

6 WORLD

- Zelenskyy warns of an 'artificial deficit' of weapons after withdrawal from Avdiivka
- Western officials and Kremlin critics blame Putin and his govt for Navalny's death in prison

8 NATION

- Delhi Assembly initiates discussion on motion of confidence moved by Kejriwal
- Farmer leader Pandher asks Centre to bring ordinance to give legal guarantee for MSP

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Vol .No. XXV Issue No. 39 RNI-ASSENG/2000/12862 DIPHU, KARBI ANGLONG SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2024 PAGES 12 PRICE ₹ 8



Modern farming, Prosperous farmers

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Modi Sarkar ki Guarantee

Electronic devices found from NSA detainees in Dibrugarh jail

GUWAHATI, Feb 17: Several electronic gadgets were recovered from the cells of National Security Act (NSA) detainees at Dibrugarh Central Jail in Assam on Saturday. Among the detainees are 10 members of the radical group 'Waris Punjab De' (WPD), a pro-Khalistani outfit, including its chief Amritpal and one of his uncles.

They have been in jail since March 19 last year, following their arrests under the NSA from various parts of Punjab during a crackdown on the outfit.

Director General of Police (DGP) GP Singh revealed that a search of the premises was conducted by jail staff based on intelligence indicating unauthorised activities.

The search yielded various electronic devices, such as a smartphone with a SIM card, a keypad phone, a TV remote with a keyboard, a spycam pen, pen drives, Bluetooth headphones, and speakers.

The jail staff confiscated these items, and investigations are underway to determine the source of these "unauthorised articles and



mode of induction. DGP Singh posted on 'X' that additional CCTV cameras were installed in the public area of the NSA block following the receipt of information about unauthorised activities taking place there.

He further said additional lawful actions and preventive measures are being implemented to avoid

Additional CCTV cameras installed as jail houses pro-Khalistani outfit members

additional CCTV cameras and the repair or replacement of faulty ones. Dibrugarh Jail, one of the oldest and high-security prisons in the Northeast, was constructed by the British in 1859-60.

Amritpal Singh was brought to Dibrugarh Central Jail on April 23, 2023 after Punjab Police arrested him from the state's Moga district after several weeks of manhunt.

His aides were also shifted to the jail during the massive operation against Waris Punjab De. Jail sources had earlier said Amritpal had been kept in a solitary cell. (PTI)

Modi sounds poll bugle at BJP meet

'Winning 370 seats will be true tribute to Mookerjee'

NEW DELHI, Feb 17: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday asked BJP members to build the party's Lok Sabha poll campaign around the government's development and pro-poor welfare initiatives besides the measures to enhance the country's global standing, asserting that winning 370 seats will be a true tribute to its key ideologue Syama Prasad Mookerjee.

Addressing a meeting of the BJP's national office-bearers before the start of its convention, he said every party worker should focus on polling booths in the next 100 days, the period by which the upcoming Lok Sabha polls are likely to be over, and ensure at least 370 more votes for the party at every polling station than in 2019.

Briefing reporters on Modi's speech, BJP general secretary Vinod Tawde said the prime min-



ister told the meeting that the opposition will engage in "tu-tu-main main" (petty squabbling), unwarranted and divisive issues but they must not be distracted and remain focussed on its development agenda.

Modi said, "370 is not merely a number for the BJP. It symbolises a profound sentiment. Mookerjee made the ultimate sacrifice for the

Undeclared bandh continues in Karbi Anglong and West KA after attack on KSA members

HT Bureau
DIPHU, Feb 17: The situation in Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong regions remained tense as an undeclared bandh continued after a violent attack on Karbi Students Association (KSA) members in Kheroni Sariali of West Karbi Anglong on February 15.

The aftermath of the assault has led to a shutdown of business establishments and shops in West Karbi Anglong, while Karbi Anglong district also remained shuttered, though government offices were operational. Additionally, public transport services were halted; however, train services remained unaffected.

In Diphu, a few private vehicles were seen on the roads amidst the subdued atmosphere.

An indefinite sit-in demonstration demanding eviction from Professional Grazing Reserve (PGR) and Village Grazing Reserve (VGR) land is underway at the KSA premises in Diphu.

Meanwhile, the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) has called for a meeting of elected representatives and leaders on February 20 to address the issue of PGR and VGR land.

Another meeting has been convened by the KAAC on February 19, inviting all presidents and sec-

retaries of Autonomous State Demand Committee (ASDC), Karbi Nimso Chingthur Asong, and KSA to discuss the matter further.

In a press conference held at the ASDC office, located, the ASDC Youth Front and KSA-Jemson Timung thanked the CEM of KAAC, Tuliram Ronghang, for initiating talks to resolve the PGR and VGR land issue. They also clarified that they had not called for any bandh, attributing the shutdown to the people's enforcement.

On the other hand, the Garo Students Union (GSU) has strongly condemned the attack on KSA members and demanded the immediate arrest of the perpetrators.

In a press conference held at the ASDC office, the ASDC Youth Front and KSA-Jemson Timung thanked the chief executive member (CEM) of Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC), Tuliram Ronghang, for initiating talks to resolve the PGR and VGR land issue. They also clarified that they had not called for any bandh, attributing the shutdown to the people's enforcement.

On the other hand, the Garo Students Union (GSU) has strongly condemned the attack on KSA members and demanded the immediate arrest of the perpetrators. It is worth (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

Need to 'pay attention at trial courts' to reduce growing cases: CJI

PRAYAGRAJ (UP), Feb 17: Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud on Saturday said that there is a need to "pay attention at trial courts," to reduce the burden of growing number of cases.

Addressing the inauguration ceremony of an arbitration centre inaugurated by him, the CJI said, "Trial courts are where the solution to problems begins, there is a need to pay attention. Many such cases are increasing in the Supreme Court which should be settled in the trial court itself. Due to non-availability of bail in small cases, people are coming to the Supreme Court and the pressure there is increasing."

Talking about Uttar Pradesh, CJI Chandrachud said that investment is increasing in the state. Industries will be set up in the state and in this regard, it is necessary to have expansion and trust in the judicial sector, he added. Appealing to advocates and others in the legal profession to engage with technology, the CJI said, "I ask all (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

Increasing number of countries viewing two-state solution as 'urgent': Jaishankar

SITUATION IN GAZA
NEW DELHI, Feb 17: India maintained for many decades that there should be a two-state solution to the Palestine issue and an increasing number of nations are now not only endorsing it but considering it as "more urgent" than before, external affairs minister S Jaishankar said on Saturday amid concerns over the prevailing situation in Gaza.

Jaishankar made the remarks at an interactive session at a security conference in Munich in presence of US secretary of State Antony Blinken and German foreign minister Annalena Baerbock.

The external affairs minister described the October 7 attacks on Israeli cities by Hamas as "terrorism" but at the same time, referring to Tel Aviv's response, said Israel has an international obligation to observe the humanitarian law.

Jaishankar said it is important that Israel should have been very mindful of civilian casualties.

Explaining New Delhi's position on the conflict, he said there are different dimensions to it, and broadly classified them into four points. "Number one -- we must be clear that what happened on October 7 was terrorism; no caveats, no justification, no explanation. It was terrorism," he said.

"Number two, as Israel responds, it is important



that Israel should have been very mindful of civilian casualties. It has an international obligation to observe humanitarian law," Jaishankar said.

The external affairs minister, mentioning point number three said the return of hostages today is imperative. "Number four -- There is a need for a humanitarian corridor, a sustainable humanitarian corridor to provide relief. And eventually, there has to be a permanent fix, a long-term fix. Otherwise we are going to see a recurrence," he said.

The external affairs minister also highlighted India's long-held position on the Palestine issue. "Certainly India has long believed in a two-state solution. We have maintained (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

Manipur CM condemns violence in state, vows legal action



IMPHAL, Feb 17: Manipur chief minister N Biren Singh on Saturday denounced the recent incidents of violence in Churachandpur and Imphal East district, labeling them as unfortunate.

Addressing media persons at the chief minister's secretariat in Imphal, Singh expressed strong condemnation and assured that magisterial inquiries would be conducted into the incidents. Singh also emphasised the government's commitment to uphold law and order, protect public property, and ensure the safety of citizens.

He further asserted that stringent

legal action would be taken against those found guilty, including individuals making threats on social media platforms.

Regarding the Indigenous Tribal Leaders Forum's (ITLF) ultimatum to the SP of Churachandpur, Singh firmly stated that such threats against law enforcement agencies and government officials would not be tolerated. He reiterated the government's support for the SP and the DC of Churachandpur.

Singh also addressed misleading narratives, stating that divisive politics and misinformation aimed at inciting youth (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

10 killed in mishap in TN fireworks factory

VIRUDHUNAGAR (TN), Feb 17: Ten people including four women were killed in an explosion at a fireworks factory in this district on Saturday. Tamil Nadu chief minister M K Stalin directed two state ministers to coordinate the rescue and relief activities.

The chief minister said a sudden explosion in a firecracker manufacturing unit in Kundayiruppu village in Vembakottai resulted in the death of ten people - six men and four women.

He has directed state revenue minister K K S R Ramachandran and labour minister C V Ganesan to immediately rush to the spot and ensure rescue and relief activities, an official release here said.

Expressing anguish over the accident, the Chief Minister conveyed his heartfelt condolences and sympathies to the bereaved families.

He has ordered a solatium of Rs 3 lakh each to the kin of the deceased and Rs one lakh to the grievously injured.

The mishap occurred around 12.30 pm on Saturday in the chemical mixing room of the firecracker making (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

'Along with his long film journey, Gulzar has been setting new milestones in the field of literature'

Gulzar, Sanskrit scholar Rambhadracharya selected for Jnanpith Award

NEW DELHI, Feb 17: Renowned Urdu poet Gulzar and Sanskrit scholar Jagadguru Rambhadracharya have been named the recipients of the 58th Jnanpith Award, the Jnanpith selection committee announced on Saturday.

Sampooran Singh Kalra, popularly known as Gulzar, 89, is celebrated for his works in Hindi cinema and is considered one of the finest Urdu poets of this era.

Rambhadracharya, 74, the founder and head of Tulsi Peeth in Chitrakoot, is a renowned Hindu spiritual leader, educator and writer of more than 240 books and texts, including four epics.

In a statement, the Jnanpith selection committee said, "It has been decided to give the award (for 2023) to eminent writers from two languages: Sanskrit litterateur Jagadguru Rambhadracharya and well known Urdu litterateur Shri Gulzar." Gulzar received Sahitya



Akademi Award for Urdu in 2002, Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 2013, Padma Bhushan in 2004, and at least five National Film awards for his works.

Some of his finest works include the song "Jai Ho" for film "Slumdog Millionaire", which received an Oscar award in 2009 and Grammy Award in 2010, and songs for critically acclaimed films as

milestones in the field of literature. In poetry, he invented a new genre "Triveni" which is a non-mukaffa poem of three lines. Gulzar has always created something new through his poetry. For some time now he has also been paying serious attention to children's poetry," Bharatiya Jnanpith said in a statement. Rambhadracharya is one of the present four Jagadguru Rammanandacharyas of the Rammananda sect and has been holding this position since 1982.

A polyglot, who speaks 22 languages, Rambhadracharya is a poet and writer in several Indian languages including Sanskrit, Hindi, Awadhi, and Maithili.

In 2015, he received the Padma Vibhushan award. He was named Giridhara Misra. He lost his eyesight at the age of two months due to trachoma and was home tutored during initial years by his grandfather. By (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)



CHRISTOPHER NOLAN OPEN TO MAKING A HORROR FILM IF IT'S AN 'EXCEPTIONAL IDEA'

LONDON, Feb 17: Christopher Nolan likes moving between genres and if he stumbles upon an exceptional idea, he would love to make a horror film.

There is a lot of buzz around the next film of the director, whose 12th feature film "Oppenheimer" is a front-runner at the Oscars this year, including in the best picture and best director categories.

Asked at a British Film Institute panel discussion in London if he would ever consider

making a horror movie, Nolan seemed open to the idea of directing a horror film, according to Variety.

"Oppenheimer" has elements of horror in it definitely, as I think is appropriate to the subject matter," Nolan said.

"I think horror films are very interesting because they depend on very cinematic devices. It really is about a visceral response to things, and so, at some point, I'd love to make a horror film. But I think a really good horror film

requires a really exceptional idea. And those are few and far between. So I haven't found a story that lends itself to that," the filmmaker said.

Nolan's 'Oppenheimer', starring Cillian Murphy in the central role, is a biopic of the theoretical physicist J Robert Oppenheimer.

The film has earned over USD 950 million at the worldwide box office, making it one of the most successful movies in the British director's career, which is dotted by big budget blockbusters whether it is the 'Batman' trilogy, 'Prestige', 'Inception', 'Interstellar' or 'Dunkirk'. (PTI)

'DANGAL' CHILD STAR SUHANI BHATNAGAR DIES AT 19



NEW DELHI, Feb 17: Suhani Bhatnagar, who played young Babita Phogat in Aamir Khan-starrer wrestling drama "Dangal", has died at the age of 19.

"She died at AIIMS yesterday. She was 19," a close relative of the actor told PTI, confirming her death.

He did not elaborate on what led to the young actor's death but media reports suggested she suffered medical complications after a leg fracture and was later admitted to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences.

"She was admitted on February 7 and passed away on February 16," a source at the hospital said.

The Faridabad-born actor became a prominent face after appearing in the 2016 biographical drama about a wrestler who mentors his two daughters to success.

Zaira Wasim played young Geeta while Bhatnagar portrayed the role of Babita. The grown-up versions of the characters were

played by Fatima Sana Shaikh and Sanya Malhotra. Aamir Khan played the role of their father, Mahavir Phogat.

In a social media post, Khan's production house mourned Bhatnagar's death.

"We are deeply saddened to hear about our Suhani passing away. Our heartfelt condolences to her mother Poojaji and the entire family. Such a talented young girl, such a team player, 'Dangal' would have been incomplete without Suhani.

"Suhani, you will always remain a star in our hearts. May you rest in peace," Aamir Khan Productions said in the post on X. The film's director Nitesh Tiwari also mourned the death.

"Suhani's passing away is absolutely shocking and heart-breaking. She was such a happy soul, so full of life. My deepest condolences to her family," he said in a statement.

Suhani had taken a break from acting to complete her studies. (PTI)

THANKS FOR EVERYONE'S INPUT ON MY FACE: AMY SCHUMER



LOS ANGELES, Feb 17: Writer-actor Amy Schumer has hit back at negative comments about her face, saying it's "puffer than normal" because she is going through "medical and hormonal" changes due to her endometriosis.

Schumer appeared on The Tonight Show and Good Morning America to promote her new show "Life and Beth" on Hulu but her facial appearance sparked a discussion on social media. In an Instagram post, the 42-year-old opened up about the health issue she is facing while also criticising the undue focus on a woman's appearance.

"Thank you so much for everyone's input about my face! I've enjoyed feedback and liberation about my appearance, as all women do for almost 20 years. And you're right, it is puffier than normal right now." "I have endometriosis,

an auto immune disease that every woman should read about," Schumer wrote in an Instagram post alongside the poster for the second season of her show. "There are some medical and hormonal things going on in my

world right now, but I'm okay." Endometriosis, according to the World Health Organisation, is a disease in which tissue similar to the lining of the uterus grows outside the uterus. It can cause severe pain in the pelvis and make it harder to get pregnant. Schumer said while she believes that a woman "doesn't need any excuse for her physical appearance and owes no explanation", she took it as an opportunity to advocate for self-love and acceptance of "the skin you are in". "Like every other woman/person some days I feel confident and good as hell and others I want to put a bag over my head," she explained.

"But I feel strong and beautiful and so proud of this TV show I created. Wrote. Starred in and directed. Maybe just maybe we can focus on that for a little," she added. In 2021,

Schumer had her uterus and appendix removed due to endometriosis. (PTI)

Jiya wins 'Best Film' award at Prag Cine Awards 2024

'Jiya' wins 4 awards including Best Film, Best Screenplay and Dialogue, Best Singer Male, and Best Background Score

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Feb 17: Filmmaker Kenny Basumatary's latest directorial 'Jiya', produced by Sarmistha Chakravorty, has won 4 awards, including Best Film at the latest edition of Prag Cine Awards held at Jorhat on February 16.

'Jiya' has won the Best Film award, Best Screenplay and Dialogue (Kenny Basumatary & Sarmistha Chakravorty), Best Singer Male (Angarag Papon Mahanta) and Best Background Score (Ambar Das). The film had secured a whopping 16 nominations in the prestigious awards. Written and produced by Sarmistha Chakravorty, 'Jiya' is about a young woman (Jiya) who, having escaped an abusive marriage, navigates the challenges of single motherhood with her daughter Nupur. Struggling against societal judgment, Jiya conceals her vulnerability behind a resilient façade. Pallavi, her steadfast friend, becomes a crucial pillar of support. Jiya leaves a toxic job only to find solace in Pallavi's workplace, where she encounters the courteous Abhi. What happens next?

Expressing her excitement at winning multiple awards, Sarmistha Chakravorty said: "This is a dream coming true moment for me. My debut film as writer-producer and we won 4

awards including the Best Film. This is really overwhelming for us that our first venture has won 4 awards, and had received total 16 nominations. This is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the entire team, and I extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to making this happen." Speaking about the big win, director Kenny Basumatary said: "This is a huge recognition for the film. Winning four awards, including the esteemed Best Film category, is a testament to the collective dedication and hard work put in by our entire team." "I am deeply honoured and grateful to receive the award for Best Background Score for our film 'Jiya'. This recognition is a testament to the collaborative efforts and creativity that went into crafting the musical backdrop of our story. I am truly appreciative of this acknowledgment, and it motivates me to continue pushing the boundaries of artistic expression," said Ambar Das.

The film premiered in front of a packed audience at the 8th Brahmaputra Valley Film Festival at Jyoti Chitran on December 15, 2023. 'Jiya' will be released across theatres on May 17, 2024.

Speaking about her debut as a film producer, Sarmistha Chakravorty had said: "At first, it was just a small dream of acting in a serious role. Since I have so many single mother friends around me, I thought of writing a script based on that. Then I somehow managed the expenditure needed for the shoot. With the help of selfless support from Kenny and our team, we managed to shoot the film. Actually, I got support from everyone. From Angarag Papon Mahanta, Shankuraj Konwar, Maitrayee Patar, Chandana Pathak, Raj Dweep, Swapna Jyoti Thengal, Eepsita Hazarika to each and everyone involved. Music production was done free of cost at home since my husband Ambar Das has composed, produced the songs and did the background score. This is how I could manage. Making of this film was possible only because of the unconditional love and support I received from everyone."

Feels great that talent is recognised on national level, says Priyamani

MUMBAI, Feb 17: South star Priyamani says "Jawan" and "The Family Man" have made her popular in Hindi cinema with better opportunities coming her way.

The actor, who is fluent in different languages, is already an established star in the south and won the National Film Award for her role in "Paruthiveeran".

"I feel honoured that makers not only from your industry but from other industries are willing to have you on board because they believe in your talent. It feels great that talent is being recognised everywhere and people (actors) are getting more opportunities. It's good that we are being recognised on a national level," the Bengaluru-based actor told PTI in an interview. Priyamani's stint in Hindi cinema began with a cameo in Mani Ratnam's

bilingual movie, "Raavan", followed by a dance number in Shah Rukh Khan's "Chennai Express", but it was her OTT debut show, "The Family Man", fronted by Manoj Bajpayee, that led to her becoming famous with Hindi audiences.

"I'm happy that people are liking my work. I'm a little more known because of 'Jawan' here in Mumbai. Earlier, they (people) had to take a second look at me to think if I was the same girl from 'The Family Man'. But now the popularity is growing more, so every time wherever I walk, people are like, 'Oh it's you'," she said. The "Chaarulatha" star said she is "conscious and cautious" about her choices in Hindi cinema. Next on her slate is "Article 370" and "Maidaan" besides the third season of Prime Video series "The Family

Man". "I'm very conscious and cautious of what I do. When it comes to Hindi, and in other languages also, I take my time in deciding what I want to do," she said.

"Article 370", fronted by Yami Gautam, is a political drama, which deals with the abrogation of Article 370 in Kashmir. The film is directed by Aditya Suhas Jambhale. Priyamani plays the role of an officer in PMO named Rajeshwari Swaminathan. She described her character as a strong-willed woman. The Central government on August 5, 2019, had revoked Article 370, which gave special status to the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir, and bifurcated it into union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

Priyamani said she learnt many things about how Article 370 came into force while

working on the movie.

"Through the process of story narration, and when we started shooting for the film, I realized that there is much more to this... It is not meant for a certain age group, anybody and everybody can watch it." "Article 370", backed by Gautam's filmmaker husband Aditya Dhar and Jio Studios, will be released in theatres on February 23. Priyamani is also looking forward to the release of "Maidaan" on April 10. The sports drama is directed by Amit Ravindernath Sharma of "Badhaai Ho" fame and is headlined by Ajay Devgn. The actor said producer Boney Kapoor approached her for the movie through her husband Mustafa Raj, an entrepreneur. (PTI)



BADMINTON ASIA TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

INDIAN WOMEN ENTER MAIDEN FINAL AFTER BEATING JAPAN 3-2

SHAH ALAM (MALAYSIA), Feb 17: India kept alive hopes of winning a first-ever gold in Badminton Asia Team Championships after the women shuttlers progressed to their maiden final with a 3-2 win over two-time former champions Japan in a thrilling semi-final here on Saturday.

Wakana Nagahara, they were still a formidable side, making it tough for India. Returning from a long injury layoff, Sindhu had enjoyed wins against China's Han Yue and Hong Kong's Lo Sin Yan Happy but she couldn't produce her best against the left-handed Aya Ohori, going down 13-21, 20-22 in the first singles to peg India back.



a niggler, Sindhu then paired up with Ashwini Ponnappa but they couldn't get across the world No. 11 pair of Rena Miyaura and Ayako Sakuramoto, losing 14-21, 11-21 in 43 minutes. With the five-match rubber evenly poised at 2-2, Anmol was handed the responsibility of taming world No. 29 Natsuki Nidaira, and the Indian once again lived up to the expectation, claiming a 21-14, 21-18 win in 52 minutes.

well in team championships, it shows they can handle pressure and I am really impressed with her. This is special moment for Indian badminton." Ashmita managed to draw out errors from Nozomi and also played some delectable backhand drives and forehand cross hits to open up a 11-9 lead after an initial battle in the opening game.

Mumbai thrash Assam by innings and 80 runs to warm up for quarter-finals

MUMBAI, Feb 17: All-rounder Shardul Thakur's match haul of 10 wickets was complemented by Shivam Dube's counter-attacking century as Mumbai finished their group B Ranji Trophy league engagements with a resounding innings and 80 run win against Assam inside two days.

Tushar Deshpande (2/37) and Tanush Kotian (1/5) then kept chipping away wickets before Thakur wrapped the tail in his four-wicket burst. At Vizianagaram, visitors Kerala put up a strong fightback to post 258/3 in reply to Andhra's 272 all-out. But despite being in the backfoot, Andhra are set to finish second to join Mumbai in the last-eight.

We fully deserved the three points: Chennaiyin's FC's Owen Coyle

HT Bureau GUWAHATI, Feb 17: Chennaiyin FC head coach Owen Coyle lauded his side after they registered a hard-fought win over Kerala Blasters FC to get back to winning ways in the Indian Super League (ISL) at the Jawaharlar Nehru Stadium in Chennai on Friday.



league with this result. The veteran head coach was pleased with what he saw from his team and stated that the three points were thoroughly deserved. "We were outstanding tonight, from the first whistle to the last," Coyle said in the post-match press conference.

They had injuries and they brought young players in. I know how difficult it was going to be (for them). But we fully deserved the three points. From the first whistle to the last, we were the best team. And then we find ourselves down to 10 men. We had to show a different side to us. So it was important to get the clean sheet. Because we know we can create chances and score."

Bengaluru FC face Mumbai City FC challenge in their attempt to reach the playoffs

HT Bureau GUWAHATI, Feb 17: Mumbai City FC readies to play hosts to Bengaluru FC at the Mumbai Football Arena (MFA) in the City of Dreams as the Matchweek 15 of Indian Super League (ISL) 2023-24 season draws to an end on February 18, Sunday at 7:30 p.m.

FC, they recovered to beat Chennaiyin FC by 1-0 before drawing 1-1 against the Red Miners. Head coach Gerard Zaragoza has had nearly two months with his team now and it is about time that his ideas, philosophies, and the changes that he has brought about in the setup begin reflecting consistently on field.

Zara to join Vidhatri and Heena for Queen Sirikit Cup golf

NEW DELHI, Feb 17: Teenage golfer Zara Anand will replace defending champion Avani Prashanth in the Indian team for the 44th Queen Sirikit Cup next month in New Zealand. The Noida teenager will join the experienced Vidhatri Urs and Heena Kang as the Indian team competes at the prestigious event, which will be held at the famous Clearwater Golf Course in Christchurch, New Zealand.

vidual honours and the Indian team finished second in Manila for their best-ever performance. Avani's teammates last year were Vidhatri Urs and Nishna Patel. This year Avani will miss the event as she has been given a special invitation to the Sage Valley Junior International in Sage Valley, Graniteville, South Carolina, US.

Anmol is brave and intelligent, says Gopichand

NEW DELHI, Feb 17: Anmol Kharab is a fearless and intelligent player and her emergence is refreshing for Indian badminton, gushed chief National coach Pullela Gopichand after the teenager's impressive show at the Asia Team Championships.

"To beat China and Japan, I don't think many teams can say that, so really happy. There is great energy in the dug out and it showed literally during the match. "Before this tie, if you would have told me that (Nozomi) Okuhara would be beaten and we will make a comeback after Sindhu's loss, I would have said little chance but it has been a great run so far. "The match against China was a fantastic win. The morale was high in general. Good to see Gayatri (Gopichand) and Treesa (Jolly) pulling out the match and the way Anmol played it was amazing. Ashmita's was also a fantastic win."



This is her first major international assignment. "I think the result of the two matches is a testimony that she can beat top players. To take the pressure on and show that kind of nerve, it is very refreshing. She is fearless. The kind of strokes that she plays, it all come naturally to her," Gopichand told PTI.

