

ICC Champions Trophy in Feb

DUBAI: ICC men's Champions Trophy 2025 to be played across Pakistan and a neutral venue.

India and Pakistan matches hosted by either country at ICC Events during the 2024-2027 rights cycle will be played at a neutral venue, the ICC Board confirmed on Thursday.

This will apply to the upcoming ICC men's Champions Trophy 2025 (hosted by Pakistan), set to be played in February and March 2025, as well as the ICC women's cricket World Cup 2025 (hosted by India) and the ICC men's T20 World Cup 2026 (hosted by India and Sri Lanka).

It was also announced that the PCB has been awarded hosting rights of the ICC women's T20 World Cup in 2028, where neutral venue arrangements will also apply.

Cricket Australia is set to host one of the senior ICC women's events during the period 2029 to 2031.

The schedule for the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 is set to be confirmed soon, with Pakistan aiming to defend the title they won in 2017.

The eight-team event will feature Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, England, India, New Zealand, and South Africa, alongside hosts Pakistan.

Argentina end year on top of FIFA rankings

ZURICH (SWITZERLAND): World champions Argentina top the year-ending men's football world rankings for the second straight time, according to the FIFA latest media statement published on Thursday. While 2024 served up a record-breaking 1,181 international encounters, only 21 of those fixtures took place since the November edition of the FIFA/Coca-Cola Men's World Ranking went to press. This limited action means that changes to the December standings are few and far between.

Just as they did in 2023, Argentina (1st) sign off for the year in top spot, with France (2nd) and Spain (3rd) joining them on the podium.

As for those in the chasing pack, England (4th), Brazil (5th), Por-

tugal (6th), the Netherlands (7th), Belgium (8th), Italy (9th) and Germany (10th) all retain their places in the upper echelons of the ranking. Indeed, that lack of movement is mirrored throughout the top 100, where there is not even the slightest bit of jostling for position.

The prize for the biggest climbers in the latest instalment of the ranking goes to Vietnam (114th, up 2). Elsewhere, Hong Kong, China (155th, up 1) have amassed the most points (4.18) in climbing up one place.

However, the pair aren't the only sides to close out the year on a high, with another 10 of the 211 ranked teams also making some limited headway, rising one place to their present position: The Gambia

(125th), India (126th), Solomon Islands (147th), Lesotho (149th), Singapore (160th),

Cuba (163rd), St Lucia (167th), Malta (168th), American Samoa (187th) and Gibraltar (196th).

Having contested more matches than anyone else in the ranking in 2024, Angola – who lined up no fewer than 21 times – have registered the biggest climb over the past 12 months, progressing a jaw-dropping 32 places to their current perch of 85th.

The Palancas Negras, who have clearly taken inspiration from the sprightly antelopes to whom they owe their nickname, are pursued most closely by Jordan (64th, up 23) and Fiji (148th, up 20) by this measure.

TN Guv felicitates Gukesh

CHENNAI: Tamil Nadu Governor R N Ravi on Thursday evening felicitated 18-year-old prodigy D Gukesh for becoming the youngest player to win the FIDE World Chess Championship title.

At an event held at Raj Bhavan, the Governor and the First Lady Laxmi Ravi felicitated him. They also presented shawls to honour him.

Gukesh's parents were also present on the occasion and they were also honoured. Speaking on the occasion, Ravi hailed Gukesh's phenomenal victory in the World Chess championship and for

bringing laurels to the state and also for the country.

The state government had on Tuesday felicitated Gukesh for his historic feat and Chief Minister M K Stalin presented a cheque for Rs five crore for winning the World Chess title.

The Governor celebrated his achievement for bringing the World Chess Championship to India after 11 years, making every Indian immensely proud.

He wished the chess prodigy continued success and winning more laurels for the nation in the future.

SANTOSH TROPHY

Kerala beat Odisha

HYDERABAD: Kerala made it three wins in a row, while Meghalaya tasted victory for the first time in the final round of the 78th National Football Championship for Santosh Trophy at the Deccan Arena here on Thursday.

Kerala, the 2021-22 champions, beat Odisha 2-0 in the first game of the day to maintain their position at the top of Group B with nine points. Meghalaya, runners-up from 2022-23, also defeated Delhi by the same scoreline to move to third place with four points. Delhi suffered their first loss but remained in second spot with six points. Kerala scored on either side of half-time to register a comfortable win. The first half

was a rather even affair with free-flowing football as both teams actively searched for the opener. That arrived in the 40th minute after some exquisite individual skill from Kerala's Muhammad Ajsal, who raced from the half-way line, left two defenders in the lurch and rifled a left-footer into the bottom corner.

Kerala scored again with a rapid turnover in the 54th minute. Odisha lost the ball in the middle of the park and Muhammed Musharaf was quick to turn and release Naseeb Rahman through on goal. Rahman with all his composure swiftly tucked the ball past Siddhanta Padhan in the Odisha goal.

WB into semis

NARAINPUR (CHHATTISGARH): West Bengal qualified for the semi-finals of the 29th Senior Women's National Football Championship for the Rajmata Jibabai Trophy 2024-25 from Group B defeating Haryana 1-0 at the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama Ground on Thursday. Haryana, despite the defeat, are the other team that reached the semi-finals as the group toppers. Both Haryana and West Bengal, along with Railways, have accumulated nine points each. However, Haryana and West Bengal have a better goal difference when considering only the matches played between these three teams.

Railways routed Punjab 10-0 in the other match of the group earlier in the day, but their rousing victory could not take them ahead in the championship.

Kharb, Chirag set for nationals from today

BENGALURU: Defending champions Anmol Kharb and Chirag Sen will headline the National Badminton Championships 2024 from today (Dec. 20) as they aim to retain their respective singles titles. However, their road to victory will not be a smooth one, with fierce competition from some of the best shuttlers in the country. The individual events will begin today, December 20, and continue until December 24, promising a week filled with intense matchups across all categories, including men's and women's singles, doubles, and mixed doubles.

The badminton championships kicked off on De-

cember 17 with the inter-zonal team competitions, which took place over the first two days of the event.

In the women's singles, 17-year-old Kharb will look to defend her title after a stellar year, which saw her contribute to India's historic gold medal win at the Badminton Asia Team Championships. However, the young champion will face strong competition from the world-ranked Malvika Bansod, currently 32nd, and the experienced Aakarshi Kashyap. Kharb will be aiming to follow in the footsteps of Saina Nehwal, who won consecutive women's singles titles in 2017 and 2018.

Sensex drops

MUMBAI: Extending losers for the fourth consecutive session on Thursday, the BSE Sensex tanked 964.15 points to close at

79,218.05 on weak global cues amid selling was seen across the board. The National Stock Exchange (NSE) slipped 247.15

points at 23,951.70.

Even, US stock was also dipped as Federal Reserve gave a signal of fewer interest rate cuts in 2025.

IPO OPENS TODAY

CIL

MUMBAI: The Initial Public Offering (IPO) of Carraro India Limited (CIL) is opening today (Friday) for subscription and close on Tuesday, December 24, 2024.

The company has fixed the price band of Rs 668/- to Rs 704/- per equity Share of face value Rs 10/- each for its maiden initial public offer. Investors can bid for a minimum of 21 equity shares and in multiples of 21 equity shares thereafter.

The IPO is entirely an offer of sale of up to

Rs 1,250 crore by Carraro International S.E. with no fresh issue component.

Established in 1997, Carraro India, a subsidiary of Carraro S.p.A, began its manufacturing journey with transmission systems in 1999 and axles in 2000. The company started its operations using IP rights licensed from other entities within the Carraro Group and specializes in complex engineering products and solutions for original equipment manufacturer (OEM) customers.

VHL

MUMBAI: Ventive Hospitality Limited (VHL) (formerly known as ICC Realty (India) Private Limited), shall open its bid/offer in relation to its initial public offer (IPO) of equity shares today (Friday). The bid/offer will close on Tuesday, December 24, 2024.

The total offer size of equity shares (face value of Rs. 1 each) aggregating up to Rs. 16,000 million comprises a fresh issue of aggregating up to Rs. 16,000 million. Price band of the issue is fixed at Rs. 610 to Rs. 643 per equity share.

A discount of Rs. 30 per equity share is being offered to eligible employees bidding in the Employee Reservation Portion. Bids can be made for a minimum of 23 equity shares and in multiples of 23 equity shares thereafter.

SPL

MUMBAI: The Initial Public Offering (IPO) of Senores Pharmaceuticals Limited (SPL) is opening today (Friday) for subscription and will close on Tuesday, December 24, 2024. It is a global research driven pharmaceutical company engaged in developing and manufacturing a wide range of generic pharmaceutical products in the B2B segment for the regulated markets of US, Canada and United Kingdom and emerging markets across various therapeutic areas and dosage forms, has fixed the price band of Rs 372/- to Rs 391/- per equity share of face value Rs 10/- each for its maiden initial public offer.