



CM, BJP MLAs Slam MP Viriato Over Dabolim Claims Say **Airport Will Not Shut**

Challenge Him to Prove ‘Confidential’ Allegation.

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant and BJP MLAs on Thursday strongly refuted claims regarding the future of Dabolim Airport, accusing South Goa MP Captain Viriato Fernandes of making baseless allegations for



political mileage ahead of elections. With elections nearing, the Chief Minister said the Opposition was attempting to manufacture issues. “Elections cannot be fought over Dabolim

Airport alone,” Sawant said, accusing the MP of making statements outside Parliament to gain “weightage.” “Dabolim Airport will never be shut down. That is my clear statement,” the CM asserted, reiterating the assurance given on the floor of the House. Echoing similar



sentiments, MLA Sankalp Amonkar accused MP Viriato of misleading the public. “He has a habit of misleading the people. On every issue, he is misleading the public,” Amonkar said. He



maintained that Dabolim Airport would neither be closed nor handed over to the Navy. Amonkar further alleged that the Opposition was raising

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Pakistan Protests Over India's Map Showing Pok as Part of Indian Territory

■ Islamabad raises objection with New Delhi after map depiction of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir sparks diplomatic concern

Islamabad: Pakistan has lodged a formal protest with India over the way Pakistan-occupied Kashmir was shown on an Indian map, saying the depiction of the region as part of Indian territory is unacceptable and demands clarification. Officials in Islamabad conveyed strong objections through diplomatic channels, calling the representation inconsistent with

international norms and saying it undermines Pakistan's position on the disputed territory. According to Pakistan's foreign office, the matter was raised directly with Indian diplomatic representatives, with Islamabad asserting that the map projection could have serious implications for bilateral relations. The Pakistani side demanded that India explain the

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Goa All Set To Celebrate Grand And Vibrant Carnaval 2026 Across The State

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Department of Tourism, Government of Goa, has announced that Goa Carnaval 2026 will be celebrated on a grand scale across the State, bringing together colour, music, culture and community spirit from February 13 to 17. The official



announcement was made in the presence of Managing Director, Goa Tourism Development

Corporation (GTDC) Kuldeep Arolkar; Deputy Director of Tourism Dhiraj Wagle; Assistant Director,

Department of Tourism Jayesh Kankonkar; General Manager GTDC Gavin Dias; Deputy General Manager (Hotels & Marketing) GTDC Deepak Narvekar; and King Momo Cedric Da Costa, who symbolically ushered in the festive spirit of Carnaval. Tourism Minister

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RGP Chief Alleges Irregularities in Thivim Panchayat, Seeks Halt to Mega Project

Team Goemkarponn

THIVIM: Revolutionary Goans Party (RGP) chief Manoj Parab has alleged irregularities in the functioning of the Thivim panchayat, claiming that it is being controlled not by the BJP but by former MLA Kiran Kandolkar. Addressing the media, Parab accused the panchayat secretary and members of granting



permission to a mega project without conducting a mandatory site

inspection. He termed the move as fraudulent

and demanded that the approval be immediately revoked. Parab further stated that local villagers are strongly opposing the proposed project and warned that the RGP would support residents in their protest if corrective action is not taken. He urged authorities to intervene and ensure transparency in the decision-making process.

India's Biggest Defence Purchase Moves Forward as 114-Rafale Deal Clears Key Hurdle

■ Clearance paves way for contract talks, production timelines and major boost to Indian Air Force combat strength

New Delhi: India's largest-ever military procurement has crossed a major milestone with a crucial clearance for the purchase of 114 Rafale fighter jets for the Indian Air Force. The development marks a significant step forward in strengthening the country's air power and

modernising its fighter fleet. The clearance removes an important procedural bottleneck in the long-pending programme and opens the door for formal commercial negotiations. The proposed acquisition involves a new fleet of Rafale jets, customised



to Indian Air Force requirements, and is

expected to significantly enhance operational

capability and readiness. Officials said the decision follows detailed assessments of the Air Force's long-term needs, especially in the context of shrinking squadron strength and evolving regional security challenges. The Rafale aircraft, already inducted

into the IAF in earlier tranches, is seen as a critical platform due to its advanced avionics, multi-role capability and proven performance. With this hurdle cleared, the focus will now shift to finalising contract terms, delivery

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Dabolim Again: Will Goa Get Clarity or Just Another Political Drama?

The controversy over Dabolim Airport has returned, louder and sharper, exposing once again how Goa's critical infrastructure is trapped between political posturing, strategic interests, and public anxiety. What should have been a settled question by now has instead become a recurring political storm: is Dabolim here to stay, or is it being quietly edged out in favour of Mopa? The latest trigger is the Goa Forward Party's threat of a statewide agitation if Chief Minister Pramod Sawant and Transport Minister Mauvin Godinho fail to clarify their stand on Dabolim's future. GFP chief Vijai Sardesai has escalated the issue by alleging that the push to shut down Dabolim is not coming from private airport operator GMR, but from the Union Defence Ministry itself. He has accused Godinho of failing to protect the airport and demanded his resignation.

At the heart of the debate lies a familiar pattern. Political leaders trade allegations, make counterclaims, and draw red lines, but stop short of offering Goans what they want most: a clear, written, unambiguous assurance on the future of civil operations at Dabolim.

Sardesai's claims, including references to internal file notings and post-operation military plans, have added a sense of urgency and unease. Whether these allegations are fully accurate or politically amplified is beside the point. What matters is that they resonate with a long-standing fear among South Goa residents that Dabolim, once Goa's only gateway, is being slowly sacrificed. Leader of Opposition Yuri Alemão has echoed these concerns, pointing out the absence of a categorical assurance from the Defence Minister. His warning that "something is fishy" reflects a broader sentiment: that behind the official language of coordination and dual-airport models, decisions may already be drifting in a direction the public has not been told about.

On the other side, Mauvin

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Godinho and MLA Jit Arolkar insist that both Dabolim and Mopa will function together, complementing each other. The dual-airport narrative is appealing on paper. Goa's tourism economy needs connectivity. Charter traffic, domestic flights, international arrivals, and regional routes cannot all be funnelled through one airport without consequences. But this argument loses credibility when it is not backed by formal guarantees. Verbal assurances, press statements, and political rebuttals do little to reassure airlines, tourism stakeholders, or ordinary Goans who depend on Dabolim for accessibility and livelihoods.

Dabolim is not just an airport. It is symbolic. It represents South Goa's economic link to the rest of the country, a lifeline for local businesses, taxi operators, airport workers, and residents. Its status as a civil enclave under Navy control has always required delicate coordination. That reality demands transparency, not ambiguity.

The operationalisation of Mopa has intensified these anxieties. While Mopa promises growth and modern infrastructure, its emergence should not automatically mean decline elsewhere. Goa's geography, tourism patterns, and seasonal traffic justify more than one functioning airport. The idea that development must come at the cost of displacement is neither inevitable nor acceptable.

What is striking is how political responsibility keeps shifting. State ministers point to the Centre. Opposition leaders accuse the state of complicity. The Centre remains largely silent. In this vacuum, speculation thrives.

If Dabolim is secure, the government should say so plainly, with a written assurance from the Defence Ministry confirming the continuation of civil operations. If changes are being considered, Goans deserve honesty, not reassurances wrapped in political language. The question is no longer about who is shouting louder. It is about governance. Infrastructure planning cannot be hostage to election cycles or factional battles. Nor should strategic considerations be used as a convenient excuse to avoid public accountability. Goa has heard this story before. Each time, tempers flare, protests loom, and then the issue fades without resolution. Until the government breaks this cycle with clarity and commitment, the suspicion will remain that Dabolim's future is being negotiated quietly, away from public scrutiny. The altar of politics has claimed many institutions. Goa cannot afford to let its airport be one more.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Why Do Politicians Always Seem to Get Away?

The recent acquittal of Goa Minister Atanasio "Babush" Monserrate in a decade-old rape case has reignited a familiar and disturbing question: why do powerful politicians appear to evade accountability for serious crimes? The case, which stretched over more than ten years, involved allegations that a minor was sexually assaulted by a sitting lawmaker. Yet, despite the gravity of the charges and the length of the trial, the outcome has left many in the public disillusioned. The court found that the prosecution failed to prove key elements of the offence, but the fact that such a case could linger for a decade without a conclusive resolution raises broader concerns about how our justice system functions when the accused holds political power. This is not an isolated incident. Across India, high-profile cases involving politicians often seem to end in acquittals or prolonged delays. Even when evidence is strong or public outrage is intense, trials drag on for years, witnesses become unavailable, memories fade, and momentum dissipates. Meanwhile, the accused not only remain in public life, they often thrive politically. Such patterns erode public trust. Ordinary citizens see a double standard: politicians enjoy the benefits of position while victims and their families grapple with uncertainty and injustice. If the rule of law is to mean anything, it must apply equally to all, regardless of wealth, influence or vote bank appeal. Goans deserve better. We need a justice system and political culture that holds everyone to the same standard without fear or favour.

-Sydney Rodrigues, Guirgolim

When Power Washes Away Accountability

The acquittal of Goa Minister Atanasio "Babush" Monserrate in a rape case involving a minor has left many Goans with an unsettling feeling that justice in this country operates on two tracks. One for the ordinary citizen, and another for those who enjoy political protection. What troubles people is not only the verdict, but the pattern it fits into. Serious charges are followed by prolonged trials, missing links, weak prosecution, and finally an acquittal that is legally sound but morally hollow. By the time the case ends, public memory fades and political careers remain intact. The popular phrase "washing machine politics" exists for a reason. Allegations that once made leaders untouchable suddenly lose their weight once they cross into the ruling establishment. While no court can convict on suspicion alone, citizens are entitled to ask why investigations into powerful individuals so often appear incomplete or poorly pursued. In cases involving sexual crimes against minors, the standard of investigation should be uncompromising. If key evidence was not collected, documented, or presented effectively, that failure cannot be brushed aside as routine inefficiency. Such lapses demand accountability, not silence. The police and prosecution carry a heavy responsibility. When investigations appear weak or selective, the damage goes far beyond one case. It tells victims that power matters more than truth, and it tells the public that justice can be negotiated. This is not about presuming guilt. It is about demanding transparency and institutional honesty. If democracy is to retain credibility, political influence must stop acting as an invisible shield. Otherwise, acquittals may close cases in court, but they will never close them in the public conscience.

-Selvin D'Sa, Saligao

Dabolim airport will not shut down: Min Mauvin to Taxi Operators

Team Goemkarponn

DABOLIM: The Black and Yellow United Taxi Association of Dabolim Airport met Transport Minister Mauvin Godinho at his office on Thursday to thank him for his continued support towards the functioning of Dabolim Airport, even as fresh political claims over its future triggered a strong rebuttal from the minister. Responding to recent remarks by MLA Vijai Sardesai, Godinho dismissed rumours that the airport would be shut down and handed over entirely to the defence forces.

"Everyone is aware



of the rumours that Dabolim Airport will be shut and taken over by the defence. I personally travelled to Delhi along with Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant, MLA Nilesh Cabral and Rajya Sabha MP Sadanand Shet Tanavade and met Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. He gave us a clear assurance that Dabolim Airport will never shut

down," Godinho said. He added that a follow-up meeting was also held recently. "A few days ago, I again met the Defence Minister along with MP Sadanand Shet Tanavade and submitted a detailed memorandum explaining why this airport must continue permanently, and how tourism and the State's economy would suffer if it is closed. Once again, he assured us that Dabolim Airport will not be closed," he stated. Godinho, however, alleged that there was pressure being exerted from other quarters. "From the other side, I hear that GMR, which operates Manohar International

Airport at Mopa, is putting tremendous pressure and lobbying with the Navy to take over Dabolim Airport. That is why I requested the Chief Minister to once again meet the Union Defence Minister so that the assurance comes directly from the Centre. Despite repeated assurances from me and the Chief Minister, people continue to live in fear," he said. Taking on Sardesai's demand for his resignation, Godinho said, "Vijai Sardesai is in the Opposition and may want to play politics. I was the one who first informed the media that GMR was lobbying against Dabolim Airport.

Govt Tightens Rules to Prevent Diversion of Tribal Sub-Plan Funds

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: In a decisive step aimed at safeguarding Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) funds, the State government has issued fresh directives mandating strict compliance with NITI Aayog guidelines to ensure that allocations directly benefit Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities.

All line departments have now been instructed to seek prior approval from the Tribal Welfare Department before

proposing any new scheme, modification, project, or development work under the TSP. The approval must be obtained before administrative and financial sanctions are granted. The move follows concerns that certain TSP allocations were not aligned with NITI Aayog's clarification that only plan or scheme-based expenditure should be considered while earmarking funds in proportion to the ST population.

Non-plan spending, including establishment or routine sectoral expenses, cannot be counted under TSP allocations.



Over 280 Hectares of Forest Land in Goa Diverted for Development Projects Since 2021

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: More than 280 hectares of forest land in Goa have been cleared or diverted for non-forest uses between April 2021 and March 2025, according to official data presented in the Rajya Sabha. Union Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Kirti Vardhan Singh told Parliament that the land diversion covered 35 development projects, including an airport, road widening schemes, power substations, transmission lines, and the Kulem-Madgaon railway double-tracking project. The total diverted area during this four-year period amounts to 280.65 hectares, with the highest clearance recorded in 2023-24 at 178.19 hectares. In comparison, 97.65 hectares were diverted in 2020-21, while 15.6

hectares were cleared specifically for the railway project. For the current fiscal year, approvals for forest land diversion have already been granted for 13 government and private initiatives. Several of these projects are located in ecologically sensitive areas, including the proposed widening of a 53-metre stretch of the Goa-Belagavi highway, which would require felling 7,774 trees as it passes through the eco-sensitive zone of the Bhagwan Mahaveer Wildlife Sanctuary.

To mitigate environmental impact, the State Forest Department plans to implement compensatory afforestation (CA) over 487.98 hectares in three phases. This year, plantations will cover 130 hectares, followed by 178.49 hectares each in 2026-27 and 2027-28.

Fraudulent Land Deals In Anjuna: ED Books Mohammed Suhail Under PMLA

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Directorate of Enforcement (ED) has filed a Prosecution Complaint under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002 against Mohammed Suhail and his wife, Anjum Shaikh, in connection with alleged fraudulent land transactions in Anjuna, Bardez, Goa. The North Goa Principal District and Sessions Court took cognizance of the case on 2 January 2026. ED's investigation, triggered by a Goa Police



Special Investigation Team (SIT) charge sheet, revealed that Suhail, a known offender in land-grabbing cases, allegedly forged documents to create a fictitious person named "Malwin G. Lobo." Using fake birth and death certificates, a fraudulent Power of Attorney was

executed to transfer the property first to Suhail's wife in 2010, and later to a third party, Shaikh Salim, in 2011. Investigators said the property was significantly undervalued, and cash transactions above the registered value were allegedly used for personal gain. Suhail was

arrested by ED on 22 September 2025 and after completing 14 days of ED custody, was remanded to judicial custody at Central Jail, Colvale, where he remains. During the first court hearing, he appeared via video conferencing, while his wife was represented by legal counsel.

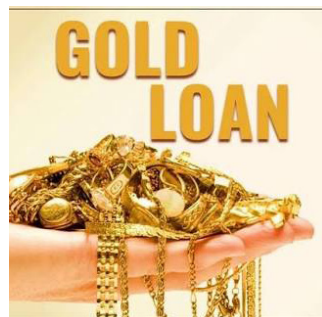
ED has stated that further investigation is ongoing to uncover the full extent of the alleged money laundering and fraudulent land dealings.

ED Attaches Properties Worth Rs 1.17 Crore In UCO Bank Gold Loan Fraud Case

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Panaji Zonal Office, has provisionally attached movable and immovable assets valued at approximately Rs 1.17 crore in connection with a bank fraud case against UCO Bank under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002.

The investigation stems from FIR No. 09/2022, registered on 7 October 2022 by the Economic Offences Cell, Goa Police, against



Hemant Raikar and Gundu Kelvekar. The accused are alleged to have conspired to defraud UCO Bank by fraudulently securing gold loans from the Verna, Fatorda, and Margao branches. During searches conducted on 5 September 2025 at the

residential and business premises of the accused, ED seized incriminating material. Investigation revealed that Kelvekar obtained 32 gold loans in the names of 20 individuals using fake gold ornaments, while Raikar, acting as the empanelled gold valuer, certified the fake gold as genuine. Loan proceeds were reportedly diverted to Kelvekar's personal accounts and used to purchase bullion and immovable assets. The total proceeds of crime have been quantified at approximately Rs 2.81

crore.

The attached properties include a benami commercial shop (Shop No. D-12, Pancharatna Building Complex, Margao), bank balance in Mrs. Mayuri Kelvekar's account, and the value of gold assets held with Narayan Sheshgiri Jewellers. These assets have been attached as they constitute proceeds of crime or equivalent value. ED continues its investigation to unravel the full extent of the fraud and trace additional assets

Man Poses As Pollution Control Board Official, Cheats Club Owner Of Rs 14.23 Lakh In Vagator

■ Anjuna Police Register Offence; Accused Allegedly Took Money For Fake PCB Licence Renewal.

Team Goemkarponn

ANJUNA: Anjuna Police have registered an offence against an unidentified person for allegedly impersonating an official of the Goa Pollution Control Board and cheating a Vagator-based businessman of over Rs 14 lakh.

According to police information, the complaint was lodged on February 11, 2026, at 7.25 pm by

Himanshu Malhotra (34), resident of Villa D, Umravi Villas, Vagator, Bardez-Goa, and originally from Dwarka, Delhi.

In his

complaint, Malhotra stated that on December 16, 2025, at around 1 pm in Vagator-Anjuna, Bardez, the accused, identified as Suraj Pendse (full details

not known), allegedly impersonated himself as an official of the Goa Pollution Control Board.

The accused allegedly dishonestly induced the complainant by making false representations and assurances regarding the upgradation and renewal of the Pollution Control Board licence of

Club Goya. Believing the claims to be genuine, the complainant transferred a total amount of Rs 14,23,200 through multiple transactions.

Police said the accused thereby cheated the complainant of the said amount.

An offence has been registered at Anjuna Police Station, and further investigation is being carried out by PSI Sahil Warang.

FRAUD

Vasco man loses ₹1.83 lakh after opening fake RTO e-challan APK

Team Goemkarponn

VASCO: A resident of Vasco was allegedly cheated of ₹1,83,600 after opening a fraudulent APK file sent in the name of an RTO e-challan. According to the complaint filed by Lalsab Bagwan, a resident of Dactolem, Vasco, the incident occurred on 07/02/2026 at 12:48 hrs. The complainant stated that an unknown person sent him an APK file purportedly related to an RTO e-challan, which contained an image of his brother. Believing it to be genuine, the complainant opened and viewed the



file. Subsequently, an amount of ₹1,83,600 was debited from his HDFC Bank account without his authorisation. Vasco police have registered an offence under Section 319(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). Further investigation is being conducted by PSI Plato Carvalho of Vasco Police Station under the supervision of PI Vaibhav Naik and the guidance of Mormugao DySP Gurudas Kadam.

Business Rivalry Turns Ugly; Man Booked for Threatening, Extortion Bid in Guirim.

■ Saligao Police Register Offence After Complaint Over Phone Threats and Rs 50,000 Demand.

Team Goemkarponn

SALIGAO: Saligao Police have registered an offence against a Bardez resident for allegedly threatening and attempting to extort money from a Guirim-based businessman over a business rivalry dispute.

According to police sources, the complaint was lodged by Ganesh Nagvekar, a resident of Sonar Villa, St. Anthony Waddo, Sonar Bhatt, Guirim, Bardez. In his complaint, Nagvekar stated that on January 17, 2026, he received a phone call at his residence during which the accused, identified as Peter D'Souza, a resident of Arpora-Nagao, Bardez,

allegedly issued threats with dire consequences.

Police said the accused allegedly demanded Rs 50,000 from the complainant in connection with a business rivalry. The complainant further alleged that both he and his son were threatened over the phone and that the accused used abusive and filthy language during the conversation. Based on the complaint, Saligao Police registered an offence on February 11, 2026, and initiated further investigation into the matter. The investigation is being carried out by PSI Akshay Gaonkar of Saligao Police Station. Further inquiries are in progress.

Man duped of Rs 2.30 lakh after fraudster poses as bank officer in Vasco

Team Goemkarponn

VASCO: A Vasco resident was allegedly cheated of ₹2,30,948 after an unknown person posing as a bank officer induced him to download a fraudulent mobile application. According to the complaint lodged by

Mahadev Tadel, a resident of Mundvel, Vasco, the incident occurred on 07/02/2026 at 01.28 hrs. The complainant stated that he received a call from an unknown person who impersonated himself as a bank official and convinced him to download an application

by sending an APK file, claiming that it would make banking transactions easier. After downloading the file, an amount of ₹2,30,948 was allegedly fraudulently debited from the complainant's bank account. Vasco police have registered an offence

under Section 319(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). Further investigation is being carried out by PSI Mayur Sawant of Vasco Police Station under the supervision of PI Vaibhav Naik and the guidance of Mormugao DySP Gurudas Kadam.



Seven booked for constructing illegal wall on public road at Arossim

Team Goemkarponn

AROSSIM: An alleged attempt to block the access road leading to a hotel project at Arossim by constructing an illegal wall on a public road has led to the registration of an offence by Verna police. As per the complaint filed by Bernard Dias, a resident of Arossim, the incident occurred

between 08/02/2026 and 10/02/2026 after 20.00 hrs. The accused persons — Jose Joaquim Fernandes, Simao D'Silva, Darick Azavedo, Macklin Rodrigues, Alex Azavedo, Benny D'Silva and some unknown individuals — allegedly formed an unlawful assembly with the common object of obstructing and blocking the access road to the

complainant's hotel project. The complaint states that the accused constructed an illegal wall on the public road, thereby causing unauthorised damage and alteration to public property. It is further alleged that when the complainant's staff and workers objected to the construction activity, the accused abused them in filthy language

and criminally intimidated them with threats of dire consequences, including threats to kill. Verna police have registered an offence under Sections 189(2), 352, 351(3) read with 190 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and Section 3 of the Prevention of Damage to Public Property (PDPP) Act.

BOOKED

One Killed As Activa Rider Without Licence Crashes Into Parked Scooter In Siolim

■ Anjuna Police Book Rider For Rash And Negligent Driving After Fatal Midnight Accident.

Team Goemkarponn

ANJUNA: Anjuna Police have registered an offence against a 33-year-old scooter rider following a fatal accident in Siolim in the early hours of Wednesday. According to police, the case was registered on February

12, 2026, at 3.07 pm based on a complaint filed by ASI Jitendra Raul (53) of Anjuna Police Station. Police said that on February 12, 2026, at around 1.35 am, the accused, identified as Sagar Chaudhary, was riding an Activa scooter (GA-03-AG-5890) from



Assagao towards Siolim. When he reached near Electric Pole No. LT/173/39/15 at Aframent Vaddo, Siolim, he

allegedly rode the vehicle in a rash and negligent manner and lost control. The scooter reportedly dashed into a parked Activa scooter (GA-03-AA-9450), causing the rider and his two pillion riders to fall on the road and sustain injuries. The pillion riders have

been identified as Bibek Chaudhary (22), residing at Siolim, and Prabin Chaudhary (23), residing at Assagao. All three are natives of Ward No. 8, Ghodaghodi, Kailali, Nepal.

Police stated that Bibek Chaudhary was later declared dead at

Asilo Hospital. It was further revealed that the accused rider did not possess a valid driving licence at the time of the accident. An offence has been registered, and further investigation is being carried out by LPSI Leesha Garudi of Anjuna Police Station.

AAP Alleges Police High-Handedness At Anti-Casino Meet In Panaji

■ Valmiki Naik Claims Manhandling At CCP; BJP Accused Of Shielding Mandovi Casinos.

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Goa unit of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Thursday accused the ruling BJP government of using police machinery to suppress dissent during an anti-casino protest in the capital city. Addressing a press conference, AAP Goa President Valmiki Naik alleged that he was manhandled and selectively targeted by police personnel while attending a meeting at the City Corporation of Panaji (CCP), where citizens had gathered to press for



the removal of casinos operating on the Mandovi River. The delegation had assembled at the CCP office following a meeting reportedly promised by Mayor Rohit Monserrate to discuss public concerns over casinos, including a proposed high-rise

vessel in the river. Naik claimed that police used force to remove him from the public meeting, alleging that the action was politically motivated. "I do not blame the police personnel for the action taken against me. However, I strongly

condemn those who hid behind the police force and demonstrated the BJP government's pressure tactics. When we came to submit our memorandum, even Monserrate did not come forward to accept it," he said. Naik further alleged that casinos operating on the Mandovi River enjoy political protection. Referring to past election promises, he claimed that Monserrate had earlier assured voters that casinos would be removed within 100 days if elected, but later joined the BJP after the Assembly results.

Dual airport model key for Goa's growth: MLA Jit Arolkar

Team Goemkarponn

VASCO: Advocating a dual airport model for Goa's sustained growth, Transport Minister Mauvin Godinho and MLA Jit Arolkar on Thursday stressed that both Dabolim and Manohar International Airport, Mopa, must function in coordination to strengthen connectivity, tourism and the State's economy. Addressing the media, the leaders maintained that the two airports serve distinct tourism segments and should complement each other rather than compete. "Both the airports are extremely important for the State. If I speak as



a common Goan and not merely as an MLA, South Goa and North Goa cater to very different kinds of tourists," said MLA Jit Arolkar. In South Goa, we largely receive high-end foreign tourists who prefer premium five-star resorts and traditionally use Dabolim Airport. North Goa attracts visitors looking for nightlife, music and parties, and many of them prefer Mopa. It is therefore essential that both airports remain fully functional," he said.



CM Inaugurates 'Samaakalan 2.0' National Conference On Integrative Oncology

■ Goa Committed To Holistic, Affordable Cancer Care Through AYUSH–Oncology Integration: Sawant

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant inaugurated 'Samaakalan 2.0' – National Conference on Integrative Oncology, held in the presence of leading experts from Tata Memorial Centre (ACTREC) and the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) in Mumbai. Addressing the gathering, Sawant said the conference highlights the importance of combining



evidence-based AYUSH systems with modern oncology to ensure more holistic and patient-centric cancer care.

He stressed that integrative oncology should not only focus on treatment but also on improving quality

of life, mental well-being, rehabilitation and supportive care for patients. The Chief Minister stated that Goa remains committed to strengthening healthcare delivery, promoting preventive care and encouraging innovation in

the medical sector.

He noted that collaboration with Tata Memorial Centre and the joint clinic initiative with the All India Institute of Ayurveda reflect the State's resolve to adopt integrative approaches in healthcare.

HJS Submits Memorandum Seeking Preventive Steps Ahead Of Valentine's Day

■ Organisation Urges Authorities, Schools To Promote 'Matru-Pitru Pujan Din' Instead.

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Hindu Janajagruti Samiti (HJS) has submitted memorandums to administrative officials and educational institutions in South Goa, seeking preventive measures to curb alleged misconduct on Valentine's Day.

According to a press note issued by Dr Manoj Solanki, State Coordinator of HJS, a memorandum was submitted to the South Goa District Collector in Margao, as well as to the Deputy Collector, local police station and school authorities in Vasco.

The organisation has urged school and college managements to celebrate 'Matru-Pitru Pujan Din' (Parents' Worship Day) on February 14 instead of Valentine's Day, stating

that the move would help inculcate traditional values among students.

The HJS delegation that submitted the memorandum at Vasco included Uday Ibrampurkar, Shivram Revanakar, Arvind Adarkar and Ravindra Salgaonkar.

A separate delegation comprising Sanjeev Patil, Nanda Nagvekar and Sudhakar Aglave submitted the memorandum to the South Goa District Collector at Margao.

In the memorandum, HJS stated that February 14 is widely promoted as Valentine's Day, which it described as a Western practice driven by commercial interests. The organisation alleged that the observance of the day encourages consumerism and immoral behaviour among youth.

Ownership status for New Vaddem housing board residents likely soon

Team Goemkarponn

VASCO: A long-pending demand of residents of the Goa Housing Board (GHB) complex at New Vaddem in Vasco may finally see resolution, with the issue expected to be placed before the State Cabinet shortly for approval.

A meeting was held at the office of Minister Mauvin Godinho on Thursday in the presence of Goa Housing Board Chairman

and Mandrem MLA Jit Arolkar, Mormugao Municipal Council (MMC) Chairperson Girish Borker and other officials to discuss granting ownership status to residents of the Housing Board plots at New Vaddem. Addressing reporters after the meeting, GHB Chairman Jit Arolkar said the discussions had reached an advanced stage.

"We met at Minister Mauvin Godinho's office to deliberate on issuing

official allotment letters for the Housing Board plots at New Vaddem. This issue has caused immense hardship to residents for over 40 years," Arolkar said.

He added that this was the third joint meeting convened on the matter. "Minister Mauvin Godinho has been consistently pursuing the issue.

This is our third meeting with all Housing Board officials, along with MMC Chairperson Girish



Borker and municipal staff. We are now almost at the final stage and the proposal may soon be placed before the Cabinet for approval," he said. Drawing a parallel, Arolkar noted, "A similar issue in Zuarinagar was cleared in yesterday's Cabinet meeting.

We are confident that the 544 plot holders at New Vaddem will also receive justice shortly.

Goa-based Tech Firm Kilowott To Drive development in Norway's Gjøvik region

■ Goa based digital firm explores long term collaboration with regional agencies and NTNU to strengthen education to industry pathways.

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: A digital transformation company headquartered in Porvorim is set to contribute to development efforts in Norway's Gjøvik region through a new collaborative initiative with Gjøvikregionen, a government supported regional development body. The engagement comes amid growing economic cooperation between India and Norway. As part of the initiative, Kilowott co founder Judah Fernandez and Strategic Outreach Partner Sheraline Rocha visited Norway in January to hold discussions with regional stakeholders. The visit focused on identifying long term strategic partnerships aimed at fostering innovation,



strengthening talent pipelines and enhancing value creation across sectors. Talks centred on building a collaborative framework that connects academia, public institutions and industry. With an established presence in Norway and the wider Nordic region, Kilowott is expected to play a role in supporting skills development and innovation driven projects in the region.

Key meetings were held with representatives

from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology at Gjøvik, Gjøvik Kommune, Mustad Næringspark, Frostrøyk idé and design, along with other regional stakeholders. One of the major areas explored was the co design and pilot implementation of micro credential programmes. These programmes are intended to help students and early career professionals transition more effectively from academic study into dynamic technology and innovation focused workplaces. Discussions also examined flexible and practical learning models that can be delivered digitally or through interactive workshops, aligning academic output with real world industry requirements. The

initiative is designed to strengthen the regional business ecosystem, improve access to skilled talent and enhance the area's appeal to students, professionals and public sector partners.

From Kilowott's perspective, the collaboration aligns with its experience in delivering short, industry relevant programmes focused on agile methodologies, artificial intelligence applications and scalable technology solutions. The visit further consolidated the company's footprint in the Nordic region and underscored the growing importance of cross border partnerships in driving regional innovation and creating stronger education to industry linkages.

Healthway Residents Secure Fifth Place at APICON 2026 National Quiz

■ Goa based DNB trainees shine among 48 teams at prestigious physicians' conference in Patna

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Three DNB Medicine residents from Healthway Hospitals in Goa earned national recognition after finishing fifth at the APICON Quiz during the 81st Annual Conference of the Association of Physicians of India held in Patna. Dr Dhruv Bawania, Dr Ankit Nair and Dr Pritesh Vaishnav represented Goa at APICON 2026, competing against 48 teams from leading medical colleges across the country. The conference, one of India's largest gatherings of physicians and internal medicine specialists, drew nearly 10,000 delegates and featured academic sessions, workshops and a highly competitive national level medical quiz. The Goa team advanced to the final stages of the quiz and secured the fifth position, placing behind prominent institutions such as IPGIMER and SSKM Kolkata, Madras Medical



College and Stanley Medical College Chennai, KMC Manipal and NIMS Hyderabad.

The performance was particularly noteworthy as Dr Bawania and Dr Nair were the only first year DNB Medicine residents participating in the competition. The team also stood out for successfully answering a particularly challenging question that other participants could not solve. This achievement continues a strong run for the trio, who were earlier selected for the zonal round of the national quiz at IRACON 2025 in Mumbai and reached the semifinal stage at the National Medical Quiz during the RSSDI Conference 2025.

Dhempe College Crowned Champions at Meteora 2026 in Panjim

■ Don Bosco College hosts two day intercollegiate festival celebrating creativity, culture and competition.

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Don Bosco College, Panjim hosted the 16th edition of its flagship intercollegiate festival, Meteora 2026, on February 5 and 6 at the Oratory. Themed "Echoes of the Lost Cities," the two day event brought together students from across Goa for a vibrant showcase of talent, innovation and sportsmanship. The festival opened with an energetic inaugural ceremony attended by



College Director Rev. Fr Kinley D'Cruz, Principal Prof Teotone Vaz, Vice Principal Dr Cedric Silveira and Faculty Incharge Asst Prof Agnelo D'Souza, along with the student organising team. Singer, actor and educator Adv Sonia Shirsat graced the occasion as chief guest, encouraging

students to actively engage in cultural pursuits and celebrating Goan folk traditions with the audience. Meteora 2026 featured 27 events aligned with its historical theme, divided into pre events, on stage, off stage and sports categories. Popular stage events included the battle of bands, group

dance competition, lip sync battle, product pitch contest, DJ battle, fashion show and the Mr and Ms Meteora pageant. Off stage competitions tested creativity and intellect through activities such as fireless cooking, currency design, quiz contests, debate and mascot creation.

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Pakistan Protests Over India's Map Showing PoK as Part of Indian Territory

rationale behind the depiction and take corrective steps to prevent misrepresentation going forward. Authorities in Pakistan said the map in question was being used in official Indian

documents and material that Pakistan insists mischaracterises the status of the region, which it says has been under Pakistani administration since the partition of the subcontinent and subsequent conflicts.

Goa All Set To Celebrate Grand And Vibrant Carnival 2026 Across The State

Rohan A. Khaunte said Carnival reflects Goa's joy, inclusivity and cultural pride. He stated that taking the festivities across multiple locations will ensure greater community participation

while offering visitors an authentic and memorable Goan experience.

He added that Carnival 2026 aligns with the State's vision of responsible and regenerative tourism.

India's Biggest Defence Purchase Moves Forward as 114-Rafale Deal Clears Key Hurdle

schedules and production arrangements. The deal is expected to involve a mix of direct acquisition and

domestic manufacturing components, aligning with India's broader push to strengthen indigenous defence production and partnerships.

PM Modi Congratulates Tarique Rahman as Bangladesh Election Results Come In

■ India says it will support a democratic and inclusive Bangladesh after BNP's win.

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has extended congratulations to Tarique Rahman on the Bangladesh Nationalist Party's decisive success in the parliamentary elections, underscoring India's commitment to backing a democratic and inclusive Bangladesh. As vote counting progressed, India's government issued a statement recognising the outcome of a hard-fought election and expressing the desire



to strengthen ties with Dhaka under its newly elected leadership. The message from New Delhi highlighted the importance of stability, cooperation and prosperity in the South

Asian neighbourhood. Modi's congratulations came shortly after the Bangladesh Nationalist Party asserted its majority and signalled its intention to form the next government. India's outreach emphasised respect for the democratic process and reiterated a willingness to work closely with the incoming administration on shared goals. The Indian statement also underscored the

longstanding people-to-people links between the two countries and expressed confidence that the new government in Bangladesh would pursue policies that further regional peace and development. While India and Bangladesh have collaborated across multiple sectors in recent years, the focus now shifts to ensuring continuity and deepening engagement under the BNP leadership.



6-Year-Old Boy Dies After Being Hit by Car in UP, Teen Student Arrested

■ 21-year-old Class 12 student returning from farewell allegedly behind the wheel; police probe speed and negligence

LUCKNOW: In Lucknow, a 6-year-old boy lost his life after being struck by a car driven by a 21-year-old Class 12 student who was returning from a farewell event. The tragedy unfolded late on Friday evening when the child was crossing the road in the city's Alambagh area.

According to police, the teenager was riding in the car after attending a farewell celebration for his classmates when the incident occurred. The vehicle hit the young boy, who was critically injured and rushed to a nearby hospital. Despite efforts to save him, the child succumbed to his injuries.

Witnesses said the

impact was severe, and residents gathered at the scene as news spread. The driver was immediately taken into custody by local police, who registered a case in connection with the accident. Law enforcement officials said they are investigating the circumstances leading up to the collision, including whether speed or loss of control played a role.

Family members of the boy were distraught and demanded strict action against the driver. Neighbours and community members also expressed grief and anger over the sudden and devastating loss of a young life.

Vijay Targets 'Cash-for-Votes' Culture

■ Accuses Ruling Parties of Corrupting Tamil Nadu's Democracy

Salem: At a large election rally in Salem, Tamil Nadu, actor-turned-politician Vijay, president of the Tamilnadu Vettrivaasi Kootani (TVK), took aim at the ruling M.K. Stalin and his government, accusing them of failing to address key issues facing the state. Speaking to a sea of supporters, Vijay urged voters to think differently in the upcoming assembly elections and consider TVK as a fresh alternative



to the established parties.

Vijay highlighted what he described as shortcomings in governance, including unemployment, rising prices, and neglect of

youth aspirations. He said these problems have not been tackled effectively by the DMK administration and argued that people's frustrations were visible across the state. The rally

saw a large turnout, with people gathering along the route and filling the venue to hear the TVK chief lay out his vision. Vijay appealed directly to young voters and first-time electors, urging them to participate actively in shaping Tamil Nadu's future. He said his party's focus would be on jobs, development and inclusive growth, themes he said resonate with ordinary citizens.

Farmers and Women at Centre of PM Modi's First Decisions from Seva Teerth Office

■ Prime Minister focuses on rural empowerment and women's welfare in early policy moves from new office

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has placed farmers and women at the forefront of his initial decisions following the inauguration of the new Seva Teerth office, signalling a clear emphasis on rural empowerment and inclusive development. In his first set of directives issued from the newly established facility, the prime minister prioritised schemes aimed at strengthening agricultural livelihoods and expanding opportunities for women across the country. Modi's focus on farmers comes amid ongoing challenges in the agricultural sector, with



calls for improved support systems, better access to credit and sustainable practices gaining traction across states. The decisions taken from the Seva Teerth office aim to deepen engagement with farming communities and streamline initiatives intended to boost productivity and resilience in the sector.

BNP Sweeps Bangladesh Election, Tarique Rahman Set to Become Prime Minister

■ Opposition returns to power after nearly two decades as early results show commanding majority in parliament

DHAKA, Feb 13

Bangladesh's opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party on Friday secured a decisive victory in parliamentary elections, marking its return to power after nearly two decades and clearing the way for party leader Tarique Rahman to become the country's next prime minister. The result comes as Bangladesh emerges from months of political unrest and economic strain.

Rahman, the son of former prime minister Khaleda Zia, returned to Dhaka in December after spending almost 20 years abroad. He now faces the



immediate task of restoring political stability, reviving investor confidence and rebuilding key sectors of the economy, including the vital garment industry, after prolonged turbulence following the collapse of Sheikh Hasina's government last year.

Early vote counts from local television channels

showed the BNP and its allies winning at least 212 of the 299 parliamentary seats contested. The opposition Jamaat-e-Islami and its allies were reported to have secured around 70 seats in the Jatiya Sangsad, or House of the Nation. According to figures released by the Election Commission, the

BNP was leading or had won 181 seats, Jamaat-e-Islami 61 seats and other parties seven seats. Officials said counting was still under way in several constituencies, with full official results expected within hours. While preliminary outcomes are largely clear, the commission said the formal gazette notification confirming the results could take several days. Under Bangladesh's constitution, the new government cannot be sworn in until this notification is issued, potentially delaying the formation of the next administration.

India Gives Update on Abhishek Sharma's Availability Ahead of T20 World Cup Clash Against Pakistan

■ Team management says opener is recovering well after illness, final call to be taken closer to the match.

Mumbai: India's team management has addressed speculation around Abhishek Sharma's availability for the high-profile T20 World Cup match against Pakistan, saying the left-handed opener is recovering steadily and remains under close medical observation. Sharma missed India's previous group match



after being hospitalised with a stomach infection earlier in the week. He has since been discharged and has rejoined the squad, sparking questions

over whether he will be fit in time for the marquee encounter against Pakistan. Speaking on the team's preparations, India all-rounder Varun Chakravarthy said Sharma has resumed training and has already spent time in the nets. According to teammates, the opener looks comfortable but is being eased back into full workload as a precaution.

India captain Suryakumar Yadav had earlier indicated that Sharma could miss one or two games while recovering fully, which added to uncertainty over his selection for the Pakistan match. Sharma was absent from the game against Namibia, where India went in with a different opening combination.

Ishan Kishan Sets New T20 WC Record, Surpasses Dhoni's Milestone

■ Indian wicketkeeper-batter becomes first in tournament history to reach landmark, rewriting the record books

Mumbai: Ishan Kishan achieved a historic milestone in the ongoing T20 World Cup, entering the record books by surpassing a long-standing mark previously held by MS Dhoni. In doing so, Kishan became the first player in T20 World Cup history to reach this particular achievement, underlining his growing impact in international cricket's



shortest format. The landmark came during India's latest match, where Kishan produced a commanding performance with the bat.



Dempo Challengers Clinch Six Wicket Win With 37 Balls to Spare

■ Angle's four wicket burst and fluent half centuries from Amonkar and Sawkar seal dominant start in GSB Unity Cup 3.0

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Dempo Challengers began their campaign in the GSB Unity Cup 3.0 with an emphatic six wicket victory over CD Fountainhead in a floodlit encounter at the MCC ground in Margao on Wednesday. The tournament is being organised by the Goa GSB Sports and Charitable Trust. After winning the toss, Dempo opted to bowl and immediately seized control of the contest. Skipper Aditya Angle produced a decisive spell, returning figures of 4 for 27 from his four overs. He was well supported by Shridhar Keni, who claimed 3 for 25, while Tunish Sawkar chipped in with a wicket to keep the pressure on the opposition. Despite regular setbacks, CD Fountainhead found resistance through captain Pranav Biche, who played an aggressive knock of

53 from just 29 deliveries. His innings featured five boundaries and four sixes and provided the only substantial momentum for his side. Anish Prabhudesai added 20, but the lack of partnerships hurt Fountainhead as they were bowled out for 136 in 19.3 overs.

In reply, Dempo Challengers approached the chase with confidence and attacking intent. Sumiran Amonkar and Tunish Sawkar turned the match decisively with a 78 run partnership for the second wicket. Amonkar struck 51 off 30 balls, hammering nine fours, while Sawkar scored 50 from 29 deliveries, clearing the ropes three times and finding the boundary on four occasions. Their calculated assault ensured there were no late complications. Dempo reached 139 for 4 in just 13.5 overs, comfortably overhauling the target with 37 balls remaining.

How India Is Preparing to Counter Pakistan Spinner Usman Tariq, Says Ishan Kishan

■ Team India focuses on strategy and execution to tackle Pakistan's mystery spinner ahead of their T20 World Cup showdown

Mumbai: India's players have been working through specific plans to counter the threat posed by Pakistan's mystery spinner Usman Tariq as both teams gear up for their high-profile T20 World Cup clash. Ishan Kishan, one of India's key batters, explained how the side has been approaching



preparations to handle Tariq's bowling and maintain momentum in the tournament. Kishan said

India has been paying close attention to Tariq's variations, spending time in the nets facing similar styles of spin and adjusting techniques to ensure they stay ahead in match situations. With Tariq's ability to deliver unconventional spin and change pace, the Indian batters have been practising reads off

the hand and adapting footwork to deal with his deliveries effectively. According to Kishan, sessions have involved facing different lines and lengths that Tariq is likely to bowl, with team coaches and analysts providing insights on where pressure can be applied and how to rotate the strike.



Clarence, Rajendra and Kane, Ruta Clinch Titles at BPS Open Pickleball Championship

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: The BPS Open Pickleball Championship 2026 concluded on a high note in Margao, with Clarence Noronha and Rajendra Godinho capturing the Men's Doubles 50 plus crown and Kane Roncon Pereira partnering Ruta Borkar to secure the Open Mixed Doubles title. In the Men's



Doubles 50 plus final, Clarence and Rajendra delivered a steady performance to defeat Noel Noronha and Wilfred Jacques 11 to 5, 11 to 8.

Goa's 218 Not Enough as Punjab Seal Comfortable Win

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Goa suffered a six wicket loss to Punjab in their Senior Women's One Day Trophy Elite fixture at the Usha Martin Ground in Ranchi on Thursday, despite posting a competitive total. Opting to bat first, Goa Women put up 218 for 9 in their allotted 50 overs. The innings was anchored by Harshita Yadav, who compiled a steady 52 off 74 deliveries, striking six boundaries. She found support from Poorva Bhaidkar, who made 36, and Tejaswini Duragad, who added 32 runs. Contributions also came from Purvaja Verlekar with 23 and Tanisha Gaikwad with 21, helping Goa reach a respectable score. Punjab's bowling attack kept



things under control through regular breakthroughs. Mannat Kashyap and Meenu Kumari claimed two wickets each, while others chipped in to restrict Goa from accelerating in the closing stages. In response, Punjab chased down the 219 run target comfortably, finishing at 222 for 4 in 44.4 overs. Although they were reduced to 59 for 2 early in the innings, the middle order ensured there were no further setbacks. Ridhima Aggarwal steadied the chase with a composed 55, while Pragati Singh struck a fluent 60.