



Opposition Slams One Nation, One Election Proposal at Goa JPC Meet

■ Congress, AAP oppose constitutional amendment as BJP defends reform as a step in national interest

Team Goemkarponn

BENAULIM: Political parties in Goa presented sharply divided views on the proposed Constitution (129th Amendment) Bill on "One Nation, One Election" during a consultation held by the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) on Saturday, with opposition parties rejecting the proposal and the BJP strongly defending it. Leaders from the Congress and the Aam



Aadmi Party (AAP) argued that holding simultaneous elections across the country would weaken India's federal framework and adversely affect democratic processes. Congress MLA Carlos Alvares Ferreira

said every opposition representative who participated in the consultation opposed the Bill. He said the parties had objected to the proposal clause by clause but could not reveal the details of the discussions

due to the confidentiality norms governing JPC proceedings. Congress MP Captain Viriato Fernandes maintained that the country's federal structure must be safeguarded and

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AAP Tells JPC One Nation, One Election Threatens Federalism

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BENAULIM: AAP MLA Capt Venzy Viegas urged the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) to reject the proposed "One Nation, One Election" legislation, arguing that the move poses a

serious threat to India's federal structure and democratic framework. Viegas said the proposal would undermine federalism by diluting the constitutional balance between the Centre and the states. He maintained that

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Burglaries Continue in Mapusa, Bookshop Targeted

Team Goemkarponn

MAPUSA: A fresh burglary at a bookshop in Mapusa during the early hours of Friday has raised concerns over a spate of break-ins in the town.

According to preliminary information, unidentified persons allegedly broke into the shop and stole around ₹65,000 in cash before fleeing the scene.

Mapusa Police rushed to the spot after receiving information about the incident and conducted a preliminary investigation. A case is being probed, and efforts are underway to identify and trace those involved.

The latest incident comes amid continuing reports of burglaries in Mapusa, prompting concern among local residents and business owners over the recurring thefts. Further details are awaited.

Karapur Villagers to Take Protest to Jantar Mantar as Agitation Nears 100 Days

■ Enough is Enough Goa calls for solidarity gathering at Azad Maidan while protestors seek Centre's intervention

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: As the agitation against the proposed House of Abhinandan Lodha project at Karapur completes 100 days on July 13, villagers have decided to take their protest to Jantar Mantar in New Delhi, seeking the Central government's



intervention in the matter. Announcing the move at a press conference on Friday, Enough is Enough Goa spokespersons Swapnesh Sherlekar, Govind Shirodkar and

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North Goa Cracks Down On Illegal Waste Dumping

■ DM Orders Strict Enforcement Of Solid Waste Rules, Intensified Inspections Across District

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PANAJI: In a move aimed at tightening enforcement against illegal waste disposal, North Goa District Magistrate Ankit Yadav has directed authorities to intensify inspections of illegal dumping sites and bulk waste generators while ensuring strict implementation of the



Solid Waste Management Rules, 2026. Chairing a meeting of the Special Cell on Solid Waste Management, constituted under the directions of the Supreme Court,

the District Magistrate reviewed the district's preparedness to curb illegal dumping, improve monitoring and strengthen compliance with waste management norms.

'Jammu And Kashmir Is An Integral Part Of India': India Objects To Incorrect Map At Dhaka Seminar

■ Indian diplomat raises immediate objection during a regional conference in Bangladesh, reaffirming India's territorial integrity

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: India lodged a strong objection after an incorrect map of the country was displayed during a seminar in Dhaka, reiterating that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral and inalienable part of India. The issue arose during a presentation at a conference focused on strengthening regional cooperation in South



Asia. The objection was raised by Pooja Kumari Jha, Second Secretary at the Indian High Commission in Dhaka, during a presentation delivered by former Bangladesh High Commissioner to India Ahmed Tariq Karim. As

the map appeared on screen, the Indian diplomat immediately intervened, stating that the depiction of India was incorrect and reaffirming that Jammu and Kashmir forms an inseparable part of the country. Following the intervention, the presenter acknowledged the objection and confirmed that India's concern had been noted before the seminar continued.

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One Nation, One Election: Reform or Risk to Democracy?

The debate over “One Nation, One Election” has once again come into focus, with the Goa Pradesh Congress Committee strongly opposing the proposal before the Joint Parliamentary Committee. The Congress argues that simultaneous elections threaten federalism, weaken democratic accountability and concentrate power in the hands of the Central Government. The BJP, on the other hand, presents the idea as a major electoral reform that will reduce costs, minimise disruptions and improve governance.

As with most major constitutional questions, the truth lies somewhere between the two extremes.

The concept itself is not new. India conducted simultaneous elections for the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies in the 1950s and 1960s. The cycle was disrupted after several state governments were dissolved before completing their terms. Since then, elections have been held at different times across the country, creating an almost permanent election mode in one state or another.

The BJP's argument is straightforward. Frequent elections involve enormous expenditure by governments, political parties and candidates. Every election triggers the Model Code of Conduct, slowing down administrative decisions and development projects. Security personnel, government machinery and election officials are repeatedly diverted from their primary duties. Holding all elections together, proponents argue, would save money, reduce administrative burdens and allow governments to focus more on governance than campaigning.

These are legitimate concerns. India is the world's largest democracy, and conducting elections is a massive logistical exercise. Any reform that improves efficiency deserves serious consideration.

However, efficiency cannot be the only criterion in a democracy.

The concerns raised by opponents of the proposal are equally valid. India is not a unitary nation where all political decisions flow from the Centre. It is a federal republic where states have their own governments, mandates and political realities. The tenure of a

“The concerns raised by opponents of the proposal are equally valid. India is not a unitary nation where all political decisions flow from the Centre. It is a federal republic where states have their own governments, mandates and political realities. The tenure of a state government is determined by the voters of that state, not by the electoral calendar of the Union Government.”

The biggest challenge facing the proposal is practical rather than ideological. What happens if a state government loses its majority midway through its term? What happens if a coalition collapses? Would a state be forced to remain under President's Rule until the next synchronised election? Or would newly elected governments be allowed to serve only a fraction of a normal five-year term?”

state government is determined by the voters of that state, not by the electoral calendar of the Union Government. The biggest challenge facing the proposal is practical rather than ideological. What happens if a state government loses its majority midway through its term? What happens if a coalition collapses? Would a state be forced to remain under President's Rule until the next synchronised election? Or would newly elected governments be allowed to serve only a fraction of a normal five-year term?

These are not minor technical details. They go to the heart of representative democracy.

Another concern is the impact on regional issues. Simultaneous

elections could encourage national narratives to dominate political discourse. Voters may focus more on national leaders and national issues while local concerns receive less attention. In a diverse country like India, where states often have unique social, economic and cultural priorities, regional voices must not be drowned out by national campaigns.

There is also the question of political advantage. Critics believe that simultaneous elections tend to favour larger national parties with greater resources and visibility. While this claim can be debated, the perception itself makes consensus difficult. Constitutional reforms succeed when they enjoy broad political acceptance, not when they are viewed as benefiting one party over another.

Yet it would be unfair to dismiss the idea entirely. India does need electoral reforms. The growing cost of elections, constant campaigning and repeated imposition of the Model Code of Conduct are genuine issues. The challenge is finding a solution that balances efficiency with democratic principles.

Perhaps the answer lies not in a rigid “One Nation, One Election” framework but in exploring alternatives such as grouping elections within fixed windows, reducing campaign expenditure and strengthening electoral administration. Such measures could achieve many of the desired benefits without fundamentally altering the federal balance. The debate should not be reduced to a contest between patriotism and opposition, or between reform and resistance. It is a constitutional question that deserves thoughtful examination.

India's democracy has survived and thrived because it accommodates diversity, differing mandates and multiple centres of power. Any electoral reform must preserve those strengths. If One Nation, One Election can achieve efficiency without compromising federalism and democratic accountability, it deserves consideration. If it cannot, the country must be willing to look for better alternatives.

The goal should not simply be fewer elections. The goal should be stronger democracy.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Rising Electricity Bills Are Shocking Consumers

The recent protest by the Vasco Block Congress Committee over rising electricity bills highlights an issue that is affecting households across Goa. While political parties may differ on the reasons, the fact remains that many consumers are finding it increasingly difficult to cope with higher power charges at a time when the cost of living continues to rise.

Electricity is not a luxury but an essential service. Every household depends on it for lighting, cooking, refrigeration, education and daily living. When bills rise sharply, it is the poor and middle class who feel the impact the most. Families are already struggling with increasing expenses on food, fuel, healthcare and education. Additional financial pressure through higher electricity charges only worsens their burden.

Equally worrying are complaints about the difficulties faced by consumers when seeking clarification regarding their bills. Citizens should not be forced to make repeated visits to government offices or be sent from one department to another to resolve simple issues. Public service departments exist to assist consumers, not frustrate them.

The Electricity Department must improve its grievance redressal mechanism and ensure that complaints are addressed promptly and transparently. If tariff revisions are necessary, the government should clearly explain the reasons and justify the increases before the public.

Affordable electricity and efficient customer service are basic expectations in a welfare state. The government must listen to the concerns of consumers and take corrective measures before public dissatisfaction grows further.

- **Anthony Fernandes**, Vasco da Gama, Goa

Accountability Needed in Electrical Safety Cases

The registration of a criminal case following the tragic electrocution death of 20-year-old ITI student Akshat Naik in Bicholim is a reminder of the importance of safety and accountability in electrical work.

While it is encouraging that the police have initiated action, the larger concern is how an unqualified student was allegedly allowed to undertake hazardous electrical installation work in the first place. Electrical work involves significant risks and should only be carried out under proper supervision, with adequate safety equipment and strict adherence to established procedures.

Across Goa, it is not uncommon to see inexperienced workers and trainees being assigned tasks that expose them to serious danger. In many cases, cost-cutting or negligence takes precedence over safety. Unfortunately, it is only after a tragedy occurs that attention is drawn to these lapses.

The loss of a young life with a promising future should serve as a wake-up call for homeowners, contractors and utility personnel. Safety cannot be treated as an afterthought. Regular inspections, strict enforcement of regulations and awareness among workers are essential to prevent such incidents. The authorities must ensure that the investigation is completed swiftly and transparently. If negligence is established, those responsible must be held accountable. At the same time, lessons must be learned to prevent similar tragedies in the future. No family should have to lose a son or daughter because basic safety norms were ignored.

- **Santosh Gawas**, Bicholim, Goa

Goa to Roll Out AI-Based Traffic Enforcement From July 15, Nine Offences in First Phase

■ Smart cameras to issue digital challans with photo and video proof; HSRP checks to be introduced in the next phase

Team Goemkarponn

MARGAO: Goa is set to introduce an artificial intelligence-driven traffic surveillance system from July 15, ushering in automated enforcement of key traffic rules across the State. The rollout will begin with monitoring nine major traffic violations, while checks for High Security Registration Plates (HSRPs) will be



added in a later phase.

Officials from the South Assistant Director of Transport (ADT) office said the AI-enabled

cameras will identify offences such as driving while using a mobile phone, riding without a helmet, driving without a seat belt,

overspeeding, dangerous overtaking, driving on the wrong side, illegal parking or stopping, failing to give way to ambulances

and fire service vehicles, carrying more pillion riders than permitted, transporting passengers in goods vehicles, and using fancy or unauthorised number plates.

While HSRP violations will not be enforced immediately, officials confirmed that they remain part of the project and will be incorporated into the system after the initial rollout.

Food Safety Drive at Verna IDC: Five Units Penalised for Operating Without FSSAI Licence

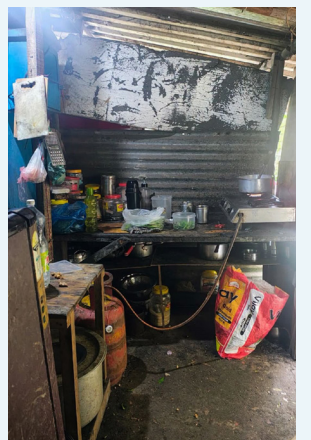
■ Nine establishments inspected; hygiene lapses, unsafe food handling and COTPA violations detected during FDA enforcement drive

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VERNA: The Goa Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) carried out a food safety enforcement drive at Verna Industrial Estate, inspecting nine establishments, including restaurants, retailers, hawkers and private company canteens, as part of its ongoing efforts to ensure safe and hygienic food for consumers.

During the inspection, five establishments were found operating without valid FSSAI licences. The FDA issued notices to the operators and imposed penalties for violating food safety regulations.

The inspection also revealed serious hygiene and food safety deficiencies at four establishments. Officials identified improper food storage, pest infestation, poor sanitation, unsafe



food handling practices, use of synthetic food colours, wrapping food in newspapers and inadequate waste disposal systems. The operators have been directed to immediately rectify the shortcomings.

In addition, three establishments were penalised for violations under the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA).

The FDA has directed all concerned establishments to submit compliance reports within eight days after addressing the deficiencies.



High Court Closes Nigerian Detainee's Petition After Repeated Non-Appearance

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PANAJI: The High Court of Bombay at Goa has dismissed a writ petition filed by a Nigerian national lodged at the Mapusa detention centre after he repeatedly remained absent during the hearings, concluding that he was not interested in prosecuting the matter further.

The Division Bench of Justice Neela Gokhale and Justice Amit Jamsandekar dismissed the petition for non-prosecution after recording that there was no appearance on behalf of the petitioner when the matter was called on Friday.

The Bench also referred to the previous hearing held on July 2, when the petitioner had similarly remained unrepresented. During that hearing, Deputy Solicitor General of India S.D. Faldessai informed the court that the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO), Goa, had already implemented the directions issued by the High Court in May.

ED Files PMLA Chargesheet in Caranzalem Land Fraud Case

■ Prosecution complaint names two priests, former survey official and real estate firm; alleged proceeds of crime pegged at ₹27.10 crore

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PANAJI: The Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Panaji Zonal Office, has filed a prosecution complaint under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, against two priests of the Archdiocese of Goa and Daman, a former Inspector of Survey and Land Records, and a private real estate development firm in



connection with an alleged land fraud at Caranzalem in North Goa.

The prosecution complaint has been filed before the Special PMLA Court at Mercers. Those named in the complaint are Fr. Arlino De Mello, Fr. Victor Conceicao Rodrigues, both former Procurators of the Archdiocese of Goa and Daman, Prabhakar

Rama Hawaldar, the then Inspector of Survey and Land Records, City Survey, Panaji, and a private real estate development firm as a legal entity. According to the ED, the case pertains to the alleged fraudulent deprivation of tenancy rights over a 2,479-square-metre land parcel at Mitra, Caranzalem, bearing Chalta No. 44 of P.T. Sheet No. 162 of City Survey, Panaji.

Six Iron Ore Dumps Find Buyers in Goa's Second E-Auction Round

■ Improved participation sees bidders secure dumps across Sanguem, Dharbandora and Bardez; highest premium touches 51%

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PANAJI: The Directorate of Mines and Geology's (DMG) second e-auction of low-grade iron ore dumps has witnessed a stronger response from the mining industry, with six dumps being successfully auctioned, a marked improvement over the first round held earlier this year.

The auction, conducted on July 8,



covered iron ore dumps located in Sanguem, Dharbandora and Bardez talukas. The highest bid premium of 51 per cent was offered for Dump-4 at Costi in Sanguem, with Sarus Infrastructure

Pvt. Ltd. emerging as the successful bidder.

Sarus Infrastructure also secured Dump-3 at Costi after quoting a premium of 24.40 per cent. Silvermist Retail Pvt. Ltd. won Dump-6 at Codli in Sanguem with a premium bid of 42.10 per cent. Kai International added two more dumps to its portfolio, winning Dump-

13 at Shigao-Collem in Dharbandora with a premium of 22.10 per cent and Dump-24 at Curpem in Sanguem with a bid of 22.40 per cent.

In Bardez, Satish Sugars Ltd. emerged as the successful bidder for Dump-16 at Sircaim after quoting a premium of 25 per cent. The second phase of the auction includes nearly 26 low-grade ore dumps with an estimated combined

quantity of about 41.9 million tonnes. The outcome contrasts with the inaugural e-auction held in February, which saw limited participation. During that round, Kai International was the only successful bidder, securing a 14-million-tonne dump in Dharbandora by offering a premium of 22.1 per cent, marginally above the reserve premium of 22 per cent.

Two Booked in ITI Student's Electrocution Death in Bicholim

Police register culpable negligence case against lineman and house owner after inquiry into 20-year-old Akshat Naik's death during electrical installation work

Team Goemkarponn

BICHOLIM: More than two weeks after the electrocution death of a 20-year-old ITI Electrical student, Bicholim Police have registered a criminal case against a lineman and a house owner for allegedly causing the student's death through negligent handling of hazardous electrical work. The FIR was registered

BOOKED

on July 9 following a complaint filed by Rajesh Prabhakar Naik, father of the deceased Akshat Naik, a resident of Lamgao, Bicholim.

According to the police, Akshat, who was pursuing an ITI course in Electrical

and was keen to gain practical experience, had been engaged on June 26 by accused Kedar Krishna Mandrekar (33), a lineman/wireman, to assist in electrical installation work at a newly constructed first floor of a house in Harijanwada, Maulinguem, owned by accused Sameer Ramnath Maulingkar.

Police alleged that Mandrekar engaged

Akshat despite knowing that he was not qualified to assist in such hazardous work. During testing of the newly installed electrical wiring by temporarily extending electricity supply from the ground-floor connection, even though the first floor had no authorised electricity connection, Akshat allegedly suffered a severe electric shock and collapsed.



Senior Citizen Alleges Assault and Intimidation; Two Booked in Betalbatim

Complaint by 68-year-old leads to FIR under BNS and Senior Citizens Act; incident allegedly occurred near Martin's Corner

Team Goemkarponn

BETALBATIM: A case has been registered against two persons following a complaint filed by a senior citizen alleging assault, intimidation and verbal abuse at Betalbatim in South Goa.

According to the complaint lodged by Crisostomo Mariano Soares, a resident of Mollanguinim, Cuncolim, the incident allegedly took place before 4:00 pm on July 9, 2026, near Martin's Corner in Betalbatim.

Based on the complaint, police registered FIR No. 58/2026 against Isidoreo Souza and Irene Gonzalves, both residents of Betalbatim.

The FIR has been registered under Sections 115, 126, 127, 352 and 351(3) read with Section 3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), along with Section 24 of the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007. Police have initiated an investigation into the matter.



Elderly Man Found Dead at Curtorim Residence

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CURTORIM: A 69-year-old man was found dead at his residence in Agxem, Curtorim, on Friday afternoon.

According to police, information about the incident was received at around 2.48 pm on July 10, following which officers rushed to the spot. The deceased was identified as Conceicao Simon Paes, a resident of Agxem, Curtorim. He was found hanging from a nylon rope tied to the door frame inside his house.

He was shifted to the South Goa District Hospital (SGDH), Margao, where the on-duty doctor declared him brought dead.

During the preliminary enquiry, police learnt that the deceased had been suffering from heart disease and had recently suffered a stroke. Police are investigating the circumstances surrounding the death.

Officers conducted the scene of occurrence panchanama and inquest panchanama. The body has been preserved at SGDH, Margao, for medico-legal formalities.

Railway Police Arrest Four, Recover 60 Stolen Mobile Phones

Accused allegedly targeted train passengers by snatching phones during journeys; investigation underway to trace owners and possible links to other cases

Team Goemkarponn

MARGAO: In a major breakthrough against mobile phone thefts on trains, the Railway Police have arrested four persons and recovered 60 stolen mobile phones allegedly snatched from passengers during train journeys.

According to Railway Police, the accused allegedly targeted unsuspecting passengers travelling on various trains and snatched their mobile phones during the



journey before attempting to dispose of the stolen devices to avoid detection.

Acting on specific intelligence and after a detailed investigation, Railway Police traced the suspects and arrested all four accused. During the operation, officers

recovered 60 mobile phones believed to have been stolen from railway passengers.

Police said efforts are underway to identify the rightful owners of the recovered mobile phones and return the devices to them. Investigators are also examining whether the accused are linked to similar theft and snatching cases reported from other railway stations and train routes.

Shantinagar Contractor Booked After Labourer Dies in Fall at Vasco Worksite

Police allege safety lapses led to fatal fall from second floor during dismantling work at New Vaddem

Team Goemkarponn

VASCO: Vasco Police have registered a case against a Shantinagar-based contractor following the death of a labourer who allegedly fell from the second floor of a building while carrying out dismantling work at New Vaddem.

The case was registered on a complaint filed by PSI Akanksh Fadte Dessai



of Vasco Police Station. According to police, the incident occurred at around 2.12 pm on July 6 at a house near the Goa State Co-operative Bank in New Vaddem.

Police identified the accused as Hapich Hossain, a resident of Shantinagar, Vasco, originally from Cooch Behar, West

Bengal. He had reportedly engaged mason and labourer Altab Mian, a resident of New Vaddem and a native of West Bengal, to remove metal plates erected over

wooden scaffolding on the second floor of the building. During the work, the contractor allegedly failed to provide adequate safety measures, including safety belts, helmets and proper fall-protection equipment, and permitted the labourer to work at height under unsafe conditions. As a result, Altab Mian allegedly lost his balance, fell from the second floor, sustained grievous injuries

and later succumbed. Based on the findings, Vasco Police have registered an offence under Section 106(1) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) against the contractor.

Further investigation is being carried out by PSI Akanksh Fadte Dessai under the supervision of PI Vaibhav Naik and the guidance of Mormugao DySP Gurudas Kadam.

NFF Opposes Draft National Water Metro Policy, Raises Livelihood Concerns

■ General Secretary Olencio Simoes says proposed policy threatens river ecosystems and traditional fishing communities; seeks wider stakeholder consultations

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: National Fishworkers' Forum (NFF) General Secretary Olencio Simoes has opposed the Draft National Water Metro Policy, alleging that it could adversely impact river ecosystems and the livelihoods of traditional fishing communities.

Speaking at the Just Transition on Urban Waterways consultation organised by Climate Agenda at the Indian



Social Institute in New Delhi, Simoes criticised the policy proposed by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW), which aims to introduce Water Metro services in

18 cities to ease urban traffic congestion.

Simoes claimed that the implementation of the Sagarmala Programme and the National Waterways Act, 2016, under which 111 rivers have been declared National Waterways, has already affected the customary rights of traditional inland fishing and riverine communities.

He alleged that the proposed Water Metro Policy would further intensify the ecological and social impacts of port-led development.

According to him, large-scale capital dredging and continuous maintenance dredging required for Water Metro infrastructure could damage river ecosystems, accelerate riverbank erosion and affect fish breeding habitats.

Vasco Congress Protests Against Rising Electricity Bills, Warns of Bigger Agitation

Team Goemkarponn

VASCO: The Vasco Block Congress Committee, led by Congress leader Nandadeep Raut, on Friday staged a protest march to the Electricity Department office in Vasco against the continuous increase in electricity bills and alleged harassment faced by consumers seeking redressal of their grievances.

A large number of Congress workers and local residents participated in the protest, raising slogans against the government and demanding immediate relief from what they described as "unjustified" power tariff hikes and penalties.

Addressing the gathering, Raut questioned why the

government continues to increase electricity tariffs despite the financial hardships being faced by ordinary citizens. He said the burden of rising power bills has become unbearable, particularly for poor and middle-class families who are already struggling with the increasing cost of living.

Raut alleged that consumers who visit the Electricity Department to seek clarification or correction of their bills are forced to move from one office floor to another without receiving any proper response. He claimed that instead of resolving public grievances promptly, the authorities are making consumers run from pillar to post, causing unnecessary inconvenience and frustration.



Kala Academy Marks 50th Konkani Drama Competition, Honours Pundalik Naik

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Kala Academy Goa commemorated the 50th Konkani Drama Competition with a special programme held at Dinanath Mangeshkar Kala Mandir in Panaji, celebrating the rich legacy of Konkani theatre.

The highlight of the event was the presentation of the Jeevan Gaurav Puraskar to renowned Konkani playwright Pundalik Naik in recognition of his outstanding lifelong contribution to Konkani theatre and literature.

Several eminent personalities who have made significant contributions to the growth and promotion of Konkani drama were also felicitated during the programme.

The event was attended by Shripad Yesso Naik, Ramesh Tawadkar, Kala Academy Chairman Babu Kavlekar, Goa Konkani Akademi President Dr Purnanand Chari, and other distinguished dignitaries, who lauded the enduring contribution of Konkani theatre to Goa's cultural identity.

Mormugao Varkaris Begin 420-km Annual Sacred Walk to Pandharpur

■ Pilgrimage Receives Grand Welcome Across Taluka

Team Goemkarponn

MORMUGAO: Amid chants of "Vitthal Vitthal Jai Hari Vitthal" and an atmosphere filled with devotion, hundreds of Varkaris from Mormugao on Friday embarked on the third edition of their annual sacred Pandharpur Vari, a 15-day, 420-kilometre pilgrimage on foot to the holy town of Pandharpur in Maharashtra ahead of Ashadhi Ekadashi.

The pilgrimage commenced from the Brahmaneshwar Temple



at Sada with devotees seeking divine blessings before beginning the arduous journey. The number of participants has witnessed remarkable growth over the years, increasing from just 54 devotees during the inaugural edition to around 140 in the second year. Organisers said this year's

participation is expected to be even higher, with a large number of devotees from Vasco, Dabolim and

Cortalim joining the yatra.

One of the unique attractions of the pilgrimage continues to be "Shwan Mauli," the dog that first joined the Varkaris during the maiden edition from Cortalim and completed the entire pilgrimage before being adopted by one of the devotees.

Banjara Ekta Sankalp Yatra Reaches Goa, Community Renews Push for Key Constitutional Demands

■ Leaders reiterate call for ST status, Gorboli recognition and National Banjara Board as nationwide yatra promotes unity and social reform

Team Goemkarponn

VASCO: The nationwide Banjara Ekta Sankalp Yatra, led by Shri Sree Maharaj Ji, Dharmadhikari of the Santh Shri Sevalal Maharaj Charitable Trust, received a grand welcome in Goa on Friday, with hundreds of members of the Banjara community joining the procession and seeking the blessings of Maharaj Ji. The yatra, which



commenced on July 5 from Sevagad in Andhra Pradesh, the birthplace of Sant Shri Sevalal Maharaj, is travelling across the country with a message of unity, education, social reform and self-respect among the DD Banjara

community. The campaign will culminate with a national concluding programme on July 27 at Talkatora Indoor Stadium in New Delhi.

Spanning nearly 7,000 kilometres across 15 states and more than 80 districts, the yatra also serves as a platform to press for several long-pending demands of the community before

the Central and State Governments. Addressing members of the community in Goa, Shri Sree Maharaj Ji urged Banjaras across the country to remain united and work collectively for the progress and upliftment of the community. He stressed the importance of education, social harmony, preservation of Banjara culture and language, and empowering the younger generation. As part of the movement, the organisers

have reiterated six key demands, including Scheduled Tribe (ST) status where applicable, constitutional recognition for the Gorboli/Banjara language, establishment of a Central Banjara University, development of Banjara Tandas into revenue villages, separate enumeration of the community in the 2027 caste census, and the formation of a National Banjara Board.

Govt Mulls Uniform Rules For Messaging Apps Amid WhatsApp Username Feature Concerns

■ Centre considers common standards for platforms as it raises concerns over fraud, impersonation and law enforcement challenges

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: The Centre is considering introducing uniform regulations for messaging platforms as it reviews WhatsApp's proposed username feature, amid concerns that the new system could increase the risk of online fraud, impersonation and digital arrest scams. The move is aimed at ensuring that all messaging services operating in India are governed by the same standards, regardless of the features they offer.

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) is reportedly working on a framework that would establish common rules for messaging platforms, providing a clear legal basis for approving or restricting platform features. Officials believe the absence of uniform standards creates a regulatory gap, making it difficult to apply consistent decisions across competing services.

The government is also preparing to oppose WhatsApp's proposed username feature, arguing that replacing phone number based identification with usernames could make



it more difficult for law enforcement agencies to trace suspects during criminal investigations. Authorities are particularly concerned that anonymous usernames could be misused for impersonation, phishing, financial fraud and digital arrest scams.

The development follows responses submitted by WhatsApp and Telegram after receiving notices from MeitY seeking details about their username based systems and the safeguards built into those features. The government is currently examining the responses, while Signal, which also received a

notice, is yet to submit its reply.

The debate has also prompted action from Indian technology companies. Zoho founder Sridhar Vembu recently announced that the company's messaging application, Arattai, would disable its username based account feature to comply with the evolving regulatory requirements.

Messaging platforms such as WhatsApp, Telegram, Signal and Arattai currently operate under the Information Technology Act, 2000, and the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules,

2021. While these laws require intermediaries to cooperate with law enforcement and comply with legal directives, they do not prescribe uniform rules governing platform features.

WhatsApp's proposed feature would allow users to connect using unique usernames instead of sharing their mobile numbers. While the change is intended to enhance privacy, the government believes it could also make it easier for fraudsters to conceal their identities and complicate criminal investigations, prompting the push for a common regulatory framework.

Rs 1 Lakh Crore Naval Push: Indian Navy Plans Three Indigenous Warship Projects To Boost Maritime Power

■ Projects 15C, 17B and 18A are expected to form the backbone of India's future surface fleet as the Navy strengthens its presence in the Indo Pacific

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: India is preparing for one of its biggest indigenous naval expansion programmes, with the Indian Navy planning three major warship projects worth nearly Rs 1 lakh crore. The proposed initiatives, currently undergoing internal consultations and planning, are expected to significantly strengthen the country's maritime capabilities and reinforce its strategic position in the Indian Ocean Region and the wider Indo Pacific.

The three projects include the construction of next generation Project 15C guided missile destroyers, Project 17B stealth frigates and the ambitious Project 18A large surface combatants. Once approved, they will represent one of the largest investments in indigenous naval shipbuilding since the launch of the Project 15B destroyers and Project 17A stealth frigates.

Project 15C is the largest of the three programmes, with plans to build four advanced guided missile destroyers at an estimated cost of around Rs 50,000 crore. The vessels will build upon the

capabilities of the existing Kolkata class and Visakhapatnam class destroyers while incorporating next generation sensors, weapons, electronic warfare systems and enhanced air defence capabilities. The Request for Proposal is expected within a year, with construction likely to begin after procurement and design approvals.

Under Project 17B, the Navy plans to induct six advanced stealth frigates valued at approximately Rs 40,000 crore. Construction is expected to be shared equally between Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited and Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers, with each shipyard building three vessels. The proposal is expected to move forward within the next 18 months.

The most ambitious programme is Project 18A, which envisages six next generation surface combatants weighing between 14,000 and 15,000 tonnes, making them among the largest warships ever built in India. Designed for long range deployments, these vessels are expected to feature enhanced strike capabilities, advanced missile defence systems and sophisticated command and control infrastructure.



Karapur Villagers to Take Protest to Jantar Mantar as Agitation Nears 100 Days

Devidas Amonkar said Karapur residents have given a "Chalo Delhi" call and will stage a one-day demonstration at Jantar Mantar. Simultaneously, the organisation has appealed to Goans to gather at Azad Maidan in Panaji at 5 pm on July 13 in solidarity with the villagers.

The organisation alleged that the proposed five-star project, spread over 4.5 lakh square metres, received permissions after government rules were bent. It claimed the development poses a threat to Karapur village and that the agitation will continue until the project is cancelled. According to the activists, the Delhi protest is aimed at drawing the Centre's attention to

alleged irregularities surrounding the project, including land ownership and approvals. They said a petition challenging the project has already been filed in court, while the developer has initiated a defamation case against activist Swapnesh Sherlekar in a Mumbai court.

Opposition Slams One Nation, One Election Proposal at Goa JPC Meet

claimed that even some allies within the NDA were not entirely convinced about the proposal. The AAP also rejected the Bill and instead called for changes to the Anti-Defection Law. The party alleged that the existing law was being exploited to encourage defections and bring down democratically elected governments. Responding to the

criticism, senior BJP leader and JPC member Anurag Thakur said the Narendra Modi government had a track record of implementing major structural reforms, citing the Goods and Services Tax (GST) as an example. He said the One Nation, One Election proposal was another significant reform aimed at improving governance.

AAP Tells JPC One Nation, One Election Threatens Federalism

synchronising elections across the country could erode the autonomy of state governments and centralise political power.

The memorandum also argued that simultaneous elections would reduce democratic accountability by limiting the frequency with which governments face voters.

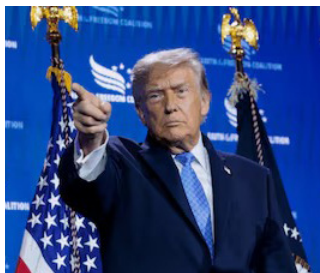
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'1,000 Missiles Are Locked And Loaded': Trump Warns Iran Of Massive US Retaliation Over Assassination Threat

■ US President says military has standing orders to launch a devastating response if Tehran attempts to target him, even as nuclear talks are set to continue

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: US President Donald Trump has issued one of his strongest warnings yet to Iran, declaring that the United States is prepared to unleash overwhelming military force if Tehran attempts to assassinate him. In a sharply worded statement, Trump said 1,000 missiles were already "locked and



loaded" and aimed at Iran, with thousands more ready to follow if any attack against him is carried out.

Trump stated that the

US military had already received standing orders to respond decisively to any assassination attempt targeting the sitting American President. He said the military was fully prepared to launch a massive operation capable of inflicting extensive damage across Iran, adding that the directive would remain in effect for one year and could be extended if

necessary.

The warning comes amid heightened tensions after reports suggested Israeli intelligence had alerted Washington to an alleged Iranian plot targeting Trump. Intelligence shared with US authorities reportedly pointed to a specific threat, marking the first such warning focused on a direct assassination attempt.



'If You Continue To Prop Up Putin's War Machine': India Faces Fresh 500% US Tariff Threat Over Russian Oil

■ Washington moves to revive tougher sanctions legislation targeting countries that continue importing Russian energy, with India emerging as a key focus

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: India could soon face renewed trade pressure from the United States as a bipartisan group of American senators prepares to introduce updated legislation targeting countries that continue purchasing Russian energy. The move comes amid rising geopolitical tensions, with global crude oil prices climbing after fresh hostilities between the United States and Iran and President Donald Trump's declaration that the ceasefire with Tehran has ended.

Four senior US senators, Republicans Lindsey Graham and Roger Wicker, along with Democrats Richard Blumenthal and Jeanne Shaheen, announced that they had reached an agreement with the Trump administration to move forward an updated Russia sanctions bill. The lawmakers said the legislation is intended to intensify economic pressure on Moscow by targeting nations that continue importing Russian oil and natural gas, arguing that such purchases help finance Russia's military operations.



NIA Led Team Arrests Two In Manipur Over Killing Of Six Liangmai Naga Civilians

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: A joint team comprising the National Investigation Agency (NIA), Manipur Police and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) has arrested two people in connection with the killing of six Liangmai Naga civilians in Manipur's Kangpokpi district, marking a significant breakthrough in the high profile investigation.

The arrests were made during a coordinated operation at Leilon Vaiphei village on Friday after security agencies acted on specific intelligence regarding the suspects' whereabouts. The accused have been identified as Pradip, son of Tomba, and his wife Ayingbi, both residents of the same village.

Investigators believe the couple was involved in the abduction and subsequent killing of the six civilians, who went missing on May 13. The victims' bodies were recovered in June, triggering widespread outrage and renewed demands for justice.

'Not Merely A Diplomatic Milestone': PM Modi's Historic New Zealand Visit Elevates Ties To Strategic Partnership

■ India and New Zealand unveil a Roadmap to 2030, targeting stronger cooperation in trade, investment, security, agriculture and connectivity

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi's landmark visit to New Zealand has ushered in a new phase in bilateral relations, with the two countries formally elevating their engagement to a Strategic Partnership and adopting an ambitious Roadmap to 2030. The announcement followed delegation level



talks with New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon in Auckland during Modi's first visit to the country, marking the first trip by an Indian Prime Minister to New Zealand in four decades.

Describing the development as more than a diplomatic achievement, PM Modi said the upgraded partnership represents a shared commitment to shaping the future of both nations. The Roadmap to 2030 outlines cooperation across trade, investment, security, agriculture, clean energy, innovation, education, tourism and cultural exchanges.

Iran Reportedly Blames 'Rogue Hardliners' For Hormuz Attacks, Seeks To Keep US Talks Alive

■ Trump Team Receives Reported Private Admission From Iran Over Hormuz Ship Attacks

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Iran has reportedly conveyed a private message to US President Donald Trump's advisers acknowledging that attacks on commercial vessels in the Strait of Hormuz were a mistake, even as tensions between the two countries continue to escalate. The reported admission comes after renewed fighting this week, with



Trump declaring that the ceasefire with Tehran is "over" despite agreeing to continue diplomatic talks.

According to reports, Iranian officials told members of Trump's negotiating team that the attacks were carried

out by an "errant" group of hardliners seeking to derail ongoing negotiations. The officials reportedly expressed regret over the incident, saying the attacks did not reflect the broader objective of maintaining dialogue with Washington and reaffirmed their willingness to keep the talks alive.

The explanation has emerged as one of two competing narratives surrounding the attacks. Iran maintains that rogue

elements within its system acted independently to sabotage the peace process. The Trump administration, however, believes Tehran reacted after realising that increasing commercial traffic through the southern shipping lane along the Omani coast was reducing its strategic leverage over the Strait of Hormuz.

Fresh negotiations are scheduled to take place in Oman, where the US delegation, led

by Vice President JD Vance, Jared Kushner, Special Envoy Steve Witkoff and Secretary of State Marco Rubio, is expected to meet Iranian representatives. Washington is seeking a public commitment from Tehran that the Strait of Hormuz will remain open to international shipping and managed without disruption. US officials have indicated that failure to provide such assurances could lead to further consequences.

'If France Has To Fear Anyone, It's Us': Lamine Yamal Fires Warning Ahead Of World Cup Semi Final

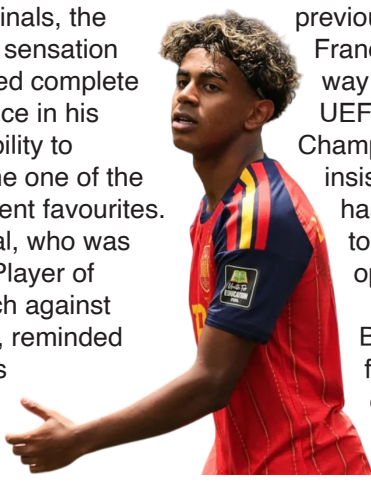
■ Spain's teenage star says his side fears no one after defeating Belgium to set up a blockbuster clash with France

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Spain's rising superstar Lamine Yamal has delivered a bold warning to France ahead of their FIFA World Cup 2026 semi final, declaring that the reigning European champions are the team the 2018 world champions should be worried about. Fresh from Spain's 2-1 victory over Belgium in the

quarter finals, the teenage sensation expressed complete confidence in his side's ability to overcome one of the tournament favourites.

Yamal, who was named Player of the Match against Belgium, reminded reporters that Spain had

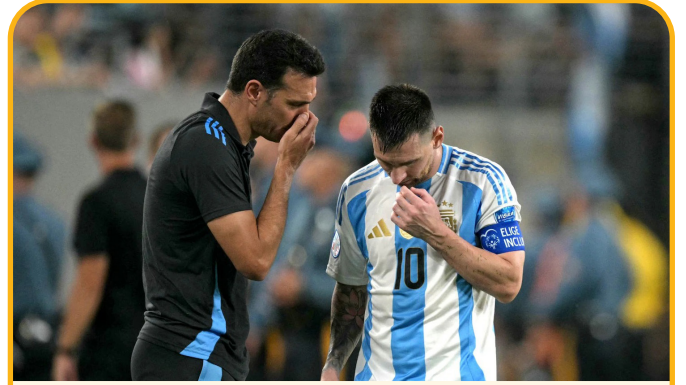


previously eliminated France on their way to winning the UEFA European Championship and insisted his team has no reason to fear any opponent.

The Barcelona forward described France as one of the

strongest teams in world football but maintained that Spain possesses the quality to challenge and defeat them once again. He said the upcoming semi final would be a clash between two world class sides but stressed that Spain enters the contest with confidence rather than intimidation.

Reflecting on the win over Belgium, Yamal believed Spain deserved



'People Don't Want Argentina To Win': Lionel Scaloni Rejects FIFA 'World Cup Fixing' Claims

■ Argentina coach dismisses allegations of favouritism, saying criticism only motivates his players ahead of the quarter final against Switzerland

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Argentina head coach Lionel Scaloni has firmly rejected claims that FIFA is favouring the defending champions at the 2026 FIFA World Cup, insisting the criticism has only strengthened his team's resolve.

Speaking ahead of Argentina's quarter final clash against Switzerland, Scaloni dismissed allegations that the tournament has been "fixed" to help his side retain the title. The controversy has intensified after Argentina's path to the last eight avoided

opponents currently ranked among the world's top 10, while several refereeing decisions during the tournament have also drawn scrutiny. Following Argentina's dramatic comeback victory over Egypt in the Round of 16, members of the Egyptian camp alleged that the competition was being manipulated in Argentina's favour. Responding to the accusations, Scaloni said such criticism is nothing new and claimed there are always people who do not want Argentina to succeed after winning the previous World Cup.



Harmanpreet Kaur Creates History, Becomes First Indian To Score Fifties In All Three Formats At Lord's

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: India women's captain Harmanpreet Kaur etched her name into cricket history by becoming the first Indian cricketer, across both men's and women's cricket, to score a half century in all three international formats at the iconic Lord's Cricket Ground. The landmark achievement came during the first innings of the ongoing one off Test against England, where the experienced batter scored a composed 58 off 121 deliveries.

With her latest knock, Harmanpreet completed a rare feat after previously registering two ODI fifties and a T20I half century at the historic venue. Her latest innings also made her the first female cricketer in the world to score fifties in Tests, One Day Internationals and T20 Internationals at Lord's, a record made possible as this is the first women's Test ever played at the ground.

'This Is Not Abnormal': BCCI To Review Team India's T20 Struggles, Gautam Gambhir's Job Safe

■ Board to hold performance review after England tour, with focus on correcting shortcomings rather than making coaching changes

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) will conduct a review meeting with the Indian team's core members after the ongoing tour of England, but head coach Gautam Gambhir is not facing the threat of dismissal despite the team's recent struggles in T20 cricket.

BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia confirmed that the board is closely



monitoring India's performances after a disappointing run in the shortest format. Since resuming international cricket following their T20 World Cup triumph earlier this year, India have played six T20 Internationals, losing five, while one match was

abandoned due to rain. The poor run has resulted in back to back T20I series defeats, including India's first ever bilateral series loss to Ireland. Despite the setbacks, the BCCI has ruled out any immediate action against the coaching staff. Saikia described the results as a temporary dip rather than a major crisis, saying such phases are part of international cricket and do not warrant a knee jerk reaction.

Sarvesh Kushare Scripts History With Third Place Finish On Diamond League Debut In Monaco

■ National record holder becomes only the fourth Indian athlete to secure a top three finish in the prestigious Diamond League

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Indian high jumper Sarvesh Kushare produced a memorable performance on his Diamond League debut by finishing third at the Monaco meet, becoming only the fourth Indian athlete to secure a podium finish in one of the world's most prestigious athletics competitions.

The 31 year old national record holder



cleared 2.12m, 2.16m, 2.20m, 2.23m and 2.26m, clearing each of those heights on his first attempt. He then made three unsuccessful

attempts at 2.28m, ultimately settling for third place in a world class field.

The competition was won by Ukraine's Oleh

Doroshchuk, who cleared 2.32m on his first attempt, while Great Britain's Jack Kimani claimed second with a best jump of 2.30m.

Kushare's podium finish places him in an exclusive group of Indian athletes to finish among the top three in a Diamond League event. Before him, only Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra, long jumper Murali Sreeshankar and former discus thrower Vikas Gowda had achieved the

feat.

The Indian high jumper also outperformed several internationally renowned athletes, including three time world champion and Tokyo Olympic gold medallist Mutaz Essa Barshim of Qatar, 2023 World Championships silver medallist JuVaughn Harrison of the United States and Tokyo Olympic champion Gianmarco Tamberi of Italy.