



Office bearers of BCCI and captains of WPL teams posing alongwith trophy during inaugural ceremony at Mumbai on Saturday.

Mumbai Indians trounce Gujarat Giants by 143 runs in WPL opener

MUMBAI, Mar 4:

In a mismatch of epic proportions, Mumbai Indians crushed Gujarat Giants by 143 runs to stamp their authority with an all-round show as the Women's Premier League got underway here today.

After posting a mammoth 207/5, powered by captain Harmanpreet Kaur's sensational 30-ball 65 laced with 14 boundaries, Mumbai Indians' bowlers led by Saika Ishaque (4/11) produced a superb show to restrict Gujarat Giants to just 64/9 in 15.1 overs and make a dream start to the competition.

Gujarat Giants captain Beth Mooney suffered an injury in the first over and retired hurt after initial checkup on the field, and could not return to bat again.

Mumbai Indians not only dominated Gujarat Giants right from the start but also showcased their aggressive style of play both with the bat and the ball in the first game itself, delighting a fairly-packed crowd.

India and Mumbai Indians captain Kaur recorded the first-ever half-century of WPL with stunning strokeplay and added 89 runs from just 42 balls with New Zealand's Amelia Kerr (45 not out from 24 balls, 6x4s, 1x6) after Hayley Matthews provided the initial fireworks.

Kaur's innings was straight out of textbook for all the domestic players watching in her team, competition and beyond. She found gaps at will, connected the ball perfectly, and did not give a single chance to the opposition bowlers to capitalise.

But before Kaur's onslaught, it was the aggressive West Indies batter Matthews who looked set to score the first fifty of the tournament but unfortunately fell just

three runs short. Matthews smoked 4 sixes and 3 fours to make 47 from 31 balls and added 54 runs for the second wicket with Nat Sciver-Brunt, an association that laid the platform for a strong first-innings total for the winning side.

England star Sciver-Brunt was in her elements on Saturday night as after smoking 5 fours for her 18-ball 23, she returned an opening spell of 2-0-5-2 that helped derail the Gujarat Giants off the track.

It was certainly a forgettable first outing for Gujarat Giants who did not have much to cheer about.

After their bowlers were hammered all over the park for a grand total of 31 fours and 6 sixes by the Mumbai Indians, the wheels came off completely when they were left tottering at 23/6 after 7.1 overs.

With the pounding received in the first half of the game, the matters became worse for the Gujarat Giants as soon as their chase began.

In the first over, Gujarat Giants' captain and arguably the best batter in the side, Mooney retired hurt after facing only her third ball. She is believed to have injured her left knee after making a few paces for a run but deciding against it.

On the final delivery, Nat Sciver-Brunt drew the first blood getting Harleen Deol caught at deep third man for a two-ball duck.

The England player returned in the third over to hurt Gujarat Giants further, this time cleaning up opening batter Sabhineni Meghana for a 4-ball 2.

But before they lost Meghana, Gujarat Giants had suffered a huge blow in the form of Ashleigh Gardner, with Hayley Matthews

taking a sharp catch at the first slip off the right-arm pacer Issy Wong to walk back for a golden duck.

Saika Ishaque removed Annabel Sutherland (6) in the fifth over, and returned in the seventh over of the innings to clean up Georgia Wareham (8), making the most of the pressure created by the impressive right-arm seamer Wong from the other end, who gave no room for scoring in her first spell (3-0-7-1).

The left-arm orthodox spinner Saika returned with 3.1-1-11-4. The pair of Dayalan Hemlatha (29 not out) and Mansi Joshi (6) did their best to delay the inevitable, but Mumbai Indians completed the win with 29 balls to spare.

Earlier in the game, Gujarat Giants' skipper Mooney decided to take up wicketkeeping duties — something which she hasn't done regularly in her career — and invited Mumbai Indians to bat after winning the toss.

Mooney's side made plenty of errors in the field, with the bowlers straying down the leg side more often than not in the first half and fielding poorly, which in a way highlighted the lack of time and opportunity that the WPL teams have got in the lead-up to the tournament.

But before all of that, WPL began with the familiar razzmatazz of a glittering opening ceremony featuring Bollywood actresses Kiara Advani and Kirti Sanon, who performed alongside singer AP Dhillon and the evening sky was lit up by spectacular fireworks.(PTI)

Probable selected for National Kabaddi C'ship

Excelsior Sports Correspondent

JAMMU, Mar 4: President of Jammu & Kashmir Amateur Kabaddi Association Anil Gupta announced Kabaddi team of J&K in women section which will participate under the banner of Jammu & Kashmir Amateur Kabaddi Association and J&K Sports Council in the 69th National Kabaddi Championship, scheduled to be held from March 23 to 26 at Mahendergarh, Haryana.

Probable: Sunita Devi, Dinakshi Sharma, Suman Kumari, Sonia Devi, Sweetie Devi, Siya Saini, Rajni Rani, Anita Sharma, Muskan Majeed, Aisha Hameed, Ilfa Majeed, Taniya Choudhary, Shilpa Sharma and Manisha Devi.

Fencing team selected for Sr National C'ship

Excelsior Sports Correspondent

JAMMU, Mar 4: Adhoc Committee J&K Amateur Fencing Association selected the J&K team for the forthcoming Senior National Fencing Championship, scheduled to be held at Pune Maharashtra from March 24 to 28.

For mens sabre, Javed Ahmed, Mayank Sharma, Amit Chib, Suryansh Sharma and Vishal Thapar were selected, while for mens epee, Jasdev Singh, Sufyan, Veer Sangram, Ajay Kumar and Yuvraj were shortlisted and for mens foil, Pranay, Poorvak Suri, Mihd Tariq, Prashant and Gourav Thakur were selected.

In women sabre, Shreya Gupta, Kritarthi Kotwal, Rishika Khajuria, Ananya Sharma and Simran Rajput were shortlisted, while for women epee, Aditika, Riya, Preeti, Gazal and Pihul and for women foil, Simarleen, Suhani, Ashu Rani, Riya Bakshi and Mansi were shortlisted for upcoming National event.

MKGS celebrates Annual Day

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Mar 4: Maa Koushalya Grammar School (MKGS) and its junior wing 'KIDZEE' Kunjwani celebrated 4th Annual Day with great enthusiasm at Teacher Bhavan Gandhi Nagar, here today on theme 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao'.

The magnificence of the day was made stronger by chanting

the occasion. The auditorium was completely decorated with lights and flowers. The programme was hosted by Arusa Issar with her co-host, Rajni Sharma. The programme commenced with lighting of lamps followed by 'Vandana'.

School Principal Jyoti Manhas delivered a welcome speech and pointed out the significance of the School in the field of education. The young star kids of the School presented several colourful cultural items which enthralled the gathering with their performances.

Addressing the mantras, Vikram Singh Randhawa (Ex.MLC) was the chief guest on the occasion, Adv. Rekha Mahajan (District President BJP Jammu South) was the guest of honour and Sunil Bandral (Kidzee Dream City Muthi), Amit Pathania and Munish Pathania (Kidzee Roop Nagar) were the special guests on

gathering the chief guest and guest of honour emphasized on the importance of mother in the life of a child and highlighted the various achievements, good work done by the Central Government for education.

The vote of thanks was presented by the chairman Ajmer Singh Chib.

Batting style of 9-yr-old Kulgam kid leaves Irfan Pathan in awe

Excelsior Sports Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Mar 4: It was as if a dream came true when the star cricketer Irfan Pathan praised Mumin Liyakat (9), from south Kashmir's Kulgam for his peculiar and stylish batting style.

Hoping one day to play for team India, Mumin has been

working hard to chisel his batting skills and has been following Virat Kohli's batting style. He is on a journey which is long and needs him to be consistent.

Mumin Liyakat son of Liyakat Ahmad Dar resident of Matibugh Yaripora is now a well-known face with amazing batting skills while those around him feel encouraged and inspired.

His batting skills caught the attention of Irfan during an event held at CAP- Cricket Academy of Pathans, Jaipur, and in a video,

which went viral on social media platforms, he can be seen guiding and teaching Mumin the tits and bits of professional cricket batting. "I will surely keep an eye on him; his batting is impressive," Irfan said during the event.

Working hard to improve his batting, Mumin said that he has been playing cricket every day



—Excelsior/Sajad Dar

with a special focus on learning the technicalities of batting. "My favourite player is Virat Kohli and I am following his style," he said, adding his family has been supportive, encouraging him to play.



Players and dignitaries posing for a group photograph at Reasi on Saturday.

Badminton C'ship commences under CAP

Excelsior Sports Correspondent

REASI, Mar 4: A two days' District Badminton Championship', organized by J&K Police under Civic Action Programme (CAP), commenced at Indoor Stadium Maari, here today.

DySP Headquarter Neeraj Padyar, along with SHO Reasi Inspector Vijay Sharma Singh inaugurated the event and witnessed the inaugural match of different categories.

A total of 58 players and coaches from different areas of the district are participating in the tournament.

Speaking on the occasion, chief guest Neeraj Padyar (DySP) said that Jammu and Kashmir Police is providing the avenues to the youth so that they can show their hidden talent and youth of J&K have been taking the benefits of these sports activities, organized by Jammu Kashmir Police from time to time.

He further said that sports activities are a prerequisite for a healthy youth and youth of Reasi are participating in these events with enthusiasm.

Surinder Sharma, president Badminton Association Reasi along with Vikas Sharma, Abhinav Sharma and others expressed gratitude to J&K Police especially DySP Hqrs. for

sparing his time from his busy schedule to promote sports activities in the district.

Students from different colleges/schools witnessed the event and cheered for their players who were competing to grab the winner title in different categories.



Dr Sindhu Kapoor presenting a trophy to a participant during the function at Vijaypur on Saturday.

Youth Talent Search holds prize distribution function

Excelsior Correspondent

SAMBA, Mar 4: Youth Talent Search (Forum for Schools of Jammu) organized Annual Prize Distribution Ceremony-a yearly feature clubbed with Women's Day celebration today in the Auditorium of The Shri Ram Universal School Jakh Vijaypur.

The program commenced with the somber tradition of lighting the lamp to evoke the blessings of the Goddess Saraswati. Shivani Vaid Sharma in her welcome note extended a warm welcome to all the esteemed guests who graced the occasion.

Keeping up with the traditions and encouraging the green cover drive, the guests were presented with potted plants. Dr Sindhu Kapoor, Dean Faculty of Social Sciences, Cluster University of Jammu, was the chief guest on the occasion.

Principals and teachers from the Schools of repute such as SD Tarapuri, Humanity Public School, JK Montessorie Senior Secondary School, New Era Environment School, Bikram Memorial School, Alexander Memorial School, Elite Public School, Play Way House, BHMPs and Lawrence Public schools par-

ticipated in the function. The participating teachers from the schools showcased their talent and put-up scintillating dance performances, folk songs, and skits. The annual report of YTS was read out by Maifre Jain, Administrator, New Era Environment School. As part of the jubiliations, a lucky draw was organized for the participants.

Chief guest, Dr Sindhu Kapoor gave away the prizes to the winners and also felicitated the Principals of member schools namely Prabha Jain, Neeru Puri, Shashi Sharma, Usha Jamwal, Rajni Gupta, Esther William, Mala Sharma, Anku Charak, Shivani Joshi and Anita Koul.

Dr Sindhu Kapoor appreciated the YTS for providing a platform to the budding young minds to display their hidden talent. She expressed her satisfaction with the measures adopted by the skilled teachers for guiding the young children and equipping them adequately to negotiate the challenges while exploring new vistas of life.

The vote of thanks was presented by Usha Jamwal, Principal BHMP School. The function culminated with singing of the National Anthem.



Kids performing a cultural item during Annual Day function of Nidaan Kids at Shastri Nagar Jammu on Saturday.

Nidaan Kids celebrates Annual Day

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Mar 4: Nidaan Kids Digital Playway School Shastri Nagar celebrated its Annual Day, here today.

The celebration started with the lamp lighting ceremony by Chairperson Nidaan Parivaar Group Darshan Kumar Gupta in the presence of Meenakshi Gupta, Rakesh Kumar Mahajan and Ram Anand.

The chairman of the school applauded the efforts of the School Principal Nidhi Mahajan for the

CSE emerges overall Champion in MIET Sports Meet

Excelsior Sports Correspondent

JAMMU, Mar 4: Computer Science Engineering (CSE) Department emerged overall Champion, while Civil Warriors lifted Cricket trophy and Puniya of BBA bagged sprint gold in boys section and Saranshavi of B.Com clinched sprint gold in girls section in the Annual Sports Meet of Model Institute of Science and Technology (MIET) Jammu at MA Stadium, here today.

Ankur Gupta, Director MIET Jammu was the chief guest on the valedictory function, who along with Sahil Sahwney, General Manager Strategic Initiative distributed prizes among the winners and runners-up teams/players.

Earlier, in the Cricket summit clash, Civil Warriors scripted a thrilling 2-run victory over CSE to lift the title. Batting first, Civil Warriors scored 80 runs in the stipulated 10 overs, while CSE Super Kings scored 80 runs, thus lost the match by 2 runs.

In the first semifinal, Civil Warriors drubbed Rest of MIET Tigers, while in another semifinal, CSE Super Kings got the better of BBA Department.

Meanwhile, in Basketball boys, CSE outplayed Rest of MIET in the finals to win the title, while in girls, CSE emerged winner, while BBA LLB remained runners-up.

In Badminton boys, Aryan of ECE lifted the title, while Suhail of BBA and Vaibhav of ECE remained first and second runners-up respectively. In girls, Simran of MCA won the title, while Akshita Rajput of BBA and Poorvi Gupta of CSE remained first and second runners-up respectively.

In Table Tennis boys, Keshav of ECE won the title, while Riteshwar of B.Com remained first runners-up and Dhruv of Civil emerged second runners-up.

In Tennis boys, Shivansh of CSE won the title, while Naman



Winners being awarded with trophy at MA Stadium on Saturday.

of BBA Hons and Altumish of CSE remained first and second runners-up respectively. In Volleyball, Rest of MIET emerged winners, while BBA LLB remained runners-up.

In 100 meters boys sprint, Puniya of BBA won gold, Rishi of CSE bagged silver and Sameer of BBA claimed bronze, while in 1500 meters boys, Narotam of BBA bagged gold and Kunal of MBA claimed silver medal.

The event was held under the overall supervision of Sports Saranshavi of B.Com, Divya of B.Com and Sushaivi of CSE



Players posing with dignitaries at Samba on Saturday.

Kheri Mandi FC reaches Thalora Football League final

Excelsior Sports Correspondent

SAMBA, Mar 4: Kheri Mandi Football Club defeated Thalora Mandi Football Club by 1 goal to nil in the 2nd semi-finals of the ongoing Thalora Football League, here today.

The first half of the match ended with a goalless draw, while in the 2nd half, Kheri Mandi's team got a penalty stroke which was converted into a goal and maintained the lead till end of the game.

Mohinder Singh, senior leader of National Conference and former chairman of Central Cooperative Bank graced the event as chief guest.

Addressing the players, he said that such sports competitions should be held continuously so that our youth remain physically fit and avoid bad habits like drugs.

NC Provincial youth president Rajeshwar Singh, Hasan Ali, Bittu Singh, Councilor Raj Singh, Councillor Narinder Singh, Kulbir Singh and many others were also present.

In the earlier semi-final match, Param Football Club defeated Kheri Mandi Football Club.

The final match will be played between Kheri Mandi Football Club and Param Football Club tomorrow.

Adil Shah elected as Carrom Asso prez

Excelsior Sports Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Mar 4: Adil Rashid Shah has been elected as president of J&K Carrom Association for the period of four year (2023-27), while Sameer A Ganie was announced as senior vice president, here today.

Arif Sultan, Mudasar Khan and Dawar Rashid were elected as vice president, general secretary and secretary, while Sheikh Mohd Saqib as joint secretary for Kashmir, Jagpal Singh as joint secretary for Jammu and Adfar Jan

was elected as treasurer.

Mudasir Altaf, Nisar Paul, Talib Rashid, Numan Hamid, Ishaq Najar, Zahoor Ahmad, Irfan Majeed, Mir Usama, Malik Adil and Syed Anaf were announced as executive members of the Association.

The election was held during the annual general council which was held at Hotel Standard Amira Kadal Lal Chowk, Srinagar. Rauf Trambloo, former Member J&K Sports Council attended the election as observer and Mehak Mehboob Khan as returning officer.

RMG Int'l celebrates annual prize distribution function

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Mar 4: RMG International School, Jandial celebrated its annual prize distribution function of Toddlers wing on the theme 'Pied Piper of Hamelin' here today.

The occasion was graced by chief guest Sunaina Sharma Mehta - Joint Director Tourism Jammu while Mohan Lal-SDPO Akhnoor was the guest of honour. Chairman Rohit Gupta, Director Mona Gupta and Principal Anil Pathania welcomed the chief guest and other dignitaries by presenting them bouquets.

The program started with an inaugural speech by Vice-Principal, Indu Kapoor, followed by lighting of lamp by the distinguished dignitaries.

The Annual Day, meticulously planned by the staff and students of the School in which nearly 300 students from Toddlers wing participated and showcased the vibrant performances before the guests and parents.

The program started by taking blessings from God in the form of prayer presented by munchkins of senior KG, while the program was anchored by Chandni Pandey.

The budding flowers of

Volleyball tournament held at Arnas

Excelsior Sports Correspondent

REASI, Mar 4: District Police organized a Volleyball tournament at Arnas under Civic Action Programme, here today.

Five teams from the Mahore and Arnas area participated in the event. The matches were organized on a knockout basis.



Trophy being presented to winners by Police Officials at Arnas in Reasi on Saturday.

The final match was played between team Judda-B and team Arnas in which team Arnas won the match by defeating team Judda-B by a margin of 2:1 games and lifted the tournament title.

SDPO Arnas Pritpal Singh was chief guest of the occasion

and witnessed the nail biting contest, along with SHO Arnas Inspector Jeet Singh, Sarpanches and Panches were present during the match.

The trophies, cash prize and refreshment were distributed among the players after the tournament.

Speaking on the occasion, the

SDPO praised the sportsmanship of the players and conveyed that sports activities are must for a healthy youth, and Jammu Kashmir Police is providing opportunities and platform to youth by organizing such sports activities.

RoundGlass Punjab become I-League champions with a match to spare

NEW DELHI, Mar 4:

RoundGlass Punjab today entered their name in the history books by winning the I-League title with a game to spare, after notching up a dominating 4-0 victory over Rajasthan United here.

The champions' entry into the top-tier ISL, however, is subject to fulfilment of financial criteria as agreed upon by all stakeholders.

Chencho Gyeltsen (16th), Luka Majcen (40th), Juan Mera 76th, Hmingthanmawia (91st) scored for Punjab, while Rajasthan drew a blank in the crucial match.

It was yet another flawless performance by Staikos Vergetis's team here at Ambedkar Stadium as the victory gave RoundGlass an unassailable eight-point lead atop the points table, crushing Sreenidi Deccan's hopes.

The I-League trophy will return to Punjab for the first time since 2017-18, when Minerva Punjab won it.

This success will taste sweeter as it helped RoundGlass inch closer to a berth in the Indian Super League — the top tier of club football — as well as earning them a direct entry into the sea-

son-ending Super Cup. Hero of the Match Chencho Gyeltsen capitalised on a defensive error in the 16th minute to start the scoring spree.

Khaiminthang Lungdim crossed from the right wing and the defender standing ahead of Gyeltsen out-jumped him but missed the header. Gyeltsen did not. It took a deflection off Yash Tripathi and went in.

Rajasthan's Uzbek midfielder Otabek Zokirov failed to score in the 25th minute when his booming left-footer from just outside the box was kept out by Kiran Limbu.

His counterpart, Vishal Joon, did the same a couple of minutes later to deny Luka Majcen, who still has a match in hand to overtake Sreenidi's David Castaneda as the top-scorer of this I-League.

However, the Slovenian was not to be denied for long. He got his share of the pie in the 40th minute as Ajay Chhetri crossed from the left.

Four Rajasthan United men stood in a line, none of them trying to clear it. Luka headed home coming in from behind, as Amritpal Singh remained a spectator. (PTI)