will be amended to include exemption on credit and debit cards, the sources added.



ing withdrawal of old Rs 500 and 1,000 banknotes.

The government has decided to "exempt services by an acquiring bank to any person in relation to settlement of an amount up to Rs 2,000 in a single transaction through credit, debit card or other payment card service", sources said.

A notification to

As people have been making a beeline for banks and ATMs to withdraw new currency.

The government has been taking steps to promote cashless or digital transactions to take India towards a less-cash economy.

Recently, the government asked banks to install additional 10 lakh PoS terminals by March

As of now, services provided by organisations such as United Nations and other international bodies are exempt from tax.

A range of other services provided by arbitral tribunals, testing of newly developed drugs, educational institutions, trade unions, general insurance business and sports bodies, among others, too are exempt from the levy.

## Sunrisers Hyderabad look to consolidate against Kings XI Punjab

**MOHALI(KCN):** Defending champions when they take on Kings XI Punjab side are currently placed fifth, one short of eight games so far and have shared the this season, Hyderabad secured a



ons Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) will aim to consolidate their stay in their top three positions of the Indian Premier League (IPL) stand-

(KXIP) in an away game at the I.S. Bindra Stadium here on Friday.

With just three wins from seven matches, the home

of where they would at least like to be at the end of the league format.

The David Warner-led Hyderabad have won four

points in a rain-abandoned outing against Royal Challengers Bangalore on Tuesday.

In their home match against Punjab

five-run win while defending a modest total of 159 runs.

Hyderabad will once again hope their openers Warner (235 from 7 games) and

Shikhar Dhawan (282 from 7 games) score the bulk of runs while the middle order comprising Moises Henriques, Yuvraj Singh, Naman Ojha, Deepak Hooda play the long handle when the situation demands.

The visitors have an equally potent bowling attack, with Purple Cap holder medium pacer Bhuvneshwar Kumar (16 wickets) and young Afghanistan leg-spinner Rashid Khan (10 wickets) leading the department.

On the other hand, Kings XI Punjab will be hoping for another sublime score from opener Hashim Amla, who can take the attack to the opposition camp.

KXIP scored a near-200 total (198) against the Mumbai Indians with Amla scoring a terrific hundred and skipper

Glenn Maxwell also hitting some lusty blows. In the middle order, David Miller, Wriddhiman Saha, Shaun Marsh and all-rounder Axar Patel can smash the bowlers all around the park.

The hosts will, however, need to rethink on their bowling strategy with the likes of medium pacers Sandeep Sharma and Mohit Sharma failing to provide the early breakthroughs although Axar, with his left-arm spin has been economical in the middle overs.

Squads: Sunrisers Hyderabad: David Warner (Captain), Tanmay Agarwal, Ricky Bhui, Bipul Sharma, Ben Cutting, Shikhar Dhawan, Eklavya Dwivedi, Moises Henriques, Deepak Hooda, Chris Jordan, Siddharth Kaul, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Ben Laughlin,

Abhi-manyu Mithun, Mohammad Nabi, Mohammed Siraj, Mustafizur Rahman, Ashish Nehra, Naman Ojha (WK), Rashid Khan, Vijay Shankar, Barinder Sran, Pravin Tambe, Kane Williamson, Yuvraj Singh.

Kings XI Punjab: Glenn Maxwell (Captain), David Miller, Manan Vohra, Hashim Amla, Shaun Marsh, Armaan Jaffer, Martin Guptill, Eoin Morgan, Rinku Singh, Sandeep Sharma, Arman Jaffer, Anureet Singh, Mohit Sharma, K.C. Cariappa, Pradeep Sahu, Swapnil Singh, T Natrajan, Matt Henry, Varun Aaron, Axar Patel, Marcus Stoinis, Gurkeerat Mann, Rahul Tewatia, Darren Sammy, Wriddhiman Saha (WK), Nikhil Naik, Ishant Sharma.

## Struggling Delhi Daredevils have mountain to climb against red-hot Kolkata Knight Riders

**KOLKATA(KACN):** Delhi Daredevils will have to play out of their skins to try and stop the Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) juggernaut when the two sides lock horns in an Indian Premier League (IPL) game here at the Eden Gardens on Friday.

KKR have been in sublime form, winning two back-to-back games in convincing fashion.

While the twice IPL champions skittled Royal Challengers Bangalore for the tournament's lowest score of 49 to win by a massive 82 runs here last Sunday, skipper Gautam Gambhir and Robin Uthappa massacred Rising Pune Super-giant bowlers while chasing a 183-run target with ease.

Related Article IPL: KKR beat Pune by seven wickets to jump to top spot

It's more difficult to maintain intensity from last match: KKR skipper Gautam Gambhir

"I thought we are a good chasing side and we are confident of chasing anything. Restricting the opposition to 180 was terrific and the credit needs to go to the bowlers," said Gambhir after the Pune game as his side

registered their sixth win out of eight games in this year's IPL.

Gambhir has been in terrific form, scoring 305 runs in eight matches so far with an average of 50.83. The southpaw has the Orange Cap, given to highest scorer in the tournament, and is happy to be able to contribute in the team's cause.

"It's good to keep contributing, I keep saying Orange Cap does not matter if you don't have points as a team. But it is good to score runs and when you are, score as much as you can," added Gambhir, who has played 224 Twenty20 innings from 228 matches so far.

Nathan Coulter-Nile, who bowled a fiery first spell at the Eden against RCB, was rested for the Pune game and the Australian quick is expected to be drafted back in the side against Delhi on a track which helps fast bowlers.

Sunil Narine seems to have blended well in the opening slot and is doing his job of hitting big in the Powerplay to good effect. Coming to the visitors, the Zaheer



Khan-led Delhi side have won just twice in their six matches.

In the last meeting of the two sides, KKR showed champions intent to wriggle out of a hole and script a four-wicket win at the Feroz Shah Kotla in Delhi. Chasing a modest 168, the men in purple were 21/3 but Manish Pandey and Yusuf Pathan bailed their team out wonderfully.

Delhi will have to improve their batting if they are to harbour any chances

of making it to the playoffs. Barring Sanju Samson and England's Sam Billings, none of the batsmen have been consistent.

Samson's brilliant century against Rising Pune Super-giant was the highlight and in the next game Billings' gritty 50 helped Delhi win two matches on the trot. But since then, the Rahul Dravid-coached side have lost three in a row.

Kagiso Rabada, Pat Cummins, Chris Morris, Zaheer and

Amit Mishra make a good reading as far as their bowling is concerned and they would look to back their strength against KKR.

In the head-to-head count, Delhi have lost 11 and won eight of the 19 meetings so far against KKR.

Squads: Kolkata Knight Riders: Gautam Gambhir (captain), Sunil Narine, Kuldeep Yadav, Manish Pandey, Suryakumar Yadav,

Piyush Chawla, Robin Uthappa, Shakib Al Hasan, Chris Lynn, Umesh Yadav, Yusuf Pathan, Sheldon Jackson, Ankit Singh Rajpoot, Trent Boult, Chris Woakes, Rishi Dhawan, Nathan Coulter-Nile, Royman Powell, R. Sanjay Yadav, Ishank Jaggi, Darren Bravo, Sayan Ghosh, AColin de Grandhomme Delhi Daredevils: Zaheer Khan (captain), Angelo Mathews,

Corey Anderson, Kagiso Rabada, Pat Cummins, Ankit Bawne, Aditya Tare, Murugan Ashwin, Navdeep Saini, Shashank Singh, Mohammed Shami, Shahbaz Nadeem, Jayant Yadav, Amit Mishra, Shreyas Iyer, Sam Billings, Sanju Samson, Chris Morris, Carlos Brathwaite, Karun Nair, Rishabh Pant, Chama Milind, Khaleel Ahmed, Pratyush Singh.

## PV Sindhu advances, Ajay Jayaram bows out of Asia Championships

**WUHAN(KCN):** Indian shuttler P.V. Sindhu defeated Aya Ohori of Japan to advance into the second round of the Badminton Asia Championships while compatriot Ajay Jayaram bowed out of the tournament going down to Chinese Taipei's Hsu Jen Hao here on Thursday.

Continuing her prime form, Sindhu outplayed the Japanese shuttler 21-14, 21-15 in a match that lasted 40 minutes at the Wuhan Sports Centre Gymnasium here.

On the other hand, Jayaram, who caused an upset by defeating fifth seed Tian Houwei 21-18, 18-21, 21-19 on Wednesday, was bested by Hao 19-21, 10-21 in the second round match.

In a lop-sided women's singles encounter, Rio Olympic silver medalist and fourth seed Sindhu continued her domination right from the start. She wrapped up the first game comfortably and in the second game the Hyderabad shuttler showed much more intensity and discipline to outplay her opponent.

The second game saw Jayaram giving up easy points. As a result, Hao took eight consecutive points and thus wrapped up the issue 10-21 in just 35 minutes of play.