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# Pranavi stars; MacLaren, Hillier lead

GURUGRAM, PTI

**T**een amateur golfer Pranavi Urs nailed two late birdies to emerge as the best-placed Indian at tied-10th after the opening round of the Hero Women's Indian Open here on Thursday.

The 16-year-old from Mysore, a past winner on the domestic pro tour, brought home a card of one-under 71 at the DLF Golf and Country Club to lie four shots behind the two leaders – England's Meghan MacLaren and Whitney Hilliers of Australia.

Meghan and Whitney shared the lead at five-under 67.

Norwegian Marianne Skarpnord and England's Liz Young were tied third at four-under 68 each, while Swede Linda Wessberg (69) was fifth. Four players, including Europe's Solheim Cup-winning captain, Catriona Matthew, were tied-sixth on two-under 70 and another eight players shot 71s to be Tied-10th including Pranavi.

Adding to the action on the first day was Lucknow-based 19-year-old Jyotsana Singh, a late entrant, who aced the par-3 16th. She had an interesting finish – four bogeys between 13th and 18th with an ace in between on 16th for 73. She closed with two bogeys.

Among other Indians, Diksha Dagar and domestic tour regulars Amandeep Drall and Tvesa Malik were tied-18th after carding 72 each.

## Sandhu placed fourth

India's Ajeetesh Sandhu went on a birdie spree to turn in a four-under 68 and lie fourth after the opening round of the Mercuries Taiwan Masters in Tamsui on Thursday.

Sandhu, starting from the back nine, opened with a bogey but blasting five birdies on the trot from 13th to 17th to turn in four-under.

On the second nine – the front side of the Taiwan Golf and Country Club

course, he had nine pars to total 68. Philippines' Miguel Tabuena and Malaysia's Nicholas Fung, who are sharing a room this week, returned matching five-under 67s to be tied for the first round lead with South Africa's Keith Horne.

Among other Indians, S Chikkarangappa was Tied-8th with 70, while Aman Raj and Khalin Joshi shot 71 each to T-17, Rashid Khan, Chiragh Kumar, Viraj Madappa and Abhijit Chadha carded 72 each and were T-30th.

Aadil Bedi (74) was T-59th, Shiv Kapur (75) was T-79 and Jeev Milkha Singh (76) was T-90.