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A Troubled Journey and a Court's Call: Omkar the Elephant Heads to Vantara

by **Satyavatinandan Satrekar**

The Bombay High Court's Kolhapur Circuit Bench has permitted the capture and temporary translocation of Omkar, the wandering elephant whose movements across Goa and Maharashtra have unsettled communities, tested forest departments, and raised questions about long-term wildlife management in the Western Ghats. In an order passed on November 12, the bench of Justices Ajit B Kadethankar and M S Karnik allowed the operation under the earlier capture order issued on April 8 by the Chief Wildlife Warden in Nagpur. The court stressed that Omkar must not suffer



harm or trauma during the rescue and that every step must follow established protocols. Once moved, Omkar will be placed under the care of Vantara in Jamnagar. The facility has been asked to oversee his welfare and training with minimal human intervention while a High Powered Committee studies the

case and submits its report. Maharashtra's forest officials will have access to Omkar and will monitor his condition at regular intervals. The committee has also been asked to recommend the best plan for his rehabilitation or release, whether that means remaining in captivity or returning to the wild. Both the petitioner and the intervenor may submit suggestions to aid their assessment. The order followed a petition by Rohit Kamble of Ratnagiri, who raised concerns over Omkar's erratic movements, the damage he caused and the safety risks to local communities. Omkar's recent trail is a map of conflict and confusion.

The Court Verdict on Omkar....

- The Bombay High Court cleared the capture of Omkar and his temporary move to Vantara, stressing that he must not be harmed.
- A High Powered Committee will study his case and recommend whether he should be rehabilitated in the wild or kept in captivity.
- Omkar's long journey through Goa and Maharashtra led to crop damage and one death, which pushed the matter into court.
- Some residents and conservation voices say Omkar should be reunited with the elephant herd in Tillari instead of being shifted to Jamnagar.



How to Restore Brand Goa

GoaMiles, in collaboration with the Directorate of Planning, Statistics & Evaluation (Goa), has launched Phase V of the Mukhyamantri Goencho Taxi Patrao (MGTP) Scheme at the Goa Hyundai Showroom in Verna. With this new phase, GoaMiles has surpassed 300 taxis under the initiative, strengthening its mission to empower Goans as taxi entrepreneurs while promoting cleaner and greener transportation through CNG-fueled vehicles. During the event, 50 new CNG taxis were handed over to beneficiaries, further supporting the government's focus on sustainable mobility and livelihood generation. The ceremony was graced by Panchayat Minister Mauvin Godinho. GoaMiles continues to advance the vision of Swayampurna Goa by transforming lives through eco-friendly mobility solutions.



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Government of Goa



On the occasion of foundation of
PRESS COUNCIL OF INDIA
Celebrates

NATIONAL PRESS DAY

On November 17, 2025 at 10.00 a.m.
At Institute Menezes Braganza Hall, Panaji - Goa

Chief Guest

Dr. Pramod Sawant

Hon'ble Chief Minister

Guest of Honour

Shri Sarpreet Singh Gill, IAS

Commissioner cum Secretary(I&P)

* All are cordially invited *

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