

Twin earthquakes strike western Nepal

PTI, KATHMANDU: Two back-to-back earthquakes struck western Nepal on Friday evening, occurring just three minutes apart, officials here said. However, there have been no immediate reports of casualties or damage.

RETURNED TO THE LORD



MARGARIDA JOSEFINA FERNANDES
-: Dangwado, Benaulim -:

Born: 9.6.1952 Died: 4.4.2025

Wife of late Joaquim Francisco Rodrigues.
Loving mother/ mother-in-law of Maria/ Joe, Rockson (Rocky), Siporoza/ Eusebio, Sonia/ late Anthony.
Dearest grandmother of Maeva, Mazel, Sam.
Passed away peacefully.
Funeral cortege will leave her residence at 3.30 p.m. on Saturday, 5th April 2025 to Holy Trinity Church, Benaulim for Eucharistic Celebration & burial.

Relatives and friends kindly accept this as the only intimation.
Confidant Advtg. & Funeral Services, Margao. Ph. 9823022194

IN GOD'S LOVING ARMS

Born: 17/01/1933 Died: 04/04/2025

LILY D'MELLO
(Madel - Chorao)

In the garden of memories, your love will forever bloom

Beloved wife of late Ricardo D'Mello; Loving mother/ mother-in-law of Francisco Socorro D'Mello/Aramita D'Mello and Martin D'Mello/Annie D'Mello; Everloving grandmother of Xavier/Ninoshka, Anoushka/Valencio, Louella, Richard and Synclair.
Funeral cortege will leave her residence on Sunday, 6th April, 2025 (tomorrow) at 3:15 p.m. for Eucharistic Celebration at Our Lady of Grace Church, Madel-Chorao, followed by burial.

Relatives & friends kindly accept this as the only intimation.
romeo ads

RETURNED TO THE LORD

BORN: 14.02.1941 DIED: 04.04.2025

MARIANO SOUZA (Babush)
Bhatt - Macasana

"During this time of mourning, know that you are not alone. God is with you, holding you in His loving arms."

Son of late Joaquim Souza / late Angelina Costa, loving Husband of Catarina Costa (Cotu), loving Father / Father-in-law of Esmeralda (Esmu) / John, Joaquim (Joqu) / Felicidade, Celina / Conceicao (Conny), Succorina / Gabriel, Anita / Antonio
Grandfather of Royston, Rizia, Jelcy, Jestroy, Joyfon, Sam, Shawn, Irwin, Croydon
Brother of late Ligorio (Daddy), late Luis Manuel, late Diego, Josefa Espetina & Marie Augusta.

Funeral cortege will leave his residence TODAY, 5th April 2025 at 10.00 AM to St. Francis Xavier Church, Macasana followed by burial.

Relatives & friends, kindly accept this as the only intimation.
BOSS ADVT

LORD I AM COMING HOME

Born: 26-1-1930 Died: 01-04-2025

FELICIDADE MATILDES CARRASCO DE SOUZA
Pilerne, Bardez-Goa.

Beloved wife of late Matias Agostinho De Souza.
Daughter of late Baptista & late Adelina Carrasco. Niece of late Rita & late Damaciano Furtado. Sister/Sister-in-law of late Agnes/late Querobino, late Severina, late Anthony/ late Rosy, late Robertina/late Martin, late Mariano/late Julie and late Alice, late Cypriano/Flory, Magdalena/late Joaquin, late Carlos/ Dora.
Loving mother/mother-in-law of late Damaciano/Yvonne, late Victoria/ late Joseph, Bernardina/John, late Maria/ Remegius, Rita/Johnny, Lena/Lawrence.
Affectionate grandmother of Rochelle/Melville, Tatayana, Natasha, Anjali, Joy/Malcolm, Janice/Paul, Jonalida, Renata/Savio, Ryan/Beverley, Roydon, Darren & late Alice. Loving great-grandmother of Mirielle, Raynelle, Zachariah, and Zayne.

Funeral cortege will leave her residence Casa Felicidade, House No. 468, Pilerne, Kholbath Vaddo, Bardez-Goa, on Sunday, 6th April 2025 to St. John the Baptist Church, at 3:30 p.m. for Eucharistic Celebration followed by burial.

Relatives, neighbours & friends kindly accept this as the only intimation.
ART TRICKS 8390897800

FROM PAGE 1 & 2

682 INDIANS DEPORTED FROM US SINCE JANUARY: MEA

"The vast majority of these deportees had attempted to enter the US illegally, but were apprehended at the US border itself and thereafter deported to India after due verification. As such, these deportations may not have any impact on the overall remittance flows to India," he said.

According to the minister, the government continues to be engaged with the US to promote mutually advantageous and secure mobility frameworks for streamlining the movement of students and professionals and facilitating short-term tourist and business travel.

The issues of illegal immigration and human trafficking are also being addressed by taking strong action against bad actors, criminal facilitators, and illegal immigration networks, he said.

"The Government of India continues to work in close coordination with the US government on all instances of deportation of individuals who were found to have illegally entered the US, or have overstayed their visa validity, or have been found living in the US without any documentation or have criminal convictions against them.

"The list of persons identified for deportation by the US side is closely scrutinised and verified by the concerned agencies of the Government of India. Only those persons who have been verified to be Indian nationals are accepted to be deported to India," he said.

In response to a separate question on the issue, the minister noted that government does not maintain data on the number of people who may have entered the US via illegal means and routes.

CONGRESS, AIMM LEADERS MOVE SC AGAINST WAQF BILL

Jawed, a Lok Sabha MP from Kishanganj in Bihar, was a member of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the bill and has alleged in his plea that the bill "introduces restrictions on the creation of Waqfs based on the duration of one's religious practice".

"Such a limitation is unfounded in Islamic law, custom or precedent and infringes upon the fundamental right to profess and practice religion under Article 25," it said.

In his separate plea, Owaisi said the bill takes away from Waqfs various protections which were accorded to Waqfs and Hindu, Jain, and Sikh religious and charitable endowments alike.

Owaisi's plea, filed by advocate Lzafeer Ahmad, said, "This diminishing of the protection given to Waqfs while retaining them for religious and charitable endowments of other religions constitutes hostile discrimination against Muslims and is violative of Articles 14 and 15 of the Constitution, which prohibit discrimination on the grounds of religion."

The plea argued the amendments "irreversibly dilute" the statutory protections afforded to Waqfs and their regulatory framework while giving undue advantage to other stakeholders and interest groups, undermining years of progress and pushing back Waqf management by several decades.

"Appointing non-Muslims on the Central Waqf Council and the State Waqf Boards disturbs this delicate constitutional balance and tilts it to the detriment of the right of Muslims as a religious group to remain in control of their Waqf properties," Owaisi said.

Jawed's plea said the restriction discriminated against

persons who converted to Islam recently and wished to dedicate property for religious or charitable purposes, violating Article 15 of the Constitution.

Article 15 deals with prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth.

Jawed's plea similarly argued the amendment to include non-Muslims in the administrative composition of the Waqf Board and the Central Waqf Council was an "unwarranted interference" in religious governance unlike Hindu religious endowments, which were exclusively managed by Hindus under various state enactments.

"This selective intervention, without imposing similar conditions on other religious institutions, is an arbitrary classification and violates Articles 14 and 15," it said.

The plea said the enhanced role of state authorities in Waqf administration impinged on the rights of the community and the bill shifted the key administrative functions, such as the power to determine the nature of Waqf properties, from the Waqf Board to the district collector.

"This transfer of control from religious institutions to government officials dilutes the autonomy of Waqf management and contravenes Article 26(d)," it said.

The proposed law, the plea said, also modified the process of dispute resolution by altering the composition and powers of the Waqf tribunals.

"It reduces representation of individuals with expertise in Islamic law, influencing the adjudication of Waqf-related disputes," it said. The plea said the change disproportionately affected willingness to resort to legal recourse through specialised tribunals, in contrast to the robust protections provided to other religious institutions under their respective endowment laws.

"These amendments undermine property rights protected under Article 300A," it alleged.

GOAN DIASPORA WILL HAVE ITS MOMENT IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Adorabelle emphasised the importance of recognising the Goan community's impact across various sectors, including medicine, the armed forces and politics. "We have Goans in key positions, including MPs and even the first Canon to lead worship at a cathedral in London. This event is a testament to the hard work and efforts of our community, and it fills me with pride to be part of this recognition," she added.

A highlight of the event will be a unique performance in Konkani by two renowned tiatr artists, Tommy Afonso (Jr Nelson) and Andre Pedro de Souza (Bab Andrew), who will compose an original song for the occasion. Afonso shared his excitement ahead of the performance, saying, "The song will reflect the experience of coming from Goa, living in the UK and the unity that the Goan diaspora needs. Andrew and I are the only tiatrists performing at the event."

This isn't the first time Tommy Afonso has performed at a special occasion. He previously sang at the High Commission of India and at an All India Poetic Meet alongside his friends Albert Cabral, Lanisha, and Delisha. Now, he will take the stage at Westminster to celebrate the Goan community's contributions and unity.

The 'Recognition of the UK Goan Diaspora' event is expected to be a landmark moment for the community, further cementing the significance of Goan heritage and its enduring impact in the UK.

ON EVE OF I-LEAGUE DECIDER IN KASHMIR, CHURCHILL ALEMAO HAS EYES SET ON ISL

However, Churchill remembers how Odafa slipped out of his flat overnight and joined Mohun Bagan. "After reports surfaced that Odafa was trying to join the Bengal team, I sent my friend to check on him at night. He told me that two sandals and shoes were lying outside his flat and convinced me that he was inside. When I went to check, Odafa was missing, though the sandals were lying outside!" he said, adding that Odafa will be shortly visiting Goa.

Churchill wants to see his club doing well in the ISL. "FC Goa has State players but the club is not owned by a Goan. Our fans want to see the club playing in the ISL and I seek the blessings of the Almighty," he told us.

To a question, Churchill admitted that his team lost two points after the AIFP Disciplinary Committee found that the team had fielded an ineligible player thereby committing breach of I-League regulations. The game against Aizawal FC played at Mizoram had ended in 1-1 draw on February 17 but the AIFP Disciplinary Committee declared the result in a forfeiture of 0-3 loss for Churchill Brothers FC.

However, the club patron strongly denied that he had publicly criticised referee Crystal John for awarding a penalty to Sreenidhi Deccan FC in the 10th minute of stoppage time. "I never criticised the referee but it was the fans who shouted that the referee was biased," he said.

Elaborating on the controversy, Churchill said, "We were leading by a solitary goal and seven minutes add on time was given. But the referee played 10 minutes and awarded a penalty. The game ended in a draw. If the game had ended within seven minutes of injury time, we would have by now been I-League champions... God wanted us to win but the demon took it away."

MANCURAD MADNESS: RS 5,000 FOR A DOZEN MANGOES!

Malik, a vendor, noted, "The season lasts for three to four months, and soon the markets will be flooded with mangoes." Raza added, "As supply increases, the starting price for a dozen will drop to Rs 1,800 or even less." Aslam Nadaf, a fruit stall owner in Panjim, observed, "We haven't stocked too many because there's not much demand right now."

At present, there's greater demand for Hapus mangoes from Maharashtra than for the locally grown Mancurad. The hefty price tag on Mancurad has led many to opt for Hapus. A vendor remarked, "Hapus is a good, cheaper alternative for those who can't afford Mancurad." Hapus mangoes are priced between Rs 1,000-1,500 for a dozen.

Amitha Helekar, a mango lover and home-maker from Panjim, said, "I mostly buy Hapus now. It's tasty and more affordable." Some vendors have even raised concerns about the authenticity of the Mancurad mangoes. "Some sellers are passing off Hapus as Mancurad, at lower prices of Rs 1,200 or even Rs 1,000," warned one vendor.

Smart shoppers are choosing to wait before making their purchase. Helekar shared, "I'll probably buy Mancurad in May or June when there will be more available at lower prices." After all, there are plenty of other delicious mango varieties on the market, such as Paily, Hapus, and Lalbagh.

However, the smaller specimens of the Mancurad are priced at around Rs 2,000 for a dozen. A customer at the Mapusa market shared, "Last year, I bought good-quality Mancurads at ₹1,500 at the start of the season, and now I'm paying Rs 2,000," reflecting an increase of 30-35% compared to last year.

However, mango vendors are confident that prices will drop in May and June. Ahmed Raza, a vendor in Panjim, explained, "At the start of the season, the rates are high, but by mid-May, they should drop." Nonetheless, Mancurad prices have reached record highs, with the cheapest variety priced at ₹2,000 per dozen.

One factor driving the steep prices is the mango shortage. Vendors anticipate that the supply will increase in May, June, and July. Malik, a vendor, noted, "The season lasts for three to four months, and soon the markets will be flooded with mangoes." Raza added, "As supply increases, the starting price for a dozen will drop to ₹1,800 or even less." Aslam Nadaf, a fruit stall owner in Panjim, observed, "We haven't stocked too many because there's not much demand right now."

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FOUR SPACE TOURISTS RETURN TO EARTH AFTER PRIVATE FLIGHT OVER POLES

The Chinese-born Wang, now a citizen of Malta, invited Norwegian filmmaker Jannicke Mikkelsen, German robotics researcher Rabea Rogge and Australian polar guide Eric Philips, all of whom shared stunning vistas during their voyage.

"It is so epic because it is another kind of desert, so it just goes on and on and on all the way," Rogge said in a video posted by Wang on X while gazing down from orbit.

Mikkelsen packed the capsule with camera equipment and spent much of her time behind the lens.

All four suffered from space motion sickness after reaching orbit, according to Wang. But by the time they woke up on day two, they felt fine and cranked open the window cover right above the South Pole, he said via X.

Besides documenting the poles from 270 miles (430 km) up, Wang and his crew took the first medical X-rays in space as part of a test and conducted two dozen other science experiments. They named their trip Fram2 after the Norwegian sailing ship that carried explorers to the poles more than a century ago. A bit of the original ship's wooden deck accompanied the crew to space.

Their medical tests continued at splashdown. All four got out of the capsule on their own, heaving bags of equipment so researchers could see how steady returning space crews are on their feet. They pumped their fists in jubilation.

SpaceX said its decision to switch splashdown sites from Florida beginning with this flight was based on safety. The company said Pacific splashdowns will ensure that any surviving pieces of the trunk — jettisoned near flight's end — falls into the ocean.

The last people to return from space to the Pacific were the three NASA astronauts assigned to the 1975 Apollo-Soyuz mission.

GOVT BODIES UNDER HC SCRUTINY OVER POLLUTION IN SALPEM LAKE

These promises came only after the court's intervention forced officials to acknowledge years of inaction.

As the April 15 hearing approaches, the MMC is preparing to file an affidavit on the steps initiated by the civic body against the 317 establishments. SIDCGL has issued a work order dated March 17 for trenchless laying and commissioning of a sewerage network and pumping station at the Fatorda market, with a 120-day completion timeline.

Meanwhile, residential communities in Malbhat, Calconda and surrounding areas find themselves caught in an impossible situation. With no underground sewerage infrastructure available, 154 households now face potential penalties for practices that developed in the absence of proper public facilities. An additional 163 commercial establishments have also been identified for discharging waste into storm drains that feed the lake.

The vacuum technology solution proposed by the PWD years ago for densely populated areas remains unimplemented, highlighting how inter-agency coordination failures have exacerbated the environmental damage. This technology, which would allow sewerage installation without extensive excavation, was shelved despite expert recommendations.

Compounding concerns about infrastructure quality, residents of Nagmodem recently protested when they noticed that land excavated near the western bypass underpass to lay a sewage chamber was sinking. When asked about it by the media, a senior SIDCGL official downplayed the issue, claiming it was merely 'settlement of soft soil' rather than actual sinking. While insisting that rectification work would be completed soon, the official acknowledged the need for continued monitoring of the site.

STOP 'DUKAANDARI', START INNOVATING: GOYAL TO START-UPS

While acknowledging India's position as the world's third-largest start-up ecosystem, Goyal stressed that scale alone wasn't enough. "We are very proud of what India has done but are we the best in the world as yet? Not yet."

He pointed to the lack of deep-tech startups in India as a major concern. "Only 1,000 startups in India's deep-tech space is a disturbing situation," he remarked, adding that the country needs to focus on innovation beyond e-commerce and services.

"Dukaandari ka hi kaam karna hai ya one of scale, to make a mark in the world?" He questioned, urging entrepreneurs to think beyond short-term business models and work toward global technological leadership.

In the last few months I have met a few deep-tech cos that have absolutely blown me away. From AI & space-tech to material science, Indian entrepreneurs are ready to take on the world. But capital & the eco-system for growth & commercialization are severely lacking. Founders can do most things but not everything??
-Anupam Mittal, founder of Shaadi.com

Using our example, the reality is this: there are almost 1.5 lakh real people who are earning livelihoods on Zepto today - a company that did not exist 3.5 years ago. Rs 1,000+ crore of tax contribution to the government per year, over a billion dollars of FDI brought into the country and hundreds of crores invested in organising India's backend supply chains (especially for fresh fruits and vegetables). If this isn't a miracle in Indian innovation, then I don't know what is
-Aadit Palicha, Zepto co-founder and CEO