

Food price shocks spook RBI's monetary policy committee amid rift over interest rate cut

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank of India's monetary policy committee remain fearful of recurrent food price shocks which have prevented retail inflation from cooling quickly to the desired 4 per cent level on a durable basis.

The committee has been deep-riven with only two of the six members calling for an immediate interest rate cut even as the others balked at the idea because of the concerns surrounding food prices.

The minutes of the three-day meeting that ended June 7 provided a glimpse of just how divergent the committee's views were. External member Dr Ashima Goyal had joined counterpart Dr Jayanth Varma in calling for a cut in the repo rate by 25 basis points and a change in the monetary policy stance to neutral. Until this meeting, Varma was the lone voice calling for a rate cut and an end to the accommodation policy adopted in June 2019.

Observers were keen to scope out the views of Shashank Bhide, the third external member, to determine whether he was likely to switch sides at subsequent meetings.

However, the minutes seemed to indicate that there was little likelihood of that anytime soon as he continued to focus on the need to align retail inflation to the target of 4 per cent over the medium term.

While the other members have often cited food price shocks as the main reason to retain the inflation fight, Dr Goyal reminded the committee that the "world seems to have learnt to live with them".

Pointing out that the volatility seen in April had moderated, she said that conflicts have been contained and international oil prices are softening despite the



extension of OPEC's production cuts. Palm oil inflation, which affects many consumer goods costs in India, is also softening.

According to Dr Goyal, the good monsoon predicted has already set in and will likely reduce food inflation. She added that the general elections are over and results suggest political stability but also policy continuity rather than disruptive changes.

"India gets a credible opposition, which strengthens democracy. Even so, a conservative government with a good implementation record will return and is likely to continue with fiscal consolidation through a better composition of expenditure and other short and long-term cost-reducing supply-side reforms," she added.

Goyal maintained that in addition to a lower probability of a large supply shock, the experience of the past year shows supply shocks no longer have persistent effects on inflation or inflation expectations. "We have waited for one year to watch the impact of these shocks, now it is time to move on," she said.

Varma said the current real policy rate of 2 per cent (based on projected inflation) is well above the level needed to steer inflation to its target. However, Bhide said the policy should look to maintain the inflation rate aligned to the target over the medium term.

Tata Consultancy Services to give Xerox an AI makeover

Mumbai: Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) on Friday said it has signed a deal with Xerox for the transformation of its technology services using cloud computing and generative artificial intelligence (GenAI).

While TCS did not disclose its size, shares of the country's largest IT services firm rose as investors gave a thumbs-up to the "extended partnership".

The TCS share ended at ₹3,808.95, a gain of 0.59 per cent, or ₹22.35, over the last close. It came on a day the benchmark Sensex slumped by over 269 points.

TCS said the partnership will fast track the evolution

of Xerox to a simplified, services-led, software-enabled organisation.

Under the agreement, the Tata group firm will consolidate Xerox's technology services to improve business outcomes, migrate complex legacy data centres to the Azure public cloud, deploy a cloud-based digital ERP platform to transform business processes and incorporate GenAI into operations to help drive sustainable growth.

TCS added that it will develop a new agile, cloud-first operating model for the company. TCS is also looking to leverage the deep capabilities of its service practices like



AI.Cloud, Enterprise Solutions (including TCS Crystalus) and Cognitive Business Operations (including TCS Cognix). Through these, it will build an AI-first enterprise

platform for Xerox.

These TCS capabilities will be combined with the expertise of industry partners such as leading hyperscalers and AI solution providers, it added.

Ambuja Cements, ACC redefining construction landscape with next-gen digital initiatives

Ahmedabad: Ambuja Cements and ACC Limited, the cement and building material companies of the Adani Portfolio, on Friday said they are excited to unveil their commitment towards innovation that will redefine the construction landscape through a series of visionary digital initiatives.

The cement and building material companies are at the forefront of facilitating swift decision-making and improved customer service by leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT), video analytics and optimisation capabilities.

"Ambuja Cements and ACC's digital initiatives emerge as a beacon of progress. The process of modernising the entire digital landscape, as well as using AI & IoT technologies for enhancing the plants stand as a testament to the company's unwavering commitment to progress," said Ajay Kapur, CEO, Cement Business, Adani Group.

By standardising and simplifying business processes, the companies aspire to significantly enhance outcomes for internal teams and external collaborators, said the firms.

In addition, Ambuja Cements and ACC are implementing the 'Plants of the Future' programme to digitally transform manu-



facturing processes to improve production quality and reduce costs. This includes incorporating robotics for automation, automated weighbridges, in-plant automation, automated quality testing, robotics process automation for plant shutdown management, and drones for maintenance. "Teaming up with the Adani Group's AI Labs will seamlessly enable harnessing the power of Artificial Intelligence through the integration of AI models, including Generative AI capabilities, video-based analytics and optimiser functionalities," the companies noted.

Ambuja, with its subsidiaries ACC Ltd. and Sanghi Industries Ltd has taken the Adani Group's cement capacity to 78.9 MTPA with 18 integrated cement manufacturing plants and 19 cement grinding units across the country.

Sensex trades higher led by IT stocks

Mumbai: Indian equity indices opened in green on Friday as Infosys, Wipro, and Tech Mahindra were top gainers. At 9:40 a.m., Sensex was up 222 points or 0.28 per cent at 77,700 and Nifty was up 71 points or 0.30 per cent at 23,638. Selling is being seen in banking shares. Nifty Bank is down by 109 points or 0.21 per cent at 51,665. There is a bullish trend in small and medium stocks. The Nifty midcap 100 index is at 55,728, up 252 points or 0.48 per cent, and the Nifty smallcap 100 index is at 18,376, up 109 points or 0.60 per cent. Tech Mahindra, Infosys, TCS, HCL Tech, Wipro, Bharti Airtel, Bajaj Finserv, Titan and Power Grid are the top gainers. Tata Steel, Tata Motors, HUL, Kotak Mahindra, HDFC Bank and Reliance are the top losers.

International Yoga Day celebrated in Washington

Washington: Hundreds of yoga enthusiasts came together to observe the International Yoga Day at an event that was addressed by India's Deputy Ambassador to the US Sripriya Ranganathan. At the picturesque Wharf, overlooking the Potomac river, the International Yoga Day event on Wednesday began with prayers and Indian classical dance performances. The

yoga session highlighted the spirit of oneness and harmony inspired by the ancient Indian practice. The International Day of Yoga is celebrated on June 21 every year. This year's theme is 'Yoga for Self and Society'. At the event, Ranganathan said yoga illuminates the path to creating harmony and balance for a brighter future of society. The draft resolution establishing

the International Day of Yoga was proposed by India and endorsed by a record 175 member states. Nearly 5,000 years later, hundreds of millions of people around the world practice yoga, Ranganathan said. The event also included elements to popularise inclusion of millets and environmentfriendly products and practices in daily life, a media release said.

Mega Career Carnival

Agartala: The 1st Edition of the "Mega Career Carnival 2024" has been scheduled to take place on 22nd & 23rd June 2024 at the indoor hall in Agartala International Fair Ground, Hapania and it will be organized by Madhurupa Memorial Cancer Welfare Society. The programme would be organized from 2pm to 8.30pm. The General Secretary of the organization Subhadip Bhat-

tacharjee informed the same during a press conference at Agartala press club on Thursday. He added that the twoday mega event aims to provide a comprehensive platform for students and professionals to explore various career opportunities, receive guidance from industry experts, and engage in skill development workshops and promote cancer awareness among the youth.

Dr. Shilpa Vora, a Marico expert, shares her thoughts on hair care for the summer season

Guwahati: Summers in India are harsh, with high temperatures and humidity affecting overall health. Hair is particularly vulnerable to damage due to excessive sweat and heat, leading to frizz, dryness, increased hair fall, and brittleness. Marico expert Dr. Shilpa Vora recommends using coconut and methi for protective hair care during this season.

Prioritizing hair health and protecting it from UV

rays during summer is crucial. A regular hair oiling routine can reduce dullness and dryness caused by heat. Nihar Naturals offers a lightweight, non-greasy oil infused with light fragrance, containing Coconut & Methi for 2X thick hair and Jasmine for fresh-smelling hair. This non-greasy oil is lightweight and non-greasy. Methi is a highly effective hair care ingredient, rich in protein, that combats hair dryness, making it soft and

shiny. It also serves as a natural scalp moisturizer, especially beneficial in the summer heat.

Oiling your hair during summers is best done on a clean scalp, not a greasy one. Oil can be applied for 30 minutes to 4 hours, and not left overnight in hot weather. Avoiding oiling can cause heat damage to your hair. To maintain moisture, wash your hair with cold water and avoid leaving it overnight. This will help keep it hydrated and soft.



MSU signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Assam Rifles

Guwahati: Medhavi Skills University (MSU) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Assam Rifles to offer educational opportunities and concessions to the families of Assam Rifles personnel. This agreement aims to provide scholarships of up to 50% and allocate seats in MSU's skill-based undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes for the wards and spouses of serving, deceased, and retired Assam Rifles personnel.

The MoU was signed between the Director General of Assam Rifles, Lt. General Pradeep Chandran Nair, and Mr. Kuldeep Sarma, Co-Founder and Pro-Chancellor, MSU, in the presence of Air Vice Marshal D. K. Awasthi (Retd.) at the headquarters of Assam Rifles in Shillong. Mr. Kuldeep Sarma said, "MSU salutes and commends the efforts of the Assam Rifles. We are committed to improving the education and employability of the families of our brave armed forces."

The Assam Rifles, India's oldest paramilitary force, has been a key part of India's defence during the Indo-China war. The MoU with MSU aims to provide educational opportunities to Assam Rifles personnel, reserving 150 undergraduate and 50 post-graduate seats. These beneficiaries will receive a 50% tuition fee concession and a 10% hostel accommodation fee concession. The MoU also offers exceptional concessions for Veer Naris and martyrs' wards, including a 100% tuition fee waiver.

Blackberrys join hands with Randeep Hooda to celebrate Dads who inspire to #KeepRising

Guwahati: Blackberrys, a leading contemporary Indian menswear brand known for its commitment to quality and innovation for over three decades celebrates Father's Day by recognizing the power of fathers in inspiring their children to #KeepRising despite all odd challenges. Celebrating this breed of fathers, Blackberrys, has unveiled a touching Father's Day campaign featuring actor-par-excellence Randeep Hooda and his father Ranbir Hooda. The

brand values strong, confident fathers who drive their children to reach their full potential.

The Indian menswear brand, known as India's 'fit expert', has launched a Father's Day campaign featuring an actor expressing gratitude to his father for being the wind beneath his wings and pushing him to reach his full potential. The campaign film highlights the bond between actor Randeep Hooda and his father, who played a pivotal role

in his success in the acting world. Dressed in Blackberrys attire, the duo engages in a conversation, appreciating the freedom and confidence given to him by his father, which shaped his career and life. Randeep Hooda said, "My father has always been my pillar of strength, encouraging me to chase my dreams and to rise above every challenge. I am delighted to be associated with a brand like Blackberrys that celebrates the unwavering spirit in men".

Oriflame aims to empower 1 Million Micro-Entrepreneurs in India by 2029

Guwahati: Oriflame, the leading Swedish beauty brand with a global presence, has announced India its being one of the top-priority market. Building on its current success, the premier cosmetic brand aims to on-board 1 million brand partners within the next five years (2029), thereby promoting micro-entrepreneurship and nurturing a dynamic start-up culture across the country. This ambitious target aligns perfectly with India's growth trajectory

and the Government of India's emphasis on employment generation and self-reliance.

Oriflame fosters an entrepreneurial spirit by empowering individuals to become brand partners, instilling ethical values, and providing flexibility in work schedules. This approach fosters a fulfilling career, prioritizing social and mental well-being, and paving the way for financial independence. Edyta Kurek, Senior Vice President and Head of

India and Indonesia, Oriflame, stated, "India is a key market for Oriflame, and we are immensely grateful for the love and trust from our Indian consumers."

Oriflame is focusing on 'Made in India' and 'Make in India' initiatives by establishing research and development capabilities in India, producing products with Swedish quality and innovation, adhering to global standards and European safety regulations.

HCLTech organizes its fourth HCLTech Grant Pan-India Symposium 2024 at North-Eastern Hill University

Shillong: HCL Foundation, which drives the corporate social responsibility (CSR) agenda of global technology company HCLTech in India, conducted the fourth HCLTech Grant Pan-India Symposium 2024 at North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong, Meghalaya, on the theme 'Role of CSR in Development of Rural Parts of Northeast India'.

The HCLTech Grant Pan-India Symposium series aims to enhance sustainable rural

development in India by providing a platform for social purpose organizations like NGOs and civil society to network and exchange ideas. Dr. Nidhi Pundhir, Vice President, Global CSR, HCLTech and Director, HCLFoundation said, "Our priority has always been to contribute towards the development of local communities and the HCLTech Grant is the medium through which we assist NGOs with the common goals".

The HCLTech Grant Symposium 2024 series aims to increase awareness of the HCLTech Grant among NGOs, with Edition 10 providing funding of 16.5 Crore to nine selected NGOs. Three NGOs will receive Rs. 5 crore each for their projects of four-year duration in the categories of health, education and environment. Another six NGOs will receive a grant of Rs. 25 lakh each for projects of one-year duration.

Optimize Your Health: Robotic Knee Implants Excellence at Sarvodaya Hospital

Guwahati: Due to today's lifestyle, elderly people as well as people crossing the age of 40 start having knee pain problems. Dr. Sujoy Bhattacharjee, Director of the Joint Replacement Department at Sarvodaya Hospital, shares his experience in robotic joint replacement, a modern medical advancement that ensures better results for patients suffering from knee pain. With over 24000 joint replacements under his belt, Bhattacharjee's expertise in this technology is invaluable.

The robot's joint replacement method offers the highest accuracy in terms of results. Along with this; there are other advantages of joint replacement by robot such as:

1) Faster recovery by saving ligament or muscle: Sarvodaya's Robotic Joint Replacement Department offers faster recovery by saving ligament or muscle. This minimal incision procedure only changes the necessary part of the knee, saving the ligament. This results in quick recovery without the patient feeling like they have undergone knee replacement

surgery.

2) Longer life of the implant with accurate placement: Joint replacement requires accurate placement of implants in a straight frame to prevent rapid wear. Robotic bone cutting allows for precise bone cutting, providing a pain-free knee replacement for a long time. This precision is unparalleled by any other technique, ensuring a longer life for the implant.

3) Possible to walk 2 hours after joint replacement surgery: After joint replacement surgery, patients can walk for up to two hours with minimal incisions, less bleeding, and accurate implants. This reduces pain, shortens hospital stay, and eliminates the need for physiotherapy, allowing patients to return home after surgery.

4) More secure technology: Robotic surgery is a safer technique than other methods due to its complete control by the surgeon, as it is fully automated before and during the procedure. The robot's functioning is determined before surgery, and guidelines are included, ensuring safety even during the procedure.

ICICI Prudential empowers women in Mizoram with double discounts on iProtect Smart plan



Aizawl: ICICI Prudential Life Insurance has launched a groundbreaking initiative to bolster financial security for women across Mizoram. The company unveiled a lifetime discount of 15% on premiums for its leading term insurance product, iProtect Smart, exclusively for women. Salaried women will also benefit from an additional 15% discount on the first year's premium, aimed at enhancing their ability to provide for their families' future.

iProtect Smart offers extensive coverage, including protection against 34 critical illnesses such as breast, ovarian, uterine, and cervical cancers. This feature ensures comprehensive financial support during health crises, with payouts upon diagno-

sis to facilitate immediate medical treatments without exhausting personal savings.

Mr. Amit Palta, Chief Distribution Officer at ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, highlighted the significance of this initiative, stating, "As the number of working women in Mizoram's workforce grows, so does the need for robust financial planning. iProtect Smart not only secures their future but also empowers them to face life's uncertainties confidently."

With an industry-leading claim settlement ratio of 99.17% for FY2024 and an average turnaround time of just 1.27 days, ICICI Prudential reaffirms its commitment to providing reliable and efficient service to its customers.

Flipkart announces the upcoming 'Back to Campus' program

Flipkart



Guwahati: As students gear up for the new academic year, Flipkart, India's homegrown e-commerce marketplace, has announced the June 2024 edition of its annual 'Back to Campus' program after successfully concluding its May 2024 edition. Scheduled between June 21 - June 27, the campaign will provide an expansive assortment of products across brands, including laptops, tablets, gaming consoles, monitors, smartwatches, true wireless earphones, printers, laptop accessories, and more, to cater to the entire spectrum of student's requirements.

Flipkart offers a wide selection of affordable devices, catering to students with options like SuperCoins, No-Cost EMI, and attractive exchange

deals for old laptops, ensuring a rewarding experience and a hassle-free upgrade process. There will be additional student offers up to Rs 6000 off on Laptops and Tablets coupled with No-Cost EMI offers up to 12 months on a wide range of credit cards. Catering to diverse payment preferences, Flipkart will provide multiple constructs such as cash on delivery, UPI, and credit / debit cards for seamless transactions. Consumers can enjoy affordability and loyalty through SuperCoins, No-Cost EMI, Exchange offers, cash on delivery, UPI, and credit/debit cards. The shopping experience will be enhanced with features like on-demand video assistance and Gen-AI powered chat assistance.

Bahamas thrilled to announce the launch of SS '24 Collection

Guwahati: Bahamas, the free spirited footwear brand under the leading footwear manufacturer, Relaxo Footwears Ltd., is thrilled to announce the launch of its highly anticipated Spring-Summer 2024 (SS '24) Collection. Infused with the spirit of fun, joy, and carefree living, this collection embodies the essence of the youth, captivating the hearts of Gen Z and millennials across the nation.

The SS '24 Collection is designed for individuals who value a high-energy, high output work ethic and style with gusto. With a range of contemporary and fashionable articles, Bahamas invites customers to immerse themselves in the fun & youthful aesthetic

and uplift their personal style quotient. Mr. Gaurav Dua, Executive Director, Relaxo Footwear Ltd., shared his insights on the SS '24 Collection, stating, "With the new range, we believe our valued customers will celebrate a season of exuberance and youthful vitality with Bahamas."

The Bahamas SS '24 Collection invites individuals to inculcate the spirit of carefree living, express themselves boldly, and make a splash with their style choices. Available at over 405 Exclusive Brand Outlets (EBOs) and leading footwear stores, the perfectly tailored collection is also available on the official website of Relaxo Footwears - www.relaxofootwear.com.

Vi extends prepaid validity and provides free data for Remal-affected Assam and Northeast

Guwahati: Given the damage and disruption caused by Cyclone Remal, Vi is committed to supporting its customers in Assam and North East in this challenging time. Knowing how important it is for people to remain connected and access critical information in this challenging time, the telecom operator is extending the validity of prepaid services by 4 days for people living in Barak Val-

ley, Meghalaya, Manipur, and Mizoram to remain connected. Vi is providing IGB of extra data and a few free outgoing minutes at no extra cost to enhance connectivity. These measures are effective immediately and are applicable to select customers within the cyclone affected regions. Vi's network teams are working tirelessly with local authorities to restore normalcy in the affected areas.

CEAT Indian Supercross Racing League opens rider registration for Season 2

Guwahati: The CEAT Indian Supercross Racing League (ISRL), the world's first-ever franchise-based Supercross league, roared back to life by opening up rider registration for Season 2. Following a phenomenal inaugural season that captivated audiences with heart-stopping races and exceptional talent, the ISRL is ready to push the boundaries once again.

Season 1 of motorsports sparked significant interest among enthusiasts, attracting over 104 registrations from various countries, includ-

ing defending champions. Some of the leading names that battled for the win were Matt Moss - 9-time Australian MX and SX Champion, Jordi Tixier - World Champion MX2 (2014), 2022 Prince of Paris (SX2) Thomas Ramette, Hugo Manzano from France, Caleb Goulet, Reid Taylor from Australia, and Brian Gyles from Thailand, a sensation in Season 1's 85cc category. Eeshan Lokhande, Co-Founder & Director of the CEAT Indian Supercross Racing League, said, "We are excited about Season 2 and confident that



it will surpass the phenomenal success of our inaugural season."

Register now for the CEAT ISRL, a ground-breaking motorsport revolution in India. This registration is the initial step to enter the rider pool and be considered

for selection by franchises during the player auction. The upcoming season, from January to March 2025, will feature multiple rounds across Indian cities, organized in partnership with the Federation of Motor Sports Clubs of India (FMSCI).

ONGC pledges commitment to Assam, denies RGL relocation rumors

Guwahati: In a recent press release, ONGC has firmly denied any plans to relocate its Regional Geosciences Lab (RGL) from Sivasagar, Assam, following speculation and reports in various newspapers. The company has reassured its dedication to Assam's development and emphasized that the RGL will continue to operate from its current location.

ONGC has also announced the establishment of a new, state-of-the-art RGL in Jorhat to meet the increasing operational demands of the North East Region. This facility aims to foster a conducive environment for learning, skill development, and research, particularly benefiting students from the region. Additionally, the existing RGL building in Sivasagar has undergone significant renovations to enhance working conditions.

Addressing recent allegations and calls for agitation from local organizations, ONGC reiterated its unwavering commitment to Assam's economic and social development. The company emphasized that internal organizational adjustments are aimed at improving operational efficiency and service delivery, not at undermining local interests.

Tata AIA declared its highest ever bonus payout of INR 1,465 crores

Aizawl: Tata AIA Life Insurance Co. Ltd. (Tata AIA), one of India's leading life insurers, has declared a bonus of INR 1,465 crores for Participating (PAR) policyholders for the financial year 2024. The bonus payout announced is the highest ever paid by the Company, showcasing an increase of 24% over the INR 1,183 crore bonuses announced in FY23.

Tata AIA's robust risk management practices and strong investment management capabilities have consistently led to higher bonuses for policyholders, thereby gaining the trust of consumers who renew their

policies. During FY24, Tata AIA achieved industry-leading Persistency performance (based on premium), ranking #1 in 4 cohorts - 13th Month (89.40%), 25th Month (80.70%), 37th Month (75.00%) and 49th Month (73.10%). Persistency ratio indicates the percentage of policyholders who renew their life insurance policy every year, demonstrating their loyalty and trust in the brand. Kshitij Sharma, Executive Vice President and Appointed Actuary, Tata AIA, said, "We are delighted to deliver yet another year of excellent performance of bonus payout in our participation pol-

TATA AIA
LIFE INSURANCE

icies. Tata AIA's record bonus announcement underscores our commitment to rewarding our policyholders for their trust."

Tata AIA provides Participating products that help consumers accumulate wealth, earn income, secure their families, and fulfill their aspirations. These solutions offer life insurance, income, and bonuses, allowing them to grow their investments without market-linked risks.

Haier India Launches Phoenix: A Premium Glass Door Series of Refrigerators

Guwahati: Haier Appliances India, the No.1 global major appliances brand for 15 consecutive years, continues its legacy of innovation in the direct cool range with the introduction of Phoenix - a series of premium glass door refrigerators. Being the industry's only brand to offer the widest range of Direct Cool Glass Door refrigerators, new series sports a sleek and premium glass design, adding a touch of sophistication to any kitchen space. The new refrigerators come in 185 Lts and 190 Lts and will be available across all retail channels.

Phoenix refrigerators are designed to blend style and functionality, catering to modern Indian homes. They feature a base drawer for storage, efficient cooling through Diamond Edge Freezing Technology, and



stabilizer-free operation for uninterrupted performance. The new range of refrigerators in India features a sleek premium glass finish and a steel covering on the back for safety. Phoenix refrigerators start at INR 21000 and will be available in leading retail stores. Haier India offers a 10-year compressor warranty on

both models, 1-year product warranty on 180 Lt and 2-year product warranty on 190 Ltrs. Mr. NS Satish, President, Haier Appliances India said, "With its advanced features and exceptional performance, we are confident that our latest series of refrigerators will create a new benchmark in the home appliance industry."

Kohli Poised for Comeback Amid India's Kuldeep Yadav Selection Dilemma

Bridgetown: As India gears up for their opening Super 8 fixture against Afghanistan in the T20 World Cup this Thursday, all eyes are on Virat Kohli to break out of his slump. Meanwhile, the selection of left-arm spinner Kuldeep Yadav remains a hot topic. The Indian team must decide whether to stick with the lineup that succeeded in the group stages or make room for Kuldeep, who has been their top spinner over the past year.

The decision hinges on whether to replace a specialist pacer, likely Mohammed Siraj or Arshdeep Singh, with Kuldeep to leverage the spinner-friendly conditions anticipated at the Kensington Oval. Despite favorable conditions for pacers due to a gentle breeze, the pitch's spinfriendly nature may tip the scales in Kuldeep's favor.

Kohli, known for his aggressive playing style, has struggled to score

in double digits during the tournament but is expected to excel on the Caribbean pitches, known for their batter-friendly nature. The intensity he has shown in training sessions reflects his commitment to regaining form.

Other key players like Shivam Dube and Suryakumar Yadav are also under scrutiny. Dube, introduced to provide firepower in the middle and death overs, has only hit one six so far and will be expected to capitalize on the conditions in Barbados. Suryakumar found some form against the USA and will look to continue that momentum.

From a bowling perspective, while Arshdeep Singh has been solid, partnering with Jasprit Bumrah effectively, the potential inclusion of Kuldeep could bolster India's spin attack, which already features Axar Patel and Ravindra Jadeja. Afghanistan



comes into the Super 8 following a tough loss to West Indies but remains optimistic. Captain Rashid Khan is confident about his team's chances, with key contributions expected from leading wicket-taker Fazalhaq Farooqi and the dependable opening duo

of Rahmanullah Gurbaz and Ibrahim Zadran.

As the match approaches, India's strategic choices, especially regarding their bowling line-up, will be crucial in their quest for a victory against a resilient Afghan side.

Suryakumar Yadav Embraces Challenges of Adapting His Game Across Different Pitches

Bridgetown: Suryakumar Yadav, currently the world's top T20I batsman, acknowledged the need for adaptability in his batting technique across varied pitch conditions during the T20 World Cup. As India prepares to launch their Super 8 campaign against Afghanistan this Thursday, Suryakumar reflected on his experiences on the challenging pitches of New York and his expectations for more favorable conditions in the Caribbean.



to return to his characteristic 360-degree batting style in the West Indies, where conditions are more familiar and conducive to aggressive stroke-play. The pitches in the Caribbean, as noted during practice sessions, appeared more suited to his style compared to those in New York.

During the group stages in New York, Suryakumar had to adjust his typically aggressive batting style to accommodate slower wickets, resulting in a calculated 50 off 49 balls against the USA—a stark contrast to his usual strike rate of 168.06. "If you have been number one for two years, you should be able to bat in different conditions and change the game as per the needs of the team," Suryakumar stated during a media interaction here on Tuesday.

He emphasized the importance of being versatile and responsive to the team's requirements, particularly when facing slow pitches that hinder his usual highimpact playing style. "It's difficult to generate that force when there's no pace on the wicket," he explained. "So, at that time, you have to be very smart how you want to extend your innings."

Looking ahead, Suryakumar expressed his eagerness

those in New York. Despite the spinners finding success in the Caribbean so far, Suryakumar remains confident in his ability to counteract their strategies, citing sweeps and reverse sweeps as strong points in his repertoire. He also touched on the strategic dynamics within the Indian team, including batting lineup decisions involving Virat Kohli and Rishabh Pant, emphasizing the collective focus on maintaining aggressive intent regardless of early setbacks in a game. As India moves forward in the tournament, Suryakumar's adaptability and strategic acumen will be crucial in navigating the varied conditions and maintaining his position as one of the leading batsmen in international cricket.

Hockey India Announces 27 Core Probables for Pre-Olympic Camp, Dilpreet Singh Excluded

Bengaluru: Hockey India has named a 27-member list of core probables for the men's team pre-Olympic national camp, which is scheduled to run from June 21 to July 8 at the Sports Authority of India (SAI) centre in Bengaluru. The camp is crucial for the preparation of the team, which will compete in a challenging Pool B at the Olympics alongside top contenders like Belgium, Argentina, New Zealand, Australia, and Ireland.

The selection retains many of India's proven performers who are returning from a successful stint in the FIH Hockey Pro League, where India currently holds the fourth position with 24 points from 16 matches. The Indian team will begin their Olympic campaign against New Zealand on July 27. The core group includes experienced goalkeepers Krishan Bahadur Pathak, PR Sreejesh, and Suraj Karkera; defenders Harmanpreet Singh, Jarmanpreet Singh, Amit Rohidas, Jugraj Singh, Sanjay, and Amir Ali; and midfielders such as Manpreet Singh, Hardik Singh, and Vivek Sagar Prasad.

Striker Dilpreet Singh, despite his capabilities, is a notable absentee from the list, raising some eyebrows about the selection criteria. The forward lineup features Mandeep



Singh, Lalit Kumar Upadhyay, and newcomers like Bobby Singh Dhami and Arajieet Singh Hundal, among others.

Craig Fulton, the chief coach of the Indian men's hockey team, expressed satisfaction with the team's recent international exposure. "The Pro League outing against top teams of the world was a great experience for our side," Fulton commented. He emphasized the importance of the upcoming camp in shaping the team for the Paris 2024 Olympics. "We are looking to start an important block of training in this camp, and we need to make sure that we are in the best form ahead of Paris 2024. It has helped us in realizing where we need to improve," he added.

Harbhajan Singh Picks Pandya, Pant as India's T20 World Cup Key Players

New Delhi: Former Indian cricketer Harbhajan Singh has praised India's performance in the T20 World Cup, highlighting Hardik Pandya's unexpected bowling success and Rishabh Pant's effective batting at number three as major positives. India progressed undefeated into the

Super Eight stage, dominating in their group matches against Ireland, Pakistan, and the USA, with their final game against Canada abandoned due to rain. Speaking on 'Star Sports', Harbhajan pointed out Pandya's significant contribution as the fourth bowler, exceeding expectations with

seven wickets to his name. "The biggest positive is Hardik Pandya's wicket-taking ability in this tournament.

Rishabh Pant, returning to international cricket after a serious car accident in 2022, has also been impressive, scoring at a strike rate of 124.67. Harbhajan lauded the decision to

Neeraj Chopra Wins Paavo Nurmi Games Despite Injury Concerns

Turku: Indian javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra clinched gold at the Paavo Nurmi Games, marking a successful return to competition after a month-long hiatus due to a nagging adductor issue. The Olympic champion threw an impressive 85.97m on his third attempt in Turku on Tuesday.

Chopra, who previously had to withdraw from the Ostrava Golden Spike event as a precaution, expressed relief and satisfaction with his performance, especially with the condition of his adductor, a group of muscles in the inner thigh. "The weather was good today, a little bit cold with the wind. But I am happy with my adductor now because I could do all 6 throws," he stated.

Despite recurring issues with his adductor, Chopra remains focused on competing further this season and has planned consultations with various medical experts post-Paris Olympics to address the problem permanently. "Every year I have some problems with my adductor, maybe after the Olympics I am going to talk to different doctors," Chopra noted. The 26-year-old athlete started the season strongly, securing a second-place finish at the Doha Diamond League with a throw of 88.36m, his ninth-best mark. Although he faced challenges with minor injuries, he managed to win gold at the National Federation Cup Senior Athletics Championships in Bhubaneswar with a throw of 82.27m.

Chopra's next competition will be at the Paris Diamond League on July 7. In preparation for the upcoming Paris Olympics, he will train across three locations in Europe with coach Klaus Bartonietz and physio Ishaan Marwaha.