

sportspopup

**Axar to take over Delhi Capitals captaincy as Rahul declines to lead**

**NEW DELHI:** All-rounder Axar Patel is set to take over as captain of the Delhi Capitals for IPL 2025 after K L Rahul declined to lead the team. Rahul led Lucknow Super Giants in the last three IPL seasons before he was released ahead of last year's auction. Delhi Capitals, who released Rishabh Pant, bought Rahul for Rs 14 crores (Rs 140 million) at the IPL mega auction. 'The franchise had asked for K L Rahul to be the team's captain, but he very much wishes to contribute for the side as a player in the upcoming tournament,' sources told a news agency.

**Lakshya advances, Prannoy out of All England Championships**

**BIRMINGHAM:** India's Lakshya Sen fought his way back to reach the second round of the All England Championships on Tuesday, while compatriot HS Prannoy was eliminated in the opening round of the men's singles competition here. Lakshya, ranked 15th in the world, came from behind to defeat Chinese Taipei's world No. 37, SU Li Yang, with a 13-21, 21-17, 21-15 win in the opening round of the Super 1000 event. The 23-year-old from Almorá will face Indonesia's third seed Jonatan Christie next. Lakshya had defeated Christie en route to his fourth place finish at the Paris Olympics last year. Prannoy, a bronze medalist at the 2023 World Championships and Asian Games, struggled against France's Toma Junior Popov, who is ranked 17th. Prannoy fought for 53 minutes before going down 19-21, 16-21. In the mixed doubles, Sathish Kumar Karunakaran and Aadya Varyiyath had a tough outing against China's world No. 7 pair of Guo Xin Wa and Chen Fang Hui, losing 6-21, 15-21 in 51 minutes.

**Coach Yousuf withdraws from Pakistan team ahead of NZ tour**

**KARACHI:** Pakistan's batting coach Muhammad Yousuf has pulled out of the tour to New Zealand due to the illness of his daughter. Former captain Yousuf, who was appointed batting coach for the tour, informed the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) he was withdrawing. The PCB said no replacement would be announced for Yousuf as the team leaves for New Zealand on Wednesday. Yousuf was appointed batting coach for the tour comprising five T20 Internationals and three ODIs after Pakistan's winless campaign in the Champions Trophy. Yousuf was the only new addition to the support staff as the PCB retained Aaqib Javed as the interim head coach for the tour along with assistant coach Azhar Mahmood.

**Ronaldo scores to send Al-Nassr into AFC Champions League Elite quarters**

**RİYADH (Saudi Arabia):** Cristiano Ronaldo was on target as Saudi Arabia's Al-Nassr beat Iran's Esteghlal 3-0 to progress to the quarterfinals of the AFC Champions League Elite on Monday. Ronaldo, who has yet to win a trophy for Al-Nassr since signing for the Riyadh club in December 2022, missed the 0-0 draw in the first leg of the round of 16 tie in Tehran last week. After 26 minutes in the return match, the 40-year-old scored his seventh goal of the tournament, converting a penalty after Sadio Mane was fouled in the area. Earlier, Jhon Duran opened the scoring with a lob from the corner of the area. Esteghlal was reduced to 10 men just before the break when Mehran Ahmadi was issued a second yellow card. Al-Nassr, seeking a first Asian championship, added a third late in the game after Duran fired home a low shot for his second.

**Inter Milan midfielder Piotr Zielinski could be out for weeks with calf injury**

**MILAN:** Inter Milan midfielder Piotr Zielinski could be out for a few weeks with a calf strain. Zielinski is set to miss Tuesday's return game against Feyenoord in the Champions League round of 16 after he was injured on Saturday in a 3-2 win over Monza in Serie A. Zielinski came on as a substitute in the 70th minute but had to be helped off the field just three minutes later. The Polish midfielder strained the medial gastrocnemius muscle, part of his right calf, the club said on Monday. Zielinski has played 33 times for Inter in all competitions this season, scoring twice.

**Manchester United unveil 100,000-seat new stadium project**

**LONDON:** Manchester United on Tuesday announced plans to build a new 100,000-capacity stadium close to their historic Old Trafford home, which co-owner Jim Ratcliffe promised would be the "world's greatest" football ground. The momentous decision by the Premier League club comes after an extensive consultation process on whether to develop their creaking current ground or move. The stadium, which will be built on land surrounding Old Trafford, will cost around \$2.6 billion and the project timescale is five years. United, 20-time English league champions, are one of the world's most iconic football clubs but have fallen behind rivals such as Manchester City and Liverpool over the past decade.

**Hosts India drawn with Nepal, Lanka in SAFF U-19 Championship**

**NEW DELHI:** Hosts India were drawn alongside Nepal and Sri Lanka in Group B of the SAFF U-19 Championship 2025 in the draw conducted in Kathmandu on Tuesday. The Golden Jubilee Stadium in Yupia, Arunachal Pradesh, will host the third edition of the regional U19 men's tournament from May 9 to 18, 2025. The venue had also hosted the Santosh Trophy final round last year. Maldives, Bhutan and Bangladesh were drawn in Group A. For the draw, the teams were seeded in three pots based on the latest FIFA men's rankings as of December 2024. The top two teams from each group will qualify for the semi-finals that will be played on May 16. The final will take place on May 18. India are the defending champions, having beaten Pakistan 3-0 in the final of the 2023 edition held in Kathmandu. India's fixtures: May 9: Sri Lanka vs India; May 13: India vs Nepal; May 16: Semi-finals; May 18: Final.

**Neymar under fire for missing semis with Santos after celebrating Carnival**

**SAO PAULO:** Neymar's justification for missing a semi-final with Santos was criticized because he was seen at Carnival last week. Santos lost to arch rival Corinthians 2-1 on Sunday in the semifinals of the Sao Paulo state championship, and Neymar sat on the bench for all 90 minutes. On Monday, he said he had a minor injury without elaborating. Days earlier, the striker was photographed at Rio de Janeiro's Sambadrome, the venue for the glitzy Carnival parade. Neymar, who rejoined his boyhood club Santos in January, attended the Carnival parade only hours after being substituted in the second half of another Sao Paulo state championship match on March 2 because of an apparent left thigh injury. He recently recovered from an ACL tear that sidelined him for more than one year. Santos did not reveal Neymar had any injuries before Sunday's semi-final.

# Mumbai City FC seal playoff spot

**AGENCIES, BENGALURU:** Mumbai City FC qualified for the playoffs of the Indian Super League (ISL) 2024-25 with a 2-0 win against Bengaluru FC at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium tonight. The Islanders thus

Jorge Ortiz receiving a pass from Lallianzuala Chhangte inside the 18-yard box and rattling the crossbar with a left-footed shot.

The visitors threw bodies forward, with Nikolaos Karelis heading just past the post from the six-yard box. However, Karelis finally struck home with a slick pass for Chhangte in the penalty area, which the captain slotted from very close range into the middle of the net to open the scoring in the eighth minute with his right foot.

Bengaluru FC tried to execute a different strategy to equalise. Ryan Williams and Vinith Venkatesh pulled off shots from outside the box

INDIAN SUPER LEAGUE TABLE							
Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Mohun Bagan	24	17	5	2	47	16	56
FC Goa	24	14	6	4	43	27	48
NorthEast Utd	24	10	8	6	46	29	38
Bengaluru	24	11	5	8	40	31	38
Jamshedpur	24	12	2	10	37	43	38
Mumbai City	24	9	9	6	29	28	36
Odisha	24	8	9	7	44	37	33
Punjab FC	24	8	4	12	34	38	28
Kerala Blasters	23	8	4	11	32	36	28
East Bengal	24	8	4	12	27	33	28
Chennaiyin	24	7	6	11	34	39	27
Hyderabad	23	4	5	14	21	46	17

around the 28th minute mark, but the Islanders' regathered their shape to

block those efforts in time. Karelis showed impressive awareness to earn a

penalty with his fleet footedness, and stepped up to convert the spot-kick with a strike into the bottom right corner in the 37th minute to double the advantage.

Chhangte and Ortiz connected in the final third again in the 56th minute, with the former supplying a probing delivery that the Spaniard tried to deposit into the net from close distance, but to no avail.

Sunil Chhetri undertook the responsibility to claw the Blues back into the encounter, barging into the Mumbai City FC box and laying up a headed pass for Edgar Mendez, which was struck slightly past the right post in the

**TODAY'S FIXTURE**

**Hyderabad FC vs Kerala Blasters FC,** at the GMC Balayogi Athletic Stadium, Hyderabad, at 7:30 pm

67th minute.

Chhangte kept hitting back, donning a free-flowing role wherein he was both the creator of chances and also assumed the responsibility to try and hammer those opportunities.

In the 79th minute, he trusted Vikram Partap Singh to try his luck from distance but the attacker's shot was saved on the top right corner. The team still walked away with three points, securing a spot in the top-six eventually.

**GFA's boys U-19 league: Dempo walk past FC Goa**

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**MAPUSA:** Dempo SC had an easy outing as they trounced FC Goa by 4-1 margin in the GFA's Boys U-19 league, played at Guirim ground, on Tuesday.

Dempo went into the breather with Murphy Fernandes put his team ahead in the 14th minute of play with a neat placement 1-0.

On crossing ends Macnelle Dias doubled Dempo's lead, with Murphy Fernandes netting his brace and Swavel Furtado pumping in his teams fourth goal.

FC Goa managed to net their consolation goal in the 87th minute through the boots of Shawn Fernandes.

**Sporting Club move into quarters**

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**RAIA:** Sporting Club defeated Benfica Youth Club, Vasco, 3-1, to move into the quarter-final of 14th Wilred Leisure Soccer Cup 2025, played at DSYA ground, Curtorim, on Tuesday.

Allen Dias, Sweden Barboosa and Silvano Oliveira netted a goal each for Raia sporting Club in the 4th and 33rd minute. Later, Benfica Youth Club pulled a goal back in the 54th minutes through Jaison Vaz.

**Lavina Veterans storm into semi-final**

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**RAIA:** Lavina Veterans outplayed Football Mogi Veterans, 6-1, to enter into the semi-finals of 10th Fatorda Veterans Football tournament, at Don Bosco ground, Fatorda, on Tuesday.

Eddy Fernandes scored a brace for Fatorda Veterans while Presley Pereira, Pascoal Soares, Remy Colaco and Caji Fernandes scored one goal each and Peter Fernandes scored the lone goal for Football Mogi Veterans.

Eddy Fernandes of Lavina Veterans awarded man-of-the-match by Mahesh Kamble.

**GOA DIARY**

**Selection trials for Dream Sports C'ship 2025 girls' U-17 tournament**

**PANJIM:** The Goa Football Association will be conducting selection trials of Goa team due to take part in the Dream Sports Championship 2025 - Girls' U-17 All-India Football Tournament, organised by Dream Sports Foundation and approved by AIFF, from April 8 to 16, in Goa. Players born between January 1, 2008 and December 31, 2009 may attend the Trials as below: March 12 and 13, at GFA Stadium, Duler-Mapusa for North Goa and March 15 and 16, at Rosary Church ground, Navelim. Players should come with full playing kit at 3.30 pm, at the venue and report to Coach Maymol Rocky.

**All-Goa veteran football from March 20**

**RAIA:** Flame of Unity Sports Club will be organising their 21st all-Goa veteran football tournament starting from March 20, at Mabai ground, Per-Seraulim. Interested teams may contact sports secretary Crescencio Furtado.

**TODAY'S SPORTS**

**GFA Futsal League:** Margao SC vs St Sebastiao YC, at 6 pm; Futebol Club YFA vs Parish Yiuth Nuvem, at 7 pm; UC Verna vs Ambelim SC, at 8 pm. All matches at Manohar Parrikar Indoor Stadium, Navelim ground  
**Benaullim constituency youth football tournament:** USC Seraulim Youth v Carmona Youth, at Varca ground, at 4 pm  
**14th Wilred Leisure Soccer Cup 2025:** Sao Jose de Areal v Navelim VU, at DSYA ground, Curtorim, at 4.30 pm

## Priority Titans clinch Sarsangan super series title

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**MARGAO:** Priority Titans defeated Desserts n More Avengers by 21 runs in a thrilling final to claim the Sarsangan Super Series Cricket Championship, played at Arlem Cricket ground. Aditya Prabhugaonkar was named player of the series.

Batting first, the Titans lost captain Sudin Kamat early, but Deval Karmali (39) and Sahish Mahambrey (19) steadied the innings with a 44-run stand. Samar Dubhashi's explosive 40 off 17 balls, alongside Granthik Buyao (19), propelled them to 123-2 at the halfway mark. However, Avengers fought back, reducing Titans to 144-6 in the 15th over. A crucial unbeaten 33 from Sunil Salgaonkar and a late cameo from Akshay Dalvi (13 not out) lifted the Titans to 191-6 in



20 overs. Aditya Dalal (2-20) led the bowling attack, with Sankalp Bhat, Samrudh Hegde Desai, and Sagar Salgaonkar picking up a wicket each.

In response, Sachin Bhandare (38) and Sanat Prabhudesai (37) gave Avengers a flying start, adding 74 in six overs. However, quick wickets, including Animesh Prab-

hugaonkar's crucial breakthrough, turned the game. Captain Siddhesh Prabhu Alvenkar's 33 off 17 balls kept Avengers in the hunt, taking them to 170 in the 19th over, needing 22 from the final nine balls.

With momentum swinging, Granthik Buyao delivered a match-winning hattrick, bun-

dling Avengers out for 170 and sealing the Titans' 21-run victory. Buyao finished with 3-33, supported by Prabhugaonkar, Salgaonkar, Dubhashi, Kakodkar, and Divekar, who took a wicket each.

Chief guest Digambar Kamat, ex-chief minister and MLA, presented the awards alongside Goa ex-Ranji crick-

**INDIVIDUAL HONOURS**

**Man of the finals:** Granthik Buyao & Sunil Salgaonkar (joint winners)  
**Best batter:** Samar Dubhashi  
**Best bowler:** Aditya Dalal  
**Best batter (tournament):** Damodar Pai Patnekar  
**Best bowler (tournament):** Animesh Prabhugaonkar  
**Best wicketkeeper:** Laxmikant Kurade  
**Best fielder:** Pranav Kamat  
**Emerging player:** Saish Hegde

**Orlim Youth advance**

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**RAIA:** Orlim Youth defeated Cavellissim Youth, 2-0, and moved into the next round of the Benaullim constituency youth football tournament, at Varca ground, on Tuesday. Orlim Youth dominated proceedings from the start.

Orlim youth netted a goal each through Mackin and Jouston.

**RCB deny MI direct entry into final with win**

**Delhi Capitals through to title clash**

**PTI, MUMBAI:** Defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru ended an otherwise disappointing season on a positive note, denying Mumbai Indians a direct entry into the final of the Women's Premier League (WPL) with an 11-run win here on Tuesday.

**WPL**

The result helped table toppers Delhi Capitals secure a direct berth in the final of the competition, which will be held here on March 15, while MI will take on Gujarat Giants in the eliminator on March 13 at the same venue. DC have now entered the summit clash for the third consecutive time and would hope that coveted title doesn't elude them.

Batting first, RCB rode on skipper Smriti Mandhana's 37-ball 53 and useful contributions from Ellyse Perry (49 off 38 balls), Richa Ghosh (36 off 22) and Georgia Wareham (31 off 10) to post a commanding 199 for three.

In reply, MI were stopped at 188 for nine. Both MI and DC finished the league engagements with five wins each, but the latter had better net run rate.

Sajevan Sajana raised MI hopes with a 12-ball 23 before perishing to Perry. MI were off to a disastrous start as they slipped to 38 for two in the sixth over. Nat Sciver-Brunt, however, kept them afloat until she was caught and bowled by Perry for a 35-ball 69.

As far as RCB bowling is concerned, all-rounder Sneha Rana bowled his off-breaks effectively to finish with excellent figures of 3/26 in four overs, while Georgia Wareham (1/29 in 4) was also impressive with the ball.

Kim Garth picked up two wickets for 33 runs as RCB emerged victorious. Earlier, RCB were off to a flying start with the opening duo of skipper Mandhana and Sabbhini Meghana putting on 41 runs in quick time before the latter got out while going for one too many.

**Newcastle sink West Ham to boost top 4 bid**

**AFP, LONDON:** Newcastle reignited their bid to qualify for the Champions League as Bruno Guimaraes sealed a controversial 1-0 win at West Ham on Monday.

Brazil midfielder Guimaraes struck in the second half as West Ham's claims for a foul in the build-up were ignored.

**EPL**

Eddie Howe's side are up to sixth place in the Premier League, level on points with fifth-placed Manchester City and two points behind fourth-placed Chelsea. A top four berth will guarantee Newcastle return to the Champions League after missing out this season.

Even finishing fifth could be enough to ensure qualification for Europe's elite club competition depending on the results of the remaining English clubs in continental action. After losing three of their last four matches, the Magpies' restorative victory was perfectly timed ahead of their second League Cup final appearance in three seasons.

**Maradona medical team on trial four years after icon's death**

**AFP, BUENOS AIRES:** Seven medical professionals who cared for Argentine football legend Diego Maradona during his final days go on trial Tuesday accused of criminal negligence over his death.

Maradona died on November 25, 2020 aged 60 while recovering from brain surgery for a blood clot, after decades battling cocaine and alcohol addictions.

Each defendant risks between eight and 25 years in prison if convicted of "homicide with possible intent" -- allegedly for pursuing a course of action despite knowing it could lead to the footballer's death.

More than 100 witnesses, including members of Maradona's family and doctors who tended to him over the years, are expected to take the stand in the long-delayed trial in the Buenos Aires suburb of San Isidro.

The hearings are expected to run until July. Maradona was found dead in bed two weeks after going under the knife,

in a rented house in an exclusive Buenos Aires neighborhood where he was brought after being discharged from hospital. He was found to have died of a heart attack.

**TICKETS ON SALE**  
**PRINCE JACOB**  
75th BIRTH ANNIVERSARY  
PRODUCTION PRESENTS  
TIATR  
**SANT PADRE PIO**  
SUNDAY  
**23rd MAR.**  
**3:30 PM**  
**RAVINDRA BHAVAN**  
**MARGAO**

**LAST 2 SHOWS AT MARGAO**  
**14th MAR. 2025 AT 7.30 P.M.**  
**AT PAI T. HALL PUBLIC HOLIDAY**  
**15th MAR. 2025 AT 3.30 P.M.**  
**AT PAI T. HALL**  
**LAST SHOW AT PANJIM**  
**16th MAR. 2025 AT 3.30 P.M.**  
**AT KALA ACAD.**  
**BOOKING STARTED**