



Suswagatam

Hon'ble Prime Minister
Shri Narendra Modi ji

On 28th November 2025 | 2:45 PM



For Unveiling of **Shree Rama Pratima** &
Inauguration of **3D Projection Mapping**

Followed by
Dev Darshan & Sabha Karyakrama

📍 **Shree Samsthan Gokarn Partagali
Jeevottam Math Poinguinim, Goa**



Issued by
Department of Information and Publicity
Government of Goa



A Welcome Reform That Must Be Protected From Misuse

The Goa Cabinet's decision to amend the compensation scheme and give priority to children who have lost both parents is a step the state can be proud of. It affirms something fundamental. When a child's world collapses, the government must not look away. It must step in and help rebuild that life with urgency and dignity. By placing orphans at the front of the line for compassionate appointments, the state has drawn a clear moral line. It recognises that children who suddenly lose their support system face immediate and lifelong challenges. Timely assistance is not a privilege for them. It is a necessity.

This reform matters because it acknowledges a truth often overlooked in the machinery of governance. When a government employee dies while still in service, the emotional and financial impact on the family can be devastating. For orphaned children, the situation is far more dire. They are left navigating grief as well as the burden of survival. Prioritising their cases gives them a real chance at stability and continuity. It can help them rise above circumstances that would otherwise swallow their potential.

The Goa government's decision also reflects a deeper shift. It shows an administration willing to adapt rules in response to social realities instead of treating policy as a rigid manual. Providing the flexibility to relax certain provisions can help officials respond humanely when a rule stands in the way of rightful relief. Policies exist to protect people, not to manufacture obstacles for the most vulnerable. That said, any scheme that carries this much compassion must be shielded from manipulation. India

That said, any scheme that carries this much compassion must be shielded from manipulation. India has seen how well-intended welfare measures can be twisted by those who know how to work the system. Compassionate appointments in particular have, over the years, attracted criticism for becoming a backdoor into government service for select families rather than a safety net for those in real distress. The more discretion a policy offers, the greater the need for vigilance.

While prioritising orphans is ethically sound, the administration must ensure that the verification process is watertight. Documentation must be thorough.

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While prioritising orphans is ethically sound, the administration must ensure that the verification process is watertight. Documentation must be thorough. The status of the child should be clearly established. Financial conditions should

be assessed along defined parameters. Every approval should leave behind a clear paper trail so that no future doubt arises. What should never happen is the misuse of a child's tragedy to secure a job for someone who is not entitled to it.

Equally important is the need to maintain balance. The purpose of the scheme is not merely to provide employment but to offer relief where there is genuine hardship. That means every case must be evaluated on need, not only on category. There may be orphaned children who already have sufficient support from extended family or other means. Meanwhile, there may be single-parent households struggling far more. The government must apply the rule with empathy but also with fairness, ensuring the most vulnerable get assistance first.

Another safeguard must come from transparency. Publishing broad data on approvals, pending cases, and the time taken to process them can help build trust. Independent review mechanisms, even if periodic, would keep the scheme accountable and clean. Civil society and media scrutiny will also play a role. A compassionate law cannot flourish in silence. It thrives in the light. In recognising the deep insecurity faced by orphaned children, the government has made a powerful statement. It has placed humanity above paperwork and shown that welfare, when done right, can restore dignity. But compassion must travel with caution. Good policy must be protected from those who see opportunity in despair. Goa has taken a commendable stride. It must now ensure that every stride that follows is just as sincere and just as honest.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Goa's 77-ft Lord Ram statue — A new chapter in pilgrimage tourism

The unveiling of a 77-foot bronze statue of Lord Ram at the Shree Samsthan Gokarn Jeevottam Mutt in South Goa — described as the tallest in the world — presents a significant opportunity for Goa to transform from a party- and beach-centric destination into a major pilgrimage and cultural tourism hub. With the historic mutt's existing legacy — nearly four centuries old — now accentuated by a grand religious monument, Goa stands poised to attract a different set of visitors: devotees, heritage-seekers and families looking for spiritual tourism. The planned festivities marking 550 years of the mutt's tradition, with thousands expected daily, signal that the region will soon see a surge in consistent footfall beyond the seasonal holiday rush.

This could have far-reaching benefits for local communities. Pilgrimage tourism often brings more sustained economic activity — from lodging, local transport and eateries to shops selling religious items and crafts — supporting livelihoods beyond just the beach-based transient tourist economy. Moreover, this may help diversify Goa's tourism portfolio, alleviating the over-reliance on nightlife and foreign holidaymakers. However, for this potential to translate into long-term benefit, it is vital that infrastructure is strengthened, visitor management is planned, and the sanctity of the religious site is respected. Thoughtful regulation and community involvement are essential to ensure the transformation is sustainable.

-Saiesha Vaghurmekar, Bethoda

Chief Minister's missed deadline on pothole-free roads

As we approach the end of November, one question hangs over Goa's daily commute. What happened to the Chief Minister's assurance that all potholes would be repaired by November 1? Nearly a month has passed since that deadline and the reality on the ground tells a very different story. Roads across the state remain battered. Large stretches continue to be unsafe. Motorists navigate broken surfaces every day, risking accidents and damage to their vehicles. Goans took the Chief Minister at his word because road safety is not a political talking point. It affects every resident, tourist, student and worker who depends on the state's road network. When a public deadline is announced, people expect it to be honoured. Instead, they have watched the same potholes deepen and multiply.

This situation not only undermines public confidence but also reflects poorly on governance. Goa is a major tourist destination and the condition of its roads shapes the first impression visitors carry. More importantly, it shapes the daily experience of the people who live here. The government must recognise that timely repairs and quality control are not optional. They are essential. The longer authorities delay, the more expensive and difficult the repairs become. I urge Chief Minister Pramod Sawant to revisit his promise and ensure immediate, sustained action rather than shifting deadlines. Goans deserve safe roads and leadership that stands by its word.

-Shrikant Usgaonkar, Ponda



Partagali Math Stands as 550-Year Beacon of Cultural Resilience: PM

Team Goemkarponn

PARTAGALI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi underscored the historic and spiritual importance of Shree Samsthan Gokarn Partagali Jeevottam Math, calling it a centuries-old anchor that has guided society through changing times. Speaking at the Math's 550th year celebrations, the Prime Minister said the institution had survived "countless cyclones of time," remaining steady even as eras, politics, and social conditions transformed around it.



"This Math never lost its direction. It emerged as a centre guiding people, and that is its greatest identity," he said. Modi noted that the Math's legacy stands tall even today, at a time when India is undergoing a broader cultural renaissance—highlighted by the rejuvenation of the Ram Temple, Kashi Vishwanath Dham, and

Mahakal Mahalok. The Prime Minister also connected the Math's endurance to Goa's cultural spirit, saying that Goan temples and traditions had faced several crises over the centuries. "Pressure was exerted on language and cultural identity, yet the soul of society remained strong. This resilience is Goa's unique characteristic," he said. The celebration marked yet another milestone for the Partagali Math, reaffirming its role as a spiritual lighthouse for the region and the country.

Swamiji Compares PM Modi to Lord Krishna, Calls Him 'Dharma Putra'



Team Goemkarponn

PARTAGALI: Shrimad Vidyadheesh Teerth Swamiji of Shree Samsthan Gokarn Partagali Math on Friday drew a powerful parallel between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Lord Krishna, saying the Prime Minister embodies the virtues and spirit associated with the Mahabharata's divine guide. Swamiji noted that both Krishna and

PM Modi Unveils Asia's Tallest Lord Ram Statue as Partagali Math Begins 550th-Year Celebrations

Team Goemkarponn

PARTAGALI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled a 77-foot-tall bronze statue of Lord Ram at Shree Samsthan Gokarn Partagali Jeevottam Math, marking it as Asia's



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Some Oppose Projects Out of Selfishness: Goa CM

Team Goemkarponn

PERNEM: Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant laid the foundation for the ₹42-crore Dhargal (Don



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56th International Film Festival of India
20th– 28th November, 2025 Panaji, Goa

CLOSING CEREMONY

In the gracious presence of

Dr. Pramod Sawant

Hon'ble Chief Minister
Government of Goa

Dr. L. Murugan

Hon'ble Minister of State for
Information & Broadcasting &
Parliamentary Affairs
Government of India

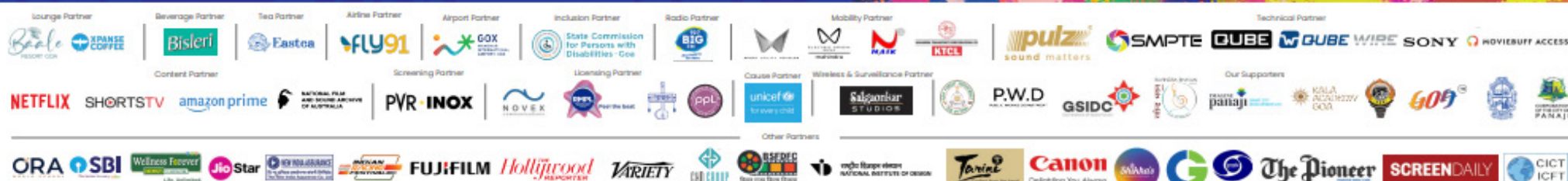
Shri. Ashwini Vaishnaw

Hon'ble Minister of Information & Broadcasting,
Railways and Electronics & Information Technology
Government of India

Closing Ceremony on 28th November, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.
at Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Indoor Stadium, Taleigao, Goa

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HC Rejects Plea of Land-Grab Accused Khan Challenging His Detention

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The High Court of Bombay at Goa dealt a blow to land-grab accused Suleman Siddique Khan, dismissing his criminal writ petition in which he had challenged what he termed his “illegal detention.” Khan, who moved the petition nearly two months ago, had questioned the legality of his arrest and alleged that police acted against him to divert attention from other pressing issues in the State. The accused was in the custody of the Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing a large land-grab racket when he escaped from the Old Goa police lock-up in December 2024. He was traced



and re-arrested in Hubli within a fortnight, with the SIT branding

him a “hardened criminal.” This isn’t Khan’s first setback in court. Earlier, in April, the High Court had dismissed his plea seeking a CBI probe into the circumstances surrounding his escape. Khan had publicly claimed that the incident was orchestrated by police to shift focus away from the job scam controversy. Khan also remains embroiled in multiple legal battles. The Judicial Magistrate First Class in Valpoi had previously rejected his bail plea in a 2021 land fraud case. Additionally, the Civil Court in Bicholim annulled 13 sale deeds tied to a 10,100 sq m property in Tivim, naming Khan as one of the respondents.

Goa Govt Ends Services of Four Junior Scale Officers After SC Stay

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Goa government on Thursday terminated the services of four Junior Scale Officers from the Goa Civil Service following a Supreme Court order that put on hold the High Court ruling under which they had been appointed. In a notification issued by the Department of Personnel on November 27, the government withdrew the appointments of Brucelee Jesus Nazario



Savio Quadros, Praveen Prakash Shirodkar, Nilesh Bhagwant Naik (OBC) and Daulatrao Vijayrao Rane Sardesai (CFF). All four had been given notional appointments to the Junior Scale cadre with retrospective effect from May 23, 2012, a decision later upheld by the High Court on February 12, 2025.

Goa Adds Public Lighting Charge to Electricity Bills, Effective Oct 1

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Electricity users in Goa, already dealing with the recent tariff increase approved by the Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission (JERC), will now face an additional burden as the State government has decided to recover the cost of public lighting through monthly power bills — with the levy applied retrospectively from October 1. A



notification issued by Chief Electrical Engineer Stephen Fernandes states that a public lighting duty will now be imposed on electricity consumption and collected along with regular energy charges.

GRE Slams Fisheries Dept for Failure to Stop Illegal Trawlers in Goan Waters

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Goenchea Ramponkaranchi Ekvott (GRE) has sharply criticised the Directorate of Fisheries, accusing it of repeatedly failing to curb widespread illegal fishing by trawlers from other States, including vessels from Malpe in Karnataka and boats from Maharashtra and Gujarat that routinely enter Goan waters. GRE General Secretary Olencio Simoes said that despite years of complaints, these out-of-



State operators continue to engage in destructive practices such as bull trawling, pair trawling and, more recently, LED light fishing. According to him, the unchecked activity has been devastating for the local marine ecosystem and has severely affected the livelihood of

traditional Goan fishermen. Simoes alleged that the Fisheries Department and enforcement agencies have shown no seriousness in tackling the issue, claiming that illegal trawlers operate without fear, damage nets belonging to local fishermen, and even

intimidate them at sea. “We have complained again and again, yet nothing meaningful has been done. The authorities appear either reluctant or incapable of enforcing the law,” he said. GRE has also expressed alarm that court-mandated directives have not been implemented. The High Court of Bombay at Goa had ordered strict enforcement by the Coast Guard, Coastal Police and Fisheries Department, with compliance to be reported within three months.

Goa Govt Makes One-Year Work Experience Compulsory for All Group ‘C’ Jobs

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Goa government has introduced a significant change in recruitment criteria, making one year of work experience mandatory for all Group ‘C’ positions across departments. A fresh

notification issued by the Department of Personnel (DoP) states that Recruitment Rules for Group ‘C’ posts have been amended to ensure that applicants must possess at least one year of experience in government, semi-government or private

organisations to qualify for applying. The revised eligibility condition will now apply to a wide range of posts, including MTS, LDC/Recovery Clerk, Junior Stenographer, Stenographer Grade-II, Junior Assistant, Senior Assistant, Bailiff, Court Master, Attendant, Field

Assistant, Data Entry Operator, Assistant DEO, Talathi, Panchayat Secretary, Accounts Clerk, Accountant, Junior Auditor, Investigator, Library Attendant, Field Worker, Ahya, Maid Servant, Waiter, Milkman, Mess Servant, and several others.

According to the new rules, wherever earlier provisions required less than one year of experience — or none at all — they will now be replaced with a compulsory minimum of one year, defined as 11 months or 335 days of continuous or

accumulated service. The DoP has also clarified that experience gained in educational institutions, law institutes, chartered accountant offices, or banking institutions will be considered valid, provided applicants submit official proof of employment.

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PM Modi Unveils Asia’s Tallest Lord Ram Statue as Partagali Math Begins 550th-Year Celebrations

tallest statue of the deity. The event coincided with the commencement of the Math’s grand 11 day Sardha Panchashatamanotsava, celebrating 550 years of its establishment. The celebrations began early in the morning with traditional

Havan rituals led by H.H. Shri Vidyadheesh Teertha Swamiji. Devotees witnessed the ‘Devata Prarthana’ Havan at the shrines of Shree Ramdev and Veer Vittal at 7 am, followed by the Shree Rama Nama Taraka Mantra Japa Havan.

Swamiji Compares PM Modi to Lord Krishna, Calls Him ‘Dharma

Modi hail from Dwarka, adding that the PM’s reforms, people-centric governance, and global vaccine assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic reflect Krishna-like ideals. “We regard him as a Dharma Putra,” he said. Addressing devotees

during the 550th-year celebrations of the Partagali Math, Swamiji said the day would be remembered as a golden chapter in the institution’s long history.

Some Oppose Projects Out of Selfishness: Goa CM

Khamb) flyover on the National Highway, asserting that development works will continue despite resistance from certain quarters. The event was attended by Pernem MLA Pravin Arlekar, Sarpanch Arjun Kanolkar and Sarpanch Bala Shetkar. Speaking at the inauguration, the Chief

Minister said that while the government is pushing ahead with infrastructure expansion across the State, “some people keep opposing government projects, including for political reasons,” adding that such objections often stem from “selfishness” rather than genuine public interest.

Digital push at Partagali Math: Over 100 WiFi hotspots, 240 CCTV cameras strengthen Canacona's tech infrastructure

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: In a significant boost to Canacona's digital network, the Department of Information Technology, Electronics & Communications (DITE&C), in collaboration with Infotech Corporation of Goa Ltd (ITG), has deployed more than 100 WiFi access points and over 200 CCTV cameras at the Shree Samsthan Gokarn Partagali



Jeevottam Math. The upgraded facilities were launched on Thursday ahead of the Sardha Panchashatamanotsava celebrations. The inauguration was carried

out by His Holiness Paramapoojya Shreemad Vidyadheesh Teerth Shreepad Vader Swamiji in the presence of IT Minister Rohan Khaunte, ITG Chairman Dr Chandrakant

Shetye, DITE&C Director Kabir Shirgaonkar, ITG Managing Director Praveen Volvotkar and Central Committee President Shrinivas Shenvi Dempo. The initiative, supported by Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant, aims to strengthen Goa's digital backbone and address the rising connectivity needs around the Math, now a major spiritual attraction with its 77-foot bronze idol drawing increasing visitors.

Goa Pavilion at IITF 2025 Receives Special Appreciation Award

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Goa Pavilion at the 44th India International Trade Fair (IITF) 2025 has been honoured with the Special Appreciation Award for excellence in display under the States and Union Territories Pavilion category. The award, presented by ITPO Managing Director Dr Neeraj Kharwal, IAS, recognised Goa's outstanding creative presentation at this year's



fair held at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi. Information Officer (DIP) Kiran Munankar and Photographer Chandu Korgaonkar received the award on behalf of the department, along with representatives from Goa-IPB, Goa Waste Management Corporation and GSIDC.

Truck Driver and Accomplice Booked for Assault and Damaging Car in Cuchelim

Team Goemkarponn

MAPUSA: A complaint has been filed at Mapusa Police Station after a man was allegedly assaulted and his vehicle damaged by the driver of a truck and an unidentified accomplice at Khadpawada, Cuchelim. The complainant, Vishram

Sitaram Talgaonkar, 42, a resident of Acoi, Karaswada, reported that the incident occurred on November 25 at around 11:45 pm. According to the complaint, the driver of a truck bearing registration number GA-03-R-8238, along with



another unknown person, allegedly assaulted Talgaonkar with slaps, fist blows and kicks, causing him injuries. The accused individuals also reportedly threatened him with dire consequences, including threats to kill.

Trawlers Seized in Maharashtra for Banned LED Fishing; One Linked to Goa BJP MLA: Sources

Team Goemkarponn

MUMBAI/GOA: Maharashtra Fisheries authorities have seized two Goan fishing trawlers for allegedly operating illegally in the State's waters using banned LED fishing equipment, in a crackdown that has sent ripples through



Goa's fishing and political

circles. Sources said one of the trawlers is linked to a Goa BJP MLA, raising concerns about political proximity and regulatory enforcement. Officials confirmed that the vessels were detained for jurisdiction violation and the use of prohibited gear, both punishable under fisheries regulations.

Elderly Man Arrested for Theft of Silver Rudraksh Mala from Pilgao Temple

Team Goemkarponn

BICHOLIM: Bicholim Police have arrested a 72-year-old man for allegedly stealing a silver Rudraksh mala from Shree Sai Seva Dham at Tarwada, Pilgao. The complaint was lodged by Mahadev Jagannath Vengurlekar, 70, a resident of Tarwada, who reported that between October 6 and November 25, an unknown person entered

the temple by opening the door and stole a silver Rudraksh mala weighing 344.920 grams, valued at around ₹22,000. During the investigation, police examined CCTV footage installed at the temple premises, which clearly captured the accused, identified as Kolla Ramu Vadar, 72, of Sonarpeth, Bicholim, entering the shrine, removing the silver mala from the idol's neck, and fleeing with it.

Man Held in Seraulim for Possessing 438 Grams of Suspected Ganja

Team Goemkarponn

COLVA: Colva Police arrested a man after he was allegedly found in possession of a sizeable quantity of suspected ganja during the early hours of Thursday. The offence was registered on the state complaint of LPSI Raksha Naik, who reported that between 11:20 pm on November 26 and 2:10 am on November 27, the accused, identified



as James Lima, a resident of Odisha, was caught red-handed near the chapel at Botlem Ward, Seraulim. Police stated that Lima was found carrying fruiting and flowering substance suspected to be ganja, weighing 438 grams and valued at approximately ₹43,800.

Hit-and-Run Case Registered After Scooter Rider Injured Near Nuvem Flyover

Team Goemkarponn

COLVA: A hit-and-run case has been registered after a scooter rider sustained injuries when an unknown vehicle allegedly rammed into his Access scooter near the NH-66 Flyover at Nuvem. The complaint was filed by Pares Shirodkar, a resident of Nuvem and native of Sadashivgad,

Karwar, who reported that the incident occurred around 8:55 am while he was travelling towards Margao. According to the complaint, the unidentified driver was operating the vehicle in a rash and negligent manner and fled the scene immediately after the collision, without stopping to provide medical assistance or informing the police.

Goa Govt Partners with IGNOU to Enable Higher Education Access for Students with Disabilities

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Office of the State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities and the Department for Empowerment of

Persons with Disabilities, Goa, have announced a strategic partnership with Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), Regional Centre Panaji, to expand higher-



education opportunities for students with disabilities through distance learning.

The initiative aims to support students who completed Class 12 but were unable to pursue further studies due to personal, financial, health-related, or accessibility

challenges. Under the tie-up, eligible students will receive guidance to enrol in IGNOU's certificate, diploma, undergraduate, and postgraduate programmes, enabling them

to continue their education from home. IGNOU officials will also conduct special orientation sessions to help candidates understand programme options and the enrolment process.

Aamir Khan Captivates IFFI 2025 with Humor, Insight, and Love for Storytelling

Aamir Khan Honors Dharmendra's Cinematic Legacy.



The 56th edition of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) witnessed a spectacular culmination of cinema and conversation during the last Fireside Chat, as Bollywood stalwart Aamir Khan captivated the audience at Kala Academy. Titled "The Narrative Architect of Social Transformation and Inclusivity," the session unfolded as a journey through Khan's cinematic philosophy, his instinct-driven career choices, and reflections on his lifelong love for storytelling. The event began with a tribute from moderator and acclaimed film critic Baradwaj Rangan to legendary actor Dharmendra. Khan, reminiscing about the actor he grew up admiring, described Dharmendra as a "gentle

giant" and a "remarkable artist" whose versatility in genres from romance to drama left a lasting impact on Indian cinema. "His mastery of language, dignity, and range made him an institution in himself," Khan said, acknowledging the profound personal and artistic loss the industry suffered with his passing. The conversation then shifted to Khan's cinematic journey, revealing the formative experiences that shaped his approach to storytelling. From childhood tales spun by his grandmother to the magical broadcasts of Hawa Mahal on the radio, Khan highlighted the profound influence of stories in his early life. "I've always been drawn to stories. They were a big part of my childhood, and that fascination has guided

every choice I've made as an actor," he said. True to his moniker as "Mr. Perfectionist," Khan emphasized that his approach to cinema has always been instinctive rather than calculative. He rejected the notion of following market trends or catering to predictable formulas, stating, "I choose films purely based on my emotional excitement for the story, even if it goes completely against the norm." Khan illustrated this with his landmark film Lagaan, recalling that even industry veterans advised against its production, yet its unconventional nature resonated profoundly with audiences. While many of Khan's films have tackled socially relevant themes, he stressed that these were

byproducts of compelling storytelling rather than deliberate activism. "I am a complete film personality, not an activist. My primary objective is to entertain my audience," he candidly stated. He credited the writers of his films for laying the foundation of these stories, acknowledging works like Taare Zameen Par, 3 Idiots, Dangal, and Ladies in Shoes as creations that moved him and inspired his performances. The discussion also unveiled Khan's future plans. Having produced a series of

projects including Lahore 1947 and Happy Patel, he announced a decisive shift back to acting: "From here on, any script I hear will be only for me as an actor. It's the right time to dedicate myself fully to acting again." On his directorial ambitions, Khan revealed a long-term dream: "Direction is actually my big love. The day I consciously decide to take up direction, I'll probably stop acting, because it will consume me completely. That's why I'm delaying that decision for now." On engaging with filmmakers, Khan advised flexibility, allowing scripts to be sent to his manager for narration or review. "Sometimes I prefer reading a script, and sometimes I prefer hearing it—so either approach works," he said.



3 Eras, One Lamp: A.R.M Illuminates IFFI with Folklore and Fantasy

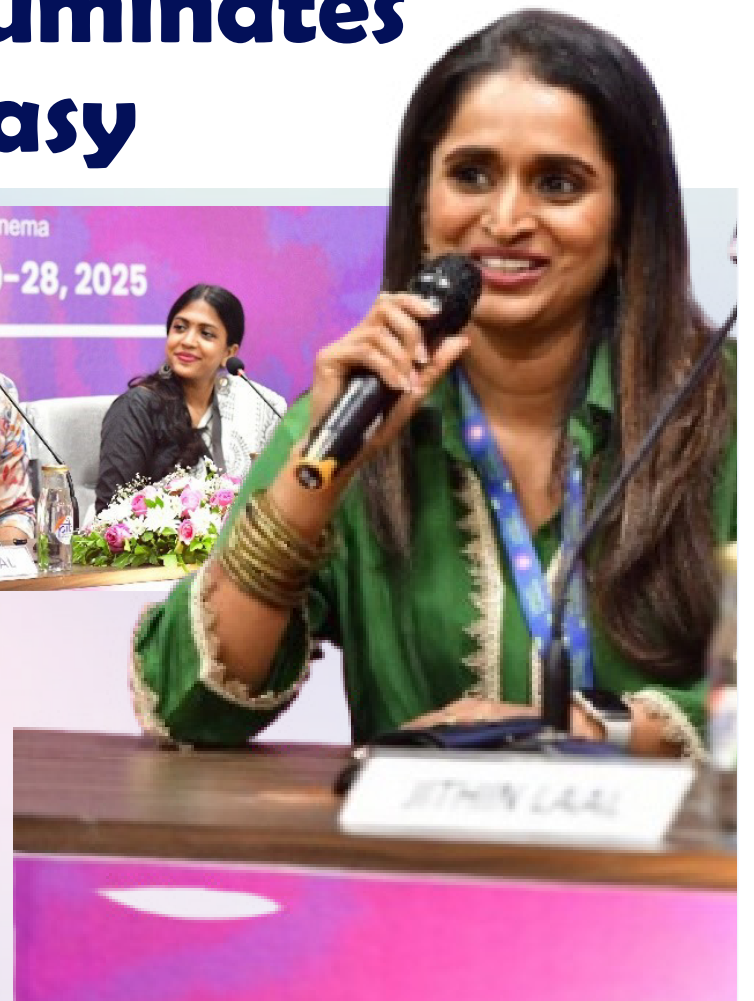
The International Film Festival of India (IFFI) witnessed a spectacular blend of myth, adventure, and craft as 'A.R.M' (Ajayante Randam Moshanam) took the stage. Director Jithin Laal, actors Tovino Thomas and National Award-winner Surabhi Lakshmi shared insights into the film's layered storytelling, meticulous preparation, and the challenges of bringing a fantasy epic to life. Jithin Laal: "IFFI Was My Film School" Reflecting on his journey, Laal described IFFI as his personal film school. "I haven't been to a film school. IFFI was my film school," he said. The director highlighted the mythical lamp as a central

metaphor and explained that the story explores themes of caste, cultural inheritance, and generational continuity while remaining visually engaging for all audiences. Tovino Thomas: Mastering Three Lives Playing Maniyan, Kunjikelu, and Ajayan across three eras tested Thomas physically and mentally. "It's not about the looks. The body language had to be entirely different for each one," he said. Discussing the years-long journey of the film, he emphasized that A.R.M demonstrates that cinema can be both entertaining and festival-worthy. Surabhi Lakshmi: Craft Meets Commitment National Award-winning actor



Surabhi Lakshmi spoke about her rigorous preparation, including Kalarippayattu training and character immersion. She highlighted the "actor-to-actor energy" with Tovino that allowed the characters to truly come alive on screen. Cinema, Craft, and Kerala's Audience. The panel discussed Malayalam cinema's evolving

landscape, noting challenges like limited theatre audiences and tight budgets. Thomas reflected, "Budget constraints make us more creative. We find new ways to bring our vision to life." Exercises in physicality, Kalari, and workshops allowed actors to deeply differentiate characters across generations.



Nuclear Power Sector Set to Open for Private Participation, Says PM

■ Government prepares major legislative overhaul to expand atomic energy capacity.

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that India is preparing to allow private companies to participate in the nuclear power sector, marking a major shift in an industry long controlled exclusively by the central government. The statement was delivered during the inauguration of Skyroot Aerospace's Infinity campus in Hyderabad, where he highlighted the need to strengthen the country's future energy framework. He said that opening the nuclear sector to private



involvement would support India's long-term power requirements and accelerate technological innovation. The government has set an ambitious target of producing 100 gigawatts of nuclear energy by 2047, a dramatic increase

from the current installed capacity of 8.8 gigawatts. The expanded goal is expected to create opportunities in areas such as small modular reactors, advanced reactor technology and new-age nuclear research. The move is

part of a broader reform plan, with the government preparing to introduce the Atomic Energy Bill, 2025 in the upcoming Winter session of Parliament beginning December 1. The proposed legislation includes provisions allowing private-sector participation in nuclear power generation, a step that would require changes to the existing legal framework. Earlier this year, the Union Budget also indicated upcoming amendments to the nuclear liability law to support new investment models.

Death Toll in Hong Kong High-Rise Fire Climbs to 94 as Search Efforts Continue

■ Seven towers left badly damaged as authorities probe safety lapses and construction practices

New Delhi: Hong Kong faced one of its worst fire disasters in decades as the death toll from a massive blaze at the Wang Fuk Court apartment complex rose to 94, with many still unaccounted for. Firefighters continued operations for a second day on Thursday, moving through soot-covered corridors and smoke-filled apartments in the Tai Po district, where thousands of residents live across eight towers. Officials reported that flames had been fully extinguished in four buildings and brought



under control in three more, though firefighters were still working to access several units. Search teams equipped with flashlights combed through the darkened interiors, while some windows continued to emit thick smoke and occasional bursts of flame.

CISF Strengthens Security Framework at Parliament with Expanded Force and Longer Tenure

■ More than 3,300 trained personnel deployed as part of revamped protection strategy

New Delhi: Security at the Parliament House Complex has been significantly reinforced as the Central Industrial Security Force implements a comprehensive overhaul nearly three years after the breach incident. With full operational control assumed in May 2024, the force has introduced wider manpower deployment, revised posting policies and modernised training systems to elevate



preparedness across all security layers. A contingent of over 3,300 personnel is now dedicated to the protection of the complex. Each member must clear strict psychological evaluations, physical efficiency tests and detailed security vetting before being posted.

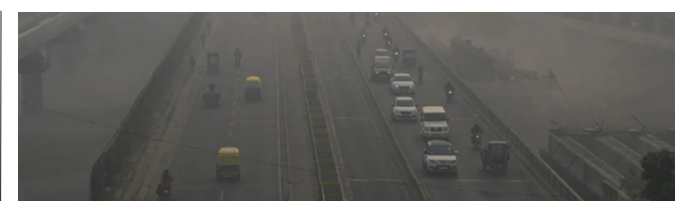
India Will Not Compromise on Sovereignty and Security, Says Defence Minister

■ Dialogue in New Delhi highlights rising challenges and India's strengthened defence posture

New Delhi: India's defence framework and strategic readiness were placed in sharp focus as the Defence Minister addressed the Chanakya Defence Dialogue in New Delhi, underscoring the country's determination to protect its sovereignty and maintain stability in a rapidly evolving geopolitical environment. The minister noted that India supports peace and dialogue, yet remains firm that national security and territorial integrity are non-negotiable. During the



address, he outlined how shifting power centres and emerging global tensions have created an era of uncertainty. He emphasised that the nature of conflict is changing, with new pressures shaping regional and international security.



Delhi-NCR Residents Face Alarming Health and Financial Strain Amid Pollution Surge

New Delhi: A new survey across Delhi-NCR has revealed the severe impact of persistent air pollution on daily life, with a large majority of residents reporting significant health problems, rising expenses and growing uncertainty about continuing to live in the region. The findings indicate deepening concerns as hazardous air quality increasingly disrupts routines, wellbeing and long-term decisions for families. According to the

Smytten PulseAI survey of 4,000 residents in Delhi, Gurugram, Noida, Ghaziabad and Faridabad, more than 80 per cent of respondents said they regularly experience symptoms such as chronic cough, fatigue and respiratory discomfort linked to polluted air. The study highlighted that 68.3 per cent sought medical attention over the past year specifically for pollution-related issues, signalling a widening public health challenge.

Trump Announces Plan to Halt Migration from Several Countries Amid Security Concerns

New Delhi: President Donald Trump announced that the United States will move toward a permanent halt on migration from what he described as "Third World countries," arguing that the country's immigration system needs time to stabilise following recent security incidents. His announcement came days after a shooting near the White House

left one National Guard member dead and another critically injured. In a statement on social media, he claimed that past immigration policies had strained national resources and said the proposed halt would be part of a broader effort to overhaul the system. He outlined plans to reverse recent admissions, tighten eligibility rules



and implement stricter measures that would remove individuals considered security risks

or reliant on government support. The shooting earlier in the week intensified debate over

immigration. The incident involved two National Guard personnel, Sarah Beckstrom and Andrew Wolfe, who were approached by an armed man and shot at close range. Beckstrom, 20, died of her injuries, while Wolfe, 24, remains in critical condition. The suspect, Rahmanullah Lakanwal, a 29-year-old Afghan national who

arrived in the country after the 2021 US withdrawal from Afghanistan, has been taken into custody. Authorities have not yet determined the motive. Following the identification of the suspect, federal immigration authorities temporarily halted the processing of immigration applications connected to Afghan nationals, citing security precautions.

BCCI Flags Concerns Over Gambhir's Pitch Comments

■ Coach's Future May Depend On India's 2026 T20 World Cup Performance.

New Delhi: The Board of Control for Cricket in India is reportedly displeased with head coach Gautam Gambhir after his forthright comments regarding the Kolkata pitch used during India's 30-run loss to South Africa in the first Test at Eden Gardens. Although the board is not expected to take any immediate action, his long-term position could come under review later in the year, particularly if India fail to perform at the upcoming 2026 T20 World Cup. The concerns came to the forefront after Gambhir defended the surface in Kolkata despite India collapsing while chasing 124 runs. He stated that the pitch behaved exactly as the team had requested, adding that the conditions were intentionally designed to test technique and temperament rather than allow flamboyant stroke play.



His comments, which praised the curator's cooperation and insisted the wicket held no major difficulties, have reportedly not gone down well with the board. According to reports, the BCCI is monitoring the situation but is likely to retain Gambhir for now due to limited coaching alternatives. However, officials are expected to reassess his role after the T20 World Cup scheduled to

take place at home from February 7 to March 8. A disappointing campaign could place his position under serious scrutiny. Gambhir maintained that the Eden Gardens pitch offered a fair contest and that India's defeat stemmed from poor execution rather than external factors. He emphasised that the surface was designed to challenge batters with turn and reward disciplined play, adding that such conditions were deliberately sought by the team management. With India preparing for a high-stakes global tournament on home soil, the focus has shifted to both performance and leadership stability. While the BCCI has not taken any disciplinary step at this stage, the upcoming season is expected to play a decisive role in determining Gambhir's future with the national side.



Big Buys And Power-Packed Lineups Shape WPL'26 After Mega Auction

New Delhi: The Women's Premier League 2026 mega auction delivered a high-intensity bidding battle, reshaping squads across all five franchises and setting the stage for a competitive new season. The event featured major signings, headline-grabbing price tags, and strategic squad rebuilding, especially from teams looking to bolster both Indian and overseas depth.

Deepti Sharma emerged as one of the biggest stories of the day. Fresh off her standout World Cup performance, she was reclaimed by

UP Warriorz for 3.2 crore through the Right to Match option, making her the joint second-costliest player in league history. New Zealand all-rounder Amelia Kerr became the most expensive overseas pick of the auction after Mumbai Indians secured her for 3 crore. Shikha Pandey also surprised many when UP Warriorz bought her for 2.4 crore. Mumbai Indians strengthened their already formidable core by adding Kerr along with Shabnim Ismail and Nicola Carey, complementing retained stars like Nat Sciver-Brunt and Harmanpreet Kaur.

Amod Borkar Shines as MCC Avengers Dominate Warriors by 65 Runs

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: MCC Avengers showcased complete control with both bat and ball as they registered a resounding 65-run win over MCC Warriors in the latest MCL 11 T20 clash at the MCC Ground in Margao. The result highlighted the team's depth and discipline, with a series of impactful performances guiding them to a comfortable victory. Opting to bat first, the Avengers set a strong platform with a series of brisk top-order contributions. Venkatesh Nevagi provided early momentum with a quick 37 from just 19 deliveries, combining power hitting with precise shot selection. Amod Borkar continued the charge with a composed 38, keeping the innings stable during the middle overs. Vedant Naik added further acceleration, striking 36 off 20 balls, ensuring the scoring rate stayed high throughout. The finishing touches came from Amlon D'Souza, whose unbeaten 27 off 14 deliveries helped the Avengers



close their innings at an imposing 180 for 7 in the allotted 20 overs. Facing a steep target, MCC Warriors struggled to build partnerships and were unable to keep pace with the rising required rate. Vikas Shetty tried to resist with a determined 40 from 21 balls, while Govind Lotlikar contributed 25. However, regular wickets halted any chance of a recovery, and the Warriors were bowled out for 115 in 13.4 overs. The Avengers' bowling attack delivered a collective effort, led by Man of the Match Amod Borkar, who capped off his strong batting effort with an impressive 3 for 29. Gopal Gawas maintained

GSTA Launches School Grassroots Tennis Programme in Chorao

Team Goemkarponn

Panjim: The Goa State Tennis Association, in partnership with the Directorate of Sports and Youth Affairs, has introduced its first school-level grassroots tennis programme at Dayanand High School in Chorao. The launch brought tennis training to the island region for the first time and marked the beginning of a long-term plan to expand the sport across Goa's hinterland. The event was attended by MLA Premendra Shet along with several local sports supporters and



school representatives. The programme follows the Play and Stay format, an internationally recognised system that introduces young students to tennis through modified equipment and progressive stages. Under the guidance of ITF-certified and AITA Level-1 coach Hazel Fernandes, supported by physical education instructor

Rohan Naik, the six-month training schedule began with strong participation from students eager to experience the sport. The format allows children to start with beginner-friendly red balls before gradually advancing to orange, green and finally standard tournament balls. This progression ensures that students develop racquet skills, coordination



and confidence at a comfortable pace. The structure is also flexible enough to be conducted indoors or on open grounds, enabling schools with limited facilities to adopt the programme with ease. The Association plans to expand this initiative to 20 schools across the state, with 10 each in North and South Goa.

Tanisha's Fighting Knock Not Enough as Goa Fall Short by 18 Runs

Team Goemkarponn

Panjim: Goa endured a close 18-run loss to Andhra in the U-23 Women's T20 Elite Tournament in Nagpur, where a determined effort from Tanisha Gaikwad kept the chase alive but could not overturn a challenging target. Choosing to bowl

first after winning the toss, Goa made an explosive start that put Andhra under severe pressure. Angel D'Costa led the early charge with a sharp spell that dismantled the top order. Her three early strikes, combined with a run-out, reduced Andhra to 14 for 4 inside the powerplay and handed

Goa complete control. The momentum shifted when Andhra's middle order produced a resilient fightback. A robust 93-run stand for the fifth wicket revived their innings, with Hema Roshni anchoring the recovery with an unbeaten half-century and Anjum adding a fluent 53. Their partnership lifted

Andhra to a competitive 146 for 7 at the end of 20 overs. Angel closed with exceptional figures of four wickets for just 10 runs, while Usma Khan and Sejal Naik contributed a wicket each. Goa's pursuit began cautiously, and steady but slow scoring left them at 51 for 3 by the halfway stage.