Saudi Pro League to Ronaldo on transfer window dispute: 'No individual - however significant - determines decisions'

NEW DELHI: Saudi Pro League has come out against its most iconic player Cristiano Ronaldo amid the ongoing transfer window dispute. Ronaldo reportedly is not happy with his club Al Nassr for inactivity in the January transfer window. Al Nassr's competitor and Saudi Pro League table toppers Al Hilal, meanwhile, brought in heavy reinforcement during the same window including former French international Karim Benzama from Al Ittihad. Ronaldo, if reports are to be believed, sat out of Al Nassr's Monday (Feb 2) match because of the transfer inactivity and may do the same on Friday (Feb 6) against Al Ittihad as well. Notably, both Al Nassr and Al Hilal are owned by Saudi's Public Investement Fund (PIF).

Reacting to situation, the Saudi Pro League issued a statement and said: "Clubs have their own boards, their own executives and their own football leadership. Decisions on recruitment, spending and strategy sit with those clubs, within a financial framework designed to ensure sustainability and competitive balance. That framework applies equally across the league."



"Cristiano has been fully engaged with Al-Nassr since his arrival and has played an important role in the club's growth and ambition. Like any elite competitor, he wants to win. But no individual – however significant – determines decisions beyond their own club," it further added.

The money for transfer, however, comes through a player acqusition fund overseen by the league and distributed amond clubs on an annual basis, based on their size. The big four of Saudi Pro League - Al Hilal, Al Nassr, Al Ittihad and Al Ahli, believed to have received roughly the same amount last year.

The superstar footballer, who has not won a single Saudi Pro League title since joining the league in 2023, is not happy to not get enough reinforcements to win the title. He has been in superb form this year, scoring 17 goals, but the lack of committment from club owners has left him not amused at all.

Meanwhile, Al Nassr's rival Al Hilal has made five signings compared to Al Nassr's one. Before signing Benzama on Monday night, Al Hilal had also signed up Pablo Mari from Fiorentina for $2 million, and are working on getting French Saimon Bouabré from Neom for a reported fee of $33 million. 18-year-old Rennes striker Kader Meite is also in line to join the Saudi league toppers. Al Nassr, meanwhile, has only signed up 21-year-old Iraqi midfielder Haydeer Abdulkareem.

R Ashwin makes bold Vaibhav Sooryavanshi claim after U19 World Cup final heroics

NEW DELHI: After Vaibhav Sooryavanshi's jaw-dropping performance in the U-19 World Cup final, former India spinner R Ashwin made a bold prediction about the teenager's future, saying fans shouldn't be shocked if he breaks into international cricket very soon.Reacting to Vaibhav's final innings, Ashwin highlighted how extraordinary the knock really was.

"175 (80) in the U19 WC final, 15 fours and 15 sixes with 85.7% of his runs in boundaries. That's absurd. This is a follow up to his 68(33) in the semis chasing a 300+ target. Vaibhav has owned the big stage like he's born for it. A prodigy with serious big match temperament," R Ashwin wrote on X.The 14-year-old left-hander tore into England's bowling at Harare, smashing 175 runs from just 80 balls in the final. His innings included 15 fours and 15 sixes, with most of his runs coming in boundaries.

India went on to post a massive 411 for 9, putting the match completely out of England's reach.Ashwin also pointed to Vaibhav's consistency throughout the tournament."Overall Tournament numbers: Leader run getter with 439 runs at 62.71, SR 169.49. A T20 Strike rate of 170 is elite. 30 sixes overall and 78.35% of his runs in boundaries.

"This kid is knocking on the doors of international cricket hard & fast. Post the T20 World Cup, don't be surprised if that door opens."Vaibhav's rise has been rapid.

Major blow for Australia as another star player gets ruled out with injury



NEW DELHI: In a mjor blow to Australia's T20 World Cup 2026 campaign, pacer Josh Hazlewood has been ruled out of the tournament. With no Patrick Cummins, Mitchell Starc and now Hazlewood as well, the 2021 T20 World Cup champions will definitely have their work cut out for them in the tournament. This is also the first time since 2009 Champions Trophy that Australia are playing in an ICC tournament with without one of Cummins, Starc, Hazlewood, Steve Smith or David Warner as well. Cricket Australia, meanwhile, hasn't named a replacement for Hazlewood yet and will take a call on it at the later stage. Australia start their T20 World Cup campaign on Wednesday (Feb 11) against Ireland.

Ever since winning the IPL 2025 title with RCB, Hazlewood has been dealing with a lot of injuries. He suffered a hamstring strain leading upto the Ashes and then got hit by Achilles Heels injuries later on in the series.

Hazlewood, however, played three T20I series against South Africa, New Zealand and India. He was expected to get fit for the later stages in the T20 World Cup but the recovery seems to be taking more time than anticipated.

"We were hopeful Josh would be back to match fitness by the Super 8 stage but the latest indications he is still some time away and accelerating his program will carry too much risk," selector Tony Dodemaide said. "We will not be naming a replacement player immediately. We feel we are well covered for the initial games so will make any later decisions based on priority need at the time."

As of now, Australia isn't naming a replacement. Sean Abbott, who has travelled with squad as a travelling reserve, might join the main squad later on.

Australia squad for T20 World Cup 2026: Mitchell Marsh (c), Xavier Bartlett, Cooper Connolly, Tim David, Ben Dwarshuis, Cameron Green, Nathan Ellis, Travis Head, Josh Inglis, Matthew Kuhnemann, Glenn Maxwell, Matthew Renshaw, Marcus Stoinis, and Adam Zampa.

Nitu, Preeti Storm into Semis, Jadumani Shines Again as India Confirm 19 Medals

LA NUCIA(SPAIN): The Indian contingent is assured of bringing home 19 medals at the prestigious BOXAM Elite International 2026, extending its impressive run on Day 3 as Nitu (51kg) and Preeti (54kg) powered into the semifinals, while Jadumani Singh (55kg) delivered yet another dominant performance in the men's draw.

The Indian women's team, under the guidance of new head coach Santiago Nieva, has confirmed 12 medals, while the Indian men's team is assured of 7 ahead of the semis.

Nitu was in imperious form, shutting out Canada's McKenzie Wright with a commanding 5:0 win to secure her place in the last four. Preeti followed with a clinical showing against Spain's Maria Gonzalez, forcing an abandonment in Round 3 after dictating the contest with sustained pressure. Poonam (54kg) added another emphatic 5:0 victory over Thailand's Natnicha Chongprongklang, while Priya (60kg) and Pranjal (65kg) registered unanimous wins against Spain's Laura Galano and Czech boxer Viktorie Jilkova, respectively. Kajal (65kg) edged Kazakhstan's Akbar Ichshanova 4:1 in a tightly contested bout. In the men's competition, Jadumani Singh continued his fine run, outclassing Peng Chia-Feng of Chinese Taipei 5:0 in the 55kg category. Mohammed Hussam Uddin (60kg) produced a polished display to defeat Ukraine's Ali Dahly unanimously, while Sachin (60kg) battled past Ukraine's Aider Abduraimov in a tense 3:2 decision. Akash (75kg) also advanced with a solid 4:1 win over Spain's Jose Luis Canero. Several Indian boxers bowed out after spirited efforts, including Pawan Bartwal, who went down narrowly 2:3 to England's Ellis Trowbridge, and Abhinash Jamwal, who lost to Ukraine's Elvin Aliiev. Despite the exits, India's growing medal tally underlined another strong day at the tournament, with multiple semifinal spots secured as the competition heads into its decisive stages.

BOXAM Elite 2026 - Day 3 Results

Elite Women

51 Kg: Nitu bt. McKenzie Wright (CAN) 5:0

51 Kg: Kusum lost to Chuthamat Raksat (THA) 0:5

54 Kg: Preeti bt. Maria Gonzalez (ESP) ABD R3

54 Kg: Poonam bt. Natnicha Chongprongklang (THA) 5:0

57 Kg: Prachi lost to Vivien Parsons (ENG) 0:3

57 Kg: Vinka lost to Punrawee Ruenros (THA) 0:5

60 Kg: Priya bt. Laura Galano (ESP) 5:0

60 Kg: Disha Patil lost to Thanaya Somnuek (THA) DSQ R3

65 Kg: Pranjal bt. Viktorie Jilkova (CZE) 5:0

65 Kg: Kajal bt. Akbar Ichshanova (KAZ) 4:1

Elite Men

55 Kg: Jadumani Singh bt. Peng Chia-Feng (TPE) 5:0

55 Kg: Pawan Bartwal lost to Ellis Trowbridge (ENG) 2:3

60 Kg: Mohammed Hussam Uddin bt. Ali Dahly (UKR) 5:0

60 Kg: Sachin bt. Aider Abduraimov (UKR) 3:2

65 Kg: Abhinash Jamwal lost to Elvin Aliiev (UKR) 1:4

75 Kg: Akash bt. Jose Luis Canero (ESP) 4:1

90 Kg: Harsh Choudhary lost to Isaac Okoh (ENG) 0:5

90 Kg: Sawal Gill lost to Nurassyl Assylkhan (KAZ) 0:5

Virat Kohli, former cricketers praise RCB Women's WPL title triumph

NEW DELHI: India star batter Virat Kohli, along with former India cricketers Dinesh Karthik and Mithali Raj, lauded Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) Women after their title-winning performance in the Women's Premier League (WPL) final, describing the triumph as a significant moment for women's cricket.

Taking to social media, Kohli congratulated captain Smriti Mandhana and the RCB squad for their second WPL title. "Champions again. Keeping the RCB flag flying high is something that each one of you can be proud of. To Smriti Mandhana and the whole squad and the management team, a big congratulations on this tremendous victory. You guys deserve this undoubtedly," Kohli said.

Former India cricketer Dinesh Karthik described the final as a reflection of the rapid growth of women's cricket since the inception of the league. He said RCB were the standout team throughout the tournament and also highlighted Delhi Capitals' achievement of reaching four consecutive finals.

India set for T20 WC kickstart against underdog USA at Wankhede

MUMBAI: A high-voltage T20 thriller is set to unfold as defending champions India take on the underdog United States of America in the third match of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 at Wankhede Stadium here on Saturday evening. The match is scheduled to start at 7:00 PM IST and promises fireworks both on and off the field.

India, coming off five wins in six T20Is this year, will aim to stamp their authority early in the tournament. Explosive openers Ishan Kishan and Abhishek Sharma are expected to set the tone, while Tilak Varma, skipper Suryakumar Yadav, Hardik Pandya, Shivam Dube, and Axar Patel form a formidable middle order capable of posting or chasing big totals. In the bowling department, Jasprit Bumrah, Arshdeep Singh, and Varun Chakravarthy will spearhead India's pace attack, with the final spot in the bowling lineup likely to be filled by either Kuldeep Yadav or Harshit Rana, giving the team a mix of experience and variety.

The USA side, though considered underdogs, brings a blend of experience and surprises. Openers Andries Gous and Saiteja Mukkamalla are expected to provide a solid start, while captain Monank Patel will anchor the innings at number three.

The middle order, featuring Shubham Ranjane, Milind Kumar, and Sanjay Krishnamurthi, possesses the firepower to change the course of the game quickly. USA's bowling attack, led by Saurabh Netravalkar, Ali Khan, and Shadley van Schalkwyk, can trouble the Indian batters with swing, while variety spinners Harmeet Singh and Mohammad Mohsin add a tactical edge. Wankhede Stadium, known for its batting-friendly pitch, is expected to host a high-scoring encounter. Teams bowling first have historically held an advantage due to evening dew, and India could post totals exceeding 230 if they bat first. Powerplay fireworks are anticipated, with India averaging over 60 runs in the first six overs in recent matches, while USA maintains a powerplay scoring rate of eight runs per over.

Adding to the narrative is a homecoming storyline: Shubham Ranjane, originally from Mumbai, returns to play in familiar conditions, giving the match a sentimental and social media-friendly angle.

How separating logic and search boosts AI agent scalability



Separating logic from inference improves AI agent scalability by decoupling core workflows from execution strategies. The transition from generative AI prototypes to production-grade agents introduces a specific engineering hurdle: reliability. LLMs are stochastic by nature. A prompt that works once may fail on the second attempt. To mitigate this, development teams often wrap core business logic in complex error-handling loops, retries, and branching paths.

This approach creates a maintenance problem. The code defining what an agent should do becomes inextricably mixed with the code defining how to handle the model's unpredictability. A new framework proposed by researchers from Asari AI, MIT CSAIL, and Caltech suggests a different architectural standard is required to scale agentic workflows in the enterprise.

The research introduces a programming model called Probabilistic Angelic Nondeterminism (PAN) and a Python implementation named ENCOMPASS. This method allows developers to write the "happy path" of an agent's workflow while relegating inference-time strategies (e.g. beam search or backtracking) to a separate runtime engine. This separation of concerns offers a potential route to reduce technical debt while improving the performance of automated tasks. Current approaches to agent programming often conflate two distinct design aspects. The first is the core workflow logic, or the sequence of steps required to complete a business task. The second is the inference-time strategy, which dictates how the system navigates uncertainty, such as generating multiple drafts or verifying outputs against a rubric.

When these are combined, the resulting codebase becomes brittle. Implementing a strategy like "best-of-N" sampling requires wrapping the entire agent function in a loop. Moving to a more complex strategy, such as tree search or refinement, typically requires a complete structural rewrite of the agent's code.

The researchers argue that this entanglement limits experimentation. If a development team wants to switch from simple sampling to a beam search strategy to improve accuracy, they often must re-engineer the application's control flow.

This high cost of experimentation means teams frequently settle for suboptimal reliability strategies to avoid engineering overhead.

These markers indicate where an LLM call occurs and where execution might diverge. The developer writes the code as if the operation will succeed. At runtime, the framework interprets these branch points to construct a search tree of possible execution paths.

This architecture enables what the authors term "program-in-control" agents. Unlike "LLM-in-control" systems, where the model decides the entire sequence of operations, program-in-control agents operate within a workflow defined by code. The LLM is invoked only to perform specific subtasks. This structure is generally preferred in enterprise environments for its higher predictability and auditability compared to fully autonomous agents.

A tiny Dinosaur with a weird skull is rewriting evolution

"From the very first moment anybody sees this animal one is staggered by its extreme smallness," says Dieudonné. "And yet it preserves a highly derived cranium with unexpected anatomical innovations."

The fossils belong to at least five individuals and were originally discovered by Fidel Torcida Fernández-Baldor of the Dinosaur Museum of Salas de los Infantes. The unusually small size of the bones immediately caught researchers' attention.

"From the beginning, we knew these bones were exceptional because of their minute size. It is equally impressive how the study of this animal overturns global ideas on ornithopod dinosaur evolution," he explains.

The name Foskeia comes from ancient Greek. The prefix fos means 'light', a reference to the lightweight build and very small body size of adult individuals (Dieudonné et al. 2023). The letters 'skei' come from boskein, meaning foraging. The species name pelendonum honors the Pelendones, a Celtiberian tribe that once lived in the Fuentes del Duero region (north of the province of Soria, southeast of Burgos and perhaps the southeast of La Rioja).

Researchers say Foskeia carries major evolutionary importance despite its size. Marcos Becerra (Universidad Nacional de Córdoba) highlights how unusual the animal truly is: "Miniaturization did not imply evolutionary simplicity — this skull is weird and hyper-derived."

Thierry Tortosa (Sainte Victoire Natural Reserve) emphasizes its broader significance: "Foskeia helps fill a 70-million-year gap, a small key that unlocks a vast missing chapter."

Tábata Zanesco Ferreira (Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro) adds: "This is not a 'mini Iguanodon', it is something fundamentally different."

According to Penélope Cruzado-Caballero (Universidad de La Laguna), "Its anatomy is weird in precisely the kind of way that rewrites evolutionary trees."

Growth trajectory of Foskeia pelendonum, compared to an adult chicken. This trajectory is based on differently sized bony elements and their histology.

