



## Smart Meter Rollout Put on Hold Amid Consumer Concerns

Govt to study load requirements, resolve billing disputes before proceeding with installation

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** The Goa government has temporarily halted the installation of smart electricity meters across the state following concerns over billing discrepancies, load-related issues and other consumer complaints, Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant announced.



Speaking after a Cabinet meeting, Sawant said the government would first conduct a detailed assessment of electricity load requirements and



address issues raised by consumers before moving ahead with the smart meter project.

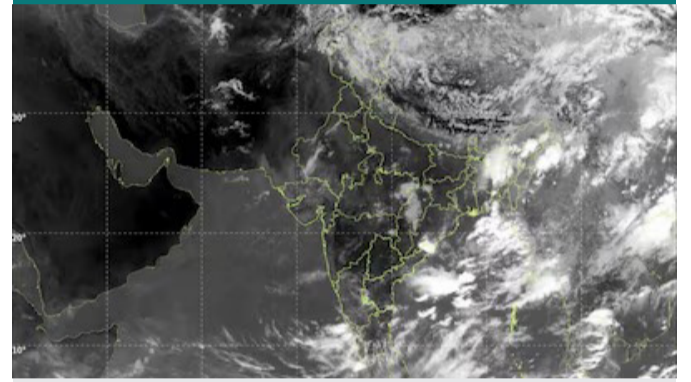
"After the power issue, the installation of smart meters is currently on

hold. I have prepared a note and will forward it to the department. The payment differences, load issues and other disputes will be taken up and resolved," the Chief Minister said.

He noted that around one lakh smart meters are yet to be installed in Goa. "The load needs to be studied first, and

## Where Did The Monsoon Go? Why India's Sudden June Dry Spell Has Experts Concerned

Weak cloud cover and rain deficit raise concerns



Team Goemkarponn

**NEW DELHI:** Just days ago, India's southwest monsoon appeared to be surging ahead. Today, satellite images are showing a very different picture.

Fresh imagery from Meteosat, NOAA and ISRO's INSAT-3DS satellites reveals unusually sparse monsoon cloud cover across large parts of central, western and peninsular India — a rare sight for the middle of June. The images have become the clearest indication yet that the monsoon has entered a significant pause. The slowdown is already visible on the ground. According to

the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Central India recorded a rainfall deficit of around 65 per cent between June 4 and June 16, making it the worst-hit region in the country. Several districts in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh have received little meaningful rainfall during a period crucial for kharif sowing. The pause is particularly striking because the monsoon began strongly. After reaching Kerala on June 4, it advanced rapidly across southern and eastern India, covering large parts of the country within days. But since early June, its progress

## AAP Will Meet Same Fate as RGP in Goa, Claims Sudin Dhavalikar

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** Power Minister and Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party (MGP) leader Sudin Dhavalikar today predicted a political decline for the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in Goa, stating that the party could face a situation similar to that of the Revolutionary Goans Party (RGP).

Speaking at the inauguration of MGP offices in Shiroda and Ponda, Dhavalikar said recent developments within AAP indicate growing internal challenges.

Referring to disciplinary action taken against a leader who had contested against him in the Assembly elections, he suggested that the party was heading towards political irrelevance in the state.

Dhavalikar also brushed aside criticism directed at the MGP-BJP alliance, reiterating that the partnership remains intact and continues to function under decisions taken by the BJP's central leadership.

He said the MGP maintains direct communication with national leaders and will continue working within the alliance framework.

## 'Goa Sleepwalking Into Climate Crisis': Sardesai Questions State's Readiness For Super El Niño

Goa Forward Chief Warns Of Water Scarcity, Crop Losses, Heat Emergencies And Ecological Threats; Seeks Urgent Climate Action Plan

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** Claiming that Goa is "sleepwalking into a climate crisis", Goa Forward Party President and Fatorda MLA Vijai Sardesai on Tuesday questioned the State Government's preparedness to tackle the potential impact of a Super El Niño, warning that the consequences could be severe for lives, livelihoods and the environment.

Sardesai said that while the government remains focused on organising celebrations, publicity campaigns and



large-scale public events, an impending climate threat is not receiving the attention it deserves.

Referring to warnings that a Super El Niño could affect large parts of India, including Goa, Sardesai cautioned that the state could face water shortages, crop failures, forest fires, heatwaves,

declining groundwater levels, increased power demand, reduced fish catches and serious public health challenges.

"Goa is sleepwalking into a climate crisis while the government appears preoccupied with events and optics. The threat is real and demands immediate preparedness," Sardesai said.

The Fatorda MLA questioned whether the state has any comprehensive preparedness strategy in place to deal with prolonged dry conditions and extreme weather events.

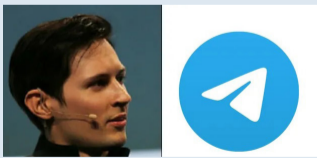
## Telegram CEO Pavel Durov Slams India's Temporary Ban Ahead Of NEET Re-Test

Messaging app blocked till June 22 over exam leak concerns

Team Goemkarponn

**NEW DELHI:** Telegram founder and CEO Pavel Durov has criticised the Indian government's decision to temporarily ban the messaging platform ahead of the NEET-UG 2026 re-examination, saying the move punishes millions of users without addressing the root cause of exam leaks.

The Centre on



Tuesday restricted access to Telegram until June 22 following recommendations from the National Testing Agency (NTA), which said the measure was necessary to curb organised cheating networks and prevent the spread of misinformation

surrounding the medical entrance examination scheduled for June 21. Reacting to the decision, Durov said the ban unfairly targets ordinary users. "India's IT ministry banned Telegram for one week because some users shared leaked exam questions. This punishes 150M+ ordinary Telegram users in India — not the insiders who leaked the exam materials.

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## Congress's Youth Gamble Could Be the Turning Point Goa Politics Needs

The indication from the Goa Pradesh Congress Committee that deserving young leaders may be considered for Assembly election tickets is more than just an organisational discussion. If implemented sincerely, it could become one of the most significant political decisions taken by the party in recent years.

For far too long, political parties across India have spoken about youth empowerment while reserving the most important positions for the same set of leaders election after election. Young workers are often expected to organise events, mobilise crowds, manage campaigns and promote the party on social media, but when it comes to actual electoral opportunities, many find themselves pushed to the sidelines. This has created frustration among aspiring leaders and widened the gap between political leadership and the younger generation.

Congress now appears willing to challenge that pattern. By signalling that Assembly tickets could be allotted to deserving young leaders, the party is acknowledging an important reality. Goa's electorate is changing rapidly. A large section of voters consists of young people who are concerned about employment, education, housing affordability, environmental protection and transparent governance. They often seek representatives who understand these concerns not from a distance but through lived experience.

Fresh faces can bring fresh energy. Young candidates are generally more accessible, more connected to emerging issues and often more willing to adopt innovative approaches to governance and public engagement. Their participation can also help rebuild trust among voters who have become disillusioned with conventional politics and repeated political defections.

For Congress, this move could also serve a strategic purpose. The party has struggled in recent

*“Congress now appears willing to challenge that pattern. By signalling that Assembly tickets could be allotted to deserving young leaders, the party is acknowledging an important reality. Goa's electorate is changing rapidly. A large section of voters consists of young people who are concerned about employment, education, housing affordability, environmental protection and transparent governance. They often seek representatives who understand these concerns not from a distance but through lived experience.”*

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years despite securing substantial public support during elections. Internal factionalism, leadership disputes and post election defections have weakened its credibility. Introducing a new generation of leaders could help the party project itself as a forward looking organisation prepared

to embrace change rather than remain trapped in old political equations.

However, the success of this initiative will depend entirely on its implementation. Youth should not become a slogan or a token gesture. Tickets must be awarded on merit, commitment, grassroots work and public acceptance rather than family connections or internal lobbying. Simply replacing one privileged group with another will not deliver the desired results.

The challenge for Congress will be to strike the right balance between experience and youth. Senior leaders possess valuable institutional knowledge and political understanding that cannot be ignored. At the same time, emerging leaders deserve meaningful opportunities to prove themselves. A healthy combination of experience and fresh perspectives can create a stronger and more competitive political organisation.

The timing of this discussion is also significant. With the next Assembly election approaching, political parties are assessing their strengths and weaknesses. Voters are increasingly demanding accountability and performance over rhetoric. In such an environment, promoting credible young leaders can help Congress differentiate itself from its rivals and present a renewed vision for Goa's future.

Ultimately, political renewal is not merely about age. It is about ideas, commitment and the willingness to serve the public honestly. Yet age does matter when a party seeks to remain relevant to changing generations. If Congress follows through on its promise and genuinely empowers capable young leaders, it may not only strengthen its electoral prospects but also contribute positively to the evolution of Goa's democratic culture.

What is currently being discussed could become a political masterstroke. More importantly, it could send a powerful message that leadership is earned through dedication and performance, not simply inherited through seniority or influence.

### OPED

## FIR Against the Dead: A Disturbing Precedent

The decision of the Mapusa Police to register an FIR against the late Samuel Garvyn de Braganza has raised serious concerns about both legality and fairness. An FIR is meant to initiate an investigation that could lead to prosecution and punishment. When the accused person is no longer alive, the very purpose of such proceedings becomes questionable.

Samuel's death was already a tragic event that shocked many people. Filing a fresh case against him after his demise only adds to the anguish of his family and friends. More importantly, it creates a public perception that a person who can no longer defend himself is being branded a criminal without the opportunity to explain his side.

The police certainly have a duty to investigate any information relating to illegal weapons or other offences. However, if evidence exists, the focus should be on identifying and proceeding against living persons who may be connected to the matter. Naming a deceased individual as the accused achieves little from the standpoint of justice and accountability.

Every citizen deserves dignity, not only in life but also in death. Law enforcement agencies must ensure that their actions are guided by legal principles and sensitivity, especially in cases that have already resulted in the loss of a human life.

The authorities should clarify the legal justification for this FIR and reassure the public that criminal investigations will not be used in a manner that appears vindictive or unnecessary.

- Sebastian D'Souza, Aldona, Goa

## Holiday Dreams Turn Into Financial Nightmare

The recent case of a Ponda resident allegedly being cheated of ₹2.67 lakh in the name of a Maldives holiday package is both shocking and alarming. What was meant to be a dream vacation turned into a financial nightmare, highlighting the growing risks faced by consumers in the travel industry.

According to reports, the complainant paid a substantial amount towards booking charges, package costs and taxes, only to be informed later that the trip had been cancelled. What is even more disturbing is the allegation that neither the promised holiday package nor a refund was provided despite repeated expectations from the customer.

Incidents such as these undermine public trust in travel agencies and online booking services. Many families save for months or even years to afford international holidays. When such hard earned money is lost through alleged fraud or misrepresentation, the emotional and financial impact can be devastating.

This case serves as a reminder that travellers must exercise caution before making large payments. Travel companies should be properly verified, and customers should insist on clear documentation, cancellation policies and refund guarantees.

At the same time, authorities must ensure swift investigation and strict action against those found guilty of cheating unsuspecting customers. Strong enforcement is necessary not only to provide justice to victims but also to deter similar frauds in the future.

People should be able to plan their holidays with confidence, not fear that their savings will disappear along with empty promises.

- Melvyn Fernandes, Ponda, Goa

# Locals Halt Molasses Tank Scrap Transport At Shristhal Industrial Estate; Three Vehicles Detained

■ Residents Object To Removal Of Valuable Scrap Until Toxic Molasses Waste Is Completely Shifted From Site

**Team Goemkarponn**

**CANACONA:** Alert local residents on Tuesday intervened to stop the transportation of scrap materials from the partially dismantled molasses tank at Shristhal Industrial Estate, leading to the detention of three transport vehicles by authorities.



According to sources, around five Madhya Pradesh-registered trucks arrived at the industrial

estate and were seen stationed near the half-dismantled tank, which previously contained highly toxic molasses waste. With the assistance of a JCB machine, scrap from the dismantled structure was being loaded into the trucks.

By afternoon, two loaded trucks had reportedly already left the site, while a third vehicle was being loaded when vigilant locals raised objections and demanded that the operation be stopped. Residents immediately informed Canacona MLA and Minister Ramesh Tawadkar about the activity.



## Intensifies Food Safety Drive; Nine Establishments Suspended Across North Goa

■ Inspection in Candolim, Anjuna, Vagator and Mapusa reveals multiple violations; surveillance to continue statewide

**Team Goemkarponn**

**ANJUNA:** The Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) has intensified its enforcement action against food safety violations by conducting a comprehensive surveillance and inspection drive across Candolim, Anjuna, Vagator and Mapusa. During the operation, FDA teams inspected restaurants, retail outlets, food vending units and wholesale establishments to verify compliance with food safety regulations and hygiene standards.

A total of 17 food business operators were inspected, out of which nine establishments were directed to suspend operations due to various non-compliances observed during the checks. As part of the ongoing enforcement exercise, the FDA team also carried out

inspections in the Alankar area of Mapusa to review compliance levels and assess whether previously shut establishments were adhering to official directions. Officials stated that similar surveillance drives will continue in other parts of the State in the coming days as part of efforts to strengthen food safety enforcement and protect public health. Food business operators have been urged to strictly comply with prescribed hygiene and safety norms.

The FDA warned that failure to meet standards may result in suspension of licences or penalties under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.

The inspection team included Designated Officer Richard Noronha, Food Safety Officers Lenin De Sa, Amit Mandrekar and Darlane Diukar, along with staff member Sandeep Shelke.



## Goa Records 59% Rainfall Deficit As Weak Monsoon Raises Concerns

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** Nearly two weeks after the onset of the southwest monsoon, Goa is grappling with a severe rainfall deficit, having received barely 40 percent of its normal June precipitation, even as temperatures continue to remain significantly above average.

According to data released by the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Goa recorded 165.8 mm of rainfall between June 1 and June 16 against the normal 405.5 mm for the period, resulting in a rainfall deficit of 59.1 percent. The weak monsoon conditions have also contributed to unseasonably warm weather across the State. On Tuesday, the maximum temperature touched 34.4°C, which was 4.5°C above normal, while the minimum temperature settled at 27.8°C, around 3.3°C higher than the seasonal average. The IMD said the southwest monsoon remained weak over Goa during the last 24 hours, with only very light to light rainfall reported from many parts of the State.

## Bombay High Court Seeks Mandovi Water Quality Report From Gspcb

■ Interim Assessment Ordered Within Two Weeks Amid Pollution Concerns; Mala Lake Sewage Issue Also Reviewed

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** The High Court of Bombay at Goa has directed the Goa State Pollution Control Board (GSPCB) to submit an interim report on the water quality of the River Mandovi within two weeks, while continuing its monitoring of pollution concerns in the river stretch near offshore casinos. The direction was issued during the hearing of a suo motu public interest litigation that was initially taken up following concerns over pollution in Mala Lake and was later



expanded to include the Mandovi river stretch.

The Court had earlier raised concerns over high levels of faecal coliform bacteria detected in parts of the Mandovi, especially in areas where offshore casinos operate. The Bench observed that the issue required immediate attention due to the continuing threat of water pollution. Following the earlier observations,

the Court had sought a response from the GSPCB along with details of action taken to address the issue. During Tuesday's hearing, the Bench of Justice Valmiki Menezes and Justice Hiten Venegavkar directed the GSPCB to place an interim water quality assessment report on record within two weeks and posted the matter for further hearing. The Court also reviewed the steps taken by the Corporation of the City of Panaji (CCP) against houses allegedly discharging sewage into Mala Lake.

## Goa To Launch AI-Based Traffic Enforcement System Across 26 Locations From July 1

■ Automated cameras to issue e-challans; serious violations to attract licence suspension

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** In a major initiative to improve road safety and strengthen traffic law enforcement, the Directorate of Transport will roll out its Automated Intelligent Traffic Management System (ITMS) across 26 locations in Goa from July 1, 2026.

The AI-powered



system will be deployed at key junctions and traffic corridors in Panaji, Margao, Nuvem, Verna,

Mapusa and Vasco. Equipped with advanced surveillance cameras, the network will automatically detect traffic violations and generate e-challans without the need for manual intervention.

Under the new enforcement framework, motorists caught using mobile phones while driving or indulging in dangerous driving will be

fined ₹1,000 for the first offence. Repeat violations will attract a steep penalty of ₹10,000.

The system will also monitor speeding offences, with fines fixed at ₹1,000 for Light Motor Vehicles (LMVs) and ₹2,000 for heavy vehicles. Failure to wear a seat belt or helmet will invite a penalty of ₹1,000.

Authorities have

prescribed a ₹10,000 fine for motorists who obstruct emergency vehicles, including ambulances. Other traffic violations such as wrong-side driving, unauthorised parking and the use of fancy number plates will attract a fine of ₹500 for first-time offenders and ₹1,500 for repeat violations.

# Woman Loses ₹4.13 Lakh In Fake Government Investment Scheme Fraud

■ Mardol Police Register Case After Accused Uses Minister's Name And Image To Lure Victim With Promise Of High Returns

**Team Goemkarponn**

**MARDOL:** Mardol Police have registered a case following a complaint by Dipali Sukthankar, a resident of Ganesh Nagar, Khandola, Marcel, Ponda, who alleged that she was cheated of ₹4,13,999 through a fraudulent online investment scheme. According to the



complaint, between April 2 and April 29, 2026, the complainant came across an online advertisement allegedly posted by an unknown accused person.

The advertisement falsely used the name and image of a Cabinet Minister and promoted a purported government investment scheme promising high returns. Believing the advertisement to be genuine, the complainant invested money in the scheme. Later, the accused allegedly demanded an additional

₹2.5 lakh under the pretext of tax payment and communicated through a person claiming to represent "Kumar Merchants." After making the payment, the complainant was allegedly subjected to further demands for money citing SEBI regulations and other fabricated compliance issues.

# Panaji Police Book Two In ₹1.90 Lakh Holiday Package Fraud Case

■ Beatrix Holiday Private Limited accused of inducing customer with tour package offer and failing to provide services or refund

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** Panaji Police have registered a case against two persons for allegedly cheating a customer of ₹1.90 lakh through a holiday package scheme. A case has been registered at Panaji Police Station under CR No. 107/2026 under Section 318(4) read with 3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya



Sanhita (BNS) Act, 2023, based on a complaint filed by Aman Kumar, a 30-year-old resident of Kerala. According to the complaint, the incident took place on February 13, 2026, at Crown Hotel, Panaji,



## Tour Package Fraud: Ponda Man Loses ₹2.67 Lakh In Maldives Holiday Scam

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PONDA:** Ponda Police have registered a case following a complaint by Gautam Fadte Gaonkar, a resident of Housing Board Colony, Curti, Ponda, who alleged that he was cheated of ₹2,67,600 by a travel agent in connection with an international holiday package.

According to the complaint, between December 8, 2025 and February 17, 2026, accused Siddharth Kapoor, a travel agent and Managing Director of "Heaven Holidays" based in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, allegedly induced the complainant to book a Maldives vacation package. The complainant paid various amounts towards the booking, package cost and TCS tax through Google Pay and ICICI Bank credit card, amounting to a total of ₹2,67,600. Later, the accused allegedly informed him that the trip was cancelled due to the Middle East war situation. However, the accused allegedly failed to provide the vacation package or refund the amount, causing financial loss to the complainant.

## Calangute shop owner booked for allegedly selling e-cigarettes

■ Electronic cigarettes and allied products worth ₹35,500 seized during police raid

**Team Goemkarponn**

**CALANGUTE:** Calangute Police have registered a case against a 37-year-old man for allegedly selling electronic cigarettes and allied products from a shop at Umtawado, Calangute.

The case was registered on June 15 following a state complaint by PSI Prajit Mandrekar of Calangute Police Station.



The complaint stated that the accused, identified as Sanjay, was found selling electronic cigarettes and related products at a shop named "Smoking Corner, Hookah & More" near Ticlo Resort, Umtawado, between 8.30 pm and 10.05 pm.

## Property dispute leads to alleged assault in Pernem, three booked

■ Mandrem Police register case after woman alleges attack on her son and herself over family dispute

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PERNEM:** Mandrem Police have registered a case against three persons following a complaint by a 50-year-old woman from Parcem, Pernem, alleging assault over a long-standing property dispute.

The complaint states that the incident occurred on June 14 at



Madhalawada, Parcem, where the accused persons — Vishwanath Nagoji (66), Sandesh Nagoji (37), and Sangamesh Nagoji (35) — allegedly abused the

complainant, threatened her, and assaulted her son.

As per the complaint, accused Sandesh allegedly held the complainant's son Digvesh Nagoji (33) from behind, while Vishwanath and Sandesh allegedly assaulted him with fists, kicks and a hard object suspected to be iron, causing fracture injuries.

## Foreign national escapes from Mapusa detention centre, case registered

■ Kazakhstan citizen allegedly flees while under FRRO detention order

**Team Goemkarponn**

**MAPUSA:** Mapusa Police have registered a case after a foreign national allegedly escaped from the Detention Centre at Mapusa under the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO), Goa.

According to the complaint lodged by ASI Ramchandra Parsekar attached to Detention Centre Mapusa (FRRO), on June 15, 2026, at



around 8.45 am, accused Alexandr Arkhipov, a Kazakhstan national and resident of the detention

centre, allegedly escaped from the premises.

The accused was reportedly lodged at the

detention centre and was lawfully detained under an order issued by FRRO Panaji vide Order No. FRRO/GOA/R.M.O. 32/2026/4151/2026 dated June 1, 2026, along with a corrigendum issued on June 13, 2026. Police stated that the accused allegedly violated the detention order and conditions applicable to his stay in India by escaping from custody. Further investigation is underway.

## Maid booked for allegedly stealing gold ornaments and cash

**Team Goemkarponn**

**SALIGAO:** Saligao Police have registered a case following a complaint by Mrs. Dipa K. Lingudkar, a resident of Pilerne, Porvorim, Bardez-Goa, regarding an alleged theft from her residence. According to the complaint, between June 9, 2026, at around 6.30 am and June 14, 2026, at around 7.30 pm, at Pilerne, the accused, identified as Bimla Pun (23), a maid working at the complainant's house, allegedly stole a pouch containing gold ornaments and cash.

# FIR against deceased Samuel over illegal weapon 'malicious', says Adv Carlos Ferreira

■ Aldona MLA questions police action, alleges attempt to tarnish Samuel's image

**Team Goemkarponn**

**ALDONA:** Aldona Congress MLA Adv. Carlos Alvares Ferreira has criticised the Mapusa Police for registering an FIR against deceased Samuel Garvyn de Braganza in connection with alleged illegal weapon possession, calling the move "illegal and malicious". Samuel had died by suicide in Mapusa after a video showing him allegedly dumping



garbage in an open area was circulated widely. Reacting to the FIR, Adv. Carlos said an FIR cannot be registered against a deceased person as its purpose is to investigate an offence and prosecute the accused.

"I told the SP that in

criminal jurisprudence you don't file an FIR against a dead person. The purpose of an FIR is to register an offence, investigate and punish the accused through prosecution. If the accused is dead, there is no question of an FIR," he said. He alleged that naming Samuel as an accused after his death showed "additional malice" and could be an attempt to portray him as a criminal.

Adv. Carlos also questioned the earlier

case registered over the garbage dumping incident, stating that the available video did not clearly establish the offence and questioned the basis for invoking the relevant section. He said an inquiry should also be conducted into the circumstances surrounding the registration of the FIR, adding that a person should not lose dignity and respect after death merely because a police case has been filed.



## EDC posts ₹68 crore profit before tax, strengthens support for Goa's MSMEs

■ Chief Minister Pramod Sawant highlights EDC's role in promoting entrepreneurship and economic growth

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said that EDC Limited continues to play a key role in strengthening Goa's industrial and entrepreneurial ecosystem while supporting MSMEs across the state.

Sawant, who chaired the 408th Board Meeting of EDC Limited at EDC House, said several important policy decisions were taken to further boost entrepreneurship, industrial growth and financial support mechanisms in Goa.

The Board sanctioned term loans and approved the Accounts for FY 2025-26, with EDC reporting a revenue of ₹94 crore and a Profit Before Tax of around ₹68 crore. The company maintained a

low NPA level of 0.30 per cent. "Complimented the officers and staff of EDC for this commendable financial performance.

EDC continues to support MSMEs, entrepreneurship and economic growth in Goa, aligned with the vision of Swayampurna Goa and Viksit Goa," Sawant said.

The meeting also reviewed key initiatives including the Easy Exit Scheme for CMRY borrowers, loan schemes for solar and renewable energy projects, and the Working Capital Term Loan Scheme. The Chief Minister said such initiatives would help create a stronger business environment and encourage more Goans to pursue entrepreneurial opportunities.



## GFG slams power policies, alleges 'three-pronged assault' on electricity consumers

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** Goans for Goa (GFG) has criticised the State Government and the Electricity Department, alleging that electricity consumers are being burdened through increased tariffs, sanctioned load penalties and mandatory smart meter implementation. In a statement, GFG President Kennedy Afonso said the recently approved tariff hikes were excessive and unjustified, adding that electricity being an essential service should remain affordable for ordinary households. GFG demanded that the government ensure a stable tariff structure for consumption up to 400 to 500 units, stating that higher rates should apply only beyond this level. The organisation raised objections over sanctioned load penalties, claiming that merely increasing the sanctioned load would not provide relief unless the tariff structure itself is revised.

## Goa Youth Congress gears up for electoral battle, focuses on grassroots expansion

■ Senior leaders call for booth-level strengthening and greater youth participation ahead of polls

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** The Goa Pradesh Youth Congress has intensified its organisational preparations with a State Executive Meeting focused on strengthening the party network, increasing youth participation and preparing



for upcoming electoral challenges. The meeting, attended by senior Congress leaders including

Manikrao Thakare, Manish Sharma, Girish Chodankar, Carlos Ferreira, M.K. Sheikh and Youth Congress In-charge Swapnil Patil,

discussed the political situation in Goa and strategies to expand the party's reach.

## North Goa reviews preparations for smooth and secure NEET examination

■ District Magistrate Ankit Yadav directs departments to ensure safety, facilities and coordination at centres

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** A meeting of the District Level Coordination Committee (DLCC), North Goa was chaired by District Magistrate Ankit Yadav, IAS, to review and finalise arrangements for the smooth, fair and secure conduct of the NEET examination in the district.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Collectors, Mamlatdars, representatives of the



National Testing Agency (NTA), Centre Supervisors and officials from Police, Education, Higher Education, Health, KTCL, Electricity Department and IT Department.

During the meeting, the preparedness of

examination centres was reviewed in detail. The District Magistrate directed officials to ensure availability of essential facilities including uninterrupted power supply, CCTV surveillance, drinking

water, sanitation and proper seating arrangements for candidates.

Security arrangements including deployment of police personnel, safe handling of confidential examination material, frisking procedures, biometric verification and prevention of unfair practices were also discussed. Special focus was placed on ensuring a hassle-free experience for candidates.

## Konkan Railway Police flag fire safety gaps at Margao railway station

**Team Goemkarponn**

**MARGAO:** Konkan Railway Police have written to railway authorities highlighting fire safety concerns at Margao Railway Station following a fire incident reported on May 29, 2026. In the communication, police pointed out that although fire tenders reached the spot promptly, the lack of a dedicated firefighting water pipeline and limited access to the affected area posed challenges in controlling the blaze.

# Namo Cities, Metro Corridors And A '30-Minute NCR': Inside The Regional Plan 2041

■ Blueprint aims to reshape Delhi-NCR's future

Team Goemkarponn

**New Delhi:** Delhi-NCR is set for a massive transformation under the draft NCR Regional Plan 2041, an ambitious blueprint that seeks to accommodate a population of nearly 11 crore by creating new cities, expanding high-speed transit networks and decentralising economic activity across the region.

At the heart of the plan are four proposed greenfield "Namo Cities", a Rs 5,000-crore allocation for new urban centres and the vision of a "30-minute NCR", where residents can travel between major residential and commercial hubs within half an hour using Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) corridors, metro networks and upgraded highways.

The NCR Planning Board recently reviewed the draft plan and decided to retain the existing boundaries of the National Capital Region while focusing on balanced growth beyond Delhi, Gurugram and Noida.

According to the draft, NCR's population is



expected to rise from 5.81 crore in 2011 to nearly 11.3 crore by 2041, with urbanisation accelerating rapidly. Experts say the region can no longer rely on Delhi as the primary centre for jobs, housing and infrastructure.

The proposed Namo Cities are envisioned as self-sustaining urban centres with their own employment hubs, civic amenities and social infrastructure. Industry experts believe they could help reduce pressure on Delhi while creating new growth corridors across the region.

The plan also

emphasises transit-oriented development, higher Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and mixed-use neighbourhoods, particularly along metro and RRTS corridors. With Delhi facing a severe land crunch, policymakers see vertical growth and integrated live-work-play spaces as key to meeting future housing demand.

A report by Knight Frank India estimates that the Regional Plan 2041 could attract investments worth over Rs 20 lakh crore in housing, transport and civic infrastructure, potentially reshaping northern India's urban

landscape. While industry leaders have welcomed the vision, they caution that its success will depend on effective implementation. Massive investments in transport, logistics and urban infrastructure will be required to transform the NCR into a network of interconnected cities rather than an overburdened capital-centric cluster. If executed successfully, NCR 2041 could become one of India's most ambitious regional planning projects, redefining how millions live, work and travel in the decades ahead.

...CONTD FROM PAGE 01

## Smart Meter Rollout Put on Hold Amid Consumer Concerns

after that the matter will be discussed further," he added, indicating that the government would review the project only after completing the assessment.

Apart from the smart meter issue, the Cabinet approved several key decisions. It sanctioned the creation of 73 posts for the Nursing Institute in Margao, including 45 regular posts and 28 additional positions, aimed at strengthening the institute's academic and administrative functioning.

The Cabinet also approved the transfer of five lakh square metres of land at Farmagudi for the development of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) campus, paving the way for expansion of higher education infrastructure in the state.

In another significant decision, the government withdrew the Goa Highways Law (Revival of Operation, Amendment and Validation) Bill, 2023, which was awaiting

clearance from the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Sawant said the Centre had suggested certain modifications to the legislation. "We have withdrawn the bill for now. The suggested changes will be incorporated and the revised bill will be sent again for approval," he said.

The Chief Minister also announced that 22 children of freedom fighters would be offered government jobs on the occasion of Revolution Day. Reaffirming the government's commitment to employment generation, Sawant said efforts would be made to ensure all eligible beneficiaries receive job opportunities under various government schemes.

## Where Did The Monsoon Go? Why India's Sudden June Dry Spell Has Experts Concerned

towards central and north-western India has stalled.

Meteorologists attribute the slowdown primarily to the absence of strong low-pressure systems over the Bay of Bengal, which normally act as engines driving the monsoon inland. The monsoon trough has also remained weak, while western disturbances over north India have disrupted the usual circulation patterns. Another factor weighing on the season is the expected emergence of moderate-to-strong El Nino conditions. Historically, El Nino years tend to suppress rainfall by weakening the moisture-bearing winds that fuel the Indian monsoon.

Experts caution that temporary breaks in the monsoon are not unusual and that strong rainfall spells in July can often make up for June deficits. However, the combination of stalled advancement, weak cloud cover and a sharp rainfall shortfall has made this year's pause particularly noteworthy.

For farmers growing paddy, soybean, cotton and pulses, the next two weeks could prove decisive. A revival by late June may limit losses, but a prolonged dry spell could intensify concerns over crop sowing, reservoirs and water availability.

## Fly Without A Meal, Pay Less: Air India Introduces New Budget Fare On Select Routes

■ Economy passengers can opt out of meals for lower fares

Team Goemkarponn

**New Delhi:** Air India has introduced a new "no-meal" fare category for economy-class passengers on select domestic routes, allowing travellers to pay lower fares if they choose to skip onboard meals.

The airline announced the launch of the 'Basic' fare category on Tuesday, describing it as a move aimed at giving passengers greater flexibility and control over how they travel and what they pay for.

The new option becomes the fourth fare category in Air India's economy class, joining the existing Value, Classic and Flex fares.

Initially, the Basic fare will be offered on select short-haul domestic routes, with the airline expected to assess customer response before expanding the service. Routes such as Delhi-Chandigarh and Delhi-Udaipur are among those likely to be included during the pilot phase.

Air India said the initiative is designed to provide more choice to passengers rather than

reduce services.

Under the Basic fare, passengers will receive a checked baggage allowance of 15 kg and a cabin baggage allowance of 7 kg. Complimentary beverages, including tea and coffee, will continue to be served onboard.

Travellers who opt for the no-meal fare will still have the option of purchasing meals up to 24 hours before departure. Meal choices will include vegetarian, non-vegetarian, Jain and diabetic options.

The airline clarified that the change applies only to economy-class passengers and that there are no plans to introduce a similar no-meal option in Business or Premium Economy cabins. Air India currently serves complimentary meals on both domestic and international flights. The carrier believes the new fare category could appeal particularly to passengers on shorter routes who prefer lower ticket prices over onboard meal service.

The airline said customer feedback during the pilot phase will determine whether the Basic fare is expanded to more routes in the future.



# Trade Deal, Iran Conflict, Energy Security: Key Issues On Agenda For Modi-Trump Meeting In France

Leaders set for crucial bilateral on G7 sidelines

Team Goemkarponn

**NEW DELHI:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump are set to hold a closely watched bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the G7 Summit in France on Wednesday, with trade, energy security and the evolving situation in West Asia expected to dominate the discussions.

The meeting, scheduled in Evian-les-Bains, marks the first formal bilateral engagement between the



two leaders in nearly 16 months and comes amid heightened geopolitical tensions and concerns over global energy supplies.

According to sources, both leaders are expected to discuss the ongoing

conflict involving Iran, maritime security in the Strait of Hormuz and ways to strengthen the India-US energy partnership. The Strait, a critical route for global oil and gas shipments, has been at the centre of international

attention following recent disruptions to commercial shipping and attacks on vessels carrying Indian crew members.

Energy security has gained added significance after recent turmoil in West Asia triggered a spike in global oil prices and raised fears of supply disruptions. While the US has announced a tentative agreement with Iran aimed at reopening the Strait of Hormuz, details of the deal are yet to be finalised and regional tensions remain high.



## 'Recognise Rising Anti-Hindu Bias': Hindu American Group Urges California Hate Commission

Foundation cites attacks on temples, online hate and targeted assaults

Team Goemkarponn

**NEW DELHI:** The Hindu American Foundation (HAF) has urged California's Commission on the State of Hate to formally recognise and address what it describes as a growing wave of anti-Hindu bias, vandalism and violence targeting Hindu Americans across the state. In comments submitted to the California Civil Rights Department and the Commission on June 9, the organisation called for stronger reporting mechanisms, improved hate-crime data collection, enhanced security for religious institutions and greater public acknowledgement of anti-Hindu

discrimination. "Hindu Americans are an integral, vibrant part of the California tapestry," said Samir Kalra, HAF's Managing Director of Policy and Programs. "Freedom of religion and the right to practice without fear of violence are foundational. We respectfully urge this Commission to formally recognise this dangerous spike in anti-Hindu bias and prioritise the protection, safety and inclusion of the Hindu American community." The Commission on the State of Hate was established to advise California authorities on trends in hate crimes and discrimination and recommend policy measures.



## India's Defence Production Hits Record Rs 1.78 Lakh Crore In FY26: Rajnath Singh

Team Goemkarponn

**NEW DELHI:** India's annual defence production reached an all-time high of Rs 1.78 lakh crore in the financial year 2025-26, reflecting the country's expanding indigenous manufacturing capabilities and growing self-reliance in the defence sector, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh announced on Wednesday.

The latest figure marks a 15.6 per cent increase over the previous year's production of Rs 1.54 lakh crore. Rajnath Singh said defence production has more than doubled since FY2020-21, when it stood at Rs 84,643 crore.

"India's annual defence production has surged to an all-time high of Rs 1.78 lakh crore in the Financial Year 2025-26," the minister said in a post on X, attributing the growth to the government's focus on indigenous manufacturing and policy reforms.

## Letter To Speaker And Warnings: Uddhav Sena's Bid To Stop MPs From Breaking Away

Party scrambles to prevent split amid 'Operation Tiger' buzz

Team Goemkarponn

**NEW DELHI:** The Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) has launched a multi-pronged effort to keep its parliamentary flock together amid reports that several MPs are preparing to break away under what is being dubbed as Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's "Operation Tiger".



According to sources cited by News18 Marathi, six rebel MPs have already submitted a letter to the Lok Sabha Speaker

seeking recognition as a separate group and have reportedly received an in-principle nod.

In response, the Uddhav Thackeray-led faction has moved swiftly to avoid a repeat of the 2022 split in the undivided Shiv Sena. Senior leaders Arvind Sawant, Anil Desai and Sanjay Raut are camping in Delhi to coordinate the party's strategy.

## PM highlights indigenous military transformation

Team Goemkarponn

**NEW DELHI:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday hailed India's growing indigenous defence capabilities, saying the country's military strength has undergone a major transformation over the past decade driven by self-reliance, innovation and homegrown technologies.

His remarks came shortly after Defence Minister Rajnath Singh announced that India's annual defence



production touched an all-time high of Rs 1.78 lakh crore in the financial year 2025-26.

In a post on X, PM Modi said, "India's defence capabilities have witnessed significant transformation over the last decade, guided by the vision of self-reliance and powered by

innovation, technology and indigenous manufacturing."

The Prime Minister also shared a thread by MyGovIndia highlighting the country's progress in strengthening defence capabilities across land, sea and air through indigenous technologies.

"This thread explains how India has strengthened its defence capabilities across air, land and sea, advanced indigenous technologies and built a stronger foundation for self-reliance and national security," he wrote.

The thread showcased some of India's major defence achievements over the past 12 years, including the indigenous fighter jet Tejas, the Akash missile system, the Agni-V ballistic missile and the country's first home-built aircraft carrier, INS Vikrant.

Tejas, developed by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), was highlighted as a key pillar of India's combat aviation ecosystem, with the induction of the Mk-1A variant and development of the more advanced Mk-2 version underway.

The DRDO-developed Akash missile system was cited for its improved target-tracking and interception capabilities, while the Agni-V missile was described as a major milestone that places India among a select group of nations possessing advanced long-range strategic deterrence systems.

INS Vikrant, India's first indigenous aircraft carrier, was showcased as a symbol of the country's technological capabilities and maritime strength.

# Messi's Hat-Trick, Mbappe's Brace And Austria's Historic Win Light Up World Cup

■ Argentine legend breaks multiple records in 3-0 win

## Team Goemkarponn

**NEW DELHI:** Lionel Messi turned back the clock in spectacular fashion, scoring the first World Cup hat-trick of his illustrious career as Argentina cruised to a 3-0 victory over Algeria in their FIFA World Cup 2026 Group J opener at Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City.

The 38-year-old delivered a vintage performance on a night that coincided with the 20th anniversary of his World Cup debut, reminding

the football world why he remains one of the game's greatest players. Messi's three goals took his World Cup tally to 16, equalling the all-time record held by Germany's Miroslav Klose. One more goal will make him the

outright highest scorer in the tournament's history.

The hat-trick also saw Messi become the oldest player to score three goals in a World Cup match at 38 years and 357 days, surpassing the

previous mark held by Cristiano Ronaldo. He further added to

his legacy by becoming the first footballer to appear in six World Cups, having represented Argentina continuously since 2006.

Remarkably, Messi now holds the distinction of being both Argentina's youngest and oldest World Cup goalscorer. He scored his first World Cup goal at the age of 18 against Serbia and Montenegro in 2006 and became the country's oldest scorer with his opener against Algeria.



## IPL 2026 Most-Watched Ever, Crosses 1.2 Billion Viewers: JioStar

■ Sub-heading: The IPL 2026 final, where RCB retained the title, became the most-watched match in the tournament's history with a reach of over 400 million viewers

### Team Goemkarponn

**MUMBAI:** JioStar on Wednesday announced that the recently concluded IPL 2026 became the most-watched edition in the tournament's history, with the cumulative reach crossing 1.2 billion viewers across television and digital platforms.

According to the broadcaster, IPL 2026 registered a 7 per cent year-on-year growth in reach, while total watch time touched 870 billion minutes. The final, in which Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) clinched their second consecutive title, emerged as the most-watched match in IPL history, attracting more than 400 million

viewers across screens.

The season also witnessed strong growth in digital consumption. Connected TV (CTV) viewership increased by 22 per cent, highlighting the growing convergence of television-scale audiences with digital viewing experiences.

Digital video views reached 25 billion, an increase of 8 per cent over the previous season, while regional language watch time on digital platforms surged by 33 per cent.

Speaking on the record viewership figures, Ishan Chatterjee, CEO, Sports, JioStar, said IPL 2026 marked a new phase in creating an integrated sports-viewing ecosystem.



## Rounak Chouhan Qualifies For Macau Open Main Draw After Opponent Retires

### Team Goemkarponn

**NEW DELHI:** Indian shuttler Rounak Chouhan advanced to the men's singles main draw of the Macau Open Super 300 badminton tournament after Myanmar's Hein Htut retired midway through their qualification match in Macau on Tuesday.

Chouhan fought back after losing the opening game to take the next two, with the score reading 14-21, 21-15, 19-17 in his favour when Htut was forced to retire. The Indian will now face Chinese Taipei's Zhe Ying Wu, ranked 133rd in the world, in the Round of 32 on Wednesday. However, it was a disappointing day for the other Indian players in the qualification rounds. Tushar Suveer bowed out of the men's singles event after suffering a 20-22, 13-21 defeat to Indonesia's Christian Adinata. Earlier, Alap Mishra also exited the tournament after losing 18-21, 18-21 to Hein Htut in the qualification stage.

## "Pakistan Knock Boosted My Confidence": Richa Ghosh Ahead Of Netherlands Clash

■ Wicketkeeper-batter eyes consistency at T20 World Cup

### Team Goemkarponn

**NEW DELHI:** Indian wicketkeeper-batter Richa Ghosh believes her match-winning cameo against Pakistan has restored her confidence as she looks to build momentum in the Women's T20 World Cup.

Richa played a crucial innings of 34 off just 17 balls in India's emphatic 64-run victory over Pakistan in Birmingham



last Sunday, helping her side post a competitive total of 170.

"I think the knock against Pakistan will help me really well because

it gave me confidence," Richa said on the eve of India's Group-stage clash against the Netherlands on Wednesday.

The 22-year-old revealed that her return to form began in a warm-up match against England, where she scored a half-century after enduring a lean run of scores leading into the tournament.

"I think I got the confidence from the practice match we played.

## Harsh Dubey Has The Skills To Become Future Star: India Spin Coach

■ Sairaj Bahutule says India's spin unit is in transition and Harsh Dubey has the talent and temperament to emerge as a long-term asset

### Team Goemkarponn

**NEW DELHI:** India's spin department is in a phase of transition, and spin-bowling coach Sairaj Bahutule believes young all-rounder Harsh Dubey has the skills and temperament to become an important player for the future.

Dubey was preferred ahead of the more experienced Kuldeep Yadav in the first ODI against Afghanistan and



impressed with figures of 3/47 from five overs.

Speaking ahead of the second ODI, Bahutule said the team management is evaluating a pool of young spinners

following the retirement of Ravichandran Ashwin and workload management for Ravindra Jadeja.

"This is a transition time for spinners," Bahutule said.

"This group of spinners, the selectors, Gautam (Gambhir) and everybody, they are having a look at all the spinners. Those who have the potential and the right attributes will definitely be given a chance.

"That is what the process is. In a transition, you have to identify the right bowler. That is what the process is at the moment. I am sure we will get the right people on board."

Bahutule, who recently joined as India's spin-bowling coach, said youngsters such as Dubey, Manav Suthar, Shivang Kumar and Zeeshan Ansari would get opportunities in the coming months.

Praising Dubey, he said the Vidarbha all-rounder has already shown his quality in domestic cricket and is capable of succeeding at the international level as well.