



Goa CM Warns of Suspension Within Eight Days for Panchayat Secretaries Obstructing 'Mhaje Ghar' Scheme

■ Strong warning during 'Sarkar Tumchya Daari' programme in Pernem as CM vows action against officials delaying certificates and obstructing scheme implementation

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant has warned that Panchayat Secretaries who unnecessarily obstruct or delay the implementation of the 'Mhaje Ghar' scheme will face suspension within eight days.

The Chief Minister issued the warning during the 'Sarkar Tumchya Daari' programme held at Sant Sohrobanath Ambiyee Government College of



Arts and Commerce in Pernem taluka, where he heard public grievances in the presence of Mandrem MLA Jit Arolkar, Pernem MLA Pravin

Arlekar and officials from various government departments. Taking a firm stand against bureaucratic hurdles, Sawant said strict action

would be taken against Panchayat Secretaries who unnecessarily delay the process even after the required certificate has been issued by the Deputy Collector's office. He stressed that citizens should not face unnecessary difficulties in accessing government schemes and that officials must ensure the timely processing of applications and resolution of grievances. The 'Sarkar Tumchya Daari' programme is

being organised under the state government's Seva Sankalp Abhiyan to bring administration closer to the people and provide citizens with a direct platform to raise their concerns with elected representatives and government officials. The statewide initiative on October 17 is being conducted simultaneously across 10 talukas: Pernem, Salcete, Bicholim, Sattari, Tiswadi, Ponda, Mormugao, Sanguem, Dharbandora

and Canacona. Sawant is leading the programme in Pernem, while designated state ministers are overseeing public interactions in the other talukas, supported by senior government officers. Officials are assisting citizens with submitting grievances and directing them to the appropriate departments for necessary action. Appointments for interactions are being provided on a first-come, first-served basis.



Vijai Sardesai Alleges Voter List Manipulation During SIR, Seeks Election Commission Action

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Goa Forward Party (GFP) president Vijai Sardesai has accused the BJP of allegedly benefiting from irregularities in the electoral rolls during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process in Goa, demanding an inquiry and strict action from the Election Commission.

Sardesai has written to the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), seeking intervention over the alleged improper shifting of voters between constituencies. He claimed that around 50 voters from Curtorim had been shifted to Fatorda despite having voted twice in Curtorim, and termed the alleged manipulation a serious offence. The GFP president also accused Goa BJP president Damu Naik of allegedly orchestrating the transfers for political gain. He has called for the removal of names allegedly shifted improperly and demanded accountability for the reported irregularities.

GCA managing committee rejects Rs 50-crore fraud allegations

■ Committee says it was in office for only three months during the audit period; matter pending before High Court

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The managing committee of the Goa Cricket Association (GCA) on Friday rejected allegations that it was responsible for a Rs 50-crore accounting mismatch flagged in an audit report, blaming the previous managing committee for making unfounded allegations.



Addressing a press conference, GCA president and former Ranji player Mahesh Dessai, vice-president Paresh Phadte, secretary

Tulshidas Shetye and treasurer Abdul Majid said the present committee was in office for only three months during the period covered by the audit. "The period covered by the audit is between April 2024 and March 2025 and April 2025 to December 2025. The new managing committee was in charge for just three months of the above period.

Two Suspects Arrested in Nashik Over Kala Academy Labourer Murder

■ Panaji police arrest two persons in connection with the killing of 30-year-old Jumma Dhobi, whose body was found in a pool of blood near a temporary shed at Darya Sangam, Campal

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Panaji police have arrested two persons in Nashik, Maharashtra, in connection with the murder of a 30-year-old labourer whose body was found behind Kala Academy in Panaji. The deceased has been identified as Jumma Dhobi, son of Sahid Dhobi, a native of Bihar who was residing at Dattagarh, Ponda. He



was engaged in cleaning work at a temporary shed being erected for a Consumer Shopee exhibition at Darya Sangam, Kala Academy, Campal. According to police, a call was received from

the Police Control Room at 6.57 am on October 16, 2026, reporting that a person was lying in a pool of blood near the temporary shed. Upon reaching the spot, police found the victim lying face down with injuries to his head. Blood was found on a white wooden laminate sheet being used for the construction of the temporary shed.

Jit Arolkar Dismisses BJP Joining Rumours, Says Seat-Sharing Talks Will Reveal All

MGP MLA says reports of him joining the BJP are currently rumours, while Pernem MLA Pravin Arlekar credits Jit Arolkar for his electoral success



Team Goemkarponn

MANDREM: MGP MLA Jit Arolkar has dismissed reports of him joining the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), describing them as rumours circulating in the media and on social media.

He said the situation would become clear at the appropriate time when the BJP and the Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party (MGP) sit together for seat-sharing discussions. Arolkar indicated that the outcome of the proposed talks between the two parties would provide clarity on the political developments and speculation

▶ CONTD TO PAGE 06

"Dadagiri Won't Be Tolerated": Dayanand Sopte Seeks Action Against Mauvin Godinho

Team Goemkarponn

MANDREM: BJP leader and former MLA Dayanand Sopte has objected to Minister Mauvin Godinho's statements in support of MGP MLA Jit Arolkar in Mandrem, asserting that "dadagiri won't be tolerated". Sopte has demanded party action against Godinho over his remarks, stating that he would take up the matter with Chief

▶ CONTD TO PAGE 06

Are We Losing the Sanctity of Protests?

When demonstrations become a tool for political mobilisation, ordinary citizens and businesses pay the price. Democracy cannot be held hostage to endless street protests.

Protest is the lifeblood of democracy. It gives citizens the right to question authority, challenge injustice and demand accountability from those in power. No government, however powerful, can claim that its decisions are beyond scrutiny. But a fundamental question needs to be asked today: are we losing the sanctity of protests, and are those who claim to defend democracy beginning to undermine the very principles they profess to uphold?

The frequent protests called by CJP's Abhijit Dipke have raised uncomfortable questions. A demonstration was called for October 10, followed by another on October 12, and now October 16. What exactly is the objective of repeatedly mobilising people on the streets? Is this a sustained campaign for a clearly defined cause, or are protests becoming an end in themselves?

Businesses have reportedly claimed losses of around Rs 2,000 crore because of the disruptions. Such a figure needs independent verification, and responsibility for the losses must be established. Yet the larger concern cannot be dismissed. When repeated demonstrations disrupt commercial activity, affect livelihoods, inconvenience commuters and create uncertainty, the costs are borne not by politicians sitting on platforms but by ordinary citizens, small traders, employees and daily wage earners.

Democracy cannot mean that one person's right to protest becomes another person's right to suffer.

The Constitution guarantees the freedom to assemble peacefully and express dissent. These are essential democratic freedoms, not concessions granted by the government. But these rights also operate within a constitutional framework. The Supreme Court has repeatedly recognised that the right to protest is not unlimited and that public spaces cannot be occupied indefinitely in ways that deny others their rights.

This raises an important question about the role of the judiciary. Why have repeated demonstrations been permitted to continue in the manner alleged? Has the court examined the consequences of successive calls for protests, the extent of disruption and the balance between the demonstrators' rights and the public's interests?

However, it would be wrong to suggest that the Supreme Court is condoning anarchy without examining its specific orders and the circumstances before it. Courts must protect dissent, but they must also ensure that constitutional freedoms are exercised responsibly. The public deserves clarity on where that balance

"The frequent protests called by CJP's Abhijit Dipke have raised uncomfortable questions. A demonstration was called for October 10, followed by another on October 12, and now October 16. What exactly is the objective of repeatedly mobilising people on the streets? Is this a sustained campaign for a clearly defined cause, or are protests becoming an end in themselves?"

Businesses have reportedly claimed losses of around Rs 2,000 crore because of the disruptions. Such a figure needs independent verification, and responsibility for the losses must be established. Yet the larger concern cannot be dismissed. When repeated demonstrations disrupt commercial activity, affect livelihoods, inconvenience commuters and create uncertainty, the costs are borne not by politicians sitting on platforms but by ordinary citizens, small traders, employees and daily wage earners.

Democracy cannot mean that one person's right to protest becomes another person's right to suffer."

lies.

The more troubling issue is the apparent shift in the political messaging surrounding these demonstrations. The protests were presented as a campaign against alleged vote theft, a demand for Ganesh Kumar's resignation and concerns surrounding NEET. These are issues that deserve serious scrutiny. Electoral integrity cannot be compromised, public officials must be accountable, and allegations concerning competitive examinations must be investigated fairly.

But the political character of a movement changes when its own leaders openly describe its objective in broader political terms.

Prashant Bhushan, reportedly speaking alongside Dipke, Neha Bora and Prakash Raj, has described

the fight as one for regime change, with P. Chidambaram also backing that position. If these statements accurately reflect the campaign's direction, the public is entitled to ask a straightforward question: is this movement seeking specific institutional reforms, or is it now pursuing a larger political objective?

There is nothing inherently undemocratic about seeking a change of government. Regime change through elections is the very essence of parliamentary democracy. Opposition parties and citizens are entitled to campaign against an incumbent government. But political ambitions should be stated honestly. A movement cannot indefinitely present itself as a limited campaign for electoral accountability while simultaneously expanding its stated objective into a struggle to dislodge the government.

That distinction matters because public trust is easily exploited and difficult to restore. Citizens who join a protest over a specific grievance should know whether they are participating in a targeted campaign or being drawn into a broader political battle.

The comparisons with Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal also require caution. Each country has its own political circumstances, institutional weaknesses and history of public mobilisation. India is not destined to follow their trajectories simply because people demonstrate. Our democracy has strong constitutional institutions, regular elections and a long tradition of peaceful transfers of power.

Yet the lesson is equally clear: institutions must remain credible, political leaders must exercise restraint, and public anger must not be manipulated into permanent confrontation.

The answer is not to suppress protests or criminalise dissent. It is to demand accountability from everyone involved. Organisers must explain their objectives, ensure peaceful conduct and consider the public consequences of repeated demonstrations. Authorities must facilitate lawful protest while maintaining public order. Courts must protect fundamental rights without overlooking the rights of others.

Above all, political leaders must recognise that democracy is much larger than the government they oppose or the government they support.

A protest should be a means of correcting injustice, not a permanent instrument of disruption. When demonstrations become repetitive, their objectives keep changing and ordinary people are left paying the price, the movement owes the public an explanation.

The right to protest must be protected. But the public also has the right to ask: protest for what, at what cost, and to whose political benefit?

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Smart Meters in Goa: Transparency Must Come Before Implementation

The Goa Human Rights Commission's decision to allow smart meter installation while recommending prior notice to consumers brings an important issue into focus: the need for transparency and public confidence in government decisions.

The Commission has found no evidence before it to establish human rights violations relating to privacy or alleged health risks. However, its recommendation that consumers be notified before existing working meters are replaced deserves serious attention.

The question is simple: If smart meters are being introduced under a statutory framework, why should consumers not be properly informed about the process?

Electricity is an essential service, and consumers have a legitimate interest in understanding changes that affect their homes, electricity bills and consumption data. Even when a policy is legally mandated, its implementation must be transparent, accessible and sensitive to public concerns.

The Electricity Department must ensure that notices are issued well in advance, explaining when meters will be replaced, how the new system works and where consumers can seek clarification or register complaints. Public awareness campaigns should also address concerns about billing, data privacy and the functioning of smart meters.

At the same time, misinformation should not be allowed to create unnecessary panic. Concerns must be addressed through credible technical explanations and expert assessments rather than assumptions or political rhetoric. The Commission's findings should be seen as an opportunity to improve public communication, not merely as a clearance for the authorities to proceed.

Modernisation of Goa's electricity infrastructure may be necessary, but public trust cannot be taken for granted. Consumers deserve information, clarity and accountability. Technology should make public services better, not leave citizens feeling excluded from decisions that affect them.

- Alton Vaz, Vasco

Goa's Healthcare Plans Must Deliver Results on the Ground

The Goa government's announcement of hospital upgrades, a nursing college at Old Hospicio and the introduction of telemedicine services is a welcome step towards improving healthcare access in the state. However, the real measure of success will be how effectively these initiatives translate into better services for ordinary citizens.

The proposed improvements at the Sub-District Hospital to strengthen patient-testing facilities could help reduce delays and make essential diagnostic services more accessible. Similarly, establishing a nursing college at Old Hospicio following renovation could expand opportunities for nursing students while helping address the growing demand for trained healthcare professionals.

The proposed telemedicine service is another encouraging initiative. Allowing patients to submit prescriptions online and receive medical advice could save time, reduce unnecessary hospital visits and benefit people living in remote areas. The reported one lakh bookings for online OPD services at Goa Medical College also indicate the growing demand for digital healthcare.

However, technology cannot replace the need for adequately staffed hospitals, timely diagnostic services and accessible treatment. Telemedicine must be supported by reliable digital infrastructure, trained medical personnel and clear procedures for referring patients who require physical examinations.

The government must also ensure that senior citizens, economically disadvantaged families and people unfamiliar with digital platforms are not left behind. Traditional consultation facilities must remain accessible to those who need them. Goa needs a healthcare system that combines modern technology with dependable public hospitals and skilled medical professionals.

Announcements are encouraging, but implementation, regular monitoring and accountability are essential. The ultimate objective must be to ensure that every Goan receives timely, affordable and quality healthcare, regardless of where they live.

- Joseph Sequeira, Panjim



Strengthening Water Security for a Growing Goa

30 MLD Raw Water Pumping Station at Calangute Marks a Major Infrastructure Milestone

Strengthening water infrastructure and preparing for the growing needs of North Goa, the 30 MLD Raw Water Pumping Station at Calangute, located on the Tillari Irrigation Canal, has been inaugurated. The project marks an important step towards improving raw water supply for Pilerne Industrial Estate and the surrounding areas of Calangute and Saligao.

The initiative reflects the Government of Goa's commitment to building reliable infrastructure that supports communities, industry and the state's expanding economic activity. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant, infrastructure development continues to remain an important part of Goa's growth and long term progress.

The inauguration was held in the presence of Water Resources Minister Subhash A. Shirodkar,

Saligao MLA Kedar J. Naik, Calangute Sarpanch Joseph Sequeira, Zilla Panchayat Member Franzilia Rodrigues, Comunidade of Calangute President Anthony F. D'Souza, Attorney Augustin Proenca and other dignitaries.

With a capacity of 30 million litres per day, the pumping station is designed to strengthen the movement of raw water from the Tillari Irrigation Canal, supporting the requirements of the Pilerne Industrial Estate and neighbouring areas.

Water infrastructure is essential for the continued development of Goa. As residential settlements expand, businesses grow and industrial activity increases, dependable water supply systems become increasingly important. Investments in pumping facilities and water management infrastructure help build the foundation for meeting these evolving requirements.

For the Pilerne Industrial Estate, improved raw water infrastructure

can support industrial operations and contribute to a more dependable environment for economic activity. The surrounding areas of Calangute and Saligao also stand to benefit from infrastructure planning that takes future demand into account.

The inauguration represents another step in strengthening Goa's water infrastructure through continued investment and development. It highlights the importance of coordinated efforts between the state government, elected representatives and local institutions in advancing projects that serve public and economic needs.

With a focus on infrastructure, development and long term planning, the 30 MLD Raw Water Pumping Station at Calangute adds an important component to North Goa's water supply network.

Government of Goa: Building stronger water infrastructure for a more secure and prosperous future.



Department of Information and Publicity

CCTV footage helps Panaji police identify four suspects in Nagali Hills sickle attack

■ Two youths injured in alleged attempt to murder following verbal argument; victims undergoing treatment at GMC Bambolim

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: CCTV footage and witness statements have helped Panaji police identify four suspected assailants in an alleged attempt-to-murder case following a violent assault on two youths at Nagali Hills on October 15.

The incident occurred at around 10 pm when a verbal argument allegedly escalated into



a violent attack, with the four suspects assaulting two youths with metal sickles and wooden ribs, according to the complaint lodged with Panaji police.

the head with a metal sickle, while another friend, Deniel, sustained an injury to his hand in the attack. Both victims suffered bleeding injuries

and are undergoing medical treatment at Goa Medical College (GMC), Bambolim. During the investigation, police used statements and CCTV footage to narrow down the identities of the four suspected accused: Fulchand Sahani, 35; Sanjeev Kumar Sahani, 18; Sujeet Kumar Sahani, 40; and Nitish Kumar Sahani, 19. All four are from Bihar.



Motorcyclist seriously injured in collision with electric car at Porvorim

■ Rash and negligent driving alleged at NH-66 junction near Gauri Petrol Pump; pillion rider also injured

Team Goemkarponn

PORVORIM: A 25-year-old motorcyclist sustained serious abdominal and other injuries after a Tata Tiago electric car allegedly rammed into his motorcycle at a junction on National Highway 66 near Gauri Petrol Pump, Porvorim, on October 14.

The accident occurred at around 8.26 am near Vivanda Cotta house when the electric car, bearing registration number GA-04-H-2673, was proceeding from the internal road at Reis Magos towards Porvorim and crossing the national highway.

According to the police complaint, the car driver, Prajot

Sakhalkar, 49, a resident of Harijanwada, Maulingem, Bicholim, allegedly drove in a rash and negligent manner and failed to exercise proper care and caution while crossing the highway, resulting in a collision with a Suzuki Gixxer motorcycle bearing registration number GA-07-Y-4318.

The impact caused the motorcycle rider, Vishal Dhote, 25, a native of Borgaon, Betul district, Madhya Pradesh, and the pillion rider, Bhuvan Raj Joshi, 35, residing at Alto Porvorim, to fall onto the road. Dhote sustained serious injuries to his abdomen and other parts of his body, while Joshi also suffered injuries.

Quepem police rescue missing minor girl from Karnataka

Team Goemkarponn

QUEPEM: Quepem police have traced and rescued a missing minor girl from Arsikeri in Hassan district of Karnataka following an inter-state search operation involving intelligence gathering, field enquiries and assistance from railway vendors.

According to police, a missing person report led to the registration of a kidnapping case and the launch of a search operation to trace the girl.

During the investigation, police personnel visited Hubballi and developed intelligence with the help of railway hawkers and vendors. The girl's photograph was circulated among vendor groups operating along railway stations on the Hubballi-Mysuru route, helping investigators gather information about her whereabouts.

Acting on the inputs received, a police team, accompanied by a family member of the girl, reached Arsikeri and successfully traced her. She was safely brought back to Goa after the necessary legal and procedural formalities.

The operation involved police constables Sahil Shetkar (PC-9435), Sidhu Raul (PC-8883), Arbaz Khan (PC-9077) and Prajwal Naik (PC-9215).

Betim man assaulted with cutter over alleged matka gambling dispute

■ Shopkeeper sustains hand injury in attack near Betim ferry

Team Goemkarponn

BETIM: A 40-year-old man was allegedly abused and assaulted with a cutter following a dispute over matka gambling activities near Betim ferry on October 15.

The complainant, Mohammad Usman Hazarat, a resident of Penha de France, Bardez, alleged that Rajaul Karim Sheikh alias Ranaji, 56, a resident of Verem, Bardez, assaulted him on his left hand with a cutter, causing injuries.

According to the



complaint, the incident occurred around 2 pm in an open area near the complainant's shop close to Betim ferry and was linked to a dispute over

matka gambling activities.

The case was registered on October 15, and further investigation is being conducted by PSI Akshay Gaonkar.

Truck caught with allegedly tampered registration number in Pernem

■ Truck found transporting murram powder near Casarvarne PHC with suspected altered number plate; police probe underway

Team Goemkarponn

PERNEM: A truck allegedly operating with a tampered registration number was found transporting metal aggregate dust powder, commonly known as murram powder, near the Primary Health Centre (PHC) at Casarvarne, Pernem, prompting police to initiate an investigation. According to the complaint lodged by



Mahadev Shet, secretary of the Pernem Bardez Truck Owners Association, the incident came to light before 8 am on October 15. The truck, a Swaraj Mazda driven by

registration was reported as GA-03-K-2845, while it was allegedly altered to GA-03-K-2945 to conceal its original identity. The complaint further alleges that the truck was

transporting murram powder clandestinely without obtaining the requisite permission from the concerned authorities, with the intention of securing unlawful personal gain and deceiving the authorities. The complaint was lodged at 4.40 pm on October 15 by Shet, whose association office is located near the old RTO check post at Dhargal, Pernem.

Fake PM Awas Yojana APK link costs Cuncolim man ₹1.74 lakh

Team Goemkarponn

CUNCOLIM: A man from Jharkhand residing in Cuncolim was allegedly cheated of ₹1,74,577 after clicking on a fraudulent APK file sent through WhatsApp under the pretext of applying for the PM Awas Yojana housing scheme.

According to the complaint filed by Birbal Nayak, the incident occurred on October 3 at around 1 pm at the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC), Cuncolim.

Gõy Rakhonn Yatra draws massive response in Sanvordem and Curchorem

■ Congress targets BJP over mining crisis, corruption and civic issues; expresses confidence of victory in 2027 Assembly elections

Team Goemkarponn

CURCHOREM: The Gõy Rakhonn Yatra witnessed a massive public response as it entered its 23rd day on Friday, travelling through Sanvordem and Curchorem, with Congress leaders launching a scathing attack on the BJP government over alleged corruption, the mining crisis, deteriorating law and order, unemployment and the neglect of essential public services. Congress leaders



claimed that the enthusiastic participation of people reflected growing dissatisfaction with the BJP government and expressed confidence

that the party would return to power in the 2027 Goa Assembly elections.

Among those present were AICC Goa Desk In-charge Manikrao

Thakare, Co-in-charge Dr Anjali Nimbalkar, GPCC President Girish Chodankar, Leader of Opposition Yuri Alemao, MP Capt. Viriato Fernandes, Working Presidents and MLAs Altone D'Costa, Sunil Kawthankar and MK Shaikh, former minister Domnic Fernandes, vice presidents Pramod Salgaonkar, Beena Naik and Vithoba Desai, along with several other party leaders, office-bearers and thousands of yatris.



Rane Orders Inspection of Comba Sewerage Menace, Assures Upgradation of SGDh

Team Goemkarponn

MARGAO: Health Minister Vishwajit Rane today ordered an inspection of the sewerage menace in Comba, Margao, and assured Madganvcho Awaaz and Youth Leader Prabhav Naik of steps towards upgrading South Goa District Hospital (SGDH) into a fully equipped tertiary care hospital. The assurances came during the Government's "Sarkar Tumchya Daari" initiative held in Margao.

The Health Minister instructed the Chief Officer of Margao Municipal Council (MMC) to conduct an inspection of the affected areas in Comba by Wednesday and submit a compliance report to the Secretary, Urban Development. He further

stated that, if required, he would personally visit the area to obtain first-hand information and assured Prabhav Naik that the long-pending sewerage issue would be addressed. Prabhav Naik had earlier submitted a memorandum to Health Minister Vishwajit Rane on Friday, 16 October 2026, highlighting the serious problem of sewage leakage in Comba, Margao, and urging urgent intervention to address the issue and prevent further contamination of local wells, rainwater drains and the River Sal. During the interaction, Prabhav Naik also raised the long-pending demand for upgrading South Goa District Hospital into a fully functional tertiary care institution.



Goa targets next phase of pharma growth through research, innovation and skilled jobs

Team Goemkarponn

CAVELOSSIM: Goa is looking to move beyond its established pharmaceutical manufacturing base and attract greater investment in research, innovation and advanced technologies, with Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant pitching the state as a destination for the next phase of industry growth.

Inaugurating the Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (IPA) Leadership Summit Goa 2026 at Cavellossim on Friday, Sawant highlighted Goa's contribution of around 12 per cent to India's medicine production and called on pharmaceutical companies to expand their investments in the state.

The focus, he indicated, is on translating Goa's manufacturing strength into broader opportunities in research and development, life sciences, advanced production technologies and exports.

Kushavati road safety panel flags accident black spot in Quepem, beach driving by tourists

■ District committee calls for corrective measures, stricter enforcement against modified silencers and better safety arrangements at roadwork sites

Team Goemkarponn

QUEPEM: The first District Road Safety Committee meeting of Kushavati district has flagged a road accident black spot in Quepem taluka and discussed measures to curb unsafe driving, noise pollution and tourists driving vehicles on beaches. The meeting, chaired by Kushavati District Collector



and District Magistrate Gurudas S. T. Desai at the Matanhy Saldanha Administrative Complex in Margao, stressed the need for coordinated action by departments to improve

road safety and strengthen enforcement of traffic regulations. The identification of an accident black spot in Quepem was among the key issues discussed, with the committee emphasising the need for appropriate corrective measures to reduce the risk of further accidents.

South Goa hospital expansion aims to cut patient referrals to GMC

■ ₹12-crore MRI facility, new specialist units to bring advanced diagnostics and treatment closer to patients in the district

Team Goemkarponn

MARGAO: Patients in South Goa could increasingly access advanced diagnostic tests and specialist consultations closer to home, with the government expanding facilities at South Goa District Hospital in Margao to reduce dependence on Goa Medical College and Hospital (GMC). Chief Minister



Dr Pramod Sawant inaugurated the hospital's MRI and echocardiography facilities, along with Cardiology and

government has invested approximately ₹12 crore in the MRI facility, while the echocardiography machine cost around ₹35 lakh. The upgraded

Nephrology units, on Friday, marking a major expansion of specialised healthcare services in the district.

The

infrastructure is expected to benefit nearly 30 per cent of South Goa's population by improving access to diagnosis and treatment and reducing referrals to GMC.

Under the expanded services, a cardiologist from GMC will be available three times a week, while nephrology consultations will be conducted every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Goa Rolls Out MhojoSmart Meter App to Help Consumers Track Power Usage

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Electricity consumers in Goa with smart meters can now access details of their power usage through the newly launched 'MhojoSmart Meter' mobile application, an initiative aimed at making electricity-related information easier to monitor and manage. The application brings several consumer services together, allowing users to check electricity consumption, monitor voltage levels and review billing information.

Built Around You: How Customer Voices Are Shaping the Ai+ Smartphone Experience

Team Goemkarponn

MUMBAI: Ai+ Smartphone is strengthening its customer-first approach by incorporating real user feedback into product and service improvements. Drawing insights from customer reviews, everyday device usage and after-sales interactions, the brand is addressing concerns related to camera stability, connectivity and performance through software updates, enhanced testing and more responsive customer support. This approach reflects Ai+ Smartphone's commitment to building not just for its users, but with them.

Across its smartphone portfolio, customers have appreciated Ai+ Smartphone for its design, camera capabilities, battery life, performance and value for money. The Nova 2 Neo 5G has received positive feedback for its battery performance and accessibility, while the Nova 2 Power 5G has been appreciated for its overall experience and dual-tone design, particularly the Blue Fusion colour. The Nova 2 Ultra 5G has been recognised for its photography experience, performance and AMOLED display. Similarly, the Nova 2 5G and Nova 2 Pro 5G have received encouraging responses for their overall experience and value, while the Ai+ Pulse 2 has been appreciated for its battery, display and design. Beyond positive reviews, Ai+ Smartphone is actively using customer feedback to identify and address areas for improvement. Concerns related to camera stability, connectivity and device performance have been shared with product and technical teams, informing targeted over-the-air (OTA) updates and product refinements. The Nova 2 Ultra 5G, for



Ai+
Smartphone

Built Around You

**Real Feedback.
Real Improvements.
A Better Ai+ Experience.**



**BUILT IN INDIA
FOR WHAT'S next**

instance, has received software updates aimed at improving camera stability. These insights are also being considered during product reviews and pre-launch testing to strengthen the experience offered by future devices.

Ai+ Smartphone has also made independent pre-launch evaluations an integral part of its product development approach through Project Open Review, inviting external feedback on its devices before they reach consumers. As of now we have over thousand registrations, from reviewers, creators, journalists, tech enthusiasts and, for the first time, ethical hackers to independently evaluate our devices. The initiative enables the brand to gather honest, unscripted feedback and incorporate necessary refinements into its products ahead of launch, reinforcing its commitment to Trust through Transparency.

Commenting on the approach, Archi Gogoi, Head of Brand, Marketing & Growth at Ai+ Smartphone, said, "At Ai+ Smartphone, we believe that building better technology starts with listening to the people who use it. Customer feedback helps us understand what we are getting right

and where we need to improve. Whether through software updates, stronger product testing or more responsive after-sales support, our focus is on translating these insights into meaningful action. As we grow, we want our customers to know that their voices play an important role in shaping the Ai+ experience."

The brand is also strengthening its after-sales operations through daily feedback collection, improved case tracking and closer coordination between customer support and technical teams. Dedicated teams conduct pre-launch testing to identify potential concerns, while software-related issues identified through customer interactions are being addressed. Where spare parts availability affects repair timelines, handset replacements are arranged wherever required and feasible to minimise customer inconvenience. To make customer support more responsive and personalised, Ai+ Smartphone has strengthened its social media feedback and escalation process. Dedicated teams regularly monitor customer messages, comments and mentions, ensuring concerns are reviewed, prioritised and coordinated with

Customer Service for timely action. The process focuses on proactive engagement, structured follow-ups and tracking cases through to resolution, helping deliver a more consistent and accountable customer experience. Ai+ Smartphone currently aims to resolve most service concerns within three to four days, depending on the nature of the issue and spare parts availability. Ai+ Smartphone also plans to introduce customer experience videos following service resolution to better understand customer satisfaction and identify opportunities for improvement. Alongside product reviews and service feedback, these insights will help the brand refine its support processes, improve turnaround times and incorporate customer learnings into future product and service decisions. As Ai+ Smartphone continues to expand its portfolio, customer feedback will remain central to how the brand evolves. By connecting real-world experiences with product development, software enhancements and after-sales improvements, Ai+ Smartphone is reinforcing its commitment to building technology not just for its users, but with them.

Goa to Host State Level Workshop on Free Trade Agreements on October 19

■ DITC and DGFT to help exporters and manufacturers explore international market opportunities under India's FTAs

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Directorate of Industries, Trade and Commerce (DITC), in coordination with the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, will organise a state level workshop on "Leveraging Free Trade Agreements (FTAs)" on October 19, 2026, in Panaji.

The workshop will be held from 10 am to 5.30 pm at Terminal Banquets, Caculo Enclave, St. Inez. The programme is part of a nationwide outreach initiative aimed at increasing awareness about the opportunities available under India's Free Trade Agreements and encouraging businesses to make greater use of preferential access to international markets.

The initiative seeks to familiarise exporters, manufacturers and industry stakeholders with the potential benefits of FTAs, which can help eligible Indian businesses access overseas markets under favourable trade conditions. Greater

awareness of these agreements can support businesses in exploring export opportunities and expanding their international presence.

DITC has invited industry associations, micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) associations, manufacturers, exporters and other relevant stakeholders from across Goa to participate in the workshop.

The programme will provide an opportunity for participants to engage in discussions on leveraging trade agreements and understanding the market access opportunities available to Indian businesses.

To ensure wider participation, arrangements are also being made for stakeholders who are unable to attend the programme in person to join online.

Interested manufacturers, exporters and other industry representatives are encouraged to register for the workshop and take advantage of the outreach initiative.

Registration is available at: <https://tinyurl.com/yp5yv9vy>

...CONTD FROM PAGE 01

Jit Arolkar Dismisses BJP Joining Rumours, Says Seat-Sharing Talks Will Reveal All

surrounding his possible move to the BJP.

Meanwhile, Pernem MLA Pravin Arlekar has credited Jit Arolkar for his electoral success, stating that he became an MLA because of Arolkar.

Arlekar also said that the two leaders share positive thoughts about each other.

"Dadagiri Won't Be Tolerated": Dayanand Sopte Seeks Action Against Mauvin Godinho

Minister Dr Pramod Sawant. He urged the Chief Minister to direct ministers and MLAs to refrain from making such statements. Reacting to Godinho's support for Arolkar, Sopte indicated that the issue needed to be addressed within the party and stressed that such conduct would not be accepted.

Trump Waives Russia Sanctions Threatening 100% Tariffs on India, Easing Trade Tensions

■ US President cites national interest to suspend punitive measures targeting major buyers of Russian oil, including India and China

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: US President Donald Trump has suspended the implementation of sanctions and tariffs linked to Russian exports that threatened to impose duties of up to 100% on imports from India and other major buyers of Russian crude oil. The decision provides temporary relief to New



Delhi, with the measures due to take effect on October 18.

In an executive order issued on Friday, Trump said the waiver was in the national interest of the

United States. The decision suspends the immediate implementation of the proposed restrictions but does not permanently remove the possibility of imposing them in the future.

The measures were linked to the Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of

2026, signed by Trump last month. The legislation gave the US President 30 days to impose tariffs of up to 100% on goods from major purchasers of Russian crude, including India, China, Slovakia, Hungary and Azerbaijan. It also provided for additional sanctions against Russian entities and potential 500% tariffs on imports of Russian energy products.



Security Forces Foil Infiltration Bid in J&K's Keran Sector, Gunfight Erupts Near LoC

■ Search Operation Launched in Kupwara's Jumagund Area as Additional Troops Join Security Sweep

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Security forces foiled an alleged infiltration attempt by an armed group in Jammu and Kashmir's Kupwara district early Saturday, triggering a brief exchange of gunfire in the Keran sector near the Line of Control (LoC). The incident occurred at around 3.30 am in the Jumagund area of the Keran sector in north Kashmir. Security personnel responded to the suspected movement, leading to a brief exchange of fire. Following the incident, security forces launched a search operation to locate any suspected infiltrators and sanitise the surrounding area. Additional troops have been deployed to

support the operation and strengthen the security presence in the sensitive border region. The Keran sector, located close to the LoC, is considered strategically important because of the possibility of infiltration attempts across the border. Security forces regularly maintain heightened vigilance in the area to prevent armed groups from entering Indian territory. The search operation is continuing, with personnel checking the surrounding terrain for any signs of movement. Further details about the incident, including the whereabouts of the suspected armed group and whether there were any casualties, are awaited.



Internet Access Is a Fundamental Right for Children Too, Rules Supreme Court

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court has held that the right to access and use the internet is protected under Articles 21 and 19(1)(a) of the Constitution, clarifying that children are entitled to the same fundamental protections and cannot be denied internet access altogether. A bench of Justice JB Pardiwala and Justice K Vinod Chandran said children's safety and freedom were not mutually exclusive. It observed that completely denying children access to the internet would be as unreasonable as suggesting that their freedom of speech and expression did not deserve protection. The observations came as the court issued directions to strengthen the detection and removal of child sexual exploitation and abuse material (CSEAM) from social media platforms and other online services. The bench noted that the right to freedom of speech and expression includes the right to receive, share and access information and ideas.

India Rejects UN Rapporteur's Report on Youth Protests, Calls Claims 'Hearsay'

■ New Delhi questions the credibility of allegations against India, citing constitutional freedoms, youth engagement and government action on examination reforms

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: India has strongly rejected a report by United Nations Special Rapporteur Gina Romero alleging that young people in the country face retaliation, stigma and repression for raising issues such as mental health and gender justice. Speaking during the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly's Third Committee, Indian First



Secretary Anuj Swarup criticised the report for relying on anonymous and unverified submissions. He described it as "hearsay dressed up as a report" and said such reporting practices undermined the credibility of the United Nations and its institutions. Swarup said India's Constitution guarantees

citizens the rights to peaceful assembly, association, speech and expression. He pointed to the role of the independent judiciary, a free press and the National Human Rights Commission in safeguarding these freedoms. He also questioned the report's portrayal of the country as repressive, arguing that it acknowledged the emergence of a satirical political movement led by young people.

Tiranga Protest: CJP Abhijeet Dipke Under Preventive Arrest, Neha Bora Released

■ Dipke faces action ahead of the party's Tiranga protest in Delhi, while AISA chief Neha Bora criticises the police and renews demands to halt the SIR exercise

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) founder Abhijeet Dipke has been placed under preventive arrest following his detention ahead of the party's planned 'Lehra Do Tiranga' protest at Central Park in Connaught Place, New Delhi. Meanwhile, All India Students' Association (AISA)



national president Neha Bora has been released after completing the required formalities under Section 65 of the Delhi Police Act. According to police, action against

Dipke was initiated under Sections 126 and 170 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS). He was scheduled to be produced before a Special Executive Magistrate on October 17. Police said Dipke had been served two notices directing him not to visit Central Park

for the planned protest but allegedly failed to comply. He had also furnished a bond of Rs 50,000 and was directed to maintain public peace for one year. After her release, Bora accused the authorities of violating law and order by detaining ordinary citizens and keeping them in custody overnight. She questioned the legal basis for such detentions and alleged that protesters were being treated like

hardened criminals.

Bora also reiterated the CJP's demand for the impeachment of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and the withdrawal of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise. She accused the authorities of creating difficulties for ordinary citizens and disrupting their daily lives through restrictions and road closures.

IOC Scraps 12 Key Committees in Major Governance Overhaul Under Kirsty Coventry

■ Cost Cutting and Administrative Restructuring to Leave 19 Committees as IOC Shifts to Expert Panels

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: The International Olympic Committee (IOC) is abolishing 12 permanent committees as part of a major governance restructuring aimed at streamlining operations and reducing costs. The move will leave the organisation with 19 committees, with expert panels and temporary working groups expected to handle specific issues when required.



The restructuring comes under IOC President Kirsty Coventry, who has increasingly relied on smaller working groups to address key policy matters during her second year in the role. The revised approach is intended to provide

greater flexibility in dealing with strategic priorities and developing policies.

Among the committees being discontinued is the Commission for Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. The IOC had previously assigned a review of the protection of the female category in sports to a specialised expert panel in March, rather than the existing

commission. The membership of that panel was kept confidential.

The IOC Advisory Committee on Human Rights will also be abolished. The committee was chaired by Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, the former deputy president of South Africa.

Other bodies facing closure include committees responsible for sustainability, technology, athletes' entourage and digital engagement.



“It Is Very Unfair”: R Ashwin Slams Selectors Over Yashasvi Jaiswal's ODI Snub

■ Former India spinner questions the decision to overlook Jaiswal for the New Zealand ODIs, warning that a lack of international opportunities could affect the young batter's confidence

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Former India spinner Ravichandran Ashwin has criticised the national selection committee for leaving Yashasvi Jaiswal out of India's squad for the ODI series against New Zealand, describing the decision as unfair and unfortunate. He believes the young opener should have been considered for the final two matches, particularly with Shubman Gill being rested. With India preparing for the 2027 ODI World Cup, opportunities to assess players and strengthen the squad have become increasingly important. Jaiswal's continued absence from limited overs cricket has raised

questions about his role in India's plans, especially as the team looks to build depth ahead of the global tournament. Ashwin expressed his disappointment in a discussion on his YouTube channel, arguing that the final two ODIs presented an ideal opportunity to give Jaiswal valuable international match practice. While he acknowledged the need to manage players ahead of the upcoming Test series, he questioned why Jaiswal could not have been included when a place was available. Ashwin also expressed concern that the lack of opportunities could undermine Jaiswal's confidence.



Vidarbha Thrash Goa by 176 Runs as Goa End Vinoo Mankad Trophy Campaign Winless

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Goa suffered a crushing 176 run defeat against Vidarbha in their final Group C match of the Vinoo Mankad Trophy Elite Under 19 cricket tournament at the GMSS Sector 26 Cricket Ground in Chandigarh on Friday. The result left Goa without a victory in five matches during their campaign.

Chasing a target of 250, Goa were bowled out for just 73 in 23.5 overs, struggling against a disciplined Vidarbha bowling attack. Mohit Yadav was Goa's highest scorer with 33 runs, while Mihir Kudalkar contributed 12. The remaining batters failed to build meaningful partnerships, resulting in a comprehensive defeat. Captain Aaradhya Goyal was unable to bat due to injury. Earlier, Vidarbha recovered from a difficult position to post 249 runs in 49.5 overs. Goa's bowlers made an impressive start, reducing their opponents to 56 for five and putting pressure on the batting side.

Usma Khan and Athashree Shivarkar Hit Half Centuries as Goa End U-19 T20 Campaign Winless

■ Usma and Nikhila Naik take three wickets each, but Himachal Pradesh secure a 53 run victory in Goa's final match

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Goa ended their Women's Under-19 T20 Trophy Elite campaign without a victory after suffering a 53 run defeat against Himachal Pradesh at Alur Cricket Stadium 2 in Bengaluru on Friday.

Batting first, Himachal Pradesh posted an imposing 184 for nine in their allotted 20 overs, powered by an outstanding innings from



Ahana Sharma. She smashed 88 off just 44 balls, hitting 12 fours and five sixes to put Goa's bowlers under pressure. Archana Thakur provided valuable support with 44 off 31 deliveries, including

six fours and a six. Goa's bowling attack managed to pick up wickets at regular intervals. Usma Khan and Nikhila Naik were the standout performers, claiming three wickets each. Nandini Chauhan, Pooja Kalel and Vidhi Bhandare chipped in with one wicket apiece.

Goa University Clinch Third Place at West Zone Inter-University Women's Chess Championship

■ Gunjal Chopdekar wins Fourth Board Prize as Goa University finish among the top three teams in the 2026-27 championship

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Goa University secured third place at the All India University (AIU) West Zone Inter-University Women's Chess Championship 2026-27, held at Shri Jagdishprasad Jhabarmal Tibrewala University in Chudela, Jhunjhunu, Rajasthan, from October 12 to 16. Goa University delivered a consistent performance throughout the eight-



round tournament, finishing with six wins, one draw and one defeat to collect 13 match points.

The team finished behind Ahmedabad University, which

topped the standings with a perfect record of eight victories, and Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, which secured second place.

Goa University began its campaign strongly, registering convincing 4-0 victories against Hemchandracharya North Gujarat University and Bharati Vidyapeeth (Deemed to be University). The team also defeated RTM Nagpur University 3-1, Savitribai Phule Pune University 2½-1½ and Shivaji University 3½-1½. A 2-2 draw against Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University further strengthened Goa's

position in the standings. Their only defeat came against eventual champions Ahmedabad University, which edged past Goa 2½-1½.

Goa University finished with 24 game points, narrowly behind the second-placed team, which accumulated 24½ game points. The result highlighted the competitive nature of the championship, with the leading teams separated by small margins.