



## HC Raps Panchayats In Illegal Structures PIL

### Orders Action Against Panchayat Secretaries

- HIGH COURT PULLS UP VILLAGE PANCHAYATS IN GOA OVER
- NON-COMPLIANCE IN ILLEGAL STRUCTURES PIL
- PANCHAYATS FAILED TO SUBMIT COMPLIANCE REPORTS AS DIRECTED EARLIER
- COURT ORDERS INQUIRY INTO LAPSES BY PANCHAYAT AUTHORITIES
- DISCIPLINARY ACTION DIRECTED AGAINST PANCHAYAT SECRETARIES
- ACTION UNDER SERVICE RULES FOR DERELICTION OF DUTY
- NON-COMPLIANCE LINKED TO HC ORDER DATED MARCH 6, 2025
- ISSUE PERTAINS TO ILLEGAL STRUCTURES AND ENFORCEMENT FAILURES

#### Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** In the suo motu PIL concerning illegal structures in Goa, the High Court has come down heavily on village panchayats for failing to submit compliance reports as directed earlier, and has ordered disciplinary action against erring officials. Taking serious note

of the lapse, the Court directed an inquiry and called for appropriate disciplinary action under service rules against panchayat secretaries for dereliction of duty. The action pertains to their failure to file compliance reports as mandated by the High Court in its order dated March 6, 2025.

During the hearing,

the Division Bench of Justice Suman Shyam and Justice Amit Jamsandekar observed that while several village panchayats (VPs) and municipal councils had submitted compliance affidavits, many had failed to do so within the stipulated time.

"...The VPs and municipal councils have filed the affidavits on the



compliance. Many VPs and municipal councils are yet to do so. The time permitted by the court for filing the reply/affidavit has expired. We direct

the remaining shall file within a week from today by furnishing a copy of the same to Amicus Curiae and respective nodal officers," the Bench stated.

The Court further directed the two designated Nodal Officers to scrutinise the affidavits received from the local bodies and submit their reports within four weeks.

"On receipt of this, the two nodal officers shall examine this and file a report within four weeks as per the direction," the Bench ordered.

The directions were issued while monitoring compliance in the ongoing PIL concerning unauthorised constructions and encroachments affecting public roads and safety.



## BSF Considers Using Snakes and Crocodiles in Riverine Border Gaps

■ Proposal aims to strengthen surveillance along difficult stretches of the India-Bangladesh border

**New Delhi:** The Border Security Force is examining an unusual proposal to deploy reptiles such as snakes and crocodiles in vulnerable riverine stretches along the India-Bangladesh border as part of efforts to prevent infiltration and cross border criminal activity.

A communication issued from the BSF headquarters on March 26 directed field units guarding the border to

study the feasibility of the idea from an operational perspective. The message suggested exploring whether reptiles could act as a natural deterrent in areas where conventional fencing and surveillance remain difficult.

According to officials, the suggestion aligns with directions from Union Home Minister Amit Shah, although the plan remains at a preliminary stage and has not yet been

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## Wild Elephant Omkar damages van at Kadshi-Mopa villagers panic

Team Goemkarponn

**KADSHI:** A wild elephant, identified as Omkar, reportedly caused damage to a van owned by local resident Umesh Gad near Mopa, sparking fear among villagers. Fortunately, no one was injured during the incident. The elephant is believed to have wandered close to human settlements, highlighting growing concerns over wildlife encounters in parts of North Goa. Residents expressed anxiety following the event, while forest officials are monitoring the situation to ensure safety for both people and the animal. Authorities have advised locals to stay cautious and avoid approaching the elephant as measures continue to prevent further incidents.



## BJP Chief Raps Mauvin Godinho Over Invite To Jit Arolkar

■ Calls Remark "Irresponsible"; Arolkar Says Focus Remains On Serving Constituents

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** A political row has erupted within the BJP after Minister Mauvin Godinho publicly invited Mandrem MLA Jit Arolkar to join the party and contest the next Assembly election on a BJP ticket.

Addressing the media, Godinho said that Arolkar would "certainly win" if he



joined the Bharatiya Janata Party and contested from Mandrem on its ticket. "We

want you to be in our party, and if you contest on our party ticket, then you will certainly win the election in Mandrem," Godinho stated, extending an open offer to the MGP legislator.

Responding cautiously, Mandrem MLA Jit Arolkar said his immediate priority is to continue working for the people

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## Strait of Hormuz Will Never Be the Same, Says Iranian Navy Amid Rising Tensions

■ Tehran signals a new regional security approach after fresh warnings from Donald Trump

**New Delhi:** The naval command of Iran has declared that the strategic Strait of Hormuz will not return to its previous status, indicating a significant shift in the country's maritime posture amid escalating tensions in



West Asia.

According to statements from the naval wing of the Islamic

Revolutionary Guard Corps, the current developments in the

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## Enough Must Truly Mean Enough: Rethinking Section 39A in Goa

The recent remarks by Droupadi Murmu, urging that “enough is enough” in the context of mounting concerns over land use and environmental degradation in Goa, have struck a chord far beyond ceremonial rhetoric. At a time when public anxiety over unregulated development is no longer confined to activists and experts, but shared widely by ordinary Goans, the spotlight has once again turned to Section 39A of the Town and Country Planning Act.

For many, Section 39A has come to symbolise a deeper unease about how decisions regarding land, ecology and community futures are being made. The provision allows for changes in land-use zoning under specific circumstances. In principle, flexibility in planning is not inherently problematic. Cities and regions evolve, and governance frameworks must respond to emerging needs. However, the issue in Goa is not about flexibility alone. It is about the manner in which such flexibility is exercised, and whether it aligns with the broader public interest.

Over the years, there has been a growing perception that Section 39A has enabled a pattern of ad hoc decision-making. Concerns have repeatedly been raised about the lack of transparency, limited scope for meaningful public participation, and the speed with which sensitive land parcels can be reclassified. When decisions of such long-term consequence appear to be taken without robust scrutiny, it erodes public trust in institutions that are meant to safeguard collective interests.

The President’s intervention, even if indirect, carries symbolic weight. It reflects a recognition at the highest level that environmental governance and sustainable development are not peripheral concerns but central to the

“What makes the present moment significant is the convergence of voices. Civil society groups, village communities, environmentalists and even sections of the political class have begun to articulate a shared concern: that the current framework may not be adequately protecting Goa’s ecological and social fabric. This is not merely a policy debate. It is about the kind of development model the state wishes to pursue.

However, to assume that Section 39A will simply be scrapped in response to rising criticism would be premature. Legislative provisions are rarely dismantled overnight, especially when they are embedded within a larger planning framework.”

country’s future. Goa, with its fragile ecosystems and unique cultural landscape, stands at a particularly critical juncture. The pressure from tourism, real estate and infrastructure expansion has already begun to strain its natural balance.

What makes the present moment significant is the convergence of voices. Civil society groups, village communities, environmentalists and even sections of the political class have begun to articulate a shared concern: that the current framework may not be adequately protecting

Goa’s ecological and social fabric. This is not merely a policy debate. It is about the kind of development model the state wishes to pursue.

However, to assume that Section 39A will simply be scrapped in response to rising criticism would be premature. Legislative provisions are rarely dismantled overnight, especially when they are embedded within a larger planning framework. What is more likely, and perhaps more constructive, is a process of review and reform. This could include clearer guidelines on when and how the provision can be invoked, stronger requirements for public consultation, and independent oversight mechanisms to ensure accountability.

The real test for policymakers lies in their willingness to engage with the substance of these concerns rather than treating them as episodic dissent. If “enough is enough” is to mean anything, it must translate into institutional change. Cosmetic adjustments or selective enforcement will only deepen scepticism.

Goa’s identity has always been tied to its land — not just as a resource, but as a shared inheritance. Any legal provision that governs its use must therefore operate with the highest degree of transparency, fairness and foresight. Section 39A, in its current form, has clearly triggered a crisis of confidence. Whether it is ultimately repealed, amended or retained, the process must be guided by a genuine commitment to public interest.

The President’s words should not be seen as a conclusion, but as an opening. They have created an opportunity for introspection and course correction. It is now up to the state’s leadership to decide whether this moment will lead to meaningful reform or fade into yet another missed chance.

### EDITOR SPEAKS

## Killer Goa roads continue to claim lives

Suraj Nandrekar

Goa’s roads are becoming paradoxically more dangerous even as overall accident numbers show signs of decline. The concern is no longer just how many accidents occur, but how severe they are. Nowhere is this shift more visible than on the state’s national highways, where crashes are increasingly proving fatal. Highways such as NH-66 and NH-748 are designed for speed and long-distance travel, but in Goa they double up as everyday roads for local communities. This creates a risky overlap. Heavy trucks, tourist vehicles, two-wheelers and pedestrians all share the same space, often without adequate separation. The result is a road environment where a single mistake can have devastating consequences. Speed is the most critical factor. National highways encourage faster driving, and in many stretches across Goa, there is little to physically slow vehicles down. Long, open roads tempt drivers to push limits, while enforcement remains inconsistent. When accidents happen at such speeds, the chances of survival drop sharply. What might have been a minor collision in a city setting often turns fatal on a highway. Equally worrying is the nature of highway design within the state. Unlike access-controlled expressways, Goa’s highways frequently pass through villages and semi-urban areas. People cross roads on foot, local traffic merges suddenly, and roadside activity is constant. Yet, basic safety features such as pedestrian crossings, service lanes, proper lighting and clear signage are often missing or inadequate. This mismatch between road design and real-world use creates conditions for frequent and severe accidents. Two-wheeler riders are among the most vulnerable. A large share of fatal accidents involves riders who are exposed to the full impact of high-speed collisions. Helmets are not always used consistently, and risky manoeuvres such as overtaking on narrow stretches further increase danger. Night-time travel adds another layer of risk, with poor visibility and fatigue affecting both riders and drivers. Tourism also plays a role in shaping highway risks. Visitors unfamiliar with Goa’s roads often underestimate the challenges of driving on highways that are not fully segregated. Rental vehicles, late-night travel and occasional reckless behaviour contribute to the unpredictability. During peak tourist seasons, the volume of traffic increases significantly, putting additional pressure on already strained road infrastructure. Another critical issue is enforcement. While traffic police do conduct checks, continuous monitoring across long highway stretches is difficult. Speeding, dangerous overtaking and lane indiscipline often go unchecked. The absence of widespread automated systems such as speed cameras means that deterrence is limited. Drivers are more likely to take risks when the chances of being penalised appear low. Emergency response also influences fatality rates. In several highway accidents, the time taken to reach victims and provide medical care can determine whether injuries become fatal. Delays in ambulance access, especially in less populated stretches, reduce the chances of survival for seriously injured victims. The rising severity of accidents points to a larger issue. Road safety is not just about driver behaviour. It is about how roads are designed, how rules are enforced, and how quickly help arrives when things go wrong. Goa’s highways highlight gaps on all these fronts. Reducing fatalities will require a coordinated approach. Identifying accident-prone stretches and redesigning them, enforcing speed limits more strictly, improving lighting and signage, and creating safer spaces for pedestrians are essential steps. Public awareness campaigns must also target both residents and tourists, stressing the risks of high-speed driving and the importance of safety measures. Goa’s highways are meant to connect places and people. But unless urgent attention is given to safety, they risk becoming corridors where journeys end abruptly. The challenge is not just to reduce accidents, but to ensure that when they do occur, they are not inevitably fatal.

# Goa Tops India In Unemployment Rate At 8.3%, PLFS Report Reveals

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** Goa has emerged as the state with the highest unemployment rate in the country, as per the latest Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

The survey indicates that Goa recorded an unemployment rate of 8.3 per cent between January and December 2025, significantly higher than the national average of 3.1 per cent.

Nagaland followed with 6.7 per cent, while Arunachal Pradesh reported 6.6 per cent. Other states with comparatively higher unemployment included Manipur (5.9 per cent),



Punjab (5.3 per cent), Uttarakhand (5.1 per cent), Telangana (5 per cent), Meghalaya (4.8 per cent), Haryana (4.5 per cent), Himachal Pradesh (4.5 per cent), and Rajasthan (4.3 per cent).

On the other end of the spectrum, Gujarat recorded the lowest unemployment rate at 0.9 per cent. Madhya Pradesh (1.5 per cent),

Karnataka (2.3 per cent), Chhattisgarh (2.3 per cent), and Maharashtra (2.4 per cent) also reported relatively lower figures.

The nationwide survey covered approximately 1.48 lakh households and 6.56 lakh individuals, spanning various educational backgrounds from primary schooling to postgraduate levels.

Within Goa, rural areas showed a higher unemployment rate of 11.9 per cent, compared to 6.1 per cent in urban regions. Among rural residents, unemployment stood at 12.1 per cent for men and 11.4 per cent for women. In urban areas, the rate was 6.6 per cent for men and 4.8 per cent for women.

State authorities have previously maintained that the figures may not fully reflect ground realities. According to officials, many individuals who are already employed in the private sector continue to keep their names registered with employment exchanges in hopes of securing government jobs, which could inflate the overall unemployment data.

# Goa BJP Govt Exposed on Rising Unemployment Crisis: Panjikar

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** The latest findings from the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, have completely exposed the failure of the Bharatiya Janata Party Government in Goa under Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant.

Goa has shockingly recorded the highest unemployment rate in India at 8.3%, which is far above the national average of 3.1%. This is not just a statistic, it is a clear indictment of the BJP government's inability to generate jobs and secure the future of Goa's youth charged GPCC Media Chairman Amarnath Panjikar.

For years, Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant has made tall claims about development, investment, and employment opportunities. However, the ground reality tells a completely different story. Educated youth across Goa are struggling, qualified individuals are left without jobs, and families are facing growing uncertainty. The BJP Government has failed to translate promises into meaningful employment stated Mr. Panjikar.

Instead of creating sustainable job opportunities, the government has indulged in publicity-driven



governance, ignoring the real issues faced by the people said Mr. Amarnath Panjikar.

It is deeply concerning that while other states are progressing and creating opportunities, Goa — despite its potential — is lagging behind due to lack of vision, poor planning, and misplaced priorities. The BJP's so-called "double engine" model has only resulted in double failure for the youth of Goa said Mr. Panjikar.

This government has not only failed economically but has also betrayed the aspirations of an entire generation. The educated unemployed youth, who once looked towards the government with hope, are now disillusioned and frustrated. We strongly condemn the inaction and incompetence of the BJP Government. The people of Goa deserve accountability. They deserve answers. Most importantly, they deserve jobs. It is time for the people to recognize this failure and hold the government accountable. The youth of Goa cannot be sacrificed for political propaganda and hollow promises.

# Goa Reservoir Levels Dip Amid Rising Summer Demand, Situation Under Control: WRD

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** As temperatures climb across the state, increasing water consumption has begun to impact reservoir storage, with several major dams nearing or slipping below the 50 per cent mark.

Despite the decline, officials from the Water Resources Department (WRD) have assured that the overall situation remains stable and

manageable.

According to recent WRD data, the Selaulim dam — the main source of drinking water for South Goa — is currently at 53 per cent capacity. In North Goa, the Tillari reservoir has reached the halfway level at 50 per cent. Meanwhile, Chapoli in Canacona and the smaller Gaunem reservoir are in a relatively better position, recording 58 per cent and 59 per cent storage,



respectively.

However, some areas are witnessing sharper drops. The Anjunem

reservoir, which supplies water to Sattari and parts of Bicholim, has fallen to 36 per cent.

# BJP Sthapana Diwas: Naik Projects Big Win In Ponda Bypoll

■ Party At 46 Years, Says BJP An Inspiration; Confident Of 3,500+ Margin In Ponda

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** Marking the BJP's 46th Sthapana Diwas, Goa BJP President Damodar Naik on Monday highlighted the party's growth into "an inspiration for crores of people" and expressed strong confidence of a decisive victory in the upcoming Ponda by-election.

Speaking after hoisting the party flag at the BJP headquarters in Panaji,



Naik traced the party's journey from the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, founded in 1951, to the formation of the BJP in 1980. "Today,

the BJP is no longer limited to just one or two MPs; it has become an inspiration for crores of people," he said.

# Dengue Cases Decline Sharply In Goa In March, Health Officials Credit Preventive Measures

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** Goa recorded a notable reduction in dengue cases in March this year, with only four infections reported across the state, according to the Directorate of Health Services.

The figure marks a drop compared to previous months and years. In February, 21 cases were detected, while March last year had reported seven infections.

Dr Kalpana Mahatme, Deputy Director and head

of the State's National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme, said the decline is the result of sustained and proactive measures on the ground. Health teams have been actively identifying and eliminating mosquito breeding sites, clearing stagnant water, and conducting awareness campaigns focused on cleanliness and prevention. Local panchayats have also played a key role in supporting these efforts.

The four cases

reported in March were from Margao, Cansaulim, Cortalim, and Curtorim. Officials noted that a majority of dengue patients in the early months of 2026 were migrant labourers residing at construction sites or temporary shelters. Improper storage of water in such locations is believed to have created favourable conditions for mosquito breeding. Additionally, the movement of workers from dengue-affected regions has contributed to the spread.

## Woman Seriously Injured In Knife Attack At Cortalim; Relative Booked

Team Goemkarponn

**VOLLANT:** A woman sustained serious injuries after she was allegedly attacked with a knife at Vollant, Cortalim, on April 4 morning.

According to police, the complaint was filed by a resident of Vollant, Cortalim (name withheld), stating that at around 9:45



am his married daughter was plucking flowers while standing on an internal public road when the accused, identified as Sushant Shirodkar, a neighbour and relative,

approached her with a knife while allegedly under the influence of alcohol.

Police said the accused allegedly abused the woman in filthy language and questioned why she was visiting her parental home despite being married and residing at Carambolim. He then allegedly attempted to kill her by repeatedly

attacking her on the head and neck with the knife, causing serious injuries.

The complainant also sustained injuries while trying to rescue his daughter from the attack. A case has been registered, and further investigation is being carried out by PSI Mahesh Bhomkar of Verna Police Station.

## Cross Complaints Filed After Violent Clash In Aldona

Team Goemkarponn

**ALDONA:** Cross complaints have been registered following a violent altercation between two parties at Aldona on April 4, with both sides accusing each other of trespass and assault.

According to police, Melwyn Francis Fernandes (49), a resident of Goncoi, Aldona, alleged that at around 3:20 pm, Savio Lobo of Goncoi, Aldona, criminally trespassed into his restaurant, La Boneta, at Santarxette, Aldona, and assaulted him with metal shock absorbers following a dispute over not allowing authorities to inspect the complainant's house.

The complainant sustained bodily injuries. Further investigation is being conducted by ASI Ajay Gaonkar.

In a cross complaint, Francila Fernandes of Coimawado, Aldona, alleged that at around



3:15 pm the same day, Melwyn Francis Fernandes and Schinieder Fernandes, both residents of Goncoi, Aldona, along with an unknown male, allegedly trespassed into the house of her brother Savio Lobo at Goncoi, Aldona.

The accused allegedly abused him, threatened him with dire consequences, and assaulted him with weapons causing serious bodily injuries.

The complaint further stated that the accused also damaged household items belonging to Savio Lobo, resulting in an estimated loss of around Rs. 1 lakh.

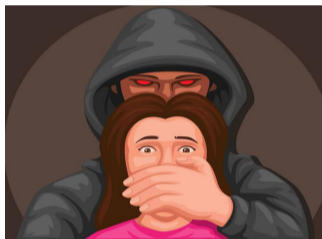
Further investigation in the matter is in progress with PSI M. Palni.

## Minor Girl Kidnapped In Quepem; Assault Case Registered At Colva

Team Goemkarponn

**QUEPEM:** Police have registered two separate cases involving a minor girl's kidnapping in Quepem and an assault incident at Colva.

In the first case, a resident of Xeldem, Quepem, originally from Uttar Pradesh, lodged a complaint stating that on February 2, 2025, at around 4:30 pm, an unknown accused



allegedly kidnapped his minor daughter from his legal guardianship.

A case has been registered, and further investigation is being carried out by PSI Digamber Bondre of

Quepem Police Station.

In another incident, Francisco Xavier Gomes, a resident of Vanelim, Colva, reported that on April 5, 2026, at about 3:00 am at Viva Goa Restaurant, Colva, four persons allegedly abused and assaulted him.

The accused have been identified as Amit Langote of Assolda, Quepem; Damodar Sathe of Fatorda, Margao; Tukaram Langote of

Assolda, Quepem; and Bhimaji Hiranwale of Guirdolim, Curtorim.

Police said the accused, acting with common intention, allegedly abused the complainant with filthy language and assaulted him with fist blows, causing bleeding injuries.

Further investigation is in progress with HC Sandesh Gadkar of Colva Police Station.

## Two Found Dead In Suspected S\*\*\*e Cases In Sattari And Saligao

Team Goemkarponn

**SALIGAO/VALPOI:** Two persons were found dead in separate suspected suicide incidents reported from Sattari and Saligao on April 4. Police have registered unnatural death cases and initiated inquiries.

In the first incident, Valpoi Police received information from PCR Panaji at around 8:35 pm about a body found hanging at a house near the Primary Health Centre at Podocem, Sattari. PSI Khushali Naik visited the spot and found a man hanging from a ceiling fan inside the hall of the house in a decomposed state.

The deceased was identified as Arjun More (45), a resident of Bhumika Nagar, Podocem, Sattari. Police conducted scene of occurrence and inquest panchanamas in the presence of panch witnesses and forensic experts. The body was later preserved at GMC Morgue, Bambolim.



Further investigation is in progress.

In another case, Saligao Police received a call at around 5:20 pm about a person hanging from a ceiling fan using a cloth towel near H. No. 4/128(2), Akem Mollem Bhat, Saligao. The deceased was identified as Shabir Sheikh (24), a native of Malda district, West Bengal, who was residing in the area.

Preliminary inquiry with the deceased's brother revealed that he was under stress due to family issues between him and his wife. Police stated that no foul play is suspected. The body was preserved at GMC Morgue, Bambolim, and further investigation is being carried out by PSI Dishan Naik.

## Youth Killed In Self-Accident At Sarzora

Team Goemkarponn

**SARZORA:** A 27-year-old man died in a self-accident reported at Sarzora on April 5, Cuncolim Police said.

According to police, a call was received from South Goa District Hospital, Margao, at around 10:38 am informing that Wilson Soreng (27), a resident of Assolda, Quepem, was brought dead following a vehicular accident at Sarzora. An unnatural death case has been registered under Section 194 of BNSS, along with a motor vehicle accident case. During inquiry, police learned from family members that the deceased had left for Easter Mass at Cuncolim with friends. After the mass, he reportedly stayed back with them for some time, and while returning home, met with a self-accident at Sarzora, succumbing to his injuries.

Police conducted the inquest panchanama, and the body has been preserved at South Goa District Hospital, Margao, for medico-legal formalities.

## Vasco youth dies after fall from Baina flyover

Team Goemkarponn

**BAINA:** A 23-year-old youth lost his life after his motorcycle crashed into the safety barrier of the Baina flyover, causing him to fall onto the ground near the railway tracks at IOC junction in Vasco.

The accident occurred on Saturday when the rider, identified as Girish Ram Gurkha, a resident of Bhute Bhat, Baina, was proceeding from Vasco towards Baina on his KTM Duke motorcycle bearing



registration number GA06Q3138. While negotiating the stretch on the flyover, he reportedly lost control and dashed against the side safety barrier. The impact caused him to be thrown off the bridge, and he fell onto the ground below, sustaining critical injuries. The pillion

rider accompanying him suffered minor injuries in the incident.

Following the accident, Girish Gurkha was shifted to Sub District Hospital, Chicalim, in a 108 ambulance. However, hospital authorities later informed the police that he was brought dead to the casualty.

Police have registered a motor vehicle accident case in connection with the incident and further investigation is in progress.

## Three Held For Activa Theft; Six Stolen Bikes Recovered In Margao

Team Goemkarponn

**MARGAO:** Margao Town Police have arrested three persons in connection with the theft of a Honda Activa 5G scooter and recovered six stolen two-wheelers during the investigation.

According to police, Crime No. 32/2026 was registered under Section 303(2) of the BNS following a complaint filed by Ahmed Hussain Patel regarding the theft of his Honda Activa



5G. During the course of investigation, police traced and arrested the accused identified as Mohammad Shaikh (35), a labourer residing near the Wholesale Fish Market, Margao; Prasanjit

Burman (30), a labourer residing near Holy Spirit Church, Margao, and a native of Assam; and Raja Hiremath (21), residing near KTC Bus Stand area, Margao, and a native of Karnataka.

# AAP Claims 80% Houses Covered In Ponda Campaign

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PONDA:** The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Sunday claimed it has covered over 80 per cent of houses in Ponda as campaigning for the by-election nears its end, asserting growing public support across the constituency.

AAP candidate Geetesh Naik said the party has reached every corner of Ponda through door-to-door outreach and interacted with residents on key local issues. He alleged that people raised concerns over



contaminated drinking water in Panditwada, frequent power cuts in areas such as Nagzar and Haveli, and inflated electricity bills. He further claimed that the response on the ground reflects dissatisfaction with both BJP and Congress.

AAP Goa State

President Valmiki Naik stated that the scale of engagement across the constituency indicates a shift in public mood, adding that people are increasingly viewing AAP as a credible alternative. He expressed confidence that the party would secure a strong mandate in the by-election.

AAP Senior Vice President and Ponda campaign in-charge Sandesh Teleikar-Dessai said the campaign has covered nearly 5,786 houses and most booths across areas including

Khadpabandh, Durgabhat, Shanti Nagar, Khandepar, Curti, Nagzar, Silva Nagar, Sapna Park, Naga Masjid, Haveli Curti, Yashwant Nagar and Kurtarkar Nagar. He added that residents have voiced frustration over lack of development and are expecting results-oriented governance. AAP leaders said the response from voters indicates support for clean and transparent governance, expressing confidence that the momentum will translate into a decisive electoral outcome in Ponda.

# North Goa Issues Heat Wave Advisory

■ Authorities Directed To Ensure Water, ORS And Public Awareness Measures

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** The District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), North Goa, has issued a heat wave advisory ahead of rising temperatures expected between March and May, directing all departments to implement preventive and preparedness measures.

Collector and Chairperson of DDMA North Goa, Ankit Yadav, stated that departments including Panchayats and Municipal Administration must install colour-coded display boards indicating heat alerts and widely publicise do's and don'ts. Authorities have also been instructed to identify vulnerable hotspots and ensure availability of potable drinking water in villages, towns and slum areas.

The Directorate of Health Services and Women and Child Development have been directed to ensure adequate stock of Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS), drinking water facilities at health centres



and anganwadis, and deploy additional staff to manage sunstroke cases. Hospitals and PHCs have also been asked to activate emergency services and maintain sufficient IV fluids.

Public Works Department has been instructed to set up drinking water kiosks at public places, reschedule working hours for construction workers, and carry out regular water sprinkling on roads. The Electricity Department has been asked to ensure uninterrupted power supply to critical facilities and avoid load shedding during peak heat hours.

Departments including Labour, Industries and Fire & Emergency Services have been directed to conduct awareness campaigns for workers and ensure drinking water facilities at industrial and construction sites.

# Collem Health Facilities To Be Upgraded; CM Assures PHC And 24x7 Ambulance

**Team Goemkarponn**

**COLLEM:** Health facilities in Collem are set for a major boost after a delegation met Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant and sought urgent improvements.

Hon'ble Speaker Dr Ganesh Gaonkar, along with the Dharbandora



Zilla Panchayat member, Collem Panchayat sarpanch, panch members

and local residents, met the Chief Minister and highlighted the need to

strengthen healthcare services in the area.

During the meeting, the Chief Minister assured that the ongoing RMD work will be completed within the next six months. He also stated that the RMD facility will be upgraded to a Primary Health Centre (PHC) to improve medical services for residents.



# Residents Oppose Delimitation Changes Ahead Of Bicholim Municipal Polls

**Team Goemkarponn**

**BICHOLIM:** Residents of Varchawada, Borde in Bicholim have expressed strong opposition to the recent delimitation and changes in the voters' list ahead of the upcoming Bicholim Municipal Council elections. Addressing a press conference, locals alleged that the newly carried out delimitation in the Varchawada, Borde area is unfair and would adversely affect several voters. They claimed that changes in the voters' list have caused inconvenience

to many residents and could impact their voting rights. The residents urged the administration to review the decision and take corrective measures. Responding to the concerns, local MLA Dr Chandrakant Shetye clarified that the delimitation process is conducted by election authorities as per rules and through the competent authority. He stated that there is no personal interference in the process and all decisions are taken strictly in accordance with prescribed norms.

# Komar pant petitions for Sewerage Plant in Canacona

**Team Goemkarponn**

**CANACONA:** Youth social worker and former councillor of the Canacona Municipal Council, Shubham Komarpant, has petitioned SIDCGL Chairman and MLA Sankalp Amonkar to set up a Sewerage Treatment Plant in Canacona to address the rising sewerage load in the taluka.

In a memorandum submitted to Amonkar, Komarpant stated that the sewerage burden is increasing with the growth of tourism-related infrastructure, including large



hotels, resorts and residential projects. He warned that untreated discharge from such developments is contributing to pollution of the

groundwater table and rivers in Canacona. Komarpant urged the Sewerage and Infrastructural Development Corporation of Goa Limited (SIDCGL) to take up the project at the earliest to prevent further environmental damage and support planned urban growth in the region. SIDCGL Chairman Sankalp Amonkar is learnt to have responded positively and assured that the matter would be taken into consideration at the earliest. Komarpant's tenure as councillor of the Canacona Municipal Council ended on March 31, 2026.

# DEO Reviews Ponda Bypoll Preparedness, Orders Stronger Surveillance

**Team Goemkarponn**

**MARGAO:** Collector and District Election Officer (South Goa) Egna Cleetus reviewed election arrangements for the upcoming by-election to the 21-Ponda Assembly Constituency, stressing the need to strengthen surveillance and enforcement measures.

The review meeting



was held in the presence of Expenditure Observer Sharyu Adhe, SP (South) Santosh Desai, Additional Collector-II Ramesh

Gaonkar and Deputy Collector South-I Velton Tellis, along with nodal officers and senior officials from various departments.

During the meeting, the Expenditure Observer directed officials to enhance surveillance by setting up check posts at all entry and exit points and closely monitoring suspicious cash movements. Authorities were also instructed to intensify vigilance against liquor, narcotics and other inducements, and to take prompt action on violations.

# Café Akasa introduces second edition of its Easter Special Meal

**National:** service of Akasa Air, has unveiled the second edition of its Easter Special Meal, bringing a gourmet, season-inspired dining experience to the skies.

Thoughtfully curated to celebrate the spirit of Easter, the special offering features a smoked chicken and dill roulade with pistachio and cranberry, paired with a colourful balsamic veggie salad, a silky lemon panna cotta topped with vibrant berry coulis, and a beverage of choice.

Available for a limited period from April 1 to April 30, 2026, the Easter

Special Meal can be conveniently pre-booked across the Akasa Air network via Akasa Air's website, [www.akasaair.com](http://www.akasaair.com) or the mobile app.

Rooted in the spirit of Easter, a time of togetherness, and joyful celebration, the meal brings together fresh, vibrant flavours and comforting elements that reflect the warmth and significance of the season.

The offering reflects Café Akasa's continuous endeavour to redefine the in-flight dining experience by moving beyond functionality to create



moments of delight and discovery.

Since launching operations in August

2022, Akasa Air has been committed to offering specially curated meal options that reflect regional specialties associated with various celebrations.

From Makar Sankranti to Valentine's Day, Holi, Eid, Easter, Mother's Day, International Yoga Day, Navroz, Onam, Ganesh

Chaturthi, Dussehra, Diwali, Children's Day and Christmas, Café Akasa continues to enhance the flying experience with festive meals. The airline also offers a pre-selection of cakes on its regular

menu for flyers who want to celebrate special occasions with their loved ones in the skies.

Café Akasa's frequently refreshed menu is thoughtfully curated to include a variety of gourmet meals, snacks, and refreshing beverages to ensure there is something to cater to a wide range of dietary and culinary preferences. The menu offers 45+ meal options, including fusion meals, appetisers with a regional twist, and decadent desserts, all exclusively curated by reputed chefs from across India.

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## BSF Considers Using Snakes and Crocodiles in Riverine Border Gaps

region have permanently altered the balance of power in the crucial waterway. Officials asserted that external forces, particularly the United States and Israel, would no longer be able to operate with the same level of influence near Iranian waters as in the past. The announcement was shared through official channels, emphasising that the strait's conditions have fundamentally changed for countries viewed as rivals by Tehran. The remarks also highlighted ongoing preparations for what Iranian authorities describe as a new security arrangement in the Persian Gulf.

Iranian naval officials indicated that the country is working toward establishing a regionally managed security



framework in the Gulf. The concept is based on the idea that nations bordering the waterway should be responsible for maintaining stability and security without the presence of foreign military forces.

As part of this approach, Iran is reportedly expanding its naval deployments, strengthening surveillance systems and enhancing rapid response capabilities in the surrounding waters. The move is aimed at

safeguarding its maritime boundaries while ensuring the continued flow of energy shipments through the strait, one of the world's most vital oil transit routes.

The statement comes shortly after renewed warnings from Donald Trump, who cautioned Iran against limiting access through the waterway and threatened strong retaliation if restrictions were imposed. Iranian officials have maintained that the passage remains

open, but suggested that vessels connected to the United States, Israel or their allies could face limitations. Despite the sharp rhetoric, diplomatic channels appear to remain active. Reports indicate that discussions involving Washington, Tehran and regional intermediaries are exploring the possibility of a temporary 45 day ceasefire that could create space for broader negotiations aimed at easing tensions in the region.

## Strait of Hormuz Will Never Be the Same, Says Iranian Navy Amid Rising Tensions

implemented. Authorities have clarified that the current exercise is limited to examining whether such a measure would be practical and effective.

Security officials have also acknowledged that the proposal presents several challenges. Questions remain about how the reptiles would be sourced and managed, as well as the potential impact on communities living along the riverbanks. Many settlements are located close to these vulnerable stretches, raising concerns about safety if such a measure were to be introduced.

The idea was discussed following a meeting held on February 9 at the BSF headquarters in New Delhi. The force is responsible for guarding India's borders with both Bangladesh and Pakistan, with the eastern frontier posing particular challenges due to its terrain.

Large sections of the border pass through flood prone riverine areas where erecting permanent fencing is difficult. During the monsoon season, water levels rise and often submerge existing barriers, creating gaps that can be exploited for illegal crossings or smuggling.

Authorities say these geographical conditions have long complicated border management efforts. The latest proposal is being considered amid continued concerns about infiltration and smuggling activities along the eastern frontier, including recent cases of gold smuggling intercepted by BSF personnel in parts of West Bengal.

For now, officials emphasise that the plan remains under evaluation and any decision will depend on detailed assessments of operational feasibility and potential risks to local communities.

## BJP Chief Raps Mauvin Godinho Over Invite To Jit Arolkar

of his constituency. He added that any decision regarding contesting elections or party affiliation would be taken at the appropriate time. "Right now, I want to continue working for the people

of my constituency. The decision on the ticket can happen at the right time," Arolkar said.

However, BJP Goa President Damu Naik strongly criticized

Godinho's remarks, calling them "irresponsible" and against party discipline. Naik said such statements should not be made publicly, especially when it concerns inviting leaders from other parties.

He further cautioned party MLAs against making baseless remarks before the media, stressing the importance of maintaining discipline and following established party protocols.



# Don't Fear TMC's Intimidation on Polling Day, Trust the Law: PM Modi in Cooch Behar Rally

■ Prime Minister says the upcoming election will remove fear in Bengal and bring confidence through a BJP victory

**New Delhi:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday urged voters in Cooch Behar, West Bengal, to cast their ballots without fear and to place their trust in the rule of law despite alleged intimidation by workers of the All India Trinamool Congress.

Addressing a public rally, Modi sharply criticised the ruling party and encouraged people not to be intimidated on polling day. He said voters had the confidence of the Bharatiya Janata Party to



counter what he described as a culture of corruption and fear in the state. According to him, people should rely on the strength of democratic institutions and vote freely. The Prime Minister asserted that the

upcoming election would mark a turning point for the state. He said the polls would remove the climate of fear in Bengal and restore confidence among citizens if the BJP secured victory. Modi also

indicated that after the election, there would be a thorough review of the actions of the state's ruling leadership and that the law would take its course. During the speech, he criticised the functioning of the state government and raised concerns about what he described as a disregard for constitutional institutions. Referring to a recent incident in Malda, Modi said the episode had shocked both the judiciary and citizens across the country.



## India's Diplomacy Praised as Iran Seeks Bigger Role for Delhi in War Negotiations

■ Tehran signals confidence in India's balanced foreign policy as conflict enters sixth week

**New Delhi:** As the ongoing conflict involving Iran enters its sixth week, officials from Tehran have expressed hope that India could play a larger role in mediating efforts aimed at reducing tensions in the region. Dr. Abdul Majid Hakeem Ilahi, the representative of Iran's Supreme Leader in India, called for renewed global efforts toward peace and highlighted the strength of India's diplomatic approach. Speaking about the situation, he described

the conflict as a serious mistake that has affected not only Iran but people across many countries.

Ilahi emphasised that India's diplomatic influence and balanced international relations place it in a strong position to contribute to peace negotiations. According to him, the consequences of the war are being felt worldwide, with civilians

in several regions facing hardship as the conflict continues.

Similar sentiments were earlier expressed by Iran's ambassador to India, Mohammad Fathali, who said New Delhi could play an effective and constructive role in easing tensions between Iran, the United States and Israel. He pointed to India's long standing ties with all sides and its reputation for maintaining a balanced foreign policy.

The diplomatic discussion follows a recent announcement by Donald Trump about a temporary pause in escalation and the proposal of a 15 point ceasefire plan sent to Tehran through intermediaries in Pakistan. Pakistan has also offered to host potential talks, although the broader geopolitical environment remains complex.

## Kerala Polls Aim to Shape State's Future, Says Amit Shah

■ Home Minister claims growing NDA support in the state and calls for a BJP-led government

**New Delhi:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday said the upcoming assembly elections in Kerala are not only about changing the government but about securing a stronger future for the state. Addressing a public gathering in the Kunnathunadu constituency, Shah stated that the vote share of



the National Democratic Alliance has steadily increased in Kerala since the 2014 Indian general election. He expressed confidence

that the growing support for the alliance indicates the time has come for a government led by the Bharatiya Janata Party in the state. During his speech, Shah extended greetings to the Christian community on the occasion of Easter and appealed to them to support the NDA in the upcoming polls. He emphasised that the

alliance stands for equal justice for all citizens while rejecting the politics of appeasement. The Home Minister also criticised the state government led by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan. He alleged that the administration often renames projects funded by the central government in order to claim credit for them.



## People Will Give a Fitting Reply: BJP Hits Back at Kharge Over 'Illiterate Gujarat' Remark

■ Congress chief's comments during Kerala campaign spark sharp political reactions across the country

**New Delhi:** A political controversy erupted after Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge made remarks about voters in Gujarat during an election campaign speech in Kerala, drawing strong criticism from leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Responding to the

statement, BJP president Nitin Nabin accused the Congress leadership of repeatedly insulting people across the country. He said every state has played a vital role in India's development and criticised what he described as attempts to belittle citizens through political remarks.

## Delhi Unveils Rs 22,000 Crore Green Budget to Tackle Yamuna Pollution and Dirty Air

■ New plan links government spending across departments to measurable environmental outcomes

**New Delhi:** The government of Delhi has announced an ambitious environmental plan worth over Rs 22,000 crore aimed at addressing the capital's long standing air pollution crisis and the severe contamination of the Yamuna River.

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Sunday presented the 2026 to 2027 Green Budget, allocating more than 21 percent of the total state budget of Rs 1.03 lakh crore for projects connected to environmental improvement. The initiative seeks to ensure that spending across the

government produces measurable progress in areas such as air quality, water treatment and pollution control.

A key feature of the plan is a new system that requires 17 government departments to monitor and report how their spending contributes to environmental goals. Under this framework, every department will link its expenditures to outcomes like cleaner air, improved water quality and reduced pollution levels. A dedicated Green Fund will support projects across departments, aiming to reduce coordination gaps that



have slowed earlier clean up efforts.

The largest share of the allocation, Rs 6,485 crore, has been earmarked for the Delhi Jal Board to strengthen sewage treatment and accelerate the cleaning of the Yamuna. Untreated and partially treated sewage discharged through major drains remains one of the biggest contributors to pollution in the river.

Authorities believe improving sewage infrastructure is essential to reducing the contamination load.

The budget also focuses heavily on reducing pollution from vehicles and dust, two major sources of poor air quality in the city. Around Rs 4,758 crore has been allocated to expand the electric bus fleet and improve public transport systems.

# 'Was the Planning Right?' Aaron Finch Questions CSK Strategy After Third Straight Loss

■ RCB's dominant performance exposes tactical flaws as Chennai Super Kings struggle in IPL 2026

New Delhi: Former Australia captain Aaron Finch has questioned the planning of Chennai Super Kings after the team suffered its third consecutive defeat in the Indian Premier League 2026 season.

CSK went down by 43 runs to Royal Challengers Bengaluru in a match played in Bengaluru on Sunday night. The loss extended the Chennai franchise's poor start to the tournament, with two of their three defeats coming by heavy margins.

Analysing the match, Finch suggested that



the issue went beyond execution and pointed to problems in the team's overall strategy. He explained that captains can accept poor execution if the plan itself is sound and players have practised it repeatedly.

However, he questioned whether CSK had the right plan in place in the first place, adding that the combination of flawed planning and weak execution was a worrying sign. RCB seized control of the game late in the

innings when Tim David launched a powerful assault in the death overs. Despite CSK remaining competitive for much of the first innings, the late surge from Bengaluru shifted the momentum decisively. Former India cricketer Ambati Rayudu also criticised the approach taken by CSK during the crucial phase of the match. He remarked that the team continued with a strategy that was clearly not working and lacked intervention from the leadership group to slow the game down and reassess the plan.



## Satwik-Chirag Withdraw From Badminton Asia Championships; Lakshya Sen and PV Sindhu Lead India's Campaign

■ Injury forces men's doubles champions out as India eyes long-awaited singles title at continental tournament

New Delhi: India's top men's doubles pair Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty have withdrawn from the Badminton Asia Championships due to a shoulder injury to Rankireddy, leaving India to rely on its singles stars to lead the campaign.

The duo, who clinched the continental title in 2023, decided to skip the tournament as Rankireddy continues to recover from a recurring shoulder problem. The pair had earlier pulled out of the Swiss Open before their quarterfinal match because of the same injury concern.

With the withdrawal of the top ranked doubles team, India's challenge will now be spearheaded by Lakshya Sen and PV Sindhu in the singles events. Both players will be aiming to end India's long wait for a singles title at the continental tournament.

India has not won a men's singles gold at

the event since Dinesh Khanna achieved the feat in 1965. Lakshya Sen, who recently finished runner up at the All England Championships, will be looking to build on his strong form. The 24 year old will begin his campaign against Lee Cheuk Yiu of Hong Kong.

In women's singles, two time Olympic medallist Sindhu returns to action after a disrupted European tour. She had to withdraw from the All England Championships after being stranded in Dubai due to regional tensions and later skipped the Swiss Open to recover. Sindhu will open her campaign against Malaysia's Wong Ling Ching.

India will also see action from players such as HS Prannoy, who returns after recovering from injury, and Kidambi Srikanth, who faces Singapore's Loh Kean Yew. Rising star Ayush Shetty is set to take on China's Li Shi Feng.

## 'Played All Domestic Games to Stay Match Ready': Mohammed Shami Sends Strong Message

■ Veteran pacer credits fitness and domestic cricket for match-winning spell in IPL clash

New Delhi: Indian fast bowler Mohammed Shami emphasised the importance of regular domestic cricket and maintaining peak fitness after delivering a standout performance that helped Lucknow Super Giants secure a crucial win in the Indian Premier League 2026.

Speaking after the match against Sunrisers Hyderabad in Hyderabad,



Shami said staying connected with the game through domestic competitions had helped

him maintain rhythm and sharpness. He explained that consistent match practice and physical

fitness are essential for players to refine their skills and perform at the highest level.

The experienced pacer delivered a clinical spell, finishing with impressive figures of two wickets for nine runs and bowling 18 dot balls. His disciplined performance played a key role in restricting the opposition and securing momentum for Lucknow.

## Royal Tigers Post Massive 177 Run Win as Five Teams Register Victories in Chetan Manju Desai T20 Tournament

Dominant performances by Palolem Warriors, Mallikarjun Gaondongrim, Young Marathas, Royal Tigers and Arya Strikers highlight league matches at Mashem

### Team Goemkarponn

**CANACONA:** Palolem Warriors, Mallikarjun Gaondongrim, Young Marathas, Royal Tigers Faskali and Arya Strikers emerged victorious in their respective league matches of the 1st Chetan Manju Desai Leather Ball T20 Cricket Tournament

played at the GCA Grounds in Mashem, Canacona.

Palolem Warriors secured an eight wicket victory over Patnem Colomb Avengers. Batting first, Patnem Colomb Avengers managed 78 for the loss of seven wickets in 20 overs, with Sairaj Naik contributing 26 runs.

## AIFF Elections Likely Postponed to December as FIFA Raises No Objection

■ Extension expected to help federation align constitution with National Sports Governance Act 2025

New Delhi: The All India Football Federation is likely to postpone its scheduled elections by three months after receiving a "no objection" from FIFA, allowing the governing body more time to align its constitution with the new National Sports Governance Act 2025. According to reports, the elections, initially expected to take

place around September 2026, may now be held in December. The extension is intended to give the federation sufficient time to incorporate structural changes required under the new sports governance law and its accompanying regulations. Current AIFF president Kalyan Chaubey was elected on September 2, 2022, for a four year term.

While the next election was originally expected before the completion of his tenure, the introduction of the new legislation prompted the federation to request additional time to update its constitution and administrative framework.

Officials within the federation have indicated that continuing with the existing leadership for a short period

will help ensure the smooth functioning of football administration in the country while the necessary reforms are implemented. In a communication to stakeholders, AIFF deputy secretary general M Satyanarayan referenced a notice issued by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in December 2025.

