

# India to take on Syria in Mandiri U-20 Challenge Series opener

**PTI, SIDOAJO (Indonesia):** The India U-20 men's team will begin their campaign in the Mandiri U-20 Challenge Series, a four-nation friendly tournament, against Syria, here, on Friday.

Head coach Biby Thomas and his 23-member squad of youngsters, consisting mainly of U-17 and U-18 players, arrived in their team hotel in the city of Surabaya on Wednesday and held their first training session in the evening at the Gelora 10 November Stadium.

India will meet Jordan on January 27 and hosts Indonesia on January 30.

It is obvious that the tournament will be a mountain to climb for the Blue Colts, who are the youngest outfit among the four participating teams.

Syria, Jordan and Indonesia are using these friendlies to prepare for next month's AFC U20 Asian Cup with 2005-born players.

Thomas has 2007 and 2008-born players at his disposal for the Indonesia tour. This batch is preparing for the SAFF U-19 Championship to be held from May 8 to 18, 2025.

But there's no lack of international experience in the Indian team.

A dozen of the 23 were part of the India U-17 squad that won the SAFF U-17 Championship 2024 in Bhutan and narrowly missed their spot in the AFC U-17 Asian Cup in the qualifiers in Thailand last year.

Midfielder Gurnaj Singh Grewal, at 18, is the oldest member of the squad, and Malemngamba Singh Thokchom represented India at the AFC U-17 Asian Cup in 2023 and the SAFF U-20 Championship last year.

Thokchom also played the AFC U-20 Asian Cup Qualifiers.

On the other hand, there

are a few names who have been included in the national team for the first time - defender Afinmon Baiju, goalkeeper Alsabith Sulaiman Thekkakaramel, midfielder Jajo Prashan and forward Sujin S.

Syria have arrived in Indonesia in good form. They sealed qualification for the AFC U-20 Asian Cup with four wins in four - beating Bangladesh 4-0, Bhutan 1-0, Guam 10-1 and Vietnam 1-0.

Ahead of the Mandiri U-20 Challenge Series, Syria played three friendly matches in Qatar against the hosts, Yemen and Uzbekistan, drawing 0-0 in all three.

# Yash crowned Category C champ

## Joshua secures 2nd place; Joy clinches 3rd spot

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**PANJIM:** Yash Manoj Upadhye (FIDE Rating 1696, Goa) emerged champion in the Category C of late Shri Manohar Parrikar 3rd Goa International Open Grandmaster Chess Tournament 2025, scoring an outstanding 9 points.

Joshua Mark Telles (FIDE Rating 1692, Goa), a promising U-11 player, secured second place with 8 points, while Joy Kakodkar (FIDE Rating 1681, Goa) claimed the third spot with the same score. Rudresh Fadte (FIDE Rating 1637, Goa) finished fourth, also with 8 points.

The tournament which concluded at the Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Indoor Stadium, Taleigao, recently, was organised by the Goa Chess Association under the aegis of All India Chess Federation (AICF). The top four prize winners were awarded cash prizes of Rs 1.35 lakh, Rs 1.05 lakh, Rs 90,000 and Rs 80,000 respectively, from a total Category C prize purse of Rs 13 lakh. Union Minister of State Shripad Naik, Minister of Sports and Youth Affairs Govind Gaude, AICF



The winners along with Union Minister of State Shripad Naik, Minister of Sports and Youth Affairs Govind Gaude, AICF Treasurer Dharmendra Kumar and Goa Chess Association President Mahesh Candolkar, Secretary Ashesh Keni, Treasurer Vishwas Pilankar, Vice-President Arvind Mhamal and other dignitaries at the Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Indoor Stadium, Taleigao, recently

Treasurer Dharmendra Kumar and Goa Chess Association officials, including President Mahesh Candolkar, Secretary Ashesh Keni, Treasurer Vishwas Pilankar, and Vice President Arvind Mhamal were present at the closing ceremony.

9 points, Joshua Telles (1692, Goa, U-11) 8 points, Joy Kakodkar (1681, Goa) 8 points, Rudresh Fadte (1637, Goa) 8 points, Aarav Shah (1630, Gujarat, U-13) 8 points, Vansh Rasik Gala (1619, Maharashtra) 8 points, Prakhari Raj (1571,

points, Pratih Raj (1628, West Bengal) 7.5 points, Aleksandr Rakhmatullin (Russia) 7.5 points.

Following Goa players were awarded special prizes across various categories: Best Goan player: Aarth Karapurkar (1st), Raposo Maxwell (2nd), and Chopdekar Aarav (3rd).

Best female player: Sanvi Gaonkar (2nd). Age categories: U-15 girls: Vaishnavi Parab (1st), Shivalli Gandhi (2nd). U-13 boys: Atharva Borkar (2nd). U-13 girls: AFM Diya Sawal (1st), Tanisha Dessai (2nd). U-11 girls: Skyla Rodrigues (1st), Avani Sawaikar (3rd). U-9 girls: Duple Vaibhav (1st), Dacunha Sidonia (2nd), Amaira Borkar (3rd).

# Hyderabad gain 3 pts

**(Agencies)HYDERABAD:** Hyderabad FC moved past Jamshedpur FC 3-2 in the Indian Super League match played at the GMC Balayogi Athletic Stadium, here, on Thursday.

After scoring first and then conceding twice, the home side struck the back of the net twice in a short passage of play in the second half to clinch all three points from this match, where they held 54.1 per cent of the possession and took four shots on target.

This was their first win in nine games and break their four game losing streak

against Jamshedpur FC. Hyderabad FC will play their next game against NorthEast United FC on January 29, whereas Jamshedpur FC will be facing off against Punjab FC on January 28.

**RESULT**  
**Hyderabad FC 3**  
**(Muhammed Rafi 12', Joseph Sunny 69', Andrei Alba 74') Jamshedpur FC 2**  
**(Javi Hernandez 24' 28')**

**ISL FIXTURE**  
**Kerala Blasters FC vs East Bengal FC at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan, Kolkata, at 7.30 pm**

# Fr Agnelo YSC to meet Curtorim Gym in final

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**RAIA:** Fr Agnelo YSC, Paroda, downed Mandopa Sports Club 3-0 in the semi-final to march into the final of Simon Barreto Memorial inter-village football tournament organised by Maina Sports Club at the DYSA ground, Curtorim, on Thursday.

Fr Agnelo YSC drew the first blood in the 14th minute through a powerful header from Regan Costa and remained 1-0 lead till

the half time.

As the match progressed in the second half, Rohan Pereira, Ronaldo Pereira and Meliston Dias played major role to keep Mandopa SC in the game but the luck did not favour them and Fr Agnelo YSC scored another two goals through Kanchan Kiro and Bradley Carvalho in the 52nd and 55th minute of play.

Fr Agnelo YSC will meet Curtorim Gymkhana in the final on Republic Day, January 26, at 4.30 pm.



The Shotokan Karate-Do Japan Federation-India (SKJFI) karate school, Margao, students secured 38 medals - 12 gold, 15 silver and 11 bronze - at the 5th SCKFI International Karate Championship Kata and Kumite events, held at Manohar Parrikar Indoor Stadium Hall, Navelim, recently. The winners include Eesha Shirwaikar, Arushi Jamuni, Ridhima Naik, Apoorva Amonkar, Kanishka Velip, Amy Fernandes, Shreeya Prabhudessai, Triveni Naik, Nidhi Gaonkar, Srisha Shirodkar, Anvi Pandrekar, Pihika Salkar, Shrihan Prabhudessai, Tanay Timani, Bhargav Popker, Shivam Chauhan, Aditya Hegde, Ilhan Mirza, Manjit Sakappanavar and Taksheet Korgaonkar. All students were trained under SKJFI Chief Instructor of Goa Sensei Gaurish Dabholkar (Blackbelt 6th Dan)

# Laziz CQS start campaign with 2-wkt win

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**PANJIM:** Laziz CQS registered a thrilling two-wicket victory over Sinq Rangers UC in the Alcon GSB Unity Cup T20 Cricket Tournament organised by the Goa GSB Sports and Charitable Trust in association with Goa Saraswat Samaj.

The match held at the MCC ground, Margao, saw exceptional performances from both sides.

Batting first, Sinq Rangers UC posted a competitive total of 157 for 9 in 20 overs,

with skipper Samrudh Bharme leading the charge, scoring 29 runs. Other notable contributions came from Annish Kaakode (25), Gaurav Gaitonde (20), Sahil Adwalpalkar (20), and Sanat Mhapne (20). Laziz CQS's bowler Deep Bhende delivered an outstanding spell, picking up 3 wickets for 26 runs and was well-supported by Nikhil Virginkar and Vasant Karmali, who claimed a wicket each.

In reply, Laziz CQS chased down the target with three

balls to spare, scoring 158 for 8 in 19.3 overs. Rauji Kakodkar guided the team to victory with an unbeaten 33 off just 18 balls. Deep Bhende contributed a vital 30 runs, while Nikhil Virginkar (25) and Balkrishna Hodarkar (22) added crucial runs. Sinq's bowlers fought hard, with Tunish Sawkar and Sanat Mhapne taking 2 wickets each, but it wasn't enough to stop Laziz CQS. For his exceptional all-round performance, Deep Bhende was adjudged the

man-of-the-match.

Brief scores: Sinq Rangers UC: 157 for 9 in 20 overs (Samrudh Bharme 29, Annish Kaakode 25, Gaurav Gaitonde 20, Sahil Adwalpalkar 20, Sanat Mhapne 20; Deep Bhende 3-26, Nikhil Virginkar 1-23, Vasant Karmali 1-30, Sarvesh Sinari 1-23, Ishan Hodarkar 1-31). Laziz CQS: 158 for 8 in 19.3 overs (Rauji Kakodkar 33\*, Deep Bhende 30, Nikhil Virginkar 25, Balkrishna Hodarkar 22; Tunish Sawkar 2-24, Sanat Mhapne 2-25, Annish Kaakode 2-31, Gaurav Gaitonde 1-29).

# Ilhas Veterans in final

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**PANJIM:** Ilhas Veterans needed the tie-breaker to put it across Calangute Veterans 5-4 to enter the final of All Goa veterans football tournament organised by Mix Friends of Santa Cruz, at Santa Cruz ground, on Thursday.

The teams were locked 1-1 at the end of regulation time. Calangute Veterans took the lead through

Eddie Fernandes, only for Francis Dias to equalise and take the match into the tie-breaker.

In the resultant tie-breaker, Nevil, Benny, Martin and Govind were on target for Ilhas, while Alwyn, Marcus and Raymond converted their penalties for Calangute.

Ilhas will now meet the winners of the second semi-final between Fatorda Veterans and Vasco Veterans.

# TODAY'S SPORTS

**GFA U-17 Division I-League:** Guardian Angel SC vs South Goa United CS & C Betalbatim ground, 3.45 pm

**All Goa Volleyball tournament (2nd semi-final):** United Friends Colony, Sattari, vs Sai Krupa, Usgao, at Manora ground, 8.30 pm

**Mix Friends Veterans soccer (semis):** Fatorda Veterans vs Vasco Veterans, at Santa Cruz ground, 4.30 pm

# Priority Titans, Vimson Panjim Powerplay register victories

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**PANJIM:** Priority Titans cruised into the semi-finals of Rajdeep Builders Sarsangan Super Series Cricket 2024-25 defeating Ultracon Madgaon Royals by 4 wickets and 15 balls to spare at Arlem ground.



In the second match, Vimson Panjim Powerplay cruised past 108 Delite Titans by 5 wickets and 19 balls to spare.

Put into bat, the Ultracon Madgaon Royals opens put on a 66 run stand in 7 overs with the skipper Damodar Pai Patnekar making 35 and Vishwesh Kamat making 38. Kartik Hattangadi (11) and Megh Netravalkar 35 put on 39 runs in 30 balls for the 3rd wicket and with useful contributions from Nikit Naik Dalal (14 no) and Prashel Kamat (19), Royals put up a formidable 169-5 in 20 overs.

Sudin Kamat with 2-27 was supported by Animesh Prabhugaonkar and Rauji Kakodkar who picked a wicket each.

In reply, Priority Titans were helped by Sudin Kamat's (14), Adv Sahish Mahabrey's 29 and Samar Dubhashi's 22 as they reached 59-3 in 8th over. Granthik Buyag 35 tilted the scales in favour of the Priority Titans with an aggressive innings and took the game away in the company of the south paw Sunil Salgaonkar 28 no with



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**SARSANGAN SUPER SERIES CRICKET**

Rauji Kakodkar completing the formalities making 16, helping Priority Titans reach the semi-finals with a game to spare. Siddesh Desai, Sandesh Kamat Bambolkar, Kartik Hattangadi, Megh Netravalkar, Nikit Naik Dalal and Shaunit Sawardekar picked a wicket each.

Madgaon Royals chances of making it to the semi-finals depend upon the outcomes of other matches.

In another match, electing to bat first, 108 Delite Titans put up a mammoth

Pai Kuchelkar 26 sealed the victory with a 38-run stand in only 20 balls, as they reached 176-5 in 16.5 overs. Ashay Ambe and Amogh Agshikar picked 2 wickets each, while Viraj Purnanik took a wicket. Both the teams have no chance of making it to the knockouts.

The crucial matches which will decide the semi-final spots will be played on February 2, between the DNS/VMJ's Rookies, who will take on the Mapusa Dream Crushers, while Commonwealth Fountainheads will face Desserts n More Avengers.

# GOA DIARY

**Hockey selection trials on Jan 25 at Peddem**

**PANJIM:** Goa Hockey will conduct hockey selection trials to select teams for the 15th Hockey India National Championship for Senior Men, Senior Women and Junior Women on January 25, at astro turf ground, Peddem, Mapusa, at 3.50 pm. Interested players should report to Canon Fernandes, at the venue, along with playing kit and copy of Aadhaar Card.

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