

Saina Nehwal to lead Indian challenge at India Open Super Series

New Delhi: Men's singles World No.1 shuttler Lee Chong Wei of Malaysia and India's own women's World No.2 Saina Nehwal will return to action at the Siri Fort Indoor Complex for the India Open Super Series from April 23-28.



The Malaysian star, who won the inaugural India Open title in 2011, and the Indian shuttle queen will spearhead the challenge at the \$200,000 tourney.

Over 200 shuttlers from 18 countries including Malaysia, Indonesia, Denmark, Germany, England, China, Korea, Japan and hosts India have confirmed their participation as entries came to a close in March.

In addition to Chong Wei and Nehwal, the line-up include women's World No.4 Juliane Schenk from Germany, men's No.4 Sony Dwi Kuncoro from Indonesia, All England Open women's runners-up Ratnachok Intathon of Thailand and men's doubles Olympic silver medallists Mathias Boe and Carsten Mogensen of Denmark.

In men's singles, former Olympic champion Taufik Hidayat and compatriot Simon Santoso will boost the star power arriving from Indonesia while World No.6 Jan O Jorgensen of Denmark and Japanese Kenichi Tago will be aiming to lift their maiden India Open crown. Badminton powerhouse China will be represented by World No.7 Chen Jin and No.11 Wang Jhengming.

Doubles action promises to be a sizzling affair as World No.2 Malaysian pair of Kien Keat Koo and Boon Heong Tan, Korean duo of Ko Sung Hyun and Lee Yong Dae, women's World No.2 pairing of Misaki Matsutomo and Ayaka Takahashi from Japan and World No.3 women's doubles duo of Kamilla Rytter Juhl and Christinna Pedersen of Denmark gear up for the India sojourn.

The home campaign will be led by Saina, seeking her maiden India Open title, while Jwala Gutta and Ashwini Ponnappa will pair up with new partners for the first time in the history of the tournament. While Ashwini pairs-up with Pradnya Gadre, Jwala will partner Prajakta Sawant.

World No.8 Parupalli Kashyap, the highest-ranked Indian men's shuttler, shot into the limelight through a dramatic performance in the previous edition where he qualified for the London Games, piping compatriot Ajay Jayaram.

Apart from Kashyap and Jayaram, other Indians in the fray will be World No.16 P.V. Sindhu and Arundhati Pantawane in women's and R.M.V. Gurusaidutt, Sai Praneeth and K. Srikanth in men's.
