



## REC Rejects Goa Government's Bid to Restore Forest Clearances for Railway Doubling Project

Panel reiterates ecological concerns over line through Bhagwan Mahaveer Wildlife Sanctuary; activists slam repeated attempts to revive project.

### Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji:** The Regional Empowered Committee (REC) has rejected the Goa government's latest request to revoke the suspension of forest clearances for the controversial railway doubling project passing through the Bhagwan Mahaveer Wildlife Sanctuary and Mollem National Park.

The decision, taken at the REC meeting on March 26, 2026, marks the third time the panel has turned down attempts



by the state government, acting on behalf of the South Western Railway and Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL), to revive clearances for the project. The railway doubling

proposal, covering the Castle Rock-Kulem stretch, had earlier received wildlife clearance from the National Board for Wildlife. However, following a petition by

the Goa Foundation, the Central Empowered Committee recommended cancellation of the clearance. The Supreme Court accepted this recommendation in May 2022, leading the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) to place the project's forest clearances in abeyance later that month.

Despite multiple efforts by the Goa government to overturn this suspension, the REC has maintained that the project cannot be segmented into smaller



## Viral Videos Trigger Police Crackdown in Calangute-Baga Tourist Belt

Daily anti-touting drives intensified; over 170 booked in three months under tourism law

### Team Goemkarponn

Calangute/ Panaji: Viral videos allegedly depicting

illegal activities in the Calangute-Baga tourist belt have prompted police  
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**Goa Viral Video Case: Accused Arrested, Admits Upload for Views**

In a significant development from Goa, police have arrested a man in connection with a viral video that sparked concern online. The Goa Police Crime Branch has taken Saurabh Sahni, a native of Uttar Pradesh, into custody for his alleged role in the incident reported near Tito's Lane in Baga.

**NO TREES TO BE CUT for Calangute Works, Says MLA Michael Lobo**

Clarifies only damaged trees to be removed; 150 saplings to be planted, assures no impact on key stretches

**Michael Lobo**

- 3 damaged trees to be removed, close to 150 saplings to be planted
- Left-hand side trees from St Alex Church to Palmarinha will not be touched

Calangute, Goa

## No Trees to Be Cut for Calangute Works, Says MLA Michael Lobo

Clarifies only damaged trees to be removed; 150 saplings to be planted, assures no impact on key stretches.

### Team Goemkarponn

**Calangute:** Calangute MLA Michael Lobo has sought to allay public concerns over alleged large-scale tree cutting linked to ongoing development works in the area, terming such reports as misleading. Addressing the issue, Lobo said only around three bent or damaged trees will be removed along the stretch from Bodke Waddo to Dolphin Circle. He added that nearly 150 new trees,

including jackfruit and coconut, will be planted beginning April 20 as part of the project. The MLA further assured residents that no trees on the left-hand side stretch from St Alex Church to Palmarinha will be affected. He stated that planned infrastructure, including footpaths and road dividers, will be constructed without harming existing trees, while also incorporating additional greenery on the dividers.

## Mining Transport Halted in Mulgao After Villagers Block Route Over Local Concerns

Residents protest traffic congestion, road damage and environmental impact; demand urgent intervention from authorities.

### Team Goemkarponn

**Mulgao, Goa:** Movement of mining transport vehicles came to a standstill in Mulgao after local villagers blocked a key route, protesting against persistent issues linked to heavy truck traffic, deteriorating road conditions and the broader



impact on daily life. The protest, which lasted

for several hours, saw residents gather along

the transport corridor and physically prevent mining trucks from passing through the area. The blockade disrupted the movement of ore-laden vehicles and brought operations to a temporary halt, drawing attention to grievances that villagers say have remained unresolved for a long time.



## "No State Will Lose Representation": Centre Plans Seat Clarity Amid Delimitation Debate

Government considers state-wise Lok Sabha seat schedule as opposition raises concerns over proposed changes

**New Delhi:** The Centre is expected to introduce a detailed provision in Parliament outlining the allocation of Lok Sabha

seats for each state, as part of its broader delimitation plan. The proposed move aims to  
**CONTD TO PAGE 06...**

## US Ends Oil Sanctions Waivers, Tightening Pressure on Russia and Iran

India among key beneficiaries earlier, now faces tighter global supply conditions

**New Delhi:** The United States has announced it will not extend sanctions waivers that had permitted limited purchases of Russian and Iranian oil, marking a significant shift in its energy and foreign policy approach. The decision brings an end to temporary relaxations that allowed countries such as

India to secure additional crude supplies during a period of global disruption. The waivers had enabled transactions involving oil shipments that were already in transit before mid March deadlines.

# Beyond Arrests: What the Mapusa and Dona Paula Dacoity Case Reveals About Policing Today

The arrest of six accused in the Mapusa and Dona Paula dacoity cases is not just a breakthrough in two high-profile crimes. It reflects the changing nature of criminal networks and the urgent need for policing to evolve in step.

These incidents had shaken public confidence in Goa's image as a relatively safe state. Organised robberies of this nature are not just about loss of property. They signal planning, coordination and, often, the involvement of networks that operate beyond local boundaries. That the accused were eventually tracked and arrested in coordination with the Delhi Police underlines a key reality. Crime today is rarely confined by geography.

Equally important is the role of inter-state coordination. For years, one of the weak links in India's policing framework has been the lack of seamless cooperation between states. In this case, the sharing of intelligence between Goa Police and the Delhi Police Crime Branch appears to have been timely and effective.

It demonstrates what is possible when agencies move beyond procedural silos and work with a common objective.

But arrests, however significant, are only the beginning. The accused will now be brought to Goa on transfer warrants, and the focus will shift to building a case that can stand scrutiny in court.

This is often where the system faces its toughest challenge. Investigations that begin strongly can falter during prosecution due to gaps in evidence,

*The response of the Goa Police, particularly after the cases were transferred to the Crime Branch in January 2026, points to a more structured approach to investigation. The inclusion of cyber cell inputs and district-level intelligence suggests an understanding that modern investigations demand a blend of traditional policing and technological capability. Criminals leave digital trails, and it is increasingly these traces that lead to breakthroughs.*

procedural lapses or lack of coordination between investigators and legal teams. Ensuring that this case results in convictions will be the real measure of success.

The episode also raises questions about prevention. How were such crimes executed in the first place.

Were there gaps

in surveillance, local intelligence or community awareness.

Reactive policing can deliver results after the fact, but it does little to reassure the public if similar incidents continue to occur. Strengthening preventive mechanisms must be an equal priority.

Technology will play a decisive role in this shift. The involvement of cyber experts in the investigation is a reminder that policing is no longer confined to physical spaces. Investment in digital forensics, data analysis and surveillance systems is essential. Just as important is the training of personnel to effectively use these tools.

Without that, even the best technology remains underutilised. There is also a role for the public. Community vigilance, timely reporting of suspicious activity and basic security practices can act as the first line of defence. Policing cannot function in isolation. It depends on an informed and cooperative citizenry.

Credit is due to both the Goa Police and the Delhi Police Crime Branch for their coordinated effort. Their success in tracking down the accused sends a clear message that criminals cannot rely on distance or jurisdictional gaps to evade the law. At the same time, the case should serve as a reminder rather than a conclusion.

The nature of crime is changing, and isolated successes must translate into systemic improvements. Stronger coordination, better use of technology and a sharper focus on prevention will determine whether such incidents remain exceptions or become a pattern.

## EDITOR SPEAKS

### Crackdown or Cosmetic Action? Rethinking Goa's Anti-Tout Drives

By Suraj Nandrekar

The detention of 13 touts in the Calangute-Baga belt and the imposition of fines may appear, at first glance, as a firm step towards restoring order in one of Goa's busiest tourist corridors. But beyond the headlines, the action raises a more pressing question. Is this a sustained effort to address a long-standing problem, or yet another episodic crackdown that offers only temporary relief?

Touting has plagued Goa's tourism hotspots for years. Visitors are routinely approached, pressured and sometimes harassed into accepting services ranging from hotel bookings to transport and nightlife packages. It creates a poor first impression, undermines the visitor experience and, more importantly, reflects a deeper regulatory failure. Occasional police drives, however well-intentioned, have done little to dismantle this ecosystem.

Fines of ₹5,000 may serve as a deterrent on paper, but in practice, they often fail to address the economic incentives that sustain touting. For many, the returns from even a few successful deals can offset the penalty. Without consistent enforcement and a clear strategy to track repeat offenders, such measures risk becoming part of a predictable cycle. Arrest, fine, release and return to business.

The issue also points to gaps in coordination between departments. Touting thrives in the grey areas between tourism regulation, local business interests and law enforcement. A police-led approach, while necessary, cannot be the only response. There is a need for tighter licensing norms, better monitoring of tourism-linked services and accountability for establishments that indirectly benefit from tout networks.

Equally important is the question of livelihood. While touting is unlawful and often exploitative, it is also driven by the absence of structured employment opportunities in the tourism sector. Ignoring this dimension only ensures that the problem resurfaces. A parallel effort to formalise and regulate small operators, offer training and create legitimate avenues of work could help reduce dependence on informal and illegal practices.

Public messaging is another weak link. Tourists are rarely made aware of authorised services or the risks of engaging with touts. Clear signage, helplines and visible enforcement can shift behaviour on both sides. If visitors feel protected and informed, the space for touts automatically shrinks. The latest crackdown does send a signal that authorities are willing to act. But signals alone are not enough. What is needed is consistency, coordination and a long-term vision that goes beyond periodic drives. Goa's tourism economy depends not just on its natural appeal, but on the quality and safety of the experience it offers.

Unless the state moves from reactive enforcement to structural reform, anti-tout drives will continue to make news without making a lasting difference.

# Goa Reservoir Levels Fall Below 50% Amid Rising Summer Heat

Weak pre-monsoon showers blamed; concerns grow over water supply with over 45 days of summer remaining.

## Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji:** Water levels in most reservoirs across Goa have dropped below 50 per cent capacity by mid-April, raising concerns over water availability as the state braces for the peak summer period.

According to officials, the Selaulim reservoir, a key source for South Goa, is currently at 48 per cent capacity, while Amthane and Panchwadi reservoirs

## Goa Reservoir Levels as of April 15

Reservoir	Water Level
Selaulim	48%
Amthane	42%
Panchwadi	42%
Tillari	46%
Anjunem	38%
Chapoli Gaunem	54%

have dipped further to around 42 per cent. Tillari stands at 46 per

cent, while Anjunem has recorded the lowest levels in the state. In contrast, Chapoli and Gaunem reservoirs in Canacona have remained relatively stable at around 54 per cent capacity. Authorities have attributed the decline primarily to weak pre-monsoon showers this year, which have impacted water storage levels across major reservoirs.

With more than 45 days of summer still

remaining, officials have expressed concern over meeting rising water demand. The delay in the Sal barrage project, now expected to be completed by end-May, may further add to the pressure.

Officials indicated that alternative sources such as bandharas and mining pits may be increasingly relied upon to supplement water supply in the coming weeks if the situation persists.

# Delimitation Done as Per ECI Guidelines, No Personal Role: Ramesh Tawadkar

## Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji, Goa:** Minister for Art and Culture Ramesh Tawadkar has stated that the ongoing delimitation exercise is being carried out strictly as per the directions of the Election Commission India, clarifying that he has no personal role in the process. Responding to concerns over ward restructuring ahead of municipal elections, Tawadkar said that all



decisions regarding ward division or changes have been taken by the Election Commission and administrative authorities, including the Deputy Collector.



**Sudin Dhavalikar Defends Smart Meter Rollout, Says Part of National Reform Plan**

## Sudin Dhavalikar Defends Smart Meter Rollout, Says Part of National Reform Plan

Power Minister cites Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme, says no separate state-level debate required.

## Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji:** Goa Power Minister Sudin Dhavalikar has defended the rollout of smart meters in the state, stating that the initiative is part of a nationwide reform plan under the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme.

Responding to concerns raised by civil society groups opposing the installation, Dhavalikar said the government is implementing the project in line with Central guidelines, with a majority of the financial support coming from the Centre.

He clarified that the move is not a state-specific decision but part of a broader national policy aimed at strengthening the power distribution system.

Addressing calls for wider public consultation, the Minister said many people are not fully aware of how smart meters function. He added that the government has already studied the system before proceeding and stressed that implementation should not be delayed due to lack of understanding or opposition without technical basis.

# Kerala Native Held with Suspected Magic Mushroom Narcotics in Canacona

Firm Supplying Mushroom By-products Under Police Scanner

## Team Goemkarponn

**CANACONA:** A Kerala native residing in south Goa's Khotigao village was arrested after being caught allegedly in possession of dried "magic mushrooms", suspected to contain the banned substance psilocybin, police said on Wednesday. The arrest followed a late-night raid conducted by Canacona police between 9.30 pm and 11.30 pm on April 14 at IDC Shristhal. The accused has been identified as Rojin Philip Mathews, a resident of Ponsulem in Canacona



## MAIN POINTS

- Kerala native arrested in Canacona drug bust
- 16.6 grams of suspected psilocybin mushrooms seized
- Narcotics valued at ₹41,500
- Booked under NDPS Act Section 22(b)
- Shroomerium Mycolabs firm under investigation
- Police probing misuse of company operations

and a native of Kerala. Police said he was found in possession of 16.6 grams of dried mushrooms suspected to be psilocybin-based narcotics. The seized contraband is estimated to

be worth around ₹41,500.

Mathews has been booked under Section 22(b) of the NDPS Act. Police Sub-Inspector Ramdas Doifode of Canacona Police Station is leading the

investigation. Investigators said Mathews is also a director of a company, Shroomerium Mycolabs Pvt Ltd, which supplies mushroom by-products, including oils, in the Canacona region.

# MMC Boosts Waste Management Fleet with 12 New Vehicles in Vasco

CSR support from JSW Group, Adani Group and Goa Shipyard Limited strengthens scientific waste practices

## Team Goemkarponn

**Vasco:** In a major step towards strengthening waste management, the Mormugao Municipal Council (MMC) in Vasco has received a fleet of garbage collection and utility vehicles. The handover ceremony was held in the presence of Vasco MLA Krishna Daji Salkar and Mormugao MLA Sankalp Amonkar,



along with civic officials and councillors. A total of 12 vehicles, including a JCB, have been added to enhance efficiency

and operational capacity of the council's waste management system. MMC Chairperson Girish Borkar and councillors

were congratulated for their efforts in promoting scientific waste management practices in the city. The initiative has been supported under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) by JSW Group, Adani Group, and Goa Shipyard Limited, marking a significant move towards ensuring a cleaner, greener, and more sustainable Vasco city.

# Stella Maris Elevated to Church, Becomes 175th Parish of Archdiocese of Goa and Daman

■ Historic transition at Miramar marks growth of vibrant Catholic community; Archbishop calls for faith, fellowship and mission.

Team Goemkarponn

**Miramar:** Stella Maris Chapel at Miramar was formally elevated to the status of a Church on Tuesday, becoming the 175th parish of the Archdiocese of Goa and Daman in a significant milestone for the local Catholic community.

The solemn Eucharistic celebration was presided over by Archbishop Filipe Neri Cardinal Ferrão in the presence of clergy, religious leaders, dignitaries and a large gathering of the faithful. Among those



present were Chancellor Fr Romeo Monteiro, Panjim Deanery head Fr Francisco Dias, and Fr Zeferino D'Souza, who has been appointed as the first Parochial Administrator of the newly formed parish.

In his homily, the Archbishop described a parish as a "living

Church" and urged the faithful to deepen their spiritual lives through prayer, participation in the sacraments, and active community engagement. He emphasised the importance of fostering values of love, care, mercy and forgiveness, while calling on parishioners to be witnesses of faith and

instruments of peace.

The elevation marks the culmination of years of steady growth for the Miramar community, which began as a chapel under St Inez Parish. Church officials noted that the transition reflects not only infrastructural development but also the strengthening of faith and unity among parishioners.

Fr Zeferino D'Souza, in his address, termed the occasion the result of "years of unwavering faith and collective effort" by clergy, parishioners, benefactors and well-wishers.



Complaint alleges verbal abuse, threats in presence of staff; matter reported to senior officials

Incident reported at Shram Shakti Bhavan in Panaji; complaint lodged to senior officials for legal action

Panaji, Goa:

DEVELOPING STORY

## Woman Staffer Accuses Police Constable of Misconduct Inside Goa Govt Office

■ Complaint alleges verbal abuse, threats in presence of staff; matter reported to senior officials

**Panaji, Goa:** A serious allegation has emerged from the Labour Welfare Department office at Shram Shakti Bhavan, where a woman employee has accused a police head constable of verbal abuse, threats and misconduct within office premises.

According to the complaint, the incident

occurred while the staffer was on duty and in the presence of several colleagues, who have been listed as witnesses.

The complainant has formally reported the matter to senior authorities and police officials, seeking legal action in the case. Further inquiry is expected.



## Call to Scrap Section 39A Ahead of CM, TCP Minister Visit to Cuncolim

■ Local leaders back Justice Rebello's proposal; demand statewide rollback, raise concerns over land use and healthcare infrastructure

**Panaji, April 15:** Ahead of the scheduled visit of the Chief Minister and the Town and Country Planning (TCP) Minister to Cuncolim on April 17, local leaders have intensified their demand for the scrapping of Section 39A of the TCP Act.

Addressing a joint press conference, Dr Jorson Fernandes, Elvis Gomes and Sammy Tavares expressed solidarity with the "Enough is Enough" movement and urged the state government to adopt the proposals put forward by Justice (Retd.) Ferdinando Rebello. The retired judge, a native of Cuncolim, has advocated amendments to protect agricultural land, including the removal of

Section 39A. The leaders called for the provision to be scrapped not only in areas such as Sanquelim, Siridao and Harmal but across the state, citing concerns over large-scale land conversion. Sammy Tavares invoked Cuncolim's history of resistance, drawing parallels with the Cuncolim Revolt, and described the current movement as a fight to safeguard Goa's land and identity. Dr Jorson Fernandes said Justice Rebello's recommendations reflected sound legal reasoning and could help preserve Goa's cultural identity amid increasing external investment pressures.

## Question Unacceptable Actions, Be Courageous: MP Viriato Fernandes to Students

■ South Goa MP Addresses Annual Prize Distribution at Nirakar Vidyalaya

**CANACONA:** South Goa Member of Parliament Viriato Fernandes on Tuesday urged students to develop the courage to question elected representatives over issues and actions they find unacceptable. He was speaking at the annual prize distribution ceremony of Shri Nirakar Vidyalaya at Mashem in Canacona.

Addressing the gathering, Fernandes commended the school for its progress across academic, cultural, sports and environmental spheres, despite being located in a rural area. He credited the teaching staff for maintaining high standards and contributing



to the institution's growth. Referring to the current social and political climate, the MP encouraged students to be aware and assertive.

He said young citizens must not hesitate to raise questions on governance and accountability when they encounter actions they consider wrong.

Anant Gajanan Prabhuganekar, an alumnus of the school and a senior general manager at Vodafone, said the achievements of former students demonstrate that those from rural backgrounds can succeed through dedication and hard work. Institution president Prashant Naik thanked the teaching staff for sustaining academic excellence and expressed gratitude to the MP for extending financial support to the school through the MPLADS scheme. Two retired teachers, Gautami Gaad and Ujwala Lodayekar, were felicitated on the occasion for their services to the institution.

## Delhi Man Booked for ₹20 Lakh Investment Fraud in Margao

Team Goemkarponn

**Margao:** In a shocking case of investment fraud, Margao Police have booked a Delhi-based man for allegedly cheating investors of ₹20 lakh. The accused, identified as Hitesh from West Delhi, posed as a representative



of a local investment firm and promised high returns. Police say he collected money from multiple victims and diverted the funds for personal use.

To gain their trust, he allegedly created fake documents showing the investments were

genuine. A case has been registered under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, and further investigation is currently underway. Authorities are urging citizens to stay cautious and verify investment offers before committing money.

# Census House Listing Phase to Begin in Goa from April 16

■ Around 3,000 enumerators to cover all households; digital data collection and self-enumeration see strong response.

## Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji:** The Directorate of Planning, Statistics and Evaluation has announced that the House Listing Operation (HLO) phase of the upcoming Census will be conducted across Goa from April 16 to May 15, 2026.

During this phase, nearly 3,000 trained enumerators will visit every household in the state to collect information on housing conditions, amenities and assets. Officials said the data will be captured digitally through mobile applications to ensure greater accuracy and efficiency.

The information gathered during the HLO phase will serve as the basis for the population



enumeration exercise scheduled to be carried out nationwide from February 9 to 28, 2027. Authorities also noted that the self-enumeration facility, made available from April 1 to 15, received an encouraging response in Goa, with around 12,000 households completing the process online.

Residents who have already self-enumerated have been asked to share their unique Self Enumeration (SE) ID with visiting enumerators for verification.

Under the provisions of the Census Act, 1948, citizens are required to provide accurate information to the 33 questions notified in the

official Gazette.

Residents have also been requested to allow enumerators to mark Census House Numbers on the front door or wall of their homes as part of the official process.

Officials assured that all enumerators will carry valid identification and that the data collected will remain confidential and be used solely for statistical purposes.

The Census, a key national exercise, plays an important role in policy planning and implementation of welfare programmes. Authorities have urged citizens to extend full cooperation to ensure the success of the exercise. For queries or assistance, residents can contact the toll-free helpline number 1855.



## Tilari Canal Water Wastage in Pernem Raises Alarm Among Locals

■ Residents flag 15-day leak, seek urgent intervention to prevent resource loss and road damage.

### Team Goemkarponn

**Pernem:** Residents along the Tilari canal stretch at Candel-Hali on the Pernem road have raised serious concerns over continuous water wastage reportedly persisting for nearly 15 days, with large volumes flowing unchecked in the area. According to locals, the issue is particularly visible near a roadside section close to a wine store, where water has

been accumulating and flowing continuously, causing inconvenience to commuters and highlighting the loss of a vital water resource. Local resident Vishram Gawas said that multiple complaints have already been submitted to the concerned authorities. However, despite requests to regulate the discharge and implement protective measures, no effective action has been taken so far.



## Road Improvement Work at Khotigao, Temple Development at Kindlem Inaugurated

■ Projects Worth Over ₹83 Lakh Launched in Canacona.

**CANACONA:** Two development projects, including road infrastructure improvement and temple beautification, were inaugurated in the Canacona constituency on Wednesday. Work on the improvement of the existing road leading to Mastimol in V.P. Cotigao commenced earlier in the day. The project, estimated at ₹63.82 lakh, aims to upgrade the condition of the

road, which had been a longstanding concern for local residents. Villagers had been facing difficulties due to the poor state of the road. The upgraded infrastructure is expected to enhance connectivity, improve safety and ease daily commuting in the area. Later, the foundation stone was laid for the construction of a mantap along with beautification works at Nirakar Temple in Kindlem.

## Empowering women through digital literacy with the launch of MDSY Training in Mulgao, Bicholim

**Bicholim; April 10, 2026:** Strengthening the vision of Mahila Sashaktikaran through digital empowerment, the Department of Information Technology, Electronics and Communications, Government of Goa, organised the inaugural session of a training programme under the Mahila Digital Sashaktikaran Yojana (MDSY) at Mulgao, Bicholim. Under the leadership of Hon'ble



Chief Minister, Dr. Pramod Sawant and Hon'ble Minister for Information Technology, Electronics and Communications, Shri Rohan A. Khaunte, the Department of Information Technology, Electronics and Communications

continues to strengthen its efforts towards bridging the digital divide and advancing inclusive access to technology across Goa, with a focused emphasis on empowering women through digital literacy initiatives such as MDSY.

This initiative is supported by Dr. Chandrakant Shetye, Hon'ble MLA for Bicholim and Chairman, Info Tech Corporation of Goa Ltd., and guided at the departmental level by Shri Kabir Shirgaonkar, Director, Department of Information Technology, Electronics and Communications (DITE&C), with a focused emphasis on empowering women through digital literacy initiatives such as MDSY.

## Hygiene, Infrastructure Gaps at Ponda Fish Market Raise Concerns

■ Manisha Usgaonkar flags sanitation, drainage issues; calls for urgent action.

### Team Goemkarponn

**Ponda:** Serious concerns over hygiene and infrastructure at the Ponda fish market have come to the fore following an inspection by Congress leader Rajesh Verekar along with Manisha Usgaonkar.

During the visit, the leaders highlighted long-standing issues related to sanitation, drainage, and lack of basic public facilities at one of the busiest market hubs in the region. Usgaonkar raised strong concerns over inadequate infrastructure, noting that the market

caters to people from multiple constituencies but continues to face persistent problems such as poor cleanliness, insufficient drainage systems, and lack of proper parking space. She said these issues are affecting both vendors and customers



on a daily basis. She further pointed out that the situation worsens during the monsoon, with waterlogging and overflowing drains posing serious hygiene and health risks, making it difficult for traders to function and for the public to access the market safely.

# Caculo Earthmovers' story an inspiration for Goa's youth: CM Sawant



**MAPUSA:** Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant said that the story of Caculo Earthmovers is an inspiration for today's youth, and emphasised that Goa needs more investment so that the state can flourish, which is not possible without private and industrial investment. He was speaking at the inauguration of Caculo Earthmovers' second 3S (Sales, Service and Spares) facility at Karaswada on Thursday. Deepak Shetty, Group Executive Director, Managing Director & CEO, JCB India Limited; Chairman & Managing Director Manoj Caculo; Joint Managing Director Suraj Caculo; Manager – Operations Manav Caculo; and General Manager Haroon Shaikh, along with the entire Caculo family, were present. The inauguration was held on the birth anniversary of the founder, the late Mohan Caculo, marking a moment of deep significance for the organisation and paying tribute to his vision, values, and enduring legacy that continue to guide its growth. Congratulating Caculo Earthmovers on their new facility and their journey over the last four decades, Dr Sawant said that the story of the family-run business is an inspiration for everyone. "We want many more to continue such businesses and generate employment. The Caculo family business is an inspiration for today's youth. If many more enter business, many youth can prosper. There are so many opportunities in Goa; we only have to know how to grab them. With mining having restarted,

if such opportunities are not taken by us, then someone else will take them," he said.

He also said that there are a lot of job opportunities in Goa, not only in the government sector but also in the private sector. "The Caculo group has opened a showroom at Verna recently and now this JCB facility at Karaswada. This shows that Goa is witnessing a huge investment because of ease of doing business and a pro-industry government. Goa needs more investment so that the state can flourish more; this is not possible without private investment and industrial investment. I urge Goans to invest in the private sector so that GSDP and per capita income increases," he said. Speaking about the JCB company, Dr Sawant said JCB has been associated with the mining and infrastructure sectors and has made a huge contribution, especially to Goa's infrastructure development. He also said that JCB is a perfect example of the Prime Minister's 'Make In India' concept. "More than 50% of employees are women at their Gujarat plant. When we are passing the Women's Reservation Bill, to have such a percentage of employees in a manufacturing company is a proud moment," he added. He also said that Mr Shakeel Shaikh, who worked as an engineer at Caculo Earthmovers and has purchased 25 earthmovers continuously after leaving the firm, is an inspiration for today's youth. In his address, Manoj Caculo said that the inauguration of the company's new 3S facility in North Goa marks an important milestone for

Caculo Earthmovers.

"Our family has been associated with JCB since the year 1979. My late father used to say that the colour of our blood is yellow. Today, Manav is the fifth generation who is here in the business. My uncle Suhas has also been instrumental, along with my father, in the JCB business. And that is how we started the leadership in 1979. And since then to now, almost five decades later, we are here at your service thanks to all the support that we get from JCB India and our esteemed customers who have made us what we are today," he said. "On behalf of the Caculo family, we have always strived to help the Goa government build infrastructure and be with you, and we assure you that our next generation too will work very closely with the Goa government and will be there for you in the future. Whether it is creating infrastructure, generating employment or anything else, we will always be there for you. Our honourable Chief Minister has gone beyond all limits to help the industry. We have to acknowledge that I admire the leadership of Dr Sawant in helping the industry grow the way we are in Goa. I also acknowledge the leadership of MD and CEO Deepak Shetty, who has led JCB in such a phenomenal way.

JCB is not only a name in India, but India has become a major export hub thanks to the leadership and foresight that our leader has shown in the country. Under your leadership, we assure you that we will keep on growing more and more in Goa," he said.

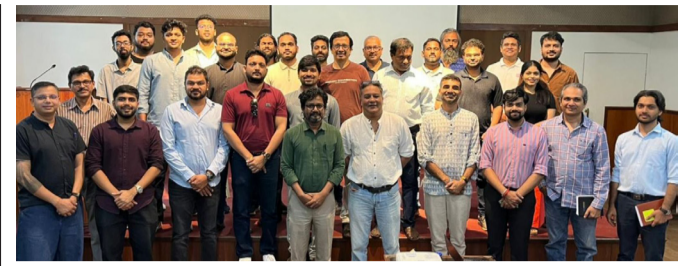
"This expansion reflects our continued

commitment to delivering quality service, reliable support, and enhanced accessibility to our customers across the region. With this facility, we aim to strengthen our partnership with JCB India and contribute to the growing infrastructure and development needs of Goa," said Caculo.

Shetty said that the foundation of the Caculo organisation is built on trust and long-term relationships—values that continue to guide the business today. "Caculo Earthmovers have been associated with us for over four decades and have been one of JCB's oldest dealer partners. Over the years, your contribution has been instrumental in building and sustaining the JCB brand in Goa. I thank the Caculo family because they are not joined with us from the business point of view; they are joined at the heart. Dealers like Manoj and Suraj Caculo are the strength of JCB."

Suraj Caculo delivered the vote of thanks.

Founded in 1979, Caculo Earthmovers is approaching 50 years of operations and represents a distinguished legacy spanning four generations of the Caculo family. The new facility is designed to provide integrated sales, service and spares support under one roof, backed by modern infrastructure and trained technical teams to ensure an enhanced customer experience and efficient service delivery. Over the years, the company has played a pivotal role in supporting infrastructure development in Goa and maintains a dominant market presence, with approximately 90 per cent share in backhoe loaders and around 25 per cent in excavators.



## "A Great Idea Needs A Great Story": Practical Tips For Entrepreneurs To Pitch Startups Effectively

**Team Goemkarponn**

**Panaji:** Pitching a startup is often one of the most challenging yet essential tasks for entrepreneurs. Before any product gains traction, founders must first communicate the idea behind it in a compelling and clear manner. Whether addressing investors, customers or government bodies, the ability to present a strong pitch can determine the success or failure of a venture. With Goa's startup ecosystem expanding steadily, now home to over 700 DPIIT registered startups, the focus has increasingly shifted from just innovation to effective communication. The Department of Information

Technology Electronics and Communications Goa, under the leadership of Rohan Khaunte, has been actively supporting entrepreneurs through initiatives like the Goa Startup Accelerator Programme. These programmes aim to equip founders with not only ideas but also the skills to present them convincingly.

During a recent session held in Panjim, Apoorv Bamba highlighted common mistakes founders make while pitching. These include overloading presentations with product features, failing to define the target audience, lacking differentiation, and not clearly stating what they seek from investors.

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## Viral Videos Trigger Police Crackdown in Calangute-Baga Tourist Belt

to intensify enforcement, leading to a fresh crackdown on touting and related offences across one of Goa's busiest coastal stretches. Acting swiftly, teams from Calangute Police, led by PI Laxi Amonkar, have stepped up patrolling and launched sustained anti-touting drives in key hotspots, including the Calangute beach promenade, Baga, and

the Tito's Lane area. Police said the operations target individuals involved in illegal solicitation, unauthorised tourist guiding, and violations under the Tourist Trade (Prevention of Unlawful Activities) Act. Officials confirmed that the drives are being conducted daily, particularly during peak evening hours, with support from beat staff and special squads.

## "No State Will Lose Representation": Centre Plans Seat Clarity Amid Delimitation Debate

ease growing concerns among several states by indicating that their percentage share in the House is likely to remain unchanged, even if the total number of seats increases. This clarification may come through a

legislative "schedule," a section that provides additional details to support the main law. The development comes alongside plans to introduce three key bills during a special sitting of Parliament.

## “Ready To Move Forward”: Canada Signals Fresh Start In Ties With India

■ New leadership and renewed trust set the stage for stronger economic and strategic cooperation.

New Delhi: Canada has expressed a clear intent to rebuild and strengthen its relationship with India following a period of diplomatic strain. The shift comes after Mark Carney assumed office as Prime Minister, succeeding Justin Trudeau, under whose tenure bilateral ties had faced significant challenges.

Canadian envoy to India, Christopher Cooter, highlighted a renewed sense of confidence between the two nations, emphasizing that both governments are prepared to move forward with a



pragmatic approach. He noted that despite past tensions, efforts have been made to repair relations, and there is now a clearer understanding between New Delhi and Ottawa. Diplomatic ties had deteriorated following allegations made in 2024 regarding the killing of

Hardeep Singh Nijjar, which India strongly denied. The situation escalated further with accusations involving Sanjay Kumar Verma, leading to heightened tensions and diplomatic actions from both sides. However, recent developments suggest

that both countries are working to put those disputes behind them.

Despite the political turbulence, economic engagement between the two nations remained resilient. Trade and investment continued to grow, reflecting a strong underlying foundation. Canadian investments in India and the presence of companies employing thousands in both countries have reinforced the importance of the partnership. Looking ahead, Canada aims to position itself as a reliable energy partner for India.



## Cannot Hollow Out Religion In Name Of Reform: Supreme Court On Sabarimala

■ Top court weighs balance between faith, constitutional rights and social reform.

New Delhi: The Supreme Court of India has observed that religious traditions cannot be diluted under the pretext of social reform, as it continued hearings on petitions related to the Sabarimala Temple entry issue. The court underlined that essential religious practices must be respected while addressing constitutional questions. A nine judge bench led by Chief Justice Surya Kant is examining the broader legal issues arising from the case, particularly the delicate balance between the right to religious freedom and the need for social reform. During the proceedings, the court acknowledged the complexity of determining whether long standing beliefs held by millions can be declared incorrect.

The matter traces back to a 2018 judgment that allowed women of all age groups to enter the Sabarimala

temple, overturning a traditional restriction on women between 10 and 50 years. That ruling had described the practice as discriminatory and inconsistent with constitutional values. In the ongoing review, several judges raised concerns about judicial intervention in deeply held religious matters. Questions were also posed on whether courts should adjudicate such issues without hearing the broader community of devotees. Legal arguments presented during the hearing focused on interpreting constitutional provisions governing religious freedom and institutional autonomy. It was argued that while individuals have the right to practice their faith, religious institutions must also retain the authority to manage their internal affairs, provided such practices do not violate public order, morality or health.

## No Compromise On Workers' Rights, Violators Will Face Strict Action: Yogi Adityanath

■ UP government orders crackdown on unrest, pushes for better wages, housing and worker welfare.

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has asserted that the state will take a firm stand on protecting workers' rights, dignity and social security, warning that any violations will invite strict legal action. The statement came during a high level review of the state's industrial situation conducted via video conference.



He directed officials to ensure that workers across industries receive fair treatment, including timely payment of full wages, access to statutory

benefits and dignified working conditions. The review followed recent unrest in Gautam Buddha Nagar, where protests had disrupted industrial activity. Taking a serious view of the incident, the chief minister instructed authorities to identify individuals responsible for inciting violence or disturbing industrial harmony. He emphasised

that such elements must face stringent action and, if required, be publicly exposed. A zero tolerance approach was reiterated against misinformation, rumours and attempts to mislead workers. Authorities have also been asked to monitor social media platforms closely and act swiftly against the spread of false information.

## Tensions Rise As Naval Blockade Intensifies, Calls For Restraint Grow

■ China urges calm while threats and diplomatic efforts shape a volatile US–Iran–Israel situation.

New Delhi: The ongoing tensions involving the United States, Iran, and Israel have escalated further, with military actions at sea and diplomatic signals unfolding simultaneously. The United States Central Command confirmed that it has enforced a naval blockade near Iranian ports, preventing at least ten ships from departing within the first two days of operations. According to officials, no vessel has successfully crossed



the blockade since it began earlier this week. In response, Iran has issued a strong warning. Mohsen Rezaei, a senior adviser to Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei, stated that

Tehran could target US vessels in the strategically critical Strait of Hormuz if Washington continues its naval enforcement in the region. The Strait remains one of the world's most vital oil transit routes, making any disruption a matter of global concern. Amid rising tensions, China has stepped in diplomatically, calling for de escalation and emphasizing the importance of maintaining free navigation in international waters.

## “Religion-Based Quotas Not Allowed”: Amit Shah Rejects Demand For Muslim Women Reservation

■ Debate intensifies in Parliament as opposition links women's quota to broader representation demands

New Delhi: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday firmly rejected calls for reservation for Muslim women, stating in Parliament that the Constitution does not permit quotas based on religion. His remarks came during a heated discussion on the implementation of the women's reservation framework. Shah was responding to comments made by



Dharmendra Yadav, who argued that his party would not support the proposal unless it ensured representation for Other Backward

Classes, backward class women, and Muslim women. Dismissing the demand, Shah described the statement as unconstitutional and asserted that providing reservation on religious grounds is not legally permissible. The exchange reflects growing political differences over how the women's reservation policy should be structured and implemented.

# Rahane Fined As KKR's Losing Streak Deepens In IPL 2026

■ Slow over-rate penalty adds to Kolkata's struggles after defeat against Chennai Super Kings

**New Delhi:** Ajinkya Rahane is facing mounting pressure in the ongoing IPL 2026 season as both his form as captain and his team's results continue to falter. Leading Kolkata Knight Riders, Rahane remains without a win after five matches, with the latest setback coming against Chennai Super Kings in Chennai.

Adding to his challenges, Rahane has been fined Rs 12 lakh by the IPL Governing Council for a slow over-rate during the match at the MA Chidambaram Stadium. The penalty falls under the league's Code of Conduct rules

and marks the team's first such offence this season. On the field, KKR's performance against CSK further highlighted their struggles. Despite posting a competitive total of 192 for 5, Chennai dominated the chase with early breakthroughs and maintained control throughout. In reply, KKR could

only manage 160 for 7 in their allotted 20 overs, falling well short of the target. The innings saw some resistance from

players like Ramandeep Singh and

Rovman Powell, but their efforts were not enough to turn the tide. Changes in the batting order also failed to deliver results, with Sunil

Narine opening alongside Finn Allen.

While Narine showed early promise, wickets at regular intervals disrupted any momentum. Rahane, along with Angkrish Raghuvanshi, attempted to stabilise the innings, but the team could not recover from early setbacks.

Key players, including Finn Allen and Cameron Green, once again failed to make significant contributions with the bat.

With both disciplinary action and a string of defeats weighing on the side, KKR faces an uphill task to revive their campaign.



## "There Will Be An F1 Race In India In 2027": Mandaviya Pushes For Grand Prix Return

■ Government efforts gain momentum as companies show interest in reviving Buddh International Circuit

**New Delhi:** India could witness the return of Formula 1 after more than a decade, with Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya expressing confidence that the country will host a race in 2027.

The proposed event is expected to take place at the Buddh International Circuit, which previously hosted the Indian Grand Prix until 2013. The earlier editions of the race were discontinued due to tax complications and administrative challenges. However, renewed interest from multiple stakeholders has brought the prospect of revival back into focus. At least three companies have reportedly shown interest in operating the circuit, signalling growing confidence in motorsports infrastructure in India. The potential return also aligns with broader developments in the sport

globally. Formula One, now owned by Liberty Media, has expanded significantly in recent years, with a record number of races on its calendar and a surge in global popularity. While there has been no official confirmation yet, discussions appear to be progressing.

The Adani Group, which is set to acquire assets of the Jaypee Group including the racing circuit, has also expressed interest in reviving the high profile event. This could play a crucial role in addressing past financial and operational hurdles. Efforts are also underway at the institutional level. The government has held discussions with the Federation of Motor Sports Clubs of India to explore the feasibility of bringing back Formula 1 and introducing MotoGP events.

## "Always Looking To Push The Bar": Kohli Signals Bigger Impact After Taking Orange Cap Lead

■ RCB star's match winning knock and top run tally set tone for rest of IPL 2026.

**New Delhi:** Virat Kohli has sent a strong message to rivals in the Indian Premier League 2026 after climbing to the top of the run scorers list, following a crucial performance for Royal Challengers Bengaluru against Lucknow Super Giants. Although he narrowly missed a half



century, Kohli's 49 off 34 balls played a key role in guiding RCB to a comfortable five wicket

win while chasing a target of 147 at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium. His innings, which included six boundaries and a six, helped the side complete the chase in just over 15 overs under the leadership of Rajat Patidar. With this performance, Kohli moved to the

top of the Orange Cap standings, underlining his consistency in the ongoing season. Reflecting on his form, he acknowledged that while he has not been at his absolute best in recent games, he remains focused on improving further and raising his performance level in the matches ahead.

## Vaishali Clinches Candidates Title With Stunning Final-Round Victory

■ Indian chess star earns World Championship shot against Ju Wenjun after remarkable comeback.

**New Delhi:** India's R Vaishali delivered a standout performance to win the FIDE Women's Candidates Tournament 2026, securing a place in the World Championship match against Ju Wenjun later this year. The 24 year old sealed her triumph in the final round with a composed victory over Kateryna Lagno, finishing with 8.5 points out of 14. Vaishali's win marked a remarkable turnaround, as she began the



tournament among the lower rated participants. Her performance drew comparisons to D Gukesh, who achieved a similar breakthrough in 2024 by winning the Candidates against expectations.

In the decisive round, Vaishali displayed exceptional control and precision. Playing with the white pieces, she gained an early advantage through a well prepared opening and gradually converted it into a winning position. Maintaining a slight material edge, she navigated the middlegame with accuracy and handled critical moments with calm decision making, ensuring there was no opportunity for a comeback.

## Kauthankar's Unbeaten 136 Powers Dempo To Commanding 412/5

■ Strong partnerships and a century from Aman Dhooper put Dempo in control on Day 1

### Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji:** Dempo Cricket Club delivered a dominant batting performance on the opening day of the Goa Premier Division League 2025 to 26 final, posting an imposing 412 for 5 in 89 overs against Chowgule Sports Club in Panaji. Opting to bat first after winning the toss, Dempo made full use of the day night conditions in the pink ball encounter at the GCA Academy



ground in Porvorim. Despite a shaky start that saw early dismissals of Aaditya Kota and Sarthak Bhike with the score at 11 for 2, Dempo recovered strongly through a crucial third wicket partnership.

Abhinav Tej Rana and Aman Dhooper steadied the innings with a 139 run stand. Rana played a composed knock of 70 off 93 balls, striking eight boundaries and two sixes to rebuild the innings.