



Will RGP Enter Ponda Bypoll Fray? Party Keeps Decision Pending

■ Core committee meet on Friday to take final call; grassroots workers push for contest.



Team Goemkarponn

PONDA: With the Ponda by-election scheduled for April 9 approaching fast, a key question remains — will the Revolutionary Goans Party (RGP) contest the polls? Even as BJP, Congress and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) have already announced their candidates, the RGP continues to deliberate internally, keeping its strategy under wraps. The Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party (MGP), meanwhile, has extended its support to the BJP

candidate. RGP MLA Viresh Borkar said the party is still consulting its workers and leaders, with a final decision expected after a core committee meeting slated for Friday. Initial feedback, he noted, shows a strong push from within the party to enter the contest.

“Many of our workers want the party to contest, but no final decision has been taken yet,” Borkar said. He also ruled out any possibility of a pre-poll alliance, stating that the party is not in talks with any

MAINS POINTS:

- ▶ Ponda bypoll scheduled for April 9; political activity intensifies.
- ▶ Key question remains: Will RGP contest the election?
- ▶ BJP, Congress and AAP have already announced candidates
- ▶ MGP has decided to support BJP nominee
- ▶ RGP yet to take final call; internal discussions ongoing
- ▶ Core committee meeting on Friday likely to decide party's stand
- ▶ MLA Viresh Borkar says majority of workers favour contesting
- ▶ Party rules out any pre-poll alliance with other parties
- ▶ Party rules out any pre-poll alliance with other parties
- ▶ Speculation of RGP-AAP tie-up dismissed
- ▶ RGP secured around 7% vote share in Ponda in 2022 Assembly polls
- ▶ Internal pressure within party to contest independently

other political formation. This effectively puts to rest speculation about a potential understanding with AAP for the Ponda seat. The RGP had secured nearly seven per

cent vote share in Ponda during the 2022 Assembly elections, a factor that has encouraged sections within the party to push for an independent run this time.

Goa CM undergoes routine check up at Pune hospital, to be discharged today

Confusion arises after earlier reports claimed cardiac procedure at Pune clinic



Team Goemkarponn

PUNE: Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant has refuted reports suggesting that he underwent an angioplasty at a hospital in Pune, clarifying that his visit was only for a routine medical check-up.

Addressing the speculation surrounding his health, Sawant stated that he is in good condition and had not undergone any surgical procedure.

He also indicated that he was not aware of the

statements attributed to the hospital regarding an angioplasty.

Earlier reports, citing officials from Ruby Hall Clinic, had claimed that the Chief Minister was admitted after experiencing discomfort and had successfully undergone a cardiac intervention, with his condition reported as stable. The Chief Minister's clarification has, however, created uncertainty, as differing versions of events have emerged from official and medical sources.



Goa Hit by Flight Cancellations

■ Multiple international services suspended till March 26–28; only limited operations continue, passengers advised to check schedules

Team Goemkarponn

DABOLIM/MOPA: Passengers travelling through Goa's airports are facing major disruptions as several international flight services have been cancelled over the coming days, impacting connectivity to key Gulf destinations. According

to an advisory issued by the Airports Authority of India (AAI), all Gulf Air flights operating between Bahrain and Dabolim have been cancelled until March 26, 2026. Air India Express has also suspended its Dubai–Dabolim services until March 28, 2026. In addition

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“High Risk Environment”: India Advises Airlines To Avoid 11 Middle East Airspaces

DGCA issues safety advisory amid rising tensions following military strikes involving the US, Israel and Iran

New Delhi: India's aviation regulator has directed airlines to avoid flying through 11 airspaces across the Middle East, warning that the region currently presents a high risk environment for civil



aviation due to escalating tensions

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Chief cardiologist confirms Goa CM is stable and in good health

Team Goemkarponn

PUNE: Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant is “absolutely fine” and did not undergo any surgery, according to Dr. Purvez Grant, Chief Cardiologist and Chairman of Ruby Hall Clinic. Clarifying earlier confusion, Dr. Grant stated that only a



routine health check-up was conducted on the Chief Minister, dismissing reports of any cardiac procedure.

‘Deeply Disturbing’: MEA Condemns Attacks On Gulf Energy Infrastructure

■ MEA says assaults on oil and gas facilities are deeply disturbing and risk worsening global energy instability

New Delhi: India has expressed serious concern over recent attacks targeting energy infrastructure in the Gulf region, stating that such actions are deeply disturbing and must stop immediately. Responding to media queries, Randhir Jaiswal, spokesperson for the Ministry of External

Affairs, said India strongly condemns attacks on civilian infrastructure, including oil and gas facilities. He stressed that targeting such installations only worsens an already fragile global energy situation.

He noted that India had earlier called for avoiding strikes on civilian

infrastructure across the region and reiterated that recent attacks on energy installations are unacceptable.

According to the spokesperson, such incidents could further destabilise energy supplies at a time when global markets are already facing uncertainty.



The remarks came amid escalating tensions in the Gulf following retaliatory actions by Iran targeting energy facilities across the region.

Reports indicate that the SAMREF refinery, operated as a joint venture between Saudi Aramco and ExxonMobil, was

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Governance by Court Order: Arpora's Illegal Constructions Lay Bare Systemic Failure

The order to demolish illegal structures in the paddy fields of Arpora is not just about enforcing the law. It is a stark reminder that governance, in too many cases, begins only when the courts step in. By the time such directives are issued, the damage is already done, and the system's failure is laid bare. What is most troubling is not that illegal constructions came up. It is that they were allowed to remain. Notices were issued, violations identified, and yet, little moved on the ground. This gap between action on paper and action in reality has become the defining feature of local administration. Files move, responsibilities shift, and in the end, nothing changes until a judicial order forces movement.

This is where the real crisis lies. Enforcement in Goa today appears less like a function of governance and more like a reaction to legal pressure. The explanation often offered is familiar. Lack of manpower. Delays in getting demolition squads. Procedural bottlenecks. But these are not reasons. They are symptoms of a deeper problem. When multiple authorities are involved and none can be held directly accountable, inaction becomes the easiest outcome.

Meanwhile, the violations themselves are far from harmless. Paddy fields are not empty spaces waiting for construction. They are part of a delicate ecological system that supports water flow, prevents flooding, and sustains local agriculture. Filling them up for illegal structures is not just a land use violation. It is environmental damage with long term consequences. And yet, such encroachments continue with alarming regularity. There is also the question of inconsistency. In many such cases, some structures face action while others escape scrutiny. This selective enforcement raises doubts about the process itself. On what basis are decisions taken? Why do some violations

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attract urgency while others fade into silence? These are questions that authorities rarely answer, but the public increasingly asks. The result is a steady erosion of trust.

The pattern is now well established. Illegal construction takes place. Complaints are raised. Authorities respond with notices. Time passes. Nothing happens. Eventually, the matter reaches the court. Orders are issued. Only then does enforcement begin.

This is not how a functioning system should operate. The consequences extend beyond a single village or a few structures. They shape the way development unfolds across the state. When rules are not enforced consistently, they lose their meaning. When violations are not penalised swiftly, they become incentives. Builders and landowners begin to see illegality as a manageable risk rather than a serious offence. That is a dangerous shift. Goa is already grappling with the pressures of rapid urbanisation and tourism driven expansion. In such a scenario, the protection of agricultural land and natural ecosystems becomes even more critical. Allowing unchecked construction in paddy fields only accelerates environmental degradation and increases vulnerability to flooding and water scarcity.

What makes it worse is the absence of accountability. When delays occur, who is responsible? When demolition orders are not executed, who answers for it? These questions rarely find clear answers. Responsibility is spread so thin across departments that it effectively disappears. Without accountability, there can be no real reform.

The High Court's intervention in Arpora may ensure that the specific violations are addressed. But it does not solve the underlying problem. That requires a shift in how governance is carried out. Enforcement must be proactive, not reactive. Action must be timely, not delayed. And responsibility must be fixed, not diffused. Until then, such episodes will continue to repeat. Each new case will bring the same cycle of violation, delay, and eventual judicial intervention. And each time, the cost will be borne not just by the environment, but by the credibility of the system itself. Because when governance depends on court orders to function, it is no longer governance. It is failure dressed up as compliance.

EDITOR'S SPEAK

Flight Disruptions Expose Goa's Vulnerability to Global Crises

The recent cancellation of Gulf-bound flights from Goa, triggered by the ongoing conflict in West Asia, has highlighted how vulnerable the state's connectivity is to global events. With services by airlines such as Gulf Air and Air India Express suspended, passengers have been left stranded and uncertain.

While the cause may lie beyond local control, the impact is deeply felt here. For many Goans working in the Gulf, air travel is essential. Disruptions of this scale affect jobs, families, and urgent travel needs. The situation becomes more difficult when communication is limited, and alternatives are not readily available. This episode underscores the need for stronger contingency planning. Even when disruptions are caused by international crises, there must be systems in place to manage the fallout locally. Clear communication, support for stranded passengers, and coordination with airlines are critical in such moments. As Goa continues to position itself as a global destination, it must also prepare for the uncertainties that come with global connectivity. External factors may be unavoidable, but preparedness and response are within our control.

-Sydney Silveira, Cansaulim

A Preventable Health Crisis in Goa

The recent diarrhoea outbreak in Goa, with over 149 cases reported within days in Dabolim, raises an urgent and uncomfortable question: what exactly is the health department doing to prevent such incidents? While officials have stated that the situation is being monitored and water samples have been collected, these are reactive steps taken after dozens have already fallen ill.

Residents had reportedly been consuming suspected contaminated water for days before the scale of the outbreak became clear. This points to a deeper failure of preventive public health systems. Safe drinking water is a basic necessity, not a luxury. Regular inspections of water sources, especially in residential complexes dependent on borewells, should be routine. Early warning systems and quicker response mechanisms could have prevented the situation from escalating. Moreover, the response so far appears limited to advisories and testing. Where are the emergency measures on the ground? There is little clarity on whether clean water is being supplied consistently, whether pipelines are being audited, or whether accountability is being fixed. Goa cannot afford to treat such outbreaks as isolated incidents. Water contamination has repeatedly been at the root of similar crises across the country. Without systemic intervention, this will not be the last. The health department must move beyond monitoring and act decisively. Prevention, transparency, and accountability must become the pillars of its response. Public health cannot wait for a crisis to begin.

-Sanjeev naik, Vasco

Goa Issues ₹1,752 Cr GST Demand to Delta Corp, Subsidiary Over Casino Operations

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Goa government has slapped a massive Goods and Services Tax (GST) demand of ₹1,752.38 crore on Delta Corp Limited and its arm, Highstreet Cruises and Entertainment, for the financial year 2022–23. As per an official notice dated March 17, the Office of the Commissioner of Commercial Taxes initiated proceedings under Section 74(1) of the Central GST Act, 2017, along with corresponding provisions of the Goa GST Act. Of the total



amount, ₹1,350.25 crore has been claimed from Delta Corp, while ₹402.12 crore has been demanded from its subsidiary. The tax authorities have alleged that the companies underpaid GST by calculating dues on a basis different from what the department

considers appropriate. The demand is largely based on the estimated total value of bets placed across casino games during the period. This method of assessment has long been disputed by casino operators, who maintain that GST should be imposed only on gross

gaming revenue (GGR)—the actual earnings of the casino—rather than the aggregate betting volume. Responding to the development, Delta Corp, in a regulatory filing, described the demand as unjustified and inconsistent with legal provisions.

The company stated that it intends to challenge the notices through appropriate legal channels. It further noted that similar tax claims covering the period from July 2017 to March 2022 are already being contested before the Supreme Court.



No Irregularities Found in Petrol Pumps, LPG Agencies in Bicholim: Govt

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Goa government has informed the Legislative Assembly that no violations or irregularities were detected during inspections of petrol pumps and LPG agencies in Bicholim constituency over the past three years.

Responding to an unstarred question tabled by MLA Chandrakant Shetye, Legal Metrology Minister Digambar Kamat said the department carried out inspections of 34 petrol pumps and 12 LPG gas agencies in the constituency during this period.

The minister stated that checks were conducted to identify issues such as short delivery, tampering of dispensing units, malfunctioning

meters, or any breach of Legal Metrology norms. However, no such discrepancies were found in any of the inspections.

Detailed records show that multiple petrol pumps were inspected periodically between 2023 and 2025, covering equipment such as electronic dispensing units and nozzles. All inspections reported compliance with prescribed standards under the Legal Metrology Act, 2009.

Similarly, inspections of LPG agencies revealed largely satisfactory conditions. While most checks found operations in order, one instance in January 2024 led to a case being booked over an issue related to a weighing scale at a gas agency in Bicholim.

Fish Shortage Hits Goa Markets Amid Seasonal Decline, LPG Supply Issues

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: A visible drop in fish supplies across Goa has raised concerns among consumers, as a mix of seasonal factors and operational hurdles disrupt the state's fishing sector. Industry stakeholders say the decline is largely in line with the end of the peak

fishing season, but an ongoing shortage of commercial LPG cylinders has further complicated matters by affecting routine fishing activities. Fish, a key component of the Goan diet, has become less available both at landing points and in retail markets. Discussions with fishing associations, boat owners

and traders indicate that the situation stems from a combination of natural cycles and logistical challenges. All Goa Fishing Boat Owners Association (AGFBOA) President Jose Philip D'Souza acknowledged that the LPG shortage has impacted some operators, though many have adapted to keep their



boats running. "Fishing operations cannot simply stop, as many livelihoods depend on them. In the absence of gas cylinders, some boats have switched to diesel-based cooking systems," he said, noting that vessels generally carry enough fuel for long trips.

Govt Clarifies on 'Heavy Metals in Fish' Study, Says No Evidence of Contamination

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Goa government has clarified that there is no conclusive evidence of heavy metal contamination in fish caught off the state's coast, responding to concerns raised over a study conducted by Goa University researchers. Replying to a starred question tabled by Velim MLA Cruz Silva in the Legislative Assembly, Fisheries Minister Nilkant Halarnkar stated that the research in question did not specifically deal with "heavy metals" but focused on essential trace elements. According to information received from Goa University, the study was carried out during the academic year 2023–24 by a faculty member and students of marine science, with findings published in December



2025. The university also clarified that the research was not funded by the government and was undertaken independently by the researchers. On the methodology, the minister said the study adhered to established scientific standards. The research design, sampling techniques, and analytical procedures were detailed in the published paper, which appeared in the journal Biological Trace Element Research. Addressing

concerns among local fishermen, particularly from Caranzalem, the minister acknowledged that the community had expressed distress over the claims. In response, the fisheries department advised institutions such as Goa University and the National Institute of Oceanography not to publicise sensitive findings without prior government approval. The department also sought inputs from the Goa State Pollution Control Board (GSPCB).



Goa Seeks Financial Clearance for Museum Project; New Building Estimated in 3 Years

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Directorate of Museums has moved a proposal seeking financial approval from the state's Finance Department for ₹51.31 lakh to pay commercial tax and infrastructure tax to the Town and Country Planning Department, as part of the Goa State Museum project.

Providing details in the Legislative Assembly, the Minister for Museums Ramkrishna Dhavalikar said that a Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the new museum building was prepared by

a consultant appointed by GSIDC and submitted to the Union Ministry of Culture on March 20, 2024. The initial estimated cost of ₹22.30 crore was later revised to ₹35.25 crore after incorporating suggestions from the Ministry. On funding, the minister said the project is being taken up under the Museum Grant Scheme of the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. While central assistance is capped at ₹8 crore, the remaining cost will be borne by the state government, which has already allocated ₹10 crore under the

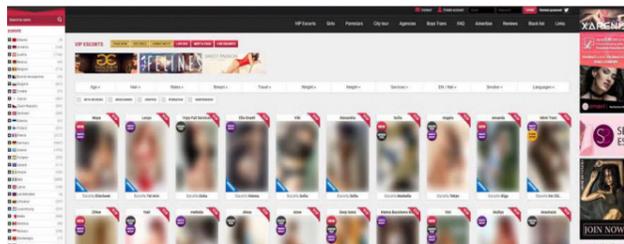
capital head and assured additional funds for completion. He further informed that no private museums have been officially recognised or granted financial aid by the department in the last two years. However, steps are being taken to compile a list of museums in Goa, along with the introduction of a scheme to support and upgrade private museums. Regarding the timeline, the minister stated that the new Goa State Museum building is expected to be completed within three years from the commencement of construction.

Crime Branch Busts Escort Website Racket, 3 Arrested

■ Accused allegedly ran nationwide prostitution network through illegal escort platforms; bank accounts frozen, devices seized.

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: In a major breakthrough, the Crime Branch has arrested three persons for allegedly creating, operating and managing escort websites involved in publishing sexually explicit and objectionable content, while running a country-wide prostitution network. The arrests follow sustained surveillance by the Crime Branch and the Social Media Monitoring Cell on multiple escort websites. On March 9, an FIR (No. 21/2026) was registered under Section 67 of the IT Act and Section 6 of the Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act against 22 such websites, all of which have since been blocked. During the



technical investigation, the police identified one of the key accused as V. Narayanrao (40), a native of Shivamogga, Karnataka, who was allegedly operating the websites along with accomplices. Multiple teams were formed and deployed across Goa, leading to a successful raid at a location in Nerul, Bardez. The Crime Branch arrested three accused: V. Narayanrao (40), Shahbaz Khan (33) from Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, and Manjunath Shahshetty (36) from

Basavakalyan, Bidar, Karnataka. During the raid, police recovered a mobile phone linked to the escort website "secretnightss.com" from the possession of the accused. Further searches led to the seizure of one laptop and four mobile phones containing incriminating material. Investigation into bank transactions revealed that the accused received money from victim women through Google Pay and UPI transfers, indicating they were living off the earnings of prostitution.

Three Held for Illegal Cattle Transport in Pernem

■ 14 cattle rescued from unhygienic vehicle; accused booked for cruelty ahead of Eid.

Team Goemkarponn

PERNEM: Pernem Police have arrested three persons for illegally transporting cattle in cruel and unhygienic conditions, allegedly for slaughter without valid permission or veterinary certification.

According to police, the case was registered on March 18, 2026, at 6:58 pm following a complaint filed by Vinod Nagesh Sawant, a resident of Hasapur, Pernem. The incident reportedly took place earlier the same day at around 2:50 am near Amar Crusher Plant at Casarvarnem. The accused have been identified as Gous Nadaf (40), a resident of Savordem (native of Belgaum, Karnataka), Altaf Kadrolli (42) from Bailhongal, Belgaum, and



Iqbal Talikoti, a resident of Hosapet Galli, Sampgaon, Belgaum, who is also the owner of the vehicle involved.

Police said the trio, acting with common intention, transported 14 cattle in a goods vehicle (Tata Motors, medium goods permit) bearing registration number KA-22-AA-4747. The animals were allegedly confined in extremely unhygienic conditions without adequate food, fodder

or water, amounting to cruelty. Authorities further stated that the cattle were being transported without permission and without any medical fitness certificate issued by a veterinary officer, and were suspected to be intended for slaughter for meat during the upcoming Eid. The police have seized the vehicle under a panchanama. Further investigation is being carried out by PSI Swapnil Kinalkar.

Three Booked for Illegal Meat Transport at Keri Checkpost

■ 300 kg of suspected meat seized; main accused caught red-handed, two later arrested and granted bail

Team Goemkarponn

VALPOI: Valpoi Police have booked three persons for illegally transporting meat without valid documents, seizing around 300 kg of suspected red meat worth approximately Rs 1.2 lakh at the Keri checkpost in Sattari. According to police, the offence was registered on March 18, 2026, at 5:48 pm based on a complaint lodged by Police Constable Ankush Krishna Gaonkar of Valpoi Police Station. The incident occurred earlier in the day at around 4:30 pm at the BCP Keri checkpost. The main accused, Ahamed Pathan (47), a resident of Ramapur, Khanapur taluka in Belagavi, Karnataka, was caught red-handed while transporting the meat in a white Tata Indigo



car bearing registration number GA-05-B-2630. Police said the meat was being transported without any bill or authority letter from the competent authority. Pathan was arrested at 5:45 pm on the same day. Subsequently, two more accused—Vishwas Tukaram Naik (59), a resident of Vagurme, Marcel-Ponda, and Mohamad Arif Bepari (20), a resident of Pansulem, Dharbandora—were also arrested at 11:18 pm. Both were later released on bail in the early hours of March 19 at 1:43 am.

Senior Citizen Duped of Rs 3.48 Lakh in Agoda Scam



Team Goemkarponn

OLD GOA: A case of online fraud has been registered at Old Goa Police Station after a senior citizen was cheated of Rs 3.48 lakh by a fraudster posing as a customer care executive of a travel booking platform. According to police, the complaint was filed on March 18, 2026, at 6:11 pm by Trupti Nadkarni (46), a resident of Shantaban Housing Complex, Mercedes-Chimbel Road, Santa Cruz. As per the complaint, the incident took place on March 16 at around 6:02 pm, when an unknown accused impersonated an Agoda customer care employee and contacted the complainant's father. The accused allegedly convinced him to install a mobile application on his phone under the pretext of resolving an issue.

Margao Woman Duped of Rs 2.2 Lakh in Work-from-Home Scam

■ 300 kg of suspected meat seized; main accused caught red-handed, two later arrested and granted bail

Team Goemkarponn

MARGAO: A case of online cheating has been reported in Margao, where a woman was duped of Rs 2.2 lakh by fraudsters promising high returns through a fake work-from-home job. According to police, the complaint was filed by Gotru Kranti Rajkumar, a resident of Margao and native of Andhra Pradesh. She stated that between



March 9 and March 13, 2026, unknown accused persons approached her with an online job offer, claiming she could earn substantial profits. Believing the offer to be genuine, the complainant

transferred a total amount of Rs 2,20,000 in multiple transactions as instructed by the accused. However, after receiving the money, the accused failed to provide any returns or refund the invested amount, thereby cheating the victim. A case has been registered, and further investigation is being carried out by PSI Swadesh Dessai of the Margao Town Police Station (MTPS).

Three Booked in Suspected Culpable Homicide at Betul Seashore

■ Man lured into sea after being intoxicated; victim missing since December 2025.

Team Goemkarponn

CUNCOLIM: Cuncolim Police have registered a case of suspected culpable homicide after a man went missing under suspicious circumstances at Betul seashore in Quepem.

According to police, the complaint was filed by Nawab Singh, a resident of Uttar Pradesh, regarding the disappearance of his son Surjeet Singh. The incident reportedly occurred on December 7, 2025, at around 3:45 am

near the mouth of the River Sal at Betul. Police stated that three accused—Sonu Kumar (Uttar Pradesh), Sanjay Singh and Anuj Singh (both residents of New Delhi)—had allegedly called the victim to the seashore.

149 cases of diarrhoea outbreak grips Dabolim housing complex, residents demand urgent action

Team Goemkarponn

DABOLIM: Panic has gripped residents of Prabhu Violetta after a surge in diarrhoea cases crossed 149, with families alleging contaminated water supply as the likely cause behind the outbreak. Addressing the media on Thursday, residents said the situation has worsened over the past few days, with several families affected across the complex. While official figures indicate 149 cases, residents claim the actual number could



be significantly higher, estimating that nearly 300 people are unwell. A resident said the issue was first reported earlier this month, following which the health department conducted multiple inspections. "When the situation

began, we informed the health authorities, who visited the site on the 14th and instructed the builder to clean the premises. Cases of diarrhoea started emerging from that point. Subsequent visits on the 16th and 17th recorded a steady rise—

from around 65 cases to nearly 149. These are only documented figures; a door-to-door survey suggests the number could be much higher," the resident said. Residents have demanded that authorities make public the findings of water samples collected by various departments. "It has been over a week and people continue to suffer. We want the results of the water testing conducted by the health, PWD and WRD departments so that the exact cause can be established.

Builder refutes contamination charge, says no prior complaint received from residents

Team Goemkarponn

DABOLIM: Amid the diarrhoea outbreak at Prabhu Violetta, Amit Prabhu of Prabhu Realtors on Thursday strongly denied allegations of water contamination, stating that the developer had not received any prior intimation from residents before the issue surfaced in the media. Addressing reporters in Vasco, Prabhu said the claims came as a surprise and insisted that no resident had officially raised concerns about water quality. "We had not received any prior intimation regarding any contamination issue. We came to know about the matter only after certain media reports quoted a flat owner alleging contamination and inaction on the part of the builder," he said. Detailing the timeline, Prabhu pointed out that routine maintenance work was already underway just before the issue became public. "A day before the news appeared, we had undertaken our scheduled quarterly cleaning of overhead water tanks. On that very day, the same flat owner who later spoke



in the media had sent us an email, but it only mentioned disturbance caused due to the cleaning activity. There was no mention of any contamination concern. Had such an issue been brought to our notice, we would have immediately taken corrective steps," he said. Prabhu maintained that upon learning about the situation, the developer acted without delay to prevent any possible risk. "As a precautionary measure, we immediately stopped the supply of borewell water. The complex has two separate systems — an underground sump for PWD water and another for borewell water, along with separate overhead tanks. PWD water is supplied to kitchen taps for drinking purposes, while borewell water was being used for non-potable uses such as flushing and bathing," he explained.

Sarpanch links diarrhoea outbreak to long-pending STP issues, says residents must act

Team Goemkarponn

DABOLIM: Amid the diarrhoea outbreak at Prabhu Violetta, Chicalim Sarpanch Kamla Prasad Yadav on Thursday said that while the recent health issue was brought to his notice only a few days ago, concerns over sewage treatment at the complex date back nearly two years. Addressing the situation, Yadav said complaints were initially raised by residents from



neighbouring areas who were affected by sewage-related issues from the complex. "The sewage problem began around two years ago when people from nearby

areas approached the Panchayat. Upon inspection, it was found that the sewage treatment plants were not functioning properly. We subsequently wrote to the Goa State Pollution Control Board and the health department, following which water samples were collected and authorities noted deficiencies in the functioning of the STPs," he said. He added that the Panchayat had issued

notices to the builder at the time. "We had directed the builder to maintain the STPs properly, as sewage water was overflowing and causing inconvenience to surrounding villagers. Now, the same issue appears to have started affecting residents within the complex itself," Yadav said. Pointing to maintenance lapses, the Sarpanch said the responsibility now lies with those managing the facility.

Health advisory issued in Dabolim after diarrhoea cases, public urged to follow strict hygiene measures

Team Goemkarponn

DABOLIM: In the wake of rising cases of Acute Diarrhoeal Disease (ADD) reported from Dabolim, the Directorate of Health Services has issued a public advisory, calling on residents to adopt strict hygiene practices and remain vigilant against symptoms. According to the advisory, Acute Diarrhoeal Disease is marked by the sudden onset of frequent loose or watery stools, usually three or more episodes a day, often accompanied by vomiting, fever, and dehydration. Officials stated that the



Health Advisory

illness is commonly linked to consumption of contaminated food or water. The health department has identified contaminated drinking water, improperly cooked food, poor hand hygiene, and unsafe sanitation practices as major sources of transmission. Residents have been urged to exercise caution in daily activities, especially in handling food and water. Outlining immediate steps

for those experiencing symptoms, the advisory stressed the importance of starting Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS) without delay and maintaining adequate fluid intake through water, coconut water, and soups. "People should continue eating light, easily digestible food and report to the nearest health facility for timely evaluation and treatment," the advisory stated, adding that zinc tablets may be administered to children under medical guidance.

The department has also issued a set of 'Dos' to prevent further spread of the disease.

Catholic body backs Dabolim residents, seeks CM's intervention over diarrhoea outbreak

Team Goemkarponn

DABOLIM: Amid the ongoing health crisis at Prabhu Violetta, the Catholic Association of Goa has expressed strong solidarity with affected residents, alleging serious lapses and calling for immediate government intervention. In a press statement issued on March 19, Association President Cyril Fernandes described the situation as a "pandemic-like tragedy," claiming that contaminated drinking water from borewells, allegedly due to untreated sewage discharge from the complex's sewage



treatment plant (STP), has triggered the outbreak. Fernandes stated that over 149 residents across five buildings have been hospitalised with severe diarrhoea, including infants, women, and elderly persons, leading to widespread panic in the area. "Families have been seeking assistance from government agencies and local representatives, but despite protests by nearly

1,000 affected individuals, no meaningful relief has reached them so far," he said. He further pointed out that multiple authorities, including the deputy collector of Mormugao, health officials, police, the Goa State Pollution Control Board, and the Food and Drugs Administration, have conducted inspections and issued notices related to sewage management. "Despite these inspections and directions, enforcement has remained slow, leaving residents dependent on limited PWD water supply while awaiting laboratory reports expected by March 28," Fernandes said.



EMC Tuem Is Vital for Goa's Future," Says Rohan Khaunte While Reviewing Project Progress

■ Minister stresses faster completion of infrastructure to prepare electronics manufacturing hub for operations.

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Information Technology Minister Rohan Khaunte reviewed the progress of the Electronic Manufacturing Cluster at Tuem during a stakeholder meeting held on March 18, focusing on accelerating work so the facility can soon become operational. The review meeting brought together officials from several government departments and agencies involved in the project's development. Representatives from the Department of Information Technology, Electronics and Communications, Goa Information Technology Development Corporation, Info Tech Corporation

Goa, the Electricity Department, Public Works Department, Goa Police and the Directorate of Fire and Emergency Services were present to assess ongoing work and discuss the next phase of development. During a walkthrough of the site, the minister inspected key infrastructure including the warehouse, the waste management building and other supporting facilities. He emphasized that completing the physical infrastructure on schedule is essential to ensure the cluster can function smoothly once operations begin. Particular focus was placed on ensuring that critical utilities and shared amenities are

installed and ready in time.

The review also provided an opportunity for departments to highlight logistical requirements necessary for the project's smooth functioning. Issues raised by the Fire and Emergency Services and the Electricity Department were discussed, with directions given to address them promptly. One of the key requirements identified during the inspection was the need to install a communication and internet tower at the site. The minister instructed concerned stakeholders to immediately follow up on this task and ensure that

all pending infrastructure works move forward without delay. He also stressed the importance of maintaining high standards of upkeep and security across the site so that the cluster is fully prepared before industries begin operations.

The Electronic Manufacturing Cluster at Tuem is envisioned as a dedicated hub for electronics manufacturing in Goa. Once operational, it is expected to attract new investments, generate skilled employment opportunities for local youth and strengthen the state's role in India's growing electronics manufacturing sector.

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"High Risk Environment": India Advises Airlines To Avoid 11 Middle East Airspaces

geopolitical tensions. The advisory identifies airspace over Iran, Israel, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Iraq, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Kuwait as high risk zones. Airlines have been instructed to avoid these areas at all flight levels as a precautionary measure. The directive will remain in effect until March 28 unless reviewed earlier.

The order was issued by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, which has also asked Indian carriers to put strong contingency plans in place for flights operating to destinations within the affected region. Airlines have been advised to carry out detailed safety risk assessments to prepare for any unexpected developments. In addition to the airspace

restrictions, the regulator has issued a specific operational instruction for flights passing through parts of the region. Aircraft have been directed not to fly below flight level 320 over Saudi Arabia and Oman. In aviation terms, this means planes must maintain an altitude of at least 32,000 feet above standard sea level pressure to reduce

exposure to potential ground based threats or conflict related risks. The warning comes as tensions in West Asia remain volatile following military strikes carried out by the United States and Israel on targets inside Iran. The possibility of retaliatory actions has raised concerns about the safety of civilian flight operations across the wider region.

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'Deeply Disturbing': MEA Condemns Attacks On Gulf Energy Infrastructure

struck in an aerial attack. While the impact on operations was reportedly limited, a fire was said to have broken out at the facility. The attack followed evacuation warnings issued by the Islamic

Revolutionary Guard Corps for several oil and gas installations in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, including facilities in Yanbu. These developments are widely seen as retaliation for earlier strikes carried

out by the United States and Israel on Iran's energy assets, including the South Pars gas field. The latest attacks have raised global concerns about energy supply security, particularly as the Strait of Hormuz, a

crucial maritime route for global oil shipments, has been severely affected by the ongoing conflict. Meanwhile, Donald Trump warned that the United States could take strong action if attacks on energy facilities in Qatar continue.



"Testing Time": India Announces Rs 497 Crore Relief Package For Exporters Hit By West Asia Disruptions

■ Government launches RELIEF initiative to support trade as Middle East tensions impact logistics and energy routes.

New Delhi: The Indian government has announced a relief package worth Rs 497 crore to support exporters affected by trade disruptions arising from the ongoing conflict in West Asia. The financial assistance initiative, titled RELIEF, short for Resilience and Logistic Intervention of Export Facilitation, has been introduced to help exporters manage logistical challenges caused by instability in the region. The programme will be implemented under the Export Promotion Mission and is aimed at ensuring that Indian trade flows remain stable despite global disruptions. At an inter ministerial briefing in New Delhi, Randhir Jaiswal, spokesperson for the Ministry of External Affairs, said the evolving situation has created significant challenges not only for India but for the global community. He noted that India's leadership has been actively engaging with

counterparts in the region to address the crisis and safeguard national interests. According to him, diplomatic engagement has helped maintain key supply routes, including facilitating the safe passage of two Indian LPG vessels through the strategically important Strait of Hormuz. Jaiswal said India remains in constant contact with multiple stakeholders to ensure uninterrupted energy supplies and to safeguard the welfare of Indian nationals living in the Gulf region. The government is also monitoring developments closely to protect the interests of the large Indian diaspora in countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. The relief package was detailed by Senthil Rajan from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, who explained that the initiative was designed to quickly respond to external disruptions affecting India's trade and logistics networks.

Goa Hit by Flight Cancellations

to these cancellations, multiple other international routes have been affected. Air Arabia's Sharjah-Mopa service, Qatar Airways' Doha-Mopa flights, and several Dubai sector operations have also been disrupted, further limiting travel options for passengers. At present, Oman Air's Muscat-Mopa

service remains the only operational international connection from Goa, offering limited relief amid widespread cancellations. The disruptions are expected to significantly impact passengers travelling to and from the Gulf region, a crucial corridor for both tourism and Goan expatriates.

“Attacks On Energy Infrastructure Are Condemnable”: PM Modi Holds Talks With Global Leaders On West Asia Crisis

■ Prime Minister urges dialogue and diplomacy during calls with leaders of Qatar, Jordan, Oman, France and Malaysia.

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday held discussions with several world leaders to address the escalating situation in West Asia, strongly condemning attacks on energy infrastructure and calling for urgent steps toward de-escalation. During separate telephonic conversations with leaders from Qatar, Jordan, Oman, France and Malaysia, the prime minister emphasised that dialogue and diplomacy remain essential for restoring peace, security and stability in the region. In a conversation with Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, the Amir of Qatar, Modi conveyed Eid greetings and expressed India's solidarity with the country while condemning



attacks targeting energy facilities in the region. He also highlighted the importance of ensuring safe and free navigation through the strategically important Strait of Hormuz. While speaking with King Abdullah II of Jordan, the prime minister expressed concern about the evolving security situation in West Asia. Both leaders stressed the need to prioritise dialogue and diplomatic

engagement to restore stability. Modi also appreciated Jordan's assistance in facilitating the safe return of Indian nationals stranded in the region.

The prime minister also held discussions with Emmanuel Macron, president of France, during which both leaders emphasised the urgent need to reduce tensions and resume diplomatic engagement. They

agreed to maintain close coordination in efforts aimed at promoting peace and stability in the region. In another call with Haitham bin Tariq, the Sultan of Oman, Modi reiterated India's condemnation of violations of Oman's sovereignty and territorial integrity. He also acknowledged Oman's role in assisting thousands of people, including Indian nationals, to safely return home during the crisis. The prime minister additionally spoke with Anwar Ibrahim, the prime minister of Malaysia, where both leaders exchanged festive greetings for the upcoming Hari Raya Aidilfitri and discussed the situation in West Asia.



“Many Repercussions”: Jaishankar Speaks With Israeli Counterpart On West Asia Conflict

■ India continues diplomatic outreach to ensure energy security and push for dialogue amid escalating tensions.

New Delhi: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Thursday held a telephonic conversation with Gideon Sa'ar, Israel's foreign minister, to discuss the ongoing conflict in West Asia and its wider global implications. In a message posted on the social platform X, Jaishankar said the two leaders exchanged views on the escalating situation and the many repercussions

arising from the conflict. The discussion forms part of India's continued diplomatic engagement with key stakeholders since hostilities began in the region on February 28. The conflict intensified after joint military strikes by the United States and Israel targeted sites in Iran, prompting retaliatory actions from Tehran against several Gulf countries hosting American military bases.



Russian Oil Tanker Bound for China Diverts to India Amid Gulf Disruptions

■ Vessel carrying 7.7 lakh barrels of crude set to reach New Mangalore as conflict in West Asia disrupts global energy flows.

New Delhi: A Russian oil tanker carrying about 7.7 lakh barrels of crude oil is scheduled to arrive in India on March 21 after diverting from its original route to China amid ongoing disruptions in the Middle East. The vessel, Aqua Titan, which is registered in Cameroon, departed from a Russian port on January 18 and later turned around in the South China Sea before heading toward India. It is expected to dock at the New Mangalore Port, according to officials from the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.

The diversion comes at a time when tensions and military activity in West Asia have significantly affected the movement of oil and natural gas from the region. Attacks and retaliatory strikes linked to the ongoing conflict involving the United States, Israel and Iran have disrupted energy supply chains and forced some production shutdowns. The situation has also affected maritime traffic in the strategically important Strait of Hormuz, through which roughly one fifth of the world's crude oil supply passes.

“Crossed All Boundaries”: Mamata Banerjee Slams Poll Panel Over Transfer of Officials

■ West Bengal Chief Minister writes to Chief Election Commissioner expressing shock over large scale bureaucratic reshuffle ahead of assembly elections

Kolkata: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has strongly criticised the Election Commission of India over the transfer of several senior officials ahead of the state assembly elections, accusing the poll body of exceeding constitutional limits. In a sharply worded

letter to Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, the chief minister expressed deep shock at the functioning of the Commission and alleged that its actions had crossed all boundaries of decency and constitutional propriety. The letter is the eighth she has written to the poll panel chief

on the issue. Banerjee claimed the Commission had acted with apparent bias since the start of the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls and had ignored concerns raised by the state government. She argued that decisions were taken without proper consideration of ground realities or the interests



of the people. The chief minister also pointed out that the state government had approached the Supreme Court of India regarding the matter, noting that the court had acknowledged the concerns and issued directions which are currently being followed.

Rare 1,000 Km Rain Band Triggers Storms Across India, Pakistan And Afghanistan

■ Unusual western disturbance brings thunderstorms, strong winds and hail in late March

New Delhi: An unusual weather system stretching nearly 1,000 kilometres is currently bringing intense rainfall, thunderstorms and strong winds across parts of India, Pakistan and Afghanistan, creating conditions rarely seen at this time of year. The weather event is linked

to an active Western Disturbance that has formed an unusually straight band of low pressure extending from Afghanistan through Pakistan and deep into northern and central India. This long rain band is generating widespread storms accompanied

by gusty winds ranging between 40 and 80 kilometres per hour, along with isolated hailstorms and light to moderate rainfall or snowfall in several regions. Typically, western disturbances originate from low pressure systems over the Mediterranean



region and move in curved paths toward the Himalayas, mainly during the winter months. In contrast, the current system has formed as a straight trough pattern, highlighting increasingly unpredictable weather patterns.

“He Will Be The One And Only Sanju Samson”: Gambhir’s Remark Recalled By Shashi Tharoor

■ Congress leader praises wicketkeeper batter’s rise and match winning performances in T20 World Cup.

New Delhi: Shashi Tharoor recently recalled a conversation with India head coach Gautam Gambhir in which the former cricketer said that Sanju Samson did not need to be compared with MS Dhoni, insisting that the wicketkeeper batter would carve out his own identity. Speaking about Samson’s journey and recent success, Tharoor said he had once told the young cricketer that he



could become the next Dhoni. However, Gambhir later corrected him, saying Samson did not have to follow anyone’s path and would instead establish himself as a unique

figure in Indian cricket. Tharoor, who has followed Samson’s career from an early stage, said he first met the cricketer when he was just 14 years old and already displaying

immense talent as both a wicketkeeper and batter. The Thiruvananthapuram MP said he always believed in Samson’s potential and takes pride in seeing him achieve success on the international stage. The Congress leader praised Samson’s recent performances in the ICC Men’s T20 World Cup, where the batter played a key role in India’s title winning campaign.

Tanvi Sharma, Arjun-Hariharan Enter Quarterfinals At Orleans Masters

■ Indian shuttlers deliver commanding wins in singles and doubles to progress in France.

New Delhi: India’s rising badminton star Tanvi Sharma and the men’s doubles pair of Hariharan Amsakarunan and M. R. Arjun advanced to the quarterfinals of the Orleans Masters after registering strong victories in their respective matches on Thursday. Competing in Orléans, Tanvi Sharma continued her impressive run in the tournament with a confident win in the

women’s singles round of 16. The World Junior Championships silver medallist defeated fellow Indian youngster Anmol Kharb in straight games, winning 21-14, 21-17 to secure her place in the last eight. Tanvi had already made a strong



statement earlier in the competition by defeating second seed Supanida Katethong of Thailand in the opening round, a result that highlighted her growing confidence and ability against higher ranked opponents. Her composed

performance against Anmol ensured she maintained the momentum in the tournament. In the men’s doubles event, Hariharan Amsakarunan and M. R. Arjun also delivered an impressive display to progress to the quarterfinal stage. The Indian duo defeated Scotland’s pair of Alexander Dunn and Adam Pringle in straight games.



Jaipur Optiemus Achievers Beat Jindal Panther 9-6 In Rain-Hit Polo Exhibition

■ Early dominance by Sawai Padmanabh Singh and Alejo Aramburu helps Achievers secure victory at Jaipur Polo Grounds.

Jaipur: Jaipur Optiemus Achievers defeated Jindal Panther 9-6 in an entertaining rain affected exhibition match during the Indian Open Polo Championship at the iconic Jaipur Polo Grounds. Despite intermittent showers, nearly 1,000 spectators gathered to watch the contest, creating a lively atmosphere at the historic venue.

The crowd included political figures and students from Maharaja Agrasen Medical College. Jaipur Optiemus Achievers started the match strongly, taking early control in the opening chukker. Alejo Aramburu and Sawai Padmanabh Singh scored two goals each to give their team a commanding start. Jindal Panther responded with goals from Juan Gris Zavaleta and Ramiro Zavaleta, but the Achievers ended the first

chukker ahead 4-2. The Achievers strengthened their lead in the second chukker when Aramburu added another goal, extending the advantage to 5-2 through coordinated play and precise finishing. Jindal Panther fought back in the third chukker as Juan Gris Zavaleta and Naveen Jindal each scored to reduce the gap to 5-4.

However, the Achievers quickly regained control with goals from Sawai Padmanabh Singh and Pratap Singh Kanota, ending the first half with a comfortable 7-4 lead. After the break, Sawai Padmanabh Singh continued his impressive performance by scoring two more goals in the fourth chukker. Although Juan Gris Zavaleta managed to add another goal for Jindal Panther, the score moved to 9-5 in favour of the Achievers.

Goa Veterans Shine on Day Two of 48th Indian Masters Badminton Championship

■ Local players deliver strong performances as several Goan shuttlers progress in multiple categories

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Goa’s veteran badminton players delivered impressive performances on the second day of the Yonex Sunrise 48th Indian Masters National Badminton Championships 2025 to 26, with several local shuttlers advancing in their respective categories. Among the standout performers from the host state were Dr Satish Kudchadkar, Manjiri Moktali, Rupchandra Humraskar,



Roseline Bunyan and Chinmay Fallary, who produced notable victories to keep Goa’s challenge alive in the tournament. Chinmay Fallary

continued his strong run in the Men’s Singles category, overcoming Jose Mathew of Kerala in an intense three game encounter to secure a place in the main draw. His determined performance highlighted Goa’s growing presence in the competition. In the main draw matches, Manjiri Moktali fought a hard battle to defeat Aley Cherian of Tamil Nadu in the Women’s Singles 55 category, displaying resilience and composure in a closely contested match.

Oxford CC Crush Aim Academy by 131 Runs in U16 Tournament

■ Century by Adeep Prabhu Miskin and five wicket haul from Abhisek Lamani power dominant victory.

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Oxford Cricket Club of Goa delivered a commanding performance to defeat Aim Cricket Academy B from Sawantwadi by 131 runs in the Late Rajan Bhai Angane Memorial Under 16 Cricket Tournament on Thursday. Batting first after winning the toss at the Boarding Ground in Malvan, Oxford Cricket Club posted an imposing total of 234 runs before being bowled out in 34.2 overs. The innings



was anchored by a magnificent century from Adeep Prabhu Miskin, who scored 102 runs off just 62 balls. His aggressive knock featured 12 boundaries and five sixes and provided the

foundation for Oxford’s big total. Captain Tanishq Naik supported the innings with a useful contribution of 22 runs, while Harsh Nain added 18. Extras also played a role in boosting the total.