

WE ARE A SMART CITY, BUT...

The more things change, the more they remain the same

CCP Mayor says he is 'fed up' with the work, O Heraldo spots 3 dug-up areas

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PANJIM: Imagine Panaji Smart City Development Limited (IPSCDL) CEO Sanjit Rodrigues may have said recently that Smart City works had been completed and "there would be no road closure, no barricade", but a round of the city's roads and bylanes presents a completely different picture.

A lane near Patanjali Mega Store on 18th June Road is closed and the digging work is underway. Barricades continue to block the area near Cafe Bhonsle. Almost half of Atmaram Borkar Road is shut as sewage pipelines



VISHNU NARVEKAR

happens during the monsoon," he said.

A business owner, on condition of anonymity, said, "I don't know why the Smart City work is not ending. It keeps getting fresh deadlines. A road near EDC building is half shut for so many days, and we do not know when the full road will be ready for use."

Another shop keeper near the Patanjali Mega Store said, "Earlier, we faced inconvenience because of digging on 18th June Road. Now, this bylane has been shut from one side. I don't know how long these works will continue."

Dr Odette Lobo, a resident of the city, said, "Is this a Smart City? They are claiming that work is complete, but the fact is that 18th June Road, Dr Pis-surlekar Road, Atmaram-Borkar Road and Old Patto Bridge to Income Tax Office and Handicrafts building to Four Pillar Junction are yet to be done. Why did the authorities not announce in the beginning itself that these roads will not be ready March 31, 2025?"

“We are fed up with Smart City work. They should be out of the city by now. The work is sub-standard and a lot of people have issues with it. I have told IPSCDL officials that I will carry out an inspection of the work in the first week of May and see the quality of work – Rohit Monserrate, CCP Mayor

are being laid near Dr T B Cunha Higher Secondary School at Campal.

As the saying goes, the more things change, the more they remain the same.

Corporation of the City of Panaji (CCP) Mayor Rohit Monserrate also seemed frustrated with the slow pace of work. "We are fed up with Smart City work. They should be out of the city by

now. The work is sub-standard and a lot of people have issues with it. I have told IPSCDL officials that I will carry out an inspection of the work in the first week

of May and see the quality of work. If they start work on 18th June Road then it will take at least one month to finish because it is a long stretch. Let us see what

Waqf Act: Protests erupt across country

Police vehicles torched, stones hurled in Bengal; mob gets violent in Manipur

PTI, BAHARAMPUR, JAMMU, IMPHAL: Protests continued across various parts of the country against the recently enacted Waqf (Amendment) Act, on Tuesday.

In Murshidabad district of West Bengal, a protest turned violent, as police vehicles were set ablaze and stones were allegedly hurled at security personnel in the Muslim-majority region. The incident occurred in the Jangipur area, where a large number of people had assembled in the afternoon demanding the withdrawal of the controversial legislation.

According to a senior district police officer, demonstrators began pelting the police with stones and in the ensuing chaos, some police vehicles were also set on fire. "Security has been strengthened in the area following the incident," the officer said, adding that a few police personnel were injured in the clash. A heavy deployment of police forces has been made in the area to prevent further unrest. State minister and West Bengal president of Jamaat Ulema-e-Hind, Siddiquil Chowdhury, condemned the police action.

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Members of Tamil Nadu Sunnath Jamath stage a protest against the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, in Chennai, on Tuesday

SC TO HEAR PLEAS AGAINST WAQF ACT ON APR 15, CENTRE FILES CAVEAT

PTI, NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court would likely on April 15 hear a batch of pleas challenging the constitutional validity of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025. The Centre, however, on Tuesday filed a caveat in the apex court and sought a hearing before any order was passed in the matter.

A Govt notification, in the meantime, said Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, which was passed by Par-

liament last week, comes into force on Tuesday.

"In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (2) of section 1 of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025 (14 of 2025), the Central Govt hereby appoints the 8th day of April, 2025 as the date on which the provisions of the said Act shall come into force," the Ministry of Minority Affairs notification said.

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SC slams TN Governor for delaying bills

PTI, NEW DELHI: In a major boost to the DMK-led Tamil Nadu government, the Supreme Court on Tuesday upheld the validity of 10 State bills that were re-enacted and stalled by Governor R N Ravi. The apex court ruled that the Governor's second round of reserving the bills for Presidential assent was unconstitutional and liable to be set aside.

The SC held that the Governor had acted in bad faith by delaying assent and violating the spirit of Article 200. The court declared that the bills were "deemed to have been assented to" from the date they were re-submitted after being passed again by the Assembly. Crucially, the court set strict timelines for Governors: one month to act on bills presented, and three months if returning bills or reserving them against the Council of Ministers' advice. It rejected the concept of "pocket veto" or indefinite delay.

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Teen safety: Meta restricts usage on Insta, FB, Messenger

AP, LONDON: Instagram users under 16 will not be able to livestream or unblur nudity in direct messages they've received without parental approval, owner Meta Platforms said Tuesday as it widened its safety measures for teenagers.

The social media company also said it was extending safeguards for users under 18 to Facebook and Messenger.

Meta launched its teen account programme for Instagram in September to give parents more op-

tions to supervise their children's online activity amid a growing backlash against how social media affects the lives of young people.

The latest changes will roll out first to users in the United States, Britain, Canada and Australia, before going out to global users in the following months.

Under the changes, teens under 16 are blocked from using Instagram Live unless parents give permission.

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KEY FEATURES OF TEEN ACCOUNTS:

- Teens can only receive messages from users they follow or are already connected with
- The most restrictive content filters are enabled by default
- Only followed users can tag or mention teen users. Offensive words are filtered automatically

- To limit time prompts appear after 60 minutes of daily use
- Sleep mode automatically enabled from 10 pm to 7 am; notifications are silenced and auto-replies are sent
- Guardians can view recent contacts, set usage limits, and block access during certain hours

DIRE WOLVES: WORLD'S FIRST 'DE-EXTINCTED' ANIMAL

A MAJOR SCIENTIFIC BREAKTHROUGH

- Colossal Biosciences, a Dallas-based company, has successfully resurrected the ancient dire wolf
- Three dire wolf pups have been born, bringing a species extinct for 12,500 years back to life



HOW IT WAS DONE

- DNA from two ancient dire wolf fossils was used to recreate the species' genetic makeup
- The ancient DNA was compared with that of modern-day relatives like wolves, jackals, and foxes to identify unique dire wolf traits
- Advanced gene-editing technology was used to edit the DNA of gray wolf cells, replacing gray wolf traits with those of the dire wolf
- 20 genetic edits were made across 14 genes of gray wolf cells
- The edited cells were transferred into eggs from large, mixed-breed dogs
- Embryos were implanted into surrogate mothers for gestation

THE PUPS' ARRIVAL

- Two male pups were born on October 1, 2024, and one female pup was born on January 30, 2025
- The pups are 99.9% gray wolf genetically but display key dire wolf traits
- Their appearance includes larger size, broader heads, thick white fur, and stronger jaws, similar to extinct *Canis dirus* species, which inspired the Game of Thrones dire wolves (left)

WHERE THEY LIVE

- The pups are living on a 2,000-acre site at an undisclosed location
- The area is surrounded by 10-foot-high fences for security
- The site is monitored with security, drones, and live camera feeds

COLOSSAL'S AMBITIOUS PLANS

- Colossal Biosciences is also working on bringing back the mammoth, dodo, and Tasmanian tiger
- The mammoth project is set to achieve its first milestone by 2028
- The dire wolf project had been kept secret until now

Planning legislation to regularise irregular structures: CM

Team Herald

PANJIM: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant announced on Tuesday that the Goa government is considering issuing an Ordinance or introducing a Bill to regularise irregular structures in the state, but emphasised that no illegal structures will be allowed moving forward.

Speaking to the media after a committee meeting with Cabinet Ministers, MLAs, and officials, Sawant confirmed that action will be taken against all illegal structures in compliance with a High Court order issued on March 6, 2025. "We will not permit the erection of illegal structures in the state," Sawant said.

The CM also detailed measures to prevent illegal constructions, noting that flying squads and heliplanes at the taluka level have been activated by both District Collectorates offices to monitor and report such

structures. "Prompt action will be taken against any illegal construction," he added.

Additionally, Sawant confirmed that officers have been instructed to remove encroachments on government-acquired roadside land. He advised individuals with structures on these lands to remove them voluntarily at the earliest.

Revenue Minister Atanasio 'Babush' Monserrate also weighed in, stating that all illegal encroachments along roadways, particularly those hindering road widening projects, will be demolished. However, Monserrate clarified that the High Court's directive only required municipal councils and village panchayats to submit reports on illegal structures within their jurisdictions and did not mandate demolitions. "No houses will be demolished," he asserted.

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MAX. TEMP 34.3 °C
MIN. TEMP 24 °C

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Noise pollution: HC sets 15-day deadline for CCTVs

GSPCB harps on noise-monitoring systems, but Justice Dangre insists on CCTVs

AUGUSTO RODRIGUES

PORVORIM: Two weeks is the time that the Goa Bench of the Bombay High Court has fixed for a compliance report on the installation of CCTV cameras in establishments that play loud music beyond 10 pm.

Tuesday's directive to the Goa State Pollution Control Board (GSPCB) and the Sub-Divisional District Magistrate (SDM) North follows the court's February 18 order and was issued during the hearing of Contempt Petition 12 of 2023.

"Can the installation of CCTV cameras not be a mandatory condition? Can this not be one of the conditions before the



department issues permission to operate?" inquired Justice Bharati Dangre, who recently replaced Justice Karnik.

During the hearing, Advo-

cate Manish Salkar, representing the GSPCB, explained that decibel levels from these units are being monitored through noise monitoring systems. He reassured the bench that the system is in place to keep track of noise pollu-

tion. However, Justice Dangre questioned the timeliness of the reporting process. "How long does it take to pass on the readings and to whom?" she asked.

Salkar responded that readings are forwarded to the GSPCB office, the police, and the SDPO office. Justice Dangre, referring to an incident in

Nagpur, recounted how police had acquired portable decibel monitoring units, but by the time they arrived at the location, the music had already been turned off.

Amicus Curiae Advocate Nigel Costa Frias informed the bench that the court-appointed citizen members of the Noise Monitoring Committee (NMC), Captain Jerry Fernandes and Kamalakar Naik, had recommended the installation of CCTV cameras, a suggestion that had been accepted by both the High Court and the Advocate General.

However, Salkar argued: "We are not going to include the installation of CCTV cameras as we have already is-

sued a corrigendum to all units to install noise monitoring systems." Despite this, Justice Dangre remained concerned about the feasibility of making CCTV installation a requirement. "Has that been done or is it being done?" she pressed.

Salkar clarified that the order for CCTV installation would need to come from the SDM, as their office grants permission to operate establishments playing loud music. "We (GSPCB) only provide consent to operate, and I need to check if we can issue instructions for CCTV installation," he explained.

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