

Minutes of the General Body Meeting (GBM) held on March 25, 2026 in online mode.

Society: National Magnetic Resonance Society (NMRS)

Date: March 25, 2026, online mode

President: Prof. N.R. Jagannathan

Vice-President: Prof. Ashutosh Kumar

Secretary: Dr. G. Jithender Reddy

Treasurer: Prof. P.M. Krishna Mohan

Total participants: 35

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Prof. N.R. Jagannathan, President, NMRS, welcomed the members and thanked them for their time. He emphasized that the goal of the meeting was to review the activities of NMRS since the last GBM (March 2025) and to initiate a healthy debate for the betterment of the society.

2. Confirmation of Previous Minutes

The minutes of the previous General Body Meeting (March 2025) were circulated to all the members and no comments were received. And it was proposed to be accepted by Prof. Senthil Kumar and seconded by Dr. Uma Sharma, members of NMRS.

3. Secretary's Report: Activity Update

Dr. G. Jithender Reddy presented a summary of the various activities of NMRS including the 11th APNMR and 30th NMRS meeting held in Pune during June 2025:

- **Participation:** ~350 participants from 12 countries.
- **Program:** 4 plenary talks, 55 invited lectures, 30 students oral and 97 poster presentations. This meeting introduced 3 tutorials lectures and 2 panel discussions on MR. Also, 4 NMRS Award lectures and 7 corporate lectures were organised.
- **Awards Conferred (2024):**
 - *Prof. C.L. Kethrapal Award:* Prof. S. Subramanian
 - *H.S. Atreya Award:* Prof. Ashok Ajoy
 - *Prof. S. Subramanian Lecture Award:* Prof. Jeetender Chugh
 - *Jharna Rani Samal Award:* Neha Yadav
- **Student Support in NMRS 2025:** 9 awards (4 oral, 5 poster) were given, with partial support from Anida Technologies.

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- **Travel Awards (2025):** Sura Prakash (IIT Jodhpur) received ₹30,000 to attend EUROMAR 2025; Himanshu Rajan Pandey (CBMR, Lucknow) received ₹15,000 to attend OHBM 2025.

4. Treasurer's Report & Financial Audit

Prof. Krishna Mohan presented the audited statement for the year ending March 31, 2025 (2024-25):

- **Total Corpus:** Approximately ₹93 Lakhs (including deposits and savings).
- **Compliance:** IT returns filed in July 2025.
- **Expenditure Highlights:** ₹1,60,000 was spent for supporting two NMR workshops (CCMB Lucknow and GNDU Amritsar) and two student travel awards.
- **Upcoming Costs:** Other awards and expenses for the joint APNMR/NMRS meeting will appear in the next budget cycle.

5. Discussion on Workshop Support

In response to a query from Prof. Ramanathan regarding the procedure for workshop funding, it was clarified:

- **Policy:** The Executive Committee (EC) supports up to four workshops per year.
- **Quantum:** A maximum of ₹50,000 is provided per workshop as a token of support.
- **Criteria:** Workshops should span 5–7 days, feature NMRS faculty as speakers, and include participants from multiple institutes/states (not exclusive to the host institute).
- **Objective:** The ₹50,000 grant is intended to reduce registration fees for students.
- **Budget Cap:** The total annual support is capped at ₹2,00,000 (covering up to 4 workshops), funded via society interest income.

Action Item: Dr. Neel Bhavesh noted that the audited statements and annual reports must be uploaded to the **Darpan ID/portal** to avoid blacklisting.

6. Approval of Financial Statements

The audited financial statement and annual reports presented by Prof. Krishna Mohan was proposed to be accepted by Prof. Neel S Bhavesh and was seconded by Prof. Anirban Bhunia, members of NMRS.

7. New Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) & Guidelines for the conduct of NMRS conference

Dr. G. Jithender Reddy informed the members the various new guidelines were formulated by the various sub-committees appointed by the President of NMRS, to improve transparency and efficacy. Four key areas that were addressed are:

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1. Guidelines for NMRS STUDENT's TRAVEL awards
2. Rationalization of NMRS awards
3. SOP for organizing NMR Conference
4. Recommendation on conducting NMRS once in 2 years

Dr. Jithender Reddy presented the recommendation about the frequency of national annual NMRS meetings of the sub-committee headed by Prof. S. Subramanian. Two primary options were considered:

- **Option A:** Maintain the current annual NMR scientific conference.
- **Option B:** Move to a **biennial** (once in two years) scientific conference. In alternate years, the society would sponsor extensive NMR workshops focused on in-depth teaching and tutorials for scholars.
- **Action Item:** Due to the significance of this change, the EC decided to seek feedback from the entire NMRS community via an online platform before making a final decision.

Member Suggestions and Discussion

Dr. Chandan Singh raised following points:

- **Travel Award Quantum:** He proposed that there should be an increase in the student travel award from ₹30,000 to a minimum of ₹50,000, noting that the amount has remained same for approximately 15 years.
- **Award Visibility:** He wanted a complete and updated list of all past travel awardees be maintained on the NMRS website. Dr. Reddy confirmed that while most are listed, any missing years will be updated based on the available information.
- **Young Scientist & Jharna Rani Samal Award Criteria:** Previously, selection was heavily based on impact factors divided by the total number of authors, which disadvantaged students in large collaborations (especially in Biology/Medicine).

Prof. Jagannathan clarified that the criteria have been updated last year. The selection now evaluates the **overall quality and volume of publications** throughout the PhD period. Impact factor will be one of the components of the evaluation, not a sole factor, making it fairer for collaborative researchers.

2. Discussion on the "Biennial Workshop" Proposal

Prof. Mandar Deshmukh (CCMB) raised critical questions regarding the proposed shift to a biennial conference schedule with alternate-year workshops: nature of the proposed NMRS workshops and how they would differ from or add value to these existing activities.

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The Executive Committee in their February 25, 2026 meeting also took note of these concerns. The intent of the proposed workshops is to focus on in-depth teaching and tutorials for scholars, but the specific structure remains under deliberation.

Action Item: These suggestions regarding conference duration and workshop differentiation will be included in the feedback sought from the broader NMRS community via the upcoming online opinion poll.

1. Rationale for the Biennial Conference Proposal

Prof. N. R. Jagannathan addressed the queries regarding the shift to a biennial (once in two years) schedule. He noted that a committee with senior scientists and others (headed by Prof. S. Subramanian) proposed this change due to:

- **Funding Challenges:** Securing adequate sponsorship for a large-scale annual meeting has become increasingly difficult.
- **Research Cycles:** An annual frequency often leads to presentations with limited new data; a two-year gap would allow for more substantial scientific progress to be reported.
- **Educational Focus:** The proposed "alternate year" workshops would be designed specifically to educate newcomers and postdocs, serving as a dedicated teaching platform.

Member Suggestions: Shortening the Conference

Prof. Mandar Deshmukh (CCMB) proposed an alternative to moving the meeting to every two years:

- **Reduced Duration:** Shortening the current four-day conference to an intense two or 2.5-day meeting.
- **Cost Efficiency:** A shorter meeting would significantly reduce logistics costs and the burden on host institutions while still providing a regular platform for student-faculty interaction.
- **Speaker Rotation:** Prof. Deshmukh suggested that since not every faculty member needs to speak every year, a shorter meeting could accommodate the community through a biennial speaking rotation while keeping the event annual.
- **Support for Proposal:** Prof. Ashutosh Kumar seconded the suggestion, noting its practicality.
- **Funding Constraints:** Prof. Ashutosh Kumar also highlighted that most NMR-related events rely on the same set of funding agencies. Constant requests for annual conferences create a "headache" for organizers, as agencies find it difficult to provide substantial support every year. A biennial cycle was proposed as a way to alleviate this pressure.

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- **Comparison with Other Societies:** Prof. Anant Bahadur Patel (CCMB) questioned the change, noting that other groups like the Indian Biophysical Society and SNCI successfully maintain annual meetings. He argued that meeting once a year is crucial for members to stay up-to-date and maintain community engagement.

Prof. Neeraj Sinha raised a concern regarding the current trajectory of NMRS meetings:

- **Mandate of the Society:** He argued that the primary mandate of NMRS is to spread NMR knowledge across India. However, recent conferences have become increasingly expensive and restricted to major metropolitan hubs.
- **Call for Regional Inclusion:** Prof. Sinha strongly advocated for hosting conferences in "lesser-known" or smaller academic centers (e.g., Pondicherry, Dehradun, Sagar University, Northeast India, or Srinagar).
- **Budget-Friendly Meetings:** He suggested that by using University guesthouses and simpler catering, the society could significantly reduce budgets. This would allow the conference to remain annual and accessible without the need for massive corporate or agency funding. He warned that moving to a biennial schedule would "dilute the mandate" of the society.

Prof. Jagannathan explained that the new conference SOPs were created specifically to help smaller groups. These guidelines provide a roadmap for organizing, inviting speakers, and logistics for groups that may not have a large, established NMR presence. These SOPs would be uploaded in the NMRS website, soon

Dr. Neel Sarovar Bhavesh supported Prof. Sinha's "modest budget" idea but cautioned about current realities. He noted that even in smaller towns, expectations for high-end catering and accommodation have driven up costs. He emphasized that the community must collectively agree to "compromise and find a middle path" regarding hospitality if they wish to reduce the financial burden on hosts.

Dr. Jithender Reddy reiterated that Prof. Mandar's suggestion of a shorter 2 to 2.5-day meeting might be the key to making hosting more attractive and manageable for more institutions.

Prof. Neeraj Sinha called for the society to introspect on why there has been a sudden decline in volunteers to host the NMRS meeting compared to previous years. He emphasized that the society must actively support university structures with moderate facilities to prevent diluting the mandate of spreading NMR culture across the country.

Prof. Jagannathan and Dr. Jeetender Chugh clarified that the biennial proposal is not a dilution but a restructuring.

- **The Concept:** One year would remain dedicated to high-level research talks, while the alternate year would transition into an extensive NMR School.

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- **The Need:** Currently, there is no structured, nation-wide NMR course. The alternate-year school would create a formalized teaching platform to train a larger population of learned scholars and postdocs.

Dr. Jeetender Chugh reminded the body that while modest venues are encouraged, the acoustics and food quality must meet a baseline standard. Poor lecture hall acoustics can diminish the impact of scientific communication, which must be a key consideration in the bidding process.

Prof. Ramakrishna Hosur proposed a bifurcated approach to solve the logistical challenges of smaller venues:

- **Workshops/Schools in Remote Areas:** These educational events can be held in smaller cities or universities with modest facilities, as the participant count is lower and costs are more manageable.
- **Main Conferences in Established Hubs:** The larger scientific meetings should be held where acoustics, lecture hall facilities, and large-scale logistics are already robust to ensure high-quality delivery.
- **Duration:** Supported the move to a 2 or 2.5-day meeting to significantly lower overall costs.

Dr. A. L. Susmitha introduced a proposal to adopt hybrid participation (in-person and online) for future meetings which reduces the financial burden on participants and facilitates easy participation from foreigners. Also, these meetings successfully charge registration fees for virtual attendance, ensuring the model is financially viable for organizers.

High Expenses: Participants (Neel Sarovar Bhavesh, Jeetender Chugh, Ashutosh Kumar) noted that attendance is dropping because institutes now charge for facilities (halls, accommodation) that were previously subsidized or free.

Affordability: Both students and Principal Investigators (PIs) are struggling with high registration and travel costs.

Meeting Frequency: There is an ongoing debate about moving the NMRS meeting to a biennial (every two years) schedule to make it more affordable and ensure better attendance.

Considering all the above suggestions and comments, it was decided that these are major procedural changes requiring broad community consensus.

- **Online survey:** Prof. Krishna Mohan and the Secretary will formulate and circulate a survey to all NMRS members.
- **Survey Content:** The form will outline the pros and cons of the current annual format versus the biennial format, and will now include the suggestion to maintain an annual meeting with a reduced duration (2 days).

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- **Decision Process:** The EC will review the feedback from the community before finalizing any changes to the society's meeting structure.

Executive Committee (EC) Changes

- The four members of the EC who are retiring were announced. They are Prof. Krishna Mohan Poluri (Treasurer), Prof. Neel Sarovar Bhavesh, Prof. Manasi Ghosh and Prof. T.G. Ajit Kumar. The committee thanked the retiring members and placed on record the excellent services rendered by them to the Society. The EC suggested induction of four new EC Members in place of the four retiring members. They are Prof. Mahavir Singh (IISc, Bangalore), Prof. Uma Sharma (AIIMS, Delhi), Prof. Vinesh Vijayan (IISER, Thiruvananthapuram) and Prof. Durgesh Dwivedi (KGMU, Lucknow). The GB approved their selection and were declared elected as the new members and will serve for 3 years from 1st April 2026. Further Prof. Mahavir Singh has been elected as the Treasurer and will be one of the authorized signatories of the bank account. Prof. Krishna Mohan will remain as a co-opted member for another one year to assist the new treasurer with the transition. This resolution was formally proposed to be accepted by Mandar Deshmukh and seconded by Shilpy Sharma.

Any other matter:

New Auditor: Following last year's General Body (GB) approval, the Executive Committee (EC) invited three quotes and approved Pal and Shanbhogue as the lowest bidders, per government rules.

Govil Award: N.R. Jagannathan reported that JEOL has agreed to sponsor a cash prize of ₹1 Lakh for the Govil Award starting with the 2025 cycle.

ISMAR 2029 Bid: It was reported that while India (led by Vipin Agarwal) reached the final round to host the 2029 meeting, but the bid was unfortunately unsuccessful.

ICMRBS 2030 Bid: The GB was informed that the EC had authorized Mandar Deshmukh and his team to bid for the 2030 International Council on Magnetic Resonance in Biological Systems (ICMRBS). It was noted that Hyderabad last hosted this 25 years ago.

Upcoming NMRS 2026 (Bhopal): Convener Bharathwaj Sathyamoorthy provided an update:

- **Dates:** 8th to 11th July 2026 at IISER Bhopal.
- **Status:** Flyer is out; 50 talks (plenary/invited) are planned; website is live.
- **Logistics:** Clearances from the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and Ministry of Education (MOE) have been submitted.

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New Website Hosting: Neel Sarovar Bhavesh confirmed that the new NMRS website is now functional and has been successfully migrated to disk space and DNS facilities provided by TIFR Hyderabad. He requested EC to send a formal thanking letter to the Director TIFR, Hyderabad for the same.

Society Registration Renewal: As was discussed in the last GB, the members were informed that the NMRS registration has not been formally renewed for 31 years, which is a violation of statutory Government rules. To rectify this, the society must submit audited statements of accounts along with minutes of EC/GB for every year of that 31-year period to the Registrar of Societies. Prof. Jagannathan described the task of finding records and minutes from the last three decades as "humongous." He formally requested that anyone holding historical documents or minutes send copies to the Secretary.

The GB had previously approved appointing a lawyer to handle this matter. At present, the current focus is on correcting the PAN card name (action already initiated) and establishing a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) with the auditor to finalize the renewal.

Presently we are awaiting the Auditor's report to provide the list of exact documents required for the society's renewal.

The committee expressed deep gratitude to Professor Ramanathan for his help and personal initiative in liaising with the auditors.

New members (Mahavir Singh, Uma Sharma) noted they hadn't been receiving official emails. N.R. Jagannathan clarified that many members have outdated contact information. A provision to update their emails will be provided in the new website. In the meanwhile, members can write to Mr. Wilson, to include their email ID's.

Full Functionality: Neel Sarovar Bhavesh confirmed the new website is fully functional. Mahavir Singh suggested shutting down the old website once new site is functional, which the committee agreed to implement.

All SOPs, subcommittee recommendations, and award criteria (Travel, ICMRBS, ENC) will be posted online so that students and PIs can see the selection criteria and other details.

Prof. Jagannathan once again emphasized that renewing the society's registration is the top priority, but the primary bottleneck is the lack of documentation for the past 30+ years. The Executive Committee (EC) will work on the society registration once the auditor provides a specific list of required documents.

Prof. Jagannathan on behalf of NMRS thanked outgoing EC members: Prof. Krishna Mohan Poluri (Treasurer), Prof. Neel Sarovar Bhavesh, Prof. Manasi Ghosh and Prof. T.G. Ajit Kumar for their services. Also, He formally welcomed new EC members Prof. Mahavir Singh, Prof. Uma Sharma, Prof. Vinesh Vijayan and Prof. Durgesh Dwivedi. Finally, The President assured that all the relevant suggestions will be implemented at the earliest. The President thanked all the participants for their time and suggestions and welcomed all the members for the next annual symposia at Bhopal. Dr. G. Jithender Reddy formally concluded by thanking the Chair.

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G. Jithender Reddy