

Relief for Delhi FC, SC Bengaluru as relegation from I-League stayed

PTI, NEW DELHI: In a major reprieve for Delhi FC and Sporting Club Bengaluru, the All India Football Federation's Appeal Committee has stayed their relegation from I-League until a final decision is reached on their submissions challenging the AIFF's disciplinary panel ruling.

The two interim orders, dated May 24 and currently in possession with PTI, revealed that both the clubs had appealed against the AIFF Disciplinary Committee's decisions that would have demoted them from the 2024-25 I-League season after they finished among the bottom two of the 12-team competition.

Chaired by Justice (Retd.) Rajesh Pandey, with Ashok K Tripathi and Priyanka Mishra as members, the

Appeal Committee noted that the circumstances warranted keeping any relegation-related action "in abeyance" until the final hearing.

"On behalf of AIFF, time has been sought for 2 days to file the objections however, the circumstances of the case warrant that any order passed for relegation shall remain in abeyance and shall not be acted upon till the final hearing of the present appeal itself," both the orders stated.

In its appeal, Sporting Club Bengaluru argued that Namdhari FC had fielded an "ineligible player" during a match, a breach that their claim entitles them to three points.



Their advocate argued that the Disciplinary Committee overlooked crucial provisions (Article 57 of the AIFF Disciplinary Code), and that relegation has penal consequences, infringing Article 19 of the Indian Constitution (protection of rights).

If granted, this would also impact the standings and potentially push Aizawl FC into the relegation zone instead.

Delhi FC, meanwhile, questioned the process and rationale behind their demotion, citing AIFF's own past precedents where relegation had been waived.

Their legal counsel contended that relegation constitutes penal conse-

quences, thereby invoking Article 19 of the Indian Constitution.

The Appeal Committee observed in both cases that the Disciplinary Committee appeared to have overlooked key aspects of the relegation process and noted the seriousness of the implications involved.

The Committee has also directed that a copy of the appeal documents be sent to Aizawl FC, allowing them the opportunity to join the proceedings if they want.

As per the official standings after the conclusion of the I-League last month, SC Bengaluru (21 points) and Delhi FC (14) took the last two spots -- 11th and 12th respectively -- in the table.

The next hearing for both the appeals is scheduled for Thursday at the AIFF office in New Delhi.

Tamanna, Priya, Deepak enter Thailand Open semis

PTI, BANGKOK: Indian pugilists continued their strong showing at the fourth Thailand Open International Boxing Tour-

BOXING

namment, with Tamanna, Priya and Deepak assuring themselves of at least bronze medals by entering the semifinals here on Wednesday.

In the women's 51kg category, Tamanna put in a composed performance to beat Liu Yu-Shan of Chinese Taipei by unanimous decision.

Priya (57kg) followed it up with a confident 5-0 win over South Korea's Park Ah-hyun, controlling the

bout from start to finish.

In the men's draw, Deepak (75kg) showed technical clarity and ring discipline to defeat South Korea's Kim Hyeon-tae, also by a unanimous verdict.

India fielded a 19-member strong contingent in the prestigious boxing tournament, held under the aegis of World Boxing-backed Asian Boxing, that has attracted talented boxers from powerhouses like China, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, South Korea, and host Thailand.

Jugnoo (85kg) and Anjali (75kg) ended their campaigns with reverses in their respective quarterfinal bouts.

Yamal signs contract to stay with Barcelona until 2031

AP, BARCELONA: Teen-age star Lamine Yamal has signed a contract extension to stay at Barcelona until 2031, the club announced.

The 17-year-old Yamal helped the Catalan club clinch a domestic treble — La Liga, the Copa del Rey and the Spanish Super Cup — with his goals, dribbling and playmaking.

He scored the decisive goal to clinch Barcelona's 28th Spanish league title in a 2-0 victory at crosstown rival Espanyol nearly two weeks ago.

Barcelona also reached the Champions League semifinals this campaign.

His big season — he scored 18 goals overall and led La Liga with 13 assists — came after he helped Spain win the European Championship last



summer.

Yamal, who turns 18 in July, made his debut in April 2023 at Camp Nou and has already made 106 appearances for Barcelona.

"In 2031, Lamine Yamal

is only gonna be 23," the club said in a post on X as a reminder of how young their global star is.

Yamal joined Barcelona's famous La Masia academy at age 7.

Dandolem see off Madel SC

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RAIA: Dandolem moved into the next round after defeating Madel SC, 2-0, in the Silver Jubilee Cup 2025 interward football

SILVER JUBILEE CUP

tournament, organised by the Sporting Club of Virabhat, at the St Alex Church ground, in Curtorim.

Dandolem Sports opened the scoring through Ryan Fernandes in the 15th minute to make it 1-0. Madel had a chance to equalise in the 20th minute when Max-



well's shot was well saved by Dandolem goalkeeper Vincy Cardozo.

In the second half, Dandolem doubled their lead through Irun Hilario in the 40th minute to make it 2-0. Despite Madel's best ef-

forts to equalise, the match ended 2-0 in favour of Dandolem.

Ryan Fernandes was awarded man-of-the-match by Costancio Castanha (founder member SC Virabhat).

Rebello Pandal Maina down Ambelim Boys

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RAIA: Rebello Pandal Maina secured a comfortable 3-1 win over Ambelim Boys to enter the next round of the 5th all-Goa 8-a-side football tournament, organised by Davorlim Sports and Cultural Club, at Laymati Football ground, Davorlim, on Wednesday.

In a rain-hit encounter, both teams battled to gain control of the match. Rebello Pandal Maina opened the scoring in the 15th minute through Anselm Fernandes. Ambelim equalised before half-time

DAVORLIM SOCCER

through Savlon Fernandes, and the teams went into the break level at 1-1.

In the second half, Rebello Pandal Maina returned to the field with renewed vigour, playing at a faster pace and out-playing Ambelim Boys. They added two more goals through Nickson Castanah and Anselm Fernandes - who completed his brace - in the 45th and 56th minutes respectively to seal the victory.

Kashmir's Suhail earns India call-up for Thailand friendly

Anwar returns in build-up to Asian Cup qualifiers

PTI, KOLKATA: Suhail Ahmad Bhat on Wednesday became the latest footballer from Jammu and Kashmir to earn an India call-up as head coach Manolo Marquez announced a 28-member squad for an international friendly against Thailand on June 4.

The fixture in Thailand is part of India's preparations for the AFC Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2027 Qualifiers Final Round, where the Blue Tigers will face Hong Kong on June 10 in Kowloon City.

The 20-year-old central forward, who hails from the Bemina region of Srinagar, was a key figure in Mohun Bagan Super Giant's triumphant Indian Super League campaign last season and is seen as a promising attacking talent.

The squad announcement also marks the return of East Bengal's dependable central defender Anwar Ali, who had been sidelined since February due to a hamstring injury. He last featured in competitive action against Bengaluru FC in the ISL.

The squad, which includes talismanic striker Sunil Chhetri, who came out of retirement in March to bolster a struggling side, had been camping in Kolkata for the past 10 days.

In Kolkata, Marquez's men underwent six full days of training, with gym sessions in the mornings and on-pitch training in the evenings.

The Blue Tigers played two practice matches on May 26 and 27.

Suhail Ahmad Bhat

On Monday, they won 2-1 against Santosh Trophy champions Bengal, with Brandon Fernandes and Ashique Kuruniyan finding the net.

They registered a 3-0 victory over North 24 Parganas as Chhetri, Chinglensana Singh Konsham and Udanta Singh Kumam scored the goals on Tuesday.

India are placed in Group C of the AFC Asian Cup 2027 Final Round Qualifiers alongside Bangladesh, Hong Kong, and Singapore.

The group stage will follow a home-and-away round-robin format.

"All 28 players participating in the ongoing camp in Kolkata will travel to Thailand for the FIFA friendly against the hosts, scheduled for June 4," the All India Football Federation said in a release on Wednesday.

Before Suhail, midfielder Danish Farooq was the most recent Kashmiri to play for India, featuring in two friendlies against Bahrain and Belarus under Igor Stimac in 2022.

Mehrajuddin Wadoo remains one of the most prominent names from the Valley, having earned 31 caps between 2005 and 2011.

Wadoo, hailing from Srinagar's Rainawari area, famously scored the winning goal against Bangladesh in the 2005 SAFF Cup final in Karachi.

He was also part of India's victorious campaigns in the 2007 and 2009 Nehru Cup and the 2008 AFC Challenge Cup.

Before Wadoo, Mushir Ahmed represented India as

Zidane 'can't wait' to take 'dream' France job

AFP, PARIS: Zinedine Zidane, widely tipped in France to take over as national coach after the 2026 World Cup, said the job would be "a dream" and that he was "looking forward" to taking it.

Zidane, who is 52, was speaking at an event on Monday organised by his long-time sponsors Adidas, French media reported.

"I feel qualified for the French team, where I played and spent practically 12, 13, 14 years as a player. Of course it's a dream. I can't wait," said Zidane, a former captain of Les Bleus and the scorer of two goals as they won the 1998 World Cup final.

His midfield partner in that match and in France's Euro 2000 triumph, was Didier Deschamps who has been in charge of the French side since 2012.

Deschamps led Les Bleus to the World Cup in 2018 but has announced that he will end his reign after the 2026 World Cup in the USA, Canada and Mexico.

As a coach Zidane took Real to three Champions League triumphs and two Liga titles but has not taken a coaching job since ending his second spell at Real in 2021.

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Khuim Vhortolo?

Guardian Angel SC march into final

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RAIA: Guardian Angel SC, Curchorem, marched into the finals of the 1st Antonio Colaco Memorial football tournament by defeating hosts Mandopa Sports Club, 3-1, in the semi-final played at Rosary Church ground, Navelim, on Wednesday.

Mildroy Menezes of Guardian Angel opened the scoring in the 9th minute and Jaison Dias doubled the lead in the 20th minute. Ronaldo Pereira's powerful shot from the box missed the frame and Guardian

Angel led 2-0 at half-time.

After the restart, Mandopa created several chances, but the Guardian Angel defence stood firm and denied any breakthrough. In the 31st minute, Mandopa were awarded a penalty, which was converted by Ronaldo Pereira to make it 2-1. However, in the 43rd minute, Mildroy Menezes completed his brace off a pass from Cyril Dias to secure a 3-1 victory and a place in the final.

Mildroy Menezes of Guardian Angel SC was presented with the man-of-the-match award by GFA referee Caitano Pereira.

San Jose de Areal overcome Seraulim to reach final

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RAIA: San Jose de Areal booked their place in the final of the III Cavelossim Villagers UK Cup 2025 with a 2-0 victory over a spirited United Sports Club of Seraulim. The tournament, organised by Santa Cruz Club of Cavelossim, was played at the Fr. Druston and Wellington Ground, Cavelossim.

The teams went into the break goalless.

On resumption, Rayman's pinpoint corner found Ashnoy Gomes, who



netted from a tight angle to beat Seraulim goalkeeper Joywin Braganza and give Areal a 1-0 lead. Areal nearly doubled their advantage soon after, but Keith Rodrigues made a crucial goal-

line clearance to deny Leo.

Another well-taken corner by Rayman curled in and struck the far post before crossing the line, sealing the win and Areal's maiden entry into the final of the tournament.

Clifford Soares of San Jose de Areal was awarded man-of-the-match by Minguel Rodrigues, executive committee member of the club

Media team take home 'Friendship Cup 2025'

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PANJIM: The media team emerged triumphant in the 'Friendship Cup 2025' cricket tournament, organised jointly by the Rotary Club of Panaji and the Sports Journalists' Association of Goa (SJAG), held at the indoor complex of Panaji Gymkhana.

In the final match, the media team posted a total

of 44 runs in 5 overs. In response, the Rotary team managed only 34 runs. Manish Parab starred with the bat for the media team, top-scoring with 28 runs. For Rotary, Siddhesh Shetye impressed with the ball, taking 1 wicket for just 3 runs, while Vaibhav Kadkade contributed 22 runs with the bat. Rajaram Bhat of the media team took 2 crucial wickets.

Manish Parab (media)

and Vaibhav Kadkade (Rotary) were jointly awarded player of the match. Shailesh Zantye (media) and Dhilan Shah (Rotary) were named best batsmen, while Rajaram Bhat (media) and Siddhesh Shetye (Rotary) were adjudged best bowlers.

Parag Sardesai, Narhar Thakur, Rajiv Marathe and Nestor Sequeira from the Rotary Club, along with Kishor Petkar, Umesh Ba-

nastarkar and Kailas Naik from media, were felicitated for their contributions.

The event was graced by Nitin Raikar, Director of Fire Services, who served as the chief guest. Social activist Apa Shet Tanavade was the guest of honour. Other dignitaries in attendance included Lokik Shilkar, Mahesh Gaonkar, president of SJAG; Dhiraj Mahambre, secretary and Carlito Martin from the Rotary Club.

TODAY'S SPORTS

GFA U-17 Division II all-Goa finals 2024-2025: Snows Football Academy vs UC Seraulim, at Raia panchayat ground, at 4 pm

1st late Antonio Colaco memorial football tournament (2nd semi-finals): Margao Sports Club vs Maina SC, at Rosary Church ground, at 4.30 pm

All-Goa 8-a-side football tournament: Davorlim Boy's vs Daddy Boy's Guiridolim, at Laymati ground, Davorlim, at 4.30 pm

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