

IPL suspended amid Indo-Pak tensions

BCCI says further updates of new schedule and venues will be announced in due course after a comprehensive assessment of the situation in consultation with relevant authorities and stakeholders

PTI, NEW DELHI: The Indian Premier League (IPL) was on Friday suspended because of the deepening military confrontation between India and Pakistan with the BCCI saying that national interest trumps other considerations at a time when the country is responding to a terror attack and unwarranted aggression from across the border.

A cloud of uncertainty had loomed over the future of the ongoing edition since the cancellation of Thursday's match between Punjab Kings and Delhi Capitals in Dharamsala midway following air raid alerts in neighbouring cities of Jammu and Pathankot.

"The BCCI has decided to suspend the remainder of the ongoing IPL with immediate effect for one week," BCCI Secretary Devajit Sai-

kia stated in a press release, after early information from the Board suggested that the suspension was indefinite.

"Further updates regarding the new schedule and venues of the tournament will be announced in due course after a comprehensive assessment of the situation in consultation with relevant authorities and stakeholders," it added.

The high-profile league was to wind up on May 25 in Kolkata as per the original schedule. The Board would look to conduct the remaining 16 matches (12 league and four knockouts) at an opportune time and there is speculation that the month of September could be an option if the scheduled Asia Cup is scrapped.

"At this critical juncture, the BCCI stands firmly with the nation. We express our

solidarity with the Government of India, the Armed Forces and the people of our country," the Board statement read.

"The Board salutes the bravery, courage, and selfless service of our armed forces, whose heroic efforts under Operation Sindoor continue to protect and inspire the nation, as they lead a resolute response to the recent terrorist attack and the unwarranted aggression by Pakistan's armed forces," it added.

The BCCI said that while cricket remains a national passion, it is not greater than the sovereignty, integrity, and security of the country.

"The BCCI remains firmly committed to support all efforts that safeguard India and will always align its decisions in the best interest of the nation," it stated.

The Board also thanked stakeholders like the official broadcaster, the title sponsor and all associate partners for "putting national interest above all other considerations."

India launched missile attacks on terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan Occupied Jammu and Kashmir a fortnight after the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack in which 26 people were killed.

On Thursday, a blackout was enforced in several districts in India including Pathankot, Amritsar, Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur, Mohali in Punjab and Union Territory Chandigarh amid air raid alarms and reports of explosion-like sounds in Jammu.

Earlier in the day, the Pakistan Super League was moved to the UAE after Indian drone attacks

in Lahore and Rawalpindi among other cities.

The military confrontation had caused significant anxiety among the foreign players, according to league sources and they will be flying back over the next few days. Sixty two overseas players were signed up by the 10 franchises at the mega-auction last year.

"The players are doing well but of course there is concern among them after seeing all that has happened," an IPL team official told PTI when asked about the foreign players' state of mind.

The players of Delhi Capitals and Punjab Kings are currently on their way to the national capital from Dharamsala by road.

On Friday, the IPL bandwagon was in Lucknow for the game between Luc-

know Super Giants (LSG) and Royal Challengers Bengaluru, which now stands suspended.

"Nation first," posted LSG on its official social media page after the league's suspension.

In Sydney, Cricket Australia stated that it was closely monitoring the situation in both India and Pakistan, which shifted its flagship Pakistan Super League (PSL) to the UAE early this morning owing to the Indian military action.

New Zealand's players association had also expressed concerns about the security scenario in India and Pakistan due to the ongoing conflict.

A similar statement was issued by the Cricket West Indies, whose players are also involved in both the IPL and the PSL.

sportspopup

BCCI keen to host 2027 WTC final in India

NEW DELHI: The BCCI is contemplating to host the World Test Championship (WTC) final of the 2025-2027 cycle in India, and a proposal in this regard will be formalised at a later date. England has hosted both the WTC title clashes till now in 2021 and 2023 at Hampshire and at the Oval respectively. The PTI has learned that discussions in this regard was held during the ICC's chief executives committee in Zimbabwe last month, where the BCCI was represented by IPL chairman Arun Dharmal. Jay Shah, the former BCCI secretary, is the current ICC Chairman after taking over from Greg Barclay in December 2024.

Alcaraz, Sabalenka cruise to wins at the Italian Open

ROME: Carlos Alcaraz kicked off his bid for a first Italian Open title by cruising past Serbian qualifier Dusan Lajovic 6-3, 6-3 in Rome on Friday. World No. 3 Alcaraz got past Lajovic in one hour and 23 minutes on his return to action following a thigh injury suffered in his Barcelona Open final defeat to Holger Rune last month. Sinner will make his comeback from a three-month doping ban on Saturday when he takes on Mariano Navone in front of what will be a partisan crowd at the Foro Italico. Aryna Sabalenka cruised past Anastasia Potapova and into the third round with a 6-2, 6-2 victory.

SA appoint Conrad as all-format coach

JOHANNESBURG: South Africa Test coach Shukri Conrad will take charge of the Proteas white ball teams until the 2027 ICC 50-over World Cup, the CSA announced on Friday. Conrad, who has been coaching the SA Test side from 2023, succeeds Rob Walter, who resigned in April after the Champions Trophy. The 58-year-old's first white ball assignment will be a T20I series against Zimbabwe and New Zealand in July. CSA Director of National Teams and High Performance, Enoch Nkwe commented: "Shukri's track record with the red-ball team speaks for itself." Under Conrad's guidance, South Africa have reached their first-ever World Test Championship final, and will face defending champions Australia for the title at Lord's, London, from June 11 to 15.

Liverpool's Salah voted Football Writers' Player of the Year

LONDON: Mohamed Salah won the Football Writers' Association Player of the Year award for the third time on Friday after inspiring Liverpool's march to a record-equalling 20th English title. Salah earned the prize after scoring 28 goals and producing 18 assists for Liverpool in the Premier League this season. The Egypt forward broke the record for the most goal involvements in a 38-game Premier League campaign as Arne Slot's side romped to their first title since 2020. Salah secured almost 90 percent of the football writers' votes, marking the biggest winning margin this century.

Neeraj Chopra Classic postponed indefinitely

NEW DELHI: The inaugural Neeraj Chopra Classic, scheduled to be held on May 24 in Bengaluru, was on Friday postponed indefinitely with the organisers saying that the "thoughts at this point are only with our armed forces, who are at the forefront for our nation". Double Olympic medalist Chopra, who is also a part of the organising team, announced the postponement of the high-profile javelin event by posting a statement on 'X'.

Goa's hopes dashed as Jaiswal wants to continue playing for Mumbai

PTI, MUMBAI: India opener Yashasvi Jaiswal has requested the Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) to allow him to remain with the domestic giants, a month after asking for a No Objection Certificate (NOC) to switch to Goa.

In April, Jaiswal surprised everyone by writing to the MCA to seek its approval for a shock move to Goa. On its part, the MCA too had swiftly approved Jaiswal's request.

PTI is in possession of Jaiswal's email to the MCA in which he said he is available to represent Mumbai in the next domestic season.

"I the undersigned would request your goodwill to consider my request in



withdrawing my NOC given to me as I had some family plans in shifting to Goa which for now has been curtailed," Jaiswal wrote.

"So I sincerely request MCA to allow me to play for Mumbai this season! I have

not submitted the NOC to BCCI nor to Goa Cricket Association!," he added.

Jaiswal, who moved from Uttar Pradesh's Bhadoli to Mumbai as a young player and rose through the ranks to make his debut across

formats for India over the last couple of years, was also believed to have shifted to Goa from Mumbai owing to the prospect of becoming their captain.

A packed international calendar perhaps would not have allowed the 23-year-old Jaiswal a lot of time to spend with Goa, but becoming their skipper would have given him some experience in major leadership roles.

The secretary of the Goa Cricket Association, Shamba Desai had earlier confirmed to PTI that Jaiswal would be their captain with the Goa team being promoted from Plate division to Elite ahead of the 2025-26 season.

Man Utd set up Spurs Europa League final

AFP, MANCHESTER: Mason Mount starred as Manchester United roared back to crush Athletic Bilbao 4-1 on Thursday and 7-1 on aggregate, setting up a mouthwatering Europa League final against Tottenham.

United, 3-0 up after the first leg, fell behind to a superb strike from Mikel Jauregizar and looked nervy and untidy as they fought to find their feet at

Old Trafford. But a flurry of second-half substitutions -- including the entrance of Mount and Amad Diallo -- changed the complexion of the game completely and led to a United onslaught.

United have a chance to end the campaign on a high note with the showdown against Tottenham in Bilbao on May 22. Spurs beat Norwegian champions Bodo/Glimt 5-1 on aggregate.

EUROPA LEAGUE RESULTS

Semi-final, second legs
Bodo/Glimt 0 Tottenham 2 (Solanke 63, Porro 69). Tottenham win 5-1 on aggregate.
Manchester United 4 (Mount 72, 90+1, Casemiro 80, Hojlund 85) Athletic Bilbao 1 (Jauregizar 51). Manchester United win 7-1 on aggregate.
Final to be played May 22 in Bilbao, at 12.30 am

MARUTI SUZUKI

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