



Anjuna Police Submit 4,150-Page Chargesheet in Birch by Romeo Lane Fire Case

13 Arrested, 306 Witnesses Named; Accused Booked for Culpable Homicide

Team Goemkarponn

MAPUSA: Anjuna Police have submitted a 4,150-page chargesheet before the Mapusa court in connection with the fire at Birch by Romeo Lane nightclub in Anjuna, naming Saurav Luthra and Gaurav Luthra as the main accused along with 11 others. The accused have been booked primarily under charges of culpable homicide not amounting to murder, along with other



related offences. Investigators have cited 306 individuals as public witnesses, and the voluminous chargesheet contains witness statements, expert findings, and documentary



evidence gathered during the course of the investigation. In the course of the probe, Goa Police arrested 13 persons, including the Luthra brothers and their

business associate Ajay Gupta, as well as others linked to the operation and regulatory oversight of the establishment. Among those arrested were former Arpora-Nagoa

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Goa Govt Challenges Zenito Cardozo's Bail In High Court

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Goa government has moved the High Court challenging the order of the North Goa Principal District and Sessions Court granting bail to accused Zenito Cardozo in the activist Rama Kankonkar attempt-to-murder case. In its petition, the state has sought the setting aside of the Sessions

Court order that allowed Cardozo to be released on bail in connection with the alleged attack on activist Rama Kankonkar. The government has contended that the bail order requires judicial scrutiny. The High Court, after taking cognisance of the plea, has issued notice to respondent Zenito Cardozo and posted the matter for further hearing on March 12.

Goa Link Surfaces In Rs 1.86 Crore 'Digital Arrest' Fraud; CBI Arrests Mule Account Operator From Hotel

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: A Goa connection has emerged in the Rs 1.86 crore "Digital Arrest" fraud case, with the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) arresting a key accused from a hotel in the state during coordinated searches across six states. According to the CBI, a

mule account operator was apprehended from a hotel in Goa for allegedly playing a crucial role in operating mule bank accounts and facilitating cryptocurrency transactions linked to the fraud. Several digital devices containing incriminating data were seized from his possession during the search.

The case relates to the alleged defrauding of a senior citizen from Kottayam district in Kerala. Following digital forensic analysis and tracking of financial trails, investigators uncovered a wider cyber-fraud network spanning multiple states, with indications of international linkages.

FRRO Goa, BSF Coordinate Deportation Of 6 Bangladeshi Nationals

35 Illegal Bangladeshi Nationals Deported From Goa Since 2025

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: In a continued drive to curb illegal immigration and enforce compliance with the country's immigration laws, the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) Goa, in coordination with the Border Security Force (BSF), deported six

Bangladeshi nationals who were found residing in the state without valid travel and immigration documents. The deportation was carried out on February 25 strictly as per laid-down procedures. An escort team from FRRO Goa handed over the deportees to the BSF, which subsequently facilitated



their deportation to Bangladesh. Officials said the action forms part of ongoing efforts to identify and act against illegal entry and unlawful stay in the state. According to the Foreigners Branch of Goa Police, a total of 35 illegal Bangladeshi nationals have been tracked, traced and deported from Goa since 2025.



Opposition Seeks Special Assembly Session On TCP Section 39A

Leaders Meet Governor, Warn Of Protests And Back Draft Bill To Protect Goa's Land

PANAJI: A joint delegation of Opposition MLAs from the AAP and

Congress, along with leaders of the

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"Conspiracy Will Be Fully Exposed": NIA Tightens Net in Red Fort Blast Case

Leaders Meet Governor, Warn Of Protests And Back Draft Bill To Protect Goa's Land

New Delhi: The National Investigation Agency has arrested two additional suspects in connection with the deadly bomb blast near Delhi's historic Red Fort, taking the total number of arrests in the case to eleven. The agency said the latest arrests mark a significant step in uncovering the wider terror conspiracy behind the attack.

The accused have been identified as Zameer Ahmad Ahangar, a resident of Ganderbal in Jammu and Kashmir, and Tufail Ahmad Bhat from Srinagar. Investigators stated that both men were actively involved in planning and supporting the attack and were formally taken into custody after evidence linked them to key logistical roles in

the conspiracy. According to the investigation, the two men supplied weapons and related material to the prime accused in the case. Their role was described as critical in enabling the execution of the attack, which targeted a high profile area of the national capital and caused widespread panic. The blast occurred on



November 10, 2025, killing eleven people and injuring several others. The

Protest and Responsibility: Drawing the Line Between Dissent and Disorder

With elections barely months away, Goa is witnessing a familiar rise in protests and political mobilisations. Some of these agitations stem from genuine public concerns, particularly over planning and land issues. Others, as often happens in an election cycle, carry the unmistakable undertone of political positioning. In such a charged atmosphere, it becomes important to separate legitimate democratic protest from actions that risk crossing into disorder.

Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Wednesday stated that files went missing after protestors entered the TCP office, and also alleged that the residence of Minister Vishwajit Rane was attacked, with attempts made to assault and abuse him. These are serious claims. If true, they cannot be brushed aside as routine political activity. The Chief Minister has promised strong action, and to that extent, his statement carries weight. Government offices are public institutions, and any intrusion that disrupts their functioning or risks damage to official records raises legitimate concerns.

There is also a fundamental question of safety. Protests inside government offices create unpredictable situations. Nobody can fully anticipate mob behaviour once emotions run high. In the TCP office protest, women and children were reportedly present. One shudders to think what might have happened had the situation spiralled out of control. If an untoward incident had occurred, who would have taken responsibility? Democratic protest is a right, but it also carries the obligation to ensure that no harm comes to innocent people.

Equally troubling is the trend of targeting private residences. Protest has always been a part of Goa's political culture, but there has traditionally been an unwritten line that was rarely crossed. Demonstrations were held in public spaces, outside government offices, or at designated grounds. Taking protests to someone's

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Democratic protest is a right, but it also carries the obligation to ensure that no harm comes to innocent people. Equally troubling is the trend of targeting private residences. Protest has always been a part of Goa's political culture, but there has traditionally been an unwritten line that was rarely crossed. Demonstrations were held in public spaces, outside government offices, or at designated grounds.

home introduces an element of personal intimidation that weakens the moral legitimacy of any movement. Even the most justified cause risks losing public sympathy when agitation begins to look like harassment.

This does not mean that all protests are unjustified. Far from it. Public anger over planning decisions and development policies is real and cannot simply be dismissed as politically motivated. The Opposition and civil society have every right to question government actions. But the method of protest matters as much as the cause. When protestors take the law into their own hands, they hand the government an opportunity

to shift the focus from the issue to the incident.

In this context, the hunger strike undertaken by activist Viresh Borkar stands out as an example of protest in its most principled form. A hunger strike follows the Gandhian tradition of peaceful resistance, appealing to the conscience rather than provoking confrontation. Such actions command respect even from those who may disagree with the demands. They keep the focus firmly on the issue instead of the spectacle.

At the same time, public movements must guard against the tone and language used by their leaders.

The rhetoric employed by Manoj Parab against both the ruling party and the Opposition has often appeared excessive and, at times, arrogant. Strong criticism is part of democracy, but when language becomes needlessly aggressive, it risks alienating potential supporters and diluting the seriousness of the cause. A movement that claims moral authority must also demonstrate restraint in words as well as actions.

The government, for its part, must also avoid painting every protest as politically motivated. Dismissing all dissent as election-driven only deepens public mistrust. Genuine concerns need genuine responses, not just political counterattacks. Transparency and dialogue remain the most effective ways to defuse tensions. Goa has a long and proud tradition of peaceful protest. That tradition must be preserved. Agitations must remain democratic, disciplined and focused on issues rather than individuals. Crossing the line into intimidation or disorder weakens democracy instead of strengthening it.

As the state moves closer to elections, protests will undoubtedly intensify. That is to be expected in any vibrant democracy. But both protestors and the government must remember that the legitimacy of any movement lies not only in what it demands, but also in how those demands are pursued.

OpEd

Not Just a Protest – This is a Struggle for Goa's Identity

By Sandeep Heble

Let us be clear. The protest outside the residence of Vishwajit Rane was not an act of violence, vandalism or intimidation. It was a message. The protest came in response to Rane's warning about mobilising 45,000 people from Sattari to Panaji. That statement was widely seen as an attempt to flex political muscle and intimidate those agitating peacefully. The protestors, many of them ordinary Goenkars, gathered near his residence to send a simple message: they would not be intimidated. When a Cabinet Minister speaks of mobilising tens of thousands of people, it does not sound like democratic engagement. It sounds like a show of strength. Citizens of Sattari are not a private army to be summoned at will. The tone of that statement, seen by many as arrogant and dismissive of public concern, prompted citizens to respond firmly. The message was clear: do not misuse power and authority to threaten peaceful protestors. The protest itself remained peaceful. There was no central leadership directing it. Civil society members, political leaders and ordinary citizens gathered, raised slogans, sang songs and registered their protest. They later dispersed and returned to Azad Maidan. There was no stone pelting, no damage to property and no violence. This raises an important question about double standards. Chief Minister Pramod Sawant stated that protestors should submit representations to the Collector instead of marching to a minister's residence.

That is a reasonable position if applied consistently. Yet only days earlier, ruling party cadres had protested outside the Congress office in Panaji, requiring police intervention. Those protests were allowed to pass as political expression. But when citizens protest against Section 39A, it is described as misconduct. That difference in response has raised concerns among many Goenkars. The issue at the heart of these protests is Section 39A, which many believe gives sweeping powers to alter land use across Goa. Critics argue that the provision could allow agricultural land, hills and green areas to be converted into settlement zones. In a state where land is scarce and environmental pressures are already visible, such powers have sparked widespread anxiety about the future. This is not just a technical planning issue. It is about the direction in which Goa is headed. Fields, hills and green belts form an essential part of Goa's identity. Once they are lost, they cannot be restored. That fear has driven many citizens to speak out. As Dr Oscar Rebello said during a public address at Azad Maidan, land is a scarce resource that must be protected. Environmental damage, once done, is often irreversible. That concern resonates with many who see rapid development transforming the state's landscape. Supporters of the protests argue that this issue is far bigger than routine political disagreements. It is not about one minister or one constituency. It is about the long term future of Goa and the preservation of its natural and cultural character. For many Goenkars, Section 39A represents a turning point. They see it as a policy that could reshape the state's geography and demography in ways that may not be reversible. That is why they insist this is not just another protest. It is, in their view, a struggle to protect Goa's identity. And that is why many citizens are refusing to remain silent.

High Court Fixes April 15 for Final Hearing in PIL Challenging FAR and Height Relaxations

Goa Foundation Questions Amendments Allowing Plot-by-Plot Intensification Across State

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Goa bench of the Bombay High Court at Goa has fixed April 15, 2026, for the final hearing and disposal of a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed by the Goa Foundation and two other petitioners challenging sweeping amendments to Goa's Building Regulations



permitting significant increases in Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and building height across the State. The PIL contends that the amendments effectively empower the Government

to grant additional floors and height relaxations to individual applicants anywhere in Goa — including village panchayat areas and Outline Development Plan (ODP) regions — upon payment of ₹1,000 per square metre. According to the petitioners, this is being done without adhering to the statutory framework governing

zoning and development intensity under the Goa Land Development and Building Construction Regulations, 2010 and the Regional Plan 2021.

As per the petition, the amended Regulation 6.1.1(a)(2) allows applicants to seek enhancement of FAR and corresponding height relaxations on a case-by-case basis.



Goa-IPB Approves ₹445 Crore Investment in 10 New Projects

Board Clearances Expected to Generate Around 800 Jobs Across Key Sectors

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant chaired the 41st Board Meeting of the Goa Investment Promotion & Facilitation Board (Goa-IPB) on Tuesday, approving 10 new investment projects across key sectors including food processing, logistics and warehousing, and manufacturing.

The meeting was held in the presence of Industries Minister Mauvin Godinho, MLA and IDC Chairman Aleixo Reginaldo, senior government officials, and industry representatives.

Addressing the media, the Chief Minister said

the approved projects represent a total proposed investment of approximately ₹445 crore and are expected to generate around 800 employment opportunities in the State. Sawant stated that the approvals reaffirm the Government of Goa's commitment to sustainable industrial growth, balanced regional development, and job creation. He added that the government continues to streamline procedures, strengthen inter-departmental coordination, and promote a transparent, investor-friendly ecosystem to further enhance Ease of Doing Business in Goa.

Tanavade Appointed To India-Ukraine Parliamentary Friendship Group

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Sadanand Shet Tanavade has been appointed as a Member of the India-Ukraine Parliamentary Friendship Group, an initiative aimed at strengthening parliamentary diplomacy and enhancing engagement between lawmakers of India and



Ukraine. Expressing gratitude over the appointment,

Tanavade thanked Narendra Modi, Om Birla, and Amit Shah for reposing their trust in him and entrusting him with the responsibility.

The Parliamentary Friendship Groups serve as a platform for legislators to directly interact with their counterparts in other countries, exchange

legislative experiences, and foster trust through sustained dialogue. The India-Ukraine group is expected to deliberate on key areas such as trade, technology, social policy, culture, and broader global challenges faced by democracies, thereby contributing to stronger bilateral ties and mutual understanding.

Conditional Bail Granted to Accused in Ghogol Masjid Murder Case

Team Goemkarponn

MARGAO: A Margao court has granted conditional bail to three accused — Sayed Latif, Alam Sayed, and Ubedulla Makandar — in connection with the Ghogol Masjid murder case. The accused were represented before the court by a legal team comprising Adv. Vinay



Patkar, Adv. Vibha Patkar, Adv. Leon Almeida, Adv. Rohit Naik, Adv. Raviraj Naik, Adv. Vrusaj Talaulikar, Adv. Ajit Tato,

and Adv. Burt Miranda. The court granted bail subject to certain conditions, the details of which were specified in the order.

The case relates to the murder incident reported at Ghogol Masjid, which is currently under investigation. Further proceedings in the matter are expected to continue as per due process of law.



BDO Tiswadi Relieves St Cruz Panchayat Secretary After Transfer Order

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Block Development Officer (BDO), Tiswadi, has issued an order on February 25 relieving St Cruz Panchayat Secretary Diwakar Salelkar from his post. The action follows a corruption case registered by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) against the secretary and certain panch members of Village Panchayat Santa Cruz, based on a

complaint filed by panch member Inacio Domnic Pereira.

Sources stated that despite the earlier transfer order, the secretary had not been relieved from his duties, prompting Pereira to question the delay in implementing the order.

Following this, the BDO issued the formal order relieving Salelkar from the panchayat.

Further action in connection with the ACB case is awaited.

One Nomination Rejected After Scrutiny for CCP Elections; Contest Lines Emerge

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The scrutiny of nomination papers for the upcoming Corporation of the City of Panaji (CCP) elections was completed on Wednesday, with one nomination rejected out of the 78 candidates who filed papers for the 30 municipal wards.

The nomination of Rakesh Bhikoji from Ward 11 was rejected during the scrutiny process, while the remaining nominations were found valid.

The last date for withdrawal of nominations is February 26, after which election authorities will release the final ward-wise list of candidates contesting the polls.

Based on the current nominations, two-candidate contests are likely in 17 wards, while three-way contests are expected in 10 wards.

Dattaprasad Naik Alleges Pressure on Ami Panjekar Candidates Ahead of CCP Elections

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Dattaprasad Naik has alleged that Minister Atanasio "Babush" Monserrate and his associates are attempting to pressure candidates from the Ami Panjekar panel to withdraw from the upcoming Corporation of the City of Panaji (CCP)



elections, even claiming that threats have been issued in some cases. Naik claimed that efforts are being made to influence the election process by misusing government

machinery, with attempts reportedly underway to force nearly 12 candidates contesting from various wards in Panaji to pull out of the race. Describing the situation as serious, Naik urged Chief Minister Pramod Sawant to intervene and ensure that the elections are conducted in a fair and transparent manner.

Seat-Swap Angle Emerges in Fatal Assagao Thar Crash; Delhi Teen Arrested and Released

Team Goemkarponn

MAPUSA: A fresh twist has emerged in the fatal road accident at Happy Bar Junction in Assagao, where a 65-year-old tourist from Bhopal lost his life after a Mahindra Thar rammed into his family's Hyundai i20 on Sunday evening. According to police, the accident occurred on February 23 at around 5.45 pm when a Mahindra Thar (GA-03-V-5695), allegedly driven in a rash and negligent manner by 19-year-old Shaurya Goyal from Hauz Khas, New Delhi, was proceeding from Mapusa towards Anjuna with four



female occupants.

On reaching the junction at Assagao in Bardez, the Thar reportedly collided with a Hyundai i20 (GA-08-AB-6685), which was crossing the junction from Assagao towards Parra.

Bhagat Ram Sharma (65), a resident of Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, sustained serious injuries

and succumbed while being shifted to the District Hospital, Mapusa. His wife, Leela Sharma (60), suffered grievous injuries and is currently undergoing treatment at a private hospital in Mapusa. A two-month-old infant travelling with them sustained minor injuries.

Police conducted a motor vehicle accident

panchama at the scene, and both vehicles were seized for further investigation.

Initial inquiry revealed that the Thar was driven by Shaurya Goyal, while the Hyundai i20 was driven by Tushar Uniyal (39) of Faridabad, Haryana. Based on a complaint filed on behalf of the State, Anjuna Police registered an FIR (Crime No. 12/2026) under Sections 106(1), 281 and 125 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 on February 23 at 11 pm.

The accused was arrested on February 24 at 3.37 pm and later released as per legal procedure.



Scuffle Among Inmates at Colvale Central Jail; One Prisoner Injured

Team Goemkarponn

COLVALE: A scuffle broke out between inmates at the Central Jail Colvale, resulting in one prisoner sustaining injuries.

According to jail authorities, the incident occurred inside Block 4 of the prison premises. The altercation allegedly involved inmates Sagar Patil, Manthan Chari, and Narayan Bhalekar.

Following the incident, the injured inmate was shifted under police escort to the District Hospital Mapusa for medical treatment. His condition is presently reported to be stable.

Authorities have initiated further inquiry into the incident to ascertain the cause of the altercation and fix responsibility. Further investigation is underway.



Two Complaints Filed Over Bandara Project Works at Mirabag

Team Goemkarponn

CURCHOREM: Tension surrounding the proposed Bandara project at Mirabag on the Zuari river has escalated, with local protesters filing two separate complaints alleging unauthorised works in the area. The first complaint has been lodged against contractor Manoj Dukle for allegedly excavating private property under Survey No. 3/3 at Mirabag without obtaining the landowner's consent. Protesters have

accused the contractor of trespassing and damaging private land under the pretext of executing the Bandara project. In a separate complaint, protesters have named M/s Laxmi Civil Engineering Services Private Limited, alleging that the company dug up a road in Mirabag to lay a pipeline without proper authorisation. The complainants have sought immediate intervention and action against both the contractor and the company.

Canacona Police Seize MDMA, LSD Worth ₹84,500; One Arrested in Narcotics Raid

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: In a narcotics crackdown, Canacona Police arrested a man allegedly found in possession of MDMA and LSD during a raid conducted on February 24 at Kindlebag, Tarir in Canacona. According to a complaint filed by



PSI Ramdas Doifode of Canacona Police Station, the raid was carried out

between 12.16 pm and 1.58 pm based on specific and reliable information. During the operation, the accused, identified as Subu Panwar, a resident of Ourem, Canacona, originally from Uttarakhand, was allegedly caught red-handed with 6.35 grams of MDMA and seven

LSD blots weighing 0.15 grams. The seized narcotic substances are collectively valued at approximately ₹84,500. Police said the accused had allegedly come to deliver the drugs to prospective customers. Panwar has been placed under arrest in connection with the case.

Bungalow in Navelim Burgled After Family Leaves for UK

Team Goemkarponn

NAVELIM: A residential bungalow in Navelim was allegedly broken into shortly after its occupants travelled to the United Kingdom, with miscreants suspected of targeting the house knowing it was unoccupied

The incident came to light when neighbours observed that the doors of the house were left ajar and promptly alerted the owners' relatives. The matter was subsequently reported to the police, who have initiated an investigation.

Preliminary information

suggests that the culprits gained entry by smashing a glass panel and unlocking the latch from inside. After entering the premises, they reportedly rummaged through cupboards and drawers in search of valuables, leaving clothes and household items strewn



across rooms.

Danny Fernandes, Zilla Panchayat member from Davorlim, said it appeared that the house had been specifically targeted as the occupants were overseas. He stated that some cash and liquor bottles were suspected

FIR Filed Against Goan Artist Rajdeep Naik Over Alleged Remark on Sattari Residents

Team Goemkarponn

VALPOI: Noted Goan artist Rajdeep Naik has landed in legal trouble after Valpoi Police Station registered a First Information Report (FIR) against him over an alleged objectionable remark concerning residents of Sattari.

As per police sources, Naik is accused of referring to people from the Sattari region as "cattle," a statement that reportedly triggered strong resentment among locals. Following the alleged comment, residents approached the police demanding action.

Acting on the



complaint, Valpoi police registered a case against the artist under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023.

The sections invoked include 196(1)(a) for promoting enmity between groups, Section 352 for intentional insult intended to provoke a breach

of peace, and Section 353(2) pertaining to public mischief and spreading rumours.

Police have begun further inquiry into the matter.

The investigation is being handled by LPSI Sanisha Naik. More details are awaited as the probe continues.

Bhandari Samaj Rallies Behind MLA Viresh Borkar, Seeks Action Against Police Officer

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: The Canacona branch of the Gomantak Bhandari Samaj has extended strong support to on-fast-unto-death Viresh Borkar, condemning the alleged police action of dragging him out of the Town and Country Planning (TCP) office. The community body has demanded the immediate dismissal of the Police Inspector involved and announced



that it will file a formal police complaint over the incident. Addressing a press conference at the Gopalkrishna Temple in Mokhard-Bhatpal, Canacona, GBS Canacona branch president Praveer

Bhandari termed the incident a "grave injustice" against the Bahujan community. "The brutal act of dragging an MLA of Viresh Borkar's stature is not only an insult to the Bhandari Samaj but to the entire Bahujan Samaj.

We will not tolerate such humiliation in the future," Bhandari said. According to GBS members, the St Andre MLA had visited the TCP office to press for the repeal of Section 39A when he was allegedly forcibly removed by police personnel present at the spot. The community strongly condemned what it described as a humiliating and inhuman act, and demanded the immediate termination of the officer responsible.

District Level Committee Reviews 62 Forest Rights Claims In Kushavati District

Team Goemkarponn

MARGAO: The District Level Committee (DLC) of Kushavati District, presided over by Ms Egna Cleetus, IAS, Collector, convened to examine claims forwarded by the Sub-Divisional Level Committees of Quepem and Sanguem talukas under the provisions of the Forest Rights Act, 2006. During the meeting, the Committee reviewed a



total of 62 claims. Of these, 43 claims were received from Cazur village in Quepem taluka, while 19 claims pertained to the villages of Rivona, Villiana and Bhati in Sanguem taluka.

8th Goa Anti-Tobacco Film Festival 2026 Set for May 31, Call for Entries Now Open

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: The Entertainment Society of Goa (ESG), in collaboration with the Department of Public Health Dentistry at Goa Dental College and Hospital, will host the 8th edition of the Goa Anti-Tobacco Film Festival on May 31, 2026. The festival aims to raise awareness about the dangers of

tobacco consumption through impactful ad films while promoting the art of filmmaking via non-commercial screenings. The theme for this year is "Unmasking the Appeal: Countering Nicotine & Tobacco Addiction." Filmmakers can submit their entries in two categories: the Goa section and the national section.

Vasco Congress leader Nandadeep Raut alleges 'systematic ploy' in voter deletions, announces ward-wise drive

Team Goemkarponn

VASCO: Vasco Congress leader Nandadeep Raut on Wednesday alleged that the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) was used as a "systematic ploy" by the Bharatiya Janata Party to delete votes of sections perceived to be close to opposition parties. He announced a mega ward-wise campaign to help affected voters restore their names in the electoral roll. Addressing mediapersons in Vasco, Raut claimed that several genuine voters



had found their names missing from the rolls during the revision process. "This is not an administrative lapse but a calculated move to target voters who are believed to support opposition parties. Democracy

cannot function if selective deletions are carried out under political pressure," he said. Raut stated that the Congress would launch a door-to-door drive across all wards to collect documents of those whose names were deleted and assist them in filing the necessary forms for re-inclusion. "We will personally ensure that every deleted voter submits the required documents. Our teams will visit each ward, verify details, and coordinate with election authorities to restore the names at the earliest," he said.

Cyber Awareness Programme Held at St. Francis Xavier's High School, Siolim

Team Goemkarponn

SIOLIM: A cyber awareness and online safety programme was conducted on February 25, 2026, at St. Francis Xavier's High School, under the initiative of the Siolim Free Legal Aid Cell of V.M. Salgaocar College of Law, run by Devi Sharvani Education Society. The session was delivered by PSI Sahil Vijay Warang, Police Sub-Inspector of Anjuna Police Station, who attended as the guest speaker and addressed students on the growing threats of cybercrime and the importance of digital safety. The programme was held in the presence of Fr. Dilip Tete, Headmaster of the High School, and Fr. Marcos Dsouza, Principal of St. Francis Xavier's Higher Secondary School, who appreciated the initiative aimed at strengthening cyber awareness among



students. Around 600 to 650 students, along with teachers and members of the Legal Aid Cell, participated in the awareness session. The programme focused on educating students about emerging cyber threats and preventive measures in today's digital era.

During his address, PSI Warang described cybercrime as an "unseen danger," explaining how criminals exploit human psychology through mobile phones

and the internet. He stressed that many cyber frauds succeed not due to sophisticated technology but because of fear, greed, and lack of awareness. The session covered real-life cases of fake investment scams, online job frauds, sextortion, fake loan applications, impersonation scams, matrimonial frauds, online booking scams, and digital arrest scams. Students were also cautioned about emotional manipulation tactics commonly used by cybercriminals. Special emphasis was placed on developing the right digital mindset and remaining cautious while using social media, gaming platforms, and online payment systems. Students were informed about safety tools such as the National Cybercrime Helpline 1930, the cybercrime reporting portal, and platforms to check for potential data breaches.



Tiatr Academy of Goa to Honour Artistes at "Mhaldogdea Tiatrstancho Bhouman" on Feb 27

Team Goemkarponn

Margao: The Tiatr Academy of Goa (TAG), in association with Ravindra Bhavan Margao, will host "Mhaldogdea Tiatrstancho Bhouman" on February 27 at 3:30 pm at the Pai Tiatr Auditorium, Ravindra Bhavan, Margao. The event is set to celebrate and recognise the invaluable contributions of artistes to Goa's tiatr tradition.

A key highlight of the programme will be the Lifetime Contribution to Tiatr Awards 2025

(Commercial), established in memory of Sorgesst Pai Tiatrist Joao Agostinho Fernandes.

This year, the awardees include Leslie Pereira, Santano Pereira, and Joaquim Lorencio Fernandes (Jack Ferry), acknowledged for their exceptional work in acting, direction, writing, and music in commercial tiatr.

The event will also present the Young Achievers Awards 2025, instituted in memory of Sorgesst Regina Fernandes, to recognise emerging talent.

Fr Myron Jeson Barreto Elected President of Dalgado Konknni Akademi

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Elections for the post of President of the Dalgado Konknni Akademi were conducted



on February 22 in accordance with the Akademi's constitution. Adv. Pritam Lotlikar, who served as the presiding officer, announced the election of Fr. Myron Jeson Barreto as President.

Along with the President, six members were elected to the working committee. The newly elected members are Anthony Fernandes (Anthony San), Agnelo Luzerio Fernandes (Agnelo Borim), Wilfred Eusebio Goes (Willy Goes), Fr. Luis Xavier Gomes, Sonia Gomes, and Vassalo Carvalho.

Swiggy Dineout Onboards Bhuvan Bam as GIRF 2026 Ambassador; Brings BB Ki Vines Characters to Life with 'Bill Half. Party Full'

GIRF 2026 (Great Indian Restaurant Festival) to be live from February 15, 2026 for 2 months, Upto 50% off across 40,000 top restaurants in 60+ cities across India, Unveils a campaign with Bhuvan Bam who brings the iconic world of BB Ki Vines.

Bengaluru, Indi: Swiggy Limited, India's leading on-demand convenience platform, has announced the launch of Swiggy Dineout's widely popular Great Indian Restaurant Festival (GIRF) 2026. Launched with Bhuvan Bam as the official ambassador for GIRF 2026, integrating the much loved universe of BB Ki Vines into India's biggest dining festival.

Following the phenomenal success of last year's editions, GIRF 2026 returns bigger, better and louder with a simple, powerful promise: Bill Half. Party Full. Starting 15 February 2026, diners can enjoy up to 50 percent off at 40,000+ top restaurants in 60+ cities in India. The offers are available across categories including cafes, pubs, bars, luxury dining and family restaurants for two full months. Diners can not only unlock up to 50 percent off on their food bill, but also get an additional 10% instant discount across all HDFC Bank cards and avail 10% back as Dinecash on every order when booking via Dineout.

Leading this year's



cultural moment is Bhuvan Bam, who brings the iconic world of BB Ki Vines into the heart of GIRF 2026. The campaign integrates beloved characters including Babloo, Babli, Sameer and Bhuvan, each representing relatable diner archetypes India instantly recognises.

In the flagship film, the BB Ki Vines universe takes on a familiar dining anxiety. Babloo worries about discount caps and fine print. Sameer confidently explains the scale of GIRF. The insight is simple but powerful. When the bill is half, hesitation disappears. Celebrations get bigger. Group plans become spontaneous. The vibe changes.

Commenting on the launch, Dhruvish Thakkar, AVP Marketing and Revenue, Swiggy Dineout, said "GIRF is one of India's largest dining movements. Our focus every year is to make dining out more rewarding, more accessible and more

frequent for consumers, while unlocking sustained incremental footfalls and revenue growth for our restaurant partners. With Bhuvan and the BB Ki Vines universe, we are tapping into characters that India deeply relates to. Babloo, Babli and Sameer represent real diner mindsets we see on the platform every day, from the bill conscious planner to the value maximiser to the spontaneous celebration starter."

The GIRF 2026 theme, 'Bill Half. Party Full.', captures the core emotional insight behind dining out. Dining out is a joy. The Bill is the only brake. Take that away and the celebration scales. From the established dining capitals of Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Chennai to emerging culinary hotspots like Goa, Jaipur, Indore, Coimbatore, Chandigarh, Lucknow and Udaipur, GIRF 2026 ensures that every foodie across 60+

cities gets to celebrate their way."

The campaign will roll out across digital, social, and creator ecosystems as well as in-app storytelling formats, with deep integration of BB Ki Vines characters across performance marketing, platform creatives and cultural moments.

Beyond discounts, GIRF 2026 introduces high energy activations including limited time Crazy Deals of the Day, complimentary cocktails and mocktails at select partner bars, and extended happy hours across participating venues.

This year's edition features participation from leading brands such as Cafe Coffee Day, Barista, Good Flippin Burgers, Punjab Grill, YouMee, Krishnapatnam, Biergarten, Ironhill and several other popular dining destinations. Link of the film- <https://www.instagram.com/p/ DU0Nc8ViB1q/>



Apple Pay Set for India Push as Talks With Major Banks Gather Momentum

Planned digital payments launch highlights Apple's growing confidence in one of its fastest expanding markets

New Delhi: Apple Inc. is moving closer to introducing its Apple Pay service in India, with discussions underway with leading private sector banks and global payment networks. The initiative reflects the company's broader ambition to deepen its presence in the country and tap into one of the world's most dynamic digital payments ecosystems.

The technology giant is understood to be engaging with ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank and Axis Bank as potential issuing partners. In parallel, Apple is also in conversations with global card networks Mastercard and Visa, signalling a multi layered payments strategy. A launch is being explored around mid 2026, although timelines remain flexible.

Apple Pay in India is expected to support the country's Unified Payments Interface, a real time payment system operated by the National Payments Corporation of India. UPI has become the backbone of India's cashless economy, enabling instant transfers, merchant payments and bill settlements. Alongside UPI, Apple Pay is also likely to offer traditional card based transactions,

creating a seamless option for users across platforms.

The service would enter a crowded but rapidly expanding market that already features major players such as Google Pay, PhonePe, Amazon and Paytm. Apple's emphasis on privacy and biometric security could help differentiate its offering, especially after India's central bank allowed the use of fingerprint and facial authentication for digital transactions.

India's scale presents a significant opportunity. With more than 750 million smartphone users and one of the fastest growing digital payments markets globally, a local rollout could strengthen Apple's services revenue while also supporting demand for devices such as iPhones, Apple Watches and iPads. The payments push comes alongside Apple's expanding manufacturing and retail footprint in India. The company has increased iPhone production for global exports and continues to invest in physical retail, including its newest store in Mumbai. Chief executive Tim Cook has repeatedly described India as a key growth engine, underscoring its importance to Apple's long term global strategy.

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Anjuna Police Submit 4,150-Page Chargesheet in Birch by Romeo Lane Fire Case

panchayat secretary Raghuvir Bagkar and former sarpanch Roshan Redkar. Following the incident, the state

government initiated disciplinary action against several officials. On December 7, three officials were suspended,

including then director/ additional director of panchayats Siddhi Tushar Harlankar, Goa State Pollution Control

Board member secretary Shamila Monteiro, and Raghuvir Bagkar, whose services were subsequently terminated.

Opposition Seeks Special Assembly Session On TCP Section 39A

Revolutionary Goans Party (RGP), met the Governor at Lok Bhavan seeking an urgent special session of the Goa Legislative Assembly to repeal Section 39A of the Town and Country

Planning (TCP) Act. Leader of Opposition Yuri Alemoa said the delegation informed the Governor that the issue is highly sensitive and could potentially lead to law and order concerns if not

addressed promptly. He also highlighted the deteriorating health condition of MLA Viresh Borkar and urged immediate intervention. AAP MLA Capt. Venzy Viegas warned that Goans

would not remain silent if attempts are made to stop development works in constituencies or if cases are filed against individuals involved in the protests against Section 39A.

“India Is the Gateway to Asia”: Israel Pushes Fast Track Trade Deal as Modi Visits Jerusalem

■ Modi visit underscores fast moving trade talks, infrastructure links, and deepening defence cooperation

New Delhi: As Prime Minister Narendra Modi began a two day visit to Israel, senior leaders in Jerusalem signalled strong confidence that India and Israel are entering a decisive phase in their partnership. Israeli Economy and Industry Minister Nir Barkat described India as a gateway to Asia and said a long discussed free trade agreement could be finalised far sooner than expected. Trade negotiations, according to Israeli officials, have moved to a fast track

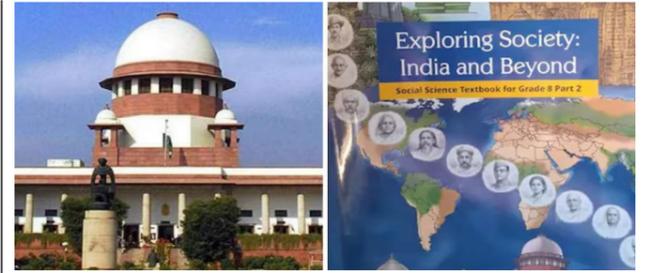


after recent high level exchanges. Both sides are now working toward a comprehensive agreement that could be concluded as early as next year. India's expanding global trade footprint has added

urgency, while Israel sees access to India's scale as essential for long term growth.

Israel views the relationship as naturally complementary. Its strength in innovation, advanced technology,

and research is matched by India's capacity to manufacture at scale and reach vast markets. With India emerging as one of the world's largest economies and home to more than a billion people, Israeli policymakers see New Delhi as a strategic anchor for engagement across Asia. The India Middle East Europe Economic Corridor also featured prominently in discussions. With regional conditions stabilising, Israel believes the project can now move from vision to implementation.



“Heads Must Roll”: Supreme Court Orders Ban on NCERT Class 8 Textbook

■ Top court launches suo motu probe over references to corruption in judiciary, demands accountability

New Delhi: The Supreme Court of India on Thursday took strong exception to a controversial section in a newly released Class 8 Social Science textbook published by NCERT, ordering an immediate ban on the book and directing that all physical and digital copies be seized. The court said it would conduct a deeper inquiry to identify those responsible and made it clear that the matter would not be closed without accountability. A bench led by Chief Justice Surya Kant expressed outrage over references to “corruption in the judiciary” contained in a chapter titled “The Role of the Judiciary in Our Society.” The court described the inclusion

as a serious institutional affront and warned that such content, if left unchecked, could erode public faith in the justice system. The bench imposed a blanket prohibition on the sale, circulation, or online sharing of the textbook, whether in full or in part. Notices were issued to the Union government and the NCERT chairman, seeking explanations on how the material was approved and published. Appearing for NCERT, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta told the court that the individuals responsible for drafting the contentious portion would be barred from working with any ministry or the University Grants Commission in the future.

“Camaraderie at Sea”: Indian Navy Showcases Maritime Power in Bay of Bengal

■ MILAN exercise brings together 42 warships, submarines, and 29 aircraft in major multinational display

New Delhi: The Indian Navy concluded its flagship multilateral maritime exercise MILAN with a high profile closing ceremony held onboard the indigenous aircraft carrier INS Vikrant off the coast of Visakhapatnam. The week long exercise marked one of the largest



naval engagements hosted by India, reflecting both operational strength and growing international

cooperation in the Indo Pacific region.

MILAN witnessed participation on an

unprecedented scale, bringing together 42 warships and submarines along with 29 military aircraft. In addition to Indian naval assets, 18 ships from friendly foreign navies joined the drills, underlining the expanding scope of maritime collaboration.

“Why Are You Collecting the Toll?": Gadkari Questions Delhi's Green Tax

■ Road transport minister urges end to Environment Compensation Charge, seeks relief for commuters.

New Delhi: Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari has called for the immediate discontinuation of the Environment Compensation Charge imposed on commercial vehicles entering and exiting Delhi, questioning both its effectiveness and utilisation. Speaking at a public event, the minister said the levy has failed to deliver tangible environmental benefits and has instead added to the burden on transporters and ordinary citizens. The Environment Compensation Charge, commonly referred to as the green tax, is



collected from commercial vehicles as they cross into the national capital. It was introduced in 2015 following directions from the Supreme Court of India, with the stated objective of discouraging polluting vehicles and helping address Delhi's chronic air pollution problem. The charge is collected in addition to existing toll fees at city entry points. Gadkari said

he had raised the issue during meetings with civic authorities, including the Municipal Corporation of Delhi, seeking clarity on how the funds collected through the tax were being used. According to him, officials were unable to point to any meaningful contribution toward green or pollution control initiatives. He questioned the rationale of continuing a levy when its core purpose was not being fulfilled. The minister said he was told the charge continued due to court directions, prompting him to approach the Delhi government for immediate intervention.

“We Will Do Anything to Protect the Northeast's Dignity": Rijiju

■ Union minister assures strict action after racial abuse of Arunachal women in Delhi

New Delhi: Union Minister Kiren Rijiju on Wednesday issued a strong assurance of action following an incident of racial abuse involving three women from Arunachal Pradesh in south Delhi. The case, which triggered widespread outrage after a video went viral on social media, has renewed concerns over the safety and dignity of people from the Northeast living in the national capital. Speaking to the media for the first time on the matter, Rijiju said he had been personally monitoring developments and coordinating with



authorities to ensure swift justice. He stressed that protecting the dignity of people from the Northeast was a responsibility he takes seriously and said firm legal action would be pursued so that such behaviour is not repeated. Rijiju said his office has remained in constant touch with the victims as well as the Delhi Police

since the incident came to light. He confirmed that arrests have already been made and emphasised that the government stands firmly with the affected women. According to him, there is no reason for people from the Northeast to feel unsafe, as authorities are committed to acting decisively in such cases. Highlighting past challenges faced by Northeastern communities in other parts of the country, Rijiju said conditions have improved significantly over the years, though isolated incidents still require strict handling.

India Eye Revival as Super 8 Permutations Keep Knockout Dream Intact

■ Complex Super 8 permutations keep India's T20 World Cup 2026 hopes hanging by a thread

New Delhi: India's campaign at the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 has reached a critical stage, with their Super 8s clash against Zimbabwe turning into a virtual knockout. The match, scheduled for Thursday at the MA Chidambaram Stadium, is a must win for the side led



by Suryakumar Yadav. A victory would keep

India's title defence alive, but another defeat could potentially end their semifinal aspirations, depending on the outcome of the other Super 8s fixture between the West Indies and South Africa at the Narendra Modi Stadium

If India lose to Zimbabwe and the West

Indies defeat South Africa, the equation becomes grim. The Windies would move to four points from two matches, while Zimbabwe would also climb to two points with a historic win over India. India, meanwhile, would be stranded at the bottom of the group with zero points after two games.

Shoot-Out Grit Ends Slump as India Shock Australia in Pro League

■ Goalkeeper heroics and late equaliser deliver first win of Hobart leg

New Delhi: The India men's national field hockey team snapped a prolonged losing run in the FIH Pro League with a morale boosting victory over world number three Australia men's national field hockey team, prevailing 3-1 in a shoot-out after regulation time ended 1-1 in Hobart on Wednesday. The result marked India's first win of the Hobart leg and provided a timely lift after a difficult start to the season. The contest was tightly contested through the opening three quarters, with both sides cancelling each other out in midfield and defence. Australia controlled possession for long periods, but India remained compact and dangerous on the counter. Goalkeeper



Mohith Shashikumar Honnenahalli made several early saves to keep the scores level, while India created chances through quick transitions and penalty corners that went unconverted. The breakthrough finally arrived in the fourth quarter when Australian captain Jeremy Hayward converted a penalty corner in the 49th minute. India responded almost immediately. A swift move initiated by Hardik Singh released Abhishek down the right, whose precise pass found Poovanna Chandura Bobby.

Berlin Defence Tests Champion as Gukesh Escapes With Draw

New Delhi: World champion D Gukesh opened his campaign at the Prague International Chess Festival by holding Hans Moke Niemann to a tense draw in the Masters section, surviving a challenging middle game in what proved to be the sole drawn contest of the opening round.

The game was shaped by a combative Berlin Defence that quickly set the tone.

Despite playing with the white pieces, Gukesh was forced onto the defensive when Niemann opted for an ambitious approach, sacrificing a knight on the thirteenth move to generate initiative

and long term pressure. The decision created a complex position that demanded precise calculation and calm defence from the Indian.

As the game progressed, Niemann built momentum with extra pawns as compensation for the sacrificed piece, pressing for an



advantage and probing for weaknesses. Gukesh, however, remained composed under pressure.

He neutralised threats at key moments, avoided tactical pitfalls, and gradually simplified the position without allowing the imbalance to turn decisive.

Young Stars Shine as Tvisha Sardesai and Ethan Ataide Seal Titles

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Rising talents took centre stage at the Baale BPS Open 2026 as key finals across categories were decided at the B.P.S. Sports Club, with impressive performances from youth competitors drawing strong attention. The tournament, currently underway in Margao, has continued to highlight competitive depth and emerging promise in Indian tennis. In the Girls Under 18 final, Tvisha Sardesai displayed control



and consistency to defeat Urvi Panandiker in straight sets. Tvisha closed out the contest 4-1, 4-3, maintaining composure in key moments to secure the title. Her ability to dictate play and manage pressure proved decisive in the championship clash.

Panthers, Stars, Oxford and Ghumtेशwar Dominate Junior Cricket Championship



PANAJI: Impressive all round performances highlighted Wednesday's matches in the Junior Cricket Championship organised by the Oxford Cricket Club, with Power Panthers Porvorim, Dhadsakhil Stars, Oxford, and Ghumtेशwar all registering convincing victories. The matches were played at the

SAG Ground and Arlem Ground, drawing enthusiastic participation and competitive cricket. At Chicalim, Panjim Challengers set a challenging total of 139 for 6 in 25 overs after batting first. Vansh Kudtarkar anchored the innings with an unbeaten 80, receiving limited support from the middle

order. In reply, Power Panthers Porvorim chased the target comfortably, reaching 140 for 2 in 20 overs. Openers Samaan Manjrekar and Sahil Metri laid a solid foundation with fluent knocks of 55 and 37 respectively, ensuring a smooth run chase. In the second match at the same venue, AK Rangers posted 131

for 6 in their allotted 25 overs, largely due to a fighting 62 from Ayush Gaonkar. Dhadsakhil Stars responded with authority, reaching 132 for 3 in just 16.2 overs. Pranjal Singh starred with a commanding 59, while steady support from the rest of the batting line up helped seal a comprehensive win.

"Running on Ice at the Roof of the World" Ladakh Enters Guinness Records

New Delhi: The Union Territory of Ladakh etched its name into global sporting history by staging the world's highest altitude frozen lake half marathon at the iconic Pangong Tso. The 21 kilometre



event, held at an altitude of 13,862 feet in sub zero conditions, has been officially recognised by Guinness World Records as the highest altitude frozen lake half marathon ever conducted.

"Cricket Unites Municipal Bodies Across Goa in Margao Showdown"

Panjim: Margao is set to host a lively display of sporting enthusiasm as the Margao Municipal Council prepares to conduct an inter municipal cricket tournament on February 28. The one

day event will take place at the SAG Ground in Fatorda, Margao, bringing together municipal teams from across Goa for a fast paced and engaging competition. A total of 13 teams are scheduled to



participate, representing a wide cross section of civic bodies and institutions.