

Kabaddi skipper steers his club in India

By MBONILE BURTON

NATIONAL Kabaddi team captain, Joseph Lusinde team's Chennai Challengers finished third at the inaugural Indo International Premier Kabaddi League (IIPKL) that ended on Tuesday in India.

Tanzania Kabaddi Sports Association (TKSA) Chairman, Abdallah Nyoni confirmed to the 'Daily News' in Dar es Salaam yesterday that Chennai Challengers beat Daler Delhi 37-36 to claim the third place berth in the top league.

Lusinde became the first Tanzanian kabaddi player to feature in professional inaugural league in India.

Nyoni said that Lusinde has made the country proud after his contribution helped his team finish in the top three.

"TKSA is proud with Lusinde achievement. He is one of country talented players, when he was selected to play his first professional career in India, we knew that he is going to excel," Nyoni said.

Chennai Challengers lost their semifinal showdown against Pune Pride, who went on to lose their final match to eventual champions-- Bangalore Rhinos.

Nyoni said that after helping his team finish third Lusinde was due to return home yesterday night. Lusinde was among more than a dozen foreign international players from various countries who were invited to take part in the league.

Among the foreign internationals included Taiwan's Wang Tzu Jen, Austra-

lian Nicholas Mark Graham, Ali Sari Sabr Al-Saedi of Iraq, Simon Kibura of Kenya, Argentinean Nahuel Alejandro, Malaysia's Gopala Rakaia and Poland's Filip Sesay.

Players from Sri Lanka, Mauritius, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Canada and Egypt were also included.

The IIPKL, that took place in three cities of India, namely Pune, Mysore and Bangalore, saw eight teams including champions Bangalore Rhinos, Chennai Challengers, Diler Delhi, Telegu Bulls, Pune Pride, Haryana Heroes, Mumbai Che Raje and Rajasthan Rajputs squaring off for the inaugural crown.

"The selected players are all vital cogs in their respective national teams and are expected to play leading roles in their respective nation's quest at the World Cup in Melaka later this July," New Kabaddi Federation (NKF) Secretary Prasad Babu was quoted saying.

He added that the inclusion of the foreign internationals was made in the interest of promoting and developing the game in all parts of the world.

"Playing alongside the top Indian players at the IIPKL would help them improve their skills and in turn help elevate the strength of their respective countries at the World Cup," said Babu.

The much anticipated World Cup Kabaddi Championship, which was postponed earlier this year due to some technical reasons, will now be held from July 20-28, 2019 at Temakes Hotel in Melaka, Malaysia.