



“KUSHAVATI” IS GOA’S THIRD DISTRICT

■ Quepem to serve as headquarters; improved road links and special bus services promised: CM

Team Goemkarponn

PORVORIM: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant today announced that Goa’s proposed third district will be named Kushavati, drawing inspiration from the Kushavati river that flows through all four talukas earmarked for the new district—Sanguem, Canacona, Quepem and Dharbandora.

Explaining the rationale behind the name, Sawant said Kushavati represents the region’s deep-rooted geographical legacy and cultural identity, as the river has historically sustained the people, ecology and livelihoods of



these talukas. He reiterated that Quepem will function as the headquarters of the proposed district.

The Chief Minister clarified that the formal creation of the district would take time as administrative structures are put in place. Until then, the South Goa Collector will continue to oversee the administration

of the four talukas.

Addressing concerns over accessibility to Quepem, particularly from Canacona and Dharbandora, Sawant assured that connectivity would be strengthened.

He announced special bus services between Canacona and Quepem via the ghat section, along with plans to widen ghat roads to enable travel between Canacona and Quepem in about half an hour. A district road linking Dharbandora to Quepem and other road infrastructure projects



are also on the anvil. Sawant further stated that the government would seek additional central assistance to accelerate infrastructure development in the new district. He added that the proposed Kushavati district would be declared an Aspirational District, making it eligible for special central funding.

Across the country, aspirational districts have received around ₹15 crore each for focused development, particularly in infrastructure.

Third Goa District: Administrative Process Yet to Begin

■ South Goa Collector to continue overseeing affairs, says CM
Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant today clarified that administrative work related to the creation of Goa’s proposed third district has not commenced yet. He assured the public that there is no cause for concern, as the process of setting up the new district’s administrative machinery will take time. Sawant said that until formal arrangements are in place, all administrative responsibilities of the proposed district will continue to be handled by the South Goa Collector’s office. The appointment of a separate Collector for the new district will be finalised at a later stage. The Chief Minister emphasised that the transition would be carried out in a phased and orderly manner to ensure there is no disruption in governance or public services.

He added that the government is committed to streamlining administrative processes once the groundwork for the new district is completed.

Appeal to PM, HM to ‘Save Goa’: Savio Rodrigues Flags Illegal Nightclubs

■ Alleged ₹240-Crore Kickback Racket

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Social activist and anti-corruption crusader Savio Rodrigues has made a direct appeal to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, urging urgent central intervention to “Save Goa” from what he describes as unchecked corruption, ecological destruction, illegal constructions, and cultural erosion. In a strongly worded statement, Rodrigues warned that Goa’s identity, heritage, and social harmony are under severe threat due to changing demographics, rampant illegal activities, and what he termed a complete failure of local leadership to act decisively.

“Goa deserves urgent intervention. Goa deserves protection. Goa deserves to be saved—now,” Rodrigues said. Rodrigues, who said he has consistently believed in and supported the Prime Minister’s vision for a stronger India, expressed deep disappointment at the current state of affairs in Goa. “My faith in the



seriousness of the local leadership to rise to the occasion and save Goa is extremely low. That is why I am compelled to turn directly to the Prime Minister and the Home Minister,” he stated.

Taking aim at corruption within the system, Rodrigues alleged that despite full knowledge within sections of the Goa government about nearly 200 illegal nightclubs operating across the state, permanent action is avoided as it is “not good business.” Citing information shared by a former senior officer of a key regulatory department on condition of anonymity, Rodrigues claimed that each illegal nightclub allegedly pays monthly kickbacks ranging between ₹10 lakh and ₹25 lakh.

“Even at the lowest estimate, this translates to nearly ₹20 crore every month and a staggering ₹240 crore annually flowing as pure kickbacks.



“No Third Party Intervention in India Pakistan Matters”: India Rejects China’s Truce Mediation Claim

New Delhi: India has firmly rejected China’s claim that it helped mediate peace between New Delhi and Islamabad during the military conflict earlier this year, reiterating that the understanding was reached solely through direct

CONTD TO PAGE 06...

Fire Dept Denies Granting Permission to Clubs to Resume Operations

■ Birch nightclub didn’t have permission from fire dept: Raikar

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Fire and Emergency Services Director Nitin Raikar on Wednesday categorically denied granting permission to nightclubs to restart operations after being shut down for lacking the mandatory Fire No-Objection Certificate (NOC). Responding to



media queries about reports that some clubs had resumed business despite closures, Raikar said no approvals had been issued

by the Fire Department. “We have not given any permission to clubs to resume operations. Even if establishments claim to have complied with safety requirements, a re-inspection by the department is mandatory, and that has not been carried out yet,” he stated.

Raikar further pointed
CONTD TO PAGE 06...

GSPCB Suspends Staff Over Arpora Nightclub Fire Lapses

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: The Goa State Pollution Control Board (GSPCB) has suspended two officials in the wake of the Arpora nightclub fire, citing lapses in inspection protocols.

The suspended staff members are scientific assistant Chaitanya Salgaonkar and junior environmental engineer Vijay Harichandra Kansekar, who reportedly failed to carry out a proper inspection at Birch by Romeo Lane.

Following a review



of the magisterial report on the incident, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant convened a meeting with department heads and directed them to issue showcase notices to officials responsible for approving permissions for the nightclub.

Notices are expected to be sent to personnel from the food and drugs administration, panchayats, and fire and emergency services departments.



“BJP Used AI to Remove 54 Lakh Voters”: Mamata Banerjee Alleges Large Scale Electoral Manipulation

■ West Bengal CM targets Special Intensive Revision, demands accountability and safeguards for voters

New Delhi: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday alleged that the Bharatiya Janata Party has used artificial intelligence to delete the names of millions of voters from the electoral rolls in the state. Addressing a public meeting at Barjora in Bankura district, she claimed that 54 lakh voters had already been removed and warned that the BJP’s larger objective was to eliminate nearly 1.5 crore names from the voters’ list in Bengal.



The Chief Minister described the alleged deletions as a direct attack on democratic rights and demanded the resignation of the Union Home Minister over the issue. She cautioned people against blindly trusting social media content, saying that advanced technologies like AI were being misused to manipulate voter data.

Kushavati District: Administrative Reform or an Avoidable Gamble for Goa?

Chief Minister Pramod Sawant's announcement of Goa's third district, to be called Kushavati, has brought an old debate back into sharp focus. The government says the creation of the new district will also lead to a new Zilla Panchayat and the appointment of a third ZP Adhyaksh, signalling a significant administrative expansion. Supporters see it as a step towards better governance. Critics fear it may deepen costs, confusion, and political symbolism without fixing deeper problems.

Since Liberation, Goa has functioned with just two districts, North Goa and South Goa. For many years, that structure appeared sufficient. But the state has changed. Population growth, tourism pressures, expanding welfare schemes, and more complex governance demands have stretched district administrations. From that perspective, the idea of a third district cannot be dismissed outright.

One of the strongest arguments in favour of the Kushavati district is administrative reach. Large districts often mean overburdened collectors, slower decision-making, and weak last-mile delivery of government services. A new district could reduce the administrative load, allowing officials to respond faster to local needs. Whether it is land records, disaster management, health services, or education administration, smaller jurisdictions can, in theory, make governance more responsive and accountable.

The government has also highlighted the financial dimension. A new district can improve access to central funds and programmes. District-level eligibility under schemes such as the Aspirational District Programme often depends on administrative status and defined boundaries. If Kushavati includes fast-growing or relatively underdeveloped regions, it could potentially attract focused investments in infrastructure, healthcare,

"One of the strongest arguments in favour of the Kushavati district is administrative reach. Large districts often mean overburdened collectors, slower decision-making, and weak last-mile delivery of government services. A new district could reduce the administrative load, allowing officials to respond faster to local needs. Whether it is land records, disaster management, health services, or education administration, smaller jurisdictions can, in theory, make governance more responsive and accountable."

The government has also highlighted the financial dimension. A new district can improve access to central funds and programmes. District-level eligibility under schemes such as the Aspirational District Programme often depends on administrative status and defined boundaries."

skilling, and education. Done right, this could help address regional imbalances within the state.

Supporters further argue that smaller districts encourage greater civic participation. Local leaders and citizens may find it easier to engage with district authorities, raise grievances, and monitor implementation. In a state where complaints about unresponsive bureaucracy are common, this promise resonates with many residents.

Yet the concerns are

substantial and deserve equal attention.

The most immediate issue is cost. Creating a new district is not simply about drawing lines on a map. It requires new offices, administrative buildings, staff appointments, vehicles, security arrangements, and ongoing operational expenditure. The announcement that a new Zilla Panchayat and a third ZP Adhyaksh will follow only adds to these recurring costs. At a time when Goa faces fiscal pressure and competing priorities, the government must clearly explain how this expansion will be funded and sustained.

Boundary demarcation is another sensitive issue. Goa's villages and talukas are closely connected through social, cultural, and economic ties. Redrawing administrative boundaries risks disrupting these linkages. Without careful planning, residents could face confusion over jurisdiction, land records, taxation, and access to services, at least in the initial years.

There is also the question of politicisation. While the name Kushavati avoids the overt political symbolism that earlier proposals attracted, scepticism remains about timing and intent. Administrative restructuring, critics argue, should be driven by data and governance needs, not political calculations or optics.

Public trust is further weakened by Goa's recent administrative track record. Citizens have seen ambitious announcements falter during implementation, whether in urban planning, infrastructure projects, or environmental regulation. Without a detailed roadmap, clear timelines, and institutional accountability, Kushavati district risks becoming another decision that looks good on paper but delivers little on the ground.

Perhaps the most fundamental question is whether a new district addresses the root causes of governance failures. Many of Goa's problems stem not from administrative size, but from weak enforcement, political interference, and lack of accountability.

Letters

There was a time when Goa was a paradise.

I count myself among the fortunate Goans who truly experienced it. Goa was once a sanctuary of simplicity and silence. Its people were happy, fun-loving, and easygoing, living largely in harmony. Hindus and Catholics shared space, traditions, and everyday life with little friction. Those days are long gone now, preserved only in memory.

The clean cities, towns, and beaches have disappeared. The sushegad lifestyle that defined Goa has been replaced by something unrecognisable. Crowded, chaotic, dirty, and stripped of the quiet magic that once set it apart.

The downward spiral began in the 1980s, when the first wave of tourists and migrants from other states discovered Goa as a cheap holiday destination. What followed was an unchecked influx that changed the character of the land and its people. Many of these visitors, including some who claim to be educated, brought with them little sense of civic responsibility or respect for the place they were entering.

With them came roadside food stalls, peddlers, and beggars, turning large parts of Goa into a visual and environmental mess. The decision to introduce casinos remains one of the most baffling acts of governance in Goa's history. The stupidity of those involved defies belief. Idiocy seems the only honest word for it. Casinos brought with them more riffraff, prostitution, and organised vice. It is hard to ignore the suspicion that politicians are not just complicit, but personally benefitting. The government has failed Goa. Politicians are corrupt, greedy, and intellectually bankrupt, occupying positions of power while doing little to protect the land they were elected to serve.

I wish for the impossible. The return of that Goa which lived in balance with its rivers, its land, and its people. For those of us who experienced the old Goa, we are the lucky ones. We carry within us the memory of a paradise that will never return, a dream that now feels more like a lament.

- Vithal Kamat

Goa Needs Action, Not Lip Service

Leadership has failed. Goa needs strong leadership that can solve problems instantly, not leaders who survive on speeches and slogans. We want action, not assurances. We want decisions taken without delay, not pretence and political theatre.

Nothing is impossible. Everything is possible if there is intent. What Goa needs now is an alliance, and it must happen immediately. Not at the last minute. Not behind closed doors. Let the people know who their leaders are and where they stand. The Congress must also reflect honestly on the defections of 2019 and 2022. These did not happen by accident. They were the direct result of weak leadership, indecision, and the absence of firm action when it mattered most. Goa paid the price for those failures. Stop unnecessarily blaming others. This is not the time for finger-pointing. It is the time for accountability and resolution. Anyone within the party who does not want an alliance should be removed without hesitation. That is what strong leadership looks like. Clear decisions. Clear consequences.

The people of Goa are watching. They are tired of delays, excuses, and internal games. Show leadership. Take control. Build the alliance now, or step aside and let those who are willing to act take charge.

— Herculano Rebello

North Goa Police Intensify Night Patrolling; DySP Jivba Dalvi Details Security Measures

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: In an effort to bolster law and order and enhance public safety, the North Goa Police have intensified their routine "Night-Round" patrolling across the district, Deputy Superintendent of Police (DySP) Jivba Dalvi said on Tuesday.

Dalvi explained that the night-round patrols are conducted as part of a pre-planned strategy



under which all gazetted officers, including DySPs, are assigned night duties once every 15 days. On the particular night, Dalvi himself was in charge of supervising night patrolling operations across North

Goa. During the exercise, police teams inspected naka bandis (checkpoints), visited various police stations, and reviewed security arrangements along the district's borders. Inspections at Saligao and Calangute police stations revealed that the overall situation was normal and under control.

The DySP also said that visits to border checkpoints, including the Dodamarg outpost and

other border points, were scheduled to ensure strict vigilance and prevent any untoward incidents. He emphasised that night-round teams remain alert throughout their patrol hours and are ready to respond immediately to any emergency or criminal activity. According to Dalvi, these patrols serve both preventive and corrective purposes, particularly in the wake of recent major crimes.

Finalise Ward Reservations Well in Advance of Municipal Polls: Vijai

Team Goemkarponn

FATORDA: Fatorda MLA Vijai Sardesai has urged the Directorate of Municipal Administration (DMA) to finalise and notify ward reservations well in advance of the forthcoming municipal elections, stressing that transparency in the reservation process is crucial for free and fair polls.

In a communication addressed to the DMA, Sardesai said he supports the decision not to undertake ward delimitation ahead of the municipal elections, noting that it is in line with the State government's notification freezing administrative boundaries in view of the upcoming census exercise. He said retaining existing ward boundaries brings a degree of certainty to the electoral process.

However, the MLA emphasised that clarity on ward reservations is equally important. "Reservation is not a peripheral matter; it goes to the very heart of free and fair elections and directly impacts the ability of potential candidates to prepare, organise and contest on an equal footing," Sardesai said.



He warned that any delay, ambiguity or last-minute notification of reservations would seriously prejudice candidates, distort the electoral process and create an uneven playing field, which would be contrary to the principles of natural justice and the constitutional mandate of fairness in democratic elections.

Sardesai further cautioned that if the reservation process is not completed and announced within a reasonable and transparent timeframe, legal recourse would be considered. "Should the reservation process not be completed in time, we will have no option but to approach the Hon'ble High Court and seek appropriate directions to ensure timely notification before the elections," he stated, adding that the issue is one of institutional integrity and public interest, not political expediency.

Congress MLAs meet Guv; urge to protect Goa's identity

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Drawing the Governor's attention to the failures of the BJP Government, Congress MLAs met him on Tuesday and urged him to address pressing issues plaguing Goa's image.

Leader of Opposition Yuri Alemas, Aldona MLA Carlos Ferreira, and Quepem MLA Altone D'Costa met Goa Governor Shri Pusapati Ashok Gajapati Raju and submitted a memorandum requesting action.

"We drew his attention



to governance failures, corruption, the collapse of law and order, environmental damage, and threats to Goa's identity. We hope that, as the constitutional

head of the state, he will uphold the Constitution's spirit and Goa's people's interests," Yuri Alemas said.

Alemas said there are many issues

related to public safety, environmental protection, fiscal stability, and the state's social fabric.

"But instead of addressing these, the BJP Govt is doing nothing. It is busy with events and commissions. Such programs don't benefit the common man. Important issues are ignored," Alemas said.

He added that Goa has seen a disturbing rise in violent assaults, organised crime, drug-related offences, land and real-estate frauds, and night-time violence.

GCCI Seeks Deferment of Porvorim-Mapusa Road Closure Till January 5

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: The Goa Chamber of Commerce & Industry (GCCI) has formally requested the North Goa district administration to defer the proposed road closure on the Porvorim-Mapusa stretch till January 5, 2026, citing peak tourist inflow and the likelihood of severe traffic congestion during the New Year period.

In a letter dated December 30, 2025, addressed to North Goa Collector and District Magistrate Ankit Yadav, IAS, GCCI acknowledged the proactive steps taken by the district administration to ensure public safety and expedite completion of the ongoing flyover work between Porvorim and Guirim.



While expressing support for the timely execution of critical infrastructure projects, the chamber highlighted that Goa is currently witnessing peak tourist movement until the first week of January, with January 2 falling on a Friday, resulting in an extended weekend rush.

CARES Scheme Extended by Three Years; SPV, CoEs Approved

■ Empowered Committee reviews progress, notes improved learning outcomes and national recognition

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Monday chaired the sixth meeting of the Empowered Committee of the Coding and Robotics Education in Schools (CARES) scheme, during which the



government reviewed the programme's progress and approved several measures to strengthen

technology-driven education in Goa.

The committee approved a three-year

extension of the CARES scheme under the Directorate of Technical Education. It also cleared the incorporation of PMU-CARES as a Special Purpose Vehicle under government corporations to commercialise innovative STEAM-based ed-tech solutions.

AAP and Congress Trade Barbs in Goa Over Who Strengthens BJP

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: A sharp political exchange erupted between the Goa Congress and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Tuesday, with both parties trading strong accusations over their respective roles in opposing the BJP in the state.

The Congress

dismissed AAP's criticism as "laughable," alleging that the party's real objective in Goa is to weaken the opposition by dividing votes whenever the BJP faces pressure. Referring to recent remarks by AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal, the Congress said AAP itself has admitted that its



principal fight is against the Congress, not the BJP.

"Whenever the BJP is under pressure, AAP conveniently appears to divide votes and provide relief. That isn't opposition,

it is B-team politics," the Congress said, asserting that it has consistently confronted the BJP both on the streets and in the Assembly.

The party further accused AAP of functioning through "Delhi's remote control" and acting as a spoiler in Goa's political landscape.

Pernem Police Nab Serial Burglars

Recover Stolen Property Worth ₹53.6 Lakh

Team Goemkarponn

Pernem: Pernem police have busted a serial day-burglary racket with the arrest of two habitual offenders and the recovery of stolen property worth approximately ₹53.68 lakh, including gold ornaments, laptops and other valuables.

The case relates to Pernem Police Station Crime No. 57/2025 registered on August 12, 2025, under Sections 305 and 331(3) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), following a complaint by Anil Kambli of Zorulem Khailo Vaddo, Tuem, Pernem. The complainant had reported that unknown persons broke open the lock of his house between 8 am and 12 noon and decamped with gold ornaments and cash, with the gold alone valued at around ₹8 lakh.

Acting on reliable inputs and technical



surveillance, a team led by PI Nitin Halarnkar arrested Rohan Mahadev Padwal (29) of Varpe Waddo, Pernem, and Jagannath alias Ketan Sanjay Bagkar (20) of Ramnagar, Colvale, Bardez, on December 26, 2025. During interrogation, police revealed that the duo are professional burglars involved in a series of day house-breaking cases across Pernem, Dhargal, Virnoda, Tuem and Korgao since December 2024.

Police linked the accused to multiple

offences registered at Pernem police station, including Crime Nos. 06/2025, 47/2025, 57/2025, 62/2025, 75/2025 and 81/2024, all under Sections 305 and 331(3) of BNS, besides several similar cases.

During the investigation, police attached a DEWALT grinder cutter machine, two scooters—a Yamaha Fascino and a Honda Activa—and three mobile phones allegedly used in the commission of the crimes. On December 27, stolen gold ornaments

weighing 151.3 grams and valued at about ₹21.48 lakh were recovered from Muthoot Finance branches at Pernem and Dhargal at the instance of the accused.

Further recoveries followed on December 28, when police seized two laptops and additional gold and silver ornaments worth approximately ₹18 lakh from the residence of accused Rohan Padwal. On December 29, more stolen gold ornaments weighing about 100 grams and valued at around ₹14.20 lakh were recovered from a bank and goldsmiths in Colvale, Panaji and Mapusa.

The accused were produced before the JMFC, Pernem, and remanded to seven days of police custody. Further investigation is being carried out by PSI Praveen Simpurshekar under the supervision of senior police officers.

Verna police arrest four for assault, molestation & criminal intimidation at Upasnagar

Team Goemkarponn

Upasnagar: A late evening altercation at Upasnagar, Sancoale, escalated into a violent assault involving a woman and her family, prompting Verna police to book four persons on multiple serious charges, including outraging modesty and criminal intimidation.

According to police, the incident occurred on December 29, 2025, at around 6.45 pm, when the complainant, Susmita Das (24), resident of Umeya Building, flat no. 402, Birla, Sancoale, Verna, originally from Buloniya, Tripura, was returning home with her husband and sister-in-law. Near Upasnagar, they were allegedly wrongfully restrained by Toffick Shaikh, resident of H.No. 89/51, Housing Board, Upasnagar, Sancoale, who abused them and pushed the complainant's



husband.

Police said Shaikh then called three associates, who arrived at the spot on two scooters. One of them, Adnan Shaikh, resident near Titan Junction, Verna, allegedly pushed the complainant's husband again. When the woman intervened, Adnan Shaikh is accused of touching her chest with intent to outrage her modesty. The situation worsened when Toffick Shaikh, along with Iqran Jagirdar and Meezan Sayed, both residents of Housing Board, Upasnagar, allegedly pushed the complainant's sister-in-law to the ground and assaulted her with sandals and fist blows.

Two Booked for Forgery and Cheating in House Tax Transfer Case at Vasco

Team Goemkarponn

Vasco: Based on a complaint filed by Zaida Bi Shaikh, a resident of Chicalim, police have registered a case alleging forgery, cheating and use of forged documents in connection with the illegal transfer of a house tax property at Vasco.

According to the complaint, prior to December 2012 at TNK, Vasco, the accused Noorbi Shaikh Mohammed and Hamid Shaikh, both residents of Vasco, allegedly acted with common intention to prepare an affidavit-cum-NOC in the name of Ibrahim Khan by forging his signatures.

Ibrahim Khan had expired on November 22, 2008. The forged document was allegedly notarised before Notary Advocate

Santana Fernandes and subsequently produced as genuine before the Mormugao Municipal Council, Vasco.

The complainant stated that the forged affidavit was used to facilitate the transfer of a house tax property situated near Shafi Masjid, Katem Baina, Vasco, in the name of accused Noorbi Shaikh Mohammed.

The property is stated to belong to the complainant's late father. Through this act, the accused allegedly cheated the complainant and her family members.

Police have registered the offence and further investigation is being carried out by LPSI Priyanka Patil.



Minor Girl Kidnapped from Usgao Poultry Farm; Police Launch Search

Team Goemkarponn

Ponda: Ponda police have registered a case of kidnapping following a complaint that a minor girl was abducted from Usgao in Ponda taluka.

According to the complaint, the incident occurred on December 24, 2025, between 3 pm and 4 pm at Nirmala



Farm Poultry World, Usgao.

The complainant alleged that unknown

accused person(s) kidnapped his minor daughter from his lawful guardianship.

Police have registered an offence in the matter and launched an investigation to trace the missing child and identify those involved.

Further investigation is being carried out by PSI Krishna Gawas of Ponda Police Station.

47-Year-Old Man Found Dead in Navelim Flat

Team Goemkarponn

Margao: A 47-year-old man was found dead in his flat at Mandopa, Navelim, late Sunday night, police said.

According to police, information was received around 11 pm on December 28 from a woman who reported that her husband was found motionless in their flat at Mandopa, Navelim. The deceased was identified as Dinesh Velip (47), a resident of Mandopa, Navelim.

During preliminary enquiry, it was revealed that Velip was found lying on his bed and



unresponsive. He was immediately shifted to the South Goa District Hospital, Margao, where the doctor on duty declared him brought dead.

Further enquiry with family members disclosed

that the deceased was residing alone in the flat and was a chronic alcoholic. As he was not responding to phone calls, family members visited the flat, found it locked, and upon opening it, discovered him lying

motionless on the bed.

Police conducted an inquest panchanama and the body was sent for post-mortem examination. The autopsy conducted by the police surgeon certified the cause of death as acute myocardial infarction consequent to occlusive coronary artery disease, in a person suffering from acute on chronic pancreatitis and fatty liver disease.

After completion of formalities, the body was handed over to the family for final religious rites. The enquiry was conducted by PSI Subhash Gaonkar of Margao Town Police Station.

Drishti Marine Steps Up Beach Safety Ahead of New Year, Deploys 135 Additional Personnel

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: With a surge in tourist arrivals expected during the New Year festive week, Goa's state-appointed lifesaver agency Drishti Marine has intensified beach safety operations across the coastline, including extended duty hours till 1 am on New Year's Eve.

Drishti Marine has deployed an additional 135 personnel for the festive



season, comprising 70 lifesavers and 14 beach marshals in South Goa, and 65 lifesavers along with 19 beach marshals in North Goa. The move is aimed at managing increased footfall at popular beaches such

as Baga, Calangute, Candolim and Miramar in North Goa, and Colva, Benaulim and Palolem in South Goa. "Drishti Marine has taken significant pre-emptive safety measures this holiday season to safeguard beach-goers, keeping in mind the large crowds expected along Goa's coastline," said Navin Awasthi, CEO of Drishti Marine. He added that lifesavers will remain on duty till 1 am

on New Year's Eve to manage midnight crowds and respond swiftly to emergencies.

In total, over 450 lifesavers and 70 beach marshals will be deployed across designated locations to ensure uninterrupted safety services. Colonel Austin Collaco, General Manager (Operations and Training), said additional manpower is crucial during New Year celebrations.



Tourism Dept Acts Swiftly on North Goa Beach Garbage

■ Reaffirms Clean Coastline Commitment

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: The Goa Tourism Department on Tuesday acted swiftly to address reports of garbage accumulation along a North Goa beach stretch, ensuring immediate clearance and restoration of cleanliness.

The prompt response highlights the Department's zero-tolerance stance on littering and its commitment to maintaining Goa's beaches as clean, safe and welcoming spaces for tourists and residents alike. Upon receiving the report, ground teams were

mobilised without delay and the affected area was cleaned in coordination with concerned agencies. Instructions were also reiterated to stakeholders to ensure strict compliance with waste management protocols.

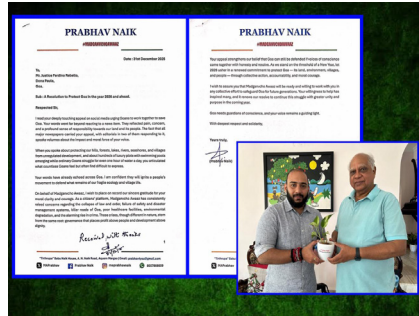
Tourism Minister Rohan A Khaunte said clean beaches are integral to Goa's identity as a premier tourism destination. "Any lapse is addressed immediately. We will continue working closely with all stakeholders to ensure our coastline remains pristine, orderly and environmentally responsible," he stated.

Madganvcho Awaaz Resolves To Protect Goa In 2026 And Beyond

Team Goemkarponn

Margao: Citizens' platform Madganvcho Awaaz has resolved to stand firmly with all voices of conscience and actively participate in collective efforts to safeguard Goa for future generations. The group reaffirmed its commitment to protect the State's land, environment, villages and people

through unity, vigilance and moral resolve. Responding to an appeal by former Bombay High Court Judge Justice Ferdino Rebello, youth leader Prabhav Naik met Justice Rebello on Tuesday and submitted a formal resolution on behalf of Madganvcho Awaaz, expressing solidarity with his call for Goans to unite against unchecked and destructive development.



Salcete Exposes Myth of 'Strategy', Highlights Grassroots Strength: Vishal Pai Cacode

Team Goemkarponn

Margao: The electoral outcomes in South Goa, particularly Salcete, during the Lok Sabha and Zilla Panchayat elections are a clear endorsement of grassroots strength rather than imported leadership or opportunistic political strategy, political analyst Vishal Pai Cacode has said. In a detailed analysis, Cacode asserted that the Congress' success in Salcete was the result of years of sustained organisational work, door-to-door campaigning, ideological consistency and personal credibility built by committed party workers. "These victories were not negotiated in drawing rooms or engineered through shortcuts. They were earned on the ground by loyal Congress cadres," he said. Refuting post-election claims by certain leaders projecting themselves as "architects of victory", Cacode said such narratives insult grassroots workers who remained steadfast when it was easier to defect or



compromise. He pointed out that during the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, Congress candidate Capt. Viriato Fernandes secured his highest leads from traditional Congress strongholds driven by local organisation—Benaulim (14,181), Nuvem (13,688), Velim (13,350), Curtorim (9,188) and Navelim (5,770)—with Cuncolim registering the lowest lead at 5,548. "These numbers are not accidental. They reflect disciplined organisational work, not individual brilliance or centralised strategy," he said, adding that Fatorda, represented by the lone Goa Forward MLA, gave a comparatively modest lead of 2,437, while Margao saw Congress workers successfully restrict the BJP lead to just 1,323.

Archdiocese of Goa Hosts Christmas Outreach Programme for Church Employees

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: In a heartwarming display of gratitude and love, the Archdiocese of Goa and Daman organized a special Christmas Outreach Programme for its dedicated church employees. The event, which took place on 30th December, 10.30am, at the St. Joseph Vaz Retreat Centre, Old Goa, was a gesture of appreciation for the



tireless service of those who often work behind the scenes in the church community.

The outreach event, brought together a diverse group of employees

representing Church office assistants, sacristans, cooks, grave diggers, and gardeners—individuals whose efforts play an essential role in the daily operations of the

churches across Goa. These workers, many of whom work quietly without seeking attention, were honored for their unwavering service throughout the year.

The occasion was graced by the presence of Archbishop Filipe Neri Cardinal Ferrao, who warmly addressed the gathering, and Auxiliary Bishop Simão Fernandes, who also joined in the celebrations and gave the vote of thanks.

GTDC Unveils Calendar and Diary 2026 Showcasing Goa's Culture and Hidden Gems

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: The Goa Tourism Development Corporation (GTDC) on Tuesday unveiled its Calendar and Diary for 2026, offering a vibrant visual celebration of Goa's rich culture, heritage and lesser-known destinations.

Speaking on the occasion, Director of Tourism Kedar Naik said the GTDC Calendar 2026



is more than a date-keeper. "This is not just a calendar; it is a beautiful showcase of Goa's vibrant culture, heritage and the hidden gems that

make our state a global destination," he said. He added that the initiative reflects Goa Tourism's continued focus on promoting sustainable

and regenerative tourism.

The unveiling ceremony was held in the presence of GM (Marketing) Gavin Dias, DGM (Marketing) Deepak Narvekar, DGM (Administration) Sandeep Gawas, DGM (Finance) Kundan Naik, senior managers Vishesh Naik, Pravin Phaladesai and Prasad Kavlekar, along with other GTDC officials.



Goa Is Building a Future Where Technology Empowers Every Citizen

■ DITE&C's 2025 initiatives strengthen connectivity, governance, skills and innovation across the state

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Goa's journey toward becoming India's Creative Capital and a modern technology hub gathered strong momentum in 2025. Driven by focused efforts from the Department of Information Technology, Electronics and Communications, the year marked steady progress in digital connectivity, citizen centric governance, skilling and startup growth.

Strengthening connectivity remained a priority. The state expanded its free public Wi-Fi network to 135 hotspots in prominent public locations, improving access

for residents and visitors. The rollout of 4G and 5G towers also accelerated, delivering faster and more reliable internet services. At the institutional level, the Goa Broadband Network extended high speed internet connectivity to 1,492 government offices, creating a robust digital backbone for service delivery.

E-governance saw notable advancement with increased adoption of the GoaOnline portal. Offering 265 services across 41 departments, the platform recorded more than 11 lakh digital interactions during the year, reflecting growing trust in online public services. Complementing

this, the Gramin Mitra Yojana ensured essential digital services reached rural and remote communities through Common Service Centres, reinforcing transparent and inclusive governance.

Skilling initiatives gained prominence as Goa prepared its workforce for the digital economy. The launch of the Goa AI Mission 2027 set a long term roadmap focused on skills, startups, capital and infrastructure. As an early milestone, the AI for Governance programme introduced government officials to practical applications of artificial intelligence in policymaking and service

delivery. Digital literacy efforts also expanded, including the Mahila Digital Shashaktikaran Scheme for women and laptop distribution to 111 meritorious SC and ST students.

Infrastructure development progressed at the Electronics Manufacturing Centre in Tuem, with land allotted to multiple companies, strengthening the state's manufacturing ecosystem. Goa also explored emerging technologies like blockchain, engaging with global firms and international delegations to assess future opportunities.

The startup ecosystem continued to flourish,



with over 700 registered startups, including a strong presence of women led ventures. Policy reforms, innovation

challenges, national tech expo participation and new partnerships further supported entrepreneurial growth.

"Act Today to Achieve Tomorrow": Goan Short Film Earns Global Recognition

■ Environmental film from Goa reaches semi finalist stage at Japan's Rising Cinema Film Festival

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: The Goan short film Act To Achieve has achieved a significant international milestone after being selected as a semi finalist at the Rising Cinema Film Festival in Osaka, Japan. The recognition marks an important moment for Goan cinema and highlights the growing presence of young Indian filmmakers on global platforms.

Rising Cinema Film Festival is an emerging international festival focused on discovering and supporting new voices in filmmaking. Rooted in the Japanese philosophy of Kaizen, which emphasizes continuous improvement, the festival encourages creative growth, collaboration and artistic evolution. It aims to provide a supportive environment where filmmakers develop

their craft while engaging with global cinematic communities.

The festival's credibility is strengthened through its association with leading film institutions such as Toei Studios, Shochiku Studios and Kyoto Filmmakers Lab. It has also drawn recognition from acclaimed international filmmakers, adding to its standing as a respected platform for emerging talent.

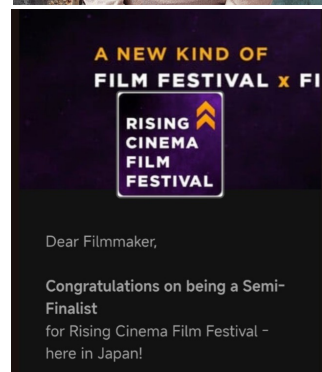
Act To Achieve is an environmental short film directed by Mario Pimenta, a Gen Z filmmaker from Loutulim in Goa. The film addresses the pressing issue of climate change and calls for immediate and responsible action. Rather than limiting itself to awareness alone, the film urges audiences to translate concern into real world impact for a sustainable future.

The visual storytelling

plays a key role in delivering its message. Cinematography for the film is led by Mario Pimenta, with selected sequences captured by Sharvi Dhond and Craig Rodrigues. The film relies on strong imagery and a focused narrative to communicate urgency and responsibility in the face of environmental challenges.

Mario Pimenta has steadily built a reputation within Goan independent cinema for presenting socially relevant themes through a contemporary lens. His selection at the Rising Cinema Film Festival reflects both his creative growth and the increasing global visibility of filmmakers from Goa.

The semi finalist recognition of Act To Achieve stands as a proud moment for Goa and Indian independent cinema. It underlines the power of youth led storytelling and



reinforces the relevance of environmental narratives in today's global filmmaking landscape.

Fire Dept Denies Granting Permission to Clubs to Resume Operations

out that there was clear negligence on the part of the establishments regarding fire safety norms. "Despite repeated approaches and instructions from the department, the required safety measures were not adequately addressed," he added. Clarifying specifically about Birch by Romeo Lane, the Director said the nightclub did not receive any clearance

from the Fire Department. "Birch by Romeo Lane did not have any permission, and we have already made this clear publicly. We did not give them permission to operate," Raikar said. The Fire and Emergency Services Department reiterated that any establishment found operating without valid fire safety clearance would face strict action as per law.

"No Third Party Intervention in India Pakistan Matters": India Rejects China's Truce Mediation Claim

communication between the two countries. The response follows public remarks by Chinese leaders asserting Beijing's role in easing tensions between India and Pakistan.

China recently stated that it played a constructive role in reducing hostilities in multiple conflict zones, including South Asia. Addressing a symposium on international affairs in Beijing, Chinese

Foreign Minister Wang Yi said China adopted an objective and balanced approach to resolving global conflicts and cited the India Pakistan situation as one of several regions where Chinese mediation helped calm tensions. India, however, has consistently maintained that the conflict, which began on May 7, was resolved through established military channels without any external involvement.

“India Is on the Side of Peace”: PM Modi Voices Concern Over Reports of Attack on Putin’s Residence

■ New Delhi urges restraint and renewed focus on diplomacy amid fresh Russia Ukraine tensions

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday expressed deep concern over reports claiming that the residence of Russian President Vladimir Putin was targeted, and called on all parties to remain committed to diplomatic efforts aimed at ending the conflict.

In a public statement, the Prime Minister said he was troubled by reports of an alleged attack on the Russian President’s residence and stressed that ongoing diplomatic initiatives remain the most effective route toward peace. He urged all concerned to avoid actions that could derail



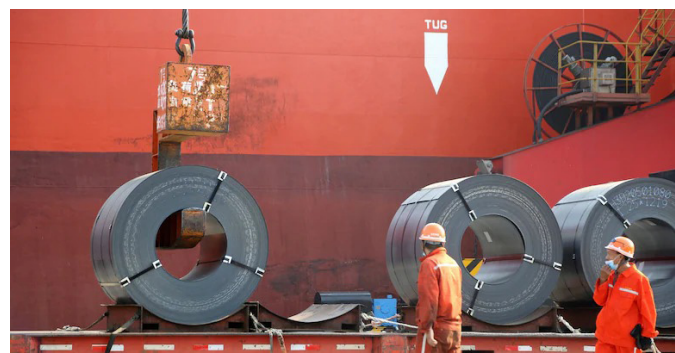
dialogue and undermine prospects for a peaceful resolution. The remarks came amid claims from Moscow of a large scale drone incident in Russia’s Novgorod region. Russian authorities alleged that dozens of long range drones were launched with the intent of striking one of President Putin’s

country residences. According to Russian officials, the drones were intercepted before causing any damage.

India’s response aligns with its consistent position on the Russia Ukraine conflict, where it has repeatedly emphasised dialogue, diplomacy and practical engagement

over military escalation. New Delhi has maintained that the present global environment is not conducive to prolonged conflict and has encouraged sincere efforts from all sides to bring hostilities to an end.

Prime Minister Modi has previously underlined that India is not neutral but firmly aligned with peace. During earlier interactions with global leaders, including President Putin, he reiterated that India supports every initiative that can lead to a peaceful and lasting settlement. Indian leadership has also welcomed all constructive efforts aimed at restoring stability in the region.



“Safeguard Duty Needed to Protect Domestic Industry”: India Acts on Steel Imports

■ Three year tariff plan aims to check surge of low priced steel and support local manufacturers

New Delhi: India has imposed a safeguard duty on select steel products for a period of three years in an effort to curb the inflow of cheap imports and protect the domestic steel industry. The move follows growing concern over a sharp rise in low priced steel entering the country, particularly from China and other neighbouring nations.

Under the new framework, the import duty will be levied in a phased manner. The rate has been fixed at 12 per cent in the first year, reduced to 11.5 per cent in the second year, and further lowered to 11 per cent in the third year. The decision has been notified through an official order and comes after detailed assessment of import trends and their impact on local producers.

The safeguard duty will apply to imports from countries such as China, Vietnam and Nepal. However, shipments from certain developing nations have been exempted under existing trade provisions. The measure also excludes specialty steel products, including stainless steel, which are not covered under the new tariff structure.

The government has maintained that unchecked imports of low cost and sub standard steel pose a serious threat to India’s domestic manufacturing base. Officials have repeatedly stressed the need to ensure that local producers are not harmed by unfair pricing practices or sudden import surges that distort the market.

Earlier this year, a temporary safeguard duty of 12 per cent was imposed for 200 days as an interim measure. Following this, a detailed investigation found a recent, sharp and significant increase in steel imports that was causing and threatening to cause serious injury to domestic manufacturers. Based on these findings, a longer three year duty was recommended and subsequently approved.

The decision also comes amid rising global trade tensions in the steel sector. Recent tariff actions by the United States have triggered increased scrutiny of Chinese steel exports worldwide, prompting several countries to introduce anti dumping measures to shield their industries.

India Emerges as the World’s Fourth Largest Economy

■ Strong GDP growth and domestic demand power India past Japan, eyes third spot by 2030

New Delhi: India has officially overtaken Japan to become the world’s fourth largest economy, marking a major milestone in the country’s economic rise. With a gross domestic product valued at USD 4.18 trillion, India now stands behind only the United States, China and Germany, and is on track to claim the third position within the next few years.

The latest economic data highlights strong and consistent growth momentum. India’s real GDP expanded by 8.2 per



cent in the second quarter of the 2025–26 financial year, improving from 7.8 per cent in the first quarter and 7.4 per cent in the final quarter of the previous fiscal year. This represents the fastest pace of growth in six quarters and

reinforces India’s position as the fastest growing major economy globally.

Economic resilience has been a defining feature of this performance, even as global trade uncertainties continue to weigh on several economies. Domestic factors played a decisive role, with robust private consumption acting as the primary driver of growth. Strengthening urban demand and steady consumer confidence supported overall economic activity

across sectors. Looking ahead, India is projected to surpass Germany and become the world’s third largest economy by 2030, with GDP expected to reach approximately USD 7.3 trillion. Global institutions have also expressed confidence in India’s medium term outlook, forecasting sustained growth over the coming years. Several agencies expect India to maintain growth rates well above those of other major economies through 2026 and beyond.

“Settling Hotspots”: China Claims Role in India Pakistan Ceasefire

■ New Delhi reiterates truce was achieved through direct military talks amid scrutiny of Beijing’s actions

New Delhi: China has renewed claims that it played a role in easing tensions between India and Pakistan during the military confrontation that took place from May 7 to May 10, a position firmly rejected by New Delhi. The assertion comes after similar remarks by United States President Donald Trump, with India maintaining that the ceasefire was reached

without any third party involvement.

Speaking at a symposium on China’s foreign relations in Beijing, Foreign Minister Wang Yi projected China as an active mediator in several global conflict zones. He stated that international instability had increased sharply and said China adopted a balanced approach focused on addressing both



immediate tensions and their underlying causes. Among the conflicts cited, Wang Yi included the India Pakistan military standoff, claiming it was one of several hotspot issues where Beijing helped

reduce tensions.

India has consistently rejected this narrative. New Delhi has clarified that the ceasefire understanding was achieved through direct communication between the Directors General of Military Operations of the two countries. The agreement, including its timing and wording, was finalised during a phone conversation on May 10.

India has reiterated that matters concerning India and Pakistan are bilateral and do not allow space for external mediation.

China’s role during the conflict has remained a subject of close scrutiny, particularly due to its close defence ties with Pakistan. During the escalation, Beijing issued statements calling for restraint while expressing regret over India’s military actions.

At the same time, China avoided direct criticism of Pakistan while reiterating opposition to terrorism and urging de escalation.

Beyond diplomacy, China’s extensive military support to Pakistan drew attention. A significant majority of Pakistan’s defence equipment originates from China, and the conflict highlighted the depth of their strategic partnership.

“Deepti Sets World Record as India Seal Historic Whitewash

■ Harmanpreet Kaur's gritty fifty and disciplined bowling power 5-0 T20I sweep over Sri Lanka

New Delhi: India Women capped a dominant home season with a comprehensive 5-0 T20I series sweep over Sri Lanka, clinching the fifth and final match by 15 runs in Thiruvananthapuram. The victory was highlighted by a world record from Deepti Sharma and a captain's knock of substance from Harmanpreet Kaur, as India continued their winning momentum following a World Cup triumph earlier in the year.

Batting first, India found themselves under pressure early after a shaky start that saw the



top order falter. With key batters departing cheaply, the hosts slipped to 77 for five midway through the innings. At a crucial juncture, Harmanpreet held firm, anchoring the innings with a composed 68 off 43 deliveries. Her

knock, laced with nine boundaries and a six, brought stability and ensured India remained competitive.

Support came through a vital sixth wicket partnership with Amanjot Kaur, who contributed a

valuable 21. The finishing touches were applied by Arundhati Reddy, whose brisk unbeaten 27 off just 11 balls, including four fours and a six, propelled India to a defendable total of 175 for seven.

Sri Lanka's chase began on an unsteady note with the early dismissal of skipper Chamari Athapaththu. However, a solid second wicket stand between Hasini Perera and Imesha Dulani revived hopes. Both batters registered half centuries and kept Sri Lanka in the contest through steady boundary hitting and strike rotation.

“Shami Very Much in the Frame”: Senior Pacer Tipped for New Zealand ODIs

■ Selectors monitor fitness as veteran bowler eyes comeback after strong domestic form

New Delhi: Senior fast bowler Mohammed Shami is likely to return to the Indian one day international setup for the upcoming three match home series against New Zealand, scheduled to begin on January 11 in Vadodara. The experienced pacer has not featured for India since the final of the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 in Dubai, but recent developments suggest his comeback could be imminent.

Shami has remained under close observation by the national selectors, with particular focus on his fitness and workload management. Those tracking the selection process indicate that he remains firmly in contention and is being discussed regularly, given his proven ability to deliver in high pressure situations. His experience and consistent wicket taking record continue to weigh heavily in his favour.

The Bengal fast bowler has been in impressive form on the domestic circuit this season. In the Vijay Hazare Trophy 2025-26, he has picked up six wickets from three matches, while in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy he claimed 16 wickets across seven Elite Group C fixtures.



These performances have strengthened his case for a recall and demonstrated that his sharpness with the ball remains intact.

Shami's last Test appearance for India came in the World Test Championship final against Australia in June 2023, while his most recent T20 international outing was against England in February 2025. Although he was not selected for the T20 World Cup 2026 plans, his white ball credentials remain formidable. He was the highest wicket taker in the 2023 ODI World Cup and continues to be India's most successful bowler across ICC white ball tournaments.

The potential opening has been created by the likelihood of Jasprit Bumrah being rested for the New Zealand series. In Bumrah's absence, Shami could be entrusted with leading the pace attack, bringing control, experience and strike power to the bowling unit.

India's most recent ODI series against South Africa saw a relatively young pace group in action.

“India's Strides in Chess Continue”: PM Modi Lauds Arjun Erigaisi After World Blitz Bronze

■ Young Grandmaster caps stellar year with twin world medals in Doha

New Delhi: Indian Grandmaster Arjun Erigaisi capped a memorable year by winning a bronze medal at the World Blitz Chess Championship in Doha, drawing praise from Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his consistency and growing influence in the sport. The 22 year old also secured a bronze earlier at the World Rapid Chess Championship, making it a rare double podium finish



at the global level.

Erigaisi topped the blitz league stage standings with 15 points to qualify for the semifinals, delivering a series of impressive

performances against elite opponents. His campaign included victories over eventual champion Magnus Carlsen, Javokhir Sindarov and Nodirbek

Abdusattorov, underlining his ability to compete with the very best in high pressure formats.

With this achievement, Erigaisi became only the second Indian male player after Viswanathan Anand to win a World Blitz medal in the Open category. His consistency across both rapid and blitz events further highlighted India's growing depth in international chess.

Goa Bow Out After Heavy Innings Loss to Karnataka

■ Karnataka dominate Vijay Merchant Trophy Elite match in Raipur

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Goa's campaign in the Vijay Merchant Trophy Elite cricket tournament came to a disappointing end after they suffered a comprehensive innings defeat against Karnataka on the second day of their three day match at the RDCA Ground in Raipur. Karnataka registered a dominant innings and 147 run victory, underlining their superiority across all departments.

After being asked to bat first, Goa struggled to build momentum in their opening innings and were dismissed for 160 runs in 55 overs. Karnataka's bowlers maintained consistent pressure, preventing Goa's batters from settling at the crease and forcing regular breakthroughs.

In reply, Karnataka produced a commanding batting performance, piling up a massive 434 for 6 before declaring their first innings after 76 overs.

“Fix the System, Not Just the Podium”: Bindra Task Force Calls for Sports Governance Overhaul

■ 170-page report outlines urgent reforms to modernise India's sports administration

New Delhi: India's aspirations as a global sporting power are being held back by outdated and fragile administrative systems, according to a comprehensive report submitted by an Abhinav Bindra led Task Force to Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya. The 170 page document presents a candid assessment of existing shortcomings and offers a structured blueprint to reset sports governance in the country. The government has indicated that all recommendations

will be taken forward.

The report highlights deep rooted systemic failures across key institutions, including the Sports Authority of India, National Sports Federations and state sports departments. It finds these bodies to be understaffed, poorly coordinated and heavily dependent on generalist officials or short term contractual employees who lack sector specific expertise. This has led to inconsistent decision making, weak institutional

memory and limited long term planning. Special focus has been placed on the functioning of SAI and state departments, described as critical yet constrained pillars of the sports ecosystem. The absence of a dedicated sports administration service has resulted in fragmented governance, overlapping responsibilities and blurred accountability between agencies and federations. At the core of the Task Force's recommendations is the need for



professionalisation. The report argues that India lacks a trained cadre of sports administrators equipped with modern governance, ethical oversight, digital capability and operational expertise. Existing training mechanisms are seen as outdated and fragmented, prompting a call to shift from personality driven leadership to competency based governance.