



Karapur Agitation Intensifies as Villagers Demand Immediate Halt to Mega Project

Protesters Outmanoeuvre Police Deployment, Warn of Escalating Stir Over Alleged Environmental Damage

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The agitation against the proposed mega project at Karapur-Sarvan intensified on Friday as residents, who have been protesting for the past 66 days, marched to government offices in Panaji and demanded an immediate stop-work order, alleging that environmental destruction at the project site continues unchecked

despite pending



approvals.

In a move that caught authorities off guard, members of the "Save Karapur" movement altered their announced protest plans at the last minute. While police had

deployed personnel at the

Directorate of Panchayats expecting a demonstration there, protesters instead marched to the Town and Country Planning (TCP) Department office before proceeding to the Environment Department.

The unexpected change in venue enabled the protesters to bypass security arrangements and draw attention to what they described as official inaction over the controversial project.

Accompanied by St Cruz MLA Viresh Borkar, a delegation of villagers later met Environment Department Director and Goa Coastal Zone Management Authority

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AAP Demands Withdrawal of Power Bill Penalties, Warns of Protest

Party seeks three-month window for consumers to regularise sanctioned load; threatens march to Power Minister's residence



Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: AAP Goa President Valmiki Naik on Friday criticised the Electricity Department over its stance on consumers being required to apply for an increase in sanctioned electrical load, questioning the rationale behind imposing penalty charges on people who were allegedly unaware of the requirement.

Naik asked whether the department suffers any financial loss due to an increase in sanctioned load and, if not, why consumers are being penalised instead of being given an opportunity to regularise their connections.

He argued that many residents were not informed about the need to submit applications for a load enhancement.

The AAP leader called on the Electricity Department to issue a clear policy decision immediately. He demanded that all penalty charges linked to the issue be withdrawn and that consumers across Goa be granted a three-month period to file applications for an increase in sanctioned load.

He also urged the department to process and approve such applications within the same three-month timeframe.



Jaishankar Defends Russian Oil Imports, Slams Europe's 'Double Standards'

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: India's External Affairs Minister, S. Jaishankar, has strongly defended New Delhi's decision to purchase Russian oil following the Ukraine conflict, while accusing European nations of applying double standards in their criticism of India's

▶ CONTD TO PAGE 06

Goa BJP Leaders Hail PM Modi's 12-Year Tenure, Cite Infrastructure and National Reforms

CM Sawant and state ministers say development, global recognition and key policy decisions reflect the Centre's leadership over the past decade

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Goa Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant and several senior state ministers on Friday lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 12 years in office, highlighting infrastructure expansion, national policy decisions and India's growing international standing as defining features of his tenure.

Addressing the occasion, Chief Minister Sawant said Goa



has undergone major transformation during the period, pointing to the development of nearly 299 kilometres of national highways, the construction of a six-lane port connectivity road, railway electrification, the introduction of Vande Bharat train services from Goa and

the commissioning of the Mopa international airport. He said these projects have significantly strengthened the state's connectivity and infrastructure.

Sawant also stated that Prime Minister Modi has received 32 top honours and awards from 16 countries and international organisations, describing the recognition as a reflection of India's increasing influence and leadership on the global stage.

Final Air India AI171 Crash Report May Take Two More Months, Investigation Ongoing

AAIB says comprehensive findings will be made public as probe into deadly Ahmedabad-London crash nears completion

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: A year after the tragic crash of Air India Flight AI171, families of the victims may have to wait a little longer for definitive answers, with the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) expected to take another two months to

submit its final report.



According to officials familiar with the investigation, the probe is progressing on schedule

and investigators are focused on producing a comprehensive report that examines every aspect of the disaster. Authorities have assured that the findings will be made public once the investigation is complete.

"Nothing will be kept in the dark. All details will be brought into the public domain," an

official involved in the process said, dismissing speculation surrounding the inquiry and suggesting that several media reports about the crash lack factual basis.

The crash of Air India Flight AI171 on June 12, 2025, remains one of India's deadliest aviation disasters in recent years.

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A Happiness Index Cannot Hide Ecological Unhappiness

The Goa government's decision to develop India's first comprehensive Happiness Index is an ambitious and thought-provoking initiative. The proposed index seeks to measure well-being beyond economic indicators by examining health, education, environment, culture, community life and mental wellness. It reflects a growing global recognition that development cannot be measured by income alone. Yet, before governments begin celebrating happiness scores, they must confront an uncomfortable question: can people truly be happy when their environment is under siege?

The answer lies not in official reports but in the growing number of protests and agitations across India. From Goa's own battles against controversial infrastructure projects to movements against mining, deforestation, coastal destruction, river pollution and unregulated urbanisation, citizens are increasingly taking to the streets to defend natural resources. These protests are often portrayed as obstacles to development. In reality, they are expressions of a deeper concern about the quality of life that governments claim to improve.

The irony is striking. The Goa government proposes to include environmental factors in its Happiness Index even as environmental concerns remain at the heart of public resistance. Across the country, people are questioning projects that threaten forests, wetlands, agricultural lands and fragile ecosystems. Such protests are not merely about preserving trees or landscapes. They are about protecting livelihoods, cultural identities, public health and future generations.

A happiness survey may record whether people feel satisfied with life today. However, true well being depends on whether communities feel secure about tomorrow. When villagers fear displacement, when fishermen worry about shrinking coastal resources, when farmers face water scarcity and when urban residents struggle with pollution and flooding, happiness becomes a fragile and temporary condition.

The relationship between environment and happiness is neither abstract nor ideological. Clean air, safe drinking water, green spaces and ecological stability

“The Goa government proposes to include environmental factors in its Happiness Index even as environmental concerns remain at the heart of public resistance. Across the country, people are questioning projects that threaten forests, wetlands, agricultural lands and fragile ecosystems. Such protests are not merely about preserving trees or landscapes. They are about protecting livelihoods, cultural identities, public health and future generations.”

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directly affect physical and mental health. Numerous studies worldwide have established that environmental degradation contributes to stress, anxiety and declining quality of life. Therefore, any index that claims to measure happiness must honestly account for the social costs of environmentally destructive development.

Goa itself offers an important lesson. Successive governments

have highlighted achievements in literacy, income and tourism growth while simultaneously facing criticism over land use changes, infrastructure expansion and ecological concerns. The state may indeed rank high on several development indicators, but development figures alone do not erase public anxieties about environmental sustainability. Citizens who participate in protests are often demanding accountability, transparency and long term planning rather than rejecting development outright. (The Times of India)

This is where the proposed Happiness Index faces its biggest test. If it becomes a public relations exercise designed to showcase government success, it will quickly lose credibility. Happiness cannot be manufactured through surveys while ignoring grievances on the ground. An honest index must measure public trust in institutions, perceptions of environmental security and citizens' ability to participate meaningfully in decisions affecting their lives. Governments should view protests not as threats but as democratic feedback mechanisms. Agitations often emerge when people feel excluded from policymaking. In many cases, environmental movements have exposed weaknesses in project planning, environmental assessments and public consultation processes. Silencing such voices may accelerate projects, but it rarely creates genuine social harmony.

The pursuit of happiness must therefore begin with responsible governance. Economic growth remains important, but it cannot come at the expense of ecological destruction. Sustainable development requires balancing infrastructure needs with environmental protection and community interests. It requires listening to citizens before conflicts escalate into prolonged agitations.

A Happiness Index can be a useful tool if it measures reality rather than aspirations. The true test of any society's happiness is not how many projects it inaugurates or how many statistics it celebrates. It is whether people feel heard, secure and confident that the natural environment sustaining their lives will remain intact for future generations.

Without that assurance, happiness risks becoming a number on paper while discontent continues to grow in the streets.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Junta House Must Serve Citizens, Not Casinos

Sebastian D'Souza

The debate over the future of Junta House in Panaji goes far beyond the redevelopment of a single building. It is about determining the priorities of our city and deciding whether valuable public land should be used to address pressing civic needs or be handed over for commercial ventures. The proposal to redevelop this prominent government-owned site into a casino and hotel project has understandably raised concerns among citizens who believe that Panaji deserves infrastructure that improves daily life rather than developments that could worsen existing urban challenges.

In this context, Panaji councillor Jack Sukhija's proposal to transform the site into a multi-level parking facility deserves serious consideration. Traffic congestion and parking shortages have become some of the most persistent problems facing the capital city. Residents, workers and visitors often spend considerable time searching for parking spaces, while double parking has become a common sight on many roads. These issues not only create inconvenience but also contribute to traffic bottlenecks, pollution and reduced mobility within the city.

Junta House occupies a strategic location in the heart of Panaji, making it ideally suited for a modern parking facility. A well-planned multi-storey parking complex could accommodate a large number of vehicles and significantly reduce congestion in surrounding areas. Such a project would provide a practical solution to a long-standing civic problem while generating revenue through paid parking services.

The site's historical significance must also not be overlooked. Constructed in the years following Goa's Liberation, Junta House has served as an important administrative and cultural landmark. Generations of Goans associate the building with the city's civic life and development. Any redevelopment plan should therefore preserve its legacy and ensure that the site continues to serve the public interest.

What makes the proposed alternative particularly attractive is its focus on citizen welfare. Beyond parking, the vision includes green spaces, vertical gardens, community facilities, event spaces and training centres for young people. These features would create a vibrant public space that balances functionality with environmental sustainability and social development.

The broader question is whether public land should primarily serve citizens or commercial interests. While hotels and casinos may generate economic activity, they do little to address the daily challenges faced by residents. Public infrastructure, on the other hand, creates long-term benefits that improve quality of life and strengthen urban resilience.

The government must therefore engage citizens transparently before making any final decision. Residents, urban planners, heritage experts and community groups should all be consulted. The future of Junta House should reflect the needs and aspirations of the people of Panaji, not merely the demands of commercial development.

At a time when Panaji urgently requires better urban planning and improved infrastructure, Junta House presents a rare opportunity to create something genuinely beneficial for the public. The government should seize this opportunity and ensure that this landmark site serves citizens first.

IIT Goa Finally Secures Site for Permanent Campus

Centre Approves Farmagudi Land, Paving Way for Long-Pending Infrastructure Development

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: After years of uncertainty over its permanent location, IIT Goa has moved a step closer to establishing its own campus, with the Union Ministry of Education approving a 4.5 lakh square metre land parcel at Farmagudi in Ponda taluka.

The approved site is located within the Goa College of Engineering (GEC) campus and has



been recommended by the Site Selection Committee (SSC), which visited the area in May. The Ministry has accepted the committee's recommendation and directed the Goa

government to complete the required formalities for transferring the land to the institute. The approval is being seen

as a significant milestone for IIT Goa, which has been functioning from temporary premises since it was established in 2016. The institute has repeatedly highlighted the need for a dedicated

campus to accommodate its growing academic, research and residential requirements. Officials said the Centre's earlier decision to ease the minimum land requirement for new IIT campuses helped clear the path for the Farmagudi proposal. The approved parcel is smaller than the previously prescribed norm, but is considered adequate for the institute's immediate development needs.



Tourism Det Opens Application Process for Seasonal Shacks and Cottages

Fresh Registrations and Renewals Invited for Temporary Tourism Units on Private Land

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Goa Tourism Department has begun accepting applications from individuals seeking permission to operate temporary tourism facilities, including beach shacks and seasonal huts or cottages on private properties, for the 2026-27 tourism season. The exercise covers both new applicants and existing operators seeking renewal of their licences under the state's framework governing temporary tourism establishments.

According to the department, application forms can be obtained through its official online portal and must be submitted at designated Registration Facilitation Centres in Panaji and

Margao. Applicants are required to furnish all supporting documents along with the applicable processing fee. Authorities have specified that applicants must provide documentation such as ownership records or lease agreements, site layouts, affidavits, clearances from relevant departments and valid fire safety certificates. Properties located within Coastal Regulation Zone areas will also need approval from the Goa Coastal Zone Management Authority before permissions can be granted. Those applying for registration for the first time must additionally submit valid identity proof, including Aadhaar or any other government-issued identification document.



HC Allows Victim's Father to Assist State in Dhungat Release Case

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The High Court of Bombay at Goa has declined a request by the father of murder victim Mandar Surlakar to formally intervene in proceedings related to convict Rohan Pai Dhungat's plea for premature release. However, the court has permitted him to assist the State during the hearing and submit written arguments for consideration.

A Division Bench comprising Justice Neela Gokhale and Justice Amit Jamsandekar observed that a separate intervention was unnecessary as the State was already representing the interests involved in the matter. The judges indicated that while the victim's family could place its concerns before the court, adding another party to the proceedings would unnecessarily prolong the case.

During the hearing, counsel representing Dhungat argued that the issue of his premature release had previously been considered by the Supreme Court.

High Court Pushes for Faster Hearing in Tejpal Acquittal Appeal

Bench Indicates It Will Not Encourage Repeated Adjournments in State's Challenge

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Bombay High Court at Goa has signalled its intention to move ahead with the State government's appeal against the acquittal of former Tehelka editor Tarun Tejpal without unnecessary delays, nearly five years after the challenge was first filed.

During a hearing on Thursday, a Division Bench of Justice Neela Gokhale and Justice Amit Jamsandekar made it clear that the proceedings should not be repeatedly



postponed. The observation came after Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Goa government, requested that the matter be heard without interruptions caused by frequent adjournment requests.

Appearing virtually, Mehta informed the court that the State would shortly submit a consolidated summary of the evidence forming

the basis of its appeal. According to him, the document would assist the Bench in examining the case more efficiently.

The court was also informed that counsel for Tejpal had sought access to the paper book containing the case records. The Bench directed that the relevant documents be made available to the defence.

While rescheduling the matter for hearing next week, the court agreed to the State's request that the case be given priority in the cause list.

Konkan Railway Intensifies Drive Against Ticketless Travel, Collects ₹3.70 Crore in May

More than 61,000 cases of unauthorized travel detected during 951 ticket-checking drives across the Konkan Railway network

Team Goemkarponn

MARGAO: Konkan Railway Corporation Limited (KRCL) has intensified its ticket-checking campaign to curb ticketless and irregular travel, detecting 61,051 cases of unauthorized passengers during 951 ticket-checking drives conducted in May 2026.

According to KRCL,



a total of ₹3.70 crore was collected from offenders towards due railway fare

and penalties during the month.

The corporation stated

that the special drives were carried out alongside routine ticket-checking activities in coordination with Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel and railway officials to ensure a safe, secure, and comfortable journey for genuine passengers.

KRCL has appealed to all travellers to purchase and carry valid tickets while travelling, emphasizing

that intensified ticket-checking drives will continue across its entire route to maintain convenience and discourage unauthorized travel. The corporation also encouraged passengers to stay updated on railway information through its KR Mirror mobile application, available on both Android and iOS platforms.

Burglars Decamp With Cash and Gold Worth Lakhs From House in Borda

■ *Unknown culprits allegedly broke open main door and stole ₹50,000 cash along with gold ornaments

Team Goemkarponn

FATORDA: A burglary has been reported at a residence in Borda, Salcete, where unknown culprits allegedly broke into a house and stole cash and gold ornaments.

According to the complaint lodged by Ismail Shaikh, a resident of Living Space Castle,



Borda, the theft took place between 3:00 pm on June 7, 2026, and 9:45 pm

on June 8, 2026. During this period, the accused allegedly broke open the main door of the house, entered the bedrooms, and decamped with ₹50,000 in cash.

The stolen valuables also included four gold bangles, four gold finger rings, and five pairs of gold earrings.

Fatorda Police have registered a case against unknown persons and launched an investigation. PSI Satvashil Devidas of Fatorda Police Station is conducting further investigation.



Car Driver Arrested for Rash Driving After Injuring Two in Curchorem

■ Accused allegedly fled the accident spot without helping the injured; arrested later and released on bail

Team Goemkarponn

CURCHOREM: A Maruti Swift car driver was arrested by Curchorem Police for allegedly driving in a rash and negligent manner and causing an accident that injured two persons at Carriamoddi, Curchorem.

According to police, the incident occurred on June 9, 2026, at around 3:26 pm, when the accused, Ravindra Gawali, a resident of near KTC Bus Stand, Fatorda, Margao and a native of Kolhapur, Maharashtra, was driving from Carriamoddi towards Pontemol. Upon reaching opposite Lotus Plaza building at Carriamoddi, he allegedly veered to the extreme right side of the road and collided with an oncoming Royal Enfield Bullet motorcycle.

The impact caused the motorcycle rider, Sainur Shaikh, and the pillion rider, Masabi Shaikh, both residents of Pontemol, Curchorem, to fall on the road and sustain injuries. They were shifted to CHC Kakoda for medical treatment.

Police stated that the accused allegedly fled the scene without providing medical assistance to the injured or informing the police about the accident.

Based on a state complaint filed by HC 4485 Paresh Shetkar of Curchorem Police Station, a case was registered. The accused was arrested on June 10, 2026, at 8:09 pm, and was subsequently released on bail.

Further investigation is being carried out by HC Paresh Shetkar of Curchorem Police Station.



Woman Files Complaint Over Obscene and Religion-Based Abuse on Instagram

Team Goemkarponn

CURCHOREM: Curchorem Police have registered a case following a complaint by a woman alleging that she was subjected to obscene, abusive, and religion-based harassment through Instagram.

According to the complaint filed by the lady complainant (name withheld), the incident occurred on June 10, 2026, when an unknown person operating an Instagram account allegedly posted obscene and sexually explicit comments, sent abusive messages, and made derogatory remarks about her religion through the social media platform.

The complainant alleged that the acts outraged her modesty and deliberately insulted her religious sentiments.

Police have registered the case against the unknown accused and initiated an investigation to identify the account holder and verify the allegations.

Further investigation is being carried out by PI Melson Colaco of Curchorem Police Station.

Ten Booked for Alleged Trespass, Vandalism, Theft and Criminal Intimidation in Shiroda

■ Complainant alleges accused damaged CCTV equipment, stole SIM and memory cards, pelted stones, and issued death threats

Team Goemkarponn

PONDA: Ponda Police have registered a case against ten accused persons, including one unidentified individual, following allegations of criminal trespass, vandalism, theft, assault, and criminal intimidation at a property in Mankem village, Shiroda.

According to the complaint filed by Franky Fernandes, a resident of Parvem, Agonda, Canacona, the incident allegedly occurred on June 22, 2024, at Survey No. 870/8, Mankem Village, Shiroda, Ponda.

The complainant alleged that the accused—

BOOKED

Constantino Pereira, Salvacao Fernandes, Rosario Fernandes, Cecilia Colaco, Agostinho D'Costa, Margarita Dias, Rosa Maria Costa, Stephen D'Costa, Reshma Luisa Fernandes, and one unknown person, all residents of Mankem, Shiroda—formed an unlawful assembly and, acting with a common object, criminally trespassed onto his property.

It is alleged that, at the instigation of the

unidentified accused, the group damaged a CCTV pole and camera installed on the property by throwing it to the ground. The complainant further alleged that the accused stole the SIM card and memory card from the CCTV camera. The complaint also states that the accused allegedly threw stones at him with the intention of causing grievous hurt, while the unidentified accused allegedly threatened to kill him, amounting to criminal intimidation. Ponda Police have registered the case and further investigation is being carried out by PSI Prajyot Bakhale of Ponda Police Station.

Scooter stolen outside hardware shop in Vasco

Team Goemkarponn

VASCO: A grey TVS Ntorq scooter was allegedly stolen from outside a hardware shop on F.L. Gomes Road in Vasco on Thursday.

According to a complaint lodged at Vasco Police Station by Mithila Kamble, a resident of Vasco and the registered owner of the scooter, the vehicle bearing registration number GA06Y4229 was parked by her father-in-law, Vassant Naik Shirodkar, near

Raymond Hardware Shop at around 12.05 pm on 11/06/2026. When he returned to the spot at about 12.12 pm, the scooter was found missing.



A search of the surrounding area and inquiries with nearby persons failed to trace the vehicle.

The complainant stated that CCTV footage from the area reportedly showed an

unidentified person wearing a white shirt and blue jeans taking away the scooter from the spot. The stolen vehicle is a grey TVS Ntorq with chassis number MD626AG7XK2F09967 and engine number AG7FK2309429. A complaint has been submitted to Vasco Police seeking registration of a theft case and an investigation to trace the stolen scooter and identify the accused. Police are expected to examine the CCTV footage as part of the probe.

Case Registered Over Alleged Circulation of False Electronic Record on Social Media

Team Goemkarponn

CURCHOREM: Curchorem Police have registered a case against an unknown person for allegedly creating and circulating a false electronic record on social media, resulting in reputational harm to the complainant.



Jack Sukhija Opposes Casino-Hotel Project at Junta House, Seeks Multi-Level Parking Facility

■ Panaji councillor says iconic site should address city's parking and traffic woes through public-centric redevelopment

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Panaji councillor Jack Sukhija has urged the state government to reconsider the proposed redevelopment of the historic Junta House site, reportedly earmarked for a casino and hotel project, and instead develop it into a multi-level parking facility with citizen-centric amenities.

Addressing a press conference outside the iconic building on Thursday, Sukhija said



the government-owned property, located in the heart of Panaji, should be utilised to solve the city's growing parking and traffic problems rather than add to them through commercial development.

"The question we have to ask is, do we prioritise commercial development over civic amenities for the city,

especially in public infrastructure? I think the answer is no. The citizens of Panaji are very clear. They have voiced their opinion and none of that includes a casino and a hotel project right in the

centre of Panaji," he said.

Sukhija stated that the site's strategic location makes it too important to be viewed solely as a commercial opportunity, particularly when the city is already grappling with traffic congestion, double parking and a shortage of parking spaces.

He proposed that the majority of the area be developed into a multi-storey paid parking facility while incorporating limited commercial activity and other public amenities.

Car gutted in fire at Baina

Team Goemkarponn

BAINA: A car was extensively damaged after it caught fire at Baina on Thursday evening, triggering a brief scare in the area.

According to the vehicle owner, there was no foul play involved in the incident. The owner stated that the fire appeared to have originated from the engine compartment while a routine check of the vehicle was being carried out. Within moments, the flames spread rapidly to other parts of the car.

On being alerted, personnel from the Fire and Emergency Services

rushed to the spot and launched firefighting operations. The blaze was brought under control before it could spread to nearby vehicles or property.

However, by the time the fire was extinguished, the car had been almost completely gutted, resulting in substantial damage.

No injuries were reported in the incident. The exact cause of the fire is yet to be officially determined, though preliminary indications suggest a mechanical or electrical fault in the engine section. Further inquiries are underway.



Awareness Before Penalty, Information Before Intimidation: Amarnath Panjikar

Team Goemkarponn



PANAJI: Goa Pradesh Congress Committee Chairman

of the Media & Communication Department, Amarnath Panjikar, has criticized the Electricity Department and the BJP-led government, alleging that consumers were not adequately informed about sanctioned load requirements before penalties were imposed.

Addressing the issue, Panjikar questioned why the Electricity Department did not send individual notices to consumers despite having their billing addresses, mobile numbers, and other contact details. "If the Government was genuinely interested in ensuring compliance, why were notices merely published in newspapers? Is there any law that requires every electricity consumer to read newspaper advertisements in order to avoid penalties? Why were these important notices not printed and sent along with monthly electricity bills that are delivered to every consumer?" he asked.

BPS Club Land Records Matter Heats Up as Objection Filed to Intervention Plea

■ Club president's counsel challenges Savio Coutinho's locus standi; Shadow Council convener seeks transparency over

Team Goemkarponn

MARGAO: The dispute surrounding the confirmation of land records of the BPS Club has intensified, with the club president's counsel filing an objection to an intervention application submitted by Shadow Council Convener Savio Coutinho.

When the matter came up for hearing before the



Inspector of Survey and Land Records on Friday, counsel for

BPS Club President Yogiraj Kamat, Advocate Monisha Viegas, filed an application objecting to Coutinho's intervention plea, contending that he has no locus standi in the matter.

According to Coutinho, his request for immediate arguments on the objection was not accepted, as a copy of the objection application had only been handed over to him during the proceedings. Reacting to the development, Coutinho said he was "shocked and surprised" that his intervention application had been opposed.

Hydraulic Parking Not Fit for Goan Climate; GSUDA Must Not Rush Into Project: Prabhav Naik

■ Youth leader calls for comprehensive technical and financial feasibility study, seeks greater transparency

Team Goemkarponn

MARGAO: Madganvcho Awaaz and youth leader Prabhav Naik on Friday urged the Goa State Urban Development Agency (GSUDA) not to rush the proposed Hydraulic Parking Project for Margao without first conducting a comprehensive technical and financial feasibility study.

Naik, accompanied by social worker Wency



Cirilo Angelo Gonsalves and Prakash Shetkar, met GSUDA engineers and expressed concerns over the suitability of hydraulic parking systems for Goa's

climatic conditions.

"Hydraulic parking may sound attractive on paper, but Margao is not a laboratory for untested experiments.

Goa's climatic conditions demand a comprehensive feasibility study before any decision is taken. We will not allow haphazard projects imposed merely to create opportunities for election fund generation," Naik said. He pointed out that hydraulic lift parking systems require regular servicing, dedicated manpower and high maintenance, while also being vulnerable to corrosion and rusting in Goa's humid coastal

climate. Without proper assessment, he warned, the project could become another costly and non-functional "white elephant." During the meeting, Naik questioned GSUDA officials over the absence of a response to the detailed memorandum he had submitted on September 22, 2025, seeking information on the feasibility and viability of the proposed project.

Ai+ Smartphone Turns Launch Into Open Trial: Nova2 Neo & Pro Reviewed Before Retail

Team Goemkarponn

Goa: In a first-of-its-kind move for the Indian smartphone industry, Ai+ Smartphone today announced that it will send its upcoming Nova2 Neo and Nova2 Pro smartphones to reviewers, creators, journalists, and members of the technology community across India before we open sales for trusted consumers - critique and review the devices without restrictions. In an industry built around launch events, Ai+ Smartphone is choosing something different - A conversation before a campaign, Feedback before a sale and Consumers before marketing.

"At a time when product launches are often accompanied by carefully controlled narratives, Ai+ is taking a different approach: putting consumer interest ahead of launch-day marketing. We don't want validation. We want unbiased feedback for user benefits," said Madhav Sheth, CEO of Ai+ Smartphone and Founder of NxtQuantum Shift Technologies.

There will be no embargo, no review guidelines, no scripted



messaging and no curated launch experiences and most importantly, the devices will not go on sale until reviewers have had seven days to share their feedback. Reviewers are being encouraged to test every aspect of the devices—from hardware and software performance to cameras, battery life, data transfer, reliability, and overall user experience.

"As a young brand, we are still learning, still improving, and still earning consumer trust every day. If there is something we've missed, we'd rather hear it from reviewers before consumers spend their money. That's why Nova2 Neo and Nova2 Pro will not go on sale until

this feedback window is complete." added Madhav Sheth.

Reviewers will be free to publish their opinions immediately at their own will once they receive the device within 7 days. Positive feedback, critical feedback, and everything in between will be welcomed by the brand as part of its commitment to transparency and continuous improvement. The reviews will be available realtime on the brands website for everyone to view the feedback. The initiative reflects Ai+ Smartphone's belief that the future of technology must be built through Accountability, Transparency, and a willingness to listen.

The Nova2 Neo and Nova2 Pro represent the

next expansion of the Nova Series portfolio positioned under the Nova2 Ultra bringing the Nova experience to a wider audience while continuing Ai+'s mission of making technology more accessible, transparent, and trustworthy.

Ai+ Smartphone is a next-generation brand built in India, delivering reliable and high-performance mobile experiences. Powered by NxtQuantum OS, India's first sovereign mobile operating system. The brand focuses on delivering a clean design, ensuring long battery life, and maintaining trusted software performance, all while keeping prices accessible without compromising the user experience. From redefining smartphones to pioneering AIoT products as part of the company's Connected Ecosystem, Ai+ Smartphone is creating a new standard for trust, immersive experience, and accessibility. Rooted in a privacy-first architecture and a commitment to equitable access, Ai+ Smartphone stands for more than specs — it stands for India's next era of user-owned, future-ready technology.

Centre Extends Excise Duty Exemption To Higher Ethanol-Blended Petrol Grades

■ Move aims to prevent double taxation and support future expansion of ethanol blending programme

Team Goemkarponn

New Delhi: The Centre has extended excise duty exemptions to higher ethanol-blended petrol grades, a move aimed at preventing double taxation on fuel blending activities and facilitating the future adoption of higher ethanol-content fuels.

The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has issued notifications exempting ethanol-blended petrol grades E22, E25, E27 and E30 from central excise duties, provided excise duty has already been paid on petrol and Goods and Services Tax (GST) has been paid on the ethanol used in the blend.

According to government officials, the exemption addresses a technical issue under the Central Excise law, where blending ethanol with petrol is classified as a manufacturing activity. Without the exemption, the final blended fuel could attract excise duty once again, resulting in double taxation despite taxes already being paid on the individual components.

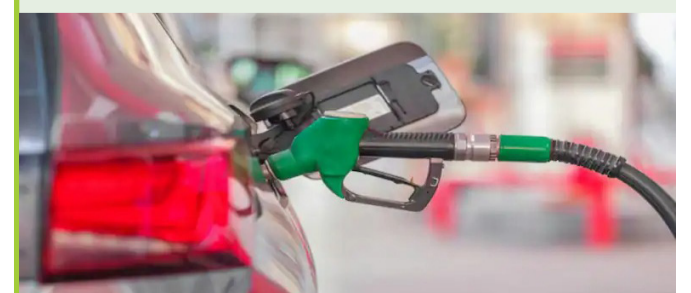
The government clarified that similar exemptions already exist for ethanol-blended petrol grades such as E5, E10 and E20. Extending the same treatment to higher blends ensures consistency in taxation and does not amount

to a reduction in excise duty on petrol sold in the domestic market.

Officials stressed that the notification should not be viewed as an immediate rollout of higher ethanol blends across the country. Instead, it is a regulatory step required to enable future adoption of such fuels. Any introduction of E22, E25, E27 or E30 in the retail market will be subject to extensive testing, consultations and policy decisions.

The development comes shortly after the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) issued standards for the higher ethanol blends in May 2026. The excise duty exemption, which came into effect on June 10, aligns the tax framework with these new fuel specifications.

India has significantly expanded its ethanol blending programme over the past decade as part of efforts to reduce dependence on imported crude oil, lower carbon emissions and boost farmers' incomes. Ethanol blending levels have increased from 1.53 per cent in 2014-15 to 20 per cent in 2025-26. Government data shows the programme has generated payments of around Rs 1.62 lakh crore for farmers, saved more than Rs 1.91 lakh crore in foreign exchange through lower crude imports, and helped reduce carbon dioxide emissions by an estimated 93.1 million tonnes.



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Karapur Agitation Intensifies as Villagers Demand Immediate Halt to Mega Project

(GCZMA) Member Secretary Sachin Dessai. The delegation pressed for an immediate suspension of all activities at the project site until environmental clearances and other statutory permissions are scrutinised and decided upon by the competent authorities.

The protesters alleged that while government departments continue to deliberate on approvals, work on the ground has continued, resulting in damage to the local environment. They argued that every passing day without intervention was causing further harm and undermining the purpose of the ongoing review process.

At the TCP office, protesters raised slogans and demanded urgent

government action, insisting that authorities could not allow project-related activities to continue while questions remained over compliance with environmental regulations.

Responding to the delegation, Dessai said the concerns raised by the villagers would be placed before the Environment Impact Assessment Authority (EIAA), the Expert Appraisal Committee and other relevant bodies for examination. He informed them that officials would require about a week to verify the issues and assess the situation before considering further action.

The assurance, however, failed to fully satisfy the protesters, who maintained that immediate intervention was necessary. The delegation informed officials that they would return on Monday to seek a status update and press for concrete action.

With the protest entering its third month and residents showing no

signs of backing down, the Karapur issue is rapidly emerging as a significant environmental flashpoint, with villagers warning that their agitation will intensify if work at the site is not stopped and their concerns remain unaddressed.

Jaishankar Defends Russian Oil Imports, Slams Europe's 'Double Standards'

energy policy.

Speaking at the Kultaranta Talks in Finland during a discussion on emerging geopolitical competition, Jaishankar rejected suggestions that India had been overly sympathetic to Russia.

He argued that India's oil purchases were guided by affordability, availability and energy security rather than political considerations.

NDA Sweeps Andhra Pradesh Rajya Sabha Polls, Four Candidates Elected Unopposed

■ TDP Secures Three Seats While Jana Sena Makes Rajya Sabha Debut With One Seat

Team Goemkarponn

New Delhi: The ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) has secured all four Rajya Sabha seats from Andhra Pradesh, with candidates from the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and Jana Sena Party (JSP) being elected unopposed.

The returning officer on Thursday declared three TDP nominees — Sana Sathish Babu, Bhashyam Ramakrishna



and Vijay Chintakayala — along with JSP candidate Lingamaneni Ramesh elected to the Upper House after the deadline for withdrawal of nominations expired.

With only four candidates remaining in

the fray for four vacancies and no opposition nominations filed, the scheduled election on June 18

became unnecessary.

The vacancies arose following the retirement of Rajya Sabha members Alla Ayodhya Rami Reddy, Parimal Nathwani and Pilli Subhas Chandra Bose of the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP), along with TDP

member Sana Sathish Babu.

Sathish Babu, a close associate of TDP national general secretary Nara Lokesh, has secured a second term in the Rajya Sabha. He was earlier elected in a 2024 bypoll following the resignation of a YSRCP member.

Among the first-time MPs, Ramakrishna is a noted entrepreneur and founder of the Bhashyam educational institutions. Chintakayala Vijay, son of



States Key To Achieving Viksit Bharat Goal, PM Modi Tells NITI Aayog Meeting

■ Prime Minister stresses cooperative federalism, youth empowerment and reforms at 11th Governing Council meet

Team Goemkarponn

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday underscored the crucial role of states in driving India's development agenda as he chaired the 11th Governing Council meeting of NITI Aayog in New Delhi.

Held under the theme "Inclusive Human Development for Viksit Bharat@2047," the meeting brought together Chief Ministers, Lieutenant Governors and Administrators from 28 states and five Union Territories. It marked the first time that Chief Ministers from all 28 states participated in a NITI Aayog Governing Council meeting.

In a post on X after the meeting, Modi said discussions focused on self-reliance, adopting global best practices and accelerating reforms. Reaffirming the government's

commitment to cooperative federalism, he said states remain central to India's growth and development journey.

The Prime Minister highlighted India's strong economic performance amid global uncertainty and called for greater efforts to strengthen self-reliance. He urged states to embrace successful international practices, particularly in sectors such as renewable energy, while tailoring them to local needs. Emphasising the importance of demographic advantage, Modi noted that nearly 70 crore Indians are below the age of 25 and described the country's youth population as its greatest asset. He urged states to invest in education, skilling and capacity-building initiatives to convert this demographic dividend into a development dividend.



CID Questions Abhishek Banerjee For Nearly Six Hours In Signature Forgery Probe

Team Goemkarponn

New Delhi: Trinamool Congress (TMC) national general secretary and Diamond Harbour MP Abhishek Banerjee appeared before the West Bengal Criminal Investigation Department (CID) on Thursday and was questioned for nearly six hours in connection with an alleged signature forgery case related to the appointment of the Leader of Opposition in the state assembly. Banerjee reached the CID headquarters at Bhabani Bhaban in Kolkata at around 5.50 pm, shortly after receiving interim protection from coercive action from the Calcutta High Court. He left the premises at approximately 11.30 pm without speaking to reporters. The TMC leader had previously skipped three summons issued by the CID, citing health concerns and a petition challenging the notices before the HC.

Dharavi Redevelopment Project Enters Execution Phase As Resident Relocation Begins

■ Around 900 Shahunagar families to move temporarily as authorities accelerate housing redevelopment

Team Goemkarponn

New Delhi: The ambitious Dharavi Redevelopment Project has moved a step closer to on-ground execution, with the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) issuing notices to residents of Shahunagar to vacate their homes and prepare for temporary relocation.

The move follows similar notices issued last



month by redevelopment authorities to families in Dharavi's Sector 6. Officials said the objective is to free up land for construction activities and speed up the delivery of

permanent rehabilitation housing under the large-scale urban renewal project.

According to government officials, around 900 BMC tenant families living in Shahunagar will be required to relocate temporarily while redevelopment work is carried out.

Omar Abdullah Raises J&K Statehood Issue During Meeting With PM Modi

■ Chief Minister seeks early restoration of statehood, discusses development and economic concerns

Team Goemkarponn

New Delhi: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday renewed his demand for the restoration of statehood to the Union Territory during a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi.

The meeting comes amid increasing political activity by Abdullah



and his party, the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference, aimed at pressing the Centre to fulfil its commitment to restore Jammu and Kashmir's statehood. Following the

meeting, Abdullah said he discussed several issues of importance to the region, including the early return of statehood, economic development, infrastructure growth and tourism promotion.

He also congratulated the Prime Minister on completing 12 years in office. In a post on social media, Abdullah said he had urged the Centre to address key concerns facing Jammu and Kashmir and emphasised the need for continued cooperation between the Union Territory administration and the central government.

Assam-Nagaland Oil Pact Could Boost Production Tenfold, Says Amit Shah

Team Goemkarponn

New Delhi: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday hailed a landmark agreement between the Centre, Assam and Nagaland aimed at facilitating oil and mineral exploration along the two states' border, saying the pact could increase oil extraction capacity by up to ten times.



BCCI Monitoring Belfast Unrest Ahead Of India-Ireland T20I Series: Report

■ Board reportedly considering venue change options as security concerns grow in Northern Ireland

Team Goemkarponn

New Delhi: The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is reportedly keeping a close watch on the security situation in Belfast ahead of India's upcoming T20I series against Ireland, following days of unrest and violent clashes in the Northern Irish city.

According to reports, the BCCI has been placed on "high alert" and is assessing developments after



anti-immigration protests in Belfast escalated into violence. India are scheduled to play two T20 Internationals against Ireland cricket team on June 26 and 28 at the

Stormont Cricket Ground. The board is expected to rely on security assessments provided by Cricket Ireland and may discuss alternative arrangements

if authorities deem it necessary. Reports suggest that the possibility of moving the matches away from Belfast could be considered should the security situation fail to improve. The unrest was triggered by a knife attack earlier this week that left a local resident seriously injured. The incident was followed by protests that escalated into clashes in several parts of Belfast, resulting in damaged property, burned vehicles and multiple arrests.



FIFA World Cup 2026 Begins With Drama As Mexico Win, South Korea Stage Comeback

■ Three red cards overshadow hosts' victory while South Korea rally past Czechia in thrilling opener

Team Goemkarponn

New Delhi: The FIFA World Cup 2026 got off to a dramatic start on Friday, with co-hosts Mexico national football team defeating South Africa national football team 2-0 in a fiery opening match, while South Korea national football team came from behind to beat Czech Republic national football team 2-1 in an entertaining second game. Mexico 2-0 South Africa:

Red Cards Dominate Opening Match Mexico began their home World Cup campaign in style, securing a comfortable victory, but the match was overshadowed by disciplinary issues that resulted in three straight red cards.

Forward Julián

Quiñones etched his name into World Cup history by scoring the tournament's first goal in the ninth minute, finishing clinically after a low cross slipped through the legs of South African goalkeeper Ronwen Williams. Veteran striker Raúl Jiménez doubled Mexico's advantage midway through the second half with a powerful header, ensuring the hosts claimed all three points.

The match, however, became increasingly heated as Brazilian referee Wilton Sampaio issued three straight red cards. South Africa's Sphephelo Sithole and Themba Zwane were both sent off, while Mexico defender César Montes also received his marching orders.



AFI To Launch Indian Athletic Awards 2026, Ceremony Scheduled In New Delhi

Team Goemkarponn

New Delhi: The Athletics Federation of India (AFI) will host the first-ever Indian Athletic Awards on June 20 in New Delhi, marking a new initiative to celebrate excellence and contributions across the Indian athletics ecosystem.

The awards have been conceived as a platform to recognise not only current and former athletes but also coaches, technical officials, mentors, state associations, sponsors and other stakeholders who have played a crucial role in the growth of Indian athletics and its achievements on the global stage.

The inaugural ceremony is expected to bring together many of India's leading track and field stars, both past and present, making it one of the most significant gatherings of the athletics community in the country.

PV Sindhu Powers Into Australian Open Semi-Finals, Sets Up Akane Yamaguchi Clash

■ Indian star cruises past Chen Su Yu as teenager Tanvi Sharma's impressive run comes to an end

Team Goemkarponn

New Delhi: Two-time Olympic medallist P. V. Sindhu advanced to the women's singles semi-finals of the Australian Open Super 500 badminton tournament with a dominant straight-games victory in Sydney on Friday. The third-



seeded Indian shuttler overwhelmed Chinese Taipei's Chen Su-yu 21-6, 21-9 in a one-sided quarter-final that lasted just 27 minutes. Sindhu

controlled the match from the start, using her experience, reach and court coverage to dictate rallies and keep her opponent under pressure throughout. With the victory, Sindhu booked a place in the last four, where she will face top seed Akane Yamaguchi of Japan.

2027 ODI World Cup Likely To Begin On October 4, Final Scheduled For November 21

■ South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia to co-host first 50-over World Cup in Africa since 2003

Team Goemkarponn

New Delhi: The 2027 ICC Men's ODI World Cup is set to be held from October 4 to November 21, 2027, with South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia jointly hosting the tournament, according to reports.

The proposed schedule was discussed during an International Cricket Council (ICC) board meeting in Ahmedabad in May and is expected to be



formally approved at the ICC Annual General Meeting in Edinburgh next month.

South Africa is likely

to host the majority of the tournament, with reports suggesting it could stage at least 41 of the 54 matches. Zimbabwe is expected to host between eight and ten games across three venues, including Victoria Falls, while Namibia could host three fixtures.

The tournament will mark the return of the ODI World Cup to Africa for the first time since the 2003 edition, which was jointly hosted by South Africa, Zimbabwe and Kenya.

The 2027 event will

also see the World Cup expand back to a 14-team format after the previous two editions featured 10 teams. Teams will be divided into two groups of seven, with the top three sides from each group advancing to the Super Six stage. From there, the leading teams will progress to the knockout rounds.

As Full Members of the ICC, South Africa and Zimbabwe will qualify automatically for the tournament. Namibia, however, will need to

secure its place through the qualification process.

The World Cup will also be the first major ICC event conducted under the 2027-31 Future Tours Programme (FTP), which outlines the international cricket calendar for the next cycle. Alongside preparations for the World Cup, the ICC is continuing discussions on several key issues, including the future structure of the ICC World Test Championship.