

JK Public School Panjtirthi celebrates Army Day virtually



Students of JK Public School Panjtirthi paying tributes to Indian army during Army Day celebration.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: JK Public School (JKPS) Panjtirthi expressed its admiration and gratitude to the Indian Army by cele-

brating Army Day virtually with great zeal.

Jakiians expressed that martyred soldiers are the greatest heroes of our country

and remembering them on this special day is a duty of all the Indians. They recited beautiful patriotic rhymes to pay homage to the coura-

geous and brave Indian soldiers. Jakiians also enacted a skit to showcase the selfless service, devotion, brotherhood and patriotism of soldiers.

The Principal of JKPS Panjtirthi, Suman Banbah said, "Soldiers are always ready to fight at all the hard times at Indian borders as

well as with the natural disasters. They courageously face all the challenges and difficulties which come their way to save the nation and people."

Winter Olympics-bound Arif Khan calls on LG

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: J&K's alpine skier, Arif Mohammed Khan who has qualified for Winter Olympics in Beijing on Sunday called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, here.

Skier Arif Khan who hails from a small village of Goiwara in Hajibal, Tangmarg in Kashmir valley has achieved the unique distinction of being India's sole representative at the Beijing Winter Olympics. He is also the first athlete from the country to win direct quota spots in two different Winter Olympics events.

The Lt Governor congratulated Arif for achieving a rare feat and extended his best wishes to the Winter Olympics qualifier.

"Entire nation is inspired by Arif's dedication and sportsmanship. I urge everyone to support him. Wish him good luck and pray for his victory. Let's bring home the gold," the Lt Governor said.



Winter Olympics qualifier, Arif Mohd Khan calling on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha.

The Lt Governor commended the Winter Olympics qualifier for setting an incredible example for youth and budding sportspersons of the UT.

The Youth of J&K are immensely talented and certainly deserve more opportunities and exposure to display their talents. We are committed to extending all possible support to the local sportspersons who strive hard to make J&K and the nation proud. The J&K Government is taking ground-breaking initiatives for creating world-class infrastructure, implementing new policies to make J&K the Power House of sports, the Lt Governor said.

Arif Khan has represented the country four times in the World Championships in skiing and had earlier participated in both the editions of Khelo India Winter Games held in Gulmarg.

The skier was accompanied by his mentor Zulfiqar Ahmed khan.

India out of women's Asian Cup match against Chinese Taipei called off after 12 players test COVID positive

■ AGENCY

NAVI MUMBAI: India were forced out of the AFC Women's Asian Cup football tournament on Sunday after a dozen COVID-19 cases among their players led to the cancellation of a group match against Chinese Taipei minutes before kickoff here.

Apart from the COVID cases, two players were also laid low by injuries which made it impossible for India to field a team given that two of their footballers were already out of contention after being infected by the virus a few days ago.

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) said given the situation, Article 4.1 of the tournament rules comes into effect, which makes it clear that if a team fails to assemble for a match, it would be "considered to have withdrawn from the relevant Competition."

The RT-PCR tests on the squad were conducted on January 21 and the results came this morning.

The All India Football Federation (AIFF) President Praful Patel also issued a statement expressing sadness at the turn of events but surprisingly did not clarify the team's tournament status.

"We are as disappointed as probably the entire nation would be right now with this unwarranted situation," he said.

"However, the players' health and well-being are of paramount importance to us, and it cannot be compromised under any circumstances. I wish all the infected players and team officials a swift and full recovery. They will be well supported by the AIFF and AFC."

India failed to name the required minimum of 13 players for the Group A match against Chinese Taipei before the game and there was no sign of the team at the ground even as the rivals warned up.

India were next scheduled to play China in their final group match on Wednesday but that is unlikely to go

ahead now given that the team does not have enough players to field an XI.

The knockouts start from January 30, making it nearly impossible for the tournament organisers to maneuver the schedule.

"...this happened to us despite the best measures put in place, and it is sheer bad luck that it happened to us. Let there be no fingers pointed at any. We need to understand this is a pandemic situation, and no bubble is fool proof around the world," Patel said in his statement which focussed on feelings of the players but offered no insights on how the situation arose.

It is still not clear how the spread happened.

As per Article 4.1 of the 'Special Rules Applicable to AFC Competitions during the COVID-19 pandemic', "If a Participating Team/Participating Club has less than thirteen (13) Participating Players

(including one [1] goalkeeper) available for a match for any reason (whether or not relating to COVID-19), the relevant Participating Team/Participating Club shall not be able to participate in the Match.

"Such Participating Team/Participating Club shall be held responsible for the Match not taking place and shall be considered to have withdrawn from the relevant Competition.

"The relevant Participating Team/Participating Club and its affiliated Member Association shall be subject to the provisions of the relevant Competition regulations regarding the consequences of withdrawal, as applicable."

The AFC said the tournament will continue to be played as scheduled with the group winners, runners-up and the two best third-placed teams qualifying for the quarter-finals.

"The India-Chinese Taipei match matter will now be referred to the relevant AFC Committee in accordance with the applicable regulations," it said.

Tourism Deptt organises Shikara Rally in Dal lake



Director Tourism G N Itoo flagging off Shikara rally in Dal Lake, Srinagar.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: In a streak of multiple events organized by Tourism Department of Kashmir to celebrate 75th year of independence under Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, the department on Sunday held a colorful Shikara rally in Dal Lake to woo tourists to the valley.

Director Tourism G N Itoo flagged off the rally from Nehru Park in which a

restricted under of shikara wallas participated owing to the covid situation.

The Shikara wallas rowed from Nehru Park to SKICC and back to the park to complete the round with enthusiasm.

Speaking on the occasion, Director Tourism emphasized on observation of Covid guidelines strictly amid the ongoing third wave to save all the stakeholders from falling

to the disease.

He stressed on Shikara wallas, houseboat owners and tourists to wear masks and maintain physical distance so the tourism activity is not affected.

It was informed that the aim of organizing such events is to highlight the tourism potential of valley besides acquainting general people about the values of independent India.

India lose by four runs, suffer 0-3 whitewash against rebuilding South Africa

■ AGENCY

CAPE TOWN: India's formidable batting line-up was a let-down once again as they were handed an embarrassing 0-3 whitewash by a South African team in transition after falling four runs short in the third and final ODI here on Sunday.

Despite half centuries by Virat Kohli (65 off 83 balls), Shikhar Dhawan (61 off 73 balls) and Deepak Chahar (54 off 34 balls), India were on the losing side for a third straight time, this time in pursuit of 288, ending a disastrous tour of the 'Rainbow Nation'.

Asked to take first strike, South Africa were all out for 287 after Quinton de Kock's attacking hundred and Rassie van der Dussen's fluent half-century. In reply, India were all out for 283 in 49.2 overs, completely mis-handling a chase that should have been completed smoothly.

Having taken two wickets with the ball, Chahar blazed away with the bat and hit five fours and two sixes, but his effort was not enough in the end.

All in all, the limited overs series turned out to be one of the most disappointing out-

ings for India in recent years, especially after having blanked the Proteas in their backyard in 2018.

They began the tour on a rousing note, winning the opening Test by 113 runs but lost the plot thereafter, failing miserably to challenge the South Africans. It was especially for KL Rahul, who lost all four matches he captained during the tour (one Test and three ODIs).

Looking to restore some pride in their last match of the tour, India overhauled their playing XI by making as many as four changes, bringing in Suryakumar Yadav, Jayant Yadav, Deepak Chahar and Prasadidh Krishna.

The ones to miss out were Ravichandran Ashwin, Shardul Thakur, Venkatesh Iyer and Bhuvneshwar Kumar.

The changes did not bring about a change in India's fortunes as Suryakumar was dismissed for 39 off 32 balls.

India were last clean swept in an away ODI series by New Zealand (0-3) in 2020 under Kohli.

Incidentally, Rohit Sharma was absent from that series

too, with a hamstring injury.

On Sunday, Kohli made a 65 off 84 balls, while opener Shikhar Dhawan struck a 73-ball 61, both scoring their second fifties of the three-match series.

And it should have been India's game as it seemed for a good part but the side simply bungled it in the closing stages despite being well ahead on the asking rate thanks to Chahar's blitzkrieg.

Earlier, India rallied to bowl out South Africa under 300 after de Kock and van der Dussen's blazing knocks.

De Kock struck 124 off 130 balls and added 144 runs for the fourth wicket with van der Dussen before India put the brakes on the home team's scoring by sending back both the batters in quick succession.

After that, David Miller contributed a 38-ball 39 before the innings ended with a ball to spare.

With his sixth ODI century, de Kock equalled AB de Villiers' record of scoring the most hundreds against India by a South African.

KL Rahul's decision to bowl first worked straightaway as

Deepak Chahar (2/53) had opener Janneman Malan (1) caught behind with just eight runs on the board at the start of the third over.

It was a big wicket for the Indians as Malan came into the inconsequential final ODI on the back of a neat 91-run knock in the Proteas' series-clinching second ODI win at Paarl.

And credit for that must go to Chahar who got his fullish delivery to move away after angling it in, leaving Malan clueless.

A direct hit from India skipper KL Rahul from mid-off, ended his in-form counterpart Temba Bavuma's brief stay in the middle as the batter failed to reach the non-striker's end in time.

Bavuma making his way back to the dressing room for eight runs was another big break for India as the South Africa captain had scored a century in the opening fixture and also looked solid in the second outing.

After bagging two wickets in the powerplay, India seemed to be headed in the right direction when Aiden Markram's attempted pull

Winter Climbing Workshop from Jan 29

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

LADAKH: The Adventure Pulse shall be holding week-long Winter Climbing Workshop with the sole aim to provide practical and theoretical knowledge of two important disciplines of Rock Climbing and Ice Climbing from January 29 to February 5.

The workshop shall be conducted by two Everest Summiteers in the majestic and icy terrain of Ladakh. The high altitude and subzero temperatures create a perfect simulation of conditions found in climbing expeditions.

The first two days will be spent in physical conditioning, assessing and evaluating acclimatization to the sudden change in altitude and temperature through some hikes around Leh.

It will be followed by the Rock Climbing for next two days with boots, gloves and tools. On day five and six, the participants shall be involved in climbing on Ice in subzero temperatures practicing newly acquired skills.

For more details interested adventure climbers can contact on info@adventurepulse.com.



Sindhu wins Syed Modi International badminton title

■ AGENCY

LUCKNOW: Two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu eased past young compatriot Malvika Bansod in straight games to win her second women's singles title at the Syed Modi International badminton tournament here on Sunday.

Playing in a depleted field due to multiple COVID-19 cases, top seed Sindhu hardly broke her sweat to get past Bansod 21-13 21-16 in a lop-sided title contest.

The final lasted just 35 minutes.

It was former world champion Sindhu's second Syed Modi title after having annexed the BWF World Tour Super 300 event in 2017.

Before that, seventh seeded Indians Ishaan Bhatnagar and Tanisha Crasto clinched the mixed doubles title with a straight game win over compatriots T Hema Nagendra Babu and Srivedya Gurazada.

Bhatnagar and Crasto inflicted a 21-16 21-12 on the unseeded Indian duo in the summit clash that ended in 29 minutes.

Earlier, the men's singles final between Arnaud Merkle and Lucas Claerbout was declared a 'No Match' after one of the finalists tested positive for COVID-19.

Eight seeds Anna Ching Yik Cheong and Toh Mei Xing of Malaysia defeated seventh seeds Treasa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand 21-12 21-13 to win the women's doubles crown.

The story was same for the Indians in the men's doubles



final as the sixth seeded pair of Krishna Prasad Garaga and Vishnuvardhan Goud were outclassed 18-21 15-21 by eighth seeds Man Wei Chong and Kai Wun Tee of Malaysia.

It was expected to be a one-sided women's singles match between world number seven Sindhu and young Bansod, ranked 84th in the world, and it turned out to be exactly that.

Sindhu used her vast experience and skills to great effect as Bansod found it extremely difficult to adjust to her opponent's game from the onset.

The Tokyo Olympics bronze medallist took off from the word go and raced to a 7-0 lead in no time. The ace shuttler used her height and reach to great effect to increase her lead to 11-1 at the break.

After the break, Bansod tried to up her game and collected a few points to close the gap but it was no match for a much superior Sindhu, who closed out the first game with consummate ease.

"From the first game I just went for the win and it was important for me that every point mattered. Even though I was leading I didn't take it easy, may be, couple of points I made unforced errors but I

made sure I came back into the game and thought that I should be consistent," Sindhu said after the match.

The second game, however, produced a better contest with Bansod trying her best to lift her game, and she did that too, but it was not enough to challenge Sindhu's class.

Sindhu used her height to mix her smashes with pinpoint drop shots, which Bansod failed to counter as the Olympic medallist raced to a 11-4 lead at the break.

Sindhu continued in the same vein even though Bansod tried her best to forge a comeback and in the process secured four points on the trot to reduce the deficit to 17-12.

Bansod managed to pick up four more points but lacked the temperament and class as Sindhu closed out the contest without any fuss.

"Overall, it's been a good week, good matches, so I am happy with the win," Sindhu said.

The Olympic star lauded India's bench strength and Bansod for her spirited show in the tournament.

"In the whole week each match was important because even though I was playing with Indians I could see good talented youngsters who are coming up and are really doing well," Sindhu said.

"It was good she (Bansod) is an upcoming player and she is doing really well. She had some good matches in quarter-finals and semi-finals. She played well and there were some good rallies."

shot failed to clear substitute fielder Ruturaj Gaikwad in the deep square leg region, leaving the hosts at 70 for three in the 13th over.

SCOREBOARD		
South Africa Innings		
Quinton de Kock c Dhawan b Bumrah		124
Janneman Malan c Pant b Chahar		01
Temba Bavuma (c) run out (Rahul)		08
Aiden Markram c sub (RD Gaikwad) b Chahar		15
Rassie van der Dussen c Iyer b Chahal		52
David Miller c Kohli b Prasadidh Krishna		39
Andile Phehlukwayo run out (Iyer/†Pant)		04
Dwaine Pretorius c SA Yadav b Prasadidh Krishna		20
Keshav Maharaj c Kohli b Bumrah		06
Sisanda Magala c Rahul b Prasadidh Krishna		00
Lungi Ngidi not out		00
Extras		18
Total		287/10
India Innings		
KL Rahul (c) e Malan b Ngidi		09
Shikhar Dhawan c †de Kock b Phehlukwayo		61
Virat Kohli c Bavuma b Maharaj		65
Rishabh Pant † c Magala b Phehlukwayo		00
Shreyas Iyer c Phehlukwayo b Magala		26
Suryakumar Yadav c Bavuma b Pretorius		39
Deepak Chahar c Pretorius b Ngidi		54
Jayant Yadav c Bavuma b Ngidi		02
Jasprit Bumrah c Bavuma b Phehlukwayo		12
Yuzvendra Chahal c Miller b Pretorius		02
Prasadidh Krishna not out		02
Extras		11
Total		283/10