

"The IPL has started exactly how I expected it to, with flatter pitches and high-scoring games. As always, it's interesting to see how the old school superstars like Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli perform, but I think this youngster for Rajasthan Royals, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, is the one to watch in the opening few weeks." - Graeme Smith, South African batting great

Asian Boxing C'ships

Indian women top medal charts with 4 gold

Ulaanbaatar(Mongolia): The Indian women's team delivered a historic performance at the Asian Boxing Championships 2026, finishing on top of the medal charts with a total of 10 medals, including four gold, two silver, and four bronze, underlining their dominance at the continental stage.

Under the stewardship of head coach Santiago Nieva, every member of the women's team returned home with a medal, stamping their authority on the continental competition. With Boxing Federation of India President Ajay Singh in attendance, Minakshi Hooda (48kg) got



things going by claiming the first gold of the day with a commanding 5-0 victory over Mongolia's Nomundari Enkh-Amgalan. Preeti (54kg) continued her sensational run, defeating Chinese Taipei's Huang Hsiao-wen, a three-time world champion and Tokyo 2020 Olympic bronze medallist, by a unanimous 5-0 decision to secure

the top podium finish.

Priya (60kg) added to India's gold tally with a clinical 3-0 win over North Korea's Won Un-gyong in the final. Arundhati (70kg) also impressed, registering a 4:1 victory against Kazakhstan's Bakyt Seidish to clinch gold in her category.

India added two silver medals to its tally, with Jais-

mine (57kg) finishing runner-up after a strong campaign, while Alfiyan Pathan (80+kg) also secured silver following her final bout.

Earlier in the week, two-time world champion Nikhat Zareen (54kg), Ankushita Boro (65kg), Lovlina (75kg) and Pooja (80kg) had settled for bronze medals after semifinal exits. Having confirmed 16 medals, the most of any nation in this edition, India will be looking to finish the tournament strongly, with two men's boxers - Vishwanath Suresh (48kg) and Sachin Siwach (60kg) - in their respective finals on Friday.

TG finishes runner-up in national gymnastics

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

THE Telangana gymnastics team delivered an impressive performance to secure second place overall at the Level-wise Boys & Girls National Gymnastics Competition 2026 held in Delhi at The Gymnastic Academy. The team clinched a remarkable tally of 25 silver medals and 2 bronze medals across events, including table vault, uneven bars, balance beam, and floor exercise.

In Level 1, gymnasts Hiya Yadav, Pranavi Shah, Anshul Yadav, and Adwaith Akula showcased strong performances. Level 2 saw notable contributions from Manvi Reddy,



Myra Mandava, and Chokkarapu Loukya Virat, while higher levels featured standout efforts from Inara Rukmini, Simone Pestonji, and Khushi Rai.

The team was felicitated in Hyderabad in the presence of Priyanka, an international gymnast, national champion, and judge.

Dist chess selections from April 11

HYDERABAD: The Telangana State Chess Association will conduct Hyderabad and Rangareddy district Under-7 and Under-11 boys and girls selection tournaments on April 11 and 12 at Lal Bahadur Stadium, Hyderabad. The tournaments will shortlist players for the state championship.

Details are available at www.chesstelangana.com or contact 7337578899 and 7337399299, said General Secretary A Jayachandra.

Mukul guides LSG to thrilling 3-wkt win over KKR

KOLKATA

MUKUL Choudhary stood against all the odds and remained unbeaten at 54 off just 27 balls as Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) chased down the target of 182 runs on the final ball of the match and registered a three-wicket win over Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata on Thursday.

Earlier, captain Ajinkya Rahane and young batter Angkrish Raghuvanshi played key knocks, while Rovman Powell provided a late boost as Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) posted 181/4 in 20 overs.

Chasing a challenging total on a slow surface, LSG got off to a strong start with Aiden Markram and Mitchell Marsh scoring freely at

over 10 runs per over. The pair took the team to 41 in just four overs.

However, KKR bounced back in the fifth over through Vaibhav Arora, who dismissed Markram for 22 and Marsh for 15 in the same over. Captain Rishabh Pant tried to stabilise the innings alongside Ayush Badoni, but struggled for rhythm and was dismissed by Cameron Green for 10. Nicholas Pooran also failed to make an impact, scoring 13 before getting out in the 12th over, while Abdul Samad departed cheaply.

With wickets falling at the other end, Badoni held the innings together and scored a well-made 54 off 34 balls, hitting seven fours and two sixes. However, he was dismissed soon after reaching his half-century.

After Badoni's departure,



Mukul took charge of the chase. He played aggressively, hitting multiple sixes and keeping LSG in the hunt. In the final over, LSG needed 14 runs, and Mukul held his nerve, smashing two sixes before completing the winning run on the last ball. He brought up his fifty in just 26 balls and remained unbeaten on 54. Earlier, after being asked to bat first, Kolkata Knight Riders had a steady but cautious start, with Mohammed Shami conceding

just six runs in the opening over. The early breakthrough came when Finn Allen was dismissed for nine, caught off Prince Yadav. Following the setback, Ajinkya Rahane and Angkrish Raghuvanshi rebuilt the innings with a composed partnership.

BRIEF SCORES: Kolkata Knight Riders 181/4 in 20 overs (Angkrish Raghuvanshi 45, Ajinkya Rahane 41, Rovman Powell 39; Digvesh Rathi 1-25, Manimaran Siddharth 1-34) lost to Lucknow Super Giants 182/7 in 20 overs (Mukul Choudhary 54*, Ayush Badoni 54; Anukul Roy 3-32, Vaibhav Arora 2-38) by 3 wickets.

In Action today Rajasthan Royals vs Royal Challengers Bengaluru at 7.30 pm.

Siva powers Golkonda Hotel into final

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

RIDING on T Siva's swash-buckling unbeaten 82, favourites Golkonda Hotel crushed Radisson Blu Plaza by 63 runs to storm into the final of the 10th edition of the Hotels & Restaurants Association of Telangana State T20 Cricket Tournament 2026, played at the New Madies Cricket Grounds on Wednesday.

Golkonda Hotel, appearing in the final for the first time, will now face The Leela Hotel in the title clash.

BRIEF SCORES:



Golkonda Hotel: 175/6 in 20 overs (T. Siva 82*, Pankaj 33; Anil Kumar 2/29) beat Radisson Blu Plaza: 112 all

out in 16.4 overs (Babu 41; Pankaj 3/17, Praneeth 2/22, Shiva Kumar 2/11) by 63 runs.

BADMINTON ASIA C'SHIPS Ayush enters quarters; Sindhu, Prannoy bow out

NINGBO: Ayush Shetty continued his fine form at the Badminton Asia Championships as he entered the quarterfinals after beating Chin Yu Jen of Taipei in straight games here on Thursday, while two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu and HS Prannoy concluded their campaigns with their re-

spective second-round losses.

Ayush, the US Open 2025 champion, registered a comfortable 21-16, 21-12 win over the Taipei shuttler in a match that lasted for 41 minutes.

Ayush started off his campaign with a stunning win over world No. 7 and fifth seed Li Shi Feng of China, 21-13, 21-16,

in the opening round. He will look to carry the momentum in the quarterfinal when he faces third seed Jonatan Christie of Indonesia. Meanwhile, two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu and former world championship medallist H. S. Prannoy bowed out after losing their respective second-round matches.

TFA mourns demise of former national footballer Nithyasheelan

HYDERABAD: The Telangana Football Association (TFA) expressed deep grief over the untimely demise of former national football player Nithyasheelan, at the age of 57. He had represented at the Sub-Junior National Championship in 1988 held in Dhanbad.

As a mark of respect, two minutes of silence were observed on Thursday morning at the Gymkhana Football Ground during the ongoing U-20 camp. Similar tributes were paid before the C Division Football League matches. A condolence meeting was also held at 5 pm at the TFA office, attended by coaches, referees, and office bearers, who paid homage to his contributions to the sport. Nithyasheelan is survived by his wife, two sons, and a daughter. The TFA conveyed heartfelt condolences to his family, remembering his dedication and lasting contribution to football.

Women's Reservation Bill

Stalin backs 33% quota, raises suspicion on poll-timed bill

CHENNAI: Chief Minister M K Stalin on Thursday alleged that the proposed amendment to ensure 33 per cent reservation for women in the midst of polls in states including Tamil Nadu appeared to be yet another political manoeuvre aimed at shaping electoral narratives. Stalin alleged the timing for the proposed amendment led to serious suspicion.

"Why push such a far-reaching decision in the middle of state elections. This appears to be yet another political manoeuvre aimed at shaping electoral narratives, much like earlier attempts to influence women voters ahead of the 2024 Parliament elections," he alleged in a statement titled "This is not reform, this is reengineering power." Further, he said: "Let me be unequivocal: we strongly support 33 per cent reservation for women. Our support is absolute. But it must be implemented without increasing seats and without punishing states that acted responsibly. If the intent is genuine, nothing prevents immediate implementation within the existing framework."

Demanding fair delimitation, he alleged there was complete opacity on the basis for delimitation and



asked would the exercise rely on 1971 figures from a pre-population control era or the 2021 Census. "Conflicting signals and vague assurances only deepen suspicion." This move would also impose a massive financial burden on states, forcing them to expand or rebuild Legislative Assemblies, all without proper consultation.

"This is a direct assault on cooperative federalism. This is not reform, it is a unilateral, politically driven exercise designed to concentrate power, weaken Parliament, marginalise the South, and undermine social justice," he alleged. "The nation deserves answers: why this undue haste, why shift the goalposts, and who truly stands to benefit?" The NDA government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi is systematically eroding the very foundations

of Parliament, he alleged.

The Dravidian party chief claimed: "What should be a vibrant forum for debate and accountability is being reduced to a hollow ritual, a stage where members may not even get fair time to speak or represent their people. This proposal to increase seats is a direct contradiction of their own slogan of minimum government, maximum governance. It will only inflate expenditure, burden taxpayers, and dilute the quality of parliamentary functioning."

This also went against the spirit of Article 1 of the Constitution, which defines India as a Union of States. Ignoring the voices of states and bypassing meaningful consultation is not democratic - it is unitary overreach that undermines the country's federal and plural character.

Kerala polling sees minor protests over bogus votes

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Assembly polling across Kerala progressed largely peacefully, but protests were reported at several booths on Thursday over allegations of bogus voting. A minor scuffle broke out between Congress and BJP activists at Manalur in Thrissur district after UDF candidate T N Prathapan arrived in the area.

According to police, BJP activists prevented people accompanying Prathapan from entering the booth premises, leading to the scuffle.

In Wadakkanchery, also in Thrissur district, a voter, Sajeev, was unable to cast his vote after election officials informed him that his vote had already been recorded as a postal ballot. This triggered protests by BJP activists, prompting police intervention.

Although election officials offered to allow him to cast a tender vote, he declined. BJP candidate T S Ullas Babu later arrived at the booth and staged a protest.

A similar incident occurred in Kuttiady, Kozhikode district, where a woman was denied the right to vote after it was found that her vote had already been cast as a postal ballot.

At Malampuzha and Shoranur in Palakkad district, Thrikkaripur in Kasaragod, and Vattiyorkavu in Thiruvananthapuram, complaints emerged that votes had been cast in the names of original voters, leading to protests.

The affected voters were later permitted to cast tender votes.

Bengal political row over Kabir video

KOLKATA

A political controversy erupted in West Bengal on Thursday after an alleged video of Humayun Kabir surfaced on social media, purportedly showing him claiming links with senior BJP leaders and efforts to defeat Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee in the upcoming Assembly elections.

At a press meet, the Tri-

namool Congress shared the purported video and demanded an Enforcement Directorate probe into Kabir's alleged claims of proximity with Leader of Opposition in West Bengal Assembly, Suvendu Adhikari, Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and the Prime Minister's Office as part of a multi-core plan to defeat Banerjee in the polls.

In the video, which could

not be independently verified by PTI, Kabir is allegedly heard saying he is willing to go to "any extent" to unseat Banerjee and has been in touch with senior BJP leaders, including Adhikari.

Kabir termed the video as AI-generated and aimed at maligning him and threatened to take legal action. Kabir, who founded the Aam Janata Unnayan Party days after he was suspended by the

TMC late last year, is also purportedly heard claiming that he had communication with the PMO and was advised to coordinate with leaders from other BJP-ruled states.

The video further purportedly captures Kabir stating that his strategy revolves around diverting minority votes away from the ruling Trinamool Congress, suggesting that such a shift could benefit the BJP electorally.

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