



COME ON,
NETFLIX,
CHAKDA...!

Following historic Women's World Cup win, streaming platform urged to rise above conflict and release Chakda Express, the Jhulan Goswami biopic » P16



Central Railway motormen were barricaded inside lobby by protesters

Viral video shows how railway union members pushed benches against the door and tied the handles to stop motormen from operating trains; union members deny it



A still from a viral clip shows union lanyards being used to seal doors. PIC/BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

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THE railway union protesters on Thursday had barricaded the motormen's lobby area with benches from outside and also used their lanyards to secure doors, completely blocking the movement of those who run trains. The motormen, who run local trains, incidentally, had no role to play in the protest. A viral video on social media showed the blocked door. » P06

'We did not stop the motormen from operating trains. After the planned protest and speeches were over, the protesters dispersed and probably again gathered in the CSMT lobby area when this must have happened' Praveen Bajpayi, president, Central Railway Mazdoor Sangh

5.50 PM TO 6.45 PM Period of Thursday's rail disruption

'We received only ₹1000 for a one-day match in 90s'

Purnima Rao, who led Indian women's cricket team to its first international title in 1995 at NZ, recalls hardships

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HYDERABAD: While the Harmanpreet Kaur & Co made history by winning India's maiden Women's World Cup on Sunday, not many know that a Purnima Rao-led Indian women's team won its first-ever international title way back in 1995, in a tri nation event in New Zealand, also involving Australia. "I received 200 NZ dollars. It was a huge moment for the Indian team. No one expected us to beat New Zealand or Australia, but we proved the detractors wrong," Rao, 58, told mid-day » P28



AMOL MUZUMDAR
Head Coach



AAVISHKAR SALVI
Bowling Coach



MUNISH BALI
Fielding Coach



ASHOK IYENGAR HARSHA
Strength & Conditioning Coach

SUPPORTING ACTORS TAKE CENTRE STAGE!

You've heard of Harmanpreet, Jemimah, Smriti... now here are the coaches, analysts, doctors, physios and masseurs behind the World Cup winning women's cricket team

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WHEN the Indian women lifted the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup, the nation celebrated a new chapter in sporting history. Yet, beyond the roars of victory and the bright lights of the stadium lay a story of quiet determination, of those who worked behind the scenes to make this triumph possible. Behind every boundary struck and wicket claimed lies a network of expertise, coaches, doctors, analysts, and physiotherapists, who shaped the team's rhythm, resilience, and readiness. This World Cup victory is as much a testament to India's evolving cricketing ecosystem as it is to the brilliance displayed on the field. » P28



Women's cricket world champions India at Navi Mumbai on Sunday. PIC/ATUL KAMBLE



MAMTA SHRIVASTAVA
Masseur



PURVA KATE
Masseur



ANIRUDHA DESHPANDE
Performance Analyst



DR HARINI MURALI
Team Doctor

In a country that celebrates its heroes with fervour, it's time to acknowledge these silent contributors, thinkers, strategists, and healers, who shaped our champions



DHANANJAY KAUSHIK
Head Sports Science & Medicine



RAKHI DARNE
Head Physiotherapist



AKANSHA SATVAVANSHI
Physiotherapist

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THE BACKBONE OF INDIA'S WIN

Here are the coaches, analysts, doctors, physios and masseurs behind Team India's Women's Cricket World Cup triumph

WHEN the Indian women lifted the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup, the nation celebrated a new chapter in sporting history. Yet, beyond the roars of victory and the bright lights of the stadium lay a story of quiet determination, of those who worked behind the scenes to make this triumph possible. Behind every boundary struck and wicket claimed lies a network of expertise, coaches, doctors, analysts, and physiotherapists, who shaped the team's rhythm, resilience, and readiness. This World Cup victory is as much a testament to India's evolving cricketing ecosystem as it is to the brilliance displayed on the field.

The support staff form the invisible backbone of this historic achieve-

ment. They are professionals who thrive beyond the scoreboard, yet whose work defines success itself. As the cheers subside and the champagne settles, we must be reminded that the foundation of greatness is often laid by those who never seek the spotlight. In a country that celebrates its heroes with fervour, it's time to acknowledge these silent contributors, thinkers, strategists, and healers, who shaped our champions.

Amol Muzumdar,
Head Coach:
His calm leadership and clarity of purpose redefined the culture within the Indian dressing room.



Aavishkar Salvi,
Bowling Coach:
He brought analytical precision to the bowling unit.



Munish Bali,
Fielding Coach:
He totally focussed on transforming the team's



agility and sheer anticipation into a match-winning art.

Ashok Iyengar Harsha,
Strength & Conditioning Coach: He designed rigorous programs that ensured the players peaked at the right time.



Anirudha Deshpande,
Performance Analyst:
He turned hours of footage and statistics into actionable strategies that shaped the team's tactical decisions.



Dr Harini Murali,
Team Doctor:
She maintained constant vigilance to keep athletes fit and focused through the rigours of international competition.



Rakhi V Darne, Head
Physiotherapist (left) &
Akansha Satyavanshi,
Physiotherapist:



They ensured precision in recovery and rehabilitation to sustain performance levels

throughout the lengthy tournament.

Dhananjay Kaushik,
Head of Sports Science & Medicine:
He brought in some cutting-edge sports science into daily routines.



Purva Kate and Mamta Shrisulla, masseurs:



The duo ensured recovery, relaxation, and readiness before every crucial game.

BEFORE HARMANPREET'S HEROES, IT WAS PURNIMA'S PERFORMERS

Three decades before Harmanpreet Kaur's team lifted India's maiden World Cup, Rau's underrated outfit shocked New Zealand in 1995 to claim the country's first women's international title; then skipper recalls the passion and challenges behind that path-breaking feat

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HYDERABAD: The Harmanpreet Kaur-led team made history by clinching India's maiden Women's World Cup title at Navi Mumbai on Sunday. But very few people are aware that the Indian women's team won their first-ever international title way back in 1995, that too in New Zealand, in a tri-nation tournament that also involved the mighty Australians.

Thirty years ago, the Purnima Rau-led Indian team stunned a strong New Zealand by 20 runs in the final. All-rounder Rau led from the front with a 51-ball 48 to propel India to a score of 200 in 50

overs. In reply, the hosts were restricted to 180-8 in 50 overs, with Rau picking up figures of 3-50, as she duly won the Player of the Final award.

'A huge moment for the team'

"I received 200 New Zealand dollars. It was a huge moment for the Indian team. We went in as the underdogs, since we had a poor record outside India. No one expected us to beat New Zealand or Australia. [But] we proved the detractors wrong. In fact, we garnered more attention than the Mohammed Azharuddin-led men's team, as they had a poor tour of New Zealand then," Rau, 58, told **mid-day** while making a reference to the Indian men's

team finishing last in a quadrangular series involving New Zealand, Australia and South Africa in 1994-95.

Back then, the women's team were under the aegis of the Women's Cricket Association of India (WCAI), with financial backing for the players rather scarce. "We received ₹1000 for a one-day match. We went with a manager [Jyoti Joshi] and two coaches. I remember Jyoti madam wearing the same saree until the final, as a superstition, after we beat New Zealand in the first league match. We topped the table with five points and qualified for the final, along with second-placed New Zealand, who pipped Australia. We had a good team — Sandhya Agarwal, Neetu David, Pramila Bhat, Anjum Chopra, Anju Jain, Sangita Dabir, among others. There was no cash award from WCAI. But we were happy to simply get noticed," recalled Rau, who played 33 ODIs and five Tests.

Rau was thrilled that the women's team came out victorious at this World Cup. "I could see it coming, as we had



The Purnima Rau-led Indian team that won the tri-series in 1995. PIC/PURNIMA RAU'S PERSONAL COLLECTION

seen strong performances from them of late. I'm happy that the BCCI announced a ₹51 crore cash award. That is a big motivation for any team. It is like the 1983 World Cup win of Kapil Dev. This World Cup win could be a big game-changer for women's cricket in the country. Ever since women's cricket has come under the BCCI's fold, the cricketers are getting cash benefits, facilities, a good number of tournaments from junior level onwards, and sponsors. A few years ago,

very few people would come to watch a women's international match. But on Sunday, there was a full house for the final. It was a coming of age for women's cricket. In our time, it was all a struggle, but we played with a lot of passion. Things were actually a little better when we played, but it was worse during the Shanta Rangaswamy, Diana Edulji, Sudha Shah era. When I recall those days, it was crazy," said Rau.

Rau said the state women's teams faced all kinds of challenges those days.

"We travelled in unreserved bogies, keeping kit bags near the toilets, and drinking water from the platforms. We also slept in veterinary hospitals," explained Rau.

Brief stint as India coach

After retirement, Rau had a stint as the coach of the Indian team from 2014-17. "We had the distinction of winning the Asia Cup, and we beat Australia 2-1 in a T20I series Down Under. For reasons best known to the authorities then, I was removed as coach one month before the World Cup in 2017," a disappointed Rau concluded.



Women's cricket ODI World Cup champions India. PIC/ATUL KAMBLE

Purnima Rau