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PRESS RELEASE

CBL sixth-season title to be decided in final race at Kollam on Saturday

Kollam, Nov. 20: The sixth season of the Champions Boat League (CBL), organised by the Kerala Tourism Department, will conclude with the President's Trophy Boat Race at Ashtamudi Lake in Kollam on Saturday.

For the first time since the CBL was launched in 2019, the championship title will be decided in the final race, with the top three contenders still in the reckoning after 10 races.

The CBL final matches will be inaugurated by the Minister for Tourism, Culture, and Cinema, P. C. Vishnunadh, at a conference presided over by the Minister for Labour, Women and Child Welfare, Dairy Development, and Animal Husbandry, Bindu Krishna. The Minister for Forest and Wildlife, Shibu Baby John, will be the chief guest at the event, while Organising Committee Chairman and MP N. K. Premachandran will distribute the prizes. Kollam Mayor A. K. Hafees will hoist the flag. MPs K. C. Venugopal and Kodikkunnil Suresh, along with MLAs Vishnu Mohan, K. N. Balagopal, B. B. Gopakumar, C. R. Mahesh, Jyothikumar Chamakkala, M. M. Nazeer, Ullas Kovoor, and C. Ajayaprasad, will address the gathering. Kollam District Panchayat President Dr. R. Lathadevi, Tourism Secretary K. Biju IAS, Tourism Director Anukumari IAS, Kollam Deputy Mayor Karumalil Dr. Udaya Sukumaran, Division Councillor Joseph Kuruvila, local self-government representatives, leaders of various political parties, and officials from the Tourism Department will also attend. Kollam District Collector and President's Trophy General Convenor Ancy Jula Thomas will deliver the welcome address, and Kollam DTPC Secretary Jyothish Keshavan will propose the vote of thanks.

In the previous five seasons, the champions had been decided even before the final race, with one team establishing an unassailable lead in the points table. This season, however, the title race has gone down to the wire, with just two points separating the top two teams.

The champion will be crowned only after the final strokes of the oars on the waters of Ashtamudi Lake.

Pallathuruthy Boat Club's Melpadom Chundan leads the points table with 91 points, followed closely by Aroma Chundan, rowed by the Aroma Boat Club of Paravur, Kollam, with 89 points. Veeyapuram Chundan, rowed by UBC Kainakary FC, is in third place with 83 points. Niranam Chundan, rowed by Niranam Boat Club, is fourth with 74 points, while Punyalan Niranam of Kumarakom Town Boat Club is fifth with 49 points.

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Cheruthana Chundan, rowed by NBC Nattakom Boat Club, occupies the sixth position with 48 points. Nadubhagam Chundan, rowed by PBC Punnamada NCFC Boat Club, is seventh with 45 points, followed by Arppookara Chundan of Immanuel Boat Club, Kumarakom, with 42 points. Thalavadi Chundan, rowed by Village Boat Club, is ninth with 20 points.

The sixth season has witnessed closely fought finishes at almost every venue, with races often decided by fractions of a second. Aroma Chundan won the opening race at Karuvatta and the second race at Kallada after strong late surges.

Melpadom Chundan, meanwhile, edged past its rivals by 180 microseconds at Mithramadam Nettayath in Pandanad and by just eight microseconds at Marine Drive, Kochi, to claim victories. It continued its winning run at Kottappuram and Piravom before Aroma Chundan overtook it in the final 100 metres at Thazhathangadi.

One of the season's most dramatic finishes came at Pulinkunnu, where Aroma Chundan, which was in third place until the final lap, surged ahead to beat Veeyapuram and Melpadom by a margin of 530 milliseconds.

Veeyapuram Chundan, however, returned strongly with consecutive victories at Kainakary and Kayamkulam, winning both races through powerful finishing efforts in the last 200 metres. These results brought the three leading teams closer in the points table and made the final race decisive.

The President's Trophy Boat Race at Kollam marks the grand finale of Kerala's traditional boat racing season, which begins with the Nehru Trophy Boat Race. The boat race came to be known as the President's Trophy after it was inaugurated by the then President of India, Mrs Pratibha Patil, on August 31, 2011.

One of the major attractions of the race is its 1,200-metre straight track on Ashtamudi Lake, stretching from near Thevally Bridge to the boat jetty near the KSRTC bus stand. Selected as the grand finale venue of the CBL from its inception, the President's Trophy Boat Race is among the major water-sport events and tourism attractions of southern Kerala.

The club that finishes first in the championship will receive a prize of Rs 25 lakh, while the second- and third-placed clubs will receive Rs 15 lakh and Rs 10 lakh, respectively. At each race venue, the first, second and third-placed teams receive Rs 5 lakh, Rs 3 lakh and Rs one lakh, respectively. All participating teams are also given a bonus of Rs 4 lakh each by the Tourism Department.

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The final will also feature competitions for traditional smaller boats, including Iruttukuthi, Thekkanodi and Veppu. Elaborate arrangements have been completed in Kollam to host the concluding event of the season.

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