Goemkarponn

TRUE GOEMKARS AT HEART

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Over 150 shops gutted in major fire at Vasco Sunday Market

Blaze erupts late Wednesday night, destroying traders' Diwali stocks; separate fire at car accessories shop behind Tilak Maidan damages parked vehicles

Team Goemkarponn

VASCO: A major fire broke out at Vasco's Sunday Market late Wednesday night, destroying over 150 shops and stalls and causing extensive losses to traders who had stocked up merchandise for the upcoming Diwali festive season. Fortunately, no casualties were reported.

The blaze erupted late at night and spread rapidly through the densely packed market, engulfing shops selling clothes, bags, footwear, utensils and other goods. Despite extensive firefighting efforts, most of the shops were completely gutted before the fire could be brought under control.

Firefighting teams from Vasco, Verna and the Mormugao Port Authority were deployed to contain the blaze and prevent it from spreading further. The scale of the fire and the closely packed stalls posed a major challenge to the personnel involved in the operation.

The incident has left scores of traders facing heavy losses, with their merchandise and property reduced to ashes. Many vendors had stocked their shops in anticipation of increased sales during the Diwali season, making the destruction particularly devastating. The losses are feared to run into crores of rupees, although an official assessment is awaited.

The market fire

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CM Sawant assures financial assistance to Vasco market fire victims

Around 150 shops gutted in blaze; authorities investigate cause of fire and allegations of foul play

Team Goemkarponn

VASCO: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant has assured all possible financial assistance to vendors who suffered heavy losses in the fire that gutted around 150 shops on the first floor of the Vasco Sunday Market.

Sawant visited the fire-ravaged market along with local MLAs, the Collector and other

CONTD TO PAGE 03

Vasco Market Fire: Why Does Safety Become a Priority Only After Disaster Strikes?

The sealing of the fire ravaged New Modern Municipal Market in Vasco is a necessary step to protect lives. With the South Goa District Magistrate restricting public access within a 50 metre radius because of fears of structural instability, falling debris and residual fire hazards, the administration has finally moved to secure the site. But an uncomfortable question remains. Why does safety become an urgent concern only after a disaster has already occurred?

The massive fire that broke out at the market late on October 28 has left traders facing an uncertain future, livelihoods destroyed and serious questions hanging over the preparedness of the authorities. While the damage assessment scheduled for October 29 will establish the extent of the destruction, it cannot answer the larger question of whether enough was done to prevent such a tragedy in the first place.

Goa has been through this painful experience before. The Birch nightclub fire in Arpora claimed 25 innocent lives, exposing serious concerns about fire safety, regulatory oversight and the enforcement of rules in commercial establishments. That tragedy should have been a turning point. It should have forced the government, municipal bodies, fire services and enforcement agencies to examine whether Goa was adequately prepared to prevent and respond to fires.

Yet, here we are again, confronting a major fire and asking questions that should have been addressed long ago.

The circumstances surrounding the Vasco market fire are different from those of the Birch tragedy. One involved the loss of human lives at a nightclub, while the other has devastated a public market and threatened the livelihoods of traders. However, the underlying issue is the same. Safety regulations mean little if they exist only on paper and are enforced only after disaster strikes.

Markets are crowded public spaces. They bring together traders, workers, customers, electrical installations, combustible goods and storage areas. In older commercial buildings, inadequate maintenance, overloaded electrical systems, obstructed access routes and insufficient fire protection can turn a small incident into a major emergency. Whether any of these factors contributed to the Vasco fire must be established through a transparent and professional investigation. It would be premature to assign blame before the findings are available.

But the administration cannot wait for an investigation to begin examining the broader failures that may have allowed such a disaster to occur.

Markets are crowded public spaces. They bring together traders, workers, customers, electrical installations, combustible goods and storage areas. In older commercial buildings, inadequate maintenance, overloaded electrical systems, obstructed access routes and insufficient fire protection can turn a small incident into a major emergency. Whether any of these factors contributed to the Vasco fire must be established through a transparent and professional investigation. It would be premature to assign blame before the findings are available.

But the administration cannot wait for an investigation to begin examining the broader failures that may have allowed such a disaster to occur.

The decision to cordon off the affected market and prohibit public entry is justified. A fire damaged building can pose serious risks even after the flames have been extinguished. Structural instability, exposed electrical wiring and hidden pockets of heat can endanger anyone entering the premises. The joint inspection involving the police, municipal authorities, Fire and Emergency Services, the Public Works Department, the Electricity Department and forensic experts is therefore essential.

However, the real test will be what happens after this inspection.

Will the findings be made public? Will responsibility be fixed if negligence or regulatory failure is established? Will the authorities examine fire safety arrangements in other municipal markets and commercial buildings across Goa? Or will the exercise end with a report, a few assurances and a return to business as usual?

These are not unreasonable questions. They are questions that taxpayers and citizens have every right to ask.

The government must also recognise the human cost of the Vasco fire. For many small traders, a shop is not merely a commercial space. It is the source of income for an entire family, often built through years of hard work and borrowed money. The destruction of merchandise, equipment and business premises can push families into financial distress overnight.

A joint damage assessment must therefore be followed by a clear rehabilitation plan. The authorities should identify affected traders, assess their losses, facilitate legitimate insurance claims and provide appropriate assistance wherever possible. Any temporary trading arrangements must be transparent and fair, particularly for those who have lost their only source of livelihood.

At the same time, compensation cannot become a substitute for accountability. Relief addresses the consequences of a disaster. Prevention addresses the reasons it happened.

The Birch nightclub fire should have taught Goa that public safety cannot be compromised by commercial interests, administrative convenience or regulatory complacency. That lesson must apply equally to nightclubs, restaurants, markets, shopping complexes and every other place where people gather.

There cannot be one set of rules for influential commercial establishments and another for ordinary citizens. Nor can enforcement depend on whether a tragedy has attracted public attention.

Goa does not need another committee that merely records what went wrong after the damage is done. It needs a system that identifies risks before lives and livelihoods are lost.

The Vasco market fire must become a warning, not another forgotten incident. The administration must establish the facts, fix responsibility wherever warranted, strengthen inspections and ensure that fire safety measures are regularly tested rather than merely certified.

After Birch, Goa was reminded of the terrible price of neglect. Vasco now presents another opportunity to act before the next disaster.

The question is no longer whether Goa has safety rules. The question is whether those entrusted with enforcing them take their responsibility seriously enough to prevent another tragedy.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Vasco Market Fire: Government Must Stand by Traders During Their Hour of Crisis

The devastating fire at Vasco's Sunday Market, which reportedly gutted around 150 shops and destroyed merchandise stocked for Diwali, is a heartbreaking blow to traders and their families. For many small vendors, the market is not merely a place of business but their primary source of income and the foundation of their livelihoods.

The timing of the tragedy makes the losses particularly painful. Many traders had invested their savings and borrowed money to purchase festive merchandise, hoping to earn better returns during Diwali. With their goods reduced to ashes, several families now face uncertainty over how they will repay debts, meet household expenses and restart their businesses.

Chief Minister Pramod Sawant's assurance of financial assistance is a welcome step. However, the affected traders need more than verbal assurances. The government must conduct a transparent and speedy assessment of losses, announce a clear relief package and ensure that compensation reaches genuine beneficiaries without unnecessary delays.

The administration's decision to seal the fire-affected premises and restrict public access is also important given the risks of structural instability and residual fire hazards. The joint inspection involving relevant departments must establish the extent of the damage, assess safety concerns and preserve evidence for the investigation.

The authorities must determine the cause of the fire and examine whether adequate fire safety arrangements were in place. Any allegations of foul play must be investigated impartially, without speculation or premature conclusions.

This tragedy should also prompt a wider review of fire safety measures in Goa's crowded commercial markets, including emergency access, electrical installations and firefighting equipment. Vasco's traders need immediate relief, practical support to rebuild their businesses and confidence that such a disaster can be better prevented in the future. The government must turn its assurances into timely action.

- Aaron Fernandes, Vasco da Gama

Goa's ST Reservation: December Deadline Raises Hopes for Long-Awaited Political Representation

Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant's confidence that four Goa Assembly constituencies could be notified for Scheduled Tribe (ST) reservation by December 8–10 is an encouraging development for the state's tribal communities. After years of demands for political representation, the prospect of progress offers hope to people who have long sought a stronger voice in Goa's democratic institutions.

The identification of Canacona, Sanguem, Priol and Nuvem in a report forwarded to the Election Commission of India marks an important stage in the process. However, the final notification depends on the completion of the required procedures by the Election Commission, an independent constitutional authority whose role must be respected.

The Chief Minister has reiterated his government's commitment to reservation and urged ST organisations to refrain from fresh agitations. While dialogue and patience are important, the government must also recognise the frustration that has built up over years of waiting. Tribal organisations have a legitimate interest in seeking clarity on an issue that directly affects their political future. Sawant's acknowledgement of the contributions of former Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar and former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to securing ST status for Goa's tribal communities is also significant. Welfare schemes and recognition are important, but meaningful political representation is equally essential to ensure that tribal concerns receive adequate attention in the Assembly.

The government should maintain regular communication with ST organisations, explain the remaining procedural steps and provide updates without making commitments beyond its control.

Political reservation is not merely an electoral issue; it is about inclusion, dignity and democratic justice. Goa's tribal communities deserve a transparent process and a clear outcome.

Chief Minister Sawant's assurance must now be followed by sustained coordination and timely action so that the long-pending aspiration for political representation moves closer to reality.

- Rohan Naik, Sanguem

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Congress Demands Immediate Relief and Adequate Compensation for Vasco Market Fire Victims

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PANAJI: The Congress has expressed deep sorrow over the devastating fire at Vasco's Sunday Market on the eve of Diwali, which destroyed shops and severely affected the livelihoods of traders and their families. Girish Chodankar said the tragedy had robbed many families of their hard-earned savings, livelihoods and hopes for Diwali, extending his solidarity to all affected traders and their families. The Congress demanded an immediate, time-bound assessment of losses, adequate compensation and emergency financial assistance for every affected trader. It also called for a transparent inquiry into the circumstances leading to the fire and accountability from the authorities concerned over fire safety arrangements, preventive measures and the emergency response. "The government cannot limit itself to expressing sympathy. It must explain what went wrong, fix responsibility wherever lapses are established, and ensure that such a tragedy is not repeated.

Vasco Market Fire Site Sealed, Public Entry Banned Within 50-Metre Radius

South Goa Collector Issues Two-Day Prohibitory Order Under BNSS Section 163; Joint Damage Assessment Scheduled for October 29

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VASCO: The South Goa District Magistrate has prohibited public access to the fire-affected premises at New Modern Municipal Market in Vasco city and the surrounding area within a 50-metre radius following a major fire that broke out late on October 28.

In an order issued on October 29 under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023, South

Goa Collector and District Magistrate Egna Cleetus directed the police to cordon off the affected premises and restrict entry by traders, vendors, customers and other members of the public in the interest of public safety. The order cited concerns over possible structural instability and the risk of portions of the building collapsing. Flammable and potentially hazardous materials reportedly remain at the site, raising concerns about further ignition or other dangerous incidents.

The police have been directed to deploy personnel, erect barricades and display warning signs to prevent unauthorised entry, theft, pilferage and the removal of goods. Any removal of materials from the premises will be permitted only under controlled conditions and in coordination with the competent authorities.

Urban Development Department in Touch With Vasco Fire-Affected Traders

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Goa Urban Development Minister Vishwajit Rane on Thursday said his department was coordinating with traders affected by the massive fire at Vasco's Sunday Market, as the state government stepped up efforts to assess the damage and restore normalcy in the affected area.

MP Viriato Demands State Disaster Status For Vasco Market Fire, Seeks Probe Into Possible Conspiracy

South Goa MP calls for immediate compensation and market reconstruction, questions fire safety preparedness and says the possibility of a conspiracy cannot be ruled out.

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VASCO: South Goa MP Captain Viriato Fernandes has urged the Goa government to declare the devastating fire at Vasco's Sunday Market a State Disaster and announce immediate compensation for traders who lost their shops and festive-season stock. He has also called for a

thorough investigation into the cause of the blaze, stating that the possibility of a conspiracy cannot be ruled out.

Expressing concern over the destruction, Fernandes said the fire had wiped out the livelihoods of numerous traders and affected families who depend directly or indirectly on the market for their income. With Diwali approaching, many vendors had invested heavily in merchandise in the hope of making festive-season sales.

Vasco Sunday Market Fire: Traders Seek Urgent Government Assistance

Shopkeepers suffer losses worth crores as festive-season stocks are destroyed; demand compensation, rehabilitation and support to rebuild businesses

Team Goemkarponn

VASCO: Shopkeepers affected by the massive fire at Vasco Sunday Market have appealed to the government for urgent assistance after suffering losses worth crores of rupees, with their goods, investments and hopes for the upcoming festive season reduced to ashes.

The affected traders said the incident was nothing short of a

state-level disaster, as many shopkeepers had stocked their businesses with merchandise for the upcoming Diwali season, hoping to make good returns during the festive period.

However, the devastating blaze has wiped out their investments, leaving several families facing uncertainty over their livelihoods and financial future. For many traders, the losses represent years of hard work and savings invested in their businesses.

The shopkeepers stressed that compensation alone may not be sufficient to help them recover from the massive losses. They have called for comprehensive government assistance, rehabilitation measures and a concrete action plan to help them rebuild their businesses and resume their livelihoods.

The traders have urged the authorities to intervene immediately, assess the extent of the damage and provide financial relief to those affected.

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Over 150 shops gutted in major fire at Vasco Sunday Market

occurred barely an hour after another blaze broke out at a car accessories shop behind Tilak Maidan, approximately a kilometre away. The second fire caused extensive damage to goods inside the shop and also damaged several vehicles parked in the vicinity.

Firefighters were deployed to tackle the two incidents and prevent further damage to nearby properties.

The back-to-back fires have raised concerns among market vendors over the adequacy of firefighting arrangements and the ability to tackle large-scale blazes in densely packed commercial areas. Affected traders questioned whether sufficient measures were in place to respond effectively to such emergencies and minimise losses.

With over 150 shops destroyed at the Sunday Market alone, the incident has dealt a severe blow to local traders ahead of Diwali, leaving many facing uncertainty over the recovery of their businesses and livelihoods.

CM Sawant assures financial assistance to Vasco market fire victims

officials to assess the damage and take stock of the situation.

Speaking to the media at the site, the Chief Minister said that several vendors had stocked their shops with goods for the upcoming Diwali season, but their merchandise was destroyed in the blaze, leaving them facing significant financial losses.

The fire broke out at around 10.30 pm, with incidents of fire reported at three locations in Vasco, Sawant said. He assured the affected traders that the government would extend all possible financial assistance to help them cope with the losses caused by the incident. Meanwhile, authorities are investigating the cause of the fire. Responding to media queries regarding allegations of foul play, Sawant said the matter was also being investigated.

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PANAJI | THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2026

Ajay Kholkar Says Manoj Parab Has Responded Positively to RGP's Call to Return

Former RGP leader hints at a major announcement around Diwali, asserts party is united and will contest the 2027 Goa Assembly elections under the football symbol.

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PANAJI: Former Revolutionary Goans Party (RGP) leader Ajay Kholkar has said former party president Manoj Parab has responded positively to the organisation's request to return and lead the party, raising expectations of a significant announcement around Diwali.

Speaking to reporters, Kholkar said senior party functionaries recently met to discuss internal restructuring, rebuilding organisational committees and preparing for the upcoming Goa Assembly elections. He said the discussions were positive and that the party's organisational structure and election strategy would become clearer within the next two to three days.

Kholkar said the meeting was attended by General Secretary, former president Manoj Parab, vice presidents Anish Naik and Shabi Fernandes, the North Goa district president and founding member Rohan Kalangutkar. The discussions focused on strengthening the organisation after its committees were dissolved and preparing for the elections, which he said were approaching quickly.

Congress and RGP Step Up Alliance Efforts to Protect Goa's Interests

Senior leaders of both parties meet to strengthen unity and cooperation amid a renewed push for Goa-centric politics

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Congress Party and the Revolutionary Goans Party (RGP) have stepped up efforts to strengthen their political alliance, with senior leaders from both parties holding a meeting to reinforce their partnership and discuss a united approach to issues concerning Goa and its people.

The Congress delegation was led by AICC General Secretary In-charge Shri Manikrao Thakare and included AICC Secretary In-charge Dr. Anjali Nimbalkar, Goa Pradesh Congress Committee (GPCC) President Girish Chodankar, Leader of Opposition Yuri Alemao, South Goa MP Capt. Viriato Fernandes and Working President M. K. Sheikh.

Representing the RGP were National President and MLA Viresh Borkar, State President Shavina Naik Shirodkar, Advisor Amol Navelcar and other party leaders.

The meeting underscored the importance of greater coordination and a strengthened partnership between the two parties as they seek to advance issues affecting Goa.

High Court Stays Notification On Estimated ST Population

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PANAJI: The Goa High Court has granted interim relief to the petitioner by staying the issuance of a notification concerning the estimated population of Scheduled Tribes (STs) in the state.

The court has also admitted the petition challenging the constitutional validity of the Readjustment of Representation of Scheduled Tribes in Assembly Constituencies of the State of Goa Act, 2025.

As part of the proceedings, the High Court has directed the parties to file their replies and rejoinders by November 19. Meanwhile, Deputy Solicitor General of India, Advocate Pravin Faldessai, stated that the Central Government would decide in the coming days whether to challenge the High Court's interim order. The development comes amid the ongoing legal proceedings concerning the proposed readjustment of Assembly constituencies to provide political representation to Scheduled Tribes in Goa.

Subhash Phal Dessai Says He Will Accept BJP Decision on Constituency if Sanguem Gets ST Reservation

Minister says nearly 300 BJP workers gathered at his residence seeking clarity on the Chief Minister's statement; maintains that the court's verdict, the Constitution and the party's decision must be respected.

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SANGUEM: Social Welfare Minister and Sanguem MLA Subhash Phal Dessai has said he will abide by the BJP's decision on his political future if Sanguem constituency is reserved for Scheduled Tribes (ST), adding that the party will decide where he should contest in the next Assembly elections.

Phal Dessai said ST political reservation was a long-pending demand and a constitutional right of the community. He welcomed Chief Minister Pramod Sawant's statement that the process was expected to be completed by November–December, while noting that he did not know what decision the court would deliver.

Phal Dessai said that if Sanguem is reserved, an ST candidate from the BJP would represent the constituency. The party would then conduct surveys and assess the political situation before deciding his next course of action. He said he would accept the decision taken by the Chief Minister, the state BJP president and the party's central leadership.

Goa's Consumer Dispute Backlog Persists as State Ranks Fourth Among Small States

Nearly one-third of pending cases have dragged on for over three years, while the state commission utilised just 64.6% of its budget in 2025

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PANAJI: Goa continues to face challenges in delivering timely consumer justice, with 46 of the 147 cases pending before its State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission remaining unresolved for more than three years. The state has secured the fourth position among nine small states in the Consumer Justice Report 2026, scoring 3.98 out of 10.

Meghalaya leads the category with 5.58 points, followed by Sikkim at 4.72 and Himachal Pradesh at 4.20. Goa's performance highlights concerns over the time taken to settle consumer disputes and the effective use of resources allocated to the commission.

Of the 147 cases pending in 2025, 60 had been awaiting resolution for between one and three years, while 41 had been pending for less than a year. The 46 cases that had crossed the three-year mark represented 31.3% of the total backlog, underscoring the difficulties faced by consumers seeking timely redressal.

The commission's disposal record has varied over the years. In 2022, it resolved 180 cases against 177 new filings. The following year, disposals rose sharply to 379, compared with 214 cases received. In 2024, however, the commission disposed of 245 cases against 250 new filings, leaving disposals slightly below fresh registrations.

Three Road Accidents Reported In Goa, Pedestrians Among The Injured

■ Pedestrians sustain grievous injuries in Maina and Ponda hit-and-run accidents; two-wheeler collision reported in

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Three separate road accidents reported in different parts of Goa have left several people injured, including two pedestrians who sustained grievous injuries. The incidents occurred in Maina, Ponda and Canacona, with police investigating all three cases. A woman pedestrian sustained grievous injuries after an Aprilia scooter allegedly hit her near Maina Church on October 26 at around 9.30 am.According to a complaint lodged by ASI Rajendra Sangodkar of Maina Curtorim Police Station, the accused rider, Rohit Sakharkar, a resident of Aquem Alto, Margao, was proceeding from Maina towards Mugali when he allegedly rode the scooter in a rash and negligent manner and hit Manika Thomas Mascarenhas, a resident of San Jose de Areal, Mugali, from behind. The woman was walking towards Mugali when she fell onto the tar road following the impact and sustained grievous injuries. Further investigation is being conducted by ASI Rajendra Sangodkar of Maina Curtorim Police Station. In another incident, a pedestrian sustained grievous injuries after an unidentified motorcycle rider allegedly hit him at a zebra crossing outside Rajiv Gandhi Kala Mandir in Ponda on October 25 at around 11.05 pm. As per the complaint lodged by Vishan Korde, a resident of Bethora, Ponda, the unidentified rider was travelling from Ponda town towards Bethora when the motorcycle allegedly struck the complainant's father, Vasudev Korde, who was walking across the road.

Unidentified Man Found Dead Near Sai Baba Temple In Vasco

■ Man aged around 40 declared brought dead at Chicalim SDH; police conduct inquest and seek to establish identity

Team Goemkarponn

VASCO: An unidentified man, believed to be around 35 to 40 years old, was declared brought dead at the Sub-District Hospital (SDH), Chicalim, after being found lying on a bench near Sai Baba Temple in Vasco.

According to information received from the Medical Officer of SDH Chicalim on October 27 at around 10.12 pm, the man was brought to the hospital by 108 ambulance staff.

During the enquiry, police found the deceased to be of medium build and approximately 5 feet 6 inches tall. He was wearing a grey T-shirt and blue jeans and had red and green religious threads tied around his waist. Police conducted an inquest panchanama, and the body was preserved at South Goa District Hospital (SGDH), Margao, for further medico-legal formalities. Further enquiry in the case is being conducted by PSI Suresh B. Velip of Vasco Police Station.

Water Supply To Be Partially Affected In Several Goa Areas From October 31

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PANAJI: Water supply to several areas across Goa will be partially affected following a 24-hour shutdown of the 100 MLD Salauli Water Treatment Plant at Xelpem, also known as the JICA WTP, on October 31.

According to the Department of Information and Publicity, the shutdown will be in effect from 8 am on October 31 to 8 am on November 1 to carry out interconnection work between the existing 100 MLD water treatment plant and the additional 100 MLD plant under the Salauli Water Supply Project.

The affected areas include parts of Sanguem, including Netravali, Zambaulim and Rivona; Guddemoll in Sanvordem; Shiroda; Quepem; Balli pumping station; Gudi; Margao city; Fatorda; Raia; Fatepur; Handka; Loutolim; Cansaulim; Nagoa Cuncolim; Curtorim; Nuvem; Cortalim; Dabolim; Vasco; and areas under the Mormugao constituency.

Goa Implements Telecommunications Right Of Way Rules, 2024

■ GWMC to process telecom infrastructure permission applications through online portal; government clarifies provisions on levies, coercive action and NOCs for private property towers

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: The Government of Goa has adopted the Telecommunications (Right of Way) Rules, 2024, for the state with effect from January 1, 2025, to streamline permissions for telecommunications network infrastructure.

According to the Department of Information and Publicity, the Goa Waste Management Corporation (GWMC) has informed that all applications seeking Right of Way (RoW) permissions for telecommunications network infrastructure on properties and infrastructure owned, controlled or managed by the corporation will be processed strictly in accordance with the rules through the online RoW Portal. As per the provisions outlined in the notification, no property tax, levy, fees or duties shall be imposed on telecommunications network installations under Section 14(3) of the Telecommunications Act, 2023.

Goa Police Holds Cyber Crime And Drug Awareness Programme For 900 Students In Mapusa

■ Students from various schools sensitised to online fraud, digital arrest scams and dangers of drug abuse during awareness programme organised by Goa Police

Team Goemkarponn

MAPUSA: The Cyber Crime Police Station of Goa Police organised a mass cyber crime and drug awareness programme for around 900 students and teachers from various schools across Mapusa at Anantya AC Banquet Hall on Tuesday, as part of Cyber Awareness Month 2026.

The programme was organised under the guidance and supervision of SP Cyber Crime Jivba Dalvi, GPS, with the objective of educating young people about online threats, cyber fraud prevention and the harmful consequences of drug abuse. The programme commenced with a welcome address by Police Inspector Sujay Korgaonkar of the Cyber Crime Police Station. Deputy Director of Education Sarveshwar Naik highlighted the importance of creating awareness among school students and incorporating cyber safety and drug prevention education into the school curriculum.

Cristebella Dias of the Cyber Wellness Center spoke about the psychological impact of cyber fraud and the importance of counselling and support for victims who suffer financial losses through online scams.

Artists from Bla Bla Entertainment staged an informative skit on digital arrest scams, demonstrating how cybercriminals deceive innocent citizens. Police Inspector Vidyanand Pawar of the Cyber Crime Police Station delivered a session on emerging cybercrime trends, common methods used by fraudsters and preventive measures to safeguard against online threats.

Aldona MLA seeks review of AI camera-based traffic e-challan system

Carlos Ferreira flags alleged wrongful fines at Bastora flyover and Mapusa, calls for human verification and transparency

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Aldona MLA Adv. Carlos Alvares Ferreira has called for an immediate halt to the automated issuance of traffic e-challans at problematic stretches, including the Bastora flyover and underpass, urging the Transport Department and traffic police to review the AI-powered camera system amid complaints of alleged erroneous fines for signal violations and line crossing.

Ferreira said he welcomed the government's move to install AI-powered CCTV cameras at various locations but stressed that the technology should serve broader purposes, including monitoring public movement and enhancing public security, while protecting individual privacy.

"The technology should not be just about generating traffic fines," he said, highlighting concerns raised by citizens over automated challans issued for alleged traffic violations.

According to Ferreira, some motorists have reportedly received fines for using a mobile phone while stationary at a red signal and for allegedly crossing a red light while waiting at the stop line.

Kushavati Collector reviews occupancy rights grievances of Salaulim project-affected persons

Gurudas S. T. Desai and Minister Subhash Phal Dessai direct officials to expedite pending matters concerning Class-I Occupancy Rights

Team Goemkarponn

KUSHAVATI: A meeting was held under the chairmanship of Shri Gurudas S. T. Desai, Collector and District Magistrate of Kushavati District, to review and address the grievances of Project Affected Persons (PAPs) concerning the grant of Class-I Occupancy Rights under the Salaulim Irrigation Project.

The meeting was attended by Shri Subhash Phal Dessai, Minister for Social Welfare, Archives and Archaeology, and River Navigation, as a special invitee. Also present were the Additional Collector-II, Deputy Collector (Revenue), Deputy Collector and Sub-Divisional Officer (SDO), Mamlatdars, Joint Mamlatdar, officers of the Water Resources Department, Inspectors of Survey and Land Records, and the Sarpanch of Vaddem Curdi.

The discussions focused on the pending issues and grievances of project-affected families relating to the grant of Class-I Occupancy Rights under the irrigation project.

During the meeting, the Minister and the Collector directed the concerned officers to expedite the necessary procedures and ensure the timely resolution of pending matters.

Navelim Health Centre begins 24/7 services: Ulhas Tuenkar

Team Goemkarponn

NAVELIM: The Navelim Health Centre will now provide medical services round the clock following the inauguration of its 24/7 facility, with Navelim MLA Ulhas Tuenkar stating that the initiative fulfils a long-pending demand of the people of the constituency.

Speaking after the inauguration, Tuenkar said the Health Minister had addressed the demand by ensuring round-the-clock medical services at the centre, supported by one doctor and other staff.

The MLA also expressed gratitude to the Health Minister for providing an ambulance to the health centre, stating that the facility would help improve access to medical care and emergency services for residents of Navelim and the surrounding areas.

Tuenkar said the BJP government was committed to serving the people of Goa by strengthening healthcare infrastructure and ensuring that medical services remained accessible to citizens at all hours.

Warkaris from Velim felicitated by Eng. Cruz Silva Charitable Trust

13 Warkaris honoured for their devotion and participation in the Pandharpur Wari; artisans and bhajani performers also felicitated

Team Goemkarponn

RANGALI-BETUL: The Eng. Cruz Silva Charitable Trust organised a felicitation ceremony to honour 13 Warkaris from the Velim constituency who undertook the sacred Wari pilgrimage to Pandharpur, upholding the rich tradition of devotion, spirituality and service.

The programme was held at the premises of Shree Gopalkrishna Saunsthan, Rangali-Betul, in the presence of chief guest and Velim MLA Shri Cruz Silva. All 13 Warkaris were felicitated with shawls and mementos in recognition of their dedication, devotion and commitment to the age-old Wari tradition. The Warkaris felicitated were Shri Vinay Naik, Shri Pratikesh Tari, Shri Deepak Juwatkar, Shri Umesh Juwatkar, Shri Jagannath Juwatkar, Shri Tukaram Madkaikar, Shri Vinayak Juvatkar, Shri Sanjay Raikar, Shri Sudhakar Joshi, Shri Digambar Lotlikar, Shri Krishna Vernekar, Smt. Prita Vernekar and Smt. Sushmita Joshi.

South Goa Collectorate marks 15th State Road Safety Week with competitions

Winners of placard, quiz and reel-making competitions felicitated for promoting road safety awareness

Team Goemkarponn

MARGAO: The Office of the Collector, South Goa District, marked the 15th State Road Safety Week – 2026 by organising placard, quiz and reel-making competitions under the theme "Drive Safe, Ride Safe, Reach Safe". The competitions provided a creative platform for participants to showcase their talents while spreading awareness about road safety, responsible driving and the importance of complying with traffic rules. A prize distribution ceremony was held to honour the winners and recognise their efforts in promoting the message of road safety through their creative contributions. Ms. Egna Cleetus, IAS, Collector and District Magistrate, South Goa District, presented prizes to the winners and commended them for their creativity and dedication towards raising awareness about road safety. Addressing the importance of the initiative, she emphasised that road safety must be an integral part of everyday life and urged everyone to strictly follow traffic rules to prevent accidents and ensure the safety of all road users. The initiative formed part of the district administration's efforts to encourage responsible road behaviour and strengthen public awareness about safe driving practices.

'Lawyers Can Work From Home, Judges Cannot': Supreme Court Highlights Delhi's Pollution Crisis

Justice Vikram Nath Remarks on Lawyers' Virtual Hearing Option as Court Discusses Pollution Before Diwali

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Air pollution in Delhi came into focus during a Supreme Court hearing on Wednesday, with Justice Vikram Nath pointing out that lawyers can avoid exposure by working from home and appearing virtually, while judges must attend court to hear cases in person.

The observation came during proceedings on a petition related to pollution. Senior advocate Indira Jaising requested that the matter be listed on November 17, after Diwali. However, the opposing side pressed for an earlier hearing, citing concerns that pollution levels in Delhi and the surrounding areas could worsen after the festival.

Jaising remarked that pollution remained severe both before and after Diwali and requested a later date. Justice Nath responded that air quality could deteriorate further following the celebrations, making an earlier hearing necessary.

Jaising subsequently noted that she was willing to face the pollution to appear before the court in person, adding that judges would also have to attend proceedings. Justice Nath observed that lawyers had the option of appearing through video conferencing, whereas judges could not simply remain at home.

'Refrain From Seeing Ghosts Everywhere': Nirmala Sitharaman Hits Back at Rahul Gandhi Over Tata Row

Finance Minister Accuses Congress Leader of Politicising Business Disputes After He Claims Tata Group Is Being 'Criminally Destroyed'

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has hit back at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi over his remarks that the Tata Group is being "criminally destroyed", accusing the Leader of the Opposition of politicising commercial disputes and spreading distrust towards Indian industry. The exchange took place on Wednesday after Gandhi raised concerns about the ongoing dispute within the Tata Group. In a post on social media, he alleged that business leaders were afraid to speak out and accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah of treating Indian businesses as their "plaything". Gandhi also questioned the silence of industry leaders and vowed to ensure justice over what he described as wrongdoing affecting the conglomerate. Responding to his remarks, Sitharaman urged Gandhi to avoid politicising every issue and questioned his decision to describe commercial and legal matters as criminal without sufficient grounds. She accused the Congress leader of repeatedly criticising the achievements of Indian businesses and entrepreneurs, asking whether he was attempting to encourage industry leaders to join him in spreading distrust.

68 Killed in Spain High Speed Train Collision, Human Error Suspected

Team Goemkarponn

SPAIN: At least 68 people have been killed and several others injured after two high speed trains collided in Spain on Wednesday, October 28, triggering a major emergency response and the suspension of rail services connecting Madrid with Ciudad Real and Andalusia. The accident occurred in the province of Toledo on the Madrid to Seville high speed rail line. Spain's rail infrastructure operator ADIF confirmed that services had been suspended following a rear end collision involving two trains. A southbound Renfe AVE train reportedly struck a stationary Iryo train, causing several carriages to derail and tumble down an embankment. The impact left numerous passengers injured and prompted emergency teams to respond to the scene. According to regional authorities, the Renfe train was carrying 397 passengers, while the Iryo service had 147 passengers on board.

India Closely Monitoring Tehran Talks Involving Pakistan, Says MEA

New Delhi Tracks Regional Diplomatic Efforts Amid Reported Saudi Arabia Houthi Ceasefire Discussions and Wider West Asian Tensions

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: India is closely monitoring major geopolitical developments in West Asia, including reported discussions in Tehran involving Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Pakistan and Iran, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Wednesday.

MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said New Delhi was following developments in the region that could have implications for India's interests. His remarks came amid reports of diplomatic efforts in Tehran aimed at reducing regional tensions and securing a ceasefire between Saudi Arabia and Yemen's Houthi group, with Iran reportedly facilitating the discussions.

Reports have indicated that senior officials from Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Pakistan and Iran participated in the talks. There have also been claims that Saudi Arabia proposed financial assistance to the Houthis as part of efforts to end attacks against the kingdom. However, the reported proposal involving $1 billion has not been independently confirmed.

The discussions are taking place against the backdrop of broader regional tensions involving Iran, the United States and Israel.

'Operation Sindoor Was India's Declaration Against Terrorism': Rajnath Singh at ASEAN Defence Meet

Defence Minister Calls for Stronger Intelligence Sharing, Joint Exercises and Regional Cooperation to Counter State Sponsored Terrorism

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday reaffirmed India's firm stance against terrorism, describing Operation Sindoor as a clear declaration of the country's position against state sponsored terrorism. Addressing the 13th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM Plus) in Cebu, Philippines, he called for stronger regional cooperation to eliminate terrorism and strengthen security across the Indo Pacific. Singh emphasised India's commitment to enhancing regional security and tackling terrorism at its roots. He highlighted the country's extensive experience in counter terrorism operations, stressing that India's strategies had been shaped by decades of practical experience in confronting security threats. Referring to Operation Sindoor, conducted last year, the Defence Minister said India had demonstrated its resolve by destroying multiple terrorist infrastructure sites. He described the operation as a clear message against state sponsored terrorism and underlined the importance of coordinated action to address cross border security challenges.

Singh called on ADMM Plus partners to strengthen cooperation through intelligence sharing, joint military exercises and capacity building programmes. He said sharing practical counter terrorism expertise would help countries improve their collective capabilities and respond more effectively to emerging threats. He also emphasised the need for a secure and resilient Indo Pacific region, where peace and stability are achieved through collective efforts rather than remaining aspirations.

'No Excuses at This Level': Gautam Gambhir Sets Clear Message for India's Long New Zealand Tour

■ Tilak Varma says India are determined to maintain high standards, with the team targeting a 5-0 clean sweep in the T20I series after taking an unassailable 3-0 lead.

Team Goemkarponn

NEW DELHI: India's packed cricket schedule has once again tested the team's ability to adapt quickly, with the players travelling to New Zealand just four days after completing their home series against the West Indies.

Moving between different climates and playing conditions requires mental, physical and technical adjustments. However, with limited preparation time, the Indian team has had to deliver results from the outset. Batter Tilak Varma said the players have accepted the challenge and are focused on setting high standards for the next generation. He also revealed that head coach Gautam Gambhir had emphasised the importance of the ongoing T20I series during team meetings. "At this level, we cannot make excuses. We are at the highest level, and we need to set standards for the youngsters who look up to us," Tilak said ahead of the fourth T20I. He added that Gambhir had made it clear that the New Zealand tour would be a long one, and the team's performance in the T20I series could provide momentum for the upcoming ODI and Test assignments.

India have made an impressive start to the five-match T20I series, winning the first three games to take an unassailable 3-0 lead. The visitors are now aiming to complete a clean sweep. Tilak said the team views the remaining matches as an opportunity to achieve a 5-0 series victory and give Indian supporters another reason to celebrate.

Darshan Misal Reaches 200 Wicket Milestone in Ranji Trophy

■ Goa All Rounder Achieves Major Career Landmark as Goa Cricket Association Congratulates Him

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Goa cricketer Darshan Misal has achieved a significant milestone in his domestic cricket career by completing 200 wickets in the Ranji Trophy, marking an important accomplishment in his journey in India's premier domestic first class tournament.

Misal's achievement highlights his contribution to Goa cricket and his performances in the prestigious competition. Reaching the 200 wicket mark is a notable milestone for any bowler competing at the highest level of domestic cricket, reflecting his ability to make an impact over multiple seasons. The Goa Cricket Association (GCA) congratulated Misal on reaching the landmark and acknowledged his achievement as a proud moment for the state's cricketing fraternity. GCA President Mahesh Dessai, Secretary Tulshidas Shetye, Treasurer Abdul Majid and the entire managing committee extended their congratulations to the cricketer. They also wished him continued success and further achievements in his cricketing career. Misal's milestone adds to Goa's achievements in domestic cricket and brings recognition to the state's players competing in the Ranji Trophy. His accomplishment is an encouraging moment for Goa cricket as the team continues to participate in India's premier first class tournament.

Goa's Shaheen and Aswin Put Up Brave Fight Before Exiting All India Junior Badminton Tournament

■ The Goa duo narrowly lost to the top seeds in Boys' Doubles Under 19, while Shaheen also bowed out of the Mixed Doubles Round of 16 at Navelim

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: Goa's Shaheen C.K. and Aswin Mannambalath delivered a spirited performance before suffering a narrow defeat in the Boys' Doubles Under 19 pre quarterfinals at the Yonex Sunrise G.H. Raisoni Memorial All India Junior Ranking Badminton Tournament 2026 at the Manohar Parrikar Indoor Stadium in Navelim. The Goan pair pushed top seeds Abhishek Bonu of Andhra Pradesh and Aanayan Borah of Assam to the limit in their Round of 16 encounter. However, Shaheen and Aswin narrowly lost 17 to 19, 13 to 15, bringing their campaign in the event to an end. Shaheen also featured in the Mixed Doubles Under 19 category, partnering seventh seeds Jesicca Neyi Saring of Arunachal Pradesh. The duo fought hard against Rajasthan's Arnav Sharma and Tamil Nadu's Anushkaa Jennifer A.S. but went down 13 to 15, 13 to 15 in another closely contested Round of 16 match. Meanwhile, the tournament witnessed several competitive encounters in the singles categories as leading junior shuttlers battled for places in the next round.

In Boys' Singles Under 19, fourth seed Shaurya Agarwal of Uttarakhand defeated Kerala's Kiran Noguchi 15 to 12, 14 to 16, 15 to 9 in a three game contest.

FC Goa Snatch Dramatic 1-1 Draw Against Sporting Club Delhi With Stoppage-Time Equaliser

■ Alex Vallejo scores in the 95th minute to rescue a point for Goa after Juan Pena puts Delhi ahead in a thrilling Indian Super League encounter

Team Goemkarponn

PANAJI: FC Goa produced a dramatic late comeback to hold Sporting Club Delhi to a 1-1 draw in their Indian Super League encounter on Wednesday, denying the visitors their first victory of the campaign.

Juan Pena's second-half goal appeared to have put Delhi on course for all three points. However, Alex Vallejo struck in the fifth minute of stoppage time to rescue a point for the hosts in a thrilling finish.

Both teams began aggressively, pressing high and looking to create an early breakthrough. Goa threatened in the eighth minute when Samsanga narrowly missed the target at the far post.

Samsanga thought he had opened the scoring in the 19th minute after Francisco Feuillassier played him through, but the goal was ruled out for offside. Goa continued to push forward, with Muhammed Nemil sending an effort narrowly over the crossbar in the 37th minute.

The hosts maintained their attacking approach after the break. Nemil picked out Feuillassier inside the six-yard box, but Nora Fernandes produced an important save to keep Delhi in the contest.

Delhi made the most of that opportunity in the 52nd minute. A swift counterattack saw Rodrigunho set up Pena, who finished confidently with his right foot to give the visitors the lead.

Goa increased the pressure as the match entered its closing stages. Vallejo had an opportunity following a defensive error in the first minute of added time, but his cross came to nothing as Chiki failed to convert.

The hosts eventually found their breakthrough in the 90+5th minute. Feuillassier delivered a dangerous free-kick into the penalty area, and Vallejo timed his run perfectly to meet the ball in front of the goalkeeper and turn it into the net.