



ROMEO LANE VAGATOR TO BE DEMOLISHED

Crackdown Begins After Birch Fire Tragedy

Team Goemkarponn

VAGATOR: In the aftermath of the devastating fire at Birch by Romeo Lane in Arpora that claimed 25 lives, the Chief Minister's Office has directed the district administration to initiate demolition proceedings against Romeo Lane in Vagator. Sources indicate the demolition drive could begin at any moment, with teams already on standby. Even as the directive came in, the local administration on Monday sealed the Romeo Lane

club and restaurant in Vagator, along with another establishment operating under the same name. Both outlets are promoted by brothers Saurabh and Gaurav Luthra, who remain untraceable and are now considered absconding by authorities. The Vagator outlet – perched along the coastline and often seen as one of the area's more high-profile nightlife venues – has a long history of controversy. It has repeatedly been flagged for alleged illegal constructions,

environmental breaches and violations of High Court directives. Despite a series of inspections and official notices over the years, residents and activists say the club continued operating with impunity. Local groups had consistently raised concerns, filing complaints and petitions citing unchecked expansions and non-compliance. Their allegations suggested that enforcement actions were either delayed or not carried through effectively. After the Arpora tragedy,

however, officials moved swiftly. The sealing of both Romeo Lane premises was described as a "precautionary step" aimed at verifying all structural, safety and licensing compliances, a senior officer said. With demolition instructions now issued from the highest level, authorities are expected to make an official announcement soon. Security in the Vagator area has been discreetly strengthened in anticipation of public attention once demolition activity begins.



Tension Erupts at Canacona IDC as Toxic Molasses Waste Dumped Into Open Pits

Minister Tawadkar Rushes to Site.

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: Panic and anger spread through the Canacona Industrial Estate at Shristhal on Monday after toxic molasses waste from a damaged

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Centre Directs IndiGo To Cut Flights By 5 Per Cent, Around 110 Services Removed Daily

Government Directs IndiGo To Cut Winter Schedule After Widespread Flight Disruptions.

New Delhi: The Centre has ordered a reduction in IndiGo's winter schedule after a week of severe flight disruptions that affected thousands of travellers across the

country. The aviation regulator has instructed the airline to scale back operations by five per cent, which translates to roughly 110 fewer flights each day. The released slots will



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PIL Seeks Court-Monitored SIT Into Birch Fire Tragedy; HC Hearing on Dec 16

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: A Public Interest Litigation has been filed before the High Court seeking the formation of a court-supervised Special



Court is scheduled to hear the plea on December 16. According to police, the blaze erupted shortly after midnight at Birch by Romeo Lane, a popular

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India Condemns Deadly Pakistan Strikes On Afghanistan, Reaffirms Support For Kabul's Sovereignty

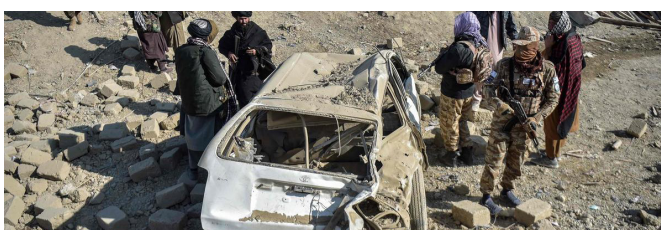
Fresh border clashes break out weeks after ceasefire agreement aimed at ending prolonged tensions

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: A Public Interest Litigation has been filed before the High Court seeking the formation of a

court-supervised Special Investigation Team (SIT) to conduct an in-depth probe into the Birch by Romeo Lane nightclub fire.

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21 Victims' Mortal Remains Sent Home With Full Dignity

Goa Govt Assures Support for Remaining Families.

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The mortal remains of 21 victims of the Arpora fire tragedy have been transported with full dignity to their home states, including Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Assam and West Bengal. The Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said the Government of Goa has ensured complete assistance to the families during the process. In an official statement, the Office of Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant said



the administration has provided "all necessary support in facilitating the

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A Crisis Foretold: Why Goa's Air Travel Chaos Exposes a Failure of Regulation

The Goa's recent wave of flight cancellations and rerouting did not arrive as a surprise. It was the final act of a slow-burning crisis that regulators and the government saw coming yet chose to treat with complacency. When nearly the entire nation's largest airline stumbles and drags the country's busiest tourist destinations down with it, the question is not what went wrong but why those responsible for aviation oversight failed to act when it mattered.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation had more than enough warning signs. Airlines have operated with tight crew rosters for years. Pilots raised fatigue concerns long before this meltdown. Internal industry conversations spoke openly of understaffing, unrealistic scheduling and excessive dependence on a single carrier controlling a disproportionate share of India's domestic market. None of this was hidden. DGCA knew it. The Ministry of Civil Aviation knew it. Yet both continued to assume that market forces would correct themselves. Instead, the collapse came at the worst possible moment. Goa, which relies heavily on steady flight operations during the tourist season, found itself paralysed. Travellers were stranded, hotels were left with last-minute cancellations, and the state's tourism-driven economy took an entirely avoidable hit. Peak season is not the time to discover that airline operations have been stretched to breaking point. That discovery should have been made months earlier by the very authorities tasked with maintaining safety and reliability. The DGCA's explanation that crew duty limitations triggered cancellations only underscores the lack of foresight. FDTL norms exist to protect pilots and passengers. Their implementation was phased and well-signalled. If an airline fails to prepare adequate staffing for a known regulatory requirement, the regulator's job is not to accept excuses but to enforce compliance. Instead, enforcement was soft, and oversight seemed largely documentary. When rules on rest periods were strengthened, DGCA should have anticipated staffing shortages and required mandatory corrective plans.

The DGCA's explanation that crew duty limitations triggered cancellations only underscores the lack of foresight. FDTL norms exist to protect pilots and passengers. Their implementation was phased and well-signalled. If an airline fails to prepare adequate staffing for a known regulatory requirement, the regulator's job is not to accept excuses but to enforce compliance. Instead, enforcement was soft, and oversight seemed largely documentary. When rules on rest periods were strengthened, DGCA should have anticipated staffing shortages and required mandatory corrective plans. That never happened.

The government's role is equally worrying. Aviation infrastructure has been under pressure for years. Air traffic control staffing, runway capacity, seasonal weather constraints and simultaneous operations at Dabolim and Mopa all needed active monitoring. Goa's tourism sector cannot depend on hope.

That never happened. The government's role is equally worrying. Aviation infrastructure has been under pressure for years. Air traffic control staffing, runway capacity, seasonal weather constraints and simultaneous operations at Dabolim and Mopa all needed active monitoring. Goa's tourism sector cannot depend on hope. It needs a system capable of withstanding predictable seasonal surges. Yet successive administrations have allowed airports to function with minimal

contingencies, leaving passengers at the mercy of operational bottlenecks. What this episode exposes is a regulatory culture far too reactive. Authorities intervene only once the crisis is in motion, never when it can still be prevented. When DGCA finally responded, it did so by issuing temporary relaxations instead of demanding accountability. The message was clear: the system will bend rules to accommodate failure rather than reform the practices that caused it. The larger question is why India remains dependent on a single airline to keep its domestic network running. Market concentration of this scale is a structural vulnerability. When one airline sneezes, the entire network catches a fever. A regulator's duty includes anticipating such risks and diversifying operational capacity, not waiting for headlines to expose them.

For Goa, the consequences go beyond delayed flights. The state's economy depends on trust. Travellers make plans months in advance. When dozens of flights are cancelled without prior warning, it signals unreliability—not only of airlines but of governance. Destinations are chosen not just for beaches and nightlife but for ease of access. If reaching Goa becomes unpredictable, visitors will go elsewhere. This should be a watershed moment. DGCA must move from monitoring paperwork to monitoring performance. Airlines must be forced to maintain realistic rosters and operational buffers. Airports must undergo regular audits that evaluate not only safety but resilience. The Ministry must address monopolistic vulnerabilities in the aviation market. And above all, the government must treat aviation not as an industry that will simply self-correct but as critical infrastructure requiring constant oversight. The chaos in Goa did not happen overnight. It was the product of long neglect. The lesson is simple: ignoring systemic weaknesses does not make them disappear. It only guarantees that when failure arrives, it arrives loudly, publicly and painfully. Goa deserved better, and India's travellers deserved far more from those meant to protect them.

EDITOR'S SPEAK

Accountability Cannot Stop at the Club Owner

-By Pradeep Padgaonkar

The arrest warrant issued for the owners of the Birch by Romeo Lane nightclub in Arpora is a necessary step, but it is far from sufficient. The tragedy that unfolded there was not the result of one man's negligence. It was the product of a chain of failures across multiple departments, each of which had a duty to protect the public and enforce the law. Until we confront that uncomfortable truth, Goa will remain vulnerable to the same disasters repeating themselves. The Chief Minister has said that several managers and others linked to the case have been detained and assured that anyone responsible will face jail time. These statements offer reassurance, but they cannot be allowed to become the final word. The real test lies in whether responsibility is traced beyond the private actors who profited from this illegal and unsafe establishment, and extended to the officials whose signatures, approvals and silence made the operation possible. The first department that must come under scrutiny is Fire Services.

A fire NOC is not a piece of paper. It is a life-saving certification meant to guarantee that a premises has ventilation, functional exits, sprinklers and active fire dousing systems. In this case, the club lacked even the most basic safety provisions. The question is simple. Did the fire officer actually visit the premises before issuing the NOC. If not, how did the clearance come through. If yes, how could such glaring violations be ignored. Either scenario points to negligence or complicity. The Health Department's role is equally troubling. A health clearance implies that the officer has inspected the premises and found it fit for public occupation.

Approving a space that lacked fire exits and basic safety measures is not a technical oversight. It is a grave lapse that put hundreds of lives at risk. Then there is the Panchayat. The Secretary who granted the trade licence had the authority to halt operations until compliance was demonstrated. Instead, the licence was issued, allowing an unsafe and illegal structure to run as a high-density commercial outlet. The Police must also be held accountable for failing to enforce safety norms and for permitting large gatherings in a venue that lacked emergency infrastructure. The Tourism Department cannot be left out of this chain of responsibility. Goa has been aggressively marketed as a party destination. With that comes an obligation to ensure that venues meet standards.

Permissions granted without inspection or in disregard of safety norms raise serious questions about the department's processes and integrity. It is important to remember that an illegal establishment of this scale does not operate without administrative support. Each approval, each ignored complaint and each renewed licence contributed to the inferno that killed innocent people. The law provides for action under sections related to culpable homicide, murder and public safety. These must be considered not only for the owners but for every official whose actions or omissions enabled the tragedy. The Chief Minister has promised accountability. To make that promise credible, the investigation must be comprehensive, independent and fearless. Justice will not come from arresting a few visible faces. It will come only when the entire network of responsibility is exposed and those who failed the public are held to account. Only then can Goa hope to prevent another night of preventable loss and grief.

Arpora Fire Accused Fled To Phuket Hours After Tragedy, Says Govt

■ LOC issued; Interpol alerted as probe reveals midnight escape.

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: In a dramatic twist to the Arpora fire investigation, the Goa government on Monday revealed that key accused Saurabh and Gaurav Luthra fled to Phuket just hours after the blaze, taking a 5:30 am flight on December 7—barely minutes after the incident that occurred around midnight. Officials say the timing of their departure clearly indicates an attempt to evade the investigation. A Look Out Circular (LOC) was issued later the same



evening by the Bureau of Immigration, even as Goa Police dispatched a team to Delhi to raid their residences. Notices were pasted at their homes after officers found them missing. Meanwhile, the state has launched a magisterial inquiry into the

tragedy. The committee has visited the site and demanded all relevant documents. Authorities revealed that the Sarpanch had signed multiple NOCs—from electricity and water connections to house repairs and trade licence permissions—and that the

club continued operations even after its trade licence expired in March 2024, despite the Panchayat having powers to seal such premises under Section 72-A of the Goa Panchayat Raj Act. So far, all victims have been identified and the mortal remains of 20 have been transported to their native places with government assistance. Two other Romeo Lane establishments have also been sealed, and a safety-audit committee has begun drafting a new SOP for clubs and entertainment venues.



Taxi Union Leader Yogesh 'Mogambo' Govekar Joins Congress

Team Goemkarponn

ANJUNA: Renowned social worker and prominent voice of Goa's taxi operators, Yogesh Govekar, has officially joined the Congress Party, placing his trust in the party's promise of better governance. Congress leaders said Govekar's commitment to public welfare and his influence among taxi owners

will further strengthen the organisation. "We warmly welcome Yogesh Govekar to the Congress family," the party stated. Meanwhile, the coastal political landscape is bracing for fresh turbulence with Govekar popularly known as Mogambo formally declaring his intention to contest the upcoming Zilla Panchayat elections from Anjuna, a constituency

Damu Naik Warns Voters Against 'Congress Crooks'

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: Goa BJP president Damu Naik on Sunday launched the poll campaign of Khola ZP candidate Tejal Pagi at Saleri-Khola, using the occasion to strongly attack the Congress, urging voters "not to trust Congress crooks". Naik performed a traditional coconut-breaking ritual at a local Devasthan before addressing party workers. Speaking to supporters, Naik cautioned locals not to take the



state government's 'Mhaje Ghar' scheme lightly and encouraged every household to fill the necessary forms to legalise their homes. He claimed that Congress leaders were misleading the public about the scheme.

Students Boycott Ziltawadi Govt Primary School Over Sudden Teacher Transfer

■ PTA Demands Reversal Within 24 Hours.

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: Tension gripped Ziltawadi-Gaondongrim on Monday morning as students and parents of the Government Primary School launched a protest and boycotted classes after a sudden transfer of their teacher. Around 26 students of GPS Ziltawadi refused to enter their classrooms after the morning assembly, instead sitting outside the school



in protest. Parents soon joined them, expressing solidarity and demanding immediate cancellation of the transfer order. PTA Chairman Pradeep Gaunkar, backed by

the majority of parents, appealed to Chief Minister and Education Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant to revoke the transfer within 24 hours, warning that the boycott would

continue until the teacher is reinstated. Students said the transferred teacher had been actively preparing them for the school gathering, organising activities, and even planning a school picnic. "The transfer came without rhyme or reason," one child said. Parents highlighted that the teacher had played a crucial role in revitalising the school, which once faced closure due to low enrolment.

1 More Survivor Discharged as Condition of Birch Fire Victims Improves at GMC

Team Goemkarponn

BAMBOLIM: One of the five survivors of the Birch nightclub fire, 32-year-old Atish Mehta, was released from Goa Medical College and Hospital (GMC) on Monday after showing steady recovery. Mehta had been admitted with approximately 12% burn injuries. Health Secretary Yatindra Maralkar informed that the remaining four patients being treated in the Burns and Plastic Surgery Unit

are also responding well to medical care. Among them, Amit Kumar, Clinton Prasad, and Rahul Rai have suffered 12–15% burns, while 20-year-old Tanishqa Chaurasian remains the most severely injured with 29% burns. Doctors continue to monitor all four patients closely. Maralkar added that post-mortem examinations for six victims are still pending, awaiting completion of identification formalities by family members.



The process will begin once relatives arrive and confirm identities. The update brings a small measure of relief amid the continuing fallout of the tragic fire that claimed 25 lives.

Stingray Stings 4 at Hollant; Drishti Marine Lifesavers Rescue 4 Others Across Goa Beaches

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Drishti Marine lifesavers had a busy weekend across Goa's coastline, responding to multiple emergencies—including four stingray injuries at Hollant beach, four rescues from drowning, three medical assistance cases and the successful tracing of a missing child at Calangute. Calangute: A four-year-old boy from Bihar who was reported missing was swiftly located by lifesavers



during an extensive beach search and reunited with his parents after due verification. In another incident, a man from Bengaluru sustained a minor hand injury and was administered first aid on the beach. Candolim:

A 44-year-old Russian tourist facing difficulty while swimming was rescued by lifesaver Santosh Patil using a rescue board. He was reported stable following the incident. Sinquerim: Lifesaver Sukhram responded to a 65-year-old Russian man showing signs of distress while resting on a beach bed—including sweating, facial spasms and a weak pulse. After receiving first aid, the man and his companion declined further medical assistance.

22 Arrested After Violent Clash at Pilar Music Event; Police Personnel Injured

Team Goemkarponn

PILAR: A music event at Fr Agnel School Ground in Pilar descended into violence on Saturday afternoon, leading to a major law-and-order incident and injuries to police personnel. The Agacaim Police have registered a case against more than 20 individuals for rioting, assault, stone-pelting, and damaging property. According to the complaint filed by LPSI



Deepika Parwar at 10:37 pm on December 7, the incident began around 3 pm when an event

organised by Suraj Arjun Lohra (25) of Saligao allegedly saw a fight break out between the organisers and members of the public. Police said the confrontation disturbed public peace and amounted to an affray. As the situation escalated, ten named accused identified as Raju Gopal Sahu, Ravi Putulu Oraoa, Suraj Nath Chawan, Arwind Vinay Kullu, Pradip Kiran Singh, Rajesh Lawro Singh, Sitender Shubhat Oraoa, Gangadhar

Narayan Das, Aryan Rajendra Singh, along with Lohra and around ten other unidentified persons allegedly began shouting, fighting, damaging the stage and sound equipment, and assaulting the sound system owner. Police further stated that when personnel attempted to intervene, the accused group turned aggressive, refused to obey lawful directions, and began pelting stones, causing injuries to officers on duty.

59-Year-Old Man Killed in Wild Boar Attack in Balli

Team Goemkarponn

CUNCOLIM: A 59-year-old man from Balli died after he was attacked by a wild boar while working in a forested cashew plantation on Sunday evening. Cuncolim Police said they received a message from PHC Balli at 9:56 pm on December 7, informing them that the victim, Ram Gaonkar, a resident of Bendurdem, Balli, had been brought in dead. During enquiry, his brother Ramesh Gaonkar and son Satendra Gaonkar told police that Ram had gone to the nearby forest



to clean their cashew plantation when a wild boar suddenly attacked him. He was later found lying unconscious by family members, who rushed him to PHC Balli, where he was declared brought dead. The body has been preserved at South Goa District Hospital, Margao, for medico-legal procedures.

67-Year-Old Man Dies After Fall From Building in Ponda

Team Goemkarponn

PONDA: Ponda Police have registered an Unnatural Death (UD) case after a 67-year-old man was found dead early Monday morning following a fall from a residential building in Daag, Ponda. According to police, SDH Ponda informed them at 2:01 am on December 8 that the victim, Jayant Joshi, a resident of Gogal Housing Board Road, Vidyanagar, Margao, had been brought dead by a 108 ambulance from Rajdurga Heritage Building, Daag. During enquiry, police spoke to family members who stated that Joshi had



been staying at his sister's flat in Daag for the past six months. They informed that he had been undergoing treatment for psychiatric illness. Police were told that around 10:34 pm on December 7, he fell from the fifth floor of the building, resulting in fatal injuries. A scene panchanama and inquest were conducted, and the body was sent for postmortem.

60-Year-Old Man Arrested in Sanquelim for Running Illegal Public Gambling

Team Goemkarponn

SANKHALI: A 60-year-old man was arrested on Monday afternoon after he was allegedly caught accepting money bets in a public place near Tourist Hotel at Market Sanquelim. According to the complaint

lodged by ASI Sumant Gaonkar of Bicholim Police Station, the incident occurred around 11:30 am on December 8. The accused, identified as Rajendra Arjun Gawade, a resident of Virdi, Sankhali, was allegedly found accepting betting amounts



from members of the public in an open area. Police said they seized

₹910 in cash in various denominations, along with other gambling articles, from his possession. Gawade was arrested the same day at 12:51 pm. Further investigation is being carried out by ASI Gaonkar of Bicholim Police Station.

Canacona Police Register FIR 11 Days After Failed Dacoity Attempt at Chaudi Jewellery Shop

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: In a delayed move that has raised eyebrows among residents, Canacona police have registered an FIR 11 days after six unidentified men attempted a dacoity at a jewellery shop in Chaudi.

According to police, an FIR under Sections 312 and 132 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) 2023 has been filed vide Canacona PS Crime No. 73/2025 against six unknown accused who allegedly attempted to rob S M Jewellery, Chaudi



Market, around 2:30 am on November 25, 2025. The case has been filed

based on a complaint by Constable Yeshwant Gad Desai of Canacona Police Station. Police stated that the group of six, armed with deadly weapons and with a common intention to commit theft, abandoned their plan after the arrival of police personnel.

Bolero Driver Arrested for Hit-and-Run at Bicholim; Car Damaged

Team Goemkarponn

BICHOLIM: A 19-year-old Bolero tempo driver has been arrested for fleeing after causing a collision at the Adhar Hospital junction in Kulan, Bicholim, on Sunday morning. According to a complaint filed by Head Constable Ganesh Parwar (HC-5723) of Bicholim Police Station



following an enquiry into MV Accident No. 101/2025, the incident occurred around 10:00 am on December 7. The accused, driving a Bolero tempo (GA-03-W-3314), allegedly

drove in a rash and negligent manner while heading from Togeshwari Temple towards Adhar Hospital. Police stated that upon reaching the hospital junction, the Bolero rammed into the front side of a Hyundai Eon (GA-04-C-6694) that was approaching the hospital from the main road junction.

Russian Nat'l Injured After Car Driver Takes Sudden U-Turn in Morjim

Team Goemkarponn

MANDREM: Mandrem Police have registered an offence against a local resident after a sudden and negligent U-turn by an Innova Crysta allegedly caused a serious accident involving two Russian nationals at Morjim on November 29. According to Mandrem Police, during the



enquiry into MV Accident No. 24/2025, it was found that the crash occurred at around 8:55 am near MK Corner, Vithaldas Vaddo, when the accused Yogesh

Ghag, residing in Morjim and originally from Thane, Maharashtra, allegedly drove his Innova Crysta (GA-11-A-5780) in a rash and negligent manner and abruptly attempted a U-turn without taking proper care or caution. As a result, the Innova collided with a Yamaha Aerox 155 (GA-03-BA-3993) travelling from Morjim towards Ashwem.

MP Viriato says suspensions in Birch fire case a 'mere eyewash'

Team Goemkarponn

VASCO: South Goa MP Captain Viriato Fernandes criticised the government's response to the Birch by Romeo Lane fire tragedy, calling the suspension of three officials "a mere eyewash" and alleging that serious violations were



ignored due to political pressure. Fernandes said the incident, in

which around 25 people lost their lives, has left families devastated. "It is heartbreaking that 25 precious lives have been lost — some tourists, some staff.

Their families are in deep grief, and among the victims are three women who were mothers of young children," he said.

Ideologies must align for alliances, says South Goa MP Viriato Fernandes

Team Goemkarponn

VASCO: South Goa MP Captain Viriato Fernandes said that any political alliance must be rooted in shared ideology, while reiterating that the Congress has fielded only genuine, block-selected candidates for the upcoming elections.



His remarks came amid ongoing discussions over the Congress—

Revolutionary Goans Party (RGP) alliance. Fernandes said the party leadership had already clarified its stand on some seats where consensus could not be reached. "The party leadership has explained the situation, and there were certain seats where we could not arrive at an agreement," he said.

Ritesh Naik Strengthens Public Connect Through Continuous Ground-Level Outreach

Team Goemkarponn

PONDA: Staying true to his word and his unwavering commitment to the people of Ponda, Ritesh Naik continues to lead from the front with tireless dedication and sustained public engagement. Known for standing firmly by every promise he makes,



Ritesh Naik has once again demonstrated his resolve through consistent on-ground action and community-focused outreach.

Merciana Vas files nomination as independent from Cortalim, receives strong panchayat backing

Team Goemkarponn

CORTALIM: Merciana Vas, wife of Cortalim MLA Anton Vas, filed her nomination papers on Monday as an independent candidate for the upcoming Zilla Panchayat elections from the Cortalim constituency. Her nomination drew significant support from



across the constituency, with several panch members and Sarpanchas accompanying her and publicly endorsing her

candidature. Local leaders from various panchayats under the Cortalim segment highlighted their confidence in Vas's ability to represent the constituency effectively. They said her grassroots connect, accessibility, and involvement in community initiatives had earned her goodwill among residents,

making her a popular choice for the ZP seat. Speaking to reporters shortly after the nomination was filed, Cortalim MLA Anton Vas expressed strong confidence in his wife's prospects, stating that the people would vote based on her performance and commitment during her earlier tenure.

AAP Files 27 Zilla Panchayat Nominations In A Day, Alleges Bias In Process

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Monday filed 27 Zilla Panchayat (ZP) nominations across Goa in a single day, showcasing what the party described as strong organisational mobilisation ahead of the upcoming polls.



Former BJP Mandal secretary Achut Naik resigns, files as independent from Sancoale

Team Goemkarponn

CORTALIM: Former BJP Cortalim Mandal general secretary Achut Naik resigned from the party on Monday and filed his nomination as an independent candidate for the



upcoming Zilla Panchayat elections from the Sancoale constituency. His move has stirred political discussion in the area, particularly because Naik has been known as a long-time BJP loyalist with decades of grassroots involvement.

TMC Goa Convenor Mariano Rodrigues files nomination as independent from Sancoale ZP constituency

Team Goemkarponn

SANCOALE: TMC Goa State convenor and Former Sancoale Zilla Panchayat member Mariano Rodrigues filed his nomination papers on Monday as an



independent candidate from the Sancoale constituency for the upcoming ZP elections, marking his return to grassroots politics with a renewed pitch for development and accountability.



Congress fields former ZP Vasant Naik and Sandra Rodrigues for ZP polls

Team Goemkarponn

MORMUGAO: Congress candidates Vasant Naik and Sandra Rodrigues filed their nomination papers on Monday for the upcoming Zilla Panchayat elections, drawing strong support from party leaders and workers across the Mormugao taluka. Naik submitted his nomination from Sancoale, while Rodrigues filed her papers from Cortalim, marking the party's formal entry into the electoral fray in both key constituencies. A large gathering of Congress supporters

accompanied the two candidates as they arrived at the nomination centre. Senior party leaders present included South Goa MP Captain Viriato Fernandes, Cortalim Block President Peter D'Souza, Congress fishermen leader Olemcio Simoes, Congress committee member Orville Dourado and several block-level functionaries. Their presence signalled the party's intention to consolidate its base and project a united front in the ZP elections.

Starlink Clarifies India Pricing Was Just Test Data, Not Actual Rates

■ Company fixes website glitch, says service pricing and orders not yet announced.

New Delhi: Starlink has clarified that the pricing briefly displayed on its India website was a configuration error and does not reflect the actual cost of its services in the country. The glitch showed a monthly subscription of Rs 8,600 and a hardware kit priced at Rs 34,000 for new subscribers, causing confusion among potential customers. Lauren Dreyer, Vice President



and Senior Director of Starlink Business Operations at SpaceX, said in a statement that the India website

is not yet live for taking orders, and the company has not announced official service pricing. She explained that the

numbers appeared due to “dummy test data” and were quickly corrected. Dreyer added that Starlink remains committed to bringing high-speed satellite internet to India once final government approvals are obtained. Starlink aims to offer features such as plug-and-play installation, over 99.9 percent uptime, extreme weather resilience, and no data caps.



India's Major Airlines Employ Nearly 14,000 Pilots, Government Tells Parliament

■ Air India leads with over six thousand cockpit crew as sector expands training capacity

New Delhi: The government has informed Parliament that six major domestic airlines collectively employ 13,989 pilots, reflecting the scale and operational requirements of India's growing aviation sector. Air India accounts for the largest share with 6,350 pilots, followed by Air India Express with 1,592. IndiGo, the country's biggest airline by market share, employs 5,085 pilots. Among other carriers, Akasa has 466 pilots and SpiceJet has 385, while the state-run Alliance Air employs 111. The Ministry of Civil Aviation noted that hiring levels across airlines are guided by market

conditions and operational needs.

According to the ministry, airlines sometimes recruit foreign pilots to meet specific fleet or aircraft-type requirements, particularly during rapid expansion phases or when there are time-bound operational demands. The government also highlighted continued growth in the country's flying training ecosystem. Flying training organisations are steadily modernising their fleets, supported by the induction of 61 new training aircraft up to November. In addition, the civil aviation regulator has approved two new training organisations this year.

Goa Government Organises 2-Day Cybersecurity Workshop to Strengthen Digital Defences

PANAJI: The Department of Information Technology, Electronics and Communications (DITE&C), in collaboration with the Goa Institute of Public Administration and Rural Development (GIPARD), hosted a two-day workshop on cybersecurity aimed at enhancing the digital



safety of government systems and critical public data. Held at GIPARD's Ella Farm campus, the workshop brought together officials from various Goa

Government departments to raise awareness about evolving cyber threats, data protection regulations, and best practices for secure data management.

The event was inaugurated by Shri Kabir Shirgaonkar, Director of DITE&C, along with Dr. Milind Sakhardande, Joint Director, DITE&C, Dr. Seema Fernandes, Assistant Director, GIPARD, and Shri Vidyanand Pawar, PI, Cyber Crime Police Station, Goa.

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Tension Erupts at Canacona IDC as Toxic Molasses Waste Dumped Into Open Pits

storage tank was found being discharged into large, freshly dug open pits — an action that has triggered serious health, safety and environmental concerns for the locality and

surrounding water bodies. The waste, believed to belong to a defunct alcohol company, was emptied into unprotected pits dug adjacent to the damaged tank, raising fears of groundwater

contamination and harm to the nearby Kalwade stream, the Talpona river and the coastal ecosystem downstream. A strong stench engulfed the area, causing immediate distress to residents.

As word spread, furious citizens gathered at the site, demanding that authorities immediately remove the hazardous material and initiate criminal action against those responsible.

21 Victims' Mortal Remains Sent Home With Full Dignity

respectful transportation of the mortal remains along with their next of kin,” coordinating closely with authorities in the respective states. Meanwhile, arrangements for the remaining four victims are currently

underway. The CMO added that these too will be carried out “with proper dignity and in close coordination with their families and the concerned state authorities.”

PIL Seeks Court-Monitored SIT Into Birch Fire Tragedy; HC Hearing on Dec 16

coastal nightclub located at Baga. The fire is suspected to have been triggered by a cylinder explosion, prompting the deployment of multiple fire tenders. Firefighters and emergency personnel continued rescue operations well into the early hours of Sunday. Officials indicated that most of the victims were club employees, though

tourists were also among the casualties. Senior police officers — including the Director General of Police — along with teams from North Goa rushed to the scene as the scale of the disaster became evident. The tragedy claimed 25 lives, including 20 staff members and five tourists, making it one of the worst fire incidents recorded in the state.

Centre Directs IndiGo To Cut Flights By 5 Per Cent, Around 110 Services Removed Daily

be reassigned to other carriers to help maintain overall connectivity. The directive followed a detailed review of IndiGo's performance during the recent crisis. The regulator

noted that while the airline had approval for more than sixty four thousand departures in November, it operated fewer than sixty thousand, with close to one thousand cancellations

recorded during the month. Despite receiving approval for an expanded schedule supported by a larger fleet, the airline was unable to deploy the number of aircraft it had committed to

for the season. According to the assessment, IndiGo had increased its scheduled departures significantly compared with the previous winter and summer periods.

India Condemns Deadly Pakistan Strikes On Afghanistan, Reaffirms Support For Kabul's Sovereignty

The petition calls for an investigation into alleged illegal construction, licensing violations, and lapses by government authorities. It also requests

a statewide fire-safety audit of all nightclubs and similar commercial establishments. The High Court is scheduled to hear the plea on

December 16. According to police, the blaze erupted shortly after midnight at Birch by Romeo Lane, a popular coastal nightclub located at Baga.

“Rules Should Strengthen Systems, Not Trouble Citizens”: PM Speaks On IndiGo Crisis

■ Government reiterates firm action as airline grapples with widespread cancellations and passenger distress.

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has underscored the need to ensure that government regulations function to strengthen systems rather than create hardship for the public. His remarks were conveyed during a meeting of lawmakers from the ruling alliance, where he highlighted the importance of protecting citizens from unnecessary



inconvenience arising from administrative rules. The reminder came as the government continued

to address the fallout from IndiGo's weeklong operational crisis. The situation has drawn

national attention after severe crew shortages and new fatigue management rules led to thousands of cancelled flights and widespread disruption. Travellers across the country shared images and accounts online, many describing experiences of being stranded while trying to attend urgent family, medical or professional commitments.

India Welcomes UK Measures Against Anti-India Extremist Networks

■ New Measures Aim to Strengthen Global Counter-Terrorism Efforts.

New Delhi: India on Monday welcomed the United Kingdom's decisive action against extremist elements linked to the Khalistan movement, describing the move as a significant step in strengthening international efforts against terrorism and transnational crime. The UK government recently imposed sanctions on an individual and an organisation



allegedly involved in terrorist activities targeting India. These measures include asset freezes and strict restrictions designed to prevent the flow of funds to extremist networks.

India Reaffirms Arunachal Pradesh's Status After Detention Incident At Shanghai Airport

■ MEA urges caution for travellers to China and seeks assurances against selective targeting

New Delhi: India has reiterated its firm position on Arunachal Pradesh following renewed focus on the issue after an Indian citizen from the state was detained at Shanghai airport. The Ministry of External Affairs stated that Arunachal Pradesh remains an inseparable part of the country and emphasised that no external interference will be accepted. During a briefing, the ministry



expressed concern over the treatment of Indian nationals transiting through Chinese airports. Officials said India expects China to uphold international aviation norms and ensure that travellers are not

subjected to arbitrary detention or discriminatory questioning. The ministry also advised Indian citizens to exercise caution while travelling to or through China in light of the recent incident. The advisory was issued after Prema Wangjom Thongdok, an Indian passport holder living in the United Kingdom, was stopped by immigration authorities in Shanghai on November 21.

Civil Aviation Minister K Ram Mohan Naidu Orders Reduction Of IndiGo's Winter Routes

■ Government reallocates flights to stabilise operations after widespread disruptions.

New Delhi: Civil Aviation Minister K Ram Mohan Naidu has confirmed that IndiGo's winter flight schedule will be scaled back, with part of its network redistributed to other airlines in response to the carrier's recent operational turmoil. The move comes after days of widespread cancellations and delays that affected passengers across the country. The minister stated that IndiGo currently operates around 2,200 flights a day and that a segment of these services will be curtailed to restore stability in the aviation sector. He said the government's decision aims to protect passenger interests and ensure



smoother operations during the winter travel period. The redeployment of routes to other carriers is part of a broader effort to maintain reliability in the national flight grid.

Officers Sent To Key Airports As IndiGo Disruptions Trigger Nationwide Inspection

■ Senior officials asked to conduct immediate ground checks to assess passenger impact.

New Delhi: Senior officials from the Ministry of Civil Aviation have been dispatched to major airports across the country as part of an urgent inspection drive prompted by the continuing disruptions in IndiGo's operations. The move follows several days of delayed and cancelled flights that have caused widespread inconvenience for travellers. The Ministry has directed officers at the level of

Deputy Secretary, Director and Joint Secretary to visit airports within a day to examine the situation firsthand. Their mandate includes reviewing on-ground operations, observing passenger flow and identifying any service-related gaps. Airports selected for this inspection include Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Chennai, Ahmedabad, Pune, Guwahati, Goa and Thiruvananthapuram.



Authorities have been monitoring developments continuously since early December as the airline's operational difficulties escalated into

a nationwide challenge. A high-level review was convened to assess the extent of disruptions and coordinate the response among senior

officials. The Ministry has instructed its officers to verify airline procedures, evaluate passenger assistance arrangements and ensure

prompt corrective action wherever shortcomings are found. Feedback gathered during these visits is expected to guide immediate improvements. During a recent address in the Rajya Sabha, the Civil Aviation Minister explained that the ongoing issues stem from internal crew rostering and planning challenges within the airline rather than any problems with the Aircraft Maintenance and Scheduling System.

IPL 2026 Auction: BCCI Trims Player List to 350

■ Major Changes Announced Ahead of December Auction in Abu Dhabi.

New Delhi: The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has finalized the player list for the IPL 2026 auction, reducing it to 350 participants after removing 1,005 names from the longlist.

Ahead of the auction, 35 new players, including some international stars and promising domestic talent, were added to the final roster. One of the biggest surprises is the return of South African wicket-keeper batter Quinton de Kock, who recently reversed his international retirement. De Kock, who scored a century against India in the



final ODI of the series in Vizag, was included in the auction at the request of a franchise.

He has set his base price at Rs 1 crore, a significant drop from his Rs 2 crore base in the previous mega auction. Other overseas players added to the auction

list include Sri Lanka's Traveen Mathew, Binura Fernando, Kusal Perera, and Dunith Wellalage, as well as Afghanistan's Arab Gul and West Indies' Akeem Auguste, who will be appearing in the IPL auction for the first time.

England's Miles Hammond and Dan

Lategan, along with South Africans Connor Ezterhuizen, George Linde, and Bayanda Majola, also feature in the revised list.

The domestic circuit sees the addition of several players who were not part of the original registration, including Vishnu Solanki, Parikshit Valsangkar, Sadek Hussain, Izaz Sawariya, and 20 others, bringing new opportunities for emerging talent to enter the IPL. The auction is scheduled to start at 1 pm UAE time (2:30 pm IST) on Tuesday, 16 December, at the Etihad Arena in Abu Dhabi.



Jasprit Bumrah 1 Wicket Away from T20I Milestone

New Delhi: The T20I leg of South Africa's tour of India begins tonight at Cuttack's Barabati Stadium, kicking off a five-match series. India and South Africa have already shared honours in the earlier legs, with South Africa sweeping the two-Test series before India clinched the ODI series 2-1. India's premier fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah returns after being rested for the ODIs. The 32-year-old has been in fine form,

taking eight wickets in the Test series, including a five-wicket haul. Bumrah is just one wicket shy of 100 T20I scalps, which would make him the second Indian after Arshdeep Singh to reach the milestone. Achieving it would also crown him as the first Indian bowler to claim 100 wickets in all three international formats, joining an elite group that includes Tim Southee, Shakib Al Hasan, Shaheen Afridi, and Lasith Malinga.

"Abhishek Sharma Is a Key Wicket": Markram Highlights Indian Opener's Threat

■ South Africa skipper Aiden Markram stresses early wickets and fearless batting as key to T20I series opener against India.

New Delhi: South Africa T20I captain Aiden Markram has emphasized the importance of dismissing India's young opener Abhishek Sharma, describing him as a fearless player who embodies the aggressive, modern approach to T20 cricket. Markram, who previously shared the field with Sharma at Sunrisers Hyderabad, spoke highly



of the 25-year-old left-hander and acknowledged the challenge he presents. "Abhi is a fantastic player and a great guy. Getting

him out early would be a significant advantage for us," Markram said ahead of the five-match T20I series opener at Barabati Stadium. He noted that the modern T20 game is increasingly driven by young batsmen willing to take risks from the very first ball, making the format both entertaining and unpredictable. "Players now are given

Global Chess League Returns to Mumbai: Blending Chess, Technology, and Entertainment

■ Homecoming Edition to Feature Icons Anand, Caruana, Gukesh, Pragg, and Arjun Erigaisi.

New Delhi: The Global Chess League (GCL), a franchise-based chess tournament known for merging tradition with innovation, is set to make its Indian debut with a grand homecoming edition in Mumbai. Supported by industrialist Anand Mahindra, the league aims to bring the strategic depth of chess together with modern entertainment and technology. Having previously staged successful events in the UAE and the United Kingdom, GCL is now bringing its hybrid format to India, the spiritual home of the game. Indian Grandmaster Vidit Gujrathi highlighted Mahindra's long-standing interest in chess, noting that his



backing adds prestige and momentum to the league's efforts to promote chess culture nationally. Gourav Rakshith, GCL commissioner, emphasised the league's mission to engage new audiences while maintaining the integrity of competitive chess.

Manolo Marquez Backs Ayush Dev Chhetri as FC Goa Clinches Super Cup

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: FC Goa head coach Manolo Marquez has expressed strong faith in midfielder Ayush Dev Chhetri, highlighting his intelligence, composure, and adaptability, especially during the team's successful Super Cup campaign. Despite facing criticism and setbacks,

Chhetri has emerged as a key figure under Marquez's guidance. Marquez described Chhetri as one of the most unfairly criticised players in Indian football. "Ask his teammates about him, and they will tell you the same. He thinks faster than most players in the country, and you always want someone like him in your team,"



the coach said. Chhetri's performance in the Super Cup final against East

Bengal demonstrated why Marquez places such trust in him. Despite a red card

in the AFC Champions League Two, the coach opted for the young midfielder over more senior options. Chhetri controlled the midfield effectively, distributing the ball, maintaining possession, and competing strongly against an experienced overseas midfield trio, helping FC Goa secure a hard-

fought victory. Marquez highlighted Chhetri's ability to adapt to the pace of the game. "Some critics say he is not strong or good in the air, but he is fast, intelligent, and rarely loses possession," he noted. The midfielder's composure, positioning, and quick decision-making have made him a vital part of FC Goa's tactical setup.