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1. India's star female tennis player Sania Mirza has announced her retirement (Jan. 11, 2023)

India's star female tennis player **Sania Mirza** has announced her **retirement** in January 2023. This year's **Australian Open and Dubai Tennis Championships** will be her last tournaments.

An Overview of the news

- She will play in women's doubles at the Australian Open in January 2023 with **Kazakhstan's Ana Danilina**, which will be her last appearance at any **Grand Slam**.
- Sania missed the US Open last year due to an elbow injury.

International Tennis Career of Sania Mirza

- Sania has won the **mixed doubles title** of **Australian Open in 2009, French Open in 2012, US Open in 2014**.
- Apart from this, she has won the **2016 Australian Open, 2015 Wilmington, 2015 US Open title** in women's doubles.
- Sania Mirza has won many titles and honours in her career. She has been awarded the **Arjuna Award in 2004, Padma Shri in 2006, Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna in 2015 and Padma Bhushan in 2016**.

2. South African all rounder Dwaine Pretorius announces retirement from international cricket (Jan. 11, 2023)

South African all-rounder **Dwaine Pretorius** has announced his **retirement** from international cricket on 9 January 2023.

An Overview of the news

- Cricket South Africa (CSA) confirmed this. He made his international debut in **2016**.
- The 33-year-old Dwayne represented South Africa in all **three formats of cricket**.
- He played **30 T20 Internationals, 27 ODIs and three Test matches**. This includes **two World Cups**.
- Pretorius had his best bowling performance in T20 Internationals in 2021 with **5-17 against Pakistan**.

- Dwayne Pretorius will now be seen in cricket action in **IPL 2023**. Pretorius will represent **Chennai Super Kings** in the upcoming IPL. Chennai Super Kings bought Pretorius for his base price of **Rs 50 lakhs**.

3. Talon Griekspoor of the Netherlands won the singles title at the Maharashtra Open tennis tournament in Pune (Jan. 8, 2023)

The **Netherlands' Tallon Griekspoor** prevailed in three-set final against **Frenchman Benjamin Bonzi** to win his **maiden ATP World Tour title** as the first-time finalists dished out a gripping game of tennis in Pune on 7 January.

An overview of the news

- Griekspoor (World No. 95) won a thrilling **4-6 7-5 6-3 title** against his French opponent in two hours and 16 minutes to clinch the **fifth edition of Tata Open Maharashtra title**.
- Both the players put on a scintillating performance in front of a packed Center Court crowd at the **Balewadi Stadium** and enthralled the fans with their breathtaking shot-making and tenacity.
- The two had played a lot of junior tennis together, and in the **2021 season**, were on a winning spree of Challengers, with Griekspoor **winning eight of those titles, Bonzi winning six**.
- It has been almost a decade since the Netherlands won a singles title on Tour.
- South Asia's only ATP 250 was organised by the **Maharashtra State Lawn Tennis Association (MSLTA)** in association with the Government of Maharashtra for the fifth year in Pune.
- Earlier, the Indian pair of **N Sriram Balaji and Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan** finished **runners-up in doubles** after going down 4-6, 4-6 against fourth seeded pair of **Sander Gille and Joran Willijn** in the final.
- Gille and Vliegen secured their sixth ATP Tour title.

4. DEXA: BCCI introduces new selection criteria for Team India (Jan. 2, 2023)

The BCCI announced a major change in the **selection criteria of players** on 1st January.

Important facts

- To review the team's performance in 2022, **Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)** president **Roger Binny** and secretary **Jay Shah** met India captain **Rohit Sharma**, head coach **Rahul Dravid** and chief selector **Chetan Sharma** on January 1.

- The future of Indian cricket was discussed in the meeting, which was also attended by National Cricket Academy (NCA) director **VVS Laxman**.
- The new criteria have been brought in to ensure the fitness of players before their selection as the team has been facing a serious injury crisis for the last one year.
- The fitness of Indian cricketers has been a matter of concern with players like **Deepak Chahar** not playing regularly.
- Fast bowler **Jasprit Bumrah** is also out for a long time due to a back injury.

What are the new selection criteria?

- The new rule brought back the **Yo-Yo test** and made it mandatory for players to be selected for the national team.
- Players must take a '**DEXA**' before being selected for the Indian team across all formats.
- Emerging players have to play enough domestic seasons to be eligible for selection in the national team.

What is a Yo-Yo test?

- The Yo-Yo test is an **aerobic endurance fitness test** that involves running between markers placed **20 metres** apart at increasing speed.
- The test was introduced during **Virat Kohli's tenure** as India captain and initially the passing score was 16.1, which was increased to 16.5.

What is Dexa?

- DEXA, also called '**bone density test**', is an X-ray technique used to measure bone strength.
- From this it can be ascertained whether there is any risk of breaking or losing bones of the test taker or whether a player is at risk of fracturing any part of the body.
- It also helps measure body composition and record **body fat and muscle mass**.

5. Ronaldo joins Saudi club Al Nassr with record \$214 million contract (Dec. 31, 2022)

After leaving the **Manchester United club** on 30 December 2022, **Portugal team captain Cristiano Ronaldo** has joined **Saudi Arabian club Al Nassr** on a two-and-a-half-year contract.

Important facts

- Ronaldo left **Old Trafford** after a television interview last month. He said that he has been cheated by the club.

- Al Nassr issued a statement saying that the five-time Ballon d'Or winner will be under contract until 2025.
- Although he did not reveal any financial details, Ronaldo's contract is estimated by the media to be worth more than **200 million euros (\$214.04 million)**, the highest salary in football history.
- Ronaldo will move to Saudi Arabia after a stellar spell at Spanish club Real Madrid from 2009 to 2018, winning two La Liga titles, two Spanish Cups, four Champions League titles and three Club World Cups.
- Ronaldo's inclusion will provide a boost to the Saudi Arabian club, which is looking to add to its **nine Saudi Pro League titles**.

About Al Nassr

- Al-Nassr is a club from **Saudi Arabia** that competes in the **Saudi Pro League**. It is one of the most successful teams in the country. It was formed in **1955**.
- Al-Nasr, nicknamed **Al-Alami or Faris Najd**, is located in the capital city of **Riyadh**. It is formally managed by Rudi Garcia of Roma, Marseille and Lyon.
- Cameroon striker **Vincent Aboubakar** joined in 2021 and is a key player for the team.
- Brazilian defensive midfielder **Luiz Gustavo** and former Arsenal shot-stopper **David Ospina** signed for the club in 2022.

6. Hockey Haryana Women's U-18 team wins Khelo India Youth Games 2022 (Dec. 31, 2022)

Hockey Haryana Women's U-18 team wins Khelo India Youth Games 2022

Hockey **Haryana's women's team** won the Khelo India Youth Games 2022 **Women's Under 18 Qualifiers title** after defeating **Madhya Pradesh 2-0** in the final at **Bhubaneswar** on December 30.

Important facts

- In the final match, **Pooja and Gurmail Kaur** scored a goal each for Haryana to turn the match in their favour.
- Odisha** stepped up to claim **third place** after beating **Jharkhand** by 2-1 in the 3rd and 4th place encounter.
- Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and Jharkhand** have qualified for the Khelo India Youth Games (Women) to be held in Madhya Pradesh next year.

Awards List

- Best Goalkeeper:** Kavita (Haryana)
- Best Defender:** Yogita Verma (Madhya Pradesh)

- **Best Midfielder:** Manisha (Haryana)
- **Best Striker:** Bhumshika Sahu (Madhya Pradesh)

7. Hockey Madhya Pradesh clinches Khelo India Youth Games 2022 Men's U-18 title (Dec. 31, 2022)

Hockey Madhya Pradesh clinches Khelo India Youth Games 2022 Men's U-18 title

In hockey, **Madhya Pradesh** clinched the title **by defeating Odisha 6-5** in the **Khelo India Youth Games 2022 Men's Under-18** qualifier title in **Bhubaneswar** on 30 December.

Important facts

- In a thrilling final, **Jamir Mohammad** was the star of the final, scoring a hat-trick, while Ali Ahmed, Mohammad Zaid Khan and captain Ankit Pal scored one goal each for Madhya Pradesh.
- On the other hand, Anmol Ekka, Paulus Lakra, Deepak Minz and Akash Soreng scored one goal each for **Odisha**.
- **Haryana defeated Jharkhand** 2-0 to secure the **third position** in the competition. Amandeep and Roshan scored the goals for Haryana.
- With this, **Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Haryana and Jharkhand** have qualified for the **Khelo India Youth Games** to be held in **Madhya Pradesh** next year.
- **Award List**
 - **Best Goalkeeper** : Ravi (Haryana)
 - **Best Defender** : Sundaram Rajawat (Madhya Pradesh)
 - **Best Midfielder** : Prem Dayal Giri (Odisha)
 - **Best Striker** : Ali Ahmad (Madhya Pradesh)

8. Government recognises e-sports as part of multisports events (Dec. 28, 2022)

Government recognises e-sports as part of multisports events

The **Government of India** has officially recognised '**E-Sports**' (**Electronic Sports**) as a part of **Multi-sports events** on 27th December.

Important facts

- E-sports will be handled by the **Department of Sports** under the **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports**.
- This decision was taken by President **Draupadi Murmu**, using the powers given in **provision 3 of Article 77** of the Constitution, after changing the rules related to e-sports.
- It is noteworthy that since the inclusion of e-sports as a demonstration sport in the **Jakarta Asian Games 2018**, there has been a demand to make it a part of the multi-sport event.
- The **International Olympic Committee** is also promoting e-sports and in this exercise, the **first Olympic e-sports week** will also be celebrated in Singapore in June 2023.
- Next year's **Asian Games in China** will see the debut of e-sports.
- The Indian Esports Industry has been fighting for E-sports not to be clubbed under the umbrella term "**Gaming**".

What is E-sports?

- e-sports or "electronic sports," transforms online gaming into a spectator sport.
- The experience is similar to watching a professional sporting event, with spectators watching video gamers compete against each other in a virtual environment.
- The e-sports Industry has maintained that e-sports is a competitive sport where e-sports athletes use their physical and mental abilities to compete in certain genres of video games in a **virtual, electronic environment**.

9. PV Sindhu among top 25 highest-paid female athletes in Forbes annual list (Dec. 24, 2022)

India's badminton star PV Sindhu is the only Indian sportsperson to feature in the top 25 of Forbes' annual list of the world's highest-paid female athletes.

India's **badminton star** [PV Sindhu](#) is the only Indian sportsperson to feature in the **top 25 of Forbes' annual list of the world's highest-paid female athletes**.

Important facts

- Sindhu, the 2016 **Tokyo Olympics** silver medalist, is **ranked 12th** in the list, which is **topped** by Japanese tennis star **Naomi Osaka**.
- The 27-year-old Sindhu, who won the singles gold and doubles silver at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham earlier this year, **earned \$7 million** out of her total earnings of \$7.1 million.

- For the **third year in a row**, Osaka topped Forbes' annual list of the world's highest-paid female athletes. The list is once again dominated by **tennis players**.
- Naomi Osaka, the world number 42, topped the list with a total annual earning of **\$51.1 million**, while **Serena Williams** is a distant second with **\$41.3 million** and **Eileen Gu**, the freestyle skier, **third** with a total coffer of **\$20.1 million**.

List of 15 highest paid female athletes of the year

- Naomi Osaka (Japan) – Tennis – \$51.1 million
- Serena Williams (USA) – Tennis – \$41.3 million
- Eileen Gu (China) – Skiing – \$20.1 million
- Emma Raducanu (UK) – Tennis – \$18.7 million
- Iga Swiatek (Poland) – Tennis – \$14.9 million
- Venus Williams (USA) – Tennis – \$12.1 million
- Coco Gauff (USA) – Tennis – \$11.1 million
- Simone Biles (USA) – Gymnastics – \$10 million
- Jessica Pegula (USA) – Tennis – \$7.6 million
- Minjee Lee (Australia) – Golf – \$7.3 million
- Candace Parker (USA) – Basketball – \$7.2 million
- P.V. Sindhu (India) – Badminton – \$7.1 million
- Leylah Fernandez (Canada) – Tennis – \$7 million
- Lydia Ko (New Zealand) – Golf – \$6.9 million
- Ons Jabeur (Tunisia) – Tennis – \$6.5 million

10. Union Minister Anurag Singh Thakur inaugurated the National Level Kabaddi Championship at Udupi Karnataka (Dec. 24, 2022)

Union Minister Anurag Singh Thakur inaugurated the National Level Kabaddi Championship at Udupi Karnataka

Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports, **Anurag Singh Thakur** inaugurated the National level Kabaddi championship in **Udupi in Karnataka** on December 24.

Important fact

- National level Kabaddi tournament will be held at **MGM ground** in flood light, in which **12 teams** from different states will participate.
- The winner will get the **Atal Trophy** and prize money of Rs **one lakh**.
- The runner-up will be awarded **Rs 75,000**, the third prize winner **Rs 50,000** and the fourth prize winner Rs 25,000.
- The winners will be presented with the Atal trophy.

- The **Atal Utsav and Booth Sangam** will be inaugurated on December 25 by former chief minister **B S Yediyurappa** along with selected presiding officers of six vote booths.
- Atal Trophy was started in 1999 by **Zilla Yuva Morcha** through volleyball tournament and this time kabaddi tournament is also being organized.