

IPL allows temporary replacements considering non-availability of a few foreign players

PTI, NEW DELHI: The Indian Premier League on Wednesday allowed teams to make temporary replacements in their squad for the remainder of the tournament considering the non-availability of a few foreign players owing to the forced rescheduling of the event.

IPL had to be suspended last week due to the India-Pakistan military conflict but the announcement

of the ceasefire paved the way for its resumption on May 17.

As per the original schedule, the IPL final was to be held on May 25 but now it will take place on June 3, making it trickier for the players who had to report for national duty.

While a few players are not returning due to personal reasons, the likes of Jamie Overton, representing CSK this season,

will stay back in the UK for the white-ball series against the West Indies at home.

In an email to franchises which was accessed by PTI, IPL informed the teams of the temporary replacement player option.

"... in the current situation, where we had to temporarily suspend IPL 2025, resulting in its completion beyond the earlier set-out date of May 25, 2025, we

have reassessed the Replacement Player provisions.

"Given the non-availability of certain foreign players due to national commitments or personal reasons or any injury or illness, Temporary Replacement Players will be allowed until the conclusion of this tournament.

"This decision is subject to the condition that the Temporary Replacement

players taken from this point forward will not be eligible for retention in the following year," IPL said in its note.

As per the IPL Player Regulations 2025-27, players can be replaced if they are injured or ill, provided the injury or illness occurs during or before the 12th league match of the relevant team in that season.

"Temporary Replacement players will have to

register for the IPL Player Auction 2026.

The replacements which were approved or taken before the suspended period will be eligible for retention ahead of 2026 player auction," the note added.

The rescheduling is likely to impact the preparation of South Africa and Australia for the World Test Championship final beginning at Lord's on June 11.

Delhi Capitals sign Mustafizur Rahman as Jake-Fraser's replacement

PTI, NEW DELHI: Delhi Capitals on Wednesday signed Bangladesh left-arm seamer Mustafizur Rahman as replacement for Australian batter Jake-Fraser McGurk, who will not rejoin the team for the remainder of Indian Premier League after returning home due to the ongoing India-Pakistan hostilities.

Fraser-McGurk's release won't hurt DC as he was dropped after the first six games in which he tallied only 55 runs. Also, if Mitchell Starc doesn't come, as is widely anticipated, then Mustafizur's left-arm seam bowling, with expertise in death overs, would come in handy.

"The JSW and GMR owned franchise Delhi Capitals today announced the signing of Bangladesh pacer Mustafizur Rahman as a replacement for Australian opener Jake Fraser-McGurk, who will be unavailable for the remainder of the TATA IPL 2025 season," the franchise stated in a release.

However Mustafizur, on Wednesday, flew to Dubai for Bangladesh's two-match T20I series vs UAE and also posted the news on his official twitter handle.

Bangladesh play UAE on May 17 and 19 and if Mustafizur happens to play both games, he would only reach India on May 20. He would miss Delhi's game



Mustafizur Rahman

against Gujarat Titans.

However, it is learnt that Mustafizur has a lucrative contract, and the franchise -- Delhi Capitals in this case -- is currently negotiating with the Bangladesh Cricket Board for his early release. As is customary for overseas players, the respective cricket board also receives a percentage of the contract.

Kolkata Knight Riders' Quinton De Kock to return

Veteran South African keeper-batter Quinton de Kock has confirmed his availability and will rejoin the Kolkata Knight Riders squad in Bengaluru for their next IPL game, as per an ESPNcricinfo report.

Rajasthan Royals Jofra Archer not to return

It has been learnt that Ra-



Quinton de Kock

asthan Royals pace spearhead Jofra Archer, who sustained a thumb injury during their game against Kolkata Knight Riders, is not returning for the remaining games.

However, if sources are to be believed, the Royals being out of playoff contention meant there was little point in asking Archer to return for a few inconsequential games. The same applies to CSK, where Sam Curran is also not expected to return.

WTC Final-bound SA players likely to miss IPL play-offs

South African players who have been picked for the World Test Championship Final against Australia are likely to miss the IPL playoffs as the country's cricket board is standing firm on prioritising national duty over league



Jofra Archer

commitments.

The BCCI confirmed on Monday that the IPL will resume on May 17 with the final slated for June 3.

However, the revised schedule has left players from WTC finalists Australia and South Africa in a tight spot. The franchises and the BCCI have urged foreign boards to make their players available for the remainder of the tournament.

CSA, however, has reiterated its commitment to WTC Final preparations. "It is an individual decision, obviously, to return or to play or continue," CSA's director of national teams and high performance Enoch Nkwe said during press conference.

"One thing we've made clear, and we are finalising this with the IPL and the BCCI, is sticking to our original plan when it comes to the WTC preparations."

Pakistan unlikely for Asia Cup hockey

PTI, NEW DELHI: The national federation is awaiting a government advisory but Pakistan's participation in this year's Hero Asia Cup hockey tournament in India is in serious doubt because of the prevalent tension between the two countries after the Pahalgalam terror attack.

The Asia Cup will be staged in Rajgir, Bihar from August 27 to September 7. Hosts India, Pakistan, Japan, Korea, China, Malaysia, Oman and Chinese Taipei are scheduled to participate in the 12th edition of the continental showpiece, a qualifying tournament for next year's World Cup to be held in Netherlands and Belgium.

"It is too early to say anything but we will follow the government's directive on this issue, which has been the case in the past," HI Secretary General Bholanath Singh told PTI.

"We can't predict anything right now especially after the recent barbaric Pahalgalam attack and Operation Sindoor that India conducted following that.

"There is still close to three months for the tournament but we will abide by what our government suggests us. There are no two ways about it."

Lakshya bows out of Thailand Open; Malvika, Aakarshi, Unnati advance

PTI, BANGKOK: Star Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen suffered a shock defeat but the trio of Malvika Bansod, Aakarshi Kashyap and Unnati Hooda advanced to the women's singles second round after hard-fought victories in the USD 475,000 Thailand Open Super 500 tournament, here, on Wednesday.

World No. 10 pair of Tressa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand, currently the best-ranked Indians in the world, also made a positive start to their campaign, reaching the second round with a 21-15, 21-13 win over Malaysia's Ong XY and C Ting.

The third-seeded Indian combination, which is returning after missing the Sudirman Cup mixed team championships due to injuries, will next square

off against Japan's Rui Hirokami and Sayaka Hobara.

Sen, a 2021 World Championships bronze medalist, fell to Ireland's Nhat Nguyen in a tense three-game battle, losing 18-21, 21-9, 17-21 in a men's singles match that lasted one hour and 20 minutes.

After dropping the first game, Sen found his rhythm in the second, dominating with aggressive rallies. However, Nguyen held his nerve in a close-decider, edging ahead at 17-13 before sealing the win.

World No. 33 Priyanshu Rajawat too made a first-round exit as he went down 13-21, 21-17, 16-21 against Alwi Farhan of Indonesia.

In women's singles, world No. 23 Malvika, a runner-up at the 2024 Hylo Open, ousted Tur-

key's Neslihan Arin 21-12, 13-21, 21-17 to set up a clash with former world champion Ratchanok Intanon, seeded seventh.

Aakarshi survived a thrilling contest against Japan's Kaoru Sugiyama, winning 21-16, 20-22, 22-20. It was a match of narrow margins, with the Indian holding her nerve in the final stages of the decider.

The 17-year-old Unnati, the 2022 Odisha Masters and 2023 Abu Dhabi Masters winner, also fought her way through to the next round, registering a gritty 21-14, 18-21, 23-21 victory over Thailand's Thamonwan Nithiittikrai.

Unnati, who reached the semifinals at Taipei Open last week, will face top seed Thai Pornpawee Chochuwong, while Aakarshi

meets fourth seeded Supanida Katethong, also from Thailand. However, it was the end of the road for Rakshitha Sree Santhosh Ramraj, who lost her women's singles opener 18-21, 7-21 to eighth seed Yeo Jia Min of Singapore.

Former national champion Anupama Upadhyaya, who was part of India's Sudirman Cup team, too fell by the wayside, going down 11-21, 9-21 to Thailand's former world champion Ratchanok Intanon.

The women's pair of K Selvam and S Singhi, and men's pair of P Krishnamurthy Roy and S Pratheek K also lost in the opening round of doubles events.

National Games gold medalist Tharun Mannepal will face Justin Hoh of Malaysia later in the day.

India have huge amount of talent to fill big shoes of Kohli, Rohit: Anderson

PTI, LONDON: England pace great James Anderson feels India's next generation of batters have the aggression and fearlessness to step into the "big shoes" of Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma in the Test team.

Kohli and Rohit, legends of Indian batting, bid farewell to Test cricket within a week of each other. Having already stepped away from T20Is last year, the duo will now only feature in ODIs for India.

Kohli ended his inspiring run in the traditional format, scoring 9230 runs from 123 matches with 30 hundreds at an average of 46.85, while Rohit accumulated 4301 runs from 67 Tests at an average of 40.57 and has 12 centuries and 18 fifties to his name.

"Great players. Kohli, one of the greatest Test batters

that's ever been," Anderson said on "Talksport". The twin retirements mean India will not only have a new captain at the helm but will be without two of their most experienced players.

"There will be a new captain because Sharma has retired, there's big shoes to fill there but they've got a huge amount of talent in their squad," Anderson added.

Anderson praised the new crop of Indian batters for their attacking mindset.

"You just have to watch the IPL. They are bringing players into Test cricket from the IPL now who are just so attacking, aggressive, and fearless," he said.

England are scheduled to host India for a five-match Test series starting June 20, which is also the beginning of the 2025-2027 World Test Championship cycle.

No one has done more for Test cricket than Kohli: Vaughan

PTI, LONDON: "Gutted, shocked and sad" at Virat Kohli's sudden retirement from the longest format, former England skipper Michael Vaughan said no individual has done more for Test cricket than the star Indian batter.

Kohli announced his retirement from Test cricket on Monday, drawing the curtain on a stellar red-ball career. He represented India in 123 Tests, scoring 9,230 runs at an average of 46.85, including 30 centuries.

"There are not too many Test retirements where I am left genuinely disappointed that I won't watch a cricketer play again. But I'm gutted we won't see Virat Kohli in England this summer or in

whites any more," Vaughan wrote in his column for the Telegraph.

"I'm shocked that he's retiring now, and I'm also quite sad about it. In my time involved in the game, stretching back more than 30 years, I don't believe there is any individual who has done more for the Test format than Virat."

Kohli led India to 40 wins in 68 Tests -- the most by any Indian skipper to date -- and Vaughan said it was the 36-year-old Indian who brought the love back to the traditional format, and the five-day game would have been a "far blander place" without him.

"When he took the captaincy just over a decade



ago, I was worried India was losing interest in Test cricket," said the 50-year-old, who served as England Test captain from 2003 to 2008.

"MS Dhoni was one of the great white-ball players but it felt like he captained a Test team who did not love the format. The game needs India to be madly in love with

Test cricket, and that is what Virat fostered as captain.

"His passion, skill, and the way he talked about Test cricket always being the pinnacle has been a huge shot in the arm for the format. Test cricket would have been a far blander place without him, and there is a chance it would

have lost its appeal if he had not been as interested and invested in it." Vaughan described Kohli as the greatest player across all formats and called his retirement a blow to Test cricket.

"His retirement now is a blow to Test cricket and very disappointing for fans not least in England this summer but my belief is that he has helped forge a love for the format among the generation that will follow him, and kept the flame burning," wrote the former opening batter.

"It's impossible to compare across every era, but if you look at since T20 came in around 20 years ago, he is almost certainly the greatest player when you

consider all three formats."

There has been a lot of criticism around Kohli's on-field aggressive persona but Vaughan feels the Indian superstar didn't have such a big ego as has been made out to be.

"All great players have egos, but maybe Virat's wasn't quite as big as we thought. Perhaps family life has mellowed him a bit, and he just wants as normal a life as he possibly can, which is probably going to be in London, where he spends a lot of time now.

"Those outside that bubble really can't imagine what it's like being a Kohli or a Sachin Tendulkar, with the pressure of billions of adoring fans on your shoulders."

sportspopup

Punjab FC crowned AIFF U-17 Elite Youth League champions

GUWAHATI: Punjab FC dished out a dominant display as they clinched the AIFF U-17 Elite Youth League title after defeating Jamshedpur FC 4-1 here on Wednesday. A superior first-half show saw Punjab surge ahead 4-0 at the break through goals from Karish Soram (28th minute), Ashish Lohar (34th), Vikash Kisku (37th) and Usham Thougamba Singh (39th). Heerangamba Serum (84th) pulled one back for Jamshedpur FC late in the match. After a cagey start to the game, Karish broke the deadlock with a fine goal, curling the ball in from the corner just after the half-hour mark. The goal changed the complexion of the game.

Superbet Classic: Praggnanandhaa in joint lead with three others

BUCHAREST (Romania): Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa kept his joint lead intact drawing with fellow co-leader Alireza Firouzja of France in the seventh round of the Superbet Classic, a part of the Grand Chess Tour, on Thursday. With four points out of a possible seven in his bag, Praggnanandhaa shares the lead with Fabiano Caruana of the United States, Maxime Vachier-Lagrave of France and Firouzja. Results (Round 7): R Praggnanandhaa (Ind, 4) drew with Alireza Firouzja (4); Levon Aronian (USA, 3.5) drew with Fabiano Caruana (USA, 4); Deac Bogdan Daniel (Rou, 3.5) drew with Maxime Vachier-Lagrave (4); Nodirbek Abdusattorov (Uzb, 3.5) beat Duda Jan Krzysztof (Pol, 2.5); Wesley So (USA, 3.5) drew with D Gukesh (Ind, 2.5).

Asian individual chess: Sarin roars back but still trails behind Iranian Daneshvar

AL AIN (UAE): Indian Grandmaster Nihal Sarin registered his third win on the trot but still remained a full point behind leader Bardiya Daneshvar of Iran after the end of the eighth and penultimate round of the Asian Individual Open Chess Championship here on Wednesday. T Results Round 8 (Indians unless stated): Bardiya Daneshvar (Iri, 7) beat Abhimanyu Puranik (5); Vokhidov Shamsiddin (Uzb, 6) drew with Ivan Zemlyanskiy (Fid, 6); S P Sethuraman (5) lost to Nihal Sarin (6); G B Harshavardhan (5.5) drew with Murali Karthikeyan (5.5); S L Narayanan (6) beat Madaminov Mukhiddin (Uzb, 5); L R Srihari (5) M Pranesh (5); Sergei Lobanov (Fid, 5) Bai Jinshi (Chn, 5); Pranav Anand (5) Huang Renjie (Chn, 5); Nodirbek Yakubov (Uzb, 4.5) S Aswath (4.5); V Praneeth (4.5) David Paravyan (Fid, 4.5); P Iniyar (4.5) Ramazan Zhalmakhanov (Kaz, 4.5); Raja Rithvik (4.5) Yang Zilong (Chn, 4.5); Leon Luke Mendonca (4); Bai Adelard (Kaz, 4); Surya Shekhar Ganguly (4) Wang Shixu (Chn, 4); Khuong Duy (Phi, 4) V Karthik (4); Sankalp Gupta (4) Neelash Saha (4); Bharath Subramaniyam Ivan Rozum (Fid, 4); A R Ilamparthi (4) Jan Emmanuel Garcia (Phi, 4).

Alcaraz, Gauff advance to Italian Open semi-finals with straight-set wins

ROME: Carlos Alcaraz won in straight sets despite a strong challenge from Jack Draper to reach the Italian Open semi-finals, and Coco Gauff extended her unbeaten streak against Mirra Andreeva to also advance to the last four at the clay-court tournament Wednesday. Alcaraz was made to work hard on his serve and saved six of the eight break points he faced on his way to a 6-4, 6-4 victory over Draper, who beat him earlier this year. In the women's draw, Gauff played aggressively throughout to advance to the last four for the third time with a 6-4, 7-6 (5) win. Gauff will next play the winner between No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka and Zheng Qinwen. Jasmine Paolini and Peyton Stearns face off in the other semifinal. Rome is the last big warmup before the French Open starts on May 25. Also Wednesday, top-ranked Jannik Sinner visited the new pope, gave him a tennis racket and offered to play, during an off day for Sinner. Leo XIV, the first American pope, is an avid tennis player. Sinner has a quarterfinal match Thursday in his first tournament back after a three-month ban for doping that was judged to be an accidental contamination. He will next face freshly-crowned Madrid champion Casper Ruud, who beat Jaume Munar 6-3, 6-4.

Neeraj to compete in event in Poland on May 23, conferred honorary rank of Lt Col

NEW DELHI: Star Indian javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra will compete in the 71st ORLEN Janusz Kusocinski Memorial event in Chorzow, Poland, on May 23 following the postponement of next week's NC Classic in Bengaluru. Chopra was slated to compete in the NC Classic -- an event he was also set to host on May 24 -- alongside several global and Indian stars but the event was postponed in the wake of the military confrontation between India and Pakistan. In Chorzow, Chopra will be up against two-time world champion and Paris Olympics bronze medalist Anderson Peters of Grenada, Germany's Julian Weber and Polish national record holder Marcin Krukowski. Other Polish competitors include Cyprian Trztyglod and Dawid Wegner. The event in Poland will be the third competition for Chopra in the season. He started at South Africa. His next event is on May 16 at the Doha Diamond League where he won the title in 2023 (88.67m) and finished second in 2024 (88.36m). Peters will be Chopra's rival in Doha also. Olympic gold medalist Neeraj Chopra has been conferred the honorary rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the Territorial Army, according to a government notification. The notification was issued on May 13 by the Ministry of Defence's Department of Military Affairs.

FA appoint former Man Utd Sporting Director Dan Ashworth as chief football officer

LONDON: Former Manchester United sporting director Dan Ashworth has returned to the Football Association (FA) after being appointed as chief football officer following his ill-fated stint at Old Trafford. The 54-year-old served as the governing body's director of elite development and then as technical director between 2013-2019 before taking up positions at Brighton and Newcastle ahead of a five-month stay at Old Trafford, which ended in December. His appointment at United was seen as a major coup among sweeping changes to the Red Devils' sporting structure under minority owner Jim Ratcliffe. Ashworth had been expected to spearhead an overhaul of United's underachieving team, alongside manager Ruben Amorim, who was appointed in November, but he left the club the following month.

Tottenham's Kulusevski to miss Europa League final after surgery

LONDON: Dejan Kulusevski will miss Tottenham's Europa League final against Manchester United after undergoing surgery on his knee, dealing a major blow to the club's hopes of ending their trophy drought. Kulusevski suffered the injury in Sunday's 2-0 loss at home to Crystal Palace after being caught by Marc Guehi and was substituted in the 19th minute. Spurs boss Ange Postecoglou provided a mixed assessment post-match, but further scans have shown the Swedish playmaker required surgery. "We can confirm that Dejan Kulusevski suffered an injury to his right patella in our Premier League fixture against Crystal Palace last weekend," a Tottenham statement said.