

sportspopup

Cricketer dies after collapsing on field during club match

ADELAIDE: Junail Zafar Khan, a club-level Pakistan-origin cricketer, has died after collapsing on the ground during a local match played in extreme heat at the Concordia College here. In his 40s, Khan was representing Old Concordians Cricket Club in a match against Prince Alfred Old Collegians last Saturday, news.com.au reported. After fielding for 40 overs and batting for seven, Khan collapsed around 4 pm Australian Central Daylight Time (ACDT). South Australia has been in the grip of extreme heat over and according to data from the Bureau of Meteorology, temperatures here were still above 40 degrees Celsius at the time. Adelaide Turf Cricket Association rules state that games are cancelled if the temperature climbs above 42 degrees Celsius. "We are deeply saddened by the passing of a valued member of the Old Concordians Cricket Club, who tragically suffered a medical episode while playing on the Concordia College oval today," Khan's club said in a statement.

Samson joins RR practice session after recovering from finger injury

JAIPUR: Rajasthan Royals skipper Sanju Samson has joined his IPL team after completing his recovery from a finger surgery he underwent last month. The 30-year-old cricketer, who finished his rehabilitation at the Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru, attended the Royals' first practice session on Monday ahead of the upcoming season. Samson had suffered the injury after being struck by a bouncer from Jofra Archer during India's five-match T20I series against England. Following the injury, he underwent surgery to treat the damaged finger. "Straight from the airport to our first practice match to making everyone smile like he does!," RR said in a post on 'X'.

Messi out injured as Argentina seek to seal World Cup place

BUENOS AIRES: Lionel Messi will miss Argentina's World Cup qualifiers against Uruguay and Brazil over the next eight days because of an injury to his adductor. The 37-year-old Messi was not included in the 25-man squad announced on Monday by coach Lionel Scaloni. Later Monday, Inter Miami said Messi — the reigning Major League Soccer MVP — underwent an MRI "to assess the extent of the discomfort in his adductor region," an injury that the team said occurred in Sunday's win over Atlanta United.

BFI suspends secretary general Kalita for financial irregularities

NEW DELHI: Boxing Federation of India secretary general Hemanta Kalita was suspended on Tuesday after being found guilty of 'financial irregularities' in an investigation and his nomination for the president's post in the upcoming election was also rejected on a day of dramatic developments in the BFI. Treasurer Digvijay Singh was also suspended on similar charges after an inquiry conducted by former Delhi High Court judge Sudhir Kumar Jain. Jain was appointed by the BFI to carry out the investigation. The inquiry followed a complaint accusing the two of unauthorised fund withdrawals, fraudulent billing, and abuse of power, which PTI had reported last month.

Djokovic player union launches legal blitz against governing bodies

PARIS: A tennis union co-founded by Novak Djokovic on Tuesday announced a series of legal actions aimed at the sport's governing bodies, alleging "anticompetitive restraints and abusive practices". The Professional Tennis Players' Association (PTPA) said it was suing the Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP), Women's Tennis Association (WTA), International Tennis Federation (ITF), and International Tennis Integrity Agency (ITIA) in a series of actions in the United States, United Kingdom and the European Union. The PTPA was set up by Djokovic and Canadian Vasek Pospisil in 2020. Some 20 players were named as part of at least one of the actions. "The lawsuits expose systemic abuse, anti-competitive practices, and a blatant disregard for player welfare that have persisted for decades," said the PTPA statement.

T20: Big-hitting New Zealand crush Pakistan by 5 wickets for 2-0 lead

DUNEDIN: New Zealand's openers went on a six-hitting blitz on Tuesday to thrash Pakistan by five wickets and go 2-0 up in their Twenty20 series. The home side reached 137-5 with 11 balls to spare in Dunedin to take control of the five-match series after Pakistan posted 135-9 off 15 overs in a rain-reduced second match. New Zealand's highlight was a ferocious opening stand between Tim Seifert and Finn Allen in which seven of the first eight scoring shots were sixes. Four New Zealand wickets fell in the space of four overs midway through the chase before Mitchell Hay's unbeaten 21 made the outcome safe. Earlier, captain Salman Agha top-scored with 46 off 28 balls, launching a recovery after Pakistan were sent in and lost opener Hasan Nawaz without scoring for the second time in the series. They were 19-2 in the fourth over before the skipper embarked on a knock that featured four fours and three sixes.

Marquez: The mastermind behind ISL's turnarounds

Team Herald sports@herald-goa.com

PANJIM: Few head coaches in the history of the Indian Super League (ISL) have demonstrated the consistency and tactical brilliance of Manolo Marquez. Since his arrival in India, the Spanish tactician—who also leads the Indian national team—has transformed struggling teams into title contenders, making the playoffs in four of his five seasons in the league.

Whether at Hyderabad FC or his current stint with FC Goa, Marquez has repeatedly delivered success, often exceeding expectations.

Marquez took charge of Hyderabad FC ahead of the 2020-21 season when they had just finished bottom of the table. Under his guidance, the team staged a remarkable turnaround, finishing fifth and suffering the joint-fewest losses (3). They also boasted

the third-best defence, conceding just 19 goals in 20 matches.

His impact grew stronger the following season as Hyderabad FC finished second in the standings with 11 wins and just four defeats in 20 matches. Their attack flourished, scoring 43 goals while maintaining defensive discipline. Their campaign ended in triumph as they won the ISL Cup, defeating



Mohun Bagan SG in the semi-finals before overcoming Kerala Blasters FC in the final—securing the club's first-ever silverware.

In 2022-23, Hyderabad FC remained a force to reckon with, finishing second again and narrowly missing out on the League Shield, just four points behind Mumbai City FC. They recorded 13 wins in 20 matches and conceded the fewest goals (16) that season. However, their campaign ended in heartbreak, losing on penalties to Mohun Bagan SG in the semi-finals.

Following Marquez's departure in 2023, Hyderabad FC struggled to maintain their level, finishing bottom in the 2023-24 season and failing to reach the playoffs since. After three successful years at

Hyderabad, Marquez took over at FC Goa in 2023-24, with the club having failed to make the playoffs since 2020-21. He quickly turned things around, leading them to a third-place finish with 13 wins and just three defeats in 22 matches. Goa topped the table for most of the season but narrowly missed out on the League Shield, finishing three points behind Mohun Bagan SG.

Despite a strong league run, their playoff campaign ended in disappointment, as they squandered a 2-0 first-leg lead and lost both semi-final ties to Mumbai City FC. However, Marquez had once again taken a struggling side and transformed them into contenders within a single season.

The ongoing 2024-25 season has further cemented his reputation. Despite a slow start, with just one win in six matches, FC Goa bounced back with a sensational 12-game unbeaten streak. With 21 matches played, they sit

Dempo SC take on Churchill Bros in Goan Derby

Team Herald sports@herald-goa.com

MARGAO: Dempo SC are set to lock horns with Churchill Brothers in the Goan Derby at the Nehru stadium, Fatorda, at 4.30 pm, in their I-League 2024-25 encounter on Wednesday.

The Golden Eagles are riding high on confidence after an emphatic 8-1 demolition of SC Bengaluru. Trinidadian forward Marcus Joseph stole the

show with a hat-trick, while Holicharan Narzary, Ignacio Mera, Damian, Hayden Hoble, and Lukman Adefemi all got their names on the scoresheet. SC Bengaluru's Henry Kisseka managed to grab a consolation goal, but the contest was long settled in Dempo's favour.

Dempo head coach Samir Naik reflected on his side's form and growing belief. "The mood in the camp has always been good, but now

the boys are even more confident. We had a few foreign players join us late, but now the team is gelling well. It's a completely different side now, and we have plenty of options," he stated.

Meanwhile, Churchill Brothers arrive with momentum of their own after thrashing an eight-man Shillong Lajong



PREVIEW

6-1. Sebastian Gutierrez led the charge with a hat-trick, while Matar Dieye and Cédric Lekay also found the net. An own goal from Shillong's Ranit Sarkar compounded their misery, with

Rudwere grabbing a late consolation for the visitors. Looking ahead to the crucial derby, Naik ac-

knowledged the challenge ahead. "We are ready, but this is a big test for us. It's a crucial match for both clubs," he said. The Dempo boss also confirmed a near-full squad at his disposal. "All our foreign players are fit, though we have two injuries. But we have solid replacements," he added.

In the league standings, Churchill Brothers sit comfortably at the top with 34 points from 18 matches,

while Dempo SC, currently ninth, have accumulated 22 points from the same number of games.

Naik also had a message for Dempo's supporters, urging them to turn up in numbers. "We've seen great support at Raia, but we need the fans at Fatorda. Churchill fans will be there, and we don't want this to feel like an away game. This is the real Goan Derby—it's going to be massive," he signed off.

Areal advance to semis after penalty shootout victory

Team Herald sports@herald-goa.com

RAIA: Sao Jose de Areal edged past United Sports Club Seraulim, 5-3, in a penalty shootout to secure their place in the semi-

WILRED LEISURE SOCCER CUP

nals of the 14th Wilred Leisure Soccer Cup 2025, at DSYA ground, Curtorim, on Wednesday.

Both teams fought hard but failed to break the deadlock in regulation

time, leading to a tense penalty decider.

In the shootout, Areal converted all five spot-kicks through Bersal Viegas, Stalen Colaco, Mohammad Mansoori, Aryan Carvalho, and Dyrall Costa. Seraulim managed to score through Ashley Fernandes, Sandip Shante, and Oliver D'Souza, but fell short as Areal held their nerve.

Sao Jose de Areal's Mohammad Mansoori was named man-of-the-match, receiving the award from Yogesh Velip.

Ambelim SC emerge champs



GFA Futsal league 2024-25 champions, Ambelim SC along with GFA President Caetano Fernandes and other executive members

Team Herald sports@herald-goa.com

RAIA: Ambelim Sports Club easily outwitted Ponda Footballers, 9-1, to emerge champions of the GFA Futsal league, at Manohar Parrikar indoor stadium, Na-

velim, on Tuesday.

Fredson Marshall scored a brace while Ozen Silva, Crossley Luis, Savan Lotlikar, Michael Silva, Ronaldo Pereira and Lyndon Cardozo scored a goal each for Ambelim SC. The only goal for Ponda Footballers was scored by Relino Salvador Carvalho.

FC Goa trounce South Goa Utd

Team Herald sports@herald-goa.com

MAPUSA: FC Goa trounced South Goa United Club by 4-0 margin in the GFA's Boys U-17 league, played at Field of Dreams Guirim, on Tuesday.

GFA'S BOYS U-17 1ST DIV LEAGUE

Young Gaurs lads scored two goals in each session of play.

Sangam opened the scoring in the 15th minute with a header while Tanish added the second goal just before the break on entering the 18-yard box from the left flank and placing the ball past the rival goalkeeper 2-0.

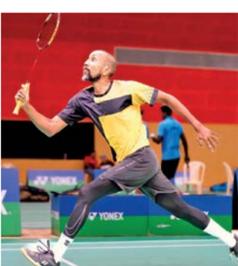
Josley scored a brace in the second half in the 58th and 65th minute.

Today's win secures 3 points for FC Goa and maintains their lead at the top of the table.

Goa's Sandhya, Leena, Betty, Govind storm into pre-quarters

Team Herald sports@herald-goa.com

PEDEDEM: Goa's seasoned badminton stars put up stellar performances on Day 3 of the 47th Indian Masters National Badminton Championship 2025, with former State champions Sandhya Melasheemi, Leena Pednekar



Goa's Sandhya Melasheemi and Govind Navelkar (right) in action at the Indian Masters National Badminton Championship

INDIAN MASTERS NAT BADMINTON

alias Dhapre, making their way into the round of 16 in their respective categories. Sandhya [1] displayed dominance in the women's singles 40+, securing a 21-11, 21-9 win over Mansi Kohli (Delhi). Leena cruised past Saji Nair (Chhattisgarh) 21-4, 21-2, while Betty Dourado (Goa) overcame a stiff challenge from Kavitha M. (Tamil Nadu) 21-13, 21-18 to book her spot in the next round. In a thrilling men's singles 45+ Round

of 32 match, Govind Navelkar (Goa) showed great resilience to defeat Vijayakanna Degala (RBI) 18-21, 21-6, 21-12, setting up an exciting Round of 16 clash against former India international Abhinav Shyam Gupta (Uttar Pradesh) [1], who breezed past Kamalakannan Venkateshan (Tamil Nadu) 21-4, 21-5.

Among other significant results, Saurav Kapoor (RBI) edged past Nalin Dinesh (Gujarat) [15] in a gripping three-game contest 21-10,

21-23, 21-19 in the men's singles 35+ category. In the men's doubles 50+, Shrikant Bakshi and Navdeep Singh (Delhi/PNB) [2] delivered a strong performance, defeating Yogesh KB and Kirankumar Madival (Karnataka) 21-19, 21-9. Another exciting doubles match saw Gurdeep Singh Arora and Manish Bhati (Maharashtra) get the better of Goa's Mahesh Pauskar and Kishore Raghunath 21-19, 21-15. In the men's singles 40+ round of 32, Krishna T

(CAG) secured a convincing 21-12, 21-10 victory over Madhu K (RBI), while top-seed Mayank Behal (PNB) [1] survived a scare against Nigel D'Sa (Maharashtra) before prevailing 21-13, 20-22, 21-19.

Goa's representation in the men's singles 50+ category saw Dr Sandeep Fowker (Goa) defeat Rahul Sharma (RBI) [14] 21-8, 21-8, and Sandip Kanji (Goa) outplay Sankaraiiah Pogula (Telangana) 21-17, 21-11, both advancing to the round of 32.

In another doubles encounter, former India stars Sunil Gladson and Vijay Lancy Mascarenhas (Karnataka) [1] dominated S Bodiga and A Gude (Andhra Pradesh) to enter the men's doubles 45+ round of 16, while Amrith Shinde and Jaison Xavier (Gujarat/Kerala) down Surender Kumar and Virender Kumar (Haryana) to move into men's doubles 50+ round of 16.

Veterans football at Santa Cruz

PANJIM: The Santa Cruz Panchayat Cup Veterans Football Tournament will kick off at the Santa Cruz ground from April 1. Cash prizes of Rs 50,000 and Rs 40,000 will be awarded to the winners and runners-up respectively. Players above the age of 50 are eligible to participate. No entry fee will be charged. Teams interested in participation may contact Nevil Araujo or Domnic Araujo.

TODAY'S SPORTS

I-League: Dempo SC vs Churchill Brothers FC at the Nehru stadium, Fatorda, at 4.30 pm

Goa Professional League (Super League): Geno FC vs FC Goa, at Duler stadium, Mapusa, at 4 pm

GFA U-19 Division I League: Sesa FA vs Dempo, at Sirsaim ground, at 4 pm

14th Wilred Leisure Cup: Raia Sporting Club vs Velsao Sports and Culture Club, at DSYA ground, Curtorim, at 4.45 pm

10th Fatorda Veterans football tournament (2nd semi-final): Lavina Veterans Fatorda vs Nuvem Veterans, at Don Bosco ground, Fatorda, at 4.45 pm

All eyes on Chhetri as India face Maldives

PTI, SHILLONG: The returning Sunil Chhetri will be the cynosure of all eyes as India face Maldives in an international friendly here on Wednesday, at 7 pm, the match serving as a dress rehearsal for the all-important AFC Asian Cup qualifier against Bangladesh at the same venue in less than a week's time.

The 40-year-old Chhetri came out of his internation-

al retirement earlier this month to help the team successfully navigate the qualifiers for the continent's top football tournament, starting with the March 25 clash.

The preparatory match for Manolo Marquez's side marks a historic moment as the Blue Tigers will play in the football-crazy hill town for the first time.

It will also be India's all-time top scorer Chhetri's

first match since announcing his return to international football.

In the pre-match press conference on Tuesday, Marquez said, "It is the first time we are playing here, but I have worked with a lot of coaches and players from here. I knew it's a very nice place."

"I remember when I watched the Durand Cup in Shillong last year, I said,

'Wow, the ground, crowd, atmosphere, everything is nice.' I'm not joking, I said it'd be great if one day, the national team could play here."

For Marquez, his first competitive match since becoming India's head coach in July 2024 is a week away, and the friendly presents a great opportunity to fine-tune his team before the crucial fixture.

TIATR ACADEMY OF GOA In Collaboration With Organises Popular Tiatr Festival 2025 It's Today on 19th March 2025 Free Mukutt Sorgincho Pascoal D'Costa D'Costa Production, Carmona At Ravindra Bhavan, Curchorem at 4.00 pm

TOMORROW LAST SHOW AT MARGAO 20th MAR. 2025 AT 7.30 P.M. AT PATI HALL BOOK YOUR SEATS BEFORE IT'S HOUSEFUL YET AGAIN TIME TO SAY GOODBYE