



Panic Grips Depositors After Goa Govt Cancels NOC Of Tirumalla Tirupati Co-Op

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Panic and uncertainty prevailed among customers of Tirumalla Tirupati Multistate Co-operative Credit Society Ltd. across Goa on Wednesday after the State Government abruptly withdrew the



society's No Objection Certificate with immediate effect. News of the



cancellation triggered anxiety among depositors, many of whom rushed to

branches seeking clarity on the safety of their savings.

Customers were seen making repeated inquiries, expressing fear over possible disruption of services, withdrawals, and ongoing financial commitments. The sudden

CONTD TO PAGE 06...

CM To Meet Tirumala Tirupati Co-Operative Credit Society Representatives

Panaji: Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant said that representatives of the Tirumala Tirupati Co-Operative Credit Society have sought an appointment with him and he will be meeting them later this evening.

The Chief Minister did not divulge details of the agenda but indicated that the meeting would address issues raised by the society's representatives. Further details are expected after the interaction.

GMC Launches Online OPD Appointment Booking to Ease Patient Access

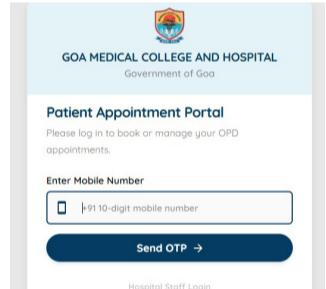
■ Health Minister Vishwajit Rane says initiative will reduce queues, improve dignity in care

Team Goemkarponn

BAMBOLIM: Another step towards strengthening the Goa model of healthcare was taken on Wednesday with the launch of an online OPD appointment booking system at Goa Medical College (GMC), aimed at making access to healthcare smoother, faster and more citizen-friendly.

The new facility will initially cover OPDs in Medicine, Surgery, Skin, ENT and Orthopaedics. Officials said the system is expected to significantly cut down long waiting queues and allow patients to plan their hospital visits more efficiently.

Health Minister Vishwajit Rane said the initiative marks a decisive shift towards technology-



enabled healthcare delivery. "This reform will make access to healthcare smoother, faster and more dignified for our citizens. By reducing long queues, patients can plan their visits to GMC with greater ease and convenience," Rane said.

The minister said the move is in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a technology-driven and citizen-centric healthcare ecosystem, where ease of access and efficiency are central to public service delivery.

Deendayal Gramin Kaushalya Yojana Launched In Goa To Boost Rural Youth Employment

■ Free six-month skill training, stipend and assured placements for unemployed youth announced.

Team Goemkarponn

PORVORIM: The Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, in collaboration with the Rural Development Agency (RDA), Government of Goa, has launched the Deendayal Gramin Kaushalya Yojana (DDGKY) in the state,



aimed at providing job-oriented skill training to unemployed rural youth. The scheme is targeted

at students who have passed Class 8 to Class 10 and are currently unemployed. Under the programme, selected youth will undergo six months of skill-based training designed to enhance employability and link trainees directly with job opportunities. Training under the

DDGKY will be completely free of cost, including learning materials and uniforms. Both residential and non-residential courses will be offered. Residential trainees will be provided free hostel accommodation and food facilities, along with a stipend during the training

CONTD TO PAGE 06...

Goa CM reviews Fire & Emergency Services, Stresses Safety & Faster NOCs

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant today chaired a review meeting of the Directorate of Fire & Emergency Services and assessed the department's operational preparedness, management and overall functioning. "We reviewed the report on operations, preparedness and



overall management of the Directorate of Fire & Emergency Services. A comprehensive review of departmental functioning was held, with a specific focus on streamlining the

issuance of Fire Safety NOCs while ensuring strict adherence to safety norms," the Chief Minister said. Sawant said a general assessment of resources, response mechanisms and operational readiness was also carried out during the meeting. He directed officials to strengthen efficiency, improve inter-departmental coordination and enhance public

service delivery. "I have asked officials to further improve efficiency, coordination and response systems so that public safety and service delivery are strengthened," he added. The Chief Minister reiterated that while the government is committed to easing procedures and improving timelines, there will be no compromise on fire safety standards and preparedness.

No Official Word From New Delhi On Russian Oil, Says Moscow

■ Kremlin plays down claims linked to India US trade deal, stresses strategic partnership

New Delhi: Russia has indicated that it has received no official communication from India regarding any plan to halt purchases of Russian oil, even as claims circulate about such a commitment being part of a recent trade understanding between India and the United States. Moscow's



position comes after US President Donald Trump announced a trade deal with India, stating that tariffs on Indian goods

would be sharply reduced in return for New Delhi stopping imports of Russian crude. According to the announcement, tariffs were brought down from earlier levels to eighteen percent, with India expected to shift its energy sourcing toward the United States and possibly Venezuela.

India and China Trade Reaches Historic Peak Signalling Warmer Relations

■ Bilateral economic engagement expands as diplomatic ties show steady recovery

New Delhi: Trade between India and China climbed to an all time high of 155 billion US dollars in 2025, reflecting a strong revival in economic engagement between the two Asian neighbours.

The record figure represents an annual growth of more than twelve percent and

indicates that commercial links are moving ahead despite past political tensions. Chinese diplomatic representatives in India highlighted that relations between the two countries have entered a new and improved phase following high level political dialogue in recent months.

The meeting between the leadership of both nations in Tianjin last year was described as a turning point that helped move ties from a phase of reset to one of constructive cooperation. Since then, interactions at governmental and business levels have increased noticeably.



Selective Silence: Goa's Noise Rules and the Politics of Convenience

Goa's long-running debate over noise pollution is no longer just about decibel levels or late-night music. It has become a test of governance, fairness and credibility. The problem is not the existence of rules. It is how those rules are enforced, against whom, and when.

Noise pollution is real and undeniable. Residents across North Goa's coastal belt have been complaining for years about blaring music from beach shacks, nightclubs and open-air parties that stretch well past midnight. The impact is not trivial. Sleep is disrupted, daily life suffers, and local communities feel increasingly alienated in places they once called quiet and livable. The law is meant to protect them.

Yet when enforcement finally arrives, it appears to land disproportionately on weddings, village feasts and religious or community celebrations. Families are fined, events are shut down, and organisers are warned in the name of environmental discipline. At the same time, commercial establishments that generate far greater and more sustained noise often appear to operate with remarkable flexibility. This contrast lies at the heart of public anger.

Noise regulations exist for a reason. They are designed to balance individual freedom with collective well-being. But laws lose moral authority when they are applied selectively. When enforcement seems guided less by principle and more by convenience, influence or optics, it sends a dangerous message. That compliance is expected only from those without power.

The northern coastal stretch offers a glaring example. During peak tourist season, music routinely spills from beach venues late into the night. Complaints from residents are frequent, but action is inconsistent. Inspections are often predictable. Volumes dip

Noise regulations exist for a reason. They are designed to balance individual freedom with collective well-being. But laws lose moral authority when they are applied selectively. When enforcement seems guided less by principle and more by convenience, influence or optics, it sends a dangerous message. That compliance is expected only from those without power.

The northern coastal stretch offers a glaring example. During peak tourist season, music routinely spills from beach venues late into the night. Complaints from residents are frequent, but action is inconsistent. Inspections are often predictable. Volumes dip temporarily, only to rise once officials leave.

dip temporarily, only to rise once officials leave. The impression that some businesses are effectively untouchable has become widespread, whether or not it is formally true. Perception, in governance, matters almost as much as fact.

By contrast, weddings and festivals are easy targets. They are visible, time-bound and usually lack legal muscle. Penalising them is administratively simple and publicly defensible under the letter of the law. But it raises an uncomfortable question. Is the objective really to reduce

noise pollution, or merely to demonstrate action?

Cultural celebrations are not noise-free, nor should they be exempt from regulation. But they are episodic, rooted in community life, and rarely driven by profit. Treating them with the same rigidity as commercial nightlife, while ignoring or soft pedalling the latter, creates a hierarchy of rights. Tourists and businesses appear privileged. Locals are asked to adjust, repeatedly.

This unevenness has broader consequences. It erodes trust in institutions tasked with regulation. It deepens the sense that Goa's development model prioritises revenue over residents. And it feeds a narrative that laws are not neutral instruments, but tools wielded selectively.

What is missing is a coherent, transparent noise management policy that applies across the board. One that uses technology rather than discretion. Continuous noise monitoring, publicly accessible data, and time bound response mechanisms would reduce arbitrariness. Clear zoning rules must be enforced consistently, whether the source is a five-star venue or a family mandap.

Equally important is political clarity. Authorities cannot speak of sustainability while tolerating excess in the name of tourism. Nor can they invoke environmental concern only when it is convenient. Sustainable tourism demands discipline, not indulgence.

Goa's identity has always rested on a balance. Between celebration and calm, tourism and tradition, freedom and responsibility. That balance is now under strain. Noise pollution is the symptom. Selective enforcement is the disease.

If the state wants public cooperation, it must first earn public confidence. And that will only happen when the law sounds the same, no matter who is playing the music.

EDITOR'S SPEAK

Goa's Rejection of the Tiger Reserve Plan Raises Alarming Questions

By Suraj Nandrekar

When a matter as serious as wildlife conservation reaches India's highest court, the natural expectation is that all stakeholders will engage in good faith with the scientific evidence and legal frameworks on offer. Instead, the Goa government's blunt dismissal of the Central Empowered Committee's recommendation to notify a tiger reserve in the state has exposed deeper problems in how environmental priorities are negotiated and interpreted. The government's response, calling the report "vague" and lacking scientific rigour, raises legitimate questions but it also reveals a worrying tendency to prioritise political positioning over ecological stewardship. At the heart of the dispute is the proposal to designate parts of the Cotigao-Mhadei forest complex in Goa as a tiger reserve a step recommended by a court-appointed committee after long deliberation. For conservationists, a reserve would not only help protect an endangered species but also strengthen broader habitat corridors that allow wildlife to move between protected areas across state borders. Declare a tiger reserve, and the area gains stronger legal protection and dedicated funding, enhancing anti-poaching patrols, scientific monitoring and community livelihood programmes that align with long-term ecosystem health. The government's counterargument centres on its assertion that there are no resident or breeding tiger populations in Goa. On the surface, this sounds like a fair point: tiger reserves are meant to safeguard thriving populations, not merely scenic forested areas. But this interpretation is myopic. Tigers do not respect artificial boundaries; their survival depends on habitat connectivity. The presence of transient animals moving through Goa's protected forests indicates that the state sits within a larger ecological matrix. Protecting those corridors could be as crucial as safeguarding resident populations in core tiger landscapes elsewhere. Instead of engaging with the underlying ecological reality, the state government has leaned heavily on semantics. The report is criticised for allegedly overstepping its remit and for failing to measure local habitation impact. But conservation planning must account for people and wildlife alike; dismissing concerns about local residents without proposing constructive alternatives does little to foster trust. Protecting wildlife should not mean sidelining human interests precisely the point that integrated conservation strategies try to address. The government's insistence that existing sanctuaries and protected areas already provide sufficient safeguards is equally hollow. Legal designation matters because it comes with stronger management plans, sustainable financing and a level of national commitment that ordinary protected status cannot guarantee. Choosing to remain within the comfort zone of existing designations is tantamount to incrementalism in the face of an urgent crisis. Part of the government's pushback also reflects fear of potential restrictions on land use, developmental pushback from local communities, and another layer of regulatory oversight. These concerns cannot be dismissed out of hand; they deserve thoughtful engagement. But rejecting an entire proposal on the basis that it might trigger "resentment" or "human-animal conflict" without offering a credible mitigation strategy is political avoidance, not environmental leadership. The bigger issue here is not just about tigers. It is about Goa's role in a rapidly changing ecological landscape, where habitats are shrinking, extreme weather events are increasing, and development pressures tug relentlessly at fragile ecosystems. What Goa needs is not a binary choice between development and conservation but a framework where both can co-exist sustainably. A tiger reserve could have been a catalyst for bringing together scientists, tribal and forest communities, policy makers and civil society to forge such a framework. Instead, the dismissal of the CEC report risks sidelining serious discourse in favour of defensive posturing. There are no easy answers in conservation. But shrinking from bold, science-based proposals only accelerates environmental degradation. If Goa truly cares about its forests, its wildlife and its future generations, it must step beyond reflexive rejection and engage in collaborative, evidence-driven planning. Otherwise, the real loss will not be a proposed tiger reserve on paper — it will be a missed opportunity to secure a meaningful conservation legacy for the state.

HC Allows State to Pay Fire Victims' Families, Recover Amount From Accused

■ Court seeks asset details of Luthra brothers, others in Birch by Romeo Lane case.

Team Goemkarponn

PORVORIM: The High Court of Bombay at Goa has accepted the State government's proposal to disburse compensation to the families of those killed in the Birch by Romeo Lane nightclub fire and later recover the amount from the accused persons, including the Luthra brothers.

The direction was issued on Tuesday while the court was hearing a suo motu Public Interest Litigation (PIL) arising from the tragic fire incident, which claimed 25 lives and left several others injured.

The Bench instructed



the State to compile and place on record a detailed list of assets belonging to the accused, including brothers Gaurav and Saurabh Luthra and the disqualified sarpanch of the Arpora-Nagoa village panchayat, Roshan Redkar, among others.

Observing that compensation to the victims' families should not be delayed, the High Court permitted the

government to proceed with interim relief, making it clear that the amount would subsequently be recovered from those found responsible for the incident. The matter has been posted for further hearing on February 16.

During earlier proceedings, the court had issued notices to multiple parties, including various village panchayats. The principal respondents

include the Luthra brothers and Redkar. The court was informed that notice has already been served on Redkar, while the Luthra brothers are currently in judicial custody.

The Bench directed the State to ensure that notices are served on all accused through the police.

Advocate General Devidas Pangam later told the media that the State had urged the court to allow immediate compensation, noting that many of the victims came from economically weaker backgrounds and may not be in a position to pursue lengthy legal remedies.

Panaji Civic Polls Set in Motion as CCP Ward Delimitation Finalised

■ Notification redraws 30 ward boundaries ahead of expected March elections

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Director of Municipal Administration, Brijesh Manerkar, has issued a notification finalising the delimitation of 30 wards for the Corporation of the City of Panaji (CCP), paving the way for the forthcoming civic elections likely to be held in March. The order, published in the Official Gazette, was issued on Monday with the approval of the State government under Section 9(2) of the City of Panaji Corporation Act, 2002. The Act authorises the



Director, with government consent, to determine the number and boundaries of wards for the election of councillors. According to the notification, the newly drawn ward boundaries differ substantially from those in place during the previous CCP elections held in 2021.



Rahul Gandhi's Remarks Undermine National Interest: Goa CM

■ Chief Minister defends PM Modi, calls allegations reckless and misleading.

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Wednesday strongly criticised Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, accusing him of repeatedly relying on baseless foreign claims to question India's leadership and institutions, and said such conduct goes beyond dissent and harms national interest. In a statement, Sawant said Rahul Gandhi has, over the past two days, pushed what he termed "non-facts and misleading narratives" against Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He objected particularly to Gandhi's remarks on India-US trade engagement, which the Congress leader described as a "cover-

up," while alleging that the Prime Minister was "compromised."

"These are reckless fabrications aimed solely at misleading the public. This is not dissent, but irresponsible conduct that undermines the nation's interests."

India deserves facts, not distortion and deceit," Sawant said.

The Chief Minister asserted that Prime Minister Modi's credibility is rooted in decades of public service and governance.

"The Prime Minister's credibility is not built through propaganda or purchased influence. It is earned through hard work, decisive leadership, reforms and an unwavering focus on

Cyber Crime Police Arrest Kerala Man in Rs 67 Lakh Investment Scam

■ Accused Used Fake Trading App and WhatsApp Numbers; Linked to Multiple Cyber Frauds Across

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Cyber Crime Police Station, Goa, has arrested a key accused in a major cyber fraud case involving an investment scam of ₹67 lakh, in a significant breakthrough

against organised online financial crimes. According to police, the offence was registered on December 2, 2025, under Crime No. 44/2025, invoking Sections 318(4) and 319(2) read with Section 3(5) of the Bharatiya

Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) Act, 2023, and Section 66-D of the Information Technology Act.

The case was registered based on a complaint filed by a resident of Caranzalem, Tiswadi, Goa.

HC Directs Time-Bound Probe Into GCA Fund Misuse Allegations

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The High Court of Bombay at Goa has directed the Inspector General of Societies (IGS) to complete, within six months, an inquiry into complaints alleging large-scale financial irregularities by the managing committee of the Goa Cricket Association (GCA). The direction was issued while hearing a petition filed by Mahesh Chavan, who alleged that crores of rupees received by the GCA from the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) were diverted and misused. The petitioner claimed that funds earmarked for developing cricket infrastructure in

Goa were instead spent on events jointly organised by the BCCI and the GCA, amounting to financial impropriety. Chavan sought a detailed court-monitored inquiry into the matter and also requested the appointment of an administrator to run the GCA until the probe was concluded. Opposing the plea, Advocate General Devidas Pangam submitted that the Inspector General of Societies has no statutory authority to appoint an administrator, stating that such powers rest with the government. He informed the court that the IGS is empowered to inquire into complaints and that a show-cause notice has already been issued to the

GCA managing committee in connection with the allegations. The Advocate General further told the court that the matter is scheduled for hearing before the Inspector General on February 27, 2026, and that four months had been sought to conduct further investigation. However, counsel for the petitioner, Rohit Bras D'Sa, pressed for a definite timeline for completing the inquiry, pointing to prolonged inaction despite the seriousness of the allegations. After considering submissions from both sides, the Bench directed the Inspector General of Societies to hear both the complainant and the respondents and proceed with the inquiry.

CLP launches "Avaz Tumcho, Sangat Amcho" outreach program



Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Congress Legislature Party (CLP-Goa) will launch District outreach program "Avaz Tumcho, Sangat Amcho" seeking suggestions and the issues to be raised during assembly sessions and other platforms. Addressing a press conference, CLP leader Yuri Alemao, Aldona MLA Adv. Carlos Ferreira and Quepem MLA Altone D'Costa were present. "Through this initiative we are inviting people to share their suggestions and ideas on pressing issues facing their village, town and the state. As part of our "Avaz Tumcho, Sangat Amcho" initiative, we aim to engage with the people of Goa and bring their concerns to the Assembly session and other platforms," Alemao said. "Today the biggest worry among our Goemkars is the destruction which is taking place in the state, our environment is suffering over hill cuttings and our youths are also suffering over unemployment issue."



Canacona Police Bust Major Drug Trafficking Attempt, Seize Narcotics Worth Rs 5.25 Lakh

■ MDMA, Charas and Cocaine Recovered; One Accused Arrested in Third Major Bust Under New PI.

Team Goemkarponn

Canacona: Reinforcing Goa Police's zero tolerance policy against narcotics, Canacona Police have busted a major drug trafficking attempt and seized narcotic substances worth ₹5,25,200 in a well-coordinated raid at Devabag Football Ground, Canacona.

Acting on credible intelligence, the police apprehended one individual red-handed while in illegal possession of multiple narcotic substances. The accused has been identified as



Walter, son of Denniez Fernandes, aged 49 years, a resident of Chapoli, Canacona, and a native of Cochin, Kerala.

During the operation, police recovered 24.4 grams of MDMA, 111.2 grams of charas and 3.4 grams of cocaine from an Isuzu V-Cross vehicle bearing registration number GA-10-A-1729. The vehicle was allegedly brought to the location for

delivery of the drugs to a prospective customer. The narcotic substances along with the vehicle were seized under a search-cum-seizure panchanama.

The accused was arrested and has been placed in police custody. Further investigation is underway to trace both forward and backward linkages in the drug trafficking network.

This seizure marks

the third major narcotics bust by Canacona Police after PI Praveen Gawas assumed charge, under the supervision of the SDPO Canacona and overall guidance of the Superintendent of Police (South), reflecting sustained and intensified enforcement against the narcotics trade.

Goa Police have reiterated that no individual, irrespective of status or background, will be spared if found involved in drug-related offences, and warned that those engaged in the narcotics trade will face strict action.

Scooter Theft Reported Near RG Hospital in Porvorim

■ Aviator Scooter Worth ₹40,000 Stolen; Police Register Offence and Begin Probe

Team Goemkarponn

Porvorim: An offence of theft has been registered following a complaint regarding the stealing of a two-wheeler near RG Hospital, Porvorim, Bardez. As per police information, the complaint was registered on February 2, 2026, at around 10.24 pm, based on a written complaint filed by Ayyan Khan, major in age, a resident of H. No. A-21, opposite Presentation School,

Ambaji, Fatorda, Goa. The complainant stated that between January 31, 2026 and February 2, 2026, near RG Hospital at Porvorim, Bardez, Goa, the accused Sunil, son of Dinnanath Haldankar, resident of C-1/491, Bautawado, Assagao, Bardez, Goa, and Flat No. 03, Dangue Colony near Mahadev Temple, Mapusa, allegedly committed theft of his Aviator scooter bearing registration number GA-08-AM-8647.



Multi-Vehicle Accident at Kundaim Junction Leaves Four Injured

■ Truck's Rash Driving Triggers Chain Collision Near Jayesh General Store.

Team Goemkarponn

Ponda: A multi-vehicle road accident was reported at Manaswada Junction, Kundaim, on February 2, 2026, resulting in injuries to four two-wheeler riders. The incident occurred at around 8.15 am opposite Jayesh General Store, Kundaim, Ponda.

According to a state complaint filed by Head Constable 7121 Vishant Kunkolienkar of Mardol Police Station, the accused, Aminul Hussain, a resident of Assam, was driving a Tata truck in a rash and negligent manner while proceeding from Kundaim IDC towards Bhoma. On reaching Manaswada Junction, the truck allegedly dashed into an oncoming Maruti Eco car travelling from Bhoma towards Kundaim IDC.

Due to the impact, the

Maruti Eco car further collided with a TVS iQube electric scooter moving from Kundaim IDC towards Bhoma. The Tata truck then went on to hit two more oncoming two-wheeler a Yamaha Fascino scooter and a TVS NTorq scooter both travelling from Bhoma towards Kundaim IDC.

As a result of the accident, the rider of the TVS NTorq scooter, Pratik Naik, and pillion rider Pooja Naik, both residents of Kundaim, Ponda, sustained simple injuries. The rider of the Yamaha Fascino scooter, Prakash Talwar, r/o Kundaim, Ponda, and the rider of the TVS iQube electric scooter, Druv Velingkar, r/o Veling, Mardol, Ponda, also sustained injuries.

Further investigation in the case is being carried out by HC 7121 Vishant Kunkolienkar of Mardol Police Station.

Woman Robbed of Gold Mangalsutra Outside Residence in Xeldem

■ Two Unknown Accused Used Criminal Force and Fled; Quepem Police Launch Probe

Team Goemkarponn

Quepem: A case of robbery has been registered at Quepem Police Station following an incident in which a woman was assaulted and her gold mangalsutra was snatched by two unidentified men at Xeldem, Quepem.



According to police, the offence was registered based on a complaint lodged by Sarika Naik,

a resident of Xeldem, Quepem. The complainant stated that on February 2, 2026, at around 8.15 am, while she was outside her residence, two unknown male accused persons, acting with common intention, used criminal force against her.

During the incident, the complainant sustained

injuries and the accused snatched her gold mangalsutra from her neck before fleeing from the spot. The loss caused to the complainant has been estimated at ₹1,90,012.

Further investigation in the case is being carried out by LPSI Riffa Barreto of Quepem Police Station.

Woman Arrested for House Theft in Taleigao, Cash and Gold Worth Over Rs 6.7 Lakh Stolen

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Panaji Police have arrested a 21-year-old woman in connection with a house theft reported from Taleigao, in which cash and gold ornaments worth over ₹6.7 lakh were stolen. According to police, a case bearing Crime No. 15/2026 was registered at Panaji Police Station on February 2, 2026, at around 5.05 pm under Sections 305 and 331(3) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), following a complaint lodged by Kishor, son of Yeshwant Kunkolikar, aged 50 years, a resident of H. No. 657,



Nagali, Taleigao, Tiswadi, Goa. The complainant stated that on February 1, 2026, between 1.45 pm and 2.35 pm, an unknown woman entered his residence by opening the latch of the house and decamped with cash amounting to ₹50,000 and gold ornaments weighing about 49 grams, valued at approximately ₹6,23,280, which were kept in a cupboard.

Youth Caught With Ganja at Torda Junction, Porvorim

■ 250 Grams of Suspected Ganja Worth ₹25,000 Seized; Accused Nabbed Red-Handed.

Team Goemkarponn

Porvorim: Porvorim Police have registered an offence and arrested a 19-year-old youth for illegal possession of suspected ganja during a narcotics check at Torda Junction, Salvador-do-Mundo, Bardez.

According to police, the offence was registered on February 2, 2026, at around 9.00 pm based on a state complaint lodged by Pratik Tulaskar, Police Sub-Inspector of Porvorim Police Station.



The complaint stated that on the same day, between 5.12 pm and 7.05 pm, near the garden area at Torda Junction, the accused was caught red-handed. The accused has been identified as Sahil Mirza, son of Imtiaz Mirza, aged 19 years, a resident of Haliwada, Britona, Bardez, Goa.

Goa Launches e-Zero FIR to Fast-Track Action in Cyber Fraud Cases

■ New module to enable instant registration, quicker fund freezing and faster recovery for victims.

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: In a significant step to strengthen the fight against cyber financial fraud, the Goa government on Monday launched the e-Zero FIR Module, aimed at enabling faster reporting and swift recovery of defrauded amounts. Unveiled by Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant at the valedictory of the State-Level DGSP/IGSP Conference 2025,



the e-Zero FIR system allows immediate online registration of FIRs in cyber fraud cases, irrespective of jurisdiction. This ensures that crucial time is not lost during the initial hours following a

fraud, which is critical for freezing suspicious bank transactions.

Explaining the importance of the initiative, Dr Sawant said the new mechanism will empower Goa Police to take instant action across districts, improving coordination with banks, financial institutions and cybercrime cells.

The system is expected to significantly increase the chances of tracing money

trails and recovering funds for victims of online scams. Senior police officials said the e-Zero FIR will remove procedural delays that often hamper cybercrime investigations, especially in cases involving interstate or online transactions. Once registered digitally, the case can later be transferred to the concerned police station for detailed investigation without affecting immediate preventive action.

Goa Congress Slams Union Budget 2026–27, Alleges State ‘Ignored and Short-Changed’

■ Calls CM’s Claims Hollow, Says Double-Engine Government Has Delivered ‘Zero for Goa’

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: The Goa Pradesh Congress Committee (GPCC) has strongly condemned the Union Budget 2026–27, alleging that Goa has been completely ignored and financially short-changed despite claims by Chief Minister Pramod Sawant that the Budget is “visionary, people-centric and growth-oriented.”



and not a special package or generosity by the Centre.

The party asserted that not a single rupee in this amount reflects a Goa-specific decision in the Union Budget.

Team Goemkarponn

VASCO: Former Congress minority chairman Nazir Khan on Tuesday raised serious concerns over hygiene and management at the newly inaugurated Vasco fish market, alleging that poor enforcement has defeated the very purpose of the modern market complex

Addressing the media after visiting the facility in the afternoon, Khan said he was disturbed to find fish vendors operating outside the market premises, selling fish on the roadside and leaving waste water behind, resulting in a foul stench in the area. He alleged that the situation posed a health risk to both vendors and residents. “The fish market is a

municipal project and the MMC chairperson is fully responsible for its functioning. However, the MLA has taken credit for the project. While we welcome the new market, what is happening on the ground is unacceptable,” Khan said. He claimed to have witnessed a municipal worker collecting ‘sopo’ from fish vendors operating on the roadside. “When I questioned how money was being collected from vendors selling outside the market, the worker asked me to approach the chief officer or senior MMC officials,” he said.

Goa Master Trainers Honoured for Republic Day 2026 Participation

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Chief Minister Dr Pramod P. Sawant has congratulated two Master Trainers from Goa for their outstanding performance under the Aapda Mitra/Aapda Sakhi programme and their participation in the Republic Day Celebrations 2026 at Kartavya Path, New Delhi.



selected as best-performing Aapda Mitra/Aapda Sakhi volunteers after successfully completing a 12-day Disaster Response Training Programme under the Training of Trainers (ToT) initiative.

12 Shristhal Schools Participate In BMC-Organised Bazaar Day

Team Goemkarponn

Canacona: As many as twelve schools from Shristhal village participated in the Bazaar Day organised by the Biodiversity Management Committee (BMC), Shristhal, in association with the Village Panchayat of Shristhal, with support from the Goa State Biodiversity Board and the Department of Environment and Climate Change



Panchayat office, on Monday. The BMC specially organised the “Bazaar Day” for school students from the Shristhal Panchayat area from 8.30 am onwards in front of the panchayat office, with the objective of providing practical exposure and hands-on learning experiences.



Rs 10-crore road beautification project launched in Vasco

Team Goemkarponn

VASCO: Vasco MLA Krishna Salkar on Tuesday inaugurated an ambitious road beautification and redevelopment project covering two of the city’s busiest stretches — Swatantra Path and FL Gomes Road — marking the start of a major makeover of Vasco’s urban landscape. The works were launched in the presence of Mormugao Municipal Council chairperson Girish Borker, city ward councillor Shami Salkar and local residents. The ₹10-crore project is scheduled to be completed within a year and will be taken up in a phased manner.

Speaking to reporters after the launch, Salkar said the project has been

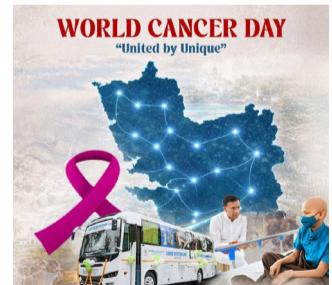
designed to address long-pending civic issues while preserving the emotional and cultural identity associated with the two iconic roads. “Swatantra Path and FL Gomes Road are deeply connected with the memories of Vasco. Over the years, trees have aged, footpaths have deteriorated and gutters have not seen proper restoration, resulting in recurring problems,” he said. He explained that the redevelopment will be executed in four major stages — restoration and repair of gutters, paving of footpaths, installation of illumination systems and landscaping with new tree plantation. Separate ducts will also be created for underground cables and pipelines to prevent repeated digging in the future.

‘United by Unique’: Goa Reaffirms People-Centric Cancer Care on World Cancer Day

■ Early Detection, Holistic Treatment and Compassion at Core of State’s Cancer Care Approach.

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: As the world observes World Cancer Day, Goa has reaffirmed its commitment to accessible, compassionate and people-centric cancer care, placing patients and their families at the heart of the healthcare system. Highlighting the theme “United by Unique”, Health Minister Vishwajit Rane said that while cancer affects many, every patient’s journey is different and deserves care that goes beyond treatment alone. “In Goa, our approach to cancer care is guided by the belief that healthcare must be humane, inclusive and tailored to the unique



needs of each patient and family,” Rane said. According to data from Goa Medical College (GMC), the Department of Medical Oncology registered 1,550 new cancer patients in the last year. Breast cancer accounted for the highest share at 23 per cent, followed by gastrointestinal cancers at 18 per cent, genitourinary cancers at 15 per cent, and head and neck cancers at 15 per cent.

Kotak Mutual Fund Rolls Out Kotak Services Fund to unlock India's Growth Engine for Investors

Goa: Kotak Mahindra Asset Management Company Ltd. announces the launch of the Kotak Services Fund, an open ended equity scheme following the service theme. Opening on 4th February 2026 and closing on 18th February 2026, the New Fund Offer (NFO) enables investors to access India's core growth engine—the services sector that contributes 55% to the country's GVA (Gross Value Added) and employs 31.5% of country's workforce¹.

With diverse sectors such as consumer services, telecom, healthcare, logistics, financial services, IT, power and oil & gas scaling rapidly, India's services economy continues to unlock multiple structural growth drivers for long-term investors*.

The Kotak Services Fund aims to capture this multi-dimensional opportunity through a disciplined investment strategy anchored in



Growth at Reasonable Price (GARP) and a bottom-up BMV framework (Business, Management, Value). The fund will invest across market capitalisations, focusing on quality businesses with strong cash flows, scalable models, and long-term compounding potential. Nilesh Shah, Managing Director, Kotak Mahindra Asset Management Company Ltd., said, "India's services economy is undergoing a structural shift, driven by rising incomes, greater digital adoption, and expanding urbanisation. These forces are reshaping how Indians consume, transact, and access essential services. With the Kotak Services Fund, we aim to construct a portfolio that can capture the evolving opportunities

within India's services economy and deliver long term value for investors." Rohit Tandon, Fund Manager for Kotak Services Fund, said, "The services theme offers both stability and growth through its breadth across consumption driven and export driven segments. The services sector, in our view, represents one of the most compelling combinations of resilience and scalability in India's market landscape. At the Kotak Services Fund, our portfolio construction will lean toward companies that have proven their ability to sustain margins, upgrade business models, and deploy capital judiciously. Our investment conviction is anchored in the belief that disciplined selection of such companies can

translate into stable, long term wealth creation for investors."

The Kotak Services Fund is being launched at a time when India's service-oriented enterprises are reshaping the way households, businesses, and institutions function. As customer expectations shift and service delivery models advance, the sector is experiencing strong growth in enterprises that are leveraging specialization, technology-enabled processes, and operational discipline to scale efficiently.

The NFO offers a minimum investment of ₹1000 and any amount thereafter during the offer period. The fund is suitable for investors seeking long term capital appreciation through a diversified portfolio of companies engaged in service oriented businesses, as outlined within the scheme's product suitability disclosures.

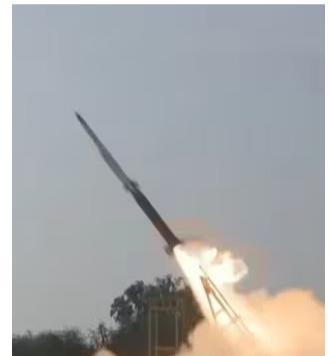
India Successfully Demonstrates Advanced Ramjet Missile Technology

■ Test places country among select nations with capability to build long range air to air systems.

New Delhi: India achieved a major milestone in defence technology with the successful flight test of solid fuel ducted ramjet system, a key platform for developing next generation long range air to air missiles. The demonstration was carried out by the Defence Research and Development Organisation at the Integrated Test Range in Chandipur along the Odisha coast.

The achievement positions India among a small group of countries that possess this complex propulsion technology. Defence officials said the system is expected to provide a significant tactical advantage by enabling missiles with greater range, speed and accuracy.

According to the defence ministry, the trial validated the performance of several critical subsystems including the nozzle less booster, the ramjet motor and the fuel flow controller. The vehicle was first propelled by a ground booster to reach the required Mach speed, after which the ramjet mechanism took over and functioned as planned. Data from the flight was captured through multiple tracking instruments installed at the test range and along the Bay of Bengal coastline. Scientists confirmed that the parameters recorded during the mission matched the expected



design objectives, marking the test as a complete success. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh congratulated the DRDO and partner industries for the accomplishment, describing it as a significant step toward strengthening the country's indigenous missile capabilities. Senior officials noted that mastery of this technology would allow India to develop highly advanced air combat systems in the future.

The launch was overseen by experts from various DRDO laboratories, including the Defence Research and Development Laboratory, High Energy Materials Research Laboratory, Research Centre Imarat and the Integrated Test Range. The chairman of DRDO also commended the teams involved for their coordinated effort and technical excellence. The solid fuel ducted ramjet concept is considered crucial for modern aerial warfare as it supports sustained high speed propulsion without the need for onboard oxidiser.

Private Firms Shortlisted For India's AMCA Fighter Project, First Prototype Expected In 3 To 4 Years

■ Three consortiums shortlisted to build fifth generation jet prototypes within four years.



a final partner is expected to be chosen within the next few months. Senior defence officials confirmed that an overwhelming response was received from industry during

the pre qualification process. The shortlisted groups will soon receive a formal request for proposal to submit cost bids for manufacturing five prototypes of the stealth fighter. The first prototype is targeted to roll out within the next three to four years, subject to successful design and testing milestones.

Although the names of the final contenders have not been officially disclosed, multiple major defence players are understood to have participated, including Tata Advanced Systems, Adani Defence, Larsen and Toubro in collaboration with Bharat Electronics Limited, along with other industry combinations.

...CONT'D FROM PAGE 01

Panic Grips Depositors After Goa Govt Cancels NOC Of Tirumalla Tirupati Co-Op

regulatory action has led to confusion and concern, particularly among small depositors who rely on the cooperative for day-to-day banking needs.

Several customers said they were caught off

guard by the development and are awaiting clear communication from the authorities and the society regarding next steps.

With the NOC revoked, apprehension continues to mount as depositors seek assurances on their funds

and future transactions. The Office of Registrar of Cooperative Societies has informed that the permission/ No Objection Certificate (NOC) granted to Tirumalla Tirupati Multistate Co-operative Credit Society Ltd., vide

letters dated 31/07/2014 and 28/06/2018 permitting extension of its area of operation and opening of 13 branches within the State of Goa has been withdrawn and cancelled with immediate effect by the Government of Goa.

Deendayal Gramin Kaushalya Yojana Launched In Goa To Boost Rural Youth

period. The government has assured 100 per cent placement opportunities for candidates who successfully complete the training. The programme will be conducted at 17 training centres across 12 talukas in Goa.

Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant announced the launch of the scheme, stating that the initiative will play a key role in empowering rural youth through skill development and employment generation.

US Tariff Cut A Positive Signal For Indian Exports, Says Finance Minister

■ Reduction to 18 percent expected to restore competitiveness and expand market access

New Delhi: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has described the new trade understanding with the United States as highly encouraging for India, saying the decision to reduce tariffs on Indian goods to 18 percent will give a strong push to exports and help domestic industries regain lost ground.

Speaking on Tuesday, the minister expressed confidence that lower duties would revive demand for Indian products in the American market. She said exporters who had struggled under the earlier high tariff regime would now find better opportunities, while also continuing to benefit from alternative markets developed over the past year.



The earlier levy of 50 percent had sharply affected shipments from India by increasing costs for American buyers and reducing profit margins for manufacturers. Key sectors such as steel, aluminium, textiles, engineering goods and certain agricultural products witnessed a decline in orders as importers shifted to suppliers from other countries.

Under the new

arrangement announced by US President Donald Trump, tariffs on Indian goods will be aligned with the levels faced by most Asian economies, which range between 15 and 19 percent. The finance minister noted that detailed terms of the agreement would be released soon, but the broad framework was clearly favourable for Indian businesses. Economic analysts have pointed out that the punitive duties imposed last year had led to a noticeable fall in India's trade surplus with the United States and contributed to weak investor sentiment. Several labour intensive industries, including apparel, footwear and jewellery, were among the worst affected as they compete primarily on

price.

The revised tariff structure is expected to restore India's advantage over regional competitors such as Vietnam and Bangladesh, which currently face higher duties.

Industry bodies believe the change will help manufacturers recover orders, increase production and protect employment in export oriented clusters.

The government views the development as part of a larger effort to deepen economic engagement with the United States. Officials said the improved access would complement India's strategy of expanding manufacturing under the Made in India initiative and strengthening integration with global supply chains.

Energy security remains foremost focus of government, says Piyush Goyal

■ Assurance in Parliament highlights protection of agriculture and dairy interests amid global trade shifts

New Delhi: The Union government has reaffirmed that guaranteeing reliable and affordable energy for the nation is its highest priority, even as international economic conditions undergo rapid change. Speaking in Parliament, Union Minister Piyush Goyal stated that the needs of India's vast population remain at the centre of policy decisions and that efforts are being made to ensure long term stability in the energy sector. The minister explained that the government is carefully diversifying its energy



sources in response to evolving global circumstances. According to him, this approach is essential to protect the country from external uncertainties and to meet the growing demand created by economic expansion and rising living standards. He stressed that every decision taken in this area is guided by the objective of securing uninterrupted supply for citizens and industries.

Yumnam Khemchand Chosen To Lead Manipur As President's Rule Nears End

■ BJP legislature party elects senior MLA to head new government in the state

New Delhi: Senior Bharatiya Janata Party leader Yumnam Khemchand Singh is set to become the next Chief Minister of Manipur after being unanimously elected as the leader of the BJP Legislature Party. The decision clears the way for formation of a popular government in the state, where President's Rule will complete one year on



February 13. The announcement followed a crucial meeting

in New Delhi attended by BJP lawmakers from Manipur along with leaders of National Democratic Alliance allies. The party's central observer Tarun Chugh and northeast in charge Sambit Patra were present during the consultations that led to the selection of the new leader. Khemchand, aged 61, is regarded within the party

as a balanced and non confrontational figure capable of managing diverse political interests in a sensitive state. Sources described him as an administrator who relies on organisational discipline and quiet consensus rather than aggressive political rhetoric, a quality seen as important during the current transition phase.

Justice Crying Behind Closed Doors, Mamata Tells Chief Justice

■ Bengal chief minister appears in Supreme Court challenging voter list revision process.

New Delhi: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday appeared in person before the Supreme Court and told the Chief Justice that justice was crying behind closed doors, as she pressed her challenge against the Election Commission's Special Intensive Revision

of voter rolls in the state. Banerjee sought permission from the court to argue her own case, filing an application to appear as a party in person. Official arrangements confirmed her presence in Courtroom 1 along with her legal team. The matter was heard by a bench comprising the

Chief Justice of India along with two other judges. The petition questions the ongoing revision of electoral rolls being carried out by the Election Commission ahead of the 2026 West Bengal Assembly elections. Similar pleas filed by Trinamool Congress leaders Derek O'Brien and



Dola Sen have also been tagged with the case. In her application, the chief minister stated that she was fully conversant with the facts and legal aspects of the matter and that her personal participation would assist the court in understanding the ground realities.

Amit Shah To Lead Conclusive Review Of Anti Naxal Operations

■ Home minister to review ground situation in Chhattisgarh and interact with communities in Bastar

New Delhi: Union Home Minister Amit Shah will conduct a decisive security review in Chhattisgarh this week as the government moves closer to its internal deadline to end Naxal violence in the country. The visit is being seen as a final strategic assessment aimed at consolidating recent gains and ensuring that development measures progress alongside security operations. Officials indicated that the minister is likely to visit Bastar, one of the last remaining regions affected by Left Wing Extremism,

to take a direct stock of conditions on the ground. The tour is expected to include meetings with local residents, security personnel and officials handling rehabilitation and welfare programmes. As per the tentative schedule, the home minister will first travel to Jammu and Kashmir on February 5 for a separate security review and will remain there until February 7. He is then expected to reach Raipur the same day and continue engagements in Chhattisgarh before concluding the visit on February 8.



Don't Want To Jinx It, But Dew Is India's Big Worry, Says MS Dhoni

■ Former captain calls 2026 squad one of the most dangerous but flags conditions as key factor

New Delhi: As India prepare to begin their T20 World Cup 2026 campaign, former captain MS Dhoni has described the current team as one of the most formidable in the tournament, while cautioning that evening dew could become a decisive challenge for the hosts. India will open their title defence against the United States at Mumbai's Wankhede Stadium later this week. The side enters the competition as reigning champions after lifting the trophy in 2024 under Rohit Sharma, adding to the historic triumph achieved in the inaugural 2007 edition led by Dhoni himself. Speaking during a recent interaction, Dhoni praised the depth and experience within the squad. He said



the team possessed all the ingredients required for success in the shortest format, including players accustomed to handling high pressure situations over a long period. However, the legendary wicketkeeper highlighted weather conditions, particularly dew during night matches, as a major concern. He explained that moisture on the outfield often alters the balance between bat and ball, making the toss

unusually important and reducing the effectiveness of bowlers. Dhoni noted that if conditions remained neutral, India would emerge victorious more often than not against top opponents. Yet he stressed that T20 cricket remains unpredictable, where a single off day for a few players can change the result completely. He pointed out that the real test comes when an opposition player

produces a brilliant performance on a crucial day, especially in knockout matches. According to him, avoiding injuries and ensuring that every player executes his assigned role would be essential for a successful campaign. Despite the caution, Dhoni expressed strong belief in the side led by Suryakumar Yadav. He said the combination of skill, confidence and big match experience made India a serious contender for a record third T20 world title. The former skipper concluded on a hopeful note, saying he preferred not to speak too confidently to avoid tempting fate, but reiterated that the current Indian unit stands among the most dangerous teams in world cricket.



Dubai Royals Defeat Delhi Warriors to Set Up Final With Pune Panthers

■ Dhawan brilliance and Chawla spell guide Royals into title clash in Goa.

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: The World Legends Pro T20 League has its finalists after Dubai Royals secured an impressive 17 run victory over Delhi Warriors in the second semi final in Goa. The win confirmed a summit clash between the Shikhar Dhawan led Royals and the Pune Panthers captained by Kieron Pollard at the 1919 Sportz Stadium on February 4. Asked to bat first, Dubai Royals faced immediate pressure as the Delhi bowlers struck at regular intervals. Despite the

early setbacks, Dhawan once again provided stability at the top of the order. The left hander paced his innings with maturity, rotating the strike and punishing loose deliveries on the way to a well compiled 71. His effort ensured the Royals remained competitive even as partnerships failed to develop at the other end.

Delhi Warriors fought back strongly through their captain Harbhajan Singh, who picked up two important wickets and kept the scoring under control in the middle overs.

Goa's Shikha Pathak To Officiate At Prestigious Genoa Open In Italy

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Shikha Pathak from Vasco, Goa, has been chosen to represent India as an International Technical Official at the renowned Genoa Open JJIF Ranking Grand Prix in Italy, marking a proud moment for Indian martial arts. Her selection highlights the growing presence of Indian technical officials on the global Ju Jitsu stage. Pathak has built a strong reputation over the years through consistent performances in international refereeing



assignments. She holds the distinction of being the first Indian and Asian woman to achieve World B Referee status in the Duo Discipline. She is also recognised as the first Asian female World Referee in Ju Jitsu, an achievement that has inspired athletes and officials across the country.

Sonics deliver commanding performance to capture All Goa Basketball Women's Title

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Sonics emerged as the new champions of women's basketball in the state after producing an impressive performance to defeat Jades in the final of the All Goa Basketball Tournament. The title clash witnessed confident play



from the winning side as they recorded a 26 to 18 victory and lifted the trophy in front of an enthusiastic

AFI Sets Tough Standards For 2026 Commonwealth Games Selection

■ Athletes in 17 events must equal or better national records to qualify.

New Delhi:

The Athletics Federation of India has announced strict qualification norms for



**ATHLETICS
FEDERATION OF INDIA**

16 women, prompting the federation to adopt tougher criteria to select the most competitive squad.

In the men's category, qualification marks have been set higher than current national records in events such as the 100 metres, 400 metres, 1500 metres, 110 metres hurdles and hammer throw. Sprinter Animesh Kujur, who holds the national 100 metres record of 10.18 seconds, will need to clock 10.16 seconds to make the cut. Similarly, 110 metres hurdles record holder Tejas Shirse must improve his best of 13.41 seconds to meet the required standard.

Deputy chairman Imran Khwaja reportedly asked to hold talks with PCB over boycott decision

■ ICC Steps In To Prevent India Pakistan Clash From Being Cancelled At T20 World Cup



New Delhi: The International Cricket Council has reportedly initiated urgent efforts to ensure the high profile India versus Pakistan match at the T20 World Cup goes ahead as scheduled. The global body is understood to have asked its deputy chairman Imran Khwaja to engage with the Pakistan Cricket Board and persuade it to reconsider the government directive barring the team

from playing India. Earlier this month the Pakistan government announced that its national side would travel to Sri Lanka for the tournament but would not take part in the fixture against India on February 15.

and sharper intent. Their players combined disciplined defending with quick transitions, making it difficult for Jades to settle into a rhythm.

By the end of the first half, Sonics had built a solid 12 to 4 lead, reflecting their dominance on both ends of the court.