



Indian Men clubbed with China, Women have it easy at Badminton Asia Team Championship 2016 (Thomas & Uber Cup Qualifiers), Hyderabad

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HYDERABAD: Indian Men and Women will have tough campaigns up ahead when Hyderabad hosts the coveted Badminton Asia Team Championship organized by Badminton Asia Confederation (BAC) under the aegis of Badminton Association of India (BAI) and hosted by Badminton Association of Telangana State (BATS), at GMC Balayogi Indoor Stadium here from February 15 to 21.

Kidambi Srikanth and co will have a first crack at the Chinese Wall while the women heaved a sigh of relief at the Badminton Asia Team Championships draw conducted at a city hotel here on Tuesday.



Indian Men are clubbed with China and Singapore in Group A and Women are drawn in Group D along with Japan and Singapore. The Continental Team

event, which will feature 14 Men and 12 Women teams, will be held at the Gachibowli Indoor Stadium from February 15 to 21.

Two teams from each of the four groups will make it to the knockouts. Each team will have to play three singles and two doubles. To progress into the quarterfinals, Indian men have to beat either China or Singapore while women have to win one of their ties against Japan or Singapore.

The Championships are very important for the Teams as they will not only serve as qualifiers for Thomas & Uber Cup but also provide crucial ranking points for the players who are vying for a berth in Olympics.

The likes of Lin Dan, the Chinese Wangs, Lee Chong Wei and the doubles specialists from Korea, Japan, Malaysia and Indonesia will showcase their talent at this biennial event.

Describing the draw as a comfortable one, Chief Coach of the Indian team Pullela Gopichand said that India have a good chance to do well. "We have a good Team now. This a high quality tournament and the draw will be not very easy. But we only have to win just one match to qualify for knockouts. So we stand a good chance. Our players are beating the top players quite regularly and that would help us here," Gopi said.

Newly-crowned Syed Modi Champion, Srikanth exuded confidence and said that it is indeed good to play against the Chinese in the round robin stage itself. "It is a good draw. Playing the Chinese first up will actually give us good practice ahead of the knock outs. We can learn from the mistakes we make at the robin stage," Srikanth said.

PV Sindhu and Jwala Gutta are happy with the draw. "We can make it the knockouts. We can do well in the tournament as we will have a lot of home support," they said.

State Minister and President of Telangana Badminton Association, KT Rama Rao said that government is trying to get more International Badminton events to Hyderabad. "We are trying to get more international tournaments to the city. Ours is the Badminton capital of the Country and soon we will be getting more such tournaments," said Rao, who is also the son of the Chief Minister.

Men's Draw

Group A: China, India and Singapore.

Group B: Japan, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Nepal

Group C: Indonesia, Chinese Taipei, Thailand and Maldives.

Group D: Korea, Hong Kong China and Philippines.

Women's Draw

Group A: China, Malaysia and Hong Kong.

Group B: Thailand, Chinese Taipei and Sri Lanka.

Group C: Korea, Indonesia and Maldives.

Group D: Japan, India and Singapore.
