



LUTHRA BROTHERS ARRESTED, DRAGGED TO GOA

■ Police say brothers exercised “ultimate control” over nightclub operations as probe into deadly fire continues.

Team Goemkarponn

ANJUNA: Gaurav and Saurabh Luthra, the co-owners of the Arpora-based Birch by Romeo Lane nightclub, were brought to Goa on Wednesday after being deported from Thailand in connection with the December 6 fire tragedy that resulted in the deaths of 25 people. Escorted by a team of Goa Police officers, the brothers were flown from Delhi and arrived at Manohar International Airport,



Mopa, at around 10.45 am. They had been taken into custody in Delhi on Tuesday soon after their deportation and were granted a 48-hour transit remand by a local court



to enable their transfer to Goa. Following their arrival, the accused were moved under tight police security to the Primary Health Centre at Siolim for routine medical

examination and were subsequently shifted to the North Goa District Hospital in Mapusa. Police sources said one of the brothers complained of **CONTD TO PAGE 06...**

MP Viriato Alleges Bribe, Blames Govt for Birch Fire

Team Goemkarponn

VASCO: South Goa MP Captain Viriato Fernandes has accused the state government of receiving a monthly bribe of Rs 25 lakhs to allow operations at Birch by Romeo Lane, the Arpora nightclub where a fire on December 6 claimed 25 lives. Fernandes



termed the tragedy as a “murder of innocent lives” and alleged that the Goa government misled the Centre regarding the implementation of the 73rd Amendment on Panchayati Raj in the state.

Court Orders Fresh Medical Checkup of Luthras

Team Goemkarponn

MAPUSA: The Judicial Magistrate First Class (JMFC), Mapusa, has ordered a fresh medical examination of the Luthra brothers. Earlier, one after one of them complained of

chest pain and uneasiness shortly after landing in India. The brothers, Gaurav and Saurabh Luthra, were produced before the court following their deportation from Thailand and arrival in Goa on transit remand.

Gas pipeline rupture at Vales junction triggers brief scare

Team Goemkarponn

DABOLIM: A gas leakage incident triggered panic at Vales junction on Wednesday afternoon after an underground pipeline was accidentally **CONTD TO PAGE 06...**



Trump's \$100,000 H-1B Fee Set to Hit Tata, Infosys and Other IT Giants

■ New charge could reshape foreign hiring and drive more IT jobs overseas.

New Delhi: President Donald Trump's \$100,000 fee for new H-1B visas for workers hired from outside the US is expected to have a major impact on IT outsourcing and

staffing companies, particularly multinational firms like Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys, and Cognizant Technology Solutions. The fee represents the

largest restriction on skilled foreign workers introduced by the Trump administration to date. A Bloomberg analysis found that nearly 90 **CONTD TO PAGE 06...**

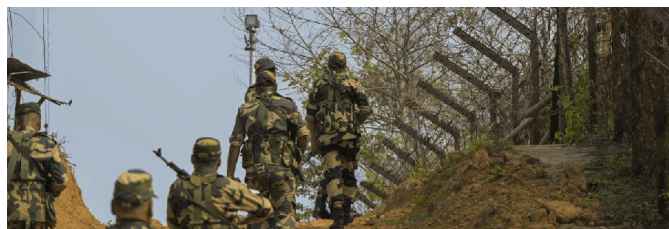


Over 23,900 Infiltrators Arrested Along Other International Borders, Centre Tells Parliament

■ “No Infiltration Reported on India China Border Since 2014”.

New Delhi: The government has informed Parliament that no cases of infiltration have been reported along the India China border since 2014, even as security agencies

have arrested thousands of infiltrators along other international frontiers during the same period. According to official data presented in the **CONTD TO PAGE 06...**



AICC's Thakare Alleges BJP Failure, Claims Law & Order Collapse Ahead of ZP Polls

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Ahead of the Zilla Parishad (ZP) elections, the All India Congress Committee (AICC) in-charge for Goa, Manikrao Thakare, on Tuesday alleged that the BJP

government has failed to fulfil the promises made to the people of the state and asserted that voters would “teach the BJP a lesson” in the upcoming polls. Thakare claimed that law and order has collapsed in Goa and held **CONTD TO PAGE 06...**



Woman Abducted, Sexually Assaulted Near Mining Pit in Sattari; Case Registered

Team Goemkarponn

VALPOI: Valpoi police have registered a serious offence after a 41-year-old woman from Ansolem, Bhironda, Sattari, lodged a detailed complaint alleging abduction, wrongful confinement, assault and sexual assault. According to police, the incident occurred on December 16, 2025, at around 6 pm near Redye Ghat, Amyakade, Valpoi, in Sattari taluka. Based on the complaint and following discussions with the Police Inspector, Valpoi, and senior officers, an offence has been registered against the

accused, identified as Vithal Zore, a resident of Ansolem, Bhironda, Sattari. As per the complaint, the accused allegedly abducted the woman and took her in his car to an isolated jungle area near a mining pit. He is accused of wrongfully confining her at the mining pit, verbally abusing her, and physically assaulting her by slapping her on the head and nose, and biting her on the left hand and near the right ear. The complainant further alleged that the accused forcibly had sexual intercourse with her without her consent.

No Licence to Kill: Why the Luthra Brothers Must Face Exemplary Punishment

What happened on that December night in a Goa nightclub was not an accident in the ordinary sense of the word. It was a catastrophe waiting to happen, born of arrogance, neglect and a casual disregard for human life. Twenty-five people walked into a place meant for music and celebration. None of them expected that faulty decisions and ignored safety norms would turn it into a death trap. The owners of that space cannot be treated as unfortunate bystanders to fate. They were active enablers of the conditions that led to mass death. The Luthra brothers were not running a corner shop or an informal gathering. They were operating a high-profile commercial establishment in one of India's busiest tourist hubs.

Such ventures come with profits, visibility and responsibility. When safety norms are diluted, licences allowed to lapse and flammable structures become part of design aesthetics, responsibility does not end with apologies or legal paperwork. It begins with accountability. What makes this case particularly disturbing is not just the scale of the tragedy but the behaviour that followed it. Within hours of the fire, the club's owners left the country. That single act speaks volumes. Flight in the immediate aftermath of a disaster involving mass casualties is not the action of people eager to cooperate with the law.

It reinforces a long-held public suspicion that wealth and influence can be used to evade consequences, at least temporarily. India has seen too many such cases. Buildings collapse, fires break out, bridges fail, and lives are lost. Each time, negligence is blamed, compensation is announced, and the news cycle moves on. Very rarely does punishment

An exemplary punishment in this case is not about vengeance. It is about restoring faith in the idea that lives matter more than profits. Twenty-five people did not die because of an unforeseeable natural event. They died because safety was treated as optional.

Fire regulations are not ornamental clauses meant to be ignored until tragedy forces attention. They exist precisely to prevent situations like this. There is also a wider context that cannot be ignored. Goa's nightlife economy thrives on a reputation for freedom and fun.

match the magnitude of the crime. When it does not, negligence becomes normalised. It sends a dangerous message that cutting corners is a manageable risk, and that even if disaster strikes, the system will soften the blow. An exemplary punishment in this case is not about vengeance. It is about restoring faith in the idea that lives matter more than profits. Twenty-five people did not die because of an unforeseeable natural event.

They died because safety was treated as optional. Fire regulations are not ornamental clauses meant to be ignored until tragedy forces attention. They exist precisely to prevent situations like this. There is also a wider context that cannot be ignored. Goa's nightlife economy thrives on a reputation for freedom and fun. But freedom without responsibility becomes recklessness. When

enforcement agencies look the other way and operators exploit that silence, public safety becomes collateral damage. While authorities and inspectors must also be held to account, that cannot dilute the primary culpability of those who owned and ran the establishment. Some will argue that the law must take its course and that emotions should not influence sentencing. That argument misses the point.

The law already provides for proportionate punishment. Culpable negligence resulting in multiple deaths is among the gravest offences a business owner can commit. Applying the law firmly is not emotionalism. It is the justice system doing what it is meant to do. An exemplary punishment would serve a vital deterrent function. It would tell every bar owner, event organiser and hospitality entrepreneur that safety violations are not minor infractions to be settled with fines or influence. They are criminal acts with life-altering consequences. It would also tell families of the victims that their loss is not being reduced to a line item in a charge sheet. This case must become a turning point. Not just in Goa, but across the country.

Public spaces must stop being governed by a culture of jugaad and selective enforcement. When the punishment is strong, clear and unavoidable, behaviour changes. When it is weak or delayed, tragedy repeats itself. The Luthra brothers did not pull the trigger, light the match or lock the exits. But they created an environment where death became inevitable. For that, the punishment must be exemplary. Anything less would be a betrayal of the dead and an invitation to the next disaster.

EDITOR'S SPEAK

ZP Polls Expose a Fractured Opposition

The Zilla Panchayat elections in Goa have once again laid bare a truth the Opposition has long tried to evade. Its biggest challenge is not the ruling party, but its own inability to act as a cohesive political force. While these local body polls are often dismissed as low stakes, they serve as a clear barometer of organisational strength and voter confidence. Instead of presenting a united front, Opposition parties went into the ZP elections divided, competitive and confused. Multiple candidates, overlapping claims and quiet rivalries ensured that votes were split even before polling began. In several constituencies, the fight was less about defeating the ruling party and more about settling internal scores. The outcome was predictable. What is striking is the absence of learning from past mistakes.

Goa's electorate has repeatedly shown that it rewards clarity and punishes fragmentation. Yet, Opposition leaders continue to prioritise individual relevance over collective strategy. Alliances are discussed but rarely executed. Coordination exists in statements, not on the ground. The ZP elections also highlighted a deeper issue. The Opposition lacks a shared political narrative at the grassroots level. Local concerns were overshadowed by party positioning, leaving candidates disconnected from voters' everyday issues. Panchayat-level politics demands presence, consistency, and credibility. These cannot be manufactured during election season. If the Opposition hopes to remain relevant beyond protest politics, it must treat local elections seriously. Unity cannot be an afterthought. It has to be built patiently, well before ballots are cast. Until then, ZP elections will continue to expose not just electoral defeats, but the widening faultlines within the Opposition itself.

-Sandesh Pomburpekar, Aldona

Tourism Pays the Price for Goa's Chaos

Goa's tourism sector is facing a crisis of confidence, and it is largely self-inflicted. The fallout from the Birch fire tragedy, frequent raids on nightclubs, and the recent IndiGo fiasco have created an image of instability that no marketing campaign can easily repair. For a state whose economy depends so heavily on visitor trust, this erosion should be deeply worrying. The Birch fire exposed serious lapses in safety and regulation. Instead of reassuring tourists through transparent reform, the response has oscillated between sudden crackdowns and visible disorder. Raids on clubs, often conducted without clear public communication, have added to the sense that Goa's nightlife operates in a constant state of uncertainty. Visitors do not see safety enforcement.

They see chaos. The IndiGo episode further damaged confidence. Whether justified or not, the public spectacle reinforced the perception of poor coordination and governance. For tourists planning holidays, perception matters as much as reality. Goa is increasingly being seen as a destination where rules change overnight, and experiences can be abruptly disrupted. The irony is that genuine reform is essential. Safety standards must be enforced and illegal operations shut down. But enforcement that appears reactive and erratic undermines its own purpose. Tourists seek assurance, not anxiety. Goa must move quickly from crisis management to credibility building. Clear rules, consistent enforcement, and calm communication are essential. The state cannot afford to lurch from tragedy to turbulence. If Goa continues on this path, it risks losing not just visitors for a season, but its reputation as a reliable destination altogether.

-Domnic Pereira, Siridao

Advocate Moves HC Over Alleged Unregistered Surgery

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: An advocate has approached the Bombay High Court at Goa, contesting the manner in which the Goa Medical Council (GMC) dealt with a complaint involving allegations of unregistered medical practice, including a surgical procedure carried out in 2023. Advocate Moses Pinto has filed a writ petition questioning an order issued by the Ethics and Disciplinary Committee (EDC) of the GMC on July 19, 2024, along with the National Medical Commission's (NMC) decision to reject his appeal against that order. According to the petition, Pinto underwent a laparoscopic appendectomy at a private hospital in Margao on August 1, 2023. He



has alleged that the surgeon who performed the procedure was not registered with the Goa Medical Council at the relevant time. Pinto has further stated that he later suffered serious post-surgical complications

and had to undergo corrective treatment at a hospital in New Delhi, where a retained appendiceal stump was allegedly identified. In January 2024, Pinto lodged a formal complaint with the GMC, accusing the doctor of professional misconduct, practising medicine without valid registration and failing to obtain proper informed consent. The petition notes that while the EDC recorded that the surgeon had been practising in Goa for several months without being registered, the committee imposed a penalty of ₹10,000 and did not recommend any additional disciplinary action. Pinto has also challenged the subsequent grant of what he has described as "retrospective registration" to the doctor.

India's Power Grid Being Readied for Clean Energy Future

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Centre is pressing ahead with a wide-ranging programme to upgrade India's power sector, combining policy changes, international collaboration, technological modernisation and a push for green and digital energy solutions, Union Minister of State for Power Shripad Naik told the Rajya Sabha on Monday. In a written reply to an unstarred question, Naik said the government's efforts are focused on delivering dependable, affordable and environmentally



sustainable electricity, while reinforcing the country's long-term energy security and advancing its clean energy goals. According to the minister, the Ministry of Power is working closely with foreign governments, multilateral agencies and industry groups to strengthen cooperation across power generation, transmission and distribution.

Tourism Department Conducts Enforcement Drive to Ensure Beach Safety

Team Goemkarponn

BENAULIM: The Department of Tourism, in coordination with law enforcement authorities, conducted an enforcement drive across identified beach stretches to ensure safety, discipline and compliance with regulatory norms. The drive was led by Rodlin Mascarenhas, Assistant Director, Department of Tourism. During the operation, a hawker, Mohammad Kareem Shaikh, was found operating in violation of



prescribed norms and was handed over to the Tourist Police for further action. Police said the individual paid a fine of ₹5,000 as per applicable provisions. Officials also removed an unauthorised party setup outside the Ouzo

private shack, with the assistance of the Tourist Police, restoring order and regulatory compliance. As part of the same drive, unauthorised advertisement materials were identified and removed.

MMC clears encroachments at Vasco vegetable market, warns of strict action

Team Goemkarponn

MORMUGAO: Mormugao Municipal Council (MMC) chairperson Girish Borker on Tuesday morning carried out a surprise inspection of the Vasco vegetable market, accompanied by municipal staff including market inspectors, following repeated complaints of congestion and illegal encroachments. During the visit, the MMC cleared all road encroachments by vendors and removed additional tarpaulin sheets,



plastic coverings and other objects that had narrowed the internal roads and turned the market area into a heavily congested zone. Municipal staff were seen removing excess trays and dismantling makeshift extensions that spilled onto the roadway. Speaking to reporters,

Borker said the action was taken after continuous complaints from citizens about the difficulty in walking through the market and the complete blockage of internal roads. He said the municipality had decided to introduce a clear system to prevent future violations.

Civil Society Urges Goans to Treat ZP Polls as 'Semi-Final' Ahead of 2027 Elections

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Calling the forthcoming Zilla Panchayat elections a decisive moment for Goa's future, members of the civil society on Tuesday appealed to voters to view the December 20 polls as a "semi-final" ahead of the 2027 Assembly elections, and to vote responsibly to protect the state from further decline. The activists clarified that they were not endorsing or opposing any specific candidates. Instead, they urged voters to exercise discretion and support individuals committed to safeguarding Goa's land, environment and social fabric. Addressing the media, Fr Eremito Rebello expressed anguish over Goa's image being projected nationally as a corruption-ridden state in the aftermath of the Arpora



fire incident. He alleged that the tragedy amounted to a grave failure of governance and said it was time for citizens to elect representatives who would work sincerely for Goa's long-term welfare. He reiterated that voters must independently decide who is worthy of leading the state. Konkani artiste Rajdeep Naik echoed similar concerns, stating that corruption and a weakening

law-and-order situation had severely damaged Goa's reputation. He claimed that intimidation and violence had become common against those speaking out against wrongdoing. Stressing the importance of the ZP polls, Naik urged voters not to treat the election lightly, warning that failure at this stage could have consequences for the 2027 elections. He cautioned people against blindly following political diktats and appealed to them to reflect deeply on whether their chosen representatives would stand by them in the future. Naik further appealed to citizens across religious communities to vote thoughtfully, likening the election to a crucial qualifying match. He said that only by making the right choices now could Goa hope to reach the "final" in 2027 and overcome corruption and criminal influence in politics.

Construction Worker Dies After Fall from First Floor Near Anjuna Panchayat

Team Goemkarponn

ANJUNA: A 52-year-old construction worker died after falling from the first floor of a construction site near the Anjuna Panchayat on Monday afternoon. According to police, at around 3.51 pm on December 15, 2025, PCR Panaji received a phone call informing that a male person had fallen from the first floor of a construction site near the



Anjuna Panchayat and was seriously injured. Acting on the information, PSI Ramesh Harijan rushed to the spot and conducted an enquiry with the labourers

present at the site. Police said the deceased has been identified as Indrajeet Chik, son of Ritbhanjan Baraik, aged 52 years, a native of Village

Tenariya Khihur Toli, Tengariya, Gumla district, Jharkhand. Preliminary enquiry revealed that the deceased lost his balance while carrying a ladder on the first floor of the construction site and fell onto the ground floor. He sustained serious injuries in the fall and succumbed to the injuries on the spot, police said. Further procedures are being carried out by the police.

Mandrem Police Arrest Man for Illegal Gambling

Team Goemkarponn

PERNEM: Mandrem Police have arrested a 41-year-old man for allegedly accepting illegal gambling bets from the general public at an open place in Mandrem. According to police, the offence was registered on December 15, 2025, at around 9.14 pm on a state complaint filed by HC-4820 Satish Shetye of Mandrem Police Station. The accused has been identified as Siddarth, son of Kashinath Kharbe, a resident of House No.



350, Askavada, Mandrem, Pernem. Police said the accused was found accepting bets related to numerical digit gambling. During the operation, cash amounting to Rs 1,200 and other gambling-related materials were seized from his personal possession. Further investigation in the case is in progress.

Accused Arrested in Old Patto Bridge Assault Case

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Police have arrested the accused in connection with the assault reported near the Old Patto Bridge in Tiswadi. The case was registered on December 15, 2025, following a complaint filed by Nilesh s/o Bajirao Ganpati Barande (48), a native of Arewadi, Tolnaka, Jawli, Satara, Maharashtra, presently residing below the Old Patto Bridge, Panaji, Tiswadi, Goa. According to police, the incident occurred on December 15, 2025, at around 8.00 pm, near the Sakleshwar Shrine close to the Old Patto Bridge, when the accused



Aman Choubey, a native of Jharkhand, allegedly assaulted the complainant with a wooden danda, causing grievous bleeding injuries to his head and other parts of the body. Police said the accused has been arrested, and further investigation in the case is in progress with PSI Saheen Shetye.

Biker Booked for Rash and Negligent Driving in Chicalim Accident

Team Goemkarponn

VASCO: Vasco Police have registered an offence against a motorcyclist for rash and negligent driving following an accident reported near Mohan Garage at Chicalim. According to police, the case was registered on a

state complaint filed by HC-4824 Ashish Naik of Vasco Police Station. The incident occurred on November 26, 2025, at around 7.15 pm, when the accused Deeparj Gaonkar, a resident of Vaddem, Vasco, was riding a Royal Enfield motorcycle from Chicalim Junction towards Village Panchayat



Chicalim. Police said that while negotiating a sharp curve near Mohan Garage, Chicalim, the accused allegedly drove in a rash and negligent manner and,

while overtaking a Tata Winger vehicle, dashed into an Avenger scooter. Due to the impact, the riders of both vehicles fell onto the road and sustained injuries. Further investigation in the case is in progress with HC-4824 Ashish Naik of Vasco Police Station.

Arrosim Couple Booked for Threatening Physically Challenged Man Over Property Dispute

Team Goemkarponn

VERNA: Verna Police have registered an offence against two residents of Arrosim for allegedly threatening, harassing and abusing a physically challenged man and his

wife over a property-related dispute. The case was registered on a complaint filed by Gabriel Anthony Braganza, a resident of Arrosim, Cansaulim. According to police, the incident occurred on August 4,

2025, at TNK, Arrosim, Cansaulim, where the accused Joseph Gomes and Rosy Barretto, both residents of Arrosim, Cansaulim, allegedly threatened, harassed and verbally abused the complainant and his wife.

Police said the complainant is a physically handicapped person, and the incident arose over a property dispute. Further investigation in the case is in progress with PSI Ramchandra of Verna Police Station.

Mariano Rodrigues' IND ZP expresses confidence in victory

Team Goemkarponn

SANCOALE: The campaign of TMC convenor and former Zilla Panchayat member Mariano Rodrigues, who is contesting as an independent candidate from the Sancoale constituency in the upcoming ZP elections, has gathered full momentum, with strong grassroots participation across the constituency. Several residents, along with local leaders and volunteers, have been



moving door to door to canvass support for Rodrigues, who earlier represented Sancoale in the Zilla Panchayat.

2 Cases of Illegal Laterite Stone Extraction Booked in Quepem

Team Goemkarponn

QUEPEM: Quepem Police have registered two separate offences in connection with the illegal extraction of laterite dimension stones at Rivona in Sanguem taluka and Maina in Quepem taluka, causing loss to the State Government of Goa.

In the first case, registered on a complaint filed by Ameet Shetgaonkar, Junior Geologist, Directorate of Mines and Geology, Panaji, police said that prior to December 15, 2025, and before 12.05 pm, unknown landowners allegedly illegally extracted laterite dimension stones at



village Rivona, Sanguem taluka, without obtaining prior permission from the competent authority.

Yuva Shakti Joins BJP in Porvorim Ahead of ZP Polls

■ Induction Held in Presence of Minister Rohan A. Khaunte.

Team Goemkarponn

PORVORIM: Ahead of the Zilla Panchayat elections, a large number of young men and women (Yuva Shakti) from the Porvorim constituency joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Tuesday in the presence of Tourism Minister and Porvorim MLA Rohan A. Khaunte. The youths said they



were inspired by the performance of the BJP government and formally joined the party at an induction ceremony held at the Kadamba Hotel Hall, Porvorim. Among those

present on the occasion were BJP candidates from Penha de França and Socorro, Sandip Salgaonkar and Amit Asnodkar, respectively, PDF Sarpanch Sapnil

Chodankar, Socorro Sarpanch Sonia Pednekar, BJP State General Secretary Siddharth Kunkolienkar, BJYM State President Tushar Kelkar, Mandal President Vineet Parab, and other senior party leaders. Minister Khaunte welcomed the new entrants by presenting them with roses and the party's saffron shawl.

BJP only needs traitors, no scope for loyal karyakartas

Team Goemkarponn

SANCOALE: Sancoale Independent Zilla Panchayat candidate Achut Naik on Tuesday afternoon launched a sharp attack on the BJP, alleging that the party no longer values loyalty and grassroots workers, but instead promotes "traitors" who have little connect with party karyakartas or the people. Speaking to reporters while campaigning in the Matve



area of Dabolim along with Chicalim panch member Neelam Naik and a large number of supporters, Naik asserted that his exit from the BJP had taken place much earlier and dismissed the party's move to issue a letter declaring him expelled as a "political stunt" with no relevance.

Lost & Found: Missing Talpona Fishing Boat Traced off Ankola

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: In a dramatic mid-sea ordeal, a fishing boat (Path) with four local fishermen went missing off the Talpona coast after a motor engine failure, drifting deep into the Arabian Sea and straying towards Ankola in Karnataka, before all four were finally rescued and escorted safely back to Talpona Jetty by the Talpona Coastal Police late Tuesday evening. The fishermen were initially assisted mid-sea by a Kerala-based fishing trawler, which provided them with fuel, water, ice, charged their mobile phone and crucially guided them with navigational directions to head back towards Goan waters. Boat Drifts After Engine Breakdown The incident



occurred when the fibre fishing boat Path, carrying a four-member crew led by tandel Sandeep Arondekar, along with Vijendra Arondekar, Aniket Govekar (all residents of Talpona) and Anthony J.B. Rebello of Galgibaga, left Talpona Jetty on Monday evening for routine overnight fishing operations. After securing a good catch, including large kingfish, tandel Arondekar contacted the boat owner, Sagar Namshikar, informing him to expect their return within 90 minutes and to arrange transport for the fish.

BJP leaders express confidence of victory for Sunil Gawas at Zorint corner meeting

Team Goemkarponn

SANCOALE: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant, Minister Mauvin Godinho, former sarpanch and panch Girish Pillai, along with Sancoale sarpanch Anusha Lamani, on Tuesday extended full support to BJP candidate Sunil Gawas, asserting that the party was firmly



on course for victory in the Sancoale Zilla Panchayat constituency. The leaders were addressing a well-

attended corner meeting held near the Sevalal Temple at Zorint, which witnessed a tremendous

response from local residents, party workers and supporters, indicating strong grassroots backing for the BJP candidate. Addressing the gathering, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant urged voters to strengthen the BJP by electing a candidate who would work in coordination with the government.

Congress Ticket to BJP-Linked Candidate Exposes Hidden BJP-Congress Alliance: AAP

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Tuesday alleged that the ruling BJP and the Congress have a "hidden understanding" in the Zilla Panchayat elections, citing the Calangute ZP constituency as a clear example. Addressing a press conference at the party office, AAP Organisation Secretary



Shrikrishna Parab said the Congress had exposed its alleged alliance with the BJP by giving a ticket to a candidate with strong BJP links. AAP's Calangute ZP candidate Carol

Fernandes was also present. Parab alleged that Carmelina Fernandes, who was earlier expelled from the BJP, has now been given a Congress ticket. "The same Carmelina Fernandes had actively campaigned for BJP Sarpanch Joseph Sequeira. By giving her a ticket, Congress has ensured that there are effectively two BJP candidates in Calangute," Parab claimed.

Talpona Coastal Police PI Therron Earns Praise from Locals for Brave Rescue Operation

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: Despite the lack of adequate facilities and equipment, the Talpona Coastal Police Station has earned special praise from local residents for its courageous handling of the rescue of a fishing boat with four fishermen



that had gone missing in the deep Arabian Sea. Locals particularly commended Talpona Coastal Police PI Therron

S. D'Costa for his personal involvement in the operation. "We approached PI Therron and informed him about the distressing situation. He helped us wholeheartedly and finally brought all our missing fishermen safely back to the jetty himself," said Rudresh Namshikar.

Rasta Roko Over Missing Fishing Boat Paralyzes NH-66 for an Hour; SDM Orders Action Against Agitators

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: Tempers flared on Tuesday evening as agitated residents, upset over the alleged delay in tracing a missing fishing boat with four fishermen on board, resorted to a Rasta Roko agitation by blocking the Manohar Parrikar



Canacona Bypass Road (MPCBR) on NH-66 at Talpona, bringing highway

traffic to a complete standstill for nearly an hour.

Indian Army Receives Final Batch of Apache AH-64E Attack Helicopters

■ Helicopters to Join Jodhpur-Based Squadron, Enhancing Strike and Reconnaissance Capabilities.

New Delhi: The Indian Army has received the final three Boeing Apache AH-64E attack helicopters, completing the delivery of the six-aircraft order. The helicopters will be deployed to the 451 Army Aviation Squadron in Jodhpur following assembly, joint inspections, and other formalities. They were transported to India aboard an Antonov An-124 aircraft. The first three Apache helicopters arrived in July this year, with the remaining three arriving recently. Their induction marks a significant enhancement of the Army Aviation Corps' operational capabilities, particularly in strike and reconnaissance roles. The helicopters made their operational debut during Exercise Maru Jwala, part



of the larger tri-services drill, Exercise Trishul. Alongside the Apaches, the Army is also set to induct 90 homegrown Light Combat Helicopters (LCH) Prachand, while continuing to operate the weapon-equipped version of the Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH), known as Rudra. The induction of the AH-64E helicopters had faced delays, with initial deliveries expected in early 2023. The first batch eventually arrived in

July 2025, with the second batch following now. The Indian Army has formally inducted the helicopters into its aviation fleet, calling the arrival a "milestone moment" that will bolster operational capabilities significantly. The Indian Air Force already operates 22 Apache helicopters in Ladakh and western sectors. The AH-64E is the most advanced version of the Apache, designed for modern Multi-Domain Operations.

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Apple Begins Discussions With Indian Firms on iPhone Component Assembly

■ Early talks with Indian semiconductor firms signal deeper integration into global supply chain.

New Delhi: Apple has initiated preliminary discussions with select Indian semiconductor companies to explore assembling and packaging iPhone components, marking a potential first step toward expanding India's role in its global supply chain. If these talks progress, certain iPhone chips could be handled locally, reflecting India's growing significance in electronics manufacturing. One of the companies involved is CG Semi, part of the Murugappa Group, which is setting up an outsourced semiconductor assembly and test (OSAT) facility in Sanand, Gujarat. While the discussions are still exploratory, display-related chips are seen as likely candidates for local assembly. Any advancement will



depend on CG Semi meeting Apple's rigorous quality and performance standards. Apple is known to engage with multiple suppliers across its supply chain, but only a few make it onto its approved list. Both Apple and CG Semi have declined to comment publicly, emphasizing that details will be shared once agreements are finalized. If realized, the collaboration would provide a substantial boost to India's developing semiconductor ecosystem. The move comes shortly

after Intel signed an agreement with Tata Electronics to manufacture and package chips domestically, including exploring advanced chip packaging techniques that enhance performance and durability. Currently, Apple sources iPhone display panels from Samsung Display, LG Display, and BOE, while the associated display driver integrated circuits (DDICs) rely heavily on South Korea, Taiwan, and China for manufacturing and packaging.

LUTHRA BROTHERS ARRESTED, DRAGGED TO GOA

chest discomfort and was referred for additional medical evaluation. As part of security arrangements, the two were transported in separate police vehicles. The Anjuna police had earlier booked the nightclub owners under several sections of the law, including culpable homicide not amounting

to murder, in connection with the deadly fire at the Arpora nightclub. Investigators allege that a fireworks display was conducted at the venue without proper safety precautions or adequate firefighting arrangements, which allegedly triggered the blaze. Police have maintained that the event was

organised in violation of safety norms. In submissions made before the Delhi court, investigating officials stated that the Luthra brothers exercised complete control over the nightclub's operations, including licensing, safety compliance and permissions for events. They further informed

the court that crucial documents such as licences and internal records are yet to be recovered and that custodial interrogation is essential at this stage of the investigation. According to police, the accused allegedly left the country within hours of the incident and travelled to Phuket.

Gas pipeline rupture at Vales junction triggers brief scare

ruptured during excavation work. The situation, however, was brought under control swiftly, averting any major mishap, with no loss of life or damage to nearby property reported. Sources said

the incident occurred when a contractor, while carrying out excavation work, punctured an underground gas pipeline, leading to a loud sound followed by a significant release of gas into the air.

Trump's \$100,000 H-1B Fee Set to Hit Tata, Infosys and Other IT Giants

percent of new H-1B hires at Tata, Infosys, and Cognizant between May 2020 and May 2024 were approved at US consulates. If the fee had applied during that period, these companies would have faced hundreds

of millions of dollars in additional costs. Infosys alone would have incurred visa charges exceeding a billion dollars for over 10,400 new H-1B hires, while Tata and Cognizant would have faced fees for

roughly 6,500 and 5,600 employees respectively. Even if legal challenges succeed in blocking the fee, experts predict it will likely reduce visa demand and encourage firms to place more workers overseas.

AICC's Thakare Alleges BJP Failure, Claims Law & Order Collapse Ahead of ZP Polls

Chief Minister Pramod Sawant responsible for the situation.

He also alleged that the BJP government has permitted illegal nightclubs to operate in the state. Referring to the Congress-Goa

Forward Party (GFP) alliance, Thakare said the coalition has fielded strong candidates for the ZP elections and appealed to the people of Goa to support and elect alliance nominees. Goa Pradesh Congress

Committee (GPCC) president Amit Patkar intensified his attack on rival opposition parties, claiming that except for the Congress and the GFP, no other opposition party was targeting the BJP government.

Over 23,900 Infiltrators Arrested Along Other International Borders, Centre Tells Parliament

Lok Sabha, a total of 23,926 infiltrators have been apprehended along India's borders with Pakistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal, and Bhutan from 2014 up to November 2025. The figures highlight continued infiltration attempts along India's western and eastern borders, while the northern frontier with China has remained free of reported cases. The data

shows that between 2014 and 2024, security forces arrested 20,806 infiltrators across the international borders with Bangladesh, Myanmar, Pakistan, and Nepal Bhutan. An additional 3,120 infiltrators were apprehended between January and November 2025. Among all borders, the India Bangladesh frontier recorded the highest number of arrests, accounting

for 18,851 cases since 2014. This was followed by 1,165 arrests along the India Myanmar border, 556 along the India Pakistan border, and 234 along the India Nepal Bhutan borders. Month wise figures for 2025 up to November indicate that infiltration attempts have continued, particularly along the eastern borders.

India Summons Bangladesh High Commissioner Over Threats to Embassy

■ Diplomatic protest lodged following inflammatory remarks against India.

New Delhi: India has summoned Bangladesh's High Commissioner to New Delhi, Muhammad Riaz Hamidullah, to register a formal diplomatic protest after threats were directed at the Indian High Commission in Dhaka and anti-India statements were made by Bangladeshi political leaders. The move follows comments by National Citizen Party (NCP) leader



Hasnat Abdullah, who publicly threatened to isolate India's northeastern states, often referred to as the "seven sisters."

Abdullah also claimed that his party would provide refuge to separatist groups from India's northeast if Bangladesh

faced destabilization. The incident comes shortly after Bangladesh celebrated its Victory Day with a cultural programme at the Bangladeshi Embassy in Delhi. During the event, High Commissioner Hamidullah highlighted the country's young population and emphasized Bangladesh's commitment to addressing the aspirations of its people, particularly the youth.

No Fuel for Vehicles Without Valid PUC in Delhi From Thursday

■ Automated Checks at Petrol Pumps Aim to Strengthen Pollution Control.

New Delhi: Vehicles without a valid Pollution Under Control certificate will not be allowed to refuel at petrol pumps across Delhi from December 18, as the government steps up measures to curb air pollution in the national capital. Vehicle owners have been given a one day window to ensure compliance with the mandatory pollution norms. Under the new system, cameras installed at petrol pumps will automatically identify vehicles that do not have a valid PUC certificate. Such vehicles will be denied



fuel without any manual intervention, confrontation, or disruption. The move is intended to ensure smooth enforcement while improving overall compliance. Authorities have already imposed penalties on more than eight lakh vehicle owners who currently do not possess valid PUC certificates.

India and Israel Follow Zero Tolerance Policy Against Terrorism, Says Jaishankar

■ External Affairs Minister condemns Sydney attack and outlines growing strategic partnership during Israel visit.

New Delhi: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said that India and Israel share a firm policy of zero tolerance towards terrorism, underlining the strong convergence between the two countries on security and counterterrorism. The remarks were made during his two day visit to Israel while addressing the



media alongside Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Moshe Sa'ar. Jaishankar strongly condemned the recent terror attack during

Hanukkah celebrations at Bondi Beach in Sydney, expressing deep condolences for the loss of lives.

"No Stubble Burning Now, Why Is Delhi Polluted?" Mann Questions BJP

■ Punjab CM slams accusations against farmers as Delhi battles severe air pollution.

New Delhi: Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann has criticized the BJP for repeatedly blaming Punjab farmers for Delhi's air pollution, questioning why the national capital is facing a crisis despite no current stubble burning. Mann noted that following every paddy harvest, BJP leaders have historically linked Delhi's poor air quality to stubble burning in Punjab. However, he pointed out that the



Air Quality Index (AQI) in major Punjab cities currently ranges between 70 and 130, while Delhi's AQI is dangerously high

at 450 to 500. "No smoke is coming from Punjab, yet Delhi's situation is worsening. At least now they should accept that Punjab has no role in Delhi's poor air quality," he said in a video message. The Punjab CM highlighted that severe floods in the state had delayed paddy harvesting this year. Despite this, he said, Delhi ministers had already begun pointing fingers at Punjab.

"I Dedicate This Honour to 140 Crore Indians" Says PM Modi in Ethiopia

■ PM Modi Receives Ethiopia's Highest Civilian Award During Landmark Visit.

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday held wide ranging talks with Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali in Addis Ababa, marking a significant moment in bilateral relations during his first official visit to the African nation. The discussions focused on enhancing cooperation across multiple sectors of mutual interest and reinforcing the long standing partnership between the two countries. Upon his arrival from Jordan, Prime Minister Modi was



accorded a ceremonial welcome at the National Palace. In a warm and personal gesture, Prime Minister Abiy received him at the airport and personally drove him to his hotel. During the journey, the Ethiopian leader made an unscheduled stop to showcase the Science Museum and Friendship Park, highlighting the spirit of goodwill and mutual respect that defined the visit. Prime Minister Modi had earlier expressed his enthusiasm for engaging with Ethiopian leadership

to expand collaboration in diverse fields, including development, education, and global cooperation. The visit reflected the deep historical and people to people ties that have connected India and Ethiopia for generations. In a landmark moment, Prime Minister Modi was conferred with Ethiopia's highest civilian honour, the Great Honour Nishan of Ethiopia, at a special ceremony held at the Addis International Convention Centre.

IPL 2026 Auction Sees Franchises Invest Heavily in Emerging Players

■ Uncapped players shine as franchises strengthen squads with smart picks.

New Delhi: The IPL 2026 auction concluded with all 77 slots filled, leaving every franchise with a complete squad of 25 players. Delhi Capitals, which began the auction with a Rs. 2 crore signing of David Miller, closed it with another Rs. 2 crore deal for Kyle Jamieson — a “perfectly balanced” ending that mirrored the league’s growing maturity. Beyond the symmetry, the auction highlighted the evolution of scouting and player development. Teams dug deep into domestic T20 leagues in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, unearthing talent that had



previously flown under the radar. Kartik Sharma and Prashant Veer, two uncapped players with modest official records, saw six of the ten

franchises compete fiercely for their signatures. Chennai Super Kings emerged as the highest spenders on uncapped talent, making Sharma and Veer the joint most expensive uncapped signings in IPL history and signaling a shift from their traditional preference for experienced players. In total, ten uncapped players became crorepatas, with four earning more than Rs. 4 crore, surpassing last year’s mega auction figures. Social media also played a role in spotlighting talent, as seen in the case of Izaz Sawariya, who attracted attention despite going unsold.

Shivam Dube Confident Suryakumar Yadav Will Bounce Back Ahead of World Cup

■ India all-rounder insists captain remains a match-winner despite lean patch.

New Delhi: India all-rounder Shivam Dube has expressed strong support for T20 captain Suryakumar Yadav, emphasizing that the star batter remains a match-winner despite struggling for runs in recent months. With the T20 World Cup less than two months away, questions over Suryakumar’s form have

intensified, as he has not scored a T20I fifty since October 2024. Dube dismissed concerns about the captain’s performance, saying that form cannot define a player of Suryakumar’s calibre. “He’s the kind of player who can win you five out of five matches on his own. If he’s not scoring right now, it doesn’t mean



he’s not a good player,” Dube said ahead of India’s fourth T20I against South Africa in Lucknow. He highlighted that Suryakumar’s influence

goes beyond statistics. “He’s one of the best. No one can do what he does. Yes, runs have dried up, but his form will return at the right time.



Tata Group Felicitates ICC Women’s World Cup 2025 Winners with Tata Sierra

■ Indian Women’s Cricket Team honoured for historic triumph at Bombay House.

New Delhi: Following their landmark victory at the ICC Women’s World Cup 2025, the Indian Women’s Cricket Team was formally felicitated by Tata Motors in recognition of their outstanding achievement. A ceremony was held at Bombay House on 16th December 2025, where Tata Motors announced a special gesture: each member of the World Cup-winning squad, along with support staff, will be awarded a Tata Sierra, the recently unveiled model positioned as an icon reimaged. The event was attended by senior Tata Group leadership, including N. Chandrasekaran, Chairman of Tata Sons and Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles Ltd., and Shailesh Chandra, Managing Director and CEO of Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles Ltd., highlighting the Group’s commitment to celebrating excellence

in Indian sport. Speaking at the event, Chandrasekaran reflected on the historical significance of cricket in India. “Every child knew where they were when the world changed for them in July 1983. One of those children who watched the men’s team’s success became one of the world’s great batsmen. In 2025, on 2nd November, a new generation of children witnessed a historic moment as the women’s team achieved what their followers always believed was possible,” he said. He praised the team’s resilience, teamwork, and consistent pursuit of excellence, noting that their victory would inspire young athletes across the country. “The culture of excellence that runs through this team has been built over years of effort, experimentation, and learning from both disappointment and success.

Purvi Ritesh Naik Clinches Gold With Best Timing in 100m Freestyle

■ Young swimmer shines at SGFI School National Games in New Delhi.

Team Gomkarponn

PANAJI: Purvi Ritesh Naik won the gold medal in the 100 metres freestyle at the SGFI School National Games held in New Delhi. She delivered an impressive performance to finish first with her best recorded time of 1 minute and 03 seconds. Her victory came against strong



competition, highlighting her speed, technique, and determination in the pool. Achieving a personal best at a national-level event marks an important milestone in her swimming journey. The gold medal adds to her growing list of achievements and reflects her consistent training and competitive spirit.

Goa to Hold Selection Trials for 69th National School Games 2025

■ Cycling and shooting trials scheduled on Dec 18 to finalise state teams for January championships.

Team Gomkarponn

PANAJI: The Directorate of Sports and Youth Affairs, Government of Goa, has announced the conduct of selection trials to identify Goa State teams for the 69th National School Games Championship 2025. The trials will cover Cycling and Shooting disciplines across Under 14, Under 17, and Under

19 categories for both boys and girls. Selected cyclists will represent Goa at the National School Games Cycling Championship, which is scheduled to be held in Jharkhand from January 13 to January 17, 2026. Meanwhile, the Shooting events for Under 14 and Under 19 boys and girls will take place in Madhya Pradesh from January 5 to January 9,

2026. The selection trials for Cycling in the Under 14, 17, and 19 categories will be conducted on December 18, 2025. The venue for the trials will be the Directorate of Sports and Youth Affairs office at Campal, Panaji, Goa. Athletes are required to report between 10.00 a.m. and 11.00 a.m. at the Sports Section of the DSYA office.