

## National Sports Awards delayed as Sports Ministry reviews Arjuna Award selection process

**NEW DELHI:** National Sports Awards delayed as Sports Ministry reviews Arjuna Award selection process.

The National Sports Awards have been delayed this year, as the Sports Ministry wants to re-evaluate the process of giving the Arjuna awards to ensure that only the deserving athletes get the honour. Despite the awards selection committee giving its recommendations in December last year, the ministry has held the names and is re-assessing the recommendations.

"The list of Arjuna award recommendations is being re-evaluated right now. The value of these awards should not get diminished, that's the goal. We want to follow a stringent process of selection," a Sports Ministry source close to the development said on Monday.



As per the ministry source, in the past, a few of these awards have gone to athletes who didn't deserve the recognition. "It shouldn't be the case that every other athlete is an Arjuna Awardee and when you ask them about their accomplishments, there is nothing much to show. The prestige of the award needs to be maintained. And also the number of litigations that come out in some cases is outrageous," the source said, referring to the in-

stances when athletes drag ministry to the court.

According to a source, the awards committee had nominated 24 athletes for the Arjuna Award, continuing the trend of the growing number of recipients for the award in the last few years. In the 2010-2019 decade, there was only one instance of more than 20 recipients of the award but 32 athletes received the award in 2024 only.

The ministry's opinion on the matter is that instead

of selection panel there should be a clear criteria with points to ensure only worthy athletes are nominated.

"It's like the prize money, if you have won an Olympic medal, you shouldn't have to fill a form to get your Rs 75 lakh prize money. The system just knows and transfers the money suitably. Similarly, an athlete who has achieved the requisite shouldn't have to be evaluated again by a panel," said the source.

The awards were traditionally presented on August 29, the birth anniversary of hockey legend Major Dhyan Chand, by the President. However, this tradition has not been followed in the past few years due to scheduling issues and the process of nominations getting affected by major events.

## Kyle Abbott takes ten as Yorkshire slump to 214-run loss

**YORKSHIRE:** Kyle Abbott's seventh career haul of 10 wickets or more in a first-class match helped Hampshire complete a deserved Rothesay County Championship victory over Yorkshire during the fourth afternoon at Headingley.

Abbott had claimed four for 49 from 20 overs in the first innings and recorded a superb six for 21 from 17 in the second as Yorkshire, set 426 to win after tea on day three, fell a long way short at 211 all out.

All-rounder George Hill and captain Dom Bess posted consolatory scores of 52 and 49, but the hosts were well beaten by 214 runs.

Hampshire claimed 20 points to Yorkshire's three and bounced back superbly from their opening round innings defeat at home to Essex last weekend.

For Yorkshire, this performance came on the back of an unconvincing draw at Glamorgan.

Yorkshire started day four on 65 for five, needing 361 more.

Realistically, their only hope of a positive result was a draw.

But they were pinned back further with the day's 12th ball as talismanic 38-year-old Abbott trapped Fin Bean lbw pushing forwards for 33 - 71 for six.

Further success went to the pace of Sonny Baker, whose short ball hurried Harry Duke into a pull shot which found Eddie Jack at long-leg. That left Yorkshire at 97 for seven just before midday.

Baker struck Bess with two nasty blows in the same

over shortly afterwards - one on the head and the other a touch lower. The latter certainly caused the Yorkshire captain more angst.

Bess was actually struck a couple more glancing blows but resisted through to early afternoon alongside Hill to delay the inevitable.

Hill reached his fifty, off 86 balls, in the second over of the afternoon by hoisting two sixes over long-on against Liam Dawson's left-arm spin.

He was trapped lbw not long afterwards as a 78-run partnership ended and left the score at 175 for eight.

Bess then miscued Liam Dawson's left-arm spin to mid-off just short of his own fifty. The same bowler wrapped things up by bowling Ben Coad.

Though Yorkshire's main issue in this contest was being bowled out for less than 200 in both innings - they were 177 all out first time around - their cause certainly wasn't helped by the loss of seam duo Jhye Richardson and Jack White due to the same sickness bug.

They were both substituted out the game late on day two and at the start of day three respectively.

Still, Hampshire were excellent on a good cricket wicket.

Their cause was advanced by a number of key contributions. Abbott led the way with the new ball as he caused further problems for Yorkshire, against whom he took 10 wickets in a mid-summer victory at Scarborough in 2022.

## Anderson up-ends Derbyshire as Lancashire defend 138 in thriller

**LANCASHIRE:** Lancashire skipper James Anderson took four for 18 to help his side defy the odds and defeat Derbyshire by 29 runs on a dramatic last day of the Rothesay County Championship match at Emirates Old Trafford.

Having bowled out Lancashire for 160 in their second innings, Ben Aitchison taking three for 38, Derbyshire needed only 138 to record their first victory on this ground since 1996.

But Lancashire's four-man seam attack had other ideas and despite skipper Harry Caine's 30, the visitors lost their last nine wickets for 75 runs with Anderson taking four for 7 in his 4.5-over second spell. Lancashire take 21 points from the game to Derbyshire's six.

The morning's play began in sensational fashion when Aitchison took two

wickets in two balls in the first over. Paul Coughlin was caught behind by Brooke Guest without adding to his overnight 47 when he was completely beaten by a fine delivery which bounced and moved away from him. Then Tom Bailey was late on his defensive shot and had his off stump knocked back by Aitchison's third ball of the day.

Having walked out to bat still adjusting his dress and dropping his glove in the process, Mitch Stanley then dominated the strike to the extent that the ex-Australia Test batsman Harris faced only six balls in the first six overs of the session. However, Stanley was eventually trapped lbw by Mohammad Abbas for five and Harris was caught behind for 66 off Aitchison when trying to manufacture a single.



### LG's Diary



Office of LG J&K @OfficeOfLGJandK

Today, under Drug-Free Jammu Kashmir campaign, I addressed a public rally in Kathua & launched a people's movement against narcotics. Let's build a J&K where our youth's energy illuminates the world, not destroys itself. Let us confront this challenge with unyielding resolve.

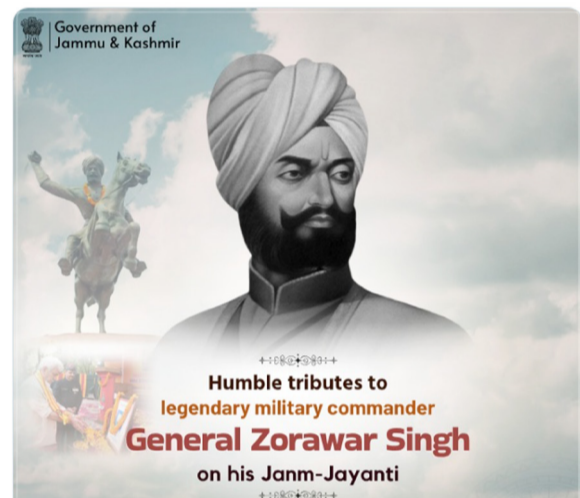


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Humble tribute to the martyrs of Jallianwala Bagh. Their supreme sacrifice, unyielding courage, and heroism stand as a defining chapter in our freedom struggle, forever inspiring us to build a prosperous, peaceful, and developed nation.

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Tributes to the great son of India, legendary military commander General Zorawar Singh on his Jann-Jayanti. A fearless warrior, he carved a saga of unmatched valour & strategic brilliance in the annals of history. His selfless service to motherland continue to inspire generations.



Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has greeted the people on the eve of the birth anniversary of the chief architect of the Indian Constitution, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

### CM's Diary



Office of Chief Minister, J&K @CM\_JnK

Chief Minister today interacted with the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Energy at Gulmarg, holding detailed deliberations on key issues pertaining to the power sector.

The Chief Minister underscored the Government's commitment to strengthening energy infrastructure, enhancing power reliability, and expediting reforms to effectively meet the growing demand across Jammu & Kashmir.



Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today paid rich tributes to Dr. B. R. Ambedkar on his birth anniversary, describing him as a visionary leader, social reformer, and the principal architect of the Indian Constitution.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today extended warm greetings to the people on the joyous occasion of Baisakhi, highlighting the festival's cultural and spiritual significance.

## Cristian Romero injured during Tottenham's loss to Sunderland

**TOTTENHAM:** Tottenham defender Cristian Romero left the field in tears following an injury in his team's 1-0 loss to Sunderland in the Premier League on Sunday.

The Argentina international limped off after colliding with Tottenham goalkeeper Antonin Kinsky in the second half at the Stadium of Light. It was not immediately clear what the nature of the injury was, but the 27-year-old Romero was unable to play on and was visibly distressed as he made his way to the sideline. While he was able to leave the field unaided and did not require a stretcher, he was consoled by teammates as he walked away.

The timing of Romero's injury will be a concern for Argentina ahead of the World Cup starting in June. Kinsky was able to continue after having his head wrapped with a bandage. New Spurs coach Roberto De Zerbi said it was "very bad" that Romero sustained an injury, but did not know the severity of it.

"We have to see in the next days. I hope for us it is not an important problem because he is a crucial player for us," De Zerbi said. "We need him to finish the season and to achieve our goal."

## Scientists Baffled by Bizarre 'Living Fossil' From 275 Million Years Ago

In a dry riverbed in Brazil, deep under a forest near the Amazon, paleontologists uncovered a fossilized jawbone from an unknown ancient animal. Continued fieldwork revealed eight more similar bones, each about six inches (15 cm) long. However, no additional remains were found that could be confidently assembled into a complete skeleton.

Even with only jawbones, researchers determined the fossils belonged to a species that would have been considered a "living fossil" during its time, around 275 million years ago. The jaws showed an unusual twist, with some teeth angled outward and sideways, while many smaller teeth lined the inner surface. This structure suggests these animals were among the earliest vertebrates capable of grinding plant material. In a study published in Proceedings of the Royal Society B, scientists introduced the new species as Tanyka amnicola. The name Tanyka comes from the Indigenous Guarani language and means "jaw," while amnicola translates to "living by the river."

"Tanyka is from an ancient lineage that we didn't know survived to this time, and it's also just a really strange animal. The jaw has this weird

twist that drove us crazy trying to figure it out. We were scratching our heads over this for years, wondering if it was some kind of deformation," says Jason Pardo, the study's lead author, who worked on this project as part of his post-doctoral fellowship at the Field Museum in Chicago. "But at this point, we've got nine jaws from this animal, and they all have this twist, including the really, really well-preserved ones. So it's not a deformation; it's just the way the animal was made." Tanyka belongs to a broader group known as tetrapods, which are four-limbed vertebrates that include reptiles, birds, mammals, and amphibians. Early in their history, stem tetrapods split into two major groups. One group evolved to lay eggs on land, while the other continued laying eggs in water. Modern reptiles, birds, and mammals descend from the lineage that developed watertight eggs suited for land. Amphibians such as frogs and salamanders trace back to the group that remained dependent on moist environments for reproduction. Even after this evolutionary split, some stem tetrapods persisted. Tanyka was one of these survivors.

Older evolutionary lineages can continue along-

side more recently evolved groups. Mammals provide a clear example. Early mammals laid eggs, but later species evolved live birth. While most mammals today reproduce this way, a few, such as platypuses, still belong to the older egg-laying lineage.

"In the sense that Tanyka was a remaining member of the stem tetrapod lineage, even after newer, more modern tetrapods evolved, Tanyka is a little like a platypus. It was a living fossil in its time," says Pardo, who is now a research associate at the Field Museum while working on a postdoctoral fellowship through the University of Vilnius in Lithuania.

Much about Tanyka remains unknown, especially its overall body structure. "We found these jaws in isolation, and they're really weird, and they're very distinctive. But until we find one of those jaws attached to a skull or other bones that are definitively associated with the jaw, we can't say for sure that the other bones we find near it belong to Tanyka," says Ken Angielczyk, a curator of paleomammalogy at the Field Museum in Chicago, who served as Pardo's advisor during his post-doctoral fellowship there and a co-author of the paper.

## PL 2026: Media fraternity honour colleagues with T20 action Punjab sneak past J&K in close opener; Himachal, Uttar Pradesh register wins

**CHANDIGARH:** In a rare convergence of sport and sentiment, the Journalist Premier League (JPL) 2026 has unfolded in Chandigarh as more than just a cricket tournament. Conceived as a tribute to journalists who are no longer alive, the T20 competition has evolved into a living memorial—one that binds the fraternity not only through the game but also through a shared responsibility towards those left behind.

Organised by the Punjab United Press Club (Registered), the tournament features teams from Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. The competition began on April 10 and will culminate in the final scheduled for May 3.

According to the organisers, the initiative seeks to sustain engagement with the families of deceased journalists, many of whom gradually lose contact with the professional community over time. Club pres-



ident Arshdeep Singh Samar said the effort is aimed at reinforcing support systems within the fraternity. The tournament, he noted, is intended to rebuild that connection and assure continued support. "The United Press Club stands with families of journalists who are no longer with us. This platform is meant to bring them closer to the fraternity," he said.

The opening quarterfinal on April 10 saw Punjab secure a narrow seven-run win over Jammu and Kashmir at the Sector 16 Cricket Stadium in Chandigarh.

Batting first after winning the toss, Punjab posted 147 before being bowled out in 19.5 overs. Raj Thak-

ur anchored the innings with a fluent 77 off 47 balls, while contributions from Pardeep Bali and Sunil Bali Jio helped maintain momentum.

In reply, Jammu and Kashmir finished at 140 for six in their allotted 20 overs. Pardeep Bali led the chase with 47, but the side fell short despite a late push. Rahul Khatri's four-wicket spell proved decisive in restricting Punjab earlier and keeping the contest balanced, though the target ultimately remained out of reach.

In the April 11 fixture, Uttar Pradesh registered a 27-run victory over Chandigarh in another competitive outing at the same

venue. Batting first, Uttar Pradesh compiled 161 for six in 20 overs. Prahlad Singh Mawri struck 51, while Rishi Singh Sengar added 38 and Ashwani Sharma contributed 42, ensuring a steady scoring rate throughout the innings.

Chandigarh, in response, managed 134 for eight. Ashwani Sharma top-scored with 42, but regular breakthroughs curtailed the chase. Mayur Shukla delivered a stand-out bowling performance, claiming four wickets for 13 runs to tilt the match firmly in Uttar Pradesh's favour.

The April 12 encounter saw Himachal Pradesh produce a commanding

performance to defeat Delhi by nine wickets. Delhi, having elected to bat, were dismissed for 81 in 17 overs following a collapse triggered by disciplined bowling. Amit Pandey (30) and Bramh Prakash Dubey (25) were the only notable contributors.

Himachal chased down the target in just 5.4 overs, losing only one wicket. Narveer Thakur's unbeaten 49 off 21 deliveries ensured a swift finish, while Rimpu's four-wicket spell earlier set up the victory.

While the matches have drawn attention for their competitive quality, organisers emphasised that the purpose extends beyond the field. The league is intended to bring together journalists across regions while reconnecting with families of those who are no longer part of the profession.

With matches still to be played before the final on May 3, the tournament continues to serve both as a sporting platform and a reminder of the fraternity's shared responsibilities.