



BJP-MGP Seat-Sharing Talks Yet To Begin Ahead Of 2027 Goa Polls

■ CM Pramod Sawant, Damu Naik Confirm Preliminary Alliance Talks; Final Decision Rests With Central Leadership

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: With the 2027 Goa Assembly elections approaching, seat-sharing has emerged as a key issue in the proposed alliance between the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Maharashtra Gomantak Party (MGP).

Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said preliminary discussions had begun between the two parties regarding the continuation of their alliance.

He expressed



confidence that the BJP-MGP alliance would contest the 2027 elections and secure a comfortable majority, adding that the final decision would rest with the central leadership.



Goa BJP President Damu Naik also confirmed that preliminary talks had taken place, clarifying that seat-sharing discussions are yet to begin. He expressed confidence that the alliance would

materialise, with further discussions involving the central leadership.

Meanwhile, MGP leader Ramkrishna 'Sudin' Dhavalikar said his party would discuss the alliance issue after its annual general meeting (AGM). He dismissed reports suggesting that a final decision had already been taken, stating that the party would consider the views and sentiments of its workers before arriving at a conclusion.

Digambar Kamat Rejects Congress Allegations Over Rahul Gandhi's Meeting Venue

Minister Says MMC Ground Is Privately Owned, Accuses Congress of Blaming Him for Mismanagement in Organising the Meeting



Team Goemkarponn

MARGAO: PWD Minister Digambar Kamat has rejected allegations levelled by the Congress over the venue arrangements for Rahul Gandhi's meeting in Margao, asserting that the MMC ground is privately owned and that he has no personal control over it.

Speaking at a press conference in Margao, Kamat accused the Congress of targeting him to deflect criticism over the arrangements for the meeting. "The Congress is making baseless and false allegations against me to cover up its failure and mismanagement

in organising Rahul Gandhi's meeting," Kamat said.

He explained that the MMC ground belongs to a private club and that the owner decides the charges for its use.

He also claimed that permission for government events had been denied at the venue in the past.

Maintaining that the ground was not his personal property, Kamat questioned the Congress's choice of venue for a meeting involving its senior national leader, describing the selected location as a small parking area. The minister's remarks come

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Goa's September Inflation At 3.92%, Below National Average

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PANAJI: Goa recorded retail inflation of 3.92% in September, lower than the national average of 5.54%, according to the latest Consumer Price Index (CPI) data released by the Union Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

The state's inflation rate was 1.62 percentage points below the national figure. Across India, retail inflation increased from 4.83% in August to 5.54% in September, indicating growing pressure on household budgets.

Goa recorded rural inflation of 3.67%, compared with 6.08% nationally. In urban areas, inflation stood at 4.07% in the state, against the national rate of 4.88%.

Among states with populations exceeding 50 lakh, Tamil Nadu recorded retail inflation of 6.81%, followed by Odisha at 6.70%, Madhya Pradesh at 6.68%, Telangana at 6.64% and Andhra Pradesh at 6.29%.

Panaji Police Identify Woman Over Alleged Slogan at CJP Protest

■ Notice Issued to Appear at Police Station as Investigation Into Alleged Communal Slogans Continues

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Panaji Police have reportedly identified a woman accused of raising the slogan "Hindutva Murdabad" during a protest organised by the Cockroach Janata Party (CJP) in Goa. She has reportedly been served a notice directing her to appear at the police station.



The development follows an FIR registered in connection with alleged communal slogans raised during a demonstration

at Azad Maidan, Panaji, on October 11. Seven protesters were detained during

the incident but were later released following the intervention of the Bombay High Court at

▶ CONTD TO PAGE 06

Goa govt backs status quo on Sada Shivaji statue

■ Chief Secretary tells High Court that Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj is integral to Goan history; legal

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Goa government has backed the status quo on the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj statue at Sada, maintaining that the Maratha king is a legendary figure and an integral part of Goa's history. In an affidavit filed before the High Court, the Chief Secretary stated that the government wants the statue to remain at its existing location. The



affidavit further stated that due legal procedures

would be followed to purchase the land allegedly encroached upon by the Mormugao Port Authority (MPA).

The government's stand comes amid the ongoing legal dispute over the statue's location and the land on which it stands.

The High Court is scheduled to hear the matter on November 3.

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ST Reservation: Can BJP Deliver Before the 2027 Goa Elections?

Goa's Scheduled Tribe community is no longer content with assurances. With the 2027 Assembly elections approaching, the demand for political reservation is gaining momentum, and the ruling BJP government faces a question it cannot afford to ignore: can it deliver on a long-pending demand before voters go to the polls, or will the issue become a major political liability?

A recent gathering at Khaddem-Balli, attended by around 150 participants, sent a clear message. The community wants political representation, employment opportunities, effective implementation of welfare schemes and resolution of long-pending forest rights claims. More importantly, its representatives have warned that failure to act could lead to a statewide democratic agitation.

For the BJP, this is not merely another community demand. It is a political challenge that could influence the electoral calculations of 2027.

Promises must translate into representation

The demand for reservation in four Assembly constituencies is rooted in a fundamental question of democratic representation. Goa's tribal population has long argued that its numerical strength and constitutional rights should translate into an effective voice in the state legislature.

The issue has remained alive through successive governments, political assurances and repeated representations. Yet, as another Assembly election approaches, the community is still asking when the promise will become reality.

The BJP government must recognise that the patience of the ST community cannot be taken for granted. Awareness programmes and meetings across Goa indicate that the demand is being organised beyond individual villages and constituencies. If more than 130 meetings have been held, as claimed by the organisation, the movement has already developed a statewide dimension.

The government must therefore provide a clear account of what has been done, what remains pending and when the process can realistically be completed.

Can reservation happen before 2027?

This is where political promises meet constitutional and administrative realities.

Political reservation for Scheduled Tribes in the Goa Legislative Assembly cannot be implemented simply through a state government announcement. The process requires action under the applicable constitutional and statutory framework, including the determination of ST population figures and the delimitation of constituencies through the competent authorities.

The state government can pursue the demand with the Centre, provide the necessary data, coordinate with the relevant institutions and press for a time-bound process. However, it cannot independently redraw constituencies or guarantee that the entire exercise will be completed before the next election.

This distinction matters. The BJP must not create an expectation that reservation can be delivered overnight. Equally, constitutional procedures must not become a convenient excuse for indefinite delay.

If the government is serious, it should publicly disclose the present status of the proposal, the procedural steps already completed and the decisions still required. The community deserves facts, not another

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Can it happen before 2027? It cannot be ruled out without examining the precise status of the process, but neither can it responsibly be promised without confirmation that the necessary legal and administrative steps can be completed in time. The larger problem is development

Political reservation is the central demand, but the Balli meeting exposed a wider set of grievances that the government must address.

The reported 2,500 backlog vacancies for ST candidates in government departments raise serious questions about employment opportunities and the implementation of reservation in public services. The reported pendency of more than 9,500 Individual Forest Rights claims adds another layer of frustration.

These figures, cited at the gathering, require verification and a department-wise response. If accurate, they point to a substantial administrative backlog that cannot be brushed aside.

Likewise, concerns about drinking water, roads, drainage, irrigation and healthcare reveal the gap between official welfare commitments and the everyday experiences of people in remote settlements.

The reported expenditure of Rs 33.37 crore on tribal welfare between 2024 and 2026 also demands transparency. The government should publish details of the expenditure, the projects undertaken, the beneficiaries reached and the outcomes achieved. Money allocated is not the same as development delivered.

Digital application procedures must also be made accessible. Students and families should not lose benefits because they cannot navigate online systems or meet

complicated documentation requirements. Village-level assistance camps would be a practical response.

Can the BJP withstand the pressure?

The BJP has organisational strength and the advantage of being in government. But those advantages will count for little if the party fails to demonstrate progress on an issue that the ST community considers fundamental to its political future.

The opposition will inevitably use the delay to question the government's commitment. More significantly, the community's mobilisation could influence electoral outcomes in constituencies where tribal voters play an important role.

Yet the government should not view this merely as an election management problem. Political representation, employment and forest rights are matters of democratic inclusion and social justice. Treating them as bargaining chips for electoral support would only deepen mistrust. The BJP must engage with community representatives, establish a transparent roadmap and communicate honestly about the obstacles that remain. It must also ensure that the demand is pursued through the appropriate constitutional channels rather than reduced to another promise on an election platform.

A deadline without accountability means little

The warning of a statewide agitation should serve as an opportunity for the government to initiate meaningful dialogue before frustration spills onto the streets.

The Chief Minister should convene a meeting involving representatives of the ST community, the relevant state departments and officials responsible for pursuing the reservation process with the Centre. A written action plan, with responsibilities and timelines, would be a credible starting point.

The government should separately address the backlog in recruitment, pending forest rights claims and the delivery of basic services. These issues do not all depend on political reservation and should not be held hostage to it.

The community, for its part, must continue to pursue its demands democratically and insist on measurable progress rather than political rhetoric.

The 2027 elections are approaching, but the real test is not whether the BJP can contain the pressure until polling day. It is whether the government can demonstrate that the concerns of Goa's tribal population matter beyond electoral arithmetic.

The verdict will be political, but the responsibility is constitutional.

If reservation is legally and administratively achievable before the elections, the government must do everything within its authority to advance the process. If it is not achievable within that timeframe, the government owes the community an honest explanation, a documented account of the hurdles and a credible commitment to completing the necessary steps. The ST community has made its position clear. It wants representation, rights and development, not another cycle of promises.

Can the BJP handle the pressure? It can, but only through action and accountability. Can political reservation happen before 2027? That remains uncertain and depends on the status of the constitutional and delimitation process.

One thing, however, is certain: the government cannot afford to treat the demand as an issue that can simply be postponed until after the elections.

EDITOR SPEAKS

Atal Setu and Porvorim Flyover: Infrastructure Must Work for Residents

The development of the Atal Setu and the Porvorim six-lane elevated corridor was expected to ease traffic congestion and improve connectivity. However, concerns raised by Tourism Minister and Porvorim MLA Rohan A. Khaunte over access difficulties and road safety highlight an important issue: infrastructure must serve local residents, not merely facilitate the movement of through-traffic.

The question is simple: What is the benefit of a modern flyover if residents struggle to enter or exit their own neighbourhoods conveniently?

The demand for better entry and exit points, particularly near the Majestic Hotel junction, deserves urgent attention. Residents should not be forced to take unnecessarily long routes because of changes introduced by major infrastructure projects. Equally important is the need for functional traffic signals at busy junctions where vehicles from the elevated corridor merge with local traffic.

Roads beneath the flyover must be repaired, bottlenecks addressed and appropriate safety measures installed. Clear signage, reflective strips and effective traffic enforcement can help reduce risks, particularly at night. The proposed use of speed-detection cameras and other monitoring technology should also be assessed for its effectiveness.

The government must ensure that restrictions on two-wheelers using the Atal Setu are clearly communicated and consistently enforced. At the same time, alternative routes must be safe and convenient for commuters.

Major infrastructure projects require proper planning, but their success must also be judged by how well they integrate with existing neighbourhoods. The concerns raised by Khaunte should lead to timely action rather than prolonged discussions between departments. Development must reduce inconvenience, not create new problems for the public. The government should prioritise these corrective measures and ensure that Porvorim residents enjoy the promised benefits of improved connectivity.

- Rohan Naik, Ponda

ST Political Reservation: Goa's Tribal Communities Deserve Answers

The demand for political reservation for Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities in Goa has once again come into focus ahead of the 2027 Assembly elections.

At a recent meeting in Balli, community representatives highlighted long-pending concerns relating to political representation, government employment, forest rights and access to basic services.

The question is simple: Why should a community continue to wait for meaningful political representation while its concerns remain unresolved?

Political reservation is not merely an electoral issue. It is about ensuring that tribal communities have a stronger voice in decisions affecting their land, livelihoods, culture and future. With Assembly elections approaching, the government must provide clarity on the status of the reservation process and explain the steps required for its timely implementation.

Equally concerning are the reported backlog of more than 2,500 vacancies for ST candidates in government departments and over 9,500 pending Individual Forest Rights claims. These figures, if confirmed, demand urgent attention. Employment opportunities and recognition of legitimate forest rights are essential for the social and economic security of tribal families. The concerns raised about drinking water, roads, healthcare, irrigation and access to government schemes also deserve serious consideration. Digital services may improve administration, but they must not become barriers for people who lack access to technology or assistance with documentation. The government should publish clear updates on pending claims, recruitment vacancies and funds allocated for tribal welfare. Village-level assistance camps and regular consultations with community representatives could help ensure that benefits reach those who need them.

Goa's development must include every community. Tribal welfare cannot be limited to election-time promises or occasional meetings. The time has come for transparent action, measurable progress and meaningful representation for Goa's ST communities.

- Vishal Naik, Canacona





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Dr Pramod Sawant
Chief Minister of Goa

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Chief Minister's Medical Assistance Cell: Bringing Hope and Healthcare Support to Every Goan Family

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In a significant step towards strengthening healthcare support for Goan families, Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant has launched the Chief Minister's Medical Assistance Cell, a dedicated initiative designed to help eligible residents access financial assistance for major medical treatments and specialised procedures. The initiative reflects the Goa Government's commitment to making quality healthcare more accessible and ensuring that families receive the support they need during critical medical situations.

Launched in the presence of

Health Minister Vishwajit Rane, Chief Secretary Dr V. Candavelou, IAS, Secretary (Health) Yatindra M. Maralkar, IAS, Director of Health Services Dr Salena Sandip Naik, Mangesh Chivte, OSD to the Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra, and other dignitaries, the Medical Assistance Cell provides a dedicated platform for eligible Goans seeking financial assistance for major medical procedures.

Under the scheme, eligible Goan residents can receive financial assistance of 30 per cent of the cost of a medical procedure or up to ₹2 lakh, as applicable. This assistance will be provided over and above the benefits available under the Deen Dayal Swasthya Seva Yojana (DDSSY), extending additional support to families facing significant medical expenses.

The application process has been made accessible through both online and offline channels.

Applicants can visit the official Goa Government portal at www.goaonline.gov.in and submit their applications along with the required documents. Offline application forms are also available at the Directorate of Planning, Statistics and Evaluation (DPSE).

For assistance and further information, residents can contact the toll-free helpline 14524.

The initiative complements Goa's continuing efforts to strengthen its healthcare network, which includes Goa Medical College, Primary Health Centres, Community Health Centres, district hospitals and super-speciality services.

With more than two lakh beneficiaries under DDSSY, the state continues to focus on accessible healthcare and public welfare.

The Chief Minister's Medical Assistance Cell is

another step towards providing timely support to Goan families, offering financial assistance and guidance when they need it most. Chief Minister's Medical Assistance Cell
Apply online: www.goaonline.gov.in
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North Goa Police trace drug supply networks, arrest four in two NDPS cases

■ Backward linkages lead to alleged suppliers in Mapusa and Mumbai; drugs worth over ₹12.7 lakh seized in separate operations

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: North Goa Police have arrested four persons, including two alleged drug suppliers, in two separate narcotics cases registered in Mapusa and Anjuna, as part of an intensified crackdown on drug trafficking under the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan. Police seized methamphetamine and MDMA worth approximately ₹3 lakh in Mapusa, while an Anjuna



operation led to the seizure of 97 LSD paper blots valued at around ₹9.70 lakh. Investigators

subsequently traced the alleged sources of the contraband and arrested two alleged suppliers, taking the investigations beyond the initial seizures. In the Mapusa case, police arrested Zameer Mohammad Sheikh (37), a resident of Mapusa, during a narcotics raid near the New KTC Bus Stand on October 16. The police seized 30 grams of

methamphetamine and two grams of MDMA from him. During the subsequent investigation, police traced the alleged source of the seized drugs to Umar Faruk Gaffar Kacchi (26), a resident of Verla-Canca in Bardez, and arrested him. Both accused have been arrested in Mapusa Police Station Crime No. 142/2026 under Sections 22(b) and 29 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act.



Bus rams car at Mangeshi slope, woman and daughter injured

■ Passenger bus allegedly dragged Alto into road divider; driver accused of fleeing without assisting injured

Team Goemkarponn

PONDA: A woman and her daughter sustained injuries after a passenger bus allegedly rammed their Alto car and dragged it into a road divider at Mangeshi slope in Ponda on October 17.

According to a complaint filed by Sujata Phadte, a resident of Usgao Tisk, Ponda, the accident occurred at around 7.20 pm when a passenger bus driven by Arjun Morjekar, a resident of Volvai, Ponda, was proceeding from Kundai towards Ponda.

The complaint alleges that the bus

driver drove rashly and negligently and hit the rear of the complainant's Alto car at Mangeshi slope. The impact allegedly caused the bus to drag the car into the road divider, leaving Phadte and her daughter, Siddhi Phadte, injured.

The complainant further alleged that the bus driver fled the scene, leaving the vehicle at the accident site without providing medical assistance to the injured or informing the police.

Further investigation into the case is being conducted by HC 4928 Govind Gawas of Mardol Police Station.



Complaint alleges fraud in sale of Curtorim properties, claims goods worth ₹12 lakh at stake

Team Goemkarponn

MARGAO: Fatorda Police are investigating a complaint alleging fraudulent declarations in two property sale deeds executed at the Sub-Registrar Office of Salcete, Margao, on February 6, 2026, involving properties situated at Uguirim in Curtorim.

The complaint was filed by Mariano Siqueira, a resident of Curtorim, against Russel Milagres D Cunha, a Mumbai resident, and Jerson Siqueira of Curtorim.

According to the complaint, Russel Milagres D Cunha, who is allegedly the son of the deceased landlady of the complainant, falsely declared himself to be a bachelor and the sole and universal heir of his deceased mother and her husband while executing two sale deeds.

The complainant alleged that D Cunha was married and had living siblings at the time of the execution of the documents.

Vasco man dies after car hits scooter in Chicalim

■ Fatal accident reported during overtaking manoeuvre; car driver booked in connection with the incident

Team Goemkarponn

CHICALIM: A scooter rider, Balvir Singh Sardar, a resident of Mangoor Hill, Vasco, succumbed to his injuries following a road accident near Mohan Garage at Chicalim on Monday, October 19. According to a state complaint lodged by Head Constable Rajesh Bhandodkar of Vasco Police Station, the accident occurred at around 12.44 pm at a curve near Mohan Garage,



Chicalim. The complaint states that a Maruti Dzire car driven by Subhash Gaudar, a resident of Sancoale, Zuarinagar, was proceeding from Chicalim towards Vasco when the driver allegedly drove rashly and negligently

while overtaking and hit the rear of a Honda Aviator scooter travelling ahead.

Due to the impact, the scooter rider, Balvir Singh Sardar, fell onto the road along with his vehicle and sustained injuries. He subsequently succumbed to his injuries. Further investigation into the fatal accident is being conducted by PSI Akanksh Fadte Dessai of Vasco Police Station.

Colva man alleges ₹5 lakh fraud over overseas job promise

■ Woman accused of promising foreign employment at attractive salaries and failing to arrange jobs or refund money

Team Goemkarponn

COLVA: A Colva resident has lodged a complaint alleging that he was cheated of ₹5 lakh by a woman who allegedly promised to arrange overseas employment at attractive salaries. According to the complaint filed by Bashasab Siddapur, a resident of Colva, the incident relates to an alleged transaction on August 12, 2024, at



Colva. The complainant alleged that the accused, Fidol Jolina Pereira, represented that she could secure overseas

employment for him and was operating a recruitment office in Margao. Believing her assurances, Siddapur

allegedly paid her a total of ₹5 lakh towards securing a job abroad. Of the amount, ₹3 lakh was reportedly transferred through a bank transaction, while the remaining ₹2 lakh was paid in cash. However, the accused allegedly failed to arrange the promised overseas employment and did not refund the money despite receiving the amount, resulting in financial loss to the complainant.

Marcel man reports son missing, suspects possible abduction

Team Goemkarponn

PONDA: Mardol Police are investigating a missing person complaint filed by Vishnu Kavalekar, a resident of Marcel, Ponda, after his son, Rohit Kavalekar, allegedly went missing on October 11.

According to the complaint, Rohit left his residence at around 2 pm on October 11, 2026, but did not return home. The complainant has expressed suspicion that unknown persons may have abducted his son. However,

Min Khaunte flags Atal Setu access issues, seeks urgent fixes to Porvorim corridor

■ Writes to CM Pramod Sawant over traffic bottlenecks, unsafe junctions and demand for better entry and exit points for residents

Team Goemkarponn

PORVORIM: Tourism Minister and Porvorim MLA Rohan A. Khaunte has written to Chief Minister Pramod Sawant seeking urgent intervention to address access-related difficulties and road safety concerns faced by residents following the development of the Atal Setu and the Porvorim six-lane elevated corridor.

In his letter, Khaunte has called for improved



entry and exit points to the bridge, installation of traffic signals at a key junction, restoration of roads beneath the flyover and stronger enforcement measures to ensure smoother traffic movement and safer commuting for residents.

While acknowledging that the new infrastructure is intended to ease congestion along the Panaji-Mapusa corridor, Khaunte stressed that it must also provide convenient connectivity to local residents and address the challenges arising from changes to existing road access. The letter follows a high-level meeting held at Mantralaya on September 21, attended by the Chief Minister, PWD Minister Digambar

Kamat, Deputy Speaker Joshua D'Souza and senior officials from the concerned departments. While acknowledging the directions issued during the meeting, Khaunte has highlighted several issues that he believes require priority attention and follow-up. A key demand is to provide convenient access to the Atal Setu for Porvorim residents, including suitable entry points and an exit into Porvorim near the Majestic Hotel junction.



Sawant Hands Over Medical Aid to First Beneficiary Under New Scheme

■ Chief Minister Says Assistance Cell Will Ensure Financial Constraints Do Not Hinder Timely Treatment; Eligible Patients Can Call 14524

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant handed over financial assistance to the first eligible beneficiary under the Chief Minister's Medical Assistance Scheme at Manipal Hospital, Goa, marking the rollout of an initiative aimed at easing the financial burden of medical treatment on patients and their families. Sawant said the Chief Minister's Medical Assistance Cell is committed to ensuring that financial constraints do not come in the way of timely medical care. Eligible applicants can call the toll-free helpline 14524 for information and guidance on accessing assistance under the scheme.

Emphasising the government's continued focus on healthcare support, Sawant said the initiative builds on the success of the Deen Dayal Swasthya Seva Yojana (DDSSY), which has benefited lakhs of people in Goa. The new scheme is intended to further strengthen the state's healthcare support system by extending a helping hand to eligible patients and their families during difficult medical circumstances. The initiative seeks to provide financial relief to families grappling with treatment expenses and reinforce the government's commitment to ensuring that financial hardship does not stand in the way of access to essential medical care.



Halloween Promotion Featuring Nun Draws Objections in Anjuna, Club Issues Apology

Team Goemkarponn

ANJUNA: A Halloween party advertisement by a club in Ozrant, Anjuna, has sparked objections over its depiction of a Catholic nun, prompting the establishment to remove the promotional material and apologise for the offence caused. The controversy arose after Club Salud publicised a three-day Halloween event scheduled from October 30 to November 1. The promotional artwork featured a nun alongside a cross, prompting criticism from sections of the local community over the use of religious imagery to market an entertainment event. Residents expressed concern that the depiction was disrespectful towards the Catholic faith and the religious significance associated with the vocation of nuns. Jawish Moniz of Vagator and Roysal D'Souza of Anjuna were among those who raised objections to the campaign. The matter also reached the police, with Assagao-based activist Desmond Alvares filing a complaint with the Anjuna police and other authorities.

Verna Police Reunite Missing Four-Year-Old Girl With Family at Ramleela Mahotsav

■ Child Found Safe Following Coordinated Search by Verna Police and Local Intelligence Branch Personnel

Team Goemkarponn

VERNA: A four-year-old girl who went missing during the Ramleela Mahotsav celebrations opposite the BITS Pilani campus was safely reunited with her family following a prompt search by Verna Police and Local Intelligence Branch (LIB) personnel.

The incident occurred during the evening festivities when the child became separated from her family amid the



gathering crowd. Upon receiving information about the missing girl, Verna Police immediately circulated her photograph through internal communication networks to alert personnel and

facilitate a quick search.

Personnel from the Local Intelligence Branch, along with Verna Police Station staff deployed at the venue, promptly launched a search operation to trace the child. Their coordinated efforts led to the girl being located within a short period. She was found safe and subsequently reunited with her relieved parents.

ST Groups Step Up Pressure for Political Quota Ahead of 2027 Goa Polls

■ Community representatives flag delays in reservation, vacant government posts and pending forest rights claims at Balli meeting

Team Goemkarponn

BALLI: With the 2027 Goa Assembly elections approaching, representatives of the Scheduled Tribe (ST) community have called for urgent action on political reservation, warning that a statewide democratic agitation could follow if the process is not completed before the polls. The issue figured prominently



at a gathering held at Khaddem-Balli, where around 150 participants from the Balli-Adnem panchayat area and other parts of Goa

discussed long-standing demands concerning political representation, employment and tribal welfare. Rama Kankonkar, president of Ami Goeche

Rakhthandar, said the organisation had been conducting awareness programmes across the state to mobilise support for reservation in four Assembly constituencies. He said more than 130 meetings had been held so far and stressed that the demand required a time-bound resolution. The gathering also highlighted concerns over the implementation of government schemes and the delivery of basic

services in tribal areas. Rupesh Velip, convenor of the organisation, sought greater clarity on expenditure of funds earmarked for tribal welfare. Referring to a reported expenditure of Rs 33.37 crore between 2024 and 2026, he called for transparency in the utilisation of public money and an assessment of whether the spending had addressed the community's needs.

HDFC Bank Probe Finds Two Senior Executives Allegedly Shared Confidential Information

Internal investigation examines possible disclosure of sensitive business strategies as India's largest bank by market value prepares for a leadership transition

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: HDFC Bank has found evidence that two senior executives allegedly shared confidential business strategies and potentially market sensitive information with outsiders, according to findings from an ongoing internal investigation.

The executives oversee key business areas and functions at the lender. The investigation began after concerns emerged among senior leaders about possible information leaks. The bank is continuing to examine whether the information was misused, and the outcome of the inquiry remains pending.

HDFC Bank has acknowledged that an internal review is underway but has not disclosed the identities of the executives or commented on the specific findings. The bank has stated that it will evaluate all relevant facts and take appropriate action after completing the review. It has also reiterated its commitment to ethical conduct, strong governance and addressing potential policy violations.

The development comes at a sensitive time for the lender, which has a market



value of approximately \$115 billion and has built its reputation on conservative management, financial discipline and consistent profitability. Its shares have declined around 28 per cent this year, adding to the challenges facing the institution.

The investigation's findings were reportedly presented to senior management and some board members earlier this year. Both executives have been formally informed of the findings, although the disciplinary action, if any, remains unclear.

The issue adds to the challenges confronting Anup Bagchi, a veteran

of the ICICI Group who is scheduled to take over as HDFC Bank's chief executive on October 27. He will inherit the leadership position following the decision of incumbent managing director and chief executive Sashidhar Jagdishan not to seek another term after six years in office.

The bank has also faced internal disagreements in recent months. In March, chairman Atanu Chakraborty resigned unexpectedly, citing differences between his personal values and certain practices at the institution. An independent legal review

commissioned by the bank subsequently found that his concerns were not substantiated.

Meanwhile, deputy managing director Kaizad Bharucha has sought to leave the bank at the end of December. Founded in 1994, HDFC Bank has grown into one of India's most prominent private sector lenders, attracting international investors seeking exposure to the country's expanding economy and consumer credit market. The ongoing investigation and leadership changes present fresh challenges as the bank seeks to maintain investor confidence and protect its longstanding reputation.

"Avoid Crowded Areas": India Issues Advisory for Nationals in Italy Amid Protests

Embassy urges Indians to stay alert and follow local news as violent clashes during demonstrations raise security concerns

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: The Embassy of India in Italy has issued a safety advisory for Indian nationals, urging them to exercise caution and avoid crowded places amid protests and demonstrations in several Italian cities.

In its advisory issued on Monday, the embassy asked Indians to stay away from locations where demonstrations are taking place and closely monitor local news for updates on the situation.

The warning comes after protests in parts of Italy reportedly witnessed clashes between demonstrators and law enforcement personnel, raising concerns about public safety and possible disruptions.

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni condemned the violence, accusing organised groups of exploiting demonstrations to provoke confrontations and create disorder. She expressed solidarity with police personnel who faced attacks while maintaining public security.

Meloni said law enforcement officers were working to protect residents, workers, shopkeepers and others who had the right to move around their cities without fear. She also criticised acts of vandalism and violence that damaged public

spaces and disrupted daily life.

Clashes Reported in Several Cities

Meloni highlighted incidents in Milan, Turin and Bologna during the protests. In Milan, demonstrators reportedly threw stones at police personnel, leaving some officers injured.

In Turin, authorities stopped individuals allegedly carrying cobblestones and hammers used for breaking windows. In Bologna, disturbances prompted the precautionary closure of the railway station.

The Italian prime minister described those responsible for the violence as individuals exploiting public demonstrations to spread chaos and undermine security.

Meloni Calls for Peaceful Demonstrations

While condemning the violence, Meloni expressed respect for people who participated in peaceful demonstrations, stressing that the right to protest was an essential part of democracy.

She also urged opposition parties to clearly condemn violent incidents and encourage peaceful participation in public gatherings. According to Meloni, opposition leaders should take an unequivocal position against attacks on law enforcement personnel and damage to public property. "Demonstrating is a right."



Digambar Kamat Rejects Congress Allegations Over Rahul Gandhi's Meeting Venue

amid a political dispute over the arrangements for Rahul Gandhi's meeting in Margao, with Kamat denying responsibility for the ground-related controversy. At the same press conference, Kamat outlined several development plans for Margao, including a proposed medical college at the ESI Hospital by July 2027, two KTC buses for city transport, and road infrastructure projects worth crores of rupees.

Panaji Police Identify Woman Over Alleged Slogan at CJP Protest

Goa. The police action followed a complaint by a local resident who alleged that slogans targeting a community were raised during the gathering. The complaint also questioned the intent behind the protest.

The FIR was registered against unidentified protesters under Sections 196 and 299 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). These provisions relate to promoting enmity between groups and deliberately insulting

religious beliefs with the intention of outraging religious feelings.

The matter came into the spotlight after videos purportedly showing the slogans surfaced on social media. Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant subsequently indicated that the allegations would be investigated, stressing the need to maintain communal harmony in the state.

The protest was organised by a CJP affiliate in Goa, with demonstrators demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar.

Before the demonstration, organisers had sought official permission to hold the gathering.

...CONTD FROM PAGE 01

Rahul Gandhi Calls RSS an “All-Male Cult”, BJP Hits Back Over His Remarks

■ BJP leaders question Congress’s record on women’s representation and accuse Rahul Gandhi of making uninformed allegations

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi’s criticism of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) has sparked a political confrontation, with BJP leaders strongly condemning his remarks and challenging the Congress party’s record on women’s representation. In a post on X on Tuesday, Gandhi described the RSS as an “all-male anti-constitutional cult”



and alleged that the organisation viewed women as subordinate to men. He also expressed his determination to oppose the Sangh, invoking the concept of Shiva-Shakti and claiming that many women

associated with the organisation supported his position. The comments drew a sharp response from BJP leaders.

Maharashtra BJP MLA Ram Kadam accused Gandhi of making uninformed statements about the RSS and urged him to understand the organisation’s structure before criticising it. He pointed out that

a separate women’s organisation associated with the Sangh operates across the country, challenging the claim that women lack a role within its wider network. Kadam also described Gandhi’s remarks as childish and argued that such statements were inappropriate for a Leader of the Opposition. Telangana BJP president N Ramchander Rao questioned the Congress party’s own record on gender equality.



Delhi Police Transfers Second CJP Leaders’ Case to Crime Branch Ahead of Hearing

■ Two cases against Saurav Das and Ashutosh Ranka to be investigated by the Crime Branch following Jantar Mantar incident

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Delhi Police has transferred a second case registered against Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) leaders Saurav Das and Ashutosh Ranka to the Crime Branch, bringing both cases linked to the party leaders under its investigation ahead of a scheduled hearing. The latest transfer follows the decision to hand over another case involving the two leaders to the Crime Branch on Monday. That case relates to their alleged entry into the Jantar Mantar area, which is no longer designated as an authorised protest site. According to the police account, the incident took place on October 13, when Das, Ranka, Ajinkya Shinde and 11

other CJP members allegedly entered the Jantar Mantar area by trespassing through private premises. Police personnel deployed at the location intervened and attempted to stop the group. All 14 individuals were detained following the incident, and two First Information Reports (FIRs) were registered in connection with the alleged violations. The cases have now been transferred to the Crime Branch for further investigation, placing the probe into the alleged trespassing and related incidents under a specialised police unit. Das and Ranka were sent to five days of judicial custody on October 14 by a Special Executive Magistrate for allegedly breaching peace bonds.



“US Ties With Pakistan Will Never Come at India’s Expense”: Marco Rubio Assures New Delhi

NEW DELHI: US Secretary of State Marco Rubio has assured India that Washington’s growing engagement with Pakistan will not come at the cost of its strategic relationship with New Delhi, seeking to address concerns over closer US ties with Islamabad and Beijing. During his two day visit to India, Rubio stressed that the United States does not view its relationships with other countries as a trade off against its partnership with India. He pointed to Washington’s ongoing engagement with New Delhi, including efforts to advance a bilateral trade agreement and expand cooperation across several sectors. Rubio also rejected comparisons between the current US approach to South Asia and the policies pursued during President Richard Nixon’s administration in the 1970s. At the time, Washington maintained close ties with Pakistan’s military leadership under General Yahya Khan, amid the broader strategic rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union.

3 Arrested After Manipur Hill Attack That Killed 3; 12 Firearms and Explosives Seized

■ Security forces intensify operations across Manipur, detain 17 people near Sinai camp and make two more arrests in a separate case

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Manipur Police have arrested three people in connection with an October 19 attack at Sunulok Hill that killed three firewood collectors and injured three others. Security forces have also recovered 12 firearms, 1,095 rounds of ammunition and a large cache of explosives during intensified operations across the state.

The arrests followed intelligence based searches conducted by



joint teams of Manipur Police, the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and CoBRA personnel in areas under Sagolmang Police Station in Imphal East district.

Two of the accused reportedly admitted during preliminary interrogation

to being part of the team involved in the attack, while investigators are examining the role of the third suspect and searching

for others allegedly linked to the incident. The recovered weapons included an INSAS rifle, an M16 rifle, an AK series or Type 81 rifle, a 7.62 mm sniper rifle, a Heckler and Koch rifle, several 12 bore guns and a handmade rocket launcher.

4 More Arrested in Tiger Shroff Shooting Case, Including 2 Women

■ Delhi Police arrest alleged weapon suppliers and couriers as investigators probe the suspected conspiracy behind the attack in Mumbai

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: The investigation into the firing incident targeting actor Tiger Shroff in Mumbai has widened, with the Delhi Police Special Cell arresting four more people, including two women, for their alleged roles in arranging and transporting weapons used in the attack.

The accused, identified as Kunal,



Sumit, Radha and Babita, were arrested in separate operations. Radha and Babita were apprehended at New Delhi Railway Station, while Kunal and Sumit were arrested in Sonipat, Haryana. They were subsequently

handed over to Mumbai Police for further investigation.

Investigators allege that Kunal and Sumit helped arrange the weapons, while Radha and Babita transported the firearms to Mumbai and handed them over for use in the attack. Kunal, 21, and Sumit, 19, are residents of Sonipat. Babita belongs to Sitapur in Uttar Pradesh,

while Radha is from Azamgarh.

According to the investigation, Kunal had recently secured bail and allegedly obtained a pistol and 20 cartridges from Amritsar. He later persuaded Radha to carry the weapon to Mumbai.

On October 15, he reportedly accompanied Radha and Babita to New Delhi Railway Station before they travelled to the city.

“Punjab Will Be Drug Free by December 31, 2029”: Amit Shah Vows War on Drugs

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah on Tuesday vowed to eliminate the drug trade from Punjab by December 31, 2029, describing the fight against narcotics as a priority for the central government. Shah made the announcement while participating in the Vijayadashami celebrations in Ludhiana, where he symbolically burned an effigy representing ‘Chitta’, a term commonly used for heroin in Punjab.

"Sportspersons Deserve Respect Beyond Retirement": AWES Celebrates Veterans at 10th Anniversary

■ Veteran athletes relive sporting glory at Sinquetim as AWES honours legendary players, century old clubs and achievers above 80

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Celebrating the spirit of sport that transcends age, the Association for the Wellbeing of Elder Sportspersons (AWES) marked its tenth anniversary with an annual sports festival, get together and felicitation ceremony at the Sinquetim Sports Complex, Sinquetim, Navelim, on Sunday. The



event brought together veteran players, sports officials and administrators who returned to the field to relive their sporting memories and renew old friendships. Despite their advancing

age, participants enthusiastically competed in seven a side men's football, men's and women's volleyball, mixed three a side basketball and athletics events, including the 50 metre run, shot put

and 4x50 metre mixed shuttle relay. Padma Shri awardee and Arjuna Award winner Brahmanand Shankhwalkar was among those who participated in football, adding to the occasion's celebration of Goa's sporting heritage. AWES used the gathering to recognise individuals and institutions that have made lasting contributions to sports.



"He Cannot Walk Into the Playing XI": Shreyas Iyer on Vaibhav Sooryavanshi's India T20I Chances

■ India captain backs consistent openers Abhishek Sharma and Sanju Samson, says the teenage sensation will get opportunities in due course

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: India captain Shreyas Iyer has made it clear that young batting sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi will have to wait for regular opportunities in the T20 International side, with established openers Abhishek Sharma and Sanju Samson continuing to deliver consistent performances.

Speaking ahead of India's five match T20I series against New Zealand, Iyer stressed that Sooryavanshi's talent was not in question but competition for places remained intense. The teenager has featured in only eight of India's 21 T20

Internationals since earning selection for the England and Ireland tour earlier this year. Abhishek and Samson have strengthened their positions through consistent performances and played important roles in India's successful defence of their T20 World Cup title earlier this year.

Iyer emphasised that Sooryavanshi, given his young age, has considerable time to establish himself at the international level. He also highlighted the importance of keeping the youngster comfortable within the team environment while ensuring he remains prepared for future opportunities.



Yash Kasvankar's 10 Wickets in Vain as Goa Suffer 68 Run Defeat Against Uttar Pradesh

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Goa suffered a 68 run defeat against Uttar Pradesh in their Ranji Trophy Elite Group A encounter despite an impressive all round performance by Yash Kasvankar and a fighting half century from experienced batter Suyash Prabhudessai. Kasvankar finished with a match haul of 10 wickets for 155 runs, but his efforts were not enough to prevent Goa from falling short while chasing a target of 236 runs. Uttar Pradesh resumed their second innings at 102 for four and were eventually bowled out for 197 in 58.4 overs. Aryan Juyal top scored with 74, while Rinku Singh contributed 24. Goa appeared to have the innings under control after reducing Uttar Pradesh to 151 for nine, but a late counterattack from Yash Dayal and Aradhya Yadav added valuable runs. Dayal smashed 36 off just 14 deliveries, while Aradhya remained unbeaten on 13 as the final wicket partnership added 46 runs.

Aryan Narvekar and Dishank Misquin's Century Stand Rescues Goa Against Bihar

■ Captain Aryan scores 60 while Dishank remains unbeaten on 62 as Goa recover from 40 for 3 to reach 217 for 5 on Day 1

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: A resilient century partnership between captain Aryan Narvekar and Dishank Misquin helped Goa recover from an early collapse and finish the opening day at 217 for five against Bihar in their Colonel C. K. Nayudu Trophy Elite four day match at the Rajgir International Cricket Stadium.



Goa endured a difficult start after losing three wickets for just 40 runs. However, Aryan and Dishank displayed patience and determination to rebuild the innings, guiding the team to 140 and restoring stability after the early

setbacks.

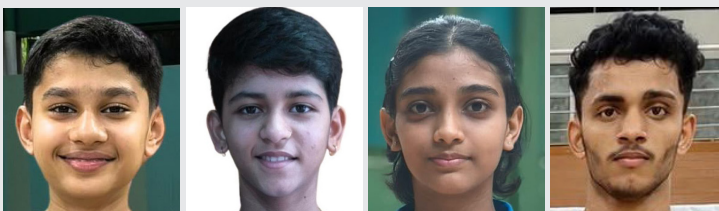
Aryan played a composed knock of 60 from 138 deliveries, hitting four boundaries and two sixes. Dishank adopted a cautious approach at the other end, facing 207 balls to remain unbeaten on 62, with six boundaries. Their partnership proved crucial in helping Goa recover and establish a competitive position by the end of the day.

Nearly 1,000 Shuttlers to Compete in Goa for ₹8 Lakh Prize Purse

■ All India Junior Ranking Badminton Tournament to be held at Navelim from October 23 to 30, featuring top U-19 talent from over 26 States and Union Territories

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Goa is set to host the Yonex-Sunrise G.H. Raisoni Memorial All India Junior Ranking Badminton Tournament 2026 from October 23 to 30 at the Manohar Parrikar Indoor Stadium in Navelim. The eight day national ranking competition will bring together nearly 1,000 players from more than 26 States and Union Territories, with a total



prize purse of ₹8 lakh.

Organised by the Goa Badminton Association (GBA) in association with the North Goa District Badminton Association, the tournament will be conducted under the aegis of the Badminton Association of India and

the Sports Authority of Goa. The event is powered by the G.H. Raisoni Sports and Cultural Foundation, Nagpur, with an estimated overall budget of ₹40 lakh.

The competition will feature five Under-19 categories: Boys' Singles,

Girls' Singles, Boys' Doubles, Girls' Doubles and Mixed Doubles. Several leading junior players from across the country are expected to compete for ranking points and honours.

The top seeds include Bornil Akash and Hardik Divyansh in Boys' Singles, Diksha S. R. and Nakshatraa Jairaj in Girls' Singles, Divyansh Agrawal and Varna Prabhuanand

in Mixed Doubles, Abhishek Bonu and Aanayan Borah in Boys' Doubles, and Lakshmi Devineni and Anjana Manikandan in Girls' Doubles.

Goa will be represented by several promising junior shuttlers, including Aarush Pawaskar, Advait Balakrishnan, Shaheen C. K., Aswin M., Ritika Chelluri, Sufiya Shaikh, Shivanjali Thite and Dimple Revankar.