



Porvorim Elevated Corridor Restrictions Put Safety Objective Under Scanner

■ Road safety panel says shifting traffic to service roads may leave five black spots unaddressed

Team Goemkarponn

PORVORIM: The restrictions imposed on the newly opened elevated corridor in Porvorim have raised questions over whether the project will be able to deliver its intended road-safety benefits, with the North Goa District Road Safety Committee (NGDRC) pointing out that five existing black spots could remain unresolved.

The elevated corridor was planned to improve traffic movement and



address accident-prone stretches in Porvorim. However, a fatal accident reported within 24 hours of its opening prompted the Public Works Department (PWD) to stop two-wheelers from using the corridor and close access points towards the Atal

Setu side.

The NGDRC said directing traffic back onto the service roads could undermine the purpose of addressing the identified black spots.

The committee stressed the need for motorists to receive advance information about the corridor and for adequate space to be provided at the Atal Setu entry point for safe

merging.

It said information boards should be placed around one to two kilometres before the entry point. Adequate width should also be provided at the opening to allow vehicles to merge smoothly, in accordance with Indian Roads Congress (IRC) standards.

Following the fatal accident, two-wheelers have been directed to use the service roads below the elevated corridor. With

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Yaniv Benaim Appears Before Merces Court After High Court Surrender Order

Israeli national alias Atala returns to trial court after absence from proceedings; bail challenge to be heard on September 21

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Israeli national Yaniv Benaim, popularly known as "Atala", appeared before the trial court at Merces on Tuesday after the High Court of Bombay at Goa directed him to surrender in connection with a narcotics case registered in 2025.

Benaim's appearance comes after the High Court ordered him to surrender before the trial court by September 16 while scheduling September 21 for hearing his petition challenging the rejection of his latest bail application.

The North Goa Special NDPS Court had earlier turned down his fresh request for bail after taking note of his absence from the proceedings. The trial court subsequently issued a non-bailable warrant against him.

Benaim had been away from the proceedings after his bail was cancelled

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Atala Remanded To 14 Days In Judicial Custody In Goa Drugs Case

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The trial court at Merces has remanded Israeli national Yaniv Benaim, alias Atala, to 14 days of judicial custody in connection with the ongoing drugs case. Benaim was produced before the court following the latest developments in the case. The court subsequently ordered that he be kept in judicial custody for the next 14 days. Advocate Mangurish Usgaonkar, who is appearing for Benaim, said that his client's bail application is currently pending before the High Court.



The rain-kissed streets of heritage Fontainhas, Panjim. Perfectly mirrored after a Goan monsoon shower. Photo: Rozario Estibeiro

Damu Naik Says BJP Ready To Take On Vijai Sardesai In Fatorda

■ BJP state president says he will contest Fatorda in 2027 if party leadership assigns him the seat, challenges Vijai Sardesai to a debate on 15 years of development

Team Goemkarponn

FATORDA: Goa BJP president Damu Naik has said he is ready to contest the 2027 Assembly election from Fatorda if directed by the party leadership, setting the stage for a potential electoral contest against Goa Forward chief and incumbent MLA Vijai Sardesai.

Naik said his candidature would depend on the decision of the BJP leadership, but asserted



that Fatorda would be among the constituencies where the party expects to emerge victorious in the 2027 elections.

"I will contest the upcoming election from Fatorda if my party tells me to descend into the battlefield," Naik said.

"UPI Policy Decisions Are Made Independently": Government Rejects 'External Pressure' Claims On MDR

■ Finance Ministry says new merchant fee framework aims to make digital payments sustainable, while Congress questions the move

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: The Centre on Wednesday rejected allegations that the decision to introduce a Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) on certain UPI merchant transactions was influenced by pressure from the United States, asserting that India's digital payments policies are formulated independently.

The Finance Ministry dismissed claims of



foreign influence, stating that the objective of the revised framework is to create a financially sustainable, inclusive and affordable digital payments ecosystem.

The clarification came after Congress leaders

questioned whether the introduction of a 0.4 per cent MDR on specified merchant transactions above Rs 2,000 was linked to demands from the United States or aimed at creating more space for international card payment companies to compete with UPI.

Congress leaders referred to earlier comments by the United States Trade

Representative regarding India's zero MDR policy and argued that the cost of maintaining the UPI ecosystem could be managed through other financial mechanisms. They also linked the issue to broader India-US economic and trade discussions. The government, however, maintained that the decision was based entirely on domestic policy considerations and not external factors.

A Supari on Yourself? Then What Was the Real Target?

The Porvorim firing case has taken a strange and potentially explosive turn.

What initially appeared to be a straightforward case of hired shooters targeting a businessman has now acquired another dimension after one of the main accused reportedly claimed that he was himself hired by Shrinivas Nayak to carry out the firing.

If that claim is true, the entire narrative changes.

If it is false, then the police must establish why such a claim was made and whether it was an attempt to mislead the investigation.

Either way, one question cannot be avoided: why would anyone allegedly pay a supari to have shots fired at himself?

A staged attack is not something that can simply be assumed because the target survived. There is currently no established evidence in the public domain proving that the Porvorim firing was staged. The accused's claim remains an allegation that must be tested against forensic evidence, CCTV footage, call records, financial transactions and the complete chain of events.

But it certainly raises questions that investigators must answer.

The August 28 firing outside Hotel Neo Majestic was serious enough to trigger a major investigation. The Crime Branch has now arrested six people in connection with the case, including two alleged shooters. One was arrested in Uttar Pradesh and another in Chennai.

That means investigators believe there was an organised operation involving several people.

So, if Nayak himself allegedly commissioned the firing, what was the objective?

Was it merely to create fear?

Was someone else supposed to be blamed?

Was there a business dispute in which an attack could have created leverage?

Was the intention to obtain protection, generate sympathy, intimidate somebody or create a particular narrative?

Or was there another target altogether?

These are not questions that can be answered through political statements, social media theories or courtroom sound bites.

The alleged claim of the accused makes the money trail particularly important. Who paid whom? From where did the money originate? Were there cash payments or

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bank transfers? Who arranged the shooters' travel and accommodation? Who supplied the weapon? Who communicated with them before and after the incident?

And then comes the most basic question.

If the intention was genuinely to kill, why did the alleged attack fail?

If the intention was not to kill but merely to send a message, then to whom was that message directed?

The answers could completely change the understanding of the case.

There is also the wider concern

about organised crime. If professional shooters were indeed brought into Goa from outside, this is no longer merely a local dispute. It raises questions about criminal networks, their ability to operate across State borders and their familiarity with Goa's business environment.

The police have already demonstrated that the investigation extends beyond Goa, with suspects traced and arrested outside the State. But arrests alone cannot close the case.

The real test is whether investigators can establish the complete conspiracy.

And if the accused's claim about Nayak hiring the shooters is found to have substance, the motive becomes even more significant. A person allegedly commissioning an attack on himself would necessarily have a reason for doing so. That reason could potentially be more important than the firing itself.

At the same time, investigators must guard against accepting the allegation at face value. An accused facing serious charges has his own reasons for making statements. His version has to be independently corroborated.

This is where forensic investigation becomes crucial.

CCTV footage, ballistic evidence, mobile phone locations, call detail records, financial transactions, travel records and communications between the accused and the alleged mastermind should tell investigators whether the story holds together.

Goa has seen several sensational crime cases in which the initial headlines were dramatic but the final answers were far less clear.

The Porvorim case should not become another such mystery.

If it was a genuine attempt on Nayak's life, the public deserves to know who ordered it and why.

If it was an intimidation exercise, the intended message and its recipient must be established.

And if the accused's extraordinary claim is supported by evidence and the firing was actually commissioned by the supposed victim himself, then Goa has an even bigger question to confront. A supari was allegedly given. The shots were allegedly fired. But if the target himself ordered the firing, what was he trying to achieve?

That is the real mystery in Porvorim.

And until investigators answer that question with evidence, the firing case remains far from its final chapter.

EDITOR SPEAKS

Lodha Got What It Wanted. So What Now?

By Suraj Nandrekar

For 161 days, the people of Karapur and Sarvan kept asking for one thing: stop the work.

Now, the Karapur panchayat has issued a stop-work order against the One Goa township project of the House of Abhinandan Lodha. The villagers have called off their prolonged agitation following the order.

But the irony is difficult to miss.

The developer now says it will fight the stop work order in court and continue with its project, maintaining that all necessary approvals are in place.

So, after months of protest, has the government actually solved the Karapur issue, or has it merely moved the dispute from the streets into the courtroom?

That is the real question.

For months, villagers raised concerns over the scale and impact of the project. They protested, approached authorities and demanded that work be stopped. The agitation did not disappear overnight. It continued for 161 days before the panchayat finally acted.

And now that the stop work order has been issued, the developer says it will legally challenge it.

This is where Goa's development model needs some serious introspection.

A project cannot be judged only by whether a developer possesses approvals. Nor can every project be rejected merely because a section of the local population opposes it. The real responsibility lies with the authorities that grant the permissions in the first place.

Were all the statutory requirements properly examined?

Were environmental concerns independently assessed?

Were the concerns of the local community properly heard before permissions were granted?

Did different government departments examine the project collectively, or did each authority simply process its own file?

These questions matter because once a major project reaches the construction stage, stopping it becomes politically, legally and financially complicated.

The developer says the project has valid approvals. The protesters have raised serious objections. The panchayat has now issued a stop work order. All three positions cannot simply coexist without somebody establishing what is legally correct.

And that somebody must be the competent authority and, if necessary, the courts.

There is also a larger Goa question here.

How many more times will the State allow a confrontation to continue for months before taking a decision?

If the project is legally compliant, the government should have the confidence to say so clearly and defend the approvals.

If there are genuine violations, the government must have the courage to act before construction advances further.

What Goa cannot afford is a system where projects are approved first, objections emerge later, protests continue for months and only then does the administration begin asking whether everything was done correctly.

That is not governance. That is crisis management.

The House of Abhinandan Lodha is now prepared to fight the panchayat order through legal remedies. That is its right. The villagers have also exercised their democratic right to protest.

The government must now ensure that neither side is allowed to turn this into a battle of influence.

Let the documents speak.

Let the permissions be examined.

Let the environmental and planning requirements be independently verified.

Let the court decide if the developer challenges the order.

But most importantly, let Goa learn from Karapur.

Development cannot mean that local concerns are heard only after 161 days of protest. And environmental opposition cannot become an automatic veto over every investment.

The answer has to lie somewhere between blind development and blind resistance.

Karapur has reached a temporary pause.

The stop work order may have given the villagers what they were demanding. But it has not ended the controversy. It has only brought the real question to the forefront:

Who got the approvals right in the first place?

Because if everything was legally cleared, why did it take 161 days of agitation to reach a stop work order?

And if something was wrong, why was the project allowed to reach this stage?

That is the accountability Goa should now demand.

Cigarette Butt Waste Emerges As A Hidden Threat On Goa Beaches

■ NIO Researchers Find 758 Discarded Filters Across Eight Tourist Hotspots

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: A new study has highlighted cigarette-butt litter as an overlooked source of pollution along Goa's heavily visited beaches, with researchers warning that discarded filters can persist in the environment and release contaminants into coastal ecosystems.

Researchers from the CSIR-National Institute of Oceanography (NIO), Goa, collected and documented 758 cigarette butts from eight beaches



frequented by tourists. Surveys carried out during different tidal conditions found an average of 3.15 cigarette butts per square metre.

Baga recorded the highest concentration, with 5.77 butts per square metre. Calangute followed at 5.60, while Arambol registered 4.97 butts per

square metre.

The distribution of the waste also pointed towards a connection with tourist activity, with beaches attracting larger crowds showing greater quantities of cigarette-butt litter. To measure the extent of the problem, the researchers applied the Cigarette Butt Pollution Index (CBPI) along with the Hazardous Items Index (HII). The CBPI assessment placed all eight surveyed beaches in the severe pollution category.



Three Speed Cameras Installed On Porvorim Elevated Corridor After Fatal Crash

■ Cameras deployed to enforce 65 kmph speed limit as authorities step up safety measures on newly opened flyover

Team Goemkarponn

PORVORIM: Authorities have installed three speed cameras on the Porvorim elevated corridor following a fatal crash that claimed two lives and another accident reported shortly after the flyover was opened. Two cameras have been positioned along the elevated corridor, while a third has been installed on the descending stretch towards Porvorim from Atal Setu.

The notified speed limit on the stretch is 65 kmph, with the cameras aimed at detecting speeding and other traffic violations. An intercepting radar had earlier been deployed as an immediate measure following the fatal

accident. Authorities have also temporarily prohibited two-wheelers from using the elevated corridor and closed service-road entry and exit points at Guirim and near Majestic as additional traffic-safety measures are being implemented. The fatal crash occurred within around a day of the corridor being opened.

According to the report, a car allegedly collided with a scooter from behind before the vehicles became involved in a collision with a truck near the Majestic-side junction. Two people died in the crash, prompting authorities to introduce additional speed enforcement and traffic restrictions on the corridor.

Congress-RG Alliance Sealed After AAP Talks Fail, Says Girish Chodankar

■ Congress leader says alliance aims to consolidate opposition votes; Goa Forward could still join if it makes a fresh proposal

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Congress leader Girish Chodankar said the party has finalised its alliance with the Revolutionary Goans (RG) after discussions with several political parties failed to progress.

Chodankar said talks had been held with all parties, including the Aam Aadmi Party and Goa Forward, but the discussions with AAP and Goa Forward eventually stopped. The Congress



subsequently moved ahead with RG and sealed the alliance.

According to Chodankar, the alliance is aimed at preventing a division of opposition votes and challenging

the BJP in the 2027 Goa Assembly elections.

He said the possibility of Goa Forward joining the alliance has not been completely ruled out. If Goa Forward makes a fresh proposal to move forward, the matter would be considered by the alliance committees of Congress and RG before a decision is taken. On Fatorda, Chodankar reiterated that Congress would contest the constituency with the intention of winning it.

'We Will Contest Fatorda To Win, Not To Defeat Vijai': Girish Chodankar

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: With no alliance reached with Goa Forward Party, Congress will contest Fatorda with the objective of winning the seat and not merely to defeat Goa Forward chief Vijai Sardesai, Congress leader Girish Chodankar said.

Tarun Tejpal, Birch Fire Accused Sent To Colvale Jail

■ Tejpal and three Arpora nightclub fire accused surrender before Mapusa court in separate cases

Team Goemkarponn

COLVALE: Former journalist Tarun Tejpal and three accused in the Arpora nightclub fire case were sent to Central Jail, Colvale, on Monday after surrendering before the Mapusa Additional District and Sessions Court in separate proceedings.

Tejpal surrendered to serve his 10-year rigorous imprisonment sentence in the 2013 alleged rape case involving his former

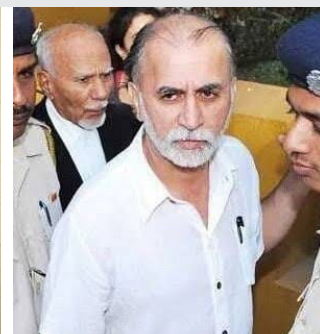


colleague. The court accepted his surrender following the Supreme Court's direction and ordered that he be taken into custody and sent to Colvale jail.

Speaking to the media after surrendering, Tejpal

said, "We are in the Supreme Court, and we are sure justice will come."

During the proceedings, his counsel sought permission to carry basic personal requirements, including prescribed medicines,



toiletries, slippers and books. The State did not oppose the medicines but submitted that other items should be permitted in accordance with the Goa Prisons Rules. The court allowed Tejpal to carry prescribed medicines,

toiletry items and books.

In a separate case, Birch by Romeo Lane owners Saurabh and Gaurav Luthra and their business partner Ajay Gupta also surrendered before the court in connection with the Arpora nightclub fire that claimed 25 lives.

The three were sent to Central Jail, Colvale, in judicial custody after the Supreme Court dismissed their challenge to the Bombay High Court at Goa's order cancelling their bail.

740 Drug Cases In Five Years: Goa Seizes The Contraband, But Where It Came From Remains A Question

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Goa's narcotics enforcement record over the past five years reveals a striking pattern: hundreds of cases have been registered and drugs worth hundreds of crores seized, but investigations have often struggled to establish the larger supply chains behind the contraband. Official crime data shows that 740 narcotics cases were registered in Goa between 2021 and 2025.

Goa Properties Attached In ED Probe Into Rs 77 Crore Club Fund Case

■ Agency Seizes Assets Worth Rs 13.44 Crore Across Goa, Mumbai And Madhya Pradesh

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Enforcement Directorate has provisionally attached assets valued at approximately Rs 13.44 crore in Goa and two other states as part of its investigation into the alleged diversion of nearly Rs 77 crore from the United Services Club in Mumbai. The latest action covers 13 movable and immovable assets, including residential flats, plots of land, fixed



deposits and funds held in bank accounts. The properties are located in Mumbai, Goa and Madhya Pradesh, the agency said.

The assets have been linked to former United Services Club Deputy

Secretary (Finance) Bernadette Bharat Varma, her husband Bharatkumar Shankarlal Varma and other persons under

investigation. The ED's case stems from an FIR filed by Mumbai Police. According to the agency, its investigation uncovered an alleged mechanism in which bank accounts bearing names

resembling those of the club's genuine vendors were used to receive club funds. The agency has alleged that approximately Rs 77 crore was routed through such accounts before being transferred to accounts associated with the Varma couple, their relatives and other associates.

Investigators have further alleged that a portion of the money was used for purchasing properties and placing funds in fixed deposits.



Unknown Persons Trespass Into Shalini Apartments In Borda

■ Fatorda Police Investigate Early-Morning Entry Into Residential Complex

Team Goemkarponn

BORDA: Two unidentified persons allegedly trespassed into the premises and parking area of Shalini Apartments at Borda, Margao, during the early hours of September 14.

The incident was reported by Sonal Sardessai, Secretary, and Nutan Naik, Treasurer of the Shalini Apartments Co-op Housing Maintenance Society.

According to the complaint, the two persons entered the residential building

complex between 3:45 am and 4:10 am with an alleged common intention to commit a cognisable offence.

They later fled from the premises without making any attempt to carry out the offence.

Fatorda Police have initiated an investigation into the incident and are working to identify the two unidentified persons and ascertain their purpose for entering the residential complex.

Further investigation is being conducted by ASI Narendra Salgaokar of Fatorda Police Station.



Skoda Rapid Hits Dio Scooter In Sancoale, Rider Injured

Team Goemkarponn

SANCOALE: A scooter rider sustained injuries after a Skoda Rapid allegedly collided with his two-wheeler from behind near Five Star Laundry at Sancoale in the early hours of September 14.

According to a complaint filed by ASI Sudhakar Jadhav of Verna Police Station, the incident occurred at around 3:05 am when the Skoda Rapid, allegedly driven by Shubham Naik of Vaddem, Vasco, was proceeding from Cortalim Junction towards Vasco.

Police said that when the car reached near Five Star Laundry, Sancoale, it allegedly hit the rear of a Dio scooter travelling in the same direction.

Following the impact, the rider of the Dio, identified as Sairaj Corguenkar of Viridi, Sanquelim, fell onto the road and sustained injuries.

Verna Police have taken up the investigation into the accident. Further investigation is being conducted by ASI Sudhakar Jadhav of Verna Police Station.

Unidentified Decomposed Body Found Near Pernem Crematorium

■ Pernem Police Launch Probe To Establish Identity And Circumstances Of Death

Team Goemkarponn

PERNEM: Pernem Police have launched an investigation after a decomposed body of an unidentified man was found near the crematorium site in Pernem on September 15.

An Unnatural Death (UD) case, numbered 15/2026 under Section 194 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), was registered at around 3 pm following a call from an unidentified



person reporting that a body was lying near the crematorium.

PSI Aditya Gad visited the spot and found the decomposed body of an unidentified male. Police

searched the surrounding area for any incriminating material or other clues that could shed light on the circumstances leading to

the death, but nothing of significance was recovered. Police said the deceased appeared to be a homeless person. The body has been preserved to facilitate identification.

Porvorim Shooting Probe Expands Beyond Goa As Two More Held In Chennai

■ Crime Branch Tracks Alleged Second Shooter And Conspirator, Arrest Tally Rises To Six

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The investigation into the Porvorim shooting has taken an interstate turn, with the Goa Police Crime Branch arresting two more accused in Chennai, including a man identified by police as the alleged second shooter. The two accused, Arputharaj alias Anna, 49, and Pavan Saur, 19, were apprehended within the jurisdiction of Lighthouse



Police Station in Chennai by a team of the Goa Crime Branch.

According to the Crime

Branch, Arputharaj is alleged to be the second shooter involved in the Porvorim incident,

alongside Babu Ali, who was arrested two days earlier near the Nepal border. Police have also alleged that Pavan was actively involved in the conspiracy. The latest arrests indicate that investigators are pursuing leads extending beyond

Goa as they work to establish the wider network and roles of those allegedly involved in the case. With the two fresh arrests, six accused have so far been taken into custody in connection with Porvorim Police Station case 66/2026. The Crime Branch has continued its investigation to establish the sequence of events, identify the roles of the accused and uncover further links in the alleged conspiracy.

Reginaldo Lourenco Named Top Performing Goa MLA In CPIE India Survey

■ Survey Of Over 8,000 Voters Across 40 Constituencies Puts Curtorim MLA At The Top

Team Goemkarponn

CURTORIM: Curtorim MLA Aleixo Reginaldo Lourenco has emerged as the top-performing MLA in Goa in a survey conducted by CPIE India, according to a press note issued by Goa Media Network.

The survey, which covered more than 8,000 voters across 40 constituencies, assessed sitting MLAs on parameters including accessibility to



constituents, availability, interaction with media and professionals, constituency-level work and their stand on environmental and pollution-related issues.

According to the survey findings cited in the press note, Lourenco received the highest number of

positive responses among the MLAs covered. The proposed top-ten list also includes Vijai Sardesai, Nileshe Cabral, Carlos Alvares Ferreira, Atanasio 'Babush' Monserrate and Subhash Shirodkar, among others.

Chief Minister Pramod Sawant was excluded from the MLA ranking as he holds the additional position of Chief Minister, with voters from his constituency also excluded from the calculation, the press

note stated. CPIE India spokesperson Charleston Fernandes said the organisation conducted confidential voter interactions, with around 200 respondents targeted in each constituency, to obtain feedback on the performance and accessibility of elected representatives. The survey forms part of CPIE India's proposed 'Goa MLAs Report Card', which is being conducted ahead of the next Assembly elections.



Tiatr Gets Push For Global Stage After National Heritage Recognition

■ Sangeet Natak Akademi official calls for international outreach, academic research and stronger preservation of Goa's traditional theatre form

Team Goemkarponn

September 10.

PANAJI: With Tiatr now part of India's National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage, the focus is shifting towards giving Goa's distinctive theatre tradition a stronger presence beyond the state and among international Goan communities.

Sangeet Natak Akademi Deputy Secretary (Drama) Suman Kumar has urged the Tiatr Academy of Goa (TAG) and the state government to use the national recognition as a foundation for expanding Tiatr's academic, cultural and international footprint. Kumar was speaking during a meeting with a TAG delegation at the Sangeet Natak Akademi in New Delhi on

The meeting was held to discuss the future course of action following Tiatr's inclusion as the 56th element in the national inventory and the possibility of pursuing UNESCO recognition. The delegation, headed by TAG President Anthony Barbosa, included Vice-President Marcos Gonsalves and Rajendra Borkar, Officer on Special Duty to Art and Culture Minister Ramesh Tawadkar, among others.

Kumar said the next phase should focus not only on promoting Tiatr but also on ensuring that its traditional character remains protected. He called for the art form to be introduced more extensively in universities, cultural institutions and theatre circles across India.



Goa Turns To Rooftops In Fresh Push To Tackle Groundwater Stress

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Goa is looking to tap one of its most underused water resources — rain falling on rooftops — as the government steps up efforts to reduce pressure on groundwater reserves.

The Water Resources Department (WRD) has set a target of getting 200 rainwater harvesting projects implemented across the state over the next year, with department engineers being assigned direct responsibility for taking the initiative forward.

Instead of waiting for applications, each engineer will have to identify two suitable locations within their jurisdiction and ensure that the proposed systems are completed and made functional within the stipulated period.

WRD Minister Subhash Shirodkar said the department was expecting its engineers to take the initiative to the field and actively identify sites where rainwater could be captured and used for groundwater recharge.

Vishwajit Rane Meets Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis On Ganesh Chaturthi

■ Goa Health Minister extends Ganesh Chaturthi greetings and seeks blessings of Ganpati Bappa

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Goa Health Minister Vishwajit Rane met Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on the auspicious occasion of Ganesh Chaturthi and sought the blessings of Ganpati Bappa.

Rane also extended his heartfelt greetings to people on the occasion and prayed for the festival



to bring happiness, prosperity and wisdom to everyone.

The Health Minister shared the festive message while marking

Ganesh Chaturthi, one of the most widely celebrated festivals in Goa and Maharashtra.

Rane's meeting with Fadnavis

came amid the festive celebrations, with devotees across the two states offering prayers and seeking the blessings of Lord Ganesha.

Ramesh Tawadkar Hands Over Shram-Dham House To Family In Canacona

■ New home at Talem-Gaondongrim built under Balram Charitable Trust initiative for family in need

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: Tribal Welfare Minister Ramesh Tawadkar handed over the keys of a newly constructed house to a beneficiary family at Talem, Gaondongrim, under the Shram-Dham initiative of the Balram Charitable Trust.

Tawadkar inaugurated the house and formally handed over the keys to Savita



Velip, who lives with her two children. The ceremony marked the completion of another dwelling constructed

under the initiative for families unable to afford a house of their own.

Speaking on the occasion, Tawadkar

said he was pleased to hand over the newly built home and described the project as an example of collective community participation.

He said the Shram-Dham initiative is based on the principle of Shramdaan, bringing together voluntary labour, community support and collective efforts to provide deserving families with safe and dignified housing. "This house stands as a

beautiful example of what we can achieve when a community comes together with compassion and commitment. Together, we build not just homes, but also hope," Tawadkar said. The Balram Charitable Trust, run by Tawadkar, undertakes the construction of homes for needy families who face financial difficulties in building their own permanent houses.

India Forms Task Force To Explore Formula One Return In 2028

■ High-level panel to examine taxation, infrastructure and investment challenges and build a roadmap for the motorsports sector

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: The Indian government has constituted a high-level Task Force to examine the challenges facing motorsports in the country and prepare a roadmap for developing the sector, including the possible return of Formula One.

A major part of the panel's mandate will be to assess the feasibility of hosting a Formula One Grand Prix in India in 2028, potentially reviving the country's association with the world's premier motorsport championship.

The Task Force will undertake a detailed review of the motorsports ecosystem, with taxation emerging as one of the key areas of focus. It will also examine regulatory, infrastructure and operational challenges that have affected the organisation of major motorsport events in India.

The panel will identify policy measures required for sustainable growth and prepare a coordinated framework for developing motorsports across the country. It will also assess the potential economic, tourism, investment and international benefits of hosting major racing events.

Another important part of its mandate is to explore possible Public-Private Partnership (PPP)



models that could support the development of motorsport infrastructure and events.

The Task Force will be headed by Yugal Kishore Joshi, Programme Director (YAS) at NITI Aayog.

Its members will include senior officials from the Department of Sports, Department of Commerce and Ministry of Tourism, along with representatives of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs and the Central Board of Direct Taxes under the Department of Revenue.

Representatives from the governments of Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra will also be part of the

panel.

The motorsport industry will be represented by officials from the Buddh International Circuit (BIC) and Madras International Circuit (MIC), along with the President or Secretary General of the Federation of Motor Sports Clubs of India (FMSCI) and a technical expert nominated by the federation.

The chairperson will also be able to bring additional members onto the panel if required.

The move comes as the government examines motorsports as more than a sporting activity, with the sector being assessed for its potential impact on

tourism, infrastructure, investment and India's international sporting profile.

India last hosted a Formula One race at the Buddh International Circuit in Greater Noida in 2013. The country staged three consecutive Indian Grands Prix from 2011 to 2013, before the event was discontinued amid taxation, regulatory and financial challenges.

The new Task Force could provide a structured framework for addressing those long-standing issues and evaluating whether India can once again become a host for Formula One and other major international motorsport events.

₹11 Product Sold For ₹325: Maharashtra FDA Flags Huge Hospital Pricing Gaps

■ FDA Commissioner Tukaram Mundhe seeks review of medical consumable pricing and stronger regulation

Team Goemkarponn

MUMBAI: Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Tukaram Mundhe has raised concerns over wide differences between the procurement prices and maximum retail prices of commonly used medical consumables in private hospitals, with some products carrying markups of more than 2,800 per cent.

The findings have been shared with the Department of Pharmaceuticals and the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority for review and possible regulatory action.

The survey examined several products routinely used during hospital treatment, including intravenous infusion sets, syringes, nebulisers, oxygen masks and catheters. The comparison found substantial differences between the prices paid by hospitals and the prices printed on the products or charged to patients.

One of the biggest gaps involved an IV infusion set that was purchased by a private hospital for ₹11.05 but carried an MRP of ₹325. That represents a markup of about 2,841 per cent.

A syringe purchased for ₹6.75 had an MRP of ₹57.20, while a catheter procured for ₹29.41 carried an MRP of ₹310.

Mundhe said patients are often unaware of the actual procurement cost of medical consumables and have limited ability to compare prices while undergoing treatment. He said the issue goes beyond pricing and also involves transparency and protection of patients. According



to the findings, patients undergoing hospitalisation may not have the option to question the cost of individual consumables or choose cheaper alternatives during treatment.

Mundhe has called for clear rules on the permissible difference between procurement prices and declared MRPs. His recommendations include rationalising trade margins and examining price monitoring mechanisms or price caps for essential categories of medical devices.

The NPPA is also examining whether significant margins are being added at different stages of the supply chain. Company filings and internal price information are being compared with the Maharashtra findings.

Similar concerns have reportedly been raised by drug-control authorities in Punjab, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu. Under the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 2013, the NPPA regulates ceiling prices for scheduled formulations and specified medical devices. For non-scheduled products, Paragraph 20 limits MRP increases to 10 per cent over a 12-month period, although it does not create a single ceiling price covering every medical device or consumable. The government has previously introduced direct price controls for products including coronary stents and knee implants.

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Yaniv Benaim Appears Before Merces Court After High Court Surrender Order

on August 14. His subsequent challenge before the High Court has now brought the matter back before the higher court, with the bail issue listed for hearing next week.

The case follows an earlier High Court judgment of July 14, in which the court set aside a Sessions Court order that had granted Benaim bail in a case registered by the Anti-Narcotic Cell (ANC).

The ANC had arrested Benaim in April 2025 following a raid at his apartment in Siolim.

During the operation, the agency claimed to have recovered narcotic

substances along with cash amounting to Rs 8.7 lakh.

Porvorim Elevated Corridor Restrictions Put Safety Objective Under Scanner

the Atal Setu-side access points closed, motorists are being routed through the service-road network to enter Porvorim.

The road safety committee also questioned the decision to restrict two-wheelers, saying the focus should instead be on correcting safety arrangements rather than simply shifting traffic away from the elevated road. It also cautioned against treating the elevated corridor as a stretch meant for high-speed driving.

The committee said it could have been consulted before the corridor was opened so that issues related to signage, merging and traffic management could have been addressed in advance.

Concerns were also raised over coordination between the PWD, traffic police and Transport Department, along with questions over the preparations made before the corridor was opened.

The NGDRC clarified that it was not consulted before the opening but does not have statutory powers to approve or stop such infrastructure projects.

The committee is an advisory body constituted following Supreme Court directions, and there is no specific requirement making prior consultation with it mandatory.

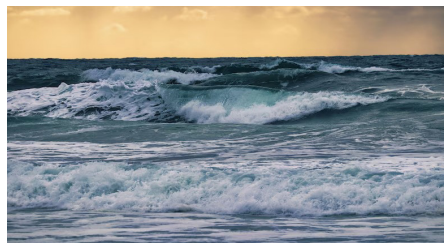
Pakistani Naval Ship Collides With Indian Navy Vessel, Delhi Summons Envoy

■ India calls the incident unacceptable and unprofessional, says Pakistani vessel violated a 1991 bilateral agreement

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: India has lodged a strong diplomatic protest with Pakistan after a Pakistani naval vessel collided with an Indian Navy ship in international waters, describing the conduct as "unacceptable and unprofessional".

The Ministry of External Affairs summoned Pakistan's Charge d'Affaires in New Delhi and conveyed its concerns over the incident. According to



the Indian government, the collision did not result in any major damage, but the conduct of the Pakistani naval unit was considered a violation of a bilateral agreement between the two countries. India said the incident was in direct

contravention of Article 10 of the 1991 Agreement between India and Pakistan on Advance Notice on Military Exercises,

Manoeuvres and Troop Movements. Article 10 requires naval ships and submarines of the two countries to maintain a separation of at least three nautical miles while operating in international waters in order to prevent accidents. The MEA said

Pakistan's diplomatic representative was asked to convey to the relevant authorities in Islamabad that military units must exercise due care and comply with existing bilateral arrangements to prevent similar incidents in the future. The latest development comes against the backdrop of continued tensions between India and Pakistan, including disagreements over security and other bilateral issues.



"Obviously Unacceptable": India Condemns Houthi Strikes On Saudi Arabia

■ New Delhi voices concern over attacks on civilian infrastructure, oil assets and commercial shipping

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: India has strongly condemned the recent Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia, warning that strikes targeting civilian infrastructure and economic assets could further destabilise the region and threaten the safety of international shipping.

External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said India was particularly concerned about the worsening security situation in the Red Sea region and its possible impact on freedom of navigation through the Bab-el-Mandeb strait.

Jaiswal said External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar had discussed the developments with Saudi Foreign Minister

Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud during a meeting held on the sidelines of the BRICS summit on Sunday. The Houthi attacks were among the issues discussed during the meeting.

India has condemned the strikes on Saudi sovereign territory, including attacks affecting civilian infrastructure and economic installations. Jaiswal said such actions threaten regional stability and create risks for shipping through one of the world's key maritime routes.

The Iran-backed Houthi group has targeted Saudi energy infrastructure, including the East-West oil pipeline, an important route for transporting crude.



"Phoney Announcement": India Slams Pakistan Over Masood Azhar Bounty Hike

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: India has dismissed Pakistan's decision to increase the reward for information leading to the arrest of Jaish-e-Mohammed chief Masood Azhar, calling the move a "gimmick" and a "phoney announcement".

External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said Pakistan should take concrete action against terror groups and individuals rather than make announcements that India considers ineffective.

"Such gimmicks and attempts at hoodwinking by Pakistan are not new," Jaiswal said, adding that New Delhi had seen similar announcements in the past. He said Pakistan should demonstrate action instead of making what he described as hollow declarations.

Pakistan's Federal Investigation Agency has included Azhar in its 2026 Red Book of most-wanted high-profile terrorists and increased the reward for information leading to his arrest from PKR 50 lakh to PKR 70 lakh.

India Yet To Clear Bangladesh's Next High Commissioner As Ties Remain Strained

■ Dhaka has proposed Foreign Secretary Asad Alam Siam for the post, but New Delhi's formal approval is still pending

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: India has yet to grant formal approval for Bangladesh's proposal to appoint Foreign Secretary Asad Alam Siam as its next High Commissioner to New Delhi, more than a month after Dhaka sought clearance for the posting.

The approval, known as agrément, is required before Bangladesh can



formally announce Siam's appointment. Under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, a country proposing an ambassador or high

commissioner must first obtain the consent of the receiving country. The receiving state is not required to give reasons if it withholds or rejects the approval. Siam is a senior career diplomat who became Bangladesh's Foreign Secretary under the interim government led by Muhammad Yunus. He previously served as Bangladesh's ambassador to the United States.

India Faces 100% Tariff Risk As US House Advances Russia Sanctions Bill

■ Bill would give President Donald Trump authority to impose steep tariffs on major buyers of Russian oil and gas

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: India could face tariffs of up to 100 per cent on goods entering the United States if a new Russia sanctions bill is passed and the tariff provisions are applied to major buyers of Russian energy. The US House of Representatives has advanced the legislation, bringing it closer to a final vote. The Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning



Russia and Iran Act of 2026 cleared a key procedural hurdle in the House by a 214-211 vote. Two Democrats joined Republicans in supporting

the measure. A final House vote is expected before lawmakers leave for their scheduled recess. The legislation would expand sanctions targeting

Russia's leadership and energy sector and also take aim at the so-called "shadow fleet" of vessels used to transport Russian oil while evading sanctions. It would also extend existing US sanctions related to Iran. India Specifically Named In House Amendment The Senate passed the bill on August 7 by an overwhelming 86-11 vote. The Senate version authorised tariffs of up to 100 per cent on goods

from major purchasers of Russian oil and gas, but did not itself list specific countries. A House amendment submitted by Democratic Congressman Steny Hoyer specifically lists India, China, Türkiye, Azerbaijan, Hungary, Slovakia, the United Arab Emirates, Singapore, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan among countries that could be subject to duties of up to 100 per cent.

Gujarat Lead by 109 Runs, Goa Remain in Strong Position

■ Smit Patel and Jaymeet Patel lead Gujarat's fightback after Goa secured a 137 run first innings advantage

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Gujarat mounted a strong fightback in their second innings against Goa on the third day of the Dr Capt K Thimmappiah Memorial Cricket Tournament, reaching 246 for six at the Bala Gangadharanatha Swamy School Ground in Bengaluru.

Gujarat began the day on 264 for six from their first innings and eventually finished on 249 all out.



Goa then produced a commanding batting performance, scoring 386 to take a substantial 137 run first innings lead.

The Gujarat batters



responded positively in their second innings and reduced the deficit. Smit Patel anchored the recovery with a patient 71 from 153 deliveries, while

Jaymeet Patel added 63 off 94 balls. His innings included two fours and two sixes.

Vedant Trivedi contributed 31, while Manan Hingrajia scored 30 as Gujarat steadily built their second innings total. At stumps, Gujarat had reached 246 for six from 61 overs, giving them an overall lead of 109 runs.

Goa's bowlers managed to keep the pressure on, with Yash Kasvankar emerging as the leading wicket taker.



"Competitors For The Outside World": Sanju Samson On Vaibhav Sooryavanshi Battle

■ Samson says India's openers must focus on winning together rather than worrying about selection debates

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Sanju Samson has addressed the growing discussion over competition for India's opening spots, insisting that Vaibhav Sooryavanshi and Abhishek Sharma are rivals only in the eyes of people outside the team.

Samson made the statement after producing a stunning performance in India's first T20I against Afghanistan. Chasing 160, India comfortably completed the target in 14.5 overs, with Samson smashing 57 off just 22 balls. He shared an 88-run opening partnership with Abhishek Sharma.

With 15-year-old Sooryavanshi waiting for his opportunity, considerable debate has emerged over which two openers should feature in India's playing XI. Samson, however, said there is no such competition inside the dressing room. "I think they are competitors for the outside world, but we are a team, and we are playing for our country," Samson said after the match. He stressed that players cannot allow selection discussions to create negativity within the team. According to Samson, the priority remains winning matches, rather than worrying about who gets an opportunity.



Goa U-19 Women Crushed by Mumbai in 114-Run Defeat

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Goa's Under 19 women's team suffered a heavy 114 run defeat against Mumbai in the Inter State Under 19 Siechem Trophy after their batting line up struggled against a disciplined bowling attack. Chasing 181 for victory, Goa were bowled out for just 66 in 15.2 overs. The innings never gathered momentum as Mumbai kept taking wickets at regular intervals and prevented Goa from establishing any meaningful partnerships. Opener Rakshanda Kalangutkar managed nine runs before being dismissed, while Nikhila Naik contributed 18. Muskaan Sab offered the strongest resistance for Goa, scoring 20 from 33 deliveries, but she found little support from the other end. Mumbai's bowlers maintained control throughout the chase. Purni Naik was the pick of the attack, finishing with excellent figures of three wickets for just 11 runs. Megan Rodrigues claimed two wickets for 10 runs, while Tanisha Sharma and Shrivani Patil picked up one wicket each.

Hockey India Infighting Deepens: Jersey Row, HIL Restructure And Elections On Agenda

■ President Dilip Tirkey disputes secretary Bhola Nath Singh's call for an emergency Executive Board meeting

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: The internal differences within Hockey India have intensified ahead of the federation's proposed emergency Executive Board meeting on September 18, with President Dilip Tirkey disputing the authority of secretary Bhola Nath Singh to convene the gathering. The meeting is expected to address



several key issues, including the future structure of the Hockey India League (HIL), upcoming federation elections, the legal notice issued to Director General

Cdr R K Srivastava and preparations for major international events.

The latest dispute follows the controversy over the change in the colour of the Indian teams' jerseys from blue to saffron during the recently concluded FIH World Cup. Tirkey had said the change was made without his knowledge or the approval of the Executive Board.

Rs 800 Crore Spent On India's Asian Games Preparation, Sports Ministry Reveals

■ Rs 702.86 crore went through the training calendar, while another Rs 97.84 crore came from TOPS as India sends 501 athletes to Japan

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: The Sports Ministry has revealed that nearly Rs 800 crore has been invested in preparing India's athletes for the 2026 Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan. The spending includes training, international competition exposure, equipment, coaches and specialist support over the past three years. According to



the ministry, Rs 702.86 crore was spent through the Annual Calendar for Training and Competition (ACTC), while another Rs 97.84 crore was allocated through the

Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS). The Asian Games begin on September 19 and continue until October 4. The largest share of the ACTC spending, Rs 251.4 crore, went towards international competition exposure. Domestic training accounted for another Rs 118.3 crore, reflecting the focus on giving athletes regular high-level

competition before the continental event. India will field 501 athletes, including 267 men and 234 women, across 36 disciplines. The contingent includes 310 athletes making their event debut. A total of 265 support staff will accompany the athletes.

Among the younger athletes attracting attention are 15-year-old cricketer Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, paddler Syndreela Das, badminton player Ayush

Shetty, 18-year-old squash player Anahat Singh and judoka Asmita Dey. Sooryavanshi is not funded by the Sports Ministry. Khelo India Pipeline And Sports Science Support N S Johal, CEO of TOPS, said 65 members of the Indian contingent have come through the Khelo India system. He said the presence of young athletes at the highest level was an encouraging sign for the future.