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Odisha FC Suspends Contracts Amid Indian Super League Uncertainty

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Odisha FC has announced the suspension of all player and staff contracts effective August 5, citing continued delays in the start of the Indian Super League (ISL) 2025–26 season and unresolved negotiations between the All India Football Federation (AIFF) and Football Sports Development Limited (FSDL). The decision comes amid growing uncertainty over the league's future.

In a statement posted on social media, Odisha FC owner Rohan Sharma clarified that the club was not shutting down entirely. “Key staff members are retained, and our women’s team will be operational. However, it becomes harder to justify to my stakeholders to sink crores upon crores with nothing to show for it, and no end in sight,” Sharma wrote on X (formerly Twitter). He cited several challenges, including no clarity on the league’s start date, lack of training facilities in Odisha, inability to secure sponsorships without a confirmed season, and the expiration of the club’s participation agreement.

Sharma emphasized that the decision was not part of the offseason plan. “We had made five signings until it became clear things were delayed. We desperately hope the above issues get resolved; maybe doing this will prompt people to fast-track solutions so we can get back to work,” he added.

Earlier, Delhi Soccer Private Limited (DSPL), the parent company of Odisha FC, issued a letter invoking “Force Majeure” due to the indefinite suspension of the ISL season. Signed by DSPL head of finance Ajit Panda, the letter described the circumstances as “entirely beyond the Club’s control and unforeseeable in nature,” likening them to a force majeure event.

The club stated that the suspension of contracts was a difficult but necessary decision taken “in the best interest of the Club and its stakeholders.” Odisha FC also assured players and staff that they would be free to pursue other professional opportunities during this period and offered to facilitate mutual contract terminations for those seeking alternative engagements.

The development reflects the broader disruption in Indian football caused by the impasse between AIFF and FSDL over the renewal of the Master Rights Agreement, which governs the operation of the ISL. Until a resolution is reached, the league’s future and that of its participating clubs remain uncertain.