



Goa Among India's Top Five Most Investment-Friendly States: NITI Aayog

■ State ranks 4th nationally, emerges as best-performing City State and Union Territory in Investment Friendliness Index 2026

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Goa has been ranked among the five most investment-friendly states and Union Territories in the country, securing the 4th position in NITI Aayog's Investment Friendliness Index 2026. The state also emerged as the top-performing City State and Union Territory, with an overall score of 53.1. The index assessed the investment ecosystem across 36 States and Union Territories based on



eight key pillars, including infrastructure, business climate, resources, regulatory ease, institutional environment, financial health, government policy and environmental resilience.

Goa was one of only five states and UTs to score above 50, earning the distinction of being a national "Top Performer." Goa's strongest performance came in Regulatory Ease, where it scored 71%, followed by Institutional Environment (66%), Financial Health (61%), and Infrastructure and Resources (56% each). The state also performed above the national average in

Business Climate and Government Policy, recording above-average scores in seven of the eight pillars evaluated. The report highlighted Goa's emphasis on human capital, noting that the state recorded the highest expenditure on skilling and healthcare as a percentage of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) within its category. Nearly 25% of higher education enrolment is in STEM disciplines, while Goa ranked first

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Sonam Wangchuk Shifted to Hospital After 21-Day Hunger Strike

Delhi Police cites High Court directions and medical advice as activist's health deteriorates



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NEW DELHI: Climate activist Sonam Wangchuk was shifted from the protest site at Jantar Mantar to Safdarjung Hospital early on Saturday after completing 21 days of an indefinite hunger strike, with authorities citing concerns over his deteriorating health.

Wangchuk had been protesting against Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, demanding his resignation over the alleged NEET paper leak. Police said the decision to move the activist was taken in compliance with directions issued by the Delhi High Court and on the advice of medical

experts. According to Delhi Police, Wangchuk's condition had worsened, making immediate medical care necessary. Officials said he was conscious and his vital signs were stable after being admitted to the hospital. Police also appealed to other protesters at Jantar Mantar to vacate the site peacefully. The action came ahead of a scheduled hearing in the Delhi High Court, which had earlier directed authorities to conduct daily medical examinations of Wangchuk. The court had observed that every citizen's life is precious and instructed authorities to take all necessary steps to safeguard his health.



'RSS Is A Civilizational Force That Needs No Certification': Rajnath Singh

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh described the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) as a "civilizational force that needs no certification or validation" while releasing the book RSS@100: A Century of Service, Unity & Sacrifice at Uprashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi. The book, authored by Shyam Jaju and Anupam Trivedi, was released in the presence of Vice President C.P. Radhakrishnan, Delhi Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta, IGNC President Ram Bahadur Rai, RSS Prant Sanghchalak Pawan Jindal and other dignitaries. Addressing the gathering, Singh said every Sarsanghchalak of the RSS has opposed discrimination and untouchability, adding that the organisation has always functioned with the principle of "Nation First, Always First."

Every Minute Counts: AI Cameras Detect Thousands Of Traffic Offences

■ 35,000 Violations Recorded In Just Two Days, Highlighting Poor Road Discipline In Goa

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PANAJI: Goa's AI-powered traffic surveillance system has recorded more than 35,000 traffic violations in just 48 hours, highlighting the extent of traffic rule violations across the State since automated enforcement came into force.

The data, generated by the Intelligent Traffic



Management System (ITMS), indicates that speeding emerged as the most common offence, followed by violations such as riding without

helmets, failing to wear seat belts, using mobile phones while driving, signal jumping and wrong-side driving. With AI-enabled cameras monitoring traffic round the clock, violations are automatically detected, photographed and processed for the generation of e-challans, reducing the need for manual intervention.

32 Tourists Fined For Illegal Dudhsagar Trek Along Railway Tracks

■ RPF intensifies crackdown during monsoon, warns of strict action against trespassers risking their lives in Braganza Ghat section

Team Goemkarponn

SANGUEM: The Railway Protection Force (RPF) has stepped up its enforcement drive against illegal trekking to Dudhsagar Falls, penalising 32 tourists during a special operation

The tourists were intercepted while illegally trekking along the railway tracks in the hazardous Braganza Ghat section. All 32 were booked under Section 147 of the Railways



Act (Jan Vishwas Act) for trespassing on railway property. Each offender was fined ₹500, with the RPF collecting a total of ₹16,000 in penalties during the one-day operation. South Western Railway has reiterated that

public access to Dudhsagar Falls through railway routes remains strictly prohibited, particularly during the monsoon season, owing to serious safety concerns. Railway authorities said the Braganza Ghat section poses significant risks because of unpredictable water levels, poor visibility, slippery terrain and the narrow railway corridor.

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Age Limit Means Nothing Without Strict Checks

Goa's decision to finally enforce the ban on the entry of persons below 21 years into casino gaming areas is a welcome move. The law has existed for years, but its implementation remained weak and inconsistent. While the notification reinforces the government's intent to keep young people away from gambling, the bigger challenge lies in ensuring that the rule is followed in letter and spirit.

The obvious question is simple. How will casinos determine who is above 21 and who is not?

The answer cannot be based on appearance. Many people between 18 and 25 look almost identical in age, making visual assessment unreliable. The only practical solution is mandatory identity verification before anyone is allowed to enter a gaming area.

Every visitor should be required to produce a valid government-issued photo identity card such as an Aadhaar Card, Passport, Driving Licence or Voter ID. These documents clearly establish the date of birth and eliminate ambiguity. Casinos should also digitally scan or record these documents to maintain an audit trail that can be inspected by government authorities whenever required.

Technology can make enforcement easier. Digital identity scanners, QR code verification and electronic visitor registers can ensure that fake or altered identity cards are detected. Every casino entrance should function like airport security, where no one is allowed to proceed without proper verification.

However, verification alone is not enough. The government must clearly define responsibility if an underage person manages to enter a casino. Will the security guard be held accountable? Will the casino operator face penalties? Or will only a token fine be imposed? Unless accountability is fixed, enforcement will remain weak.

There should be stringent

"Every visitor should be required to produce a valid government-issued photo identity card such as an Aadhaar Card, Passport, Driving Licence or Voter ID. These documents clearly establish the date of birth and eliminate ambiguity. Casinos should also digitally scan or record these documents to maintain an audit trail that can be inspected by government authorities whenever required."

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penalties for every violation. A single lapse should attract substantial fines, while repeated violations should result in suspension or even cancellation of a casino licence. Such strict action will ensure operators treat age verification as a legal obligation rather than a routine formality. Random inspections by government officials are equally important. Authorities should conduct surprise checks at casinos to verify visitor records and identity verification procedures. Mystery inspections using decoy visitors could also expose loopholes in the system and discourage negligence.

Another important issue concerns tourists visiting offshore casinos for restaurants, entertainment or social events.

If families with children are permitted on board for non gaming purposes, the gaming areas must remain completely inaccessible to anyone below 21 years. Physical barriers, controlled access points and trained security personnel must ensure that minors cannot accidentally or deliberately enter gaming zones.

The government must also spread awareness. Many tourists visiting Goa may not know that entry into gaming areas is restricted to those above 21 years. Hotels, airports, ferry terminals, tourism websites and casino booking platforms should prominently display this information so that visitors are informed before they arrive.

This is also an opportunity for Goa to strengthen responsible gambling practices. Casinos should display information about gambling addiction, provide helpline details and encourage responsible gaming. Restricting entry based on age is only the first step in creating a healthier regulatory framework.

The purpose of the law is not merely to prevent entry but to protect young adults from developing gambling habits at an impressionable age. Early exposure to gambling can have long-term financial and psychological consequences. Society has a responsibility to minimise those risks.

Ultimately, the success of the new enforcement will not depend on the notification itself but on how rigorously it is implemented. If every visitor is asked to prove their age through authentic documents and every violation is dealt with firmly, the law will achieve its objective. If checks are casual and enforcement remains selective, the age restriction will become yet another regulation that exists only on paper.

Goa has taken the right step. The next and more important task is to ensure that the rule is enforced consistently, transparently and without exceptions. Only then will the 21-year age limit have real meaning.

EDITOR SPEAKS

Don't Criminalise Citizens for Doing What the State Failed to Do

Suraj Nandrekar

The Goa Health Department's warning that FIRs could be filed against individuals and agencies carrying out unauthorised mosquito fogging has sparked debate across the state. While authorities argue that indiscriminate fogging may be ineffective, environmentally harmful or even dangerous if done improperly, the public is asking a simple question: if mosquito breeding and vector-borne diseases remain a concern, what is wrong if citizens take matters into their own hands?

The answer lies somewhere between public safety and government accountability.

No one disputes that pesticide spraying should be regulated. Chemicals used in fogging can affect human health, pets, beneficial insects and the environment if applied incorrectly. There are scientific protocols governing when, where and how fogging should be carried out. Untrained operators using unapproved chemicals can create more problems than they solve.

However, the government's warning comes at a time when many residents feel abandoned by the very system meant to protect them. Across several parts of Goa, complaints about stagnant water, clogged drains, poor sanitation and mosquito infestation continue to surface every monsoon. Citizens often report breeding hotspots long before any official action is visible on the ground.

This is where the government's message risks sounding disconnected from reality.

People usually do not spend money on private fogging because they enjoy doing so. They do it because they believe the authorities are either unable or unwilling to respond quickly enough. When families worry about dengue, malaria and other mosquito-borne illnesses, they naturally look for immediate solutions. Threatening them with criminal action without addressing their concerns sends the wrong signal.

The Health Department has every right to regulate mosquito control measures. What it does not have is the luxury of demanding compliance without first demonstrating effectiveness. Before warning citizens against private fogging, authorities must convince the public that government-led mosquito control programmes are working efficiently.

The real issue is not unauthorised fogging. The real issue is mosquito breeding.

If drains remain blocked, construction sites accumulate water, garbage piles are left unattended and breeding hotspots continue to flourish, then fogging becomes merely a symptom of a larger failure. Mosquito control begins with prevention, sanitation and regular surveillance. Fogging is only one tool among many and often not the most effective one.

Rather than threatening FIRs, the government should consider a more practical approach. It could create a registration system for private pest control operators, provide clear guidelines on approved chemicals and ensure that certified agencies can assist residents when needed. Such a framework would protect public health while acknowledging the realities on the ground.

The state must also improve communication. If certain fogging methods are scientifically ineffective or harmful, citizens deserve a clear explanation. Simply issuing warnings and threatening legal action is unlikely to inspire confidence.

People are more likely to cooperate when they understand the reasoning behind a policy. Ultimately, public health works best when government and citizens act as partners rather than adversaries. Residents should not be encouraged to use chemicals recklessly. At the same time, citizens should not be treated as offenders simply because they are trying to protect their families from mosquitoes.

If the government wants people to stop private fogging, it must first ensure that official mosquito control measures are visible, timely and effective. Otherwise, the warning risks creating the impression that the state is more interested in controlling citizens than controlling mosquitoes. The public expects protection from disease, not threats of prosecution. The focus should remain where it belongs: eliminating mosquito breeding and safeguarding public health.

FDA Cracks Down On Food Safety Violations In Calangute, Baga

■ Five food businesses ordered to shut, ₹60,000 fine imposed and unsafe food destroyed during inspection drive

Team Goemkarponn

BAGA: The Goa Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) launched a major food safety surveillance drive in the Calangute and Baga areas, inspecting restaurants, food vending establishments and retail outlets selling cashew nuts to ensure compliance with food safety norms.

A total of 12 food businesses were inspected during the



drive. Of these, five establishments were directed to suspend operations until they comply with hygiene and food safety standards after officials found unhygienic conditions on their premises.

As part of the inspection, the FDA team tested cooking oil at five establishments using a Total Polar Compound (TPC) meter. The tests

found that the cooking oil used at all five premises was within the permissible safety limits.

The enforcement drive also resulted in four food business operators being fined a total of ₹60,000 for violations under the Food

Safety and Standards Act. Officials also seized and destroyed 60 kg of chicken and 30 kg of cashew nuts found to be unfit for consumption.

The FDA said such surveillance drives will continue across the State to ensure food safety and protect public health. Food business operators have been urged to strictly adhere to prescribed hygiene and safety standards, failing which their licences may be suspended.



MLA Vijai Sardesai Renews Demand For Dual Citizenship For Goans

■ GFP Chief Says Goans Should Not Be Forced To Choose Between Identity And Opportunity While Accepting UK Honour

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DABOLIM: Goa Forward Party (GFP) president Vijai Sardesai has renewed his demand for dual citizenship for eligible Goans, saying the community should not be forced to choose between Indian citizenship and Portuguese nationality.

Speaking after receiving the International Politician of the Year 2026 award at the House of Commons in the United Kingdom, Sardesai said the issue affects generations of Goans with Portuguese links and deserves a constructive national dialogue.

He argued that many Goans are compelled to make a painful choice between preserving

their Indian identity and accessing opportunities available through Portuguese citizenship.

Sardesai called for a framework that safeguards India's national interests while addressing the aspirations of Goans living in India and abroad.

Dedicating the international honour to the people of Goa, Sardesai said the award belonged to every Goan working to protect the State's identity, culture and heritage.

He reiterated his commitment to the ideals of "Goa, Goenkar, Goenkarponn" and pledged to continue advocating for issues affecting Goans on national and international platforms.



RGP Asks Viresh Borkar To Refrain From Misleading Statements

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PANAJI: The Revolutionary Goans Party (RGP) has issued a clarification regarding the conduct of its member Viresh Borkar, stating that he attended the party's last Core Executive Committee (CEC) meeting on May 30, 2026, under protest.

According to the party, Borkar had submitted a written protest during the meeting, which has been recorded as part of the official party proceedings and reflects his stand on the issues discussed.

The RGP also claimed that several of Borkar's supporters staged a protest outside the venue while the CEC meeting was in progress.

In its statement, the party alleged that despite placing his protest on record, Borkar has repeatedly made false and misleading public statements against the RGP, its office bearers and the Core Executive Committee.

ED Raids Digital Arrest Fraud Network, Seizes Assets Worth Crores

■ Searches Across Four States Lead To Cash, Gold, Foreign Currency Seizures; 400 Bank Accounts Frozen

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PANAJI: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has conducted searches at 20 locations across Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata and Goa in connection with a digital arrest fraud case registered by the Goa Cyber Crime Cell in 2025.

The investigation stems from an FIR filed against unknown accused persons for allegedly cheating victims through the modus operandi of "digital arrest." Acting on the case, the ED's Panaji



Zonal Unit carried out coordinated raids across multiple cities.

During the searches, officials seized cash amounting to ₹80 lakh, foreign currency valued at ₹1.24 crore, gold worth approximately ₹1.30 crore and documents relating to immovable properties valued at around ₹14 crore.

The agency has also frozen nearly 400 bank accounts allegedly linked to the digital arrest fraud network. In addition, rubber stamps of around 100 shell companies were recovered during the operation, indicating the possible use of multiple entities to facilitate the fraud. The Enforcement Directorate said the investigation is continuing and efforts are underway to identify and arrest the alleged kingpin behind the digital arrest fraud network.

Goa To Offer 50% EV Subsidy, Add 70 Charging Stations In Green Mobility Push

■ CM Pramod Sawant directs EV incentives for pilots and auto drivers, cleaner fuel transition for KTC buses and industries

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PANAJI: In a major push towards sustainable transport and clean energy, the Goa government is set to introduce a scheme offering up to 50 per cent subsidy on electric vehicles for licensed motorcycle pilots and auto-rickshaw operators, while also expanding the State's EV charging network with 70 new charging stations.



The decision was taken during a meeting on Fuel Management and Sustainable Transport Strategy chaired by Chief Minister

Dr. Pramod Sawant at Mahalaxmi, Altinho, Panaji, with officials from the Department of New and Renewable Energy (DNRE), Transport

Department, Kadamba Transport Corporation (KTC) and other departments.

The Chief Minister directed the DNRE to prepare a comprehensive subsidy scheme to encourage existing licensed motorcycle pilots and auto-rickshaw operators to switch to electric vehicles, making clean mobility more affordable. In another key decision, the Chief Minister instructed

the department to formulate a policy for the phased replacement of diesel generator (DG) sets in industrial and commercial establishments with cleaner alternatives such as Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS), solar photovoltaic systems with battery storage, gas-based systems wherever feasible, and other sustainable energy technologies.

International Job Scam Accused Arrested At Delhi Airport

■ Crime Branch Nabs Third Accused In Fake Overseas Recruitment Racket; Victims Allegedly Trafficked To East Asian Countries On Tourist Visas

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Goa Crime Branch has arrested a third accused in connection with a fake overseas job racket that allegedly cheated job seekers across multiple States by promising employment in Hong Kong and other foreign countries.

The accused, Harpreet Singh (39), a resident of Kurukshetra, Haryana, was arrested at Delhi International Airport after



the Goa Crime Branch issued a Look Out Circular (LOC) against him. He

has been booked in Crime Branch Police Station Crime No. 52/2026 under

relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, and the Emigration Act, 1983.

According to the Crime Branch, the investigation revealed that Harpreet Singh, along with his associates, allegedly conspired to cheat victims by collecting money on the false promise of overseas jobs. Police said the accused operated as recruiting agents without a valid registration certificate under the Emigration Act.



Advocate Assaulted During Visit To Morjim Over Illegal Structure Demolition

■ Lawyer Suffers Serious Injuries After Alleged Attack By 8–10 Persons; Vehicle Also Damaged

Team Goemkarponn

MORJIM: Advocate Ankur Kumar was allegedly assaulted by a group of 8 to 10 persons while visiting Morjim to facilitate the implementation of Supreme Court and Bombay High Court orders directing the demolition of an allegedly illegal hotel structure.

According to available information, Kumar had gone to the site along with complainant Anil Naik when the group allegedly attacked him using rods and stones. His car was also reportedly damaged

during the incident.

The advocate sustained multiple injuries, including a fractured eye socket, bleeding from the nose and other injuries. He was subsequently provided medical treatment.

The incident comes after the Supreme Court dismissed the final appeal filed by the property owner, effectively clearing the way for the demolition of the alleged illegal coastal structure at Morjim. Police are expected to investigate the incident and take further action based on the complaint and evidence collected.

Bengaluru Tourist Dies After Fall From Hotel Balcony In Candolim

■ 38-Year-Old Succumbs To Injuries At GMC; Police Continue Investigation

Team Goemkarponn

CANDOLIM: A 38-year-old tourist from Bengaluru died while undergoing treatment at Goa Medical College (GMC), Bambolim, after allegedly falling from the second-floor balcony of a hotel in Candolim.

According to police, the deceased has been identified as Naveen S, a resident of Nagarbhavi, Bengaluru, Karnataka.

Police said the incident occurred at a resort in



Candolim, where the victim allegedly fell from

the second-floor balcony. Preliminary information

suggests that he was under the influence of alcohol at the time of the incident.

He was admitted to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at GMC, Bambolim, where he later succumbed to his injuries.

Following information received from the hospital, police registered the case on July 17. Further investigation is being carried out by PSI Yogesh Mandrekar to ascertain the exact circumstances leading to the fatal fall.



Police Arrest Accused In Sexual Assault Of 85-Year-Old Woman

Team Goemkarponn

MARGAO: Maina Curtorim Police have arrested the accused in connection with the alleged sexual assault of an 85-year-old woman from Nuvem, nearly ten days after the incident was reported.

Motorist Booked For Threatening Traffic Cop At Malim

■ Driver Allegedly Drove On Wrong Side, Attempted To Run Into Constable And Issued Threats During Traffic Regulation Duty

Team Goemkarponn

PORVORIM: A traffic police constable has filed a complaint against a motorist for allegedly threatening, abusing and obstructing him while he was regulating traffic near Malim junction following a road accident.

According to the complaint lodged by Head Constable Sushant Mhapankar of the Traffic Cell, Porvorim, he was on traffic regulation duty on Friday between 2



pm and 10 pm when the incident occurred at around 3.15 pm.

Police said the accused, identified as Audumbar alias Uday Bandodkar, was driving a Tata Tiago EV (GA-07-N-9064) from Panaji towards Porvorim. He allegedly drove on the wrong side of the bridge at high speed despite heavy traffic caused by an earlier accident. When the traffic constable signalled the driver to stop, the accused allegedly ignored the instructions and drove the vehicle towards

the complainant. He is also accused of threatening and abusing the constable, saying he would "finish" him, before allegedly pushing the officer and speeding away towards Porvorim.

Based on the complaint, Porvorim Police have registered Crime No. 57/2026 under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, for obstructing and threatening a public servant while discharging official duty.

MLA Anton Vas Alleges Illegal Sewage Dumping In Cortalim, Demands Action

■ Catches Tanker And Catering Company In Separate Incidents; Seeks Probe Into Pollution And Hygiene Violations

Team Goemkarponn

CORTALIM: Cortalim MLA Anton Vas, along with local villagers, alleged that he caught a sewage tanker dumping waste on an open plot opposite Blueberry Hall at Cortalim, triggering outrage among residents and prompting demands for strict action against those responsible.

According to Vas, alert villagers intercepted the tanker while it was allegedly discharging sewage and informed



him. He rushed to the spot and alerted Verna Police, besides contacting officials from the Health Department and other concerned agencies, seeking immediate legal

action.

The MLA claimed he had long suspected untreated sewage was being dumped in the area, alleging that nearby agricultural fields had

turned into black sludge and that several farmers had complained of skin rashes and an inability to cultivate their land due to contamination.

Vas said he had been monitoring the area for several days, including late-night patrols, in an effort to identify those behind the alleged illegal dumping. He further alleged that the tanker driver admitted to making multiple trips to the same location to dispose of sewage.



Chicalim Hosts Mhaje Ghar Awareness Camp To Assist Applicants

■ Beneficiaries Receive Comunidade Consent Letters And Legalisation Documents; Fresh Applications Also Accepted

Team Goemkarponn

CHICALIM: The Chicalim Panchayat organised a Mhaje Ghar awareness camp to educate residents about the State government's flagship housing scheme and assist applicants with documentation and legalisation procedures.

The programme was attended by Panchayat Minister Mauvin Godinho, Chicalim Sarpanch Kamla Prasad Yadav, Deputy Collector Pratap Rao Gaonkar, representatives of the Comunidade and other government officials. During the camp, several applicants were issued Comunidade consent letters, while others received legalisation-related documents, marking progress in the implementation of the Mhaje Ghar scheme.

Dedicated counters were also set up to accept fresh applications and scrutinise pending cases. Addressing the gathering, Godinho thanked the Comunidade for supporting the government's initiative and said the cooperation between Panchayats, Comunidade bodies and various government departments was ensuring the smooth implementation of the scheme. He said the BJP government led by Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant has been committed to taking welfare schemes to the grassroots level. Describing Mhaje Ghar as a transformative initiative, Godinho said the scheme would help families legalise their homes and resolve long-pending ownership and documentation issues.



Goushala Alleges Rescued Cow Was Forcibly Taken Away, Seeks Police Action

Team Goemkarponn

VALPOI: A Valpoi-based goushala has lodged a complaint with the Valpoi Police alleging that a rescued cow was forcibly taken away from its premises by a local resident without following the prescribed legal procedure under the Goa Stray Cattle Management Scheme.

According to the complaint filed by Hanumant C. Parab, President of A.V. Jai Shriram Gosavardhan Kendra, Valpoi, the organisation had rescued an injured cow near the PTS area at Valpoi on July 14 after receiving a rescue call. The cow was treated at the goushala and had reportedly recovered from its injuries. The complaint states that on the evening of July 15, a resident identified as Pandurang Betkekar allegedly trespassed into the goushala premises and forcibly removed the rescued cow despite objections from the staff.

Quelossim Panchayat Gets Stay On Floating Resort NOC

■ Deputy Director Halts Provisional Clearance; Villagers Say Fight Against Project Will Continue

Team Goemkarponn

QUELEOSSIM: The Quelossim Panchayat has secured a stay from the Deputy Director of Panchayats on the provisional No Objection Certificate (NOC) earlier granted by the Block Development Officer (BDO) for a proposed floating resort project in the village.

The stay order has provided temporary relief to the Panchayat and local residents, who



have been opposing the project over concerns that it could adversely affect the environment, fishing activities and the traditional character of Quelossim.

Panchayat members and villagers welcomed

the Deputy Director's decision but described it as only an interim relief, stating that they would continue their efforts until

the provisional NOC is permanently revoked.

They thanked the villagers for remaining united in opposing the project and expressed gratitude to Cortalim MLA Anton Vas for supporting their cause.

CM Felicitates Vedic Scholars For Academic Excellence

■ Dr Pramod Sawant Honours Shree Kshetra Tapobhoomi Gurupeeth Scholars For Preserving India's Ancient Knowledge Traditions

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant felicitated accomplished Vedic scholars of Shree Kshetra Tapobhoomi Gurupeeth for their academic achievements and contribution towards preserving and promoting India's ancient knowledge traditions. Congratulating the scholars, the Chief



Minister said that under the guidance of Padma Shri Sadguru Brahmeshanand Acharya Swamiji, they have excelled in Vedic

studies, Sanskrit, Darshan Shastra and Yogashastra, bringing pride to Goa through their achievements.

Dr Sawant felicitated Dr Dnyaneshwar Patil for earning a Ph.D. in Sanskrit, Vedamurti Dattaraj Mandrekar for

completing a Master's degree in Darshan Shastra, and Vedamurti Vrajesh Gurav for obtaining a Master's degree in Yogashastra. He also honoured Vedamurti Tanmay Patil, Vedamurti Harsh Aroskar, and Vedamurti Balkrishna Chavan, who were conferred the prestigious titles of Rigveda Vibhushan and Yajurveda Vibhushan.

"Goa's AI Vision Is Becoming Reality": State Pushes Multilingual Governance With BHASHINI

■ Workshop highlights Konkani AI model and explores practical applications to improve citizen services



Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Goa took another step towards becoming a leader in artificial intelligence driven governance as the Department of Information Technology, Electronics and Communications (DITE&C), in collaboration with the Digital India BHASHINI Division, organised the BHASHINI Rajyam State Engagement Workshop in Panaji to identify multilingual AI solutions for improving citizen services.

The workshop brought together senior government officials to explore practical AI use cases that can enhance last mile governance while showcasing the progress of the Konkani Large Language Model (LLM), which is currently under development. It also featured demonstrations of BHASHINI's multilingual AI technologies and their applications in public administration.

Addressing the inaugural session, Information Technology, Electronics and Communications Minister Rohan A. Khaunte said Goa's AI vision is steadily becoming a reality through initiatives that allow citizens to interact with government platforms in Konkani. He said the collaboration with the BHASHINI Division is aimed at making advanced technologies more accessible while building an inclusive and future ready digital ecosystem for the state.

The workshop

also highlighted the potential of multilingual AI in bridging language barriers and improving public service delivery. Officials were introduced to AI powered translation, speech recognition and transcription technologies that can simplify interactions between citizens and government departments.

Participants were also briefed on the National Hub for Language Technology, Shabd Udyan, BHASHINI's website plug in supporting 22 Indian languages including Konkani, and the

official BHASHINI mobile application.

One of the key attractions was a live demonstration that instantly converted spoken English into Konkani through real time transcription, translation and speech generation. AI tools capable of translating documents, voice and text were also showcased, illustrating how such technologies can streamline governance and make services more accessible.

The workshop concluded with discussions on pilot AI projects across government departments. The ongoing development of the Konkani Large Language Model, in partnership with the Directorate of Higher Education and the Directorate of Official Language, is expected to play a significant role in Goa's long term vision of becoming a leading hub for multilingual AI powered governance.



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Goa Among India's Top Five Most Investment-Friendly States: NITI Aayog

among City States and Union Territories in both STEM enrolment share and vocational training capacity.

Goa's infrastructure also received recognition, with its two international airports accounting for nearly 3% of India's airport capacity. The state's ports similarly contribute around 3% of the country's total port capacity and include dedicated facilities

for containers, dry bulk cargo and petroleum products.

The report further noted that Goa has the highest share of renewable energy in its power mix among all States and Union Territories while maintaining transmission and distribution losses at around 7%. Businesses surveyed also cited reliable power supply, robust transport connectivity, warehousing facilities and the availability of a skilled workforce as key advantages.

The state government credited the achievement to sustained

efforts under the leadership of Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant to strengthen infrastructure, improve regulatory efficiency, enhance connectivity, promote clean energy and build a future-ready investment ecosystem.

Officials said the recognition reinforces Goa's position as a preferred investment destination and reflects the government's commitment to attracting responsible investments, generating quality employment and creating greater opportunities for Goan youth.

India Reaches Geothermal Milestone as First Deep Wells Commissioned in Ladakh

■ Puga Valley project paves the way for the country's first 1 MW geothermal power plant

Team Goemkarponn

LEH: India has achieved a major milestone in renewable energy with the successful commissioning of the country's first and deepest geothermal wells in Ladakh's Puga Valley, marking a significant step towards harnessing geothermal energy for power generation.

The two wells, each drilled to a depth of 1,000 metres at an altitude of more than 14,000 feet by the ONGC Energy Centre, will support the development of India's first 1 MW pilot geothermal power project in the Union Territory.

Announcing the achievement, Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena described it as a historic moment in India's transition towards clean and renewable energy.

He said the successful commissioning of the wells lays the foundation for geothermal power generation in the country and represents a major technological accomplishment under challenging conditions.

The project was completed despite the harsh terrain of the Himalayan region, where engineering teams had to overcome extreme cold, high

altitude, complex geological formations and unpredictable geothermal activity. Officials said the successful drilling demonstrates India's growing capability in advanced renewable energy technologies.

Puga Valley has long been recognised as one of the country's most promising geothermal resource zones. The commissioning of these deep wells is expected to accelerate research and commercial development of geothermal energy in the region.

Authorities believe the project will help reduce dependence on diesel based electricity generation in remote parts of Ladakh while providing a reliable and sustainable source of clean energy. It also supports the Union Territory's long term goal of achieving carbon neutrality and contributes to India's broader commitment to reaching net zero emissions.

The successful completion of the project is being viewed as a breakthrough for India's renewable energy sector, opening the possibility of developing geothermal power in other suitable regions of the country and expanding the nation's clean energy portfolio beyond solar, wind and hydroelectric power.



Ram Temple Donation Theft Probe Widens as 30 More Employees Come Under Scanner

■ Investigators examine recruitment process, financial records and cash handling after eight arrests

Team Goemkarponn

AYODHYA: The investigation into the alleged theft of donations at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya has widened, with police now examining the role of around 30 more employees who were involved in counting cash offerings from devotees.

The expanded probe follows the arrest of eight individuals in



connection with the case. Investigators are now scrutinising the recruitment process, background details and financial records of employees engaged in

handling temple donations to determine whether any acquired assets disproportionate to their known sources of

income after joining the cash counting operation.

According to the investigation, nearly 50 people were assigned to count currency notes donated by devotees,

with a significant number reportedly recruited through recommendations linked to members or associates of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust. Authorities are also reviewing the role of senior trust functionaries involved in donation management, although no criminal liability has been established against them so far.



'Gilgit Baltistan Was, Is and Will Always Be Part of India': MEA Rejects Pakistan's Provincial Status Move

■ India reiterates its stand after Gilgit Baltistan Assembly seeks constitutional recognition from Pakistan

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: India has firmly rejected the Gilgit Baltistan Legislative Assembly's resolution seeking full provincial status from Pakistan, reiterating that the region "was, is and will always be a part of India."

Responding to the development, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) reaffirmed New Delhi's long standing position that the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh are integral and inalienable parts of India. The statement came after the assembly in Gilgit Baltistan, which forms part of Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK), unanimously

passed a resolution urging Pakistan to grant the region constitutional recognition as its fifth province.

MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said India does not recognise any unilateral attempts by Pakistan to alter the status of territories under its illegal occupation. He reiterated that such measures have no legal validity and do not affect India's position on the region. The resolution adopted by the Gilgit Baltistan Assembly calls on Pakistan's federal government to amend the Constitution, grant the region full provincial status and provide representation in the National Assembly and Senate.



Amit Shah Begins Three Day Bengal Visit With Focus on Border Security and Governance

Team Goemkarponn

KOLKATA: Union Home Minister Amit Shah has begun a three day visit to West Bengal, with border security, implementation of the country's new criminal laws, governance and law and order forming the core of his engagements across North Bengal and Kolkata.

Shah arrived at Bagdogra before proceeding to the Border Security Force (BSF) Frontier Headquarters at Kadamtala in Siliguri. On Saturday, he is scheduled to visit the BSF's 18th Battalion at Seema Chowki in Jumagachh, where he will interact with personnel, attend a Prahari Sammelan, participate in a plantation drive and inaugurate several infrastructure projects. A key focus of the visit is the strengthening of border infrastructure along the India Bangladesh border. West Bengal shares more than 2,000 kilometres of international border with Bangladesh, with nearly 500 kilometres still awaiting fencing.

India Confirms Chabahar Terminal Safe After US Strikes on Iranian Port

■ MEA says India operated Shahid Beheshti terminal remains unaffected despite attack on nearby facility

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: India has confirmed that the Shahid Beheshti terminal at Iran's Chabahar Port, operated by India Ports Global Limited (IPGL), was not damaged during recent US strikes on the strategic maritime facility.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) clarified that while reports emerged about attacks on Chabahar Port, the terminal managed by India remained safe and fully unaffected. The



clarification followed military strikes by the United States on the port as part of its operations against Iran.

According to the MEA, the damage was limited to the Shahid Kalantari terminal, which

is separate from the Shahid Beheshti terminal operated by India under a long term agreement with Iran's Ports and Maritime Organisation.

MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said India was aware of reports regarding the strikes but confirmed that the country's operations at Chabahar had not been impacted. He also reiterated India's consistent position that civilian infrastructure should not be targeted during armed conflicts.

Skyroot's Vikram 1 Set to Make History With India's First Private Orbital Launch

■ Mission Aagaman aims to achieve multiple milestones for India's growing commercial space sector

Team Goemkarponn

SRIHARIKOTA: Skyroot Aerospace is set to usher in a new era for India's commercial space industry with the launch of Vikram 1 on Mission Aagaman from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota. The mission is expected to become India's first orbital launch attempt by a



private company using an entirely indigenous launch vehicle developed outside the government space programme.

If successful, Vikram 1 will become the country's first privately developed rocket to place satellites into orbit, marking a major milestone for India's rapidly expanding private space ecosystem.

The rocket introduces several technological

innovations. It is India's first orbital launch vehicle built entirely with an all carbon composite structure, reducing weight while improving strength and payload carrying capability. Its first stage is also the country's longest monolithic carbon composite rocket stage, showcasing advances in domestic aerospace manufacturing.

Another major

breakthrough is the use of a fully 3D printed liquid engine in the Orbital Adjustment Module, making it the first Indian orbital rocket to feature such technology.

The mission also employs an ultra low shock pneumatic stage separation system designed to minimise vibrations and protect payloads during flight.

"England Don't Want To Play, Neither Do We": Deschamps Eyes Winning Farewell With Bronze Medal

■ Outgoing France coach says third place playoff is a duty despite disappointment after semifinal exit

Team Goemkarponn

MIAMI: France head coach Didier Deschamps has admitted that neither France nor England wanted to play the FIFA World Cup 2026 third place playoff but insisted his side remains determined to finish the tournament on a winning note by securing the bronze medal.

France's hopes



of reaching a third successive World Cup final ended after a 2-0 defeat to Spain in the semifinals, leaving them to face England in Saturday's third place

match in Miami.

Speaking ahead of the encounter, Deschamps acknowledged the disappointment of missing out on the final but stressed that the playoff is still an official World Cup match and not a friendly. He said representing France carries the responsibility of competing until the very end, with the team now focused on achieving its final objective

of finishing third.

The match also marks the end of Deschamps' tenure as France coach. Reflecting on his final game in charge, the veteran manager said he is aware that his journey with the national team is coming to a close but believes it is important to leave on a positive note. He added that while one chapter is ending, life and football will continue.



BCCI Dismisses Rohit Sharma Retirement Speculation Ahead of Lord's ODI

■ Board says India captain remains part of the ODI setup despite reports over his future

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has dismissed speculation surrounding Rohit Sharma's retirement, making it clear that the third ODI against England at Lord's will not be the veteran batter's final appearance in Indian colours. Rumours about Rohit's future emerged during the ongoing ODI series, with reports claiming that the national selectors and team management had informed the 39 year old that he was no longer part of India's plans for the 2027 ODI World Cup. The reports

also suggested that India was looking at younger opening options alongside Shubman Gill, fuelling speculation that Rohit could retire from the 50 over format. However, the BCCI has firmly rejected those claims, stating that no such discussion has taken place regarding Rohit's retirement. The board reiterated that the experienced opener continues to be a regular member of India's ODI squad and will remain available for selection as long as he features in the team's plans. The clarification comes amid widespread debate over Rohit's future following a difficult run of form in 2026.



PV Sindhu Storms Into First Japan Open Final With Dominant Display

Team Goemkarponn

TOKYO: Two time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu has booked her place in the Japan Open final, reaching her first tournament final in more than two years after China's Chen Yufei retired with a hamstring injury during their women's singles semifinal on Saturday. Sindhu, 31, was in commanding form and leading 21-19, 15-10 when the Tokyo Olympics champion was forced to withdraw from the contest after sustaining the injury. The result marks Sindhu's first appearance in a final since winning the Syed Modi International in 2024 and gives her a chance to claim her first major title since the Singapore Open in 2022. The Indian shuttler delivered an aggressive performance against the world No. 4, relying on powerful smashes, sharp net play and excellent court coverage to control the rallies.

Goa University Unveils Packed 2026-27 Inter Collegiate Sports Calendar

■ Twenty two sports and 39 championships to be held across premier venues in Goa

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Goa University has approved its tentative Inter Collegiate Sports Calendar for the 2026-27 academic year, setting the stage for a year long sporting season featuring 22 disciplines and 39 championships for men and women. The calendar is aimed at encouraging competitive sports and strengthening athletic participation among

GOA UNIVERSITY TENTATIVE SPORTS CALENDAR INTER-COLLEGIATE CHAMPIONSHIPS 2026 - 2027			
S.No.	Sports	Discipline	Venue
1	Badminton (Men)	21-22 Aug 2026	Goa Multipurpose Hall, Paddem
2	Badminton (Women)	23-24 Aug 2026	Goa Multipurpose Hall, Paddem
3	Table Tennis (Men)	25-26 Aug 2026	Goa Multipurpose Hall, Paddem
4	Table Tennis (Women)	27-28 Aug 2026	Goa Multipurpose Hall, Paddem
5	Badminton (Mixed)	29-30 Aug 2026	Goa Multipurpose Hall, Paddem
6	Table Tennis (Mixed)	31 Aug - 01 Sep 2026	Goa Multipurpose Hall, Paddem
7	Table Tennis (Mixed)	02-03 Sep 2026	Goa Multipurpose Hall, Paddem
8	Table Tennis (Mixed)	04-05 Sep 2026	Goa Multipurpose Hall, Paddem
9	Table Tennis (Mixed)	06-07 Sep 2026	Goa Multipurpose Hall, Paddem
10	Table Tennis (Mixed)	08-09 Sep 2026	Goa Multipurpose Hall, Paddem
11	Table Tennis (Mixed)	10-11 Sep 2026	Goa Multipurpose Hall, Paddem
12	Table Tennis (Mixed)	12-13 Sep 2026	Goa Multipurpose Hall, Paddem
13	Table Tennis (Mixed)	14-15 Sep 2026	Goa Multipurpose Hall, Paddem
14	Table Tennis (Mixed)	16-17 Sep 2026	Goa Multipurpose Hall, Paddem
15	Table Tennis (Mixed)	18-19 Sep 2026	Goa Multipurpose Hall, Paddem
16	Table Tennis (Mixed)	20-21 Sep 2026	Goa Multipurpose Hall, Paddem
17	Table Tennis (Mixed)	22-23 Sep 2026	Goa Multipurpose Hall, Paddem
18	Table Tennis (Mixed)	24-25 Sep 2026	Goa Multipurpose Hall, Paddem
19	Table Tennis (Mixed)	26-27 Sep 2026	Goa Multipurpose Hall, Paddem
20	Table Tennis (Mixed)	28-29 Sep 2026	Goa Multipurpose Hall, Paddem
21	Table Tennis (Mixed)	30 Sep - 01 Oct 2026	Goa Multipurpose Hall, Paddem
22	Table Tennis (Mixed)	02-03 Oct 2026	Goa Multipurpose Hall, Paddem

the state.

The sporting season will begin with the Judo Championships for men

to July 30 at the Sports Authority of Goa's Multipurpose Hall in Paddem. Competitions throughout the academic year will be hosted at some of Goa's leading sports facilities, including Sports Authority of Goa complexes at Paddem, Campal, Fatorda and Bambolim, as well as Goa University's own grounds, Jubilee Hall.

Shaurya Stuns Top Seed to Reach Naguesh and Sushila Verenkar Memorial TT Final

■ Vanlalhratpuii, Claire George and Ronisha Sakhardande also book title clash spots

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Third seed Shaurya Dessai produced the biggest upset of the tournament by defeating top seed Anaya Shukla to reach the Girls Under 11 final of the 6th Naguesh and Sushila Verenkar Memorial Major Ranking Table Tennis Tournament at the Chandor Club Multipurpose Hall.

Organised by Chandor Club under the aegis of the Goa Table Tennis Association, the



tournament witnessed several exciting matches as the finalists were decided in the Girls Under 11 and Girls Under 9 categories. Shaurya registered an impressive 3-1 victory over Anaya Shukla in the Under 11 semi final to secure her place in the title clash. She



will now face second seed Vanlalhratpuii, who dominated Tvisha Kotkar with a comfortable 3-0 win to reach the final. In the Girls Under 9 category, top seed Claire George continued her impressive run with a convincing 3-0 victory over Taisha Mehta in the semi final. She will meet Ronisha Sakhardande in the championship match after Ronisha staged a spirited comeback to

upset third seed Swara Gude 3-2 in a thrilling contest. Earlier in the Girls Under 11 quarter finals, top seed Anaya Shukla defeated Sanaz Shaikh 3-0 to advance, while Shaurya Dessai outplayed Claire George by the same margin. Tvisha Kotkar edged past Swara Gude 3-2 in one of the closest matches of the round, and Vanlalhratpuii completed the semi final lineup with a convincing 3-0 victory over Ronisha Sakhardande.

Goa Women Tennis Ball Cricket League Announces ₹70,000 Prize Pool

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Goa Women Tennis Ball Cricket League 2026 has announced an attractive prize structure ahead of its upcoming edition, with a total cash prize of ₹70,000 set to be awarded as the tournament aims to promote women's tennis ball cricket and provide a competitive platform for talented players across the state. The championship winning team will receive a cash prize of ₹40,000 along with the winners' trophy, while the runners up will be also awarded.