



AAP Ready For Alliance With RGP, Says Venzy

After Manoj Parab's call for opposition unity, AAP signals unconditional alliance.

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA Capt. Venzy Viegas today said that the party is open to an alliance with the Revolutionary Goans Party (RGP) following a call for unity by RGP president Manoj Parab, stressing that the interests of Goa and its people must come first.

Viegas said the AAP is prepared to enter into



an unconditional alliance with the RGP if it helps strengthen the opposition and address key issues



concerning the state. He described the proposal as a positive step toward building a

united front. "The Aam Aadmi Party has received the alliance offer from Manoj Parab, and we are

ready for an unconditional alliance in the interest of Goa," Viegas said.

He further stated that discussions with other opposition parties would be taken forward gradually, indicating the possibility of a broader opposition unity in the future.

Earlier, RGP president Manoj Parab had urged opposition MLAs to join the Revolutionary Goans Party if their respective

parties do not permit an alliance to take shape in Goa. Parab had called for opposition unity and appealed to like-minded leaders to come together to strengthen an alternative political front in the state.

Viegas emphasised that the primary objective of any alliance would be to work for the welfare of the people and address pressing issues affecting Goa.

I Stand Firm on My Statement, It Was Twisted: Rajdeep Naik

Team Goemkarponn

VALPOI: Artist Rajdeep Naik appeared before the Valpoi Police Station along with his legal counsel Adv. Amit Palekar after being summoned in connection with remarks he allegedly made about the people of Sattari during a protest held in Panaji. Naik cooperated with the investigation by recording his statement and submitting supporting material to the police. Speaking to reporters, Adv. Amit Palekar said that the legal team will now proceed with steps to seek the quashing of the FIR registered against the artist.



Clarifying his position, Naik said he stands by the statement he made during the protest but strongly denied making any derogatory comments about the people of Sattari. He maintained that his remarks had been misinterpreted and intentionally distorted. Naik also disclosed that he has received threats of physical assault following the controversy, which he said has caused concern.

MLA Borkar Ends Six-Day Hunger Strike After Govt Suspends 39A Proposals In St Andre

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: St Andre RGP MLA Viresh Borkar called off his six-day hunger strike at Azad Maidan after receiving an official communication suspending all provisional and final land conversion proposals under Section 39A in his constituency with immediate effect. The letter, issued on the official letterhead of the Chief Town Planner (CTP), was handed over by North Goa Collector Ankit Yadav. The revised communication addressed the clarifications Borkar had sought earlier,



particularly regarding the precise meaning of the term "suspension."

Earlier in the evening, the Collector had visited the protest site with a letter, but Borkar insisted on clearer details before accepting it. A fresh communication incorporating the required clarifications was

subsequently provided.

Before formally ending the agitation, Borkar sought the approval of villagers from Siridao-Palem, who had spearheaded and consistently backed the protest. After receiving their consent, he announced the withdrawal of the fast. Co-protester

Tushar Gawas also ended his hunger strike. Describing the movement as a "second fight for freedom," Borkar broke his fast with prasada from Sateri temple, offered by Norma Alvares. Environmentalists Claude Alvares and Norma Alvares were present at the site, providing legal guidance during the course of the agitation.

Borkar expressed gratitude to supporters across Goa and abroad, acknowledging in particular the strong participation of women from the constituency, many of whom are small vendors.

Court Clears Kejriwal and Sisodia in Liquor Policy Case

Delhi court finds no criminal conspiracy or corrupt intent in excise policy formulation

New Delhi: A Delhi court on Thursday acquitted former Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal and former deputy chief minister

Manish Sisodia in the case linked to the now scrapped excise policy, bringing major relief to the leadership of the

Aam Aadmi Party. While delivering its verdict, the court observed that there was no overarching conspiracy



CONTD TO PAGE 06...

Emergency-Era Decisions Criticised, CM Pramod Sawant Questions 1971 Post-War Strategy

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant launched a sharp critique of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's leadership during and after the Emergency period, questioning what he described as "contradictory and compromising" strategic decisions that, according to him, weakened India's long-term national interests. Addressing a public gathering, Sawant said the years of the Emergency reflected a



troubling phase in Indian democracy. "The same leadership that imposed the Emergency and curtailed the fundamental rights of Indian citizens also took strategic decisions that demand serious scrutiny," he stated. Referring to post-

CONTD TO PAGE 06...

Pakistan Declares Open War After Kabul Airstrikes

Border clashes escalate sharply as Islamabad and Kabul trade strikes, claims, and casualties

New Delhi: Tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan escalated dramatically after Islamabad declared what it described as an "open war" following

renewed fighting along the shared frontier. The escalation came after Pakistani forces carried out airstrikes targeting locations in Kabul, Kandahar, and parts of

eastern Afghanistan, hours after Afghan forces launched cross border attacks on Pakistani positions. Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif announced the start



of a military campaign named Operation

CONTD TO PAGE 06...

Birch Fire Chargesheet Filed, But Will Justice Be Served?

The submission of a 4,150 page chargesheet by the Anjuna Police in the Birch by Romeo Lane fire case marks an important step forward. On paper, it signals progress. Thirteen arrests, 306 witnesses, and a long list of documents suggest a thorough investigation. Yet for the victims and their families, the real question remains whether this process will ultimately deliver justice or simply become another case lost in the slow churn of the legal system.

The fire at Birch by Romeo Lane in Anjuna was not merely an accident. It was a tragedy that many believe could have been prevented. According to investigators, electric firecrackers ignited a wooden ceiling, turning a crowded nightclub into a death trap within minutes. More than 150 people were present that night. Panic spread as flames consumed the structure, exposing glaring lapses in safety and oversight.

The chargesheet filed before the Mapusa Court names the club's operators as primary accused and invokes culpable homicide not amounting to murder. This is a serious charge, but it also raises uncomfortable questions. Culpable homicide implies negligence and recklessness rather than intent. For the families of victims, the distinction matters. It shapes both the potential punishment and the broader message sent about accountability.

The investigation has not been limited to the club owners and staff. Officials linked to regulatory bodies have also faced action. Suspensions and disciplinary proceedings followed within the Goa State Pollution Control Board and the panchayat administration. These steps suggest recognition that the failure was systemic, not isolated. Nightclubs do not operate in a vacuum. They depend on licences, inspections, and certifications issued by authorities entrusted with public safety. But suspensions and departmental inquiries are administrative responses. They are not substitutes for criminal



The investigation has not been limited to the club owners and staff. Officials linked to regulatory bodies have also faced action. Suspensions and disciplinary proceedings followed within the Goa State Pollution Control Board and the panchayat administration. These steps suggest recognition that the failure was systemic, not isolated. Nightclubs do not operate in a vacuum. They depend on licences, inspections, and certifications issued by authorities entrusted with public safety.

But suspensions and departmental inquiries are administrative responses. They are not substitutes for criminal accountability. In many past cases across Goa and beyond, disciplinary action has quietly faded from public attention. Officials are transferred, reinstated, or simply allowed to retire.



accountability. In many past cases across Goa and beyond, disciplinary action has quietly faded from public attention. Officials are transferred, reinstated, or simply allowed to retire. Justice demands more than symbolic gestures. It requires clear consequences for those whose negligence may have contributed to loss of life. The scale of the chargesheet itself is striking. Thousands of pages and hundreds of witnesses indicate the seriousness of the investigation. Yet bulky documentation does not automatically translate into convictions. Indian courts are burdened with delays, and complex cases often stretch on for years. Witnesses lose touch, memories fade, and public attention shifts elsewhere. By

the time verdicts are delivered, the sense of urgency that followed the tragedy has often disappeared.

This is why the Birch by Romeo Lane case must not become just another statistic. The victims deserve a process that is not only thorough but also timely. Justice delayed does not merely inconvenience families. It prolongs their suffering and weakens faith in institutions meant to protect citizens and visitors alike.

There is also a broader concern. Goa's tourism economy depends heavily on nightlife. Visitors expect vibrant experiences, but they also expect safety. Every major accident chips away at that trust. When safety norms are ignored or loosely enforced, the consequences extend beyond a single establishment. They affect the reputation of an entire destination. The magisterial inquiry that followed the fire reportedly recommended dozens of reforms. These recommendations must not gather dust in government offices. Fire safety compliance, inspection protocols, and event permissions need stricter enforcement. Prevention is the only real guarantee that such tragedies will not be repeated.

For now, the filing of the chargesheet is only the beginning. The real test lies ahead in the courtroom. Prosecutors must present their case effectively. Witnesses must be protected and encouraged to testify. The defence will challenge every detail. This is how the system works, and it must be allowed to function fairly. But fairness must not come at the cost of accountability. Will the victims get justice? It is too early to say. Justice is not defined by the number of pages in a chargesheet or the number of arrests made. It is defined by truth established in court and responsibility fixed where it belongs. Until that happens, the memory of that December night will continue to cast a long shadow over Anjuna. The flames may have been extinguished, but the demand for accountability still burns.

OpEd

Drug Money Trail a Wake Up Call for Goa

The recent crackdown on narcotics linked money laundering in Goa and the attachment of properties worth several crores should be seen as a serious warning for the state. This case highlights how drug trafficking is no longer limited to isolated incidents but is becoming an organised network where illegal profits are routed into legitimate assets such as land and buildings. For a small state like Goa, this trend is particularly alarming. Once drug money starts entering the real estate sector and other businesses, it creates a parallel economy that is difficult to trace and even harder to dismantle. It also raises serious concerns about the long term impact on society, especially on the youth who are most vulnerable to the drug menace. While enforcement agencies have taken an important step by acting against such networks, this problem cannot be addressed through occasional crackdowns alone. There is a need for sustained action and coordination between various agencies to ensure that drug networks do not take deeper root. At the same time, local communities must also remain vigilant and report suspicious activities instead of ignoring them. Goa's identity as a peaceful tourist destination is at stake. If drug trafficking and money laundering continue unchecked, the damage will not just be social but also economic. Genuine investors and visitors may eventually lose confidence in the state. This is the time for authorities to act firmly and consistently. The fight against drugs must not only target peddlers but also the financial networks that sustain the trade. Only then can Goa be protected from the growing shadow of narcotics and organised crime.

-Bernard D'Costa, Maina-Curtorim

Is Manoj Parab's Arrogance Weakening the Movement?

The ongoing agitation against Section 39(A) has drawn widespread public support, largely because it touches upon the deeply felt concerns of Goans over land and identity. The hunger strike undertaken by Viresh Borkar has especially resonated with people as a peaceful and Gandhian form of protest. It has earned respect across political and social lines and has kept the focus firmly on the demand to scrap Section 39(A). However, the conduct and public statements of Manoj Parab are increasingly coming under scrutiny. At a time when unity and discipline are essential, aggressive rhetoric and confrontational behaviour towards opposition leaders and even colleagues risk diluting the seriousness of the movement. The issue at hand is too important to be overshadowed by personal attacks or political grandstanding. Movements succeed when they inspire confidence and bring people together. They weaken when they appear divided or driven by individual egos. The agitation against Section 39(A) must remain focused on protecting Goa's land and future, not on scoring political points or settling differences. The people of Goa expect maturity and restraint from those leading such a crucial cause. Calm and responsible leadership will strengthen the movement and ensure that its core objective is not lost. If the goal is truly to scrap Section 39(A), then the movement must reflect unity in purpose and humility in leadership.

-Siddharth Naik, Aldona

ED Attaches Properties Worth ₹7.17 Crore In Goa Drug Money Laundering Case

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Panaji Zonal Office, has provisionally attached immovable assets valued at about ₹7.17 crore in connection with a money laundering investigation linked to narcotics trafficking under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act.

The ED initiated proceedings under the Prevention of Money



Laundering Act (PMLA) based on a complaint registered by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), Goa, in March 2021 against Ugochukwu Solomon Ubabuko, Infinity John alias David alias

Valentine Ejezie, and Prasad Prakash Walke for offences under the NDPS Act. According to the investigation, the NCB had seized commercial quantities of drugs including LSD, cocaine, charas and ganja from a premises in Assagao. Additional searches conducted at the residence of Prasad Walke also led to the recovery of LSD. Officials stated that Walke had earlier been arrested by the NCB in 2018 and later by the Goa

Police Anti-Narcotic Cell in 2023 in separate NDPS cases involving the seizure of MDMA, ecstasy powder and hydroponic cannabis. He is currently lodged in judicial custody.

The ED probe revealed that proceeds from alleged drug trafficking activities were routed into the formal financial system through significant cash deposits made in multiple bank accounts held in the names of Prasad Walke and his wife, Sheetal Walke.

GCCI Flags Investor Concerns Amid Calls to Scrap TCP Section 39A

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: As demands grow for the State government to repeal Section 39A of the Town and Country Planning (TCP) Act concerning zoning conversions, the Goa Chamber of Commerce and Industries (GCCI) has warned that reversing approvals granted through lawful procedures may harm Goa's investment climate and create uncertainty in governance.

In a statement, GCCI Director Sanjay Amonkar said the chamber's position is not linked to any particular project but is centred on protecting the credibility of established procedures.

He pointed out that businesses make financial commitments, obtain loans and plan long-term operations based on permissions issued after statutory scrutiny. According to GCCI, cancelling or casting doubt on approvals after investors have already committed funds in good faith could send negative signals about policy stability. Such developments, the



chamber cautioned, may make investors hesitant to consider Goa as a reliable destination for future investments. The chamber also criticised the disruption at the Town and Country Planning Department during last week's protest, stating that interference in official functioning by public representatives could create an undesirable precedent. Endorsing the Chief Minister's position on the issue, GCCI stressed that uninterrupted functioning of government offices is essential for effective administration and maintaining confidence among stakeholders. It further noted that the unauthorised presence inside a government office and alleged intimidation of officials could threaten the safety of personnel and the integrity of official records.

North Goa Road Safety Panel Adopts Zero-Fatality Framework

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: In an effort to reduce road accident deaths, the North Goa District Road Safety Committee has decided to implement the Quick Reference Guide titled "Towards Zero-Fatality Districts", which aims to coordinate enforcement and infrastructure improvements with measurable targets for lowering fatalities. The decision was taken at a meeting held

on Thursday under the chairmanship of Additional Collector-I of North Goa, Gurudas Desai, and attended by representatives of various government departments. Officials said the guide would act as a structured plan to help departments work together in reducing fatal road accidents across the district.

The committee directed that data from Goa Medical College and Hospital be collected and studied to understand

the pattern of serious injuries and cases leading to permanent disability caused by road accidents. Members also called for continued analysis of fatal crash reports in North Goa to identify common factors and accident-prone locations. The panel stressed the need to create greater awareness about the Compensation to Victims of Hit and Run Motor Accidents Scheme, 2022. It also supported the ongoing "Don't Drink and Drive" campaign, with



the Tourism Department expected to assist enforcement efforts in the district.

Authorities were instructed to carry out joint inspections at Merces Junction, Atal Setu Junction and the Bambolim subway to assess road design issues and suggest necessary improvements.

High Court Seeks Crowd Management Plan For Shri Devi Lairai Zatra



Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: The Bombay High Court at Goa has instructed the State government to submit a detailed crowd management strategy for the upcoming Annual Shri Devi Lairai Zatra at Shirgao, following last year's stampede that resulted in six fatalities and left nearly 80 people injured.

The directive came during the hearing of a petition requesting the

court to ensure adequate safety arrangements for the festival scheduled to take place on April 21. The petitioners referred to the May 2025 tragedy and urged the court to intervene so that similar incidents can be prevented in the future. The plea also called on the authorities to consider and implement the recommendations put forward by the Fact-Finding Inquiry Committee that was set up after the stampede.

During the

proceedings, government counsel informed the court that a number of key measures have already been introduced to enhance safety and crowd control during the forthcoming event.

The High Court has given the State government one week to submit a brief affidavit outlining the steps already taken, as well as the long-term safety plan. The matter has been posted for further hearing on March 10.

Margao Municipal Workers Threaten Self-Immolation Over Regularisation Dispute

Team Goemkarponn

Margao: In a dramatic escalation of the ongoing dispute over the regularisation of Margao Municipal Council (MMC) employees, 14 sanitation workers on Thursday evening threatened to set themselves on fire if their demands regarding pay fixation and pending arrears are not resolved within the next two days. The workers gathered outside the Margao Municipal building carrying bottles filled with petrol and warned that they would resort to self-immolation if the council fails to implement the High Court's directions. They alleged that despite two court orders, including one passed in a contempt petition, the authorities have failed to grant them the benefits due to them.



Margao Municipal Chief Officer Madhu Narvekar later assured the media that the issues would be settled in accordance with the High Court's directions by early next week. He said the pending matters, including correction of the order date, would be addressed by Tuesday or Wednesday.

The sanitation workers, who were initially appointed on daily wages, were granted regularisation orders in March 2010. However, the Directorate of Municipal Administration (DMA) kept

the order in abeyance in June 2020 following administrative and political disputes. After unsuccessful attempts to seek relief through political representatives, a group of workers approached the High Court. Following a prolonged legal battle lasting over four years, the High Court set aside the abeyance order and upheld their regularisation. The workers, however, claim that even several months after the judgment, the council has not fully implemented the court's directives.

Four Booked For Assaulting Youth Over Old Enmity In Candolim

Team Goemkarponn

CALANGUTE: Calangute Police have registered an offence against four persons for allegedly assaulting a 19-year-old youth at Candolim in Bardez. The complaint was filed by Mr. Samuel Bobby Fernandes (19), a resident of Arady Vaddo, Candolim, and the offence was registered on February 25,



2026, at 9:42 pm.

As per the complaint, the incident took place on January 23, 2026, at around 3:30 am at Evy Mart near the football

ground in Candolim. The accused have been identified as Manjunath Badgavi, Rahul Naik, Amrut Patil and Parshuram, all residents of Arady Vaddo, Candolim.

The complainant alleged that the four accused, acting with common intention, abused him with filthy words and assaulted him with fist blows on his face. They

allegedly pushed him to the ground and continued to assault him with kicks and punches on various parts of his body over a previous enmity. The accused also reportedly threatened him with dire consequences.

Police have registered the case, and further investigation is in progress under PSI Rajaram Bagkar.



Minor Girl Allegedly Kidnapped From Nessai, One Arrested

Team Goemkarponn

NESSAI: Margao Police have registered an offence of kidnapping following a complaint from a resident of Borda, Margao, originally from Uttar Pradesh. According to police, the complainant (name withheld) reported that on February 24, 2026, between 4:00 pm and 5:00 pm, near the Carbon Factory at Nessai,

the accused allegedly kidnapped his minor cousin sister from lawful guardianship. The accused has been identified as Pankaj Nishad, a resident of Nessai and originally from Banda, Uttar Pradesh.

Police have registered the offence, and further investigation is being carried out by PSI Sagar Kamat of Margao Police Station.

Couple Booked For Trespass, Illegal Balcony Extension In Old Goa Housing Complex

Team Goemkarponn

OLD GOA: Old Goa Police have registered an offence against a couple for allegedly criminally trespassing into a neighbour's private garden and carrying out an illegal balcony extension at the Gera River of Joy residential complex in Tiswadi. According to police, the complaint was

filed by Mrs. Pranali Naik (34), a resident of Flat No. B-3001, Gera River of Joy, Zone A, Old Goa. Based on her complaint, the offence was registered on February 25, 2026, at 10:30 pm. As per the complaint, the incident occurred on April 14, 2025, at the same housing

complex. The accused have been identified as Nishant Mane and Mrs. Vaishali Mane, residents of Flat No. B-3101 in the same building.

The complainant alleged that both accused, acting with common intention, criminally trespassed into her private garden area and carried

out an illegal extension of their balcony encroaching into her property. When she objected and intervened, the accused allegedly abused her and threatened her, reportedly saying, "Come on top he will show you." Police have registered the case and further investigation is underway under the supervision of LPSI Jasvita Naik.



48-Year-Old Man Found Dead Near Borim

Team Goemkarponn

BORIM: A 48-year-old man was found dead in an apparent case of suicide near Sai Baba Temple at Kajorda, Borim, in Ponda.

As per police information, at around 10:18 pm on February 25, 2026, PCR Panaji informed Ponda Police that a person had locked himself inside a room and was not opening the door. Police personnel rushed to the spot and, with the assistance of staff from the Ponda Fire Station, forced open the door.

Upon entering the room, police found that the man had allegedly died by suicide by hanging himself

using a dupatta tied to a wooden rafter as ligature material.

The deceased has been identified as Krishna Naik (48), a resident of Khazordem, Borim, Ponda. Preliminary enquiry revealed that he was unemployed and a chronic alcoholic.

Police conducted the scene of unnatural death (UD) occurrence panchanama and inquest panchanama over the body. The shav has been preserved at South Goa District Hospital for further medico-legal formalities.

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

Three Inmates Booked For Assaulting Undertrial Prisoner At Colvale Central Jail

Team Goemkarponn

COLVALE: An offence has been registered against three inmates of Central Jail Colvale for allegedly assaulting an undertrial prisoner inside the jail premises.

According to police, the complaint was lodged by Bomu Pavane, Deputy Superintendent of Central Jail Colvale, and the offence was registered on February 26, 2026, at 1:35 pm.

As per the complaint, the



incident occurred on February 25, 2026, at around 6:00 pm in Block No. 4 of the jail. The accused

inmates have been identified as Narayan alias Babu Bhalekar, Sagar Patil, and Manthan Chari, all lodged at the Central Jail.

The three accused, allegedly acting with common intention, assaulted Simachal Parida, an undertrial prisoner, by punching him on the face. The assault reportedly resulted in fracture injuries to the right side of his jaw.

Police have registered the case, and further investigation is being carried out by PSI Vishnu Jadhav.

Illegal Sand Extraction Of 40 Cubic Metres Detected In Camurlim, Offence Registered

Team Goemkarponn

COLVALE: Colvale Police have registered an offence in connection with illegal sand extraction detected at Camurlim village in Bardez taluka.

According to police, the complaint was filed by Shri Omkar R. Naik Gaonkar, Geologist with the Directorate of Mines & Geology, Panaji. The offence was registered on



February 25, 2026, at 4:39 pm.

As per the complaint, during a site inspection conducted prior to 11:15 am on February 25, 2026, at property bearing Survey Nos. 130/0 and 131/0 of Village Camurlim,

Bardez, the complainant along with Colvale Police Station staff found illegally extracted sand stacked on the said property.

The sand, estimated at approximately 40 cubic metres and valued at around Rs. 52,000,

was allegedly extracted and stored by unknown persons without obtaining necessary permission from the concerned authorities, thereby constituting theft of a minor mineral.

Police have registered the offence against unknown accused persons, and further investigation is being carried out by PSI Vishnu Jadhav.

Valmiki Naik Warns Of Political Fallout; Seeks Immediate Debate On 39(A)

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: AAP Goa President Valmiki Naik emerged as the most combative voice in the opposition delegation that met Governor Pusapati Ashok Gajapathi Raju on Thursday, demanding a Special Session of the Goa Legislative Assembly to scrap Section 39(A) of the TCP Act.

Positioning the issue as both a moral and



political test for the BJP government, Naik warned that any delay in debating the provision on the floor of the House would have serious electoral consequences.

Naik highlighted the deteriorating health of St Andre MLA Viresh Borkar, stating that the Assembly session scheduled for March 6 may be too late. He insisted that Section 39(A) must be taken up for immediate discussion through a special sitting.

"The Chief Minister says it will be discussed in the right forum. The right forum is the Assembly — and it must be convened now," Naik said, calling

for urgency rather than procedural delays.

Naik also cautioned the government against taking action against protestors. He warned that if even one agitator is jailed, it would trigger mass mobilisation across Goa.

"In 2027, the people will respond politically," he said, asserting that a new government would review and withdraw cases filed against what he termed "innocent protestors."



Bust of Lt Narendra Mayekar unveiled at Sada

■ MLA announces road naming and move to declare homage to a government function

Team Goemkarponn

SADA: Sada witnessed a deeply moving and historic morning on Thursday as Mormugao MLA Sankalp Amonkar inaugurated the bust of Lt Narendra Mayekar at the renovated Smarak Sthal, developed under MLA-LAD funds. The ceremony drew a large gathering of residents, family members of the martyr, serving and retired defence personnel from across Goa, and other dignitaries, turning the coastal locality into a solemn yet proud tribute ground. The newly renovated memorial site, adorned with flowers and the Tricolour, echoed

with patriotic fervour as defence units presented honours. Lt Mayekar's family stood beside the unveiled bust, visibly emotional as tributes poured in for the brave son of Sada who laid down his life for the nation.

Addressing the gathering, Amonkar described the occasion as a proud moment not only for Sada but for the entire state. He announced that the road at Sada would be officially named after Lt Narendra Mayekar to ensure that his legacy remains etched in public memory. "This is a small step to honour a towering sacrifice.

Dharwad Labourer Found Unconscious in Khotigao Room, Declared Dead at CHC

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: A 40-year-old labourer from Dharwad, Karnataka, was found unconscious in his room at Avalim-Khotigao in Canacona early Thursday morning and was later declared dead at the Community Health Centre (CHC), Canacona. According to Canacona



Police, the deceased has been identified as Shankar Hadimane (35-40), a native of Dharwad, Karnataka. He had been working as a labourer under Ashok Velip of Avalim-

Khotigao and had been staying at his employer's residence for the past five days. On Thursday morning, Hadimane was found unconscious in the room where he was sleeping. He was immediately shifted to CHC Canacona in a 108 ambulance for medical attention. However, the on-duty doctor declared

him brought dead. Police conducted an inquest panchanama, and the body has been sent to South Goa District Hospital, Margao, for preservation and further medico-legal formalities. Canacona Police have registered a case of Unnatural Death under Section 194 of the BNSS 2023.

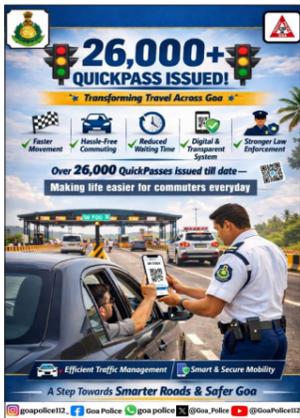
Over 26,000 QuickPasses Issued Across Goa, Says Goa Police

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: The Goa Police has announced that more than 26,000 QuickPasses have been issued so far, marking a significant step towards streamlining traffic movement and enhancing road safety across the state.

According to officials, the QuickPass system has been introduced to ensure faster movement of vehicles, hassle-free commuting, and reduced waiting time at key checkpoints and high-traffic zones. The initiative also promotes a digital and transparent mechanism aimed at improving overall traffic management.

The department stated that the system strengthens law enforcement while offering a smart and secure mobility solution for daily commuters. By integrating QR-based verification and digital processing,



the QuickPass initiative minimizes manual intervention and enhances efficiency.

Police authorities described the development as a major milestone in transforming travel across Goa, adding that the initiative contributes to efficient traffic management and safer roads.

The move is being seen as part of broader efforts by the state administration to modernize traffic systems and make commuting more convenient for residents and visitors alike.

Goa Govt Declares March 8 as Paid Holiday for Panchayat By-Elections

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Government of Goa has declared Sunday, March 8, 2026, as a "paid holiday" on account of Polling Day for the bye-elections to various Village Panchayat wards across the State.

The paid holiday will be applicable to every person employed in any business, trade, industrial undertaking or any other establishment who is entitled to vote in the concerned bye-election wards.

Polling will be held for the following wards: Ward No. I of Village Panchayat Chandel-Hasapur; Ward



No. IV of Village Panchayat Mandrem; Ward No. VII of Village Panchayat Piligao; Ward No. III of Village Panchayat Latambarcem; Ward No. I of Village Panchayat Pilerne-Mar na; Ward No. VI of Village Panchayat Sirsaim; Ward No. II of Village Panchayat Salvador do Mundo; Ward

No. I of Village Panchayat Candolim; Ward No. VI of Village Panchayat Aquem Baixo; Ward No. I of Village Panchayat Borim; Ward No. III of Village Panchayat Veling-Priol-Cuncolem; Ward No. III of Village Panchayat Bhoma-Adcolna; Ward No. VIII of Village Panchayat

Balli-Adnem; and Ward No. VIII of Village Panchayat Loliem-Polem.

The notification further states that the holiday will be a paid holiday for workers of all establishments in Goa, including commercial and industrial undertakings, daily wage and casual workers employed in any business, trade, industrial undertakings, Government departments, State Government industrial departments, or any other establishments.

The decision has been taken to enable eligible voters to exercise their franchise in the bye-elections.

Dr. Gouresh Bugde Appointed Liaison Officer for Reserved Categories

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Office of the State Registrar—cum—Head of Notary Services has informed that District Registrar Dr. Gouresh Bugde of the Registration Department has been

appointed as the Liaison Officer for members belonging to Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), Other Backward Classes (OBCs), Ex-servicemen and Economically Weaker

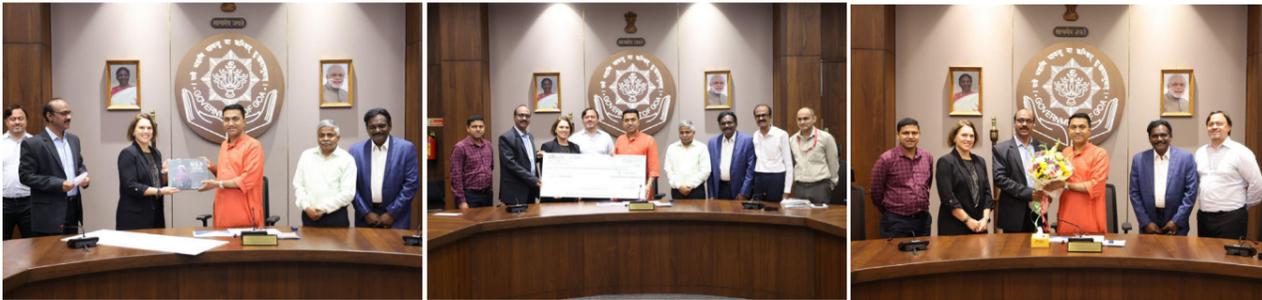
Sections (EWS).

In his capacity as Liaison Officer, Dr. Bugde will coordinate with the concerned authorities and ensure compliance with all relevant instructions and guidelines pertaining to these categories.

The appointment is aimed at strengthening institutional mechanisms and ensuring effective implementation of policies and directives related to welfare and service matters concerning the specified sections.

“CSR Is a Collective Commitment to Inclusive Growth,” Says CM as ₹2.18 Crore Boosts Goa Development

■ Pentair reinforces long term partnership with the state through major CSR support.



Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: A significant push toward community development in Goa received fresh momentum as Pentair presented a Corporate Social Responsibility contribution of ₹2.18 crore to the Government of Goa. The cheque was formally handed over at the state secretariat in Porvorim, marking a continued collaboration between industry and government to advance welfare focused initiatives across the state.

Chief Minister Pramod Sawant welcomed the contribution, describing CSR as more than a statutory obligation. He said it reflects a shared responsibility to build a stronger and

more inclusive society. According to him, when industry and government work together with transparency and accountability, development outcomes become more meaningful, sustainable, and visible at the grassroots level. The CSR support will be implemented in coordination with the Goa CSR Authority, ensuring that funds are directed toward priority development needs. These initiatives are expected to focus on strengthening community infrastructure and enhancing welfare measures that directly benefit local communities. The structured approach is designed to deliver measurable impact

while aligning with the state's broader goals of sustainable growth.

Pentair has maintained a long standing presence in Goa since 1996, operating from Verna and contributing consistently to social and developmental programmes. The latest CSR assistance reinforces the company's commitment to responsible corporate citizenship and its ongoing efforts to support inclusive progress in the region. Over the years, its initiatives have complemented public policy objectives by addressing community needs at the local level. The event was attended by senior officials from both the government

and Pentair's leadership. Key participants included Chief Secretary Dr. V. Candavelou, senior executives from Pentair's corporate office, and representatives from the Goa CSR Authority. Their presence underscored the importance of collaboration between public institutions and the private sector in driving social development. The handover ceremony in Panaji highlighted Goa's emphasis on leveraging CSR as a strategic tool for inclusive growth. With continued cooperation between industry and government, such initiatives are expected to play a vital role in improving quality of life and strengthening community resilience across the state.

...CONTD FROM PAGE 01

Emergency-Era Decisions Criticised, CM Pramod Sawant Questions 1971 Post-War Strategy

1971 war developments, the Chief Minister questioned the outcomes of the Shimla Agreement, arguing that India's strong battlefield position was not fully leveraged at the negotiating table. "After a decisive military victory,

nearly 5,000 square miles of captured territory was returned and 93,000 Pakistani prisoners of war were released. Yet, several issues remained unresolved. Many Indian soldiers never returned home," Sawant said. He further alleged

that certain decisions taken during that period appeared to compromise India's long-term security interests. "India deserved decisive leadership that converted military success into lasting strategic gains," he remarked. Sawant said historical

decisions must be debated openly to understand their impact on present-day national security and governance. "We must learn from the past to ensure that India's interests are always safeguarded with firmness and clarity," he added.

Court Clears Kejriwal and Sisodia in Liquor Policy Case

or criminal intent behind the formulation of the liquor policy. It held that the prosecution failed to establish allegations of corruption or wrongdoing and concluded that the case lacked substantive evidence to support the charges. The case stemmed

from the excise policy introduced by the Delhi government during the 2021 to 2022 period. The policy was projected as a reform aimed at increasing revenue, improving transparency, and modernising liquor retail in the national capital.

Pakistan Declares Open War After Kabul Airstrikes

Ghazab lil Haq, stating that Islamabad would no longer exercise restraint. Pakistani officials claimed their strikes hit Taliban military installations and resulted in heavy losses for Afghan forces,

asserting that more than 130 Afghan fighters were killed and dozens of posts destroyed. The Afghan Taliban government rejected Pakistan's account and offered sharply different figures.



DGCA Rolls Out Easier Ticket Cancellation and Refund Rules for Flyers

■ New norms allow free changes within 48 hours and mandate faster refunds

New Delhi: The Directorate General of Civil Aviation has introduced revised, passenger focused rules governing airline ticket cancellations, modifications, and refunds, aiming to simplify procedures and reduce delays faced by air travellers. The updated norms are designed to improve transparency and ensure quicker resolution of refund related grievances.

Under the revised framework, passengers will be allowed to cancel or change their air tickets without paying any additional charge within 48 hours of booking, provided certain conditions are met. This move offers greater flexibility to travellers who may need to revise plans shortly after making a reservation, a common concern highlighted by frequent flyers.

The regulator has also clarified long standing confusion around name corrections on tickets. For bookings made directly through an airline's official website, passengers can request a correction in the name of the same traveller within 24 hours of booking without incurring any fee. This provision is expected to reduce disputes arising from minor spelling errors or typographical mistakes. In cases where tickets are purchased through travel agents or online booking portals, the responsibility

for processing refunds will rest with the airlines. The revised rules make it mandatory for carriers to ensure that refunds are completed within 14 working days, reinforcing accountability and eliminating delays that passengers often experience when dealing with intermediaries. The new guidelines also introduce clearer provisions for ticket cancellations arising from medical emergencies. Airlines have been directed to handle such requests in a prompt and transparent manner, ensuring that genuine cases are addressed with sensitivity and fairness.

These amendments to the Civil Aviation Requirements on refunds come amid a growing number of passenger complaints related to delayed or denied refunds. The issue had previously drawn public attention during widespread flight disruptions involving IndiGo in December 2025, after which authorities had intervened to enforce timely refunds. With the revised norms now in place, passengers can expect a more predictable and streamlined refund process.

The DGCA's move is seen as a significant step towards strengthening consumer rights in India's rapidly expanding aviation sector, while encouraging airlines to adopt more passenger friendly practices.

“Humanity Must Never Be a Casualty of War,” Says PM Modi While Backing Gaza Peace Push

■ India reaffirms support for dialogue, stability, and joint fight against terrorism during Israel visit.

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday underscored India's commitment to peace and humanitarian values, stating that humanity should never become a victim of conflict. Speaking at a joint press interaction with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem, Modi said India strongly supports ongoing efforts aimed at restoring peace in Gaza. Highlighting New Delhi's position, the Prime Minister said the Gaza Peace Plan has created



a viable pathway toward stability and reconciliation. He affirmed that India has backed such initiatives and will continue to engage constructively with all stakeholders through dialogue and cooperation.

According to Modi, India's approach is guided by the belief that humanitarian considerations must always remain central during times of conflict. During the briefing, both leaders reiterated their shared stance against terrorism. Modi said India and Israel were united in their view that terrorism has no place in the modern world and cannot be justified under any circumstances.

He added that both nations would continue to work together to counter terrorism and those who

support it, reinforcing their long standing strategic partnership.

A day earlier, while addressing Israel's parliament, the Knesset, Modi had described the US backed Gaza Peace Initiative as a step toward a just and lasting resolution.

He noted that the initiative, which has also received endorsement from the United Nations Security Council, offers hope for long term peace in the region, including a fair resolution of the Palestinian issue.



“Next Strike Will Be Harsher”: Army Signals Decisive Posture Under Operation Sindoor 2.0

■ Western Command says future provocations will invite overwhelming retaliation as India sharpens combat readiness.

New Delhi: The Indian Army Western Command has issued a strong warning to Pakistan, stating that any fresh provocation along the border will be met with retaliation far more severe than last year's military response under Operation Sindoor. Senior commanders said India's approach has moved beyond limited retaliation and is now focused on achieving decisive outcomes on the battlefield. Addressing an investiture ceremony and operational demonstration in Pathankot on February 26, top officers underlined that preparations for Operation Sindoor 2.0 are already in motion. Lieutenant General Rajesh Pushkar, General Officer Commanding of the 2 Corps, said the

earlier operation in May 2025 was deliberately restrained and served as a demonstration of capability. According to him, the current phase involves far wider planning and readiness, with an emphasis on complete equipment preparedness and the integration of indigenous drones and advanced surveillance systems.

Military leaders noted that the earlier operation, which followed the Pahalgam terror attack that killed 26 civilians, forced Pakistan to seek a ceasefire within days. During that period, Indian forces struck multiple terror hubs across Pakistan and Pakistan occupied Kashmir, and later neutralised military infrastructure when Indian airbases were targeted.

“Class 8 Students Cannot Be Taught Judicial Corruption”: PM Modi Seeks Accountability Over NCERT Textbook

■ Government orders review and rewrite after Supreme Court flags content as damaging to judiciary's integrity.

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has expressed strong displeasure over a controversial chapter in a Class 8 Social Science textbook published by the National Council of Educational Research and Training, directing that accountability be fixed for the lapse. The issue relates to a chapter that referenced corruption within the judiciary, which triggered sharp reactions from the



country's top court. The controversy came into focus after the Supreme Court of India criticised the inclusion of such

content in a middle school curriculum, observing that it undermined public confidence in the justice system. The Prime Minister questioned how students at the Class 8 level could be expected to engage with sensitive themes like judicial corruption and sought clarity on who approved the material. Following the court's intervention, NCERT issued an unconditional apology and withdrew the textbook from circulation.

The council also confirmed that the curriculum would be revised and rewritten to address the concerns raised. The book in question, Exploring Society: India and Beyond, Vol II, had been released only days earlier before being taken down from official platforms and distribution channels. The Supreme Court, led by Chief Justice Surya Kant, described the chapter as an affront to the dignity and integrity of the judiciary.

CBI Moves High Court After Setback in Excise Policy Case Involving Kejriwal and Sisodia

■ Agency to challenge trial court ruling that found allegations lacking substance and criminal intent

New Delhi: The Central Bureau of Investigation has decided to approach the Delhi High Court, seeking to challenge a recent trial court order that discharged former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and former Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia in the Delhi excise policy case. The move follows the ruling by the special court at Rouse Avenue Court, which granted relief to the two senior leaders of the Aam Aadmi Party.



The court held that the allegations put forward by the investigating agency failed to meet the threshold required to proceed with criminal prosecution. While delivering the order, the

trial court observed that the purported central role attributed to Kejriwal and Sisodia in the alleged conspiracy could not be established through the evidence presented. It noted that the accusations did not withstand judicial scrutiny and lacked the necessary material to justify framing charges at this stage. The court made specific observations regarding Manish Sisodia, stating that there was no indication of criminal intent on his part.

“Terrorism Is Over, the Future Is Tourism”: Omar Abdullah Sets New Vision for J&K

■ Chief Minister highlights safety, spirituality, and infrastructure push to position J&K as a year-round global destination

New Delhi: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Wednesday delivered a strong message of optimism, declaring that terrorism in the Union Territory is over and the focus has decisively shifted toward tourism, growth, and development. Speaking at a tourism-focused event in Delhi, he said Jammu and Kashmir is ready to move forward with confidence and welcome visitors



from across India and the world. Emphasising that the region does not need a brand ambassador, Abdullah pointed to its unmatched spiritual and

cultural significance. He noted that sacred destinations such as the Vaishno Devi Temple and numerous revered shrines already draw millions of pilgrims every year. With such divine heritage, he said, the region's identity speaks for itself. Referring to past security challenges, including the Pahalgam terror incident, Abdullah described it as an unfortunate chapter but stressed that lessons have been learned.

“Play Fearless and Keep Smiling”: India’s Batting Revival Sends Strong World Cup Message

■ Tilak Varma credits team clarity and Gautam Gambhir’s words for dominant Super 8 turnaround

New Delhi: India’s aggressive batting blueprint in the ongoing ICC Men’s T20 World Cup is no longer situational but a fixed identity, according to young batter Tilak Varma. Following a commanding performance in the Super 8 stage, India underlined its intent with a massive total of 256 for four against Zimbabwe, sealing a thumping 72 run victory that revived momentum in the tournament.

Addressing the media after the match, Tilak stressed that the team has committed fully to an attacking approach regardless of early setbacks. He explained that the focus remains on collective run scoring and maintaining the same tempo even if wickets fall in the powerplay. According to him, this mindset puts sustained



pressure on opposition bowlers and creates a sense of uncertainty from the very start.

Tilak highlighted the impact of Sanju Samson, who came into the playing eleven and provided early impetus. Samson’s brisk 24 off 15 deliveries helped India race to a rapid opening stand with Abhishek Sharma, setting the tone for the innings. Tilak noted that strong starts from the openers naturally transfer confidence to the middle order, allowing batters

down the line to continue playing positively without hesitation.

Reflecting on India’s earlier Super 8 setback against South Africa, Tilak revealed that the squad regrouped by revisiting footage from previous successful T20 outings. Watching those performances helped reinforce belief and clarity before the high scoring contest at MA Chidambaram Stadium. The emphasis, he said, was on enjoying the contest and playing

with freedom rather than overthinking match situations.

India’s renewed confidence was further strengthened by head coach Gautam Gambhir, whose message to the squad was simple and direct. Gambhir reminded the players to trust the brand of cricket they have developed over the past year, including recent home series against New Zealand and South Africa. His advice was to smile, stay fearless, and back instinctive play irrespective of pressure moments. The result was a performance that not only boosted India’s Super 8 campaign but also sent a clear signal to rivals. India’s batting unit appears unified in intent, mentally liberated, and determined to impose itself as the tournament enters its decisive phase.

Tanaya Naik Takes Charge as Goa Aim for Strong U-23 Campaign

■ Young squad set for challenging Women’s U-23 One Day Trophy fixtures in Dehradun

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Tanaya Naik has been entrusted with the responsibility of leading Goa’s Women’s Under 23 side in the Women’s U-23 One Day Trophy 2025–26, as the team prepares for a competitive campaign in Women’s U-23 One Day Trophy. The tournament will be held in Dehradun from March 3 to March 11, 2026, bringing together promising young cricketers from across the country.

Placed in Group E, Goawill face a demanding league schedule with five matches lined up over nine days. The team will begin its journey against Hyderabad on March 3, followed by encounters with Saurashtra on March 5 and Chandigarh on March 7. The final phase of the group stage will see Goa take on Andhra on March 9 before concluding their league fixtures against Delhi on March 11. The format is expected to test both consistency and depth, with minimal recovery time between matches.

The selected squad reflects a balanced mix of leadership, all round potential, and emerging talent. Alongside captain Tanaya Naik, the team includes Harshita Yadav, Urvashi Govekar, Tanisha Gaikawad, Pooja Kalel, Presha Naik, Palak Arondekar, Savali Kolambkar, Metali Gawander, Nirmiti Khanvilkar, Vidika Sawant, Swarali Kasar,



Siddhi Savase, Kimya Desai, Harshada Kadam, Mrunmayee Bhike, and Shilpa Sharma. The group combines players with domestic exposure and several youngsters eager to make a mark at the national level.

The upcoming tournament is viewed as an important platform for Goa’s women cricketers to demonstrate their progress and compete against some of the strongest state sides in the country. With structured preparation and a clear focus on performance, the team will aim to build momentum from the opening match and remain competitive throughout the league phase. As the Women’s U-23 One Day Trophy gets underway, Goa’s campaign will be closely watched, with the leadership of Tanaya Naik and the collective effort of the squad expected to play a decisive role in shaping their season.

Last-Ball Run-Out Seals Dramatic One-Run Win for Vimson Panjim Powerplay

■ GSB Unity Cup clash in Margao delivers high drama under lights

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: A pulsating contest at the MCC Ground in Margao on Wednesday night ended in heartbreak for Madgaon Royals CC and jubilation for Vimson Panjim Powerplay, as Panjim Powerplay clinched a thrilling one run victory in the GSB Unity Cup 3.0. Chasing a challenging target of 160, Madgaon



Royals fought valiantly but fell just short, finishing on 158 for 7 in their allotted 20 overs. The match went down to the final ball, with the Royals needing four

runs to win and three to force a tie.

In a tense moment, Granthik Buyao attempted a risky third run but was run out, handing Panjim

Powerplay a dramatic win in front of an enthusiastic crowd.

Earlier, after opting to field first, Madgaon Royals made early inroads but were steadied by a composed innings from Panjim Powerplay captain Amod Borkar. Leading by example, he struck a fluent 50 from 39 deliveries, decorated with five boundaries and a six.

Dominant Performances Mark Action-Packed Day Two at Junior Cricket Championship

■ Dhadsakhal Stars, AK Rangers, Power Panthers Porvorim and Oxford shine with commanding wins

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Day two of the Junior Cricket Championship delivered emphatic performances as Dhadsakhal Stars, AK Rangers, Power Panthers Porvorim, and hosts Oxford registered convincing victories on



Thursday. The tournament is being organised by Oxford Cricket Club and

continues to showcase emerging talent across venues in Goa.

At the SAG Ground, Dhadsakhal Stars produced a clinical display against Ghumteshwar. Batting first, Ghumteshwar struggled against disciplined bowling and were dismissed for 97 in 22 overs. Rehan Hubali fought hard with 37, while Yash Shet added 19, but

wickets fell regularly at the other end. Shaurya Chodankar led the attack with an incisive spell that dismantled the batting order.

Dhadsakhal Stars made light work of the chase, racing to 101 for one in just 7.4 overs. Adeep Prabhu Misquin

remained unbeaten on a commanding 59, supported by Pranjal Singh’s 32. Chodankar was named Man of the Match for his match-winning impact. In another SAG Ground encounter, AK Rangers overpowered Banjara Cricket Club by 46 runs.