



POOJA'S ALLEGATIONS JOLT GOA

Pooja Naik Names Minister, IAS Officer & PWD PCE in Rs 17-Crore Cash-for-Jobs Scam

Accused allegedly claims Min Sudin, IAS officer Nikhil Dessai and PCE Uttam Parsekar were key beneficiaries in a recruitment racket.

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: In a dramatic escalation of the cash-for-jobs scandal, accused Pooja Naik has reportedly identified three senior figures—Minister Sudin Dhavalikar, IAS officer Nikhil Desai, and PWD Principal Chief Engineer Uttam Parsekar—as the key beneficiaries of the alleged multi-crore recruitment racket. Naik claimed the irregularities occurred during the period she was associated with the Maharashtra Gomantak Party (MGP) office. According to Naik, she collected around ₹17 crore from nearly 600 job seekers across Goa, believing the money would secure them government posts. She alleged that the entire amount was handed



over to the trio and warned she would publicly expose all involved if the money is not returned. Naik further claimed that most of the bribes—primarily in ₹2,000 notes—were handed over between 2019 and 2022, with transactions allegedly taking place at the Goa Secretariat and two locations in Porvorim. She said she had known the minister involved since 2012–13, and that he introduced her to the senior IAS officer and the PWD engineer. The

Dhavalikar Rejects Allegations After Being Named by Job Scam Accused

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Power Minister Sudin Dhavalikar has firmly dismissed allegations made by cash-for-jobs scam accused Pooja Naik, who recently named him as one of the individuals allegedly involved in the recruitment racket. Responding to the claims, Dhavalikar said his reputation speaks for itself and insisted that no one can tarnish his name. "Everyone knows what Sudin Dhavalikar is.



No one can defame my name," he stated. The minister asserted that he will not comment further until the Crime Branch concludes its investigation. "I have made it clear that I will make a statement only after the Crime Branch completes the inquiry. Let them complete the inquiry," he said.

individual she referred to is currently part of the 12-member Goa Cabinet, a revelation that prompted Chief Minister Pramod Sawant to order a Crime

Branch inquiry. Naik said she has already disclosed the names to investigating officers and questioned why they have not been formally included in the

AAP Demands Protection for Pooja Naik to Ensure 'Full Truth' in Job Scam Probe



Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Goa president Amit Palekar has called for urgent protection for cash-for-jobs scam accused Pooja Naik, stating that safeguarding her is essential to uncovering the "full truth" behind the multi-crore recruitment racket. Palekar urged the

The entire truth must come out, and for that Pooja Naik must be protected," Palekar said, adding that the scandal has raised serious questions about systemic corruption in government recruitment.

authorities to immediately record Naik's statement before a Magistrate, arguing that doing so would ensure her testimony is legally secured and free from influence. He also demanded a judicial inquiry into the scam and stressed the need for the prompt appointment of judges to oversee the investigation.

case. Police recently recorded another detailed statement from her at Bicholim Police Station. North Goa SP Rahul Gupta confirmed the

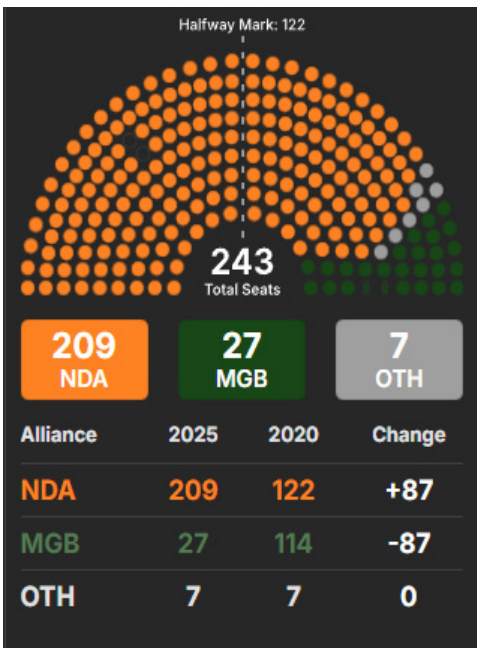
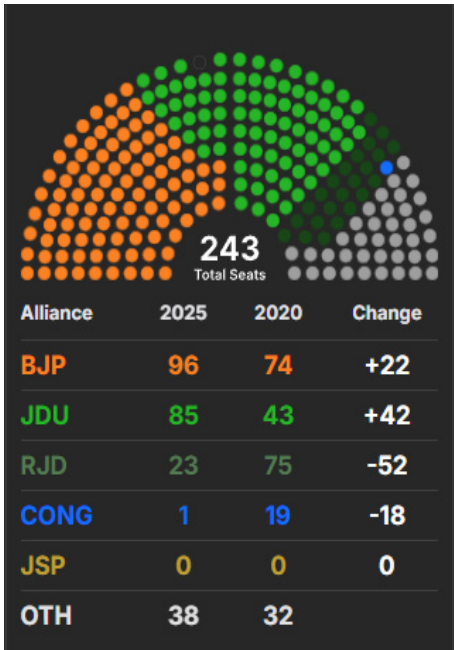
development, stating that authorities are "examining her claims." The scandal surfaced in 2024 after multiple complaints

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NDA Poised For Landslide Victory In Bihar, Nitish Kumar Set For Fifth Straight Term

Mahagathbandhan Trails Far Behind As Vote Count Shows Clear Sweep.

New Delhi: The National Democratic Alliance is on course for a sweeping win in the Bihar Assembly elections, with the latest trends indicating a commanding lead in 208 of the 243 seats. The results place Chief Minister Nitish Kumar in a strong position to secure a fifth consecutive term, further cementing his status as the state's longest-serving leader. By mid-afternoon, the alliance had already gone past its 2020 performance, when it



won 122 seats. In sharp contrast, the Mahagathbandhan was ahead in just 32 constituencies, while Prashant Kishor's Jan Suraj party had yet to register a lead in any seat. Among the key candidates, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav was leading in Raghapur. Other prominent names in the fray included Deputy Chief Ministers Samrat Choudhary and Vijay Kumar Sinha, JJD's Tej Pratap, and Bihar Congress president Rajesh Kumar.

Vote counting began at 8am, following a round of exit polls that had broadly predicted a decisive mandate for the NDA. Despite the projections, Tejashwi Yadav maintained confidence that the Mahagathbandhan would emerge victorious. This election cycle saw a record turnout of 67.13 percent across the two phases held on November 6 and 11, reflecting strong public engagement in the state's political direction.

Can Dabolim Really Bounce Back or Is It Slipping Away

The new director of the Goa International Airport at Dabolim, Lieutenant Akash Deep, has stepped in with a confident promise. He wants to bring international flights back to the old airport. He plans to speak soon with airlines such as Qatar Airways and Air Arabia. His intent is clear and welcome, yet it raises a question that deserves serious reflection. Is it really that easy to restore what has been lost.

Dabolim carries the weight of history. For decades it handled every flight that came into Goa. It survived peak season chaos, narrow infrastructure and the complications of sharing a runway with the Navy. Even after the new Mopa airport opened, Dabolim still feels crowded. Travellers who fly regularly often say the older airport remains their first choice. It is closer for many in the south, familiar to locals and easier to navigate. Passenger comfort and habit play a strong role in aviation and this is one reason Dabolim has not faded from daily life.

But that does not mean the road ahead is simple. International carriers did not leave Dabolim on a whim. They shifted because the state actively encouraged growth at Mopa. Incentives were in place and the promise of smoother operations attracted airlines that need certainty. A newer terminal, longer runways and the hope of fewer air traffic delays made Mopa the preferred option. In that context, the new director faces a significant challenge. Can he convince airlines to divide their operations between two airports in a small state. Are carriers willing to deal with the delays that arise when a runway is shared with military movements. Above all, has the state made up its mind about what it wants Dabolim to be in the future. A robust civilian hub or a shrinking facility that exists only because it cannot be shut entirely.

These uncertainties feed a growing fear among Goans. Many wonder if Dabolim is being allowed to slip into a slow decline. The drop in international flights seems to confirm the suspicion. The gradual shift of some domestic routes adds to it.

The lack of strong announcements on upgrades deepens it. And yet, on any given day, Dabolim feels far from dying. Its check in counters fill up early.

The security lines stretch long. Its arrival hall buzzes in a way that Mopa often does not. In fact, for many travellers, Dabolim still feels busier than its newer counterpart.

The economics of aviation add another layer of difficulty. Airlines return to an airport only when there is stable demand, attractive pricing and a clear long term plan. They study data, not nostalgia. So what is the plan for Dabolim. Will there be expansions in parking bays. Can the Navy offer more civilian slots. Are there investments coming or is the airport simply expected to manage with its current limitations. Without concrete answers, the idea of restoring international routes risks becoming a headline rather than a strategy.

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feed a growing fear among Goans. Many wonder if Dabolim is being allowed to slip into a slow decline. The drop in international flights seems to confirm the suspicion. The gradual shift of some domestic routes adds to it. The lack of strong announcements on upgrades deepens it. And yet, on any given day, Dabolim feels far from dying. Its check in counters fill up early. The security lines stretch long. Its arrival hall buzzes in a way that Mopa often does not. In fact, for many travellers, Dabolim still feels busier than its newer counterpart.

This tension between perception and reality makes the debate complicated. Dabolim is not an abandoned airport. It is not even close. But it does feel vulnerable. It resembles a lively old market that now competes with a modern mall up the road. People still flock to it but the shadow of uncertainty hangs over its future. As long as that uncertainty remains, doubts about its long term role will continue.

Lieutenant Akash Deep brings fresh intent and energy to his position. His plan to approach global airlines deserves attention. But it also calls for honesty about the obstacles ahead. Bringing back international carriers is not something that happens through polite outreach alone. It takes policy clarity and long term commitment from both the state government and the Navy. It requires telling airlines clearly what Dabolim can offer not just this year but five years from now.

So the real question remains. Is Dabolim slowly fading or is it simply waiting for leadership that can argue its strengths with conviction. The months ahead will offer the first clues. For the sake of travellers who still rely on its convenience and for the sake of balance in Goa's aviation network, one can only hope the airport is not pushed toward quiet decline but guided toward a revival that it has earned over decades.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Tourist Harassment in Goa Demands Firm Action

The recent video of a German tourist struggling to book an app-based cab in Goa should trouble anyone who cares about the state's visitor image. His account, in which he says local taxi operators followed him and pressured him after he chose an app ride instead of paying what he believed to be an inflated fare, reflects a deeper problem in our transport system. It is not the first time a visitor has raised such concerns and it will not be the last unless authorities take this seriously. Goa markets itself as a safe and carefree destination. Yet incidents like this tell another story. When a tourist doing something perfectly legal feels intimidated, it damages the state's reputation far more than any advertisement can repair. Travellers today rely on transparency and choice. If they fear harassment for choosing an app-based cab, they will simply take their holidays elsewhere. This does not mean the concerns of traditional taxi drivers should be dismissed. Many face rising costs and seasonal income. App-based services often undercut them. But hostility toward visitors is no solution. The government must set clear and fair rules for both app-based and traditional operators, enforce standard fares and ensure that no tourist feels unsafe for choosing a service they trust. Goa's economy depends heavily on tourism. One viral video is enough to undo months of promotion. It is time to protect both our guests and our transport workers through sensible regulation and firm enforcement.

-Digambar Naik, Saligao.

Goa's Cabinet Decisions Need More Clarity

The latest Cabinet decisions have triggered more debate than confidence. The government has approved an increase in the retirement age for chief engineers, sanctioned provident fund benefits for thousands of contract workers and transferred a large plot of land to the veterinary college. Each decision may look sound at first glance, yet the manner in which they were made raises concerns. Extending the retirement age for senior engineers is being justified on the grounds of limited eligible officers for promotion. If that is truly the case, it signals long-term neglect in grooming talent within departments. Rather than stretching tenures, the government should address the shortage by improving recruitment and promotions. Otherwise, this move risks blocking younger officers who have waited years for advancement. Provident fund benefits for contract workers are overdue and welcome. But the scale of the delay is troubling. For years these workers operated without the social security they should have received from the start. A one-time correction does not erase the fact that the system failed to protect them earlier. The state must ensure this does not become another patchwork fix. The land transfer for the veterinary college may help expand educational facilities, yet the decision lacks clarity on long-term utilisation. Large public assets need clear plans and accountability so the land does not lie idle or become part of another slow-moving project. These choices deserve more openness and explanation. Public interest is best served not by quick approvals but by transparent decisions backed by clear reasoning.

-Glenn Fernandes, Aldona.

Goa Govt Confirms ZP Elections on Dec 13; No Postponement Despite CEO's Suggestion

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The State government has made it clear that the Zilla Panchayat (ZP) elections will be held on December 13 as originally scheduled, dismissing any possibility of a delay. Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant reiterated the government's stand, stating, "There will be no change in the ZP election schedule. It will be held as announced." His statement follows a recommendation from the Chief Electoral Office (CEO) to defer the polls until the completion of the ongoing Special Intensive Revision



(SIR) of electoral rolls, which concludes with the final list on February 7, 2026. Earlier, Chief Electoral Officer Sanjay Goel had noted that the election notification was yet to be issued and the CEO's proposal for postponement was awaiting a response from the government.

However, State Election Commissioner Menino D'Souza confirmed that the electoral timeline remains unchanged. He said the formal schedule would be announced shortly, adding that there was no reason to alter the existing plan. Sources in the administration indicated that officials

not involved in the SIR revision process are expected to be deployed for election-related duties. "The current ZP body's term ends in the first week of January, and it's important that the new council is in place before then," an official said. The CEO has advised that if the SIR process overlaps with the elections, separate officers should be designated as returning officers to prevent any disruption. The State Election Commission has already appointed Deputy Collectors and Mamlatdars as Returning Officers and Assistant Returning Officers for the upcoming polls.

Security Tightened for IFFI: North Goa DM Imposes Restrictions from Nov 19-28

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Ahead of the 56th International Film Festival of India (IFFI), the North Goa District Magistrate has announced prohibitory measures restricting public gatherings and certain activities from November 19 to 28. The order, issued under the BNSS provisions, bars the assembly of five or more people and forbids organizing processions. It also bans the carrying of firearms and offensive weapons—including lathis, swords, daggers, and spears—along with the use of loudspeakers, slogan shouting, and bursting of firecrackers near fuel stations or event



International Film Festival of India

venues. These restrictions apply within a 500-meter radius of all IFFI-related locations falling under the Panaji and Agassaim police jurisdictions. The enhanced security measures come as Goa prepares to host the prestigious film festival, which will feature over 240 films from 81 countries, including 13 world premieres, four international premieres, and 46 Asian premieres. The festival officially opens on November 20.

BJP Begins Candidate Screening for North Goa ZP Polls; List Expected Soon

Team Goemkarponn

MAPUSA: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Thursday launched its candidate finalisation exercise for the upcoming Zilla Panchayat (ZP) elections in North Goa, holding an extensive meeting of senior leaders and MLAs at the party's North Goa District office in Mapusa. The closed-door discussions, chaired by State BJP president Damu Naik, continued throughout the day and focused on shortlisting strong contenders for various constituencies while reviewing the party's



organisational presence across the district. Speaking to the media after the meeting, Naik said the selection process was progressing smoothly. "We held comprehensive deliberations with senior leaders and MLAs to shortlist suitable candidates for the ZP polls. In several constituencies, there was unanimous agreement. We expect to

declare the final list within the next two to four days," he said. Party insiders said the leadership is working to create a balanced slate of candidates, combining experienced leaders with new entrants to strengthen the BJP's grassroots connect. "Winnability and performance at the panchayat level are the key parameters," a senior office bearer noted.

Goa Forward Party Suspends Adv. Amit Sawant Over Alleged Collusion With Land Mafia

Team Goemkarponn

MANDREM: The Goa Forward Party (GFP) has suspended Advocate Amit Sawant following complaints alleging his involvement with land mafia networks and individuals linked to the State BJP Government. According to party sources, the allegations pertain to land dealings and conversion activities in Mandrem constituency and Pernem taluka.



The GFP emphasized that protecting land is central to its ideology, and Sawant's alleged

actions were seen as undermining the party's core principles ahead of the upcoming Zilla Panchayat elections. The party also noted that repeated warnings from local residents were a key factor in taking the disciplinary action. Deepak Kalangutkar, President of North Goa District for GFP, confirmed the suspension and reiterated the party's commitment to safeguarding land rights in the state.

Goa CM Chairs Security Review Meeting to Strengthen Preparedness

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant chaired a high-level security review meeting to enhance the preparedness and response mechanisms of all relevant departments, including State and Central security agencies. The discussions focused on improving inter-agency coordination, streamlining communication, and

ensuring swift and effective action in case of emergencies. Commenting on the meeting, CM Sawant said, "The safety and security of our citizens remain our utmost priority." He further said that Collective and coordinated efforts across government departments, tourism stakeholders, and police forces are essential to effectively mitigate risks and manage



any future contingencies. With heightened security measures and robust preparedness protocols in place, we are committed to ensuring a safe and secure environment for all."

The review emphasized proactive planning, timely response, and constant vigilance to safeguard citizens and maintain public order across the state.

Tourist Police Act Swiftly After Viral Video; One Held For Harassing Woman At Baga Beach

Team Goemkarponn

CALANGUTE: Goa Police's Tourist Police Unit (TPU) and Calangute Police Station acted promptly after a video went viral on social media showing a woman being subjected to sexually coloured remarks at Baga Beach. The complaint was filed by Miss Soumya Khanna, stating that



between 2:04 am and 2:40 am on October 24, an unidentified man approached her at Baga Beach, made inappropriate comments about her ethnicity, and asked offensive questions,

including "rates per night." The accused allegedly followed her, causing fear and distress, and insulted her modesty in public view. Based on the complaint, Calangute Police registered an offence under Sections 75, 78, and 79 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) 2023. During the investigation, the Tourist Police Unit

identified a suspect working at a shack. One accused, Atendra Singh, 23, originally from Bharatpur, Rajasthan, and presently residing at John Beach Shack, Baga-Calangute, has been taken into custody. Goa Police reiterated that such incidents will not be tolerated and assured strict action on every complaint.



MPES Manager Files Complaint Of Trespass And Threats At Harvalem Site

Team Goemkarponn

SANKHALI: A manager of the Matoshri Padmini Educational Society (MPES), Sankhali, lodged a police complaint on Wednesday alleging criminal trespass and threats at the society's property in Harvalem. According to the complaint filed by Santosh Malik, Manager of MPES, the incident occurred around 10:45 am at the property known as Umalichi Mali, Plot No. E1, admeasuring 39,506 sq. m, bearing Survey No. 60/4 of Harvalem village.

The accused, identified as Ulhas Shantaram Samant of Copardem, Sattari, allegedly entered the property without permission and threatened the management members who were present at the site and carrying out work.

He reportedly warned them to stop the work, allegedly without following due legal procedure. The complaint was filed at 16:25 hrs on the same day. Police said that further investigation is being conducted by LPSI Sonali Harmalkar of Bicholim Police Station.

Panaji Police Arrest Man For Illegal Betting Near St. Inez Junction

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Panaji Police registered an offence after a man was caught red-handed accepting illegal bets in a public place near the Taj Vivanta junction at St. Inez.

According to police, the case was registered vide Panaji Police Station Crime No. 156/25 under Section 11(2)(a) of the GPG Act based on a state complaint filed by Head Constable Anil G. Kurtikar. The accused, identified as

Mandan Mani Nath (35), a resident of Boca de Vaca, Panaji, was apprehended around 4:00 pm while allegedly accepting bets in numerical figures. During a personal search, police recovered ₹970 in various denominations.



He was arrested at 6:00 pm and released on bail at 6:24 pm after completing all Supreme Court guidelines, police said. Further investigation is being carried out by HC Anil G. Kurtikar of Panaji Police Station.

Two Injured As Ertiga Rams Into Scooter Near Shelli, Canacona

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: Two persons were injured after a Maruti Suzuki Ertiga allegedly rammed into their scooter near Shelli, Loliem, on Monday evening. The complaint, filed by Ravindra Pednekar of Uttara Kannada, Karnataka, states that around 6:30 pm, the Ertiga driver, identified as Sachin Majgaonkar of Ballimoth Tiloi, Quepem, was driving from Canacona towards Polem when he allegedly drove in a rash



and negligent manner, endangering human life. On reaching near Shelli, the Ertiga reportedly hit Pednekar's Dio scooter from behind, causing both the rider Ravindra Pednekar and pillion Vithal Hosalkar to fall onto the road. Both sustained injuries in the accident. Further investigation is underway with HC Pares Velip (6853) of Canacona Police Station.

TCP Flags Illegal Land Development At Varca; FIR Against Unknown Persons

Team Goemkarponn

VARCA: The Town & Country Planning Department has reported a case of major unauthorized land development at Varca after its Dy. Town Planner, Prakash Bhandodkar, lodged a complaint with the police. According to the complaint, unknown individuals trespassed onto a property in Varca village and carried out large-scale development without obtaining mandatory permissions or displaying signboards



indicating approved work. The accused allegedly constructed a kutchra road, cleared wild bushes, levelled the land, damaged vegetation and sand dunes along the seaside, and built a compound wall on either side of the road stretch. The activities reportedly violate the TCP Act and also fall partly within the CRZ jurisdiction, making the development illegal on multiple fronts.

Accused In Brahmakarmali Temple Theft Convicted By JMFC Sattari

Team Goemkarponn

VALPOI: The accused involved in the temple theft case at Shree Brahmadev Devasthan, Brahmakarmali, Valpoi, has been convicted by the JMFC, Sattari. The incident occurred on the night of May 27, 2025, when unknown culprits broke open the lock of the temple's donation box located in front of the garbhakud and allegedly stole around ₹30,000. An offence was

registered the next day at Valpoi Police Station under Sections 305, 331(3), 331(4), and 238 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) 2023, vide FIR No. 34/2025. During the investigation, the accused, Vishal Govind Zarmekar, a resident of Nanoda, Sattari, was apprehended within 24 hours of the FIR registration and arrested on May 29, 2025. The case was subsequently chargesheeted before the Court of JMFC, Sattari within 44 days.



33-Year-Old Man Dies After Accidental Fall From First Floor In Bhuipal

Team Goemkarponn

SATTARI: A 33-year-old man from Bhuipal, Sattari, died after accidentally falling from the first floor of a house under construction on Wednesday. Police said they received a call at 4:38 pm from the Medical Officer at CHC Sankhalim,

informing that Baburao Navnath Zore, a resident of Bhedshiwada, Bhuipal, had been brought dead as a case of fall from height. PSI Sohan Malik visited CHC Sankhalim and spoke to the relatives of the deceased. According to them, Baburao had gone to his relative's house at Bedashi,



Bhuipal, where construction work was underway. He reportedly went to the first

floor to check the progress of the work and speak to the labourers. While stepping back from the edge, he is said to have lost balance and fallen to the ground. He was initially taken to CHC Valpoi, and later referred to GMC Bambolim, but his condition deteriorated on the way, prompting the family to take

him to CHC Sankhalim, where he was declared brought dead. Family members told police they do not suspect any foul play in the incident. The body has been sent to GMC Bambolim for preservation and medico-legal procedures. Further inquiry is being carried out by PSI Sohan Malik of Valpoi Police Station.

FDA Shuts Down Unlicensed Chicken Outlet in Fatorda

■ 200 kg Stock Destroyed for Safety Violations.

Team Goemkarponn

FATORDA: The Goa Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on Wednesday intensified its drive for safer food practices by inspecting a chicken centre in Fatorda during routine checks on 12 November. Officials found the outlet operating without a valid licence and maintaining highly unhygienic conditions, including broken freezer doors, poor temperature control and



nearly 200 kg of packed chicken stored directly on the floor in an unregulated setting. In the interest of public health, the FDA destroyed the entire stock on the basis of an undertaking from the Food Business Operator (FBO). An unlicensed notice highlighting the violations was issued. The department reiterated that its efforts to safeguard consumers from unsafe and unhygienic food operations will continue with zero tolerance.



Amonkar launches Rs 3-crore sewer works at Headland Sada

■ Vows major ₹80-crore pipeline overhaul before elections.

Team Goemkarponn

MORMUGAO: Mormugao MLA and Goa Sewerage and Infrastructure Development Corporation of Goa Limited (SIDCGL) chairman Sankalp Amonkar on Thursday morning launched sewer works at Headland Sada in the presence of councillor Shraddha

Amonkar and local residents. Speaking at the launch, Amonkar said this was the first project he was inaugurating in his own constituency as SIDCGL chairman. "Sewage management is one of Goa's biggest challenges, and this is my first step towards resolving the issue in Mormugao."



Vas launches Rs 4.5-crore road works at Thana junction

■ Urges Sancoale panchayat to resolve Zorint drainage issue.

Team Goemkarponn

CORTALIM: Cortalim MLA Anton Vas on Wednesday launched the works on hot-mixing of internal roads worth ₹4.5 crore at Thana junction in the presence of ZP member Merciana Vas, Cortalim sarpanch Ujjwala Naik, panch members and residents. Speaking at the launch, Vas said

the works would cover all damaged and pothole-ridden roads in Thana. "We are launching the hot-mixing works of all internal roads at an estimated cost of ₹4.5 crore, which will address all potholes in this area. The work will commence in a few days since the hot mix plants have not yet started operations."

AAP Accuses Govt of Downplaying Cash-for-Jobs Scam

■ Demands Sacking of Minister, Judicial Probe.

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Aam Aadmi Party on Thursday launched a fresh attack on the BJP-led state government, alleging a large-scale cover-up in the ongoing Cash-for-Jobs scam. AAP Working President and national spokesperson Valmiki Naik accused the Sawant government of concealing the true extent of the fraud and manipulating the investigation. Naik said that in response to an LAQ raised by AAP MLA Cruz Silva in March



2025, the government had claimed the total amount involved across all FIRs was ₹9.25 crore. "But Pooja Naik has revealed that she alone allegedly collected nearly ₹17.68 crore. She is just one accused among 45 FIRs. This means the real magnitude of the scam is far higher than what the government admitted."

Entrepreneur and Social Worker Pascal Fernandes Joins AAP Goa

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Entrepreneur and social worker Pascal Fernandes from Corlim formally joined the Aam Aadmi Party on Thursday, marking his entry into active politics. Pascal, who is associated with Jaycees, Lions Club, IMC and ITI Altinho, Panjim, announced his decision at a press interaction in Panjim. "AAP is the only party fighting against the BJP. "AAP has consistently worked for the



larger good of the people, and that is what motivates me." "New entrants into politics choosing AAP reflects our intent and commitment to the betterment of Goa," Naik said. AAP Joint Secretary Manoj Ghadi Amonkar added that Pascal's joining would further strengthen the party's organisation and outreach in Corlim.

Madgaon Railway Station Unveils Advanced Digital Display Video Wall

Team Goemkarponn

MARGAO: In a move to upgrade passenger amenities with modern technology, a new state-of-the-art digital display video wall was inaugurated at Madgaon Railway Station by Santosh Kumar Jha, CMD, along with Manisha Jha, Chairperson KRWC & SSA. The 200-sqft high-resolution video wall, installed in the station's circulating area, will provide commuters with real-time train schedules, platform updates, safety advisories, passenger



information, and details on nearby attractions. The facility aims to improve convenience and ensure smoother passenger movement within the station. The project has been implemented by Graphon Innovative Digital Solutions, Palakkad, under a five-year contract worth ₹18,20,563, with an annual licence fee of ₹3,08,570.

Mastimoll Residents Protest 8-Month Water Woes; No Supply for 4 Days

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: Agitated over erratic water supply for the past eight months and a complete stoppage for the last four days, residents of Mastimoll, along with ward councillor Pandurang (Dhiraj) Naik Gaunkar,

met PWD Water Supply officials on Thursday seeking immediate intervention. Residents said that until eight months ago, their locality received uninterrupted water supply. "We earlier got around 24 hours of supply. Now we barely get half an hour to one hour of water,



sometimes just two buckets, and that too at unpredictable timings," a woman from the group told the officials. "For the past four days, we haven't received a single drop." Councillor Naik Gaunkar criticised the department for failing to act despite repeated complaints.

Yuva Sammelan Held on Bhagwan Birsa Munda Jayanti

■ Tawadkar Urges Youth to Lead Nation-Building With New Ideas.

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: Minister for Tribal Welfare, Sports & Youth Affairs and Art & Culture, Ramesh Tawadkar, urged the youth to embrace determination, consistency, and good



company as guiding principles in their journey of nation-building. He was speaking at a Yuva

Sammelan organised on the occasion of Bhagwan Birsa Munda Jayanti at Adarsh Gram Amone (Pinguinim), jointly hosted by the Directorate of Sports & Youth Affairs and Adarsh Yuva Sangh. Tawadkar said that both

Adarsh Yuva Sangh and Lokotsav have emerged as national models of inspiration, and similarly, the spread of Bhagwan Birsa Munda's ideals at the grassroots in Goa is now being acknowledged across the country.

Jaishankar Holds Talks With UN Secretary General In New York

■ Discussions focus on global challenges, multilateral cooperation, and India's development trajectory.

New Delhi: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres at the UN headquarters in New York, where the two held wide-ranging discussions on global developments and the role of multilateral institutions in addressing emerging challenges. The meeting offered an opportunity to assess shifting geopolitical trends, regional tensions, and the need for collaborative international action. During the interaction, Jaishankar expressed appreciation for the UN leadership's steady support for India's progress and its development priorities. He acknowledged the UN chief's detailed assessment of the evolving global landscape and conveyed India's intent to continue engaging constructively with the organisation on issues that demand shared responsibility. He noted that such exchanges help reinforce a balanced and inclusive approach to global governance. The minister was accompanied by India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador P Harish, Deputy Permanent Representative Yojna Patel, and senior officials from the Permanent Mission of India. Their presence underscored the importance India places on maintaining close coordination with the UN across political, developmental, and humanitarian pillars. Jaishankar also conveyed that India looks forward to hosting



the UN Secretary General in the near future. The two discussed key regional hotspots and the importance of sustained diplomatic efforts to promote stability and dialogue in conflict-affected areas. The conversation touched upon global economic uncertainties, development priorities for the Global South, and the pressing need to strengthen multilateral institutions to make them more representative and effective. The meeting in New York came shortly after Jaishankar's participation in the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Canada,

where he met senior counterparts including US Secretary of State Marco Rubio. His engagements at the G7 focused on geopolitical tensions, economic resilience, and collaborative responses to global crises, aligning with the broader themes discussed during his meeting with the UN leadership. Jaishankar's visit reaffirmed India's commitment to constructive global engagement and to working closely with the UN to support peace, development, and a more equitable international order.



Empowering Goa's Young Innovators Through Digital Growth

■ DITE&C Expands Technology Access, Training and Innovation Opportunities for Children



Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Children today are growing up in a world where technology shapes how they learn, create and imagine new possibilities. As Children's Day is celebrated across the country, the focus turns to the growing link between young learners and digital development, a foundation that will define the future. In Goa, the Department of Information Technology, Electronics and Communications is playing a key role in building this foundation by equipping children and students with tools, skills and opportunities to excel in a rapidly evolving digital era. To promote academic achievement while strengthening access to technology, the department introduced the Laptop Distribution Scheme for meritorious students from SC and ST communities. By placing laptops directly in the hands of deserving students, the initiative broadens access to learning resources and supports their educational advancement. Digital empowerment is further strengthened through the network of IT Knowledge Centres established across various talukas. These centres offer hands-on exposure to coding, artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies. They serve as a bridge between classroom learning and real-world digital skills, encouraging children to explore how technology can shape their ideas. Goa's growing startup

ecosystem, now home to more than 700 ventures, is also influenced by young thinkers who are developing innovative solutions at the school and college level. To nurture this spirit of entrepreneurship, the Campus Innovation Scheme launched under the Startup Policy 2025 provides financial support of up to fifty thousand to help students advance their projects and bring their ideas closer to implementation. The department is also investing in long-term infrastructure to support future industries. The Electronics Manufacturing Cluster in Tuem, designed with ready-to-use facilities, encourages local manufacturing in sectors such as electronics, drones, IoT and clean technologies. Alongside this, the Goa AI Mission 2027 places strong emphasis on skilling. Plans include introducing AI courses in educational institutions, establishing the Goa AI Academy and conducting regular bootcamps, masterclasses and hackathons to familiarise students with advanced technologies. As technology continues to shape learning and development across sectors, these initiatives ensure that Goa's children are not only prepared for the digital future but also inspired to lead it. By prioritising digital literacy and fostering creativity, the department is helping young minds take confident steps toward a more innovative and empowered tomorrow.

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POOJA'S ALLEGATIONS JOLT GOA

According to Naik, she collected around ₹17 crore from nearly 600 job seekers across Goa, believing the money would secure them government posts. She alleged that the entire amount was handed over to the trio and warned she would publicly expose all involved if the money is not returned. Naik further claimed that most of the bribes—primarily in ₹2,000 notes—were handed over between 2019 and 2022, with transactions allegedly taking place at the Goa Secretariat

and two locations in Porvorim. She said she had known the minister involved since 2012–13, and that he introduced her to the senior IAS officer and the PWD engineer. The individual she referred to is currently part of the 12-member Goa Cabinet, a revelation that prompted Chief Minister Pramod Sawant to order a Crime Branch inquiry. Naik said she has already disclosed the names to investigating officers and questioned why they have not been formally included in the case. Police recently

recorded another detailed statement from her at Bicholim Police Station. North Goa SP Rahul Gupta confirmed the development, stating that authorities are "examining her claims." The scandal surfaced in 2024 after multiple complaints were lodged with Goa Police accusing Naik of accepting large sums in exchange for job assurances. Police action led to 27 arrests, and FIRs were registered in six talukas. Naik, arrested last year, was granted bail in November 2024 and maintains that she

has been attempting to reimburse applicants on her own because "the real recipients" have not come forward with the funds. She asserted that none of the 600 applicants ultimately secured employment. The complaint also mentions another accused, Deepashree Gawas alias Deepashree Prashant Mahato, said to be close to Sulakshana Sawant. Another accused, Parab, admitted to handing over ₹3.88 crore collected from 44 applicants seeking government jobs.

Chirag Paswan Delivers His Best-Ever Show, Redefines LJP(RV)'s Future

■ Young party chief emerges as a major force in state politics with a high strike rate and growing influence within the NDA

New Delhi: This year's Bihar assembly election is shaping up to be a defining chapter not only for the sweeping performance of the National Democratic Alliance but also for the rise of Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) leader Chirag Paswan. After negotiating assertively for 29 seats within the alliance, the young MP appears to have validated his strategy, leading in 21 constituencies and achieving a striking 72 percent success rate. The results mark a dramatic turnaround for



a party that had been considered on the decline after the 2020 assembly polls, when the then-united LJP contested alone and won only one seat despite securing a notable vote share. Political observers at the time questioned whether Chirag could uphold the

influential legacy of his father, Ram Vilas Paswan, long regarded as a towering figure in Bihar's political landscape. The internal split in 2021, led by his uncle Pashupati Kumar Paras, further deepened the uncertainty. Chirag's rebuilding phase began with a deliberate push to project himself as a youth-centric leader while remaining firmly rooted in the party's Dalit support base. The strategy paid dividends in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections when the LJP(RV) captured all five seats it contested,

boosting its credibility within the NDA. Even then, key alliance partners were initially hesitant to allocate him a larger share of assembly seats, prompting behind-the-scenes discussions with emerging political outfits before the final agreement was reached. The party's current showing surpasses its earlier best in 2005, when it won 29 seats while contesting on a far larger scale. This year's more focused and disciplined performance is expected to significantly strengthen Chirag's political standing.

Shah Vows Toughest Action as Centre Reviews Probe Into Red Fort Blast

■ Government Says Verdict Will Serve as Strong Warning Against Terror Attacks.

New Delhi: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday reiterated that those behind the deadly car blast near Delhi's Red Fort will face the harshest punishment, stressing that the outcome of the investigation will serve as a firm message against any attempt to carry out acts of terror in India. He also extended condolences to the families of the victims who lost their lives in the November 10 explosion. Speaking virtually at the inauguration of the Moti Bhai Chaudhary Sagar Sainik School in Gujarat,



Shah said the government is committed to ensuring justice and that the case is being pursued with complete seriousness. The statement followed a Union Cabinet meeting chaired by the Prime Minister, which condemned the attack and officially categorised it as a terrorist incident.

Akhilesh Yadav Flags SIR Concerns As NDA Pulls Ahead In Bihar

■ Opposition Targets Voter Roll Revision As NDA Leaders Defend Process.

New Delhi: Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav reacted sharply to the National Democratic Alliance securing a strong lead in the Bihar assembly election, linking the early trends to the pre-poll special intensive revision of voter lists. He alleged that the exercise, conducted by the Election Commission to clean up electoral rolls, had influenced outcomes in the state. Yadav argued that what he described as the "SIR game" would not succeed in other regions, saying the process had been exposed and would face stronger resistance in upcoming elections across West Bengal, Tamil Nadu,



Uttar Pradesh and elsewhere. He reiterated that his party would remain alert and counter what he claimed were efforts to manipulate the democratic process, accusing the BJP of operating with deceptive intent. By midday, the NDA had established a commanding lead with 193 seats, while the Mahagathbandhan trailed significantly at 45 and other groups held 5.



Pulwama House of Red Fort Blast Suspect Razed After Explosives Found

■ Security Forces Maintain High Alert as Probe Into Delhi Attack Expands.

New Delhi: Security forces in Jammu and Kashmir demolished the Pulwama residence of Dr Umar Nabi, identified as the suicide bomber behind the deadly car explosion near Delhi's Red Fort earlier this week. The demolition, carried out between Thursday night and early Friday, followed the recovery of explosives during searches at the property. Officials said that soon after an intense blast tore through the house, security teams cordoned off the area and launched

extended searches to ensure no additional threats remained. A high alert was declared across South Kashmir, with additional personnel deployed to maintain law and order. Forensic specialists are expected to examine the debris to extract further evidence. The action mirrors earlier operations in Pahalgam, where homes of terror accused were demolished after similar explosions were reported during night-time raids.

SC Clarifies AI-171 Inquiry Focuses on Cause, Not Pilot Blame

■ Centre Reaffirms AAIB Probe Aims at Technical Findings and Safety Reforms.

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday emphasised that the pilots of Air India flight AI-171 cannot be held responsible for the 12 June crash, as the Centre reiterated that the ongoing investigation by the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau is intended solely to identify the cause of the tragedy. The court noted that the inquiry is designed to deliver corrective safety recommendations rather than assign fault to individuals. More than 250 people, including crew members and bystanders on the ground, lost their lives in the accident. During the hearing before Justices Surya Kant and Joymalya



Bagchi, the Solicitor General stated that the investigation is being conducted strictly in line with international aviation norms. He explained that the International Civil Aviation Organisation mandates a detailed and technical approach to all crash inquiries. A clarification issued earlier by the Ministry of Civil Aviation, he added, had already addressed misconceptions arising after the preliminary AAIB report, making it clear that no blame had been cast on the pilots or any other party.

Punjab Police Dismantle ISI-Backed Grenade Attack Network

■ Ten arrested as investigators trace cross-border coordination and Malaysia-based operatives.

New Delhi: Punjab Police have uncovered a major plot to carry out a grenade attack in a crowded area of the state, leading to the arrest of ten individuals linked to a network allegedly backed by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence.

The operation, based on specific intelligence inputs, uncovered a chain of local facilitators and foreign handlers working together to trigger unrest. According to the police, three of the key accused, identified as Kuldeep Singh, Shekhar Singh and Ajay Singh from



Sri Muksar Sahib, were



initially booked following

credible leads. Their interrogation revealed deeper connections to foreign handlers and operatives based abroad. Investigators brought seven additional individuals on production warrants from different jails for their alleged

roles in transporting and facilitating the delivery of the explosive device. A Chinese-made hand grenade was recovered, marking a significant breakthrough in establishing the operational intent of the group.

Bumrah's Five-Wicket Masterclass Floors South Africa for 159 on Day 1

■ Bumrah and Kuldeep Strengthen India's Grip as Hosts Dominate Opening Session

New Delhi: Jasprit Bumrah delivered a spectacular spell to claim his 16th five-wicket haul in Test cricket, dismantling South Africa for 159 shortly after the tea interval on Day 1 of the opening Test at Eden Gardens in Kolkata. The Indian pace spearhead bowled with precision and control to return outstanding figures of 5 for 27 in 14 overs, setting the tone for the home side's dominance in the match. South Africa struggled to build partnerships throughout the innings, with Aiden Markram



providing the only notable resistance as he top-scored with 31. Once Bumrah broke through the top order, the visitors appeared increasingly unsettled against India's varied bowling attack. Mohammed Siraj complemented Bumrah's effort with two wickets,

maintaining pressure from the other end with disciplined spells. Kuldeep Yadav also made key inroads, claiming two wickets with his sharp turn and accuracy, while Axar Patel chipped in with a crucial dismissal to wrap up the innings. India's bowlers collectively

ensured that South Africa never found momentum, using the helpful surface to extract movement, bounce and turn. Their combined performance left the visitors with a modest total that will allow the hosts to shape the rest of the Test on their own terms.

Lakshya Sen Advances to Japan Masters Semifinals

■ Indian shuttler dominates former world champion Loh Kean Yew.

New Delhi: Lakshya Sen continued his strong run on the international circuit with a commanding victory that sent him into the semifinals of the Kumamoto Masters Japan. The Indian shuttler defeated Singapore's Loh Kean Yew, a former world champion and current world No. 9, in straight games to secure one of the biggest wins of the tournament. Seeded seventh, Sen produced a sharp and disciplined performance to prevail 21-13 21-17 in just 40 minutes. The



result strengthened his positive record against Loh, marking his seventh win in their 13 encounters. Currently ranked world No. 15, Sen has been in notable form this season, highlighted by his runner-up finish at the Hong Kong Open in September. The opening game saw both players go neck and neck at 4-4 before Sen shifted gears.

North Goa District Badminton Tournament Showcases New Champions

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: A series of impressive victories marked the latest day of competition at the North Goa District Badminton Tournament 2025, organised by the North Goa District Badminton Association in association with the Goa Badminton Association and the Sports Authority of Goa. The event featured a full slate of singles finals, highlighting emerging talent as well as experienced contenders. In the junior divisions, the matches brought a mix of close contests and dominant displays. In the Boys Under 11 final, Viaan Redkar edged out Anav Kannekar in a thrilling opening game before sealing the contest in straight sets. The Girls



Under 11 title went to Gauravi Dessai, who produced a commanding performance against Dakshita Bandyopadhyay. The Boys Under 13 final saw Rushank Kulkarni prevail in a three-game battle against Saksham Mhapuskar, while the Girls Under 13 crown was claimed by Gauravi Dessai after a steady win over Pihoo Redkar. In the Under 15 category, Prajesh Gawas recovered from a slow start to defeat Samuel Gonsalves, and Niharika Baljit captured the girls title after a tight three-

game clash with Sanvi Shirodkar. The intensity carried into the older age groups. In Boys Under 17, Vansh Natekar outlasted Aloisius Rodrigues in a competitive encounter, while the Girls Under 17 final saw Jewel Abranches secure a straight-games win over Ananya Kannekar. The Boys Under 19 title went to Siddharth Hazra, who overcame a first-game setback to beat Vansh Natekar, and in the Girls Under 19 final, Netra Jogdand held her nerve in the decider to defeat Jewel Abranches.

Gomanchal Warrior, Avengers, Vasco Warriors and Priority Titans Register Confident Wins

■ GVCA Veterans Cricket Tournament Kicks Off with Exciting Opening-Day Wins.

Panjim: The State Senior Basketball Championships for Men and Women tipped off in exciting fashion at the Don Bosco Oratory, Panjim, with Don Bosco Academy A, Knights Veterans, and YMCA Knights booking their berths in the quarterfinals after dominant performances on the opening day. The tournament, co-sponsored by Priority Constructions and organised by the Lourdes Basketball Club under the aegis of the Goa Basketball Association (GBA) and the Sports Authority of Goa (SAG), drew an enthusiastic crowd who witnessed a fine display of skill



and teamwork. In the first match, Don Bosco Academy Fatorda proved far too strong for Kamikaze, cruising to a 55-16 victory. Tanish (13 points) and Bradley Barreto (11 points) led the scoring for Fatorda, while Afzal was the standout for Kamikaze with 6 points. The Knights Veterans showcased their class and experience in the

next encounter, defeating Don Bosco Academy B with a 42-12 win. Daley Fernandes (10 points) led from the front, supported by seasoned campaigners Spencer Viegas, Bosco, and Charles D'Souza. The young Don Bosco B side, featuring several U-17 Goa squad members, displayed promise and determination despite the heavy defeat.

Goa Fall Short Against Gujarat Despite Spirited Effort

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Goa went down by six wickets to Gujarat in their third match of the Men's Under-23 State 'A' Trophy Elite One-Day Tournament at the Motibaugh Cricket Ground in Vadodara. The contest saw moments of resilience from Goa, but

a commanding century from Gujarat's captain ultimately decided the outcome. Batting first after being put in, Goa put up 186 runs in 47.2 overs. The innings featured a steady third-wicket stand worth 55 runs, built through the composed efforts of opener Veer Yadav, who

top-scored with 47, and Chittem Jeevankumar, who added 40. Aryan Narvekar contributed 32 in the middle order to keep the scoreboard moving. Gujarat's attack maintained control throughout, with Bhavya Chauhan leading the way by taking three wickets.

Ponda Basketball Club, DBO Panjim and KJs Advance to the Last Eight

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Ponda Basketball Club, DBO Panjim and KJs booked their places in the quarterfinals after delivering commanding displays on the second day of the State Senior Basketball Championships for Men and Women. The



tournament, co-sponsored by Priority Constructions and organised by Lourdes Basketball Club in association with the Goa

Basketball Association and the Sports Authority of Goa, continued to draw fast-paced action at Don Bosco Oratory in Panjim.