



# Goa targets 21k rooftop installations by 2027

■ Aims to generate 65MW of solar power in three years

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** For over three years from now, Goa sets to achieve 21,200 rooftop installations in the State with total solar power generation of 65MW by 2027 under its ambitious Goem Vinamulya Vij Yevjan scheme- a scheme that is aligned with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana.

Under the scheme, the State has so far received 4,500 applications while feasibility of 4,460



applicants has been approved for Rooftop installation. The data shows, till date, 477 rooftops have been installed with a total capacity of 4.55MW of solar power. Total of Rs

30 lakh State subsidy is released so far. Sources informed that under the scheme, Goa has set target of 21200 numbers of Rooftop installations aggregating to 65 MW for three

years(upto 2027). The scheme encourages free rooftop solar installation upto 5kW for household users who consume 400 units or less per year. Zero Electricity Bill will be levied for these consumers consuming 400 units or less for the next 10 years. Apart from the Centre's total outlay of Rs 75,000 crore, Goa government, with an initial investment of Rs 35 crore, will bear the entire cost of installation till 2026-27.

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# MGP-BJP can win 25 seats, then situation of "buying" MLAs won't arise: MGP's Deepak

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** MGP president Pandurang "Deepak" Dhavalikar said that the MGP-BJP alliance is necessary for a stable government in Goa and that there would be a pre-poll pact between the Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party and the Bharatiya Janata Party during the 2027 Goa assembly elections. During the 2022 state assembly elections, there was no pre-election alliance between the two main parties.

According to Dhavalikar, if the MGP-BJP combination wins 25 seats, there won't be any need to "buy" MLAs.

The MGP president stated, "I personally can win from any constituency in Ponda taluka." He added, "However, my first preference is Priol constituency as nobody can touch my 10,500 to 11,000 votes there, while the next choices are Shiroda and Ponda constituencies."

Dhavalikar also stated that he could relocate to Cumbharjua assembly constituency and run for office from that specific



constituency. BJP lawmakers Govind Gaude and Subhash Shirodkar currently represent the Priol and Shiroda assembly constituencies, respectively. Gaude won the Priol seat in the 2022 state assembly elections, defeating Dhavalikar. According to Dhavalikar, Goan voters are neither primarily BJP or MGP supporters, but when combined, the two parties receive 50% of the vote. "In this alliance, we will propose contesting seven to eight seats," he insisted, adding that the success of their relationship can be attributed to the identical ideals of both parties. The MGP chairman added that in addition to effectively addressing other problems like unemployment, the MGP-BJP government

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# Goa on high growth lane in realizing PM's vision of rural India: CM Sawant

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said that Prime Minister Modi has recently hailed the rise in rural consumption in India, mentioning about the recent household consumption expenditure survey. There is a tangible reduction in poverty as per an SBI study released. "Our vision is to



empower rural India by transforming villages into

vibrant centers of growth and opportunity.

I am confident that the development of villages will lead to the realization of a developed India." Modi said. This major change in rural India has been discussed amid preparations for the Union Budget. Goa's consistent strides in securing rural economy are contributing to and supplementing the vision of the PM.

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# "India's Passport Ranking Drops in 2025 Amid Global Mobility Shifts"

India's ranking has shown signs of recovery since 2021, moving up to 80th in 2024 before dropping to 85th in 2025.

**New Delhi:** The Henley Passport Index 2025 has unveiled a landscape of changing travel freedoms, highlighting notable shifts in global mobility. India's passport ranking has taken a hit, dropping five places to 85th, while Singapore solidifies its position at the top with unprecedented visa-free access. Intro Section: The latest Henley



Passport Index 2025 reveals a significant drop in India's ranking, from 80th to 85th, reflecting broader trends in global travel mobility. Singapore

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# Class 12 Student Detained for Orchestrating Hoax Bomb Threats to 23 Delhi Schools

■ Delhi schools have received a spate of bomb threats in the recent past. All of them have turned out to be hoax after investigation. Delhi Police have detained a student.

**New Delhi:** In a startling revelation, a Class 12 student from a private school in Delhi has been detained by the police for sending hoax bomb threat emails to 23 schools in the city. This latest development comes after a series of similar threats had been disrupting school activities and causing widespread panic among students, parents, and educators. The detained student, who has not been named due to his minor status,



confessed to sending the threatening emails to avoid taking his school exams. According to police officials, the student sent these emails multiple

times, targeting different schools each time to avoid suspicion. His strategy involved sending a single email to multiple schools simultaneously, which led

to 23 schools receiving the threats. The emails, which were sent from a Gmail account, warned of "massive and highly dangerous explosives" planted on the school premises and threatened to detonate them during exam hours. The messages also claimed to be part of an operation by a "powerful and dangerous dark web group" with ties to "Red Rooms," although these claims were later found to be baseless.



# When Will Goa Become Garbage-Free?

“Despite claims that Goa boasts one of the best solid waste management systems in the country, the visible and olfactory evidence suggests otherwise. Delegations from other states frequently visit the Saligao Waste Management Plant (SWMP) to learn from its model, yet the persistent litter on highways and the accumulation of waste in urban and rural areas highlight the stark contrast between perception and reality.

Local bodies such as panchayats and municipalities receive grants aimed at improving waste management services, yet the current situation indicates a lack of tangible improvement.”

Goa, often celebrated for its picturesque beaches and vibrant culture, faces an urgent and troubling issue: waste management. While the state has invested significantly—around Rs 1,000 crore—in the establishment of two garbage treatment plants, one located at Saligao plateau and another in Cacora, the reality on the ground tells a different story.

Waste continues to litter roads, markets, and agricultural lands, raising critical questions

about the effectiveness of these investments and the overall solid waste management strategy in Goa.

Despite claims that Goa boasts one of the best solid waste management systems in the country, the visible and olfactory evidence suggests otherwise. Delegations from other states frequently visit the Saligao Waste Management Plant (SWMP) to learn from its model, yet the persistent litter on highways and the accumulation of waste in urban and

rural areas highlight the stark contrast between perception and reality.

Local bodies such as panchayats and municipalities receive grants aimed at improving waste management services, yet the current situation indicates a lack of tangible improvement.

Questions arise regarding the adequacy of these funds and the accountability of local authorities. Are these grants sufficient to tackle the issue, or is there a gap in the execution of waste management initiatives?

The lack of transparency and responsibility may be hindering progress, resulting in residents witnessing the same issues cycle without resolution.

One of the most pronounced challenges is the Sonsodo dump, a longstanding problem that has persisted for decades. Despite numerous promises to address this critical issue, there seems to be no effective solution on the horizon.

The smell from this dump not only impacts

the quality of life for residents nearby but also poses significant health risks. This bleak scenario is compounded by the delayed development of the planned waste treatment plant at Bainguinim, which has been mired in unfulfilled commitments from the government. Each announcement of its imminent completion has faded without follow-through, leaving citizens frustrated and sceptical. The accumulation of waste from major urban centres like Panaji and Margao exacerbates the situation, as local residents must endure the unpleasant consequences of the townships' waste management failures.

Garbage trucks transporting waste to Saligao contribute to a stench that permeates the area and affects the daily life of its inhabitants. This has raised serious concerns about the efficacy of the entire waste management system in Goa, leaving residents questioning why a state known for its governance does not have a clear and functional plan in

place for such a critical issue.

For Goa to become garbage-free, a collective effort involving government accountability, community engagement, and effective resource allocation is essential. More than just the establishment of treatment plants, a comprehensive framework prioritizing consistent waste collection, recycling initiatives, and public education on waste segregation is needed.

Finally, while substantial investments have been made in Goa's waste management infrastructure, true progress can only be achieved through transparent practices and the empowerment of local bodies. With concerted efforts and a genuine commitment to environmental responsibility, the dream of a cleaner, garbage-free Goa can become a reality. However, the time for action is now, and citizens deserve a government that not only hears their concerns but actively works towards resolving them.



## Calangute Police takes action against beggars creating nuisance to tourists

Team Goemkarponn

**CALANGUTE:** In response to reports of beggars causing disturbances to tourists visiting Calangute Beach and other areas within its jurisdiction, the Calangute Police Station has initiated a drive against these individuals.

Today, a targeted operation was conducted,

and beggars found creating nuisance were booked under the Beggars Act. The arrested individuals will be produced before the competent court of law, where further action will be taken against them.

This measure aims to ensure the safety and well-being of tourists visiting the area, while also maintaining law and order.

## Jharkhand trio held at Mapusa bus stand for ganja trafficking, granted bail

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** The Additional Session Judge at Panaji, has granted bail to three accused -- Chandan Kumar Sharma, Rohit Sharma, and Imityaz Ansari, all three natives of Jharkhand who were arrested by the Mapusa Police for being in possession of 10.3 kgs of ganja during a raid conducted at the parking lot of the New Bus Stand in Mapusa to be delivered to one Vijay Volvoikar, Camurlim Bardez-Goa.

Adv Myron Araujo, who argued the bail applications of the



accused, told the Court that the applicants had clean criminal records with no antecedents and that the quantity seized was of “variable” quantity of drugs and as such since the seizure involves “less than commercial quantity” there was no bar in granting bail.

“Admittedly, the Applicant is now in judicial custody and is no longer required for the purposes of the investigations.

Detaining him any longer in custody would amount to a punishment before he has an opportunity to prove his innocence. No fruitful purpose would be served by his further incarceration other than ensuring his presence during trial, which could otherwise be secured by imposing strict conditions, which ordering his release on bail,” Judge Bosco Roberts, said.

The Court proceeded to grant bail to the

accused on furnishing bail of Rs 25,000, with two sureties each of a like amount and on conditions that they furnish copy of his identity proof and that of his sureties to the Investigating Officer, documentary proof of present address as well as that of his sureties, which the IO is directed to verify within seven days, a verified WhatsApp number, to inform the court in case of a change in address, besides other conditions like not interfering in the investigation, and remain present for investigation as and when called for.



# Goa govt fully focused on Mhadei issue: CM

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** Chief Minister Pramod Sawant has assured to address issues and suggestions raised by the Goa Legislators' Forum on River Mhadei and the Clean and Green Goa initiative.

Speaking at the Goa Legislators' Day celebration held at the Secretariat in Porvorim, Sawant further said the government is working on introducing reforms and will make financial provisions to support them.

Dr Sawant further said that the Goa Government would look into the issues and suggestions raised by the Forum such as the issue of



River Mhadei, clean and green Goa etc. The Chief Minister informed that the Government is working on introducing reforms, and would be making financial provisions which will aid these reforms.

On the occasion, members of the Vidhan Sabha of the State of Goa (1989-94) were felicitated. The Chief Minister congratulated all of them

and thanked them for their contribution to the State of Goa.

The Speaker of Goa Legislative Assembly, Ramesh Tawadkar earlier in his address said that the Goa Legislative Forum has underscored the activities of the Forum.

He highlighted the Youth Parliament which is one such initiative held to encourage new

leadership. All have a role to play to create a bright future for Goa, he emphasized.

The Leader of the Opposition, Yuri Alemão in his address said that issues such as the River Mhadei diversion, bane of Casinos and how Goa's image was getting tarnished are critical areas that needed to be voiced and addressed.

Treasurer of Goa's Legislators' Forum, Sadanand Malik presented the audited accounts of the Forum for the year 2023-24. At the onset, the Forum condoled the demise of former members and MLAs Francisco Monte Cruz and Suresh Parulekar who passed away last year.

# Pilgao villagers move HC over Vedanta 'violations'

Team Goemkarponn

**PILGAO:** Pilgao farmers and villagers have petitioned Vedanta Limited, alleging that the mining corporation violated Environmental Clearance (EC) requirements while transporting iron ore. Additionally, the petition has requested for a complete prohibition on ore transportation at night.

Through a miscellaneous civil application in a public interest litigation (PIL) writ suit backed by the Mulakh Khajan Farmers Association and the Goa Foundation, Anil Salelkar, a resident of Bagwada in Pilgao, filed the plea on behalf of the farmers and villages. The hearing is scheduled for Monday, January 13.

The petitioners have requested the court to direct the Directorate of Mines and Geology, along with police authorities, to halt the transportation of ore by the mining company during the night. They argue that the night-time transportation is causing significant noise pollution, disturbing the villagers' sleep.

The villagers of Matwada, Pilgao, have specifically opposed the



night-time transport.

Salelkar has also urged the court to restrict Vedanta from using the main road, which passes through the settlement area from the New Beneficiary Plant to Sarmanas Jetty, for ore transportation. The petition calls for the company to adhere to the EC conditions.

According to the EC criteria, the Directorate of Mines and Geology's Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) must be followed, and only the roads listed in the clearance may be used.

No transportation should pass through villages or other populated areas in accordance with EC regulations. In order to avoid going through populated areas, the mining company was also instructed to build a "bypass" route for the transportation of minerals.

# Fake Income Certificate: Ponda Councillor arrested

Team Goemkarponn

**PONDA:** In relation to an income certificate that was obtained by faking Ponda Municipal Council (PMC) Yogiraj Gosavi's signature and the municipal council's stamp, Ponda police detained Ponda Councillor Shivanand Sawant on Thursday.

In this regard, Silvanagar-Ponda resident Sadanand

Prabhugaonkar had previously been taken into custody by the police.

When Sadananda Prabhugaonkar applied for an income certificate, PMC officials found that he had attached a previous phony income certificate. After conducting an investigation and discovering that the document's signature was fraudulent, PMC Chief Officer Yogiraj Gosavi



filed a police complaint.

Inspector Vijaynath Kavalekar of the Ponda Police Department learned during the investigation that the Goa Medical College Hospital in Bambolim had utilized a

phony income certificate.

Sadanand Prabhugaonkar told the police that PMC Councillor Shivanand Sawant had given him the income certificate when they asked him about it.

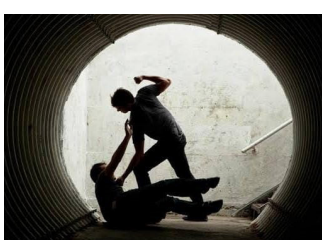
Sawant was subsequently taken into custody by police on Tuesday. Police Inspector Vijaynath Kavlekar is directing PSI Ashish Varip's investigation into the crime.

# Business Rivalry Leads to Violent Assault in Cortalim

Team Goemkarponn

**CORTALIM:** In a shocking incident reported in the early hours of 8th January 2025, two unidentified individuals attacked Vijayan Thottarayath, a resident of Aravalem, Cortalim, and a native of Calicut, Kerala. The incident occurred near Loto Garage, Santrant, Cortalim, around 5:10 AM.

According to the complaint filed at Verna Police Station, the attackers, aged between 20 to 30 years, intercepted Vijayan's vehicle with their white Toyota Innova. The complainant, who was driving his ECO car towards Margao, was forced to stop after the



Innova blocked his path.

The driver of the Innova, described as wearing shorts, a T-shirt, and a face mask, exited the vehicle armed with an iron pipe and damaged the windshield of Vijayan's car. Soon after, the co-driver, similarly dressed and masked, joined in. Both men brutally assaulted Vijayan with iron pipes, targeting his right thigh, wrist, and head, leaving him with serious injuries.

The assailants also robbed Vijayan of his valuables, including a Samsung Galaxy Fold mobile phone containing two SIM cards (9370621341 and 8806905691), Rs. 10,000 in cash, and a gold chain. The total value of the stolen items is estimated to be Rs. 2 lakh.

Preliminary investigations suggest the attack was motivated by business rivalry. Verna Police have registered a case under sections 126(2), 309(6) r/w 3(5) of the BNS 2023 Act. The investigation is being led by PSI Ramchandra Naik under the supervision of PI Melson Colaco and DySP Gurudas Kadam.

# GSPCB Board term extended by 3 months

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** The government has been obliged to prolong the tenure of the current Goa State Pollution Control Board (GSPCB) by an additional three months, or until the new Board is reconstituted, due to the delay in appointing a new Chairman and Member Secretary.

On January 6, 2025, the current Board, which was chaired by Mahesh Patil and had member secretary Shamila Monteiro, concluded its three-year tenure. In January 2022, the Board under Patil was established.

In a notification, Director of Environment Johnson Fernandes stated, "The term of the

Board is extended for a period of three months w.e.f. 06-01-2025 or up to the date of notification of the re-constitution of the Goa State Pollution Control Board, whichever is earlier, in order to maintain continuity in

the smooth functioning of the Goa State Pollution Control Board (GSPCB)."

The environment department requested applications from qualified and interested individuals in October of last year for the positions of member secretary and chairman of the GSPCB. November 14 is the last day to apply for the position.

Environmental management and

environmental science understanding are increasingly required. In addition, the candidate

must have lived in Goa for at least 15 years. Knowledge of Konkani is required, and Marathi is preferred.

According to the new guidelines published in 2021, the Board would consist of 19 members instead of 16 members, including a chairperson, member secretary, and 17 members nominated by the State government to represent the interests of local authorities operating within the State as well as those of agriculture, fisheries, industry, and trade.



Goa State Pollution Control Board  
गोंय राज्य प्रदूषण नियंत्रण मंडळ



# Datta Naik issue is priority for CM & Goa police over Cash for Job, Corruption: Chodankar

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** Former President of the Goa Pradesh Congress Committee (GPCC), Girish Chodankar, has voiced his apprehension regarding the current priorities of the Goa Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant and Goa Police, asserting that the Datta Naik matter has taken precedence over more crucial state issues.

Chodankar emphasised that the Goa Police seem more engrossed in the Datta Naik affair whilst



neglecting the alarming prevalence of various criminal syndicates, including: Cash for Job mafia, Corruption mafia, Land Conversion mafia, Drug mafia and Land Grab mafia.

Chodankar criticised

the constabulary's apparent reluctance to investigate and implement decisive measures against these criminal networks, which pose substantial threats to the sanctity of the Goan community.

He additionally pointed out that hundreds of serious grievances remain pending with the police, awaiting proper investigation.

"This procrastination in addressing vital issues undermines public confidence in law enforcement and questions their dedication to maintaining justice," he added. Chodankar urged the Goa Police to redirect their endeavours and resources towards addressing these pressing concerns, ensuring that Goans' safety and welfare remain paramount.

# There does not seem to be an inch of progress on Mhadei: LoP Yuri

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** LoP Yuri Alemao highlighted pressing issues of Mhadei, casino industry damaging Goa's image and reckless sale of Goa, during Goa Legislator's Day program.

He also lamented stating the Government is stifling the voice of opposition and it wants opposition to crawl.

"First, the threat to our lifeline Mhadei. Second, the Casino industry parading as the proprietor of River Mandovi and damaging Goa's image as the land of the pious, saintly and spiritual. Third, the reckless sale of Goa, transfers, change in use or zoning," said Alemao.

He further said that he was flagging these issues once again because these issues have magnified and there does not seem to be an inch of progress on Mhadei.

"On the other hand, the tensions and threats have multiplied. Tiger is spotted at Kankumbi, which means "Tiger Zinda hai", and "Sarkar Soya hai" over notifying Mhadei wildlife sanctuary as Tiger Reserve. There are records of NTCA in regards to the presence of Tigers in Mhadei," he



added.

He also said that it is a sad situation that the Casino industry and related gambling businesses are projected as the economic lifeline of Goa! It is really pathetic to hear that our economy today is Casino dominant or dependent.

And further, the sickness of land conversions has further grown into the menace of land grabbing and massive land transfers to land bankers.

"We expect suggestions from former MLAs to steer our Goa and protect our identity. The communal venom is entered and being forced to enter the minds of a harmonious and liberal Goan," he said.

Alemao also said that this is the threat to the DNA of Goa and Goans. We don't want communal tensions and also to become swayampurn in 'Ganja and other narcotics'. We need to eradicate its roots.

# Fake FDA officer extorting money from Calangute food outlets: Vishwajit

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** Health Minister Vishwajit Rane has warned those operating food establishments of an imposter posing as a Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) official demanding bribes, especially in the Calangute area.

Rane said he has asked FDA Director Swetha Desai to lodge an FIR with the police and ensure stern action.

He said that it has come to his notice that an individual, claiming to be an FDA official, is moving around in Calangute, speaking fluent Konkani, and demanding money.

"He is using the alias Soiroo Naiktuenkar, also known as Sarvesh Naik Tuvemkar, and has been making telephonic calls to food business operators, impersonating himself as an FDA official and demanding cash by



threatening the owners with dire consequences," he added.

Rane said that he has made calls from the following numbers: 8747850885 and 9356278836. This office

has no affiliation with such a person.

"We request everyone to remain vigilant and not fall prey to such fraudulent activities. Several complaints have been received regarding this impersonation, and we have directed the Director, FDA, to file an FIR against the individual," Rane added. Meanwhile, Minister said that strict action will be taken against the culprit.

# NICU capacity at GMC to be expanded to 30 beds

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** Health Minister Vishwajit Rane his key focus is expansion of NICU capacity at from 15 to 30 beds.

Rane held a discussion on enhancing the Pediatric and Neonatal Resource Centre (PNRC) to provide timely care and early interventions for our children.

Joined by Secretary Health Arun Kumar Mishra, Dean GMC Dr. Bandekar, Additional Secretary Trupthi Manerkar, Under Secretaries Gautami Parmekar and Pooja Madkaikar, Director GMC Nathine Araujo, and HOD Paediatrics Dr. Vaishali, we explored transformative steps to uplift child healthcare.

A key focus was the expansion of NICU capacity at GMC from 15 to 30 beds, a step that will ensure critical care for our youngest and most vulnerable.

"With Goa leading by example, we are dedicated to fulfilling PM Narendra Modi vision of a healthier and brighter future for every child in the state," he added.



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# Goa targets 21k rooftop installations by 2027

In the last six years (till September 2024), the State has generated 168.21 million units (MU) of green energy, with an annual rise. From generating just 4.46 MUs of power in 2019, to achieving 69.35 MUs of power by 2023- 2024 to, the State has made a rapid growth. In the current financial year, the total solar generation is 28.59MU till September end. The number of solar

connections in the State as on October is 1566 with total installed capacity of 65.86 megawatts and total power generation of 168.21 MUs. According to the Goa State Energy Vision 2050, the State aims to generate 150 megawatts of renewable power by 2030. The State intends to become the first in the country to run on 100 per cent renewable energy by 2050. Meanwhile, sources

informed that the State Government has also allowed for providing single phase inverters instead of three phase inverters for installations with inverter capacity of 5KW or below in case of three phase prosumers for the grid connected Rooftop solar PV systems. There are 998 residential solar rooftops, 193 commercial and 84 industrial installations while there are 16 in other categories.

# MGP-BJP can win 25 seats, then situation of "buying" MLAs won't arise: MGP's Deepak

will significantly improve Goa's growth. He went on to say that the MGP is ready for the Goa assembly elections in 2027, but a survey would be conducted to determine the party's

chances in this election.

The MGP chief further asserted that the BJP has proposed a post-election partnership with the MGP following the state assembly election in 2022.



# IMA Suggests Allocation of Funds for Cohort Studies in Healthcare

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** In their meeting with the 16th Finance Commission, the Indian Medical Association called for funding to be allocated for state-wide healthcare research and cohort studies.

The 16th Finance Commission, which was established under the direction of the President of the Government of India, held a stakeholders meeting on January 9, 2025, at the Cidade Hotel in Dona Paula, Goa, which the Indian Medical Association (IMA) Goa state was honored to attend, Sandesh Chodankar, president of IMA Goa, told reporters.

IMA Goa was represented at the stakeholders conference by Dr. Dattaram Desai, President of IMA Goa State, and Dr. Shekhar Salkar, Past President of IMA Goa State.



The honorable committee was presented with a comprehensive list of problems in the Goan healthcare industry, along with potential solutions.

In order to enhance public health in the state, IMA Goa also selected and highlighted the following crucial areas that require immediate attention and funding:

Regulation to protect private healthcare sector investments. upskilling programs to improve human resources in the medical field. Public

health services are delivered right at your door.

registry for citizens and children with special needs. ex-gratia funding support for end-of-life and palliative care facilities. specialized vehicle for the promotion of medical travel. register of non-communicable diseases. using telemedicine to monitor diseases in real time. grid for mental health providers at the federal and state levels. Rural areas' emergency ambulatory services.

Additionally, the 16th Finance Committee has received two special proposals from IMA Goa state.

The first suggestion calls for the establishment of assisted private hospitals using the PPP model in order to create specific health zones in underserved or unserved areas of the state.

In addition, IMA Goa state has stated its readiness to collaborate with the state government in the area of medical disaster management and offer ongoing assistance in times of need.

The Commission President's closing remarks touched on both of the primary concerns raised by IMA Goa state during the discussion. Additionally, the President called on the industry to step up and support research-based initiatives in the healthcare industry.

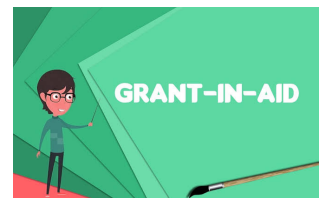
# Grants In Aids To Voluntary Organizations

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** The Directorate of Tribal Welfare invites application for consideration of grants in Aid for new project from Non Government Organization/ Voluntary Organization for the year 2024-25 under the scheme "Grant -in- Aid to Voluntary Organization working for the welfare of STs."

Applications for above may be submitted to Directorate of Tribal Welfare till February 15, 2025.

The prime objective of the scheme is to supplement the welfare efforts of the Government and fill the gaps in area of education, health, livelihood etc. by developing a participatory and collaborative mechanism with dedicated NGOs, who have capacity to provide quality service for development of tribal population.



In Education sector, grant-in-aid will be considered for project such as running and maintenance of Non-Residential School, Residential Schools and Hostels. In Health sector, grant-in-aid will be considered for project such as running and maintenance of hospital, dispensary with 10 or more beds and mobile dispensary.

In Livelihood sector, grant-in-aid will be considered for project such as enhancement of livelihood and income generation opportunities through infrastructure support and capacity building in the sector like agriculture, fishery, dairy and animal husbandry, water conservation, organic/ natural farming.

# Every teacher should make radical changes in their teaching methods to implement NEP in Effective way : Betkikar

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** If the National Education Policy is to be implemented in a real sense, every teacher should make radical changes in their teaching methods in the classroom, asserted education expert Prof. By Dilip Betkekar. In a seminar on education organized by Curti Super School Complex at M.I.B.K., Khandepar-Fonda.

100 teachers from Swastik Vidyalaya Priyol, Dada Vaidya High School Kurti, St Mary's High School Fonda, MIBK High School Khandepar

and Shree Amey Higher Secondary School Kurti attended the seminar.

Betkikar also said that while implementing the National Education Policy, it is important to see that the students will benefit more from it. Subhash Jan, President of Curti Super School Complex and Principal of Amey Higher Secondary School, welcomed and made his introductory remarks. He said that for the last 20 years Curti Super School Complex has been implementing innovative activities for secondary teachers. HM Shirish Kumar Amshekar,

recipient of the Chief Minister's Guru Vashishta Award, was honored by Betkikar on this occasion. Two students each from every school who secured the best marks in the 10th Goa Board Examination of April 2024 were felicitated in this function.

Curti Super School Complex Secretary Prof. Sandeep Shilkar delivered the vote of thanks while Maneka Hazare Bua moderated the entire programme. Shabnam Agha, Mr. Sushant Ujgaonkar, Shirishkumar Anshekar and Leena Kota, HMs of all the four schools were present.



IIT, IIM Delegates Discuss Water Sustainability With Goa WRD Minister Subhash Shirodkar.

# 3 Day Aqua Goa Mega Fish Festival 2025 from today

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** The Directorate of Fisheries, Panaji, will organize the "Aqua Goa Mega Fish Festival" at the Open Field Ground, SAG Campal, Panaji, from January 10 to 12, 2025.

The festival showcases Goa's rich variety of fish from both marine and freshwater through its aquarium gallery, which will be open to the general public. In addition, it serves as a platform to promote and boost the fishing culture in Goa, especially through seminars, workshops, and business-to-business (B2B) interactions. The program has been specially designed



to showcase the latest techniques and technologies available, which will immensely benefit fishermen and the general public by helping them tap into potential opportunities for enhancing fisheries production. The festival will also highlight Goa's rich culture through a variety of entertainment programs, including Goan folk dances, and a food court serving authentic Goan delicacies to engage visitors.

The Festival will

showcase Goa's rich variety of fish, right from marine and freshwater through its aquarium gallery which will be open to the general public.

Besides, it will serve as a platform to promote and boost the fishing culture in Goa, especially through seminars, workshop and business to business (B2B) interactions.

The programme has been especially designed to showcase latest techniques and technologies available in fisheries sector which immensely benefit fishermen and general public to tap potential opportunities for enhancing fisheries production.



# "India Invites Neighbors for Historic 'Undivided India' Seminar"

■ Trump recently suggested imposing 25 per cent tariffs on all Canadian imports unless Ottawa enhances border security, a move Trudeau warned would impact both economies.

**New Delhi:** Justin Trudeau Dismisses Donald Trump's Suggestion of Canada as 51st US State. In the midst of escalating trade tensions, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has vehemently rejected US President-elect Donald Trump's suggestion that Canada could become the 51st state of the United States. This exchange comes as Trump threatens to impose significant tariffs on Canadian imports, a move that Trudeau warns would have far-reaching economic consequences for both countries.

Trudeau, in a recent interview with CNN, characterized Trump's remarks as a diversionary tactic aimed at shifting focus away from the impending tariff impacts.



"What I think is happening here is that President Trump, who is a very skilled negotiator, is trying to distract people with this conversation," Trudeau said. He emphasized that Canadians take great pride in their national identity, stating, "Canadians are incredibly proud of being Canadian. One of the ways we define ourselves most easily is - we are not American." The tariff threat, which includes a 25% levy on all Canadian

imports unless Canada enhances its border security, has sparked significant concern. Trudeau highlighted that such tariffs would lead to substantial price increases for American consumers on goods such as oil, gas, electricity, steel, aluminum, lumber, and concrete. "These are products that American consumers buy from Canada, and they are suddenly going to get a lot more expensive if he moves forward on these tariffs," Trudeau warned.

Trudeau also referenced past trade disputes, including the 2018 counter-tariffs Canada imposed on American goods like Heinz ketchup, playing cards, bourbon, and Harley-Davidson motorcycles. However, he expressed a desire to avoid such measures, noting that they drive up prices for Canadians and harm the close trading relationship between the two nations. Trump's comments about Canada's potential statehood are the latest in a series of unconventional territorial proposals, reminiscent of his earlier claims about purchasing Greenland during his first term. These suggestions have consistently been met with strong opposition from Canadian and international leaders.

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## "India's Passport Ranking Drops in 2025 Amid Global Mobility Shifts"

has reclaimed the top spot, offering its citizens visa-free access to an impressive 195 destinations worldwide.

Meanwhile, the United States has plummeted seven places to 9th, a decline attributed to increasingly inward-looking and isolationist political trends. India's passport ranking, which had shown signs of recovery since 2021, has now slipped back to 85th.

**India's Ranking Slips:**

India's ranking in the Henley Passport Index 2025 has dropped from 80th to 85th, allowing its passport holders visa-free access to only 57 destinations. This ranking is shared with Equatorial Guinea and Niger, underscoring the challenges Indian citizens face in international travel. Historically, India's passport ranking has fluctuated, reaching its highest at 71st in 2006 and its lowest at 90th in 2021, largely due to global travel restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Leaders in Visa-Free Travel:**

Singapore tops the index with visa-free access to 195 destinations, followed closely by Japan with 193 destinations. The top 10 list is dominated by European countries, including France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Finland, and South Korea, all offering visa-free access to 192 destinations. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has made a remarkable climb, securing the 10th spot with visa-free access to 185 destinations, a gain of 32 places over the past decade.

**US Passport Loses Ground:**

The United States has experienced a significant decline, dropping from 2nd to 9th place. Experts attribute this fall to the country's increasingly inward-looking and isolationist political trends. Annie Pforzheimer, Senior Associate at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, noted that American voters were influenced by a narrative that America should stand alone, contributing to this downward trend.

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## Goa on high growth lane in realizing PM's vision of rural India: CM Sawant

Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant, while releasing a detailed survey-based report on state rural economy of Goa in Panaji, stated that, "Goa has made unprecedented achievements in the growth of rural economy in the state, signifying a paradigm shift in the economic trend. Self sufficiency among the households, with the women taking the lead in driving the rural economy has been the hallmark of a sustainable surge in rural household empowerment and diversification in expenditure. This surge can be attributed to the implementation of various state-level initiatives and national programs such as the Start-Up Village Entrepreneurship Program (SVEP) and the Prime Minister's Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME).

The SHG members are much more empowered to explore alternative income

streams, enhancing their economic resilience and contributing to sustainable rural development."

This impact assessment research has been conducted by TISS (TATA Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai), in collaboration with Goa Livelihoods Forum. This report underscores the pivotal role of the Goa State Rural Livelihood Mission (GSRLM) in implementing the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) in Goa, with Goa Livelihoods Forum (GLF) as its Project Management Unit (PMU) since 2020.

In the last five years between 2020 to 2024, there has been a 60% increase in the number of households mobilized into SHGs and overall, 65% more number of SHGs have been brought into GSRLM fold. Significantly, 131% increase has been effected in the number of VOs (Village

Organizations) brought under GSRLM fold.

Importantly 50% of the dormant SHGs (Self Help Groups) have been revived between 2020 to 2024. The non-farm-based livelihoods have been promoted under the Start-Up Village Entrepreneurship Program (SVEP), experienced a growth of 556% and Prime Minister's Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) scheme, witnessed 251% increase, from 2020 to 2024.

Hon'ble Minister for Rural Development, Shri Govind Gaude, lauded the department's efforts and said that "the VOs experienced 158% growth in startup funds disbursement between 2020 to 2024. The increase in VOs receiving startup funds and the rise in registered VOs indicate strengthened organizational structures and improved access to resources.

## Republic Day 2025: Culture Ministry's Tableau to Highlight India's Heritage and Innovation

■ Aligning with the Narendra Modi-led government's vision, 'Vikas bhi, virasat bhi', the tableau will showcase how traditional arts, crafts, cinema, and other performing arts are transforming into powerful economic drivers

**New Delhi:** Republic Day 2025: Culture Ministry Highlights India's 'Creative Economy' On January 26, 2025, as India celebrates its 76th Republic Day, the Culture Ministry's tableau will take center stage at the Republic Day Parade in New Delhi, showcasing the country's vibrant 'Creative Economy'.

This year's theme aligns perfectly with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of 'Vikas bhi, virasat bhi' (development with heritage), emphasizing the transformative power of traditional arts, crafts, cinema, and performing arts into significant economic drivers.

The tableau, crafted by the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), will feature several artisans and performers, highlighting the ways in which India's cultural heritage is being



monetized while remaining deeply rooted in its traditional identity.

According to a source in the culture ministry, this initiative underscores India's effort to merge tradition with innovation, demonstrating how the country's creative industries contribute to its gross domestic product (GDP) and project cultural soft power globally.

"This initiative reflects India's commitment to preserving its cultural identity while propelling its economic growth," said a senior officer. "As

India amplifies its global influence, the Republic Day tableau will serve as a call to embrace culture as a capital, combining tradition and creativity." Last year, the ministry's tableau, which celebrated India as the 'Mother of Democracy', won the first prize for its stunning artistry and innovative use of anamorphic techniques. This year's presentation promises to be just as impressive, showcasing the potential of India's cultural industries as a driving force in the global economy.



# "Wildfires Ravage Los Angeles: Satellite Images Show Scale of Destruction"

Entire neighbourhoods have been reduced to ash due to the Los Angeles wildfires, leaving tens of thousands displaced and countless others grieving over their losses

**New Delhi:** The skies above Los Angeles County have been filled with the ominous signs of disaster, as satellite images reveal the catastrophic impact of the Palisades Fire and the Eaton Fire. These images, captured in stark detail, show entire neighborhoods reduced to ash, a grim testament to the hellish conditions on the ground. Tens of thousands of people have been displaced, and countless others are grieving over the loss of their homes and livelihoods. The sheer scale of destruction has prompted President Joe Biden to declare a major disaster in California, promising extensive support for the affected areas.

The historic Mount Wilson Observatory, a site of groundbreaking astronomical discoveries, has also been endangered by these fires, though firefighters managed to



protect it. The ongoing crisis has highlighted the vulnerabilities of the city's infrastructure, particularly the water supply systems, which have been overwhelmed by the demand to fight these massive blazes.

The Scope of the Disaster  
The Palisades Fire and the Eaton Fire have collectively scorched 34,000 acres in Los Angeles County, marking them as the most

destructive wildfires in the region's history. These fires began on Tuesday, fueled by powerful Santa Ana winds that turned what started as brush fires into roaring infernos.

The Palisades Fire, which started at 10:30 a.m., has destroyed over 5,300 structures, while the Eaton Fire, which began at 6 p.m., has damaged or destroyed an additional 4,000 to 5,000 buildings. The rapid spread of these fires has led to thousands

of evacuations across neighborhoods such as Pacific Palisades, Malibu, Altadena, and Pasadena. Mandatory evacuation orders have been issued for at least 70,000 residents, with the Palisades Fire alone prompting 30,000 of these evacuations. The fires threaten at least 28,000 structures in different sections of the county, with 1,000 already destroyed in the Palisades area.

## Dense Fog Triggers Multi-Vehicle Collision on Delhi-Lucknow Highway

Several vehicles collided on the Delhi-Lucknow highway near the Bahadurgarh station area early Friday morning due to dense fog

**New Delhi:** On Friday morning, the Delhi-Lucknow highway near the Bahadurgarh station area in Hapur, Uttar Pradesh, witnessed a chaotic scene as dense fog led to a series of vehicle collisions. The incident occurred in the early hours, around 5:30 AM, when the temperature in Delhi had dropped to 9.6 degrees Celsius, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

The dense fog, which reduced visibility to almost zero, created hazardous driving conditions. Hapur police reported that multiple accidents took place due to the low visibility, with visuals showing several

cars stuck together, their bonnets severely damaged. The collisions were a result of vehicles hitting each other from behind, unable to see through the thick fog.

Delhi and its surrounding areas woke up to a blanket of dense fog, disrupting daily life. The fog not only affected road traffic but also impacted air and rail travel. Over 150 flights and about 26 trains were delayed due to the poor visibility. The Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) advised passengers to contact their airlines for updated flight information, highlighting the significant impact on flight operations.



## Justin Trudeau Responds To Donald Trump's "Canada 51st State", "Governor" Jibes

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remarks as a diversionary tactic aimed at shifting focus away from the impending tariff impacts.

"What I think is happening here is that President Trump, who is a very skilled negotiator, is trying to distract people with this conversation," Trudeau said.

He emphasized that Canadians take great pride in their national identity, stating, "Canadians are incredibly proud of being Canadian."

## Three Naxals Killed in Encounter with Security Forces in Chhattisgarh's Sukma

The security forces have achieved success in the anti-Naxal operation in Sukma, state Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sharma said.

**New Delhi:** In a significant blow to Naxalite activities, three Naxalites were killed in an encounter with security forces in Chhattisgarh's Sukma district on Thursday, January 9, 2025. This operation comes on the heels of a devastating IED blast triggered by Naxalites on January 6, which claimed the lives of eight security personnel and a civilian in Bijapur district. The recent escalation in anti-Naxal operations is part of a broader commitment by Union Home Minister Amit Shah to eliminate Naxalism from the country by March 2026.

The encounter took place in the dense forests along the border of Sukma



and Bijapur districts, where a joint team of security personnel, including the District Reserve Guard, Special Task Force, and the elite CoBRA unit of the CRPF, were conducting an anti-Naxalite operation.

State Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sharma, who also holds the Home portfolio, confirmed that

the bodies of the three Naxalites have been recovered and that search operations are still underway.

The incident is a stark reminder of the ongoing conflict between security forces and Naxalites in the region. The IED blast on January 6 had sparked widespread outrage and a renewed determination

among security forces to combat Naxalite activities.

Sharma emphasized the resolve of the security personnel, stating that with their strength and courage, the Naxal menace will be eliminated within the stipulated time.

This year alone, nine Naxalites have been killed in separate encounters in Chhattisgarh. In a recent three-day anti-Naxal operation in Abujhmad, which concluded on January 6, five Naxalites, including two women, were killed. Additionally, a Naxalite was killed in an encounter in Gariaband district on January 3. Last year, security forces neutralized 219 Naxalites in various encounters across the state.



# Ravichandran Ashwin's Sudden Retirement Sparks Questions About India's Team Management

During India's 2024-25 tour of Australia, R Ashwin announced his sudden retirement from international cricket. He called time on his career after the third Test.

**New Delhi:** In a shocking turn of events during India's 2024-25 tour of Australia, veteran spinner Ravichandran Ashwin announced his immediate retirement from international cricket following the drawn third Test at the Gabba in Brisbane. This unexpected decision has left many in the cricketing world stunned and has raised several questions about the team's management and strategies.

Ashwin, who did not feature in the Brisbane Test, made his announcement in the post-match press conference, marking the end of a illustrious career that saw him take 537 wickets in 106 Test matches, placing him second only to Anil Kumble in India's Test wicket-takers list. His international career,

spanning over 14 years, included significant contributions in both Test and limited-overs formats, with 156 ODI wickets and 72 T20I wickets.

The retirement announcement has been met with surprise and some criticism, particularly from former Australian wicketkeeper Brad Haddin, who suggested that Ashwin's decision might have been influenced by his recent exclusion from the playing XI. Haddin pointed out that India's inconsistent selection of spinners during the series could have frustrated Ashwin, who has always seen himself as the primary spinner.

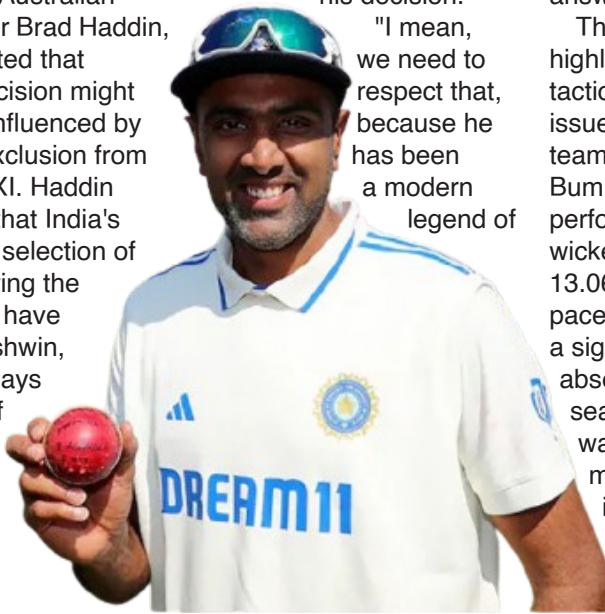
Sunil Joshi, a former India

spinner and chief selector during India's successful 2020/21 tour of Australia, expressed his surprise at Ashwin's sudden retirement. Joshi acknowledged Ashwin's contributions to Indian cricket but questioned the circumstances leading to his decision.

"I mean, we need to respect that, because he has been a modern legend of

the game and there's no doubt about it. But again, what transpired for him to do that? So obviously, we'll have to know because it was unbelievable, and the board, selection committee, and team management should answer that," Joshi said.

The series itself highlighted several tactical and strategic issues within the Indian team. Despite Jasprit Bumrah's outstanding performance, taking 32 wickets at an average of 13.06, the other Indian pacers struggled to make a significant impact. The absence of a left-arm seamer in the lineup was also noted as a missed opportunity, as it could have provided a different angle and challenge for the Australian batsmen.



## India Gears Up for Historic Kho Kho World Cup 2025 with Stellar Team Lineups

The Kho Kho Federation of India (KKFI) and the International Kho Kho Federation (IKKF) on Thursday, announced the final TEAM INDIA men's and women's squads for the upcoming Kho Kho World Cup 2025.

**New Delhi:** As the world's eyes turn to India, the country is set to host the inaugural Kho Kho World Cup from January 13 to 19 at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium in New Delhi. This landmark event, organized by the Kho Kho Federation of India (KKFI) and the International Kho Kho Federation (IKKF), will feature 20 men's teams and 19 women's teams from 23 countries, marking a significant milestone in the sport's global journey.

Leading the charge for India are Pratik Waikar and Priyanka Ingle, who have been appointed as

the captains of the men's and women's teams, respectively.

Waikar, an Eklavya Award winner, has been a stalwart in the sport since he began playing at the age of eight. With a distinguished career that includes captaining Telugu Yoddhas in the Ultimate Kho Kho League and leading Maharashtra to gold in the 56th Senior National Championship, Waikar brings a wealth of experience and leadership to the team.

"I am overwhelmed with excitement and pride," Waikar said, reflecting on his appointment.

## Goa University Football Women Team for All India Inter University Football Championship

### Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** In a significant milestone for Goa University, the women's football team has secured a spot in the All India Inter University Football Women Championships 2024-25, scheduled to take place from January 11 to 16, 2025, at GNA University in Phagwara, Punjab. This achievement is a testament to the team's hard work and dedication.

The team's journey to the championships was marked by a kit distribution and farewell function held on January 6, 2025, at the Sports Section of Goa University. The event was attended by key figures including Mr. Balachandra Jadar, Assistant Director of Physical Education,



Mr. Krishna Parsekar, Assistant Sports Officer, along with the team's Coach, Mr. Ryan Pereira, and Assistant Coach, Mr. Worrel D'Souza.

The Goa University team will be represented by a talented lineup of players: Vanisha Vaz, Rizella Almeida, Janet Mesquita, Blessica Rodrigues, Anoshka D' Souza, Rhea Pires,

Sushmita Jadhav, Flani Costa, Aaroshi Govekar, Karen Estrochio, Pearl Almeida, Lysandra Rodrigues, Jovinia D' Silva, Aniela Barretto, Vinoshka Fernandes, Pushpa Parab, Saniya Pednekar, Simran Narvekar, Tanvi Parulekar, and Tanvi D. Khedekar. Ms. Jeromina Colaco will serve as the team manager.

## Thrilling Penalty Shootout Secures Parish Youth Nuvem's Quarterfinal Spot

### Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** In a heart-stopping encounter at the DYSA ground in Curtorim, Parish Youth Nuvem and Sao Jose de Areal Sports Club clashed in a match that will be remembered for its intensity and skill.

The battle for supremacy in the Simon Barreto Memorial football tournament, organized by Maina Sports Club, went down to the wire, culminating in a dramatic penalty shootout. Tyson Carvalho of Sao Jose de Areal, despite his team's loss, was hailed as the man of the match by Ismail Sayed.

The match was a testament to the exceptional talent and determination of both teams. From the outset, it was clear that this was more than just a game; it was a fight for a place in the quarterfinals. The



game remained evenly poised, with neither team able to break the deadlock despite numerous attempts.

Niclau Colaco of Parish Youth Nuvem came close with a well-taken free kick, but Macklin Coutinho's header narrowly missed the target. On the other side, Aran Endro's through pass to Darryl Costa resulted in a shot that hit the crossbar, further highlighting the match's high stakes.

As the final whistle blew, the score remained

tied, forcing the match into a penalty shootout.

Here, Parish Youth Nuvem showed their mettle, converting all their penalties through Niclau Colaco, Alvito Dias, Frazer Miranda, Shenoy Colaco, Cedar Colaco, Drawin Colaco, and Mackvino Colaco. Sao Jose de Areal, however, fell just short, with Darryl Costa, Bresal Viegas, Tyson Carvalho, Aryan Carvalho, Stalen Oliveira, and Presden Viegas scoring but not enough to secure the win.