



## India handed comfortable group stage draw at BWF World Junior Team Championships

**NEW DELHI, AUG 08:** The Badminton World Federation (BWF) on Friday announced the draw for the BWF World Junior Championships 2025 - Suhandinata Cup (Mixed Team Event), to be held at the National Centre of Excellence, Amingaon, Guwahati, from 6 to 11 October 2025, according to a release from BWF.

Second-seeded India will compete in Group H alongside Hong Kong, China, Nepal, and Ghana. This prestigious global junior team event returns to India for the first time since 2008 and will feature 37 teams from across the world. The tournament format will see the winner from each group advance to the quarter-finals.

Top seeds Thailand are drawn in Group A with Denmark, Slovenia, and

Cook Islands. Defending champions Indonesia are placed in Group C with Türkiye, Romania, and the Netherlands, while 14-time champions China will face Japan, Singapore, Brazil, and Bhutan in Group E.

This year, a new relay format will be tested in the competition. In the new format, there will be best-of-three sets, where a team reaching 45 points in a relay format wins a set. A set will have each of men's singles, women's singles, men's doubles, women's doubles and mixed doubles matches, with the first match ending after one team reaching nine points, and the next match will start.

Earlier, the relay format consisted of a single set with a race to 110 points in 10 matches. For the Indian

team, medal winners from the Badminton Asia Junior Championships 2025 will gain direct entry, while the remaining spots will be decided through a selection trial from 9th to 13th August 2025 at the same venue.

Players eligible for the trials include those meeting the BAI ranking cut-offs, Indian shuttlers ranked in the BWF World Junior Top 20, and juniors ranked in the BWF Senior Top 50 as of 29 July 2025. All players selected in the Indian team for the WONDR Badminton Asia Junior Championships 2025 are also invited for the trials, except the medalists who already have direct entry.

Following the Suhandinata Cup, the individual events will also be staged in Guwahati from 13 to 19

October 2025 at the National Centre of Excellence.

Groups for the BWF World Junior Championships 2025 - Suhandinata Cup:

Group A: Thailand, Denmark, Slovenia, Cook Islands

Group B: Chinese Taipei, UAE, Canada, England, Norway

Group C: Indonesia, Türkiye, Romania, Netherlands

Group D: Poland, USA, Hungary, Ireland, Philippines

Group E: China, Japan, Singapore, Brazil, Bhutan

Group F: Malaysia, Australia, Sri Lanka, Slovakia, Vietnam

Group G: France, Korea, Portugal, Egypt, Uganda

Group H: India, Hong Kong, China, Nepal, Ghana.

## Kapil Dev meets Hockey India president Dilip Tirkey, lauds rise of Indian hockey talent

**NEW DELHI, AUG 08:** Legendary cricketer and 1983 World Cup-winning captain Kapil Dev met with Hockey India President and former decorated Indian hockey player, Dilip Tirkey, on Thursday in New Delhi. During the interaction, Kapil Dev applauded the sport's resurgence in India and praised the emergence of promising young talent across the country.

Speaking after the meeting, Kapil Dev said, "It was truly heartening to catch up with Dr. Dilip Tirkey and speak about the incredible strides Indian hockey has made in recent years. The speed, fitness, and skill level of today's players are simply outstanding. It's clear that the game has evolved tremendously, and what's most exciting is the pool of young talent emerging from every corner of the country. The contributions



of the Odisha Government for the development of Hockey can't go unnoticed. Indian hockey is in great hands and heading in the right direction."

Hockey India president Dilip Tirkey expressed his appreciation for the support from one of India's most respected sporting icons and stated, "Meeting legendary Kapil Dev, who is also President of PGTI, is always special—he is a true icon of Indian sport. His encouraging words about hockey's resurgence and the rise of new talent

mean a lot to our entire hockey fraternity. It's inspiring to see legends from other sports acknowledge and support our journey. We are committed to building on this momentum and taking Indian hockey to even greater heights."

Kapil's imprint on cricket is permanent. He is regarded as one of the finest all-rounders of all time. His extraordinary abilities and leadership prowess continue to inspire young players. He is a fast-medium bowler

recognised for his sheer pace and a hard-hitting middle-order batter. Kapil was the Indian team captain who lifted the World Cup trophy in 1983 at the 'Home of Cricket', Lord's.

The all-rounder has played 356 international matches and scored 9031 runs with 687 wickets. Aside from his on-field exploits, Kapil's personality and sportsmanship catapulted him to the status of a role model for young cricketers.

His captaincy of India's World Cup-winning team in 1983 was a watershed event in Indian cricket, motivating a generation and engraving his name in cricketing history. During his playing days, Kapil made 131 Test appearances, scythed 434 wickets and garnered 5,248 runs. In the ODIs, he featured in 225 matches, scalped 253 wickets and struck 3,783 runs.

## Madhura, Abhishek bow out in mixed team compound archery event quarter-finals at World Games

**NEW DELHI, AUG 08:** India's Madhura Dhamangaonkar and Abhishek Verma crashed out in the quarter-finals of the mixed team compound archery event at the World Games 2025 in Chengdu.

The Indian pair surrendered to a defeat against the Republic of Korea's Moon Yeeun and Lee Eun Ho by a 154-151 scoreline, in the mixed team compound category. This event will make its Olympic debut at LA 2028.

In a closely contested contest, the Indians trail 38-37 after the opening game. The South Koreans upped the ante and opened up a four-point lead in the second with a perfect 40 in response to another 37 from the Indian duo. The Indian archers continued their



pursuit to reduce the four-point deficit in the final two rounds, but failed to conjure a way.

Earlier in the tournament, Dhamangaonkar and Abhishek earned top seeding for the mixed team event after topping the qualification round with a combined score of 1415. On the other hand, the Korean team, with 1392, were seeded eighth.

Abhishek and Dhamangaonkar clinched the bronze medal in mixed

team compound archery at the last edition of the World Games held in Birmingham back in 2022.

Meanwhile, four of the five Indian archers qualified for the quarter-finals and will be in contention for a medal. Two-time individual Asian Games silver medallist Abhishek Verma received a bye in the first round of the men's compound draw. He then went on to defeat Jean Pizarro of Puerto Rico by 149-143.

Rishabh Yadav defeated Riku Van Tonder of New Zealand and Julio Barillas of Guatemala to storm into the men's quarters. Rakesh Kumar bowed out after losing to Batuhan Akcaoglu of Turkey by 147-146.

In the women's compound individual event, Parneet Kaur ousted South Africa's Jeanine Van Kradenburg and the fifth-seeded Mexican Mariana Bernal Sanchez to secure her entry in the quarter-finals.

Madhura Dhamangaonkar, who won the women's individual gold medal at the Shanghai leg of the 2025 Archery World Cup, received an opening-round bye before overwhelming Geesa Bybordi of the Islamic Republic of Iran comfortably in the round of 16.

## Punjab crowned champions of 15th Hockey India Sub Junior Men National Championship

**NEW DELHI, AUG 08:** Hockey Punjab has been crowned the champions of the 15th Hockey India Sub Junior Men National Championship 2025, having won the final of Division 'A' against Hockey Jharkhand 4-3.

The first match between Uttar Pradesh Hockey and Hockey Madhya Pradesh saw Hockey Madhya Pradesh start strong, taking a two-goal lead in the first half. However, they were outwitted by Uttar Pradesh Hockey in the final two quarters, as Ali Shahrukh (42', 47', 51') scored a hat-trick, supported by Mohd Atif Raynee (40') and Prahalad Rajbhar (55'), who each scored a goal, leading their team to a 5-3 victory. The goals for Hockey Madhya Pradesh were scored by Aashir Aadil Khan (13'), Karan Gautam (20'), and Meezan Ur Rehman (58').

The next match between Hockey Jharkhand and Hockey Punjab was a closely contested final, with both teams fighting till the final whistle. Hockey Jharkhand started the second quarter strongly, scoring two



back-to-back goals through Ashish Tani Purti (21') and Anish Dungdung (24').

However, Hockey Punjab quickly equalised with Akshit Salaria (29') and Varinder Singh (30') scoring in quick succession. Jharkhand's Sukhu Guria (42') attempted to swing the game in his team's favour, but a brace by Punjab's Mandeep Singh (45', 53') sealed the deal for Hockey Punjab, crowning them champions of the 15th Hockey India Sub Junior Men National Championship 2025.

Earlier in the tournament, Hockey Punjab defeated Uttar Pradesh

Hockey, 4-3 in the semi-final. Sukhdev Singh (51', 52') shone with a late brace, after Mandeep Singh (19') and Varinder Singh (28') scored in the first half. Harsh Pratap Singh (9'), Ali Shahrukh (21'), and Captain Ketan Kushwaha (28') were the scorers for Uttar Pradesh Hockey.

In the second semi-final, Hockey Jharkhand defeated Hockey Madhya Pradesh, 3-1. Though Love (21') gave Madhya Pradesh the lead, Jharkhand bounced back with goals from Soreng Sumray (29'), Ashish Tani Purti (44') and Jaysan Kandulna (56') to surge into the finals.

## Tanvi Khanna falls short in final against Egypt's Khafagy

**NEW DELHI, AUG 08:** Asian Games medalist Tanvi Khanna fell short in the final of the women's singles event of the Squash India Tour Jaipur 2025, ending as a runner-up in a well-fought contest at Sai Mansingh Stadium on Friday.

At Jaipur, she was in the battle with top-seed, Egypt's Nour Khafagy and Tanvi lost 3-1 (11-3, 5-11, 11-5, 12-10) despite a spir-

ited effort, as per Olympics.com.

Tanvi lost the opening game, but was leading in the second, which she ended up winning. She lost the third game as well, with the battle moving to the fourth game. Ultimately, she fell short of world number 94, who held the title.

The 29-year-old started her campaign with a first-round bye and then pro-

ceeded to outclass compatriot Rathika Suthanthira Seelan 3-0 (11-5, 11-3, 11-1) in a brilliant round of 16 outing. In the quarterfinals, Tanvi pulled off an upset against the second-seeded Menna Walid of Egypt, pulling a 3-2 (11-8, 8-11, 11-7, 10-12, 11-6) upset win in 54 minutes. This turned out to be the longest match of the tournament.

In the semis, Tanvi eliminated the Malaysian chal-

lenge, the fourth-seeded Goh Zhi Xuan, 3-0 (11-8, 11-8, 11-4) to secure a ticket in the final.

Anahat Singh did not participate in the tournament. The Squash Tour Jaipur, sponsored by HCL, is one of the two Professional Squash Association (PSA) Challenger 9K events that India will host this year, with the second one lined up for Mumbai next month.

## Ashwin in talks with CSK about future amid speculation of possible move

**NEW DELHI, AUG 08:** Senior Indian off-spinner R Ashwin is in discussions with the Chennai Super Kings (CSK) about his future in the IPL franchise amid speculation that he might seek his release from the team.

With over two months still left before the deadline for retentions, Ashwin, it is reliably learnt, has had conversations with the CSK brass about his role going forward.

"It is early stages to decide on any player's future. The cut off date for retention is yet to be announced. So we have time," an IPL source said.

"It's a pre-auction plan



to hold discussions with players and Ashwin, being a senior, is part of it. It is a mutual discussion to understand his role in the team ahead of next IPL season," he added.

The 38-year-old Ashwin, who retired from international cricket last year, was bought for Rs 9.75 crore in

the mega auction before the 2025 season.

It was a homecoming of sorts for the Chennai-based player, who earlier turned up for CSK from 2009 to 2015.

He later went on to play for the now-defunct Rising Pune Super Giant and the then Kings XI Punjab (cur-

rently Punjab Kings) in 2018.

He played nine games in the season gone by, picking up just seven wickets in a largely disappointing season for the team as it finished fifth with seven wins and as many losses.

There are speculations that CSK might rope in wicketkeeper-batter Sanju Samson, who wants to leave his current team—Rajasthan Royals.

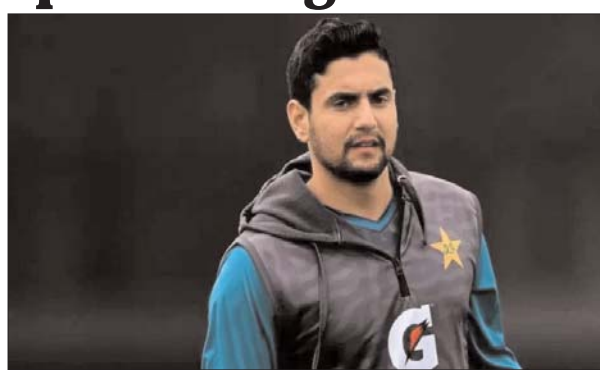
"We have certain players in our mind to add to our line up next season. But so far, we have not had discussions with anyone, as I said there is a lot of time for player retention etc," the source said.

## Pakistan cricketer Haider Ali suspended amid rape investigation in England

**NEW DELHI, AUG 08:** Pakistan batsman Haider Ali is under criminal investigation in England, his country's cricket board said, while the Greater Manchester Police said an arrest had been made following a rape allegation.

The Pakistan Cricket Board said an investigation "involving cricketer Haider Ali" stemmed from "an incident that reportedly occurred during the Pakistan Shaheens' recent tour of England." The PCB did not specify the nature of the investigation into the 24-year-old Ali.

The Greater Manchester Police said that on Monday they had received a re-



port of a rape and that "we have arrested a 24-year-old man". "It's alleged that the incident occurred on Wednesday, July 23, 2025, in Manchester," the police statement added. "The man has since been bailed pending further inquiry." The police in Britain typically do not

name suspects at this stage of investigation.

The Shaheens team represents Pakistan in second-tier international cricket. Their 15-day tour started on July 22.

The PCB suspended Ali "effective immediately, pending the outcome of the ongoing investiga-

## Former Zimbabwe skipper Graeme Cremer returns to cricket after seven years

**NEW DELHI, AUG 08:** Former Zimbabwe skipper Graeme Cremer has returned to the country's domestic cricket and is available for international selection. Cremer, who led Zimbabwe between 2016 and 2018, gave up cricket for golf, as per ESPNcricinfo.

He has now made his return in Zimbabwe's National Premier League, according to ESPNcricinfo. Cremer has confirmed he is eligible for selection for the national side and could be in contention for September's T20 World Cup

Qualifiers, which will be played in Zimbabwe.

Cremer has held coaching positions in Dubai, notably with the Rajasthan Royals Academy, and last played international cricket in 2018. He is now the top wicket-taker after two games for the reigning champions, the Takashinga Patriots 1 Cricket Club.

Cremer, on his comeback, said, "It's amazing being back, Kwekwe was my home ground for many years, so it was great walking out and being part of Takashinga, which is such

a prestigious club. They welcomed me into the team, and it was an amazing team environment. I'm really happy with the start."

Cremer took 4 wickets for 43 runs as Takashinga won by 134 runs, defending a score of 263 for 6. Brendan Taylor, who has since rejoined the Test team after serving a three and a half year suspension for violating the ICC's anti-corruption code, also played in that game on August 3.

Cremer felt amazing sharing the field with his

former Zimbabwe teammate Taylor, he said, "We are close friends, so it was an amazing feeling being on the field with him again and nice to see him score some runs," Cremer said. "It's great watching him bat, and then walking out onto the field with him, just how we communicate because we have played so much cricket together. It really helps someone like that out with me."

Zimbabwe will host the Africa Regional Qualifier for the upcoming T20 World Cup from September 26 to October 4.