

**25** Two-time champion Sainz seizes lead on day three of Dakar Rally



**26** Inspired Ben Stokes seals dramatic England victory



**27** Kahn promises to keep cool on Bayern board



## Kuwait Sports Club lift Crown Prince Cup



KUWAIT: HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is seen with National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem and the victorious Kuwait Sports Club players after they beat Arabi Sports Club on penalties yesterday to win the Crown Prince Cup. — KUNA

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Sports Club clinched the 27th Crown Prince Cup for the eighth time in its history after beating Al-Arabi Sports Club in a penalty shootout (3-2) yesterday at Jaber International Stadium.

The match was held under the patronage and presence of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

The first half witnessed a defensive approach by both sides. Play was limited with the passage of time, and the players of two teams kept calm with counterattacks to open the score, but the net was impenetrable for them.

With the start of the second half, Kuwait Sports Club imposed its rhythm on the course of the game, tightened its control, launched several

attacks and threatened Al-Arabi's goal on more than one occasion, but all attempts of the two teams were unsuccessful, and the match ended in a goalless draw.

The match moved into extra time, which witnessed several offensive attempts by both teams, but the score remained the same. In the penalty shootout, Kuwait Sports Club goalkeeper saved

three penalties, which decided the winner.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah handed the trophy to the captain of Kuwait SC Hussein Hakeem, and also handed the medals to the winners and runners-up. Al-Arabi had qualified for the final by defeating Al-Nasr with a clean goal, while Kuwait Sports Club had beaten Khaitan Sports Club 2-0. — KUNA

## Kyrgios topples Tsitsipas

**SYDNEY:** A battling Nick Kyrgios earned a morale-boosting victory over world number six Stefano Tsitsipas yesterday, while Russia and Britain booked their spots in the ATP Cup quarter-finals.

Tsitsipas was on a roll after thrashing Alexander Zverev on Monday, but met his match in the temperamental Australian, who was on his best behaviour during the high-quality 7-6 (9/7), 6-7 (3/7), 7-6 (7/5) win.

"It was exhausting but a lot of fun. I knew it was going to be very tough... he's an amazing player and so young and is going to do some special things in this sport," said Kyrgios, who missed his last match with a sore back.

"I'm just glad we got the win. There was a lot of respect out there. He's a good player, a good kid." Australia took the tie, with John Millman winning the other singles against Greece's Michail Pervolarakis 4-6, 6-1, 7-6 (7/1).

In contrast, Zverev cut a miserable figure after he meekly succumbed to another defeat, with the world number seven having some serious problems to iron out ahead of the Australian Open this month.

"Generally I'm not playing good, so there's a lot of things that I still need to improve, but it's the start of the season,"

said the German after crashing to Canada's Denis Shapovalov 6-2, 6-2.

"The first match (against Alex de Minaur) I actually thought I played okay — the serving was horrible — but then I played two very bad matches, but what can I do." His poor form contributed to the Boris Becker-led Germany losing two of their three ties.

### VERY SPECIAL

Australia, along with Novak Djokovic's Serbia, had already qualified for the last eight in the 24-nation tournament as winners of their respective groups and they were joined by Russia, with Britain also sneaking in.

The British were on tenterhooks, with their fate in the hands of Belgium and Bulgaria after they beat Moldova 3-0. Belgium ended up crushing the dreams of Grigor Dimitrov's Bulgaria in a deciding doubles clash and in doing so allowed Britain to win the group.

It was a cruel end for Dimitrov and his young team. They looked on track after Dimitar Kuzmanov thrashed Steve Darcis in the opening singles and Dimitrov took the first set in his showdown with David Goffin.

But Goffin bounced back to win with

Sander Gille and Joran Vliegen clinching the doubles. "Tough finding words right now. A very special feeling after pulling out the win today," said Vliegen after beating Dimitrov and Kuzmanov 3-6, 6-4, 10-7.

Britain put themselves in contention by thrashing Moldova, with Dan Evans crushing Radu Albot and Cameron Norrie easing past Alexander Cozbinov before Jamie Murray and Joe Salisbury won the doubles.

Rafael Nadal's Spain will also make the last eight if they beat Japan in Perth on Wednesday, as will the Marin Cilic-led Croatia by beating Argentina in Sydney. The two best runners-up also go through and will be determined on the last day of round robin play today.

World number five Daniil Medvedev steered Russia to victory, ending Norwegian Casper Ruud's giant-killing run with a 6-3, 7-6 (8/6) win as the US Open finalist continued his ominous form.

"Against Casper I knew I had to finish some points at the net," he said. "I knew I had to be aggressive and I think it helped me a lot." World number 17 Karen Khachanov easily beat Viktor Durasovic 6-2, 6-1 in the other singles before Russia made it 3-0 in the doubles. — AFP

## India cruise to T20 win over S Lanka

**INDORE:** Fast bowler Navdeep Saini led a disciplined Indian bowling performance to set up a seven-wicket win over Sri Lanka in the second Twenty20 international in Indore yesterday.

Saini returned impressive figures of 2-18 while fellow paceman Shardul Thakur claimed three wickets to help restrict Sri Lanka to 142 for nine, a total the hosts surpassed in 17.3 overs to take a 1-0 lead in the three-match series. The opening match was rained off.

"This was a clinical performance, and that's how we want to build on each series. We have ticked a few more boxes this time," said skipper Virat Kohli. "Brilliant from Navdeep. He has done well in ODI cricket, and he's bowling well in T20s, with experienced guys like Jasprit (Bumrah), Bhuvni (Bhuvneshwar Kumar) and Shardul. It's a really good sign for the team."

The 27-year-old Saini, who made his one-day international debut against West Indies on December 22, was adjudged man of the match in his seventh T20 for India. KL Rahul, who top-scored with 45, and Shikhar Dhawan, who made 32, on his return from injury, put on 71

runs for the opening wicket to lay the platform for India's comfortable chase on a good batting pitch. Leg-spinner Wanindu Hasaranga sent back the two openers as he bowled Rahul with a googly and then dismissed Dhawan lbw after a successful Sri Lanka review. Shreyas Iyer, who scored 34 before falling to paceman Lahiru Kumara, and Kohli, who made an unbeaten 30 and hit the winning six, put on a key 51-run stand for the third wicket.

But it was the Indian bowlers who built the platform for victory after Kohli won the toss and elected to field first. Sri Lanka kept losing wickets at regular intervals despite a brisk start but it was wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav's two strikes including Kusal Perera, for 28, that put a lid on the islanders' scoring. Saini, who bowled opener Danushka Gunathilaka for 20, claimed Bhanuka Rajapaksa caught behind for nine, as Sri Lanka slipped to 104 for five. Pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah also took a wicket on his return from a four-month injury lay-off by bowling Dasun Shanaka with a slower ball. Thakur returned in his final over and the team's 19th to rattle the lower-order with three strikes including two in successive deliveries. Hasaranga signed off the innings with three successive fours off Bumrah but his effort was not enough.

"I thought we were lacking by about 25 runs. We were looking at 160 or so," said Sri Lanka captain Lasith Malinga. "The bowlers did a good job of sticking to their job." The third and final match is on Friday in Pune. — AFP