



Calangute Traffic Police Office In Dark

Over ₹8.10 Lakh Unpaid Power Bills

5-day outage disrupts challan payments

■ Opposition slams BJP government over “financial mismanagement” and neglect of basic administration

Team Goemkarponn

CALANGUTE: In a shocking case of administrative neglect, the Calangute Traffic Police office has been functioning without electricity for the last five days after power supply was disconnected over unpaid electricity bills amounting to ₹8,10,567, pending since 2023.

The office, operating from a panchayat-owned property, has reportedly been relying on candlelight during night hours, while



computers have been shifted to another location to keep essential work going. The prolonged outage has also affected tourists and motorists, who have been unable to

“The power cut at the Traffic Police office in Calangute, caused by unpaid electricity bills pending since 2023, is a stark reminder of how poorly our government offices are functioning,”



Targeting Chief Minister Pramod Sawant, he remarked that the Chief Minister’s often-repeated slogan “Bhivpachi garaz na” stands exposed when a law enforcement office is forced to function by candlelight.

pay traffic challans at the office during the last five days.

The incident has triggered sharp political reactions, with Leader of Opposition Yuri Alemo

accusing the BJP-led Goa government of failing to ensure even basic functioning of government departments.

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Bengaluru–Goa Vande Bharat Train Approved Via Mangaluru

New Semi-High-Speed Service to Cut Travel Time and Strengthen Coastal Connectivity

Team Goemkarponn

MARGAO: Indian Railways is preparing to introduce a new Vande Bharat Express service linking Bengaluru, Mangaluru and Goa (Madgaon), aiming to significantly improve passenger movement along the Karnataka–Konkan coastal corridor.

The proposed train is expected to originate from Yesvantpur in Bengaluru and run up to Madgaon in Goa, passing through the Mangaluru region. The route has been designed to connect key commercial centres, educational hubs, and tourist destinations across southern and coastal Karnataka before entering Goa.

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CM Welcomes Bengaluru–Margao Vande Bharat Approval

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant has welcomed the Union Government’s approval of the Bengaluru–Margao Vande Bharat Express, calling it a major boost for the state’s connectivity and development.

Thanking Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Centre, Sawant said the project fulfils a

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“FTA Marks a Landmark Moment”: India and New Zealand Sign Major Trade Pact

■ Agreement aims to boost investment, innovation and economic cooperation across key sectors

New Delhi: Narendra Modi described the newly signed Free Trade Agreement between India and New Zealand as a landmark step that will significantly strengthen bilateral ties and unlock wide-ranging economic opportunities. The agreement, signed in the national capital, is expected to accelerate



trade, investment and collaboration between the two nations. It is designed to benefit a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including

farmers, youth, women, MSMEs, artisans, startups, students and innovators, while creating new pathways for growth and enterprise.



HC Issues Notices in Pleas Challenging Halt on TCP Section 39A Permissions in St. Andre

PANAJI: The High Court at Goa has issued notices to the State government and the Town and Country Planning (TCP) Department in petitions challenging the government’s decision to withdraw permissions granted under Section 39A of the TCP Act in the St. Andre constituency. The Court has granted six weeks’ time to the respondents to file their replies and has posted the matter for hearing on June 17. The petitions question the State’s move to suspend all provisional and final land conversion cases under Section 39A in St. Andre. The government had taken this decision on February 26–27, 2026, following intense protests and a hunger strike led by St. Andre MLA Viresh Borkar. The action effectively brought zone change-related processes in the constituency to a temporary halt.

“Hormuz Reopening Hinges on 3 Demands”: Iran Proposal Faces US Resistance

■ Standoff deepens as Washington insists nuclear issue cannot be sidelined in negotiations

Washington: Tensions remain high between Iran and the United States after Tehran proposed reopening the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz under specific conditions, a move that has reportedly been met with scepticism by Donald Trump and his administration.

Iran’s proposal outlines three key conditions for reopening the crucial shipping route. These include lifting the US-imposed blockade



on Iranian ports, ending the ongoing conflict in the region, and postponing discussions on Tehran’s nuclear programme to a later stage in the diplomatic

process. The offer is seen as an attempt to ease tensions and restart stalled negotiations.

However, Washington appears reluctant to

accept any framework that delays addressing Iran’s nuclear ambitions. Trump has consistently maintained that preventing Iran from developing nuclear weapons remains a non-negotiable priority. Reinforcing this stance, Marco Rubio indicated that any agreement must ensure strict limits on Iran’s nuclear capabilities, ruling out deals that sideline the issue.

The proposal has triggered debate within the US administration

over strategic leverage and the broader implications of delaying nuclear negotiations. Officials believe Iran’s leadership has yet to show willingness to make significant concessions on its enrichment programme, complicating efforts to reach a comprehensive agreement.

The situation carries global economic implications, as the Strait of Hormuz remains a

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Basic Failure: When a Police Station Goes Dark

The image of traffic police personnel in Calangute working by candlelight is not just startling—it is deeply embarrassing. In a state that prides itself on tourism, infrastructure, and administrative efficiency, the fact that a traffic police office could remain without electricity for five days due to unpaid dues raises serious questions about governance, accountability, and priorities.

This is not merely a case of a power cut. It is a systemic failure.

Reports indicate that electricity was disconnected over non-payment of dues amounting to ₹8.1 lakh pending since 2023. That such arrears could accumulate without intervention reflects a worrying lapse in financial oversight within the system. Government departments are expected to function as models of discipline and efficiency. When they fail to meet even basic obligations like utility payments, it undermines public confidence in administration.

The consequences of this lapse are far-reaching. Traffic police operations depend heavily on digital systems—issuing challans, maintaining records, and processing payments. With systems rendered non-functional, not only is enforcement affected, but transparency also takes a hit. Tourists and locals alike reportedly faced difficulties in paying fines, creating inconvenience and confusion. In a place like Calangute, which sees high tourist footfall, such disruptions send out the wrong message.

More importantly, what does it say about working conditions for personnel on the ground? Expecting officers to perform their duties in darkness, relying on candles or mobile flashlights, is unacceptable. These are individuals tasked with maintaining order, ensuring road safety, and representing the authority of

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the state. For them to operate in such conditions is not just inefficient—it is undignified.

This incident also exposes a larger issue of coordination failure between departments. The electricity department and the police department operate under the same government framework. Yet, a lack of communication and timely intervention has resulted in a situation where one arm of the state has effectively

crippled another. Such silos within governance are not just inefficient—they are costly.

There is also the question of priorities. Goa's economy heavily depends on tourism, and Calangute is one of its most prominent hubs. Basic infrastructure in such areas should be non-negotiable. If a traffic police office in a prime tourist location can be left without power, it raises concerns about the state of other less visible facilities.

The optics of this situation are damaging. In an era where governance is increasingly scrutinized, images of police officers working by candlelight can quickly become symbolic of deeper administrative failures. It reflects poorly not just on a single department, but on the system as a whole.

Accountability must follow. It is not enough to restore power and move on. There must be a clear explanation of how dues were allowed to pile up, who was responsible for monitoring payments, and why corrective action was not taken earlier. Fixing responsibility is essential to ensure that such incidents are not repeated.

At the same time, this should serve as a wake-up call for better systems. Automated alerts for pending dues, inter-departmental coordination mechanisms, and contingency plans for essential services must be put in place. Basic governance cannot depend on last-minute reactions.

Ultimately, governance is not tested in grand announcements or high-profile projects—it is tested in the ability to manage everyday essentials efficiently. Electricity for a police station is as basic as it gets. When even that fails, it points to cracks that need urgent repair.

This is more than just a power outage. It is a reminder that when systems fail, it is the credibility of governance that goes dark.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Vande Bharat Link Must Deliver on Ground

The proposed Vande Bharat corridor connecting Bengaluru, Mangaluru and Madgaon is a promising development that could significantly improve connectivity to Goa. For a state heavily dependent on tourism, faster and more comfortable rail travel is always a welcome step. This corridor has the potential to benefit not just tourists but also students, professionals, and patients travelling frequently between Goa and Bengaluru. Reduced travel time and modern amenities could make rail travel a preferred option over long road journeys. However, while the announcement is encouraging, the focus must now shift to execution. Rail projects in ghat sections are often complex, and delays are not uncommon. It is essential that safety, infrastructure readiness, and scheduling are given top priority to ensure that the service is both efficient and reliable. Equally important is affordability and frequency. A premium train must still remain accessible to the common traveller. Connectivity within Goa also needs attention so that passengers can easily reach their final destinations from Madgaon. This project should not remain just an announcement but must translate into a dependable service that genuinely benefits the people. With proper planning and timely implementation, this corridor can become a major boost for Goa's connectivity and economy.

-Melroy Fernandes, Margao, Goa

Summons Must Not Undermine Democratic Dissent

The recent remarks by Yuri Alemao describing the police summons as an attempt to “stifle voices” have sparked an important debate on the balance between law enforcement and democratic rights in Goa. In any democracy, dissent is not only expected but essential. Protests—especially those concerning land, environment, and public policy—are often the only means through which citizens and their representatives can express concerns. When such actions are followed by repeated summons, it raises questions about whether the response is proportionate or perceived as selective. While authorities have the responsibility to uphold the law, the manner and timing of enforcement must be transparent and even-handed. If actions appear targeted, it risks creating a sense of fear among those who speak out on public issues. This can have a chilling effect on democratic participation, discouraging citizens and leaders from raising legitimate concerns. Goa has a long tradition of active civic engagement. Issues related to land and development are closely linked to the identity and future of the state. Addressing these concerns through dialogue and policy review would strengthen trust, rather than weaken it. At the same time, protests must remain peaceful and within the framework of the law. Both sides—authorities and public representatives—must act responsibly to maintain this balance. Ultimately, democracy thrives when voices are heard, not suppressed. Ensuring fairness, transparency, and respect for dissent will go a long way in preserving public confidence in institutions.

-Alton Rodrigues, Panaji, Goa

Goa Fisheries Project at Saleri-Khola Gets CRZ Clearance

■ Integrated Modern Fishing Village Planned Under Central Scheme

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: The ambitious proposal of the Goa Fisheries Department to develop Saleri-Khola in Canacona taluka into an Integrated Modern Coastal Fishing Village has received Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) clearance from the Goa Coastal Zone Management Authority.

The project, proposed under the Central Government's Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY), aims to modernise fishing infrastructure along the Saleri coast in Khola



village. The plan includes the construction of a floating jetty, floating pontoon and gangway facilities to improve boat access and streamline fishing operations along the Saleri river.

According to the proposal, the existing fishing ramp will be

repaired, a new net-mending shed will be reconstructed, and desilting activities will be undertaken in the area. A floating jetty measuring approximately 40x3 metres is also planned as part of the infrastructure upgrade.

The total built-up

area proposed under the project is around 140 square metres, while ramp development and refurbishment works will cover over 200 square metres.

During a recent meeting, the Goa Coastal Zone Management Authority approved the proposal after detailed deliberations on the environmental aspects of the project. The site falls within ecologically sensitive Coastal Regulation Zone areas classified under Coastal Management Plan (CMP) 2011 as No Development Zone (NDZ) under CRZ-III.



SC Seeks ECI Reply On Challenge To Ponda By-Election Cancellation

■ Final Hearing On May 8; Key Issue Centres On Interpretation Of Section 151A

Panaji: The Supreme Court on Monday asked the Election Commission of India (ECI) to file its response on a petition challenging the Bombay High Court at Goa's decision to cancel the Ponda Assembly by-election notification.

A Bench comprising Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Sandeep Mehta noted that the interpretation of Section 151A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, would be central to the adjudication of the matter. The Court has scheduled the case for final hearing on May 8. The Special Leave Petition has been filed by Congress candidate Ketan Bhatikar, who contested the Ponda Assembly seat. He has challenged the High Court's April 8 ruling that had struck down the Election Commission's notification announcing the by-election. The High Court had quashed the

notification after holding that it was inconsistent with provisions of the Representation of the People Act. It observed that since less than one year remained for the completion of the current Goa Legislative Assembly's term, which is set to end on March 14, 2027, conducting a by-election was not permissible under the law.

The legal challenge was originally filed by two registered voters from the constituency, who argued that the timing of the by-election was invalid given the short remaining tenure of the Assembly. Accepting the argument, the High Court also noted that the result of the proposed by-election was expected around May 4, meaning the elected representative would have served only about nine months in office. The Supreme Court will now examine the legality of the High Court's interpretation.



Patanjali Foods Challenges Goa's Deposit Refund Scheme In High Court

PANAJI: Patanjali Foods Limited has approached the High Court of Bombay at Goa questioning the State government's proposed Deposit Refund Scheme (DRS) and has sought an interim stay on its implementation.

In its writ petition, the company has arrayed the State of Goa, the Department of Environment and Climate Change, the Goa Coastal and Environment Management Society, and the Law Department (Legal Affairs) as respondents.

The matter was placed before the Division Bench of Justice Valmiki Menezes and Justice Amit Jamsandekar for admission. During the hearing, counsel representing the petitioner urged the court to halt the rollout of the scheme.

However, the Bench declined to grant any interim relief at this preliminary stage and refrained from making any comments on the merits of the petition.

GHRC Declares Gratuity Deduction From Retired Mts Employee Illegal, Orders Refund

■ Margao Esic Hospital Directed To Return Rs 4.79 Lakh Within 60 Days With 8% Interest If Delayed

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Goa Human Rights Commission (GHRC) has ruled that the recovery of nearly Rs 4.8 lakh from the gratuity of a retired Group C employee was illegal and amounted to a violation of human rights. The Commission has ordered the ESIC Hospital, Margao, to refund the deducted



amount within 60 days.

The inquiry bench, comprising Acting Chairperson Desmond D'Costa and Member Pramod Kamat, found that

Rs 4,79,611 was deducted from the gratuity of former Multi-Tasking Staff (MTS) employee Teotonio Jose Maria Pereira without any lawful justification.

Goa Crime Branch Team Heads To Delhi To Bring Back Six Bangladeshi Dacoity Accused

■ Accused Linked To Multiple Home Invasions In Goa, Including Dona Paula And Mapusa Cases; Transit Formalities Underway

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: A team from the Goa Crime Branch (CB), comprising two Police Inspectors and 20 personnel, proceeded to Delhi on Monday to take custody of six Bangladeshi nationals arrested in a late-night operation earlier this month by the Delhi Crime Branch.

According to official sources, the team led by PI Dattaguru Sawant



and PI Kishore Raman travelled by the Rajdhani Express and is likely to return to Goa on Thursday along with the accused under police escort. The officers are expected to reach Delhi on Tuesday,

where they will complete the necessary legal and transit remand procedures before beginning the return journey on Wednesday. The accused will be brought back to Goa the following day,

sources added. The arrested individuals are being probed in connection with two serious housebreaking and robbery cases in Goa — one involving the violent intrusion at the Dona Paula residence of senior citizens Jaiprakash and Padmini Dempo in April 2025, and another dacoity reported in October 2025 at a doctor's residence in Ganeshpuri, Mapusa. The six accused identified are Suman

Hauldhar alias Pannu (35), Saifull Islam (31), Sohail Sheikh (35), Md Nasir (48), Noor Islam alias Nadim Khan (56), and Zakir (40). They were apprehended after an encounter with police near Sarai Kale Khan in Delhi during the night of April 14–15. During the operation, police recovered four country-made pistols, live ammunition, and tools commonly used for breaking into houses.

Man Electrocuted While Carrying Out Repairs at Pernem Home

■ 41-year-old declared brought dead at Tuem health centre; police register unnatural death case

Team Goemkarponn

PERNEM: A 41-year-old man from Paliem in Pernem taluka was allegedly electrocuted while carrying out repair work at his residence, police said.

The incident came to light on April 26 at around 9:02 pm after a medical memo was received from Community Health Centre Tuem informing that a patient, identified as Swapnesh Parab (41), had been brought dead to



the casualty.

According to police, enquiries with the deceased's brother revealed that neighbours were alerted by the

screams of the victim's children. On checking, Parab was found lying unconscious on the floor with an electric wire in his hand. It is suspected that

he suffered an electric shock while undertaking repair work at his house.

He was shifted to the health centre by a 108 ambulance, where the attending medical officer declared him brought dead.

In connection with the case, Mandrem Police Station has registered an unnatural death (U.D.) case No. 23/2026 under Section 194 of BNSS. Further enquiry is being carried out by PSI Abhishek Chodankar.



Rash and Negligent Riding Leads to Double Fatality in Calangute

■ Two youths die, one injured after head-on scooter collision near Norms Supermarket

Team Goemkarponn

CALANGUTE: Two persons lost their lives and another sustained injuries in a tragic road accident that took place in Calangute on April 26 evening.

As per police information, the accident occurred at around 5:15 pm near Norms Supermarket at Saunta Vaddo. The accused, Shashank Prabhakar Jadhav (36), a resident of Ambarnath in Thane, was riding a blue Activa scooter from the Baga end towards Khobra Vaddo when he allegedly drove in a rash and negligent manner and collided head-on with an oncoming black Activa.

The victims have been identified as Arun Godicha (26), a resident

of Guirim, and his pillion rider Anil Ugrejija (27), currently residing in Candolim and originally from Gujarat. Both were thrown off their scooter due to the impact and sustained grievous injuries. They were rushed to hospital but later succumbed while undergoing treatment.

Meanwhile, Srijji Suresh Nair (33), the pillion rider on the accused's scooter, also sustained injuries in the accident and is presently under treatment.

The offence has been registered at Calangute Police Station based on a complaint filed by Assistant Sub-Inspector Ravindra Gawas. PSI Snehal Malik is investigating the case.

Further investigation is in progress.

Rear-End Crash at Amona Junction Sparks Rash Driving Case

■ Bicholim rider injured after motorcycle allegedly speeds into scooter; police probe negligence angle

Team Goemkarponn

BICHOLIM: A morning commute turned hazardous at Amona Junction after a two-wheeler collision left one man injured and prompted police to register a case of rash and negligent riding.

The incident occurred on April 24 at around 9:30 am when a motorcycle, allegedly driven at speed and without due caution, rammed into a scooter from behind on the Sankhalim-Marcel stretch in Bicholim.

Police have identified the accused as



Prathamesh Majik (24), a resident of Parye in Sattari, who was riding a Royal Enfield Bullet. The impact knocked down the scooter rider, Ulhas Sinari of Mestwada, Amona, causing injuries to his right leg.

The case was registered on April 26

following an inquiry into the motor vehicle accident, based on a complaint filed by Head Constable Ladu Gawas of Bicholim Police Station. Officials stated that the accused failed to maintain safe distance and proper control, leading to the rear-end collision.



Man Found Unconscious in Moira Declared Brought Dead at Mapusa Hospital

Team Goemkarponn

MAPUSA: A 51-year-old man was declared brought dead after he was found unconscious in Moira village on April 26, police said.

According to information received at around 4:10 pm, a medical memo from District Hospital Mapusa stated that Sean Francisco Prospero Mortimer (51), a resident of Socorro, Alto Porvorim, and presently staying at Moira in Bardez, was brought dead to the casualty ward.

Police enquiries revealed that the deceased was found lying in an unconscious state earlier in the day at Moira. He was shifted to the hospital, where he was declared brought dead by the attending medical officer.

Sources further indicated that the deceased had a history of psychiatric illness and chronic alcohol use.

An unnatural death case has been registered, and further enquiry is being conducted by PSI Pandhari Chopdekar.

Daily Wage Worker Found Dead at Temple Site; Illness Suspected

■ Post-mortem points to lung condition as cause of death; police register unnatural death case in Sankhalim

Team Goemkarponn

SANKHALIM: A 37-year-old daily wage labourer was found unresponsive near a temple site in Navelim, Sankhalim, and later declared brought dead, police said.

The incident came to light on April 26 at around 11:31 pm after a medical memo was received from Community Health



Centre Sankhalim stating that the man, identified as Chhatukumar Mahato (37), had been brought dead by a 108 ambulance from the vicinity of Sateri Temple at Navelim.

Rash and Negligent Driving Case Registered After Container Hits Truck

■ Woman injured after falling from truck; accused driver also hurt in early morning NH-66 accident

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Police have registered an offence in connection with a motor vehicle accident that occurred on April 24 in the Tiswadi taluka of Goa.

According to police information, the case was registered on April 26 at 21:42 hrs following an enquiry into MV Accident No. 66/26 dated April 24. The complaint was filed by



Head Constable Chatur Sawant (47) of Old Goa Police Station.

The accused has been identified as Vittal Malannavar (26), a resident of Dindalakoppa village in Bailhongal taluka, Belgavi district, Karnataka. He was driving an Eicher

container bearing registration number KA-21/C-8875 at the time of the incident.

Police stated that the accident took place at around 5:10 am near Mercedes Circle on NH 66, on the stretch leading towards Atal Setu in Tiswadi. The accused allegedly drove the container in a rash and negligent manner, without due care and caution, thereby endangering human life.

Goa Education Directorate Caps Prospectus Fees at Rs 100

■ Schools warned against overcharging for admission forms; strict action for violations

Team Goemkarponn

PORVORIM: The Directorate of Education, Goa, has issued a circular directing all government and government-aided schools to limit the cost of prospectus and admission forms to a maximum of Rs 100 or the actual printing cost, whichever is lower.

The directive comes complaints that some schools were charging excessive amounts for



prospectuses bundled with admission forms.

Authorities have now made it clear that no additional or hidden charges will be permitted under any circumstances.

As per the circular, schools must maintain full transparency in calculating the cost of prospectuses and be prepared to present

records for inspection if required by the Directorate. Officials have cautioned that any violation of the instructions will be viewed seriously and could invite disciplinary action against the institutions concerned.

The order, issued by Director of Education Shailesh R. Sinai Zingde, has come into immediate effect, with all school heads instructed to ensure strict compliance.



DLC Reviews 97 Forest Rights Claims Across Three Talukas in South Goa

■ Collector chairs meeting to expedite decisions under Forest Rights Act

Team Goemkarponn

KUSHAVATI: District Collector Egna Cleetus, IAS, chaired a meeting of the District Level Committee (DLC) to review claims submitted under the Forest Rights Act, 2006 from multiple talukas in the district.

The meeting considered a total of 97 claims received from Sub-Divisional Level Committees (SDLCs), including 33 from Dharbandora, 40 from Sanguem and 24 from Canacona talukas in Goa.

During the proceedings, the committee undertook a

detailed review of each claim to ensure they met the criteria laid down under the Act. Officials also issued necessary directions to streamline the verification process and ensure timely disposal of pending applications. Authorities emphasized the importance of adhering to due process while safeguarding the rights of eligible forest dwellers and communities.

The District Administration reiterated its commitment to ensuring that all valid claims are processed efficiently in accordance with the provisions of the law.

Goa Hosts CERT-In Samvaad 2026, Focus on Strengthening Cybersecurity Frameworks

■ CM Pramod Sawant inaugurates conference at BITS Pilani Goa campus; over 500 delegates attend

Team Goemkarponn

ZUARINAGAR: Pramod Sawant on Tuesday inaugurated CERT-In Samvaad 2026 at the BITS Pilani K K Birla Goa Campus, bringing together over 500 delegates and global experts to deliberate on strengthening cybersecurity and audit systems in India.

The conference focuses on securing "Digital Bharat" through future-ready audit frameworks, especially



as the country's digital footprint continues to expand rapidly. During the event, key initiatives were launched, including AMBAK (Audit Monitoring Benchmark & Knowledge framework), progress reports of working groups, and an Advanced Cyber Security Certification Course by

CERT-In in collaboration with National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development and BIRD. These initiatives aim to enhance India's cyber resilience and strengthen its audit ecosystem. Addressing the gathering, Sawant подчеркнул the importance of proactive cybersecurity measures.

446 Couples Register, 131 Undergo IVF at GMC's

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: A growing number of couples are turning to the state-run fertility programme in Goa, with 446 patients registering for infertility treatment and 131 already undergoing IVF at the Goa Medical College and Hospital.

The figures underline the rising demand and impact of the Centre for Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) at GMC.



Goa Cracks Down on Unregistered Tourist Trade Operators

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Tourism Department in Goa has directed all tourist trade operators to complete mandatory registration within the stipulated time, warning of strict action against defaulters. According to officials, trade registration has been made compulsory for all stakeholders operating within the tourism sector, including accommodation providers, travel agents and related operators.

SBI supports girl students with bicycles and sanitation facility in Canacona

■ CSR initiative brings mobility, dignity and improved school infrastructure to GHS Gaondongrim

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: In a move aimed at strengthening access to education and improving basic facilities, State Bank of India (SBI) has provided 70 bicycles and constructed a dedicated toilet block for girl students at Government High School (GHS), Gaondongrim under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)



programme. The newly built sanitation facility for girls was formally inaugurated on Monday, followed by the distribution of bicycles to students. The event was attended by senior SBI officials,

and Gaondongrim Branch Manager Dhiraj Kumar Singh were present along with other officials from SBI's regional and administrative offices. Speaking on the occasion, Mishra underlined the importance of such initiatives in promoting hygiene, dignity, and a supportive learning environment for girl students.

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Palekar Flags 'Orchestrated Bid' to Stoke Tensions in Goa Over Khattar Row

Team Goemkarponn



PANAJI: Amit Palekar has warned of what he described as an "orchestrated attempt" to disturb communal harmony in Goa amid the ongoing Gautam Khattar controversy, pointing to a surge in provocative content on social media. Addressing the issue, Palekar claimed that while Khattar was handled "gracefully" by authorities.

Goa Tourism conferred 'Best MICE Destination' at Great Indian Travel Bazaar Awards (GITB) 2026

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Goa Tourism has been conferred with the 'Best MICE Destination' award at the Great Indian Travel Bazaar (GITB) Awards 2026, recognising the state's growing prominence as a leading hub for Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) in India.

The recognition comes at a time when Goa is actively positioning itself from a predominantly leisure-driven destination to a more diversified, high-value tourism ecosystem, with MICE playing a central role in driving this transition. By attracting global delegates, industry leaders and decision-makers, the segment is contributing to higher-value tourism, addressing seasonality, and creating wider economic impact across hospitality and allied sectors.

Goa's MICE ecosystem is defined by its ability to seamlessly



integrate business with experience. With a strong base of premium hotels equipped with convention facilities, the state offers a range of formats for both large-scale and bespoke events. This is further strengthened by robust connectivity, with two operational airports and expanding domestic and international access.

The state's efforts are also aligned with India's broader push to strengthen its global MICE positioning through initiatives such as Meet in India, with Goa emerging as a key contributor to this vision. Having successfully hosted

high-profile global events including G20 Tourism Working Group meetings and India Energy Week, Goa has demonstrated its capability to manage complex, large-format international engagements.

Speaking on the recognition, Rohan A. Khaunte, Hon'ble Minister of Tourism, Government of Goa, said, "This recognition reinforces Goa's growing role in India's MICE landscape. MICE is central to our vision of building a more resilient and high-value tourism ecosystem, as it brings in a segment of travellers who engage

more deeply with the destination and create meaningful economic impact. With our unique ability to offer business alongside immersive experiences, strong infrastructure, and seamless connectivity, Goa is well-positioned to contribute significantly to India's global MICE ambitions."

Echoing this, Kedar Naik, Director of Tourism, Government of Goa, added, "Goa's strength lies in the way its MICE ecosystem is built, where infrastructure, accessibility and experience come together seamlessly. This recognition further validates our continued efforts to strengthen Goa's positioning as a preferred MICE destination, both domestically and globally."

Going forward, Goa continues to strengthen its MICE offering through focused policy support, improved ease of doing business, and enhanced connectivity, including charter incentives for international markets.

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Calangute Traffic Police Office In Dark Over ₹8.10 Lakh Unpaid Power Bills

Alemao said the BJP government's much-publicised "Sarkar" initiative appeared to have failed in making adequate budgetary provisions for essential payments in the Home Department, or that the administration itself had failed to discharge its duties responsibly. "What more can we expect from a government that boasts of grand events funded through borrowings, while neglecting the most fundamental responsibilities?" he questioned. Congress leader Amarnath Panjikar also criticised the state government, alleging financial mismanagement and lack of accountability. "Goa under CM Pramod Sawant exposes a worrying reality — there are no funds to clear basic dues like electricity bills, yet relentless collections continue from citizens through traffic fines," Panjikar said. "This isn't governance, it is mismanagement. A BJP government that burdens people while failing to meet its own obligations reflects financial bankruptcy and zero accountability," he added. The incident has raised serious concerns over the functioning of key public offices in Goa and the impact of administrative lapses on both citizens and tourists in one of the state's busiest tourism hubs.

Bengaluru-Goa Vande Bharat Train Approved Via Mangaluru

Officials indicate that the semi-high-speed service could bring down current travel duration between Bengaluru and Goa to around 13 hours, offering a much faster alternative compared to existing express trains operating on the same route. The corridor will

include stretches through the Western Ghats, making it one of the more scenic yet operationally challenging routes in the Vande Bharat network. Key halts are likely to be placed at important stations along the coastal and ghat sections to balance speed with accessibility. The introduction of this service is expected to benefit a wide range of passengers, including tourists heading to Goa's beaches, professionals travelling between major cities, and students commuting across Karnataka's urban centres. This new train is part of Indian Railways' broader plan to expand Vande Bharat services across the country, particularly in high-demand intercity routes in southern India.

CM Welcomes Bengaluru-Margao Vande Bharat Approval

long-pending request made ahead of the Union Budget. He said the new semi-high-speed train will improve travel between Goa and Karnataka, support tourism, and help drive regional economic growth.

"Hormuz Reopening Hinges on 3 Demands": Iran Proposal Faces US Resistance

critical route through which a significant share of the world's oil and gas supplies passes. Disruptions have already driven up energy prices, placing pressure on global markets and key US allies in the Gulf region. With a fragile ceasefire in place, both nations remain locked in a diplomatic impasse. While backchannel discussions are expected to continue, the gap between the two sides on core issues, particularly nuclear policy, suggests that a swift resolution remains uncertain.

"Purumentachem Fest 2026"

ESG Invites Stall Applications for Monsoon-Themed Showcase

■ Three-day event to celebrate Goa's seasonal traditions, local produce and artisanal crafts

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Entertainment Society of Goa (ESG) will host "Purumentachem Fest" from May 1 to 3, 2026, at the Multiplex Courtyard, bringing together local artisans, entrepreneurs and food vendors to celebrate Goa's rich monsoon traditions.

The festival aims to highlight products and practices associated with the rainy season, offering a platform for participants to showcase and sell a wide range of traditional items. Applications are currently open for Goan artisans, self-help groups, small businesses and food vendors interested in setting up stalls.

The event will feature diverse categories, including dry fish, agricultural produce and spices, traditional Goan sweets, household tools and utensils, pottery and earthenware, and ceramic storage items. Participants can also

present nursery and kitchen garden products, locally extracted oils, and seasonal fruit-based items such as raw mango, cashew, kokum and tamarind.

In addition, the festival will include homemade food products like pickles, masalas and papad, as well as items made from coir, traditional fishing tools and accessories, and indigenous grains and millets.

The initiative is designed to promote local livelihoods while preserving cultural knowledge linked to seasonal living in Goa.

Application forms are available at the ESG office and can also be accessed through the official website. Stall allocation will be carried out on a first come, first served basis, encouraging early registration from interested participants. "Purumentachem Fest" is expected to attract both locals and visitors, offering an authentic glimpse into Goa's monsoon lifestyle through its food, crafts and traditional products.



“No Place for Double Standards on Terror”: Rajnath Singh Sends Strong Message at SCO Summit

■ Defence Minister highlights Operation Sindoor, calls for global unity against terrorism and a rules-based world order

Bishkek: Rajnath Singh delivered a firm message on terrorism at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Defence Ministers' Meeting, asserting that there can be no double standards in addressing the global threat. He underlined India's uncompromising stance, stating that terrorism in all forms must be dealt with decisively.

Referring to Operation Sindoor, Singh emphasised that India has demonstrated its resolve to hold perpetrators accountable, regardless of where they operate. He noted that terrorist networks and their bases cannot remain beyond



the reach of justice, reinforcing India's policy of zero tolerance toward terrorism.

Highlighting the broader impact of such acts, he recalled the devastating attack in Pahalgam, describing it as an incident that shook global conscience. He stressed that terrorism remains one of the most

serious challenges facing the world today, compounded by rising extremism and radicalisation. Singh also cautioned against ignoring state-sponsored cross-border terrorism, calling it a direct threat to national sovereignty.

Placing his remarks in a wider geopolitical context, Singh observed

that the global landscape is increasingly unstable, marked by frequent conflicts and growing unilateralism. He pointed out that in such a fragmented environment, the role of multilateral groupings like the SCO becomes even more crucial in maintaining stability and fostering cooperation.

While maintaining a strong stance on security, Singh also advocated dialogue and diplomacy as essential tools for conflict resolution. Drawing on the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, he stressed the importance of restraint and mutual respect in international relations.

“If Innocent, Prove It in Court”: Rekha Gupta Criticises Kejriwal Over Legal Stand

■ Delhi Chief Minister questions court boycott and raises concerns over remarks on judiciary

New Delhi: Rekha Gupta launched a sharp attack on Arvind Kejriwal after he wrote to a High Court judge raising concerns about the fairness of proceedings and chose not to appear in court in connection with the alleged excise policy case. Gupta criticised Kejriwal's approach, stating that his actions suggest he is attempting to assume multiple roles simultaneously, questioning the judicial process while avoiding participation in it. She said that raising doubts about a judge



and the conduct of hearings undermines the credibility of the legal system and leaves little room for institutional processes. The controversy was triggered after Kejriwal addressed a letter to the court, expressing apprehensions about the proceedings and seeking a change of forum. He described his stance publicly as a form of protest, drawing parallels with satyagraha.



Conversion Allegations Surface in Nashik Case as Police Probe Widens

Mumbai: Fresh details have emerged in the harassment case linked to Tata Consultancy Services' Nashik unit, with investigators examining allegations of coercion, intimidation and attempts at religious conversion involving multiple accused.

According to officials, the primary accused, Nida Khan, is alleged to have tried influencing a survivor to change her religion and identity. The case includes charges of hurting religious sentiments and criminal intimidation. Given that the survivor belongs to a Scheduled Caste, provisions under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Prevention of Atrocities Act have also been invoked. Investigators claim that items such as a burqa and religious books were provided to the survivor, allegedly to influence her beliefs.

“Historic Decision to Bring Governance Closer”: Ladakh Gets Five New Districts

■ Administrative expansion aims to improve access, services and development in remote Himalayan regions

Leh: Panic briefly unfolded at the White House Correspondents' Dinner after gunshots were reported inside the venue, prompting an immediate evacuation of Donald Trump and other top officials. The incident occurred on Saturday night as hundreds of journalists, celebrities, and political leaders gathered for the high-profile event.

In a major administrative reform, the Union Territory of Ladakh has been expanded with the creation of five new districts, marking a significant step toward decentralised governance and improved public service delivery.

The newly notified districts, Nubra, Sham, Changthang, Zaskar and Drass, increase the total number of districts from two to seven. This move addresses a long-standing demand from residents across the region, particularly those living in remote and high-altitude



areas where access to government services has traditionally been limited.

The decision is expected to bring administration closer to the people, reducing the need for long and difficult travel to access essential services. With district-level offices and officials to be stationed locally, residents are likely to benefit from faster processing of documents, improved healthcare access, and more efficient implementation of welfare schemes.

The expansion follows earlier approval from the Ministry of Home Affairs under Amit Shah and aligns with the broader development vision of Narendra Modi, focusing on inclusive growth and stronger grassroots governance.

Officials highlighted that the reorganisation will not only improve administrative efficiency but also stimulate local economies. The establishment of new district headquarters is expected to create employment opportunities and encourage small businesses and entrepreneurship in these regions.

Since becoming a Union Territory in 2019, Ladakh has undergone several structural changes aimed at strengthening governance and infrastructure. The addition of new districts represents another milestone in ensuring that development reaches even the most remote communities.

| Global Military Spending & India's Defence Push (2025-2027) | | | |
|---|---------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Top Global Spenders (2025) | | | |
| Rank | Country | Spending (\$ billion) | YoY change |
| 1 | United States | \$954 billion | -- |
| 2 | China | \$336 billion | +7.4% |
| 3 | Russia | \$190 billion | +5.9% |
| 4 | Germany | \$114 billion | +24% |
| 5 | India | \$92.1 billion | +8.9% |

Sources: SIPRI tracked 40 countries

India Emerges as World's Fifth-Largest Military Spender Amid Global Surge

■ Rising defence budget, shifting import strategy and regional tensions shape India's military outlook

New Delhi: India has secured its position as the world's fifth-largest military spender, with defence expenditure reaching 92.1 billion dollars in 2025, according to the latest global assessment. This marks an increase of 8.9 percent from the previous year and accounts for 3.2 percent of total global military spending.

Only United States, China, Russia and Germany rank ahead of India. The rise in expenditure comes during a period of heightened security focus, including India's recent military preparedness measures such as Operation Sindoor and emergency procurements to strengthen defence

readiness.

Neighbouring countries have also increased spending. China continues to hold the second position globally with an estimated 336 billion dollars, while Pakistan recorded an 11 percent rise in defence outlay to 11.9 billion dollars, ranking 31st overall. Analysts indicate that India's defence priorities are significantly influenced by its strategic environment, particularly tensions with China and Pakistan.

Globally, military expenditure reached a record 2,887 billion dollars in 2025, reflecting a steady rise and accounting for 2.5 percent of global GDP, the highest level in over a decade.

“Even I Am Surprised”: Patidar Reacts as RCB Bowlers Script Historic Powerplay Collapse

Delhi Capitals slump to record-low 13 for 6 as Bengaluru's pace attack dominates IPL clash

New Delhi: Delhi Capitals endured a dramatic top-order collapse that stunned even Royal Challengers Bengaluru captain Rajat Patidar during their IPL 2026 encounter at the Arun Jaitley Stadium. The home side crumbled to a record-low 13 for 6 within the Powerplay, marking the lowest total ever recorded in the first six overs of an IPL innings.

The damage was inflicted early, with



Josh Hazlewood and Bhuvneshwar Kumar delivering a relentless spell of pace and swing. The collapse began

almost instantly when debutant Sahil Parakh was dismissed off just the second ball. From there, wickets fell rapidly, leaving

Delhi's top six contributing a mere seven runs collectively.

Despite the early setback, Abhishek Porel scored 30 and David Miller added 19 to help the side recover slightly and avoid registering one of the lowest totals in league history.

Patidar admitted that even he was taken aback by the scale of the collapse, crediting his bowlers for executing their plans to perfection.



India Dominate With 5-0 Sweep to March Into Thomas Cup Quarterfinals

Clinical performance against Australia secures knockout spot and sets up group decider with China

New Delhi: India delivered a commanding performance to secure a place in the Thomas Cup Finals quarterfinals, defeating Australia 5-0 in a Group A clash in Horsens. With this emphatic victory, India joined China at the top of the group standings, setting up a decisive encounter to determine the group leader. The Indian team, champions in 2022, carried forward their strong form after an earlier 4-1 win over Canada. Their dominance against Australia ensured a flawless outing, with every match won in straight games.

Lakshya Sen set the tone with a confident

21-14, 21-16 victory over Ephraim Stephen Sam, giving India an early lead. Building on that momentum, Ayush Shetty delivered a commanding performance, defeating Shrey Dhand 21-8, 21-6 to double the advantage. India's top doubles pair, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, sealed the tie with a solid 21-14, 21-16 win over Rizky Hidayat and Jack Yu, extending the lead to 3-0. HS Prannoy continued the dominance with a swift 21-11, 21-17 victory against Rishi Honda Boopathy, finishing his match in under half an hour.



“9000 and Counting”: Virat Kohli Becomes First Player to Reach Historic IPL Milestone

New Delhi: Virat Kohli etched his name deeper into cricket history by becoming the first player ever to score 9000 runs in the Indian Premier League. The landmark was achieved during Royal Challengers Bengaluru's match against Delhi Capitals at the Arun Jaitley Stadium, marking another defining moment in his illustrious career.

Playing his 275th IPL match, Kohli needed just 11 runs to reach the milestone and got there with a single in the sixth over of the innings during a modest chase. He reached the 9000-run mark in 6732 deliveries, underlining both his consistency and longevity in the tournament.

Kohli continues to lead the list of highest run-scorers in IPL history, comfortably ahead of Rohit Sharma, Shikhar Dhawan, David Warner, and KL Rahul.

“I Wanted to Prove Them Wrong” Shreyas Iyer Turns Criticism Into Career Revival

Punjab Kings skipper transforms mindset and silences doubts with dominant performances

New Delhi: Shreyas Iyer has emerged as one of the standout performers in recent seasons, using criticism as fuel to elevate his game. Since joining Punjab Kings at the mega auction, he has not only impressed with the bat but also showcased strong leadership, guiding the side to a runners-up finish last season and maintaining an unbeaten run in the

current campaign.

Iyer's numbers reflect his consistency and aggression. He scored 604 runs last season at a striking rate above 175, and has carried that momentum forward with 279 runs in just six innings this year,



striking at an even higher rate. Despite his evident talent, he had long been questioned for his struggle against short-pitched deliveries.

That criticism, however, became a turning point. Determined to overcome the perceived weakness, Iyer reshaped his approach at the crease. Instead of playing it safe, he now attacks short balls with confidence, turning a former vulnerability into a strength.

Afrid Leads Oxford to Title Triumph with Match-Winning All-Round Show

Oxford edge past Banjara by 11 runs in a gripping Under-17 final at Sankhali

Team Goemkarponn

Panaji: Oxford clinched the All-Goa Under-17 Leather Ball Cricket Tournament title with a narrow 11-run victory over Banjara Cricket Club in an exciting final held at the NAPEX ground in Sankhali. The team delivered a composed and balanced performance, excelling in both batting and bowling to seal the championship.

Opting to bat



first, Oxford posted a competitive total of 157 for 5 in their 20 overs. Captain Afrid anchored the innings with an impressive unbeaten 85, guiding his side through crucial phases and ensuring a strong finish. He found

solid support in Priyanshu Verma, who added 38 valuable runs to build momentum. Banjara's bowling effort saw contributions from Chetan Lamani, Ansh Harmalkar, and Parth Sankpal, who claimed a wicket each.

In response, Banjara Cricket Club mounted a determined chase of 158. Captain Sai Naik led from the front with a well-crafted 72, keeping his team firmly in contention. Parth Sankpal chipped in with 26 runs, and at 130 for 2, Banjara appeared to be in control of the match. However, Oxford's disciplined bowling in the closing stages turned the tide. Usman Ghani played a crucial role with the ball, applying pressure during key moments and

picking up two wickets. He was supported by Shivam Singh, Afrid, and Rumaan Mulam, who contributed with a wicket each to restrict Banjara to 146 for 6 in their allotted overs. Afrid's outstanding all-round display proved decisive in Oxford's victory. The tournament also highlighted the impact of structured coaching, with several players from both teams being part of the Next Gen Cricket Academy.