

Coach tight-lipped on whether Rohit will play in final Australia Test

AFP- India coach Gautam Gambhir declined to confirm Thursday whether embattled skipper Rohit Sharma would play in the decisive fifth Test against Australia, but said he was "extremely confident" his team could win. There will be at least one change to the side that lost the fourth Test at Melbourne this week by 184 runs after pace bowler Akash Deep was ruled out with a back problem.

Either Harshit Rana or Prasidh Krishna could play instead in the match which begins in Sydney on Friday.

Opening batsman Rohit has failed to get past 10 runs in any of his five innings in Australia, with speculation mounting that the veteran could be axed.

The captain was not at India's eve-of-match press conference at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

Instead Gambhir faced the media but offered no confirmation of Rohit's fate.

"Everything is fine with Rohit and I don't think it's anything traditional," he said when asked why Rohit was absent from the usual media duties.

"The head coach is here and that should be good enough.

"We are going to have a look at the wicket and finalise (the team) tomorrow."

Asked again if Rohit would be part of that team, Gambhir responded: "The answer remains the same."

Rohit missed the first Test in Perth for the birth of his second child, with Jasprit Bumrah assuming the captaincy and

guiding India to their only win of the five-match series so far.

Superstar batsman Virat Kohli is also under pressure.

Aside from scoring 100 not out in Perth, he has struggled to get out of single figures.

In contrast, younger batsmen such as Yashasvi Jaiswal and Nitish Kumar Reddy have excelled.

"It is not about phasing out senior players or getting the youngsters in," Gambhir said.

"Ultimately the only thing that can keep you in that dressing room is performance."

Australia lead the series 2-1 with India needing to win in Sydney to retain the Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

Gambhir said he remained upbeat despite the victory in Perth being India's only win in their last seven Tests.

"Extremely confident," he said. "We know we have the skill sets, the individuals, we've got everything in that dressing room that can win a Test match here.

"Not only here, but will probably go on to do some unbelievable things in the future as well."

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