



Panchayat Secretaries Face Heat after High Court Cracks Down

■ Show-cause notices issued to 98 officials after Bombay High Court flags serious compliance lapses.

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Acting on directives from the Bombay High Court, the Directorate of Panchayats has issued show-cause notices to 98 panchayat secretaries for failing to submit compliance reports on illegal constructions across Goa.

The action comes amid ongoing suo motu public interest litigation (PIL) being monitored by the court, which has taken a



stern view of delays and non-compliance by village panchayats. Expressing strong displeasure, the High Court observed that several panchayats had not filed the required

reports despite clear instructions issued on March 6, 2025, terming the lapse a serious dereliction of duty. Taking a strict stance, the court directed authorities to initiate an

inquiry and proceed with appropriate disciplinary action under service rules against the erring officials. The Directorate of Panchayats stated that the issuance of notices follows strict court monitoring, with warnings of further action against those found negligent. The development highlights increasing judicial scrutiny over illegal constructions in the state and the accountability of local bodies responsible for enforcement.

Goa CM Assures Strict Action on Alleged Illegal Activities

■ Pramod Sawant responds to Vijai Sardesai's claims, says police instructed to act without delay.

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Wednesday responded to allegations raised by Leader of Opposition Vijai Sardesai regarding alleged prostitution and drug activities operating under police protection, asserting that such matters are being treated with seriousness. Sawant said that law



enforcement agencies have been directed to take strict and immediate action whenever any such incidents come to light.

"Women From Across India Invited": Centre Plans Massive Outreach for Reservation Bill Debate

■ Special Parliament session to witness participation from grassroots voices to national figures

New Delhi: As Parliament prepares for a special three-day session to deliberate on the Women's Reservation Bill, the Centre has launched a wide-ranging outreach initiative, inviting women from across the country to

witness the proceedings. The move aims to highlight the significance of the debate and ensure representation from diverse sections of society. Women from varied backgrounds, including

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Goa Targets Year-End Launch for Ro-Ro Ferry Services

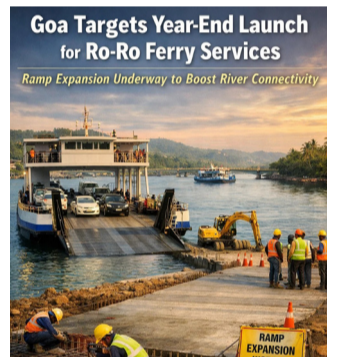
■ Ramp expansion underway; focus on boosting river connectivity and reducing travel time.

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: The Goa River Navigation Department has announced that two Roll-on/Roll-off (Ro-Ro) ferry services are expected to become operational by the end of the year, with infrastructure work progressing across key locations. The update was

shared during a review meeting on the Mala Lake issue conducted by the Goa State Smart City Development Agency, attended by officials from the Corporation of the City of Panaji (CCP), the Water Resources Department (WRD), and the Goa State Pollution Control Board. Director of the River Navigation Department,

Vikram Rajbhonsale, said ramp construction is currently underway and will be expanded as part of the project. He noted that the ramp at Ribandar has already been reinforced, with the existing 10-metre structure being extended to 25 metres to support Ro-Ro ferry operations. Officials also reviewed



the Chorao route, where ferry capacity and vessel size are being aligned with operational requirements. The department indicated that suitable ferry sizes will be deployed based on route demand and vehicle load, with a focus on improving efficiency for both four-wheelers and two-wheelers.

Courier Call Scam Spreads in Goa, Fraudsters Using Call Forwarding Trick

■ Authorities urge caution as victims risk losing OTPs, bank access and personal data.

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: A new courier-related scam is reportedly spreading across Goa, with fraudsters posing as delivery agents to trick individuals into activating call forwarding on their mobile phones, potentially compromising sensitive information and bank accounts. According to reports and user accounts, victims receive calls claiming issues with

parcel delivery. During the interaction, callers are instructed to dial specific numbers beginning with codes such as *21#, which unknowingly activates call forwarding to a fraudster's number. Once enabled, all incoming calls — including One-Time Passwords (OTPs) and verification calls — are redirected, giving scammers access

Beware! Scam Calls Divert OTPs & Bank Info

Advisory: How to Stay Safe

- ⚠ Dial #2002# to deactivate call forwarding immediately.
- ⚠ Check your phone settings to ensure call forwarding is off.
- ⚠ Avoid dialing numbers with * or # from unknown callers.
- ⚠ Do not trust unsolicited calls about delivery issues.
- ⚠ Contact courier companies via official websites or apps.
- ⚠ Enable two-step verification for banking & messaging apps.

REPORT SUSPICIOUS CALLS TO CYBER CRIME CELL

to banking services, messaging apps, and other confidential data. Authorities have cautioned that such incidents are on the rise

and have advised the public to remain vigilant against unsolicited calls, especially those requesting users to dial unfamiliar codes.



"BJP Takes Charge in Bihar": Samrat Choudhary Sworn In as Chief Minister

■ Leadership shift follows Nitish Kumar's exit, marking a first for BJP in the state.

New Delhi: Samrat Choudhary was sworn in as the Chief Minister of Bihar, marking a historic moment as the Bharatiya

Janata Party takes the lead in forming the state government for the first time. The oath ceremony

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Two videos. That is all it took to unsettle Goa's carefully curated image.

One, from Calangute, appears to show a foreign national pointing to what is allegedly an open drug trade, accompanied by troubling claims of police complicity. The other, from Baga, shows a foreigner openly soliciting on a public street, a video that gained traction after being highlighted by Vijai Sardesai.

At the time of writing, neither video has been independently verified. That matters. But what matters just as much is this: neither can be casually dismissed.

Because these clips have struck a nerve. Not by revealing something entirely new, but by putting into sharp, visual form what has long existed in fragments, anecdotes and quiet conversations. For years, there have been murmurs about drugs circulating too freely in certain pockets, about selective enforcement, about stretches of the tourist belt where rules appear negotiable after dark. The real issue here is not just whether these specific videos are authentic. It is that they feel plausible. That plausibility is the real crisis.

If even a part of what is being shown is true, then the implications are serious. It would point to gaps in enforcement, or worse, a breakdown in accountability. It would raise questions about whether authorities are equipped and willing to deal with evolving challenges in high-pressure tourist zones. But if the videos are misleading or staged, the situation is no less worrying. Because then Goa is facing a different kind of vulnerability. One where its image can be dented overnight by content that spreads faster than any official clarification. In today's ecosystem, perception does not wait for verification. It builds its own momentum. And Goa, perhaps more than

Goa has always lived with a paradox. It sells freedom.

Its beaches, nightlife and easygoing culture have drawn visitors from across the world precisely because of that sense of openness.

But freedom without visible boundaries can easily be mistaken for absence of control.

And when that perception takes root, it becomes difficult to contain.

most places, depends on perception. Tourism here is not just an industry. It is the backbone of the state's economy and identity. Every viral clip, every narrative of lawlessness, every suggestion of unchecked activity chips away at that image. Not always dramatically, but steadily. What is also striking is the silence that often follows such moments. When allegations surface, especially those that touch on law enforcement

credibility, the response cannot be slow or ambiguous. A prompt, transparent inquiry does not just establish facts. It signals intent. It reassures both residents and visitors that the system is alert and responsive. Silence, on the other hand, creates a vacuum. And that vacuum is quickly filled by speculation.

The question, then, is not just about what happened in those two videos.

It is about what happens next. Will there be a clear statement on whether these incidents are being investigated? Will there be visible action if wrongdoing is established? And equally important, will there be a firm rebuttal if the claims are found to be baseless? Goa cannot afford to drift into a space where such questions linger unanswered. Because the damage, in many ways, is cumulative. It is built not just through confirmed incidents, but through repeated suggestions that something is amiss. Over time, that erodes trust. Among tourists. Among locals. Even within institutions. There is still time to address this decisively. That means acknowledging the concerns without amplifying panic. It means verifying facts quickly. It means demonstrating that the line between freedom and disorder is clearly understood and firmly maintained. Goa's strength has always been its balance. Its ability to offer openness without chaos, vibrancy without breakdown. That balance now feels under scrutiny. Whether these videos represent isolated distortions or early warning signs, the response will define the narrative going forward. Because in the end, this is not just about two clips circulating online. It is about credibility. And credibility, once questioned, is far harder to restore than it is to protect.

EDITOR SPEAKS

Beyond Jayantis: Remembering Ambedkar and Gandhi in Everyday Life

By Suraj Nandrekar

Every year, on Ambedkar Jayanti and Gandhi Jayanti, the country pauses. Statues are garlanded, portraits dusted off, and familiar quotes circulate widely. For a brief moment, B. R. Ambedkar and Mahatma Gandhi reclaim the public imagination. But the day passes. And so does the intensity of remembrance. This annual ritual, while important, exposes a deeper discomfort. Why do we remember two of India's most influential thinkers only on designated days? Why do their ideas not find equal space in the routines of everyday life? There is also a growing tendency to equate remembrance with infrastructure and symbolism. Building an Ambedkar Bhavan, renaming roads, installing statues. These are visible acts, politically and socially convenient. But they are also limited. Only building an Ambedkar Bhavan will not suffice if the values he stood for do not find expression in how institutions function or how people treat each other. Ambedkar's legacy is not about structures. It is about dismantling structures of inequality. He spoke of dignity as non-negotiable. He argued that democracy must extend beyond the ballot box into social relations. Yet, caste continues to operate in subtle and overt ways. Access, opportunity and even everyday interactions are still shaped by invisible hierarchies. In such a context, symbolic gestures, however well-intentioned, can begin to feel like substitutes for harder, necessary change. The contradiction becomes even starker when one looks at how Gandhi is remembered. On October 2, a day meant to honour his life and principles, there are people who express irritation rather than reflection. Some curse the day not because of any engagement with Gandhi's ideas, but because it is observed as a dry day. The inconvenience of not being able to purchase alcohol becomes, for some, the defining feature of Gandhi Jayanti.

This may seem trivial, even anecdotal, but it reveals something deeper. It shows how far the essence of remembrance has drifted from its intent. When a national day of reflection is reduced to a minor inconvenience, it suggests that the connection to the person being remembered is, at best, superficial. Gandhi's philosophy was never meant to be comfortable. His ideas on restraint, discipline and moral accountability demand effort. They require individuals to look inward, to question habits and choices. That is not easy. It is far easier to reduce his legacy to a public holiday, or worse, to an inconvenience. The truth is that commemorations are easy. They are structured, expected and largely ceremonial. Living by principles is far more demanding. It requires individuals to examine their own beliefs and behaviours. It asks institutions to reflect on whether they are truly fair and inclusive. It demands action, often uncomfortable, sometimes unpopular. It is far simpler to post a quote than to question one's own prejudice. Far easier to attend a tribute than to speak up against discrimination in one's own surroundings. There is also a tendency to selectively interpret both leaders. Ambedkar is sometimes invoked without engaging with his critique of social hierarchies. Gandhi is often remembered for non-violence, but not always for the discipline that came with it. In both cases, the complexity of their thought is flattened into convenient fragments. This selective remembrance allows society to honour without being challenged. The consequence is a widening gap between reverence and reality. The more we celebrate these figures symbolically, the less we seem to apply their ideas meaningfully. Over time, this risks turning living philosophies into static icons. Yet, the relevance of both Ambedkar and Gandhi has not diminished. If anything, present conditions make their ideas more urgent. Questions of inequality, social justice, public conduct and institutional integrity remain central to India's trajectory. Remembering them in daily life does not require grand gestures. It begins with small, consistent choices. It lies in treating people with dignity, regardless of background. In engaging with opposing views without hostility. In holding systems accountable, including those we benefit from. Jayantis will continue to be observed. They should be. But they cannot be the only moments of reflection. Because the true measure of remembrance is not how we celebrate these leaders once a year. It is how much of them we are willing to practice, quietly and consistently, every single day.

Khaunte Seeks Crackdown on Touts, Flags Concern Over Viral Coastal Incidents

■ Tourism Minister stresses accountability, stronger enforcement and inter-departmental coordination to protect Goa's image.



Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Rohan Khaunte has called for a strict and sustained crackdown on illegal touts operating in Goa's tourism belt, saying that awareness campaigns alone are insufficient to address the issue. Khaunte said accountability must be fixed at the police station

level, with local authorities taking responsibility for monitoring and curbing illegal activities in their jurisdictions. He expressed concern that repeated instances of touting and related offences are harming Goa's reputation as a tourist destination. Emphasising the need for proactive enforcement,

Image at risk....

▶ Rohan Khaunte calls for strict and continuous crackdown on illegal touts

▶ Says awareness campaigns alone are not sufficient

▶ Seeks accountability at police station level for enforcement lapses

▶ Flags concern over viral coastal incidents

the minister urged action against organised tout networks and repeat offenders, stating that failure to act decisively could further erode public trust and visitor

impacting Goa's image

▶ Briefed Chief Minister Pramod Sawant, to pursue issue seriously

▶ Urges prompt action against tout networks and repeat offenders

▶ Calls for stronger coordination among departments for responsible tourism

confidence. Separately, Khaunte also raised concern over recent viral incidents along Goa's coastal belt, noting that such visuals are damaging the state's tourism image.



Mala Lake Restoration to Follow Long-Term Plan, Says Panaji Mayor

■ Rohit Monserrate stresses sewage control, multi-agency coordination for sustainable revival

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: A comprehensive, long-term restoration plan is being prepared to address pollution in Mala Lake and surrounding water bodies, CCP Mayor Rohit Monserrate said following a high-level review meeting with key departments.

The meeting was attended by officials from the Corporation of the City of Panaji (CCP), the Water Resources Department of Goa, the Goa State Smart City Development Agency, and the Goa State Pollution Control Board. Monserrate said the issue cannot be resolved through short-term measures such as aerators alone, pointing out that untreated sewage inflow remains the primary concern. He stressed that unless sewage discharge is fully controlled, restoration efforts will not

yield lasting results.

Highlighting the need for coordinated action, he said multiple departments, along with public participation, must work together, noting that several areas still lack proper sewage connectivity, resulting in direct discharge into the lake.

The Mayor informed that a consultancy-based study is being planned to prepare a detailed project report (DPR), covering sewage management, drainage upgrades, and ecological restoration of the lake system. The proposal will also focus on restoring natural tidal flow and improving overall water quality.

He added that public consultation will form a key part of the process, allowing citizens to review and provide feedback before the final plan is implemented.



CM Launches 'Taare Zameen Par' Mobile Digital Lab to Boost STEM Learning

■ Planetarium-on-wheels and outreach programme aim to transform science education in Goa's government schools.

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: The state government on Wednesday launched the "Taare Zameen Par" Mobile Digital Platinum and STEM Education Outreach Programme at PM SHRI School, Kumbharjua, in the presence of Chief Minister Pramod Sawant, along with senior education officials and dignitaries. The programme was attended by MLA Rajesh Faldessai, Education Secretary Prasad Lodayekar, Director of Education Shailesh Zingre, and SCERT Director Meghna Shegokar, along with teachers and students.

₹77 Crore Cyber Fraud Racket Busted; Goa Link Surfaces

■ 16 arrested by Gujarat Cyber Centre, nine from Goa; mule accounts and shell firms exposed

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: In a major breakthrough, the Gujarat Cyber Centre of Excellence has busted a ₹77 crore cyber fraud racket with links to Goa, arresting 16 accused, including nine from the coastal state.

Investigations revealed that the accused were operating a vast mule account network, opening bank accounts under



multiple identities and routing illicit funds linked to cyber fraud operations across the country.

Officials said some members of the syndicate

had floated shell firms and managed over 260 bank accounts, which were connected to at least 375 cybercrime cases reported nationwide.

Parsekar Says He Remains Active in Social Work, Stays Connected with People

Panaji, April 15: Laxmikant Parsekar on Wednesday said he remains actively engaged in social work and continues to maintain close contact with people across communities, despite not holding active political office. He said individuals still approach him for guidance and assistance on a range of personal and public matters, indicating sustained public trust and engagement.



Parsekar noted that he does not favour comparisons between political parties or involvement in rivalry, stressing that his focus is on service-oriented work rather than political competition.

Goa Mahila Congress Questions Timing of Women's Reservation Bill Debate

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: The Goa Mahila Congress has raised concerns over the timing and intent of the Centre's recent discussions on the Women's Reservation Bill, officially known as the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam.

Addressing a press conference, North Goa Mahila Congress President Mauli Gama Silver, along with state leaders, including Dr. Pratiksha Khalap,



questioned the decision to convene deliberations on the bill during an ongoing election period. The leaders alleged that the ruling BJP is approaching the issue with an "election-driven mindset" rather than a genuine commitment to women's empowerment. Dr. Khalap noted that the

Women's Reservation Bill has a long legislative history, with efforts dating back several decades. The Mahila Congress leaders further pointed out that similar legislative attempts were introduced in Parliament in the 1990s but could not be fully implemented due to political instability.

Amonkar Opposes Proposed Shivaji Statue Demolition at Mormugao

■ MLA urges Port Authority to reconsider decision, calls for dialogue citing public sentiment.

Panaji: Mormugao MLA Sankalp Amonkar has strongly opposed the proposed demolition of a statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, urging authorities to respect public sentiment and reconsider the move.

Amonkar appealed to the Mormugao Port Authority to withdraw the proposal and seek a



peaceful and respectful resolution through dialogue. He stressed

that for millions, Shivaji Maharaj symbolises pride, courage and identity.

Warning against the emotional impact of the decision, the MLA said that removing the statue could deeply hurt public sentiments and undermine cultural values across the region. He reiterated the need for consultations before taking any action, stating that the issue carries significant cultural and emotional importance.

Naik Dismisses Rift Talk, says internal discussions routine

■ Calls for Fact-Based Reporting on Margao Incident; stresses need for stronger security planning at public events.

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: BJP State Chief Damu Naik on Tuesday dismissed reports of internal differences between party leaders Pravin Arlekar and Babu Azgaonkar, stating that such issues are being overstated and should not be viewed as personal disputes. He said the party functions through regular organisational meetings and large-scale training programmes aimed at strengthening its cadre at all levels. According to Naik, thousands of party workers undergo training in leadership, ideology and coordination to improve internal efficiency. Clarifying the party's internal processes, Naik said discussions within the organisation are routine and reaffirmed that the Bharatiya Janata Party remains focused on discipline and organisational building



rather than individual conflicts. Separately, Naik also responded to reports of an incident during a public event in Margao where a vehicle allegedly rammed into a police car, triggering panic at the venue. He said he was present at the event but did not witness the incident directly, and stressed that details should be verified before drawing conclusions. Naik noted that while such public gatherings are organised with safety arrangements in place, the reported incident underlines the need for stronger security planning and better coordination.

Probe Underway Into Fish Death Incident, Sewage Discharge Suspected: Monserrate

■ Minister says authorities taking matter seriously, strict action promised against violators.

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Minister Babush Monserrate on Tuesday said that authorities are treating the recent incident involving a large number of dead fish with seriousness, with an investigation currently underway.

He said the Mayor has convened a meeting with the Water Resources Department (WRD) and other concerned agencies to ascertain the cause of the incident.



Monserrate said preliminary observations indicate possible sewage discharge and technical factors related to water flow and tidal patterns, though a detailed assessment is in progress.

He added that strict action will be taken against any individual or entity found responsible for releasing waste into the water body, and assured that the municipality and concerned departments are actively working to address the issue.



Navelim Panchayat seeks revocation of housing project licence

Team Goemkarponn

Margao: The Navelim village panchayat has decided to approach the authorities seeking revocation of a construction licence issued for a housing project at Ratawaddo, following objections raised by residents over alleged procedural lapses and lack of proper road access. At a special meeting held on Monday, the panchayat resolved to request the additional director of

panchayats, South Goa, to cancel the licence granted by the panchayat secretary. Members also agreed to demand a joint inspection of the project site after residents claimed that the Town and Country Planning clearance was issued without ensuring a six metre wide access road. The meeting witnessed strong participation from residents of Ratawaddo, many of whom attended with placards demanding immediate revocation of the licence.

Goa Strengthening Fisheries Sector Through Supply Reforms, Coastal Projects: Halarnkar

■ Minister highlights resolved fuel issues, sustainable aquaculture push and focus on community training.

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Fisheries Minister Nilkanth Halarnkar on Wednesday said the Goa government is implementing a series of measures to strengthen the fisheries sector, improve supply systems and promote sustainable coastal development.

Halarnkar said earlier challenges related to diesel and LPG supply for trawlers and fishing workers have been largely resolved through improved distribution mechanisms, subsidies and coordination with fuel suppliers. He noted that past commercial restrictions and supply bottlenecks



had affected operations, but the situation has now stabilised, ensuring smoother functioning for fishing communities. On infrastructure and coastal development, the Minister said beautification and related works carried out in coordination with the Water Resources Department were undertaken after due

consultation. He clarified that while the Fisheries Department does not directly execute such investments, it provides technical guidance, particularly in matters concerning water bodies.

Highlighting ongoing initiatives in Old Goa and other coastal regions, Halarnkar said earlier projects were

closely monitored for effectiveness. He added that some interventions showed initial improvements, including aquatic growth and environmental changes, within a few months, following which corrective steps were taken based on field assessments.

The Minister also said the department is focusing on structured training programmes in schools and villages to promote sustainable fishing practices and raise awareness among local communities. Efforts to expand aquaculture, including prawn cultivation, are being intensified to support livelihoods.

Mining Threatens Goa's Water Systems, Says Activist Ramesh Gauns at MOG Sunday Talk

■ Wells run dry, rivers turn toxic and regulation fails as unchecked mining ore extraction reshapes the state's ecology, Gauns said.

■ Environmental impact assessments are far from facts, Gauns claimed, calling mining regulation inadequate.

Panaji, April 2026: Mining in Goa is severely damaging natural water systems across the state, drying wells, contaminating rivers and disrupting fragile ecological networks, warned environmental activist Ramesh Gauns during a recent talk at the Museum of Goa on Sunday. Gauns, whose name is synonymous with a range of environment-related agitations in the state, was critical of environmental governance



frameworks, particularly the quality of impact assessments, accusing such reports of indulging in fakery. Drawing on

years of field observations and data, Gauns, a veteran activist, said during his MOG Sunday talk that mining activity in catchment areas has led to widespread depletion of groundwater. "(As many as) 100 streams have gone bad and 60 wells have gone dry," he said, pointing to villages where water sources that once sustained communities have disappeared. In some areas, he added, up to as many as 80 wells have completely dried up.

Rivers, too, are under stress, Gauns said, describing how mining waste and silt are entering water bodies, altering their quality and flow. In several locations, water has taken on a visible colour and metallic taste, contradicting its natural properties. He cited figures showing large volumes of mining discharge entering rivers daily, raising concerns about long-term environmental and health impacts.



Education key to empowerment of backward classes: CM Sawant

■ Ambedkar Jayanti event in Panaji sees launch of welfare initiatives, foundation stone for Ambedkar Bhavan laid

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Tuesday said education remains the most powerful tool for empowerment of backward classes, as Goa marked the 135th birth anniversary of B. R. Ambedkar at Dr Ambedkar Park in Panaji. Addressing the state-level programme, Sawant said the government's priority is to strengthen educational opportunities for Scheduled Castes and Other Backward Classes, in line with Ambedkar's vision. He urged meritorious students to pursue national-level competitive examinations such as NEET and JEE, assuring continued scholarship support.

The event was organised by the Goa government in collaboration with the Directorate of Social Welfare and the Goa State Scheduled Caste and Other Backward Classes Finance and

Development Corporation. The Chief Minister also highlighted ongoing initiatives including Nari Shakti Adhinyam, Nasha Mukta Bharat and Nasha Mukta Goa, saying these programmes are aimed at broader social empowerment. Sawant virtually laid the foundation stone for an Ambedkar Bhavan at Porvorim and said the project will be completed within a year and inaugurated on the next Ambedkar Jayanti.

During the programme, financial assistance was distributed to 1,999 beneficiaries under various welfare schemes. Meritorious students were also felicitated for their academic performance.

The function was attended by Social Welfare Minister Subhash Phal Desai, Pernem MLA Pravin Arlekar, Chief Secretary V. Candavelou, Social Welfare Director Dipak Bandekar, SC/ST Commissioner Ravindra Gaonkar and other officials.

Goa CM Reviews Coastal Security, Praises Coast Guard Vigilance

■ Pramod Sawant lauds coordination, assures continued state support for coastal vigilance

Team Goemkarponn

Vasco: Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Monday visited the Indian Coast Guard District Headquarters in the state, where he reviewed ongoing maritime security and search and rescue operations. During the visit, officials of the Indian Coast Guard briefed the Chief Minister on their



role in safeguarding the nation's maritime interests along the coastline. The presentation highlighted operational preparedness, surveillance systems, and response mechanisms



to tackle emergencies at sea. Interacting with officers and personnel, Sawant appreciated the coordination between the Coast Guard and state



authorities, noting that such synergy strengthens coastal vigilance and ensures swift response during critical situations. He commended the force for its dedication and professionalism in carrying out its duties and assured continued support from the state government towards capacity building and strengthening of the service.

Eid-e-Milan Celebrated in Mormugao, Youngest and Eldest Rozadars Felicitated

■ 3-year-old among youngest participants; 83-year-old honoured for completing full month of fasting.

Team Goemkarponn

Mormugao: The Mormugao Muslim Welfare Association organised an Eid-e-Milan programme and felicitation ceremony at Ravindra Bhavan on Tuesday afternoon, witnessing a large turnout from across Mormugao taluka. A key highlight of the event was the felicitation of 'Nanhe Rozadars' and 'Buzurg Rozadars', recognising both the youngest and oldest members of the



community who observed fasting during the holy month of Ramadan. Among the notable moments was the recognition of a 3.3-year-old child, Fija, who observed a one-day fast, making her one of the youngest participants. At the other end of the spectrum, an 83-year-old devotee was honoured for

successfully completing the entire month of fasting, drawing admiration from attendees. Organisers reported record participation this year, with 335 children in the Nanhe Rozadar category, 45 elderly participants, 68 entries in the Naat competition, and 42 participants in the cooking competition.

Green fields keep villages alive, says Aldona MLA Carlos Ferreira

■ Warns of economic fallout if agriculture declines; calls for timely support to farmers.

Team Goemkarponn

ALDONA: Carlos Alvares Ferreira on Monday lauded farmers in the Aldona constituency for sustaining agriculture despite mounting challenges, saying their efforts are vital to preserving village life. Speaking at the foundation-laying ceremony for the project "Improvement to Tali in Survey No. 71/19 at Grande Coimavaddo in Aldona Constituency in Bardez Taluka," Ferreira said agriculture



remains the backbone of Goa's rural economy. "If agriculture collapses, the village economy will fail and people will be forced to migrate," he said, urging youth to take up farming and carry forward the tradition.

Ferreira described

farming not only as a livelihood but as a means of preserving the identity of villages. He reiterated his opposition to the conversion of agricultural land for construction, calling such practices detrimental to Goa's long-term sustainability.

US Blockade Forces Sanctioned Tanker to Retreat from Gulf Waters

■ Shipping disruption deepens as vessels struggle to navigate rising tensions around the Strait of Hormuz

New Delhi: A US-sanctioned tanker was forced to reverse course and return to the Strait of Hormuz after failing to pass through a newly imposed maritime blockade, highlighting escalating tensions in a critical global shipping corridor. The vessel, Rich Starry, had exited the Gulf a day earlier but was unable to proceed further, according to shipping movement data.

The blockade, announced by US President Donald Trump following unsuccessful peace negotiations with Iran in Islamabad, has already begun to disrupt maritime activity in the region. Within the first 24 hours of enforcement, no vessels successfully crossed the restricted zone. Several ships were directed to turn back, with multiple vessels complying and returning toward Iranian ports.



The Rich Starry, a medium range tanker, is among a group of ships affected by the restrictions.

Carrying a substantial cargo of methanol, the vessel had originally loaded its shipment from the port of Hamriyah in the United Arab Emirates. Its ownership is linked to a Chinese shipping company that has been placed under US sanctions for its dealings involving Iran.

The situation intensified further when a US naval destroyer

reportedly intercepted two oil tankers attempting to leave the Iranian port of Chabahar, preventing their passage into open waters. This action underscores the strict enforcement of the blockade and signals heightened military oversight in the region.

Meanwhile, another sanctioned tanker, Alicia, has entered the Gulf through the Strait of Hormuz. Unlike the Rich Starry, it is currently empty and is expected to load oil cargo from Iraq, indicating that some

shipping operations are still proceeding under careful navigation.

The blockade has significantly reduced maritime traffic in the area, with vessel movements dropping sharply compared to normal levels.

The uncertainty surrounding the situation is causing concern among shipping companies, oil traders, and insurers, as risks continue to rise in one of the world's most strategically important waterways.



“Global Growth at Risk”: IMF Warns of Recession if Middle East Conflict Escalates

■ Rising energy prices and market instability prompt downgrade in 2026 outlook

Washington: The International Monetary Fund has lowered its global growth forecast for 2026, cautioning that an escalation of the ongoing conflict involving Iran could push the world economy toward a recession.

In its latest World Economic Outlook, the IMF projected global growth at 3.1 percent for the year, down from its earlier estimate of 3.3 percent. The revision reflects mounting uncertainty caused by geopolitical tensions, particularly the impact of military developments and trade disruptions in West Asia.

According to IMF Chief Economist Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas, the outlook would have been stronger if not for the conflict, with growth potentially reaching 3.4 percent. However, the ongoing crisis has driven up prices of key commodities such as oil, gas and fertilizers, adding pressure on inflation and supply chains.

A major concern is the disruption of shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, a critical global route for energy supplies. Restrictions and blockades in the region

have intensified fears of a prolonged energy shock, which could significantly slow economic activity worldwide.

The IMF now expects global inflation to rise to 4.4 percent this year, higher than previously forecast. While inflation had been easing in recent years, the current situation risks reversing that trend, especially if energy prices remain elevated for an extended period. In a worst-case scenario, the IMF warned that global growth could fall to between 2.0 and 2.5 percent, levels historically associated with major economic downturns such as the global financial crisis and the pandemic period.

The impact is expected to be uneven, with emerging and developing economies likely to face greater strain than advanced nations. Higher fuel and fertilizer costs could also lead to increased food prices, placing additional pressure on vulnerable populations. The IMF stressed that the trajectory of the global economy will largely depend on how the conflict evolves, urging close monitoring as risks to growth and stability remain high.

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“Women From Across India Invited”: Centre Plans Massive Outreach for Reservation Bill Debate

grassroots workers, self-help group members, sanitation staff and beneficiaries of government schemes, are being brought to the national capital. Political parties such as Telugu Desam Party and Shiv Sena are also mobilising women leaders, legislators and first-time visitors to attend the session, reflecting a broad-based effort to make the occasion inclusive. The special sitting will



focus on amendments to the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, passed in 2023, with the aim of enabling 33 percent reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies ahead of earlier timelines. Narendra Modi is expected to outline the

government's roadmap during the debate, which will span extended hours in both Houses before a scheduled vote. The proposed changes seek to address delays linked to census and delimitation requirements. The government is considering using 2011 Census data to fast-track implementation, potentially allowing the reservation to take effect by the 2029 general elections instead of being pushed further.

“BJP Takes Charge in Bihar”: Samrat Choudhary Sworn In as Chief Minister

took place at Lok Bhawan in the presence of senior leaders from the National Democratic Alliance. Alongside Choudhary, Bijendra Prasad Yadav and Vijay Kumar Chaudhary were sworn in as Deputy Chief Ministers, completing the initial formation of the new administration. The development comes shortly after Nitish Kumar stepped down from the top post and dissolved his cabinet, paving the way for a change in leadership. Choudhary, who previously served as Deputy Chief Minister and handled the home portfolio, was subsequently elected as the BJP legislative party leader. His elevation reflects shifting political dynamics within the alliance, with the BJP assuming a more prominent role while continuing its partnership with Janata Dal (United) and other allies.

Panchayat Secretaries Face Heat as Court Cracks Down on Illegal Constructions

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Acting on directives from the Bombay High Court, the Directorate of Panchayats has issued show-cause notices to 98 panchayat

secretaries for failing to submit compliance reports on illegal constructions across Goa. The action comes amid ongoing suo motu public interest litigation (PIL) being monitored by the court,

which has taken a stern view of delays and non-compliance by village panchayats. Expressing strong displeasure, the High Court observed that several panchayats had not filed the required

“They Couldn’t Finalise It”: JD Vance Explains Collapse of Iran Talks

■ US says Iranian team lacked authority as Washington signals openness for fresh negotiations.

New Delhi: JD Vance revealed that recent talks between the United States and Iran in Pakistan failed to produce a breakthrough because the Iranian delegation did not have the authority to finalise any agreement. Speaking after the discussions, Vance stated that the negotiating team present at the talks was unable to conclude a deal



independently and would need approval from senior leadership in Tehran. This limitation,

he indicated, was a key reason why the negotiations ended without any concrete outcome.

He noted that the United States had clearly outlined its expectations and non-negotiable conditions during the discussions. Despite the setback, Washington remains open to continuing dialogue and is

awaiting a response from Iran regarding the terms that were presented. Vance also highlighted that the US is willing to move towards normalising relations if Iran meets the required conditions.

He reiterated that the next step now depends on Tehran's decision, signalling that the responsibility lies with Iran to advance the process.



“Anger Erupts After Children’s Death”: Violent Protests Leave Injured in Manipur

■ Clashes, road blockades and heightened security follow deadly bomb attack in Bishnupur

New Delhi: Fresh tensions gripped Manipur after protests against the killing of two children in a recent bomb attack turned violent, leaving several people injured in Bishnupur district. Demonstrations intensified across the region, disrupting movement and raising security concerns. The unrest followed the deaths of a five-year-old boy and a six-month-old girl, who were killed when an explosive device struck their home on April 7 while they were asleep. The incident triggered widespread anger, leading to large gatherings demanding swift action against those responsible. During the protests,

demonstrators reportedly stopped a vehicle on a highway, suspecting the occupants of links to insurgent groups. The vehicle was set ablaze, and clashes soon broke out between protesters and security forces. Authorities intervened and removed the occupants from the scene. The agitation quickly spread, with protesters blocking key routes, including the road connecting Bishnupur and Churachandpur, as well as the highway leading to Imphal International Airport. The disruptions caused major inconvenience to commuters and added to the tense atmosphere.

“Women’s Reservation Is the Need of the Hour”: Amit Shah Calls for Unified Support

■ Government pushes forward long-pending reform to boost women’s role in policymaking.

New Delhi: Union Home Minister Amit Shah has described the Women’s Reservation Bill as a “historic” and timely reform, urging broad support for its swift implementation. Emphasising the importance of greater female participation in governance, he stated that the legislation



reflects the rightful place of women in shaping national policy and strengthening the country’s future.

Highlighting the government’s commitment, Shah noted that the initiative is aimed at empowering women and ensuring their meaningful representation in legislative bodies. He called on all sections of society to come together and back what he termed a transformative step for the nation. Defence

Minister Rajnath Singh also voiced support for the bill, addressing an open letter to women across the country. He acknowledged the growing appreciation among citizens for the decision to introduce reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies, expected to take effect from the 2029 elections.

European Court Shields Nirav Modi’s Extradition Case from Public View

■ Confidential proceedings add new twist as fugitive businessman awaits crucial ruling.

New Delhi: Fugitive businessman Nirav Modi has been granted anonymity by the European Court of Human Rights, effectively placing his extradition case under confidentiality and out of public scrutiny. The decision means that details of the proceedings will not be disclosed, and hearings will be conducted privately. With anonymity in place, the court has indicated that it cannot share any information regarding the case, including updates or filings. A hearing on Modi’s plea is expected in the coming weeks,



during which India’s investigating agency, the Central Bureau of Investigation, is also likely to present its arguments. A verdict could follow after these submissions. The outcome of this hearing is considered critical. If

“New Government Will Have My Guidance”: Nitish Kumar Steps Down as Bihar Chief Minister

■ End of a long political chapter as leadership shifts and BJP prepares to form government.

New Delhi: Nitish Kumar has resigned as the Chief Minister of Bihar, bringing to a close a long and influential tenure that spanned nearly two decades. The veteran leader submitted his resignation to Governor Syed Ata Hasnain after dissolving his cabinet,

marking a major political transition in the state. Soon after stepping down, Kumar assured that he would continue to support the incoming administration. He expressed confidence that the new government would carry forward development work

and emphasised that Bihar would continue progressing under fresh leadership with his guidance. Kumar’s resignation comes shortly after he assumed office as a member of the Rajya Sabha, signalling a shift from state-level politics to a broader national



role. Earlier in the day, he chaired his final cabinet meeting alongside senior leaders, including Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary and other ministers, before formally stepping down.

High-Pressure Steam Leak Triggered Deadly Blast at Vedanta Plant

Raipur: A devastating explosion at a power plant operated by Vedanta Ltd in Chhattisgarh was triggered by a rupture in a high-pressure steam tube, leading to the deaths of at least 13 workers and

injuries to several others. The incident occurred at the Athena Power plant in Singhitari village in Sakti district on Tuesday afternoon. Officials stated that the blast originated in a pipeline carrying

high-pressure steam from the boiler unit to the turbine. The rupture caused an intense release of extremely hot steam, which engulfed workers stationed nearby and resulted in severe burn

injuries. The explosion took place around 2:30 pm at the Unit-1 boiler section, where several workers employed by a subcontractor were engaged in maintenance and painting work.



“Try Saying No to Kohli, Rohit”: Munaf Patel Backs Gambhir Amid Sack Speculation

■ Former pacer warns BCCI of fallout, highlights challenges of managing senior stars.

New Delhi: Munaf Patel has strongly backed Gautam Gambhir amid growing speculation over his future, cautioning the Board of Control for Cricket in India against taking any drastic decision to remove him from the role. Gambhir, who took over as head coach after India's T20 World Cup triumph in 2024, has experienced mixed results during his tenure. While he has guided the team to major titles such as the Champions Trophy, Asia Cup and T20 World Cup, India's struggles in Test cricket during a transition phase have drawn



criticism.

Amid calls for his removal, Munaf Patel stressed that replacing Gambhir could create significant challenges within the team environment. He highlighted the importance of strong leadership and man-management, noting that handling top

players requires both authority and clarity. Patel pointed out that Gambhir's straightforward approach and willingness to make tough decisions, including dropping underperforming players, may not always be well received.

However, he suggested that such honesty is essential for

maintaining discipline and performance standards in the national setup. Referring to senior players like Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, Patel underlined the difficulty of managing established stars.

He remarked that taking firm calls involving high-profile players is never easy and often leads to friction, but is necessary for the larger interest of the team. Patel also hinted that Gambhir's candid style may have earned him critics within cricketing circles, but maintained that his commitment to the team should be valued.



“Youngest-Ever Showdown Looms”: Sindarov to Challenge Gukesh for World Chess Crown

■ Uzbek prodigy wins Candidates unbeaten, setting up historic clash with reigning champion.

New Delhi: Uzbekistan's Javokhir Sindarov has secured his place in the World Chess Championship after winning the 2026 Candidates Tournament, setting up a highly anticipated title clash with India's D Gukesh later this year. The 20-year-old clinched the tournament with a round to spare following a draw against Anish Giri in the 13th round. Sindarov remained unbeaten throughout the competition, underlining his consistency and dominance against a strong field of contenders.

The upcoming championship match is expected to be one of the youngest-ever contests for the world title. Gukesh had already made history in 2024 by becoming the youngest world champion at just 18, surpassing the long-standing record of Garry Kasparov, who achieved the feat at the age of 22. India's R Praggnanandhaa was the only Indian participant in the Candidates tournament, having qualified through the 2025

FIDE Circuit.

However, it was Sindarov who emerged as the standout performer. Recent encounters between Sindarov and Gukesh hint at a closely fought battle ahead. In one of their latest games at a major tournament earlier this year, Gukesh created a winning opportunity with a bold queen sacrifice, but Sindarov defended resiliently to secure a draw after a long contest. Sindarov's only classical win against Gukesh dates back to 2022.

The Uzbek grandmaster heads into the title match in formidable form, currently on an impressive unbeaten run in classical chess. In contrast, Gukesh has experienced a mixed start to the year, with a few below-par tournament finishes.

With both players representing a new generation of chess talent, the upcoming World Championship promises to mark a significant moment in the sport's evolving landscape.

“Teen Sensation Nears India Call-Up”: Vaibhav Sooryavanshi Shortlisted for Ireland T20Is

■ Selectors include 15-year-old in 35-member probables list amid strong IPL form.

New Delhi: Rising cricket talent Vaibhav Sooryavanshi has been included in a 35-player shortlist for India's upcoming T20I series in Ireland, signaling a potential early international debut. The 15-year-old has impressed with his performances for Rajasthan Royals in the ongoing IPL 2026 season. India is scheduled to tour Ireland in June for a two-match T20I series in Belfast, and selectors have prepared a pool of T20 specialists as probables. Sooryavanshi's inclusion highlights the



confidence the selection panel has in his abilities at a remarkably young age. If selected, he is expected to become the youngest

player to represent India in men's cricket, surpassing a long-standing record held by Sachin Tendulkar. However, selectors are still evaluating the most suitable opportunity for his debut, with alternative options including the Zimbabwe tour in July or multi-team events later in the year. Despite his strong case, competition for a spot in the playing XI remains intense. Established players like Sanju Samson, Abhishek Sharma, and Ishan Kishan are already in contention, along with Yashasvi Jaiswal, making team

selection a challenging task. Selectors are reportedly convinced of Sooryavanshi's readiness but must balance his inclusion with maintaining stability in the squad. Opportunities may arise during overlapping tournaments such as the Asian Games or a home series against the West Indies, where multiple squads could be fielded. With his rapid rise and consistent performances, Sooryavanshi appears poised for a breakthrough, as Indian cricket looks to nurture the next generation of talent.

“Landmark Expansion”: Asian Champions League to Grow to 32 Teams from 2026

■ New format aims to boost inclusivity while retaining core structure of elite competition

New Delhi: The AFC Champions League is set for a major expansion, with the number of participating teams increasing from 24 to 32 starting from the 2026–27 season. The decision, announced by the Asian Football Confederation, is aimed at enhancing competitiveness and broadening opportunities across the continent. Despite the increase in

teams, the tournament's overall structure will largely remain unchanged. The competition will continue to feature two regional groups, East and West, but each group will expand from 12 to 16 teams under the new format.

Under the revised system, the top six teams from each group will qualify directly for the round of 16. Teams



finishing between seventh and tenth place will enter a newly introduced playoff stage, offering an additional pathway into

the knockout rounds and increasing the stakes during the group phase. The AFC described the move as a significant

step toward promoting inclusivity and raising the standard of club football in Asia. By allowing more teams to participate, the governing body aims to give emerging clubs greater exposure at the highest level of continental competition.

The tournament, which has been rebranded as the AFC Champions League Elite since the 2024–25 season,

continues to evolve in format and scale as part of broader reforms in Asian football.

Meanwhile, the ongoing 2025–26 edition is currently in its knockout phase, with last-16 and quarterfinal matches being held in Jeddah. The expansion is expected to further elevate the tournament's profile and competitiveness in the coming years.