

Bangladesh make four changes, India bat first

Dubai, (UNI)

The toss has been done and dusted, and cricket's gentle ritual of fate has delivered its first twist: Bangladesh have elected to field. It is a decision that speaks of intent, Jaker Ali's side eager to set the tone early, to make the Indian batsmen work hard under the pleasant September skies.

Suryakumar Yadav, ever the picture of composure, welcomed the opportunity to take the crease first. "We are happy doing it. We have got what we wanted in the last 4-5 games and we are happy to bat first," he said with the quiet assurance of a man who trusts rhythm and process over panic.

"We have to follow the good things that we have been doing and the results will take care of themselves. The boys have done their bit—it is part of the game," he added, nodding to the odd dropped catch that cricket, in its charming



unpredictability, insists upon.

With the weather pleasant and no changes to the Indian eleven, the stage seems set for a contest that will reward patience, skill, and just a

touch of flair.

Across the boundary rope, Bangladesh's captain Jaker Ali was brimming with cautious optimism. The absence of Litton Das, sidelined

by a practice injury, is a blow, but not a deterrent. "I am excited and looking forward to this game. We are doing really well as a team and will try to give our best. We will try to restrict them and chase it down," he said, already plotting his team's approach.

Four changes in the playing XI suggest fresh energy, fresh ideas, and perhaps a dash of unpredictability to unsettle an Indian batting line-up that has found consistency of late.

With bat and ball now set on opposite paths, the real story will unfold in the spans between deliveries: the flourish of a cover drive, the subtle turn of a spinner, the tiny tactical adjustments that define the ebb and flow of a cricket match.

Both captains, in their own manner, have framed the narrative; now it falls to the players to write the chapters on the field. And, if cricket is kind, it will be a story worth remembering.

Franchises spend big on overseas & junior talents as HIL 2026 Men's auction conclude successfully



New Delhi, (UNI)

The buzz around the Hockey India League (HIL) Mini Auctions reached its peak today as franchises completed their squad-building process in a high-energy closed-door session held here.

Over 100 men players went under the hammer, with franchises making bold and strategic moves to secure talent for the upcoming season. With salary caps of INR 4 Crores (Men), franchises made every move count, and their final rosters reflected a balanced mix of experienced internationals, promising juniors, and specialist positions such as goalkeepers and drag-flickers.

It is worth noting that the Hero HIL Governing Council today assumed charge of the UP Rudras franchise for the upcoming Hero HIL 2026 season. Until a new franchise owner comes forward, the team will be managed and operated by the Governing Council and will compete under the name 'HIL Governing Council'.

Thies Prinz – bought by HIL Governing Council for INR 36 Lakhs Highlights from the Men's

Auction: Vivek Lakra (Indian junior goalkeeper): With a base price of INR 2 Lakhs, Lakra stunned the room as multiple franchises entered the fray. Ultimately, Shracchi Rarh Bengal Tigers signed him for a whopping INR 23 Lakhs, one of the standout stories of the day. Adrohit Ekka (Indian junior midfielder): One of the most sought-after juniors in the pool, Ekka sparked a heated bidding contest between JSW Soorma Hockey Club and Tamil Nadu Dragons, before the Dragons secured him for a whopping INR 11 Lakhs.

Ajeet Yadav (Indian junior forward): With a base price of INR 2 Lakhs, Yadav was bought by HIL Governing Council for whopping INR 11.5 Lakhs.

Sushil Dhanwar (Indian junior midfielder): Also snapped up by Tamil Nadu Dragons at his base price of INR 2 Lakhs, strengthening their youth brigade. Sander de Wijn (The Netherlands defender): A marquee international pick, the Dutch stalwart triggered a fierce bidding war between SG Pipers and Tamil Nadu Dragons, before Dragons closed the deal at INR 36 Lakhs.



FIFA to hold historic women's friendly series in United Arab Emirates

Zurich (Switzerland), (UNI): As part of FIFA's commitment to bringing the game to all, the FIFA Unites: Women's Series is scheduled to kick off in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, between October 23 and 29 this year.

The historic four-team women's football event reinforces FIFA's efforts to promote and protect the right of all women and girls to play the sport, pursue their footballing dreams and thrive through the game.

The event will mark the first involvement in an international tournament of the Afghan women's refugee team, a project pioneered by FIFA and a leading initiative in the sporting world. The Afghans will face the national teams of Chad, Libya and the United Arab Emirates.

Playing on their own patch, the UAE team – who are coached by vastly experienced Dutchwoman Vera Pauw – will be looking to build on their recent progress, while the squads from Chad and Libya harbour ambitions of making their FIFA/Coca-Cola Women's World Ranking debuts.

"Ensuring that all women have access to football is a priority for FIFA and a key element in shaping the future of our sport," said FIFA President Gianni Infantino.

"We are aware of the potential the game has both on and off the pitch. These friendly matches represent more than just a competition; they are a symbol of hope and progress for women all over the world.

UST Marathon: Milind Soman named Brand Ambassador, Rs 22 lakh prize money

Thiruvananthapuram, (UNI)

Kerala's capital city is gearing up for its largest ever marathon on October 12, as the second edition of the UST Trivandrum Marathon promises a festive celebration of fitness, endurance, and community spirit.

Organised by UST, a leading global AI and technology transformation company, in partnership with NEB Sports, the mega event will feature four categories the full marathon, half marathon, 10K run, and 5K run all flagged off from the UST campus at Technopark, Thiruvananthapuram.

Adding star power to the marathon, Milind Soman renowned actor, model, and fitness icon has been named the Brand Ambassador. Lending further sporting distinction to the event will be the presence of former Indian badminton coach Pullela

Gopichand, athlete Reeth Abraham, and shuttler U. Vimal Kumar.

With over 10,000 runners expected to participate, the marathon carries a prize pool exceeding Rs 22 lakh, making it one of the most rewarding running events in Kerala.

Speaking about the initiative, Alexander Varghese, President, UST, said? "The UST Trivandrum Marathon is a prestigious event for us, as it spreads awareness on physical fitness and mental well-being. Bringing such an annual marathon to Kerala's capital underlines UST's commitment to society and its wellness."

Nagaraj Adiga, CMD, NEB Sports, added, "This marathon ushers in pride for Thiruvananthapuram. With UST's support, we are delighted to host more than 10,000 runners.

Barcelona faces injury crisis ahead of La Liga match against Oviedo

Madrid, (UNI)

FC Barcelona coach Hansi Flick faces a deepening injury crisis ahead of his side's La Liga visit to newly promoted Oviedo on Thursday night.

Barcelona travels to Oviedo after confirming that Spain international midfielder Gavi needs another operation on his right knee that will keep him out for four to five months.

Meanwhile, Fermin Lopez has suffered a groin injury that will sideline him until after the next international break.

Lamine Yamal likely will miss his third consecutive game as he continues recovering from pubalgia that caused him to miss matches against Valencia, Newcastle United and Getafe.

Yamal is expected to return



against Real Sociedad this weekend, but concern remains that pubalgia - also known as a sports hernia - doesn't always respond to conserv-

ative treatment. His playing style, with constant twists and turns, could cause it to flare up again. Barcelona also received news

Tuesday that the local government has again refused to grant a license for the club to use Camp Nou, meaning the team will have to play this weekend's game against Real Sociedad at Montjuic.

Dani Olmo appears likely to start against Oviedo, while Marc Casad also could play. They will face an opponent that has struggled to adapt since winning promotion, with one win and four defeats this season.

Elche has adapted much better to life in the top flight, with Eder Sarabia's side currently unbeaten with two wins and three draws.

Sarabia's team travels to play Osasuna on Thursday in what looks like a battle of in-form strikers, as Osasuna's Ante Budimir faces Elche's powerful duo of Rafa Mir and Andre Silva.

ISSF Junior World Cup New Delhi 2025: Medal rounds to commence on Sep 25

New Delhi, (UNI)

The first medals of the ISSF Junior World Cup New Delhi 2025, will be decided on Thursday with the 50m Rifle Prone event for both men and women, set to start proceedings at the Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range here.

The Olympic events will start on Friday, September 26, with the 10m Air pistol finals scheduled. A total of 208 shooters from 18 countries will be participating in 18 events, 15 Olympic and three Non-Olympic events, with a total of 54 medals to be earned. India will field 10 athletes, five each in both the junior men's and women's categories for the 50m Rifle Prone event, a non-Olympic event which has 21 athletes in fray for the medals.

The Indian challenge will be spearheaded by Asian Champi-



onship bronze medalist Vedant Nitin Waghmare and 50m Rifle 3 Positions (3P) gold medalist in Shymkent, Anushka H. Thokur.

The other athletes in the men's section are Rohit Kanyan, Kushagra

Singh Rajawat, Deependra Singh Shekhawat and Kunal Sharma while Nimrat Kaur Brar, Saniya Sapale, Aadhya Agrawal and Anshika will be in action in the women's category.

Jharkhand to upgrade mega sports complex, push for Sports University

Ranchi, (UNI)

Chief Minister Hemant Soren has directed senior officials to take concrete steps toward establishing a Sports University in Ranchi, signaling a major push to enhance sports infrastructure and athlete development in the state.

The announcement came during a high-level meeting at the Jharkhand Secretariat today, focused on the proposed upgradation of the Mega Sports Complex, Hotwar.

Speaking at the meeting, attended by Tourism, Art-Culture, Sports & Youth Affairs Minister Sudivya Kumar, Chief Secretary Avinash Kumar, senior officials of the Sports Department, Jharkhand State Building Construction Corporation (JSBCC), Central Coalfields Limited (CCL), and specialized agencies, the Chief Minister emphasized that all necessary procedures for the university should be completed promptly.

"The Sports University will pro-



vide a robust platform to nurture talent and advance the careers of our athletes," he said.

The Mega Sports Complex, Soren noted, has already given Jharkhand a distinct identity on the national and international sports stage.

Very few sports centers in the country house multiple stadiums

under one roof. Our complex has successfully hosted several national and international competitions, and we continue to receive opportunities to host more," he added.

The Chief Minister underscored that the complex must maintain international standards and incorporate modern technologies and practices to remain competitive.

Real Madrid wins in Levante to maintain 100 percent start to La Liga season

Madrid, (UNI)

Real Madrid retained its perfect record at the top of La Liga with a 4-1 win away to recently promoted Levante.

Excellent goals from Vinicius Jr., back in the starting 11 after reacting badly to being substituted at the weekend, and Franco Mastantuono after 27 and 37 minutes put Real Madrid 2-0 up at halftime on Tuesday night.

Etta Eyong nodded Levante back into the game after 53 minutes, but another Kylian Mbappe penalty in the 63rd minute restored Madrid's two-goal lead. A second goal from the Frenchman two minutes later meant there was no doubt where the points were heading.

Villarreal won 2-1 away to Sevilla, with Manor Solomon scoring the winning goal on the break five minutes from time. Tani Oluwaseyi had put Villarreal



ahead after 16 minutes and the visitors dominated the first half, before Djibril Sow equalized in the 50th minute. Sevilla then looked the more likely side to win until Solomon's late strike.

In the early kickoffs, Athletic Bilbao drew 1-1 at home to Girona, with the visitors taking a first-half lead through Azzedine Ounahi's ninth-minute effort that went in off the underside of the crossbar. Athletic made four changes at halftime and Mikel Jauregizar leveled the match with a powerful shot from outside the penalty area three minutes into the second half. Javi Puado scored a 96th-minute equalizer as Espanyol twice came back from behind to claim a point at home to Valencia. Arnaut Danjuma put Valencia ahead after 15 minutes, with Leandro Cabrera leveling in the 59th minute.

Jamal Hossain opens up three-shot lead with stunning 62 on Day 2 telangana Masters

Hyderabad, (UNI)

Bangladeshi golfer Jamal Hossain extended his lead to three shots with a stunning eight-under 62 in round two of the Telangana Golconda Masters being played at the Hyderabad Golf Association (HGA) here.

Jamal (61-62), the first-round leader by one shot who has been bogey free in the tournament so far, took his total to an impressive 17-under 123 today.

Chandigarh's Akshay Sharma (62-64) signed for a 64 to continue in second place for the second straight day. Akshay's total stood at 14 under 126.

Angad Cheema (66-62), another Chandigarh player, ended the day in third place at 12-under 128.

