

sportspopup

No Pakistan representation at CT presentation ceremony irks host PCB

**KARACHI:** The ICC's failure to invite a Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) official on stage for the closing ceremony of the Champions Trophy has not gone down well with the tournament host. A source said that the PCB's chief executive officer Sumair Ahmed, who was also the director of the tournament, was present at the venue but was not invited for the ceremony. Pakistan hosted an ICC event after 29 years with all India games scheduled in Dubai as part of the competition's hybrid model. "PCB chairman Mohsin Naqvi didn't go to Dubai because of prior commitments as federal minister for interior but the PCB CEO was sent to represent Pakistan at the final and closing presentation," the source said.

It required lot of preparation: Rahul after excelling in new role

**DUBAI:** KL Rahul is delighted after successfully migrating to No. 6 batting slot, and termed it as a result of his unrelenting "preparation" and improving his game constantly. Rahul, who usually bat No. 5, was pushed down a position lower in the Champions Trophy, and made 140 runs in four innings here. "It's really pleasing for me. The work that I'm putting in to different roles requires a lot of preparation, work outside the cricket field, thinking about how I need to take each game and how I need to perform in different situations and watch some of the players that bat at 5, 6 and how they've been successful," said Rahul following India's Champions Trophy triumph. Rahul said he was happy to take up that new responsibility for the team.

Commonwealth Games Federation changes its name to Commonwealth Sport

**LONDON:** The Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) on Monday changed its name to Commonwealth Sport, saying it was a transition from being a governing body to becoming a "movement". The decision to change its name was announced on the occasion of Commonwealth Day -- March 10. "From Commonwealth Day 2025 onwards, the Commonwealth Games Federation will be known as Commonwealth Sport," the governing body of the Commonwealth Games and Commonwealth Youth Games said in a media release. "The Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) is changing its public brand name to Commonwealth Sport. This brand development signifies the organisation's transition from a 'Sports Federation' to a 'Sports Movement'," it added. Commonwealth Sport CEO Katie Sadleir said, "The brand name Commonwealth Sport demonstrates a stronger, more unified purpose that resonates with our audience on a deeper level."

Toss-up between Axar and Rahul for Delhi Capitals captaincy

**NEW DELHI:** Leading all-rounder Axar Patel and senior keeper-batter KL Rahul are the two contenders for Delhi Capitals captaincy in the upcoming Indian Premier League season with the multi-skilled Gujarat man having his nose slightly ahead. It is understood that the franchise bigwigs will be announcing the name of their new captain in the next few days, having waited for the Champions Trophy to end. Delhi Capitals will have a short training-cum-simulation camp in Delhi before flying to Visakhapatnam for their first two games. Axar, Rahul, Kuldeep Yadav, South Africa's Tristan Stubbs, Australian Jake Fraser-McGurk and Mitchell Starc are set to gather in Visakhapatnam on March 17 and 18. With Rahul and wife Athiya Shetty expecting their first baby, the senior player could miss a game or two depending on the due date. Into his seventh season with the Capitals, looks a more likely candidate to lead the team than Rahul, who will be donning the Delhi blues for the first time. However, Rahul has been an IPL captain for some years now and has led Punjab Kings and Lucknow Super Giants in the past.

Swiatek, Medvedev sprint into Indian Wells fourth round

**INDIAN WELLS:** Defending champion Iga Swiatek edged closer to an unprecedented third Indian Wells WTA title Sunday, overwhelming Dayana Yastremska 6-0, 6-2 to reach the fourth round. Swiatek's 65-minute victory set the tone on a day that saw Daniil Medvedev spend just 10 minutes on court before ailing opponent Alex Michelsen retired. Swiatek, the World No. 2 two from Poland, was in full control against hard-hitting Ukrainian Yastremska, swinging freely as she won the first 10 games. She converted six of her 11 break chances and didn't face a break point herself. It was all but over by the time Yastremska got on the board by winning her last two service games. Swiatek next faces Czech Karolina Muchova, who trailed 3-5 in the first set but won 10 of the next 11 games to beat compatriot Katerina Siniakova 7-5, 6-1. Russian 17-year-old Mirra Andreeva and 2023 Indian Wells champion Elena Rybakina joined Swiatek in dishing out bagels as they lined up a fourth-round clash. Andreeva needed 63 minutes to beat Denmark's Clara Tauson 6-3, 6-0 in a rematch of the Dubai final. Rybakina downed Britain's Katie Boulter 6-0, 7-5.

Real Madrid capitalise as Atletico stumble in Liga title race

**MADRID:** Kylian Mbappe and Vinicius Junior were both on target for Real Madrid as they beat Rayo Vallecano 2-1 on Sunday to pull level with La Liga leaders Barcelona. Real Madrid rose one point above Atletico Madrid who suffered a surprise 2-1 defeat to Getafe earlier, while Barca's match on Saturday against Osasuna was postponed because of the death of one of the Catalan club's doctors. Atletico, now third, seemed on course for a narrow win against Getafe until Angel Correa's red card left them exposed in the final stages. Diego Simeone's side, second, would have gone top with a victory and Alexander Sorloth struck from the penalty spot after 75 minutes. Spanish La Liga results: Getafe 2 (Arambarri 88, 90+2) Atletico Madrid 1 (Sorloth 75-pen), Real Madrid 2 (Mbappe 30, Vinicius 34) Rayo Vallecano 1 (Diaz 45+2), Athletic Bilbao 1 (Nico Williams 58) Real Mallorca 3 (Raiello 56), Real Betis 1 (Llorente 65) Las Palmas 0, Real Sociedad 0 Sevilla 1 (Ejike 46). Saturday: Celta Vigo 2 (Mingueza 26, Gonzalez 45+1) Leganes 1 (Rosier 19), Alaves 1 (Sanchez 11) Villarreal 0, Valencia 2 (Lopez 7, Sadiq 58) Valladolid 1 (Latasa 40), Barcelona vs Osasuna - postponed.

Arsenal held by Man Utd in latest blow to Premier League title bid

**MANCHESTER:** Declan Rice's equaliser denied Manchester United boss Ruben Amorim a much-needed win but Arsenal's faltering Premier League title challenge suffered another damaging blow in a 1-1 draw at Old Trafford on Sunday. The Gunners sit 15 points behind runaway leaders Liverpool, now with just one game in hand, with their focus beginning to turn to holding off the chasing pack for a place in next season's Champions League. English Premier League results: Chelsea 1 (Cucurella 60) Leicester 0, Manchester United 1 (Fernandes 45+2) Arsenal 1 (Rice 74), Tottenham 2 (Sarr 67, Son 84-pen) Bournemouth 2 (Tavernier 42, Evanilson 65).

# 2027 World Cup: It wouldn't be fair for me to think too far ahead, says Rohit

**PTI, DUBAI:** He is not retiring from ODI cricket anytime soon but Rohit Sharma also doesn't want to look too far ahead and commit to playing the 2027 World Cup, the only among three white-ball ICC silverware missing from his cabinet.

While speaking to 'JioHotstar', the Indian skipper was non-committal on playing the next big ICC 50-over tournament, in South Africa. "Right now, I am taking things as they come. It wouldn't be fair for me to think too far ahead. At this moment, my focus is on playing well and maintaining the right mindset. I don't want to draw any lines and say whether I will or won't play in the 2027 World Cup. There's no point in making such statements right now," Rohit said after the final.

"Realistically, I have always taken my career one step at a time. I don't like thinking too far into the future, and I haven't done so in the past either. For now, I am enjoying my cricket and the time I spend with this team. I hope my teammates enjoy my presence as well. That's all that matters at this point."

Talking about his lasting legacy, Rohit said he has always wanted to build an Indian team that is never taken lightly by the opposition.

"I don't want to dictate how other teams should perceive us. The only thing I want is for them to never take us lightly. Even if we are

five wickets down, we have the ability to fight back and turn the game around."

"Until the last ball of the match is bowled, our opponents should always feel the pressure of playing against us. Similarly, when we bowl, this team never gives up. That is the kind of legacy we want to create and leave behind."

He also said that after Jasprit Bumrah was ruled out of the Champions Trophy, his main goal was to get a fully-fit Mohammed Shami, who has always been phenomenal at ICC events.

"We already had a sense that his (Bumrah) recovery might not be in time for the Cham- pions

Trophy. Given the nature of his injury and the fact that he is a fast bowler with a long career ahead, we had to be cautious."

After it became clear that Shami was available for the England white-ball series, Rohit heaved a sigh of relief.

"It was always going to be a challenge, but having Mohammed Shami in the team was crucial. We needed to ensure he was at peak fitness because his record in ICC tournaments is exceptional."

"Looking back at past World Cups, Shami has consistently delivered outstanding performances in ICC events."

"So, when he played those two matches against England, we gained confidence that even in Bumrah's absence, we had a strong alternative," he said.



Right now, I am taking things as they come. It wouldn't be fair for me to think too far ahead. At this moment, my focus is on playing well and maintaining the right mindset. I don't want to draw any lines and say whether I will or won't play in the Cup. There's no point in making such statements right now. Realistically, I have always taken my career one step at a time. I don't like thinking too far

future  
—Rohit Sharma,  
India skipper

## We learned from past defeats: Kohli

**PTI, DUBAI:** Superstar Virat Kohli says lessons learned from tough defeats in past ICC knockout games have paved the way for India's second major title in less than 12 months.

India won the T20 World Cup in June last year and on Sunday, they lifted the Champions Trophy for the third time.

It was a total team effort from Rohit Sharma's men over the course of their campaign in the UAE.

"It's been a long time since we've had a Champions Trophy, and the format is really good. This was our aim. After a tough tour of Australia, we came here and won a big tournament, which has once again boosted our confidence as a team," Kohli told the host broadcaster.

"Throughout the tour-

ament, different players stepped up in different matches. There were moments in past tournaments where we weren't able to finish games or capitalise on crucial situations. But this time, we learned from those experiences."

The experience of Rohit and K L Rahul towards the end got India over the line in the final against New Zealand.

"That's why you back experienced players - they have faced these moments before, and when you apply those learnings and work hard, you get a chance to turn things around," Kohli said.

"The way KL (Rahul) finished in the last two matches is a testament to that experience. When you've been in those situations before and couldn't cross the line, there's always a desire

to get another opportunity and overcome it. And that's exactly what we did."

India were by far the best team in the combination. They picked as many as five spinners and that worked well for them on the slow wickets of Dubai. In the playing eleven, India had four spin options.

"One thing we kept emphasising throughout the tournament was focusing on our skills - how good we are, not how good the opposition is. Despite all the challenges, this is why you play the game - for these big tournaments."

"Winning four ICC titles is truly a blessing, and I consider myself very lucky to have played for so long and achieved this," said Kohli, who was also part of the victorious 2011 ODI World Cup squad and 2013 Champions Trophy outfit.

## Sesa FA, Clube de Salgaocar play goalless draw

### Dempo SC secure a 2-1 win over Cortalim Villagers

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**MAPUSA:** Sesa FA and Clube de Salgaocar were locked in a goalless draw in the Goa Professional League Super League match played at Duler Stadium, here, on Monday.

Both the teams knowing each other's style of play, the teams' defenders gave very little space for the strikers to have a good look at their goal.

Sesa FA with 28 points and Clube de Salgaocar with 27 points did come earnestly into the match to return home with a win but managed to add a point to their kitty.

In the closing period of the regulation time, Sesa FA almost scored. Substitute Omkar Shetgaonkar darted inside the 18-yard box and after dribbling past the defence placed the ball towards the goal only to find

Clube de Salgaocar's custodian Sanij Bugde retreat and gather the ball.

In another match, Dempo SC secured a 2-1 victory over Cortalim Villagers at Nagoa ground, with a late penalty sealing the deal.

Dempo SC took control early, breaking the deadlock in the 27th minute. Beck-

ham sliced through Cortalim Villagers' defence with a perfectly timed through ball to Velanco, who squared it across the box for Salgaeo Dias to slot home with a clinical low finish.

The Golden Eagles continued to press and nearly doubled their lead when Aryan Poll threaded a precise pass to Dias inside the box, but the forward's strike sailed just wide.

Cortalim Villagers came out firing after the break and

found their equaliser in style. Ronil Vaz's pinpoint free-kick into the danger zone was met by Velroy Carvalho, who nodded it down for Jaison Vaz. Without hesitation, Jaison struck a stunning first-time half-volley past the keeper, restoring parity.

Dempo SC pushed forward in search of a winner and came agonisingly close when Murphy dispossessed Pushkar and teed up Shreyash Naik, whose thunderous shot rattled the crossbar. But the breakthrough arrived in the dying moments.

A curling corner from Topon Minj found Pratik Naik, whose header struck a defender's hand, prompting the referee to point to the spot. Sairon Albuquerque stepped up and coolly dispatched the penalty, sealing all three points for Dempo SC.

GOA PRO LEAGUE

TODAY'S SPORTS

**GFA Futsal League:** Enfermos SC vs Verna Cultural & Sports Association, at Manohar Parrikar Indoor Stadium, Navelim, 6 pm. Ponda Footballers vs CDJ Ribandar, 7 pm

**GFA U-19 Division I League:** Sesa FA vs Sporting Clube de Goa, at Sirsaim ground, 4 pm. FC Goa vs Dempo SC, at Guirim ground, 4 pm

**10th Fatorda Veterans football:** Lavina Veterans vs Football Mogi Veterans, at Don Bosco ground, Fatorda, 4.30 pm

**Benaulim constituency youth football:** Orlim Youth vs Cavellossim Youth, at Varca ground, 4 pm

**14th Wilred Leisure Soccer Cup:** Raia Sporting Club vs Benifica Youth Club, at the DSYA ground, Curtorim, 4.30 pm

## Edger sends Margao SC in quarter-finals

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WILRED LEISURE SOCCER CUP

**RAIA:** Margao Sports Club secured a hard-fought 1-0 win over Uguem Rising Club to move into the quarter-finals of 14th Wilred Leisure Soccer Cup 2025 played at the DSYA ground, Curtorim, on Monday.

The all-important goal came in the 12th minute of play through Edger Noronha for Margao SC.

Uguem Rising Club got

a golden opportunity to equalise in form of penalty kick when their player Jacec D'Costa brought down by Margao SC goalkeeper Karol Soares and penalty shot was wasted by Macson D'Costa.

Edger Noronha of Margao SC was awarded the man-of-the-match by Sandip Verlekar, club member.



Edger Noronha of Margao SC receives the man-of-the-match from Sandip Verlekar, club member

## Mohammedan rally to hold Punjab FC 2-2

**AGENCIES, KOLKATA:** Mohammedan SC came from behind to hold Punjab FC to a 2-2 draw in the Indian Super League match played at the Kishore Bharati Krirangan, Kolkata, on Monday.

Both teams have thus rounded off their campaigns in the competition this season, with Mohammedan SC having 13 points from 24 games, being unable to secure a home win throughout and Punjab FC bagging 28 points on the back of eight victories and four draws. The Kolkata-based team, trailing by two goals at one point, produced a laudable outing in the second half to bag the draw.

Both Punjab FC and Mohammedan SC season comes to an end.

**RESULT**  
Mohammedan SC 2 (Marc Schermböck 58', Robi Hansda 66') Punjab FC 2 (Ezequiel Vidal 9', Luka Majcen 53')

**ISL FIXTURE**  
Bengaluru FC vs Mumbai City FC at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium, Bengaluru, at 7.30 pm

## Salgaocar FC, YC Manora share spoils

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**RAIA:** Salgaocar FC held Youth Club of Manora to a 2-2 draw in the Goa Football Association U-13 Division I League match played at The King's School ground, Sao Jose de Areal, on Monday.

GFA LEAGUES

Naiden Braganza and Joseph Da Costa scored for Youth Club of Manora, while Snyder Gomes and substitute Abner Luis

scored for Salgaocar FC. Leticia stars for Union of Chinchim Villagers

Union of Chinchim Villagers booked their place into the final of Goa Football Association U-13 Girls tournament drubbing Laxmi Prasad SC 9-0 in the semi-final played at Sirsaim ground, on Monday.

The highlight of the match was a four-goal blitz from Leticia Monteiro with Joieila Rocha, Morenza Baretto, Risa Oliveira, Rida Jamada and Jenalee Gomes adding their names to the scorers' list.

GOA DIARY

Selection trials for tennis ball cricket

**PANJIM:** The Goa Tennis Ball Cricket Association will hold selection trials to select Goa sub-junior teams to participate in the 30th Sub-Junior (U-17) National Tennis Ball Cricket Championship for Boys and Girls scheduled from March 20 to April 23, at Barabanki, near Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. The selections will be held as per schedule: On March 15, at the DSYA ground, Kunkolim, Priol, at 3 pm. On March 16, at Panchayat ground, Borim-Ponda, at 3 pm. On March 17, at SAG ground, Campal-Panjim, at 3 pm. On March 18, at Tuem ground, Pernem, at 3 pm. On March 19, at panchayat ground, Cola-Canacona, at 3 pm. Interested players should report with a copy of Aadhaar Card, two photographs to Hareesh Parsekar or Ajinkya Naik or Nilesh Naik with a complete playing kit, at 2.45 pm.

**KALA ACADEMY GOA**  
50<sup>th</sup> TIATR 'A' GROUP COMPETITION - (2024-25)  
TODAY'S TIATR 11/03/2025  
**VAVTOLL**  
Pedro Vaz  
Institution:  
Taleigao Dramatic Troupe, Taleigao  
Venue:  
Dinanath Mangeshkar Kala Mandir, Panaji  
Time: 7.00 p.m.  
Tickets of Rs. 100/- available at the Venue