



Tension Brews as MGP Questions BJP's Moves in Curti-Ponda

■ Three ZP seats allotted to MGP; party to field Independent in disputed constituency and confirms plan to contest Ponda bypoll

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Political fault lines widened as the Maharashtra Gomantak Party (MGP) publicly questioned the BJP's decision not to back an alliance candidate in Curti-Ponda, declaring it will field an Independent there and "win the seat" despite pressure from its senior partner. Chief Minister Pramod Sawant confirmed that three Zilla Panchayat seats have been allotted to the MGP under the ongoing seat-

sharing arrangement, while the BJP plans to support Independent candidates in several areas. The remaining ZP candidates, he said, will be revealed on Monday. Even as Power Minister Sudin Dhavlikar announced that the MGP will declare its full list within three days, party president Deepak Dhavlikar downplayed the significance of the ZP polls, saying the party's primary focus is the 2027 Assembly elections. However, the flashpoint emerged in Curti-Ponda. MGP leader



Ketan Bhatikar lashed out at the BJP's move to claim the constituency, asserting that Curti-Ponda "is an MGP seat" and calling the BJP's decision "surprising and unacceptable." He said the party would not bow to political pressure and would go ahead with its Independent candidate.



Bhatikar further confirmed that the MGP would contest the upcoming Ponda by-election as well. The tensions signal a strain within the alliance even as both parties prepare for crucial local body polls and an increasingly competitive political landscape ahead of 2027.



Winter Session Begins With Political Fireworks as Modi, Priyanka Trade Barbs

■ PM Targets Congress With 'Delivery, Not Drama' Remark; Priyanka Gandhi Hits Back

Team Goemkarponn

New Delhi: Ahead of the Winter Session of Parliament, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a sharp attack on the Opposition, saying some parties were unable to accept their defeat in the

Bihar election and should not turn Parliament into a "meltdown zone". He asserted that the session should focus on national progress, not political theatrics. The Winter Session, which begins today and

CONTD TO PAGE 06...

Tawadkar Warns GFP on Meeting Norms, Says Law Applies to All

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: Canacona MLA and Minister Ramesh Tawadkar has responded to the Goa Forward Party's Poinguinim meeting controversy, stressing that all political groups must strictly adhere to the code of conduct. He said that permissions for any public meeting during the election code are mandatory and that the police will take action if norms are violated.



"I have neither done politics nor will I do so in the future. I have full faith in my people," Tawadkar said, reiterating that compliance with rules is compulsory for everyone.

Kharge Slams PM Modi for 'Drama', Says Government Ignoring Core Issues

Team Goemkarponn

New Delhi: On the opening day of the Winter Session of Parliament, Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge launched a sharp attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, accusing him of "delivering drama" instead of addressing pressing national concerns. Taking to X, Kharge wrote, "On the first day of the Winter Session, the Prime Minister has once again delivered drama instead of addressing the core issues before Parliament." He



alleged that parliamentary norms and democratic values had been undermined consistently over the last 11 years. Kharge pointed out that during the previous Monsoon Session alone,

at least 12 bills were passed in haste — some in under 15 minutes and others without any discussion. He claimed that major legislations, including the "anti-farmer black laws," GST, and the

Indian Civil Security Code, were "bulldozed through Parliament." The Congress chief also accused PM Modi of staying silent on key national issues. "When the issue of Manipur was raised, you remained silent until the Opposition brought a no-confidence motion," he said. He further alleged that Booth Level Officers (BLOs) were being overburdened due to the ongoing SIR process, leading to loss of lives. "BLOs are continuously losing their lives due to the

CONTD TO PAGE 06..

Pernem on Alert as "Omkar" Elephant Re-Enters Goa; Forest Teams Intensify Monitoring

Team Goemkarponn

PERNEM: Panic returned to Patradevi on Sunday after confirmation that the rogue elephant known as "Omkar" had crossed into Goa once again. Forest Department officials have heightened vigilance in the region and begun tracking the animal's movements in real time to prevent damage to fields and property. Special teams



have been stationed along the border to steer the elephant back into Maharashtra. The renewed

worry comes in the wake of recent incidents involving the same elephant. Barely two months ago, Omkar

rampaged through Mopa, Torsem and Tambosem, leaving extensive agricultural destruction in its trail. The elephant had also caused major crop loss across Banda, Insuli and Amboli in Maharashtra's Sindhudurg district. Despite sustained efforts by Maharashtra's forest authorities, the jumbo remained unmanageable for more than 60 days.

Firecrackers Lined Up for Night Event at Vagator Beach

Team Goemkarponn

VAGATOR: Several firecrackers were found lined up along the Vagator Beach shoreline on Sunday evening ahead of a planned night event, sparking outrage among local residents and environmental activists. The area is a recognised turtle nesting zone, and the move is being viewed as potentially illegal under coastal and wildlife



protection laws. Residents said that loud explosions and bright flashes from firecrackers could severely disturb nesting turtles and other marine life. They have questioned whether the

CONTD TO PAGE 06..

A crackdown that confuses law with intimidation

The warning from the Goa Chief Electoral Office that hiding Portuguese citizenship will be treated as a criminal offence may sound firm and decisive. In reality, it exposes an uneasy truth. The state has chosen legal muscle where clarity, consultation and compassion were needed. This shift risks turning a long-standing administrative puzzle into a social fault line. For decades the question of Portuguese nationality among Goans has lived in a grey zone. Thousands have registered births in Portugal because the law there allows descendants of pre-Liberation Goans to claim nationality by ancestry. Many did so not as a political act but as a practical tool for work, education or family prospects abroad. For a long time, Indian authorities themselves did not treat this as an automatic renunciation of Indian citizenship. That ambiguity carried on through passport renewals, voter enrolments and official documents. Today the state wants to treat the same ambiguity as deceit. The new warning frames non-disclosure as a criminal act and hints at severe punishment. The signal is unmistakable.

The state plans to deal with the issue not as a complicated legal and historical matter but as wrongdoing. That marks a troubling shift. Citizenship is not a bureaucratic slip. It shapes a person's right to live in the only home they have known. When authorities move against people who may have held Indian passports, voter cards and property documents for decades they must act with precision and fairness. Instead, the approach has become heavy-handed. People have faced passport cancellations without proper notice, and their right to respond has often been

This move sidesteps the real problem. India never created a clear, consistent framework for dealing with Goans who acquired Portuguese nationality by virtue of birth registration. Successive governments allowed the matter to linger in uncertainty. As a result, many citizens genuinely believed they were not doing anything unlawful. They renewed Indian documents with official approval and lived their lives as Indians. The state cannot now rewrite the rules and punish people for acting under decades of mixed signals.

If the aim is to protect the integrity of the electoral rolls, the solution is simple. Create a transparent system that allows people to declare their status without fear of criminalisation.

ignored. Now they face the spectre of criminal action layered on top of administrative penalties. This move sidesteps the real problem. India never created a clear, consistent framework for dealing with Goans who acquired Portuguese nationality by virtue of birth registration. Successive governments allowed the matter to linger in uncertainty. As a result, many citizens genuinely believed they were not doing anything unlawful. They renewed Indian documents with official approval and lived their lives as Indians. The state cannot now rewrite the rules and punish people for acting under decades of mixed signals. If the aim is to protect the integrity of the

electoral rolls, the solution is simple. Create a transparent system that allows people to declare their status without fear of criminalisation. Provide time, hearings and appeals. Make the legal consequences clear and uniform. Public institutions should not behave like traps that spring after years of silence. The bigger mistake in this crackdown lies in its disregard for Goa's unique history. Identity here is layered.

Families that lived under Portuguese rule for centuries cannot be forced into neat administrative boxes without acknowledging that past. National law must be upheld but it cannot ignore the lived reality of people whose ties to Portugal come from ancestry rather than contemporary political loyalty. Reducing the issue to crime also feeds an unhealthy narrative. It paints thousands of ordinary Goans as suspects. Many work abroad, send money home, and maintain strong roots in villages and towns across the state. Treating them as offenders weakens trust and fuels resentment. It risks pitting people against institutions that should protect their rights, not undermine them. The state should step back and ask what outcome it truly wants. If the goal is clarity, then start with transparency. If the goal is compliance, then create a humane process that encourages honest disclosure. And if the goal is fairness, then stop blaming citizens for confusion that the government itself allowed to persist. Criminalisation may look strong on paper, but it solves nothing. It deepens uncertainty, damages trust and turns a historical identity question into a courtroom matter. Goa deserves better than a crackdown that punishes people for living with the legacies of their own history.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Antonio Peregrino Da Costa - The Musician who taught Life with a Smile



Everyone in Campal will know the three happy-go-lucky brothers - Ravi, Robson Peregrino da Costa and Rafael Pdacosta - from the house by the St. Inez creek. The huge Peregrino house in that beautiful Campal heritage area was where so many of our younger days were spent. As kids, we played lots of football at the Campal ground, at times also at the Don Bosco school ground, and the brothers would occasionally join us. With the part Brazilian blood running through them, all three were naturally gifted footballers, even though they never pursued it seriously. Now, they are scattered in different parts, but back then, when they all used to be living in Campal, they were ever so friendly, always cracking jokes, bringing lightness to every occasion. On Sundays, we sometimes played cricket in the lane outside their house.

And there were those moments when they'd wear scary masks (especially Rafael) just to spook people walking by - all in fun and in the true spirit of joy and jest of course. Their cousin, now Aldona MLA Carlos Alvares Ferreira, would drop in once in a while, sharing with us some interesting legal talks of those days. And of course, there were also those mini-parties at their place - full of noise, dance, laughter, and music. If anyone ever tried to wonder where this jolly nature of theirs came from, the answer was simple - it came straight from their dad, Antonio Peregrino Da Costa. The man who set the tone of the entire household, whose good humour, patience, and easy smile shaped the very atmosphere in which those three brothers grew up.

A name spoken with love and respect in the area, he was a well-known music teacher, a quiet master of the violin, and a man gifted not just with musical talent but with the rare patience to teach it.

Every single time we visited their home, he would greet us with his trademark customary line, spoken with an unmistakable spark in his eyes: "Is Everything fine, is everything under control." Yes Sir, we would respond. Around him, fun, noise, pranks, and youthful chaos swirled all the time - yet not once did he lose his cool. His calm almost legendary, his humour extremely likeable, and his heart delightfully large. Nearly touching 90 the last time I met him a few years ago, he picked up his violin and played a beautiful musical piece for me - fingers aged, but spirit young as ever. It is a memory I will cherish forever. Today, as we fondly remember this remarkable gentleman, it is impossible not to smile. For even as he steps toward the gates of heaven, I can almost hear him asking St. Peter, with that familiar grin and that same reassuring tone before entering: "Is Everything fine, is everything under control inside?" Rest in peace, dear Mr. Antonio. Your music, your humour, and your spirit will echo in Campal - and in our hearts - while those beautiful memories will never fade.

By Sandeep Heble

BJP releases first list of 19 candidates for ZP elections

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Goa BJP announced its first slate of 19 candidates for the December 20 Zilla Panchayat polls, becoming the second party after AAP to declare its nominees. The upcoming ZP elections are being seen as an important indicator of public mood ahead of the 2027 Assembly polls, with the ruling party treating this as a key organisational test at the grassroots. Contesting in alliance with the MGP, the BJP's initial list includes four women, three ST, two OBC, one SC, and nine general category candidates. Among the



prominent names is Siddhesh Naik of Corlim, sitting ZP member, former North Goa ZP chairperson and son of Union Minister of State Shripad Naik. North Goa candidates: Sapna Mapari (Colvale),

Sagar Maulankar (Sirsaim), Franzilia Rodrigues (Calangute), Amit Asnodkar (Socorro), Reshma Bandodkar (Reis-Magos), Sandeep Salgaonkar (Penha-de-France), Raghuvir

Kuncolienkar (Taleigao), Padmakar Malik (Latambarcem), Sundar Naik (Pale), Namdev Chari (Honda), Nilesh Parwar (Querim), Premnath Dalvi (Nagargao), Sameksha Naik (Usgao-Ganje), and Shramesh Bhonsle (Betqui-Khandola). South Goa candidates: Pritesh Gaonkar (Curti), Mohan Gaonkar (Sanvordem), Shidharth Gauns Dessai (Zeldem), and Sunil Gawas (Sancoale). Party sources say the BJP hopes the ZP performance will demonstrate its organisational depth and rural connectivity as it works towards the more significant political battle in 2027.

SIR Drive Flags 90,000 Goa voters for removal

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: In a major clean-up of Goa's electoral rolls, nearly 90,000 voters have been identified for deletion during the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR), Chief Electoral Officer Sanjay Goel announced on Sunday. According to officials, these names fall under the ASDD category — Absent, Shifted, Dead, or Duplicate — after Booth Level Officers carried out multiple rounds of field verification. Many were not found at their listed addresses, had permanently relocated, were reported deceased, or confirmed being registered elsewhere. These names will not appear in the draft



electoral roll scheduled for release on December 16. Goel said that the complete list of the flagged voters will be displayed on the CEO's website as well as at District Returning Officers' offices and other public locations. Anyone who believes they have been wrongly categorised can file a claim during the objections period by submitting Form 6 along with proof; valid cases will be reinstated in the final roll.

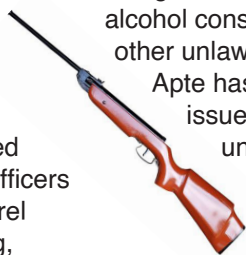
Illegal air gun seized, man confesses to Podoshe firing incidents

Team Goemkarponn

VALPOI: Authorities have made a breakthrough in the recent gunshot incident reported from Podoshe, Sattari. A joint team from Valpoi Police Station and the Forensic Science Laboratory carried out a detailed search at Housing Board, Zariwada. During the operation at House No. 131/13, conducted in the presence of owner Nandkumar Mahadev Apte, officers initially found nothing amiss. However, a locked

storeroom next to the residence raised suspicion. When Apte refused to open it, police broke the lock and continued their search. Inside, officers recovered a blue barrel containing a long bag, which held a professional air gun equipped with a scope. Apte had no licence for the weapon, which he had been using illegally. On questioning, Apte admitted to firing the shots, telling police he discharged the weapon to scare away groups gathering late

at night in the area for alcohol consumption and other unlawful activities. Apte has been issued a notice under Section 35(3) and instructed to cooperate with investigators until the inquiry is complete. The investigation is being conducted by PSI Prathamesh Gawas, under the supervision of SDPO Bicholim and PI Videsh Shirodkar, with overall supervision by SP North Harish Madkaikar.



HC issues notice to Calangute MLA over long-pending demolition of illegal Nazri Beach Resort structures

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Bombay High Court at Goa has pulled up Calangute MLA Michael Lobo, issuing him a notice over allegations that he failed to act on a demolition order pertaining to illegal constructions at the Nazri Beach Resort, developed by M/s Elite Builders, in which he is a partner. Lobo has been directed to file his response by February 4, 2026, signalling a fresh push in a case that has remained unexecuted for seven years despite



approvals from every judicial authority, including the Supreme Court. The High Court's intervention follows a writ petition filed by an Assagao resident, who has accused the State government, the Goa Coastal Zone Management Authority (GCZMA) and the

Calangute panchayat of intentionally delaying action to shield the politically connected developer. The petition highlights that the demolition order—originally issued by the GCZMA on July 9, 2018 for structures in Survey Nos.

CEO Clarifies Misuse of Term 'OCI', Says He Meant 'Overseas' Voters

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Goa, has issued a clarification after the CEO inadvertently referred to "OCI" while addressing the media during a press conference on November 30 at Altinho, Panaji. The remark came during a briefing on the ongoing Special Intensive Revision

(SIR) of electoral rolls. The CEO clarified that the term "OCI" (Overseas Citizen of India) was mistakenly used in place of "overseas voters." According to the CEO, Goa currently has 88 overseas electors — all Indian citizens residing abroad — and the Election Commission has enabled online submission of Form 6A (EF) for them.

High Court overturns conviction of Panaji Income Tax Officer in 2009 bribery trap case

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The High Court has overturned the 2016 conviction of Income Tax Officer C.V. Narayana Reddy in a 2009 CBI bribery trap case, ruling that the prosecution failed to establish the essential ingredient of demand for illegal gratification. Reddy, who was serving as Income Tax Officer in Ward 12, Panaji, had been found guilty by the North

Goa Sessions Court in October 2016 for allegedly seeking and accepting a bribe from the managing partner of a cruise company during scrutiny of the firm's 2007–08 income tax return. He was sentenced to two years' simple imprisonment under provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act and subsequently appealed the verdict. Before the High Court, Reddy's advocate Rohan

Desai argued that the prosecution's account of the alleged bribe demand—its timing, amount, and purported repetitions during verification and at the trap—was marred by contradictions, omissions, and later "improvements," rendering it unreliable. He further submitted that the trial court had drawn unwarranted inferences about Reddy's presence with the complainant at a



hotel, instead of grounding its conclusions on concrete proof of demand, and had improperly invoked the statutory presumption without first establishing the necessary foundational facts.

Nigerian National Arrested With Ecstasy, Charas in Pernem Raid

Team Goemkarponn

PERNEM: A 40-year-old Nigerian national, Joseph Osuagwu Kelechi, was arrested by Pernem Police on Friday after a narcotics raid at New Housing Colony, Pethechawada, Corgao, led to the seizure of Ecstasy tablets, Charas and cash. The raid, conducted between 12:47 pm and 2:40 pm on November 29 based on inputs received by PSI Sahil S. Naik, resulted in the recovery of 13 pink Ecstasy tablets weighing



3.66 grams and 23.88 grams of Charas, together valued at around ₹1.05 lakh. The drugs were reportedly concealed in the dicky of a Yamaha Fascino (GA-03-BA-6901).

Police also seized a black RFID-tagged leather purse containing ₹9,600 in cash, along with the scooter used in the offence. The search and seizure were carried out after following

all mandatory NDPS procedures, officials said. Kelechi, currently residing at Pethechawada, Corgao and at a second address in Cunchelim, Mapusa, was placed under arrest at 6:21 pm the same day in compliance with Supreme Court guidelines. An express report has been filed given the seriousness of the offence, and the FRRO has been requested to inform the Nigerian Consulate. Further investigation is being carried out by PSI Sahil S. Naik.

Pillion Rider Killed After High-Speed Motorcycle Crash in Loutolim

Team Goemkarponn

MAPUSA: P LOUTOLIM: A pillion rider died and the rider was grievously injured after a Kawasaki Ninja motorcycle crashed into a road divider in the early hours of Sunday near the Aryaman Sai showroom. According to a state complaint filed by ASI Hemant Gaude, the incident occurred on November 30, before 4:58 am, when Everist Gauncar, a resident of Arlem, Raia, allegedly rode his Kawasaki Ninja in a



rash and negligent manner, resulting in the collision. Both Gauncar and his pillion rider, Joliton Fernandes of Carvota, Loutolim, sustained grievous injuries in the crash. Fernandes later succumbed to his injuries at the hospital, police said.

Porvorim Couple Accused of Hiding Pending Land Dispute While Selling Property

Team Goemkarponn

PORVORIM: Porvorim Police have registered a case after a local resident alleged that a senior couple sold their property while concealing an ongoing access-road dispute, causing loss to the buyer. Complainant Siddhesh Naik, 35, of Vijay Nagar, Porvorim, filed the complaint on November 29 at 6:55 pm, stating that the incident pertains to a property transaction dated October 19, 2023 at TNK,

Porvorim. According to the complaint, Prakash Arlekar (73) and Sunita Arlekar (68), residents of Porvorim, sold land bearing Survey Nos.

184/3 and 183/4 at Penha de França, Bardez, measuring 1,424 sq. m, to Vipin Goyal of Mysuru, Karnataka.

It is alleged that the accused couple, acting with common intention, intentionally failed to disclose in the sale deed that a case related to an access road for the property was already

pending before the Inspector of Survey and Land Records, Mapusa. The complaint further states that Prakash Arlekar later informed the Survey Inspector that he would maintain a 4.5-metre-wide access road through the sold property without the knowledge or permission of the buyer, thereby allegedly causing loss to Goyal.

PSI Sitaram Malik of Porvorim Police Station is conducting the

Woman Molested; Friend Assaulted With Bottle and Fork at Arambol Restaurant

Team Goemkarponn

PERNEM: Mandrem Police have registered a case after a woman from Maharashtra complained that she was molested and her friend assaulted late Friday night near a beach restaurant in Arambol. According to the police, the incident occurred around 11:45 pm on November 28 near Hang Out Beach Restaurant at Madhalawada, Arambol. The complainant, 32, currently staying at a resort in Arambol, alleged that Jay Thakur, a resident of Morjim and originally from Madhya Pradesh, along with two unidentified associates, threw beer on her in public view. Thakur then allegedly touched her shoulder inappropriately, outraging her modesty.



When her friend, Pratik Kirit Soni, intervened, the accused trio allegedly abused him and assaulted him with a beer bottle and a fork, causing injuries to his head. Police registered the offence at 9:33 pm on November 29. Further investigation

Tulsi Plant Vandalised Outside Ancestral Home in Mapusa; Case Registered

Team Goemkarponn

MAPUSA: Police have registered a case after a resident of Gaunsawado reported that unknown persons trespassed onto his property and vandalised a sacred Tulsi structure outside his ancestral home. Complainant Siddesh Prakash Narvekar, a resident of H.No. E-91, Gaunsawado, lodged the complaint late on November 29 at 11:53 pm, stating that the incident occurred on November 25



around 7:30 pm. According to him, unknown accused persons, acting with common intention, entered his property without permission and

Man Allegedly Choked, Assaulted and Robbed in Varca; Attempt to Murder Case Registered

Team Goemkarponn

VARCA: Colva Police have registered a serious offence after a resident of Chadvaddo, Varca alleged that he was assaulted, choked and robbed by two men over previous enmity. Complainant Nicholas Dias reported that the incident occurred on November 18 between 4:00 pm and 4:30 pm while he was walking towards his car after purchasing vegetables.

According to him, the accused Agnelo Rodrigues and Diago



Rodrigues, both residents of Uddo Laxette Vaddo, Varca intercepted him and, acting with common intention, restrained him from proceeding and assaulted him with fists and kicks.

Dias further alleged that the duo choked him to the point where he was unable to breathe, amounting to an attempt to commit murder. The accused then allegedly removed his shirt,

dragged him behind a nearby structure and continued the assault. During the attack, accused Agnelo Rodrigues allegedly snatched the complainant's Samsung mobile phone and fled, committing theft. Police said the motive appears to be linked to previous enmity between the parties.

The case is under investigation by LPSI Raksha Naik of Colva Police Station.

Tourist Bus Mysteriously Gutted in Late-Night Fire at Agonda

Team Goemkarponn

AGONDA/CANACONA: A luxury tourist bus that had just transported 40 pilgrims bound for Partagal Math went up in flames under mysterious circumstances late Saturday night at Agonda. The nine-month-old bus (GA-08 Z-0144), which had arrived from Mopa Airport, had dropped the pilgrims at a beachfront hotel. The group was scheduled to be picked up early Sunday morning for darshan at Partagali Math, currently hosting 11-day celebrations marking the Math's



550th year, where Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently unveiled Asia's tallest 77-ft bronze statue of Prabhu Rama. With the next pickup scheduled for 5:15 am, the owner-

driver chose to stay overnight in the village and parked the vehicle near the SAG Grounds. After stepping out for dinner, he returned around 9.40 pm to find smoke emerging from the bus. He immediately attempted to douse the flames using the onboard fire extinguisher, but the fire had already spread rapidly through the luxury seating area, forcing him to retreat due to thick smoke.

Locals rushed to assist and alerted the police and fire services. By the time the fire tender arrived, the bus was engulfed in flames.

Rash Driving Claims Life of 55-Year-Old in Rumdamawada

Team Goemkarponn

MORMUGAO: A fatal accident was reported on Saturday evening near the motor vehicle washing centre beside Shirodkar building at Rumdamawada, Mormugao. Police have registered an offence based on a complaint filed by HC Hirilual Naik of Mormugao Police Station. According to the inquiry,



the accused, Srikrushn Bandekar (20), a resident of Baina, allegedly drove his Hyundai i10 sports car (GA 06 E 5006) in a rash and negligent manner while travelling from Sada to Vasco.

Agonda Gramsabha turns stormy over 4th mobile tower, app-based taxi operations

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: The Agonda Gramsabha witnessed a heated debate over the installation of a fourth mobile tower within 100 meters of an existing tower in a residential area, alongside issues regarding app-based taxi operations in the village. Residents raised concerns over potential radiation effects, claiming a decline in coconut sizes and



disappearance of five bird species. Countering these claims, other villagers argued that bird species continue to thrive, with nests observed on existing mobile towers, and stressed the need

for adequate network coverage in the digital era. Ex-Sarpanch Badal Naikgaunkar dismissed radiation concerns as a myth. Sarpanch Nilesh Pagui clarified that the panchayat has not issued any NOC for the tower. However, citing correspondence from the Deputy Collector and Directorate of Panchayats, he noted that the local body has no authority over mobile tower installations.

47-Year-Old Man Found dead at Calangute Rehabilitation Home

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: A 47-year-old man undergoing treatment for alcohol de-addiction was found dead by suicide at a rehabilitation facility in Gaurawado, Calangute on Saturday evening. Police said they received a call from PCR Panaji, following which Calangute Police verified that Luckybaboo D. Naik, son of Dayanand Kavlekar @ Naik and resident of Maina, Pilerne, had hanged himself using a towel and blanket tied



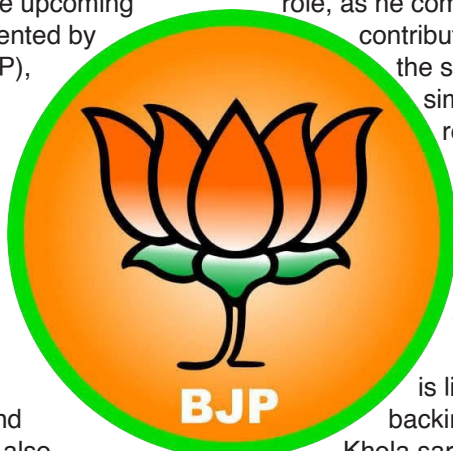
to a metal roof rafter at the New Creation Rehabilitation Home. The information was recorded at 6:53 pm on November 29. During enquiries, both the rehabilitation centre staff and the family members informed police that the deceased had been admitted there

to overcome alcohol addiction. Police said preliminary findings indicate that stress linked to his drinking habits may have led to the act, and no foul play is suspected at this stage. The body has been preserved at the GMC Morgue, Bambolim, for post-mortem and medico-legal procedures.

BJP Confident of Retaining Both Canacona ZP Seats

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: Energised by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to Partagal Math, the BJP camp in Canacona is confident of retaining both Zilla Panchayat seats—Poinguinim and Khola—in the upcoming polls. In Poinguinim, currently represented by Shobhana Gaonkar (ST Women, BJP), party insiders say she is unlikely to be renominated. With the seat now falling under the General category, the BJP is expected to field a new face under the leadership of Minister and Canacona MLA Ramesh Tawadkar. Names doing the rounds include former Loliem-Polem sarpanchs Ajay Loliemkar and Sachin Naik, as well as a local mandal office-bearer and the husband of a sitting panch. Internal dissent is also simmering over potential ticket allocation. The opposition alliance (Congress-GFP-RGP) appears divided even before the poll schedule is finalised. The Goa Forward Party has already declared Prashant Naik as its candidate. Meanwhile, former Khotigao sarpanch Daya Gaonkar—an Isidore Fernandes loyalist who recently joined the Congress—has staked claim to the seat and threatened to contest as an Independent if the seat is allotted to GFP. AAP has also announced its contender: former Khotigao sarpanch Rajesh Gaonkar,



a vocal critic of the BJP and a one-time close associate of Isidore Fernandes. With three corners emerging within the opposition bloc, plans for a one-on-one contest against the BJP may weaken. Political observers say former minister Isidore Fernandes could play a decisive role, as he commands influence in key pockets and may contribute significantly to vote division. In Khola—the second ZP seat under Canacona—a similar tussle is unfolding. With the seat now reserved for OBC, sources say former Deputy Chief Minister Chandrakant 'Babu' Kavlekar has been given a free hand to shortlist a BJP nominee, while MLA Tawadkar is also expected to push candidates from Agonda and Shristhal, which fall under his constituency. Incumbent BJP ZP member Shanu Velip is likely to be replaced. Kavlekar is reportedly backing a new face, including the wife of former Khola sarpanch Ajay Pagui. Tawadkar, meanwhile, is said to be considering candidates from Agonda, with former sarpanch Fatima Rodrigues, ex-panch Shilpa Pagi (wife of Agonda sarpanch Nilesh Pagi), and another local leader emerging as contenders. Though the Congress-GFP-RGP alliance has yet to firm up its choices for Khola, AAP is believed to be preparing to field a candidate. Former MLA Isidore Fernandes, who previously represented two of the three villages under the Khola seat, is expected to influence candidate selection and voter sentiment, given his continuing support base.



Construction Worker Dies After Fall From Fifth-Floor Structure in Ponda

Team Goemkarponn

PONDA: A 26-year-old construction worker died after falling from a height at a building site opposite Ponda Municipality on Saturday morning. Police said they received a call from SDH Ponda at 11:17 am on November 29, informing that a man had been brought in dead following a fall at the site. Upon visiting the location, officers identified the deceased as Ajay Yadav, a resident of Ponda

and originally from Uttar Pradesh. A UD (Unnatural Death) panchanama was conducted, and the body has been preserved at SGD Margao for post-mortem. Preliminary enquiry revealed that Yadav was working on a temporary side-beam centering structure on the fifth floor when he slipped and fell onto the third floor, sustaining fatal head injuries. Further enquiry is being carried out by PSI Pratik Bhat Prabhu of Ponda Police Station.

India's Population Likely to Stabilise by 2080 as Fertility Rates Decline

Kolkata: India's population is projected to stabilise by around 2080 at approximately 1.8 to 1.9 billion, driven by a steady decline in the total fertility rate (TFR), which has now fallen below the replacement level to 1.9. Experts say the country is undergoing a significant demographic transition marked by a sharp drop in birth rates over the past two decades. In 2000, India's TFR stood at 3.5; today, it has nearly halved. According to demographic assessments, the nation's population will peak before 2080 and remain under two billion, signalling a long-term shift towards smaller families. The decline in fertility is attributed to rising development indicators, particularly higher levels of female education. With more women pursuing higher studies and careers, decisions around marriage

and childbirth have choices. Data shows



changed considerably. Increased use of contraceptives, greater awareness, and wider access to reproductive healthcare have also played a major role. Experts note that couples today exercise more control over the timing and number of children, leading to smaller family sizes. Late marriages and expanding economic opportunities have further influenced reproductive

that fertility levels vary sharply across education levels—while illiterate groups still have TFRs above three, the rate drops to between 1.5 and 1.8 among educated sections. Examples from states illustrate this trend. Kerala achieved replacement-level fertility in the late 1980s and now has a TFR of around 1.5. West Bengal has recorded one of the country's biggest fertility declines, with its

TFR dropping from 1.7 in 2013 to 1.3 in 2023. The state now ranks among the lowest fertility regions nationally, alongside Tamil Nadu and just above Delhi, and holds the lowest urban TFR in India. Even as birth rates fall, life expectancy continues to rise due to improvements in healthcare. More people are living beyond 60, bringing new challenges related to elderly care, especially as younger populations migrate for work. Discussions around solutions such as community day-care facilities for senior citizens are gaining momentum. Demographers emphasise that India's shifting population structure will have far-reaching implications for healthcare, employment, and social support systems, making it essential to plan ahead for a changing demographic future.

...CONTD FROM PAGE 01

Winter Session Begins With Political Fireworks as Modi, Priyanka Trade Barbs

runs till December 19, will include 15 sittings. The government is set to introduce 13 Bills, while the Opposition plans to raise concerns over the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voter lists. Addressing reporters, Modi said India had demonstrated to the world that "democracy can deliver" through the strong voter turnout in Bihar, especially among women. He urged the Opposition to rise above electoral disappointment, adding that "some parties are not able to digest defeat", in a veiled reference to the Congress. The Prime Minister also said young MPs should be given more opportunities to speak during debates. "There are many places to do drama. Those who want to do it can do it there. Parliament is for delivery,

not drama," he remarked. Calling for constructive engagement, he cautioned against allowing "negativity" to overshadow the nation-building agenda. Modi accused certain Opposition-ruled states of facing such intense anti-incumbency that their leaders were unable to face the public, resulting in their "anger" being expressed in Parliament. He said he was willing to "give tips" to the Opposition on how to function effectively, but urged them not to "sacrifice MPs" due to frustration over electoral losses. Responding strongly, Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said that the SIR process and rising air pollution were urgent issues demanding parliamentary scrutiny. "Let us discuss them.

Goa Tourism showcases new-age tourism experiences at Malaysia roadshow; strengthens global outreach

Goa: The Department of Tourism, Government of Goa, successfully concluded its exclusive roadshow in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, receiving an encouraging response from the travel trade and strengthening its presence in the Southeast Asian market. The event highlighted Goa's renewed tourism vision, immersive campaigns, and dynamic experiential offerings designed for today's global travellers. The Goa delegation was led by Director of Tourism, Shri Kedar Naik, accompanied by General Manager (Marketing) GTDC, Shri Gavin Dias, along with key officials and industry representatives. The engagement brought together leading tour operators, travel partners, hospitality players from Malaysia, establishing new avenues for collaboration. The event was graced by the presence of First Secretary of the Indian Vivekanand; MATTA



President, Shri Nigel; and Director General of Malaysia Tourism, Shri Datuk Manoharan further strengthening the significance of this international outreach. Hon'ble Minister for Tourism, Shri Rohan A. Khaunte, stated, "Goa is steadily emerging as a global destination driven by innovation, culture,

and sustainability. This roadshow in Malaysia allowed us to present the new vibrancy of Goa, shaped by responsible and regenerative tourism. We are committed to building deeper international partnerships that will further enhance Goa's global positioning and create new opportunities for meaningful travel

experiences." Highlighting the success of the roadshow, Director of Tourism, Shri Kedar Naik, stated, "The response from Malaysian travel trade partners has been extremely encouraging. Goa today stands for diverse experiences, from entertainment and wellness to luxury and curated cultural programmes. This roadshow gave us a platform to showcase the State's emerging strengths."

The roadshow highlighted Goa's key tourism products, signature festivals, improved air connectivity, expanding hotel infrastructure, and a range of new initiatives that reflect the State's forward-looking and experience-driven tourism landscape. These elements, combined with Goa's emphasis on regenerative tourism, position the State as a destination that blends innovation with cultural depth, offering diverse and meaningful experiences for global travellers.

Kharge Slams PM Modi for 'Drama', Says Government Ignoring Core Issues

workload," Kharge stated. Stressing that the Opposition intends to prioritise issues such as alleged "vote theft," he said the ruling BJP must "end the drama of diversion and debate real issues" concerning the public. "The common man is struggling with unemployment, inflation, economic inequality and exploitation of national resources, while those in power are busy with theatrics," he added. Congress leader Jairam Ramesh echoed Kharge's criticism, alleging that the Prime Minister rarely attends Parliament and

avoids engagement with the Opposition. "Before every session, he speaks outside Parliament calling for cooperation, but inside, he ensures that urgent public issues are blocked," Ramesh wrote on X. "If Parliament doesn't function smoothly, the responsibility lies with the Prime Minister and his refusal to allow the Opposition to have its say. His statements before Parliament begins are pure hypocrisy. The biggest dramabaz of them all is talking of drama," he added.

Firecrackers Lined Up for Night Event at Vagator Beach

organisers obtained the necessary permissions to carry out such activities in an ecologically sensitive stretch. Locals have urged the Forest Department, Goa Coastal Zone Management Authority and other authorities to immediately intervene,

verify permissions—if any—and take strict action in case of violations. Environmentalists stressed that Vagator Beach remains under a protected category during the nesting season, and any disturbance could lead to long-term

Rahul Gandhi Declines to Respond to PM's Remarks; Priyanka Gandhi Hits Back

■ PM warns against 'meltdown'; Congress accuses him of avoiding debate

New Delhi: Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, declined to comment on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's sharp criticism of the Congress and other Opposition parties ahead of the Winter Session of Parliament. However, his sister and Wayanad MP, Priyanka Gandhi, delivered a pointed response. Reacting to the Prime Minister's accusation that the Opposition disrupts Parliament, Priyanka Gandhi said issues like the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voter



lists and rising air pollution directly impact the public and must be discussed. "What is Parliament for? It's not drama. Raising issues that matter to the people is not drama. The real drama is blocking



democratic discussions," she said. Earlier, Prime Minister Modi took indirect jabs at the Opposition, expressing hope that Parliament would not witness a "meltdown" following the Opposition

bloc's defeat in the Bihar elections. "There are many places to do drama. Those who want to do it should do it elsewhere. There should be no drama here; only delivery," he said, referring to protests and unruly scenes in the Houses. The Prime Minister urged political leaders to limit "negativity" and focus on nation-building. He alleged that some Opposition-led states face such strong anti-incumbency that their leaders avoid facing the public. "That is why all their anger is brought into Parliament.



300 Indians Evacuated From Cyclone-Hit Sri Lanka by Indian Air Force

Thiruvananthapuram: The Indian Air Force (IAF) has evacuated over 300 Indian nationals stranded in Sri Lanka following the devastation caused by Cyclone Ditwah. The evacuated passengers were flown from Colombo to Thiruvananthapuram, with the aircraft touching down at around 7:30 pm on Sunday. IAF's IL-76 and C-130J heavy-lift aircraft, which had earlier transported rescue supplies and National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) teams to Sri Lanka, were deployed

for the evacuation effort. The operation forms part of Operation Sagar Bandhu, India's ongoing Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) mission supporting Sri Lanka amid severe natural calamities. The Air Force has also been conducting multiple rescue missions within Sri Lanka. IAF helicopters have airlifted 57 Sri Lankan Army personnel from Diyathalawa Army Camp and Colombo to Kotmale a region in the central province completely cut off by road due to landslides.

"Biology Must Serve Peace": India Calls for Major Overhaul of Global Biosecurity Frameworks

New Delhi: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar warned that the risks posed by biological weapons and their potential exploitation by non-state groups have become a real and immediate global concern. Addressing a conference commemorating five decades of the Biological Weapons Convention, he called for an urgent and comprehensive strengthening of

international biosecurity systems.

He noted that the current global security climate, combined with fast-advancing biotechnology, has created unprecedented vulnerabilities. According to him, biological threats can no longer be viewed as hypothetical, and the possibilities of bioterrorism demand far more robust preparedness across nations.

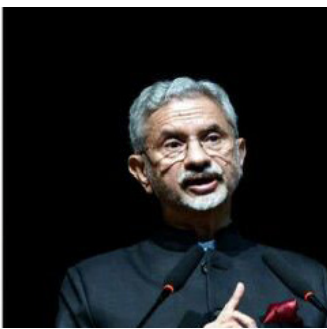
Jaishankar: Politics Now Overtakes Economics, India Must Diversify Supply Sources

■ "The United States, long the underwriter of the contemporary system, has set radically new terms of engagement," Jaishankar said.

New Delhi : External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Saturday said that in today's global environment, politics increasingly outweighs economics, making it vital for India to diversify supply sources to secure its national needs. He was speaking after receiving an Honorary Doctorate from IIM-Calcutta. Jaishankar noted that the world has entered an era of uncertainty where countries must prepare



for disruptions in trade and supply chains. "In an uncertain world, it is all the more important that we continuously diversify supply sources to guarantee our



national needs," he said. Highlighting changes in global diplomacy, he said the United States—traditionally considered the underwriter of the international order—has

adopted "radically new terms of engagement", dealing with countries individually rather than through broader frameworks. India and the US are currently engaged in two negotiations: a framework trade deal focused on tariff issues and a separate comprehensive trade agreement. Jaishankar also pointed out that China has "long played by its own rules" and continues to do so.

Shinde Stresses 'Coalition Dharma' as Poaching Row Strains Mahayuti

Mumbai: Tensions within Maharashtra's ruling Mahayuti alliance have escalated following allegations that the BJP violated a 'non-poaching' pact with its partner, the Shiv Sena led by Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde. The row comes at a crucial time, as the alliance prepares for the

high-stakes Mumbai civic body elections, a contest for the country's richest municipal corporation. Amid rising friction, Eknath Shinde issued a direct message to his ally, emphasising the importance of adhering to coalition principles. "My clear stand is that we fully follow the principles of



coalition dharma, and our alliance partners should also follow the same," he



said. Shinde noted that the alliance was built on the legacy of Balasaheb

Thackeray, Atal Bihari Vajpayee and LK Advani, adding that it was created "not for power or positions but on shared ideology and common principles." Relations between the two parties have been strained in recent weeks, with leaders exchanging politically loaded public statements. Tensions

deepened after the Election Commission's Flying Squad and the Local Crime Branch raided the office of Shahajibapu Patil, a former MLA from the Shinde-led Sena, immediately after his election rally. Patil is contesting against the BJP in the Sangola local body polls.

BCCI Calls Urgent Meeting With Gambhir and Agarkar Ahead of 2nd ODI

New Delhi: The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has convened an urgent meeting with head coach Gautam Gambhir, selection committee chief Ajit Agarkar, and senior board officials ahead of the second ODI against South Africa on Wednesday. The discussion is expected to focus on key issues related to team management, performance, and long-term planning. The development comes at a time when the future roles of senior players Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma have been widely debated, despite both having recently returned to top form with strong performances. According to reports, the meeting will involve



BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia, joint secretary Prabhtej Singh Bhatia, Gambhir, and Agarkar. It remains unclear whether the newly elected BCCI president, Mithun Manhas, will attend. Given that the meeting is scheduled on match day, senior players are not likely to be part of the discussions. A senior BCCI official indicated that the purpose of the meeting is to ensure "selection consistency"

while balancing long-term development and immediate team performance. The board is expected to review concerns that surfaced during India's recent home Test series defeat to South Africa, which highlighted tactical inconsistencies both on and off the field. With Gambhir and Agarkar present, the board aims to seek clarity on the current management approach and lay down a

clearer roadmap ahead of upcoming assignments. Officials are especially keen on forward planning, considering India's next Test series is eight months away. The board also views the next two major tournaments—the T20 World Cup next year and the ODI World Cup that follows—as crucial opportunities, making it important to address gaps swiftly. The situation has parked speculation about communication challenges between team management and senior players. There were rumours of the BCCI urging Virat Kohli to reconsider his Test retirement, but the star batter dismissed any possibility of a return after the Ranchi ODI on Sunday.

Lalit's Fighting Fifty in Vain as Hyderabad Beat Goa by 7 Wickets

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Goa suffered their second defeat in the Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 Trophy, going down to Hyderabad by seven wickets on Sunday at Eden Gardens, Kolkata. Despite posting a competitive 160/4, Goa's bowling attack couldn't contain Hyderabad, who chased down the target in a blistering 14 overs. Put in to bat, Goa had a shaky start as openers Arjun Tendulkar (7) and Ishan Gadekar (1) fell early. Abhinav Tejarana (21 off 14) and Deepraj Gaonkar (23 off 20) tried to stabilise the innings, but it was Lalit Yadav's sensational knock that lifted the team. Lalit hammered an unbeaten 85 off 48 balls, smashing

10 fours and 3 sixes, rescuing Goa from 67/4 and stitching a vital 93-run stand with Darshan Misal (18*). Hyderabad's Tanay Thyagarajan stood out with the ball, returning impressive figures of 2/20.

In reply, Hyderabad came out all guns blazing. Skipper Pragyan Reddy led from the front with a commanding 67* off 34 deliveries, featuring 4 fours and 5 sixes. Aman Rao chipped in with a solid 40, ensuring the chase remained on track. Goa's bowlers—Deepraj Gaonkar, Darshan Misal and Vikas Singh—picked one wicket apiece but couldn't stem the flow of runs. With this loss, Goa remain on 4 points in the Elite B group.

Rahul Praises Kohli and Rohit After India Seal 17-Run Win Over South Africa

New Delhi: India skipper KL Rahul hailed Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma for making the opposition "look silly" with their match-defining performances in the first ODI against South Africa in Ranchi on Sunday. Kohli's majestic 135 off 120 balls—his 52nd ODI century—along with Rohit's composed 57 helped India secure a tense 17-run victory and take a 1-0 lead in the three-match series. "Watching Rohit and Kohli bat like that is always fun. They've made oppositions look silly and shown why they are who they are," Rahul said at the post-match presentation. "I've seen this for a long time, but it's even more enjoyable when you're sharing the dressing room with them." Despite India's strong batting display, Rahul admitted feeling nervous during the final overs as South Africa kept the contest alive. "I'd be lying if I said there were no butterflies. We're playing ODI cricket after a while and expectations are always there. But we



kept taking wickets, and the bowlers stuck to their plans," he said. Rahul, who batted at No. 6, said the role has been a new and valuable learning experience. "Batting at No. 6 is okay; the job is to do what the team needs. It's the role I've had for the last few series and it's helping my personal development." He praised young pacer Harshit Rana and spinner Kuldeep Yadav for holding their nerve in a high-scoring contest. "Harshit has great potential. He's tall, bowls fast and getting those early wickets is what we expect from him. Kuldeep has been doing this job consistently—he's key for us." Kuldeep, who claimed four wickets, said he relied on variations to unsettle the South African batters.

MCL 11: MCC Avengers and MCC Thunder Register Commanding Wins

Team Goemkarponn

Margao: The MCL 11 T20 cricket tournament delivered an action-packed day at the MCC Ground, Margao, with MCC Avengers and MCC Thunder securing impressive victories in their respective matches. In the opening encounter, MCC Avengers outplayed MCC Stallions with a convincing 6-wicket win. Chasing 143, the Avengers showcased a



strong batting display led by Venkatesh Nevagi, who contributed 36 runs along with a disciplined spell of bowling that

earned him the Man of the Match award. Solid performances from Amod Borkar, who took 3/20 and later added 39 runs, and

Vedant Naik, who scored 37, helped the team seal the chase in just 15.2 overs. Earlier, the Stallions posted 142/9 in 20 overs, with Dr. Ankush Patil remaining unbeaten on 35 and Rueben Karekar adding 25, while the Avengers' bowlers kept the opposition under pressure throughout. In the afternoon match, MCC Thunder registered another comfortable 6-wicket victory, this time against MCC Tigers.

Over 24,000 Runners Join 9th Adani Ahmedabad Marathon in Tribute to Armed Forces

Team Goemkarponn

New Delhi: Ahmedabad turned into a vibrant hub of athletic spirit and national pride as more than 24,000 participants took part in the 9th Adani Ahmedabad Marathon at the Sabarmati Riverfront Sports Park. Held under the purpose-driven theme #Run4OurSoldiers, the event paid tribute to India's Armed Forces, carrying added emotional weight this year in the backdrop of Operation Sindoor. The



marathon was flagged off by Pranav Adani, Director of Adani Enterprises Ltd.; Air Marshal Nagesh Kapoor; Major General Gaurav Bagga; fitness ambassador Mandira Bedi; Olympic medallist

Gagan Narang; Preeti Jhangiani, Vice President of the Indian Olympic Association; and celebrated designer Aaquib Wani. Indian cricketer and Gujarat Giants signee Yastika

Bhatia also graced the occasion. More than 4,000 personnel from the military and police forces joined the run, underscoring the marathon's message of respect and solidarity with those who serve the nation. Participants competed across the Full Marathon, Half Marathon, 10 km, and 5 km categories along a scenic route highlighting Ahmedabad's iconic landmarks, including Gandhi Ashram, Atal Bridge, and Ellis Bridge.