



Curchorem Sex Scandal Rocks Goa

Curchorem On Edge As Sex Scandal Triggers Protests; Youth Arrested

GPCC, Goa Forward Mount Pressure On Police In Curchorem Sex Scandal

Residents Issue Ultimatum, Gather Outside Police Station; Case Registered.

Leaders Meet DySP; POCSO Invoked, Main Accused Arrested, Victims Asked To Come Forward.

Team Goemkarponn

CURCHOREM: A sex scandal that rocked Curchorem triggered massive public outrage, forcing police to arrest a 20-year-old youth late Sunday evening after residents issued a 24-hour ultimatum demanding immediate action. The accused, Soham Naik of Madhegal-Curchorem, was taken into custody by Curchorem police under Section 294 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita



(BNS) and Section 67A of the Information Technology Act, relating to publishing or transmitting sexually explicit material online. Police said further investigations are in

progress. Tension had escalated earlier in the day when a large number of residents gathered outside the Curchorem police station, alleging delay in action

and demanding the immediate arrest of those involved. Protesters warned that roads in Curchorem would be blocked if police failed to act within 24 hours.

Former councillor Anand Prabhudessai, who led the protest, demanded clarity on the investigation and urged authorities to act swiftly. Protesters also appealed to MLA Nilesh Cabral to intervene, referring to his role in handling a similar controversy in the past.



Team Goemkarponn

CURCHOREM: Mounting pressure from political leaders intensified in the Curchorem sex scandal case after leaders of the Goa Pradesh Congress Committee and the Goa Forward Party met Deputy

Superintendent of Police Ashish Shirodkar on Monday, demanding a thorough and transparent investigation. GPCC president Amit Patkar and Goa Forward Party chief Vijai Sardesai urged police to act firmly and ensure

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Chaos At Ponda Dy Collector Office During Nominations; Opposition Alleges Bias



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PONDA: Tension and chaos marked the nomination process for the Ponda by-election on Monday, with heated arguments breaking out between BJP and Congress workers and a confrontation reported between AAP leaders and police at the Deputy

Collector's office. Congress leaders alleged injustice during the filing of nominations, claiming that BJP cadres were allowed inside the premises while opposition party supporters were restricted. The party accused the authorities of adopting a discriminatory approach and favouring the ruling party during the crucial process.

Ponda Bypoll Heats Up With Show Of Strength As Candidates File Nominations

Triangular Fight Emerges; BJP Confident, Congress Eyes Big Win, AAP Enters Fray As RGP Backs Congress



Team Goemkarponn

PONDA: Triangular Contest Takes Shape For Ponda Bypoll As Candidates File Nominations AAP, BJP Show Strength; Congress Confident Of Big Win As



RGP Extends Support. The battle for the Ponda Assembly by-election intensified on Monday with candidates from major political parties filing their nominations in a show of strength, setting the stage for a



high-stakes triangular contest. AAP candidate Geetesh Naik reached the Deputy Collector's office to file his nomination, accompanied by MLAs Venzy Viegas and Cruz Silva, State President Valmiki Naik, and a

large number of party supporters. The party projected confidence while highlighting its growing base in the constituency. Leader of Opposition Yuri Alemao expressed optimism

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DRDO Pushes Jet Engine Self-Reliance With National Test Complex Plan

DRDO plans national facility to strengthen indigenous aero engine development and reduce reliance on foreign technology

New Delhi: India is taking a significant step toward strengthening its defence technology capabilities with plans to establish a National Aero Engine Test Complex, a specialised facility designed to support the development and validation of indigenous



jet engines. The initiative is being led by the Defence Research and Development Organisation

through its laboratory, the Gas Turbine Research Establishment. The

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Jag Vasant, Pine Gas Exit Strait Of Hormuz After IRGC Clearance

Indian LPG carriers resume journey home, easing concerns over supply disruptions amid Iran Israel tensions

New Delhi: Two Indian LPG carriers, Jag Vasant and Pine Gas, have successfully crossed the Strait of Hormuz and entered international waters after being stranded in the Persian Gulf due to escalating tensions between Iran



and Israel. According to government officials, the vessels departed early

Monday after receiving clearance from the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, which oversees security in the region's key maritime routes. Their exit from the strategic chokepoint marks a major relief for India's energy

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When Everyone Passes, Who Is Truly Prepared?

A 92.9 percent pass rate in Goa's Class 12 board examinations looks impressive. It signals efficiency, progress, and a system that appears to be working. Parents celebrate, schools advertise their success, and policymakers highlight the numbers as proof of improvement. But behind this near-universal success lies a deeper concern: are we producing capable, competitive young minds, or simply inflating academic outcomes? The growing trend of high pass percentages across boards in India demands closer scrutiny. When almost every student clears an exam, the benchmark itself becomes questionable. Passing is no longer a differentiator. It tells us little about a student's depth of understanding, analytical ability, or readiness for the challenges ahead. Instead, it reflects a system that prioritises completion over competence. This is not a reflection on students. They work hard within the framework they are given. The problem lies in that framework. Board examinations continue to reward memorisation, repetition, and predictability. Students are trained to reproduce answers rather than think critically. As a result, they may perform well in familiar settings but struggle when faced with unfamiliar problems. The real test begins after Class 12. Competitive exams like engineering and medical entrance tests demand conceptual clarity, speed, and application. Here, the gap becomes evident. A large pool of board-qualified students narrows sharply when it comes to clearing these national-level examinations. Only a small fraction make it through. The rest are left grappling with the realisation that high board scores did not necessarily prepare them for higher competition. This disconnect has created an entire parallel industry. Coaching centres and private tuition have become almost essential for those aiming higher. Families invest heavily in these systems

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because they know that school education alone is often insufficient.

This raises a fundamental question: if students must rely on external support to succeed, what does that say about the strength of the formal education system?

Beyond elite exams, the issue extends to employability and life readiness. Not every student will become an engineer or doctor, nor should they. But every student

should leave school with a set of skills that enables them to adapt, learn, and grow. Communication, problem-solving, creativity, and critical thinking are no longer optional. Yet, these are precisely the areas where the current system falls short.

There is also a psychological cost to this model. When high marks become the norm, students feel pressured to achieve near perfection just to stand out. At the same time, those who fall slightly behind feel disproportionately inadequate.

A system that produces both inflated success and silent anxiety cannot be called healthy. Raising educational standards does not mean making exams tougher for the sake of it. It means making them smarter. Assessments must move beyond textbook boundaries and test understanding in real-world contexts. Classrooms must encourage questioning, discussion, and independent thought. Teachers must be given the training and freedom to innovate, rather than rush to complete syllabi. Equally important is broadening the definition of success. India's obsession with a few prestigious career paths has narrowed the purpose of education. Students need exposure to diverse fields and clear guidance on the opportunities available to them. A system that values only a handful of professions will inevitably fail the majority. The 92.9 percent pass rate is not the problem.

It is a symptom. It reflects an education system that has become efficient at producing results, but not necessarily at building capability. If we continue to measure success only through percentages, we risk mistaking quantity for quality. The real challenge is not to ensure that more students pass, but to ensure that those who pass are truly prepared. Until then, high pass rates will remain a comforting statistic, masking a more uncomfortable truth about the state of education.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR Confusion, Contradictions, and Credibility: The Questions Around the CM's Health

Conflicting statements over the Chief Minister's health have created avoidable confusion and raised serious questions about transparency in public communication. What should have been a straightforward medical update quickly turned into a cycle of claims and counterclaims. Initial reports suggested that the Chief Minister had undergone angioplasty, with hospital sources indicating as much. Soon after, the Chief Minister's Office issued a clarification denying any such procedure, calling it a routine check-up. The matter did not rest there. A senior party leader then publicly stated that an angioplasty had indeed been performed, even as he reassured that the Chief Minister was stable. Amid these contradictions, a video of the Chief Minister surfaced, showing him in good health and dismissing speculation. Within a day, he returned to Goa and resumed official duties, further blurring the line between fact and perception. The issue here is not the medical condition itself, but the communication surrounding it. Public trust depends on clarity and consistency, especially when it concerns a sitting Chief Minister. Mixed messaging from official and political channels only fuels speculation and erodes credibility. In an age of instant information, silence creates rumours, but conflicting information creates distrust. The public does not demand detailed medical disclosures, but it does expect honesty and coherence. If institutions speak in one voice, speculation ends. If they do not, confusion becomes the story.

-Shailesh Madgavkar, Chinchinim

Demand Answers, Not Silence

The concerns raised by residents of Curchorem over the alleged sex racket cannot be brushed aside as mere speculation. When ordinary citizens feel compelled to approach the police seeking clarity, it reflects a deeper unease about law enforcement and public accountability. (Herald Goa) Reports linking the alleged racket to individuals with local influence have only intensified these fears. In such situations, silence or delayed responses from authorities do more harm than good. They create space for rumours, damage reputations, and weaken public trust in institutions meant to uphold the law. What residents are asking for is neither unreasonable nor premature. They are demanding a clear statement of facts, a transparent investigation, and assurance that no one will be shielded if wrongdoing is established. This is the minimum expectation in a democracy governed by the rule of law. Equally important is the need for sensitivity. Allegations of this nature carry serious social consequences. If untrue, they can irreparably harm individuals and families. If true, they point to grave criminal activity that must be dealt with firmly. In both cases, clarity is essential. The police must act swiftly, communicate responsibly, and ensure that the truth is established without fear or favour. Public confidence depends not just on action, but on visible and credible action. Curchorem's residents have done their part by raising the issue. It is now up to the authorities to respond with transparency and integrity.

-Sandesh Kudchadkar, Baina

Over 100 Illegal Borewells Yet to Be Sealed Amid Court Cases in Goa

■ Govt Says Groundwater Still 'Safe' at 23.29%, Enforcement Hit by Ongoing Litigation.

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Even as Goa's groundwater extraction remains within the "safe" category, enforcement against illegal borewells continues to face hurdles, with over 100 identified cases yet to be sealed due to ongoing court proceedings. In a written reply to Legislative Assembly Question (LAQ No. 144) tabled by MLA Yuri Alemao, Water Resources Minister Subhash Shirodkar informed that groundwater extraction in the state stands at 23.29%, as per a joint assessment with the Central Ground Water Board. This falls



under the "safe" category in the Dynamic Ground Water Resources of Goa 2025 report. However, the government acknowledged widespread irregularities in borewell drilling. While action has been initiated in several cases, a significant number remain pending. As per official data, most

of the over 100 illegal borewells identified across the state have not yet been sealed because the matters are currently sub judice before the High Court of Bombay at Goa.

The department has taken steps such as issuing show-cause notices and directing the Electricity Department to

disconnect power supply to unauthorized borewell pumps. In areas like Arpora and Anjuna, some borewells have been sealed following High Court directives in ongoing Public Interest Litigations.

The report also highlights instances of penalties imposed on violators. In certain cases not under litigation, fines of up to ₹6 lakh have been levied on engineering and construction firms for illegal groundwater extraction. Meanwhile, the government released details of borewell registrations since 2020, covering industrial, commercial, residential, and construction sectors.



Chaos At Gandhi Market In Margao Over Sopo Measurement Drive

Team Goemkarponn

MARGAO: Tension prevailed at Gandhi Market on Monday after a dispute over sopo collection led to protests by traders against authorities conducting shop measurements. Officials from the Margao Municipal Council, accompanied by police personnel, began measuring shops as part of an exercise linked to revision and possible increase in sopo rates.

The move triggered immediate opposition from shopkeepers, who alleged that the measurements were being carried out without prior notice.

Traders objected to the exercise, claiming that the fresh measurements could result in a steep hike in fees, further burdening their businesses.

Several shopkeepers gathered at the site and demanded that the authorities halt the process until proper consultation was held.

"For Goa, I Am Even Ready To Consume Poison": Yuri Alemao Targets BJP In Ponda



Team Goemkarponn

PONDA: Leader of Opposition Yuri Alemao on Monday launched a sharp attack on the BJP government, accusing it of "dadagiri" and misuse of state machinery during the Ponda by-poll nomination process. Alemao alleged that while BJP karyakartas were allowed entry into the administrative building campus, Congress workers were deliberately stopped, calling it a clear example of bias by the authorities. "To protect Goa from the clutches of such an anti-people party, I am ready to consume poison if asked," Alemao declared while speaking to the media after the nomination of Congress candidate Dr. Ketan Bhatikar for the Ponda by-election. He further accused the BJP of "murdering democracy" and said that government machinery was being blatantly misused to

favour the ruling party. Referring to the legacy of former chief minister Ravi Naik, Alemao said it was rooted in the welfare of the Bahunjan community, kul-mundkars, and the broader interests of the people. He asserted that Congress would carry forward that ideology and build on the development undertaken by previous Congress governments in Ponda. "With the development carried out by Congress governments in the past in Ponda, I am confident we will win this seat," he said. Alemao also welcomed the support extended by the Revolutionary Goans Party, terming it a "winning formula" for the by-poll. He expressed gratitude to the party for backing the Congress candidate. "Their support will indeed help us defeat the BJP. I am thankful to them for taking the right step in the interest of Goa," he added.

Goa Allocates One-Third of Budget for Women's Empowerment, Says CM Sawant

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SANKHALI: Chief Minister and Finance Minister Pramod Sawant highlighted that over the past three years, 33% of Goa's state budget has been dedicated to a gender-focused initiative aimed at promoting



women's empowerment, self-reliance, and independence. He noted that the effort has received recognition from

UN Women. Addressing a discussion at Ravindra Bhavan, Sankhali, organised by the Goa Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI) in collaboration with Ravindra Bhavan, Sawant said Goa ranks second in the country for financial management.

Four accused discharged in 43-crore cocaine case, court questions investigation



Team Goemkarponn

MORMUGAO: Less than a year after the Crime Branch made headlines with a record Rs 43-crore cocaine seizure at Mormugao in April 2025, the case has resurfaced after four of the five accused were discharged by the court before the trial began due to lack of evidence. While the court found prima facie evidence against Accused No. 1 sufficient to frame charges, the discharge of the remaining four raised serious concerns over the quality of the police investigation. South Goa Additional Sessions Judge Ram Prabhudesai noted that the prosecution's material against Accused Nos. 2 to 5 was either incomplete, irrelevant, or based on inadmissible evidence, including the confession of Accused No. 1.

Thakare urges respectful tone towards allies, distances Congress from Yuri's remark on Sardesai

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MARGAO: In a notable political move, Congress Goa Desk in-charge Manikrao Thakare on Sunday distanced the party from Leader of Opposition Yuri Alemao's comment calling Goa Forward chief Vijai Sardesai "Judas"



and emphasized the importance of maintaining a respectful tone towards alliance partners. Thakare, who returned to Goa on Sunday afternoon,

stated that Alemao's remark reflected his personal opinion and should not be seen as the official position of the Congress. He added that the party plans to hold discussions with the Goa Forward chief to address any misunderstandings stemming from the statement.

New Marine Crab Species Discovered in Goa's Mangrove Ecosystems

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Scientists have identified a previously unknown species of marine crab along Goa's coastline, highlighting the rich biodiversity of the State's mangrove forests.



Named Chhapparus nangankeae, the species was discovered by Sameer Kumar Pati from the Zoological Survey of India. The discovery traces back to the muddy backwaters of the Galgibaga River in

Goa, where the primary reference specimen, or holotype, was collected. Measuring just 1.6 cm, the small crab inhabits intertidal mangrove habitats, which are commonly found along Goa's coast.

Fake TCP NOCs Used To Sell Comunidade Land; Two Booked In Ponda

Team Goemkarponn

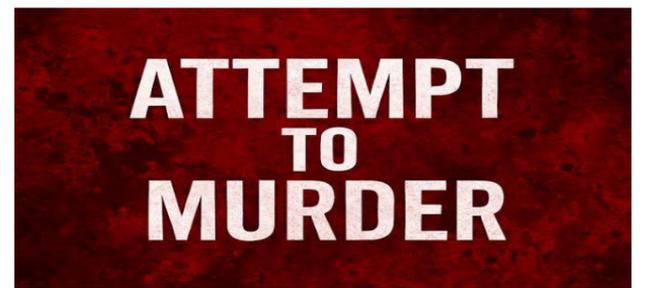
PONDA: Ponda Police have registered a case against two partners of a real estate firm for allegedly using forged TCP NOCs to grab and sell Comunidade land at Bethora. According to a complaint filed by Ucchhari Gaude of Bethoda, the alleged offences took place between October



17, 2023 and January 28, 2026. The accused, identified as Muhammad Javed Mullam Comoludino of Nagamasjid, Ponda and Neeraj Kankonkar of Kindlem, Canacona, partners of Phoenix Real

Estate Developers, along with others, allegedly acted on a power of attorney executed by 33 co-owners of a property in Bethora. Police said the accused allegedly prepared fake NOCs purportedly issued by the TCP Department and used them to carry out large-scale land grabbing operations. The prohibited and undivided ancestral

land, originally belonging to the Comunidade of Bethora, was then allegedly sold to third parties. The complainant stated that the actions deprived him of his legal rights over the property and amounted to cheating. Ponda Police have registered the case and further investigation is being conducted by PSI Prajyot Bakhale.



Man Booked For Attempt To Murder After Deliberate Car Dash In Borim

Team Goemkarponn

PONDA: Ponda Police have registered an attempt to murder case following a deliberate accident reported from Tamshirem, Borim on March 21. According to the complaint filed by Vithal Naik of Talaulim, the incident occurred at around 9:45 am when the accused, identified as Lavunath Naik of Wadi, Talaulim, allegedly drove his Alto car at high speed from Borim and intentionally rammed into the complainant's brother,

Bramhanand Naik. Police said Bramhanand Naik was riding his Jupiter scooter from Talaulim towards Verna when the accused allegedly gave a deliberate dash, leaving him seriously injured. The accused reportedly fled the spot leaving the victim in a pool of blood and allegedly uttered threatening words before escaping.

Ponda Police have registered an offence of attempt to murder. Further investigation is being carried out by PSI Ashish Velip.

Man Killed In Hit-And-Run Near Kadamba Bypass; Two Vehicles Flee Spot

Team Goemkarponn

OLD GOA: Old Goa Police have registered a case after a man succumbed to injuries in a hit-and-run accident near the Kadamba Bypass Road. According to the complaint filed by Ashwinee Naik (29), a



resident of Gademand, Adpai in Durbhat, Ponda, the incident occurred on February 28, 2026 between 6:00 am and

6:30 am opposite the Fern Kadamba Hotel on Kadamba Bypass Road, Old Goa. Her husband was riding scooter GA-05-Q-1571, while she was travelling as pillion rider. Police said an unknown driver of a white Maruti WagonR, driven in a rash and negligent manner,

allegedly brushed against the scooter, causing both riders to fall on the road. At the same time, an unidentified tractor with a container attachment, which was passing by, reportedly ran over the rider's pelvic region, resulting in severe injuries to both.

Russian National Booked For Illegal Stay In Arambol

Team Goemkarponn

MANDREM: Mandrem Police have registered an offence against a Russian national for allegedly staying illegally in Goa without valid travel documents.

According to police, the case was registered on March 21, 2026 at 8:01 pm based on a complaint filed by Police Inspector Girendre J. Naik of Mandrem Police



Station. The accused has been identified as Aleksei Leonov, a Russian national residing in a rented room at Girkarwada, Arambol in Pernem.

Man Assaulted With Stone, Scooter Damaged Over Personal Dispute In Canca

Team Goemkarponn

CANCA: Mapusa Police have registered an offence following an alleged assault and damage to property reported from Khalapwado, Canca in Bardez on March 21.

According to police, complainant Rohan Ratikant Korgaonkar (36), a businessman and resident of Khalapwado, Canca, stated that the



incident occurred at around 3:00 pm near Anup Sherol Gym. The accused, identified as Pitu alias Willson Fernandes, reportedly abused the complainant using filthy language

over a personal issue and allegedly assaulted him with a stone, causing bodily injuries. Police said the accused also allegedly threatened the complainant with dire consequences and

damaged his scooter bearing registration number GA-03-AG-2514, resulting in an estimated loss of around ₹20,000.

Mapusa Police have registered an offence under sections 352, 351(3), 118(2) and 324(4) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023. The accused has not been arrested and further investigation is in progress.

Two Zuarinagar youths killed in bike-car crash on Cuelim-Verna road

Team Goemkarponn

VERNA: Two youth from Zuarinagar were killed on the spot after the bike they were riding collided with an Innova taxi on the internal Cuelim-Verna road on Sunday evening, in a tragic accident that has raised fresh concerns over speeding on newly tarred roads. The deceased have been identified as Venkatesh Basar (21) and Rakesh Sankappanavar (24), both



residents of Zuarinagar. They were travelling on an Access bike towards Verna from Zuarinagar when they crashed into an Innova taxi that was coming from the opposite direction carrying tourists. The impact of the collision was severe, resulting in

both riders succumbing to their injuries at the scene itself. Social worker Roquezinho Dsouza, who rushed to the site, said that while the road was recently improved, it should not become a reason for reckless driving.

Woman, Rickshaw Driver Steal Household Items From Velim House; FIR Registered

Team Goemkarponn

CUNCOLIM: Cuncolim Police have registered a theft case after unknown persons allegedly broke into a house at Cumbiabhat, Velim and decamped with household articles worth over ₹22,000. According to the complaint filed by Joe Mascarenhas of Cumbiabhat, the incident occurred on March 20 between 12:00 pm and 4:40 pm. Police said an unknown woman

allegedly trespassed into the complainant's house from the rear side and entered the shed/kitchen area, from where she stole several items. The stolen articles included four bullet silencers valued at ₹16,000, a copper pot worth ₹3,500, a cloth iron machine worth ₹1,000, a steel utensil rack worth ₹1,000, a steel tumbler worth ₹500 and five steel plates valued at ₹600, amounting to a total loss of ₹22,600. Police said the accused woman allegedly

kept the stolen items near a tamarind tree opposite the house and later returned at around 4:26 pm with an unidentified male accomplice driving a rickshaw. Both allegedly loaded the stolen articles into the rickshaw and fled the spot. Cuncolim Police have registered FIR No. 13/2026 under sections 305(a), 329(4) read with 3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. Further investigation is being carried out by PSI Suhas Velip.

Residents move out as Prabhu Violetta diarrhoea cases touch 160

■ Builder begins tanker disposal of sewage.

Team Goemkarponn

DABOLIM: Even as diarrhoea cases at the Prabhu Violetta residential complex in Dabolim rose to 160 with two fresh cases reported on Sunday, the situation on the ground appears to have eased only because several residents have temporarily moved out, citing fear of contamination and unsafe water. Health authorities continue to monitor the situation closely, including the two suspected typhoid cases detected earlier, while medical teams remain engaged in follow-up visits and treatment of affected residents. However, many occupants say the visible dip in distress is largely due to families vacating their flats and shifting to rented accommodations or relatives' homes. "People are not feeling safe



staying here anymore. Many families who have been suffering for days have now moved out temporarily. That is one of the main reasons why the situation looks under control," a resident said. In a significant development, the builder has now begun transporting sewage through night soil tankers to government sewerage facilities, following directions issued by the Goa State Pollution Control Board (GSPCB). The move comes after sustained scrutiny and

action by authorities, with the GSPCB mandating tanker-based disposal until both Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) at the complex are made fully functional. "After so much pressure and action from authorities, the builder has finally started sending sewage through tankers to PWD plants as directed. This should have been done much earlier," another resident said. Despite these steps, residents expressed disappointment over what they described as a lack

of visible support from elected representatives during the crisis. "Except for the sarpanch, no elected representative has come here to understand our problems. We have not seen any politicians including MLAs, ministers or even MPs visiting the site, which has been very disheartening for all of us," a resident said. Locals also raised concerns over the lack of communication regarding health findings. "Samples were collected by health authorities, but the results have not been shared with residents so far. People are anxious and want clarity on what exactly caused the outbreak," another resident added. Frustration has also been directed at the builder, with residents alleging that there has been no meaningful engagement to address their grievances.



Truck Owners From Kamral Demand Mining Restart, Seek Jetty Activation

Team Goemkarponn

CURCHOREM: Residents and truck owners from Kamral in Curchorem and nearby areas have called for the immediate revival of mining operations, stating that the prolonged shutdown has pushed many families into financial distress. They said the halt in activity has left truck operators without steady income, severely affecting livelihoods dependent on the mining sector. Voicing concern over continued uncertainty, the truck owners urged the government to take swift steps to resume mining in South Goa. According to them, the

sector once supported thousands of households, and its revival is crucial for restoring employment and economic stability in the region. Locals also raised the issue of a jetty constructed by Tarcar and Company, demanding that it be made operational at the earliest. They clarified that the facility is not linked to coal handling and warned they would oppose any attempt to use it for coal transportation. At the same time, the truck owners expressed solidarity with residents of Xeldem who have been opposing coal-related activities, reiterating their stand against coal handling in the area.



Ritesh Naik Intensifies Outreach After Being Named BJP Candidate For Ponda By-Election

Team Goemkarponn

PONDA: Soon after being announced as the BJP candidate for the upcoming Ponda by-election, youth leader Ritesh Naik has stepped up his grassroots outreach, meeting residents and stakeholders across the constituency. Over the past few days, Naik has

interacted with locals, community leaders and representatives, listening to concerns and assuring attention to key issues. Discussions focused on infrastructure gaps, employment opportunities, youth engagement and implementation of welfare schemes, with Naik stressing practical and people-centric governance.

North Goa Collector Reviews Preparations for Shirgao Jatra, Works Deadline Set for April 10

Team Goemkarponn

MAPUSA: Collector (North Goa) Ankit Yadav on Monday chaired a review meeting with officials and stakeholders to assess infrastructural works and arrangements for the upcoming Shirgao Jatra scheduled on April 21, 2026. The meeting was attended by Mayem MLA Premendra Shet, SP (North Goa) Harishchandra Madkaikar, SP Traffic Prabodh Shirvaikar, Deputy Collector (Bicholim),



SDPO (Bicholim), temple committee representatives, and officials from PWD, Electricity Department, panchayat, excise, and fire & emergency services.

Shri Mallikarjun Higher Secondary School Achieves 100% Class 12 Results in Canacona

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: Shri Mallikarjun Higher Secondary School, Char-Rasta-Canacona, has achieved a remarkable 100% pass rate in the Class 12 examinations conducted by the Goa Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education, bringing pride to the entire Canacona taluka. In the Science stream, Aayushka Malesh Komarpant secured first rank with 88.5%. Amardeep Singh Gurjar

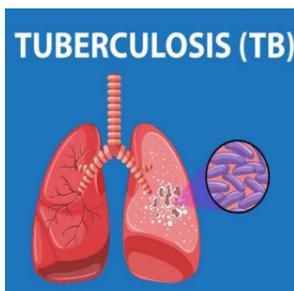


stood second with 87.33%, while Shanaya Roy D'Silva secured third place with 83.5%.

Goa Steps Up TB-Free Drive, Health Min Vishwajit Rane Urges Early Testing

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Reaffirming Goa's commitment to eliminating tuberculosis, Health Minister Vishwajit Rane said the state is strengthening early detection, free treatment, and community outreach under the TB Mukta Bharat mission. He stressed that



tuberculosis is fully curable and that timely testing and

completion of treatment remain key to saving lives and reducing transmission. "TB is curable. Treatment is free. Early action saves lives. Goa continues to lead from the front with advanced diagnostics, AI-powered screening, and strong last-mile outreach to ensure early detection and timely care.

AAP Has Given Ponda A Real Option, Give Us Six Months: MLA Venzy Viegas

Team Goemkarponn

PONDA: Aam Aadmi Party MLA Venzy Viegas said that AAP has provided a genuine alternative to voters in the Ponda by-election, asserting that the contest is effectively between the BJP and AAP. He claimed that Congress candidate Dr. Ketan



Bhatikar joined the party only after he could not be accommodated by

the Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party (MGP), and questioned the stability within Congress ranks. "AAP has given an option to the people of Ponda. Today, the contest is between BJP and AAP. Bhatikar couldn't be accommodated by MGP, so he joined Congress," Viegas said.

“Saligao Festival Envisioned To Celebrate Heritage And Gudi Padwa Spirit”: Grand Opening Marks Vibrant Start

Traditional performances, devotional music and strong community participation set the tone for the cultural celebration

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Saligao witnessed a vibrant and enthusiastic beginning to the Saligao Festival 2026 as the event opened with a colourful display of culture, devotion and community spirit. The festival attracted a large gathering of residents, visitors and cultural enthusiasts, transforming the constituency into a lively hub of celebration and tradition.

The inaugural day began with a traditional Dindi procession, symbolising devotion and collective participation. Accompanied by rhythmic chants and energetic beats, the procession moved gracefully through the venue, drawing enthusiastic participation from attendees. The celebratory atmosphere intensified with powerful Dhol Tasha performances that captivated the crowd



and added a dynamic rhythm to the evening. Spiritual performances formed a key highlight of the opening programme. A graceful Ganesh Vandana invoked blessings for the festival, followed by a powerful Shiva Tandav presentation that impressed the audience with its dramatic energy and devotional expression. These performances reflected the festival's deeper connection to faith, tradition and cultural identity. Another memorable segment of the evening was the Abhang Repost, which brought together devotional music and

cultural expression. The performance celebrated the rich legacy of Bhakti traditions and resonated deeply with the audience, blending spirituality with artistic excellence. The formal inauguration ceremony and felicitation of dignitaries added significance to the occasion, highlighting the festival's growing importance as a cultural landmark in the Saligao constituency. Several prominent leaders, government officials, and local representatives were present, along with members of village panchayats and community organisations.

Addressing the gathering, it was noted that the Saligao Festival has been envisioned in alignment with the auspicious festival of Gudi Padwa, marking the beginning of the Hindu New Year.

The celebration aims to preserve and promote traditional heritage, devotional practices and the spirit of community bonding. The strong public response on the opening day reflected the enthusiasm and pride people hold for their cultural roots. With energetic participation, coordinated efforts by the organising teams and support from local bodies, the first day concluded on a high note. The festival is set to continue with a series of cultural, musical and traditional programmes in the coming days, further strengthening Saligao's identity as a vibrant cultural destination in Goa.



G Kishan Reddy To Launch Auction Of 19 Critical Mineral Blocks In Seventh Tranche

Centre pushes domestic supply security for lithium, rare earths and other strategic resources

New Delhi: Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy will launch the seventh tranche of auctions for critical and strategic mineral blocks on Monday, offering 19 blocks located across several states as part of the government's push to strengthen domestic resource security.

The auction round will be launched in the presence of Minister of State Satish Chandra Dubey, according to the Ministry of Mines. The blocks will be offered under both mining lease and composite licence formats, allowing companies to explore and extract valuable resources.

With this latest round, the government aims to build on earlier progress in expanding India's access to minerals that are crucial for emerging technologies and industrial growth. Six previous auction rounds have already resulted in the allocation of 46 critical and strategic mineral blocks. The seventh tranche adds 19 more blocks to the list, marking another step in the country's efforts to secure a steady supply

of resources required for advanced manufacturing, clean energy systems and high technology sectors. Critical minerals such as lithium, graphite, tungsten and titanium play an essential role in modern technologies, including electric vehicles, renewable energy equipment and electronics. However, the global supply of many of these minerals is concentrated in a limited number of countries, creating concerns about long term supply stability. By expanding domestic exploration and mining, the government is seeking to reduce dependence on imports and strengthen supply chains needed for sectors linked to energy transition, fertiliser production and strategic technologies.

In parallel with the auction launch, the ministry will also host the National District Mineral Foundation Summit 2026 over two days. The summit is expected to focus on development initiatives in mining regions and the welfare of communities affected by mining activities.

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Ponda Bypoll Heats Up With Show Of Strength As Candidates File Nominations

about the Congress prospects, stating that Congress candidate Ketan Bhatikar would emerge victorious by a big margin. He said the win would add another MLA to the Congress tally and reflect public support in Ponda. Meanwhile, BJP candidate Ritesh Naik filed his nomination in a show of strength in the presence of Chief Minister Pramod Sawant and senior party leaders. The Chief Minister said victory was assured with full backing from karyakartas across the constituency. He also clarified that Apurv Dalvi is a BJP karyakarta and his good friend, adding that Dalvi would support BJP candidate Ritesh Naik. Ritesh Naik dismissed speculation about internal differences, emphasizing unity within the party. He said all members would

work together to ensure BJP's victory in the by-election. BJP MLA Govind Gaude said voting for BJP candidate Ritesh Naik would be a true homage to late leader Ravi Naik, urging voters to rally behind the party. The contest is now shaping into a triangular battle, with BJP, Congress and AAP banking on their ground strength and campaign momentum. With the Revolutionary Goans Party stepping aside to support Congress, the political equations in Ponda have become sharper ahead of the campaign. Monday's nominations mark the formal beginning of an intense campaign, with political parties preparing for a closely watched contest expected to witness high-voltage campaigning, sharp exchanges and strong mobilisation across the constituency.

Jag Vasant, Pine Gas Exit Strait Of Hormuz After IRGC Clearance

supply chain, which had been under pressure due to disruptions in tanker movement. The two LPG carriers had been held in the region for several days as heavy shelling and heightened military activity led to restrictions on maritime traffic. Authorities in Iran had earlier advised ships to remain in designated holding areas until the security situation

improved. Sources indicated that the Indian Navy played an important role in facilitating the vessels' safe passage by coordinating closely with Iranian authorities. The successful clearance comes at a time when tanker traffic through the Strait of Hormuz has dropped significantly due to security concerns.

DRDO Pushes Jet Engine Self-Reliance With National Test Complex Plan

proposed complex will function as a comprehensive testing centre where both complete jet engines and individual components such as fans, compressors, combustors, turbines and afterburners can be evaluated under simulated real world conditions. The facility will include advanced

systems capable of recreating high altitude environments along with controlled air heating and cooling mechanisms. These systems will allow engineers to test engines on the ground under conditions similar to those experienced during flight at altitudes of around 40,000 feet, enabling accurate performance assessments.

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GPCC, Goa Forward Mount Pressure On Police In Curchorem Sex Scandal

that all those involved are brought to justice without delay. The leaders stressed that the probe must be fair, time-bound and sensitive to victims. Following the meeting, DySP Shirodkar confirmed that the main accused, Soham Shashikant Naik, son of a councillor, has

been arrested. He said police have invoked stringent provisions under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and the Goa Children's Act, adding that more sections could be invoked as the investigation progresses.

“Citizens Must Be Protected From Impact Of Iran Conflict”: PM Modi At Security Review

■ Cabinet Committee on Security discusses measures to safeguard energy supply, food security and economy

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security to assess the potential impact of the ongoing conflict involving Iran and to review measures aimed at protecting citizens and maintaining economic stability. During the meeting, the committee conducted a detailed review of the availability of essential commodities, including food supplies, fuel and energy resources. The Prime Minister emphasised that the conflict remains an evolving global situation and highlighted the importance of taking proactive steps to shield citizens from any adverse consequences. Officials examined both



immediate and long term strategies to ensure the uninterrupted supply of critical resources. To strengthen energy security, the government decided to maintain adequate coal reserves at power plants across the country to avoid any electricity shortages. Discussions also focused on diversifying import sources for petrochemicals, chemicals and pharmaceutical inputs in order to reduce dependence on limited supply chains. Ensuring

food security was another key priority during the meeting. Plans to build sufficient reserves of fertilisers were reviewed so that farmers continue to receive steady supplies during the upcoming agricultural cycles. The committee also explored the possibility of identifying alternative fertiliser sources to maintain stability in the sector. The meeting included a comprehensive presentation on the global situation and its possible economic

effects on India. Various sectors were examined, including agriculture, fertilisers, petroleum, power generation, shipping, trade, finance, supply chains, exporters and micro, small and medium enterprises. The committee also discussed expanding export opportunities for Indian goods by identifying new international markets. This strategy is expected to help mitigate disruptions in existing trade routes while supporting domestic industries.



Air Canada Plane Collides With Fire Truck At LaGuardia, Pilots Critically Injured

■ Runway crash at New York airport halts flights as emergency crews respond and authorities investigate

New Delhi: A regional jet operated by Air Canada collided with a fire truck while landing at LaGuardia Airport late Monday night, leaving several people injured and forcing authorities to halt air traffic at the busy airport. The aircraft, an Bombardier CRJ-900 operating as an Air Canada Express flight from Montreal, reportedly struck the emergency vehicle on Runway 4 shortly after arrival. The impact occurred at around

11:38 pm local time when the plane was travelling at roughly 39 kilometres per hour, according to flight tracking data. Early reports indicate that the pilot and co pilot of the aircraft were seriously injured in the collision. Two firefighters on the truck, believed to be members of the Port Authority Police Department, also sustained injuries including broken limbs but were reported to be in stable condition at a hospital.



Amit Shah To Table CAPF Umbrella Law In Rajya Sabha

■ Proposed bill aims to regulate recruitment, deputation and service conditions across central armed police forces

New Delhi: Union Home Minister Amit Shah is set to introduce the Central Armed Police Forces (General Administration) Bill, 2026 in the Rajya Sabha, seeking to establish a comprehensive legal framework governing recruitment, deputation, promotion and service conditions of officers across the central armed police forces. The proposed legislation aims to serve as an umbrella law for major paramilitary forces including the Central Reserve Police Force, Border Security Force, Indo Tibetan Border Police and Sashastra Seema Bal. Currently, each of these forces operates under its

own Act and set of rules governing appointments and service conditions. According to the provisions outlined in the bill, a significant share of senior posts in these forces will continue to be filled by officers from the Indian Police Service on deputation. The proposal specifies that 50 percent of Inspector General rank posts will be filled through deputation, while at least 67 percent of Additional Director General rank positions will be reserved for deputed officers. The posts of Special Director General and Director General would be filled exclusively through deputation.

Piyush Goyal Meets Allies In Chennai To Finalise NDA Seat Sharing For Tamil Nadu Polls

■ Union minister expresses confidence alliance will sweep elections in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry

New Delhi: Union Minister Piyush Goyal arrived in Chennai on Monday to hold discussions with alliance partners and finalise the seat sharing arrangement for the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly election, 2026. The meeting comes amid heightened political activity as parties gear up for the upcoming state polls. During his



visit, Goyal met Nainar Nagenthran and other leaders from the alliance to accelerate negotiations over the distribution of constituencies among coalition partners. The discussions are aimed at

finalising the structure of the National Democratic Alliance in the state. Speaking to reporters, the minister expressed strong confidence in the alliance's prospects. He said the coalition expects to perform decisively in both Tamil Nadu and Puducherry and predicted that the alliance would secure victory in the elections. Goyal indicated

that the seat sharing talks would be resolved through consensus among partners, describing the alliance as a closely knit political family. He highlighted the participation of several leaders including Edappadi K. Palaniswami, Anbumani Ramadoss, T. T. V. Dhinakaran and L. Murugan in the ongoing discussions.

Nirmala Sitharaman To Table Finance Bill And Corporate Laws Amendment In Lok Sabha

■ Key legislation aims to implement Budget proposals and introduce reforms in corporate governance framework.

New Delhi: Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is set to introduce two significant pieces of legislation in the Lok Sabha, including the Finance Bill, 2026 and the Corporate Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026. The Finance Bill, 2026 is designed to implement the financial proposals announced by the central government for the 2026 to 2027 fiscal year. The minister will move the bill for consideration and seek its passage in the House, marking an important step in translating



the government's budgetary announcements into law and shaping the country's economic policy for the coming year. Alongside

the Finance Bill, the government will also introduce the Corporate Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026, which proposes changes to major corporate legislation including the Limited Liability Partnership Act, 2008 and the Companies Act, 2013. These laws regulate the incorporation, governance, disclosure requirements and dissolution of companies, while also providing a flexible framework for partnerships with limited liability protection.

“Players Withdrawing From PSL For IPL Will Face Action,” Mohsin Naqvi

■ PCB chief issues stern message as overseas players pull out of Pakistan Super League to join IPL franchises.

New Delhi: Tensions between two of the world's biggest T20 leagues have resurfaced after several overseas cricketers withdrew from the Pakistan Super League to join franchises in the Indian Premier League, prompting a strong response from Mohsin Naqvi. The chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board said strict action would be taken against players who pull out of PSL commitments at the last moment in order to participate in the IPL. His remarks came after Sri



Lanka's Dasun Shanaka withdrew from the Lahore Qalandars squad to join the Rajasthan Royals as a replacement for the injured Sam Curran. Shanaka had earlier appeared in the 2023

edition of the IPL for the Gujarat Titans, where he featured in three matches and scored 26 runs across his innings.

His withdrawal follows another recent switch involving Zimbabwe

fast bowler Blessing Muzarabani, who stepped away from his deal with Islamabad United after receiving an offer from the Kolkata Knight Riders to replace Bangladesh pacer Mustafizur Rahman. Naqvi made it clear that such late withdrawals would be dealt with under the league's regulations. A similar situation occurred last year when South African all rounder Corbin Bosch was handed a one year ban from the PSL after leaving the Peshawar Zalmi squad to join the Mumbai Indians.



Smirnov, Kakodkar And Pavithran Advance As Bandodkar Panjim Gymkhana Tennis Open

■ State level tournament gathers momentum with competitive contests across multiple age categories

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The third edition of the Bandodkar Panjim Gymkhana Tennis Open continued to deliver competitive encounters as players battled it out across several categories in the state capital. In the men's open singles category, Sreenath secured a narrow 6 to 4 victory against Arup Angle in a closely fought match.

Debayan Das registered a dominant performance with a 6 to 0 win over Sagar Patki, while Kshitij Garg defeated Chiraag Suckerkar 6 to 3. Punit Fadte and Shrish Lohiya also impressed with commanding 6 to 0 victories against Allan Fernandes and Bhalchandra Gaitonde respectively. Raoul Vas cruised past Vedang Verlekar 6 to 0, while Dnyaneshwar Surushe defeated Sarvesh Bhohe 6 to 1. Neenad Desai progressed to the next

round after receiving a bye. The men's 45 plus doubles category saw Sachin Dukle and Kevin Pinto Rebelo advance to the semi finals with a convincing 6 to 0 win over Kapil Nair and Swapnil Budge. Anurag Agrawal and Jai Gill defeated Kedar Tari and Shubert Colaco 6 to 1, while Naveen Daivajna and Neville Menezes blanked Kedar Palekar and Vilan Sawant 6 to 0 to move into the semi final stage.

In the Round of 16 matches of the men's 45 plus singles category, Dimitry Smirnov produced the most dominant performance with a 6 to 0 win against Kapil Nair. Kalyanaraman B defeated Oscar 6 to 2, while Noel Noronha progressed with a 6 to 1 victory over Kedar Tari. Kishor Metry secured a 6 to 1 win against Kedar Palekar, and Neville Menezes continued his strong run with a 6 to 2 victory over James Stewart.

Mardolkar Stars As Secretary's XI Win Under New Floodlights At Porvorim

■ All round performance leads Secretary's XI to six wicket victory in exhibition match.

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The newly installed floodlights at the Goa Cricket Association Ground came alive for their first competitive match as Secretary's XI registered a comfortable six wicket win over President's XI in an exhibition game on Friday. The match marked a significant moment for the Goa Cricket Association as the venue hosted its first contest under the recently installed



international standard lighting system.

The floodlights, set up at a cost of around Rs 4 crore, highlighted the association's efforts to upgrade cricket infrastructure in the state while also providing a platform for local

talent to perform under professional conditions. President's XI batted first and posted 130 for 6 in their allotted 15 overs. Vijay Kudtarkar led the scoring with a composed knock of 30 runs from 24 balls, guiding his side to a competitive total.

However, the innings struggled to build stronger partnerships as the bowling attack kept the scoring under control.

Secretary's XI responded confidently in the chase, reaching the target of 131 with five balls remaining.

Panvalkar, Verlekar And Kauthankar Shine As Goa Premier Division League Begins

■ Chowgule, Margao Cricket Club and Salgaocar take early control in opening round matches.



Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Goa Premier Division League, organised by the Goa Cricket Association, began on Saturday with the first round of fixtures, setting the stage for an intense domestic cricket season. The tournament follows

a five round format, with each match scheduled to be played over three days. At the Bandodkar Ground, Geno Sports Club were bowled out for 237 runs in their first innings.

Half centuries from Manish Kakode who scored 62 and Vikas Singh who added 51

helped steady the innings, while Nihal Surkar and Kaushal Hattangadi chipped in with 23 runs each.

In response, Chowgule Sports Club reached 38 for the loss of one wicket by the end of the day, with Sanath Nevagi unbeaten on 27.



Kasvankar, Kakode And Verlekar Deliver Standout Performances On Day Two Of Goa Premier Division League

■ Salgaocar pile up huge total while Geno Sports Club and Panjim Gymkhana strengthen their grip in opening round

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The opening round of the Goa Premier Division League continued to witness impressive performances on the second day, with Geno Sports Club, Panjim Gymkhana and Salgaocar Cricket Club taking strong positions against their

respective opponents. At the Bandodkar Ground, Geno Sports Club secured a first innings lead of 40 runs after bowling out Chowgule Sports Club for 197 in reply to their 237. Madhur Yadav top scored for Chowgule with 56, while Sanath Nevagi added 27 and Kaustubh Pingulkar contributed

26. Geno leg spinner Manish Kakode delivered an outstanding spell, claiming 5 wickets for 48 runs, while Samarth Rane supported with figures of 3 for 57. Geno then strengthened their advantage in the second innings, reaching 124 for 3 and extending their overall lead to 164 runs.