



Villagers Storm GSPCB Office Against Proposed Coal Jetty In Curchorem

Locals, Leaders Demand Immediate Scrapping Of Project; Govt Accused Of Ignoring Advance Protest Notice

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Tension escalated in the capital today as villagers from Curchorem constituency staged a strong protest outside the GSPCB office at Patto against the proposed jetty allegedly being constructed for coal handling.

Residents of Assolda, Xelvona, Xic-Xelvona, Hodar and neighbouring villages marched to the Town and Country Planning (TCP) office at Patto, demanding that the controversial project be scrapped immediately.

The protestors claimed that the jetty, coming



up in Xelvona village, is intended for coal transportation and would severely impact not only their village but the entire surrounding region.

Curchorem-based leader Rohan Gauns Desai joined the agitators in solidarity, lending political weight to the demonstration.

Councillor Balkrishna

Hodarkar of the Curchorem Municipal Council criticised the government for remaining silent despite prior intimation of the agitation.

"This protest was announced four to five days in advance, yet the government did not react to our demand. We want the government to stop this project. It is not just



about Xelvona village but about all surrounding areas.

This project is going to affect everyone. The next generation will curse us," he said.

The protestors alleged that the jetty is being developed to facilitate coal handling operations and warned of

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Goa Carving Niche In Ocean Research: CM Sawant

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Stating that Goa is steadily gaining recognition as a centre for marine research and scientific excellence, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant inaugurated the World Ocean Science Congress 2026 at the National Institute of Oceanography (NIO), Dona Paula.

In his address, Sawant said the state is moving beyond its image as a tourism hotspot and is positioning itself as a significant contributor to ocean science and sustainable maritime development. He stressed that discussions on ocean health and climate resilience are



crucial, particularly as a substantial portion of India's population resides along coastal belts.

Referring to Goa's extensive coastline, the Chief Minister observed that the state's economy — including fisheries, tourism and maritime activities — is closely tied to the wellbeing of marine

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Every MLA Must Maintain Own Respect: Min Digambar Kamat

Team Goemkarponn

PERNEM: Public Works Department (PWD) Minister Digambar Kamat today stressed that every legislator must uphold personal dignity and decorum while participating in protests, amid the ongoing agitation against Section 39A of the TCP Act. Reacting to the developments surrounding the protest, Kamat said that while dissent is part



of democracy, elected representatives should not cross certain boundaries. "Every MLA must maintain his own respect. We also protested in the past, but we never entered

government offices or pressured government officials," Kamat stated. When asked about the incident involving MLA Viresh Borkar, Kamat refrained from making any specific remarks, saying he would not comment on what transpired. His statement comes at a time when protests against Section 39A have intensified, drawing sharp political reactions across party lines

Section 39A Misused For Large-Scale Conversions: Jit Arolkar

Team Goemkarponn

MANDREM: Mandrem MLA Jit Arolkar has alleged that Section 39A of the Town and Country Planning (TCP) Act is being misused for large-scale land conversions, contrary to the original intent presented in the Assembly.

Arolkar said that when the amendment was passed, legislators were informed that the provision



was meant to help local landowners who were unable to convert their orchard lands.

However, he claimed that the ground reality reflects a different

picture. "We were told that Section 39A was introduced to benefit locals who could not change the zoning of their orchard lands.

But today, we are witnessing vast tracts of land being converted in the name of zone change," Arolkar stated. He further alleged that hills, agricultural lands and No Development Zones (NDZ) are being converted under the provision.

"You Are Already Naked": PM Modi Targets Congress Over AI Summit Protest

Prime Minister Accuses Opposition of Politicising Global Event After Shirtless Demonstration.

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday launched a sharp attack on the Congress party following a shirtless protest staged by its youth wing during the recent India AI Impact Summit in New Delhi. Addressing a public gathering in Meerut, he accused the opposition of misusing an international platform to



pursue partisan politics. The Prime Minister criticised the demonstration, describing

it as an attempt to undermine the country's global standing. In a pointed remark aimed

at the protesters, he questioned the intent behind their actions, suggesting that the episode reflected the party's ideological decline. He said the summit was a national event that showcased India's technological progress and was not linked to any particular political party.

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Preliminary Report on Ajit Pawar Plane Crash to Be Released by February 28

Civil Aviation Authorities Assure Transparent Probe Amid Fresh Allegations

New Delhi: The Union Ministry of Civil Aviation has announced that the preliminary investigation report into the fatal Learjet 45 crash in Baramati, which claimed the life of senior NCP leader Ajit Pawar and four others, will be made public on or before February 28. The accident occurred on January 28, and



international aviation norms require that an initial report be issued within 30 days. Minister

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Is the Opposition Finally Coming Together In Goa, While Leaders Hesitate?

For years, Goa's opposition parties have discovered the importance of unity only after suffering defeat. The pattern is painfully familiar. Elections are fought separately, votes are split, the ruling party wins comfortably and only then do opposition leaders begin speaking about alliances. The latest signs of cooperation among opposition MLAs may appear encouraging, but they also highlight a deeper failure of leadership, particularly within the Indian National Congress and the Aam Aadmi Party.

On the ground, there is a growing realisation that unity is no longer optional. MLAs across party lines are beginning to speak in one voice on key public issues. Whether it is planning-related concerns, such as Section 39(A) of the TCP Act affecting Palem-Siridao or protests surrounding the proposed Unity Mall, opposition legislators have found themselves standing shoulder to shoulder. This cooperation has not come from party headquarters or national leadership. It has emerged from the ground, where political survival depends on recognising reality.

That reality is simple. The Bharatiya Janata Party continues to dominate Goa not just because of its organisational strength but because its opponents remain divided. Under Chief Minister Pramod Sawant and state president Damu Naik, the BJP has repeatedly benefited from triangular and multi-cornered contests. Even where public dissatisfaction exists, it rarely translates into electoral defeat because the anti-BJP vote is split between Congress, AAP, the Goa Forward Party and the Revolutionary Goans.

The recent Zilla Parishad results were yet another reminder of this political arithmetic. The BJP's victories were not merely a reflection of popularity but also of opposition disunity. Every divided constituency made the ruling party's task easier. Yet even after such repeated lessons, the leadership of the major opposition parties appears reluctant to move beyond rhetoric.

What is striking is that individual MLAs seem more willing to confront this reality than their own parties.

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Statements from AAP MLAs Venzy Viegas and Cruz Silva indicating that they are prepared to push for an alliance, even if their party hesitates, reveal a level of urgency that is missing at the top. When elected representatives begin signalling that they may take positions independent of party lines, it reflects both frustration and political necessity.

The Congress leadership, in particular, must bear a large share of responsibility. As the principal opposition party, it

should have taken the initiative in building a broad anti-BJP platform. Instead, it has appeared hesitant and reactive, often behaving as though alliances are a burden rather than a necessity. In a small state like Goa, this approach is politically unrealistic. Congress may still command a traditional support base, but without alliances, that base is no longer sufficient to challenge the BJP effectively.

AAP's approach has been equally disappointing. Having secured representation in the Assembly, the party has an opportunity to expand its role in Goa's politics. Yet it continues to act as though it can independently emerge as the primary alternative. Political ambition is understandable, but ambition without strategy only strengthens the ruling party. By delaying or diluting the prospect of an alliance, AAP risks being seen as part of the problem rather than part of the solution.

The irony is that unity already exists where it matters most. On public platforms and local issues, opposition leaders are working together. They recognise that the concerns of ordinary Goans transcend party labels. But unless this cooperation translates into a formal electoral understanding, it will remain incomplete.

There is no need for complex analysis to understand what is at stake. A divided opposition cannot defeat a united ruling party. This is not theory but arithmetic. Every additional candidate in a constituency increases the BJP's advantage. Every failed alliance strengthens the status quo.

If the opposition is serious about offering Goa a credible alternative, the initiative must come from the leadership of Congress and AAP.

Waiting for MLAs to force the issue only exposes a lack of direction. Alliances require compromise, but politics without compromise leads only to irrelevance.

The growing unity among opposition MLAs is a hopeful sign, but it is also a warning. The rank and file understand what the leadership refuses to accept. If Congress and AAP fail once again to forge a meaningful alliance, they will have no one to blame but themselves when the next election produces the same familiar result.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Tourism cannot Thrive Without Affordable Transport

A recent video showing tourists using suitcase trolleys instead of taxis is both embarrassing and revealing. It highlights a growing problem that many visitors complain about, but little has been done to address. Taxi fares have become so high that some tourists now prefer to drag their luggage for long distances rather than hire a cab. This is not an isolated incident but a symptom of deeper issues within the state's tourism system. One major reason for this situation is the continued resistance to app-based taxi services such as Uber and Ola. While traditional taxi operators deserve protection, that protection should not come at the cost of the tourist experience. Visitors to places like Maharashtra, Karnataka, Delhi and Bengaluru rarely face such situations because transport options there are more transparent and reasonably priced. We often speak about increasing tourism revenue, but revenue cannot grow without proper infrastructure and basic facilities. If visitors feel overcharged or inconvenienced, they will simply choose other destinations. Promotion alone cannot compensate for poor ground realities. The sight of tourists pulling suitcases along busy roads should be a wake-up call. Instead of blaming visitors, authorities must address the lack of affordable and reliable transport. If tourism is truly a priority, then policies must reflect that commitment.

-Mark D'Costa

Development Must Benefit Local Communities

The recent inspection by officials from the Goa State Pollution Control Board (GSPCB), Goa Coastal Zone Management Authority (GCZMA), and the Anjuna Panchayat into alleged CRZ-III violations by beachfront nightclubs has once again drawn attention to a larger issue. While enforcement of coastal laws is essential, there is also a growing concern among local residents about how such establishments operate and who truly benefits from them. Many of these businesses function on our land, use our beaches, and depend on local infrastructure, yet the benefits rarely reach the local community. Employment opportunities for Goan youth remain limited, with few vacancies advertised locally. Instead, a large portion of the workforce is recruited from outside the state, leaving many qualified locals struggling to find jobs in the hospitality sector. Local suppliers and small vendors are often overlooked in favour of outside contractors, further reducing economic opportunities within the village. Meanwhile, residents are left to deal with the consequences. Parking congestion blocks narrow village roads, late-night noise disrupts families and students, and poor garbage management harms the environment and traditional fishing areas. Rising rents and property prices are also pushing local families out of their own communities. Development should not come at the cost of the people whose land sustains it. Authorities must ensure that businesses operating in coastal areas respect not only environmental laws but also the rights and well-being of local communities.

-Krups King Palyekar

Rally Intensifies Opposition To Proposed Mirabag Bhandara

Team Goemkarponn

SANVORDEM: Opposition to the proposed bhandara across the Zuari River at Mirabag gathered momentum on Sunday as residents of Mirabag-Sanvordem, joined by supporters from Curchorem, Sanguem and adjoining areas, staged a torchlight procession demanding that the project be scrapped.

Participants alleged that the plan is being advanced without the consent of the local community. They claimed the government has continued to push forward despite sustained objections from villagers. The rally commenced with a brief prayer at Shri Purushmaru Devasthan in



Curchorem. From there, the procession moved through key streets of the town before culminating at the Mirabag Bridge. Hundreds of people took part, carrying flaming torches and raising slogans against the proposed construction. Sunday's demonstration marked the twelfth consecutive day of protests against the project. Organisers said the agitation has been stepped up due to the absence of any official response to their demand for cancellation.

Addressing the gathering, Sanket Bhandari, Goa Pradesh Congress Committee President Amit Patkar and other speakers accused the BJP-led government of disregarding public sentiment.

They argued that repeated representations seeking withdrawal of the proposal have gone unanswered. The leaders further contended that the bhandara could have serious consequences, including damage to agricultural plantations,

threats to homes situated along the riverbanks and the possibility of flooding a temple in the vicinity once the structure is built.

They also questioned the necessity of the project, stating that it was neither sought nor supported by local residents. Patkar remarked that citizens across the state are increasingly resorting to protests to make their voices heard, alleging that authorities tend to act only under public pressure.

Villagers from Mirabag reiterated that the project offers no tangible benefit to them. Instead, they fear it could result in economic hardship, particularly for farmers, and pose risks to properties located near the river if implemented.



AITC Convenor alleges voter deletion in Cortalim, vows legal battle up to SC

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Alleging large-scale irregularities in the ongoing SIR process in Cortalim, All India Trinamool Congress (AITC) state convenor Mariano Rodrigues warned of an all-out legal battle, terming the exercise a "systematic ploy" to harass genuine voters and weaken democracy. Calling it a direct attack on innocent citizens, Rodrigues said, "We will file an appeal immediately. If we are denied justice, we will move the High Court and,

if necessary, approach the Supreme Court of India with the support of the party — even if it is for a single genuine voter of Cortalim constituency."

He alleged that members of the Bharatiya Janata Party, including karyakartas and booth-level agents, had submitted Form 7 applications seeking deletion of names of genuine voters, particularly from economically weaker sections. "Their intention was to target people from the lower strata of society.



3 Ferries To Ply Between Old Goa And Divar From March 1: Faldessai

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Chairman of the Goa Rehabilitation Board and Cumbarjua MLA Rajesh Faldessai has announced that from March 1, three ferries will operate continuously between Old Goa and Divar from 8am to 8pm, bringing major relief to commuters. Speaking to reporters, Faldessai said that earlier the ferry service functioned only between 8am to 11am and 4pm to 7pm, causing inconvenience to residents.

"From March 1, we will have three ferries from Old Goa to Divar from 8am to 8pm. People were aggrieved. I spoke to the River Navigation Minister and the director regarding the issue. Even on Sundays, there was no ferry. Now there will be three ferries on Sundays as well," he said. He further stated that the Tolto ferry service to Akhada and Sao Estavao,

which earlier began at 9am at intervals of 10 minutes, will now start from 8am and continue every 10 minutes. "This has come as a huge relief for students and office-goers.

This was a demand from locals," he added. Faldessai also informed that the ferry service from Sao Pedro to Divar has been increased from one to two ferries. Looking ahead, he said that Ro-Ro ferry services from Sao Pedro, Ribandar to Divar are expected to begin by November. "Work on the ramps on both sides is currently underway," he said. River Navigation Department (RND) Director Vikram Raje Bhosale confirmed the development. "The MLA was informing me daily about the grievances of the people.

Hence, we have started the third ferry service after getting approval from the minister and the government.

Cumbarjua MLA, Naroa Locals Oppose Encroachment Of Crematorium For Aarti Ghat Project

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Chairman of the Goa Rehabilitation Board and Cumbarjua MLA Rajesh Faldessai has strongly opposed the alleged encroachment of the crematorium at Naroa, Divar, in connection with the proposed Aarti Ghat project at the site.

Faldessai stated that the project is being undertaken at an estimated cost of ₹11 crore by the Goa Tourism Development Corporation (GTDC). He expressed concern that the centuries-



old crematorium, believed to be over 200 years old — and possibly even 500 years old — is under threat due to the proposed development.

He alleged that vested interests are attempting to usurp the land and

said that the private crematorium, located in the Mayem constituency, serves residents from Akhada, Sao Estavao, Old Goa, Cumbarjua, Tirth, Divar and Vanxim.

"At the moment, the project proponent is removing things concerning the crematorium. We don't want this removed. We are not asking for land — this belongs to our ancestors. We don't want the crematorium shifted elsewhere. I have spoken to the Chief Minister and he has assured me.

Chirag Paswan attends Goa Spiritual Festival, calls for global focus on state's heritage

Team Goemkarponn

VASCO: Union Minister for Food Processing Industries Chirag Paswan arrived in Goa to attend the Goa Spiritual Festival, stating that the event presents the state's spiritual and cultural depth to the world beyond its image as a beach destination.

Paswan was received



at Dabolim Airport by Vasco MLA Krishna Salkar. Addressing the gathering, Paswan said Goa has long been known

for "sun, sand and its vibrant atmosphere," but stressed that tourists must now be introduced to the state's spiritual legacy and historical roots.

"In the race towards modernity, many aspects of Goa's rich traditions were fading. It is our generation's responsibility to ensure that this invaluable heritage does not disappear," he said.



CM Reviews 131 Proposals Under Goa Gram Samruddhi Yojana Ensures Equitable Development Across 40 Constituencies

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant chaired a detailed review meeting of 131 project proposals submitted under the Goa Gram Samruddhi Yojana (GGSY) of the Department of Rural Development, aiming to ensure that the benefits of development reach every corner of the State. The comprehensive assessment focused on strengthening grassroots infrastructure and accelerating community development works across Goa. During the meeting, it was decided that priority would be given to works recommended by MLAs from all 40 Assembly Constituencies, ensuring that at least one project is executed in every constituency under the scheme.

Hydroponic Ganja Worth ₹7.84 Lakh Seized In Mapusa; Mumbai Youth Arrested

Team Goemkarponn

MAPUSA: In a continued enforcement drive under its zero tolerance policy against drug trafficking, the Anti Narcotic Cell (ANC) Police Station has registered Crime No. 07/2026 under Section 20(b)(ii)(A) of the NDPS Act, 1985 on February 21, 2026.

According to police, on February 21 between 3.15 pm and 5.30 pm, the ANC team conducted a raid at the parking area of Mapusa Yard (back gate



side) and apprehended Anirudh Ashok Bhogle (25), a resident of Vashi, New Mumbai, for illegal possession of 224 grams of suspected hydroponic weed (ganja).

The seized contraband is valued at approximately ₹7,84,000. Police also recovered ₹8,000 in cash and an Aprilia scooter bearing registration number GA-03-AK-8783

from his possession.

The accused was arrested on the same day and produced before the JMFC Court, which remanded him to eight days of police custody.

The investigation is being carried out by PSI Saheen Shetye under the supervision of PI ANC Sagun Sawant and SP Nerlon, with overall supervision of SP ANC Sunita Sawant. The ANC Police Station reiterated its firm commitment to take strict action against drug-related offences.

House Break-In At Cansaulim; Gold Worth ₹5 Lakh Stolen

Team Goemkarponn

VERNA: Verna Police Station has registered a case of house-breaking and theft following a complaint filed by Leonardo Gouveia, a resident of Borda, Margao. According to the complaint, the incident occurred in the early hours of February 5, 2026, between 12.30 am and 1.10 am, at his house located at Cuelim, Ossoilem, Cansaulim.



Unknown accused persons allegedly gained entry into the house by breaking open the rear door. The accused reportedly decamped with gold ornaments and other articles collectively valued at approximately ₹5 lakh.



Missing Teen Found Dead At Pollem Beach

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: Canacona Police Station registered an unnatural death (UD) case on February 22, 2026 after receiving information from a lifeguard about a body floating in the Arabian Sea at Pollem Beach.

Police rushed to the spot and recovered the body of Vigneshwar Naik (19), a resident of Ankola, Uttar Kannada, Karnataka. He had been reported missing since February 20, 2026, and a missing person report had earlier been registered at Canacona Police Station.

The body was identified by the deceased's uncle, Shrikant Naik, also a

resident of Uttar Kannada, Karnataka.

Police conducted a scene of occurrence panchanama and inquest panchanama before referring the body for post-mortem examination at South Goa District Hospital (SGDH), Margao. The Police Surgeon who conducted the autopsy certified the cause of death as "No opinion in view of advanced decomposition. However, tissue samples preserved for diatom study."

The body was later handed over to the family members for final religious rites. Further enquiry is being conducted by PSI Ramdas Doifde of Canacona Police Station.

Man Attacked With Chopper, iPhone Damaged In Margao Assault Case

Team Goemkarponn

MARGAO: Margao Town Police Station has registered an offence following a complaint filed by Rohan Chavan, a resident of Aquem Baixo.

As per the complaint, on February 19, 2026, at around 11.50 pm, the accused Francis Fernandes, who resides in the same neighbourhood,



allegedly pushed, abused and assaulted the complainant with slaps and fist blows near his residence when the complainant had gone to meet a friend, Madhukar

Gawande. Police said the accused later, along with his brother Prince Fernandes, proceeded in a Thar Jeep to the house of the complainant's relative, Sahil Jadhav, at Shantinagar. The accused allegedly trespassed into the house and, acting with common intention, assaulted the complainant with a chopper on the back of his head.

The complainant also alleged that his iPhone mobile phone worth approximately ₹60,000 was damaged during the incident and that the accused abused his relatives using filthy language. Further investigation is being carried out by PSI Shubham Gaunkar of Margao Town Police Station.

Lady ASI Found Dead After Feeling Uneasy At Thivim

Team Goemkarponn

THIVIM: Colvale Police Station has registered an unnatural death (UD) case on February 22, 2026 at 2.20 am following a medical memo received from the casualty ward of North Goa District Hospital regarding a woman who was brought

dead. The deceased has been identified as Sarika Naik, wife of Sagar Naik, a resident of Vancio Waddo, Guirim, Bardez. She was serving as a Lady Assistant Sub-Inspector (LASI) attached to the Detention Centre in Mapusa.

Preliminary enquiry revealed that she had

travelled to Mumbai on deportation duty to escort a Nigerian national, along with other staff members. After completing the deportation formalities on February 21, the team returned to Goa by train and alighted at Thivim Railway Station.

Police said that upon reaching the Thivim

Railway Station junction bus stop, she complained of giddiness and uneasiness.

The staff accompanying her immediately shifted her to North Goa District Hospital, Mapusa, where the doctor on duty declared her brought dead.

Borim Accident Victim Succumbs At GMC; Ponda Police Probe Continues

Team Goemkarponn

BORIM: A 37-year-old man injured in a road accident at Borim succumbed to his injuries at Goa Medical College on February 22, 2026. According to police, a wireless message was received at 11.14 am from the casualty police of GMC Bambolim informing that Manoj Desai (37), a resident of Borim, Ponda, had expired while



undergoing treatment. Enquiry revealed that the accident occurred on February 21 near Bharat Petrol Pump at Borim, Ponda, involving a mini bus and an Activa scooter.

The deceased, who was riding the scooter, sustained injuries in the crash. He was initially shifted to PHC Shiroda, later referred to South Goa District Hospital, Margao, and subsequently to GMC Bambolim for advanced treatment. In connection with the incident, Ponda Police Station had registered a motor vehicle accident case on February 21.

Cross Complaints Filed In Pernem Property Dispute; Six Booked On Each Side

Team Goemkarponn

PERNEM: Pernem Police Station has registered cross complaints following a violent clash between two families in Mopa village on February 21, 2026, reportedly over a property dispute.

In the first case, registered at 9.04 pm, police acted on a complaint filed by Damodar Ghure (54), a

resident of Paltadwada, Mopa, Pernem. He alleged that earlier in the day at around 9.45 am at Survey No. 19/2, Paltadwada, the accused — Suresh Ghure, Vijayalaxmi Ghure, Dattaprasad Ghure, Santosh Ghure, Sunita Ghure and Rohit Ghure — verbally threatened him and his family.

According to the complaint, Dattaprasad, Santosh and Rohit

allegedly assaulted his 17-year-old minor daughter with kicks. Vijayalaxmi, Dattaprasad, Santosh, Sunita and Rohit are further accused of forming an unlawful assembly and assaulting Damodar and his son Dipesh with fist blows and slaps. The accused allegedly pulled his wife, Dipti Ghure, to the ground, resulting in her shoulder being dislocated.

Sea Of Faithful Join Annual Lenten Walking Pilgrimage At Sancoale

Team Goemkarponn

SANCOALE: Sancoale witnessed a massive turnout as around 28,000 faithful participated in the annual Lenten Walking Pilgrimage in the early hours of February 22, 2026. The pilgrimage, organised to mark the beginning of the holy season of Lent, carried the theme "Followers of Christ, Pilgrims of Hope." The 10-km walk commenced at around 2 am from various centres across Goa, drawing participants of all age



groups. The pilgrimage serves as a spiritual preparation for Lent, encouraging penance, sacrifice, prayer and personal conversion while reflecting on the love of God and the faithful's response to it. The event was led

by Filipe Neri Cardinal Ferrao, Archbishop of Archdiocese of Goa and Daman, along with Auxiliary Bishop Simao Fernandes and Bishop-Elect of Sindhudurg Fr. Agnelo Pinheiro. Priests, religious and lay faithful from across the state

joined the walk, with the Archbishop and bishops participating from the Goa Velha centre. The pilgrimage culminated at the façade of the Old Church of Sancoale, at the foot of Our Lady of Health. Addressing the gathering at the beginning of the Mass, Cardinal Ferrao reminded the faithful that Christ himself fasted, prayed and made sacrifices before and during His ministry, urging them to embrace these spiritual practices to become true followers of Christ.

Shiv Jayanti Celebrated at Shree Mallikarjun College; 4 Personalities Felicitated

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: The 'Shiv Jayanti Mahotsav' was celebrated at Shree Mallikarjun & Chetan Manju Desai College of Dnyan Prabodhini Mandal, in association with the Tourism Department Goa on Thursday, paying rich tributes to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj through lectures, felicitation ceremonies and cultural programmes. The celebrations began with a grand procession across the college premises to the rhythmic beats



of lezim. Floral tributes were offered to the idol of Shivaji Maharaj, setting a reverent and patriotic tone for the event. Shri Maruti Aba Gole, the 14th descendant of Narveer Pilaji Gole and infantry chief of the Hindavi Swarajya established by Shivaji Maharaj, attended as the Chief Guest.



Porvorim Pays Glorious Tribute To Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj With Grand ShivJayanti Celebration

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Department of Tourism, Goa, along with local representatives from Porvorim, organised a grand and dignified celebration of ShivJayanti at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Chowk on February 19, 2026. The event featured cultural performances, floral tributes and inspiring addresses by dignitaries. The gathering also acknowledged the initiative of Tourism Minister Rohan A. Khaunte in facilitating the development and upkeep of the statue site, ensuring it remains

a landmark symbolising heritage, valour and cultural identity. Among those present were Kedar J. Naik, MLA of Saligao Constituency and Chairman of Goa Tourism Development Corporation (GTDC); Amit Asnodkar (ZP, Socorro Constituency); Sandeep Salgaonkar (ZP, Penha de França); Swapnil Chodankar (Sarpanch, Penha de França Panchayat); Sonia Sanjay Pednekar (Sarpanch, Socorro Panchayat); and Kuldeep Arolkar, Managing Director, GTDC, along with panchayat members and local residents.

GCA Ex-President Chetan Desai Attends Congress Sangathan Srijan Abhiyan Meet in Canacona

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: Under the ongoing Sangathan Srijan Abhiyan, the Congress party held a key organisational meeting in Canacona aimed at strengthening the Kushavati District Committee. The meeting was chaired by Vijendra



Singhla, AICC Observer and In-charge for Kushavati District, who also serves as Joint Treasurer of the All India

Congress Committee. He was joined by Goa Pradesh Youth Congress President Archit Naik and Mahila Congress

President Pratiksha Khalap. Interactions during the meeting focused on gathering grassroots feedback, understanding the views of senior leaders and active karyakartas, and discussing strategies to strengthen and restructure the Kushavati District Committee.

"Awareness Today, Responsible Tomorrow": JJB South Goa Holds Legal Awareness Session in Canacona

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: The Juvenile Justice Board (JJB), South Goa District, organised an informative awareness session at Shree Balram Residential High School aimed at educating students on important legal and social issues. The session focused on the importance of understanding laws and responsibilities in today's



fast-changing world. Experts highlighted key topics such as traffic regulations, cyber crime risks, the legal framework protecting children, and the harmful effects of substance

abuse. Students were encouraged to become informed, responsible and law-abiding citizens. The programme was graced by Smt. Sunita A. Gaunekar, Principal Magistrate of the Juvenile Justice Board,

South Goa District, who emphasised the role of awareness in preventing juvenile offences and ensuring child protection. The session was further enriched by Adv. Sumita Sawant Dessai, Member of the Juvenile Justice Board, and Adv. Vahida Yelgar, Advocate under Free Legal Aid, who shared valuable insights on legal rights, responsibilities and available support systems.

Human Touch Foundation, GMC Mark International Childhood Cancer Day With 'Joyful Hearts' Outreach

Team Goemkarponn

MOBOR: Human Touch Foundation, in collaboration with the Department of Medical Oncology at Goa Medical College (GMC), commemorated International Childhood Cancer Day with a special



outreach programme

titled "Joyful Hearts" at Holiday Inn Resort Goa on Sunday. The initiative brought together children undergoing cancer treatment, their caregivers, doctors, nurses, therapists, and volunteers for a day dedicated to joy, solidarity, and emotional support.

1st All Goa Yuva Kalakar Bhajan Spardha Held At Ravindra Bhavan, Canacona

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: The 1st All Goa Yuva Kalakar Bhajan Spardha was organized by Yuva Samruddhi Manch, Canacona, at Ravindra Bhavan, marking a significant step towards promoting devotional music among the youth



of the state. The first-of-its-kind Bhajan Spardha was inaugurated by Minister for Art & Culture Ramesh Tawadkar, who

also unveiled the trophies for the competition in the presence of dignitaries and members of the organizing committee.

MediaScope 10.0 Celebrates Young Creative Voices at St. Xavier's College

■ Inter Higher Secondary Media Festival Draws Participation from Ten Institutions Across Goa.

New Delhi: The Department of Mass Communication and Journalism at St. Xavier's College, Mapusa hosted the tenth edition of its flagship inter higher secondary media festival, MediaScope 10.0, bringing together budding media enthusiasts from ten institutions across Goa. The day long event, held in January, served as a vibrant platform for students to demonstrate their creativity, technical skills and collaborative spirit.

The festival began with an inaugural ceremony attended by Administrator Rev. Fr. Antonio Salema and Principal Ms. Ursula Barreto. Addressing the gathering, Rev. Fr. Salema encouraged students to cultivate gratitude and mindfulness in their academic and personal pursuits. Ms. Barreto highlighted the importance of innovation and urged participants to explore the wide ranging opportunities available in the media and communication industry. The keynote address was delivered by filmmaker,



director and editor Vardhan Dhaimodkar, an alumnus of the college. He spoke about the fast changing landscape of media and cinema, emphasising the need for young aspirants to adapt, innovate and believe in their creative potential. A key moment during the inauguration was the unveiling of the newly designed MediaScope trophy.

MediaScope 10.0 featured a variety of

competitions conducted simultaneously across the campus, including Quiz, Amazing Race, Mad Ad, LollyWood, Spotlight, Photography, Reel making, Canvas Painting and Dance. The events were designed to test participants' imagination, analytical thinking, teamwork and technical expertise. The dance competition stood out for its energy and enthusiastic audience response.

Sharada Mandir Higher Secondary School claimed the overall championship title, while Navy School Higher Secondary School secured second place. St. Xavier's Higher Secondary School finished third.

Coordinated by Mr. Dinesh Nirawdekar and Ms. Jonquil Sudhir, the festival once again reinforced its reputation as a dynamic forum for nurturing emerging media talent in the state.



"Entire Toll Amount to Be Refunded": ₹5.16 Crore Relief for 1 Lakh Motorists After Expressway Gridlock

■ 33 Hour Disruption on Mumbai Pune Expressway Triggers Mass Refund Process

New Delhi: More than one lakh motorists stranded in a massive traffic jam on the Mumbai-Pune Expressway earlier this month will receive toll refunds amounting to ₹5.16 crore. The decision comes after a 33 hour disruption caused by a gas tanker accident led to severe congestion along the Khopoli stretch. On February 3, a gas tanker overturned on the expressway, bringing traffic to a standstill for several kilometres. Thousands of commuters were left stuck for hours, facing shortages of water, food and other essential supplies as authorities worked to clear the route and restore normal

movement. In the aftermath of the incident, officials ordered an immediate halt to toll collection. However, toll amounts had already been deducted from the FASTag accounts of many motorists before the suspension was fully implemented. Authorities have now decided to refund the entire amount collected after the directive to stop toll operations was issued. The refund process, amounting to ₹5.16 crore in total, will be carried out by the Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation. The funds will be credited directly to the FASTag accounts of affected vehicle owners over the next few days.

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Villagers Storm GSPCB Office Against Proposed Coal Jetty In Curchorem

environmental and health hazards if the project proceeds. Meanwhile, GPCC chief Amit Patkar extended support to the agitation and questioned which MLA

or Minister was allegedly protecting businessman Dinar Tarcar, who is said to be constructing the jetty for coal handling purposes. Several villagers raised slogans outside the TCP

office, pressing authorities to intervene and halt the project immediately. The demonstrators maintained that they would intensify their agitation if their demands are not met.

Till the filing of this news report, there was no official response from the government or CRZ officials regarding the allegations surrounding the proposed jetty.

"You Are Already Naked": PM Modi Targets Congress Over AI Summit Protest

The protest occurred when a group of Youth Congress members entered a hall at the summit venue and raised slogans against the government over its trade engagement with the United States. Some protesters carried T shirts displaying images of the Prime Minister alongside US President Donald Trump.

Security personnel intervened as the group attempted to continue their demonstration inside the high security venue. Four individuals identified as Youth Congress office bearers were subsequently detained. They were produced before a court and remanded to five days of police custody as investigations continue.

Preliminary Report on Ajit Pawar Plane Crash to Be Released by February 28

of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol confirmed that the timeline would be adhered to, stating that the findings would be released within the stipulated period. The incident has drawn heightened attention following allegations by Rohit Pawar, who has questioned the safety compliance of the private company that owned the

aircraft.

He has publicly raised concerns about potential irregularities and technical issues linked to the firm, fuelling speculation around the crash. In response, the Civil Aviation Ministry emphasised its commitment to transparency, safety oversight and accountability.

Goa Carving Niche In Ocean Research: CM Sawant

ecosystems. He noted that scientific collaboration and innovation are essential to safeguarding coastal livelihoods and strengthening resilience against climate-related challenges. Sawant highlighted the contributions of leading research institutions such as NIO and the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR), describing them as key drivers of marine and polar studies that support informed policymaking. During the programme, the Chief Minister released the Book of Abstracts in digital format, inaugurated the exhibition, and interacted with researchers presenting

their work, encouraging young scientists to pursue solutions-oriented research. He also underscored that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India is strengthening its maritime focus by combining traditional knowledge with technological advancement to address present and future ocean challenges.

The Congress has brought together experts, policymakers and scholars to deliberate on marine conservation, climate adaptation and the advancement of a sustainable Blue Economy, further reinforcing Goa's growing role in global ocean science conversations.

“World Wholeheartedly Praised India’s Potential at Historic AI Summit”: PM Modi

■ New Delhi Declaration on AI Impact Wins Backing from 89 Nations, Signalling Broad Global Consensus.

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that India’s growing capabilities in artificial intelligence received overwhelming appreciation from the global community at the recently concluded AI Impact Summit 2026 in New Delhi. He noted that the recognition reflects confidence in India’s young technology talent and its potential to contribute meaningfully to humanity’s future.

The summit culminated in the adoption of the New Delhi Declaration on AI Impact, a framework aimed at strengthening international collaboration in the responsible development and deployment of artificial intelligence. The



declaration has been endorsed by 89 countries and international organisations, underscoring a shared global commitment to harnessing AI for economic progress and societal benefit.

Leaders from across continents attended the high level gathering. Among them were United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres, French President Emmanuel Macron,

Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and Swiss President Guy Parmelin. The summit also drew participation from several other heads of state and government, alongside top executives from leading global technology firms.

With the theme ‘Sarvajan Hitay, Sarvajan Sukhay’, meaning welfare for all and happiness for all, the event sought to position India as a central player in shaping the global

AI agenda. Discussions focused on ensuring that artificial intelligence advances human welfare, promotes inclusive development and supports environmental sustainability.

The gathering brought together more than 500 global AI leaders. This included around 100 chief executives and founders, 150 academicians and researchers, and hundreds of chief technology officers, vice presidents and philanthropic leaders. Over 100 government representatives and nearly 60 ministers and deputy ministers also took part, reflecting the wide ranging engagement and importance attached to the summit’s outcomes.



‘Right to Protest Not Absolute’: Delhi Court Denies Bail to AI Summit Demonstrators

■ Four Youth Congress Members Sent to Five Days’ Police Custody Over Bharat Mandapam Protest

New Delhi: A Delhi court has refused bail to four Youth Congress members arrested for staging a shirtless protest during the AI Summit 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, observing that the right to dissent cannot be exercised in a manner that disrupts public order, particularly at an international event attended by foreign delegates. The order was

passed by the Patiala House Court while remanding Krishan Hari, Kundan, Ajay Kumar Singh and Narsimha to five days of police custody. The court noted that although the Constitution guarantees freedom of speech and peaceful assembly, these rights are subject to reasonable restrictions in the interest of sovereignty, public order and decency.

Most Wanted JeM Militant Killed After Evading Capture 20 Times in Kishtwar

■ Three Terrorists Neutralised in Joint Security Operation Under Operation Trashi I

New Delhi: A most wanted operative of the Pakistan based group Jaish-e-Mohammed was among three militants killed in an encounter with security forces in Jammu and Kashmir’s Kishtwar district on Sunday. The slain militant, identified as Saifullah, had reportedly been active in the region for the past two years and had narrowly escaped security operations on multiple occasions. The encounter unfolded after forces received specific intelligence inputs regarding the movement of militants in the area. Acting swiftly, security personnel launched a coordinated operation. As teams moved in to cordon off the suspected location, the militants opened fire, triggering a fierce exchange.

The group had taken shelter inside a mud house situated along a hillside. Security forces responded with sustained



and precise fire, ultimately neutralising all three militants at the site.

The operation involved personnel from the Jammu and Kashmir Police, the Central Reserve Police Force, and special forces units. Officials recovered two assault rifles along with other supplies from the encounter location. The elimination of Saifullah marks a significant development in ongoing counter militancy efforts in the district. Recently, another key militant identified as Adil was also killed in a separate operation in the same region.

“Attempt to Externalise Internal Failures”: India Condemns Pakistan Airstrikes on Afghanistan

■ New Delhi Reaffirms Support for Afghan Sovereignty After Civilian Casualties Reported

New Delhi: India has strongly criticised Pakistan over its recent airstrikes on Afghan territory that reportedly resulted in civilian casualties. New Delhi described the military action as an effort to shift focus away from Pakistan’s domestic challenges and reaffirmed its backing for Afghanistan’s sovereignty and territorial integrity.



Responding to media queries, External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said India condemns the strikes,

particularly as they led to the loss of civilian lives, including women and children, during the holy month of Ramadan. He

stated that the action represented another attempt by Pakistan to externalise its internal failures. India, he added, remains committed to supporting Afghanistan’s independence and territorial integrity. According to statements from Islamabad, the air operations targeted at least seven militant hideouts inside Afghanistan.

“No 20 Year Cooling Off Proposal”: Rajnath Singh Clarifies on Books by Retired Military Officers

■ Defence Ministry Reviews Guidelines After Controversy Over General Naravane’s Book.

New Delhi: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has clarified that there is no proposal to impose a 20 year cooling off period on retired armed forces officers before they can write or publish books. He stated that no such proposal has been placed before the Cabinet and there is

currently no restriction preventing former Army chiefs or other retired officers from authoring books immediately after retirement. The clarification comes amid controversy surrounding the book Four Stars of Destiny authored by former Army chief General MM Naravane. The book, reportedly

containing references to sensitive national security matters, was scheduled for release in 2024 but has been put on hold pending review by the Defence Ministry. The issue gained political attention after Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi attempted to cite excerpts from the book in



Parliament. A magazine report based on its contents also surfaced, following which the Delhi Police registered a case in connection with the matter.

“You Can Lose It in the Powerplay”: Suryakumar Admits Costly Batting Failure in 76 Run Defeat

India Outplayed by South Africa as Selection Calls and Net Run Rate Take a Hit.

New Delhi: India captain Suryakumar Yadav acknowledged that the team's inability to build partnerships proved decisive in their 76 run defeat to South Africa national cricket team in the Super Eights stage of the ICC T20 World Cup on Sunday.

Chasing 188, India faltered early and never recovered, getting bowled out for 111 in 18.5 overs. The top order collapsed inside the powerplay, with Ishan Kishan, Abhishek Sharma and Tilak Varma falling cheaply as the side slipped to 26 for 3. Suryakumar admitted that while matches may



not always be won in the powerplay, they can certainly be lost there. He conceded that the batting unit failed to stitch together meaningful stands and needed to perform better. The defeat severely dented India's net run rate, leaving them with little margin for error in their remaining Super Eights fixtures against Zimbabwe and West

Indies. Despite the heavy loss, Suryakumar praised the bowlers for keeping India in contention earlier in the evening. Jasprit Bumrah claimed 3 for 15 and Arshdeep Singh picked up two wickets to restrict South Africa to 187 for 7, preventing what had looked like a likely 200 plus total. South Africa captain Aiden Markram credited his

team's adaptability to the conditions. He highlighted a crucial middle order partnership between David Miller and Dewald Brevis that stabilised the innings after early setbacks, while Tristan Stubbs added late momentum. Lungi Ngidi's disciplined spell, conceding just 15 runs in four overs, choked India's chase. India's team selection also drew scrutiny. Vice captain Axar Patel was left out for the second consecutive game, with Washington Sundar retained in a match up driven combination shaped by head coach Gautam Gambhir and the team management.

Ankush Patil, Felix Dias Power into Finals at All India Doctors Badminton Tournament

Goa Shuttlers Shine Across Categories at Manohar Parrikar Indoor Stadium

New Delhi: Goa's Dr Ankush Patil delivered an authoritative performance to book his place in two finals at the All India Doctors Badminton Tournament, currently underway at the Manohar Parrikar Indoor Stadium. Displaying sharp court coverage and attacking precision, he secured straight game victories in both the Men's Singles and the 35 plus category semifinals

In the Men's Singles semifinal, Dr Patil defeated Dr Ibraheem Saleem 21 to 18, 21 to 15. He followed it up with another clinical win in the 35 plus section,



overcoming Dr Viraj 21 to 19, 21 to 11 to confirm his spot in the title clash. Goa's Dr Felix Dias also advanced to the final in the 60 plus category. He outplayed Dr Hemant Sathe 21 to 10, 21 to 15 in a commanding semifinal display.



CD Fountainhead, Sinq Rangers Shine Under Lights in GSB Unity Cup 3.0

Thrilling Saturday Clashes at MCC Ground Keep Tournament Momentum High

New Delhi: CD Fountainhead and Sinq Rangers recorded impressive victories in the ongoing GSB Unity Cup 3.0, organised by the Goa GSB Sports and Charitable Trust, during Saturday's matches at the MCC Ground in Margao. Both encounters, played under lights, delivered high intensity cricket and were decided in the closing stages.

In the first match, CD Fountainhead put up 169 for 7 in their 20 overs after opting to bat. Manish Kakode top scored with 49, while Anish Prabhudesai added 45 to provide a steady

platform.

Vikrant Prabhu chipped in with 29 and Pranav Biche remained unbeaten on 24, ensuring a strong finish in the final overs.

Desserts N More Avengers mounted a determined chase but were limited to 161 for 7.

Kaushal Hattangadi made 36 and Saish Hegde contributed 30, yet consistent breakthroughs halted their progress.

Pranav Biche returned to make an impact with the ball, claiming 2 for 26, while Vikrant Prabhu and others supported with disciplined spells to seal an eight run victory.

RC Goa Clinch 'PGML 5.0' Crown After Dominant Final Display

Five Wicket Win Over Priority Titans Seals Dominant Campaign at Bandodkar Ground

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: RC Goa were crowned champions of the Panjim Gymkhana organised 'PGML 5.0' cricket tournament after registering a commanding five wicket victory over Priority Titans in the final at the Bandodkar Ground in Campal, Panaji. Chasing a competitive target of 157, RC Goa



completed the task comfortably with 27 balls remaining to claim the title and a cash prize of ₹3 lakh. The runners up

received ₹2 lakh along with the trophy. Priority Titans, who opted to bat first after winning the toss, were bowled out for 156

in 19.3 overs. The innings began on a strong note, with the Titans cruising at 102 for 1. However, a sudden middle order collapse saw them slide to 114 for 5, shifting the momentum.

Rijul Pathak and Atharva both struck 37 runs to anchor the innings, while young opener Adeep Misquin contributed a brisk 26.

Shamrao Tridents, K.K. Strikers Secure Convincing Wins in GSB Unity Cup 3.0

Dominant Performances at MCC Ground Light Up Sunday Fixtures.

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Shamrao Tridents and K.K. Strikers registered impressive victories in the ongoing GSB Unity Cup 3.0, organised by the Goa GSB Sports and Charitable Trust, at the MCC Ground in Margao on Sunday. In the morning fixture, K.K. Strikers posted a formidable 205 for 9 in their allotted 20



overs against Dempo Challengers. Opener Viraj Puranik set the tone with a blistering 55 off just 24 deliveries, striking nine boundaries and a six. Rauji Kakodkar

provided the late surge with an unbeaten 44 off 20 balls, smashing five sixes and two fours to propel the total beyond 200. Ramnath Prabhu Bam added a steady 37

to strengthen the innings. For Dempo, Shridhar Keni stood out with figures of 3 for 29. Chasing 206, Dempo Challengers were bowled out for 173 in 19.1 overs.