



## BABUSH SHOWS UTPAL HIS PLACE...

**BJP-backed panel led by Panaji MLA Atanasio 'Babush' Monserrate registers decisive victory; Ami Panjekar panel bags three seats** | **Babush Panel Sweeps CCP Polls, Wins 27 of 30 Wards**



### Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji:** The BJP-backed panel led by Panaji MLA and Revenue Minister Atanasio "Babush" Monserrate secured a landslide victory in the Corporation of the City of Panaji (CCP) elections, winning 27 out of the 30 wards as the final results were declared on Friday. The rival Ami Panjekar-backed panel managed to

win three wards, indicating a dominant performance by the Monserrate-led panel across the capital city. According to the official result sheet of the CCP election, candidates supported by the Monserrate-BJP panel swept most wards, while Ami Panjekar-backed candidates emerged victorious in Ward 7, Ward 17 and Ward 29. Leonid Furtado won from Ward 7, Jack Sukhija secured

### CCP Poll Verdict Shows BJP's Strength in Panaji: Babush Monserrate

Revenue Minister thanks party leadership and voters after BJP-backed panel sweeps 27 of 30 wards

#### Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji:** Reacting to the results of the Corporation of the City of Panaji (CCP) elections, Revenue Minister and Panaji MLA Atanasio "Babush" Monserrate said the outcome has delivered a strong message that even a united opposition



could not defeat the BJP in the capital city. The BJP-backed panel led by Monserrate won 27 out of 30 wards, securing a decisive mandate in the municipal corporation.

CONTD TO PAGE 06...

### Utpal Parrikar: Journey Was Not Just About Winning Seats



"My commitment to Panaji does not end with this election. We will continue to engage with citizens, raise issues that matter, and work constructively to address the challenges our city faces," he said. Describing public life as a long journey, Parrikar said both victories and setbacks are part of the process but the intention to serve must remain constant. "Public life is a long journey. There will be victories and setbacks, but what must remain constant is the intention to serve," he said, adding, "Thank you, Panaji. Our work continues."

#### Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji:** Utpal Parrikar on Friday thanked voters who supported the Ami Panjekar panel in the CCP elections and said his commitment to the city of Panaji would continue

despite the results not meeting expectations. In a statement issued after the results, Parrikar expressed gratitude to voters, candidates, volunteers and supporters who backed the panel during the campaign.



### Opposition Protests Rock Goa Assembly Over Private Bills, House Adjourned

MLAs in black raise slogans, storm well after being denied permission to introduce agriculture protection legislation

#### Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji:** Proceedings of the Goa Legislative Assembly were disrupted on Friday after Opposition MLAs staged a protest over the alleged refusal to allow introduction of their private member bills, including the proposed Goa Protection of Agricultural Lands Bill. The uproar forced Speaker Ganesh Gaonkar to adjourn the House first till 1 pm and later for another 30 minutes. Opposition legislators, led by Leader of Opposition Yuri Alemao, entered the House dressed in black as a mark of protest.

The MLAs raised slogans of "Karo ya maro" and displayed placards

before rushing to the well of the House, demanding that they be allowed to introduce their proposed legislation

The protest intensified when the members questioned why their bills were not being permitted for introduction.

Despite repeated appeals by the Speaker to allow the Chair to address the House, the Opposition continued raising slogans, leading to disruption of proceedings. Speaker Ganesh Gaonkar remarked that such behaviour was not in keeping with democratic functioning and urged members to maintain order so that the House could proceed with its business.

### Domestic LPG supply secure in Goa; commercial sector faces 80% shortage, says CM

Industrial gas connections temporarily suspended; government urges citizens not to panic-buy

#### Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji:** Assuring residents that household cooking gas will remain available, Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Friday said the State has sufficient LPG quota for domestic consumers, even as supplies to the commercial sector have



been severely curtailed.

Speaking after chairing a high-level review meeting with officials from the Civil Supplies Department, police authorities and representatives of oil marketing companies, Sawant stated that around 80 per cent of LPG meant for commercial establishments has been

affected, while industrial LPG connections have been temporarily suspended. The Chief Minister explained that the restrictions are part of emergency fuel allocation measures issued by the Central government to ensure uninterrupted availability of cooking gas for households.

### India's Fuel Supplies Fully Secure Despite Hormuz Crisis," Says Hardeep Puri

Government reroutes crude imports and expands global sourcing as West Asia conflict disrupts key energy route

**New Delhi:** India's energy supply remains stable despite the disruption in the Strait of Hormuz, with the government shifting a majority of crude oil imports to alternative routes, Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri told Parliament. Addressing the Lok Sabha, the minister said India's crude supply



position is secure and the volumes already procured exceed what would have

CONTD TO PAGE 06...

### Goa CM thanks Voters for BJP Panel's Victory in CCP Polls

#### Team Goemkarponn



**Panaji:** Chief Minister Pramod Sawant has thanked

the people of Panaji for giving a decisive mandate to the BJP-backed panel in the Corporation of the City of Panaji (CCP) elections, stating that the results reflect the public's trust in the party's commitment to development and

good governance. In a statement following the results, Sawant expressed gratitude to the voters for reaffirming their faith in the BJP and its vision for the capital city. "I express my heartfelt gratitude to the people of Panaji for giving a resounding mandate to the BJP-led panel in the CCP polls and for once again reaffirming their trust in our commitment to serve the city and continue the momentum of all-round development," the Chief Minister said.

## When Assurances Don't Match Reality: Goa's LPG Confusion Fuels Public Panic

The images emerging from across Goa in recent days are deeply unsettling. Long queues outside LPG agencies, anxious households rushing to book cylinders, restaurants trimming menus, and fishing vessels staying anchored due to a shortage of commercial gas. At the same time, the official message from the government has been reassuring: there is ample LPG stock and citizens need not panic.

It is precisely this contradiction that has pushed the situation from concern to confusion.

If supplies are indeed adequate, as authorities claim, why are consumers scrambling to secure cylinders? Why are dealers reporting unusually high demand and long waiting periods? Why are restaurants rationing fuel, and fishermen hesitating to venture out to sea? These questions cannot simply be brushed aside as public panic.

Cooking gas is one of the most basic necessities in any household. The moment people sense uncertainty around its availability, anxiety spreads rapidly. That anxiety is amplified when the government sends mixed signals about the real situation.

On one hand, there have been suggestions that stock levels could last only a limited period. On the other, officials have insisted that there is nothing to worry about. Such conflicting messages naturally erode public confidence. When citizens hear two different narratives from the same administration, they prepare for the worst.

Panic buying is not created in isolation. It is

*On one hand, there have been suggestions that stock levels could last only a limited period. On the other, officials have insisted that there is nothing to worry about. Such conflicting messages naturally erode public confidence. When citizens hear two different narratives from the same administration, they prepare for the worst.*

*Panic buying is not created in isolation. It is usually triggered by a lack of clear information.*

*The impact is not limited to households alone. The commercial sector is also feeling the pressure. Hotels, restaurants and eateries depend on uninterrupted LPG supply to function normally. When gas becomes scarce or uncertain, kitchens are forced to reduce menus, limit cooking hours or shift to costlier alternatives. The fishing sector too faces disruption when vessels cannot rely on a regular fuel supply for long journeys.*

usually triggered by a lack of clear information. The impact is not limited to households alone. The commercial sector is also feeling the pressure. Hotels, restaurants and eateries depend on uninterrupted LPG supply to function normally. When gas becomes scarce or uncertain, kitchens are

forced to reduce menus, limit cooking hours or shift to costlier alternatives. The fishing sector too faces disruption when vessels cannot rely on a regular fuel supply for long journeys.

In a state where tourism and fisheries play a vital role in the economy, such disruptions quickly ripple outward. What begins as a supply concern soon affects businesses, livelihoods and public confidence. The deeper problem lies in governance and preparedness. Essential commodities like LPG require careful monitoring and coordination between suppliers, distributors and government agencies. Any potential disruption must be anticipated and addressed before it reaches the consumer.

Equally important is communication. In times of uncertainty, the public expects clarity and consistency. When different officials present different versions of the situation, it only deepens suspicion that the government itself is unsure of the facts. The present episode shows how fragile public confidence can be when essential services are involved. A shortage of information can be as damaging as a shortage of supply. What Goa needs now is not just reassurance but transparency. Citizens deserve clear answers about stock levels, distribution challenges and the steps being taken to ensure uninterrupted supply. Only then can panic subside and trust be restored. Because when people begin to doubt what they are being told, even full cylinders cannot extinguish the fire of uncertainty.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR Confusion Over LPG Stock in Goa

The Goa government's recent statements on LPG availability have created more confusion than clarity among citizens. Within a short span of time, different versions have emerged from the authorities regarding the actual stock of cooking gas in the state. On one hand, there were statements suggesting that Goa has LPG stock for only about two weeks. Soon after, another assurance followed claiming that there is ample LPG supply and that domestic consumers need not worry. Such contradictory messaging leaves the public wondering what the real situation is. For households that depend entirely on LPG for daily cooking, clarity is essential. Even a hint of shortage can trigger anxiety, panic booking and delays in cylinder deliveries. When people hear conflicting claims from the same government, it naturally raises questions about whether the administration itself is fully aware of the ground reality. Public communication during sensitive situations must be consistent and transparent. Mixed signals can create unnecessary panic and also erode public trust. Citizens deserve clear information on the actual stock position, supply schedules and steps being taken to ensure uninterrupted availability. The government must ensure that its departments speak in one voice. Before making public statements, there should be proper coordination so that the information shared with the public is accurate and uniform. In matters affecting essential household supplies, confusion can be as damaging as an actual shortage. What people need is not reassurance through conflicting statements, but credible and consistent communication backed by clear facts.

-Cecile Vaz, Parra

## Tourism Carrying Capacity Study Must Lead to Action

The Goa government's proposal to undertake a scientific study to assess the State's tourism carrying capacity is a welcome step, but it must not end up as just another report gathering dust on government shelves. Tourism is the backbone of Goa's economy, yet the pressure it puts on the State's infrastructure and environment is becoming increasingly visible. According to figures placed in the Assembly, Goa received over 1.08 crore tourists in 2025, with domestic visitors forming the overwhelming majority. With such a massive inflow into a small coastal state, it is only natural that concerns are being raised about traffic congestion, waste management, water supply and the strain on local resources. A carrying capacity study is therefore essential. It can help determine how many tourists Goa can sustainably accommodate and what kind of infrastructure upgrades are required to support them. However, the real test will lie in how the government uses the findings of this study. Goans have seen several committees, master plans and studies announced in the past, but very few have translated into meaningful policy changes. If the carrying capacity assessment reveals that certain coastal belts or heritage areas are under severe stress, the government must have the courage to regulate tourism growth in those areas. Sustainable tourism should mean balancing economic benefits with environmental protection and the quality of life of local residents. Goa cannot afford to become another global example of uncontrolled overtourism. The proposed study offers an opportunity to plan the future of tourism in a scientific and responsible manner. What the people of Goa hope to see is not just another study, but a clear roadmap that protects the State's fragile ecology while ensuring that tourism remains beneficial for generations to come.

-Sandesh Calangutkar, Mapusa

## Goa Proposes 4 Dog Breeds as 'Ferocious Animals'; Public Invited to Give Feedback

Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji:** The Goa government has initiated the process to classify four dog breeds—Pitbull, Rottweiler, Cane Corso, and Dogo Argentino—as “ferocious animals” under the Goa Animal Breeding and Domestication (Regulation and Compensation) Act. A public notice has been issued, inviting objections and suggestions before the final notification is published. Addressing a



starred question in the Assembly raised by MLA Venzy Viegas, Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Services Minister Nilkanth Halarnkar said the breeds have been identified by the department

for formal notification under Section 3 of the Act. “The breeds Pitbull, Rottweiler, Cane Corso, and Dogo Argentino have been earmarked for classification as ferocious animals. We have invited objections from the public, which will be considered before issuing the final notification,” the minister said. He added that owners of animals declared as ferocious will bear full responsibility for their pets’ actions. This includes any injuries

caused to humans or other animals by these dogs. Minister Halarnkar clarified that no cases relating to sterilisation or certification of these breeds have been registered so far, as the official notification is yet to be issued. The prohibition on breeding or domesticating these animals will take effect only after publication in the official gazette—a process that the department has already initiated.

## No LPG Shortage in Goa, Assures Chief Secretary After Review Meeting



Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji:** The Goa government has assured residents that there is no shortage of domestic LPG cylinders in the state, urging households not to panic amid concerns over supply. Chief Secretary Dr. V. Candavelou reviewed the LPG supply situation during a meeting with representatives of oil marketing companies — Indian Oil Corporation Limited, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited — along with senior state officials. Officials informed the meeting that adequate LPG stocks are available in Goa, and domestic consumers need not fear any disruption in the supply of cooking

gas cylinders. The meeting was attended by Secretary (Civil Supplies) Sanjeev Gadkar, IGP K. R. Chaurasia, North Goa Collector Ankit Yadav, South Goa Collector Egna Cleetus and Director of Civil Supplies Jayant Tari. During the review, the Chief Secretary stressed the need to disseminate accurate information to the public to prevent panic. District collectors have been asked to direct sub-divisional magistrates and deputy collectors in every taluka to monitor the situation and raise awareness about the availability of LPG. Police authorities have also been instructed to assist oil companies in ensuring smooth delivery of LPG cylinders to domestic consumers if required.

## Valpoi Residents Protest Over Shop Sign Advertising 'Pakistani Dresses'

Team Goemkarponn

**Valpoi:** Tensions have flared in Valpoi after a shop on the Valpoi-Thane road displayed a sign promoting “Pakistani dresses.” The advertisement triggered strong reactions from locals, who approached the Valpoi police demanding immediate action against the shop owner. Residents have



also called on the Valpoi Municipal Council to revoke the shop’s trade license and any related

permits. The police have confirmed that the shop owner has been summoned for questioning

on Friday at 11 am. The sign, placed near a mosque, quickly went viral on social media, sparking outrage among citizens. Many expressed that promoting items associated with Pakistan in India is offensive and undermines national pride. On Thursday, a group of local residents, led by Rishabh Mayekar, staged a protest at the police station.

## Goa Ranks Second in Fiscal Health Index Among States

Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji:** Goa has secured the second position among Indian states in the Fiscal Health Index (FHI) rankings for 2023–24, highlighting the state’s strong financial management and revenue performance. According to the report, Goa scored 54.7 points, placing it just behind Odisha, which topped the rankings with a score of 73.1. Jharkhand secured the third position with 50.5 points. The index evaluates states on several financial parameters including quality of expenditure, revenue mobilisation, fiscal prudence, debt index and debt sustainability. Goa performed particularly well in revenue mobilisation, scoring



80.4, one of the highest among states. The state also recorded a debt index score of 56.8 and fiscal prudence score of 45, reflecting relatively controlled debt levels and stable fiscal management. The findings noted that Goa’s fiscal strength largely stems from its strong own revenue generation and controlled debt levels, which have helped maintain financial stability.

Among other major

states, Gujarat ranked fourth, followed by Maharashtra in fifth position. States such as Kerala, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Punjab featured near the bottom of the rankings. The report concluded that states with strong revenue mobilisation, prudent fiscal management and sustainable debt practices continue to demonstrate better financial resilience and long-term stability.

## Goa Ships Over 45,000 Tonnes of Seafood in 2024–25, Southeast Asia Tops Destinations

Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji:** Goa exported more than 45,000 tonnes of seafood during the financial year 2024–25, with Southeast Asia, China, and the European Union emerging as the largest markets, according to data from the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA). Official figures presented in the Assembly on Thursday revealed that the State shipped 45,469 tonnes of marine products, valued at Rs 788.81 crore, during the year. Fresh fish dominated the exports, totaling 35,913 tonnes worth Rs 504.60 crore. Squid exports amounted to 5,233 tonnes valued at Rs 146.61 crore, while frozen shrimp shipments reached 1,951 tonnes,



fetching Rs 78.58 crore. Other items included 831 tonnes of cuttlefish worth Rs 27.22 crore and 1,541 tonnes of assorted fish varieties valued at Rs 31.80 crore. Trade data indicated that Southeast Asia was the largest importer of Goan seafood, taking in 37,779 tonnes valued at Rs 596.20 crore. China imported 3,531 tonnes worth Rs 65.53 crore, while the European Union accounted for 1,279

tonnes valued at Rs 44.04 crore. The Middle East imported 1,824 tonnes worth Rs 46.81 crore. Smaller consignments were also shipped to countries such as Japan and the United States, which together received over 110 tonnes valued at more than Rs 6.6 crore. The government clarified that MPEDA figures could include seafood sourced from other states but exported via Goa.

## Tourist From Madhya Pradesh Dies After Water Sports Incident at Anjuna Beach

Team Goemkarponn

**Anjuna:** A 36-year-old woman tourist from Madhya Pradesh died after falling into the sea during a water sports activity at Anjuna Beach on Wednesday evening.

According to police, Rajni Indoliya, wife of Sunil Indoliya and a native of Village Ghushgawan in Navali Badagaon, Morena district of Madhya Pradesh, was participating in a banana floater ride along with her relatives at



around 5 pm.

During the ride, they accidentally fell into the sea water and were immediately rescued by water sports staff present at the beach. However, after some time

the woman reportedly felt unwell and became unconscious.

She was rushed to St. Anthony Hospital in Anjuna, where doctors declared her brought dead, police said.

Following the incident, Anjuna Police registered UD No. 22/2026 under Section 194 of the BNSS. Police conducted an inquest panchanama over the body and stated that no foul play is suspected.

The body has been preserved at the Goa Medical College (GMC) morgue in Bambolim for further medico-legal formalities

Further investigation is being carried out by PSI Nitesh B. Shingadi of Anjuna Police Station.

## Ganja Found Hidden in Sandals of Two Undertrial Prisoners at Colvale Jail

Team Goemkarponn

**Colvale:** Two undertrial prisoners lodged at Central Jail Colvale were allegedly found in possession of suspected ganja concealed inside their footwear when they were brought back to the prison after medical examinations, officials said. According to a complaint filed by Superintendent of Central Jail Colvale, Sucheta Dessai, the incidents were detected at the jail's frisking point during routine security checks by IRBn personnel. In the first case, undertrial prisoner Dilip Saha was brought back to the jail by escort police after undergoing medical examination at GMC Bambolim. During frisking between 1.40 pm and 2.00 pm on March 11, staff allegedly discovered 143 grams of greenish leafy substance with flowering and fruiting tops suspected to be ganja, valued at



approximately Rs 15,000. The contraband was reportedly wrapped in black transparent plastic and brown tape and concealed inside the flip-flop sandals worn by the accused. In another similar incident earlier the same day, undertrial prisoner Mohammad Salam, who had also been taken to GMC Bambolim for medical examination, was checked at the frisking point between 12.35 pm and 1.15 pm. During the search, IRBn staff allegedly recovered 200 grams of suspected ganja worth about Rs 20,000, similarly wrapped and hidden inside the flip-flop sandals worn by the accused.

## Taxi Without Fitness Certificate Crashes Into Three Vehicles at Dabolim; Several Injured

Team Goemkarponn

**Vasco:** A taxi operating without valid documents allegedly caused a multi-vehicle accident on the National Highway at Matve, Dabolim, leaving several people injured. According to a complaint lodged by Head Constable

Rajesh Bandokar of Vasco Police Station, the incident occurred on March 9 at around 1.15 pm. Police said accused Raj Kori, a resident of Dongri, Dabolim, was driving a taxi Toyota Innova carrying passengers from Cortalim towards Chicalim.

The vehicle allegedly belonged to Hamid Shaikh, a resident of Chimbhel, Tiswadi. Investigations revealed that the vehicle was being operated without a valid fitness certificate and insurance, and the driver was not holding a valid taxi driver badge. While

travelling on the highway near Matve, the accused allegedly drove the vehicle in a rash and negligent manner, endangering human life. The taxi first collided with a mini bus carrying passengers that was travelling from Chicalim towards Cortalim.

## Worker Succumbs to Injuries 2 Months After Staircase Fall in Morjim

Team Goemkarponn

**Pernem:** A 26-year-old daily wage worker from Chhattisgarh died at Goa Medical College (GMC), Bambolim, nearly two months after sustaining serious injuries in a fall from a staircase at his rented

accommodation in Morjim. According to police, a wireless message was received from the casualty police at GMC on March 12 at around 12.46 pm informing that Jain Kumar Usendi (26) had expired in Ward 123. Police said the deceased, son of Lachhanuram Usendi, was working as a helper at Santacruz Technologies located at Vailo Waddo, Morjim in Pernem. He was residing at a rented house in Varchawada near Rashtoli Temple, Morjim.



Preliminary inquiry revealed that on January 14, 2026, Usendi had stepped out of his rented apartment and while returning fell from the staircase, sustaining serious injuries to his neck. He was initially shifted to CHC Tuem by a 108 ambulance and was later referred to GMC Bambolim, where he was admitted to Ward 104 under MLC No. 26/424.

Police recorded the statements of his friends, contractor, house owner and father during the course of the inquiry. A request was also moved to the Sub-Divisional Magistrate to record his dying declaration. Following the death, Mandrem Police Station registered an Unnatural Death case (UD No. 16/2026) under Section 194 of the BNSS.

## Jharkhand Native Found Unconscious at Shiroda Residence, Declared Brought Dead

Team Goemkarponn

**Ponda:** A 29-year-old man originally from Jharkhand was declared brought dead after he was found unconscious at his residence in Shiroda, police said. According to police, information was received from the Shiroda Outpost at around 11.33



pm on March 11 that a person had been brought dead to the Primary Health Centre (PHC) Shiroda. Police visited the hospital and conducted inquiries with the medical

officer, who confirmed that Vikram Ddungdung (29), a resident of Shiroda in Ponda and a native of Jharkhand, had been brought to the casualty but was declared dead on arrival. Further inquiry with the deceased's brother Agustin Ddungdung revealed that Vikram was found unconscious at the

premises of his residence, following which he was rushed to the PHC.

Police have preserved the body at the South Goa District Hospital (SGDH), Margao for further medico-legal formalities.

Further inquiry into the case is being conducted by PSI Krishna Gawas of Ponda Police Station.

## 'Enough is Enough' public meeting to be held in Canacona on Sunday

Team Goemkarponn

**Canacona:** A group of social and environmental activists has called for a large public gathering in Canacona on Sunday under the banner "Enough is Enough," urging citizens to come together to raise concerns over environmental protection and development policies in Goa. Addressing the media, activists including Sandesh Prabhudesai, Ramesh Komarpant,



Kalpna Bhat, Vassalo Carvalho, Manoj Prabhu Gaonkar and Denis Fernandes appealed to the public to attend the meeting scheduled at Shristhal in Canacona on Sunday at 4 pm. The

organisers said the event aims to mobilise people to speak out against what they described as growing threats to Goa's natural environment. Environmental activist Manoj Prabhu Gaonkar

**Activists urge citizens to unite for protection of Goa's environment.**

informed that the main speaker at the meeting will be former judge Ferdino Rebello, who is expected to address participants on issues related to environmental degradation and governance. Prominent journalist Sandesh Prabhudesai urged citizens to participate in large numbers, stressing that protecting the environment must take precedence over economic interests.

# Temporary Floating Jetties Planned to Boost Beach Safety: Rohan Khaunte

Team Goemkarponn

**Porvorim:** The Goa government has proposed the installation of temporary floating jetties at select coastal locations to improve beach safety and strengthen lifeguard response during emergencies.

Tourism Minister Rohan A. Khaunte informed the Assembly that provisions for temporary floating stations



at six locations have been included in the new tender issued for the state's lifeguarding agency.

According to the minister, the floating jetties would allow lifeguards

to quickly launch jet skis during rescue operations, enabling them to reach swimmers or visitors in distress in a shorter time.

The minister said the measure has been proposed with safety as the primary consideration and to enhance the efficiency of lifeguards while responding to incidents in the sea.

Responding to concerns raised during Zero Hour by Venzy Viegas

regarding the installation of floating stations at beaches, Khaunte stated that the proposal has been withdrawn at two locations after receiving feedback.

For the remaining sites, the Tourism Department has written to the respective panchayats, fishing communities and coastal MLAs seeking their views and suggestions before moving ahead with the plan, he added.



## FDA Marks Women's Day with Health Camp for Staff; Over 100 Employees Benefit

Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji:** The Directorate of Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) organised a special health-focused

programme on March 12 to mark International Women's Day, with a series of wellness initiatives aimed at promoting preventive healthcare among its staff.

The programme was conducted through the Goa State Price Monitoring & Resource Unit in collaboration with the AYUSH Cell under the National AYUSH Mission of the Directorate of Health Services. Held

under the theme "Give to Gain – Empowering Women for Inclusive Growth," the initiative highlighted the importance of women's health and wellbeing.

As part of the programme, several health screening services were provided, including eye check-ups by ASG Eye Hospital, bone density screening, and a 10-minute foot blood circulation therapy session.

These activities were aimed at encouraging early detection of health issues and promoting overall wellness among employees.

## LPG Shortage Grounds Goa's Fishing Fleet, Threatens Fish Supply and Prices

Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji:** A shortage of commercial LPG cylinders is severely impacting fishing operations across Goa, leaving numerous trawlers stranded at jetties and raising concerns over potential spikes in fish prices if supplies are not

restored promptly. At Malim fishing jetty, one of Goa's major fishing hubs, boat owners report that the crisis has already begun to halt operations. Returning vessels are unable to head back to sea due to the lack of cooking gas needed for long fishing trips.

Harshad Dhond, president of the All Goa Purse Seiners Boat Owners Association, said the Malim jetty alone handles around 200–250 trawlers, including roughly 125 large boats and over 100 smaller vessels. All of them rely on commercial LPG cylinders to sustain



crews during multi-day voyages. "Each large trawler, with a crew of 35–40, requires five to six cylinders for a 10–12 day trip, while smaller boats need two to three cylinders. With no new supply, boats returning from the sea are stuck at the jetty.



## Panic buying of LPG cylinders witnessed in Canacona

Gas agency says domestic supply steady, urges consumers not to hoard

Team Goemkarponn

**Canacona:** Amid concerns triggered by the ongoing tensions in the Middle East, residents in Canacona rushed to secure cooking gas cylinders, leading to panic buying at local LPG outlets on Thursday. Long queues were seen outside the HP Gas distributor Prabhudesai Gas Service at Chaudi early in the morning, even before the agency opened for the day.

The crowd continued to grow through the day as consumers arrived to book and collect cylinders directly from the

outlet. Despite the rush at the agency, officials maintained that there is no shortage of domestic LPG cylinders and that stock supplies remain regular. On Thursday alone, the agency issued over 400 cylinders directly to customers at the outlet, in addition to around 250 cylinders delivered through four home-delivery vehicles operating across the taluka. Agency representatives said the sudden surge in demand is largely driven by fear of a potential shortage due to the international situation, though supply to the domestic sector has remained stable. Pratih

Prabhudesai of the agency said staff had explained to customers waiting in queues that there was no need for panic purchasing, as adequate stock was available in the godown and fresh supplies continue to arrive regularly. He noted that the government is currently prioritising domestic LPG distribution, while commercial cylinder supply has been temporarily restricted to manage demand during the global uncertainty. However, essential services such as hospitals and institutions continue to receive cylinders without disruption.

## Black, Foul-Smelling Water Found in Colva Creek, Residents Demand Pollution Probe

Team Goemkarponn

**Colva:** Visitors and residents at Colva beach were alarmed on Thursday after noticing black, foul-smelling water stagnating in the Colva creek, raising concerns about potential pollution and the source of contamination. Locals said the sudden darkening of the creek caught them by surprise, with the stagnant water emitting a strong odor that suggested the possible entry of pollutants or untreated sewage.

"The community has no clarity on how this blackish water appeared or where it came from. Authorities must inspect the site and conduct laboratory tests to identify the source of pollution," a resident said. The public toilet block along the creek was also found closed when residents inspected the area. Initial reports suggest the closure is related to issues with sewage



discharge. No officials were present to provide explanations, though a security guard said the facility has been shut for some time due to "operational issues." Tourists were redirected to another toilet facility at the beach square. The incident has raised questions about the functioning of the sewage treatment system connected to the toilet block. Residents are concerned that the sewage treatment plant

(STP) may be non-operational or that the facility is not properly linked to the Colva sewerage network, potentially allowing untreated wastewater to flow into the creek. "Until the Goa State Pollution Control Board inspects the site and tests the water, we will not know the exact cause of the blackish water or the reason for the toilet block closure," another resident said, urging a thorough investigation.

# Vivo launches the Y51 Pro 5G: All-Day Battery, Powerful Performance, and Intelligent AI Features

Packed with a massive 7200 mAh battery with multiple battery-preserving technologies, Powered by the MediaTek Dimensity 7360 Turbo Gaming Chip with OriginOS 6, Comes loaded with AI productivity tools and features, including AI Creation, AI Notes, and AI Transcript Assist, Quad-Curved Back in Festive Red and Noble Gold color, 50MP HD Wide-angle main camera with 4K video recording and AI-powered imaging. Vivo India today launched the vivo Y51 Pro 5G, the latest addition to its Y Series. The newly introduced Y51 Pro is designed for users who prioritise smooth, reliable performance and immersive entertainment, delivering a consistent and dependable smartphone experience that keeps pace with dynamic daily routines. With a strong focus on endurance, seamless multitasking, and everyday ease of use, the device reflects



vivo's commitment to creating practical innovation that supports both productivity and leisure, offering lasting value within the Y Series portfolio. The Y51 Pro 5G houses a massive 7200 mAh Battery2 and is powered by the MediaTek Dimensity 7360 Turbo chipset. It also comes equipped with an IP68 and IP69 rating for enhanced durability, and supports a 50MP HD Wide-angle main camera with 4K video recording capabilities. The vivo Y51 Pro 5G features refined craftsmanship with a seamless one-piece frame and 3D quad-curved back, offering a comfortable grip. Big radius corners and a metallic camera deco enhance its premium appeal. It is available in Festive Red color, inspired by the warm glow of festival lanterns with a contrasting black bezel; and Noble Gold, featuring vivo's signature Gradient Grating design for a dynamic 3D depth effect. The device is

priced at INR 24,999 for the 8GB + 128GB variant and INR 27,999 for the 8GB + 256GB variant. The device will go on sale starting 11th March 2026, across the vivo official website, Flipkart, and all partner retail stores. Consumers purchasing the smartphone can avail of the following offers: Cashback of up to INR 2500 (offer valid from 8th March to 16th March) OR Up to 10 months Zero Down Payment (available with select banking partners), For Jio users, free premium access to 10 OTT apps for six months on the prepaid plan of Rs 1199. Up to 70% discount valid from 8th March to 14th March, and up to 40% discount from 15th March to 31st March on Screen Damage Protection and Extended Warranty plans. "At vivo, we believe innovation should meaningfully support the way users live and work every day," said Geetaj Channana, Chief Corporate Communications Officer,

vivo India, "The Y51 Pro 5G has been developed with a deep understanding of users who rely on their smartphones to stay productive, connected, and entertained throughout the day. It is designed to deliver a consistent and dependable experience that keeps pace with their dynamic lifestyles. Our focus remains on creating technology that feels intuitive, reliable, and thoughtfully aligned with users' everyday needs." Made in India, Made for India: The vivo Y51 Pro 5G is proudly manufactured at vivo India's Greater Noida facility, reflecting vivo's commitment to quality, innovation, and products tailored for Indian users.

Built locally by skilled professionals and running on the Android 16 platform, the device reinforces vivo's focus on delivering reliable, future-ready technology made with Indian consumers in mind.

## India Negotiates With Iran To Secure Passage For 28 Merchant Ships Stuck Near Strait Of Hormuz

■ Diplomatic efforts intensify as maritime tensions disrupt global shipping and threaten energy routes

**New Delhi:** India has initiated diplomatic discussions with Iran to ensure the safe passage of nearly 28 Indian flagged merchant vessels currently stranded around the Strait of Hormuz as tensions continue to escalate in West Asia.

The crucial maritime corridor has witnessed a significant disruption in commercial shipping in recent days following intensified military activity linked to the ongoing conflict involving Iran, Israel and the United States. For the past several days, commercial tankers carrying the Indian flag have reportedly been unable to transit through the strait, leaving multiple vessels awaiting clearance.

The situation has raised concerns over the safety of seafarers as



well as the stability of vital energy supply routes. Recent maritime incidents in the Persian Gulf have already resulted in casualties among Indian crew members. Three seafarers have lost their lives, another remains missing, and several others have been injured after attacks targeting tankers and bulk carriers in the region.

Diplomatic engagement between New Delhi and Tehran has increased in response to the growing crisis.

Discussions have focused on safeguarding maritime navigation and protecting energy shipments that pass through the strategically important waterway. Conversations at the ministerial level have also addressed the security risks facing commercial vessels operating in the region.

Authorities are closely monitoring Indian ships positioned on both sides of the strait. Twenty four Indian flagged vessels carrying 677 Indian crew members are

currently located west of the corridor, while four additional vessels with 101 crew members are stationed east of it. In addition, dozens of Indian seafarers are serving on foreign flagged ships that have recently encountered security incidents in the Gulf.

India has strongly criticised attacks on commercial vessels operating in international waters and stressed the need to protect civilian crews and maintain freedom of navigation.

The disruption in the Strait of Hormuz, a vital global energy route responsible for transporting roughly one fifth of the world's oil and gas supplies, has also triggered a surge in global energy prices as uncertainty continues to grow across the region.

...CONTD FROM PAGE 01

## BABUSH SHOWS UTPAL HIS PLACE...

and Liberata Mendes E Achari won from Ward 29 for the Ami Panjekar panel. The Monserrate-BJP panel candidates who emerged victorious include Yutika Zambaulikar (Ward 1), Carolina Po (Ward 2), Margarida Fernandes (Ward 3), Rohit Monserrate (Ward 4), Kishore Sastry (Ward 5), Bento Lorena (Ward 6), Kareena Shirodkar (Ward 8), Kabir Makhija (Ward 9), Prasad Amonkar (Ward 10), Tularam Chinanawar (Ward 11), Varsha Shetye (Ward 12),

Uday Madkaikar (Ward 13), Prajyot Vaigankar (Ward 14), Shayani Chopdekar (Ward 15), Asmita Kerkar (Ward 16), Krishna Shirodkar (Ward 18), Nikita Naik (Ward 19), Shubham Chodankar (Ward 20), Manisha Manerkar (Ward 21), Diksha Mainkar (Ward 22), Vidhya Gadka (Ward 23), Karan Parekh (Ward 24), Kirti Sakhalkar (Ward 25), Vasant Agshikar (Ward 26), Vithal Chopdekar (Ward 27), Rupesh Halarnkar (Ward 28) and Silvestre Fernandes (Ward 30).

## India's Fuel Supplies Fully Secure Despite Hormuz Crisis," Says Hardeep Puri

been delivered through the Hormuz route during the ongoing disruption. He stated that nearly 70 percent of India's crude imports are now sourced from routes that bypass the strategic waterway.

The Strait of Hormuz, located between Iran and the Arabian Peninsula, is one of the world's most critical energy corridors, handling about one fifth of global oil and natural gas shipments each day.

## “Expressed Deep Concern Over Loss of Lives”: PM Modi Speaks With Iran President Amid Escalating Conflict

■ India stresses safety of its citizens and uninterrupted energy supplies during high level diplomatic outreach.

**New Delhi:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a telephonic conversation with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian to discuss the worsening situation in West Asia, expressing serious concern over the ongoing conflict and its impact on civilians. The discussion marked the first direct contact between the two leaders since tensions in the region escalated last month.

During the call, the Prime Minister conveyed concern about the rising violence, loss of civilian lives, and damage to infrastructure. He also emphasised the importance of maintaining



peace and stability in the region through dialogue and diplomatic efforts. Ensuring the safety of Indian citizens and the uninterrupted movement of goods and energy supplies was highlighted as a key priority for India.

The conversation comes amid heightened hostilities following

the assassination of Iran's supreme leader Ali Khamenei in a coordinated offensive by the United States and Israel on February 28. The development triggered a wider conflict across the Middle East, with Iran responding by launching attacks on Israeli targets and American military

bases in the Gulf region, including areas near Dubai and Doha.

The conflict has severely disrupted shipping through the strategic Strait of Hormuz, a vital global energy route that handles a significant share of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas shipments. Maritime traffic in the region has slowed sharply after several commercial vessels were attacked in waters near the United Arab Emirates and Iraq.

The disruption has also raised concerns in India, which relies heavily on energy shipments passing through the Strait of Hormuz.

## “Mandatory Menstrual Leave Could Hurt Women’s Job Prospects,” Supreme Court

■ Court says making menstrual leave compulsory by law may discourage employers from hiring women

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court of India on Friday declined to support a plea seeking mandatory menstrual leave for women, stating that such a law could unintentionally harm women's employment opportunities. The court noted that making menstrual leave compulsory might lead some employers to avoid hiring women altogether.

A bench led by Chief Justice Surya Kant expressed concern that a legally mandated policy could create unintended consequences in workplaces. According to the court, employers might develop a bias against hiring women if they believe such regulations



would affect productivity or workplace management.

The petition, filed by lawyer Shailendra Mani Tripathi, sought directions for states to introduce rules allowing menstrual leave for women, including students and working professionals. The plea argued that menstruation can cause discomfort and health challenges that warrant supportive workplace and academic policies.



## “Paucity of Time”: President’s Office Declines Trinamool Request For Meeting After Protocol Dispute

■ Decision comes days after sharp exchange between the President and West Bengal government over tribal welfare event

**New Delhi:** The office of President Droupadi Murmu has declined a request from the Trinamool Congress for an appointment with a delegation of party leaders, citing a lack of available time. The development comes shortly after tensions surfaced between the President and the West Bengal government over alleged protocol issues during a recent event focused on tribal welfare. A senior party leader had written earlier this week seeking a meeting with the President for a 12 member delegation. The purpose of the meeting

was to brief her on various welfare initiatives implemented by the state government for tribal communities. After the request was declined, the party reportedly sought another appointment for the following week. The outreach was widely viewed as an attempt to ease tensions following a public exchange during a conference on tribal development held in Siliguri. During the visit, the President questioned why Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee or any of her cabinet ministers were not present among those who received her at Bagdogra airport.

## No Amount Of Storytelling Will Change Reality”: India Rejects Pakistan’s Terror Claims, Defends Nuclear Record

■ New Delhi dismisses Islamabad’s accusations on terrorism and uranium deal, citing Pakistan’s lack of credibility

**New Delhi:** India on Thursday strongly rejected Pakistan's allegations that it is sponsoring terrorism and also dismissed criticism over its uranium supply agreement with Canada, stating that Islamabad lacks credibility on both issues. Responding to the accusations, the Ministry of External Affairs said Pakistan's claims about India supporting militant



groups were baseless and part of a long pattern of shifting blame. During a media briefing, MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said the

international community is well aware of Pakistan's record and will not be misled by attempts to portray itself as a victim. He added that repeated accusations from Islamabad have become routine and do not alter the widely recognised reality regarding cross border terrorism

Pakistan has accused India of backing militant groups operating from

Afghanistan, alleging that New Delhi uses Afghan territory as a base to destabilise Pakistan.

Islamabad has specifically claimed that India supports organisations such as the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan and the Baloch Liberation Army. Similar allegations were raised earlier this month during a briefing of the United Nations Security Council.

## 193 Opposition MPs Move To Remove Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar

■ Notice backed by lawmakers from multiple opposition parties may be introduced in Parliament soon.

**New Delhi:** A group of opposition lawmakers has initiated a move to seek the removal of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, with a total of 193 Members of Parliament signing a notice supporting the action. The signatures include 130 MPs from the Lok Sabha and 63 MPs from the Rajya Sabha,

comfortably exceeding the minimum requirement needed to submit such a motion

Under parliamentary rules, at least 100 MPs from the Lok Sabha or 50 MPs from the Rajya Sabha must sign a notice to initiate the process of removing the Chief Election Commissioner.

Sources indicated that

the notice is expected to be formally submitted in one of the Houses of Parliament, though it remains unclear which chamber will take it up first.

Lawmakers from several parties within the opposition alliance have backed the move.

The signatures reportedly include



members from parties associated with the INDIA bloc as well as representatives of the Aam Aadmi Party, which is no longer formally part of the alliance but still supported the initiative.

This marks the first time a notice has been brought forward seeking the removal of a Chief Election Commissioner.

## Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli Lead Focus As India Plans ODI Heavy Schedule

■ BCCI likely to increase 50 over matches to prepare for the 2027 World Cup.

**New Delhi:** India is expected to play a larger number of One Day Internationals in the coming months as the team intensifies preparations for the next ICC World Cup. Senior batters Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli are set to remain central figures in India's ODI plans as the build up to the ICC Cricket World Cup 2027 gathers pace. According to reports, several cricket boards have approached the Board of Control for Cricket in India in recent months requesting the inclusion of more ODI matches during India's overseas tours.

The Indian board



is understood to have responded positively to these proposals, which could see a noticeable increase in 50 over fixtures. Following the conclusion of the Indian Premier League season, India are scheduled to host Afghanistan for a

short series featuring one Test and three ODIs. The team will then travel to the United Kingdom for a tour against England that includes three ODIs and five T20 Internationals. There is also a possibility of India playing an additional series against

Ireland during the same tour. Discussions are ongoing between Cricket Ireland and the BCCI regarding the format and venue of the matches, which could either be played in Ireland or at Southampton in England. The increased focus on ODIs is aimed at helping the Indian team adapt to the demands of the 50 over format ahead of the 2027 World Cup, which will be hosted in South Africa during September and October. India's recent home series defeat to New Zealand national cricket team has highlighted the need to build greater stability in the ODI squad.

## "We Are Not Here Just To Qualify": India Eye Title At FIH Women's World Cup Qualifiers

■ Indian women's hockey team prepares for semifinal clash against Italy after securing World Cup berth

**New Delhi:** The India women's national field hockey team will aim to continue their strong run and move closer to the title at the FIH Women's Hockey World Cup Qualifiers when they face Italy in the semifinal on Friday. India have already secured qualification for the FIH Hockey Women's World Cup 2026 after finishing at the top of Pool B with seven points from three matches. Scotland also ended with the same number of points but finished second due to India's superior goal difference. The hosts recorded two wins and one draw during the group



stage. Italy, on the other hand, finished second in Pool A with four points after registering one win, one draw and one loss. While the Italians have shown resilience in the tournament, India will enter the semifinal with a slight advantage based on recent form and past results.



## "I Was Not Expecting Such A Throw": Sumit Antil Wins Gold At World Para Athletics Grand Prix

■ Paralympic champion leads strong Indian medal surge with dominant javelin performance

**New Delhi:** Double Paralympic champion Sumit Antil delivered another outstanding performance by winning the gold medal in the men's javelin throw at the World Para Athletics Grand Prix on Thursday, leading a dominant day for Indian athletes. Competing in the men's javelin throw F43, F44 and F64 categories, Antil secured the top position with an impressive throw of 69.25 metres. Fellow Indian athletes also performed strongly in the event, with Pushpendra Singh claiming the silver medal with a throw of

56.91 metres, while Poonam Ram finished third with 49.48 metres to take bronze. The 27 year old javelin thrower from Sonipat said the distance of his winning throw exceeded his expectations. He noted that he had anticipated a mark around 67 or 68 metres but was pleased to surpass it during the competition. Antil explained that he is currently in a training phase focused on preparation for upcoming tournaments and is continuing to compete in events to find the best conditions for improving his performance.

## Purvaja Verlekar and Poorva Bhaidkar Selected For South Zone Women's Team

■ Salma Divkar has been appointed as the trainer for the South Zone squad.

### Team Goemkarponn

**Porvorim:** Two players from Goa have been selected for the South Zone women's cricket team that will compete in the Senior Women's Inter Zonal Multi Day Trophy scheduled to be held in Puducherry from March 20 to April 3, 2026. The announcement was made by the Goa Cricket Association, which

confirmed that cricketers Purvaja Verlekar and Poorva Bhaidkar have been selected to represent the South Zone side in the prestigious domestic tournament. In addition to the two players, Goa will also have representation in the team's support staff. Salma Divkar has been appointed as the trainer for the South Zone squad. The Senior Women's

Inter Zonal Multi Day Trophy brings together top cricketers from across different zones of the country, offering a platform for players to showcase their skills in the longer format of the game. The Goa Cricket Association congratulated the players and the support staff member on their selection and wished them success in the upcoming tournament.



## Snehal Kauthankar Receives Madhavrao Scindia Award At BCCI Annual Awards

■ Goa batter recognised as highest run scorer in Ranji Trophy Plate Group for the 2024–25 season.

### Team Goemkarponn

**Porvorim:** Goa cricketer Snehal Kauthankar has been honoured with the prestigious Madhavrao Scindia Award at the Board of Control for Cricket in India Annual Awards ceremony, Naman 2024–25. Kauthankar earned the recognition for finishing as the highest run scorer in



the Plate Group of the Ranji Trophy during the 2024–25 season. His

consistent performances with the bat throughout the domestic campaign have brought significant recognition to Goa cricket. The Goa Cricket Association congratulated the accomplished batter for the achievement and praised his dedication and discipline at the domestic level. GCA President Mahesh Dessai described the honour

as a proud moment for cricket in the state, noting that Kauthankar's performances reflect his commitment and hard work. He said the award is a testament to the player's consistency and determination in the Ranji Trophy and expressed confidence that the recognition will inspire him to achieve further milestones in his career.