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THE AGE  
DELHI



## **What is T-20 football?**

**AGE CORRESPONDENT**

 Despite a lot of initial detractors, T-20 cricket has managed to prove its mettle and the Indian Premiere League is the most towering testimony to that. Cashing in on this IPL fever, that's currently going strong in its fifth season, football lovers of the country have come up with a unique twist to their game too. An initiative of Pepsi's "change the game" campaign, T-20 football, seems to be catching up across the country at a feverish pace.

The new format is targeted mainly at amateurs and combines the element of speed that's become synonymous with T-20 cricket. Says Homi Battiwala, category director of the brand, "The game is played with a team of seven players per side and the time span is only 15 minutes with two 7.5-minute halves and a 5-minute half time break. So the format is a lot quicker and hence involves a lot of skill. You have to be on your toes every second of the game. Also, the game is



The game is played inside a cage where the ball never goes out

played inside a cage, so the ball never goes out — it just bounces back from the walls of the cage. So the rhythm of the game is somewhere in between T-20 cricket and squash." The similarity with cricket doesn't end here — the game also involves the concept of fours and sixes, as Homi explains, "We have earmarked zones as a 'four' and a 'six'. Any goal shot from these points will add four or six points to the respective teams."

The T-20 football tournament spans across Chennai,

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**HOMI BATTIWALA  
CATEGORY DIRECTOR**

Bengaluru, Kolkata, Mumbai, Lucknow, Ludhiana and Delhi. The Kolkata edition was played on Sunday and had eminent football personality Baichung Bhutia mentor the players. Next up is the Mumbai edition on April 22 and the national finale is scheduled to be played on June 10. A total of eight teams, which includes one winning team from each city and one wild card entry, will compete to emerge as the final "game changers" for which they will be coached by an international football star.