



Goa Human Rights Commission Allows Smart Meter Installation, Calls for Consumer Notice

■ Commission Finds No Human Rights Violation in Smart Meter Replacement, Recommends Proper Notice to Consumers

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Goa Human Rights Commission has recommended that the installation of smart electricity meters across the state may continue, while directing the Electricity Department to notify consumers before replacing existing working meters. In its inquiry report dated October 16, 2026, in Proceeding No. 36/2026, the Commission observed that the installation of



smart meters is mandated under the statutory framework of the Electricity Act, 2003. The inquiry was initiated suo motu following a newspaper report published in O Heraldo on May 9, 2026, titled "Govt's 'mandatory' smart meter push sparks

revolt." The Commission examined concerns relating to consumer rights, privacy, data protection and the alleged health risks associated with smart meters and their meshed network technology. On privacy concerns, the Commission held that there was no material before it to establish that the collection of electricity consumption data violated consumers' right to privacy under Article 21 of the Constitution.

Smart Meter Installation to Resume Next Week: EE Kashinath Shetye

Electricity Department Says Smart Meters Are Part of Pan-India Policy

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PANAJI: The Electricity Department will resume smart meter installation next week, Executive Engineer Kashinath Shetye said.

Shetye stated that the department had informed the Human Rights Commission that no human rights

violations were involved



in the smart meter installation process. He

added that smart meters are part of a pan-India policy and stressed that Goa must embrace technological advancements.

Smart Meter Installation on Hold in Goa: Sudin

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PANAJI: Goa has temporarily halted smart

meter installations on the instructions of the Chief Minister, said Sudin Dhavalikar.

Dhavalikar stated that the rollout would resume only after fresh discussions. He stressed the need to create public

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MPA Move to Lease Baina Beach for 30 Years Sparks Congress Protest

Congress leaders warn of massive agitation, with fishermen threatening to disrupt port operations over proposed lease

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BAINA: The Mormugao Port Authority (MPA) has invited expressions of interest for leasing Baina beach for 30 years, triggering strong opposition from Congress leaders and fishermen's representatives, who have warned of a massive agitation against the proposal. South Goa MP Captain Viriato Fernandes and fishermen's leader Olencio Simoes have strongly opposed the move, raising concerns over public access, the



rights of traditional fishing communities and the future of Goa's coastline. Fernandes asserted that the Congress would not allow the privatisation of Goa's beaches, maintaining that the coastline belongs to the people and should not be handed over to private interests at the expense

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Amonkar challenges MPA, warns against testing his patience over Baina beach lease

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MORMUGAO: Mormugao MLA Sankalp Amonkar has strongly opposed the proposed 30-year lease of Baina beach by the Mormugao Port Authority (MPA), warning the authority against testing his

patience over the issue. Accusing the MPA of harassing local residents from the Shivaji statue area to Murgaocha Raja Mandap, Amonkar said he had stood firmly with fishermen and residents facing demolition

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Amit Patkar Opposes Forced Smart Meter Installation, Warns of People's Agitation

■ Goans Need Uninterrupted Power Supply, Not Unwanted Smart Meters, Says Former GPCC President

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PANAJI: Former Goa Pradesh Congress Committee (GPCC) president Amit Patkar has strongly opposed the forced installation of smart electricity meters in Goa, demanding that the BJP-led state government prioritise consumer welfare, uninterrupted power supply and public concerns. Patkar said the government must respect the sentiments of Goans and allow consumers the freedom to continue with the existing postpaid billing



system. He cautioned against using the latest order of the Goa Human Rights Commission to proceed with installations without adequately addressing public apprehensions. "Goans need uninterrupted power supply, not unwanted smart meters. Technology should make the lives

of ordinary citizens easier, not expose them to financial uncertainty, inconvenience or harassment," Patkar said. He questioned the government's insistence on proceeding with the rollout despite concerns raised by electricity consumers, stressing that technological advancement should not come at the cost of consumer choice. He urged the government to address apprehensions regarding billing practices and the implementation of the project. Patkar emphasised that electricity

is an essential service and consumers have the right to reliable power supply, transparent billing and protection from unnecessary financial burdens or inconvenience. He also warned that the Human Rights Commission's order should not be used as a pretext to disregard public sentiment or impose a system against consumers' wishes. He called for greater transparency and meaningful engagement with electricity consumers before taking further steps.

Labourer murdered at Campal; accused identified, police hunt on

■ Victim found with head smashed near Kala Academy; suspect's mobile phone switched off

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PANAJI: A labourer was allegedly murdered near an ongoing exhibition venue at Campal, Panaji, close to Darya Sangam and Kala Academy. The victim's body was found



with the head smashed, indicating a brutal attack.

The incident has triggered a police investigation, with the accused reportedly identified. Police sources said efforts are underway to trace the suspect, whose mobile phone is currently switched off. Police are

also in possession of a photograph of the accused to assist in the search. The motive behind the murder is yet to be established. Further details are awaited as the investigation continues.

Protest Is a Right, But Is Religious Provocation the Agenda?

Democracy gives every citizen the right to protest, question the government and demand accountability. Peaceful dissent is not a favour granted by those in power. It is a constitutional right. But does this right also give anyone the licence to insult religious beliefs, provoke communities or threaten journalists performing their duty? The answer is an emphatic no.

The controversy surrounding the CJP protest in Panjim has raised questions that Goa cannot afford to ignore. Slogans such as "Hinduwad Murdabad" were reportedly raised during the demonstration, while a journalist recording the protest was allegedly threatened by some youth. Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant has ordered an inquiry. It is now the responsibility of the authorities to establish the facts and determine whether any laws were violated.

However, the questions go beyond the slogans allegedly raised at one protest. They concern the purpose of political demonstrations, the responsibilities of their organisers and the possibility of legitimate public issues being overshadowed by religious provocation.

If the protest was organised over the NEET controversy or to demand the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, why did religious slogans reportedly become part of the demonstration? What connection did they have with the stated demands? Were they raised spontaneously by a few individuals, or did they reflect a broader political message? These are legitimate questions that deserve clear answers.

A protest must be judged by its purpose, its conduct and the message it seeks to convey. There is nothing wrong with young people questioning the government, demanding electoral accountability or expressing anger over perceived injustice. In fact, a healthy democracy depends on citizens who refuse to remain silent. But when a demonstration about a specific public issue becomes entangled in religious rhetoric, its original purpose risks being lost.

Questions have also been raised about placards reportedly displayed at earlier CJP protests, including one said to express support for Umar Khalid. These claims must be independently verified. A placard, a slogan or an individual's political opinion cannot automatically establish the intentions of an entire organisation. Nevertheless, organisers must be prepared to explain the message conveyed at their demonstrations, particularly when it risks inflaming public sentiment.

Goa is a state where people

Goa is a state where people from different religions, communities and regions have lived together for generations. Its social harmony should never be taken for granted. At a time when political debates across the country are increasingly coloured by religious identity, Goa must be careful not to import the same atmosphere of suspicion and confrontation.

At the same time, the fact that some protesters are reportedly non-Goans cannot itself become an argument against their participation. Goa welcomes people from different parts of the country, and every citizen has rights under the Constitution. Their place of origin is irrelevant when determining whether their conduct was lawful. Anyone who breaks the law must be held accountable, irrespective of whether they are Goan or from elsewhere.

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of whether they are Goan or from elsewhere.

The alleged threat to a journalist, however, deserves particular attention. A journalist recording a public demonstration is performing a legitimate professional responsibility. Protesters may disagree with the coverage, question a report or challenge a journalist's interpretation. They cannot resort to intimidation. The freedom to protest and the freedom of the press are both essential to democracy. Neither can survive if the other is silenced through threats.

The government must therefore ensure that the inquiry is impartial, transparent and based on evidence. It must establish what slogans were raised, whether threats were made, who was responsible and whether any unlawful activity occurred. Action should follow where the evidence warrants it. Equally, nobody should be condemned merely because allegations have been made.

The organisers, too, have a responsibility. They must clarify the objectives of the demonstration and distance themselves from any unlawful conduct, if established. Silence can create suspicion, while sweeping allegations against all protesters can deepen divisions. Both approaches serve little purpose.

There is also a larger political danger. When religious provocation takes centre stage, the substantive issues that bring people onto the streets often disappear. NEET irregularities, electoral accountability and other questions of public interest deserve serious debate. They should not become casualties of slogans that divide people along religious lines. Goa does not need imported political hostility or manufactured communal confrontation. It needs informed debate, responsible activism and institutions that act without fear or favour.

The right to protest must be protected. But that protection cannot become a shield for intimidation or unlawful conduct. Equally, allegations of provocation must not become an excuse to suppress legitimate dissent.

The question before Goa is not whether people should be allowed to protest. They must. The real question is whether those who take to the streets are prepared to defend the democratic values they claim to uphold. Are we protesting to protect our rights, or are legitimate causes being used to create divisions among Goans? The inquiry must provide the answers. Until then, facts must take precedence over speculation, and democratic dissent must remain firmly separated from intimidation and religious hatred.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Goa's Power Crisis: Heat Is No Excuse for Poor Preparedness

Frequent power outages during extreme summer heat have once again exposed the challenges facing Goa's electricity supply system. Power Minister Sudin Dhavalikar has attributed the disruptions to heatwave conditions and the supply of wet coal affecting power generation. Meanwhile, temperatures in Panaji have reportedly crossed 37.4°C, adding to the discomfort of residents already struggling with high humidity.

The question is simple: Should Goans have to endure repeated power cuts when temperatures are soaring?

Electricity is not a luxury during extreme heat. It is essential for households, hospitals, businesses, students and senior citizens. Unscheduled outages can disrupt daily life, affect livelihoods and create serious discomfort, particularly for vulnerable people.

While extreme weather and fuel quality may affect electricity generation, the government and power authorities must have contingency plans to minimise disruptions. Goa's electricity requirements are predictable, especially during periods of intense heat. Adequate planning, timely maintenance and reliable backup arrangements are therefore essential. The authorities must also explain whether the outages are caused by a shortage of power supply, transmission constraints or local distribution faults. Citizens deserve clear information instead of being left guessing whenever the lights go out.

The government must strengthen the electricity distribution network, address technical faults promptly and communicate planned outages well in advance. If external factors are affecting power generation, alternative supply arrangements should be explored to reduce the burden on consumers. Goa aspires to modern infrastructure and improved public services. Reliable electricity must be a basic part of that vision. Heatwaves may be beyond the government's control, but preparedness, maintenance and accountability are not. The people of Goa deserve uninterrupted power, especially when they need it the most.

- Prachi Nagvekar, Panjim

Slogan Controversy: Let the Truth Prevail, Not Political Polarisation

The controversy surrounding the alleged raising of "Hindutva Murdabad" slogans at a recent rally has triggered a political storm in Goa. Chief Minister Pramod Sawant has ordered an investigation, while Citizens for Justice and Peace (CJP) has reportedly distanced itself from the statements, alleging the involvement of outside elements.

The question is simple: Will the truth emerge through a fair investigation, or will the controversy become another weapon in Goa's political battles?

Freedom of expression and the right to peaceful protest are important democratic principles. However, public demonstrations must remain peaceful, and any alleged unlawful conduct must be examined in accordance with the law. Equally, accusations cannot be treated as established facts without credible evidence. The authorities must investigate who raised the slogans, establish the circumstances in which they were raised and determine whether any laws were violated. If individuals are found responsible for unlawful acts, appropriate action must follow. At the same time, innocent participants must not be unfairly targeted merely because they attended the rally.

Political parties must also exercise restraint. Such controversies can deepen divisions in society when leaders rush to draw conclusions before the facts are established. Goa has a proud tradition of communal harmony, and preserving it requires responsible political discourse.

The government must ensure that the investigation is impartial, transparent and free from political pressure. Those making allegations should cooperate with the authorities and provide any evidence they possess.

Goans deserve answers, not speculation. The truth must be established through evidence and due process, not political rhetoric.

- Aman Gupta, Siolim

Goa plans hospital upgrades, nursing college and telemedicine services

■ Sawant announces improved patient-testing infrastructure at the Sub-District Hospital, a nursing college at Old Hospicio and online medical consultations to expand access to healthcare

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MARGAO: Goa Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant has announced a series of healthcare initiatives aimed at strengthening hospital infrastructure, expanding nursing education and improving access to medical consultations through digital services.

The government will upgrade the existing infrastructure at the Sub-District Hospital (SDH) to



facilitate patient testing and improve healthcare facilities. Sawant also announced plans to start a nursing college at the Old Hospicio Hospital following renovation, a move aimed at expanding nursing education infrastructure

in the state. In another significant announcement, the state is set to launch telemedicine services soon, allowing patients to submit their prescriptions online and receive responses from doctors without having to visit hospitals. The initiative is expected to provide patients with a more convenient way to seek medical advice, particularly for

consultations that do not require a physical examination. Sawant said online OPD services at Goa Medical College (GMC) have received around one lakh bookings, indicating substantial use of the digital consultation facility. The proposed telemedicine service is expected to further strengthen the state's digital healthcare delivery system by making medical consultations more accessible.



Anjuna Beach lights up again after public pressure

■ Repeated interventions and a candlelight protest prompt action from GTDC, with residents calling for consistent maintenance

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ANJUNA: Anjuna Beach, which had been lying in darkness, is illuminated once again following repeated public interventions and a candlelight protest demanding action from the Goa Tourism Development Corporation (GTDC).

The issue was raised initially to highlight the lack of lighting at the beach. When the problem remained unresolved, a second intervention followed, with a candlelight protest and an ultimatum calling on GTDC to complete the work within a stipulated timeframe.

Following these efforts, the beach lights have been restored. The campaigners welcomed GTDC's response and acknowledged the

action taken after their intervention.

However, they stressed that restoring the lights is only the first step. They have called for consistent maintenance of the lighting infrastructure and proper completion of all necessary work to prevent the issue from recurring.

The development has also raised questions about why repeated interventions and public protests were necessary to address a basic public amenity.

The campaigners said the outcome highlights the role of public participation in bringing civic issues to the attention of authorities and securing action through sustained engagement and demands for accountability.



Govt Plans Five CCTV Cameras in Every Village Panchayat

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PANAJI: The Goa government is working on a plan to install five CCTV cameras in every village panchayat across the state, alongside a policy to govern the storage and retention of surveillance footage.

The proposal was presented before the High Court of Bombay at Goa on Thursday during the hearing of two petitions filed by Sharlet Fernandes, including one concerning the Village Panchayat of Majorda-Utorda-Calata.

Advocate General Devidas Pangam informed the court that the government had prepared a draft policy on CCTV footage retention. He also submitted that an assessment was underway to determine the technical feasibility and financial requirements of installing five cameras in each village panchayat under a dedicated government scheme.

The assessment is expected to be completed within approximately three weeks.

High Court Slams Delay in 85-Year-Old Goa Man's Zuari Bridge Compensation Case

■ North Goa Collector Asked to Resolve Pending Claim by December 15; Mamlatdar Directed to Report on Alleged Debris Dumping

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PANAJI: Bombay High Court at Goa has expressed displeasure over the prolonged delay in resolving an elderly landowner's demand for higher compensation for property acquired for the New Zuari Bridge project.

The court was hearing a plea filed by 85-year-old Antonio Florencio do Rosario, whose application for enhanced compensation



has remained unresolved for several years. Represented by Advocates Gaurish Agni and Ankur Kumar, Rosario sought relief over land acquired in 2018 at Goa

Velha in Tiswadi for National Highway 66 and the approach road to the new Zuari Bridge.

Rosario had approached the statutory arbitrator in

2019 under Section 3G(5) of the National Highways Act, 1956, seeking an increase in the compensation awarded for his land in Survey Nos. 202/2 and 202/3.

Conduct Urgent Site Inspection of Sewage Contamination Concerns in Comba, Margao - Prabhav Naik Writes to HM Vishwajit Rane

Team Goemkarponn

MARGAO: Madganvcho Awaaz and Youth Leader Prabhav Naik has urged Health and Urban Development Minister Vishwajit Rane to personally inspect the sewage-related problems in Comba, Margao, during his scheduled visit on Saturday, 17 October 2026, for the Government's "Sarkar Tumchya



Daari" initiative. In a memorandum submitted to the Minister, Prabhav Naik highlighted serious public health and environmental concerns arising from repeated sewage leakages in Comba, raising fears of contamination of

nearby wells. Several residents have reportedly stopped using well water, causing considerable hardship to local

households. The wells hold traditional and cultural significance for the community, as well water is regarded as sacred and is used by some households during Shree Ganesh Visarjan. Residents are also facing additional expenses and

inconvenience as they can no longer rely on well water for routine household needs, gardening and other purposes, stated Prabhav Naik in his memorandum.

He further highlighted reports of sewage flowing into the nallah along the Ring Road behind Comba, which eventually joins the River Sal. Several rainwater drains are reportedly filled with sewage, while the source of these discharges

remains unidentified, creating unhygienic conditions and potential risks to public health and the environment. Prabhav Naik has urged the Minister to direct the concerned authorities to test water samples from affected wells, trace the source of sewage entering the rainwater drains and initiate immediate corrective measures in coordination with the Sewerage.

Goa Crime Branch traces ganja supply chain, arrests alleged supplier in Odisha

■ 10.754 kg of ganja worth ₹10.50 lakh seized; backward linkage traced to Rayagada in interstate crackdown

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PANAJI: In a major breakthrough in its crackdown on drug trafficking, the Goa Crime Branch has traced the backward linkage of a ganja seizure case and arrested the alleged supplier from Rayagada district in Odisha.

The accused, identified as Nakula Naik, 29, a resident of Baharmuskuni, Kucheipadar, Rayagada, was arrested following an investigation involving



technical surveillance and coordination with Odisha Police. The case was registered at the

Crime Branch Police Station on September 25, 2026, under relevant provisions of the Narcotic

Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985, the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, and the Juvenile Justice Act, following the seizure of 10.754 kg of ganja valued at approximately ₹10.50 lakh. During the initial operation, police arrested Gokula Jena, 24, a native of Baleshwar, Odisha, and apprehended a 17-year-old Child in Conflict with Law, whose identity has been withheld in accordance with legal provisions.



Eight booked for assaulting taxi driver in Pernem over Mopa Airport touting dispute

■ Pernem Police register case after driver alleges assault, abuse and death threats near Nagzar junction

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Vinit Hotel in Nagzar, Pernem.

PERNEM: Pernem Police have registered a case against eight persons for allegedly forming an unlawful assembly, wrongfully restraining a taxi driver and his friends, assaulting him and threatening to kill him over a dispute related to touting activities at Mopa Airport. The case was registered as Crime No. 39/2026 on October 14, 2026, at 11.51 pm, based on a complaint filed by Nikheel Mahale, 35, a taxi driver residing at Deulwada, Uguem, Pernem. According to the complaint, the incident occurred between 5.30 pm and 5.45 pm on October 14 at the T-junction near

The complainant alleged that the accused persons, acting with a common intention, formed an unlawful assembly and wrongfully restrained him and his friends, Nandakumar Mavlanekar and Rama Warang. The accused allegedly assaulted Mahale with slaps, punches and kicks to his head and other parts of his body, causing simple injuries. They also allegedly abused him using filthy language and threatened him with dire consequences, including death.

The alleged assault reportedly stemmed from a dispute over touting activities at Mopa Airport.



Man arrested for stealing motorcycle from Victor Hospital parking lot

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MARGAO: Margao Town police have arrested Akshay Talekar, a resident of behind Victor Hospital, Margao, in connection with the alleged theft of a TVS Apache motorcycle worth approximately Rs 3.10 lakh. According to the complaint lodged by Yuri Jose E. De Souza, a resident of Dona Paula, Tiswadi, the motorcycle was stolen from the parking area of Victor Hospital, Margao, on October 13, 2026. The vehicle had been parked at the hospital premises between 8.45 am and 5.50 pm. During the investigation, police examined CCTV footage from the area and identified the person allegedly involved in the theft. The accused, Akshay Talekar, was subsequently apprehended. Further investigation in the case is being conducted by ASI Sandeep Khajankar of Margao Town Police Station.

Carmona man accused of attacking woman with axe in alleged murder attempt

■ Complainant alleges accused repeatedly struck his mother on the head, causing serious bleeding injuries

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CARMONA: A man from Carmona has been accused of attempting to murder a woman by allegedly attacking her with an axe over previous enmity and jealousy related to paddy harvesting.

According to a complaint lodged by Akash Salgaokar, a resident of Carmona, the incident occurred on October 14, 2026, between 7.30 am and 8



am at Carmona.

The complainant alleged that the accused, Prabhakar Shirodkar, also a resident of Carmona, attacked his mother with an axe and repeatedly struck her on the head,

causing serious bleeding injuries.

The alleged attack was reportedly motivated by previous enmity and

jealousy concerning the harvesting of paddy in a field.

Further investigation in the case is being conducted by PSI Anil T. Krishna of Colva Police Station.

Woman booked for cheating man of Rs 99.50 lakh in bungalow deals

■ Quepem resident alleges Bardez woman collected money for two properties in Varca but failed to execute sale deeds

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QUEPEM: A woman from Bardez, Leena Mendes, has been accused of allegedly cheating a Quepem resident of Rs 99.50 lakh in connection with two bungalow purchase transactions in Varca.

According to the complaint lodged by Babu Kolekar, a resident of Balli, Quepem, the alleged



incidents took place between June 2023 and the date of the complaint.

The complainant alleged that Mendes represented herself as the lawful owner of a bungalow located at Calata, Varca, and dishonestly induced him to pay Rs 75 lakh towards the purchase of the property. Subsequently, the accused allegedly proposed to sell another bungalow in Varca and

induced the complainant to pay an additional Rs 24.50 lakh towards the second transaction.

However, the accused allegedly failed to execute the sale deeds for both properties, resulting in an alleged financial loss of Rs 99.50 lakh to the complainant. Further investigation in the case is being conducted by PSI Kishor Velip of Cuncolim Police Station.

Congress targets BJP over mining, tribal welfare and unemployment at Sanguem yatra

■ Goy Rakhonn Yatra enters 22nd day with strong turnout; Congress leaders vow to end 26-year political drought in 2027

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SANGUEM: The Goy Rakhonn Yatra entered its 22nd day on Thursday with a strong public response in Sanguem, as Congress leaders launched a sharp attack on the BJP government over mining closure, the shutdown of the Sanjivani Sugar Factory, tribal welfare funds, water scarcity, unemployment



and alleged corruption.

The Congress leaders expressed confidence that the party would win the Sanguem Assembly constituency in the 2027

elections, ending 26 years without a Congress MLA and ushering in what they described as a new era of development, social justice and accountable

governance. The padyatra witnessed the participation of AICC Goa Desk In-charge Manikrao Thakare, AICC Co-In-charge Dr Anjali Nimbalkar, GPCC President Girish Chodankar, Leader of Opposition Yuri Alemao, Working Presidents M.K. Shaikh and Sunil Kawthankar, along with several party leaders, office-bearers, workers and supporters.



Seva Sankalp Abhiyan 2026 highlights grassroots governance in Chicalim

■ Mauvin Godinho stresses transparency, improved panchayat performance and healthy competition to strengthen local self-governance

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CHICALIM: The Directorate of Panchayats, Government of Goa, organised the Seva Sankalp Abhiyan 2026 – Jansevak Mahakumbh/ Sushasan Seva Samvad at the Village Panchayat Chicalim Hall on Thursday, highlighting the role of grassroots institutions in promoting transparent administration and community-centred development.

Transport Minister and Dabolim MLA Mauvin Godinho attended the event as chief guest, while Navelim MLA Ulhas Tuenkar was also present. The programme featured a State-Level Panchayat Parliament, a Local Self-Governance Conclave, digital outreach initiatives

and the felicitation of elected representatives in recognition of their public service and contributions to local development.

Addressing the gathering, Godinho highlighted the changes in rural administration over recent years and said the initiative aimed to showcase the work undertaken by various government departments, including the Directorate of Panchayats.

"We are celebrating the good work done by various departments, including the Panchayat Department, under this initiative," Godinho said.

He added that programmes had been conducted over the past month to inform people about completed development works, proposed projects and ongoing initiatives.



AAP MLA Cruz Silva demands comprehensive water audit across Goa

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA from Velim, Cruz Silva, has called for an immediate comprehensive water audit across Goa to assess available water resources, consumption patterns, wastage and the state's preparedness to meet future water requirements.

Reacting to Minister Subhash Phal Dessai's appeal to the public to avoid using treated water for gardening and washing vehicles, Silva said the government must move beyond advisories and undertake a scientific assessment of the state's water situation amid rising demand and concerns over reliable supply in the coming months.

Silva said the proposed audit should examine the availability of drinking water, the capacity and condition of water supply infrastructure, distribution losses, consumption patterns and the status of traditional water sources, including wells, springs, ponds and streams.

District committee considers 50 fresh forest rights claims from Gaondongrem

■ Kushavati Collector Gurudas S. T. Desai chairs DLC meeting to deliberate on claims under the Forest Rights Act, 2006

Team Goemkarponn

CANACONA: The District Level Committee (DLC) under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, held a meeting under the chairmanship of Kushavati District Collector Gurudas S. T. Desai to consider 50 fresh forest rights claims submitted by residents of Gaondongrem village in Canacona taluka. The meeting was convened to



deliberate on the claims and take decisions in accordance with the provisions of the Forest Rights Act, 2006. The meeting was attended by the Deputy Conservator of Forests, South and Kushavati District; the Deputy Conservator of Forests, Wildlife and Eco-

Tourism, South and Kushavati Division; the Deputy Collector and Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM), who also heads the Sub-Divisional Level Committee (SDLC) in Canacona; and the Zilla Panchayat member representing Sanvordem. The committee examined the 50 fresh claims as part of the process of considering forest rights applications under the Act.

Old Goa Police organise awareness programme on cybercrime, drug abuse and road safety

■ Quiz and drawing competitions held for 70 school students from seven schools; around 150 college students and tourists also reached through public outreach

Team Goemkarponn

OLD GOA: Old Goa Police organised a public outreach and awareness programme on October 15 to educate students and the public about the harmful effects of drug abuse, cybercrime, road safety, and the protection of women and children.

The programme was held at Old Goa Residency and the



Basilica of Bom Jesus, Old Goa, with a focus on strengthening police-public relations and promoting responsible behaviour among students and members of the public.

As part of the initiative, quiz and drawing competitions were organised for 70 school students from seven schools to raise awareness about drug abuse, cyber safety and

the importance of building a drug-free society.

The activities also formed part of National Cyber Awareness Month, with competitions designed to educate students about cybercrime, online fraud, digital safety and the responsible use of online platforms. Police personnel delivered awareness talks and conducted presentations, supported by short videos covering cybercrime

prevention, narcotic drugs and traffic rules.

The programme also addressed issues relating to women's and children's safety. According to the police, approximately 100 students and tourists attended the awareness sessions, while the overall outreach initiative reached around 150 college students and tourists in addition to the participating school students.

India's Exports to US Rise 11%, but China Trade Deficit Crosses \$105 Billion

■ Indian Shipments to America Grow Despite Tariff Pressures as Rising Imports from China Widen Trade Imbalance

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: India's exports to the United States have continued to grow despite tariff-related uncertainty, while stronger shipments to China have failed to narrow the country's growing trade deficit with its neighbouring economy. The latest trade figures highlight the contrasting challenges facing India's two major trading partners.

India's merchandise exports to the US reached \$50.81 billion during April to September 2026, compared with \$45.73 billion in the corresponding period last year, registering growth of approximately 11.1 per cent.

Meanwhile, India's exports to China increased 40.7 per cent to \$19.26 billion during January to September 2026. However, imports from China rose 23.3 per cent to \$125.19 billion, pushing the trade deficit to \$105.93 billion, an increase of 20.7 per cent year on year. The figures show that although Indian businesses are expanding their overseas sales, the country's trade relationships are producing different outcomes depending on the balance between exports and imports.

The increase in exports to the United States comes amid uncertainty surrounding American tariff policies and ongoing negotiations for a bilateral trade agreement.

The first tranche of the proposed India US trade



deal has been finalised and is undergoing legal drafting, with Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal expressing hope that the agreement will be completed soon.

The proposed arrangement has attracted attention because tariff rates can influence the competitiveness of Indian products against exports from countries such as Vietnam, Bangladesh and Indonesia.

India's overall merchandise exports reached \$259.89 billion during April to September 2026, up 18.51 per cent from \$219.30 billion a year earlier. This means exports to the US grew more slowly than India's total merchandise exports.

Electronics, engineering goods, chemicals and petroleum products have contributed to the broader export expansion. Electronics exports, in particular, have emerged as an important growth area as India seeks to strengthen its position in global manufacturing and supply chains. However, rising export values alone do not establish how much additional profit Indian businesses are earning. Tariffs, production costs

and imported components can affect the benefits exporters ultimately receive.

India's trade relationship with China presents a different challenge. Although exports to China have recorded strong percentage growth, the country's import bill remains substantially higher.

China supplies India with electronics, machinery, chemicals and industrial components used in manufacturing, infrastructure development and consumer markets. India exports products including minerals, fuels, seafood and agricultural goods, but these shipments remain considerably smaller in value. Consequently, even rapid export growth may not be sufficient to offset imports that are several times larger.

India's trade deficit with China reached \$112.6 billion in the 2025 to 2026 financial year, reflecting the structural imbalance between the two countries' trade flows.

Reducing this gap will require Indian businesses to expand exports in competitive product categories while

strengthening domestic manufacturing capabilities.

Economists have highlighted the importance of examining the quality of export growth alongside headline figures. Higher shipments do not automatically translate into proportionately higher profits, domestic value addition or employment.

India's electronics industry illustrates both the opportunity and the challenge. Increasing exports can generate revenue and support manufacturing, but the long term benefits also depend on how much of a product's value is created domestically rather than through imported components.

Improving access to export credit, speeding up tax refunds, strengthening logistics and helping businesses meet international standards could improve the competitiveness of Indian products.

At the same time, reducing dependence on Chinese imports does not necessarily require stopping trade. Imported machinery and components can support Indian production, making the development of competitive domestic suppliers a gradual process.

The latest figures underline two priorities for India's trade strategy: sustaining export growth in major markets such as the United States and improving the balance of trade with China through stronger domestic production and more competitive exports.

'We Welcome Competition, Including Starlink': Reliance Urges Equal Rules for All Satellite Operators

■ Jio Parent Says Indian and Foreign Satcom Companies Must Follow the Same Regulatory Framework

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Reliance Industries has welcomed competition in India's satellite communications market, including from Elon Musk's Starlink, while stressing that all service providers must comply with Indian laws and regulatory requirements.

In a statement issued on Friday, the company said it supported investment and innovation from both domestic and international businesses, provided they operated within the country's legal framework. It emphasised that the same regulatory standards should apply to every satellite communications provider, regardless of its country of origin.

Reliance also pointed out that its own satellite communication services under Jio were awaiting the necessary regulatory clearances. The company said the approval process should remain consistent for Indian businesses and foreign applicants seeking to enter the market. The statement comes amid growing attention on India's emerging satellite broadband sector, where Starlink and Jio are seeking opportunities to expand their presence. Satellite based internet services are expected to provide additional connectivity options, particularly in areas where traditional broadband infrastructure is difficult to establish.

Reliance said it had never viewed

competition as a threat, describing it as an important test of how effectively companies serve customers.

The company cited Jio's entry into India's telecommunications market in 2016 as an example of its approach. According to Reliance, Jio entered the sector without an existing customer base but has since grown to serve more than 530 million customers.

The company credited Jio with helping expand India's digital infrastructure and making mobile data services more affordable for consumers. It said the experience demonstrated how investment and competition could transform an industry and widen access to digital services.

Reliance maintained that India's business environment should remain open to both domestic and international companies that introduce innovation and improve services for consumers.

The satellite internet market is attracting increasing interest as companies look to provide high speed connectivity across urban, rural and remote regions. Starlink, operated by SpaceX, is among the international players seeking to establish services in India, while Jio is also pursuing opportunities in the sector.

Reliance's statement underlined the importance of a predictable regulatory framework as the market develops.



Amonkar challenges MPA, warns against testing his patience over Baina beach lease

notices and opposed the imposition of additional fees on watersports operators and shack owners. Amonkar expressed confidence that Chief Minister Pramod Sawant would not allow the MPA's plans to succeed, asserting that the interests of local communities must be protected. Warning the MPA against

proceeding with the proposed lease, the MLA said the move could trigger massive public protests, cautioning that the situation could take an ugly turn if the concerns of locals were ignored.

Smart Meter Installation on Hold in Goa: Sudin

awareness about smart meter technology and its benefits. He also clarified that issues related to smart meters and concerns over sanctioned load are two separate matters.

MPA Move to Lease Baina Beach for 30 Years Sparks Congress Protest

of public rights. Simoes issued a stern warning, stating that fishermen from across Goa would march to the MPA if the authority proceeded with the proposal.

He further warned that the agitation could escalate to the extent of disrupting port operations if the concerns of fishing communities were not addressed.

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'Hope Better Sense Prevails': Supreme Court Warns of Compensation Over Connaught Place Shutdown

■ Traders Flag ₹200 Crore Daily Business Losses as SC Agrees to Hear Plea on October 26

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court has indicated that it could order compensation if restrictions imposed on Connaught Place in New Delhi are found to have unlawfully affected traders' businesses amid preparations for a proposed Tiranga protest by the Cockroach Janata Party (CJP). A bench



comprising Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi made the observations while considering a request for an urgent

hearing on a petition filed by the Delhi Kirana Committee and the Delhi Iron and Hardware Merchant Association.

The traders have challenged restrictions imposed by the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC), arguing that the measures could cause

substantial financial losses. Advocate Jai Anant Dehadrai, representing the traders, submitted that the proposed protest at Central Park in Connaught Place could disrupt commercial activity worth ₹200 crore a day. He also pointed out that the NDMC had issued a closure notice the previous night, raising concerns among businesses operating in the area.



'No Repeat of July 20 Violence': Delhi Police Promises Maximum Restraint During CJP's Tiranga March

■ Over 6,000 Police Personnel and 220 CAPF Companies Deployed Across New Delhi Amid Tight Security

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Delhi Police has announced extensive security arrangements for the Cockroach Janata Party's (CJP) proposed 'Lehra Do Tiranga' march at Connaught Place, promising maximum restraint while ensuring compliance with prohibitory orders and maintaining law and order. The demonstration is scheduled for 5 pm on Friday amid heightened security concerns following violence during the party's July 20 'Sansad Chalo' march over the NEET paper leak issue. More than 118 police personnel were reported injured in clashes during that protest, along with around 60 demonstrators.

Authorities have deployed more than 6,000 police personnel and arranged 220 companies of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) across New Delhi and other sensitive locations. Additional personnel have also been kept in reserve to respond to any escalation. Security arrangements cover Connaught Place, Rajiv Chowk, Central Park, Jantar Mantar, Palika Bazaar, nearby Metro stations and other important locations in the national capital. Barricades have been installed at several points, including Patel Chowk, ITO and Sansad Marg, while police teams are coordinating deployment and movement to secure entry and exit routes.



'Want Regime Change Like Bangladesh': Rajnath Singh Accuses Congress of Fueling Political Unrest
Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday accused the Congress and its political allies of attempting to trigger regime change in India along the lines of Bangladesh. He alleged that opposition parties were using youth led protests against the Election Commission to generate unrest and challenge the government. Addressing a press conference in Lucknow, Singh said recent developments in Delhi had raised concerns about the opposition's political intentions. He alleged that Congress and its affiliated organisations were directing the energy of young people towards confrontation instead of constructive activities and nation building. Singh claimed that some opposition leaders had openly referred to Bangladesh's political developments as an inspiration for regime change. He also alleged that calls to overthrow the government reflected an attempt to create instability and weaken democratic institutions.

IMF Backs India's Revised GDP Methodology, Calls Changes a 'Welcome Development'

■ IMF Says New GDP Calculation Aligns With Global Best Practices Amid Debate Over India's Economic Growth Figures
Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has backed India's revised Gross Domestic Product (GDP) calculation methodology, describing the changes as a welcome development that aligns with established statistical practices and recommendations provided by the organisation. The IMF's Asia and Pacific Department Director, Krishna Srinivasan, said India's updated methodology was



consistent with advice from the IMF's statistics department. He also acknowledged the efforts made by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) to improve the quality of the country's economic data. Srinivasan noted that India had published an explanatory note outlining the changes introduced

in its GDP calculation process. While further improvements remained possible, he said the revisions represented a positive step towards strengthening the country's economic statistics. The IMF official also addressed concerns surrounding pressure on the Indian rupee following the recent energy shock. He said India had faced the external challenges with strong economic fundamentals and responded effectively to the situation.

'He Was Merely Passing Through': Imran Khan's Lawyers Challenge Claims of Anti CEC Protest Participation

■ Actor Disputes Allegations After FRRO Directs US Citizen and OCI Cardholder to Leave India by October 28

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Bollywood actor Imran Khan's legal team has challenged allegations that he participated in a protest against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar in Mumbai, maintaining that he was merely passing through the area when police detained demonstrators



on October 10.

The clarification comes after the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) directed the actor, who holds US

citizenship and an Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) card, to leave India by October 28. The notice has brought renewed attention

to the rules governing the political activities and immigration status of foreign nationals residing in the country.

The controversy

centres on a demonstration organised by the Cockroach Janata Party (CJP) at August Kranti Maidan, where protesters demanded the resignation of the Chief Election Commissioner. Mumbai Police detained hundreds of people who had gathered or attempted to assemble at the location.

India-US Trade Deal: First Tranche Finalised, Legal Drafting Underway, Says Piyush Goyal

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has announced that the first tranche of the proposed India-US bilateral trade agreement has been finalised and is undergoing legal drafting. He expressed hope that the remaining formalities would be completed soon, paving the way for its implementation. Speaking on the sidelines of the Conclave inauguration at Shri Ram College.

CWI CEO Questions Cricket's Revenue Model, Says West Indies Get Nothing From India Series

Chris Dehring claims bilateral cricket's financial structure favours countries with large domestic markets, leaving Caribbean cricket struggling for revenue

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Cricket West Indies (CWI) CEO Chris Dehring has criticised the financial structure of international cricket, claiming the West Indies receive no share of the revenue generated by their series against India, despite the enormous commercial value of these contests.

Speaking on Wisden Cricket's Inside Scoop, Dehring said a series played in India could generate an estimated



\$20 million to \$30 million, but the West Indies cricket board does not benefit directly from that revenue under the existing arrangement.

He described the system as one of the major inequalities in international cricket, arguing that the current model disproportionately

favours countries with large populations and lucrative domestic broadcasting markets.

Dehring traced the origins of the arrangement to 1997, when International Cricket Council (ICC) member nations voted to change the financial model governing international cricket.

He said the West Indies were previously able to earn substantial income from overseas tours through touring fees and other arrangements.

FEI Suspends Indian Equestrian Federation From December 1, Bars Riders From International Events

Prolonged governance crisis and delayed elections prompt international body to suspend EFI, with reinstatement dependent on fresh polls and a review

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: The International Equestrian Federation (FEI) has decided to suspend the Equestrian Federation of India (EFI) from December 1, 2026, over a prolonged governance crisis, preventing Indian riders, officials, trainers and horses from competing in international events during the suspension.

The decision was taken at an online meeting of the FEI Board on October



13 and communicated to members of EFI's ad hoc committee, Lt Col (retd) Sandeep Dewan and advocate Vidushpat Singhania, in a letter dated October 15.

The FEI cited the dissolution of EFI's executive committee by the Delhi High Court in February 2026 and the continued

delay in holding fresh elections as the primary reasons for its action. The committee's elected tenure had expired in September 2023, leaving the federation without a

newly elected executive body.

The international governing body acknowledged the explanation submitted by the ad hoc committee on September 27 and appreciated the work undertaken by the panel since it was appointed by the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) on March 27. However, it maintained that the prolonged absence of an elected leadership could not continue indefinitely.



PM Modi Reaffirms India's Resolve to Host 2036 Olympics

Prime Minister meets Asian Games medal-winners, praises women athletes and highlights India's growing sports ecosystem

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has reiterated India's determination to host the 2036 Olympic Games, expressing confidence that the country is steadily establishing itself as a credible destination for major international sporting events.

Modi made the remarks on Thursday while interacting with India's Asian Games medal-winners at Major Dhyani Chand Stadium in New Delhi.

The gathering included members of the gold-winning men's and women's cricket teams, along with athletes who excelled in hockey, archery and other disciplines.

India formally submitted its Expression of Interest to host the 2036 Olympics in 2024. The International Olympic Committee has confirmed that India is among seven countries interested in hosting the Games. These countries have been invited to present their proposals to the Future Host Commission in November, with October 31 set as the deadline for registering new expressions of interest. "India is emerging in establishing itself as a credible and hospitable country for international sports events. We are bidding for the 2036 Olympics, and it is our resolve that we will host the games,"

GFDC Portais Sporting Club Leaves for Belgaum to Represent Goa in Inaugural AIFF Women's Youth League

Goa Team Begins National Campaign as Tournament Kicks Off on October 16 in Karnataka

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: GFDC Portais Sporting Club has left Goa for Belgaum, Karnataka, to represent the state in the inaugural AIFF Women's Youth League 2026-27, which begins on October 16 at the Sporting Planet Sports Complex, Lovedale Central School.

The tournament marks an important opportunity for Goa's young women



footballers to compete at the national level and showcase their talent against teams from across the country.

Ahead of their

departure, the team's jersey unveiling ceremony was held at Atal Stadium in St Cruz on Wednesday.

The event was attended by GFDC

Chairman Glenn Ticlo, Member Secretary Deepesh Priolkar, Directorate of Sports and Youth Affairs Director Dr Ajay Gaude, along with

players and officials of GFDC Portais Sporting Club.

The ceremony marked the team's preparations for the upcoming competition, with the players set to carry Goa's hopes into the inaugural edition of the national youth league.

GFDC extended its best wishes to the squad and expressed confidence that the players would deliver a strong performance throughout the tournament.

The participation of GFDC Portais Sporting Club is expected to provide valuable competitive exposure to Goa's emerging women footballers, helping them gain experience and develop their skills at a higher level.

As the team begins its campaign in Belgaum, the players will look to make the most of the opportunity and bring pride to Goa through their performances on the national stage.