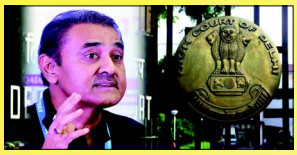
CYMK
THE ECHO OF INDIA
RNI: WBENG/2013/49934
SILIGURI
Wednesday November 1, 2017

Delhi High Court Orders Fresh AIFF Elections, Praful Patel Asked to Step Aside



NEW DELHI, OCT 31/--/ The Delhi High Court on Tuesday called for a fresh election of the office bearers of the All India Football Federation (AIFF), within five months, setting aside the election of Praful Patel as the body's president. The HC also appointed former Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) SY Quraishi the administrator of the AIFF. The court observed that the AIFF elections were conducted without adhering to the National Sports Code and thus the need to conduct fresh elections. The AIFF was recently applauded for successful hosting of the FIFA U-17 World Cup by the global body. The tournament witnessed record attendance and was organised without any hiccups. The AIFF in a statement said that it had approached the High Court in December last year and filed a detailed affidavit to bring on record that its election process was held under Sports Code, its constitution, as well FIFA & AFC statutes. The statement further mentioned that the board had also apprised the High Court that the constitution of AIFF is in compliance with the terms of age limit, tenure limit of prime office bearers and one state-one vote policy and that the court had allowed AIFF to proceed with elections vide its order 20th December, 2016. It further said that the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports also confirmed and verified in the past that AIFF's election was in strict compliances with its constitution and National Sports Code and said that the board was not aware of the reasons behind the Delhi High Court's order of ordering fresh elections.

GAME NOTES

ATK post three wins in Dubai pre-season

KOLKATA, OCT 31 /--/ Two-time Indian Super League champions ATK notched up three wins in Dubai pre-season tour and will arrive here on November 4 ahead of the fourth season. The new-look ATK pumped in eight goals in three matches with their Irish and English Premier League legend Robbie Keane scoring three, the Kolkata franchise said in a statement. ATK began their practice tour at Dubai's Nad Al Sheba Sports Complex on October 12 and blanked Dubai All Stars 3-0 with Keane scoring twice, while Robin Singh also found his name in the scoresheet. They also defeated Dubai Irish FC 2-1 and Dibba Al-Hisn Sports and Culture Club 3-2. They will conclude their pre-season with a fourth practice fixture tomorrow. Portuguese forward Santos Branco, better known as Zequinha, along with domestic midfielder Rupert Nongrum and T Bipin Singh also scored goals. (PTI)

Indian women top group with third straight win

KAKAMIGAHARA (JAPAN), OCT 31 /--/ The Indian women's hockey team recorded its third successive win in the Asia Cup, beating Malaysia 2-0 in the final pool game here today. India go into the quarterfinals as table toppers with nine points. The late goals by Vandana Katariya (54th minute) and Gurjit Kaur (55) saw the team through against Malaysia. In the previous match, India scored a 4-1 win over higher-ranked China. The first quarter saw both teams play cautiously. With Malaysia playing defensive hockey, India waited patiently without making any unforced errors. Having ended the first quarter in a stalemate, Malaysia put India on the back foot when they won the first PC of the match in the initial minutes of the second quarter. However, an alert Rajani Etimarpu made a brilliant save. The next few minutes saw both teams trade PCs. While India earned one PC, Malaysia were awarded two but nothing came off it.

Tottenham Hotspur ban fans for throwing urine at West Ham supporters

LONDON, OCT 31 /--/ Tottenham Hotspur have given life bans to two supporters after a cup filled with urine was thrown at West Ham United fans during a League Cup match at Wembley. Social media footage showed one person passing urine into a plastic glass before the other threw it towards the travelling supporters at the English national stadium last week. Tottenham investigated the incident and, after identifying the individuals concerned, have now issued lifetime bans to both men. "This kind of behaviour is not acceptable and we shall be issuing lifetime bans to both individuals in the video," a Tottenham spokesman said on Monday. Mauricio Pochettino's side led 2-0 in Wednesday's tie before West Ham hit back to beat their London rivals 3-2 and book a place in the quarterfinals.

Days of Lin Dan and Lee Chong Wei over: Kidambi Srikanth

Kidambi Srikanth is the first Indian badminton player to win four Superseries titles in a year

HYDERABAD, OCT 31 /--/ In the best form of his life after winning four Super Series titles in five months, star India shuttler Kidambi Srikanth said that the days of domination of Lin Dan or Lee Chong Wei are over and the tournaments are more wide open than ever.

Srikanth, who became the first Indian and only fourth men's singles player in the world to win four Super Series titles in a calendar year, said not a few but many players, including him, are capable of winning top tournaments these days. "For a long time I think (Malaysian) Lee Chong Wei and (China's) Lin Dan have dominated badminton. And now it has become more open. Me, Viktor (Axelsen) and even other Indian players are winning tournaments. It has become more wide open and it's always good for the sport when you have so many champions," he told reporters here. Srikanth was felicitated at the Pullela Gopichand Academy here after his recent victories at Denmark Open and French Open. He won Indonesia Open and Australia Open in June and then bagged the Denmark Open and French Open this month. "These days, there are many players who are playing really well and anybody can beat anyone on their given day. So, it's always important to be at your best against anyone," he said. Asked if he thinks Lee Chong and Lin Dan are nearing the end of their careers, he said, "I can't really say that's their end. They have played at the highest level and really have the experience to come back. One can't really take them lightly. Lin Dan played in the final of World Championship. They definitely are tough every time you play them. But, we need to believe in ourselves that we can do well." Srikanth might be inching towards the World No. 1 sport after winning the French Open last weekend but he said he was not thinking too much about the rankings. "To be frank I don't really think too much about the rankings. I really did well in the last eight to ten months. I want to just keep playing tournaments and enjoy playing the sport," he said. Asked if he will become World No. 1 if he wins the upcoming China Open, Srikanth said, "That's how it is. If you do consistently well, rankings do follow and I don't want to run behind the rankings. I really want to play well in the tournaments." Srikanth said he will be competing in the Nationals (next week), besides the China and Hong Kong Open and the BWF World Super Series Finals in Dubai in December. "I am very happy now. All the four Super Series are different. After I won the India Open in 2015, it took a long time to win the Indonesia title," said Srikanth, who beat Axelsen in men's singles quarterfinals in the Denmark Open Super Series Premier. He said match against compatriot HS Prannoy in the French Open was also a tough one. "I was really thinking to play well because I played a great match against him (Viktor) in Japan Open but I lost with by just two-three points. I didn't want that to happen. I wanted to do better and luckily I was able to do it. I am happy with the way I played that quarter final match. He has been in a great form and that win gave me a lot of confidence," Srikanth said. "Going into the French Open, it was a tough draw and with top players losing in initial rounds, there were so many thoughts running in my mind, but still I told myself that I will take it round-by-round. I fairly did well at the French Open," he said. (PTI)

Sidhu strikes gold, Deepak wins bronze in C''wealth shooting

BRISBANE (AUSTRALIA), OCT 31/--/ Heena Sidhu claimed the 10m air pistol gold, while Deepak Kumar fetched a silver in the 10m air rifle event to give India a fine start at the Commonwealth Shooting Championships here on Tuesday. Sidhu shot a combined score of 626.2 (386+240.8) to claim the top honours. This was Sidhu's second successive international gold after she, along with Jitu Rai, claimed the top position in the 10m air pistol mixed team event in the ISSF World Cup Finals in Delhi earlier this month. Among other Indians in fray here, Deepak Kumar won a bronze medal in the 10m air rifle event. London Olympic bronze-medallist Gagan Narang finished fourth in the same event, while Ravikumar ended fifth. Narang shot 626.2 in the qualification to create Commonwealth record. Sidhu was strong through the day, topping qualification with a high score of 386, her best in international competition since the 387 she shot at the Asian Championship in Delhi two years ago. In the final, Sidhu opened up a gap of over two points after the first five shot series itself over her nearest rival and led throughout, nailing the title with a perfect 10.9 in the 23rd and penultimate shot. Elena Galiabovitch of Australia won the silver medal with a score of 238.2 to Heena's 240.8 while Kristy Gillman, also from the host country, won Bronze with 213.7 India's Harveen Sraо finished fourth in the final with a score of 194.1 while the third Indian, Shri Nivetha Paramananthan was the fourth finalist to be eliminated. She finished fifth with a finals score of 174.5 In the men's 10m air rifle, Narang, first shattered the Commonwealth qualification record to top qualification with a score of 626.2. Two other Indians, Ravi Kumar, in second with 625, and Deepak Kumar, in fifth with 620.3, qualified for the eight-man final. However, Australian teenager Alex Hoberg stole the show in the final, claiming gold with a score of 247.6 after the allotted 24 shots. His compatriot Jack Rossiter challenged him till the end to win Silver with 245.5. The Indians finished third, fourth and fifth with Deepak claiming bronze with 224.2. Narang shot 203 to finish fourth while Ravi finished fifth with a final round score of 182.2 In the women's Skeet, India's Rashmmi Rathore made the six-woman final with a qualification round score of 65 out of 75. She eventually finished sixth. Two other Indians, Maheshwari Chauhan and Sania Sheikh, shot 64 and 62 respectively to miss out on a shot at the medals.

Young Lions offer hope of brighter future for England

LONDON, OCT 31 /--/ At a time when England have been pilloried by their own fans after a laboured World Cup qualifying campaign, the country's promising prodigies offer hope of a brighter future. England's starlets enjoyed a 5-2 win over Spain in the under-17 World Cup final in Kolkata on Saturday, capping a remarkable period in which the country's bright young things dominated on the global stage.

In the past five months, England's under-17 and under-20 teams have been crowned world champions, while the under-19s won the European Championship. A mixed-age England squad also successfully defended the prestigious Toulon title in June and the country's youth teams have lost only twice, both times on penalties, across 34 tournament matches. That successful streak is a stark contrast to the drab performances of Gareth Southgate's senior side en route to next year's World Cup in Russia.

Bored fans even threw paper aeroplanes onto the pitch throughout a tedious qualification-sealing win against Slovenia that offered little hope England can improve on their wretched major tournament record. Consigned to a humiliating Euro 2016 exit by minnows Iceland and bundled out of the 2014 World Cup at the group stage, England haven't made it to the semi-finals of a tournament since Euro 96 and their only trophy remains the 1966 World Cup. Those years of failure makes the rise of England's kids an alluring prospect. But the question remains whether they can turn tantalising potential into sustainable success, first with their Premier League clubs and then on the international stage. Chelsea provided 19 players, more than any other club, for England's youth movement and Blues boss Antonio Conte is confident the progress will be maintained. "I think football in England is growing in an incredible way," Conte said. "The under-19s won, the under-20s have won and the under-21s also played a really good European Championship. It means England is improving a lot. "I am sure in the future it will be very difficult to beat the England national team." Despite Conte's optimism, it is hard for some to believe the Premier League's top clubs, who so often spend huge sums on overseas players in their quest for instant success, will have the patience to allow their youngsters to develop.

Howard Wilkinson, the Football Association's former technical director, preaches caution about the path to first- team fame. "That's something that has to be worked on. We used to be a finishing school for players. It would be a shame if these players have to go to the continent to get their chance," he said. Liverpool's Rhian Brewster scored eight times in the under-17 World Cup, while Manchester City's Phil Foden netted twice against Spain and was voted player of the tournament. Back at their clubs, Brewster and Foden won't find it easy to break into teams loaded with attacking talent.

But City boss Pep Guardiola offers hope, saying: "Phil has been with us since the beginning of the season and played unbelievable against Manchester United and Real Madrid. "He trains with us every single day. He's just 17 but he is a player in our squad." Some critics claim young English players are too pampered by their clubs, and a coterie of agents and hangers-on, to focus sufficiently on honing their trade. But England under-17 boss Steve Cooper insists the current success story has shot down that theory. "The young players we are bringing into our teams are a credit to their generation," he said.

"Sometimes they get a bit of a tough stick, too-much too-soon and things like that. If you see how they train, how hard they work, they show so much respect. (AFP)

FIFA President Gianni Infantino delivers the champion trophy to the captain Angel Gomes of England after the FIFA U-17 World Cup India 2017 Final match between England and Spain at Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan ——File photo

Printed and published by Romen Dutta, owned by Asish Laha and published from Jadnvita, P.O. : Champasari, PS : Pradhan Nagar, Siliguri-734 003
and printed at Echo Printing Press, Jadnvita, P.O. : Champasari PS : Pradhan Nagar, Siliguri-734 003, Editor : Rabindra Nath Sinha* (*Responsible for selection of news under the PRB)

CYMK