



# SAINT REMARK ROW ESCALATES

## Remarks On St Francis Xavier Triggers Statewide Outrage

■ Fresh video controversy deepens row as leaders across parties demand swift arrests and strict action.

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI/VASCO/MARGAO:** A major controversy has erupted across Goa following alleged derogatory remarks against St. Francis Xavier, with police registering an FIR and political leaders from across parties calling for immediate and decisive action.

The Vasco Police have booked Gautam Khattar under provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita for allegedly hurting religious sentiments



during a public event. The complaint was filed by Congress leader Peter D'Souza, who termed the incident unacceptable and demanded accountability not just from the speaker but also organisers and

those present. The issue escalated further after a second video surfaced from an event in Panaji, with Congress MLA Altone D'Costa alleging that another speaker made



similar objectionable remarks about the revered saint. He questioned how such incidents were continuing despite the growing backlash.

The remarks have drawn sharp

## CM Sawant Urges Harmony After Khattar Row, Confirms FIR Registered

Chief Minister warns organisers to vet speakers, assures strict action over remarks on St Francis Xavier.

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** Chief Minister Pramod Sawant has called for maintaining communal harmony in the wake of the controversy surrounding remarks against St. Francis Xavier, while confirming that an FIR has been registered against Gautam Khattar. Addressing the issue, Sawant appealed to organisers of public events to exercise



responsibility while inviting speakers from outside the state. He stressed that due diligence must be ensured so that no statements are made that could disturb Goa's long-standing communal peace.



## Mala Lake Suo Moto PIL: HC Seeks Status Reports From GSPCB, Health Dept

■ Court flags wider environmental concerns, says issue extends beyond a single water body.

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** Acting on a suo moto Public Interest Litigation over the alarming sight of dead fish floating in Mala Lake, the High Court has directed the Goa State Pollution Control Board (GSPCB) and the Directorate of Health (DoH) to submit detailed status reports.

During the hearing, the court made it clear that the matter is not confined to a one-off incident at Mala Lake, but reflects a deeper and more systemic problem impacting water

bodies located along the outskirts of urban centres.

The bench observed that such recurring incidents point towards possible lapses in monitoring, pollution control, and public health safeguards. It stressed the need for coordinated action by authorities to assess the extent of contamination and prevent further ecological damage.

The case has been adjourned to Tuesday, by which time both departments have been asked to place their findings on record.



## MLA Michael Lobo Condemns Remarks Against Goencho Saib

- calls for unity, warns against attempts to create communal divide in Goa

**Team Goemkarponn**

**Calangute:** Calangute MLA Michael Lobo has strongly condemned the controversial remarks made by Gautam Khattar

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## Education Should Not Be Run As A Business: Goa CM

■ Chief Minister says schools must focus on student development, not profit-making.

**Team Goemkarponn**

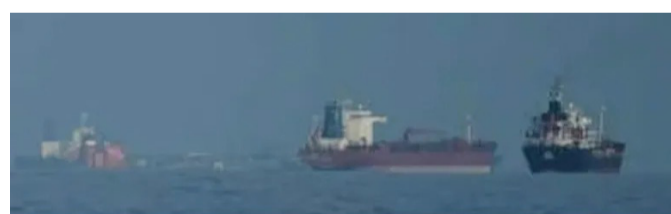
**PANAJI:** Chief Minister Pramod Sawant has reiterated that education should not be treated as a profit-driven activity, stating that schools exist to shape students' futures and contribute to their overall development.

He highlighted



that educational institutions have a larger

responsibility of guiding students in their career paths, with teachers playing a crucial role in mentoring and preparing them for the future. According to Sawant, the focus of schools must remain on quality learning and holistic growth rather than financial considerations.



## "You Gave Me Clearance, You Are Firing Now": Distress Call Reveals Chaos During Hormuz Incident

■ Audio from Indian tanker highlights confusion as vessels retreat amid rising tensions in key oil route.

**New Delhi:** A distress audio message from an Indian-flagged tanker has

brought new clarity to the confusion surrounding a

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## "Extremely Disturbed": India Flags Maritime Safety Concerns After Tankers Targeted in Hormuz

■ Government presses for secure and uninterrupted passage through key global shipping route

**New Delhi:** India has voiced serious concern following an alarming incident in the Strait of Hormuz, where two Indian-flagged vessels reportedly came under fire while in transit. The episode has intensified worries about the safety



of one of the world's most critical maritime corridors,

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# Protect Goa's Harmony: Don't Let Provocations Tear Our Social Fabric

For generations, Goa has stood as a model of peaceful coexistence, where Hindus, Christians and Muslims have lived side by side with mutual respect. This harmony is not incidental—it is deeply ingrained in the Goan way of life. Festivals are shared, traditions are respected, and communities coexist without friction. It is this delicate and hard-earned balance that must be protected at all costs.

That is why the recent controversy involving alleged remarks by Gautam Khattar has triggered widespread concern and anger. During a public event, Khattar reportedly made statements perceived as disrespectful towards Francis Xavier, a revered figure in Goa. Such remarks, regardless of intent, strike at the heart of Goa's communal harmony and have no place in a society that prides itself on unity.

The issue is not about debate or difference of opinion—it is about respect. No one is compelled to follow a faith they do not believe in. No one is forced to pray to a deity against their will. But deliberately targeting or ridiculing another religion serves no purpose other than to provoke and divide. Goa has never been a space for such hostility, and Goans are justified in rejecting it outright.

What makes this incident more troubling is that it appears disconnected from the ethos of the state. Goa is not accustomed to such confrontational narratives around religion. The social fabric here is built on acceptance, not assertion; on coexistence, not confrontation.

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When individuals make inflammatory remarks without understanding this context, they risk disturbing a balance that has been preserved for decades.

The reaction from across sections of society reflects this concern. People are not just upset about a

statement—they are worried about the precedent it sets. If such remarks are normalised or ignored, it could open the door to further provocations, gradually eroding the trust between communities.

There is also a strong sentiment that accountability must follow. Calls for action against those who make such statements are not rooted in intolerance, but in the need to safeguard peace. Goa's identity is too valuable to be compromised by reckless speech or momentary attention-seeking.

At the same time, the response must remain measured and within the framework of law. Goa's strength lies in its calm and composed handling of sensitive issues. Escalation or retaliation would only undermine the very harmony people are trying to protect. The focus must remain on justice, not reaction.

This incident should also serve as a reminder of the responsibility that comes with public platforms. Words spoken in public spaces carry weight, and when they touch upon faith, their impact is magnified. Respect is not optional—it is essential.

Goa does not need imported divisions or narratives that pit communities against each other. It needs a reaffirmation of its core values—peace, unity, and mutual respect. The message from the people is clear: they want harmony, and they will not allow it to be disturbed.

In the end, the question remains simple—if one does not believe in a particular faith, why insult it? In Goa, the answer has always been clear: respect all, disturb none.

## OpEd

### BIMARU, Delimitation and the Idea of India that was Saved

By Sandeep Heble

BIMARU was a term coined by demographer Ashish Bose in the 1980s to describe the northern states of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. It was a play on the Hindi word *bimar* (sick), referring to states that lagged in health, literacy, population control and other development indicators compared to the southern and western regions of India. Despite their weaker performance on key development parameters, these states historically enjoyed significant political weight due to the structure of electoral representation. In contrast, southern and western states—often better performers—had comparatively less influence in the national power framework. This imbalance, while long debated, could have deepened further had the recent delimitation proposal been implemented. The proposed changes, critics argue, would have disproportionately increased representation from the northern belt, shifting the balance of power even further. States that have invested heavily in education, healthcare, and population stabilisation could have found themselves sidelined in national decision-making. The concern was not merely about numbers, but about the broader implications for governance and federal balance. Such a shift, if realised, could have had long-term cultural and political consequences. A more centralised narrative—linguistic, cultural, and social—might have gained prominence, potentially overshadowing India's regional diversity. There were apprehensions that dominant cultural norms from one region could increasingly shape national identity, leaving less room for local traditions and practices across other parts of the country. Historically, India has thrived on diversity and decentralised strength. Any framework that appears to reward higher population growth without accounting for governance outcomes raises questions about fairness. States that have focused on sustainable development and population control may feel disadvantaged if representation is tied primarily to population figures. It is in this context that the failure of the delimitation push to secure the required political backing is being seen by some as a significant moment. The opposition's resistance ensured that the proposal did not move forward in its current form, thereby preserving, at least temporarily, the existing balance within the federal structure. Importantly, this debate is distinct from the Women's Reservation legislation passed earlier in 2023. While that law addressed gender representation, the delimitation discussion revolves around the redistribution of parliamentary seats—a far-reaching structural change with lasting implications. The broader takeaway from the episode is the need for a more nuanced approach to delimitation in the future. Any exercise aimed at redrawing representation must consider multiple factors beyond population alone. Indicators such as human development, governance standards, and regional equity should form part of a more balanced formula. India's strength lies in its ability to accommodate diversity while maintaining unity. Ensuring that all states—regardless of size or population—feel equally represented is central to that vision. A system that inadvertently rewards underperformance or penalises progress risks creating long-term distortions in governance and public policy. As and when delimitation is revisited, it will be crucial to evolve a framework that reflects both demographic realities and developmental achievements. Only then can the process reinforce, rather than undermine, the foundational principles of fairness and cooperative federalism.

(Disclaimer: The views expressed in this article are the personal opinions of Sandeep Heble and do not necessarily reflect those of the publication.)

# Row Erupts Over Margao Garden Plans, Public Viewing Initially Denied

■ Citizens, Activists Question MMC, Alleged Discrepancies Spark Protest.

Team Goemkarponn

**MARGAO:** A controversy broke out in Margao after citizens and activists were initially denied permission to view the municipal garden beautification plans, triggering sharp criticism of local authorities and elected representatives.

The call for a public viewing was given by Savio Coutinho, convener of the Shadow Council



for Margao, who invited residents and garden enthusiasts to examine documents obtained through RTI from the Goa State Infrastructure Development Corporation.

However, police conveyed that the viewing could not be held inside the municipal garden, citing a communication from Chief Officer Madhu Narvenkar.

This led to heated exchanges between the gathering and police officials, including PI Arun Dessai.

Several prominent citizens, including Babita Angle, Prabhav Naik, Chirag Naik, Vishal Kakode, Sangeeta Audi, Pradip Naik and others were present during the standoff. Magistrates Sidhi Pai Angle and Abhishek Naik were later called in to manage the situation.



## Konkani Activists Oppose Move To Grant Marathi Official Status

■ Groups Warn Of Electoral Boycott, Call Issue Central To Goa's Identity.

Team Goemkarponn

**MARGAO:** Tensions around Goa's language issue have intensified, with Konkani advocacy groups firmly opposing any proposal to accord Marathi the status of an official language in the state.

At a gathering held in Margao, activists and representatives of several Konkani organisations made it clear that Konkani alone holds official language status under the state's existing law and should not be altered. They emphasised that the language is a key pillar of Goa's cultural identity and heritage.

During the meeting, speakers cautioned political parties against supporting demands for Marathi's inclusion as an official language, warning that such a stance could lead to an electoral backlash from Konkani

supporters. The groups collectively signalled that they would withdraw support from parties backing any such move.

Participants also highlighted that the current legal framework adequately recognises Konkani and does not require modification to accommodate Marathi. Instead, some voices suggested that efforts, if any, should focus on strengthening the use and recognition of Konkani, including its scripts.

Concerns were also raised about the potential for the issue to create divisions among communities. Speakers urged the public to remain united and vigilant against attempts to politicise the language debate.

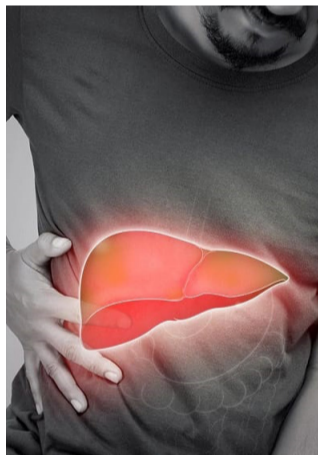
The meeting concluded with a reaffirmation that Konkani's official status, achieved after a historic struggle, must be preserved without dilution.

## Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease Emerging As A Silent Health Threat In Goa

■ Experts link rising cases to sedentary lifestyle, poor diet and increasing obesity

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** Goa is witnessing a worrying rise in cases of non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD), with health professionals cautioning that the condition is quietly becoming a significant public health concern across the state. Medical practitioners note that NAFLD, which is caused by fat buildup



in the liver unrelated to

alcohol consumption, is now being detected more frequently than before. Many cases come to light during routine medical examinations, as the disease often develops without noticeable symptoms in its early stages. According to experts, lifestyle changes are largely to blame for the growing numbers. Reduced physical activity, increased intake of

processed and high-fat foods, and a surge in obesity and diabetes are contributing factors. Urban populations appear to be more vulnerable due to fast-paced routines and unhealthy dietary habits. Studies and clinical observations indicate that a substantial section of the adult population may already be affected, raising concerns about the long-term health burden.

## Calangute Panchayat Approves ₹32.97 Crore Budget for 2026-27

■ No new taxes imposed; focus on sanitation, education, development works and welfare schemes, says Sarpanch.

Team Goemkarponn

**Calangute:** The Calangute Panchayat has approved its annual budget of ₹32,97,73,211 for the financial year 2026-27, outlining key priorities across essential sectors while maintaining fiscal discipline. Sarpanch Joseph Sequeira stated that no new taxes have been imposed in the budget, underlining the Panchayat's intent to



avoid additional financial burden on residents. He said the budget focuses on critical areas such as education, sanitation, garbage management, developmental works, and welfare schemes aimed at improving the quality of life in the village.



## Organisers condemn derogatory remarks at Vasco event, issue apology

Team Goemkarponn

**VASCO:** Organisers of the Parshuram Jayanti celebration at Tilak Maidan in Vasco on Sunday night addressed a press conference, distancing themselves from the controversy surrounding derogatory remarks made against St Francis Xavier during the programme and issuing a public apology over the incident. Clarifying

their stand, organiser Parshuram Shetye stated that the comments made by speaker Gautam Khattar were "unfortunate" and unacceptable, and said the organisers do not endorse or agree with the statements in any manner. He added that the organisers immediately intervened and stopped the speaker as soon as the objectionable remarks were made on stage.

## AAP Goa Chief Seeks Action Over Alleged Remarks On St Francis Xavier

■ Valmiki Naik Urges DGP To Take Suo Motu Cognisance, Calls For Immediate Arrest

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** Valmiki Naik, president of the Aam Aadmi Party in Goa, has written to Director General of Police Alok Kumar seeking immediate suo motu action against Gautam Khattar over alleged derogatory remarks concerning St. Francis Xavier. In his communication, Naik stated that the remarks, reportedly made in the presence of BJP Minister Mauvin Godinho and



MLA Krishna Salkar, have caused deep hurt to the sentiments of Goa's Christian community. He termed the comments as irresponsible and warned that such statements could potentially disturb communal harmony in the state.

## Charas Worth ₹4.88 Lakh Seized In Morjim; One Arrested

**Team Goemkarponn**

**MANDREM:** Mandrem Police have arrested a 51-year-old man for alleged possession of narcotics during a raid conducted in Morjim on Friday evening.

According to police, the offence was registered at 17:47 hrs on April 18 based on a state



complaint filed by PSI Kunal Naik of Mandrem Police Station. Acting on specific inputs, a raid was carried out between 2:40

pm and 5:00 pm near a ground at Kacholewada, Morjim.

During the operation, the accused, identified as Prem Chandra Mishra, originally from Nepal and currently residing at Warchawada, Morjim, was apprehended. Police said he was found in illegal possession of a blackish sticky substance

suspected to be charas weighing approximately 488 grams, with an estimated market value of ₹4.88 lakh.

The contraband was seized under panchanama, and the accused has been taken into custody.

Further investigation is being carried out by PSI Pratik Garudi.



## Man Held For Illegal Sale Of E-Cigarettes In Colva

**COLVA:** Colva Police have booked a man for allegedly possessing and selling banned e-cigarettes during a raid conducted in Seraulim.

According to police, the offence was registered based on a state complaint filed by PSI Anil Krishna of Colva Police Station.

The raid was carried out between 1:28 pm and 2:50 pm at a scrap yard located in Soccubhat,

Seraulim.

During the operation, the accused, identified as Ajam Khan, a resident of Tolloi, Colva, was found in illegal possession and sale of e-cigarettes of the brand "Yuoto."

The contraband was seized, and the accused has been booked under relevant provisions of law.

Further investigation is being carried out by PSI Anil Krishna of Colva Police Station.

## Tourists Robbed At Morjim Hotel; Valuables Worth ₹4.84 Lakh Stolen

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PERNEM:** A theft case has been registered at Mandrem Police Station after unknown persons allegedly broke into a hotel room in Morjim and decamped with valuables worth ₹4.84 lakh.

According to police, the offence was registered at 19:23 hrs on April 18

based on a complaint filed by Garvit Singh, a resident of Jaipur, Rajasthan. The incident reportedly occurred in the early hours of April 17 between 2:30 am and 8:30 am at Tender Coconut Hotel, Morjim.

Police said the

accused entered the room



through an unlatched door and stole two iPhones, a wallet containing debit and credit cards along

with ID cards, a camera and a camera

and other belongings. The stolen items belonged to the complainant and his friend, Saloni Sethi.

An offence has been registered under Section 305 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023 against unknown accused persons.

Further investigation is being carried out by LPSI Sonali Harmalkar.

## Woman Attacked With Sharp Object In Margao; Two Booked

**Team Goemkarponn**

**MARGAO:** Fatorda Police have registered a case against two persons for allegedly assaulting a woman and her family members following a quarrel in Gogol, Margao.

According to police, the complaint was filed by Safiya Bi Shaikh, who reported that the incident occurred around 6:30 pm on April 17 outside her residence. The accused, identified as Ashraf Jahan and Maaz Ali, both residents of Gogol, allegedly picked up a quarrel with the



complainant and verbally abused her.

Police said the accused then assaulted the complainant with slaps and also attacked her brother-in-law and mother-in-law during the altercation.

It is further alleged

that one of the accused used a sharp object to strike the complainant on her right wrist, causing bleeding cut injuries. A case has been registered, and further investigation is being carried out by PSI Ramrai Naik of Fatorda Police Station.

## Two Gujarat Natives Held In Goa Narcotics Raid; Charas Worth Rs 2 Lakh Seized

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** The Crime Branch of Goa Police has arrested two persons from Gujarat in connection with a narcotics raid conducted in Candolim, recovering charas worth ₹2 lakh.

Acting on reliable inputs, a Crime Branch team carried out a raid on April 18 near Bosio Hospital at Pinto Wado, Candolim, Bardez.

During the operation, the accused were caught red-handed in possession of 630 grams of charas



along with two mobile phones.

The arrested accused have been identified as Hiren Ramoliya (32), a resident of Navagam in Surat district, and

Shabbirbhai Saiyad (40), a resident of Sihor in Bhavnagar district, Gujarat. Crime Branch has registered an offence under Sections 20(b)(ii)(B) and 29 of the NDPS Act, 1985. Both accused have been placed under arrest, and the court has granted five days of police custody for further interrogation.

The investigation is being conducted by PSI Amin A. Naik under the supervision of senior officers of the Crime Branch, including SP Rahul Gupta, IPS.

## Minor Girl Kidnapped From Vasco; Police Launch Search

**Team Goemkarponn**

**VASCO:** Vasco Police have registered a kidnapping case after a minor girl was allegedly abducted from Mangoor Hill on Sunday afternoon.

According to police, the complaint was filed by a Vasco resident, stating that the incident occurred around 2:00 pm on



April 19. An unknown accused allegedly kidnapped the complainant's minor niece from lawful guardianship at Mangoor Hill. Police have launched a search operation to trace the missing girl and identify the आरोपी. Further investigation is being carried out by PSI Plato Carvalho of Vasco Police Station.

# Vasco Congress opposes PPP bus stand plan, calls for mass protest to protect public land

## Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** A press conference held in Vasco on Sunday saw Congress leaders and residents intensifying their opposition to the proposed KTC bus stand project under a public-private partnership (PPP) model with NBCC, warning that the move could compromise public land and strain the town's infrastructure. Addressing the media, Vasco Congress leader Nandadeep Raut, along



with party members Peter D'Souza, Nitin Chopdekar, councillor Priya Raut and residents, claimed that out of nearly 29,000 square metres of land earmarked for the project, around 18,000 square metres would be offered to the private

project proponent. Raut cautioned that such a proposal could open the door for a large-scale commercial development in the heart of Vasco. "We are not against development, but handing over such a large portion of prime land to private

players can result in a mega project that will put tremendous pressure on Vasco's already stretched infrastructure," he said.

He also raised objections to the recent municipal resolution proposing the allotment of around 9,000 square metres of HPCL land to Kadamba Transport Corporation Limited, alleging that the decision was taken without proper technical studies.

"There are no detailed traffic or safety reports placed before the public.

# Congress Slams Remarks On St Francis Xavier, Questions Govt Silence

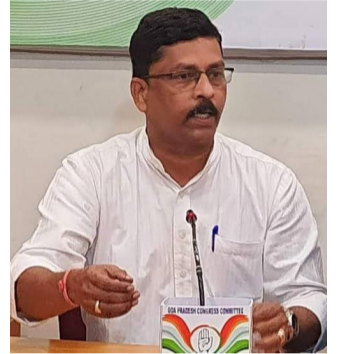
## Amarnath Panjikar Demands Swift Action, Says Comments Threaten Communal Harmony

### Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** Amarnath Panjikar, Chairman of the Media & Communication Department of the Goa Pradesh Congress Committee, has strongly criticised the offensive remarks made against St. Francis Xavier, calling them deeply hurtful and an attack on Goa's inclusive cultural fabric.

He said the saint is widely respected as a symbol of peace, faith and unity, and warned that such statements could disrupt communal harmony in the state. Panjikar described the comments allegedly made by Gautam Khattar as intentional and provocative, aimed at creating divisions among communities.

The Congress leader also raised concerns over the lack of response from the state leadership, questioning why Chief



Minister Pramod Sawant has not publicly condemned the remarks. He asked whether the government intends to act or remain silent on an issue that has upset many Goans.

Emphasising that freedom of expression should not be misused to offend religious sentiments, Panjikar called for strict legal action against those responsible. He demanded immediate steps, including the arrest of the accused, to ensure accountability and send a clear message against hate speech.

# Chicalim gram sabha turns tense over sewage crisis, residents seek special meeting with minister

## Team Goemkarponn

**CHICALIM:** The Chicalim gram sabha held on Sunday witnessed heated exchanges as residents raised serious concerns over the growing sewage and garbage issues affecting the area,



demanding immediate

intervention from higher authorities.

Several villagers voiced frustration over the alleged overflow of sewage and improper waste management, stating that the situation has worsened with increasing population and

large-scale developments in the jurisdiction

Residents insisted that a comprehensive review involving all concerned departments was necessary to prevent further environmental degradation and health risks.



# No Compromise on Coal- Our One Point agenda is to stop Coal in Mormugao: Vijai Sardesai

## Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** Goa Forward Party (GFP) President Vijai Sardesai on Sunday launched a strong attack on the coal-driven model of development in Mormugao, warning that it has devastated the region's economy, environment, and public health. At a programme in Mormugao, Sardesai inducted former Councillor Nilesh Navelkar into the Goa Forward Party. The induction took place in the presence of GFP Vice President Adv. Ashma,

General Secretary (Organisation) Durgadas Kamat, Joint Secretary Vikas Bhagat, and Goa University Students Council President Hrithik Mandrekar. The move is seen as a strategic step to strengthen GFP's grassroots presence in Mormugao Taluka and build a sustained people's movement against coal. Focusing sharply on the coal issue, Sardesai stated that Mormugao has been reduced to a "sacrifice zone" for the benefit of a few powerful interests.

# Woman Dies After Falling From Moving Scooter In Bicholim

## Team Goemkarponn

**Bicholim:** A 53-year-old woman, identified as Pramisha, a resident of Shirgao in Bicholim, succumbed to injuries at Goa Medical College and Hospital after falling from a moving scooter earlier this week.

According to police, the incident occurred on April 15 at around 4:45 pm when the victim was travelling as a pillion rider on an Aprilia scooter from Shirgao to Assnora. The vehicle was being ridden by a man from Arpora, Bardez.

While passing near the KTC bus stand in Assnora, the rider slowed down to cross a speed breaker. During this, the pillion rider—who was seated sideways lost balance, slipped off the scooter, and fell onto the road, sustaining serious head injuries.

# Infant Drowns After Falling Into Water Bucket In Quepem

## 10-Month-Old Brought Dead To PHC; Police Initiate Inquiry.

### Team Goemkarponn

**Quepem:** In a tragic incident, a 10-month-old infant, identified as Viraj Vadar from Agramorod, Paroda, was brought dead to the Primary Health Centre in Quepem

on April 18.

According to initial findings, the child is suspected to have accidentally fallen into a bucket filled with water at his residence, leading to death by drowning. Police personnel visited



the health centre after receiving information and carried out an inquest panchanama.

The body has been preserved at the South Goa District Hospital in Margao for medico-legal procedures.

# Demand Raised To Shift Chicken Shop From Ponda Market Entrance

## Citizens cite hygiene concerns, foul smell; authorities assure action

### Team Goemkarponn

**Ponda:** Devout residents of Ponda have called for the removal of a chicken shop operating at the entrance of the municipal vegetable market, citing hygiene issues and inconvenience to



vendors and customers. A delegation submitted a memorandum to Deputy Collector Kaushik Amonkar, urging immediate

intervention. The official assured that directions would be issued to the Ponda Municipal Council to address the matter.



## “Festival to Strengthen Goa’s Spiritual Identity”: CM Pramod Sawant Inaugurates Parshuram Mahotsav

■ Week-long celebration at Mandovi Promenade blends devotion, culture and tourism promotion.

### Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji:** Chief Minister Pramod Sawant inaugurated the seven day Gomantak Janak Bhagwan Parshuram Avtaran Mahotsav 2026 at the Mandovi Promenade in Panaji, marking the beginning of a major spiritual and cultural celebration in the state. The festival, being held from April 19 to April 26, commemorates the birth anniversary of Bhagwan Parshuram and aims to promote Goa as a hub for spiritual and cultural tourism. The event is organised by the Rashtriya Parshuram Parishad along with the Panaji Nav Varsha Swagat Samiti, in collaboration with the Department of Information and Publicity and managed by the Entertainment Society of Goa. The inaugural ceremony featured a traditional Kalash Yatra, lamp lighting and a Mahaarti performed by priests from Kashi. A light and sound presentation depicting the life and



teachings of Bhagwan Parshuram added a visual highlight to the evening. Addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister said the Mahotsav showcases Goa’s rich spiritual heritage and cultural traditions.

He noted that the values associated with Bhagwan Parshuram, including dharma, courage and service, should inspire the younger generation. He also invited people from across the country

to participate in the week long celebrations. The event was attended by several dignitaries, including MLA Delilah Lobo, MLA Jit Arolkar and BJP leader Damu Naik, along with other prominent guests. Cultural performances formed a key part of the inaugural programme, featuring classical dance presentations such as Bharat Natyam and Kathak, along with thematic acts based

on the life of Bhagwan Parshuram. A devotional music CD titled “Om Parashuramaya Namaha” was also launched during the event. The Mahotsav will continue with daily activities including Katha Vachan, evening Mahaarti, light and sound shows, pooja ceremonies and cultural programmes. The celebrations are expected to draw devotees and visitors, reinforcing Goa’s identity as a vibrant spiritual destination.

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## MLA Michael Lobo Condemns Remarks Against Goencho Saib

against Goencho Saib, the revered patron saint Francis Xavier. Lobo stated that people across Goa, irrespective of caste, creed, or religion, have denounced the offensive comments, describing them as irresponsible and deeply hurtful to the sentiments of Goans. He alleged that such statements appear to be a deliberate attempt to create division and communal disharmony in the state. Highlighting Goa’s long-standing tradition

of unity, tolerance, and mutual respect, Lobo urged citizens to remain vigilant against such attempts, particularly those driven by personal publicity. He called on people to stand united and firmly reject divisive narratives. The MLA further stressed that individuals seeking to provoke hatred should find no place in Goa, and appealed to the public to distance themselves from those who support or justify such remarks.

## “You Gave Me Clearance, You Are Firing Now”: Distress Call Reveals Chaos During Hormuz Incident

recent firing incident in the Strait of Hormuz, where two vessels were forced to turn back after coming under fire. The recording, reportedly from the crude oil tanker Sanmar Herald, captures a crew member urgently communicating

with Iranian naval forces during the incident. In the brief transmission, the speaker questions why the vessel was being targeted despite having received prior clearance to pass, while requesting permission to retreat.

## “Extremely Disturbed”: India Flags Maritime Safety Concerns After Tankers Targeted in Hormuz

widely used for global energy shipments. The incident occurred on Saturday

as the vessels were navigating the narrow but strategically vital waterway.

**KICK OFF** Kick Off Football Schools

## SUMMER FOOTBALL CAMP

9 Days Intensive Camp  
Initiative by PACT Foundation

**PACT**  
FOUNDATION

Sports education and empowerment  
initiative for Goan children

**From:** 1–10 May 2026  
**Time:** 7:30 – 9:00 AM  
**Daily Sessions:** 60–90 minutes  
**Venue:** Moira Club Ground  
**Age Group:** 6 – 14 Years  
**(Boys/Girls)**

Children from across the Aldona constituency are welcome to participate.

Registration includes:

- Kit
- Medals & Certificates
- Refreshment

**REGISTRATION FREE**

LAST DATE TO REGISTER:  
27 APRIL 2026  
(LIMITED SPOTS)

**Register Now!**  
 Andrea: 9822947494  
 Jonas: 9766925719

## “Free Football Training for Young Talent”: 9-Day Summer Camp Announced for Aldona Children

■ PACT Foundation and Kick Off Football Schools launch grassroots initiative to promote sports, fitness and skill development.

### Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji:** A free summer football camp aimed at nurturing young talent will be held for children from the Aldona constituency, as part of a community-focused sports initiative by the PACT Foundation in collaboration with Kick Off Football Schools. The nine day intensive camp is scheduled from May 1 to May 10, 2026, at the Moira Club Ground near Mapusa. Daily sessions will be conducted from 7:30 am to 9:00 am and are open to boys and girls between the ages of 6 and 14 years. The programme is designed to provide structured football training in a supportive and professional environment.

Organisers said the initiative seeks to strengthen grassroots football while encouraging discipline, teamwork and physical fitness among participants. Each session, lasting between 60 to 90 minutes, will be led by experienced and licensed coaches, with a focus on developing fundamental skills as well as overall growth. Participation in the camp is completely free, making

it accessible to a wider group of children in the constituency.

Registered participants will also receive training kits, certificates, medals and refreshments during the course of the programme. Highlighting the vision behind the initiative, organisers noted that sports can play a vital role in community development and youth engagement. The camp is expected to provide young players with a platform to explore their potential while building confidence and learning the value of teamwork.

The coaching programme will be guided by trained professionals who aim to create a positive and motivating learning experience for all participants. The initiative also reflects a broader effort to promote sporting culture at the grassroots level in Goa.

With limited seats available, registrations will close on April 27, 2026. Interested participants are encouraged to register early to secure a place in the camp. Further details can be obtained by contacting the organisers directly.

## “Largest Tariff Refunds in US History Begin”: Businesses Set to Reclaim Billions After Court Ruling

■ Massive repayment process starts as companies file claims for duties struck down by Supreme Court.

**New Delhi:** A major refund process for import tariffs in the United States is set to begin, allowing businesses to reclaim billions of dollars collected under duties later ruled unconstitutional. The move follows a landmark decision by the Supreme Court of the United States, which found that former President Donald Trump exceeded his authority in imposing sweeping tariffs. From Monday, importers and customs brokers



can submit refund claims through an online system managed by US Customs and Border Protection. Companies are required to identify shipments on which they paid the now invalid duties.

Approved claims are

expected to be processed within a few months, although delays are anticipated due to the scale and complexity of the exercise. The refund initiative stems from a court ruling that determined the

tariffs, introduced under emergency powers to address trade deficits, infringed on Congress's authority over taxation. A subsequent trade court decision confirmed that affected businesses are entitled to reimbursement. The scale of repayments is expected to be unprecedented. Estimates suggest that more than 330,000 importers paid around \$166 billion in tariffs across tens of millions of shipments.



## “Rebooting Strategic Ties”: South Korea President Begins Key India Visit

■ Talks with top leadership to focus on technology, defence, trade and Indo-Pacific cooperation

**New Delhi:** President Lee Jae-myung began his three day state visit to India with a ceremonial welcome hosted by President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan, marking a significant step in strengthening bilateral relations between the two nations. Arriving in New Delhi with First Lady Kim Hea-kyung, Lee's visit is the first by a South Korean head of state to India in over eight years. The trip is being seen as an effort to deepen Seoul's engagement with emerging economies and reinforce its strategic partnership with India. The visit's agenda is packed with high level engagements.

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar is set to hold initial discussions with the visiting leader, laying the groundwork for broader bilateral talks. A

key highlight will be the summit between Lee and Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Hyderabad House, where both sides are expected to explore new avenues of cooperation. Discussions are likely to centre on critical technologies such as semiconductors and green energy, alongside strengthening defence manufacturing under India's Make in India initiative with South Korean collaboration. Trade and economic ties are also expected to feature prominently, including efforts to upgrade the existing Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement to boost investment and market access. In addition to official meetings, President Lee will pay tribute to Mahatma Gandhi at Rajhat and engage with business leaders at a forum in Bharat Mandapam.

## Bengal's Culture Under Threat”: PM Modi Sharpens Attack on TMC Ahead of Polls

■ Prime Minister frames Bengal election as a battle between development and appeasement while unveiling welfare promises.

**New Delhi:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi sharpened his political offensive against the Trinamool Congress during rallies in West Bengal, accusing the ruling party of altering the state's cultural fabric, neglecting tribal regions and blocking women's political empowerment. Speaking in Purulia, Modi alleged that infiltration



had led to changes in Bengal's language and cultural identity. He criticised the government led by Mamata Banerjee

for what he described as appeasement politics, claiming it had undermined tribal languages and communities while failing to deliver basic infrastructure and employment in districts such as Purulia, Bankura and Jhargram. The Prime Minister also linked corruption to

rising unemployment, alleging irregularities in teacher recruitment and accusing local syndicates of controlling land and economic activity. He positioned his party as a viable alternative, arguing that a “double engine” government at both the Centre and state would accelerate development and improve governance.

## “Strengthening Strategic Ties”: Ajit Doval Engages Saudi Leadership in Riyadh

■ High-level discussions focus on energy cooperation, regional security, and expanding India–Saudi partnership

**New Delhi:** India's National Security Advisor Ajit Doval held a series of high-level meetings in Riyadh, aimed at deepening bilateral ties and enhancing cooperation with Saudi Arabia across key sectors. The visit reflects the steady expansion of strategic relations between the two countries amid shifting global and regional dynamics. During his engagements, Doval met senior Saudi leaders, including Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman, Foreign



Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan, and National Security Advisor Musaed Al-Aiban. The discussions covered a wide range of issues, with a strong focus on strengthening energy partnerships, regional security concerns, and advancing

mutual interests. The talks highlighted the importance of continued collaboration in the energy sector, a cornerstone of India–Saudi Arabia relations, while also addressing evolving geopolitical challenges in the region. Both sides explored ways to further reinforce cooperation in areas linked to stability, security, and economic engagement. Doval's visit comes at a time when India is actively engaging with key global partners on pressing international issues.

## “Key Legal Question Before Court”: Delhi High Court to Hear ED Plea in National Herald Case

■ Hearing to examine whether money laundering charges can proceed without a registered FIR

**New Delhi:** The Delhi High Court is set to hear a significant plea filed by the Enforcement Directorate challenging a trial court decision in the National Herald-linked money laundering case involving senior Congress leaders. The case concerns Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, along with other individuals and entities, including Sam Pitroda and Young Indian. The matter will be heard by Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma. The ED has approached the high court after a trial court refused



to take cognisance of its prosecution complaint in December 2025. The lower court had ruled that the complaint was not legally maintainable as it was not based on a formal First Information Report for the alleged predicate offence under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act. In its appeal, the ED has

argued that the trial court's interpretation raises a critical legal issue and could affect similar cases. The agency maintains that money laundering proceedings can proceed even when the underlying offence originates from a private complaint rather than a police registered FIR. The case stems from allegations that assets worth around Rs 2,000 crore belonging to Associated Journals Limited, which publishes the National Herald newspaper, were improperly acquired.

# India Prepares for Dual T20I Teams as Player Pool Expands to 35

■ Selectors look to build depth amid overlapping schedules and rising young talent.

**New Delhi:** India's growing reservoir of cricketing talent is pushing team management toward a new approach in the T20 format, with plans underway to maintain a larger pool of 30 to 35 players ready for international duty. This shift comes as the calendar becomes increasingly congested, creating the possibility of India fielding two competitive teams simultaneously. The immediate challenge arises from a scheduling clash later this year, when the Asian Games



coincide with a T20 series against the West Indies. To manage both commitments effectively, selectors are preparing to split resources without compromising competitiveness. The strategy reflects a broader long term vision, especially with cricket's inclusion in global multi

sport events such as the 2028 Olympics. Upcoming tours, including the Ireland series, are expected to serve as testing grounds for this expanded approach. Instead of sticking to a fixed core, team management is likely to rotate players and experiment with combinations, offering

opportunities to those on the fringes. This will help identify dependable options for future tournaments and bilateral series, including a potential T20 assignment against Afghanistan. Several emerging players have already caught the selectors' attention through consistent performances. Young batters such as Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Priyansh Arya, and Angkrish Raghuvanshi have shown promise, while established names like Rajat Patidar and Ayush Badoni remain in contention.



## "We Can Handle Pressure on the Big Stage," Says Navneet Kaur After Argentina Comeback

■ India women's hockey team rallies to level series after strong finish on tour

**New Delhi:** The Indian women's hockey team delivered a determined comeback performance to conclude their tour of Argentina with a fighting 2-2 overall result, showcasing resilience and growing confidence. Stand-in captain Navneet Kaur expressed satisfaction with the team's response, highlighting their ability to withstand pressure against a top ranked opponent. The tour began on a competitive note, with India displaying attacking intent despite a 4-2 defeat in the opening match. Navneet Kaur and Annu found the net, but Argentina capitalised on their chances to secure victory. The second match followed a similar pattern, as Ishika gave India an early lead before the hosts edged ahead to seal a narrow 2-1 win. Facing a two match deficit, India responded strongly

in the third encounter. Goals from Navneet Kaur and Neha, both converted from penalty corners, gave the visitors a crucial 2-1 win and kept the series alive. Despite a late challenge from Argentina, the Indian defence held firm to protect their advantage. The final match turned into a tense battle, with neither side able to break the deadlock in regulation time.

India's disciplined defensive performance ensured a clean sheet, pushing the contest into a shootout. Holding their composure under pressure, the Indian side clinched a 3-2 win to level the series. Reflecting on the turnaround, Navneet Kaur emphasised the team's character and determination after a difficult start. She noted that overcoming a 0-2 deficit against a strong opponent demonstrated both belief and progress.

# Goycar Clinch Title by a Single Point in Thrilling Junior Badminton League Final

■ Dramatic 105-104 win over Radiant Sports Club crowns inaugural champions in Fatorda.

### Team Goemkarponn

**Fatorda:** Goycar emerged as champions of the inaugural Junior Premier Badminton League after securing a dramatic 105-104 victory over Radiant Sports Club in a closely contested final at the Multipurpose Stadium in Fatorda. The summit clash delivered a gripping finish, with both teams



battling intensely across seven doubles matches in a unique team-based format. Goycar managed to win four of the seven encounters, which

ultimately proved decisive as they edged ahead by a single point in an electrifying conclusion. Earlier in the competition, the league followed a

round robin format across two groups. Goycar and Radiant Sports Club displayed consistent form throughout the group stage, each registering three wins to top their respective groups and advance to the final. In Group A, Antruz Warriors finished in second place, followed by Salcete Badminton Club and Margao Shuttlers.

# Free Football Camp Aims to Build Grassroots Talent in Aldona

### Team Goemkarponn

**Mapusa:** A dedicated initiative to promote grassroots football and youth development will see children from the Aldona constituency benefit from a free intensive summer camp organised by PACT Foundation in collaboration with Kick Off Football Schools. The nine-day camp is scheduled to take place from May 1 to May 10, 2026, at the Moira Club Ground. Daily sessions will be conducted between 7:30 AM and 9:00 AM, offering structured

football training for boys and girls aged between 6 and 14 years. The programme is designed to provide a professional and supportive environment where young participants can learn and grow through sport. With a strong focus on skill development, discipline, and teamwork, the training sessions will be led by experienced and licensed coaches. Each session will run for approximately 60 to 90 minutes, ensuring that children receive both technical guidance and physical conditioning in a balanced format.

# La-Paz Garden Dominate Final With 137-Run Victory to Lift A Division Crown

■ All-round performance seals emphatic triumph over Sunny Sports Club in Porvorim

### Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji:** La-Paz Garden Cricket Club delivered a commanding performance to secure the Goa Cricket Association A Division All Goa State title, defeating Sunny Sports Club by a massive 137-run margin in the final held at the GCA Academy ground in Porvorim on Sunday. After winning the toss and choosing to bat, La-Paz Garden built their innings with discipline and control.



Openers laid a solid foundation before Sumiran Amonkar anchored the innings with a composed 77 off 85 deliveries.

He found strong support in Jaipal Mada, who contributed a steady 59 from 63 balls. Their partnership ensured



stability while maintaining a healthy scoring pace. The momentum shifted further in La-Paz Garden's favour during the latter stages, as Sohrah Dhaliwal produced an aggressive 54 off just 43 balls, accelerating the run flow in the closing overs.



Sagar Solanki chipped in with a useful 21, helping the team post a competitive total of 282 for 8 in 45 overs.

In response, Sunny Sports Club started positively, with Jeevan Chittem scoring 23 and Vikas Shetty adding 11. However, their chase soon lost direction as wickets began to fall at regular intervals. Captain Aryan Narvekar's early dismissal for 9 added to their troubles.