



AAP Puts Vijai Sardesai On The Spot Over BJP-Congress 'Joint Venture'

■ Valmiki Naik asks Sardesai to clarify his stand ahead of the 2027 Assembly elections

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has targeted Goa Forward Party (GFP) leader Vijai Sardesai, asking him to clarify whether he stands with what the party has described as a "BJP-Congress joint venture" or with the people of Goa. AAP Goa president Valmiki Naik alleged that the BJP and Congress have been involved in political defections over the years and claimed that this trend could continue



marked by defections and corruption. AAP also questioned Sardesai's position amid the evolving political alignments in Goa, urging him to make his stand clear on the BJP-Congress relationship alleged by the party. Naik further alleged that Congress defections could recur, citing Girish Chodankar's return as GPCC president and his claim that Chodankar had been at the helm during previous waves of defections.

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Vijai Sardesai Will Go For Grand Alliance, Says Durgadas Kamat
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PANAJI: Goa Forward Party (GFP) leader Durgadas Kamat has said that Vijai Sardesai's position on a possible grand alliance is clear, while responding to recent remarks made by the

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'Can Put On Hold': Supreme Court To Examine Election Commission Decisions Amid Dissent Row

Top court seeks Election Commission response on allegations that CEC Gyanesh Kumar took decisions without the other two Election Commissioners

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NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Monday sought a response from the Election Commission over allegations that Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar may have taken certain decisions without the agreement of the other two Election Commissioners. A bench headed by Chief Justice Surya Kant, along with Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana, issued notice to the poll panel while hearing a Public Interest Litigation challenging the manner in which some Election Commission decisions were allegedly taken. The petition seeks a judicial examination of whether the Chief Election Commissioner independently exercised powers that are legally vested in the full Election Commission. It also seeks appropriate



action if any decisions are found to have been taken outside the constitutional framework. The Supreme Court stressed that decisions of the Election Commission are required to be taken either unanimously or through a majority. The bench said it could consider putting decisions on hold if it is established that they were made without following either procedure. However, the court cautioned against reaching conclusions solely on the basis of media reports. It said it would first need verified information from the Election Commission before determining whether any rules or legal requirements had been breached.



High Court Warns Mormugao Council Over Pending Demolition

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PANAJI: The High Court has taken a serious view of the Mormugao Municipal Council's failure to act on its earlier demolition order concerning the structure popularly known as "Murgao Cha Raja". The court had directed the civic body to remove the illegal structure by September 30, 2026. However, with the deadline having passed without the order being carried out, the Chief Officer of the Mormugao Municipal Council faced strong criticism from the court. The High Court warned that continued failure to comply with its directions could result in contempt proceedings. The court has given the authorities time until the next hearing on Wednesday to carry out the demolition. The matter is expected to come up again before the court on Wednesday, when the civic body's compliance with the earlier direction will be reviewed.

HC seeks clarity from Goa government on Sada land proposal

■ Chief Secretary asked to file affidavit on policy for proposed purchase of Mormugao Port Authority land where Shivaji Maharaj statue was allegedly installed without permission

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The High Court of Bombay at Goa has directed the Goa Chief Secretary to place on record an affidavit explaining the State government's policy concerning its proposal to purchase a portion of Mormugao Port Authority land at Sada.



The direction comes against the backdrop of an alleged unauthorised installation of a statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj on the land. The court is expected to examine the government's position on the proposed purchase and the circumstances surrounding the use of the port authority's property.

Congress Open To Grand Opposition Alliance In Goa, Says Pawan Khera

■ Khera hits back at AAP on defections, raises concerns over SIR and drugs, and says Congress will oppose alleged electoral irregularities

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Congress leader Pawan Khera said the party is open to a Grand Opposition Alliance in Goa, describing the Goa Forward Party's call for opposition parties to unite as a point worth considering. Responding to criticism from the Aam Aadmi Party over defections, Khera hit back at AAP, questioning the party's record on the issue. He said those



whose own party had seen several MPs leave were now lecturing Congress about defections. Khera also raised concerns over the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. He claimed that questions had emerged from within the Election Commission regarding the exercise and alleged that the Supreme Court had not approved the use of Form 6 in the manner claimed by the Election Commission. He accused the BJP of "vote theft" and said Congress would oppose what it considers an unfair electoral process in Goa.

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Is Goa's Opposition Fighting the BJP or Fighting Itself?

Goa's Opposition appears to have forgotten the most basic rule of electoral politics: if the objective is to defeat the ruling party, the Opposition must spend more time fighting the ruling party than fighting each other.

The latest war of words between the Aam Aadmi Party and Congress is deeply disturbing. AAP has attacked Congress over the defections of its MLAs to the BJP, even launching a mocking slogan questioning whether Congress can be trusted. Congress, instead of ignoring the provocation and keeping its focus on the BJP, has hit back at AAP and questioned its intentions.

So the obvious question for Goans is this: what exactly is the Opposition's strategy for 2027? Is the aim to defeat the BJP or to help the BJP win another term?

Nobody can deny that Congress has a serious credibility problem because of the mass defections of its MLAs. Ten Congress MLAs joined the BJP in 2019 and another eight followed in 2022. Those defections fundamentally changed Goa's political landscape and strengthened the BJP government.

But constantly reminding voters about Congress defections does not defeat the BJP. It only reminds voters why the BJP became stronger.

AAP and Goa Forward Party have now formed the Goa First alliance, positioning themselves as a non-BJP, non-Congress alternative. Congress has separately announced an alliance with the Revolutionary Goans Party. Instead of creating a broad Opposition platform, Goa is already witnessing competing Opposition formations, mutual accusations and attacks over constituencies. This is precisely what the BJP would want.

The BJP does not need to defeat every Opposition candidate itself if the Opposition is prepared to divide the anti-incumbency vote. In a 40-member Assembly, even a small division of votes can determine the result in closely fought constituencies.

The irony is that Opposition leaders themselves appear to understand this mathematics.

Congress president Girish Chodankar has said that if serious Opposition parties come together, the BJP could be reduced to just five seats. Whether that prediction is realistic is another question. But the statement exposes the central

"Nobody can deny that Congress has a serious credibility problem because of the mass defections of its MLAs. Ten Congress MLAs joined the BJP in 2019 and another eight followed in 2022. Those defections fundamentally changed Goa's political landscape and strengthened the BJP government.

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contradiction in Goa's Opposition politics. Leaders know unity can dramatically alter the electoral equation, yet they continue to put their own party interests ahead of Opposition unity.

AAP, meanwhile, has accused Congress of targeting AAP strongholds rather than concentrating on defeating the BJP. Congress has accused the AAP-GFP alliance of indirectly helping the BJP. Both sides may have arguments to support their positions. But there is one inconvenient truth: every vote spent attacking an Opposition party is a vote not spent attacking the government.

This does not mean Congress should be absolved of its past mistakes. Nor should AAP or GFP be above scrutiny. Every party must answer questions about candidates,

leadership, defections, ideology and post-poll commitments.

But the people of Goa deserve clarity.

If these parties genuinely want to defeat the BJP, they must answer a simple question before asking voters to trust them: what is the common minimum objective?

Is it to defeat the BJP in as many constituencies as possible?

If yes, why are Opposition parties fighting over each other's traditional strongholds?

Why are they publicly questioning each other's credibility?

Why are they allowing personal egos and party calculations to become more important than the larger electoral objective?

And most importantly, what guarantee will they give voters that an elected Opposition MLA will not cross the floor after the election?

That last question is particularly important. Goa has already seen the devastating consequences of political defections. Voters can elect an Opposition candidate believing they are voting against the government, only to see that mandate transferred to the ruling side months later.

Therefore, Opposition unity cannot merely mean sharing a stage before the election. It must mean a written commitment against post-poll defections, clarity on leadership, constituency-level coordination and a clear understanding that the mandate belongs to the voter, not to the individual MLA.

The BJP will naturally exploit every division in the Opposition. That is politics. The responsibility for preventing that advantage, however, lies with the Opposition itself.

If Congress, AAP, GFP, RGP and other non-BJP forces genuinely believe that Goa needs a change, they must stop behaving like five different opposition parties and start behaving like one credible alternative where necessary. Otherwise, 2027 could become a strange election in which the Opposition spends the campaign proving why the other Opposition party should not be trusted, while the BJP quietly consolidates its position.

Goans must then ask a very uncomfortable question:

Are Goa's Opposition parties actually trying to defeat the BJP, or are they simply competing to become the biggest Opposition party after the BJP wins?

EDITOR SPEAKS

Road Safety Week or Road Safety Ritual?

Suraj Nandrekar

Every year, Goa observes Road Safety Week. Posters are released, awareness sessions are organised, traffic officials interact with motorists and students are advised to follow traffic rules. Government officials reiterate the importance of responsible driving. And then the week ends. The roads remain as dangerous as before, and accidents continue to claim lives.

The 15th State Road Safety Week, observed from September 28 to October 4, is no exception. North Goa has released posters warning against drunken driving, while authorities in Salcete have conducted awareness programmes for students and commuters. These initiatives have value, but an uncomfortable question remains: what has changed on the ground?

The numbers tell a disturbing story. Goa recorded 548 road accidents in 2022, 539 in 2023, 518 in 2024 and 528 in 2025. By January 31, 2026, another 43 accidents had already been reported. Between 2022 and January 2026, 2,176 accidents were recorded, and 657 bikers lost their lives during this period. These are not merely statistics. They represent families shattered by preventable tragedies.

If years of awareness campaigns have failed to produce a decisive reduction in accidents, the government must reconsider its approach. Road safety cannot be reduced to an annual exercise in public relations. It must be a continuous administrative priority, backed by enforcement, engineering and accountability.

Drunken driving, speeding and rash driving remain major causes of road crashes. Yet motorists continue to violate traffic rules, often believing that they can get away with it. Occasional checks cannot change this behaviour. Enforcement must be consistent, visible and impartial. The law must apply equally to ordinary citizens and influential individuals.

Equally concerning is the condition and design of Goa's roads. Accident-prone locations have been identified, but identifying a black spot is only the first step. What action follows? Are dangerous junctions being redesigned? Are road markings and signboards clearly visible? Are crash barriers installed where required? Are streetlights functioning? Are pedestrian crossings safe? Are road shoulders and highway approaches designed to protect vulnerable users?

The concentration of fatal accidents in particular police station jurisdictions should help authorities identify dangerous corridors and prioritise corrective action. Repeated crashes at the same locations cannot continue to be treated as isolated incidents. Every fatal accident must trigger a serious investigation into whether road design, inadequate signage, poor lighting, speeding or enforcement failures contributed to the tragedy.

Two-wheeler riders and pedestrians deserve particular attention. Riders must wear helmets, avoid speeding and never drive under the influence of alcohol. But responsibility cannot rest entirely on road users. Authorities must ensure that roads are designed to reduce the risk of death and serious injury when mistakes occur.

The government also needs to publish regular, transparent road safety data. Citizens should know how many accidents occurred, how many lives were lost, how many violations were detected and what corrective measures were completed. The success of Road Safety Week should be judged by measurable improvements, not the number of posters released or awareness sessions conducted. Goa cannot afford to normalise road deaths. Every fatal crash is a reminder that something has failed, whether it is the driver's judgment, enforcement, road engineering or emergency response.

The question is not whether Road Safety Week should be observed. Awareness is necessary. The question is whether the government has the determination to turn awareness into action.

If the same warnings must be repeated every year while families continue to lose their loved ones, then Road Safety Week is not achieving its real purpose. Goa needs road safety every day, not just for one week.

Goa's Two Airports Cross 11.5 Million Passenger Mark

■ Dabolim Handles 6.12 Million Travellers As Mopa Records 15.8% Annual Growth

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DABOLIM/MOPA: Goa's two-airport network recorded 11,503,460 passenger movements in FY 2025–26, with both Dabolim and Mopa featuring among the country's 15 busiest airports.

Data from the Airports Authority of India shows that Dabolim Airport recorded 6,126,944 passengers during the April 2025–March 2026 period, placing it at 11th



position nationally.

Manohar International Airport at Mopa recorded 5,376,516 passengers and stood at 14th among India's busiest airports.

Mopa's passenger traffic increased by 15.8%

over the previous year, pointing to a significant rise in passenger movement through the airport as its network of air services continues to expand.

Dabolim remained

ahead in terms of total passengers, handling about 750,000 more travellers than Mopa during the year. However, the figures show that Mopa has rapidly established itself as a major gateway for passengers travelling to and from Goa.

The combined passenger count includes domestic as well as international traffic and covers the full financial year from April 2025 to March 2026.



North Goa DMF Moves Towards Five-Year Funding Strategy

■ Trust To Map Community Needs Before Allocating Mineral Funds To Projects

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The North Goa District Mineral Foundation Trust (NGDMFT) is moving towards a more structured system for spending mineral funds, with its Managing Committee approving the preparation of a five-year Perspective Plan for mining-affected areas.

The exercise will begin with an assessment of the requirements of affected communities. Government departments, panchayats and other local bodies, along with residents of mining-affected areas, are expected to be consulted. The Trust also plans to use field surveys and

existing information to identify areas requiring priority intervention. Once the assessment is completed, the Perspective Plan will spell out the sectors that require funding, the broad share of funds for each sector and the types of projects that can be taken up during the five-year period. The plan will then be placed before the Governing Council for consideration. The Trust will follow this with yearly action plans. At the beginning of each financial year, departments will have to submit proposals based on the priorities already identified. The Managing Committee will examine these proposals and decide on eligible projects before they are sanctioned.



Chorao Bridge Project Moves Ahead With Environmental Safeguards

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The proposed Rs 360-crore road bridge linking Chorao with the mainland has moved closer to implementation after the Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) under the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change recommended granting the project CRZ clearance.

The environmental panel has, however, sought greater care in the execution of the project because of the mangrove and riverine ecosystems along the proposed alignment.

The 1.62-km bridge and its approach roads are expected to affect around 621 mangrove trees. Of these, 449 are located on the Salvador-do-Mundo side and 172 on the Chorao side. The bridge design originally provided for 20 pillars, including foundations extending as deep as 35 metres. Several of the proposed structures fall within riverine and mangrove-rich stretches classified as CRZ-III No Development Zone.

Kabrastan Promise For 32 Years: When Will Margao See Delivery? : Prabhav Naik

Team Goemkarponn

MARGAO: For 32 years, Margao has heard of a new Kabrastan whenever elections approach. Now, the baton of false promise has passed from Margao MLA & PWD Minister Digambar Kamat to BJP President Damu Naik. Only a change in Margao's leadership can deliver this long-pending civic necessity, stated Madganvcho Awaaz & Youth Leader Prabhav Naik. "The information



provided to the Goa Legislative Assembly exposes how old this promise really is. In 1999, Digambar Kamat himself, then Margao MLA, moved Resolution No. 26 in the Goa Legislative Assembly seeking allotment of sufficient land in and around Margao for a burial

ground. The Resolution was passed unanimously. Records also refer to land measuring 99,513 sq. metres at Pajifond and Survey No. 52, PT Sheet No. 228," said Prabhav Naik. "Promises continued, but the Kabrastan did not come. A proposal for land at Fatorda in 2002 lapsed; another proposal in 2006 for additional land adjoining the existing Pajifond Kabrastan was dropped following objections.

Mining-Affected Farmers In Goa Set For Extra Subsidy Support

■ Agriculture Department Proposes Rs 2 Crore Package Amid Rainfall Deficit And Farm Distress

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Farmers cultivating land in Goa's designated mining-affected areas could receive additional financial assistance under a proposed Rs 2 crore subsidy package being worked out by the Directorate of Agriculture. The proposal envisages Rs 1 crore each for eligible farmers in North Goa and the Kushavati area,



with the assistance to be funded through the respective District Mineral Foundation Trusts. Under the proposed mechanism,

farmers with valid Krishi Cards would receive an additional 5%, 10% or 15% subsidy, depending on the particular

agriculture scheme or input for which they seek assistance. The proposed support comes at a time when Goa's farming sector is facing added pressure following a highly deficient monsoon. The state recorded an estimated 32% rainfall shortfall during the June–September period, while North Goa experienced a deficit of around 36.8%, according to data reported by the India Meteorological

Department. The additional subsidy is intended to supplement the existing assistance provided by the Agriculture Department. Farmers currently receive 50% support for activities including crop protection, mechanisation and horticulture, while irrigation infrastructure, soil and organic management and dairy expansion attract 75% subsidy.

Old Goa and Agassaim Police Conduct Joint Special Drive Across Multiple Areas

■ 22 Arrested for Drinking in Public and Creating Nuisance; Police Verify Around 500 Persons

Team Goemkarponn

OLD GOA: Old Goa Police and Agassaim Police jointly conducted a special drive during the intervening night of October 3 and 4, 2026, targeting illegal activities and public nuisance across several areas. The drive covered Chorao Island, Corlim Beat, Chimbél, Mercés, St Cruz, Siridao Beach and Bambolim Beach. As part of the operation, police conducted nakabandi,



tenant verification and beat patrolling, while around 500 persons were verified. During the drive, 50 persons were rounded up. Police booked and arrested 22 persons for

drinking in public and creating nuisance, while five persons were booked as suspects and two persons were booked for drunken driving. Police also registered cases

under 23 other minor acts, including instances involving public nuisance. The special drive followed reports from responsible citizens that groups of people were consuming alcohol at beaches and park areas, while families and couples were also visiting these places to spend time. Police noted that such situations can potentially lead to heated arguments and disturbances, affecting the safety and comfort of other members of the public.



19-year-old arrested for temple donation box theft in Keri

■ Mandrem police apprehend Uttar Pradesh native in connection with Rs 40,000 theft from Shree Ajoba Devasthan

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KERI: Mandrem Police have arrested a 19-year-old man in connection with the theft of Rs 40,000 from the donation box (fund peti) of Shree Ajoba Devasthan at Keri. The crime was registered at Mandrem Police Station as Crime No. 84/26 under Section 305 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) against unknown persons after the theft was reported on September 10, 2025. Following the

registration of the case, police conducted intelligence gathering and apprehended Ramprakash Babulal, 19, a native of Uttar Pradesh, from Keri. During questioning, the accused allegedly confessed to his involvement in the theft. He was subsequently arrested in connection with the case. Police are currently carrying out efforts to recover the stolen amount of Rs 40,000 and further investigation is underway.



Pillion Rider Seriously Injured in Motorcycle Accident at Verna IDC

Team Goemkarponn

VERNA: A motorcycle accident at the Verna Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) area left a pillion rider with grievous injuries after the rider allegedly lost control of the motorcycle on a curve on September 30. According to the complaint lodged by ASI Paresh Fal Dessai of Verna Police Station, the incident occurred at around 9.20 pm near Vijay Logistic, IDC Verna. Police said the accused rider, Ayush Kumar Saini, a resident of Vasco, was riding a Bajaj Pulsar motorcycle with pillion rider Jai Govind Singh, a resident of Jharkhand. The duo was travelling from the Water Tank area of IDC towards Titan, Verna. When they reached the curve near Vijay Logistic, the rider allegedly lost control of the motorcycle, causing both the rider and pillion rider to fall onto the tar road. The pillion rider, Jai Govind Singh, sustained grievous injuries, while the rider, Ayush Kumar Saini, also suffered injuries in the accident.

Minor Girl Raped at Caranzalem Beach; Nepal National Arrested

■ Accused Traced and Arrested Following Swift Police Investigation

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PANAJI: A minor girl was allegedly raped at Caranzalem beach after an unknown man forcibly took her to the beach, following which Panaji Police registered a case and launched an immediate investigation.

According to police, Mrs. Debi Giri Bahadur, a resident of Caranzalem, Tiswadi, lodged a complaint stating that an unknown male had forcibly taken her 11-year-old granddaughter to



Caranzalem beach and allegedly committed rape.

The incident came to light after the Panaji Police Control Room received a call at around 1.30 pm reporting that a minor girl had been raped at Caranzalem beach. A PSI and lady police constable immediately attended the location and brought the

minor girl to Panaji Police Station along with her grandmother, who is her guardian. As the girl was experiencing severe pain and was unable to walk, she was immediately referred to Goa Medical College and Hospital, Bambolim, for medical examination. During the process of recording the complaint, police received information from the GMC doctor that the victim was 11 years old and that the presence of her guardian was required for the medical examination.

Woman Dies After SuV Hits Scooter on NH-66 in Colvale

■ 36-Year-Old Pillion Rider Succumbs to Head Injuries at GMC; Driver Booked for Rash and Drunken Driving

Team Goemkarponn

COLVALE: 36-year-old woman died after sustaining serious head injuries in a road accident on NH-66 at Colvale, Bardez, after a Mahindra Scorpio allegedly hit the scooter on which she was travelling as a pillion rider.

According to the complaint filed by Head Constable Pandurang Gunaji



Naik of Colvale Police Station, the accident occurred at around 5.30 pm on October 3,

opposite Ghotneshwar Temple on NH-66. Police said the accused driver, identified as David s/o

Gabriel Mohite, 36, a resident of Miraj, Sangli, Maharashtra, was driving a Mahindra Scorpio bearing registration number MH-09-GM-1898 from Karaswada, Mapusa, towards Pernem. The police complaint alleges that the driver was driving in a rash and negligent manner, under the influence of alcohol, and was also not in possession of a valid driving licence.

Minor Girl Rescued After Alleged Kidnapping in Paroda

Team Goemkarponn

CUNCOLIM: Cuncolim Police have arrested a man in connection with the alleged kidnapping of a minor girl from Paroda, Quepem. According to the complaint lodged by the minor victim's aunt, whose identity has been withheld, the incident occurred on September 23, 2026, at around 3 pm at Paroda, Quepem. The accused, identified as Joshua Silvira, a resident of Calangute, allegedly took the minor girl away from the lawful guardianship of her family.

Goy Rakhonn Yatra enters Shiroda, Congress targets BJP over land, jobs and Mhadei

■ Chodankar alleges political intimidation, while Yuri Alemao raises concerns over land conversions, unemployment, infrastructure and Mhadei

Team Goemkarponn

SHIRODA: The South Goa leg of the Congress' Goy Rakhonn Yatra began in Shiroda on Sunday, with senior party leaders targeting the BJP government over issues ranging from land and unemployment to infrastructure, environmental protection and the Mhadei river. The



Day 13 of the statewide outreach campaign, which is covering all 40 Assembly constituencies, saw the participation of AICC Goa in-charge Manikrao Thakre, GPCC president Girish Chodankar, Leader

of Opposition Yuri Alemao, Maharashtra Congress MLA Vishwajeet Kadam and other senior Congress leaders.

Before the yatra proceeded through the constituency, Chodankar,

Alemao and other leaders offered prayers at the Bageshwar Prasann Temple. Shiroda, represented by former Congress leader Subhash Shirodkar, who later joined the BJP, became the latest constituency where the Congress sought to highlight what it described as growing public dissatisfaction with the government.



Chimbel villagers oppose obstruction of route to Toyyar lake

■ Residents flag loss of traditional access and possible ecological impact of construction activity

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Tension surfaced in Chimbel after residents gathered to oppose the alleged obstruction of a long-used route leading to Toyyar lake, saying the closure has affected public access to an important local water body.

The protest has also revived concerns over development activity in the vicinity of the lake. Residents and activists said construction in the area could have consequences for the lake's drainage pattern and the surrounding natural environment.

The protesters maintained that infrastructure and construction projects should not restrict access to

community resources or compromise environmentally sensitive areas.

Environmental activist and Chimbel tribal leader Govind Shirodkar said Toyyar lake has significance for both local biodiversity and the area's water needs. He alleged that the traditional approach to the lake, used by residents for several decades, had been blocked following construction-related activity.

According to Shirodkar, the route was regularly used by local residents, students, researchers and water tankers. He claimed that stones, laterite blocks and construction waste had been placed along the route, making passage difficult.



Goa tribal groups renew demand for Assembly reservation ahead of 2027 polls

Team Goemkarponn

QUEPEM: Tribal organisations in Goa have stepped up their campaign for political representation, beginning a statewide awareness drive at Cola in Quepem over the delay in reserving four Assembly constituencies for Scheduled Tribes (STs) ahead of the 2027 elections.

Speakers at the gathering expressed concern that the statutory process for implementing the reservation may not be completed in time, raising fears that the ST community could once again go without reserved political representation in the State Assembly. Campaign convenor Rupesh Velip said the demand for political reservation had been pursued by the community for several decades.

He pointed out that the political reservation legislation was enacted last year, but the community had yet to see sufficient progress towards its implementation.

Congress seeks clarity from GFP over 'Goa First' tie-up

■ Sardesai's call for Opposition unity puts regional party's alliance with AAP under renewed scrutiny

Team Goemkarponn

MARGAO: The political equation within Goa's Opposition camp has come under fresh strain, with the Congress seeking clarity from the Goa Forward Party (GFP) over its association with the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) under the "Goa First" platform.

The latest development follows renewed criticism of the Congress by the AAP over the issue of MLAs who have shifted



allegiance to the BJP. Rather than responding directly to the AAP, Congress leaders have turned their attention towards the GFP and questioned its position on the alliance.

Goa Pradesh Congress Committee chief Girish Chodankar had earlier

raised objections to "Goa First" banners that accuse the Congress of betraying voters. Congress working president Sunil Kawthankar has now sought to know whether the GFP endorses the latest remarks made by its alliance partner against the Congress. The Congress' questions come against the backdrop of GFP chief Vijai Sardesai advocating a broader Opposition arrangement that would include the Congress.

Torn Goy Rakhonn Yatra posters expose BJP's fear in Shiroda: Congress

■ Amarnath Panjikar says attempts to suppress the campaign will only strengthen people's resolve for change

Team Goemkarponn

SHIRODA: The deliberate tearing and damaging of posters of the Goy Rakhonn Yatra in Shiroda exposes the growing fear and frustration within the BJP ranks as the Congress campaign receives an overwhelming response from the people, Media and Communication Department Chairman Amarnath Panjikar said on Saturday.



The Congress strongly condemned the alleged vandalism, stating that tearing down posters cannot weaken the people's resolve to protect Goa, its land, identity, culture and future. "BJP may tear our posters, but it cannot tear the voice of the people. It may try to hide the truth, but it cannot hide its failures. The more the BJP tries to suppress the Goy Rakhonn Yatra, the stronger the people's determination to

bring about change will become," Panjikar said. Panjikar said the incidents in Shiroda reflected the nervousness of those who had realised that people were no longer willing to tolerate what he described as the BJP's politics of misgovernance, betrayal and neglect of Goa's interests. "BJP, remember this clearly — posters can be torn, banners can be removed, but the people's mandate cannot be torn away. In 2027, the people

of Shiroda will answer through the ballot. The same hands that tore the Goy Rakhonn Yatra posters will witness the people tearing apart the BJP's political mandate and handing it to the Congress," Panjikar warned. Panjikar appealed to Congress workers and supporters to remain peaceful and resolute, saying that the Goy Rakhonn Yatra would continue despite alleged intimidation.

Ai+ Smartphone Brings Flagship Innovation to Millions This Festive Season with Pulse 2 FE, NovaTab and LapTab

Team Goemkarponn

GOA: Ahead of the festive season Ai+ Smartphone today announced its portfolio expansion with the launch of Pulse 2 FE, NovaTab and LapTab, bringing three new technology experiences to consumers across communication, learning, entertainment and productivity.

The launch comes at a time when consumers across India are preparing for one of the year's biggest periods for technology purchases, upgrades and gifting. With the new portfolio, Ai+ Smartphone is expanding the choices available to consumers across different needs and price segments from someone purchasing their first smartphone to students looking for a connected learning device and consumers seeking a larger screen that can move seamlessly between entertainment and productivity.

Each product has been built around a distinct consumer need. Pulse 2 FE, positioned as the "First Step to a Smarter World," brings essential smartphone experiences to consumers entering or upgrading their digital journey. The launch also marks Ai+ Smartphone's entry into the 5G tablet category and the next phase of its connected ecosystem strategy with NovaTab and LapTab. NovaTab brings 5G connectivity to a larger screen, with a strong focus on education and learning. LapTab, on the other hand, combines entertainment with productivity through a large 13.2 display, and

supports stylus and an attachable keyboard that enables a laptop-like working experience.

Across the portfolio, Ai+ Smartphone brings together Android 16 with nrtQ OS, high-refresh-rate displays, large batteries and 4G/5G connectivity, with the aim of making relevant technology accessible to a wider set of consumers.

All three devices will go on sale on Flipkart from October 7, 2026, 11:59PM onwards, giving consumers new options as they upgrade their personal technology or choose devices for their families this festive season. "The festive season is a time when millions of consumers make important technology choices whether it is their first smartphone, an upgrade, a device for education or something that brings work and entertainment together," said Madhav Sheth, CEO, NxtQuantum Shift Technologies (Ai+ Smartphone). "With Pulse 2 FE, NovaTab and Nova LapTab, we wanted to create products for these different moments without losing sight of accessibility. This is also an important step in taking Ai+ Smartphone beyond smartphones and building a connected technology ecosystem

designed in India with the ambition to compete globally. As families prepare for Diwali, we want more consumers to have access to technology that adds meaningful value to their everyday lives."

Ai+ Pulse 2 FE: First Step to a Smarter World Built around "First Step to a Smarter World," Pulse 2 FE is designed for first-time smartphone users and consumers looking to upgrade this festive season. It combines a 6.67-inch 120Hz display, MediaTek G81 processor, 50MP AI camera, 5000mAh battery and IP64 protection, with 4GB RAM, 64GB storage expandable up to 1TB, and Android 16 with nrtQ OS. Available in Black, Blue, Green and Purple, it brings together the everyday essentials for a simple, dependable smartphone experience.

Ai+ NovaTab: A Bigger Screen for Smarter Learning Designed as an accessible 5G learning companion, NovaTab combines an 11.97-inch 90Hz display, 5G connectivity and an 8000mAh battery to give students a larger, connected canvas for classes, reading, research and entertainment. Powered by the T760 processor with 6GB/8GB RAM and

128GB storage, it also features dual speakers, 13MP and 8MP cameras, and Android 16 with nrtQ OS. NovaTab will be available in Dark Blue and Cinnamon Brown. Ai+ Nova LapTab: From Entertainment to Productivity, in a Tap

Nova LapTab brings entertainment and productivity together in one versatile 5G device. Its 13.2-inch 2.4K 90Hz display, stylus support and attachable keyboard allow it to move effortlessly from streaming and entertainment to note-taking, study and laptop-like productivity. Powered by the MT8755 processor with 8GB RAM, 128GB storage and a 10,000mAh battery, Nova LapTab also features quad speakers, 33W charging and Android 16 with nrtQ OS. It will be available in Teal Green and Dark Blue.

Pricing and Festive Availability
Pulse 2 FE, NovaTab and Nova LapTab have been launched in India today, September 28, 2026. Ai+ Pulse 2 FE (4 GB/ 64 GB): INR 9,999 onwards, Ai+ NovaTab (6 GB/ 128 GB): INR 17,999* (including bank offers) Ai+ NovaTab (8 GB/ 128 GB): INR 20,999* (including bank offers), Ai+ Nova LapTab (8 GB/ 128 GB): INR 24,999* (including bank offers) All three devices will go on sale on Flipkart from October 7, 2026, 11:59PM onwards, in time for consumers looking to upgrade, gift or bring home new technology ahead of Diwali.

"Next Gen GST Reforms Will Make Compliance Easier": Nirmala Sitharaman

■ New proposals target simpler registration, faster refunds, smoother input tax credit and lower compliance costs for businesses

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has outlined the next phase of Goods and Services Tax reforms, with a focus on simplifying compliance, improving access to input tax credit and reducing the time and cost businesses spend meeting tax requirements.

The proposed process reforms are expected to be considered by the GST Council on October 7. They build on nearly nine years of GST implementation and are aimed at addressing practical challenges faced by taxpayers and businesses.

The Next Gen GST reforms have two broad goals: rationalising tax rates and making compliance simpler. While the revised rate structure took effect on September 22, 2025, the upcoming phase will focus on registration, returns, refunds, disputes and input tax credit.

The government has also highlighted strong economic activity following the reforms. Between October 2025 and July 2026, reported taxable supplies increased 25.8% compared with the same period a year earlier. Business to consumer sales also rose 26.7%, indicating stronger activity in consumer facing sectors.

GST collections

remained robust as well. Gross collections between April and September 2026 stood at Rs 12.46 lakh crore, an 11.6% increase over the previous year. Collections recorded double digit annual growth in every month from June to September, while net collections after refunds rose 10.4% during the first half of the financial year.

The GST system has also expanded its taxpayer base. Registrations across central and state jurisdictions reached around 1.71 crore by the end of August, nearly 15% higher than a year earlier. Timely filing of GSTR 3B returns for April to July 2026 increased 12.6%.

Refunds remain another key area of reform. Around Rs 1.80 lakh crore was refunded between April and September, with the proposed changes seeking to make the process more predictable and improve business cash flow.

State revenues have also strengthened, with aggregate SGST receipts, including IGST settlements, rising around 16% during April to September.

The next phase is expected to focus on creating a GST system that offers businesses greater clarity, faster services and lower compliance costs, while supporting investment, consumption and economic growth.



Vijai Sardesai Will Go For Grand Alliance, Says Durgadas Kamat

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) about the GFP leader.

Kamat said Sardesai is keeping

his focus on the views of the people and will come before the public with clarity after Pitru Paksha.

"Vijai Sardesai's stand is very clear to go for a grand alliance. This is Pitru Paksha; we will take the blessings of our pitra. After Pitru Paksha, Vijai will come in front of the people clearly,"

Kamat said. Responding to questions over AAP's statement on Sardesai's political position, Kamat said the GFP leader was closely following public sentiment. "Vijai's ears are on the ground. He listens to what people want. What people want will happen," Kamat said.

'We Have Conversations With Both Russia And Ukraine': Jaishankar Says India Steps Up Peace Efforts

■ India expands diplomatic engagement on Black Sea shipping, grain exports, energy supplies and possible non attack arrangements

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: India has stepped up its diplomatic efforts to help end the Russia Ukraine war, with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar confirming that New Delhi is now holding direct conversations with both Moscow and Kyiv.

Jaishankar said India has moved beyond its longstanding call for dialogue and diplomacy



and has become more actively involved in efforts to address the conflict. He said the focus initially included ensuring the safety of shipping in the Black Sea, but discussions have now

expanded to several other issues affecting both sides.

The ongoing conversations cover grain exports, energy supplies and possible arrangements to prevent attacks. India has consistently maintained that the conflict should be resolved through negotiations and diplomacy.

The development

comes amid growing international efforts to find a path towards ending the more than four year long war. Russian President Vladimir Putin recently indicated that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had ideas aimed at finding a mutually acceptable solution, while Ukraine has also acknowledged India's involvement in discussions on a possible ceasefire.



'It Is A Cause For Worry': IAF Chief Flags Pakistan China Fighter Jet Collaboration

■ Air Chief Marshal AP Singh says delays in Tejas Mk1A deliveries are affecting fighter squadron strength and calls for faster modernisation

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Indian Air Force Chief Air Chief Marshal AP Singh has raised concerns over Pakistan's collaboration with China on a fifth generation fighter jet, calling the development a matter of concern while stressing that India must continue strengthening its overall air power.

Speaking ahead of Air Force Day, Singh said the IAF is facing pressure from delays in the induction of new fighter aircraft, particularly the Tejas Mk1A. The force currently has around 30 fighter squadrons, below

its sanctioned strength of 42, making timely deliveries increasingly important.

Singh said the IAF needs to receive around 36 to 40 fighter aircraft every year for the next few years to halt the decline and gradually increase its combat strength. He expressed hope that faster induction of Tejas Mk1A aircraft, along with future Rafale jets under the Multi Role Fighter Aircraft programme, would help address the gap. The government is working towards finalising the MRFA deal within the current financial year, subject to negotiations.



RBI Governor Warns: 'Global Order Is Under Considerable Strain'

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Reserve Bank of India Governor Sanjay Malhotra has warned that prolonged periods of financial stability could create new vulnerabilities by encouraging excessive risk taking and higher leverage across financial markets.

Speaking at an event in Delhi, Malhotra said the global economy had demonstrated considerable resilience despite repeated shocks since the COVID 19 pandemic. India has also experienced an extended period of financial stability, but he cautioned that calm markets should not lead to complacency.

According to the RBI Governor, fading memories of previous financial crises can reduce the willingness of institutions and investors to maintain prudent practices. He stressed that policymakers and financial institutions must continue monitoring risks even when the broader financial system appears strong.

'It Was Our Duty': India Explains Why Sheikh Hasina Was Allowed To Stay

■ New Delhi says extradition request is being handled through a legal process with no timeline set for Hasina's return

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: India has said there is no fixed timeline for the possible return of former Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, as Dhaka's extradition request continues to be examined through established legal procedures. India's High Commissioner in Bangladesh, Dinesh Trivedi, said New Delhi could not provide a deadline regarding



Hasina's return. He stressed that the matter was being handled through a structured legal process and that any decision would have to follow the applicable procedures. Hasina has been living in India since August 2024, when her government collapsed amid a massive anti-

government movement in Bangladesh. She left Dhaka on August 5 as protesters advanced towards her official residence and was flown to India aboard a Bangladesh Air Force aircraft. Addressing questions about why India accepted her at the time, Trivedi said Hasina was still Bangladesh's prime minister when she arrived and that India, as a neighbouring country, had to respond to the rapidly unfolding situation.

'Truth Is Our Greatest Weapon': Rahul Gandhi Launches Satyagraha Digital Platform

■ Congress leader says new platform will bring protests and public grievances from across India onto one digital map

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Congress leader and Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi has launched a digital platform called Satyagraha, aimed at bringing together protests and public grievances from different parts of the country.

Gandhi said the initiative was inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's principle of standing with the truth and would



provide people with a platform to share their struggles. He said protests involving students, farmers, women, Dalits, Adivasis and others often remain isolated, making

it difficult for their concerns to receive wider attention.

The platform allows individuals and groups to register their movements and

grievances. Gandhi said the initiative would help identify issues across areas such as education, farmers' rights, labour, social justice, health, women's safety, land,

corruption and the environment.

He said his team would examine submissions, seek additional information where necessary and identify cases where support could help bring greater attention to a particular issue. Gandhi also said he would raise genuine concerns through Parliament, public campaigns, letters and other avenues available to him.

Flydubai Co Pilot Allegedly Planned 9/11 Style Attack on Ben Gurion Airport

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: An Omani co pilot accused of attacking Indian Captain Smit Machchhar aboard a Flydubai flight to Tel Aviv allegedly planned to hijack the aircraft and crash it at Ben Gurion Airport, according to reports on the investigation. Hamam al Hammami, who is in custody in the United Arab Emirates, allegedly told investigators that he intended to incapacitate the captain, maintain control of the flight and deliberately crash the aircraft after permission to land.

India's Asian Games 2026 Campaign: 85 Medals, Historic Golds and a Host of Landmark Achievements

■ India finishes fourth in Aichi-Nagoya with 21 gold, 27 silver and 37 bronze medals as athletes deliver historic performances across sports

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: India signed off from the 2026 Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya with a strong haul of 85 medals, finishing fourth in the overall standings. The Indian contingent won 21 gold, 27 silver and 37 bronze medals, producing a series of historic performances and landmark achievements across the Games.



India's biggest success came in team sports, where the country

completed a remarkable gold-medal sweep in cricket, kabaddi and

hockey. The women's cricket team defeated Sri Lanka to retain its Asian Games title, while the men's team beat Pakistan by 19 runs in the final to complete the cricket double. Both Indian kabaddi teams also won gold. The women's team defeated Iran 37-34, while the men's side came from behind to beat Iran 40-34. Hockey produced another golden double.



"The Team Is Going Backwards": India's Bowling Attack Under Fire After West Indies Chase 351

■ India's inability to defend another huge total raises concerns about the bowling combination ahead of the World Cup

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: India's bowling attack came under serious scrutiny after the West Indies chased down 352 in the third ODI at Mullanpur, completing a five wicket victory despite India posting a formidable 351. India had already secured the series with victories in the opening two matches, but the final game exposed significant concerns with their bowling unit. KL Rahul led India's batting effort with a spectacular unbeaten 129 off 87 balls, helping the hosts post a challenging total. However, the West Indies produced a remarkable chase and reached the target in

48.2 overs. The defeat came after India had also conceded 405 in the previous match, increasing concerns over the team's ability to contain opposition batting attacks. Former India batter Hanuma Vihari questioned the direction of the bowling attack, arguing that failing to defend 350 should be treated as a major warning sign. He also highlighted the absence of a reliable fifth bowling option as one of India's biggest weaknesses. Gurnoor Singh Brar showed promise but remains a work in progress, while Mohammed Siraj was steady without producing a match changing spell.



Punjab Junior Women Edge Goa Women in Low Scoring Rama Atray T20 Thriller

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Punjab Junior Women secured a hard fought five wicket victory over Goa Women in a low scoring league match of the 7th Rama Atray Women's T20 Cricket Tournament 2026 at the DAV 8 Ground in Chandigarh.

Goa Women were sent in to bat after losing the toss and struggled early, slipping to 19/3 inside the opening four overs. Alisha Mehta and Shivani put Goa under pressure with timely wickets. Vinavi Gurav then steadied the innings with a composed 29 from 24 balls, while Divya Naik added 26 from 39 deliveries. Goa found momentum towards the end through Tanaya Naik, who remained unbeaten on an aggressive 31 off just 21 balls. Her late contribution helped Goa reach 118/5 in 20 overs. Punjab's chase also began poorly, with Manya Sharma dismissed for five. Captain Khushnawal Kaur, however, took control of the innings and produced the defining performance of the match.

Uruguay Stars Visit Eden Gardens Ahead Of India Friendly

■ Lucas Torreira and Uruguay teammates explore Kolkata and take a swing at India's favourite sport before Tuesday's clash

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Uruguay's football stars got a taste of India's sporting culture during their visit to Kolkata ahead of their international friendly against India on Tuesday.

The Uruguay squad visited the iconic Eden Gardens on Sunday, where several players tried their hand at cricket. Images from the visit quickly gained attention



on social media, with midfielder Lucas Torreira among the players seen holding a cricket bat at the historic venue.

The visit was part of the team's tour of

Kolkata as the two time FIFA World Cup champions prepare for their highly anticipated meeting with India. The squad also visited the Victoria Memorial while getting familiar with the city ahead of the match.

Uruguay have arrived in India with a strong squad featuring several prominent international names.

Around 500 Join Mini Marathon for Nasha Mukh Yuva as New Goa Olympic Association Team Begins Sporting Drive

■ 5 km Miramar run promotes fitness, healthy living and a drug free future for Goa's youth

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Around 500 participants came together at Miramar on Sunday for the "Mini Marathon for Nasha Mukh Yuva", marking the first major public initiative of the newly formed Goa Olympic Association team led by President Sadanand Shet Tanavade.

The 5 km run began at Miramar Circle, continued towards Caranzalem Park and returned to the



starting point. The event was organised as part of the Government of India's Nasha Mukh Yuva for Viksit Bharat, 100 Sundays Campaign, in association with the Goa Olympic Association, MY Bharat and the Sports

Authority of Goa.

The event focused on encouraging young people to embrace fitness, healthy living and a drug free lifestyle. Participants largely belonged to the 13 to 30 age group, while senior citizens and other

enthusiasts also joined the run.

The morning also brought together several veterans of Goa's sporting administration. Former Goa Olympic Association officials and sports administrators joined the new team, creating a strong sense of continuity and shared purpose.

Students and young participants from institutions including Kasturba Matoshri High School, Goa College of Engineering, National Institute of Water Sports,

Kendriya Vidyalaya Bambolim, Pragati High School, Don Bosco Panjim and Goa University added significant energy to the event.

GOA Secretary General Sandeep Heble said the focus was on spreading the message rather than simply counting participants. The initiative also received support from more than 50 coordinators and volunteers who helped manage the event.