



BSF Serves Up Sporting Spirit with 'Spandan' Lawn Tennis League

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, MAY 24

The Border Security Force (BSF), in collaboration with the Sports Authority of India (SAI) and Khelo India, successfully organized the Jammu Region Lawn Tennis "Spandan" League-2026 from May 21 to 24 as part of the BSF Diamond Jubilee Year celebrations marking 60 years of Service, Sacrifice and Strength.

The tournament was also dedicated to the objectives of the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA) and witnessed enthusiastic participation from players across the region.

The closing ceremony was graced by Satish Sharma, Minister for Youth Services and Sports, Government of Jammu and Kashmir, as the chief guest. Senior officers



from BSF, CRPF, Army and Police, besides distinguished guests, players and sports enthusiasts, were present on the occasion.

Participants displayed remarkable sportsmanship and competitive spirit

throughout the tournament. The winners and runners-up were felicitated with trophies and medals by the chief guest.

Addressing the gathering, the minister highlighted the importance of sports in pro-

moting physical fitness, discipline, team spirit and national integration. He appreciated the efforts of BSF in encouraging sports culture and motivating youth participation through such initiatives.

District admin Poonch organises Exhibition Cricket Match under NMBA

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, MAY 24

As part of the ongoing 100 Day Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan campaign, an Exhibition Cricket Match was today organised here at the Sports Stadium between teams of the district administration Poonch.

The event was aimed at spreading awareness against drug abuse and encouraging youth to adopt a healthy, disciplined and positive lifestyle through sports and recreational activities.

The match witnessed enthusiastic participation from officers and officials of the administration. The team of DC Office led by ADC Tahir Mustafa Malik emerged victorious after an exciting contest played in a spirited atmosphere.

Speaking on the occasion, the ADC highlighted the importance of collective efforts in combating the menace of drug addiction and reiterated the message of "Choose Life, Not Drugs." He em-



phasized that sports serve as a powerful medium to engage youth in constructive activities and promote phys-

ical and mental well being. The event also witnessed active support and appreciation from spectators, who

lauded the initiative undertaken by the district administration under the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan.

"Very proud...": Axar Patel after DC beat KKR by 40 runs

KOLKATA, MAY 25: Delhi Capitals (DC) skipper Axar Patel said he was proud of his team's fighting spirit despite an inconsistent season, following their 40-run win over Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) in their final league-stage match of the IPL 2026 at Eden Gardens on Sunday night.

Reflecting on the team's recent performances during the post-match presentation, Axar praised the character shown in the closing stages of the campaign.

"I would say that in the last three matches, the way we played, even when you know things are not going well, the way the team fought after that, I am very proud. No one thought that we would just give up and think we are already out. Things were not going well, but still, the effort in the last matches, I am very proud of that."

On the positives and take-aways from the season, Axar added, "Firstly, you have to accept your mistakes. After that, you realise what you need to do better."

He further highlighted the importance of learning from small margins and key moments that defined their campaign.

"That is the positive you have to take forward. If you talk about one match, if just one match had gone differently, things could have been very different. I think the last time we played good cricket, it was just about one match. If that one match had gone our way, we would have been talking differently. As we spoke about at the toss, moments like catches were very impor-



tant," Axar added.

The DC skipper also reflected on his development as a leader during challenging phases of the season.

"If that had happened, today we would have been in a different position. (on what he has learned about himself as captain during difficult phases) I have learned that, obviously, the IPL is a tournament where you have to take care of everyone. But at the end, if you are in a good frame of mind, then only you can handle everything properly," the DC skipper said.

He stressed the importance of maintaining composure while leading a team in high-pressure situations.

"If you are not in a good frame of mind, then you can take wrong decisions or get frustrated and do something else. I think it is very important to stay calm. If I feel that things are not going

well or I am getting frustrated, I give myself time and first relax my own mind. Because I will be able to relax other people only if I am in a good frame of mind."

On the strongest team among the Qualifiers, the DC skipper backed Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH).

"I think SRH are looking very strong. When their top three score runs, that team becomes very difficult to stop. So I think SRH," Axar concluded.

Delhi Capitals finished their season with a commanding win over Kolkata Knight Riders, ending their campaign on a positive note despite missing out on a higher finish.

Delhi defeated KKR by 40 runs in a high-scoring clash after they successfully defended 204 in their final league-stage match.

Batting first, the visitors

posted 203/5, powered by a quickfire 60 from KL Rahul, 39 from skipper Axar Patel, and a late surge from David Miller and Ashutosh Sharma. KKR's bowlers shared the wickets but struggled to contain the scoring in the death overs.

In reply, KKR began steadily with Finn Allen and Ajinkya Rahane putting on 43 runs, while Rahane and Manish Pandey kept the momentum going through the power play. However, the innings shifted after Kuldeep Yadav's double strike removed Rahane and Rinku Singh, followed by Axar Patel's wicket of Tejasvi Dahiya.

Mitchell Starc and Lungi Ngidi then cleaned up the lower order as KKR were bowled out for 163 in 18.4 overs, sealing a comprehensive win for DC and ending their campaign on a positive note. (ANI)

French Open: Emma Raducanu suffers early exit after straight-sets defeat to Solana Sierra

PARIS [FRANCE], MAY 24: Britain's Emma Raducanu endured another disappointing outing on clay as she crashed out of the 2026 French Open in the first round following a 6-0, 7-6 (7-4) defeat to Argentina's Solana Sierra at Roland Garros on Sunday.

The 23-year-old, playing her third French Open main draw, struggled to find rhythm against the aggressive and composed Sierra, who dominated the opening set and held firm in a tense second-set tie-break to seal victory in under two hours, according to Olympics.com.

Raducanu, currently Great Britain's highest-ranked women's singles player, has been trying to regain momentum after returning from a lengthy absence caused by post-viral illness. She had also suffered an opening-round defeat in Strasbourg last week during her comeback tournament.

The Briton made a nervous start in Paris, saving two break points in the opening game before Sierra converted a third opportunity to take early control.



The Argentine world No. 68 quickly imposed herself on the contest, holding serve confidently and breaking Raducanu repeatedly to race through the first set in just 24 minutes without dropping a game.

Sierra continued her dominance in the second set, breaking twice to establish a 4-1 lead. However, Raducanu showed signs of recovery, fighting back with improved serving and base-

line play to level the set at 5-5. The former US Open champion twice exchanged breaks with Sierra late in the set before forcing a tie-break. But the Argentine held her nerve in the decisive moments, closing out the match 7-4 in the breaker.

Ahead of the contest, Raducanu had acknowledged the challenge posed by Sierra, describing the 21-year-old as a dangerous

clay-court opponent. Sierra had also impressed on grass last season with a surprise run to the fourth round at Wimbledon.

The defeat marks Raducanu's earliest exit at Roland Garros, having previously reached the second round in 2022 and 2025.

Raducanu shot to global prominence in 2021 when she became the first qualifier in history to win a Grand Slam title at the US Open.

UP, Tamil Nadu, CISF athletes shine at All India Police Weightlifting Championship in Haryana

KARNAL, MAY 24: Athletes from Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, CISF, Assam and Rajasthan delivered impressive performances on the second day of the 3rd All India Police Weightlifting Cluster 2026-27 being organised at Haryana Police Academy, Madhuban. Competitions in weightlifting, powerlifting and yoga were conducted on Sunday with enthusiastic participation from police teams across the country.

In the women's 52 kg category, Rajni of Uttar Pradesh police clinched the gold medal, while Anupama Swain from Odisha police secured silver and Kusum Lata of Madhya Pradesh (MP) police got bronze medal. In the women's 57 kg category, N. Pumagal of Tamil Nadu police claimed



gold, Sarla of Uttar Pradesh police bagged silver and Khushboo of Madhya Pradesh police won bronze.

In the women's 58 kg weightlifting category, Abhirami of CISF secured the gold medal, while Shalu of Uttar Pradesh police and Shagun of BSF won silver

and bronze respectively. In the men's 74 kg bench press and deadlift, Katar Singh of UP police secured the gold medal, followed by Bichitra Nayak of Odisha police with silver and Jagdish Nahak of CISF with bronze.

In yoga competitions, Asha Nitharwal of Ra-

asthan police secured first position in the women's senior category to qualify for the finals, while Rajesh Kumar of ITBP topped the men's senior category and also advanced to the finals.

In the men's 66 kg weightlifting category, Avijit Saha of West Bengal police won gold, P. Vinayak Rao of Telangana police secured silver and G. Ganesh Babu of Tamil Nadu police claimed bronze. Similarly, in the men's 74 kg category, Dibakar Pegu of Assam police won gold, K. Janarthanam of Telangana police took silver and Mahendrakar Rohit of Tamil Nadu police secured bronze.

Senior police officials encouraged players during the events, while a large number of spectators also cheered athletes.

Gukesh, Praggnanandhaa lead India's charge at Norway Chess

OSLO, MAY 24: World champion D Gukesh will have a shot at rediscovering his touch ahead of his world championship title defence when he launches his campaign at the prestigious Norway Chess on Monday, facing another stern test of temperament and skill against an elite field.

The elite elite field headed by former World No. 1 Magnus Carlsen and, besides Gukesh, also features Indian star R Praggnanand-

haa, with a formidable Indian contingent aiming to end the country's long-standing wait for a maiden title in the picturesque surroundings of Oslo and its scenic fjords.

The carefully chosen venue, the iconic Deichman Björkvik public library overlooking the Oslofjord waterfront and located just a couple of kilometres from the Nobel Peace Center, will host six of the world's best players in both the Open

and Women's sections.

India, now firmly established as a global chess powerhouse, will have four representatives in the event—Gukesh and Praggnanandhaa in the Open category, alongside Koneru Humpy and World Cup winner Divya Deshmukh in the women's field.

The task, however, will be anything but easy for the Indian quartet, with world No. 1 and home favourite Carlsen leading a formida-

ble field that includes French star Alireza Firouzja, Germany's Vincent Keymer and seasoned American campaigner Wesley So.

Among the women, the field boasts five-time and reigning world champion Ju Wenjun, defending Norway Chess champion Anna Muzychuk, reigning world blitz champion Bibisara Asaubayeva and China's fast-rising star Zhu Jiner, alongside the two Indian representatives.