

Lakshya Sen sails into quarters, Sindhu exits from China Masters

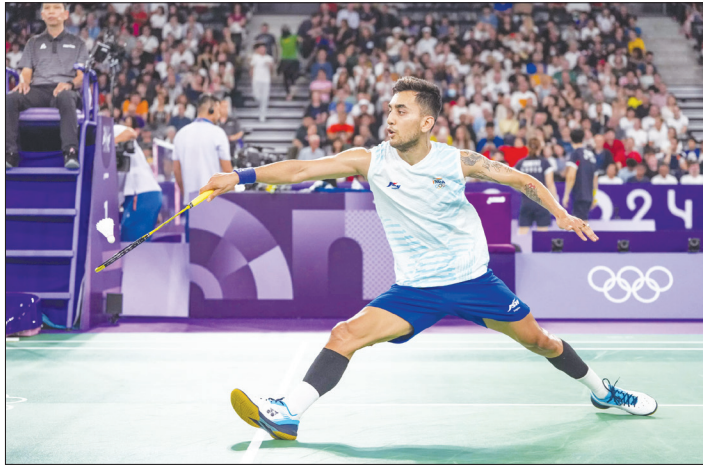
SHENZHEN: Star Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen progressed to the quarterfinals with a straight-game win, but two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu's campaign ended in the second round of the China Masters Super 750 badminton tournament here on Thursday.

Lakshya, who missed out on a bronze medal at the Paris Olympics, looked at his lethal best while disposing off Rasmus Gemke of Denmark 21-6 21-18 in a 46-minute men's singles second round match.

Lakshya will have his work cut out in the quarterfinals as he will be up against third seed Anders Antonsen of Denmark, who defeated Japan's Takuma Obayashi 21-15 21-18 in his second round match.

But it turned out to be another disappointing outing for Sindhu as she lost to Singapore's Yeo Jia Min in a hard-fought women's singles contest. World No.19 Sindhu, who dispatched the higher-ranked Busanan Ongbamrunphan 21-17 21-19 in the opening round, fought valiantly before going down 16-21 21-17 21-23 to Min in a match that lasted one hour and nine minutes.

It was curtains for the other



two surviving Indian women's singles players as Anupama Upadhyaya and Malvika Bansod crashed out in the second round. While Anupama lost 7-21 14-21 to Japan's Natsuki Nidaira, Malvika was thrashed 9-21 9-21 by eight-seeded Supanida Katethong of Thailand. The women's doubles pair of Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand was no match for second seeded Chinese pair of Liu Sheng Shu and Tan Ning.

The world number 18 Indian duo, currently at eight spot in the BWF World Tour rankings, lost 16-11 11-21 against their

Chinese opponents in a second round match lasting just 43 minutes.

Defending champions Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, who returned to action after a break following the Paris Olympics, also moved to the quarterfinals of the men's doubles with a 21-19 21-15 win over Danish pair of Rasmus Kjaer and Frederik Soggaard.

The Asian Games gold medallist Indian duo will meet the Danish combination of Kim Astrup and Anders Skaarup Rasmussen, who are seeded second here, in the next round.

West Indies eyeing change of fortunes

ANTIGUA: Ahead of the first Test against Bangladesh here, West Indies head coach Andre Coley highlights the importance of winning the home series before their tour of Pakistan scheduled early next year.

Having fallen out of contention for the ICC World Test Championship Final next year, teetering at the bottom of the points table, West Indies are determined to finish the year on a high note.

Speaking ahead of the first of two Tests at home against Bangladesh starting Friday, Coley emphasized for the hosts to rub off the disappointment of losing their previous series at home - against South Africa in August.

"It's very important. Coming off of the disappointment of the South Africa series, where we really put ourselves in a position to close out that series, we didn't, and we now have this opportunity against Bangladesh," Coley said.

Playing two Tests at home against the Proteas, the Windies were bested 1-0 after the visitors claimed the final Test by 40 runs, an ICC report said.

They arrive into the Bangladesh series on the back of a 3-1 loss to England in a five-match T20I series at home.

Coley believes it's crucial for the hosts to come out on top against Bangladesh and raise the team morale before the tour of Pakistan next year, which will see them contest in their final two Tests of the ongoing WTC cycle.



Santosh Trophy: Odisha grab big win against Madhya Pradesh

AMRITSAR: Odisha had an easy outing on the opening day of Group F qualifiers in the 78th National Football Championship for the Santosh Trophy when they defeated Madhya Pradesh 6-1 at the GNDU Sports Complex on Thursday.

The winners led 4-0 at half time. Group F has three teams, the third team being Chhattisgarh. Odisha took early grip

over the match as they opened the scoring in the 11th minute when a cross from the right was tapped in by Arbin Lakra. The winners increased the lead in the 26th minute after striker Roshan Panu spectacularly weaved through a host of defenders to beat goalkeeper Salamuddin Khan.

Two more goals came in the first half. After Jitu Muduli slammed in

a cross from the right by Arbin Lakra in the 37th minute, Kartik Hantal scored the fourth goal during the add-on time of the first half.

In the second half, Hantal scored again in the 64th minute before Shubham Mane pulled one back for Madhya Pradesh. Substitute Rahul Mukhi rounded off the tally for Odisha off a penalty during the closing stages.

Palmeiras closes gap on leader Botafogo

RIO DE JANEIRO: Jose Lopez scored in the 89th minute as Palmeiras recovered from a goal down to clinch a 2-1 away victory over Bahia in Brazil's Serie A championship.

Luciano Rodriguez gave the host the lead by combining with Gilberto Moraes before firing a low 20-yard drive into the far corner on Wednesday.

The visitor equalized just before halftime through playmaker Raphael Veiga, who sent a dipping free-kick into the top-right corner. Lopez completed the turnaround when he latched



onto Vanderlan's cross from the left wing with a diving header that rebounded in off the underside of the crossbar.

The result leaves defending champion Palmeiras just two points behind leader Botafogo with four match days remaining.

"We again showed great character to find a way to win," Lopez told reporters after the match. "We can now go back home knowing that we're still in the title race. We'll fight until the end."

In other Brazilian top-flight fixtures on Wednesday, Botafogo could only manage a 0-0 draw at Atletico Mineiro, Gremio was held to a 2-2 home draw by Juventude, Flamengo won 2-1 at Cuiaba, Sao Paulo drew 1-1 at Bragantino, and Atletico Paranaense secured a 2-0 home victory over Atletico Goianiense.

Noor wins thriller to make CAS Squash semis

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's top player Noor Zaman beat Perry Malik of England in a thrilling quarter-final of the CAS Serena Hotels International Squash Championship here at the Mushaf Squash Complex, media reports said.

Second seed Noor overcame Malik 14-12, 5-11, 11-7, 10-12, 11-7 in a clash lasting 54 minutes on Wednesday, the Dawn reported.

After Noor won the first game 14-12, Malik made a strong comeback to claim the second game 11-5.



In a seesaw match, Noor bounced back to win the next game 11-7 only for

Malik to bag the fourth game 12-10. In the decisive game,

Noor defeated his opponent 11-7 to move into the last-four stage where he will face compatriot Ashab Irfan, who got the better of Dutch Rowan Damming 10-12, 11-2, 11-9, 11-5 in their quarter-final that lasted 48 minutes.

Nasir Iqbal, another Pakistan campaigner, beat Seif El Shenawy of Egypt 10-12, 11-4, 11-4, 11-5 in a last-eight match that lasted 35 minutes. Nasir in the semi-final will face top seed Ibrahim Elkabbani of Egypt who comfortably downed Malaysia's Darren 17-15, 11-6, 11-5.

NASA introduces robots that will swim in oceans of moons of Jupiter

WASHINGTON DC: The futuristic kind of robots have been unveiled by NASA which will look into the mysteries of the underwater worlds of the moons of Jupiter like Europa and Saturn's Enceladus.

The concept, which has been built by the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), is called Sensing With Independent Micro-swimmers (SWIM) and can prove revolutionary in the investigation of the icy worlds' subsurface oceans.

The robot is being tested in a pool and it weighs more than two kilograms and measures nearly 16.5 inches.

NASA said that their plan is to deliver various such tiny self-propelled robots which are three times smaller in comparison to the existing autonomous underwater vehicles and look

for temperature and chemical signals which can point to life.

The communication and GPS systems will be equipped in these robots for navigating underwater along with instruments which will investigate the chemicals in the oceans.

The video has been shared by JPL from the tests of the prototypes which showed that the concept can work. It is just a concept currently and needs funding and approval for development.

Missions to Jupiter's moons Scientists have been intrigued by the moons of the outer solar system planets after they found hints of hidden oceans in moons like Europa, Enceladus, Titan and Ariel and links of water on moons being suitable for life.

NASA and ESA have been moti-

vated by these possibilities and hence have launched their missions to the moons of Jupiter this year.

In April, ESA's Jupiter Icy Moons Explorer (JUICE) spacecraft took off to investigate Europa, Callisto and Ganymede.

This was followed by the Europa Clipper probe of NASA which will study the moon closely.

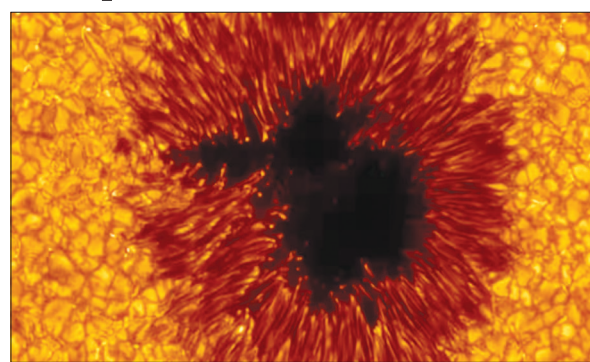
In the early 2030s, both missions will get started when the spacecraft lands at their destination.

Another mission has been planned by NASA for studying Saturn's moon Titan which is also likely to have a subsurface ocean.

The Dragonfly mission will have a drone flying over the planet and finding the traces of 'prebiotic' conditions which may have led to the emergence of life in our solar system.



Huge sunspot will soon face Earth and spew flares towards us



CALIFORNIA: The sun is once again extremely active. A massive sunspot is slowly turning towards Earth and is expected to spew out solar flares directly at us, leading to not just auroras but also radio blackouts. Named AR3901, the sunspot has already released some flares, with more expected in the coming days.

On Monday, the sun fired nine M-class solar flares, most of them originating from this active sunspot. Earth was not in the

firing line of these flares, but when the spot turns towards the planet, things might go a little awry.

"Solar flare activity has remained at high levels with 10 M-Class, R1 (Minor) level flares over the period. Much of the activity has stemmed from Region 3901 (S07E63, Dai/beta-gamma) which remains difficult to analyse due to foreshortening near the east limb," NOAA's Space Weather Prediction Center (SWPC) said in a forecast discussion.

Archaeologists find 1,600-year-old amulet with depiction of King Solomon killing devil in Turkey

ANKARA: In a stunning discovery, a rare fifth-century Christian pendant was found by archaeologists in Turkey.

The pendant depicts King Solomon riding on horseback and killing the devil.

It was the only such pendant found in Anatolia, which is a region that is spread on a major part of modern-day Turkey to date.

The two sides of the bronze pendant had inscriptions in ancient Greek. On the side of King Solomon's depiction, the text read "Our Lord defeated evil" while the other side had the names of four angels, Azrael, Gabriel, Michael, and Israfil.

"It is a symbol of religion and power," said Ersin Çelikbaş, who is an archaeologist at Karabuk University in Turkey, while speaking to Live Science.

In a statement, Çelikbaş said that people were using the pendant as an amulet



because they believed that it would protect them against danger or evil.

As mentioned in the Hebrew Bible, King Solomon was ancient Israel's ruler during the 10th century B.C., however, there is very little archaeological evidence to verify the biblical account.

Çelikbaş believed that the artefact discovered was a Christian pendant.

"Solomon is an important figure in all three holy

religions," he explained in a statement.

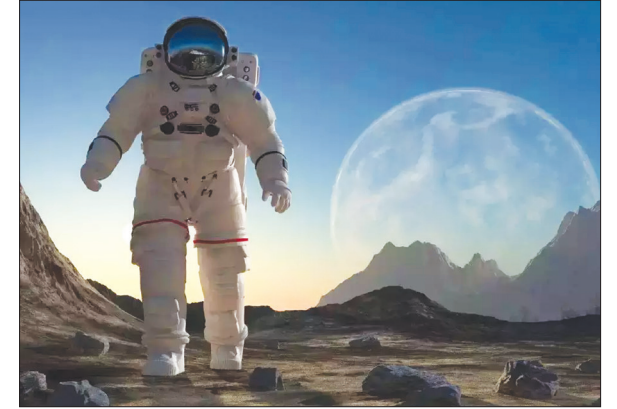
"While he is referred to as a ruler in the Torah and the Bible, he is also recognised as a prophet in Islam. The depiction of Solomon on this [pendant] surprised us and revealed the importance of the artefact for Anatolian archaeology," Çelikbaş further said.

Here's how archaeologists found the pendant

The pendant was found in a building that was likely related to military activity, said Çelikbaş while speaking to Live Science.

"In our previous excavations, we had determined the existence of a cavalry unit here," said Çelikbaş, in the statement.

"Prophet Solomon is also known as the commander of armies. We understand that he was also considered a protective figure for the Roman and Byzantine cavalry in Hadrianopolis," he added.



India's ISRO plans to build space station around moon by 2040

NEW DELHI: The Indian space agency, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), is planning to build a moon-orbiting space station by 2040, as per various online reports. This is part of ISRO's ambitious objective to establish a long-term presence beyond Earth orbit.

The space station will serve crewed missions to the surface of the moon and will be an outpost for scientific research, according to local media reports.

The lunar space station is expected to be completed around the same time India's astronauts will land on the moon, with the construction of a permanent base on the surface before 2050.

This space station will be the third and final phase of India's moon exploration efforts, as mentioned in various reports online. The first phase involved conducting robotic missions to the moon using ISRO's technology, including the upcoming Chandrayaan 4 sample-return mission.

The Chandrayaan 4 is scheduled to launch in 2028, which will aim to collect roughly 3 kilograms of samples from a water-ice-rich surface near the lunar south pole and deliver them back to Earth.

"We are looking at how we can do a mission to the moon and back in a low-cost manner," said S. Somanath, the chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

The second phase seeks to achieve a crewed moon landing by 2040, followed by construction of the moon-orbiting station, India Today reported. In addition to hosting astronauts, the station will serve as a hub for scientific research and as a base for future space missions.

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