



## Union Education Min **Dharmendra Pradhan** Resigns Following NEET-UG Controversy

■ In a Letter Addressed to the Youth, Pradhan Cites Recent Developments and Efforts to Mislead Students as Reasons for Stepping Down to Protect Student Interests and National Unity

**Team Goemkarponn**

**DELHI:** Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has tendered his resignation to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, following weeks of turmoil and protests surrounding the NEET-UG examination irregularities. In a public letter addressed to the youth of the nation, Pradhan reflected on his four-decade-long career dedicated to education reform and expressed



deep sorrow over the recent developments surrounding national

competitive exams. Detailing the action taken regarding the

examination irregularities, Pradhan highlighted that following the issues detected in the May 3, 2026 NEET-UG examination, the government acted swiftly by cancelling the test, handing over the investigation to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), and announcing fresh exam dates. He added that to prevent future breaches, the examination will transition to a Computer-

Based Test (CBT) mode starting next year. Through a coordinated effort involving state governments, local administrations, and parents, the re-examination was successfully conducted on June 21, 2026, for over 20 lakh students, with results declared on July 16, 2026. Addressing the reasoning behind his decision, Pradhan stated that despite the government's efforts

and the successful re-examination, certain individuals in responsible positions attempted to mislead students and create obstacles, leaving him deeply distressed. Highlighting protests at Jantar Mantar and across the country, he emphasized the need to prevent anti-national forces from taking advantage of the situation and to ensure students do not get entangled in legal

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### RGP Accuses Viresh Borkar of Attempted Takeover, Declares His Actions Invalid

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** Escalating the leadership dispute within the Revolutionary Goans Party (RGP), the party has accused Viresh Borkar of attempting to seize control of the organisation and has declared that he holds no authorised position within the party.

In a detailed clarification issued on Friday, the RGP alleged that a conspiracy to gain control of the party and split the organisation was planned during a meeting in Margao. It claimed that subsequent actions, including attempts to disrupt meetings of the Core Executive Committee (CEC), take control of the party's digital platforms, issue legal notices and initiate court proceedings, were part of the alleged plan. The party asserted that its constitution does not recognise the post of National President and stated that Borkar has neither been appointed to that position nor designated as the party's whip.

### Goa Issues Statewide Drowning Alert Amid Rising Monsoon Risks

■ Citizens Warned to Stay Away from Water Bodies as Government Enforces Strict Safety Measures

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** With the monsoon intensifying and the risk of drowning incidents increasing across the State, the Goa Government has issued a comprehensive public safety advisory, urging citizens and tourists to avoid rivers, waterfalls,



beaches, reservoirs and other water bodies during heavy rainfall and flooding. The advisory, issued by the Revenue Department through the GSDMA.

### Ajay Kholkar Alleges Bid To Merge RGP, Rejects Borkar's National President Claim

■ Treasurer claims party constitution has no National President post, alleges conspiracy to merge and take over RGP, announces fresh disciplinary action

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** Revolutionary Goans Party (RGP) Treasurer Ajay Kholkar on Saturday alleged that MLA Viresh Borkar was attempting to merge the party with another political outfit and take control of the organisation, while also rejecting Borkar's claim of being the party's



National President.

Kholkar claimed that the RGP's updated and approved constitution does not provide for the post of National President.

He said Borkar attended the last Central Executive Committee (CEC) meeting under protest and not as the party's National President. According to Kholkar, he came to know of Borkar's claim to the post only on Friday.

Kholkar maintained that since the approved constitution does

▶ CONTD TO PAGE 06

### Over 1 Crore Sq Mts in Salcete Declared No Development Zone

■ TCP Board Notifies NDZ Areas as Goa Moves to Strengthen Environmental Protection

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** In a major land-use decision, the Town and Country Planning (TCP) Board, chaired by Minister Vishwajit Rane, has notified more than 1.01 crore square metres of land in Salcete taluka as No Development Zone (NDZ), reinforcing efforts to protect ecologically sensitive areas from future development.

The notified areas include 34.36 lakh



square metres at São José de Areal, 6.17 lakh square metres at Dicarpale, 36.92 lakh square metres at Curtorim, 20,450 square metres at Benaulim and 24.22 lakh square metres at Mulem.

The notification restricts development activities in these

identified areas, with the move aimed at preserving environmentally sensitive land and maintaining ecological balance. Meanwhile, Forest Minister Vishwajit Rane said the Goa Forest Department will submit its final report on private forests to the National Green Tribunal (NGT) before August 15, marking the culmination of a process that has remained pending for nearly two decades.

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# A Sacred Journey Beyond the Shore

For generations, Goa has been synonymous with beaches, nightlife and leisure. While these attractions have made the state a global tourism destination, they have also confined Goa to a narrow image. The launch of the Ekadasha Teertha Yatra, a three day pilgrimage circuit connecting eleven historic temples, is therefore a welcome and visionary initiative by the Goa Tourism Department. It signals a conscious effort to showcase a side of Goa that has long existed but has rarely received the attention it deserves.

Tourism today is evolving. Travellers no longer seek only sightseeing or entertainment. They are increasingly looking for authentic experiences that connect them with local culture, history and traditions. Spiritual tourism is one of the fastest growing segments worldwide because it offers visitors peace, reflection and a deeper understanding of the places they visit. Goa, with its centuries old temples, sacred sites and vibrant religious traditions, is naturally positioned to become an important destination in this segment.

The Tourism Department deserves credit for recognising that Goa's identity extends far beyond its coastline. Every temple in the pilgrimage circuit has its own story, architecture, customs and festivals that reflect the rich cultural heritage of the state. By bringing these sacred places together into an organised circuit, the government is making it easier for pilgrims, domestic tourists and even international visitors to explore Goa's spiritual legacy.

This initiative is equally significant from an economic perspective.

For too long, tourism activities have remained concentrated in a handful of coastal destinations. As a result, the economic benefits of tourism have not reached many villages located in Goa's hinterland. Spiritual tourism has the potential to change that. Visitors travelling through temple towns will require transport, food, accommodation, guides and local shopping. This creates opportunities for small businesses, women's self help groups, artisans, traditional food vendors and local entrepreneurs.

Unlike beach tourism, which often witnesses seasonal fluctuations, pilgrimage tourism remains relatively stable throughout the year. This helps reduce dependence on peak tourist seasons while generating continuous income for local communities.

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Another positive aspect is the promotion of heritage conservation. When religious and heritage sites become part of organised tourism circuits, there is greater incentive to improve infrastructure, preserve historic structures and maintain cleanliness. Better roads, signage, sanitation facilities and visitor amenities not only benefit tourists but also improve the quality of life for local residents.

However, success will not come merely by launching a pilgrimage route.

The real challenge lies in execution.

Visitors must enjoy a seamless experience from beginning to end. Dedicated buses are a good beginning, but the Tourism Department must ensure trained multilingual guides, clean public conveniences, proper parking

facilities, digital booking systems, informative brochures and emergency medical assistance wherever required. A pilgrimage should be both spiritually fulfilling and professionally managed.

The emphasis must also remain on preserving the sanctity of these religious places. Commercialisation should never overpower devotion. Unregulated vending, excessive construction or activities that disturb the peaceful atmosphere of temples must be avoided. Spiritual tourism succeeds when authenticity is preserved, not when sacred places become overcrowded commercial attractions.

Technology can further enhance the experience. QR codes providing historical information, mobile applications with multilingual audio guides and digital maps can help younger visitors understand the historical and cultural importance of each destination. Such innovations blend tradition with modern convenience.

The initiative also opens the door for future expansion. Goa is home not only to magnificent temples but also to centuries old churches, mosques, chapels and sacred natural sites. Carefully designed heritage circuits celebrating Goa's diverse religious traditions can present the state as a symbol of harmony and coexistence. Such an approach would truly reflect the inclusive spirit that has defined Goa for centuries.

Marketing will also determine the long term success of this project. Tourism campaigns should highlight Goa as a destination where visitors can experience spirituality, heritage, nature, cuisine and culture in a single journey. This broader narrative will attract families, senior citizens, cultural enthusiasts and international travellers seeking meaningful experiences rather than just holidays.

The Ekadasha Teertha Yatra is more than another tourism product. It is a recognition that Goa's greatest strength lies in its rich cultural identity. Beaches may introduce visitors to Goa, but its temples, traditions and heritage have the power to make them return.

If this initiative is implemented with sincerity, maintained with care and expanded thoughtfully, it could redefine the future of tourism in Goa. Instead of being known only for its sun and sand, Goa can proudly emerge as a destination where faith, history, culture and hospitality come together in one unforgettable journey.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Build, Don't Burn: A Wake-Up Call to the Youth

By Vaman Sankhalder

My dear friends, We are a nation blessed with the youngest population in the world. Millions of us under thirty walk these streets with dreams in our eyes and energy in our steps. This should be our golden time, a time to build, to create, and to lift our country higher. Yet I see something troubling happening around us. Many young minds are slowly drifting away from the hard work of nation-building and getting pulled into waves of anger and division.

I am not saying we should stay silent when things go wrong. Every citizen has the right, and even the duty, to speak up against injustice, corruption, or bad policies. Raising our voices is how a democracy stays alive and honest. But there is a difference between honest protest and getting swept away by clever stories that come from outside.

Today, it feels like unseen hands are quietly pushing buttons. Through phones, social media, short videos, and trending hashtags, certain narratives spread rapidly. They show only one side of the picture. They make small problems look like total disasters. They turn neighbours into enemies and hope into hate. Who benefits when our youth spend hours fighting online battles instead of learning skills, starting businesses, or serving their communities? Not us. Not our villages, our towns, or our future.

I have seen this pattern before. When a country is strong and growing, some external forces feel uncomfortable. They do not come with armies anymore. They come with ideas, money, and technology that divide us. They find our genuine frustrations, unemployment, inequality, and social tensions, and they pour fuel on them. Suddenly, every issue becomes a reason to hate the system completely. Suddenly, protests feel more exciting than patient progress. And before we know it, our energy, which could have built schools, roads, factories, and better lives, is wasted in chaos.

Our young population is our greatest strength. Imagine what we can achieve if even half of this energy goes into real work: farming smarter, coding better, teaching children, cleaning our rivers, or supporting local industries. Small actions by many can change the destiny of a billion people. But if we keep getting distracted by selective propaganda, we will remain stuck, shouting at each other while opportunities pass us by.

I am not asking anyone to become a blind supporter. Question your leaders. Demand accountability. But do it with wisdom. Check where the information comes from. Ask who gains when we fight among ourselves. True patriotism is not blind loyalty, nor is it constant anger. It is loving your country enough to improve it steadily, day by day.

Let us not trade our future for the temporary thrill of rebellion. Let us build instead of break. Let us raise voices that unite and solve, not just divide and shout. Our parents and grandparents sacrificed so much so that we could stand tall today. Let us not disappoint them by becoming pawns in someone else's game.

We owe it to ourselves, to our children, and to this ancient land to stay awake, stay balanced, and keep building. A strong, peaceful, and prosperous India is possible, but only if we choose construction over destruction, truth over trends, and unity over endless division.

This is not weakness. This is real strength.

*(The writer is a young faculty member at a Polytechnic School in Goa and also serves as Vice President of Yuva Panaji.)*

# Government Directs ONGC to Remove Obstacles at Cutbona-Betul Estuary

■ Move Aims to Restore Safe Navigation and Ease Movement of Fishing Vessels

Team Goemkarponn

**MARGAO:** The Goa Government has instructed the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) to take immediate measures to remove obstacles affecting navigation at the Cutbona-Betul estuary after local fishermen raised concerns over difficulties in accessing the sea.

The direction was issued during a review meeting convened by Fisheries Minister Nilkanth Halarnkar



with officials from the Fisheries Department, the Captain of Ports, ONGC and representatives of the fishing community. During the meeting, fishermen highlighted that obstructions in the estuary had made it difficult for boats to move safely, particularly during low tide, impacting daily

fishing operations and posing risks to navigation. After reviewing the situation, the government asked ONGC to clear the identified hazards at the earliest and ensure that the waterway remains safe and navigable for fishing vessels and other river traffic. The minister also stressed the

importance of coordinated action between all concerned agencies to protect the interests of the fishing community while maintaining industrial activities in the region without affecting navigation. Officials said the government will keep a close watch on the progress of the work and take further action, if necessary, to ensure uninterrupted and safe movement of vessels through the Cutbona-Betul river mouth.

## FDA Intensifies Food Safety Drive; Fines Violators, Shuts Unhygienic Units

■ Ensuring safe and hygienic food for every Goan remains priority; surveillance drives to continue across the state

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** Reiterating its commitment to ensuring safe and hygienic food for every Goan, the Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) has intensified surveillance drives across South Goa and North Goa, penalising unlicensed food businesses, seizing unsafe food products and ordering the closure of establishments found violating food safety norms.

During an inspection of milk and milk product suppliers in Salcete, the South Goa FDA team fined one supplier ₹30,000 for operating without a valid licence and selling unlabelled paneer. About 20 kg of paneer worth ₹10,000 was confiscated, while milk samples were collected for quality analysis.

The FDA also carried out a compliance drive at Ramdamol, where seven food establishments were



inspected. Five unlicensed units and two establishments operating in unhygienic conditions were collectively fined ₹14,000. The operators were directed to comply with food safety regulations, including proper disposal of used cooking oil and avoiding the use of newspapers for wrapping food.

In another surveillance drive at Anjuna, the FDA inspected 13 establishments comprising restaurants, bakeries and chicken slaughter units. Three chicken slaughter units were directed to suspend operations for functioning in unhygienic conditions and without mandatory Panchayat and Health NOCs.



**Tawadkar Condemns Rama Kankonkar's 'Mastermind' Remark, Demands Apology To Tribal Community**

Team Goemkarponn

**CANACONA:** Tribal Affairs Minister Ramesh Tawadkar on Friday strongly condemned activist Rama Kankonkar for allegedly describing him and former MP Adv. Narendra Sawaikar as the "masterminds" behind the deaths of two tribal youths during the 2011 Balli agitation, and demanded that Kankonkar apologise to the United Tribal Associations Alliance (UTAA) and the tribal community.

Addressing a press conference in Canacona, Tawadkar termed the allegation as false and unfortunate, saying it had hurt the sentiments of the tribal community. He questioned Kankonkar's contribution towards the tribal rights movement and asked what role he had played in securing tribal status, government jobs and welfare schemes for the Gauda, Kunbi and Velip communities.

## Goa to Preserve Selaulim Reservoir Water with Kushawati Pumping Initiative

■ New Water Management Strategy Aims to Cut Transmission Losses and Strengthen Drinking Water Security

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** The Goa government has launched a new water management initiative that is expected to significantly reduce the release of water from the Selaulim reservoir by drawing supplies directly from the Kushawati River. The project, which becomes operational from Friday evening, is projected to conserve nearly 70 million litres of



day.

Water Resources Minister Subhash Shirodkar said the decision has been taken to improve the efficiency of the State's water distribution system, especially at a time when monsoon rainfall has

According to the minister, the government had been releasing around 70 MLD of water from the Selaulim dam to meet the requirements of Davorlim and surrounding areas, including the Verna Industrial Estate. However, a substantial quantity of water was being lost before reaching its destination due to seepage and other transmission-related factors.

## Maratha Samaj Calls for Welfare Commission for General Category

■ Organisation Seeks Dedicated Support for Economically Weaker Families Outside Reserved Categories

Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** The Akhil Gomantak Kshatriya Maratha Samaj has appealed to the Goa Government to set up a welfare commission for the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) belonging to the General Category, arguing that many financially vulnerable families remain outside the scope



of existing welfare bodies. The organisation said a dedicated commission

would help address the educational, economic and social needs of people

from the General Category who qualify under the EWS category but require greater institutional support. Among its key demands are scholarships for school and college students, fee assistance for deserving candidates, financial aid for competitive examination coaching, housing assistance for needy families, and subsidised loans to encourage self-

employment among unemployed youth. The Samaj also stressed that members of the Kshatriya Maratha community have played an important role in Goa's history and development and deserve equal access to welfare initiatives aimed at improving opportunities for economically weaker sections.

# Two Held, Abducted Man Rescued In Margao Property Dispute Case

■ Wife Among Accused As Police Recover Victim; Investigation Underway

**Team Goemkarponn**

**MARGAO:** Margao Town Police have arrested two persons and rescued an abducted man after a woman allegedly kidnapped her husband with the help of two accomplices over a property dispute.

According to police, the complaint was lodged on July 24 by 20-year-old Diya Kudchodkar, daughter of Sanjeel Kudchodkar and a resident of Gogal, Margao. She alleged that at



around 12.50 pm, her mother, Maria Luiza Fernandes e Kudchodkar, along with two unidentified persons, abducted her father, Sanjeel Kudchodkar, from Vasant

Arcade Building at Comba, Margao, in a Maruti Suzuki Celerio (GA-08-M-1669) following a property dispute. Based on the complaint, Margao Town Police registered Crime No. 79/2026 under Section 140(3) read with Section 3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023. The investigation

was entrusted to PSI Sameer N. Gaonkar. During the investigation, police identified and apprehended the two previously unidentified accused as Sassir Bin Masood of Maina, Curtorim, originally from Hyderabad, and Shah Ali Saudagar of Davorlim, originally from Solapur, Maharashtra. The abducted victim, Sanjeel Kudchodkar, was also rescued safely.

Police said further investigation into the case is in progress.



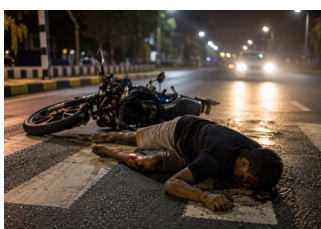
## Contractor, Site Engineer Booked For Negligence After Mapusa Construction Collapse

■ Six Workers Injured As Under-Construction Gallery Projection Collapses; One Still Undergoing Treatment

**Team Goemkarponn**

**MAPUSA:** Mapusa Police have registered a case against a contractor and a site engineer for alleged negligence following the collapse of an under-construction gallery projection that left six labourers injured. According to police, the incident occurred on July 19 at around 12.30 pm when the under-construction gallery projection collapsed at a construction site. The case was registered on July 23 at 7.21 pm based on a complaint filed by HC Vijay Gadekar of Mapusa Police Station. Police have booked contractor Avub Ibrahim Inamdar of Pune, Maharashtra, who was responsible for executing

the construction work, and site engineer Gunjesh Bharat Naik of Velguem, Valpoi, who was responsible for supervising the work and implementing safety measures. The complaint alleges that both accused acted with gross negligence and failed to discharge their duty of care towards the labourers at the site, resulting in the collapse and injuries to six workers. The injured have been identified as Durgesh Lalan Parasa (18), Mohammad Hossain Ali (26), Habibur Rehman (34), Nasim Ali (30), Binod Kumar Prasad (40), and Mohammad Rakiul Khan (35), all residents of M.A. Reality, Dangui Colony, Mapusa.



## Pedestrian Seriously Injured After Motorcycle Hits Him In Fatorda

**Team Goemkarponn**

**FATORDA:** Fatorda Police have registered a case against a motorcycle rider for allegedly driving rashly and negligently, resulting in serious injuries to a pedestrian.

According to police, the incident occurred on July 18 at around 8.21 pm when Aditya Jadhav, a resident of Gavliwada, Fatorda, originally from Kolhapur, Maharashtra, was riding a Yamaha motorcycle from Arlem Circle towards Fatorda Junction.

Police said that upon reaching opposite Gehlot Super Market at Gavliwada, the rider allegedly hit pedestrian Zubin Ornelas De Miranda, a resident of Borda, Fatorda, while he was crossing the road. The impact threw the pedestrian onto the road, causing serious injuries to his left leg, face and other parts of the body.

The case was registered based on a complaint filed by HC Sanjay Sawant Dessai of Fatorda Police Station.

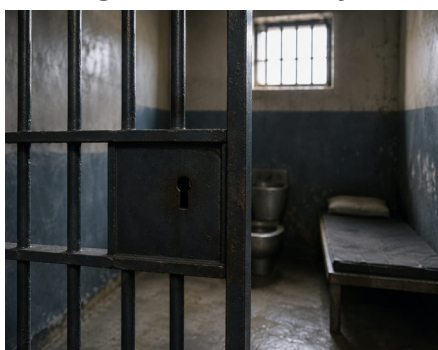
## Undertrial Prisoner Booked For Assault Inside Colvale Central Jail

■ Inmate Allegedly Attacks Fellow Prisoner With Carrom Board, Causing Fracture Injuries

**Team Goemkarponn**

**COLVALE:** An undertrial prisoner has been booked for allegedly assaulting a fellow inmate inside Central Jail, Colvale, following a dispute linked to previous enmity.

According to police, the complaint was lodged on July 23 by N.B. Pavane, Deputy Superintendent of Central Jail, Colvale. The incident reportedly occurred on July 19 at around 4 pm in Block No. 3, Cell No. 4/5 of the jail.



Police said the accused, identified as undertrial prisoner Mohammad Shainsha, allegedly abused fellow undertrial prisoner Mohammad Ashraf using

filthy language before attacking him with a carrom board.

The assault reportedly caused fracture injuries to Ashraf's left eye and cheekbone. The accused also allegedly threatened to kill the victim over previous enmity. A case has been registered, and further investigation is being carried out by PSI Vishnu Jadhav.

## Scorpio Rolls Down Driveway, Damages Vehicles And Garage In Dona Paula

■ Driver Booked After Uncontrolled Vehicle Crashes Into House Compound, Causing Property Damage

**Team Goemkarponn**

**PANAJI:** Panaji Police have registered a case against a woman after her Mahindra Scorpio allegedly rolled downhill in reverse and crashed into a garage, damaging vehicles and a compound wall at Dona Paula.

According to police, the complaint was filed by Maria Anezia Fernandes, a resident



of Good Shepherd Residence, Nagali Hills, Dona Paula. The incident occurred on July 11 at

around 9.45 am.

Police said the accused, Monia Deruz, a resident of Caranzalem,

was parking her Mahindra Scorpio (GA-07-C-9001) on a sloping driveway when she allegedly failed to take proper care and precaution to secure the vehicle.

As a result, the Scorpio rolled downhill in an uncontrolled reverse direction and rammed into the complainant's garage.

The vehicle then collided with a Toyota Fortuner (GA-05-D-3848),

motorcycles parked inside the garage, and the compound wall, causing substantial property damage.

Based on the complaint, Panaji Police registered Crime No. 124/2026 under Sections 125 and 324(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. The investigation is being carried out by HC Rajesh Yeshi of Panaji Police Station.

# Over 16,000 Trained In Workplace Safety In Five Years: CM

■ Chief Minister Inaugurates ₹13.53-Crore Aparant Surakshita Bhavan At Altinho

## Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant said the Inspectorate of Factories & Boilers has trained more than 16,000 workers, students and industry professionals over the past five years, strengthening occupational safety awareness across Goa.

Speaking after inaugurating the ₹13.53-crore Aparant Surakshita Bhavan at



Altinho, Panaji, the Chief Minister said worker safety is the foundation of sustainable industrial development and that investment in occupational

safety is an investment in Goa's workforce and future.

The newly inaugurated building, developed by the Goa State Infrastructure Development Corporation (GSIDC), houses the Inspectorate of Factories & Boilers under one roof to improve coordination, regulatory services and public service delivery.

The facility includes advanced safety testing laboratories, an Occupational Health

Laboratory, administrative offices, a library, training and conference halls, inspection sections and barrier-free public amenities.

Dr. Sawant said the government's commitment goes beyond creating infrastructure and focuses on building safer workplaces, skilled manpower and stronger institutions while promoting ease of doing business and the vision of a Swayampurna Goa.



## Preparations Begin For 127th Shree Damodar Bhajani Saptah

■ Traditional Prayers Offered At Zambaulim Temple; Festival Arrangements Set In Motion

## Team Goemkarponn

**VASCO:** Preparations for the 127th Shree Damodar Bhajani Saptah commenced on Thursday with members of the Shree Damodar Bhajani Saptah Samiti offering traditional prayers at the Shri Damodar Saunthan in Zambaulim. The delegation was led by Samiti President Bharat Kolgaonkar, Saptah Central Committee President Prashant Joshi and Vasco MLA Krishna Salkar, along with committee members and prominent citizens of Vasco. As part of the long-standing tradition, the members offered a coconut at the feet of Lord Damodar, seeking blessings for the smooth and successful conduct

of the annual religious festival. The sacred coconut will later be ceremoniously brought to the Shri Damodar Temple in Vasco, marking the formal beginning of the Bhajani Saptah celebrations. The ritual symbolises the spiritual bond between the Shri Damodar temples at Zambaulim and Vasco. Speaking on the occasion, Samiti President Bharat Kolgaonkar said the committee is committed to organising a grand and well-managed festival while preserving its rich traditions. He added that prayers were offered for the health, prosperity and well-being of the people of Vasco and for the successful completion of the festival.



## Congress Demands Immediate Clean-Up Of Chaudi Fish Market

## Team Goemkarponn

**CANACONA:** The Goa Pradesh Congress Committee has demanded the immediate cleaning and restoration of the unhygienic Chaudi Municipal Fish Market, warning that the prevailing sanitary conditions could trigger a public health crisis if left unaddressed. A delegation of the Canacona Congress Parivar on Thursday submitted a memorandum to the Chief Minister, Health Minister, Urban Development Minister, Chief Secretary, Director of Health Services, Health Officer of CHC Canacona, Administrator of Canacona Municipal Council and other authorities, seeking urgent intervention. Congress leader Janardhan Bhandari clarified that the party was not opposing the proposed new fish market but was insisting that the existing market be cleaned and maintained until the new facility is ready. "The new fish market will come when it is constructed, but the authorities cannot ignore the dangerous condition of the existing market.

## Goa Barge Owners Association Elects New Executive Committee

■ Mayur Parsekar Takes Charge As President; New Team To Focus On Revival Of Inland Barge Industry

## Team Goemkarponn

**VASCO:** The Goa Barge Owners Association has constituted its new Executive Committee for 2026-27, with the newly elected team assuming charge to lead the association and address issues concerning Goa's inland barge industry.

The new Executive Committee officially took office on June 27, 2026, and held its first meeting on Friday at the Association's office in Vasco. During the



meeting, members discussed key priorities for the coming year and reaffirmed their commitment to safeguarding the interests of barge owners across the state. Mahendra (Mayur) Parsekar has been elected as President of the Association, while

Derrik Vales will serve as Vice-President. Rahul Naik has been elected Honorary Secretary and Alex Coutinho as Honorary Treasurer. The Executive Committee also includes Chandrakant Gawas, Raymond Desa and Rohit Parab as committee members.

## Horticulture Staff Urge Viresh Borkar to Raise Employees' Issues in Assembly

■ RGP MLA Assures Full Support, Says Concerns Will Be Taken Up During Upcoming Session

## Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** Representatives and staff of the Horticulture Department from across Goa met Revolutionary Goans Party (RGP) MLA Viresh Borkar on Saturday to seek his intervention in addressing various long-pending issues concerning employees and the department's functioning. During the



meeting, the delegation highlighted concerns related to service matters, working conditions, infrastructure, and administrative issues.

They appealed to the MLA to take up these matters with the

Government and ensure that their grievances are addressed.

Borkar assured the delegation that he would extend his full support and said the issues affecting Horticulture Department employees deserve

serious attention. He stated that he would raise the matter during the upcoming Goa Legislative Assembly session and press the Government to find appropriate solutions. The RGP MLA also reiterated his commitment to standing with government employees and ensuring that their concerns are heard on the floor of the House.

## Cruz Silva Seeks Full-Time Doctor For Chinchinim PHC

## Team Goemkarponn

**CHINCHINIM:** Aam Aadmi

Party MLA from Velim, Engr. Cruz Silva, has demanded the immediate appointment of a full-time doctor at the Chinchinim Primary Health Centre (PHC), stating that the absence of a regular doctor is causing hardship to residents seeking medical care.

During a visit to the PHC, Silva interacted with patients and local residents to assess the healthcare facilities.



# 'Chikhal Kalo Celebrates Unity Beyond Barriers': Goa CM Inaugurates Monsoon Festival At Marcel

■ Three day cultural celebration begins with music, traditions and devotional performances ahead of the iconic mud play

## Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** The Department of Tourism officially inaugurated the three day Chikhal Kalo Festival 2026 at Marcel on Friday, marking the start of one of Goa's most celebrated monsoon festivals that showcases the state's rich cultural heritage and community spirit.

The festival commenced near the Shree Devki Krishna Temple in the presence of Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant, Tourism Minister Rohan A. Khaunte, Goa Tourism Development Corporation Chairman Kedar J. Naik, Priol MLA Govind Gaude, Director of Tourism Kedar Naik, GTDC Managing Director Kuldeep Arolkar and other dignitaries, devotees and visitors.

Addressing the gathering, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant described Chikhal Kalo as a celebration of unity and togetherness. He said the traditional mud play is much more than a ritual, bringing people together without barriers and reflecting the true spirit of Goa's culture



and community. A special highlight of the inaugural ceremony was the felicitation of acclaimed vocalist Mahesh Kale with a Kaavi portrait created by noted Goan artist Sagar Naik Mule, celebrating the state's distinctive artistic traditions. The ceremony was followed by Mahesh Kale's devotional performance of Abhangwari, which captivated the audience with soulful renditions.

The day's celebrations also featured a cooking competition and Anubhooti, a musical

presentation by Tanvi Walawalkar and The Heart of Jogan Band, creating a vibrant blend of music, spirituality and culture.

Tourism Minister Rohan A. Khaunte invited visitors to witness the iconic Chikhal Kalo mud play on Sunday, describing it as a unique experience where people of all ages come together in a spirit of joy, devotion and community. He said the festival remains one of Goa's most cherished traditions and offers visitors an authentic insight into the state's

cultural identity.

Tourism Director Kedar Naik said festivals like Chikhal Kalo play an important role in preserving Goa's heritage while encouraging visitors to discover the state's cultural richness beyond its beaches.

The festival will conclude on Sunday, July 26, with the traditional Chikhal Kalo mud play beginning at 11 am, celebrating the playful spirit of Lord Krishna through age old mud games and community participation.

## 'Goa Has Much More Than Beaches': Tourism Department Launches Ekadasha Teertha Yatra

■ New three day pilgrimage circuit connects eleven revered temples, strengthening Goa's spiritual tourism under the 'Goa Beyond Beaches' vision

## Team Goemkarponn

**PANAJI:** The Goa Department of Tourism has launched the Ekadasha Teertha Yatra, a specially curated three day pilgrimage circuit connecting eleven of the state's most revered temples, marking a significant step in promoting Goa as a year round spiritual and cultural tourism destination.

The initiative was inaugurated by Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant at the Shree Mahaganapati Temple in Khandola in the presence of Tourism Minister Rohan A. Khaunte, Goa Tourism Development Corporation Chairman Kedar J. Naik, Director of Tourism Kedar Naik, tourism officials, temple committee members and other dignitaries.

As part of the launch, the Department of Tourism and the Goa Tourism Development Corporation flagged off two dedicated pilgrimage buses to provide devotees and visitors with a convenient and seamless travel experience along the temple circuit. Addressing the gathering, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said Goa's rich spiritual legacy extends through its temples, churches and heritage monuments. He noted that the new pilgrimage initiative

would encourage both devotees and tourists to explore sacred destinations across the state while strengthening efforts to promote Goa's diverse cultural heritage.

Tourism Minister Rohan A. Khaunte said the initiative reflects the government's 'Goa Beyond Beaches' vision, which aims to showcase the state's lesser known attractions through eco tourism, adventure tourism, hinterland experiences, homestays and now spiritual tourism. He described the Ekadasha Teertha Yatra as another milestone in expanding Goa's tourism offerings while creating greater opportunities for local communities. The three day pilgrimage has been designed to blend faith with heritage by connecting centuries old temples and allowing visitors to explore nearby cultural, historical and natural attractions. The itinerary covers Shree Mahaganapati Temple, Shree Devki Krishna Temple, Shree Anant Devasthan and Tambdi Surla Mahadev Temple on the first day. The second day includes Shree Brahmadev Devasthan, Shree Saunthan Dattawadi and Shree Saptakoteswar Devasthan, while the final day features Shree Parashuram Devalaya, Shree Shantadurga Kunkalikin Devasthan, Shree Damodar Temple and Shree Hari Mandir.



...CONTD FROM PAGE 01

## Union Education Min Dharmendra Pradhan Resigns Following NEET-UG Controversy

complexities or lose focus on their studies. Reflecting on the situation, he wrote in his letter that seeing the sequence of events over the last ten days deeply pained his heart, adding that the matter was not one of personal prestige, but rather a commitment to ensuring India's youth power—the true strength of the nation—does not fall into a web of confusion.

In closing, Pradhan expressed his heartfelt gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his guidance and constant support, while also thanking his Cabinet colleagues and ministry

officials. Reaffirming that serving the nation remains his highest priority, he concluded by invoking the blessings of Lord Jagannath and promising to continue serving both the people of Odisha and the youth of India.

## Ajay Kholkar Alleges Bid To Merge RGP, Rejects Borkar's National President Claim

not recognise the office of National President, all letters and communications issued by Borkar in that capacity are "null and void" and have no organisational validity.

The RGP treasurer further alleged that rumours had been circulating about Borkar joining the Congress and claimed that his recent actions indicated an attempt

to merge the Revolutionary Goans Party with another political party. He also alleged that repeated demands for minutes of party meetings and other internal documents were part of a larger conspiracy to gain control of the organisation.

Calling Borkar's claim a "national blunder" rather than a "masterstroke", Kholkar questioned where the MLA had been for the past four-and-a-half years if he was indeed the party's National President. Kholkar also announced that the party would initiate fresh disciplinary proceedings against Borkar for allegedly portraying himself as the National President. He said disciplinary action against the MLA was already underway and that the latest developments would be incorporated into the ongoing proceedings.

# 'Students Turned Setback Into Success': Sitharaman Defends Government's Response To Paper Leak Crisis

■ Finance Minister says timely re exams, arrests and reforms helped students continue their academic plans

Team Goemkarponn

**NEW DELHI:** Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has defended the Centre's handling of the examination paper leak controversy, saying many students who were initially affected by the leaks used the additional preparation time to improve their performance.

Speaking about the



ongoing protests over paper leaks, Sitharaman said several students had shared that although the leaks initially caused distress, they later benefited from the

extra time before the re examinations. According to her, many candidates were able to prepare better and achieve improved results despite the disruption.

She said the government acted quickly by ordering re examinations, ensuring results were declared without unnecessary delays and allowing students to move ahead

with admissions to higher education institutions. She added that prompt arrests of those involved in the paper leak cases demonstrated the government's commitment to protecting the integrity of competitive examinations.

Sitharaman stressed that examination leaks are highly sensitive issues that directly affect the future of young people.



## 'Students Want Action, Not Videos': Rahul Gandhi Demands Dharmendra Pradhan's Dismissal

■ Congress leader backs protesting students, says removing the Education Minister from the Cabinet is the only acceptable solution

Team Goemkarponn

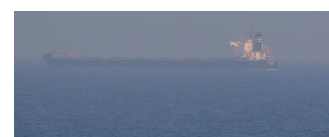
**NEW DELHI:** Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi on Saturday met students who had been on a 23 day hunger strike at Delhi's Jantar Mantar, intensifying his criticism of the Centre over the examination paper leak controversy. Standing alongside the protesters, he renewed his demand for the dismissal of Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, saying students would accept nothing less.

Rahul Gandhi described Pradhan as the face of the alleged collapse of the country's education system and insisted that shifting him to another ministry would not address the issue. He said students were clear that the minister must

be removed from the government entirely and not simply reassigned to a different portfolio.

Taking aim at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Gandhi said students were seeking decisive action rather than public messages. Referring to the Prime Minister's recent outreach to young people, he remarked that assurances alone were not enough and urged the government to act by removing the Education Minister.

The Congress leader also highlighted allegations of police action during the student protests. Pointing to an injured protester standing beside him, Gandhi demanded accountability against those responsible for the use of force during demonstrations.



## India Condemns Black Sea Ship Attack After Indian Crew Member Killed

Team Goemkarponn

**NEW DELHI:** An Indian national was killed after a commercial cargo vessel came under attack while transiting the Black Sea, prompting India to strongly condemn the incident and raise concerns over the growing risks to civilian shipping in the region. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) confirmed that the vessel, MV OMORFI, was attacked on July 18 while sailing through the Black Sea, reportedly in Russian territorial waters. The ministry said one Indian crew member lost his life in the strike and expressed condolences to the victim's family. According to the MEA, the ship had a crew of 10, including three Indian nationals. While one sailor was killed, the other two Indian crew members are reported to be safe. Describing the attack as a matter of serious concern, India condemned strikes targeting commercial shipping and civilian seafarers. The ministry warned that increasing attacks on merchant vessels pose a significant threat to freedom of navigation and the smooth flow of international trade.

## 'Students Should Not Suffer': Sonam Wangchuk Explains Why He Ended 26 Day Hunger Strike

■ Activist says protecting protesters from legal action was his top priority, while insisting the movement for accountability will continue

Team Goemkarponn

**NEW DELHI:** Activist Sonam Wangchuk has explained his decision to end his 26 day hunger strike without securing the resignation of Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, saying his immediate priority was to protect protesting students from legal action following the nationwide demonstrations over alleged examination



irregularities.

Wangchuk ended his indefinite fast shortly after midnight on Thursday after the Centre provided a written assurance that no cases would be registered against

peaceful protesters. The government also committed to holding a detailed discussion in Parliament

on examination reforms and paper leaks while agreeing to consider compensation for the families of students who allegedly died by suicide following the NEET paper leak.

## Months Long Manhunt Ends As Maharashtra TET Paper Leak Kingpin Arrested In Bihar

■ Police say the alleged mastermind will be brought to Maharashtra for interrogation as investigators probe links to a wider examination leak network

Team Goemkarponn

**MUMBAI:** The alleged mastermind behind the Maharashtra Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) paper leak has been arrested in Bihar after evading authorities for several months, marking a major breakthrough in the high profile examination fraud case.

Maharashtra Police arrested Bijendra Gupta following an extensive interstate search operation.



Officials said Gupta had repeatedly escaped arrest despite multiple raids conducted at different locations in Bihar. During the operation, police also detained another suspect

believed to be connected to the case.

Investigators believe Gupta played a central role in orchestrating the Maharashtra TET paper leak and is suspected of

having links to several examination paper leak cases across the country. His alleged involvement in multiple cheating syndicates had made him one of the most wanted accused in the investigation. The case has already led to the arrest of several individuals, including Gupta's wife. However, Gupta had remained absconding, prompting police to intensify their search across state borders until his capture.

## 'Flood Claims Are Baseless': India Rejects Pakistan's Allegations Over Chenab River Surge

Team Goemkarponn

**NEW DELHI:** India has strongly rejected allegations circulating in sections of the Pakistani media that it deliberately caused flooding across the border, describing the claims as baseless, factually incorrect and technically untenable. Addressing a media briefing on Friday, Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said the recent rise in the Chenab River's water level was the result of intense monsoon rainfall over Jammu.

# Unbeaten Dempo Goa Challengers Storm Into UTT Season 7 Final With Dominant Win

■ Alvaro Robles shines as Goa outclass Dabang Delhi TTC 8-2 to move within one victory of the title

## Team Goemkarponn

**MUMBAI:** Dempo Goa Challengers continued their remarkable unbeaten run in Ultimate Table Tennis Season 7, booking their place in the final with a commanding 8-2 victory over former champions Dabang Delhi TTC in the first semi final on Friday.

Olympian Alvaro Robles delivered a match



winning performance, starring in both the men's singles and mixed doubles to guide Goa to another

convincing triumph. The victory takes the league leaders one step closer to completing a historic title

winning campaign without suffering a defeat.

Goa made a flying start as Robles comfortably defeated Youssef Abdelaziz in straight games. After dominating the opening two games, the Spaniard staged a spirited comeback from 7-10 down in the third to complete a 3-0 victory and hand his team an early advantage.



## Ashank Joins List of Champions at Verenkar Memorial Major Ranking Table Tennis Tournament

■ Ishita, Ruhaan, Yug, Sachi, Ashank and Shaurya claim titles across age group categories

'I Never Gave Up On My Dream': Jhandu Kumar's Inspiring Journey To Commonwealth Games Bronze

From driving an e-rickshaw and selling vegetables to standing on the podium, para powerlifter's perseverance brings India pride

## Team Goemkarponn

**GLASGOW:** India's para powerlifter Jhandu Kumar scripted an inspiring success story at the Commonwealth Games 2026, winning the bronze medal in the men's heavyweight para powerlifting event after overcoming years of financial hardship and

personal struggle.

An emotional Jhandu dedicated his medal to the sacrifices he made on his journey to international success.

Reflecting on his achievement, he said he had driven an e-rickshaw and sold vegetables to support himself while continuing to chase his dream of representing India on the global stage.

Jhandu said he never allowed difficult circumstances to weaken his determination. Despite the challenges, he remained confident that consistent hard work and perseverance would eventually earn him a medal for the country.



## 'Let's Focus On His Batting': India Rules Out Rushing Vaibhav Sooryavanshi Into All Rounder Role

## Team Goemkarponn

**HARARE:** India's coaching staff has made it clear that teenage sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi will not be rushed into becoming an all rounder, with the team choosing to prioritise the 15 year old's batting development for now.

Stand in spin bowling coach Sunil Joshi said the youngster has been exceptional with the bat and the immediate focus will remain on helping him develop as a specialist batter before exploring other aspects of his game.

Sooryavanshi has enjoyed remarkable success in Harare, where he recently smashed an 18 ball half century against Zimbabwe after earlier producing a match winning 175 in the Under 19 World Cup final at the same venue. During that tournament, he also showcased his part time spin by claiming a wicket, prompting discussions about his all round potential.

## 'No Question Of Retirement': BCCI Dismisses Speculation Over Rohit Sharma's ODI Future

■ Vice President Rajeev Shukla says India captain remains part of the team as board backs selectors and current leadership

## Team Goemkarponn

**NEW DELHI:** The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has firmly rejected speculation surrounding Rohit Sharma's international future, with vice president Rajeev Shukla stating that there is "no question" of the Indian captain retiring from One Day Internationals.

Rumours over Rohit's



future gathered pace after reports suggested the ongoing ODI series against England could be his final assignment in

the format. Speculation also claimed that the team management and selectors were looking beyond the 38 year old opener as they planned for the 2027 ODI World Cup. However, Shukla dismissed the reports, saying Rohit continues to be an integral part of the Indian team and that the claims circulating on social media and in sections of the media have no basis.

## Anahat Singh Becomes First Indian To Reach World Junior Squash Championships Final

■ Teenager defeats Egypt's Barb Sameh to move within one victory of a historic world junior title

## Team Goemkarponn

**ONTARIO:** Indian squash sensation Anahat Singh created history by becoming the first player from the country to reach the women's singles final of the World Junior Squash Championships after defeating Egypt's Barb Sameh 3-1 in the semi final in Ontario, Canada.

The 18 year old is now just one victory away from becoming



India's first ever World Junior squash champion. She will face Egypt's second seed Ruqayya Salem in the title clash later on Saturday. Anahat's journey to the final has been outstanding. She secured her place in the last four with an impressive 3-1 victory over Habiba Rizk in the

quarter finals, becoming the first Indian to qualify for the semi finals of the prestigious tournament in consecutive editions. After winning a historic bronze medal in the 2025 championship following a semi final exit, Anahat has gone one step further this year, underlining her steady rise among the world's brightest young squash talents. Ranked World No. 20, she entered the tournament as one of the favourites and has

lived up to expectations with a series of confident performances. Reflecting on her semi final victory, Anahat said she knew she had to produce her best after a closely contested meeting with Barb Sameh at the British Junior Open earlier this year. She admitted she was not fully satisfied with her previous performance in the tournament and was determined to raise her level in the semi final.