Speaker Rather inaugurates Cricket tournament at Tujan

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

BUDGAM: Speaker Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly today inaugurated a local cricket tournament at Tujan in which more than 32 teams from various urban and rural areas are participating

Addressing the participating players local gathering, officials and organisers, the Speaker emphasized that sports play a pivotal role in the holistic development of youth by fostering discipline, teamwork, leadership, perseverance and a spirit of healthy competition. He said that active participation in sports not only promotes physical fitness and mental well-being but also serves as a constructive avenue for nurturing talent and character.

Reaffirming the government's commitment to promote sports as a means of developing a healthy, disciplined and progressive society, he said much impetus is being given to create world class infrastructure in the UT to train our talented youth to compete both at National and International level. He said sports has traveled beyond recreation and is now an honourable way of earning livelihood and respect. He quoted a number of names of the UT who made a mark at international level bringing repute not only for themselves but for the entire UT.

The Speaker said that various innovative measures are being ensured to promote sports at the grassroots level by strengthening the infrastructure and creating opportunities for the aspiring athletes to excel at district, UT and national level. He urged the parents, teachers, community leaders and sports organizations to collectively encourage the young people to adopt sports as a way of life.

Expressing concern over the growing menace of drug abuse and other anti-social activities, the Speaker called upon the youth to shun such harmful practices and instead devote their time and energy to sports and other positive pursuits. He said that engaging in sports keeps young people focused, builds confidence and inspires them to contribute meaningfully to society.

Commending the organizers for providing a platform to local talent, the Speaker expressed hope that the tournament would foster the spirit of sportsmanship, camaraderie and healthy competition among the participants while motivating more youth to embrace sports and lead healthy, drug-free lives.

Gulveer wins bronze in men's 5000m, his 2nd medal at 2026 CWG

NEW DELHI: Indian long distance runner Gulveer Singh continued his stellar run with a bronze medal in the men's 5000m to add another medal to his cabinet. He clocked 13:24.95s to finish third ahead of Cornelius Kemboi of Kenya in a photo finish.

Competing in a tough field against the 2024 U20 World Champion Andrew Alamisi of Kenya, Tokyo Olympic medallist Mohammed Ahmed of Canada, and 10000m champion Ky Robinson of Australia, Gulveer produced a superb kick in the last 400m to go from fourth to the bronze medal position.

While he was far from his personal best of 12:59.77, Gulveer capped his Commonwealth Games campaign with a stellar show.

Gulveer, who earlier won a silver medal in the men's 10000m, created history by becoming the first-ever Indian athlete to win two medals in track events.

Like his 10000m run, he followed the strategy of staying with the lead pack, accelerating while needed and producing a kick in the last 400m. Gulveer was fourth at the end of the 4000m mark and held his position before producing the kick in the final 400m and winning his stellar medal.

"In a championship race, position is very important. I didn't want to lead too early because that would have meant doing extra work, but I also didn't want to lose contact with the front group," Gulveer had said after the 10000m race.

Kashmir's Owais stuns unbeaten Bulgarian in international MMA bout

BURGAS: Jammu and Kashmir's mixed martial arts (MMA) fighter Owais Yaqoob scripted the biggest win of his career by defeating previously unbeaten Bulgarian Delyan Georgiev at BRAVE Combat Federation (BRAVE CF) 107 in Burgas, Bulgaria, in a major boost for Indian MMA.

The victory is being hailed as one of the biggest international wins by an Indian MMA fighter in recent years. Owais handed Georgiev, a two-time IMMAF world champion, the first defeat of his professional career.

The 27-year-old from Murran village in south Kashmir's Pulwama district displayed composure, determination and technical brilliance throughout the bout to outclass the Bulgarian on one of the world's premier MMA platforms.

Speaking after the bout, Owais dedicated the victory to the people of India and Jammu and Kashmir.

"This victory means everything to me. I stepped into the cage carrying the hopes of my family, my people in Jammu and Kashmir and the entire country. Defeating an unbeaten world champion is a dream achievement, but this is only the beginning. I will continue to work harder and aim for even greater success while proudly representing India on the global stage," he said.

The victory ended Georgiev's unbeaten run and further strengthened Owais' reputation as one of India's fastest-rising MMA fighters. Owais has built his career through consistent performances in domestic and international competitions. He entered the contest on a five-fight winning streak after being named BRAVE CF Breakout Fighter of the Year 2025, making the victory another major milestone in his career.

The bout also drew global attention as Georgiev represented Team Topuria, while Owais trains with Team Khabib at the American Kickboxing Academy. Celebrations broke out across Jammu and Kashmir following the victory, with sports enthusiasts and fellow athletes congratulating the Pulwama fighter for bringing laurels to the country.

Sunil Chhetri urges Jamshedpur FC stay in ISL, avert 'a disaster with no alternative'

NEW DELHI: Sunil Chhetri, India's record goalscorer and former captain, has urged Jamshedpur FC's team management to reverse their decision to pull out of the Indian Super League (ISL). The club, who had won the ISL Shield in the 2021/22 season, announced on Friday that it will not be part of the league from the next season onwards.

It was a decision that has left their players in a lurch and Chhetri, while acknowledging it "takes a lot to be a stakeholder in Indian football", urged the Tata Group, which owns the club, to reconsider their decision. "To know that Jamshedpur has folded first team operations is a punch to the gut. The players and staff will be without clubs, and they might find one by the end of it all. The League will have a team less, but the season will go on. However, not having the TATA group involved in the top tier of Indian football – that would be a disaster with no alternative," said Chhetri in a lengthy statement that he posted on X.

"I understand that some tough decisions in sport are down to what makes sense in the board room. But I can only request and hope that the think tank at TATA picks their heart over head and reconsiders this call. It might be a poor business decision, but it will be the one Indian football needs the most at this hour." Jamshedpur will be the latest name to have exited the league. Pune City FC folded under financial strain, Delhi Dynamos relocated to become Odisha FC, while Hyderabad FC too succumbed to prolonged monetary trouble, relocating to Delhi to become Sporting Delhi FC. However, club captain Pronay Halder said that Jamshedpur's exit feels different because the owners also operate the TATA Football Academy — which has produced players like Renedy Singh and Subrata Paul — and is known for a rich history of nurturing footballers. "I have been a professional footballer for 16 years, and this is the most difficult thing I have ever faced. All of us knew that Indian football is struggling at the moment, but no one could imagine that a club like Jamshedpur FC would withdraw from the top league. This club is run by TATA, who have a rich history of contributing towards Indian football. Even during Covid, when other clubs were struggling to pay salaries, all of our needs were taken care of. So this news has caught us blindsided. We believed that regardless of the difficulties, this is one club which will never fold. Turns out, the assumption was wrong," he had told.

Jasprit Bumrah set to miss Sri Lanka Tests with knee injury

NEW DELHI: India will take the trip to Sri Lanka without premier pacer Jasprit Bumrah. The Indian Express understands that the 32-year-old, who picked up a knee injury during the second ODI against England last month is far from attaining full fitness and hence will miss the two Tests starting in Galle on August 15.

When the BCCI released the squad for the two-match Test series, Bumrah's inclusion was subject to him clearing fitness test. With nearly four-week break before the first Test, India were hoping that Bumrah would regain full fitness by then and were keen to take him on board even if is unlikely to feature in the warm-up fixture. However, during the rehab process, Bumrah is understood to have felt discomfort in his knee and as a result his comeback is expected to take time.

While there is a chance that Bumrah could be available for the second Test, India are unlikely to take any risk with the fast bowler. Rushing players in the past in desperate situations have only resulted in them suffering long-term setbacks, which India are keen to avoid. Bumrah was expected to start bowling this weekend, but the setback he suffered during the rehab process means, it could take another couple of weeks.

Though Bumrah has played 52 Tests, his career continues to remain stop-start because of injuries. Having overcome a career-threatening back injury, India have been managing his workload carefully. Last year in England, he played only three of the five Tests, but played in all four home Tests against West Indies and South Africa.

Given India are struggling in terms of qualifying for the World Test Championship final, Bumrah's unavailability is a big dent in Sri Lanka. For India to be in the race for the final, they need to win at least three of their four Tests in Sri Lanka and New Zealand. With his ability to take the conditions out of equation, Bumrah's absence is a huge blow to India which is also fretting over the availability of Washington Sundar.

Bumrah's unavailability means, India will have to work around their pace pack which will now be led by Mohammed Siraj. Alongside Siraj, there is Prasidh Krishna, but none of them have the experience of playing Test cricket in Sri Lanka.

IBM and Sarvam partner on sovereign AI for government use

IBM and Indian artificial intelligence (AI) company Sarvam have partnered to develop and test sovereign AI technologies for government agencies and regulated sectors in India. The collaboration will focus on AI systems that give organisations greater control over their data, governance, and operations while supporting public-sector applications. The companies said the initiative is intended to address use cases where data security, regulatory compliance, and local control are critical.

IBM and Sarvam will jointly pilot AI applications for citizen services, grievance redressal, document processing, and administrative workflows.

The initiative will combine IBM's Sovereign Core platform with Sarvam's India-focused language, voice, and reasoning models.

The technologies are expected to support multilingual and voice-enabled services, potentially allowing government departments to interact with citizens in multiple Indian languages through existing digital platforms.

According to the companies, the solutions are being developed for central and state governments, public-sector organisations, and regulated enterprises operating under India's data security and governance requirements.

The IBM GovTech AI Innovation Center in Lucknow will serve as a demonstration and incubation facility for the initiative. Government departments and enterprises will be able to use the centre to assess the technical, operational, and governance aspects of AI systems before considering wider deployment. Sriram Raghavan, General Manager, IBM Software India, said sovereign AI is centred on giving organisations greater control over how artificial intelligence is deployed, governed, and managed. Sarvam co-founder Pratyush Kumar said the partnership would focus on enabling government services, including benefits delivery and grievance support, across Indian languages while working with existing digital infrastructure. The partnership comes as India places greater emphasis on developing domestic AI capabilities and infrastructure for government and other sensitive applications.

Former cricketer's stern take on Hardik's transfer to CSK: '...not needed as a captain'

NEW DELHI: Amid speculation that Hardik Pandya might be traded to Chennai Super Kings, former Indian cricketer Sadagoppan Ramesh said that while Pandya could be a good addition to the Chennai squad, he urged Super Kings not to trade youngsters for Pandya and also warned CSK against making him the captain.

"There are a lot of speculations around this with several players like Dube, Mhatre and Brevis being mentioned. But the biggest question is whether CSK needs Hardik Pandya. The answer is both yes and no. Firstly, there is no way CSK should let go of youngsters. Yet, CSK are in desperate need of proven players. So as a player, CSK needs Hardik Pandya. But, he is absolutely not needed as a captain," Ramesh said on his YouTube channel.

"I've always seen Hardik Pandya as two parts – an extraordinary cricketer and a poor captain. Yes, he led GT to the title. But it has become clearer once he left GT that even without him as captain, GT has not suffered. They just reached the final again. But see where the team he captained, MI, has been in the same timeframe. Thus, it's clear that beyond his captaincy, certain things have clicked in GT," he added.

Ramesh pointed out Mumbai's poor performances last season and said it also has to do with Hardik's own form with both the bat and ball.

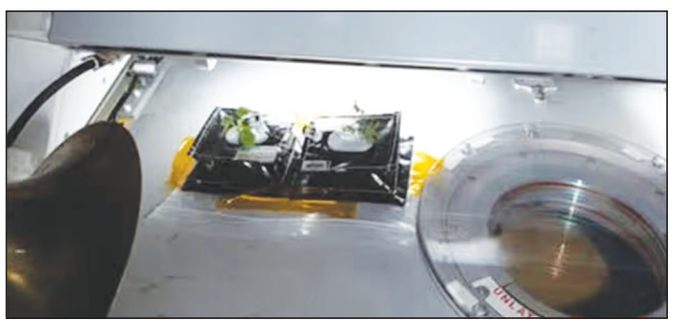
"Coming to MI, people can say other senior players' poor form hasn't helped him as captain. But his own performance with bat and ball hasn't helped MI either. Hardik's own performance hasn't helped his captaincy. He bowled only 22 overs in 10 matches, which means he has bowled.

International Space Station Shares Details Of New Plants Sprouting In Space

Astronauts aboard the International Space Station (ISS) achieved a major milestone recently. In an Instagram post, they revealed that they are growing small sprouts of Red Russian kale and Wasabi mustard greens. These sprouts have been helping the researchers study how plants develop in different areas throughout the space station, instead of inside a dedicated plant growth facility.

"This research is helping pave the way for astronauts to grow fresh, nutritious food on future missions to the Moon, Mars, and beyond," ISS wrote in the caption.

Growing plants in weightlessness is critical for the future of human space exploration. On long missions to the Moon or Mars, astronauts will need sustainable food sources and natural systems to help recycle oxygen and carbon dioxide. Demonstrating that crops can sprout quickly and healthily without Earth's gravity brings scientists one step closer to building space-based agricultural systems.



The post intrigued social media users, who flooded the comments section with questions.

"While my plants are struggling on the balcony," one user wrote in the comment section.