



Lobo Calls for War on Drug Networks in Goa

■ **MLA Says Intelligence Gaps Must Be Plugged, Entire Supply Chains Need to Be Dismantled**

Team Goemkarponn

CALANGUTE: Sounding a strong warning over the continued presence of narcotics in Goa, Calangute MLA Michael Lobo has called for an aggressive crackdown on drug networks, stressing that authorities must identify how drugs are entering the state and dismantle the syndicates behind their distribution. Lobo said the state



government has empowered police to take stringent action against offenders and illegal activities, with clear instructions to act decisively against those involved in the drug trade. However, he cautioned



that enforcement alone would not be enough unless backed by a robust intelligence network capable of tracking supply routes and identifying key players. Responding to concerns about the flow of narcotics into Goa, the

MLA said any weaknesses in intelligence gathering must be addressed immediately. He emphasized that drugs should not be allowed to enter the state and, if they do, law enforcement agencies must trace those responsible for bringing them in and pushing them into the market. Calling for a sustained and coordinated effort, Lobo said the focus

▶ **CONTD TO PAGE 06**

Michael Lobo Flags Rise in Rent-A-Car Crashes

MLA Says Reckless Tourist Driving Is Costing Lives, Seeks Meeting With CM for Long-Term Solution

Team Goemkarponn

CALANGUTE: Calangute MLA Michael Lobo has called for urgent government intervention to tackle the growing number of accidents involving rented vehicles, saying reckless driving by tourists is resulting in deaths, serious injuries and hardship for local families. Lobo said while thousands of Goans depend on the rent-a-car sector for their livelihood, the increasing

number of accidents involving tourists has become a major concern. He noted that many visitors drive recklessly or under the influence of alcohol, leading to crashes that often leave locals and tourists seriously injured. Highlighting the human cost of such accidents, the MLA said some victims have lost their lives, while others have suffered severe injuries and become entangled in lengthy legal proceedings.



GPYC Moves DGP Over Alleged Custodial Assault of Minor

■ **Delegation Also Seeks Thorough Probe Into Mapusa Youth Suicide**

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: A Goa Pradesh Youth Congress (GPYC) delegation led by President Adv. Archit Naik met the Director General of Police (DGP) on Sunday, demanding a fair and time-bound investigation into the alleged custodial assault of youths in the Maina-Curtorim case and the recent youth suicide case in Mapusa. The delegation expressed concern over reports of custodial violence against youths, including a minor, and urged police authorities to ensure accountability and strict action against those found responsible. GPYC leaders also sought a comprehensive investigation into the circumstances surrounding the Mapusa youth suicide case, calling for all possible angles to be examined to ensure justice for the victim and his family.

NSUI-Goa Demands Probe Into NEET-UG Exam Irregularities

Student Body Seeks Inquiry and Relief for Affected Candidates

PANAJI: NSUI-Goa has urged district authorities to investigate alleged irregularities during the NEET-UG examination at Examination Hall AG-07, claiming that candidates lost around 15 minutes of exam time due to administrative lapses. In a representation submitted to the administration, the student body alleged that the disruption caused stress among students



and may have impacted their performance and rankings. NSUI-Goa has demanded an independent inquiry, scrutiny of CCTV footage

▶ **CONTD TO PAGE 06**

GSEIAA Defers Karapur-Sarvan Housing Project Complaints, Cites Matter Pending Before High Court

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Goa State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (GSEIAA) has deferred consideration of complaints related to the proposed Karapur-Sarvan housing project in Bicholim, stating that issues connected to the project are currently pending before the High Court of Bombay at Goa. According to minutes of a recent GSEIAA meeting, the authority received several representations



and complaints concerning area development and building construction activities in Survey Nos. 148/0 and 176/1 of Carapur village in Bicholim taluka. After examining the matter, the authority noted that proceedings related to the project are already before the High Court.

In order to maintain judicial discipline and consistency in adjudication, GSEIAA decided that further consideration of complaints linked to issues under the court's scrutiny would remain deferred at this stage, invoking the principle of sub judice.

30 Held in NEET Re-Test Fraud Crackdown as Nine Impersonators Caught at Bihar Exam Centres

■ **Investigation widens after arrests linked to alleged cheating network in Lakhisarai**

New Delhi: A major crackdown on examination malpractice during the NEET UG Re-Examination 2026 has led to the arrest of 30 people in Bihar's Lakhisarai district, including nine individuals accused of impersonating registered candidates. The arrests were made following intensified checks at multiple examination centres after



authorities received inputs about suspected cheating and organised fraud. Investigators believe the case may be linked to a larger network involved in facilitating unfair means during competitive

examinations. Among those arrested, one impersonator was caught at the KRK High School examination centre, seven were detained from Kendriya Vidyalaya, and another was apprehended at Hasanpur School. The accused are reported to belong to different districts, raising concerns about the scale and reach of the alleged operation.

"We Will Go to War": Pakistan Defence Minister Escalates Rhetoric Over Water Security Dispute

New Delhi: Pakistan's Defence Minister, Khawaja Asif, has issued a strong warning to India, stating that Islamabad could consider military action if it believes its water security is under threat. Speaking amid growing tensions over water-sharing arrangements, Asif described water as a vital component of Pakistan's national security and said any perceived attempt to disrupt supplies could



trigger a serious response. He also suggested that Pakistan would closely monitor developments and act if it found evidence of actions that could significantly affect the country's access to water resources.

Ban the Reckless, Not the Industry

The recent series of accidents involving tourists driving rental vehicles has once again triggered demands for a ban on Goa's rent-a-car business. Political leaders across party lines have joined citizens in expressing concern over rising road accidents and what many perceive as irresponsible behaviour by visitors behind the wheel. The anger is understandable. Every accident that claims a life or leaves families shattered deserves serious attention. However, before Goa rushes towards a blanket ban, it must ask a crucial question: will banning rent-a-cars actually make the roads safer?

The answer is far from straightforward.

Goa's rent-a-car and self-drive vehicle sector has become an integral part of the state's tourism economy over the past decade. What began as a small business model has evolved into a major source of employment for thousands of Goan youth. Many young entrepreneurs have invested their savings, taken bank loans and built livelihoods around rental vehicles. Others depend on the sector indirectly through garages, vehicle maintenance, insurance services, roadside assistance and tourism-related businesses.

A complete ban would therefore have significant economic consequences. It would not merely affect tourists looking for mobility; it would impact thousands of families whose income depends on the industry. At a time when employment opportunities remain limited and many young Goans are struggling to find sustainable livelihoods, shutting down an entire sector could create more problems than it solves. More importantly, banning rent-a-cars addresses the symptom rather than the cause. The real issue is reckless driving. Whether a vehicle is rented, privately owned by a tourist or driven by a local resident, accidents occur when traffic rules are ignored. Speeding, drunk driving, dangerous overtaking, distracted driving and lack of road discipline remain the primary causes of accidents across the country. A tourist driving his own vehicle can be just as dangerous as one driving a rented car if enforcement is weak. If Goa bans rental vehicles today, will tourists stop driving recklessly? Unlikely. Many visitors will simply arrive with their own cars. Others will hire private transport or use alternative means. The challenge of

“Whether a vehicle is rented, privately owned by a tourist or driven by a local resident, accidents occur when traffic rules are ignored. Speeding, drunk driving, dangerous overtaking, distracted driving and lack of road discipline remain the primary causes of accidents across the country. A tourist driving his own vehicle can be just as dangerous as one driving a rented car if enforcement is weak. If Goa bans rental vehicles today, will tourists stop driving recklessly? Unlikely. Many visitors will simply arrive with their own cars. Others will hire private transport or use alternative means. The challenge of ensuring road safety will remain.”

What Goa needs is not prohibition but regulation.

The first step should be stricter verification before vehicles are rented. Operators must ensure that the individual booking the vehicle is the same person driving it. Digital verification systems linked to driving licences can help eliminate misuse and ensure accountability.”

ensuring road safety will remain.

What Goa needs is not prohibition but regulation.

The first step should be stricter verification before vehicles are rented. Operators must ensure that the individual booking the vehicle is the same person driving it. Digital verification systems linked to driving licences can help eliminate misuse and ensure accountability.

Secondly, all rental vehicles

should be equipped with GPS tracking and speed-monitoring systems. Technology today allows operators and authorities to monitor dangerous driving patterns in real time. Vehicles repeatedly exceeding speed limits can trigger alerts and penalties.

Thirdly, tourists renting vehicles should undergo a brief orientation process. Many visitors are unfamiliar with Goa's narrow village roads, blind curves and unique traffic conditions. A short digital safety module explaining local traffic rules, penalties and road etiquette could go a long way in reducing accidents.

The government must also strengthen enforcement. More speed cameras, stricter drunken driving checks, higher penalties for repeat offenders and swift action against dangerous driving are essential. The certainty of punishment often acts as a stronger deterrent than the severity of punishment itself.

At the same time, authorities must identify and crack down on illegal operators. Legitimate rental businesses that follow regulations should not be placed in the same category as unregistered operators who ignore safety norms and compliance requirements.

There is also a need for greater responsibility from tourists themselves. Goa is not merely a holiday destination; it is home to over a million people. Roads are shared by schoolchildren, senior citizens, local commuters and visitors alike. Respect for local laws and road safety is not optional—it is a responsibility.

The demand for a ban may sound attractive in moments of public anger. It creates the impression of decisive action. Yet history shows that blanket bans rarely solve complex problems. They often punish law-abiding businesses while leaving the underlying issue untouched.

Goa must therefore avoid emotional policymaking. The focus should be on making roads safer through stronger regulations, better technology, stricter enforcement and greater accountability. Such measures can protect lives without destroying livelihoods. Road safety and economic sustainability need not be opposing goals. Goa can achieve both if it chooses reform over reaction.

The objective should not be to eliminate the rent-a-car industry. The objective should be to eliminate reckless driving.

EDITOR SPEAKS

Rs 34,000 Crore Lost, Rs 1,000 Crore Seized: Is This Justice?

Suraj Nandrekar

The Enforcement Directorate's attachment of assets worth over ₹1,000 crore in connection with Goa's illegal mining case has once again brought the state's biggest economic scandal back into public focus. While any action against those accused of profiting from illegal mining is welcome, the figures involved raise a troubling question: if the estimated loss to the exchequer is around ₹34,000 crore, how does the recovery of ₹1,000 crore amount to justice?

The numbers simply do not add up.

For over a decade, Goa's illegal mining saga has been synonymous with environmental destruction, regulatory failure and colossal financial losses. Successive investigations, court proceedings and official reports have pointed to widespread irregularities in the extraction and export of iron ore. The scale of the alleged wrongdoing was so vast that mining operations across the state were halted, devastating thousands of workers and crippling an economy that had long depended on the sector.

Yet, while ordinary Goans paid the price through unemployment, economic uncertainty and lost opportunities, the question of accountability has remained frustratingly unresolved.

The latest asset attachment may appear significant on paper. After all, ₹1,000 crore is not a small amount. But when placed against allegations involving losses estimated at ₹34,000 crore, it represents barely a fraction of the damage allegedly caused. It is equivalent to recovering a few coins after a vault has been emptied.

This glaring disparity is precisely why many Goans remain sceptical whenever agencies announce breakthroughs in the mining case. Every few years there is news of investigations, attachments, notices and court proceedings. Yet the public continues to ask a simple question: where did the money go, and how much of it will ever return to the people of Goa?

The issue is not merely financial. Illegal mining was never just about ore extracted from the earth. It involved the depletion of a natural resource that belongs collectively to the people of Goa. Every tonne mined illegally represented a loss of public wealth. Every violation weakened trust in institutions responsible for protecting that wealth.

The environmental cost was equally severe. Forests were damaged, water bodies affected and entire communities faced the consequences of unregulated extraction. These losses cannot be measured solely in rupees and paise. They represent damage that may take generations to fully repair.

What makes the situation even more concerning is the pace of justice. Years after the mining controversy first exploded into national headlines, the state is still struggling to arrive at clear answers. Delayed accountability often benefits those with the resources to navigate lengthy legal battles while leaving ordinary citizens waiting endlessly for closure.

The people of Goa deserve more than symbolic victories. They deserve transparency regarding the total amount recovered, the status of pending investigations and the roadmap for securing the maximum possible return of public wealth. They deserve to know whether the remaining thousands of crores can realistically be traced and recovered.

Most importantly, they deserve assurance that such a scandal can never happen again.

The real measure of success will not be the value of assets attached but the extent to which public resources are restored, wrongdoers held accountable and systemic loopholes closed.

Until then, the uncomfortable equation remains: ₹34,000 crore allegedly lost, ₹1,000 crore attached, and countless questions still unanswered.

For Goa, that is not the end of the story. It is a reminder of how far justice still has to travel.

Mandovi Sees Water Quality Gains, Yet Sewage Pollution Remains A Major Concern

■ GSPCB review finds bacterial contamination still above safe limits at several river stretches despite gradual improvement in recent years.

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: While the Mandovi River has recorded a gradual improvement in water quality in recent years, sewage-related pollution continues to affect several stretches of the river, according to the Goa State Pollution Control Board (GSPCB). The findings emerged during a review of long-term water quality data collected under the Central Pollution



Control Board's National Water Quality Monitoring Programme. The assessment was undertaken as part of ongoing efforts to evaluate the health of the river and follows queries raised regarding the condition of

Mandovi waters. According to the Board, bacterial contamination remains a persistent concern, with faecal coliform levels at multiple monitoring locations continuing to exceed permissible

limits prescribed for bathing, recreational activities and commercial fishing. During the 2025-26 monitoring period, most samples collected from the designated stations failed to meet the required standards. Despite these concerns, officials noted a positive trend in recent years. The latest monitoring data indicates that the overall extent of contamination has reduced compared to previous assessment periods.

Light Rainfall Eases Heat Across Goa, More Showers Likely Ahead

■ Yellow alert issued for Monday and Tuesday as monsoon activity expected to pick up.

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: After days of warm and sticky weather, parts of Goa received light rainfall, bringing a welcome change in conditions and offering temporary relief to residents across the State. Rain was reported

from pockets of Sattari, Canacona and Tiswadi, while Panaji and nearby areas also witnessed brief showers during the day. The rainfall helped lower temperatures and reduced humidity levels that had been troubling residents amid a sluggish monsoon

season. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast a rise in rainfall activity over the next few days and issued a yellow alert for Goa on Monday and Tuesday. Heavy showers are likely at isolated places during



this period, according to the weather department. Officials said weather conditions are becoming increasingly favourable for stronger monsoon activity, with rainfall expected to become more widespread over the next three to four days.

Forensic Report Holds Key To Solving GMC Intern Death Mystery

■ Preliminary findings raise questions, but investigators say definitive answers will emerge only after FSL analysis

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The investigation into the death of a 23-year-old Goa Medical College (GMC) intern has now entered a crucial phase, with police awaiting the final forensic report that could determine what exactly led to the young doctor's death at Hawaii Beach in Dona Paula earlier this month.

While preliminary toxicology findings have reportedly detected cannabis in her bloodstream, investigators have emphasized that the presence of the substance alone does not explain the circumstances surrounding the incident. Officials say the case remains open-ended until scientific analysis provides a clearer picture.

The intern, a native of Kerala who was undergoing her internship at GMC, was found dead on June 10. Since then, police have been piecing together her final movements and examining all available evidence to establish a timeline of events. Sources said the investigation is currently focused on



forensic evidence rather than speculation, with authorities awaiting detailed findings from the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) in Verna. The report is expected to clarify whether any other substances were present and help determine the medical cause of death.

Investigators are also examining several unanswered questions, including how the intern reached the beach and the events that unfolded before her body was discovered. Her reported presence at the location while still dressed in medical laboratory attire has added another layer of intrigue to the case.

Officials maintain that no foul play has been confirmed and no theory has been ruled out at this stage. The final forensic findings will be critical in helping investigators understand whether the death resulted from accidental, medical, environmental or other factors.

₹1,023-Crore Assets Attached in Goa Mining Money Laundering Case

■ ED targets properties and investments in India and Singapore linked to alleged illegal ore extraction.

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has provisionally attached assets worth ₹1,023.85 crore in connection with its investigation into alleged illegal iron ore mining and money laundering activities involving companies associated with the Salgaocar Group. The action, taken by the ED's Panaji Zonal Office under the Prevention of Money-Laundering Act

(PMLA), covers a total of 130 assets located in India and Singapore. According to the agency, the attached assets include 99 immovable properties in India valued at ₹459.10 crore, 31 overseas properties in Singapore estimated at ₹471.32 crore and equity investments in Indian firms worth ₹93.42 crore. The properties and investments are reportedly linked to the Estate of late Anil Vassudeva

Salgaocar and several corporate entities connected to the group, including companies engaged in mining, trading, infrastructure and port operations. The ED's investigation originates from a criminal case registered by the Goa Crime Branch, which alleged offences under various laws, including provisions related to corruption, mining regulations and criminal misconduct.

2 Teenagers Drown in Collem River Tragedy

■ Incident comes days after four youths lost their lives in a separate drowning mishap near Dudhsagar.

Team Goemkarponn

COLLEM: Tragedy struck Tambdimall in Collem when two teenage cousins drowned while swimming in the Dudhsagar River, sending shockwaves through the local community already reeling from a recent drowning incident in the area. The victims, identified as Omkar Dendin (17) and Sagar Dendin (17), reportedly entered the

river for a swim and were swept into deeper waters, where they struggled to stay afloat. Police said the boys had left home along with Omkar's younger brother. Family members were reportedly told they were heading to a nearby playground. However, the trio instead made their way to the riverbank. The younger sibling allegedly warned the two teenagers against venturing into the water. Despite the caution,



the cousins decided to take a swim, reportedly because Sagar's visit to Goa was coming to an end and he was due to return to Karnataka shortly. Shortly after entering the river, both boys found themselves in distress. The younger brother immediately sought help and alerted family members, triggering a rescue effort involving local residents and police personnel.

Karnataka Man Killed After Car Crashes Into Sati Devi Ghumti At Bhoma

■ Four Others Injured As Baleno Allegedly Driven Rashly Collides With Roadside Structure In Ponda

Team Goemkarponn

PONDA: A man from Karnataka lost his life while four others sustained injuries after a Maruti Baleno car crashed into the Sati Devi Ghumti structure at Bhoma in Ponda on Friday morning.

According to Mardol Police, the accident occurred at around 7.05 am when the car, driven by Basalingappa, a resident of Jeelanabad, Gulbarga, Karnataka, was travelling from Ponda towards Panaji.



Police said the driver allegedly drove the vehicle in a rash and negligent manner, endangering human life, and failed to exercise proper care and caution before the vehicle rammed into the roadside structure.

The impact of the collision left the driver and four occupants injured. The injured have been identified as Mounesh M., Shivkumar and Sachin Alandkar, all residents of Karnataka, along with the driver. Another occupant, identified as Triloknatha, a resident of Hospet in Ballari district of

Karnataka, sustained serious injuries and later succumbed to them. Mardol Police have registered Crime No. 27/2026 under Sections 281, 125(a)(b) and 106(1) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) based on a complaint filed by Head Constable Vishant Kunkolienkar.

Further investigation is being carried out by PSI Madhav Gaude of Mardol Police Station.



8 Karnataka Residents Booked For Illegal Entry Into Madei Sanctuary

■ Forest Staff Crack Down On Trespassers At Prohibited Jalvane Waterfall; Total Violators Rises To 54

Team Goemkarponn

VALPOI: Goa Forest Department officials have booked eight persons from Karnataka for allegedly entering the prohibited Jalvane Waterfall area located within the core zone of the Madei Wildlife Sanctuary.

The action was taken by forest personnel stationed at the Parwad Anti-Poaching Camp. Officials said the waterfall lies within a highly protected core area where public entry is banned due to safety concerns and frequent movement of wild animals.

The offenders, all residents of Khanapur in Karnataka, were booked under the relevant provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

Further inquiry into the matter is underway. With the latest case, the number of people booked for unauthorized entry into the Jalvane Waterfall area has risen to 54. To curb such violations, the Forest Department has established a Special Anti-Poaching Camp near the Karnataka-Goa border adjoining Parwad village. Forest staff maintain round-the-clock vigilance and conduct regular patrols to prevent trespassing and safeguard wildlife within the protected area. The department has appealed to tourists and nature enthusiasts to visit only authorized waterfall destinations and forest sites where safety measures are in place. Officials noted that warning



₹13,000 Worth Of Wine Allegedly Stolen From Varca Store; Shop Owner Seeks Swift Police Action

Team Goemkarponn

VARCA: A theft incident involving wine bottles worth approximately ₹13,000 has been reported at Varca Mini Mart, with the shop owner expressing concern over the lack of progress in the police investigation nearly ten days after the complaint was lodged.

According to the complaint, three tourists visited the store on June 12 at around 12:50 pm. It is alleged that during their visit, they removed several bottles of wine from the premises without making payment and left the store.

The discrepancy was detected later during routine stock verification. Upon reviewing the CCTV footage, store management reportedly found clear visual evidence of the individuals allegedly committing the theft. Further inquiries conducted by the complainant revealed that the suspects were staying at a resort in South Goa at the time of the incident.

A formal complaint was filed at Colva Police Station on June 12, the same day the theft occurred. However, despite nearly ten days having elapsed,

Man Arrested For Assaulting Civilian, Attacking Policeman In Valpoi

■ Accused Allegedly Injured Victim With Vehicle Key, Assaulted PCR Staff And Threatened Police Personnel

Team Goemkarponn

VALPOI: Police have arrested a 36-year-old man for allegedly assaulting a civilian, attacking a police constable on duty, and obstructing police personnel from performing their lawful duties near Maria Bar in Valpoi on the night of June 20.

According to the complaint filed by Police Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) Namdev Mahadev



Gawas of SPCR Panaji, the accused, identified as Sunil Gajanan Madkaikar of Chimbel, Tiswadi, initially assaulted Lakhpat Singh using a vehicle key

and also punched him, causing bleeding injuries to his head and back. Police said that when a PCR team comprising ASI Gawas, Head Constable Oli Khan and driver ASI Gango Kharwat arrived at the scene emergency call, the accused allegedly became aggressive and assaulted HC Oli Khan by repeatedly slapping and punching him on the face and nose, resulting in injuries.

Calangute Traffic Police Crack Down On Illegal Rent-A-Cars, Seize Five Vehicles

Action Taken Against White-Plate Vehicles Operating Commercially; Drunk Driving Checks Intensified

Team Goemkarponn

CALANGUTE: Calangute Traffic Police conducted a special enforcement drive against illegally rented private four-wheeler vehicles operating with white registration plates and seized five vehicles during the operation.

The action was carried out in the presence of members of the Rent-a-Cab Association, who accompanied authorities during the inspection drive aimed at curbing unauthorized commercial



transport activities in the tourist belt. Meanwhile, Calangute Police have continued their nakabandi

operations at various locations across the town to strengthen traffic enforcement and maintain road safety. Police officials said strict action is also being taken against motorists found driving under the influence of alcohol, with regular checks being conducted as part of ongoing efforts to curb drunken driving and prevent road accidents.

Authorities have reiterated their commitment to ensuring compliance with transport regulations and have warned that similar enforcement drives will continue in the coming days.

Two Arrested For Villa Theft In Arpora; Stolen Mobile Phone, Laptop Recovered

Team Goemkarponn

MAPUSA: Anjuna Police have arrested two persons in connection with a theft at a rented villa in Arpora and recovered stolen property worth ₹1.6 lakh, including a premium mobile phone and a laptop.

According to police, the case was registered as Anjuna Police Station Crime No. 56/2026 under Section 305 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023,



NSUI, Youth Congress Demand Probe Into Alleged Early Conclusion Of NEET Exam At Pernem Centre

■ Student Leaders Meet Affected Candidates, Seek Action Against Officials Over Loss Of Exam Time

Team Goemkarponn

PERNEM: Representatives of the NSUI and Youth Congress on Saturday met students at Government College Pernem who were allegedly affected by the premature conclusion of the NEET examination and demanded an immediate inquiry into the incident. According to a statement issued by the organisations, Youth Congress State General Secretary Naushad and NSUI Goa District President Sadashiv visited the college and interacted with students who appeared for the examination.



The students reportedly informed the delegation that although the official examination was scheduled to continue until 5.15 pm, invigilators and supervisors allegedly stopped the exam and collected answer sheets at 5.00 pm, resulting in candidates losing the final 15 minutes allotted for the test. Condemning the alleged lapse, the

Youth Congress and NSUI demanded that the North Goa Collector conduct a thorough inquiry and initiate action against those found responsible.

The organisations stated that students spend years preparing for the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) and argued that any reduction in the allotted examination time could adversely affect

their performance and future prospects.

The student bodies also alleged that the incident reflected failures in ensuring a fair and transparent examination process and called upon the authorities, including the concerned examination officials, to take immediate cognisance of the matter. Reiterating their support for the affected candidates, NSUI and Youth Congress demanded accountability and corrective measures to ensure that students do not suffer due to administrative lapses during the conduct of competitive examinations.



Congress Questions NDZ Move

■ Amit Patkar Alleges Government Using Environmental Protection Proposal To Divert Attention From Ecological Damage.

Team Goemkarponn

VASCO: Former Goa Pradesh Congress Committee President Amit Patkar accused the BJP government of using the proposed No Development Zone (NDZ) notification covering 82.85 lakh square metres as a political exercise to mask its environmental record and divert attention from what he termed large-scale ecological damage during its tenure. Addressing a press conference, Patkar

claimed the government had allowed indiscriminate land-use changes and weakened planning safeguards over the years, only to now project itself as a protector of Goa's environment through the proposed NDZ notification. Patkar questioned TCP Minister Vishwajit Rane over the implementation of Section 39A, which the minister had earlier described as a provision intended to help ordinary Goans owning small plots construct homes.



Subhash Phal Dessai, Delilah Lobo Champion Women's Empowerment At Leadership Summit

■ Leaders Urge Women To Embrace Opportunities, Build Resilience And Prioritise Well-Being At Porvorim Event

Team Goemkarponn

PORVORIM: Goa's Social Welfare Minister Subhash Phal Dessai and Siolim MLA Delilah Lobo called on women to embrace opportunities, strengthen their leadership abilities and prioritise personal well-being while addressing the Women's Leadership & Empowerment Summit 2026 held in Porvorim on Saturday. Speaking as Chief Guest of Honour, Phal Dessai encouraged women to pursue their goals with determination and resilience. "There are challenges to face

in this world—shoulder your responsibilities and don't give up at the first failure. Successful women script their journeys by overcoming hurdles and rising stronger each time," he said, while sharing personal experiences of overcoming adversity. The minister urged women to strengthen their entrepreneurial abilities, embrace creativity and seize opportunities whenever they arise. Guest of Honour Delilah Lobo highlighted the importance of balancing professional ambitions with mental and physical well-being.

Goa Heading Towards Severe Water Crisis Due To Environmental Damage: Jose Philip D'Souza

Team Goemkarponn



VASCO: Former minister Jose Philip D'Souza has

raised concerns over Goa's growing water shortage, warning that the State could face a severe and long-term water crisis if immediate corrective measures are not undertaken.

Addressing a press conference on Saturday, D'Souza said the delayed arrival of the monsoon has exposed the vulnerability of Goa's water resources, with several parts of the State already experiencing shortages.

He attributed the situation to rampant hill cutting, large-scale deforestation and unchecked environmental degradation, which he said have disrupted natural weather patterns and weakened the State's ability to conserve water. "We are going backwards.

BJP Has Turned Governance Into A Yoga Exercise In Balancing Corruption And Failures: Girish Chodankar

■ GPCC President Alleges BJP Using Yoga Day Optics To Divert Attention From Public Issues

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Goa Pradesh Congress Committee President Girish Chodankar on International Yoga Day extended greetings to citizens practising yoga while launching a sharp attack on the BJP government, accusing it of prioritising political optics over governance and burdening people



with rising economic and social challenges. In a statement issued on Saturday, Chodankar alleged that after nearly fourteen years of BJP rule, Goans have been forced to cope with increasing

stress caused by inflation, unemployment, financial insecurity and what he termed anti-people policies. "Every household in Goa today understands the importance of yoga because people are constantly struggling to maintain balance amid rising prices, unemployment, financial insecurity and anti-people decisions of the BJP Government," he said.

International Yoga Day Registrations In Goa Cross One Lakh

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Goa recorded a major milestone in this year's International Yoga Day celebrations, with registrations across the State crossing the one lakh mark, reflecting growing public interest in wellness and healthy living.

The celebrations

witnessed widespread participation, with yoga programmes being organised at numerous locations by various organisations, government departments and community groups. According to official figures, a total of 1,230 venues were registered by Patanjali Yog Samiti, NGOs and

other organisations for conducting Yoga Day activities. Additionally, more than 80 programmes were organised at party and constituency levels, while the Department of Sports facilitated events at 12 venues. Several other yoga sessions were also conducted under the aegis of the Department of Ayush.

Parksons Cartamundi's Bonus Playing Cards Powers the Next Chapter of Bridge in India Through the Bonus 5th Asia Bridge Cup

India's iconic playing card brand powers Asia's premier Bridge championship as 300 players from 16 nations compete using specially designed Bonus playing cards in Goa.

Mumbai: The Bonus 5th Asia Bridge Cup has officially commenced in Goa. The tournament is being supported by Bonus Playing Cards from Parksons Cartamundi as its Official Sponsor. The association brings together one of India's leading playing cards brands and Asia's premier Bridge championship, reinforcing the growing stature of Bridge as a globally recognised mind sport. The championship was inaugurated on 21 June 2026, setting the stage for a week of high-stakes bridge action and showcasing the rising stature of mind sports in India. Held from 21 to 27 June 2026 at Taj Cidade de Goa Horizon, Goa, the Bonus 5th Asia Bridge Cup has brought together 300 elite players from 16 nations across the Asia-Oceania region. Participants from Australia, China, Japan, Chinese Taipei, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Hong Kong, China, Bangladesh, the Philippines, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and host nation India

are competing across Men's, Women's, Mixed, and Senior categories in both Team and Pairs formats. As one of the most prestigious Bridge tournaments in the Asia-Oceania region, the event serves as an important platform to showcase the growing popularity and competitive strength of the sport.

Creating an Exclusive Bonus Experience

As a core part of this partnership, all champions will be playing exclusively with specially designed Bonus Playing Cards created specifically for the tournament. To elevate an immersive experience for the international participants, Bonus OR Parksons Cartamundi is also rolling out extensive on-ground engagement activities at the venue. These include a dedicated Bonus Lounge for relaxation, interactive games, a custom photobooth, and the presence of the official Bonus Mascot, making the championship highly experiential. For generations, Bonus Playing Cards has been synonymous with

quality, consistency and trust among card players across India. Its association with Bridge reflects a natural synergy between an iconic playing card brand and a game that demands strategy, precision, partnership and skill. Moreover, widely regarded as one of the world's foremost mind sports, Bridge continues to attract players who value analytical thinking, teamwork, memory and decision-making.

Commenting on the association, Mr. Kapil Kejriwal, CEO & Managing Director, Parksons Cartamundi Private Limited, said: "For decades, Bonus has been a trusted companion to generations of card players across India, built on a legacy of quality, durability and consistency. Supporting the Bonus 5th Asia Bridge Cup is a natural extension of that legacy. Bridge represents the highest level of card-based competition, bringing together strategy, intellect, partnership and skill in a truly remarkable way. We are proud that some of Asia's finest players are

competing in India using our specially designed Bonus playing cards throughout this prestigious championship."

He further added, "At Parksons Cartamundi, we believe cards are much more than a form of entertainment—they are powerful tools for learning, connection and cognitive development. Through our partnership with the Bridge Federation of India, we hope to contribute to the growing recognition of Bridge as a serious mind sport and inspire greater awareness and participation, particularly among younger generations."

Mr. Prasad Keni President, Bridge Federation of India, further added: The Bonus Asia Cup Bridge Championships is among the most prestigious Bridge tournaments in the region and serves as an important platform to showcase the very best talent from across Asia and Oceania. We are delighted to have Parksons Cartamundi on board as our Principal official Sponsor. As a company with deep roots



in the world of cards, their association brings a natural synergy to the championship and reflects the growing recognition that bridge is receiving as a serious mind sport in India. Together, we look forward to creating a memorable edition of the championship and expanding awareness of the game among wider audiences.

Parksons Cartamundi's Vision for Youth Empowerment

Parksons Cartamundi brings its global expertise in card manufacturing and strong presence in India to this association, while the Bridge Federation of India contributes decades of experience in nurturing competitive Bridge across the country. Together, the partnership aims to spotlight Bridge as a discipline worth following—not only for its competitive intensity, but also for its appeal as a game of strategy, skill, and partnership. Beyond supporting professional mind sports, Parksons Cartamundi is actively working to introduce the game to younger generations, helping

build strategic thinking, teamwork, and analytical skills. As part of this commitment to youth education, the company recently supported Bridge Beyond the Table, a first-of-its-kind CSR initiative at the Tamarind Tree Sports Academy in Dahanu. Organised by Tamarind Tree—an experiential learning school for local tribal children—the initiative blended grassroots education with competitive sport, introducing students to the intellectual thrill of Bridge while reinforcing Parksons Cartamundi's commitment to turning cards into catalysts for learning and empowerment. As part of its broader commitment to the development of Bridge in India, Parksons Cartamundi aims to support initiatives that encourage greater awareness and participation in the game, particularly among students in schools and colleges. Through its association with the Bridge Federation of India, the company hopes to contribute to the long-term growth of the sport across the country.

...CONTD FROM PAGE 01

India-EU Trade Deal Set for December Signing, Rollout Expected by Early 2027

Agreement to open vast European market for Indian exports while lowering costs of select EU imports

New Delhi: India and the European Union are on track to sign their long-awaited Free Trade Agreement by December, with implementation expected between February and March 2027, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has said. The agreement, described as one of the most significant trade pacts negotiated by India, is expected to substantially strengthen economic ties between India and the 27-member European bloc.



Negotiations for the deal were concluded earlier this year after extensive discussions between the two sides. According to Goyal, the agreement will provide Indian businesses with unprecedented access to the European market. Nearly 93 per cent of Indian exports

to the EU are expected to receive duty-free access, enhancing the competitiveness of Indian products across a wide range of sectors. The pact is also expected to benefit Indian consumers by reducing tariffs on certain European products. Imports such as luxury automobiles and wines from the EU are likely to become more affordable once the agreement comes into force. The economic significance of the partnership is considerable.

NSUI-Goa Demands Probe Into NEET-UG Exam Irregularities

and attendance records, and statements from students and examination staff. The organisation has

also sought remedial measures, including grace marks or a re-examination for affected candidates if the inquiry confirms a

loss of examination time. NSUI-Goa warned that it may undertake democratic protests if the issue remains unresolved.

Lobo Calls for War on Drug Networks in Goa

should be on destroying entire drug syndicates rather than targeting individual offenders. "We need to break their entire network and shatter their backbone," he said. Lobo's remarks come amid

growing concerns over drug-related activities in the coastal state, with the MLA urging authorities to act swiftly to protect Goa's youth, communities and tourism reputation. In a separate statement, Lobo also raised concerns

over the increasing number of accidents involving rented vehicles and said discussions were needed to find solutions that balance public safety with the livelihoods of thousands dependent on the rent-a-car sector.

“Absurd and Politically Motivated”: India Rejects Pakistan President Zardari’s Remarks

■ New Delhi says Islamabad has no authority to comment on India’s internal affairs.

New Delhi: India has strongly rejected comments made by Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari regarding alleged threats to Muslim religious sites in the country, describing the remarks as unwarranted, absurd and politically motivated. Responding to the statement, External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said Pakistan has no locus standi to comment on matters that are entirely internal to India. He reiterated New Delhi’s long-standing position



that Islamabad should refrain from interfering in domestic issues concerning its neighbour. India also highlighted what it described as Pakistan’s poor human rights record, arguing that the criticism was particularly misplaced given concerns frequently raised by international

observers regarding the treatment of minority communities in the country. The response further pointed to allegations of discrimination and violence faced by religious minorities in Pakistan over the years. Issues concerning the treatment of Hindu, Ahmadiyya

and other minority communities have regularly drawn attention from international human rights groups and advocacy organisations. According to New Delhi, the comments from the Pakistani President appeared to be a deliberate political attack rather than a genuine expression of concern. Indian officials argued that such statements reflected longstanding policies of intolerance and hostility rather than an objective assessment of the situation.

Ajit Doval to Chair Key BRICS Security Meet as Terrorism and West Asia Crisis Take Centre Stage

■ Two-day New Delhi conclave to help shape agenda ahead of September BRICS Summit

New Delhi: India will host a crucial gathering of BRICS National Security Advisers and High Representatives on National Security in New Delhi from Monday, with discussions expected to focus on terrorism, regional conflicts, emerging security threats and global geopolitical challenges. The two-day meeting will be chaired by Ajit Doval as part of India’s BRICS chairship in 2026. Senior security officials from member countries are expected to participate, including Wang Yi and Sergei Shoigu, along with representatives from other member nations. The conclave is being viewed as an important preparatory event ahead of the BRICS Summit scheduled to be held in India in September. Delegates will deliberate on the theme of non-traditional security challenges and examine the rapidly evolving nature of threats facing countries around the world. Among the major issues likely to dominate discussions are the ongoing conflict in West Asia, the Russia-Ukraine war, cyber



security concerns and the impact of emerging technologies on national security. India is also expected to highlight concerns related to terrorism, particularly cross-border terrorism and security challenges affecting Jammu and Kashmir. Regional developments, including tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan, are also expected to feature in the deliberations as member nations assess the broader security environment. The meeting will review recommendations from BRICS working groups dealing with counter-terrorism and the security of information and communication technologies. Officials are expected to explore ways to strengthen cooperation in tackling both conventional and non-conventional threats.

India Commissions Three Indigenous Warships, Marking Major Leap in Naval Self-Reliance

■ INS Dunagiri, INS Sandhayak and INS Agray strengthen combat, survey and anti-submarine capabilities

New Delhi: India’s drive towards defence self-reliance received a significant boost with the commissioning of three indigenously built naval platforms, INS Dunagiri, INS Sandhayak and INS Agray, at the Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers facility in Kolkata. Designed by the



Indian Navy’s Warship Design Bureau and built domestically, the three vessels showcase the country’s growing

capability to develop advanced military platforms without relying heavily on foreign suppliers. More than 75 per cent of the equipment and systems integrated into the ships are indigenous, reflecting the rapid growth of India’s defence manufacturing ecosystem. Among the

three, INS Dunagiri stands out as one of the Navy’s most advanced warships. The Project 17A stealth frigate is equipped with modern combat systems, advanced sensors and sophisticated weaponry, including the BrahMos missile system and medium-range surface-to-air missiles.

2 Dead, Over 46 Hospitalised After Ammonia Gas Leak at Tamil Nadu Seafood Export Unit

■ Probe ordered as authorities detain facility owner and launch investigation into industrial accident

New Delhi: A tragic industrial accident in Tamil Nadu’s Thiruvallur district claimed two lives and left more than 46 workers hospitalised after an ammonia gas leak at a seafood processing and export facility in Kannigaipair near Periyapalayam. The leak occurred at a shrimp processing unit operated by St Peter’s and Paul Seafoods Exports, triggering panic among workers at the facility. Most of those affected



were migrant labourers from northern states who reportedly experienced breathing difficulties, dizziness and vomiting after being exposed to the gas.

Medical officials confirmed that over 46

workers were admitted to nearby hospitals for treatment, with at least five reported to be in critical condition. Some patients may be shifted to Chennai for specialised medical care if required. Preliminary information suggests the leak originated from a measuring valve connected to the shrimp processing unit. Following the incident, a team from the National Disaster Response Force was deployed from Chennai.

“Safe Passage Secured”: Three Indian Oil Tankers Cross Strait of Hormuz With 94 Crew Members Onboard

New Delhi: Three Indian-flagged crude oil tankers carrying more than 8.6 lakh metric tonnes of cargo and 94 Indian crew members have safely crossed the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz and are now en route to India, providing a boost to the country’s energy security efforts. Announcing the development, Union Ports, Shipping and Waterways Minister Sarbananda Sonowal said the successful transit highlighted India’s commitment to



protecting its maritime and energy interests amid heightened focus on global shipping routes. The three vessels, Desh Vaibhav, Desh Vibhor and Sanmar Herald, safely navigated the Strait of Hormuz while transporting substantial crude oil cargo destined for India. The Strait of Hormuz

remains one of the world’s most important maritime chokepoints, serving as a critical corridor for global energy shipments. A significant portion of international crude oil trade passes through the narrow waterway, making its security and stability vital for energy-importing nations such as India.

Spain Crush Saudi Arabia, Iran Hold Belgium, Cape Verde Stun Uruguay and Egypt Secure Historic First World Cup Win

■ Spain and Egypt shine as Iran and Cape Verde earn valuable draws.

New Delhi: Day 11 of the FIFA World Cup 2026 delivered a mix of dominant victories, dramatic draws and standout individual performances, with Spain and Egypt emerging as the biggest winners while Iran and Cape Verde once again proved difficult opponents. Spain bounced back emphatically from their disappointing opening draw against Cape Verde with a commanding 4-0 victory over Saudi Arabia. Returning to the starting lineup after recovering from a hamstring injury, teenage sensation Lamine Yamal made



an immediate impact by opening the scoring. Spain tightened their grip on the match when Mikel Oyarzabal struck twice in quick succession, helping the European champions establish a three-goal lead within the opening 24 minutes. An own goal early in the second half completed a comprehensive victory and reignited Spain's

campaign. Iran continued their impressive unbeaten run on American soil with a hard-fought 0-0 draw against Belgium.

Despite Belgium controlling possession for long periods, Iran remained organised and resilient. Mehdi Taremi had a goal ruled out after a VAR review, while Belgium's task became even more difficult after

defender Nathan Ngoy was sent off in the second half.

Cape Verde followed up their surprise draw against Spain with another impressive result, holding Uruguay to a 2-2 draw. Kevin Pina's superb free-kick gave the island nation an early lead before Uruguay responded through Maxi Araujo and Agustin Canobbio.

Rohit Sharma Surpasses Sehwag to Become India's Highest-Scoring Opener in International Cricket

■ Veteran batter breaks multiple records as India complete ODI series sweep over Afghanistan

New Delhi: Rohit Sharma added another remarkable chapter to his illustrious career with a record-breaking performance against Afghanistan in the third and final ODI in Chennai. The Indian captain scored a fluent 79 off 69 balls, helping India secure a convincing nine-wicket victory and complete a 3-0 clean sweep in the series. The innings saw Rohit become the highest-scoring Indian opener in international cricket, overtaking former

explosive opener Virender Sehwag. Rohit now sits atop the list with 16,137 international runs as an opener, moving ahead of

Sehwag's tally of 16,119.



"Pressure Is a Privilege": Vaibhav Sooryavanshi Continues to Shine on Cricket's Biggest Stages

New Delhi: At just 15 years of age, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi has already become one of the most closely watched young cricketers in the game. Every innings, every shot and every reaction is scrutinised, but the teenager continues to demonstrate a remarkable ability to thrive under pressure. Sooryavanshi recently found himself in the spotlight for reasons beyond his batting after an on-field altercation with Sri Lanka A players during the tri-nation series. The incident sparked debate about his temperament and raised questions about how the young star would respond to the added attention. His answer came with the bat. Facing Sri Lanka

A in the tournament final, Sooryavanshi launched a breathtaking assault from the very first over. He struck a boundary off Mohamed Shiraz and never looked back, producing an extraordinary innings of 94 from just 29 deliveries. His aggressive approach left the opposition searching for answers and reminded everyone why he is regarded as one of the brightest prospects in world cricket. The knock was particularly significant because it came after a relatively quiet campaign by his standards. Having failed to register a half-century earlier in the tournament, questions had begun to emerge about his adaptability in the 50-over format.

"Fielders Didn't Support Them": Harmanpreet Kaur Reflects on Costly Misses in Defeat to South Africa

New Delhi: India captain Harmanpreet Kaur admitted that missed opportunities in the field played a crucial role in her side's six-wicket defeat to South Africa in a Women's T20 World Cup Group A encounter. The loss came despite some disciplined bowling performances, with Harmanpreet highlighting the efforts of Shree Charani and



Shafali Verma. However, she felt the bowlers were let down by lapses in the field at key moments of

the match. South Africa's match-winner Marizanne Kapp made India pay for those mistakes. Kapp was given two lifelines when chances were spilled in the outfield and went on to produce a match-defining unbeaten 81 from just 45 deliveries, striking seven boundaries and four sixes. The Indian skipper acknowledged that her side had opportunities

to turn the game in their favour but failed to capitalise. She noted that at the highest level, taking chances is essential and that the missed catches ultimately shifted the momentum towards South Africa. The match was also a personal milestone for Harmanpreet, who became the first cricketer, male or female, to play 200 T20 Internationals.



Chandan, Ruhaan, Ishaan and Yug Storm Into MCC Major Ranking TT Semi-finals

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Chandan Caro, Ruhaan Shaikh, Ishaan Colaso and Yug Prabhu advanced to the semi-finals of the Boys Under-15 category at the MCC All Goa Major Ranking Table Tennis Tournament being held at the Multipurpose Stadium in Fatorda. Chandan delivered a

dominant display in the quarter-finals, defeating Aarish Shaikh in straight games with a 3-0 victory. Ruhaan also enjoyed a comfortable passage into the last four, overcoming Lalremkima 3-0. The remaining quarter-final encounters proved far more competitive, with Ishaan Colaso edging Yug Prabhu 3-2 in a closely fought contest.

Shaheen and Sufiya Close In on Triple Crowns as Multiple Title Battles Heat Up at State Ranking Badminton

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Shaheen C.K. and Sufiya Shaikh moved a step closer to securing triple crowns after producing commanding performances in the semifinals of the All Goa State Ranking Badminton Tournament 2026 at the Indoor Hall, Peddem, Mapusa. With the first ranking event of the 2026-27 season

reaching its climax, several players kept their hopes alive of winning multiple titles. Advait Balakrishnan and Amaira Dhumatker remained firmly in contention for double crowns, while Aswin Mannambalath, Aarohi Coutoncar, Michael Ryan Mare, Pratik P. Naik Borkar, Komal Kothari and Shivanjali Thite also booked places in two finals each.

