

COVID downs IPL: League suspended after multiple cases; BCCI assures safe return to foreign players

■ AGENCY
NEW DELHI: A barrage of COVID-19 cases forced the IPL's indefinite suspension on Tuesday, a move that was welcomed by the franchisees even as the league's jittery foreign recruits waited for BCCI's plan of action to ensure their return amid some strict travel restrictions.

The decision to postpone the league was announced after SunRisers Hyderabad batsman Wriddhiman Saha and Delhi Capitals spinner Amit Mishra joined the infected players' list, which already had Kolkata Knight Riders' Varun Chakravarthy and Sandeep Warrier.

Chennai Super Kings' bowling coach L Balaji was among the prominent non-playing staff to test positive. "The Indian Premier League Governing Council and BCCI in an emergency meeting has unanimously decided to postpone IPL 2021 season, with immediate effect," a statement from the IPL read after the development was confirmed by its chairman Brijesh Patel to PTI.

"The BCCI does not want to compromise on the safety of the players, support staff and the other participants involved in organising the IPL. This decision was

	M	W	L	PT
Delhi Capitals	8	6	2	12
Chennai Super Kings	7	5	2	10
Royal Challengers Bangalore	7	5	2	10
Mumbai Indians	7	4	3	8
Rajasthan Royals	7	3	4	6
Punjab Kings	8	3	5	6
Kolkata Knight Riders	7	2	5	4
Sunrisers Hyderabad	7	1	6	2

taken keeping the safety, health and well-being of all the stakeholders in mind," it added. The IPL said BCCI will do all it can to ensure that players in the event get back to their homes safely.

IPL features cricketers from England (11), Australia (14), South Africa (11) and New Zealand (10) among other countries. The event also featured nine West Indians, three Afghans and two players from Bangladesh. Several former foreign players, especially from Australia, were also a part of the support staffs and commentary teams.

"These are difficult times, especially in India and while we have tried to bring in some positivity and cheer, however, it is imperative that the tournament is now suspended and everyone goes back to their families and

loved ones in these trying times," the IPL stated.

"The BCCI will do everything in its powers to arrange for the secure and safe passage of all the participants in IPL 2021."

The cricket boards of Australia, New Zealand and South Africa backed the decision and expressed confidence in BCCI's planning for their players' safe return. But Australia made it clear that it won't seek exemption from the travel ban which is in place till May 15 for flights from India.

"Cricket Australia and the Australian Cricketers Association respect the decision of the Australian Government to pause travel from India until at least May 15 and will not seek exemptions," a joint release from CA and ACA stated.

The Board, apart from

multing the way forward, was also counting its losses, which could run into Rs 2200 crore, according to a senior official.

The 52-day 60-match tournament would have concluded in Ahmedabad on May 30. However, only 24 days of cricket was possible with 29 completed games before the virus halted proceedings.

"We would be losing anything between Rs 2000 to Rs 2500 crore for the midway postponement of this season. I would say something in the range of Rs 2200 crore will be closer to accurate estimation," the BCCI official said.

The tournament began on April 9 and ran smoothly before KKR's COVID-19 cases caused the initial panic on Monday.

"...we will take stock if we

can find a suitable window later during the year. It could be September but these are all speculations. As of now we are not conducting it any further," BCCI vice-president Rajiv Shukla told PTI.

The 2020 IPL was also held in a bio-secure bubble in the UAE and at that time, infections were only reported before the start of the event.

India is currently recording over 3 lakh cases every-day and more than 3,000 daily deaths.

The explosion of cases has severely burdened the country's healthcare facilities causing an acute shortage of oxygen, hospital beds and crucial medicines.

The IPL was being staged across six venues in a caravan model where only two venues were being put to use at one go.

At the time of suspension, matches were being held in Ahmedabad and Delhi and the league was due to move to Bengaluru and Kolkata next week.

Just days before this suspension three Australian players -- Adam Zampa, Kane Richardson and Andre Tye -- had left the left the league citing pandemic concerns.

Senior Indian off-spinner

BCCI set to incur losses of over Rs 2,000 crore

NEW DELHI: The BCCI stands to lose over Rs 2000 crore of the broadcast and sponsorship money earmarked for this year's Indian Premier League which was indefinitely postponed on Tuesday due to COVID-19 cases in its bio-bubble.

The BCCI was forced to postpone the IPL after multiple cases of COVID-19 among players and support staff emerged from Ahmedabad and New Delhi in the past couple of days.

"We would be losing anything between Rs 2000 to Rs 2500 crore for the midway postponement of this season. I would say something in the range of Rs 2200 crore will be closer to accurate estimation," a senior BCCI official told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

The 52-day 60-match tournament would have concluded in Ahmedabad on May 30. However, only 24 days of cricket was possible with 29 completed games before the virus halted proceedings.

The biggest loss for BCCI is the money it gets from Star Sports for the broadcast rights of the tournament.

Star has a five-year contract worth Rs 16,347 crore which is Rs 3269.4 crore per year. If there are 60 games in a season, the per match valuation comes to approximately Rs 54.5 crore.

If Star pays per match, then the amount for 29 matches would be Rs 1580 crore approximately out of what would have been Rs 3270 crore for a full tournament. This means a loss of Rs 1690 crore for the Board.

Similarly, mobile manufacturers VIVO, as tournament's title sponsors, pay Rs 440 crore

per season and BCCI is likely to get less than half of that amount because of the postponement.

Add to it, associate sponsor companies like Unacademy, Dream11, CRed, Upstox, and Tata Motors, who pay in the range of Rs 120 crore each. Some subsidiary sponsors are also there.

"Slash all the payments by half or a bit less and you will be reaching a loss in the range of 2200 crore. The actual losses could be much more but this is a back of the hand calculation for the season," the official said.

The loss of a substantial amount of money will also reduce the central revenue pool for the season (the money that BCCI distributes among eight franchises) to nearly half.

The official, however, didn't divulge how much each franchise would lose due to the suspension of the tournament.

"It is difficult to say what kind of sponsorship and co-sponsorship money they earned this season as the economic climate has been pretty hostile," he said.

In case players are available only for a part of the tournament, the salaries are paid on pro-rata basis which means "assigning an amount to one person according to their share of the whole".

However, a senior player said that pro-rata is only applicable when a player voluntarily makes himself available for only a part of the tournament based on the matches available.

In this case, the organisers have halted the event so the franchises are likely to pay for at least half of the season.

Ravichandran Ashwin was also forced to withdraw after several members of his family, including his wife, children and parents, tested positive for the virus.

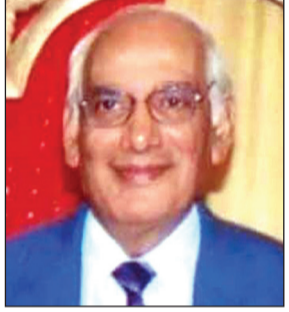
Radio Broadcaster PL Razdan passes away

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Veteran media personality, theatre and drama artist, P.L Razdan passed away on Tuesday in New Delhi after he lost his COVID-19 battle amid nightmarish health scenario in the national capital.

He is survived by wife and four daughters. A recipient of many awards and honours including national award for best Drama production during his career at radio Kashmir Srinagar, P.L Razdan continued with his passion of productions even after his retirement with excellence.

He has also won the highest award by the name of



Akashvani awards three times in various categories for radio drama productions. For every project he took up, he accomplished with success sticking to high standards of professionalism, hard work and dedication. The untimely and unfortunate demise of P.L Razdan,

the stalwart broadcaster and reputed programme producer of Prasar Bharti is a huge loss to the Broadcasting landscape.

He was also known for the most resonant and vibrant drama voice both in Kashmiri and Urdu.

He spent his considerable time as a producer in Yuv Vani section of Akashvani Srinagar. He later worked as a producer drama section of Srinagar AIR and produced ace drama's which were in enjoyed and appreciated by the listeners.

In Jammu Radio Station, he worked as a producer for popular Kashmiri programme "Pamposh" and

Urdu magazine "Khirman".

He himself was an ace drama voice and artist par excellence with laudable role in many radio plays. With his demise a void has been created among media fraternity, his colleagues and contemporaries.

Ashwani Kumar Chairman, Himalayan Media Foundation said that his demise has been widely mourned with condolences pouring in from all the stations across the country where he worked.

He said that Jammu and Kashmir lost top broadcaster, who worked in both Radio Stations and as child artist for more than seven decades.

Sheena qualifies Ph.D

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Sheena Mahajan, daughter of R o m e s h Gupta and Neera Gupta and wife of Parshant Gupta, resident of Subhash Nagar, Jammu, has been declared qualified for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) in Chemistry by University of Jammu. She worked on the topic 'Synthesis of quinoxaline containing heterocyclic compounds for anti-cancer evaluation' under the supervision of Prof Kamal Kapoor.



COVID-19: India's FIH Pro League matches in Europe postponed

■ AGENCY

LAUSANNE: India's upcoming FIH Hockey Pro League away fixtures against Spain and Germany later this month have been postponed due to the international travel restrictions imposed in the wake of surging COVID-19 cases in the Asian country, the world body (FIH) informed on Tuesday.

The Indian men's hockey team was scheduled to play against Spain on May 15 and 16, followed by the two-leg tie in Germany on May 23 and 24.

"FIH, Hockey India as well as the Hockey National Associations of Germany,

Spain and Great Britain - since the matches initially planned in London on 8-9 May were also postponed - are currently looking at all potential options to rearrange these matches at a later date," the International Hockey Federation (FIH) said in a statement.

"On behalf of the global hockey community, the International Hockey Federation (FIH) would like to express its support and strong sympathy to the Indian hockey community, as well as their families and friends.

"At this very hard time for India, a country so much linked to the history as well as

the current development of hockey, our thoughts are with all Indian people," it added.

Last month, India's FIH Hockey Pro League matches against Great Britain, scheduled for May 8-9 in London, were postponed following the UK government's decision to add India to the travel 'red list' due to the surging COVID-19 cases there. With India recording more than 3 lakh COVID-19 cases and 3,000 deaths daily for quite some time now, most of the foreign countries, including Australia, Malaysia, Germany, Singapore, New Zealand, UK etc, have suspended international flights from the country.

Court directs Revenue, Forest Departments to prevent encroachment of land

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a petition filed by inhabitants of village Chatta, Sunjwan, Tehsil Bahu, District Jammu. All inhabitants, in one voice projected the issue of encroachment of State/Forest Land as well as water bodies in Village Chatta, Sunjwan, Tehsil Bahu District Jammu under Khasra No.852, 1441, 1442, 1445, 1447, 1452, 2197 and 2202 and after taking into consideration the worry and suggestions put forth by the local Inhabitants, it was decided that issue will be brought to the knowledge of local Administration immediately and request will also be made to the Administration to take steps for removal of the encroachment already made on the State/Forest Land as well as on water bodies and further request will also be made to the authorities to stop encroachment of the land referred herein above. It was respectfully submitted that respondents were claiming that they were in possession of a huge chunk of Land in village Chatta, Sunjwan, Tehsil Bahu and District Jammu but as a matter of fact, they had encroached a huge chunk of State/Forest Land and Water Bodies at Village Chatta, Sunjwan, Tehsil Bahu and

Ditta, resident of village Chatta, Sunjwan, Tehsil Bahu, District Jammu. All inhabitants, in one voice projected the issue of encroachment of State/Forest Land as well as water bodies in Village Chatta, Sunjwan, Tehsil Bahu District Jammu under Khasra No.852, 1441, 1442, 1445, 1447, 1452, 2197 and 2202 and after taking into consideration the worry and suggestions put forth by the local Inhabitants, it was decided that issue will be brought to the knowledge of local Administration immediately and request will also be made to the Administration to take steps for removal of the encroachment already made on the State/Forest Land as well as on water bodies and further request will also be made to the authorities to stop encroachment of the land referred herein above. It was respectfully submitted that respondents were claiming that they were in possession of a huge chunk of Land in village Chatta, Sunjwan, Tehsil Bahu and District Jammu but as a matter of fact, they had encroached a huge chunk of State/Forest Land and Water Bodies at Village Chatta, Sunjwan, Tehsil Bahu and

District Jammu. Earlier also on March 16, 2019, local Inhabitants approached the concerned Authorities seeking initiation of action against aforementioned persons for encroaching State/Forest as well as Water Bodies. In this behalf enquiries were initiated against aforementioned persons by the Government and PTR No.76/2016 dated November 18, 2016 under sections 420, 467, 468, 471, 120-B RPC read with section 5(2) of PC Act was also registered and it was also found that the respondents and henchmen had encroached upon the land at Village Chatta, Sunjwan, where there was a Gairmumkin Chapri (Natural Pond).

Justice Sindhu Sharma after hearing Adv Arshad Majid Malik for petitioners, issued notice Commissioner/Secretary GAD, Revenue & Forest, Divisional Commissioner Jammu, VC JDA, Deputy Commissioner & others, directing them to file objections within four weeks. Justice Sindhu Sharma further directed respondents to take necessary steps for preventing encroachment, if any, made on State land.

Various organisations condole demise of Jagmohan, pay tributes

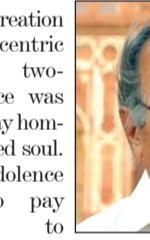
■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A number of social and political organisations condole and tragic demise of former civil servant and ex-J&K Governor, Jagmohan Malhotra, who died on Monday night in Delhi after a brief spell of illness.

The officers and staff of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) condole demise of Jagmohan, who was the Founder Chairman of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board. In this connection, a condolence meeting was held at the Spiritual Growth Centre Katra, which was attended by Ramesh Kumar, Chief Executive Officer SMVDSB besides other officers and staff.

Speaking on the occasion, Ramesh Kumar described Jagmohan as a great visionary and recalled his significant contributions, particularly as a founder Chairman of OShrine

Board, for creation of pilgrim-centric facilities. A two-minute silence was observed to pay homage to departed soul. Similar condolence meetings to pay homage to Jagmohan were also held at Bhawan, Adhkanwari and other establishments of Shrine Board. Congress has expressed profound grief and sorrow over sad demise of former J&K Governor, Jagmohan. In a condolence message on behalf of rank and file of party, JKPC Chief Spokesperson Ravinder Sharma said that Jagmohan has rendered valuable services to nation in general and J&K in particular, especially during his tenure as Governor. He was an able administrator who curbed corruption with iron hand and gave an efficient and



people-friendly administration during his tenure.

United Democratic Alliance (UDA), Convenor Rajiv Mahajan and other Co-Convenors of the association also condole demise of Jagmohan. In a condolence message issued here, Mahajan said, "Our deepest condolences to bereaved family members. May Almighty grant eternal peace to the departed soul."

Freedom Fighter Memorial Association (FFMA), Chairman Ved Gandotra, Vice Chairman Rajiv Mahajan; President S S Balwal and other members also condole demise of Jagmohan.

Kashmiri Pandit Conference (KPC) has condole sad demise of Jagmohan, former

Governor J&K and saviour of ill-fated displaced KP community. Kundan Kashmiri and Tej Pandita, President and Vice President KPC said that entire KP community is shocked due to sad demise of Jagmohan. It is a great loss to the nation as he was a great nationalist, patriotic, administrator; man of ethics and values. All KPC activists and leaders including Dr H L Saraf and Sushel Ji Bhat also paid tributes to departed soul.

Pannu Kashmir organised a webinar to condole the passing away of Jagmohan, the former Governor of erstwhile J&K State. While paying tributes, Virender Raina said that Jagmohan was the saviour of Kashmiri Pandits who saved them from near total annihilation in 1990. Others who spoke on the occasion included Upinder Koul General Secretary, Kamal Bagati,

General Secretary (Org), Sameer Bhat Convenor PK Youth, Ashok Churungoo, P K Bhan and Kewal Krishen Koul. Members of Batwal Youth Development Committee paid rich tributes to former Governor J&K, Jagmohan and recalled his contributions for J&K and its people. President Tilak Raj Bassa also spoke on the occasion.

All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS) has also condole sad demise of Jagmohan. In a condolence message issued here, the members of AIKS said, "Jagmohan was among the ablest administrators of post-independent India, a man of exceptional commitment to national cause and a far-sighted patriot." All India Kashmiri Samaj expressed heartfelt condolences on his demise and prayed to the almighty to grant Sadagati to departed soul.

Make Oxygen Plant at JLNM Hospital functional in 5 days: DC

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Mohammed Aijaz Asad on Tuesday visited JLNM hospital Rainawari to oversee the functioning of Oxygen Generation Plants and other facilities made for Covid positive patients.

Director Health Services Kashmir, Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, CMO Srinagar and other officers accompanied the DC during his visit.

The DC was informed that 1000 lpm capacity Oxygen Generation Plant has been made functional recently in addition to 350 lpm oxygen plant to cater the demand of the hos-

pital. He was also informed that work on the 625 lpm oxygen generation plant is going on and shall be completed within a few days to further augment the oxygen generation capacity in the hospital.

The DC directed the concerned to ensure effective functioning of oxygen plants so that patients do not suffer. He also directed them to work in double shifts to make a new oxygen plant of 625 lpm capacity functional within 5 days.

He also inspected other facilities being made available to patients and directed for further improving the health care facilities in the hospital.

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■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Divisional Commissioner, Jammu Dr Raghav Langer on Tuesday chaired the 9th Board of Directors meeting of Jammu Smart City Project.

The meeting was attended by IGP Jammu, (Director JSCL) Mukesh Singh; Deputy Commissioner Jammu, Anshul Garg; Commissioner JMC, Avny Lavasa, (Chief Executive Officer, Jammu Smart City); Additional CEO, JSCL, Hitesh Gupta; VC JDA, Rohit Khajuria, Chief Engineers of PWD, Irrigation & Flood Control, Director Tourism, Director Floriculture, besides senior functionaries of Project Management Consultancy (PMC) and other board members.

The CEO gave a detailed power-point presentation on



Div Com Jammu, Dr Raghav Langer chairing a meeting.

the works taken up and completed, so far besides future work plans for the smart city projects. She also presented agenda points before the members for discussion and approval of various projects under smart city.

The CEO also apprised the Board members about the status of ongoing projects including Way-finding Signages, Panjirthi Parking, Vertical Garden, Improvement of Road from

Dogra Chowk to KC Chowk, Solid Waste Management projects, Up-gradation of fire and Emergency services, Construction of Musical Fountains at Bagh-e Bahu, Jammu Zoological park etc.

It was informed that some projects are near completion, while work is in full swing on the rest.

It was also informed in the meeting that tenders have been floated for various projects under JSCL, which

includes installation of Smart Poles in Jammu city on PPP mode at 20 Locations, Façade lighting illumination of Bahu Fort and Mubarak Mandi Heritage Complex, improvement of 23 junctions, modernization of Narwal Fruit/Vegetable mandi, AD panels and Dashboard display at Intersection and street lights, Jammu Smart Public Bicycle sharing system, Smart Cards, Smart toilets, IT based smart parking management system.

The Board members also discussed in detail the projects that need to be tendered, which include High Street at Residency Road, Integrated Command and Control Centre, Intelligent Traffic Management System, E-bill & pay for civic services etc. It was informed that various other projects are also under preparation stage which include complete street devel-

opment, smart lightings at 4th bridge, E Rickshaws for Old city, development of cycle track, street vendor zones, blue green project, waste composting, E support centre, smart traffic booth, Rescue & Rehabilitation Centre, Development of River front.

The Divisional Commissioner issued instructions to the senior government functionaries to expedite the works being taken up by their respective departments for early completion. He asked the concerned officers to keep ambit of project for longer horizon and expedite work in a time bound manner so that tangible results are achieved on the ground. He also asked the concerned departments to work in unison, zeal and dedication for completion of Smart City Project to make Jammu a model city.