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SOUTHEE, PHILANDER BACK **MOHAMMED SHAMI'S** CALL TO REVOKE BAN ON USAGE OF SALIVA ON BALL

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In an attempt to revive the art of reverse swing, Mohammed Shami has lobbied the ICC to lift the rule on using saliva to shine the ball.

After India defeated Australia by four wickets in the Champions Trophy semi-final, Shami informed reporters, "We are trying [to get reverse swing], but the usage of saliva on the ball is

not allowed." "We continue to argue that we ought to be permitted to utilize saliva in order to revive reverse swing and make the game more engaging.

The use of saliva on the ball is prohibited, but we are attempting to get reverse swing," Shami informed reporters following India's four-wicket victory over Australia in the Champions Trophy semifinal. "In order to restore reverse swing to the game and make it more engaging, we continue to argue that we should be permitted to use saliva.

In May 2020, during the Covid-19 pandemic, the temporary ban on polishing the ball with saliva was first implemented. The ICC then decided to make the ban permanent in September 2022.

Shami has called on the ICC to immediately reevaluate their choice. Two former international bowlers, Tim Southee and Vernon Philander, support him as well because they believe that reverse swing is a crucial component of the game, particularly on batter-friendly surfaces.

"I think as a bowler, you want to have a slight advantage," Southee stated on ESPNcricinfo's Match Day, referring to the rule that was introduced during the global Covid pandemic. "In this format, we see the game progressing as it is, with teams scoring 362 and frequently surpassing 300. I don't see why the bowlers couldn't afford to get that back in, and I believe that something has to be in their favor, even if it's just a little saliva.

On Khelojito's Match Day, Southee stated, "I think as a bowler you want to have a slight advantage," referring to the rule that was introduced during the global Covid pandemic. "We observe that the game is proceeding as it is, with teams scoring 362 and, in this format, frequently surpassing 300. I believe that the bowlers must have something going for them, and if that's a little saliva, then I don't see why they couldn't afford to get that back in.

In the Champions Trophy semi-final matchup with New Zealand, Philander believed that South Africa may have benefited by the use of reverse swing and saliva, especially in the latter portion of the innings. In 50 overs, New Zealand scored 362 for 6.

"If we look at the condition of that ball, I mean toward the back end, it was really scuffed up, and I think the element of the reverse swing might have come into play had you used the saliva [to polish one side of the ball]," Philander remarked. "Therefore, it undoubtedly contributes. You may utilize the elements to swing it a little longer and make it glow.

"I believe that element is also necessary, thus I'd want to see it returned to the game. Particularly in ODI cricket, when we witness batsmen displaying incredible dominance, and

when you play on wickets like the one we recently witnessed in Pakistan, which is really batter-friendly."

Compared to white-ball cricket, Southee believed that red-ball cricket was significantly more affected by the use of saliva to polish one side of the ball and create reverse swing.

I believe that in white-ball cricket, the ball only swings for a few overs at first. However, you can bring it back with the red ball, and while sweat can occasionally be scarce in certain parts of the world, saliva is readily available from a variety of sources and everywhere in the world," he stated. "I believe that there is a benefit to having saliva on the ball, most likely in red-ball cricket as opposed to white-ball cricket.

Does polishing the ball with saliva rather than perspiration have any additional benefits?

"We always tried to keep the ball as dry as possible with the South African team," Philander remarked. "I believe you start soaking both sides of the ball the moment you start making mistakes on the side of perspiration. Playing in hot, muggy weather causes your hands to perspire.

The best way to shine the ball was undoubtedly with saliva. In the grand scheme of things, I would like to see that reinstated. In terms of perspiration, I do believe it might be challenging to regulate how much you perspire, particularly when you start perspiring visibly.