

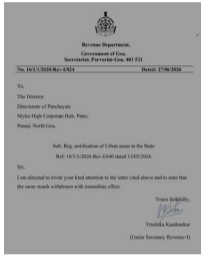


## Govt Withdraws Urbanisation Circular After Statewide Opposition

■ May 13 directive seeking panchayat views on declaring 56 villages as urban areas revoked with immediate effect

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** The Goa government on Saturday withdrew its controversial May 13 circular that had revived the process of declaring 56 villages as urban areas under the Goa Land Revenue Code, following sustained opposition from village panchayats, residents and political parties across the state.



In an order issued by the Revenue Department, the government stated that the communication dated May 13, 2026, "stands withdrawn with immediate effect," bringing



to an end the exercise initiated to seek comments from the affected village panchayats.

The withdrawn circular had directed the Directorate of Panchayats

to obtain the views of the 56 villages proposed to be notified as urban areas. The move had effectively revived a proposal first notified in January 2020 but withdrawn weeks later after widespread public protests.

The latest exercise triggered fresh resistance across Goa, with several gram sabhas and village panchayats passing

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## Congress Bars Direct, Indirect Entry of Defectors

**Chodankar says former legislators need AICC approval; joining party will not guarantee election ticket**



**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** The Goa Pradesh Congress Committee (GPCC) on Saturday made it clear that it will not allow the direct or indirect entry of defectors into the party, reiterating its commitment to strengthening the organisation ahead of the 2027 Assembly elections. Addressing the media after the Congress Political Affairs Committee and Executive

Committee meetings, GPCC President Girish Chodankar said the party's stand on defections is unequivocal. "Our policy is clear. There will be no direct or indirect entry of defectors into the Congress," Chodankar said. He further clarified that sitting and former MLAs wishing to join the party must first obtain approval from the All India Congress Committee (AICC) in-charge. Those seeking

▶ **CONTD TO PAGE 06**



## Licence Suspension, Heavy Fines Await Traffic Violators from July 1

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** Motorists violating traffic rules in Goa will face stringent action, including hefty fines and suspension of driving licences, with the Intelligent Traffic Management System (ITMS) becoming operational across the state from July 1.

The AI-powered surveillance system will monitor traffic round-the-clock through cameras installed at 26 strategic locations, automatically detecting violations and generating e-challans without manual intervention.

Authorities have warned that offences such as red-light jumping, speeding, using a mobile phone while driving, carrying passengers in goods vehicles, overloading goods carriages and driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs may attract suspension of the driver's licence for a minimum of three months, in addition to monetary penalties.

## Lobo Welcomes Drunk Driving Crackdown, Seeks Statewide Action Against Illegal Rentals

■ Calls for zero-tolerance enforcement with jail for offenders; says urbanisation policy needs clear definition

**Team Goemkarponn**

**CALANGUTE:** Calangute MLA Michael Lobo today welcomed the government's decision to tighten enforcement against drunken driving, saying the move should send a strong message that Goa will adopt a zero-tolerance approach towards motorists driving under the influence of alcohol. Addressing a press conference along with Sudip Tamhankar and representatives of rental vehicle associations, Lobo



said those caught driving under the influence should face strict legal action, including imprisonment. He said strong enforcement is necessary to deter offenders, particularly tourists and drivers of rental vehicles, and to improve road safety across the state. The remarks come after the Directorate of Transport

directed the SP to ensure strict enforcement of the Motor Vehicles Act against passenger vehicle drivers found driving under the influence of alcohol while on duty.

## Chimbel Panchayat to Pass Resolution Against Urbanisation

■ Villagers oppose proposal, citing threat to farmland, village identity and increased tax burden

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** Chimbel village has stepped up its opposition to the proposed urbanisation, with the village panchayat deciding to formally reject the move following strong objections raised by residents during a special Gram Sabha held on Saturday.

Chimbel Sarpanch Sandesh Shirodkar said the panchayat stands firmly with the villagers and will pass a resolution opposing the proposal at its fortnightly meeting on Tuesday.



The resolution will be submitted to the Block Development Officer (BDO) and the Directorate of Panchayats.

"We stand with the people of Chimbel. We do not want our village to be urbanised," Shirodkar said.

Residents at the special Gram Sabha argued that granting urban status would adversely affect Chimbel's

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# Happy Birthday!

May you be blessed with strength, wisdom, and the opportunity to make a positive difference in society. Have a wonderful year ahead. Best wishes for your continued leadership and service!

Wishing you good health, happiness, and continued success in your journey of serving the people.



Happy Birthday!

**JANARDHAN BHANDARI**  
GOA PRADESH YOUTH CONGRESS LEADER

## Urban Classification Must Begin With Public Confidence

The Goa government's renewed effort to classify several villages in Salcete as urban areas has once again met with strong public resistance. The reaction should not come as a surprise. Any proposal that seeks to alter the administrative, social and developmental character of long-established villages is bound to raise questions, concerns and apprehensions among residents. What is concerning, however, is that the government appears to be revisiting a contentious issue without first building public confidence and consensus.

Urban classification is not a routine bureaucratic exercise. It has far-reaching implications for land use, taxation, infrastructure planning, governance structures and the overall identity of local communities. Villages that have evolved over centuries possess distinct social, cultural and environmental characteristics. A change in classification can influence everything from building regulations to population density and future development patterns. Such decisions therefore require transparency, dialogue and broad public participation.

The strongest criticism emerging from affected villages is not necessarily opposition to development itself. Rather, it is the perception that the government is attempting to push ahead with a process whose consequences have not been clearly explained. Residents want answers to legitimate questions. What benefits will urban classification bring? How will it affect local self governance? Will it lead to increased construction activity? What safeguards will be put in place to protect agricultural land, water resources and traditional village settlements? Until these questions are answered convincingly, resistance is likely to continue.

The government must recognise that public scepticism does not emerge in a vacuum. Across Goa, concerns about rapid and often unplanned development have become increasingly pronounced. Many citizens fear that urbanisation, if not properly regulated, could place additional pressure on already strained infrastructure, increase traffic congestion and threaten fragile ecological systems. In a state where land remains both economically valuable

*“Urban classification is not a routine bureaucratic exercise. It has far-reaching implications for land use, taxation, infrastructure planning, governance structures and the overall identity of local communities. Villages that have evolved over centuries possess distinct social, cultural and environmental characteristics. A change in classification can influence everything from building regulations to population density and future development patterns. Such decisions therefore require transparency, dialogue and broad public participation.”*

*The strongest criticism emerging from affected villages is not necessarily opposition to development itself. Rather, it is the perception that the government is attempting to push ahead with a process whose consequences have not been clearly explained.”*

and environmentally sensitive, any proposal linked to future development inevitably attracts scrutiny.

What is particularly important is that urbanisation should not be viewed merely through the lens of economic growth. Development is meaningful only when it improves the quality of life of people while preserving the characteristics that make communities unique. Villages are not simply geographical units waiting to become towns. They are living communities with their own histories, traditions and governance systems. Their voices deserve to be heard before any major administrative change is undertaken.

The government's approach must

therefore shift from consultation as a formality to consultation as a genuine exercise in democratic decision making. Too often, public engagement begins only after proposals have been drafted and decisions appear to be moving forward. Such an approach creates suspicion and reinforces the belief that consultations are conducted merely to fulfil procedural requirements. True participation means involving stakeholders from the earliest stages of the process and demonstrating a willingness to modify or even withdraw proposals if public concerns are found to be valid.

Equally important is the need for transparency. Detailed studies, assessments and justifications supporting urban classification should be placed in the public domain. Citizens should have access to information that explains not only why the change is being proposed but also how it will affect them in practical terms. An informed public discussion is always preferable to speculation, rumours and uncertainty.

The government must also remember that trust is one of the most valuable assets in governance. Policies imposed without public confidence often face prolonged opposition, delays and legal challenges. In contrast, policies developed through dialogue and consensus tend to enjoy greater legitimacy and long term success. Building trust requires patience, openness and a willingness to engage with criticism rather than dismiss it. Goa undoubtedly faces evolving developmental challenges. Population growth, changing economic realities and increasing urban pressures require thoughtful planning. However, planning cannot succeed when people feel excluded from decisions that directly affect their future. Development must be shaped not only by technical assessments and administrative criteria but also by the aspirations and concerns of local communities.

The message from Salcete is clear. Before changing the status of villages, the government must first take stakeholders into confidence. Public participation is not an obstacle to development. It is the foundation of responsible and sustainable development. Any attempt to bypass that principle will only deepen resistance and erode public trust.

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

## Vasco's Expansion Must Prioritise Public Interest

The recent inspection of Naval lands in Vasco by the local MLA and district administration to identify space for future infrastructure projects has generated both hope and concern among residents.

There is no denying that Vasco requires better planning and improved civic infrastructure. For decades, the city has struggled with traffic congestion, inadequate public amenities, limited open spaces and growing pressure on existing infrastructure. Any sincere effort to address these challenges through long-term planning deserves appreciation.

However, the exercise should not be viewed merely as an opportunity to unlock more land for development. The government must ensure that public interest remains at the centre of any expansion plan. Vasco's residents have repeatedly witnessed projects being announced with great enthusiasm only to face delays, lack of transparency or poor execution.

Before any land is earmarked for future development, the authorities should clearly outline the intended purpose of such projects. Citizens have a right to know whether the land will be used for public facilities, affordable housing, healthcare, educational institutions, recreational spaces or commercial ventures. Public consultation must form an integral part of the planning process.

Equally important is the need to safeguard national security interests. Since the lands under consideration are linked to defence establishments, any proposal must be carefully evaluated to ensure that strategic requirements are not compromised.

Vasco certainly needs planned growth, but development should not be measured by the amount of land acquired. It should be judged by how effectively it improves the quality of life of residents while preserving transparency, accountability and security.

- Sebastiao Fernandes Chinchimim

## Assurances Alone Are Not Enough

The recent assurance from the Union Government that civilian operations at Dabolim Airport will continue may offer temporary relief, but many Goans have learnt through experience that assurances alone are not enough.

Over the years, governments have made numerous promises on issues affecting Goa, only for people to later discover that policy decisions can change with shifting priorities. It is therefore understandable that citizens remain cautious despite the latest statement regarding Dabolim Airport's future.

Dabolim is not merely an airport. It is an economic lifeline for South Goa. Thousands of jobs in tourism, transport, hospitality, retail and allied sectors depend directly or indirectly on its continued operation. Any reduction in civilian flights would have serious consequences for local businesses and livelihoods.

While the Defence Minister's clarification is welcome, what Goa needs is a long-term policy commitment backed by concrete action. The government should clearly spell out the future role of Dabolim in the state's aviation network and provide guarantees that flight operations, passenger facilities and infrastructure investments will continue alongside the development of Mopa airport.

The concerns of South Goans cannot be addressed through letters and assurances alone. They require transparency, regular public communication and a clearly defined roadmap. Citizens deserve certainty, not periodic reassurances whenever doubts arise.

Captain Viriato Fernandes deserves credit for raising the issue and seeking clarity from the Centre. However, continued vigilance will be necessary because protecting Dabolim's future requires more than assurances. It requires sustained commitment and accountability from those in power.

- Melvyn D'Souza, Vasco da Gama

# Govt to consult village panchayats before deciding on urban area status: Babush

■ Minister says views of affected panchayats will be sought before taking final call on urban area notifications

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** Revenue Minister Atanasio "Babush" Monserrate on Friday clarified that the Goa government will take a final decision on the declaration of villages as urban areas only after consulting the concerned village panchayats and considering their views.

In an official statement,



Monserrate said the government had notified certain areas as urban areas in 2020 but had later withdrawn the notification. He said the issue was revisited after

the Village Panchayat of Taleigao recently submitted a representation stating that it fulfilled the criteria prescribed for a Census Town. Following an examination of the proposal, the government notified Taleigao as an urban area. Monserrate said that since the government had earlier dealt with the issue of declaring urban areas

and was now acting on a proposal from a village panchayat, it was appropriate to seek the views of other village panchayats that had previously been notified as urban areas. Accordingly, the Directorate of Panchayats has been directed to obtain comments and views from the respective village panchayats.



## Congress to Intensify Grassroots Outreach, Step Up Campaign Against BJP in Goa

■ AICC in-charge Manickrao Thakare chairs strategy meeting; GPCC leaders plan constituency visits and organisational revamp

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** The Goa Pradesh Congress Committee (GPCC) on Friday resolved to intensify its grassroots outreach across the state and strengthen its organisational structure while stepping up its campaign against what it termed the "anti-people policies" of the BJP government. The decision was taken at a meeting of the party's senior leadership held at the Congress headquarters in Panaji under the chairmanship of AICC Goa in-charge Manickrao Thakare. The meeting was attended by GPCC President Girish Chodankar, Leader of Opposition Yuri Alemao, and Working Presidents M.K. Shaikh and Altone D'Costa. According to the party, the leaders

held detailed discussions on organisational strengthening, constituency-level visits and strategies to expand the Congress' presence at the grassroots. The leadership also reviewed plans to intensify public outreach programmes across Goa and resolved to highlight issues affecting people while mounting a stronger political campaign against the BJP-led government. The Congress leadership reiterated its commitment to strengthening the party organisation and ensuring that public grievances are effectively raised across the state. The party said it would continue to position itself as a strong voice for Goans by taking up issues concerning governance, public welfare and development with renewed vigour in the months ahead.



## High Court Extends Legal Aid to Women Claiming Custody of Rescued Children

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** The Bombay High Court at Goa has directed the Goa State Legal Services Authority (GSLSA) to provide legal representation to two women who claim to be the mothers of children rescued during a recent anti-child begging operation, allowing them to place their case before the court.

The direction came during the hearing of a public interest litigation concerning child begging in the state. The court observed that the women should have access to legal assistance before any decision is taken on their plea relating to the children. A Division Bench asked the GSLSA to appoint an advocate, preferably a woman lawyer, to represent the applicants in the proceedings. The women have sought access to the children, who are currently staying in different child care institutions after being rescued during a police operation.

## Court Grants Bail to Siddique in Thivim Land Grab Case

■ Additional Sessions Court cites delay in CFSL handwriting report, imposes strict conditions on accused's release

Team Goemkarponn

**MERCES:** The Additional Sessions Court at Mercos has granted bail to Siddique alias Suleman Khan, the prime accused in a high-profile land-grab and forgery case involving properties in Thivim, observing that the prosecution had failed to produce key forensic evidence despite the passage of several years. The court directed Khan's release on a bail bond of ₹50,000 with one surety,



while imposing stringent conditions to ensure his availability during trial and prevent any interference with the investigation. This is the second land-grab case in which Siddique has secured bail. In May this year, he was granted bail in another case involving the alleged illegal acquisition of over 216,000 square

metres of land through forged sale deeds and fabricated documents. The present case arose from a complaint filed by the Civil-cum-Sub-Registrar of Bardez, following which Mapusa Police charge-sheeted Khan on charges of cheating and forgery. According to the prosecution, Khan allegedly conspired with unidentified government officials to forge sale deeds relating to properties bearing survey numbers 455/7, 466/5&6 in Thivim.

## Panaji traffic police book over 1,800 illegal parking violations in six months

■ Authorities plan engineering measures on D.B. Marg as unsafe parking continues to disrupt traffic and pedestrian movement

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** The Panaji Traffic Cell has intensified its crackdown on illegal parking, registering 1,811 violations across the city during the first six months of 2026, highlighting the persistent challenge of indiscriminate parking in the state capital. Police data shows that the cases include vehicles



parked in prohibited areas, unauthorised parking and instances of dangerous

parking that obstruct traffic flow and pose risks to road users. Traffic

officials said enforcement drives are being carried out regularly at identified congestion points, with offending motorists being penalised to improve compliance with parking regulations. Officials also pointed out that illegal parking is not restricted to D.B. Marg but is prevalent in several parts of Panaji, contributing to congestion and inconvenience for pedestrians. To tackle recurring violations along

D.B. Marg, the Traffic Cell has proposed increasing the height of footpaths at vulnerable locations to discourage motorists from parking vehicles on pedestrian pathways. Police said a combination of stricter enforcement and infrastructure improvements is expected to help reduce parking violations and improve road safety in the city.

# Cortalim Man Booked Under POCSO for Alleged Repeated Sexual Assault of Minor

Police invoke BNS, Goa Children's Act and POCSO after 16-year-old alleges two years of abuse, blackmail and intoxication

Team Goemkarponn

**VERNA:** The Verna Police have registered a severe criminal case against Gautam Modi, a 24-year-old resident of Consua, Cortalim, for the alleged continuous sexual exploitation, blackmail, and intoxication of a minor girl over a span of more than two years.

Verna Police Station has registered an offence



following a formal complaint lodged by the victim, who is currently 16 years old.

The harrowing ordeal reportedly began on April 20, 2024, when the victim was just 14

years old. The accused allegedly administered an intoxicating substance to the minor by offering her laced mango juice.

Police reports state that once the victim began experiencing dizziness, the accused committed sexual intercourse. This initial assault reportedly escalated into a pattern, with the accused repeatedly assaulting the minor girl on multiple

subsequent occasions between April 2024 and June 2026 at Consua, Cortalim. The accused reportedly captured obscene photographs of the minor victim on his mobile phone without her consent. He then used these images as leverage, threatening to circulate the sensitive media online if she attempted to end the relationship or report the abuse.

# Elderly Man Dies After Falling Through Asbestos Roof in Ponda

71-year-old was cleaning rooftop when sheet gave way; succumbed to multiple injuries, police conduct inquiry

Team Goemkarponn

**USGAO:** A 71-year-old man from Usgao in Ponda died after falling through the asbestos roof of his house while carrying out cleaning work, police said. According to Ponda Police, Rohidas Naik was cleaning the asbestos sheet on the roof of his residence at Usgao Tisk on June 25 when the sheet suddenly gave way, causing him to fall into the hall of the house. His wife, Ranjaana Naik, told police that family members immediately rushed him to the Primary Health

Centre at Dharbandora for treatment. Due to the seriousness of his injuries, he was referred to the South Goa District Hospital (SGDH), Margao, where doctors declared him brought dead. Following the incident, police conducted an inquest panchanama and sent the body for post-mortem examination at SGDH. The police surgeon certified the cause of death as damage to the head, chest and abdomen with underlying injuries to vital organs and multiple bone fractures caused by blunt force impact in an alleged fall from a height.



# Unidentified Man Found Unconscious Near Margao Court, Declared Brought Dead

Team Goemkarponn

**MARGAO:** An unidentified man was found lying unconscious near the JMFC Court in Margao and was later declared brought dead at the South Goa District Hospital (SGDH), police said. According to Fatorda Police, they received information from the casualty police at around 1.31 pm on June 26 that an unknown male had been brought dead to the hospital. Preliminary inquiry revealed that the man was found unconscious near the JMFC Court in Margao and was shifted to SGDH by the 108 emergency ambulance service. Doctors declared him brought dead on arrival. Police have preserved the body to complete the necessary medico-legal formalities and establish the deceased's identity. During inquiries at the scene, police learned that the deceased was reportedly seen begging in the SGPDA Market area of Margao before he was found unconscious.

# Australian Crew Member Booked Over Prohibited GPS Device at Mopa Airport

Device detected during security screening; police register case under Indian Wireless Telegraphy Act

Team Goemkarponn

**MOPA:** A 30-year-old Australian national and airline crew member has been booked by Mopa Airport Police after a prohibited GPS device was allegedly detected in his handbag during security screening at Manohar International Airport.

According to police, the case was registered



lodged by K. Bhura Bhai, Head Constable (GD) of the CISF unit at Manohar International Airport, Mopa.

The accused, identified as Brett Gordon Brander,

on IndiGo flight 6E 6975. During security screening in the Domestic Security Hold Area at around 1 pm, CISF personnel allegedly detected a GPS device, identified as a "RESoLink 400", inside his handbag.

Police said the device is prohibited in India, and the accused was unable to produce a valid licence or permission from the competent authority for possessing it.



# Main Murder Accused Evades Arrest, Associate Held in Gulistan Masjid Killing Probe

Police detain one suspect, issue notices to others as manhunt for absconding accused intensifies

Team Goemkarponn

**GOGOL:** The main absconding accused in the murder of Ali Khanzade at Gulistan Masjid, Mehboob Makandar, reportedly evaded arrest during a police operation on Friday night, while one of his associates was apprehended.

According to available information, Makandar was allegedly seen in the company



of Sabir Khan of Gogol and Maila Ali Savnoor. When police moved in to apprehend the suspects, they reportedly attempted to flee. Police managed to arrest Sabir Khan, while Makandar and another

suspect escaped. Investigators have also issued notices to several persons suspected of having links to the alleged pre-planned murder conspiracy. As part of the ongoing probe, Maury Ali of Chimbel has been directed to appear before the Investigating Officer for questioning.

Police are also examining allegations that

Mehboob Makandar had allegedly taken money from Gulistan Masjid. Officials said appropriate steps would be taken to recover the amount if the allegations are substantiated during the investigation.

The case has been registered as Crime No. 04/2026 under Sections 103(1), 61, 63, 351 and 190 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). The investigation is continuing.

# Drunk Thar Driver Booked for Hit-and-Run Crash in Vagator

Team Goemkarponn

**ANJUNA:** A 26-year-old man from Odisha has been booked by Anjuna Police for allegedly driving under the influence of alcohol, causing a road accident that injured two persons, and fleeing the scene without offering assistance. According to police, the case was registered on June 26 based on a complaint filed by Head Constable Sandeep Pednekar of Anjuna Police Station.



# MP Viriato Secures Centre's Assurance on Continued Dabolim Airport Operations

■ Defence Minister confirms civilian flights will continue after South Goa MP sought clarity on airport's future alongside Mopa

Team Goemkarponn

**DABOLIM:** South Goa MP Captain Viriato Fernandes has secured an assurance from the Union Government that civilian flight operations at Dabolim Airport will continue without interruption, bringing clarity over the airport's future following the opening of Manohar International Airport at



Mopa. In a statement issued on Friday, the MP said Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, in a communication sent earlier this month, confirmed that Dabolim

Airport would continue to handle civilian flights, putting to rest speculation about its possible closure.

Captain Viriato had written to the Defence Minister seeking an official clarification amid recurring concerns over the airport's long-term future. He stressed that Dabolim Airport remains crucial to Goa's economy, tourism sector and the livelihoods of thousands

of people directly and indirectly dependent on its operations.

The MP also raised the matter with senior Defence officials as a member of the Parliamentary Standing Committee, pointing out that several defence airports in India's border states successfully operate both military and civilian flights simultaneously.



## Vasco Eyes Expansion as MLA Krishna Salkar, Collector Inspect Naval Lands

■ Exercise aims to identify land for future infrastructure projects while safeguarding defence interests

Team Goemkarponn

**VASCO:** Efforts to chart Vasco's future growth gathered momentum as Vasco MLA Krishna Salkar and South Goa Collector Egna Cleetus inspected Naval lands to explore possibilities for the city's planned expansion. The inspection focused on identifying land parcels that could be utilised to meet Vasco's growing infrastructure and civic requirements while ensuring that any future development remains compatible with defence operations. Officials visited several locations to assess the scope for planned urban expansion. Speaking after the inspection, Salkar said Vasco is witnessing increasing demand for better public infrastructure and civic amenities, making it essential to

identify suitable land for future development. He said the exercise is part of a long-term planning process aimed at addressing the city's future needs rather than relying on short-term solutions. Expressing confidence in the State Government's approach, Salkar said the "Double Engine Government" is committed to Vasco's development in coordination with all the concerned departments. He added that the matter would be pursued in consultation with the Naval authorities to ensure development projects progress without compromising defence requirements. The MLA said discussions with the concerned authorities would continue to explore feasible options that benefit residents while protecting the strategic interests of the defence establishment.



## Goa Police Honours 14 North Goa Police Stations for Swasth Police Initiative

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** Goa Police, in collaboration with VIAANAAR Group, the Indian Medical Association (IMA) Bicholim and the Telemedicine Society of India (TSI) Goa Chapter, felicitated all 14 police stations in North Goa district for successfully implementing the Swasth Police – Sashakth Police initiative. The police stations were presented with Certificates of Appreciation during a function held at Panaji. The initiative, launched on December 23, 2024, by Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant, aims to strengthen preventive healthcare and ensure regular health monitoring for police personnel across North Goa. DGP Alok Kumar (IPS) presented the certificates and congratulated the participating police stations for their commitment to the programme. He also acknowledged the contribution of IMA Bicholim, VIAANAAR Group and TSI Goa Chapter for partnering with Goa Police to promote the health and well-being of police personnel.

## Family Escapes Unhurt as House Roof Collapses at New Vaddem

■ Vasco MLA Krishna Salkar visits site, assures assistance to affected family

Team Goemkarponn

**VASCO:** A family had a narrow escape after a portion of the roof of their house collapsed at New Vaddem on Thursday night, leaving the occupants shaken but unhurt.

The damaged house belongs to Vijay Mallah. According to available information, a section of the roof suddenly caved in while family members were inside the house. They managed to escape



safely before any injuries could occur. Neighbours rushed to the spot after hearing a loud noise and assisted the family. The collapse caused significant damage to the affected portion of the

house. The exact cause of the incident has not yet been determined. It is yet to be ascertained whether the collapse resulted from structural weakness, the ongoing monsoon, or other factors.

## Congress will return to power with people's support, says Carlos Ferreira

■ At 60th birthday celebrations, Aldona MLA calls for unity to defeat 'evil forces' and vows to continue serving the people

Team Goemkarponn

**MAPUSA:** Aldona MLA and Goa Pradesh Congress Committee working president Adv Carlos Alvares Ferreira on Thursday expressed confidence that the Congress would return to power in Goa with the support of the people, while calling on party workers and supporters to remain united to



defeat what he termed as "evil forces."

Speaking at his 60th birthday celebrations at Bastora, Ferreira thanked the people of Aldona

for electing him as their representative and said their support had enabled him to bring greater recognition to Corjuem.

"I want to thank you

not only for electing me as your MLA but also for putting Corjuem on the national and international map. I am grateful for the faith you have reposed in me," he said. Recalling his childhood, Ferreira spoke about growing up in Corjuem when there was no electricity, piped water or telephone connectivity. He said the simple village life had shaped his values and commitment to public service. Reflecting on his

political journey, Ferreira said entering electoral politics had been a difficult decision despite repeated requests from the people of Corjuem. "I was never in politics though I was always associated with politicians behind the scenes. As a lawyer I could help only those who approached me, but as a politician I can reach out to many more people.

# "India Is Committed To Supporting Venezuela In This Difficult Time": Operation Amistad Takes Flight

■ Relief mission sends medical teams, field hospitals and emergency aid to earthquake devastated regions

Team Goemkarponn

**NEW DELHI:** India has launched Operation Amistad, a major humanitarian mission aimed at supporting Venezuela in the aftermath of the devastating twin earthquakes that have left hundreds dead and thousands injured.

Two Indian Air Force C 17 Globemaster aircraft departed with emergency assistance, carrying a specialised Army medical contingent, field hospital facilities and more than 35 tonnes of relief material to support rescue and recovery efforts in the affected regions.

The earthquakes have claimed 235 lives so far, while nearly 4,300 people have suffered injuries, placing immense pressure on the country's healthcare system and emergency services.

A key component of the mission is the deployment of a 41 member medical team from the Indian



Army, including nine doctors from the 60 Para Field Hospital. The unit is trained to operate in disaster zones and conflict affected areas and is equipped to provide trauma care, emergency surgeries and critical life saving treatment.

Upon arrival, the team will establish temporary medical facilities to assist communities where hospitals and healthcare infrastructure

have been severely damaged. Around six tonnes of medicines, medical equipment and humanitarian supplies are also part of the deployment.

Among the advanced medical assets sent to Venezuela are two BHISHM Cubes, portable modular field hospitals developed under India's Aarogya Maitri initiative. These self contained units can be quickly assembled

and are capable of treating up to 200 patients with services including intensive care support, emergency surgeries and advanced trauma management.

The operation further strengthens India's role as a global first responder and reflects its continued commitment to providing humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to nations facing crises and natural disasters.

...CONTD FROM PAGE 01

## Govt Withdraws Urbanisation Circular After Statewide Opposition

resolutions against the proposal. Residents argued that urbanisation would erode the rural character of villages, affect agricultural land, weaken the Panchayat system and increase the tax burden on locals.

The Congress also intensified its campaign against the proposal. Party spokesperson Amit Palekar urged villagers to submit objections through their respective panchayats and said Congress block committees would take the issue to every affected village. He warned that the party would protest outside the Directorate of Panchayats if the notification was not withdrawn, alleging that the move was intended to bring villages under Planning and Development Authorities (PDAs).

In Santa Cruz, panch member Inacio Dominic Pereira and social activist Arturo D'Souza opposed the proposal to declare Calapor an urban area, calling on the government to conduct a detailed study and consult residents before taking any decision.

Residents of Chimbhel also launched a campaign against the proposal, demanding that the issue be discussed at a special Gram

Sabha meeting. They appealed to MLA Rudolph Fernandes to meet villagers and announced plans for a door-to-door awareness drive highlighting the possible impact of urbanisation.

The withdrawal comes after growing public pressure across several affected villages. However, while the government has scrapped the consultation process initiated in May, it has not clarified whether the larger proposal to notify the 56 villages as urban areas has been abandoned permanently.

## Congress Bars Direct, Indirect Entry of Defectors

entry, he said, must do so unconditionally with the sole objective of strengthening the organisation.

Chodankar also emphasised that joining the Congress does not automatically entitle anyone to an election ticket, stating that candidature will be decided by the party through its established selection process.

Meanwhile, the Congress resolved to work towards forging a broader alliance with like-minded opposition parties committed to defeating the BJP in Goa. The alliance will be based on a Common Minimum Programme, and Chodankar has been authorised to lead the

alliance-building process.

Leader of Opposition Yuri Alemao said the Congress would continue strengthening its grassroots organisation while appealing to all anti-BJP forces to unite ahead of the 2027 Assembly elections. He also expressed confidence that the party would secure 27 seats and announced that the Goem Rakhon Yatra will commence on September 22 as part of the party's campaign against corruption and the BJP government.

## Chimbhel Panchayat to Pass Resolution Against Urbanisation

rural character, destroy agricultural fields and impose a higher tax burden on residents.

Several villagers also claimed that the proposal would divide the village and alter its traditional way of life. Villagers criticised former MLA Victoria Fernandes and current MLA Rudolph Fernandes, alleging that inadequate efforts had been made towards the development of Chimbhel. The Gram Sabha also discussed waste management issues in the village. Responding to concerns, Shirodkar assured residents that the Material Recovery Facility (MRF) plant would be shifted from its present location soon.

## "The iPhone Isn't Spared, Its Hike Is Coming": Why Apple Raised MacBook And iPad Prices But Left iPhones Untouched

■ Surging AI driven demand for memory chips is reshaping the global electronics market and pushing device prices higher

Team Goemkarponn

**NEW DELHI:** Apple has announced one of its biggest global pricing revisions in recent years, significantly increasing the prices of several MacBook and iPad models, including in India, as soaring semiconductor costs begin to reshape the consumer technology industry.

The company attributed the move to an unprecedented rise in the prices of memory and storage components such as DRAM and NAND flash chips, which are witnessing massive demand due to the rapid expansion of artificial intelligence infrastructure and data centres worldwide.

As technology companies race to build AI capabilities, chip manufacturers have increasingly prioritised supplies for enterprise and data centre customers, reducing availability for consumer electronics manufacturers. The shift has pushed up component costs across the industry, affecting laptops, tablets and other devices.

Despite its reputation for efficient supply chain management and its ability to absorb

rising costs, Apple said the current surge in semiconductor prices has reached a level that can no longer be fully offset internally, making price increases unavoidable.

In India, some of the biggest hikes have been seen across the iPad and MacBook lineup. Prices of certain iPad models have risen by more than 40 per cent, while several MacBook variants have become between 20 and 30 per cent more expensive. Products including the Mac Mini, Apple TV and HomePod have also witnessed notable increases.

Interestingly, Apple's flagship iPhone lineup has been excluded from the latest round of revisions. Industry analysts believe the company is avoiding price increases ahead of its annual iPhone launch cycle scheduled later this year, as higher prices could affect demand in an already weakening smartphone market. However, experts believe the reprieve may only be temporary, with expectations growing that iPhone prices could also rise in the coming months as the impact of rising component costs spreads across Apple's entire product ecosystem.



# "Narco Syndicates Will Find No Loopholes To Exploit": Amit Shah Announces NDPS Act Changes

■ Centre plans stricter laws as government intensifies nationwide fight against drug trafficking networks

**Team Goemkarponn**

**NEW DELHI:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday announced that the Centre is preparing amendments to the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act to eliminate legal gaps that are allegedly being exploited by organised drug syndicates operating across the country.

Speaking at the 10th



apex level meeting of the Narco Coordination Centre in New Delhi, Shah stressed the need for a tough and

uncompromising approach against drug traffickers, suppliers and criminal networks involved in the narcotics trade.

He called upon state governments to submit suggestions on the proposed changes being prepared by the Finance Ministry, stating that cooperation between the Centre and states would be essential to create a stronger legal framework

against drug related crimes.

Highlighting the government's anti narcotics efforts, Shah pointed to a sharp rise in the quantity of synthetic drugs seized over the past decade. He noted that while 26 lakh kilograms of synthetic drugs were seized between 2004 and 2014, the figure had risen to 1.18 crore kilograms between 2014 and 2026.



## NIA Uncovers Bid to Expand Extremist Network Across India, Charges 11 Operatives

■ Probe reveals efforts to radicalise youth and spread anti India propaganda through covert channels

**Team Goemkarponn**

**NEW DELHI:** The National Investigation Agency has filed a chargesheet against 11 individuals in connection with an alleged conspiracy linked to a banned Bangladesh based extremist organisation that sought to expand its influence in India. The charges have been filed before the Special NIA Court in Guwahati under provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, and the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, 1967. Investigators allege that the accused were actively involved in promoting extremist ideology and strengthening the organisation's presence

in several parts of the country. According to the investigation, a branch operating under the name Imam Mahmud Kafila was created to spread the outfit's agenda in India, particularly targeting West Bengal and several northeastern states including Assam and Tripura. The network allegedly worked towards radicalising vulnerable youth, recruiting supporters and expanding organisational activities.

The probe found that the accused used a combination of secret meetings, religious indoctrination sessions and the circulation of extremist material to influence individuals and attract new members.



## "Whoever Is Guilty Will Not Be Spared": Yogi Adityanath Issues Warning In Ram Temple Donation Case

**Team Goemkarponn**

**NEW DELHI:** Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday asserted that strict action would be taken against anyone found involved in the alleged embezzlement of donations collected at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, stressing that no guilty person would escape accountability.

Addressing a public gathering in Deoria, the Chief Minister said the state government acted swiftly after receiving the report of the Special Investigation Team constituted to examine the allegations. Following the submission of the report, police moved quickly and arrested all eight individuals named in the case. Adityanath said the government remained committed to uncovering the truth and ensuring a fair investigation. He reiterated that the probe would distinguish facts from allegations and that any wrongdoing uncovered would be dealt with firmly.

## Army Foils Infiltration Bid In Poonch, Pakistani National Taken Into Custody

■ Security agencies probe possible links as vigilance along the LoC intensifies ahead of the Amarnath Yatra

**Team Goemkarponn**

**NEW DELHI:** Indian Army personnel deployed along the Line of Control successfully intercepted an infiltration attempt in the Gulpur sector of Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district, detaining a Pakistani national who was allegedly trying to enter Indian territory.

The incident occurred during routine surveillance operations in a forward area near the border. Security personnel noticed suspicious movement



close to the LoC fencing during the night and immediately moved to intercept the individual. According to officials, the man attempted to escape after being challenged but was quickly apprehended by troops on duty.

The detained individual has been identified as

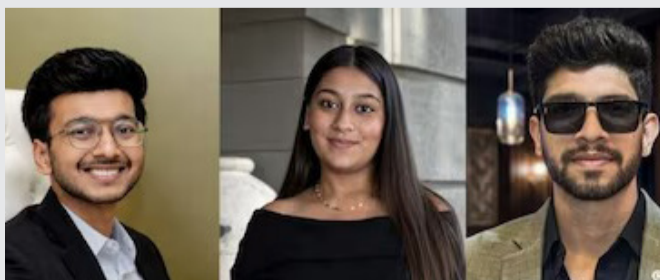
26 year old Mohammad Sajjad, a resident of Polas village in the Bandi Abbaspur area of Pakistan occupied Jammu and Kashmir. Authorities have launched an investigation to determine the circumstances surrounding the attempted crossing and whether the individual was acting independently or had links to a larger network operating across the border. Officials said no weapons or incriminating material were recovered from him during the arrest.

## "If Siya Had Said No, We Would Have Called Off The Wedding": Brother's Statement Adds New Twist To Lohagad Murder Probe

■ Investigators examine deleted chats, phone records and witness accounts in the killing of Pune realtor Ketan Agarwal

**Team Goemkarponn**

**NEW DELHI:** The investigation into the death of Pune based realtor Ketan Agarwal has taken a significant turn after the brother of one of the accused told police that the family would have cancelled the marriage had any objections been raised before the



engagement progressed further. During nearly ten hours of questioning by investigators, Sahil Goyal, brother of accused

Siya Goyal, stated that the family was unaware of any reluctance on her part regarding the wedding scheduled for

November. According to police, several aspects of the case, including her relationship with co accused Chetan Chaudhary, were discussed during the interrogation. Investigators allege that Agarwal was killed at Lohagad Fort on June 18 after being pushed into a gorge as part of a conspiracy involving Siya Goyal

and Chaudhary. Police believe the accused had planned the crime because she allegedly did not wish to proceed with the marriage. The two accused remained in regular contact for 6 months before the incident, exchanging more than 2,000 phone calls with conversations lasting over 238 hours in total.

# Dembele Hat Trick Powers France, Spain And Belgium Victorious As Cape Verde Advance

Dembele shines with a hat trick while World Cup debutants Cape Verde script more history in a memorable day of football



## Team Goemkarponn

**NEW DELHI:** Day 15 of the FIFA World Cup 2026 delivered thrilling action across multiple groups, with France and Spain securing important

victories while Cape Verde continued their remarkable journey by booking a place in the Round of 32.

France finished top of Group I after a commanding 4-1 victory over Norway, powered

by a sensational first half hat trick from Ousmane Dembele. The French forward struck three times inside the opening 32 minutes as his side maintained their perfect record in the tournament.

Norway, who rested several key players including Erling Haaland, struggled to cope with France's attacking intensity throughout the contest.

In the other Group I



## "As A Dominant Team, You Have To Adapt Quickly": Abhishek Sharma Reflects On India's Shock Defeat To Ireland

### Team Goemkarponn

**NEW DELHI:** India batter Abhishek Sharma admitted that his team's inability to adapt quickly to local conditions played a major role in their defeat to Ireland in the opening T20 International in Belfast. Ireland created history by defeating the T20 world champions by 34 runs, securing their first ever victory over India across all formats of international cricket. The result also handed the hosts an early advantage in the two match series. Speaking after the match, Sharma highlighted the importance of rapid adjustment, particularly in short series featuring back to back games where teams have limited time to prepare and train in unfamiliar conditions. He noted that successful international teams are often those that can understand and respond to conditions quickly, whether during practice sessions or during the course of the game itself.

## "We Know We Have The Ability To Match Them": Harmanpreet Kaur Confident Ahead Of India's Must-Win Clash Against Australia

India captain says recent performances against Australia have boosted belief before the virtual quarter final at Lord's

### Team Goemkarponn

**NEW DELHI:** India's women's cricket team will face a high stakes encounter against Australia at Lord's, with their hopes of reaching the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026 semi finals resting heavily on the outcome of the match.

Led by Harmanpreet Kaur, India head into the contest knowing that victory against the tournament favourites would significantly



improve their chances of progressing from Group A and securing a place in the last four. Ahead of the crucial clash, Kaur expressed confidence in her team's ability to

challenge Australia, pointing to India's strong performances during a recent T20I series on Australian soil as a major source of belief within the squad. The Indian captain dismissed suggestions that Australia had weakened following the retirement of former skipper Alyssa Healy, describing the reigning champions as a side with exceptional depth and a system capable of continually producing world class players.



## India Run Riot Against Pakistan With Stunning 7-1 Victory In FIH Pro League

Harmanpreet Singh and teammates produce a commanding display in London to complete a memorable win over arch rivals

### Team Goemkarponn

**NEW DELHI:** India delivered one of their most dominant performances in recent years, overwhelming Pakistan 7-1 in their return leg encounter of the FIH Pro League in London on Friday. The emphatic victory came just days after India edged Pakistan 4-3 in their earlier meeting and provided a perfect response following their shootout defeat to hosts England after a 2-2 draw in regulation time.

Pakistan stunned India by opening the scoring in the 13th minute when Abu Mahmood converted a penalty corner with a powerful strike to put his side ahead. However, India's response was swift and decisive.

The equaliser arrived in the 20th minute when Sukhjeet Singh brilliantly redirected Harmanpreet Singh's penalty corner flick into the net. India continued to pile pressure on the Pakistani defence and took the lead six minutes later through captain Harmanpreet, who found the top corner with another penalty corner conversion. India extended their advantage early in the third quarter after earning a penalty stroke, which vice captain Hardik Singh calmly converted to make it 3-1. Pakistan struggled to cope with India's relentless attacking play and soon conceded again when Jugraj Singh finished off a rapid counter attack following excellent work by Dilpreet Singh.

## Ashank, Aarish, Inara And Tisha March Into Semi-finals At Major Ranking TT Tournament

Young paddlers continue impressive runs as quarter-final battles conclude in multiple age categories in Ponda

### Team Goemkarponn

**NEW DELHI:** Ashank Dalvi, Aarish Shaikh, Inara D'Souza and Tisha Shaikh emerged among the standout performers as the quarter-final stage concluded in various categories of the 2nd All Goa Major Ranking Table Tennis Tournament at the Sports Complex in Ponda.

In the Boys Under-11 category, Ashank



produced a dominant display to defeat Cladwyn Miranda in straight games and secure his place in the semi-finals.

Kedar Nair also enjoyed a comfortable outing, overcoming Arjun



Rane 3-0 to join the final four. Vardhan Verlekar booked his semi-final berth with a convincing 3-1 victory over Kavish Singh, while Aarish Shaikh completed the line-up after defeating



Ved Sanvordekar by an identical margin. The Girls Under-13 competition witnessed a series of commanding performances as all four quarter-finals were settled in straight games. Sachi



Desai cruised past Vanlalhratpui 3-0, while Inara D'Souza registered an equally impressive victory over Shaurya Dessai to progress to the semi-finals.

Lalruatsangi continued her strong campaign with a 3-0 win against Vanlalrinzuali, and Tisha Shaikh rounded off the semi-final line-up after defeating Anaya Shukla in another one-sided encounter.