

## Siddiqui wants CBI. Will the govt agree?

### His counsel to move HC for transfer of case to central agency



Siddiqui alias Suleman Khan escorted by police personnel on his way out of the Court of Principal District Judge and Sessions Judge, North Goa at Altinho, Panjim, on Wednesday

#### GOA'S RECENT HISTORY OF CBI INVESTIGATIONS

Goa has witnessed similar high-profile cases being transferred to the CBI in the past, largely due to public outrage and judicial intervention. The infamous Scarlett Keeling death case, the police-politician-drug mafia nexus involving Israeli drug lords Atala and Dudu, and other politically sensitive cases were all handed over to the central agency only after sustained pressure. Given this precedent, legal experts and activists argue that the Siddiqui case fits the pattern of an investigation that demands independent scrutiny. "If the state police themselves are under the scanner, how can they be expected to conduct a fair investigation?" asked a senior Police Officer on the condition of anonymity, adding that "denying a CBI probe in this case only strengthens suspicions of a cover-up."

#### CALL FOR POLITICAL ACCOUNTABILITY

The role of one BJP MLA has also come under scrutiny, with opposition leaders demanding his immediate resignation to ensure a fair investigation. "If the MLA is named in this controversy and the police are accused of shielding those in power, then this is no longer just a law-and-order issue—it is a constitutional crisis," Kawthar said.

#### THE FIRST ACCUSED IN GOA TO DEMAND A CBI PROBE

What makes this case unprecedented is that Siddiqui, an accused himself, is actively demanding a CBI probe, alleging that the police are plotting his murder. This has raised serious questions about whether law enforcement agencies in Goa are serving justice or working as enforcers for political and criminal interests.

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** Land-grabbing accused Siddiqui alias Suleman Khan wants the high-profile case transferred to the CBI, his counsel told O Herald on Friday, claiming that crucial documents and evidence are stored at Siddiqui's residence in Karwar, which has been sealed by the SIT (Land Grabbing).

Salman Kadir Pathan, Siddiqui's lawyer, said that he plans to file a writ petition in the Goa High Court seeking the transfer of the

case to CBI. An application requesting permission for Afasana (wife of Siddiqui-Presently on conditional bail) to travel to Karwar, Karnataka, is currently pending before the North Goa District Court, with an order expected on February 17. Additionally, an appeal has been filed before JMFC Panjim to unseal Siddiqui's house and retrieve the necessary documents for filing the writ petition in the High Court.

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## Victory for Pilgao locals as HC cancels night ore transportation

### Court asks Vedanta to send only 40 trucks per hour as provided in govt-prepared SOP

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** Granting a major relief to Pilgao residents, the High Court of Bombay at Goa on Thursday cancelled transportation of iron ore during night in the village and asked the mining company to transport only 40 trucks per hour through the village as provided in the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) prepared by the State government.

Dismissing the miscellaneous civil application (MCA) filed by M/s Vedanta Limited, the Court directed the mining company to submit an undertaking that it will not do any night time transportation through the village. The Court warned that if night time transportation takes place then it will severely penal-

"I feel that we have succeeded because the mining company cannot transport ore during night absolutely and during day time, the order is to transport only 40 trucks per hour and not 254 - Senior Adv Norma Alvares, who argued on behalf of Pilgao villagers

#### COURT DIRECTIVES

- The High Court dismissed the miscellaneous civil application filed by M/s Vedanta Limited
- Directed the mining company to submit an undertaking that it will not do any night time transportation through the village
- Warned that if night time transportation takes place then it will severely penalise the firm & any govt official monitoring the operations

ise the mining company as well any government official monitoring the

night operations. M/s Vedanta Ltd in its MCA had prayed for an order to allow it to use the route approved in the Environment Clearance (EC) and wanted directions to the State authorities to clear all objections or to permit them to use the alternate route with the same terms and conditions.

The Bench comprising Justice M S Karnik and Justice Nivedita P Mehta asked the company to produce an order which allowed it to use the alternate route for transportation. The company produced an order dated December 11, 2024.

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## 'Fraud' forex trading scheme: ED seizes Rs 170 crore worth bank deposits

**PTI, NEW DELHI:** The Enforcement Directorate on Thursday said it has frozen bank deposits worth Rs 170 crore following recent searches against promoters of an alleged fraudulent forex trading and deposit scheme.

The federal agency said in a statement that raids were launched on February 11 at various premises in Delhi, Noida and Shamli in Uttar Pradesh and Rohtak in Haryana as part of a probe against QFX Trade Ltd. and its directors named Rajendra Sood, Vineet Kumar and Santosh Kumar apart from one of the "mastermind" Nawab Ali alias Lavish Chaudhary.

The money laundering probe stems from multiple FIRs filed by the Himachal Pradesh Police against QFX company.

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## GRACE IN MOTION



Artistes from Feroz Abbas Khan's 'Mughal-E-Azam: The Musical' during their performance at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in New Delhi, on Thursday

## DESPERATION STALKS VELSÃO

# Hands joined in human shield to save their lands

### Forced to halt operations initially, rlys dumps material near homes using police protection; cops had given assurance of no more work

Team Herald

**MARGAO:** In a glaring display of institutional apathy, the residents of Primeirovaddo in Velsao find themselves betrayed by the authorities sworn to protect their rights.

As construction machinery roars in their ancestral lands and trucks dump material near their heritage homes, these villagers have exhausted themselves running from police stations to government offices, from courts to panchayats, only to watch helplessly as each authority systematically fails them. Their crime? Attempting to

protect the land they've legally owned and accessed for over two centuries from railway construction that proceeds without clear ownership documents.

The depth of this institutional betrayal was laid bare again on Thursday in a series of events that saw officials repeatedly backtrack on their own assurances.

The morning began with Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) attempting to resume construction work, despite ongoing court cases and the locals' desperate pleas.

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The Railways resumed work by using heavy vehicles including an earthmover to dump construction material in front of the houses in Velsao

## Prez rule imposed in Manipur

**PTI, NEW DELHI:** President's rule was imposed in strife-torn Manipur on Thursday and the State Assembly put under suspended animation, days after Chief Minister N Biren Singh resigned from his post that led to political uncertainty in the north-eastern State.

The Manipur assembly, which has a tenure till 2027, has been put under suspended animation, according to a notification issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Singh, who was heading the BJP government in Manipur, resigned as chief minister after nearly 21 months of ethnic violence that has claimed over 250 lives so far.

"Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by Article 356 of the Constitution, and of all other powers enabling me in that behalf, I hereby proclaim that I - assume to myself as President of India all functions of the government of the State of Manipur and all powers vested in or exercisable by the Governor of the that State

- Notification issued by Ministry of Home Affairs

He resigned on February 9 and submitted his resignation to Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla in Imphal, hours after his meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah here.

The decision to impose the Central rule was taken after the Governor sent a report to President Droupadi Murmu.

"After considering the report and other information

received by me, I am satisfied that a situation has arisen in which the government of that State cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of India," the notification said.

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## New Income Tax Bill introduced in Lok Sabha

**PTI, NEW DELHI:** Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman introduced the Income Tax Bill, 2025, in the Lok Sabha on Thursday, and urged Speaker Om Birla to refer it to a select committee of the House.

Opposition members opposed the Bill at the introduction stage but the House passed a motion by voice vote for its introduction.

While moving the Bill for introduction, Sitharaman urged Birla to refer the draft law to a select committee of the House, which will submit its report by the first day of the next session.

She urged the speaker to take a call on the proposed panel's composition and rules. The much-anticipated Bill will replace terminologies such as "assessment year" and "previous year" with the easier-to-understand "tax year" as part of a move to simplify language while removing provisions and explanations.

Responding to the objections raised by some Opposition members at the introduction stage of the bill, the Finance Minister said Manish Tewari of the Congress and N K Premchandran of the Revolutionary Socialist Party (RSP) were incorrect in stating that the new bill has more sections in comparison with the existing income tax law. Sitharaman said that while in 1961 the present law had fewer sections, after a series of changes over the years it now has 819 sections.

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MAX. TEMP 34.0 °C  
MIN. TEMP 22.5 °C

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## 'TECH SUPPORT': Musk calls for US to 'delete entire agencies' from federal government

### Tesla CEO says if roots of the weed are not removed, then it's easy for it to grow back

**AP, DUBAI:** Tech billionaire and Tesla CEO Elon Musk called on Thursday for the United States to "delete entire agencies" from the federal government as part of his push under President Donald Trump to radically cut spending and restructure its priorities.

Musk offered a wide-ranging survey via a video call to the World Governments Summit in Dubai, of what he described as the priorities of the Trump administration interspersed with multiple references to "thermonuclear warfare" and the possible dangers of artificial intelligence.

"We really have here the rule of the bureaucracy as opposed to the rule of the people - democracy. I think we do need to delete entire agencies as opposed to leaving a lot of them behind. If we don't remove the roots of the weed, then it's easy for the weed to grow back. A lot of attention has been on USAID for example. There's like the National Endowment for Democracy

- Elon Musk, Tesla CEO

"We really have here the rule of the bureaucracy as opposed to the rule of the people - democracy," Musk said, wearing a black T-shirt that read: "Tech Support." He also joked that he was the "White House's tech support," borrowing from his profile on the social platform X, which he owns.

"I think we do need to delete entire agencies as opposed to leaving a lot of them behind," Musk said. "If we don't remove the roots of the weed, then it's easy for the weed to grow back."

While Musk has spoken to the summit in the past, his appearance on Thursday comes

as he has consolidated control over large swaths of the government with Trump's blessing since assuming leadership of the Department of Government Efficiency.

That's included sidelining career officials, gaining access to sensitive databases and inviting a constitutional clash

over the limits of presidential authority.

Musk's new role imbued his comments with more weight beyond being the world's wealthiest person through his investments in SpaceX and electric carmaker Tesla.

His remarks also offered a more-isolationist view of American power in the Middle East, where the US has fought wars in both Afghanistan and Iraq since the September 11, 2001 terror attacks.

"A lot of attention has been on USAID for example," Musk said.

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