

sportspopup

Treesa-Gayatri pair enters quarters of Swiss Open; Srikanth, Rajawat ousted

BASEL: India's top women's doubles pair of Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand entered the quarter-finals of the Swiss Open Badminton Championship with a straight-game victory over Germany's Amelie Lehmann and Selin Hubsch. The Indian pair won fairly easily with the scoreline reading 21-12, 21-8. In the men's singles second round, Toma Popov beat India's Priyanshu Rajawat 21-15, 21-17 in 47 minutes. Srikanth Kidambi, who reached round two by defeating compatriot HS Prannoy however meekly surrendered to China's world No 6 Li Shi Feng 15-21, 11-21 in less than 40 minutes.

No match bans for IPL captains for over-rate offences

NEW DELHI: Captains in the Indian Premier League will not be banned for over-rate offences and instead will be docked demerit points. The call was taken at the captains' meeting in Mumbai on Thursday. The move comes after Hardik Pandya and Rishabh Pant, captaining Mumbai Indians and Delhi Capitals respectively, were handed a one match ban for the team's third over-rate offence in the 2024 edition. Hardik will be serving that ban in the 2025 edition by missing the first game against CSK.

India submits bid to host 2030 CWG: sports ministry source

NEW DELHI: India has submitted its bid to host the 2030 Commonwealth Games in Gujarat, a top sports ministry source told PTI on Thursday. The last date to submit the 'Expression of Interest' to host the Games was March 31 and India's letter was sent by the Indian Olympic Association a few days ago. "Yes, it is true, India's bid has been submitted by the IOA and the state of Gujarat," the source stated. This was after sports minister Mansukh Mandaviya recently asserted that the country was interested in hosting the Games. India, which last hosted the CWG in 2010, is also aiming to host the 2036 Olympics.

KKR-LSG clash on April 6 set to be shifted to Guwahati for lack of security arrangements

KOLKATA: Kolkata Knight Riders' home game against Lucknow Super Giants on April 6 is set to be shifted to Guwahati as police has expressed its inability to provide security for the IPL contest due to 'Ram Navami' celebrations in the city on the day, CAB president Snehashish Ganguly told PTI on Thursday. BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari had announced that over 20,000 processions are being organised across West Bengal to celebrate the festival. "We have informed the BCCI to reschedule the match, but there is no scope for rescheduling the game in the city later and I'm now hearing that it's going to be shifted to Guwahati," Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) President Ganguly told PTI.

Riyan to lead RR in first 3 IPL games; regular skipper Samson's role limited by injury

NEW DELHI: Rising star Riyan Parag will lead Rajasthan Royals in their first three IPL games as regular captain Sanju Samson has been told to avoid wicket-keeping duties by the BCCI due to a finger surgery, which means that he will only be available as a batter in these games. Samson's finger was fractured after a Jofra Archer delivery hit him during the T20 International against England in Mumbai, following which he had to undergo a minor surgery last month. While he has been cleared to bat, it is understood that medical and sports science teams have told to give his fingers some more rest before he starts keeping wickets. Therefore, the 23-year-old Parag will have the distinction of being one of the youngest captains in IPL. Virat Kohli holds the top position in that list having captained Royal Challengers Bengaluru as a 22-year-old.

Raia SC in semis

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RAIA: Raia Sporting Club marched into the semi-finals of the 14th Wilred Leisure Soccer Cup 2025 defeating Velsao Sports and Cultural Club 6-5 via tie-breaker in the quarter-finals played at the DSYA ground, Curtorim.



Velroy Borges of Raia was awarded the man-of-the-match award

WILRED LEISURE CUP

Velroy Borges of Raia Sporting Club opened the account in the 8th minute of play and Velsao SCC had to wait until the 34th minute to find the equaliser through Agnelo D'Souza. Both the teams remained 1-1 draw till the final whis-

tle of the regulation time. In the tie-breaker that followed, Raia SC scored through Achilles Fernandes, Roy Colaco, Sanjiro Pango, Joswell Cardozo and Jack Medeira, while for Velsao SCC Aaron Fernandes, Melwyn Gama, Alerico Cardozo and Domnic Soares were on target.

FC Goa semi-final tickets go on sale from today

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PANJIM: FC Goa's remarkable ISL 2024-25 campaign has been one for the history books, with the team finishing second with a club-record 48 points in 24 matches - their highest tally ever for a single league season.

The Gaurs also reclaimed the top spot in the all-time ISL standings, scored in 23 consecutive matches, and secured their 8th semi-final appearance in 11 seasons, a testament to their consistency and excellence. These achievements are not just for the club but for all of Goa - a State with a rich footballing legacy - to take pride in. As the team prepares for another crucial battle at Fatorda, FC Goa are also ensuring its most loyal supporters, the season ticket holders, get the recognition

they deserve. The validity of season tickets has been extended to include the semi-final match, granting holders free entry for the all-important clash.

Their faith and confidence in the team from the very start have further been honoured with exclusive first-day access to more semi-final tickets starting at 3 pm on Friday, March 21, allowing them to secure seats for their friends and family. Ticket sales will open to the general public at 12 pm on Saturday, March 22, with the team hoping that a full house at Fatorda will welcome them on Sunday, April 6, when they play the all-important clash. FC Goa's tickets for the ISL semi-finals can be purchased online at Insider.in, via the 'District by Zomato' app, or at the Club's Box Office, Fatorda.

Sporting Clube hold Diamond Harbour FC to a 1-1 draw

HERALD PIC



Sporting Clube de Goa and Diamond Harbour FC players vie for the ball at the Bambolim Athletics Stadium, on Thursday

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PANJIM: Sporting Clube de Goa maintained their unbeaten run at home with a 1-1 draw against Diamond Harbour FC in the I-League 2 match played at the Bambolim Athletics Stadium, on Thursday.

As a result, Sporting Clube de Goa move to 19 points from eleven matches, while DHFC increase their tally to 24 points from 10 matches.

Sporting Clube's captain Dattaraj Gaonkar fired in the equaliser leveling the score after Joyner Lourenco's own goal put Diamond Harbour FC ahead.

Sporting Clube conceded early in the game when a brilliantly executed short

corner took a strong deflection off Joyner and went into the own net.

Sporting Clube had a chance to equalise when Dattaraj set up Ronaldo, but the last named fired his shot over the crossbar. Later, Naocha set up a beautiful pass at the face of the Diamond Harbour FC

I-LEAGUE 2

goal, but no Sporting Clube players were inside the box. However at the half hour mark, Kunal set in a precise cross in the area to Dattaraj, who controlled the ball and placed his shot past the keeper, 1-1.

Sporting Clube's Abhimanyu produced a fine save just before the break to deny Diamond Harbour

FC's Naro. Abhimanyu came with a fine save to deny Diamond Harbour FC's Jobby and defensively Myron stood tall for Sporting Clube as the scores remained level at the break.

In the 72nd minute, Diamond Harbour FC were reduced to 10 men after Robilal Mandi was shown his second yellow following his tackle on Biswa. Substitute Haokip had a couple of chances for Sporting Clube but both his attempts were easily collected by the keeper.

Later in the stoppage time, Sporting Clube had the best chance when Joyson Gaunkar was set through on goal, but his shot from the narrow angle was straight to the goalkeeper.

St Savio's SC collect full points

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MAPUSA/RAIA: St Savio's SC, Calangute, managed to edge past Santa Cruz of Cavellossim by 2-1 margin in the inaugural match of the Goa Football Association's Division I League match played at Poriat ground, Calangute, on Thursday.

GFA DIV I LEAGUE

Cyprian Rodrigues scored a goal in each session of play for St Savio's SC side. Melson Fernandes managed to level terms for Santa Cruz of Cavellossim in the 34th minute of play with a neat placement.

However on crossing ends, St Savio's SC exert-

ed tremendous pressure on the rival citadel and managed to score in the 74th minute once again through Cyprian Rodrigues to make it 2-1.

At Santa Cruz ground, Clube Sao Minguel de Taleigao drubbed Nuvem SC by 4-0 margin.

At Guirim ground, Candolim SC downed Youth Club of Manora 3-0.

Cuncolim Union defeated Associacao Academica de Moira 2-1 at the Rosary ground, Navelim. Cuncolim Union netted through Wilson Fernandes in the 37th minute but the joy was short-lived as Noel Franco D'Silva equalised for Associacao Academica de Moira in the 52nd minute. It was substitute MD Shajahan who doubled the lead in the 87th minute.

TODAY'S SPORTS

Goa Professional League (Relegation League): Calangute Association vs Churchill Brothers FC, at Duler Stadium, Mapusa. Guardian Angel SC vs Panjim Footballers, at Nagoa Panchayat ground. Kick off 4 pm

GFA U-17 Division I League: Sesa FA vs South Goa United CS&C, at Sirsaim ground. Sporting Clube de Goa vs FC Goa, at Santa Cruz ground. Kick off 4 pm

GFA Division I League (Group B): Goa Velha SC vs Chapora Yuvak Sangh, at Guirim ground. Sao Jose De Areal SC vs Young Boys of Tonca, at Navelim ground. Pilerne SC vs Albert Developers SC, at Poriat ground, Calangute. Kick off 4 pm

Dempo SC trounce Goa Police

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MAPUSA: Dempo Sports Club had an easy outing as they fired 5-0 past Goa Police SC in the Goa Professional Super League match played at Duler Stadium, here, on Thursday.

From Thursday's win Dempo SC climbs to top GPL spot with 38 points from 17 matches, while Goa Police stays on 19 points from 15 matches.

Goa Police playing their second Super League match did start brightly and almost scored in the

very second minute where a free-kick by striker Kunal Salgaonkar was brilliantly saved by Dempo SC's custodian U-21 Myrick Hilario.

Dempo SC's development squad under the guidance of head coach Remus Gomes started with nine U-21

GOA PROFESSIONAL SUPER LEAGUE

players who did not let him down to find medio U-21 Salgo Dias score two outstanding goals in the 14th and 26th minute of play.

The first goal by darting inside the 18-yard box and finishing with a curling

left footer and the second collecting a through pass from Jordon Borges then dribbled past a host of rival defenders and placing the ball into the goal, past the onrushing goalkeeper, 2-0.

Earlier in the match, Goa Police goalkeeper Saiesh

meleu 3-0. Just five minutes into the second session and Dempo SC fired two quick goals through defender Rahul Rodrigues (54th minute) and Mevan Dias (55th minute).

After 30 minutes of midfield tussle in the 85th minute, Dempo SC's Aryan Poll was thwarted by Goa Police custodian in one to one situation while at the other end a minute later Goa Police had just one glorious chance to score their consolation goal but substitute Kishan Kavlekar saw his tap off a deadly cross by Sunny Fernandes land into rival goalkeepers gloves.

AWES sports veterans festival on March 22

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PANJIM: The Association for the Well-being of Elder Sportspeople (AWES) will hold its annual sports festival, get-together and felicitation of elderly sportspeople on March 22, at Sinquetim Sports Complex, Sinquetim-Navelim, at 7 pm.

The annual get-together of veteran sportspeople, powered by Sesa-Vedanta, will see former players, officials and administrators come under one roof to celebrate sports during an evening of fellowship and nostalgia.

AWES will hold a felicitation to recognise the special achievements

of Armando Colaco, the first Goan to win the Dronacharya Award; Digambar Kamat, first Goan to be elected to the World Aquatic Bureau, and Marcus Mergulhao, the first Goan to win the Press Council of India's National Award for Excellence in Journalism.

As in the past, the organisation will also felicitate former sportspeople, officials and administrators who have contributed significantly towards the development of sports in Goa. These include Dilip Salgaonkar (sports promoter), Anil Madgavkar (Olympics sports), Rosephyl Menezes, Michael D'Sa (badminton champions), Vero Nunes, Subhash Pandit (table tennis champions), Perpetua Jacques, Shripad Kundaikar

(both athletics), Adv Daniel Rodrigues, Avelino Pereira (both volleyball), Jovito Lopes (administration/sports journalism), Tommy Menezes (hockey), Vishnu Mahale (water polo/swimming), Luis Fernandes (basketball), Bernard Pereira, Bento Endro, Peter Valles, Oscar Rebelo, David D'Souza, Milagres Tereza, Gregory Estrochio, Domingos Barreto, Fr Eremita Coutinho (all football players and officials). Sports Minister Govind Gaunde will be the chief guest.

AIFF exploring policies to bring OCI players into National team: Chaubey

PTI, NEW DELHI: The All India Football Federation President Kalyan Chaubey on Thursday said they are actively working on policies to integrate Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) players into the national team setup, acknowledging the ongoing struggle to find a top-quality striker.

He also described the move could be a potential "game-changer" for Indian football.

One of the biggest challenges for Indian football remains the lack of a reliable striker, with the national team still dependent on 40-year-old forward Sunil Chhetri.

Chhetri on Wednesday came out of retirement to score in a 3-0 win over Maldives in a crucial AFC Asian Cup Qualifier buildup in Shillong -- it marked India's first win in 489 days. "We are making efforts to create a policy framework that allows us to utilise the talent of overseas Indian-origin (OCA) players," Chaubey told PTI on the sidelines of the Khelo India Para

Games 2025 here. "Many countries have already done this, and until we establish clear guidelines, our national team selection will continue to follow existing rules. However, we must recognise that integrating these players could be a game-changer for Indian football."

Highlighting India's over-reliance on Chhetri, Chaubey said: "At present, we are depending on a single player like Sunil Chhetri in crucial moments. The question remains -- who will take his place? We need a long-term plan to develop Indian strikers, especially for the No. 9 and No. 10 positions."

"Currently, most clubs prefer foreign strikers in these roles, which hampers the growth of Indian forwards. Our aim is to change that by creating better pathways for our players," he added. He also hailed Chhetri's fine comeback. "Sunil Chhetri has been an inspiration for millions and a true leader on and off the field. His dedication and commitment

to Indian football have set a benchmark for future generations. We are incredibly proud of everything he has achieved."

FIFA regulations mandate that a player must hold a permanent international passport of the country they represent, with clear details of their name, date of birth, place of birth, and nationality.

Nations such as South Africa, the United Kingdom, the United States, Brazil, France, and Australia recognise dual citizenship, enabling athletes with such status to represent their countries in international sports. However, India does not recognise dual citizenship. This means that a sportsperson must renounce their current citizenship and obtain Indian citizenship to be eligible for national team selection. In 2013, Izumi Arata had given up his Japanese passport to play for India. Former India head coach Igor Stimac had strongly advocated for the inclusion of talented OCI players competing in renowned leagues worldwide.

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