

## Fuel Panic Triggers Long Queues Across Goa, Authorities Assure No Shortage

■ Surge In Demand Driven By Rumours Despite Adequate Stocks And Govt Reassurances.

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** Petrol pumps across Goa witnessed an unusual surge in demand, with long queues forming as residents rushed to refuel amid fears of a possible fuel shortage linked to the ongoing conflict in West Asia. At a fuel station near Caranzalem beach, daily footfall—typically around 200 vehicles—doubled to nearly 400 within just a few hours of the day. Similar scenes were reported from other parts of Panaji and beyond, with motorists lining up in large numbers.



Fuel station staff clarified that there has been no change in fuel prices, with petrol being sold at Rs 96 per litre and diesel at Rs 88 per litre. They also assured that supplies remain sufficient for several days. Despite this, panic buying continued, largely driven

by social media rumours and word-of-mouth speculation.

Chief Minister Pramod Sawant also addressed the situation during a cabinet meeting, reiterating that there is no shortage of fuel in the state.

In some cases,

residents were seen storing fuel in containers as a precaution. A resident said he was stocking up to ensure uninterrupted use of his home generator. The sudden spike in demand led to traffic congestion in certain areas, as vehicles queued up and spilled onto nearby roads. Meanwhile, major oil companies dismissed concerns over any supply disruption. Bharat Petroleum stated that claims of fuel shortages are baseless, highlighting that reserves remain adequate and supply chains are functioning normally.

## Curchorem scandal case handed to Crime Branch for professional probe: DGP Alok Kumar

Minor victim's identity protection top priority; sensitive investigation to be handled confidentially

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** Terming the Curchorem scandal as "very sensitive," Goa Director General of Police Alok Kumar said the case has been handed over to the Crime Branch to ensure a professional probe. He stated that protecting the identity of the minor victim remains the top priority, adding that the Crime Branch has the required expertise and resources to handle the investigation effectively and with due sensitivity.



Alok Kumar said the transfer of the case aims to ensure a thorough and confidential investigation, considering the seriousness of the matter. He assured that the probe will be conducted in a professional manner and appropriate action will follow based on the findings.

## Margao Municipal Wards To 24, Vijai Sardesai Alleges Misuse Of Power

**Team Goemkarponn**

**FATORDA:** Goa Forward Chief Questions Change From Proposed 27 Wards, Seeks Transparency In Poll Process. Goa Forward Party chief Vijai Sardesai has raised concerns over the reduction in the number of wards in the Margao Municipal Council, alleging misuse of power by the government. Referring to a recent gazetted notification,



Sardesai pointed out that the number of wards has been brought down to 24 from the existing 25, despite an earlier decision to increase them to 27. He questioned the

CONTD TO PAGE 06...

## Mulgaon villagers issue 7-day ultimatum over Vedanta mining; warn of agitation

**Team Goemkarponn**

**MULGAON:** Villagers of Mulgaon have issued a stern warning of a mass agitation against the proposed Vedanta mining project, giving the Bicholim Deputy Collector a seven-day deadline to correct the official minutes of a key meeting held with Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant on March 12. A crucial meeting of villagers was held at the Shridevi Kelbai



Temple in Mulgaon on Wednesday evening, where strong resentment was expressed over the alleged failure of authorities to record the Chief Minister's directives in the meeting minutes. The villagers said the omission undermines

their concerns and demands discussed during the interaction. A delegation, through the Mulgaon Panchayat, has submitted a formal letter to the Deputy Collector seeking necessary corrections in the minutes. Villagers warned that if

no satisfactory response is received within seven days, they will be forced to launch a large-scale agitation. Taking a firm stand, locals declared that they will not back down under any circumstances until their demands are met. Key demands include a complete ban on transportation of minerals during night hours and demarcation of the mineral block strictly in accordance with the Regional Plan 2021.

## India Slams Pakistan for Backing Banned Terror Outfit After Court Verdict

■ New Delhi says Islamabad has no standing to comment on India's judicial processes or internal matters

**New Delhi:** India on Wednesday firmly rejected remarks from Pakistan regarding a court verdict against members of a banned terrorist organisation, stating that Islamabad has no authority to comment on India's internal affairs or judicial proceedings. The response followed criticism from Pakistan over the sentencing of Kashmiri separatist leader Asiya Andrabi



and her associates in a case related to terrorism. Andrabi, who heads the banned organisation Dukhtaran-e-Millat, was convicted under provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. Reacting to Pakistan's

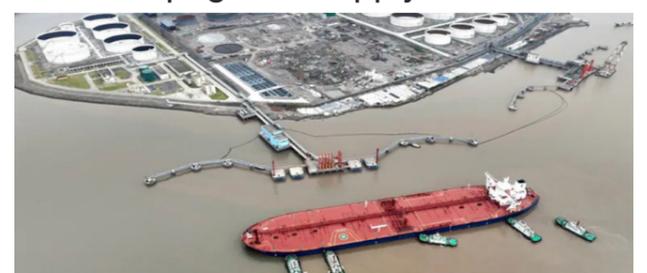
statement, External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said India categorically rejects the remarks issued in support of the outlawed group and its members. He emphasised that Pakistan has no locus standi to comment on India's judicial processes or domestic matters. The spokesperson also criticised Pakistan's record on terrorism and

CONTD TO PAGE 06...

## "India Has Diversified Energy Imports From 27 to 41 Countries": PM Modi

■ Government accelerates crude oil and LPG import deals as Middle East tensions disrupt global supply routes

**New Delhi:** India has accelerated negotiations and signing of new crude oil and liquefied petroleum gas import agreements as global supply chains face disruption due to escalating tensions in the Middle East. The move is aimed at securing stable energy supplies and protecting the country's economic interests amid volatile global markets. Officials indicated that discussions with multiple



suppliers are being fast tracked following detailed negotiations on pricing and long term supply arrangements. The effort forms part of a broader strategy to diversify

India's energy imports and reduce dependence on any single region. During a recent address in Parliament, Narendra Modi highlighted the

CONTD TO PAGE 06...

## Violence on the Shore: When Goa's Welcome Turns Into a Threat

**W**hat unfolded on Calangute beach is not an isolated breakdown. It is a symptom of something far more troubling within Goa's tourism spine.

A place that sells ease, escape and hospitality suddenly turned violent, with tourists allegedly attacked in full public view by those meant to serve them. The state has reacted in the only way it knows how. Suspend a licence. Make arrests. Signal action. Then move on.

But this cycle is wearing thin.

The truth is uncomfortable. Parts of Goa's tourism economy have slipped into a zone where accountability is weak, oversight is inconsistent, and aggression is no longer rare. When livelihoods depend heavily on seasonal earnings, disputes escalate quickly. Add alcohol, poor training, and a sense of impunity, and the result is exactly what we saw.

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*The problem is not just law enforcement. It is the casual normalisation of disorder in high-tourist zones. Loud arguments, intimidation, minor scuffles. These are often dismissed as routine. Until one day, they are not. Beach shacks are not peripheral to Goa's image.*

*They are its most visible face. If that face turns hostile, the damage travels far beyond a single incident. Visitors do not separate one shack from another. They carry back a single impression of Goa.*

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There is also a deeper failure at play. Regulation exists, but largely on paper. Monitoring is reactive. Action comes after violence, not before it. That gap is where risk grows. What is needed is not another round of statements about hospitality. It is a shift in how tourism is governed. Stronger vetting of operators and staff. Constant on-ground supervision. Clear consequences that deter, not just temporarily disrupt.

Goa's tourism has always thrived on a promise of freedom. But freedom without safety is chaos. And chaos, if left unchecked, becomes reputation. This is no longer about one assault. It is about whether Goa is willing to confront the cracks in its most vital industry before they widen further.

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

#### Rising Public Violence in Quepem Demands Urgent Attention

**T**he recent incident in Quepem, where a college youth violently attacked a taxi by smashing its glass with a chopper, is both shocking and deeply disturbing. Such brazen acts of aggression in public spaces raise serious concerns about safety and the growing tendency towards impulsive violence among young individuals. What is equally striking is the swift response of local residents, who intervened courageously to restrain the youth and hand him over to the police. The involvement of citizens like Siddesh Bhagat reflects a commendable sense of responsibility and community vigilance. Their decision to accompany the authorities to the police station also underscores a lack of public confidence in due process, a concern that cannot be ignored. While the police have initiated an investigation into the motive, the larger issue demands attention. What drives a young person to such extremes? Is it substance abuse, mental distress, or a deeper social disconnect? These questions must be addressed not only through policing but through community outreach, counselling, and stronger institutional support systems. Incidents like these should serve as a wake-up call for authorities to strengthen preventive measures and ensure visible policing in vulnerable areas. At the same time, educational institutions and families must play a more active role in identifying and addressing behavioural issues early. Public safety cannot be taken for granted. It requires collective responsibility, timely intervention, and sustained efforts to address root causes before they erupt into violence.

-Rohan Naik, Margao

#### Gas Shortage Pushes Vasco's Food Industry to the Brink

**T**he ongoing shortage of commercial gas cylinders in Vasco has placed restaurants and eateries in an increasingly difficult position, exposing the fragile backbone of the city's food industry. What may appear to be a supply hiccup has, in reality, begun to disrupt daily life for both business owners and consumers. Several establishments have already been forced to scale down their menus, while others are turning to private suppliers at higher costs just to keep their kitchens running. More alarmingly, some are even contemplating a return to firewood cooking, a step that feels like slipping back into another era rather than moving forward as a modern urban centre. For small and medium restaurant owners, this is not just an inconvenience but a serious financial strain. Rising input costs, uncertain supply, and the pressure to maintain service standards are creating an unsustainable situation. Inevitably, the burden trickles down to customers, who may soon notice fewer options, higher prices, or inconsistent service at their favourite eateries. This crisis highlights the urgent need for authorities to ensure a stable and reliable supply chain for essential resources like commercial gas. Without timely intervention, the hospitality sector in Vasco risks long-term damage. Until the situation stabilises, both businesses and consumers are left adapting to an uncomfortable reality. However, such conditions should not be normalised in a city that prides itself on growth and convenience.

-Melwyn D'Souza, Vasco

# High Court Seeks Accountability Over Alleged Damage to Chandreshwar Bhoothnath Temple

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** The High Court of Bombay at Goa directed the Managing Director of the Goa Tourism Development Corporation (GTDC) and the Directorate of Archives and Archaeology to submit affidavits concerning alleged damage to the surroundings of the Chandreshwar



Bhoothnath Temple, a protected monument in South Goa. The instructions came during the hearing of a Public Interest Litigation (PIL)

filed by Aditya Dattu Raut Dessai. The division bench, comprising Justice Valmiki Menezes and Justice Amit Jamsandekar, noted that the case involves claims of destruction and damage to areas surrounding the temple, which is safeguarded under the Goa Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1978.

Records show that in September 2018, GTDC had submitted a proposal seeking permission for beautification works at the site. Following this, the Directorate of Archives and Archaeology issued a No Objection Certificate (NOC) for the construction of a retaining wall, a viewpoint platform, a toilet block, and other related beautification initiatives.

# Only 2 of 33 Illegal Structures Demolished at Agonda; Locals Call Drive 'Eyewash'

■ Ten dismantled by owners, several get time till Friday; confusion over identification stalls action

**Team Goemkarponn**

**CANACONA:** A demolition drive targeting 33 illegal structures at Agonda beach, identified for violating CRZ regulations by the GCZMA, saw limited action on Wednesday, with only two structures demolished by the end of the day. Around



ten structures were reportedly dismantled earlier by the owners themselves, while several others

were deferred, prompting locals to term the exercise an "eyewash." The South Goa Demolition Squad arrived at the site around 10:00 am with two JCB machines, supported by police personnel from Margao, Quepem, Colva and Canacona police stations under the leadership of Canacona PI Pravin Gawas.

# Govt Rescinds TCP Zone Change Proposal in Sankhali

■ Decision withdrawn following government direction under Section 39A

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** The Town and Country Planning Department has issued a notification rescinding a previously approved zone change proposal concerning a plot in Sankhali. According to the notification issued by the Office of the Chief Town Planner (Planning), the department had received applications under sub-section (1) of Section 39A of the Goa Town and Country Planning Act, 1974, for change of zone in the Regional Plan for Goa 2021. The proposal, listed at Serial No. 08, had earlier been notified and published in the Official Gazette in terms of the Goa Town and Country Planning (Change of Zone of Land in the Regional Plan or the Outline Development Plan) Rules,



Town & Country Planning Department 2024.

However, the Government, through a note dated March 25, 2026, directed that the decision of the TCP Board taken under sub-rule (1) of Rule 4 be rescinded. Accordingly, the case at Serial No. 08, published in Official Gazette Series III No. 51 dated March 20, 2026, now stands rescinded. The notification was issued by Chief Town Planner (Planning) and Ex-officio Joint Secretary Vertika Dagur.



# FDA Cracks Down on Violations at Miramar, Candolim; Unlicensed Outlet Shut

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** Ensuring safe and hygienic food for people in Goa remains a priority, as the Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) conducted an evening inspection drive at Tonca, Miramar, and the Candolim beach stretch to assess compliance among food outlets. At Tonca, one outlet was directed to close for operating without an FSSAI licence. A bar and restaurant along with three other outlets were issued improvement notices for deficiencies observed during the inspection. At the Candolim beach food court, nine vendors



who had earlier been instructed to suspend operations were found flouting directives. Each of them was penalised with a fine of ₹5,000. The FDA team also engaged with local authorities and proposed developing the area into a clean street food hub by regularising vendors, aiming to ensure compliance while improving overall hygiene standards.

# Tourism Department Suspends Calangute Shack Licence After Tourist Assault

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** The Goa Tourism Department has ordered the immediate temporary suspension of Shack No. 16 at the Calangute Umtavaddo beach stretch following a violent assault on tourists from Bengaluru. The action comes after a report submitted by



the Tourist Police Unit regarding an incident on March 24, 2026, in which shack employees allegedly attacked visitors. According to officials, the staff used iron rods and sharp objects during the

assault, causing grievous injuries and triggering panic in the crowded beach area. Preliminary investigation also revealed that the shack management, including individuals identified as Stanley Coutinho and Rohit, allegedly participated directly in the assault.

# Government Urges Shift From LPG To PNG In Tiswadi And Ponda; Incentives Announced

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** The Department of Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs has urged residents and commercial establishments in Tiswadi and Ponda to shift from LPG to Piped Natural Gas (PNG), citing prevailing geopolitical conditions and restrictions on LPG supply. According to the government, Goa Natural Gas Pvt. Ltd. (GNGPL), a subsidiary



of GAIL and BPCL, has continued to maintain normal PNG supply to domestic, commercial and industrial consumers across North Goa and Ponda. Officials stated that PNG offers a safe, reliable, economical and uninterrupted supply of

gas. Authorities informed that PNG infrastructure and gas supply have already been made available in large housing societies in Tiswadi and Ponda areas. Residents, hotels, restaurants and industries have been requested to complete formalities and avail PNG connections at the earliest. The government has also announced several incentives for new consumers.

# Basilica Of Bom Jesus Closed For Visitors During Holy Week Triduum



**Team Goemkarponn**

**OLDGOA:** The Basilica of Bom Jesus will remain closed for tourists and other visitors from the morning of April 2 until 11 am on April 5 on account of religious services during the Holy Week Triduum. In a statement, Rector Fr Patricio Fernandes, SJ, said liturgical services for the Catholic community will be conducted during the sacred Paschal Triduum, and all services will be held in English. On Maundy Thursday (April 2), the Lord's Supper liturgical service will begin at 5 pm. On Good Friday (April 3), the Passion of the Lord service will begin at 3 pm.

## Nigerian National Arrested In Goa Narcotics Raid; Amphetamine Worth ₹2 Lakh Seized

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** The Crime Branch of Goa Police arrested a 44-year-old Nigerian national during an early morning narcotics raid at Cunchelim, Siolim in Bardez on March 25. The accused has been identified as Joseph Ifeanyi Ozoemena. Acting on specific intelligence that a foreign national would arrive in the area to deliver narcotic substances, the Crime Branch team laid a trap and intercepted the accused. During the



operation, the suspect allegedly attempted to flee but was successfully apprehended by the police team. Officials recovered suspected psychotropic substance identified as amphetamine weighing 17.580 grams from his possession. Police also seized a Yamaha

Fascino scooter bearing registration number GA-03-BA-3906 and a mobile phone. The total value of the seized drugs is estimated at approximately ₹2 lakh. Police said an offence under Section 22(b) of the NDPS Act, 1985 has been registered in connection with the case. According to police, the accused was previously arrested by the Anti Narcotics Cell of Goa Police in 2017 and remained in jail for seven years. After his release in 2024, he was lodged at the Goa Detention Centre

in Mapusa and was subsequently released in December 2025 following a High Court order. The raid was led by PI Vikas Deykar along with ASI Shriram Salgaonkar and constables Mahabaleshwar Sawant, Rupesh Gaiwad, Sandesh Valvaikar and Kritesh Kinlekar of the Crime Branch Police Station. The operation was supervised by Superintendent of Police Jivba Dalvi and SP Crime Rahul Gupta (IPS). Further investigation is underway, police said.

## Five Arrested In Attempt To Murder Case; Swift Action By Colva Police

Team Goemkarponn

**COLVA:** Colva Police have arrested five persons in connection with an attempt to murder case, following swift action by the police team under the supervision of PI Vikram Naik. The accused have been identified as Lenny Silveira (34) of George Waddo, Carmona; Issac Raul Dourado (24) of Vaz Dourado, Ambelim; Sajjan Shirodkar (40) of Alemao Xiro near Water Tank, Carmona; Narayan P. Shirodkar of

**ATTEMPT TO MURDER**

St. Sebastiao Chapel, Alemao Xiro, Carmona; and Ayush Barik (24), a native of Odisha currently residing at George Waddo, Carmona. Police said quick and immediate action was taken by the Colva Police Station team, which led to the successful arrest of all five accused allegedly involved in the attempt to murder case.



**FOREIGNERS REGIONAL REGISTRATION OFFICE (FRRO)**

## FRRO Goa Traces Nine Overstaying Foreign Nationals; Exit Process Initiated

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** The FRRO Goa Special Task Force has traced nine foreign nationals found overstaying in Goa, including seven Russian nationals among them two minors and two Ukrainian nationals.

Officials said that out of the nine overstaying foreigners traced, two Russian nationals have already left the country.

For the remaining individuals, applications for exit permits and visa conversion, wherever applicable, have been submitted and are currently under process.

The operation is being carried out under the supervision of SP FRRO Arshi Aadil (IPS), with SP/DySP FRRO Braz T. Menezes closely

monitoring the drive. Field action is being led by PI FRRO Devendra along with PSI Parag Parekh and a team comprising IRBn personnel.

Authorities said the team is conducting sustained efforts to trace overstaying foreign nationals and ensure the drive remains comprehensive, effective and legally compliant. FRRO Goa has also issued a public advisory to accommodation providers to strictly comply with Form III/ Form C requirements. Officials stated that arrival or check-in details of foreign nationals must be submitted within 24 hours, with all particulars entered accurately, and departure or check-out details must also be updated within 24 hours.

## Calangute Shack Assault: Two Accused Sent To 5 Days Police Custody

Team Goemkarponn

**CALANGUTE:** Two staff members of a beach shack at Calangute have been arrested and remanded to five days police custody for allegedly assaulting a tourist and his friends with metal rods and beach umbrella poles. According to Calangute Police, a complaint was filed by Sayed Zakir (27), a resident of HBR Layout, Bengaluru, stating that



**Police Custody**

on March 24 at around 11.30 am, he and his six friends were assaulted at Planet Goa Beach Shack, Calangute. Police said accused Dinesh Kumar and Dhupendra Yadav, along with others, allegedly attacked the group using beach umbrella rods and metal

rods, causing bleeding injuries. Based on the complaint, Calangute Police registered Crime No. 46/2026 under Section 109 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023. During investigation, both accused were apprehended following Supreme Court guidelines and formally placed under arrest. They were later produced before the court and remanded to five days police custody for further investigation.

## Two Booked For Illegal Laterite Stone Extraction In Quepem

Team Goemkarponn

**QUEPEM:** Cuncoim Police have registered a case against two persons for allegedly illegally extracting laterite stones and rubber stones at Naquerim in Quepem without obtaining permission from the competent authority. According to police, the complaint was filed by Nathen Afonso, Mamlatdar of Quepem taluka, stating that prior to March 17, 2026, the accused Govind Sawant Dessai and Kishna Sawant Dessai, both residents of Naquerim, Quepem, carried out illegal extraction of laterite stones and rubber stones. Police said the accused allegedly transported the extracted material to an unknown destination without any licence or permit, resulting in theft of state government resources for personal gain. A case has been registered and further investigation is being conducted by PSI Sahil Pagui of Cuncoim Police Station.

## House Maid Booked For Stealing Gold Worth ₹2 Lakh From Fatorda House

Team Goemkarponn

**FATORDA:** Fatorda Police have registered a theft case against a house maid for allegedly stealing gold ornaments worth ₹2 lakh from her employer's residence at Gogol, Fatorda. According to police, complainant Priyanka Martins, a resident of Gogol, Fatorda, reported that between October 2024

and February 2025, the accused Mumtaz Shaikh, who was working as a house maid at her house, allegedly committed theft of gold ornaments from a table drawer. The stolen items include one gold chain, two gold chains with 'S' pendants and three bracelets,

collectively valued at approximately ₹2,00,000. Police

have registered a case and

launched an investigation into the matter. Further

investigation is being carried out by PSI Sachin Patil of Fatorda Police Station.

**BOOKED**

## Rajasthan Man Held With 2.26 Kg Ganja Near Patradevi; Arrested By Mopa Airport Police

Team Goemkarponn

**PERNEM:** Mopa Airport Police arrested a 26-year-old man from Rajasthan for allegedly possessing over 2 kg of ganja near Patradevi underpass along the National Highway. According to police, the case



was registered at Mopa Airport Police Station under Crime No. 11/2026 under Section 20(b)(ii)

(B) of the NDPS Act based on a complaint filed by PSI Sagar Vazarkar. Police said that on March 14 between 2.15 am and 6.25 am, the accused identified as Shahil Khan (26), a resident of Shiv Colony, Chandra Bhakhar, Jodhpur, Rajasthan, was found in illegal possession

of 2,262 grams of suspected narcotic substance believed to be ganja. The contraband, described as greenish dried leaves with flowering and fruiting tops, seeds and stalks, was allegedly concealed in a polypropylene bag carried by the accused. The seized drugs

are valued at approximately ₹2.30 lakh. Police conducted a field test which confirmed the substance to be ganja. The narcotic drugs were seized under a panchanama and the accused was placed under arrest after following Supreme Court guidelines.

## SP warns rent-a-car operators after tourist complaints of extortion at Dabolim airport

**Team Goemkarponn**

**DABOLIM:** SP Gurudas Kadam on Tuesday evening convened a meeting with rent-a-car operators at the Dabolim Airport police station, issuing a stern warning following multiple complaints from tourists alleging instances of overcharging and



extortion.

The meeting was attended by several operators functioning in and around the airport area, where police raised concerns over the growing number of

grievances reported by visitors. SP Kadam made it clear that any operator found indulging in unfair practices would face strict action under the law, stressing the need to maintain Goa's image as a

tourist-friendly destination. Police officials informed that complaints primarily relate to inflated pricing, lack of transparency in rental agreements, and coercive behaviour in case of disputes. Operators were directed to adhere strictly to guidelines and ensure that all dealings with customers remain fair and transparent.

## Governor, CM Extend Ram Navami Greetings To People Of Goa

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** Goa Governor Puspapati Ashok Gajapathi Raju extended warm greetings to the people of the state on the auspicious occasion of Ram Navami, highlighting the values symbolised by Lord Shri Ram. In his message, the Governor said the sacred festival marks the birth of Lord Shri Rama, who represents righteousness, virtue, compassion and ideal leadership. He noted that Lord Rama, revered as "Maryada Purushottam," continues to inspire people to follow truth, justice, humility and devotion in daily life. The Governor further urged citizens to reaffirm their commitment to the principles of Dharma and work together to promote peace, harmony



and prosperity in society. He expressed hope that the festival would bring happiness, good health and well-being to all and guide people on the path of righteousness. Chief Minister Pramod Sawant also extended Ram Navami greetings. In his message, he shared a Sanskrit verse praising Lord Ram and conveyed heartfelt wishes on the occasion of "Maryadapurushottam Bhagwan Shri Ram Janmotsav," also known as Ram Navami

## NGT Compliance Reviewed; Focus on Strengthening Waste Management in South Goa

**Team Goemkarponn**

**MARGAO:** In compliance with NGT directives, a review meeting on solid waste management was chaired by Additional Collector-II South Goa, Ramesh Gaonkar, in charge of Kushavati district. The meeting was



held in the presence of Deputy Collector South-II, Prajeet Chodankar, to evaluate the current

status and challenges in Panchayat and Municipal areas. Officials from various departments,

including BDOs, Municipal Councils, Health Department, PWD and Goa State Pollution Control Board (GSPCB), attended the meeting. The review covered waste management infrastructure such as garbage sites and Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs).

## Quepem Police Arrest 22-Year-Old with Suspected Ganja; Cash, Scooter Seized

**Team Goemkarponn**

**QUEPEM:** Quepem Police have registered a case under the NDPS Act against a 22-year-old man for illegal possession of suspected ganja at Xeldem. According to police, the operation was conducted on March 24 between 2:39 am and 4:11 am at Nirmal Nagar, Xeldem, Quepem. A police team led by PSI Digambar



Bondre apprehended the accused who was found in possession of 297 grams of greenish leafy substance with flowering and fruiting tops suspected to be ganja, valued at approximately ₹30,000.

## Objection Raised Over Assigning Board Paper Evaluation to Non-Subject Teachers

■ Janardhan Bhandari submits memorandum to CM, warns of legal challenge.

**Team Goemkarponn**

**CANACONA:** Congress leader and former Canacona Assembly candidate Janardhan Bhandari has raised objections to the assignment of board examination evaluation duties of core academic subjects to teachers from specialised disciplines



such as Drawing and Physical Education. In a statement, Bhandari said that teachers appointed for non-core or ancillary subjects are reportedly being assigned duties for

correction and evaluation of Board Examination answer scripts of core academic subjects, and may also be involved in setting question papers outside their domain of expertise. He expressed concern that such decisions could impact the academic integrity and fairness of the evaluation process in Goa.



**North Goa Collector Reviews 78 Forest Rights Claims in Sattari**

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** Collector North Goa, Ankit Yadav, IAS, convened a District Level Committee meeting for determination of forest rights cases. During the meeting, a total of 78 claims from Sigonem, Hivrem, and Gullem villages of Sattari taluka were taken up for decision.

## Assault On Faith & Tradition: Prabhav Naik Slams Plan To Demolish Ganesh Pooja Venue In Margao Garden

**Team Goemkarponn**

**MARGAO:** Madganvcho Awaaz and youth leader Prabhav Naik has strongly criticized PWD Minister Digambar Kamat over the proposed demolition of the existing structure at the Margao Municipal Garden, calling it a direct assault on faith and tradition.



## Civil Supplies Confiscates Two Domestic Gas Cylinders from Agonda Shacks

■ Raid conducted along beach stretch after illegal commercial use detected.

**Team Goemkarponn**

**CANACONA:** The Canacona Civil Supplies Department confiscated two domestic LPG cylinders that were being illegally used for commercial purposes at beach shacks along the Agonda shoreline. According to sources, acting under the guidance of Canacona Mamlatdar Gajesh Shirodkar, Assistant Director of Civil

Supplies Ulhas Velip conducted raids across the Agonda beach stretch. During the inspection, officials found two different shacks using domestic cooking gas cylinders for commercial business operations, which is prohibited under regulations. The cylinders were seized on the spot after the violations were confirmed. Officials stated that domestic gas cylinders are meant strictly



for household use and their use in commercial establishments poses safety risks and violates supply norms. Following completion of legal formalities, the confiscated cylinders were handed over to the local gas distributor in Canacona for safekeeping and further action.

## Call For Spiritual Music University In Goa At Seminar In Ramnathi

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PONDA:** A two-day seminar on "Spiritual Upliftment through Music" organised by Maharshi Adhyatma University at Ramnathi saw participation from artists across Goa, Mumbai, Pune and Thane, with speakers calling for early establishment of a proposed university dedicated to spiritual practice through music. Senior flautist Pt. Keshav Ginde from Pune said the proposed university



in Goa, envisioned to guide spiritual practice through music, should be established at the earliest. He said the direction of "spiritual practice through music" given by Sachchidanand Parabrahma Dr. Jayant Athavale is appropriate and can lead to spiritual bliss. The two-day seminar

## India Commits to 60% Clean Energy Capacity by 2035 in New Climate Targets

■ Government announces updated climate action plan with stronger goals for emissions reduction and green energy expansion.

**New Delhi:** India has unveiled its updated national climate action plan for the period 2031 to 2035, committing to significantly expand clean energy and reduce carbon emissions as part of its obligations under the Paris Agreement. The new targets were approved by the Union Cabinet chaired by Narendra Modi. Under the updated Nationally Determined Contributions, India aims to achieve 60 percent of its cumulative installed electric power capacity from non fossil fuel energy sources by 2035. The country has also pledged to reduce the emission intensity of its gross domestic product by 47 percent compared with 2005 levels.

These commitments build on India's earlier climate targets announced in 2015 and revised in 2022. The country had previously promised to cut emission intensity by 33 to 35 percent by 2030 and ensure that 40 percent of its installed electricity capacity came from non fossil sources. Both of those targets were achieved ahead of schedule. Government



data shows that India reduced its emission intensity by about 36 percent between 2005 and 2020. In terms of clean energy deployment, non fossil fuel sources already account for over 52 percent of the country's installed electricity capacity, allowing India to meet its earlier target well before the original deadline. The new climate roadmap also expands India's ambition to increase carbon sinks through forests and tree cover. The country plans to create an additional carbon sink of 3.5 to 4 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent by 2035 compared with 2005 levels. By 2021, India had already created around 2.29 billion tonnes of carbon sink through forest and tree cover.

The updated targets follow consultations and sector specific studies conducted by working

groups coordinated by NITI Aayog with participation from government ministries, industry experts, and civil society organisations. According to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, the revised commitments align with the outcomes of the first global review of climate progress and are based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. The government said the plan balances India's development priorities, energy security and climate commitments while contributing to global efforts to address climate change. The broader strategy also supports India's long term objective of achieving net zero emissions by 2070 while promoting sustainable infrastructure, research in green technologies and international cooperation on climate action.

...CONTD FROM PAGE 01

## Margao Municipal Wards To 24, Vijai Sardesai Alleges Misuse Of Power

rationale behind the sudden change and accused the government of taking unilateral decisions without keeping the opposition informed.

Sardesai urged authorities to ensure that the upcoming municipal

elections are conducted in a transparent manner.

The Goa Forward leader also highlighted the lack of clarity regarding reservation of wards, expressing concern that certain sections of society could

face injustice if the process is not handled fairly.

He said he hopes the government will act responsibly and ensure a just and transparent electoral process in Margao.

## India Slams Pakistan for Backing Banned Terror Outfit After Court Verdict

human rights, stating that it is not surprising for a country accused of supporting terrorism to issue statements that appear to justify violence against innocent people.

He further said that

instead of spreading misleading narratives, Pakistan should reflect on allegations of systematic human rights violations within its own jurisdiction.

The diplomatic exchange came after

Pakistan's foreign ministry described the court verdict against Andrabi as a miscarriage of justice and claimed it reflected suppression of fundamental rights in Jammu and Kashmir.



## Centre Retains 4% Retail Inflation Target Until 2031

■ Government extends inflation control framework with a tolerance band between 2% and 6%

**New Delhi:** The central government has decided to continue its inflation control framework by maintaining the retail inflation target at 4 percent for another five year period ending March 31, 2031.

The decision extends the existing monetary policy structure that guides inflation management in the country. According to a gazette notification issued by the Department of Economic Affairs on March 25, the inflation target will remain at 4 percent with an upper tolerance limit of 6 percent and a lower limit of 2 percent. The framework will apply from April 1, 2026 to March 31, 2031. India first adopted the inflation targeting system in 2016, formally assigning responsibility to the Reserve Bank of India to maintain price stability within the defined band. At that time, the government set the same 4 percent inflation target for a five

year period ending March 2021. The framework was reviewed and retained again in 2021, making the latest extension the second time the government has continued with the same benchmark. Under this system, the six member Monetary Policy Committee, headed by the RBI Governor, determines the policy interest rate required to keep inflation within the prescribed range.

The committee reviews economic conditions regularly and adjusts monetary policy to manage price pressures while supporting economic growth. Over the past decade, retail inflation has remained within the mandated range for most of the period, although volatility increased during the global pandemic years. Supply chain disruptions and international economic shocks also contributed to fluctuations during that

time. Recent data based on the Consumer Price Index shows retail inflation rising to 3.21 percent in February, compared with 2.74 percent in the previous month.

The index is currently calculated using a new base year of 2024. Ahead of the latest review, the RBI had released a discussion paper in 2025 seeking feedback on possible changes to the inflation targeting framework. The paper explored issues such as whether the focus should remain on headline inflation or shift toward core inflation, and whether the tolerance band or the target level should be revised. Authorities concluded that the existing framework has broadly performed well and provides the stability and credibility needed to guide monetary policy in an increasingly uncertain global economic environment.

## "India Has Diversified Energy Imports From 27 to 41 Countries": PM Modi

government's progress in expanding energy sourcing. He stated that over the past eleven years India has significantly broadened its import network, increasing the number of supplier countries from 27 to 41. Russia remains one of the potential suppliers as India had earlier imported large volumes of discounted crude following the start of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. However, those purchases were later reduced after diplomatic and trade negotiations with the United States. The current urgency in securing additional

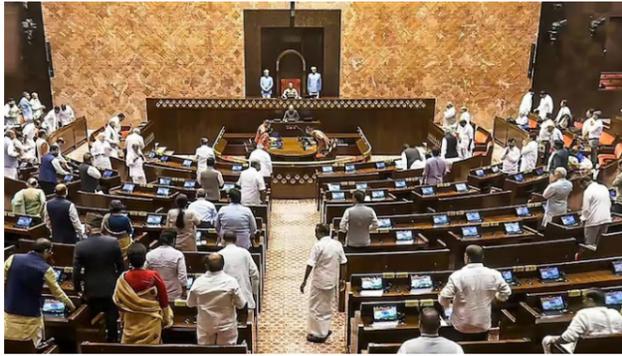
supplies comes after tensions linked to the Iran-Israel conflict disrupted shipping routes and pushed global oil prices higher. The situation worsened after tanker movement through the Strait of Hormuz was halted. The strategic waterway normally carries roughly a quarter of the world's seaborne crude oil and is a critical route for India, through which nearly 40 percent of its oil imports pass. To offset supply disruptions, temporary waivers have allowed India to purchase certain quantities of Russian and Iranian oil already

loaded on ships. These shipments are expected to help stabilise supply in the short term. The government has also assured that there is no immediate shortage of petroleum products in the country. According to Suresh Gopi, India's strategic petroleum reserves currently hold about 3.372 million tonnes of crude oil, representing roughly two thirds of their storage capacity. Combined with stocks maintained by oil marketing companies, India's total fuel reserves are estimated to cover around 74 days of consumption.

# Government Introduces Central Armed Police Forces Bill in Rajya Sabha Amid Opposition Protests

■ Proposed law aims to create a unified administrative framework for personnel across CAPF units.

**New Delhi:** The government introduced the Central Armed Police Forces (General Administration) Bill, 2026 in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday, seeking to establish a common administrative framework for personnel serving in the country's Central Armed Police Forces. The bill was tabled despite objections from opposition members and was allowed to be introduced through a voice vote. The proposed legislation aims to streamline service rules across the five Central Armed Police Forces by replacing the existing system where



each force follows its own set of regulations. The government says the new law will bring greater uniformity and clarity in matters related to administration and personnel management. Introducing the bill in the upper house, Nityanand Rai addressed concerns

raised by members about its scope and implications. He clarified that the proposed legislation would not alter the existing governance structure or operational mandates of the forces. According to him, the powers, duties and administrative systems of

the forces would remain unchanged under their current frameworks. The move sparked debate in the House, with several opposition members questioning the intent and constitutional implications of the legislation. Responding to these concerns, Kiren Rijiju defended Parliament's authority to legislate. He emphasised that the Constitution grants Parliament full competence to enact laws and argued that the legislature should not relinquish its responsibilities based on anticipated judicial interpretations.



## Railways Imposes Rs 10 Lakh Fine After Food Quality Complaint on Vande Bharat

■ Strict action taken against catering service as authorities emphasise passenger safety and service standards

**New Delhi:** Indian Railways has imposed a penalty of ₹10 lakh on Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation after a passenger complained about the quality of food served on board the Patna-Tatanagar Vande Bharat Express. The complaint, lodged on March 15, prompted an investigation by railway authorities. Following the inquiry, officials decided to take disciplinary action

against the catering operator responsible for the service. In addition to the penalty on IRCTC, a much larger fine of ₹50 lakh has been imposed on the catering service provider linked to the incident. Authorities have also ordered termination of the contract with the concerned vendor. Railway officials said the issue was treated with seriousness as passenger safety and service quality remain key priorities.

## “Sonia Gandhi Responding Well To Treatment,” Hospital Says

■ Congress leader remains under observation in Delhi as doctors monitor recovery from systemic infection.

**New Delhi:** Senior Congress leader Sonia Gandhi is responding well to treatment and remains under medical observation at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, according to hospital authorities on Thursday. The 79 year old leader was admitted to the hospital late on the night of March 24 after developing a fever. Doctors later diagnosed her with a systemic infection and began treatment with antibiotics. Hospital chairman Dr Ajay Swaroop said Gandhi is responding positively to the therapy and her condition is being closely monitored by a team of senior doctors. Medical staff are continuing to observe her health as a precaution. Sources familiar with the matter indicated that her condition is stable and not considered serious. However, she is expected to remain under observation in the hospital for a few more days to ensure a full recovery.



The illness is believed to have been triggered by a fever that developed earlier in the week, with initial indications suggesting it may have been linked to seasonal weather changes. Doctors decided to admit her to the hospital for closer medical supervision and treatment. Gandhi has been under the care of specialists since her admission, with regular monitoring and medical assessments being carried out to track her response to the medication. The veteran political leader has played a central role in Indian politics for decades and continues to be a prominent figure within the Indian National Congress.

## “India Is Not A Broker Country Like Pakistan,” Jaishankar Tells All Party Meet

■ Government briefs political leaders on West Asia crisis, energy security and contingency planning.

**New Delhi:** India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar delivered a sharp response to reports about Pakistan's role in diplomatic communications related to the West Asia crisis, stating during an all party meeting that India does not function as a “broker country” in international affairs. The remark was made during a government briefing



attended by leaders from across the political spectrum to discuss the evolving geopolitical situation in West Asia and its implications for India. The meeting, chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath

Singh, focused on the diplomatic, economic and strategic consequences of the ongoing tensions involving Iran, Israel and the United States. During the discussion, opposition leaders raised questions about reports suggesting that Pakistan had been involved in backchannel communication between Iran and the United States. Responding

to these concerns, Jaishankar clarified that India's diplomatic approach does not involve acting as an intermediary in conflicts between other nations. According to sources present at the meeting, the minister also noted that Pakistan's involvement in mediation in the region is not a recent development and has occurred periodically since the early 1980s.

## “A United Front Needed”: Government Briefs Parties on India's Strategy for West Asia Crisis

■ Centre outlines plans on energy security, diplomacy, and supply chain stability during all party meeting.

**New Delhi:** The central government held an all party meeting in New Delhi to brief political leaders on India's approach to the rapidly evolving situation in West Asia and its implications for the country's economy, energy supplies, and diplomatic relations. The meeting, chaired by Defence Minister



Rajnath Singh, brought together senior ministers and leaders from across the political spectrum to discuss India's multi layered strategy to manage the crisis. Among those present

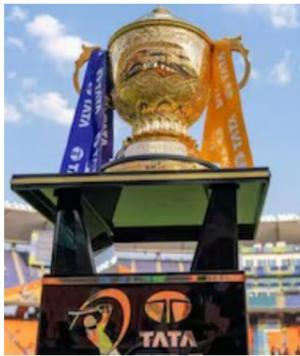
were Home Minister Amit Shah, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju, and Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri. The government used the session to reassure parties that India has prepared a comprehensive plan to safeguard energy

supplies, manage diplomatic relations, and maintain stable trade flows. During the discussions, opposition leaders raised questions about India's diplomatic stance amid the tensions in West Asia, including reports that Pakistan had offered to mediate between the United States and Iran.

## “Impact Player Rule To Be Reviewed Only After 2027,” IPL Captains Told

■ Franchise leaders raise concerns about the rule's effect on all rounders during captains meeting in Mumbai

**New Delhi:** The Impact Player rule in the Indian Premier League will remain in place until at least the 2027 season, with any review scheduled only after that edition. The update was conveyed to captains of all ten franchises during the IPL captains meeting held in Mumbai on March 25. The rule, introduced in 2023, allows teams to substitute a player during a match to strengthen either batting or bowling. Although it was extended by the Board of Control for Cricket in India until 2027, the regulation continues to spark debate among players and fans.



During the meeting, a majority of team captains shared their concerns about the rule and its influence on team composition. Many leaders indicated that the concept has changed how teams approach selection, particularly when it comes to all rounders. One of

the players who recently voiced criticism is Axar Patel, who stated that the rule reduces the need for genuine all rounders in the playing eleven. Earlier, teams often relied on players who could contribute with both bat and ball, but the Impact Player option now allows management to switch between a specialist batter or bowler depending on the match situation. Similar concerns had earlier been raised by Rohit Sharma, who believes the rule could slow the development of all rounders in Indian cricket. Hardik Pandya also noted that it has become harder

for teams to include all rounders unless they are equally strong in both departments. International players have also expressed caution about the rule's long term impact. New Zealand cricketer Glenn Phillips previously suggested that reduced opportunities for all rounders could eventually affect the balance of international white ball cricket. The meeting also included discussions on other operational matters. One captain proposed allowing teams to change the ball after the 10th over of the first innings to address wear and tear.

## Goa Basketball Association Announces ASMITA Khelo India 3x3 Women's League in Panaji and Fatorda

■ Tournament to encourage participation of girls and women across age groups under the national Khelo India initiative

### Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** The Goa Basketball Association will organise the ASMITA Khelo India Women's 3x3 Basketball League for Sub Junior, Junior Girls and Women, providing an opportunity for players across the state to compete and showcase their talent. The event forms part of the nationwide Khelo India initiative that aims to promote and empower women through sports. The competition will be

held across two venues in Goa. The first leg will take place on March 28, 2026 at the Youth Hostel in Miramar from 8:00 AM onwards. The second leg is scheduled for March 29, 2026 at the DBO courts in Fatorda starting from 4:00 PM. Teams representing schools, colleges, clubs and other institutions have been invited to participate in the league. Participants may choose to compete at either the North Goa or South Goa venue depending on their location and convenience.

## Tanishq Naik's 59 Leads Oxford CC Goa to Comfortable Chase

■ All round effort from Farhan Shaikh helps Oxford secure third win in Lt. Rajan Bhai Angane U 16 Memorial Cup

### Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** Oxford Cricket Club Goa continued its impressive run in the Lt. Rajan Bhai Angane Under 16 Memorial Cup with a convincing five wicket victory over P.C.S.A. Panvel in a league match played at the Boarding Ground in Malvan on Wednesday. The tournament is being organised by Aim Cricket Academy, Sawantwadi. Batting first, P.C.S.A. Panvel were bowled out for 154 in 34.3 overs. Advik Zine top scored with 27 runs while Aryan Kale added 22, providing some resistance in the middle order. Rudra Khopkar remained unbeaten on 14. A large number of extras also contributed significantly to the total. Oxford's bowling attack delivered a disciplined performance. Mubarak Tadapatri led the effort with four wickets, while Harsh Nain and Farhan Shaikh supported well by claiming three wickets each to restrict the opposition to a



modest total. Chasing 155 for victory, Oxford experienced an early setback as the top order struggled to build momentum. Yug Yadav then steadied the innings with a useful knock of 30 runs before captain Tanishq Naik anchored the chase with a composed half century. Naik played a patient and controlled innings, scoring 59 runs and guiding the team closer to the target. Farhan Shaikh further strengthened Oxford's position with a crucial unbeaten knock of 40 runs. His calm batting ensured the chase remained on track. Parth Sankpal stayed not out on 11 as Oxford Cricket Club Goa successfully reached 158 for five in 26 overs to seal the win.

## Sandhya Melasheemi Storms Into Two Finals, Eyes Double Gold at Indian Masters Nationals in Goa

■ Goa shuttler dominates Women's 40+ events while Parag Chauhan and Kamlesh Kanji claim bronze in Men's Doubles 45+.

### Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** Goa's Sandhya Melasheemi delivered a commanding performance at the Yonex Sunrise 48th Indian Masters National Badminton Championships, advancing to two finals in the Women's 40+ category and putting herself in contention for a memorable double gold. The former state champion and international medalist



secured her place in the Women's Singles 40+ final with a composed 21 to 19, 21 to 14 victory over Lalduhzuali of Mizoram in the semifinal. Displaying strong control and consistency throughout the match, Sandhya maintained the upper



hand during crucial rallies to seal the win in straight games. Her impressive run continued in the Women's Doubles 40+ event. Partnering with Radhika Madhur Ingalhalikar of Maharashtra, the duo delivered a dominant performance in the

semifinal, defeating Nadia Mujumdar and Rishu Roy of Madhya Pradesh with an emphatic 21 to 7, 21 to 7 scoreline. The convincing win secured their place in the final and strengthened Sandhya's bid for two titles at the championship. In the Men's Doubles 45+ category, Goa's Parag Chauhan and Kamlesh Kanji concluded their campaign with a bronze medal after a hard fought semifinal encounter.

## Kyan Mavany and Adianta Devaraya Reach Boys U 18 Final at Bhandodkar Panjim Gymkhana Tennis Open

■ Young tennis players progress across categories as competitive matches unfold in Panaji

### Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** Kyan Mavany and Adianta Devaraya secured their spots in the Boys Under 18 singles final at the Bhandodkar Panjim Gymkhana Tennis Open 2026 following strong semifinal performances at the Panjim Gymkhana courts. Kyan delivered a steady display to defeat Arsh Sardesai 4 to 1, 4 to 3



in a closely contested semifinal encounter. Adianta Devaraya also produced a commanding performance, overcoming Ethan Luis De Ataide 4 to 1, 4 to 1 to book his place in the championship match. In the Girls Under

14 singles category, Bhaavya Bhoomkar and Tvisha Sardesai advanced to the final after convincing victories in their semifinal matches. Bhaavya defeated Analeah Pearl Menezes 4 to 1, 4 to 1, while Tvisha secured a comfortable 4 to 1, 4 to 0 win over Urvi Pai Panandiker. The Girls Under 18 singles category featured quarterfinal action with several players

progressing to the next round. Tithee Bhoomkar recorded a dominant 6 to 1 victory against Renee De Menezes, while Avni Lotlikar edged past Ammiel Fernandes 6 to 4. Bhaavya Bhoomkar continued her strong run in the competition with a 6 to 3 win over Analeah Pearl Menezes, and Tvisha Sardesai advanced after defeating Kimberly D'sa 6 to 1.