



Naqueri Villagers Oppose Explosive Godown Legalisation, Warn Of Protests

Quepem court ordered demolition earlier; MLA Alton D'Costa says lives at risk



Team Goemkarponn

QUEPEM: Tension is brewing in Naqueri-Betul after residents opposed attempts to legalise an explosive storage godown in the area, citing safety risks and an earlier demolition order issued by the Quepem court.

According to locals, two explosive storage facilities existed in the locality earlier, one of which was damaged

in a blast. The second structure, residents alleged, had been operating without proper authorisation and was later ordered to be demolished by the Quepem court for not complying with legal formalities.

However, villagers claimed that efforts are now underway to regularise the same godown, prompting strong resistance from

the community. They said allowing storage of explosives in a residential vicinity would put lives and property under serious threat.

Quepem MLA Alton D'Costa, who joined residents in opposing the move, warned that people would be compelled to launch an agitation if the legalisation process is not stopped. He said the concerns of locals must be addressed and



safety should not be compromised.

Residents maintained that the earlier blast and court order underline the risks involved and demanded that authorities immediately halt any move to grant legal status to the godown. They also called for strict enforcement of the demolition order, stating that public safety must take precedence over all other considerations.

Store room catches fire at Goa airport Terminal 2, quick response averts major mishap

Team Goemkarponn

DABOLIM: A fire broke out in the store room of Terminal 2 at Goa International Airport in Dabolim on Saturday morning, triggering brief concern within the terminal premises. The store room, which housed electrical items and appliances, sustained damage as the flames spread within the enclosed space.

Airport authorities acted swiftly, deploying in-house fire extinguishers to contain and douse the blaze before it could escalate or spread to adjoining areas. No injuries or loss of life were reported in the incident, bringing relief to passengers and airport staff present at the time. Sources said that as a precautionary measure, a portion of the terminal was temporarily closed for a few minutes while firefighting operations were underway. Normal



operations resumed shortly after the situation was brought under control. Preliminary indications suggest that the presence of electrical equipment in the store room may have contributed to the fire, though the exact cause is yet to be officially confirmed. Airport authorities are expected to carry out a detailed assessment to determine the origin of the blaze and evaluate the extent of the damage caused. Further investigation is underway.

Home Torched In South Goa, Police Inaction Alleged

Victim names suspects; Fatorda MLA Vijai Sardesai demands immediate arrests.



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SATPALI: A house at Satpali in Darbandora, South Goa, was allegedly set on fire by three miscreants, with the victim accusing the police of failing to act despite a detailed complaint being submitted.

According to the complaint, the residence of Shankar Gogalekar at Satpali-Darbandora was

allegedly torched by three persons from Kahanapur. The victim reportedly approached the Collem Police Station and provided names, mobile numbers and addresses of the suspects, but claims that no action has been taken so far.

Reacting strongly to the incident, Fatorda MLA Vijai Sardesai termed the episode a shocking

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Goa-IDC launches EV bus service in Verna industrial estate, plans girls' hostel facility

Team Goemkarponn

VERNA: In a major push to improve internal connectivity within the Verna Industrial Estate, the Goa Industrial Development Corporation (Goa-IDC), in association with the Verna Industries Association, has introduced a dedicated electric bus service to operate loop routes across the estate throughout the day. The service was formally flagged off by GIDC Chairman Aleixo Reginaldo Lourenco in the presence of Pravimal Abhishek, Managing Director of Goa-IDC, along with industry

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Pakistan Hosts High-Stakes Iran-US Ceasefire Talks Amid Media Restrictions

Indirect negotiations begin in Islamabad as tensions persist over regional conflict and key disagreements.

New Delhi: Pakistan has stepped into a crucial diplomatic role by hosting ceasefire discussions between Iran and the United States in Islamabad, even as it imposed a ban on Israeli media coverage of the



talks. The negotiations are part of ongoing efforts to ease tensions following

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"Technical Limitations Delay Reopening" as Iran Struggles With Strait of Hormuz Mines

Missing Mine Locations Complicate Shipping Resumption and Ongoing Peace Talks.

New Delhi: Iran is facing significant challenges in reopening the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz, as difficulties in locating and clearing naval mines continue to hinder progress. The



issue has emerged as

a major complication during ongoing diplomatic discussions in Islamabad. According to officials, Iran has been unable to identify the precise locations of all the mines

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Big Promises, Little Ground: Goa's "Special Status" Debate Risks Missing the Point

The latest push by the Indian National Congress for a "special status" framework for Goa arrives at a politically convenient moment. With elections looming, the introduction of a private member's Bill in the Lok Sabha by Viriato Fernandes—backed by leaders like Manikrao Thakre and Amit Patkar—has been framed as a decisive step to protect Goa's fragile ecology, cultural identity and demographic balance. The intent may resonate, but the proposal raises a more pressing question: is this serious policy or election-season signalling?

At the centre of the Bill is the idea of a "Goa Sustainable Development Council," intended to guide growth while preserving the state's environment and traditions. It also proposes defining "Persons of Goan Origin," promoting Konkani in both Devanagari and Roman scripts, and addressing concerns about demographic change. On paper, it attempts to respond to anxieties that have been building for years—over land use, unregulated tourism, environmental degradation and cultural dilution.

But legislation must be judged not just by intent, but by feasibility. And here, the proposal begins to falter.

The demand for "special status" is neither new nor easy to achieve. It involves constitutional complexity and political consensus that go far beyond a private member's Bill. Successive governments have avoided expanding such provisions, wary of triggering similar demands from other states. In the current climate, expecting meaningful progress on this front appears unrealistic.

That is where the Congress risks weakening its own case. By foregrounding a demand that is unlikely to materialise, it shifts focus away from issues that require immediate attention. Goa's environmental stress is not

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theoretical. Its coastline is under pressure, forests are shrinking, and unplanned construction continues to strain resources. Heritage structures are disappearing, often without accountability. These challenges do not need symbolic legislation; they require enforcement and governance.

Employment is another missing piece. Goa's

economy remains heavily dependent on tourism, leaving young people with limited options. Migration patterns—both inward and outward—are reshaping the state in ways that go beyond cultural anxiety. Without a clear economic roadmap, concerns about identity and demographic balance cannot be addressed in isolation.

There is also an uncomfortable political parallel. The Bharatiya Janata Party has faced criticism in the past for making expansive promises that proved difficult to deliver. For the Congress to now adopt a similar tone risks reinforcing voter scepticism. The electorate is increasingly wary of declarations that sound compelling but lack a realistic path to implementation. None of this diminishes the legitimacy of the concerns raised. Goa's land, culture and ecological balance do need protection. But solutions must be rooted in what is achievable. Stronger land-use regulation, stricter environmental clearances, protection of local communities, and investment in sustainable industries would have a more direct impact than pursuing a politically attractive but uncertain "special status."

There is also a need for greater clarity in public messaging. Voters deserve specifics. How will illegal construction be curbed? What safeguards will protect agricultural land? How will tourism be managed without undermining livelihoods? These are practical questions that require concrete answers, not broad assurances.

Ultimately, the debate is not about whether Goa deserves protection—it does. The real question is whether political parties are prepared to move beyond rhetoric and offer credible solutions. As the election season intensifies, voters may be less interested in ambitious promises and more in those that can actually be delivered.

OpEd

An Agent of Change : Shri Bab Amit Palekar

By Irfan Iqbal Gheta

Circa December 2025. The outcome of the Goa Zilla Panchayat Elections 2025 saw churning within Aam Aadmi Party owing to poor performance. Advocate Shri Amit Palekar – the then President Goa AAP – was nudged out following the results of Goa Zilla Panchayat Elections 2025. A disgruntled Shri Amit Bab made a few noises here and there citing his sacrifices for the party's growth since taking over as president back in 2022. But that sob story found no traction with the Delhi based party that had moved on by appointing a new president. Even the new president did not last long in his new role. After a brief period in his new role, Shri Parab Bab stormed out of Goa AAP. Unfazed by all these developments, the party top brass moved quietly by appointing the party veteran Shri Valmiki Bab as new president after taking all the stakeholders into consideration. Shri Amit Bab – the reluctant scapegoat for his erstwhile party's no show in Goa ZP Elections 2025 – kept the pot boiling by remaining in the public eye through interviews to news channels and opinions signalling his availability for a high profile role within the structure of a political party if the party in question could match Shri Amit Bab's both towering ambitions and expectations. The rumour mills were in overdrive. For a while it was rumoured that Shri Amit Bab was going to join the Goa BJP. Then what followed was a swift denial. Ever since Shri Amit Bab has been maintaining a strategic silence by holding the cards of his next move close to his chest. Looking at Shri Amit Bab's legally sharp mind coupled with his charismatic personality, regional political outfits – dominated by personality cults – would not be able to accommodate a leader of his stature. It was quite apparent from the day one. Goa Forward Party, Revolutionary Goans and Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party – with limited footprints across the state – are the one-man-show parties. The clash of titans would be unavoidable if Shri Amit Bab were to join any one of the aforementioned regional parties. Fast Forward to April 2026. After keeping Goemkars guessing for about one hundred days, Shri Amit Bab is back with a bang. On a humid Friday evening, in the presence of the leading lights of the Goa Congress and a sea of supporters at Mercedes, Shri Amit Bab joined the Goa Congress as an Aam Aadmi (no pun intended). Shri Amit Bab – along with his followers – has joined the Goa Congress as a Congressman. From a state president to a party worker, the journey appears to be confusing on the paper. But Shri Amit Bab has taken a calculated risk. If Goa Congress gives him a ticket to fight Goa Assembly Elections 2027 and if Shri Amit Bab pulls off a stunning victory, he will be a Goa Congress MLA. As an elected representative of Goemkars, Shri Amit Bab can do a lot for both Goa and Goemkars. Shri Amit Bab can become the agent of change who is honest and hates corruption from the bottom of his heart. This move – taken after prolonged and deliberate consultations with Shri Amit Bab's supporters and well wishers – seems to have originated from the belief and conviction that the Goa Congress has the wherewithal in terms of organisational strength, a network of infrastructure and Nehruvian ideology to take on the juggernaut of the Goa BJP in 2027. Shri Amit Bab is ready to do anything for the love of Goa. Here's to a man who showed courage to accept the tough political challenges instead of playing a victim card from the comforts of his air conditioned office. A big salute to Shri Bab Amit Palekar who is trying to write a new chapter with the sole intention of saving Goa and hapless Goemkars for the generations to come.

Water Dept Denies Contamination Allegations At Dabolim Complex

■ Authorities tell rights panel supply potable; tests show no pollution in samples.

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DABOLIM: The Drinking Water Department has rejected allegations that contaminated water was supplied to a residential complex at Dabolim, informing the Goa State Human Rights Commission that the water distributed to the premises met all quality standards and was safe for consumption. The department maintained that it could not be held



responsible for the illnesses reported by residents. In its submission before the Commission, officials stated that the housing complex at Alto Chicalim receives

water from a ground-level reservoir near NSD Dabolim through a dedicated pipeline, with supply provided for several hours daily. The department said

multiple connections were granted to the project, including domestic and commercial lines covering all blocks of the complex. The issue surfaced after health authorities flagged suspected contamination following cases of acute diarrhoeal illness among residents. The department said it immediately conducted an inspection and collected water samples from the supply line for laboratory examination.



CCP Poll Secrecy Petition Posted For Hearing On May 4

■ Court seeks replies from respondents over alleged breach during Panaji civic elections.

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PANAJI: A petition alleging violation of ballot secrecy in the Corporation of the City of Panaji (CCP) elections has been deferred to May 4 by the North Goa Principal District and Sessions Court.

The court has issued notices to the respondents and directed them to submit their replies before the next date of hearing. The plea challenges the conduct of polling held on March 11, claiming that the confidentiality of votes was compromised. The petitioners have sought judicial intervention, urging the court to declare

the election invalid on the grounds that the alleged breach affected the fairness and integrity of the electoral process.

The civil suit was filed by advocate Vishnu Naik, who contested the elections as part of the Ami Panjekar panel.

Two other individuals later joined the proceedings, backing the demand for a detailed examination of the polling process and alleged irregularities.

The court is expected to consider the matter after responses are filed by the concerned authorities and parties when the case comes up for hearing on May 4.

Amit Palekar Joins Congress Ahead of 2027 Polls

■ Defectors Won't Be Forgiven by People and Congress Party: Manikrao Thakare.

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ST CRUZ: Goa in-charge Manikrao Thakare said that defectors will not be forgiven by the people, adding that neither the Congress party nor even God would pardon such actions. He also emphasized that the



Constitution guarantees full freedom to practice any religion and this

must be respected, while cautioning that politics in the name of religion and

attempts to divide people should be firmly opposed. Thakare said the Congress ideology stands for unity, brotherhood, and inclusive development, adding that those who use religion or caste for politics lack a development record and only create divisions to weaken democracy.



IMD Forecast: Goa Safe From Heatwave This Summer

■ Above-normal temperatures expected, but extreme heat unlikely to affect the state.

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PANAJI: According to the India Meteorological Department's latest seasonal forecast, Goa is set to stay clear of heatwave conditions during the upcoming summer months of April through June. While temperatures are anticipated to be slightly above normal, the state will not be part of the main heatwave-prone zones, providing a measure of relief amid rising

temperatures in other regions.

The IMD's outlook highlights that many areas in India, particularly in central and northern parts, may experience more frequent and intense heatwaves. In contrast, Goa's coastal location and the moderating effects of maritime influences are likely to keep extreme heat at bay. Though the state might still encounter warm and humid weather, the likelihood of prolonged and severe heat is low.

30,000 Families Rely on Goan Cashew Sector: CM

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PANAJI: Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant said that the cashew sector in Goa provides livelihood to around 30,000 families, noting that Goan cashew is largely organic and holds significant economic value for the state. He also announced that a dedicated Cashew Board



will soon be established in coordination with the Agriculture Department and the Goa Forest Development Corporation (GFDC) to strengthen

the industry and support stakeholders. Rajya Sabha MP Sadanand Tanavade highlighted that Goan cashews possess a distinct taste compared to

produce from other states and stressed the need to preserve this uniqueness while promoting the state's traditional produce. GFDC Chairperson Divya Rane said the Goa Cashew Fest, launched in 2023, has played an important role in promoting cashew and feni while supporting farmers, distillers and processors.

FCRA Amendments Could Be Used to Target Minorities: Carlos Ferreira

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Congress leader Carlos Ferreira has raised concerns over the proposed amendments to the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), describing them as harsh provisions that could be misused against minority institutions and civil

society organisations. He cautioned that the changes may empower authorities to assume control over properties of organisations whose licences to receive foreign funds are cancelled or not renewed. Ferreira said the proposed provisions appear to grant sweeping powers that could result in

assets being transferred to government-appointed authorities once an organisation loses its FCRA registration. He expressed apprehension that such measures may affect institutions even when their properties were not entirely created through foreign contributions. Drawing



comparisons with laws that allow the state to take over unclaimed or disputed properties, he alleged that the amendments could open the door for seizure of assets and legal action against office-bearers of affected organisations.

Man Arrested with 1.38 Kg Ganja in Calangute Night Raid

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CALANGUTE: Calangute Police arrested a 29-year-old man from West Bengal after allegedly finding him in possession of suspected ganja during a late-night narcotic raid at Porbawado, Calangute.

According to police, the raid was conducted between 10:55 pm on April 9 and 1:40 am on April 10 at an open place near Bodkewod junction, Porbawado, Calangute, Bardez. The action was initiated on a state complaint filed by PSI Prajit Mandrekar of



Calangute Police Station.

During the search, the accused, identified as Mohammad Kader Khan, resident of Thakur Colony, Titagarh Khardah (M), North 24 Parganas, West Bengal, was allegedly found in illegal possession of greenish leafy, flowery and fruity tops suspected to be ganja weighing 1,380 grams, valued at approximately ₹1.30 lakh.

The contraband was attached under a search and seizure panchanama.

Police arrested the accused at 4:51 am on April 10 and lodged him in the police station lock-up after observing all Supreme Court guidelines.

Further investigation is being carried out by PSI Vishwajit Dhavalikar of Calangute Police Station.

Scooter Stolen from Palolem Beach Parking; FIR Registered

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: Canacona Police have registered a theft case after a scooter was stolen from an open parking space near Palolem Beach late Tuesday night.

According to police, the complaint was filed by Siddharth Pagi, resident of Palolem, Canacona, stating that the incident occurred between 10:30 pm and 11:45 pm on April 8. An unknown accused allegedly stole his Honda Activa scooter from the open parking area at Palolem Beach.



The stolen scooter is valued at approximately ₹70,000.

Police have registered FIR vide Canacona Police Station Crime No. 24/2026 under Section

303(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023. Further investigation is being carried out by Head Constable Anand Pagi (HC 5909) of Canacona Police Station.



Bangladesh Tourist's Mobile Stolen on Amravati Express Near Kulem

Team Goemkarponn

VASCO: Vasco Railway Police have registered a theft case after a tourist from Bangladesh reported that his mobile phone was stolen while travelling on the Amravati Express.

According to police, complainant Goutom Kumar Sarkar, a resident of Bogura, Bangladesh, stated that the incident occurred on March 19 at around 9:00 am in the

running train near Kulem Railway Station. He was travelling with his wife from Madgaon to Shalimar when an unknown accused allegedly stole his mobile phone. The stolen mobile phone is valued at approximately ₹24,000. Police have registered a case against unknown accused, and further investigation is being carried out by PSI Krishna Talpi of Vasco Railway Police Station.

Tourist's Wallet Stolen at Baga Restaurant; Calangute Police Register Theft Case

Team Goemkarponn

CALANGUTE: Calangute Police have registered a theft case after a tourist from Bengaluru reported that her wallet was stolen at a restaurant in Baga on Wednesday evening.

According to police, Calangute PS Crime No. 55/2026 has been registered under Section 303(2) of the Bharatiya



Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, based on a complaint filed by Mrs. Shubham Duggal, resident of Srinivasa Classic Apartments,

Sarjapura Main Road, Bengaluru, Karnataka. The complainant stated that on April 9 at around 5:55 pm, while she was at Brittos

Restaurant, Sautawado, Baga-Calangute, an unknown accused person allegedly stole her wallet. The stolen wallet contained cash of ₹15,000, a PAN card, and an Axis Bank ATM card, collectively valued at ₹15,000. Head Constable Sudatta Khadpe (HC 5812) of Calangute Police Station is conducting further investigation.

Car Hits Parked Scooter Near St Joseph Chapel in Shiroda; Case Registered

Team Goemkarponn

PONDA: A case of rash and negligent driving has been registered at Ponda Police Station following a complaint by Karishma Devidas Shirodkar of Ponda.

The incident occurred on 27 March 2026 at around 12:45 pm near St. Joseph Chapel, Vanze,



Shiroda. According to the complaint, accused Ganesh Naik of Shiroda

was driving his car from Ponda towards Shiroda in a rash and negligent

manner, endangering human life.

On reaching near St. Joseph Chapel at Vanze, the vehicle allegedly dashed against a roadside parked Suzuki scooter, causing major damage to the scooter.

Further investigation is being carried out by HC 4579 Ramdas Gawas of Ponda Police Station.

Man Found Dead Near Padeli Bridge in Valpoi; Police Probe Underway

Team Goemkarponn

VALPOI: A 59-year-old man was found dead near Padeli Bridge in Sattari on Friday afternoon after he allegedly attempted suicide, police said.

According to police, information was received

at 1:34 pm from PCR Panaji stating that a person had attempted suicide at Padeli Bridge. PSI Prathamesh Gawas along with staff rushed to the spot at Padeli near the bridge, where a male body was found lying on the shore.



During inquiry, the deceased was identified as Abdul, son of Hasan

Shah, aged 59 years, resident of House No. 24, Ward No. 09, Valpoi,

Sattari, Goa.

Locals had reportedly attempted to administer CPR, but there was no response.

The body was then shifted to CHC Valpoi, where the on-duty medical officer declared him brought dead.

Police secured the presence of two panch witnesses and conducted an inquest panchanama. The body has been sent to GMC Morgue, Bambolim, for preservation.

Further inquiry is in progress under PSI Prathamesh Gawas.

Merces Vaddem creek turns health hazard as sewage, garbage choke waterway

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VADDEM: Merces Vaddem Creek has turned into a growing health concern, with foul stench and visible pollution affecting daily life in the surrounding areas. Once a natural water channel, the creek is now clogged with sewage discharge and heaps of garbage, raising fears among residents over potential health risks. Locals have complained



that the situation has worsened over the past few months, with untreated sewage flowing directly into the creek and solid waste accumulating

along its banks.

The stagnant water, coupled with the decay of waste, has led to an unbearable smell, especially during the

evening hours, making it difficult for residents to keep windows open or step outdoors. Residents of Merces and Vaddem have expressed frustration over what they describe as continued neglect by the authorities. They say the polluted creek has become a breeding ground for mosquitoes and poses a serious threat of water-borne diseases, particularly with the onset of warmer weather.



Sancoale panchayat rocked by twin resignations ahead of no-confidence showdown

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SANCOALE: In a dramatic political turn ahead of a crucial no-confidence motion, Sarpanch Anusha Lamani on Friday stepped down from her post, setting the stage for a high-stakes battle in the Sancoale Panchayat. The resignation came just days before a special meeting scheduled

on Monday to decide the fate of both Lamani and Deputy Sarpanch Derrick Vales. In a swift and equally significant development within hours, Derrick Vales also tendered his resignation as Deputy Sarpanch, deepening the political churn within the panchayat and turning the upcoming meeting into a potential clash of the titans.

Tawadkar Announces Job Roadmap, Training Centres In Canacona



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CANACONA: Minister and Canacona MLA Ramesh Tawadkar announced a job roadmap and the setting up of training centres in the constituency while inaugurating a series of developmental works, including a drainage project at Agas-Loliem. Speaking after launching the ₹40 lakh drainage construction work on Friday, Tawadkar

said the focus is now shifting from infrastructure development to human development aimed at improving employment opportunities and overall satisfaction among residents. He stated that a team from Delhi has been invited to help prepare a comprehensive human development roadmap, which may take several months to formulate and years to fully implement.



Marathi Rajbhasha Rally At Lohia Maidan On April 12

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MARGAO: The Marathi Rajbhasha Nirdhar Samiti (South Goa) has announced a grand rally and convention at Lohia Maidan, Margao, on April 12 from 4 pm to press for granting official language status to Marathi in Goa. The gathering will be addressed by senior

leaders of the association, who are expected to outline the future course of the movement. Addressing a press conference in Margao on Friday, members of the Samiti reiterated their demand for due recognition to Marathi and stressed the need for justice to the language as a state language.

Ex-Congress Candidate Calls For Jana-Sena Panel For Canacona Municipal Polls

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: Former Congress candidate for the Canacona Assembly constituency, Janardhan Bhandari, has called on aspiring candidates for the 2026 Canacona Municipal Council (CMC) elections to contest under a Jana-Sena panel to jointly challenge the BJP. Bhandari said the appointment of an administrator to several municipal councils, including Canacona, by the Directorate of Municipal



Administration has paved the way for elections in the council. He stated that the upcoming polls provide an opportunity to elect representatives committed to the overall development of the municipal area.



Career Compass Digital QR Launched to Guide Students After Class 12

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant launched Career Compass Digital QR: A Guide to Careers, Exams, and Scholarships Post-12th, an initiative of the Goa State Higher Education Council aimed at helping students make informed career decisions. The digital resource will enable students and youth to access the handbook online through a QR code.

Speaking at the launch, the Chief Minister said the comprehensive handbook

will empower students with the knowledge and resources required to explore diverse career pathways, prepare for competitive examinations, and learn about scholarship opportunities available after Class 12.

He further stated that equipping youth, educators, and parents with the right guidance will help nurture a skilled, confident, and future-ready generation. The initiative, he added, aligns with the vision of building a Viksit Goa by 2047.

Fire Services Director Nitin Raiker Awarded PhD For Disaster Management Study

■ Research highlights role of ICT, identifies gaps in preparedness and communication in Goa.

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Nitin Vassudev Raiker, Director of the Directorate of Fire and Emergency Services, Government of Goa, has been awarded the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Sociology by NIILM University, Kaithal, Haryana. His research titled "Sociological Impact of ICT on Disaster Management in the State of Goa" examines how technology can strengthen disaster preparedness, communication and emergency response in



the state. The study draws on inputs from over 1,000 respondents, including residents, tourists, business stakeholders and government officials. It analyses how people in Goa receive, trust and utilise information during disasters and emergencies.



Goa Signs Seven MoUs To Expand Skill Training And Industry Linkages

■ Life-skills programme, dual certification and self-employment initiatives to be rolled out across ITIs

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant witnessed the signing and exchange of seven Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) by the Directorate of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (DSDE) at Mahalaxmi, Panaji, aimed at strengthening Goa's skill development

ecosystem and expanding vocational training opportunities. The agreements focus on enhancing collaboration between government departments, educational institutions and industry partners while introducing new programmes across Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) in the state.



“A Dedicated Space for Women Cricketers” as Goa Launches First Pink Cricket Centre

■ New Sanquelim Facility Aims to Boost Grassroots Participation and Empower Young Talent.



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PANAJI: In a major step towards strengthening women's cricket, the Goa Cricket Association inaugurated the state's first Pink Cricket Centre at the Sanquelim Municipal Ground. The initiative is designed to provide dedicated infrastructure and training opportunities for aspiring female cricketers, encouraging wider participation and nurturing talent at the grassroots level. The launch event witnessed the presence of several dignitaries, including Sulakshana Sawant, Chairperson of

Padmini Foundation, and Siddhi Porob, Chairperson of the Sankhali Municipal Council, along with key association officials and members. The occasion highlighted a collective commitment to building inclusive sporting platforms for young athletes.

The centre is expected to benefit players from nearby regions such as Sattari and Bicholim, offering them access to structured coaching and professional guidance. A notable feature of the initiative is the inclusion of women coaches, aimed at creating a supportive and encouraging environment

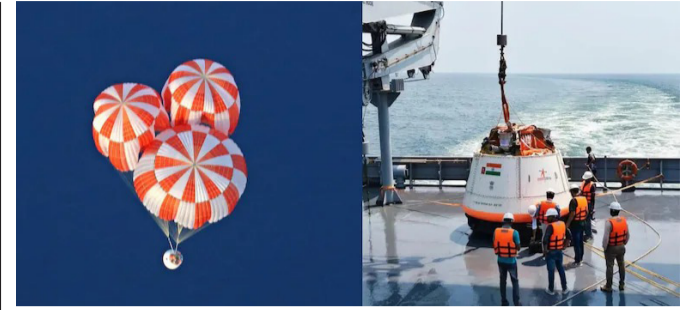
for young girls pursuing the sport.

Officials emphasised that the project reflects a broader vision to promote women's empowerment through sports. The strong response from local girls, particularly in Sanquelim, played a key role in shaping the initiative.

Encouraged by this enthusiasm, plans are already underway to expand similar centres to other parts of Goa, including Porvorim, Cujira, Chicalim and Margao. The centre has been developed in collaboration with Eagles Sports Club, recognising its long standing contribution to

sports development in the region. The concept also draws inspiration from initiatives that highlight the role of women in public service and leadership. The facility is expected to serve as a safe and structured space where young players can develop their skills and pursue their ambitions.

With consistent support and focused training, the initiative aims to prepare Goan women cricketers for higher levels of competition, including national platforms and professional leagues, marking a significant step forward in the state's sporting landscape.



India Validates 10-Parachute Safety System for Gaganyaan Return Mission

■ Successful air drop test marks major milestone in ensuring safe descent of astronauts

New Delhi: India has taken a significant step forward in its human spaceflight programme with the successful testing of a 10-parachute landing system designed for the Gaganyaan Crew Module. Conducted at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, the second Integrated Air Drop Test confirmed the reliability of a critical system that will ensure astronauts return safely to Earth after space missions. The test focused on the descent and landing phase, widely considered one of the most challenging stages of any human spaceflight. A simulated crew module weighing around 5.7 tonnes was lifted by an Indian Air Force Chinook helicopter to an altitude of about three kilometres before being released over the Bay of Bengal. What followed was a carefully sequenced deployment of

parachutes that gradually slowed the module for a controlled splashdown. The system uses ten parachutes of four different types, all designed and manufactured in India. The sequence begins with two parachutes that remove the protective cover of the compartment, followed by stabilising chutes that control the module's motion. Finally, three main parachutes deploy to reduce speed significantly, with built in redundancy ensuring safety even if one fails. During an actual mission, the crew module will re enter Earth's atmosphere at extremely high speeds after orbiting in space. The parachutes are designed to deploy at high altitudes and progressively reduce velocity from nearly 700 kilometres per hour to a safe landing speed of about 30 kilometres per hour.

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Home Torched In South Goa, Police Inaction Alleged

breakdown of law and order in the state. He stated that a house had allegedly been set ablaze even after a detailed complaint with supporting information was filed, yet the police response has been lacking.

Sardesai questioned what message such inaction sends to the public, warning that it creates an impression that offenders can act without consequences while victims remain

helpless. He further said that delays in taking action undermine public confidence and embolden wrongdoers.

The MLA demanded immediate intervention from the authorities, calling for the arrest of the accused and accountability from the police. He also stressed that justice must be delivered without delay, stating that Goa deserves better law enforcement response in such serious cases.

Pakistan Hosts High-Stakes Iran-US Ceasefire Talks Amid Media Restrictions

weeks of escalating conflict in the Gulf region. An Iranian delegation led by senior leader Mohammad-Bagher Ghalibaf has arrived in the Pakistani capital, while the United States

is being represented by Vice President JD Vance. The discussions follow a period of intense hostilities triggered by recent military strikes involving the US and Israel, which led to significant casualties,

instability in the Strait of Hormuz, and a surge in global oil prices. Earlier this week, Pakistan played a key role in facilitating a temporary two week ceasefire between the two sides.

“Technical Limitations Delay Reopening” as Iran....

it deployed in the waterway. In several cases, even when mines are detected, the country lacks the technical capability to safely remove them. This has slowed efforts to restore

normal shipping activity through the strait, a key global trade route. The situation helps explain delays in meeting calls from Donald Trump to reopen the passage. Iran's Foreign Minister

Abbas Araghchi recently indicated that reopening would proceed with consideration of “technical limitations,” a statement now understood to directly refer to the mine clearance challenges.

Goa-IDC launches EV bus service in Verna industrial estate, plans girls' hostel facility

representatives and stakeholders. The initiative is expected to ease daily commuting challenges faced by thousands of employees working within one of Goa's largest industrial hubs. For several years, industries and workers had been seeking a reliable and structured internal transport system within the estate. In another key development, Goa-IDC has announced plans to set up dedicated hostel facilities for women employees within the Verna Industrial Estate.

“Sabka Malik Ek Hai”: Army Chief Highlights Ethical Restraint During Operation Sindoor

■ India Timed Strikes to Avoid Prayer Hours While Targeting Terror Infrastructure,

New Delhi: India's military leadership has revealed a striking example of ethical decision making during cross border operations, as Army Chief Upendra Dwivedi explained why strikes on terror hubs were deliberately paused during prayer hours. Speaking at a forum in Bengaluru, he outlined how humanitarian considerations were integrated into operational planning. During Operation Sindoor, Indian forces



had the capability to strike targets at any time. However, commanders chose to closely monitor activity patterns across the border and avoided

launching attacks when individuals at these locations were offering Namaz. This decision, guided by the belief that “Sabka Malik Ek Hai,”

reflected an effort to ensure that military action remained focused strictly on terror infrastructure without appearing to target religious practices. The operation itself was launched in May 2025 in response to the Pahalgam terror attack, which resulted in the loss of 26 lives. It marked a significant moment in India's military approach, showcasing seamless coordination between the Army, Navy and Air Force.



“Deeply Disturbing”: India Voices Concern Over Civilian Toll in Lebanon

■ Government Calls for Protection of Civilians While Expanding Gulf Energy Engagement.

New Delhi: India has expressed serious concern over the escalating situation in Lebanon following recent Israeli strikes that reportedly resulted in heavy civilian casualties. Officials described the developments as deeply troubling and reiterated the need to prioritise the safety of non combatants. Addressing the issue, Randhir Jaiswal highlighted India's long standing position on the protection of civilians and adherence to international law. He emphasised that respecting sovereignty and territorial integrity remains essential, particularly in times of conflict. As a contributing nation to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, India underscored its continued commitment to peace and stability in the region. The government also assured that necessary measures are being taken to safeguard Indian citizens in Lebanon. The

Indian Embassy remains in constant contact with the community to ensure their safety amid the evolving situation. Alongside its diplomatic response, India is actively strengthening its energy ties with key partners in the Gulf region, closely monitoring developments across West Asia. Under the direction of Narendra Modi, senior ministers have been engaging with energy producing nations to secure stable supplies. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar is currently on an official visit to Mauritius and is scheduled to travel to the United Arab Emirates for high level discussions aimed at strengthening bilateral ties. India has also extended support to neighbouring countries facing energy shortages. Recently, petroleum supplies were provided to Sri Lanka, while discussions are underway for a government level agreement to supply oil and gas to Mauritius.

“Even a Snake Can Be Trusted,” Says Mamata Banerjee in Sharp Election Attack

■ West Bengal Chief Minister alleges voter manipulation, biased agencies, and raises concerns over electoral roll deletions

New Delhi: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday intensified her criticism of the Bharatiya Janata Party during an election rally in North 24 Parganas, urging voters to support the Trinamool Congress to safeguard the state's future. Addressing a gathering in Tentulia, she questioned the credibility of the BJP and accused it of undermining democratic processes.

In a strongly worded remark, Banerjee stated that while even a snake



could be trusted, the BJP could not, calling on people to vote decisively in favour of her party. She further alleged that central agencies lacked neutrality under the current government, claiming they were functioning in a biased manner.

The chief minister

also accused the BJP of importing voters during the Assam Assembly elections. She claimed that the party, uncertain of securing sufficient local support, brought in large numbers of people from outside the state, including a significant group allegedly

transported from Uttar Pradesh. According to her, such actions raised serious concerns about the integrity of the electoral process. Banerjee additionally highlighted alleged irregularities in West Bengal's electoral rolls, stating that around 90 lakh names had been removed during a recent verification exercise.

She claimed that a majority of those affected were Hindus, followed by Muslims, and suggested that the deletions were politically motivated.

“Path to End Bengal's Despair,” BJP Unveils Poll Manifesto With Cash Aid and UCC Push

■ Party promises ₹3,000 monthly support for women, jobs for youth, and sweeping governance reforms ahead of Assembly elections

New Delhi: The Bharatiya Janata Party has released its manifesto for the 2026 West Bengal Assembly elections, outlining an ambitious roadmap focused on welfare measures, governance reforms, and legal changes. The document positions itself as a plan to address economic challenges, unemployment, and public safety concerns while restoring confidence among citizens. A key highlight of the manifesto

is the promise of ₹3,000 monthly financial assistance for women, along with targeted initiatives to enhance their safety and participation in the workforce. The party has proposed the formation of women-only police battalions, special security squads, and 33 percent reservation for women in government jobs. For the youth, the BJP has pledged to create one crore job and self-employment opportunities over the next five years.



In addition, unemployed individuals would receive financial support of ₹3,000 per month.

The manifesto also assures implementation of the Seventh Pay Commission and dearness allowance benefits for

government employees and pensioners. On the legal front, the party has committed to introducing a Uniform Civil Code within six months of coming to power. It has also promised strict measures to curb infiltration and

cattle smuggling, linking these issues to national security concerns.

The manifesto includes plans to tackle corruption through a white paper detailing governance failures over the past 15 years, along with steps to dismantle alleged syndicate systems and illegal financial practices. Agricultural support has also been prioritised, with specific focus on rice, potato, and mango cultivation. Additionally, the party has

proposed cultural and infrastructural initiatives such as including regional languages in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution, revitalising tea gardens in Darjeeling, and modernising the jute industry.

Healthcare and education commitments include the rollout of central schemes, free HPV vaccination, cancer screening programmes, and the establishment of premier institutions in North Bengal.

“Dear Vaibhav, Well Done”: Virat Kohli’s Note Seals Teen Star’s Fairytale Rise

■ Young Rajasthan Royals opener shines under pressure as his fearless batting earns praise and headlines

New Delhi: Rajasthan Royals’ teenage sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi continues to capture attention with a stunning rise in the Indian Premier League 2026, delivering performances that have quickly set him apart as one of the tournament’s brightest prospects. In a defining moment after a recent match, Sooryavanshi received recognition from one of cricket’s biggest names, Virat Kohli. The young batter approached Kohli for an autograph, and the



veteran responded with a simple yet meaningful message written on a team cap: “Dear Vaibhav, well done.” The gesture marked a symbolic endorsement of the teenager’s rapid emergence on the big stage.

Sooryavanshi’s latest innings showcased remarkable confidence against top level bowling. Facing experienced pacers like Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Josh Hazlewood during the powerplay, he chose aggression over caution.

His attacking approach unsettled the bowlers early, shifting momentum decisively in Rajasthan’s favour. Chasing a challenging target of 202 against Royal Challengers Bengaluru, the Royals built their innings around the teenager’s explosive start. Under the leadership of Riyan Parag, the team secured a comfortable six wicket victory with two overs to spare, marking their fourth consecutive win and strengthening their position at the top of the table.



“I Learned Leadership Here”: Rohit Sharma Reflects On 15-Year Journey With Mumbai Indians

■ Veteran cricketer credits team culture, support system, and shared success for shaping his legacy.

New Delhi: Marking 15 years with the Mumbai Indians, Rohit Sharma delivered an emotional message, expressing deep gratitude to teammates, coaches, and the franchise for playing a defining role in his growth as both a player and a leader. Reflecting on his journey in the Indian Premier League, Rohit acknowledged that his achievements were built on collective effort rather than individual brilliance. He credited the team environment for helping him develop leadership skills, emphasising that the support he received over the years was instrumental in shaping his career. Rohit, who captained Mumbai Indians to five IPL titles, highlighted how the backing from the franchise

and its stakeholders helped him evolve during crucial phases. He noted that learning to lead was not an overnight process, but something nurtured through trust, guidance, and consistent support within the team setup. He also extended his appreciation to former and current teammates, including Kieron Pollard, Hardik Pandya, Suryakumar Yadav, Shardul Thakur, and Lasith Malinga, recognising their contributions to the team’s success. Rohit described the franchise as a special unit built on strong relationships and shared ambition. In response, current captain Hardik Pandya praised Rohit’s impact, thanking him for inspiring a generation of players.

Unbeaten Opening Stand Powers Shree Damodar to Dominant Semi Final Victory

■ Clinical All Round Display Secures 134 Run Win and Final Berth

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Shree Damodar High School delivered a commanding performance to seal a 134 run victory over Mahila Nutan High School in the semi final of the U 14 President Cup inter school cricket tournament. The match, played at the S K Ground in Molcornem, saw a one sided contest as the Salcete side excelled in



both batting and bowling. After winning the toss, Mahila Nutan High School chose to bowl first, a decision that quickly backfired. Shree Damodar High School capitalised

fully, posting a massive total of 227 without losing a wicket in their allotted 25 overs. The opening pair dominated from start to finish, building a flawless partnership.

Rumaan Mulam anchored the innings with a brilliant unbeaten 106 off 82 balls, hitting ten boundaries and a six. At the other end, Usman Ghani matched the effort with an equally impressive unbeaten 103 off 70 deliveries, which included eight fours and three sixes. Facing a steep target of 228, Mahila Nutan High School struggled to find rhythm in their chase.

Kasvankar’s Century and Tari’s 6-Wicket Spell Headline Thrilling League Action

■ Dempo, Chowgule and Salgaocar Take Strong Positions on Opening Day



Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The final league round of the Goa Premier Division League began with intense action as teams battled for dominance on the opening day. Strong performances with both bat and ball set the tone, with standout contributions shaping the day’s outcomes.

At the NAPEX ground in Sankhali, Salgaocar Cricket Club posted an imposing total after declaring their first innings at 351 for 8. Captain Yash Kasvankar led from the front with a superb 121 off 155 deliveries, striking 14 boundaries and two sixes. He received valuable support from Shaantanu Nevagi, who made 49,

and Azaan Thota, who added 44. Geno Sports Club managed to hold steady late in the day, reaching 11 without loss in response. Meanwhile, at the Bandodkar ground, Panjim Gymkhana struggled against disciplined bowling and were dismissed for 143. Soham Panvalkar top scored with 51.

Rumaan’s Match Winning Knock Leads PIOC to Title Glory

■ Dominant All Round Performance Secures 65 Run Victory in Gold Final



Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: PIOC delivered a clinical performance to claim the title with a convincing 65 run win over VRS 11 in the Gold final of the 2nd All India T20 Under 16 Cricket Championship. A strong showing with both bat and ball ensured a comfortable

triumph in the summit clash. After losing the toss, PIOC were put in to bat first but quickly took control of the game with an aggressive approach. They posted an imposing total of 195 for 3 in their 20 overs. Rumaan Mulam played a pivotal role, scoring a composed 64 off 44 balls and striking seven

boundaries to anchor the innings. He was well supported by Maheer Mogvir, who added 35 runs, while Armaan Nadaf provided the finishing touch with an unbeaten 38, helping the team build a formidable total. In response, VRS 11 found it difficult to keep up with the required run rate.