



Five Months After Projects Were Scrapped, Chimbhel Restoration Yet to Begin

■ Villagers issue seven-day ultimatum, threaten intensified agitation over alleged failure to honour official assurances

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Alleging a complete failure to implement assurances given after the controversial Unity Mall and Prashasan Sthamb projects were scrapped, Chimbhel villagers on Thursday issued a seven-day ultimatum to the district administration, warning of a renewed mass agitation if restoration of the project



site does not begin immediately. Representatives of the villagers submitted a

reminder memorandum to the Additional Collector, stating that despite repeated commitments by

the administration and the Goa Tourism Development Corporation (GTDC), the affected land remains unrestored nearly five months after the projects were withdrawn.

Addressing the media, activist Anjay Kholkar said substantial portions of the project site continue to remain fenced and the excavated land has not been restored to its original condition.

▶ CONTD TO PAGE 06

Centre Reviews WhatsApp, Telegram Replies As Uniform Rules For Username Messaging Near

Government examines legal responses amid concerns over online fraud, with regulatory decision expected soon



Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: The Centre is reviewing responses submitted by WhatsApp, Telegram and Zoho Bharat Eye regarding their username based messaging features, with a notification on the issue likely within the next 20 days.

According to sources in the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), the companies responded to government notices seeking explanations over features that allow users to communicate without sharing their mobile numbers. A legal team is now examining the replies to determine whether any existing

laws have been violated and whether regulatory action or sanctions are warranted.

MeitY Secretary S Krishnan confirmed that WhatsApp's response was received last week and is currently under review. He said the government would decide on the next course of action after completing its legal examination of the submissions.

The government has made it clear that any new regulatory framework introduced on the matter will apply equally to all messaging platforms, ensuring a uniform approach across the digital ecosystem.

The notices were

▶ CONTD TO PAGE 06



RGP Rift Deepens as Treasurer Accuses MLA Viresh Borkar of Defying Party Discipline

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The internal crisis within the Revolutionary Goans Party (RGP) intensified on Thursday after party Treasurer Ajay Kholkar accused MLA Viresh Borkar of repeatedly defying party discipline by failing to respond to a show-cause notice despite multiple reminders. Addressing a press conference, Kholkar claimed that Borkar has not submitted any reply to the party's show-cause notice even after five reminders. He alleged that while the MLA continues to claim he is on protest, he attended a Central Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting and sought documents related to a Central Executive Committee (CEC) meeting. Kholkar said the party informed Borkar that the requested documents would be provided at the next meeting as they were unrelated to the party's routine functioning.

Goa Repaid ₹600 Crore Old Loans, No Fresh Borrowing This Fiscal: CM

■ *Dr. Pramod Sawant says state maintains financial discipline; Kamdhenu Scheme expanded to cover 20 cows with enhanced subsidy support

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant said the Goa government has not taken any fresh loans between April and July of the current financial year, highlighting the state's prudent financial management. Addressing a public function, the Chief Minister said the



government has instead repaid nearly ₹600 crore in loans that were borrowed around a decade ago. He added that although the state is eligible to borrow up to ₹4,000 crore, it

has deliberately chosen not to avail any fresh loans during the period. Dr. Sawant said the government's approach reflects its commitment to maintaining financial discipline while ensuring that development projects and welfare initiatives continue without placing an additional debt burden on the state.

111 Questions On Tutor's Phone Matched NEET Master Paper, CBI Claims In Court

■ Agency says fresh evidence strengthens case that the NEET UG 2026 question paper was leaked before the exam

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has presented what it describes as one of the strongest pieces of evidence in the alleged NEET UG 2026 paper leak case, informing a Delhi court that 111 of the 136 handwritten questions recovered from the mobile phone of a Latur based coaching operator matched the National Testing Agency's master question paper.



The agency said the discovery significantly strengthens its claim that the examination paper was leaked before the May 3 test. The evidence was presented while opposing the bail plea of Shivraj Motegaonkar, who runs Renukai Chemistry Classes in Maharashtra and also operates an

educational YouTube channel with more than 1.6 lakh subscribers.

According to the CBI, Motegaonkar allegedly received the leaked questions on April 23 through a network involving a Latur based paediatrician and a retired chemistry lecturer who had previously served on an NTA panel. Investigators claim the leaked material was obtained in exchange for ₹5 lakh.



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Can an App Rescue Goa's Fading Pilot Culture?

Goa's motorcycle pilots are more than just transport providers. They are a part of the state's identity. For decades, these black and yellow motorcycles have ferried office goers, students, tourists and villagers through narrow roads where buses rarely reached. They have represented convenience, affordability and the warmth of Goan hospitality. But today, this iconic profession is struggling to survive.

The state government's decision to launch the Mhaje Driver App is a welcome attempt to modernise the sector. It acknowledges that technology has become an integral part of public transport. Digital bookings, better visibility and improved last mile connectivity can certainly make the service more accessible to commuters. However, expecting an app alone to revive the fortunes of motorcycle pilots would be unrealistic.

The challenges confronting pilots run much deeper than the absence of an online booking platform. The biggest problem is changing travel behaviour. Goa today is vastly different from the Goa of the 1980s and 1990s when motorcycle pilots enjoyed their golden years. Public transport has improved, more families own private vehicles, and rental scooters have become the preferred option for tourists. A visitor renting a scooter for an entire day naturally enjoys greater flexibility than hiring multiple motorcycle rides. At the same time, increasing fuel prices and maintenance costs have steadily eroded the earnings of pilots.

Many pilots reportedly spend hours waiting for a passenger. Their daily income often barely covers operational expenses. In such circumstances, digital bookings may improve visibility but cannot create demand where little exists.

There is also understandable apprehension among pilots about becoming part of an app based ecosystem. Across India, transport aggregators have transformed mobility but have also generated complaints about commissions, fluctuating earnings and reduced independence for drivers. Motorcycle pilots fear that they may eventually lose control over fares and become dependent on a digital platform that dictates their livelihood. These concerns cannot simply be brushed

"The biggest problem is changing travel behaviour. Goa today is vastly different from the Goa of the 1980s and 1990s when motorcycle pilots enjoyed their golden years. Public transport has improved, more families own private vehicles, and rental scooters have become the preferred option for tourists. A visitor renting a scooter for an entire day naturally enjoys greater flexibility than hiring multiple motorcycle rides. At the same time, increasing fuel prices and maintenance costs have steadily eroded the earnings of pilots."

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aside as resistance to technology.

The government must therefore build trust before expecting widespread acceptance. Participation should remain voluntary, and there must be clear safeguards against excessive commissions or unfair business practices. The platform should function as an enabler rather than a controller. At the same time, demanding restrictions on rental bikes is not a sustainable solution either. Rental scooters have become a vital part of Goa's tourism industry. Visitors appreciate the freedom and affordability they offer, while local businesses depend heavily on tourism driven mobility. Protecting one sector should not come at the cost of another.

Instead, policymakers should

identify the unique strengths of motorcycle pilots. They are best suited for short distance travel, emergency transportation, railway station and bus stand connectivity, hospital visits, office commutes during peak hours and last mile transport in areas where larger vehicles struggle to reach. The app should focus on strengthening these segments instead of competing directly with rental scooters.

Another issue requiring immediate attention is fare revision. Operating costs have increased significantly over the years, but fares have not kept pace. Unless pricing reflects economic realities, no digital platform can make the profession financially viable. Periodic fare reviews linked to fuel prices and inflation would offer much needed stability.

The government should also invest in training programmes that help senior pilots adapt to smartphones and digital payments. Many experienced riders may find technology intimidating. Without proper support, the digital divide could exclude precisely those who need assistance the most.

Looking beyond technology, welfare measures such as affordable insurance, pension schemes, electric vehicle subsidies and easy access to vehicle replacement loans can make the profession more attractive and financially secure. Such initiatives would demonstrate that the government's commitment extends beyond launching an app.

Goa's motorcycle pilots have survived changing governments, economic cycles and evolving transport systems. They have remained an integral part of the state's social and cultural fabric because they offer something technology cannot replace: personal trust, local knowledge and dependable service.

The Mhaje Driver App is a positive beginning, but it is not a magic solution. Reviving this profession will require thoughtful transport planning, fair economic policies and continuous dialogue with the very people whose livelihoods are at stake. If Goa truly wishes to preserve one of its most distinctive traditions, it must ensure that digital innovation strengthens the profession rather than becoming a substitute for meaningful policy.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

ST Status Delay Tests the Dhangar Community's Patience

The renewed warning by the Dhangar community to intensify its agitation if Scheduled Tribe (ST) status is not granted should serve as a wake up call for both the Goa and Central governments. The demand is not new. It has remained unresolved for decades despite repeated assurances from political leaders and successive governments.

The Dhangar community has consistently argued that it fulfils the criteria for inclusion in the Scheduled Tribe category and deserves the constitutional safeguards available to other tribal communities. Whether the claim is ultimately accepted or rejected, the government owes the community a transparent, reasoned and time bound decision. Keeping thousands of people waiting indefinitely only breeds frustration and mistrust.

Political parties often express solidarity with the community before elections, but meaningful progress has remained elusive. Such sensitive issues should never become tools for electoral gains. Instead, governments must engage sincerely with community representatives, place all facts in the public domain and explain the status of the proposal.

At the same time, any agitation should remain peaceful and democratic. Goa has always been known for resolving differences through dialogue rather than confrontation. The government, too, must avoid allowing the issue to reach a flashpoint.

Justice delayed is often justice denied. If there are genuine legal or constitutional hurdles, they should be communicated honestly. If the demand is justified, the process should be expedited. What the Dhangar community deserves most is clarity, fairness and an end to years of uncertainty.

- Sanjay Naik, Ponda, Goa

Monsoon Deficit Calls for Long-Term Water Planning

The uneven distribution of monsoon rainfall across Goa should be a matter of serious concern. While some areas have received sufficient showers, large parts of the state continue to experience a significant rainfall deficit. This changing weather pattern is not merely a seasonal inconvenience but a warning of the growing impact of climate change.

Agriculture is often the first casualty of erratic rainfall. Farmers depend on timely and adequate rain for sowing and sustaining their crops. A prolonged deficit could affect paddy cultivation, reduce groundwater recharge and place additional pressure on reservoirs that supply drinking water. If corrective measures are not taken, the consequences may extend well beyond the monsoon season.

The government must treat water conservation as a year-round priority rather than a response to drought conditions. Rainwater harvesting, restoration of traditional water bodies, desilting of lakes and canals, and protection of forests and catchment areas should receive greater attention. Every village and municipality should prepare a local water management plan to improve resilience against unpredictable weather.

Citizens, too, have an important role to play. Responsible water usage, avoiding wastage and supporting conservation initiatives can collectively make a significant difference.

Nature has always been generous to Goa, but changing climatic conditions remind us that this generosity cannot be taken for granted. The present rainfall deficit should be viewed as an opportunity to strengthen the state's water management policies before scarcity becomes a recurring reality.

- Anthony D'Souza, Margao, Goa

SCERT To Revise Class VIII Konkani Textbook After Errors Found In Katya Coelho Chapter

■ Council Accepts Feedback, Says Corrections Will Be Incorporated In Upcoming Edition

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Goa State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) has decided to revise a chapter on Goan windsurfing star Katya Coelho in the newly introduced Class VIII Konkani textbook after factual mistakes were brought to its attention.

The lesson, included this academic year under



the National Education Policy (NEP)-based curriculum, drew criticism after Coelho highlighted several inaccuracies concerning her sporting career. She also pointed out that certain achievements had either been incorrectly presented or omitted altogether.

One of the mistakes identified in the chapter was the incorrect mention of Indian women's cricket

captain Harmanpreet Kaur in place of Indian men's hockey captain Harmanpreet Singh.

Sources in SCERT said the council has reviewed the concerns raised and initiated the process of correcting the content. The revised text will be incorporated in the next print edition of the textbook to ensure students receive accurate information.



Mandovi River Continues To Breach Faecal Pollution Limits, GSPCB Informs High Court

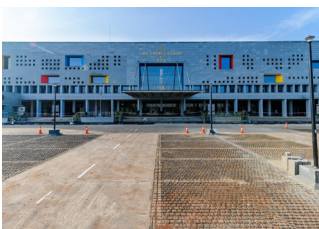
■ Water Quality Shows Signs Of Recovery, While HC Seeks Further Review Of Pollution Findings

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Goa State Pollution Control Board (GSPCB) has told the Bombay High Court at Goa that faecal contamination in the River Mandovi has remained above permissible levels at most monitoring points for several years, although recent data suggests the river's water quality is beginning to improve.

The observations were submitted through a detailed water quality assessment report in the ongoing public interest litigation relating to pollution in the Mandovi River and Mala Lake. After reviewing the report, the High Court directed the amicus

curiae to study the findings and place any recommendations before the court during the next hearing in August. According to the Board's analysis, faecal coliform levels have exceeded the prescribed standard in a majority of water samples collected between 2016 and 2026. During the 2025-26 monitoring period, nearly 96 per cent of samples collected from eight locations along the river recorded contamination beyond the acceptable limit. The Mandovi falls under the SW-II classification for coastal waters, making it suitable for activities such as bathing, water sports involving direct contact and commercial fishing.



HC Allows Goa Drug Accused To Continue On Bail Under Fresh Conditions

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Bombay High Court at Goa has permitted alleged drug accused David Driham, also known as Dudu, to remain on bail after finding that he had complied with the conditions of his release for over a year, despite declaring the original bail order passed by a Mapusa court legally unsustainable.

Delivering the order, Justice Neela Gokhale observed that Driham had cooperated with the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) during the investigation, regularly appeared before the trial court and had not violated the conditions of his release. The Court also noted that charges in the case have already been framed, reducing the need to place him back in custody.

Driham had initially obtained bail from the Judicial Magistrate First Class (JMFC), Mapusa, after the court accepted his contention that he had not been properly served with individual written grounds of arrest.

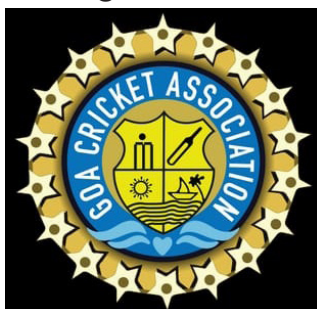
Supreme Court Upholds Process For Independent Audit Of Goa Cricket Association

■ High Court Asked To Reopen Matter Only To Consider Audit Report After Hearing All Parties

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Supreme Court has disposed of the Special Leave Petition (SLP) filed by the Goa Cricket Association (GCA), paving the way for an independent examination of the association's accounts while ensuring that any further action is taken only after all stakeholders are heard.

The apex court



observed that the Bombay High Court at Goa had directed only a fresh audit of the association's financial records and the submission of the

audit report before it. It requested the High Court to revive the concluded proceedings for the limited purpose of considering the report after hearing both sides.

The Supreme Court further clarified that no consequential orders should be passed solely on the basis of the audit findings without first providing the concerned parties an opportunity to present their case.

Dhangar Samaj Gives Government Till August 15 To Decide On ST Status

■ Community Warns Of Intensified Statewide Protest If Long-Pending Demand Remains Unaddressed

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Akhil Goa Dhangar Samaj has issued an August 15 deadline to the government to resolve its long-standing demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status, warning that the community will launch an intensified statewide agitation if no decision is taken by then.

The community, which has been



seeking ST recognition for nearly 23 years, said the process has reached its final stage and that all required formalities have already been completed. According to its leaders, the matter now depends solely on the

government's willingness to take a final call.

Representatives of the Samaj said repeated assurances from successive governments have failed to translate into action, leaving the community frustrated over

the prolonged delay.

To chart the future course of the movement, the organisation recently held meetings in South Goa and the Kushavati region. Members reviewed the status of the demand and unanimously resolved

to strengthen the campaign across the State.

As part of the next phase, the Samaj plans to expand awareness programmes and mobilise support at the village and taluka levels to ensure greater public participation in the movement.

Community leaders maintained that the government should act without further delay and bring clarity to the issue.

Three Held for Allegedly Transporting Illegal Beef in Dharbandora

■ Accused caught transporting beef from Karnataka without valid documents; police launch investigation

Team Goemkarponn

MOLLEM: Three persons were caught allegedly transporting beef illegally for sale at Nandran in Mollem, Dharbandora, police said.

According to a complaint lodged by Krishna Gaonkar, Veterinary Officer at the Veterinary Dispensary, Mollem, the incident came to light on July 14, 2025, before 4 p.m. The accused have been



identified as Muzafar Ali Bepari, Yazan Bepari and Aman Bepari, all residents

of Uppar Bazar, Ponda. Police said the trio was allegedly caught red-

handed while transporting beef in an Eco car and an Activa scooter. The meat was reportedly brought from Belagavi, Karnataka, for sale without possessing valid documents issued by the competent authority. Based on the complaint, Collem Police registered a case against the accused under the relevant provisions of law. Further investigation is being carried out by ASI Deepak Gawas of Collem Police Station.



Man Loses ₹1.8 Lakh in Credit Card Reward Points Scam

■ Fraudster posing as bank employee lures Marcel resident to fake website; police register case and launch investigation

Team Goemkarponn

MARCEL: A resident of Tivrem, Marcel, lost ₹1.8 lakh after allegedly falling victim to a cyber fraud involving a fake credit card reward points redemption scheme.

According to Mardol Police, complainant Krishna Naik reported that on July 8, 2026, at around 2 p.m., he received a phone call from an unknown person posing as an Axis Bank employee.

The caller informed him that his credit card reward points could be redeemed and convinced him to complete the process online.

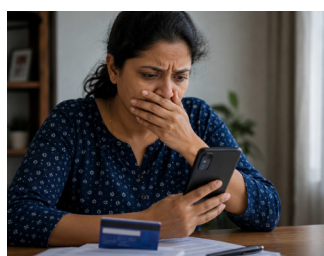
Believing the caller

to be genuine, the complainant visited a fake website as instructed, entered his credit card details and approved a bank verification request.

Soon afterwards, he discovered that an unauthorised transaction of ₹1,80,000 had been carried out from his credit card without his knowledge.

Based on the complaint, Mardol Police have registered a case against the unknown accused for allegedly cheating the complainant through an online banking fraud.

Further investigation is being carried out by PSI Abhilash Naik of Mardol Police Station.



Woman Loses ₹2.23 Lakh in Fake Gas Bill Payment Scam

Team Goemkarponn

VELIM: A woman from Velim in Salcete allegedly lost ₹2.23 lakh after being duped by a fraudster posing as a representative for gas bill payment.

According to Cuncolim Police, complainant Aruna Fernandes, a resident of Pimplafoll, Velim, reported that on May 26, 2026, at around 8.51 a.m., she received a WhatsApp call from an unknown person regarding payment of a pending domestic gas bill.

The caller allegedly persuaded her to download an application sent via WhatsApp. Believing the request to be genuine, she downloaded the app and entered her bank account number and card details.

Police said the fraudster subsequently carried out multiple unauthorised transactions, withdrawing a total of ₹2,23,200 from the bank accounts of the complainant, her husband and her son. Based on the complaint, Cuncolim Police have registered a case against the unknown accused for allegedly cheating the family through an online fraud.

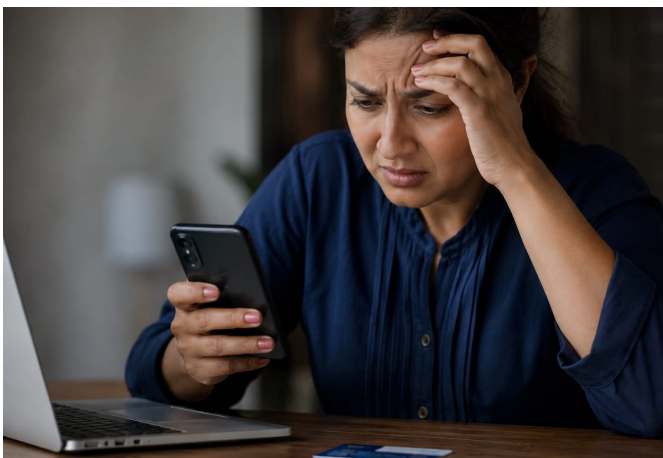
Woman Loses ₹1.6 Lakh in Suspected Online Banking Fraud at Curtorim

■ ₹1.6 lakh allegedly deducted from Union Bank account without account holder's knowledge; police probe underway

Team Goemkarponn

CURTORIM: A woman from Bhatti, Curtorim, has allegedly lost ₹1.6 lakh after an unknown person fraudulently deducted the amount from her Union Bank of India account without her knowledge.

According to Maina Curtorim Police, complainant Nancy Mellita Cardozo, a resident of Bhatti, Curtorim, reported that on May 8, 2026, at around 10:58 a.m., a sum of ₹1,60,000 was automatically deducted



from her Union Bank of India account without her authorisation. Based on her complaint, police have registered a case

against unknown accused persons for allegedly cheating and causing wrongful financial loss to the complainant.

Man Dies After Falling From Mango Tree in Kundai

■ 55-year-old had climbed tree to pluck mangoes when branch snapped; police register unnatural death case

Team Goemkarponn

KUNDAI: A 55-year-old man died after falling from a mango tree while plucking mangoes at Kundai in Ponda on Tuesday evening.

According to Mardol Police, Ramdas Naik, a resident of Dharjo Wada, Kundai, was brought dead to the Primary Health Centre (PHC), Madkai, at around 5.48 p.m. on



July 14, 2026.

During the inquiry, police recorded the statement of the deceased's cousin, Prakash Naik, who stated that Ramdas had climbed a mango tree near the Government School at Kundai to pluck mangoes. While doing so, a branch reportedly broke, causing him to fall to the ground and suffer fatal injuries.

He was immediately shifted to PHC Madkai,

where the doctor declared him brought dead.

Police conducted the unnatural death occurrence panchanama and inquest over the body. The body has been preserved at the South Goa District Hospital, Margao, for medico-legal formalities.

Further inquiry is being conducted by PSI Nitesh Kankonkar of Mardol Police Station.

FDA Suspends Three Food Units, Destroys 60 Kg of Cashew Nuts During Inspections

■ Surveillance drive in Anjuna, Vagator and Mapusa finds unhygienic operations; officials warn of strict action against violators

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) conducted a surveillance drive across Anjuna, Vagator and Mapusa, inspecting 18 food business establishments, including restaurants, food vendors and cashew nut retailers. During the inspections, three food business operators were directed



to suspend operations until they complied with hygiene and food safety norms after officials found their premises to be operating under unhygienic conditions.

The FDA also seized and destroyed 60 kg of cashew nuts, valued at approximately ₹30,000, during the drive. As part of routine food safety monitoring, officials tested used cooking oil from seven food business operators, including street food vendors and hotels selling fried food items, using a Total Polar

Compounds (TPC) meter. The tests found that the cooking oil used by all seven establishments was within the permissible safety limit of below 25 per cent TPC. Officials also inspected the Alankar food cluster and observed that operators were carrying out most cooking activities at a separate location before completing final preparations at the cluster.



Congress, BJP Trade Barbs Over Vasco Fish Market Drainage Woes

■ Congress gives one-week deadline for repairs, while MLA Krishna Salkar announces drainage work to begin immediately

Team Goemkarponn

VASCO: A political war of words erupted on Wednesday over the drainage problems at the newly constructed Vasco Fish Market Complex, with the Congress threatening an agitation if the issues are not resolved within a week, while Vasco MLA Krishna Salkar announced that permanent rectification work will begin immediately.

Congress leader Nandadeep Raut visited the fish market and interacted with traditional fish vendors, accusing the BJP-led administration of failing to address their grievances. He said the

project was initiated during his tenure as Chairperson of the Mormugao Municipal Council (MMC) and criticised the authorities for allegedly focusing on inspections rather than solving the drainage problem.

Raut questioned the quality of the six-month-old market complex, alleging that poor drainage had created an unbearable stench affecting both vendors and customers. He gave the authorities one week's time to resolve the issues, warning that the Congress would launch a major agitation, including road blockades in Vasco, if corrective measures were not taken.



Congress Hits Back at Damu Naik Over Jantar Mantar Protest Remarks

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Goa Pradesh Congress Committee (GPCC) strongly criticised BJP Goa President Damu Naik over his remarks on Goans protesting at Jantar Mantar, accusing the ruling party of attempting to equate itself with the identity of Goa.

GPCC Media and Communication Department Chairman Amarnath Panjikar said Damu Naik's comments insulted every Goan fighting for justice and reflected the BJP's "arrogance" and intolerance towards democratic dissent.

Panjikar alleged that the BJP government had failed to address public grievances, forcing citizens protesting over the Sarvan Karapur issue to continue their agitation for over 100 days before taking their protest to Jantar Mantar in New Delhi.

20-Year-Old Held With 379 Grams of Ganja at Madgaon Railway Station

■ Konkarn Railway Police seize narcotics worth nearly ₹37,900 during raid on Platform No. 2

Team Goemkarponn

MARGAO: Konkarn Railway Police arrested a 20-year-old man for allegedly possessing 379 grams of ganja during a raid at Madgaon Railway Station.

According to police, acting on specific information, a team led by PSI Roosevelt Fernandes, along with police personnel Vasim Shaikh, Wasim Shaikh and Aakash Singh, conducted a raid at Platform No. 2 of the railway station on July



14, 2026.

During the operation, the team apprehended the accused, identified as Aman Sikarwar, a resident of Nikhil Vihar Colony, Kheria Mod, Agra Cantt, Uttar Pradesh. Police allegedly recovered

379 grams of ganja, valued at approximately ₹37,900, from his possession. The contraband and other articles were seized under a search and

seizure panchanama.

A case has been registered at Konkarn Railway Police Station under Crime No. 36/2026 under Section 20(b)(ii)(A) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985.

Mahila Congress Alleges Illegal Spas, Dance Bars Threaten Women's Safety in Goa

■ Opposition leaders demand crackdown on alleged illegal operations, question enforcement and protection of women

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Goa Pradesh Mahila Congress alleged that illegal spas, massage parlours and dance bars are operating unchecked in parts of North Goa, posing a serious threat to women's safety and tarnishing the state's image.

Addressing a press conference, Goa Pradesh Mahila



Congress President Dr. Pratiksha Khalap expressed concern over the rising number of crimes against women and referred to a recent rape case involving a woman who had

reportedly come to Goa to work at a spa.

Claiming that several spas in Calangute and Panaji were functioning illegally, Khalap questioned how such establishments were

operating despite requiring mandatory health and labour licences. She also alleged that illegal activities continued despite previous court directions and questioned whether influential persons were protecting such businesses.

Mahila Congress General Secretary and GPCC spokesperson Advocate Lavinia D'Costa said Goa's reputation as a safe destination for

women had deteriorated over the years. She cited recent reports of sexual offences involving minors, senior citizens and women, and alleged that illegal activities linked to spas had increased in North Goa. D'Costa also referred to past police records, claiming that multiple cases related to illegal spa activities had been registered in Calangute between 2013 and 2018.

Goa Showcases Startup Innovation And Digital Skills At World Youth Skills Day 2026

■ Chief Minister Pramod Sawant applauds young entrepreneurs as government highlights technology driven initiatives



Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Department of Information Technology, Electronics and Communications (DITE&C), Government of Goa, along with the Info Tech Corporation of Goa Ltd. (ITG) and the Startup and IT Promotion Cell (SITPC), showcased the state's growing digital ecosystem at the World Youth Skills Day 2026 celebrations held during the Karigar Mela at Kala Academy in Panaji.

Organised by the Directorate of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, the event was held in line with the Skill India Mission and highlighted initiatives aimed at empowering youth through technology, innovation and entrepreneurship. Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant inaugurated the event and visited the exhibition stalls, where he interacted with officials from DITE&C, ITG, SITPC and representatives of



participating startups. During his visit to the Startup Showcase, he praised the innovative solutions developed by Goan entrepreneurs and encouraged them to continue using technology to solve real world challenges while contributing to the state's economic development.

Senior officials representing DITE&C, ITG and the Startup and IT Promotion Cell presented several government

initiatives focused on digital governance, startup development and youth empowerment. Key highlights included ITG's digital transformation projects, the Startup and IT Promotion Cell's efforts to strengthen Goa's startup ecosystem, the Information Technology Knowledge Centre and the Mukhyamantri Digital Yuva Scheme.

One of the major attractions of the event was the Startup

Showcase, where eight Goa based startups displayed their products and services before students, industry representatives and visitors. The participating startups included Reclevo Infotech Pvt. Ltd., Phosic, Artine Technologies LLP, Divvy Up and Grow, Sevaco, Diagopreutic, Plus Innovation and Vindaloo Entertainment. The exhibition provided an opportunity for these companies to connect with potential partners, showcase their innovations and expand their visibility.

The participation of DITE&C, ITG and the Startup and IT Promotion Cell underscored the Government of Goa's commitment to fostering a vibrant ecosystem where digital innovation, entrepreneurship and skill development work together to create opportunities for young people and drive the state's technology led growth.

Educationist Kishore Shah, Poet Dattaprasad Jog Honoured At Samraat Kavyamahotsav 2026

■ Festival celebrates excellence in education, literature and cultural contribution

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Samraat Kavyamahotsav 2026 began on a celebratory note with the special felicitation of educationist and motivational trainer Shri Kishore Shah, Founder Trustee of the G.D.P. Foundation, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the field of education and youth empowerment.

Renowned poet Shri Dattaprasad Jog was also honoured during the inaugural ceremony for achieving a world record by reciting poetry continuously for 24 hours, marking a significant milestone in the field of literature.

The felicitation ceremony was conducted by noted film and web series writer, poet and lyricist Shri Arvind Jagatap in the presence of Shri Deepak Narvekar, Chairman of Samraat Kavyamahotsav 2026, Shri Dasharath Parab, Chairman of the Institute Menezes Braganza, Shri Shashikant Punaji, President of SCI State I, along with several distinguished guests.

Addressing the gathering, Shri Deepak Narvekar said the festival is dedicated to celebrating literature, culture and the enduring power of words. He noted that recognising personalities such as Shri Kishore Shah and Shri Dattaprasad Jog serves as an



inspiration for younger generations to strive for excellence through dedication, creativity and perseverance. Samraat Kavyamahotsav brings together poets, writers, artists and literature enthusiasts from across the country on a common platform. The festival aims to promote poetry, encourage literary exchange and strengthen cultural ties by providing opportunities for creative minds to showcase their talent and engage with audiences.

The event reaffirmed its commitment to preserving and promoting India's rich literary heritage while honouring individuals whose contributions have left a lasting impact on education, literature and society.

INSTITUTE MENEZES BRAGANZA - PANAJI.COM



Centre Reviews WhatsApp, Telegram Replies As Uniform Rules For Username Messaging Near

issued after authorities raised concerns that username based messaging could be exploited for impersonation, phishing, identity theft and so called "digital arrest" scams, in which fraudsters pose as law enforcement or government officials to extort money from victims.

Earlier, WhatsApp maintained that its platform is primarily designed to enable private communication between friends and family.

However, the government is

examining whether the feature could create new security risks if left unregulated.

Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw has indicated that a notification on the issue is expected within the next few weeks. Officials said the ongoing exercise is focused on assessing the legal implications of such features rather than introducing a policy based review alone.

The development is part of the Centre's broader efforts to strengthen online safety, combat cyber fraud and ensure that digital communication platforms operate under consistent regulatory standards while protecting users from emerging forms of online misuse.

Five Months After Projects Were Scrapped, Chimbhel Restoration Yet to Begin

He alleged that around 20,000 square metres of fencing is still standing despite assurances that it would be removed following the cancellation of the projects.

Kholkar recalled that the villagers had called off their 44-day protest only after the administration announced that the Unity Mall and Prashasan Sthamb projects would not proceed and promised that the land would be restored without delay.

He alleged that those commitments have not been honoured.

...CONTD FROM PAGE 01

"I Will Survive Till I See Your End": Mamata Banerjee Vows Political Comeback Amid TMC Crisis

■ TMC chief dismisses age concerns and promises to rebuild the party despite growing rebellion

Team Goemkarponn

KOLKATA: Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee has delivered a defiant message to her political opponents and critics, declaring that she remains determined to fight on despite mounting challenges within her party. Rejecting suggestions that her political career is nearing its end, the 71 year old



leader insisted that age would not stand in the way of her return.

In a message shared on Facebook, Banerjee said physical strength, mental resilience and determination matter far more than age. She

criticised those who targeted her over her years and claimed that some BJP leaders had wished for her death following the Assembly election results. She responded by asserting that she would remain in politics long enough to witness the end of BJP rule.

Confident about reviving the Trinamool Congress, Banerjee said

she has successfully rebuilt political movements in the past and is prepared to do so once again. She maintained that the departure of leaders would not weaken her resolve, adding that those who remain with the party are its true strength. She also highlighted her role in nurturing multiple generations of political leaders and pledged to continue guiding them.



Over 3.25 Lakh Devotees Visit Amarnath Shrine As Fresh Batch Of 5,201 Pilgrims Departs

■ Pilgrims leave Jammu in escorted convoys while authorities maintain strict security across the yatra route

Team Goemkarponn

JAMMU: A fresh batch of 5,201 pilgrims set out from the Bhagwati Nagar base camp in Jammu on Thursday for the annual Amarnath Yatra under tight security arrangements. With the latest departure, the number of devotees who have offered prayers at the holy cave shrine has crossed 3.25 lakh.

The latest group included 3,970 men, 1,124 women, 92 sadhus, nine sadhvis, five children and one transgender pilgrim. The pilgrims travelled in a convoy of 251 vehicles escorted by the Central Reserve Police Force and the Jammu and

Kashmir Police. Officials said the convoy was divided into two groups. The first, carrying 1,745 pilgrims in 74 vehicles, departed for the Baltal base camp at 3 am. The second convoy, comprising 3,456 pilgrims in 177 vehicles, left for the Pahalgam base camp at 3.30 am. Since the pilgrimage began on July 2, a total of 1,04,488 pilgrims have departed from the Jammu base camp for Kashmir. Before the convoy left, the atmosphere at Bhagwati Nagar was filled with chants of "Bam Bam Bhole", "Har Har Mahadev" and "Jai Barfani Baba Ki", as devotees began their spiritual journey.



"Fair, Equitable, Balanced": Piyush Goyal Hails India-EU FTA As A Win Win Agreement

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has described the India European Union Free Trade Agreement as a fair, equitable and balanced pact, calling 2026 a historic year in bilateral relations. Speaking after the third India EU Trade and Technology Council Ministerial Meeting in Brussels, Goyal said the agreement would create new opportunities for businesses and strengthen economic ties between the two partners.

He said the trade pact, referred to as the "mother of all trade deals", is designed to benefit businesses on both sides while supporting long term economic growth. According to Goyal, the agreement reflects a shared vision of building a trusted, innovation driven and future ready partnership.

Russia Turns To India For Gasoline As Refinery Damage Deepens Fuel Crisis

■ Russian energy firms seek additional fuel supplies after repeated Ukrainian strikes disrupt domestic refining capacity

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Russia has approached Indian refiners for additional gasoline supplies as repeated Ukrainian attacks on its refineries continue to disrupt fuel production, marking an unusual shift in the energy trade relationship between the two countries.

India, currently the largest buyer of Russian seaborne crude oil, is now being asked to supply refined fuel back to Russia as the country



grapples with one of its worst gasoline shortages in recent years. According to reports, Russian energy giants including Rosneft, Gazprom Neft and Lukoil have reached out to both private and state run Indian refiners to explore possible fuel purchases. The move

comes after a significant portion of Russia's refining capacity was damaged by drone strikes, with nearly 40 percent of affected facilities expected to remain offline for at least two months if there are no further attacks. One shipment of Indian gasoline has already been dispatched to Russia, and additional cargoes could follow if supply arrangements are finalised.

Late Night Portfolio Change Sparks Buzz Over Cabinet Reshuffle In Madhya Pradesh

■ Chief Minister Mohan Yadav takes charge of Animal Husbandry Department as speculation grows over ministerial changes

Team Goemkarponn

BHOPAL: A late night decision to withdraw the Animal Husbandry and Dairy Development portfolio from Minister of State Lakhan Patel has fuelled speculation about a possible Cabinet reshuffle in the Madhya Pradesh government led by Chief Minister Mohan Yadav.

According to official notifications issued shortly after the decision,



the department has now been placed directly under the Chief Minister. The unexpected move has drawn attention because it comes soon after the Bharatiya Janata Party

completed a detailed review of the performance of ministers in the state. Responding to the development, Lakhan Patel said that the allocation or withdrawal of ministerial portfolios is entirely the Chief Minister's prerogative. He did not comment further on the decision. The timing of

the portfolio change has intensified political discussions, particularly after BJP state president Hemant Khandelwal recently revealed that the party organisation and the state government had jointly reviewed the political influence, regional performance and departmental functioning of every minister. The findings were subsequently submitted to the party's central leadership.



'Avoid Deploying Indian Seafarers Through Hormuz': Centre Issues Fresh Advisory Amid Gulf Tensions

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: The Centre has issued a fresh advisory asking shipping companies to avoid deploying Indian seafarers on vessels transiting the Strait of Hormuz until further notice, citing the deteriorating security situation in the Gulf region.

History Beckons As Reigning Euro And Copa America Champions Meet In FIFA World Cup Final

Spain and Argentina set up a first ever World Cup final between the reigning champions of Europe and South America

Team Goemkarponn

NEW YORK: The FIFA World Cup 2026 final will create a historic first as reigning UEFA Euro champions Spain take on defending Copa America champions Argentina in a clash that has never before taken place on football's biggest stage.

Spain secured their place in the final with a 2-0 victory over France in



the first semifinal, while Argentina followed with a dramatic 2-1 win against England to book their spot in Sunday's title decider at

the New York New Jersey Stadium.

For the first time in World Cup history, the current champions of Europe and South America will face each other in the tournament final, adding another landmark chapter to football's rich history.

Spain have enjoyed an outstanding campaign, remaining unbeaten with six wins and one draw in seven matches. The European champions have also built the tournament's strongest defensive record, conceding just one goal while overcoming Saudi Arabia, Uruguay, Austria, Portugal, Belgium and France on their route to the final.

"Nobody Gave Us Anything": Lionel Messi Fires Back At FIFA Bias Claims After Argentina Reach Final

Argentina captain says back to back World Cup finals prove the team's success is built on performance, not favouritism

Team Goemkarponn

ATLANTA: Lionel Messi has firmly rejected allegations that FIFA has favoured Argentina during the 2026 FIFA World Cup, insisting that his team's continued success is the result of consistent performances and not outside influence.

The Argentina captain broke his silence after guiding the defending champions to a second consecutive World Cup final with a dramatic semifinal victory over England. Messi played a decisive role by providing two assists as Enzo Fernandez and Lautaro Martinez scored late goals

to overturn Anthony Gordon's second half opener.

Argentina's campaign has been surrounded by controversy, with some fans and critics questioning several refereeing and VAR decisions that they believe worked in the team's favour. The debate intensified after incidents involving Argentina's matches and other knockout fixtures, leading to widespread allegations of bias.



BCCI Secretary Devajit Saikia Appointed To Head ICC Governance Review Committee

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: BCCI Secretary Devajit Saikia has been appointed as the chairman of the International Cricket Council's newly formed Governance Review Committee, marking a significant role for the Indian cricket administrator within the sport's global governing body.

The committee has been created to review and strengthen governance practices across the ICC. Alongside Saikia, the panel includes Dr Mohammed Moosajee from Cricket South Africa and Dr Ros Rivaz, the ICC's newly appointed Independent Director. Saikia has also been named a member of the newly constituted Franchise Leagues Committee, which will be chaired by former Bangladesh captain Tamim Iqbal. The committee also includes representatives from Cricket Namibia, the England and Wales Cricket Board, and Cricket Australia, reflecting the ICC's focus on the growing influence of franchise based cricket around the world.

PV Sindhu Cruises Into Japan Open Quarterfinals With Dominant Win Over World No. 5 Han Yue

Two time Olympic medallist sets up quarterfinal clash with Japan's Nozomi Okuhara after impressive straight games victory

Team Goemkarponn

TOKYO: PV Sindhu delivered one of her finest performances of the season, defeating world No. 5 Han Yue of China in straight games to book her place in the quarterfinals of the Japan Open Super 750 badminton tournament.

The world No. 10 Indian needed just 35 minutes to secure an impressive 21-16, 21-14 victory over the higher



ranked Chinese player in their second round encounter. With the win, Sindhu extended her dominant head to head record against Han Yue to 8-1.

Sindhu made a slow

start to the opening game but quickly settled into her rhythm midway through the contest. She began controlling the rallies with precise shot making and confident attacking play, allowing her to pull away and take the first game comfortably.

The former world champion was even more dominant in the second game, racing to an 8-0 lead and leaving her opponent with little opportunity to recover.

ICC Unveils Major Overhaul Of ODI And T20 World Cup Formats

New tournament structures introduce Super 7 and Super 10 stages to increase competition and high stakes matches

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: The International Cricket Council (ICC) has approved sweeping changes to the formats of its premier men's tournaments, introducing a new three stage structure for the 14 team ODI World Cup and a revamped Super 10 format for the T20 World Cup.

The changes were finalised during the



ICC Annual Conference in Edinburgh following recommendations from the Chief Executives'

Committee. According to the governing body, the revised formats are designed to create more

meaningful matches, improve competitive balance and deliver a better experience for players and fans.

Under the new ODI World Cup format, the tournament will continue to feature 14 teams but will now begin with a preliminary Super Series involving the three lowest ranked teams. Only the winner of that stage will advance to the main competition.

The second phase will

feature 12 teams divided into two groups of six, with each group playing a round robin schedule. The top three teams from each group, along with the next best placed team overall, will qualify for a newly introduced Super 7 stage. In this round robin phase, the seven remaining teams will compete for four semifinal spots before the tournament concludes with the knockout rounds.