

# Thanks to delay, your 'Smart City' is bracing for a bleak monsoon

Babush Monserrate calls work 'substandard'; CCP officials worry desilting of drains won't be complete before rains



Incomplete Smart City works at Dr T B Cunha Road, on Wednesday

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Smart City authorities may claim that 90% of the road work taken up under the project is complete and rest will be done by May 31, but Panjim may be staring at a bleak monsoon season, thanks to the delay in completion of the work. This update comes even as Panjim MLA and minister Antonio 'Babush' Monserrate on Wednesday criticised the Smart City work, calling it "substandard". According to sources in the Corporation of the City of Panaji (CCP), there are fears that the city may see water logging and flooding if mandatory pre-monsoon cleaning of drains does not happen on time.

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**“I have already said that I am not happy with the work. I have been saying that the work is substandard since Day One. Can't you make out whether the work is substandard or not? If they are saying that 90% work is complete, then let the completed work be handed over to the CCP. Let it be maintained. Once the completed projects are handed over, CCP will check what has been done as per the tender documents – Antonio 'Babush' Monserrate, Panjim MLA**

## PETITIONER GOES TO HC OVER UNFINISHED SMART CITY WORK

Team Herald

PANJIM: Petitioner Christus Cecilio Lopes filed a fresh affidavit in the High Court on Wednesday, highlighting that Imagine Smart City Development Limited (IPSCDL) has failed to meet its commitment to complete ongoing roadworks in Panjim by March 31, 2025. He also submitted photographs taken on April 8 to support his claims.

In his affidavit, Lopes pointed out that IPSCDL had previously provided an undertaking to the court on February 26, assuring that the roadworks would be completed by the agreed-upon deadline. The court had accepted this statement as an official undertaking. However, Lopes argued that IPSCDL had not met the deadline, with work still ongoing beyond March 31, 2025.

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## BREAKING THE GLASS CEILING



Capt Shradha, the first woman pilot in the Indian Army Cheetah fleet, co-pilots the Cheetah aircraft with Lt Col KS Bhalla as pilot

# Tit-for-Tat: China slaps 84% levy, Trump hits back with 125% tariff

AGENCIES, NEW DELHI: The trade war between China and the United States shows no signs of de-escalating as both countries continue to escalate tariffs in a tit-for-tat exchange. On April 9, China sharply increased its retaliatory measures against the US, raising tariffs on American imports to an astonishing 84%, up from the previous 34%. This escalation followed US President Donald Trump's announcement of new tariffs, including

**In a dramatic new move on April 9, US President Donald Trump announced an unprecedented 125% tariff on China, marking a significant increase in the ongoing trade dispute. He simultaneously authorised a 90-day pause in the tariff escalation on other countries, with a lowered reciprocal tariff of 10% for the three-month truce**

a 104% levy on Chinese goods, intensifying the already strained economic relations between the world's two largest economies. Trump had previously threatened an additional 50% tariff on Chinese im-

ports, prompting China to take further action.

In response to these US moves, China filed a complaint at the World Trade Organisation (WTO), accusing the US of violating international trade laws. The

Chinese Commerce Ministry argued that the tariffs infringe upon WTO rules and harm both China's economy and global trade stability. As part of its retaliation, China also expanded its "unreliable entity list," adding six US firms involved in arms sales to Taiwan, and placed twelve US companies under its export control list, citing concerns about national security and sovereignty.

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## Tahawwur Rana being brought to India in special flight: Sources

PTI, NEW DELHI: Mumbai terror attack accused Tahawwur Rana is likely to be brought to India in a special flight on Thursday after all hurdles for his extradition were removed by the US, people familiar with the matter said on Wednesday.

Rana, 64, a Canadian national of Pakistani origin, was lodged in the Metropolitan Detention Centre in Los Angeles. A multi-agency team has gone to the US and all paperwork and legal issues are being completed with US authorities to bring him to India, they said.

Rana is being brought to India after his last-ditch attempt to evade extradition failed as the US Supreme Court justices rejected his application.

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## Proposed US bill threatens to scrap post-study work permit

3 lakh Indian students may be forced to leave abruptly; sharp drop in aspirants headed for US

AGENCY, NEW DELHI: The road to the American Dream has become doubly perilous for desi students in the US. Amid fear of being deported for minor offences, now, there's another concern – the dismantling of the popular Optional Practical Training (OPT) programme.

The US is proposing a

new bill, which looks at eliminating an important work programme that allows foreign students to stay in the US and pursue their dreams. If this bill goes through, it will affect students from across the globe, but particularly hit India, as over three lakh Indians have availed of this scheme to live and work in

the US.

Over the years, OPT has gained popularity among international students. In 2007, OPT saw 24,838 participants while STEM OPT saw just two students. However, in 2023, this number rose to 1,60,627 and 62,036 respectively.

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### WHAT IS OPT

**Purpose:** OPT allows international students in the US to apply their academic knowledge in real-world job settings, gaining hands-on experience relevant to their field of study

### TYPES OF OPT:

#### Pre-completion OPT:

- Can be used while still enrolled in school.
- Part-time work allowed during academic sessions.
- Full-time work allowed during official school breaks

#### Post-completion OPT:

- Begins after graduation.
- Allows for part-time or full-time employment.
- More popular among students due to flexibility and timing

### DURATION:

- All eligible students: Up to 12 months.
- STEM graduates (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math): Eligible for a 24-month STEM extension, totaling 36 months of work authorization

**“OPT is an opportunity to apply knowledge gained from a programme of study in a practical environment**

– Jim Hicks, Division Chief, External Operations, SEVP

## Goa police bust illegal IPL betting racket, arrest 34

Team Herald

PANJIM: In a major crackdown on illegal online betting, the Goa Crime Branch on Wednesday arrested 34 individuals and seized materials worth over Rs 40 lakh, allegedly used to run the illegal operations.

According to the police, the raids targeted two illegal IPL gambling rackets operating in Nagoa, Salcete, and Curca, Tiswadi.

The police revealed that the illegal betting operations were being run at R&A Business Hub, located behind Punjab National Bank in Pirni, Nagoa, Salcete, and at a premises behind Holy Cross in Curca, Panjim, North Goa. The accused used the Reddy, Lotus, and Lionking 247.BET apps to lure members of the public into depositing money into bank accounts operated by the accused.

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## Two AP natives held in separate IPL scam at Sinquerim

CALANGUTE: Two persons from Andhra Pradesh were caught red-handed at Sinquerim after Calangute Police busted an IPL betting racket on the intervening night of Tuesday-Wednesday. The two were accepting online bets on the 20-20 IPL cricket match played between Chennai Super Kings and Kings XI Punjab.

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## NEW AADHAAR APP: SAFE AND CONVENIENT

The government launched the Beta version of the new Aadhaar app on April 8, 2025

■ The app features AI-powered face ID authentication for secure user verification

■ Digital Aadhaar eliminates the need for physical cards or photocopies

■ QR code-based instant verification is a

key feature

■ Real-time face ID authentication streamlines verification processes

■ The app ensures stronger privacy protection for users

■ Aadhaar verification is now as easy as making a UPI payment

■ Users will no longer need to carry Aadhaar cards or photocopies for travel, hotel check-ins, or shopping

■ The app is currently in Beta testing and will be available nationwide soon



MAX. TEMP 35 °C  
MIN. TEMP 26 °C

idharudhar



Darling, that water bottle isn't enough; take this one!

## Sanguem Town Hall debris dumped in field for 'illegal road'?

GAURESH SATTARKAR

SANGUEM: Illegal land-filling has reared its ugly head again in Goa's hinterlands. A recent case of a road being constructed through paddy fields near the



A road being constructed through paddy fields near the main Sanguem-Curchorem road at Cortali, Uguem Sanguem, on Wednesday



main Sanguem-Curchorem road in Cortali, Uguem Sanguem, has

raised multiple questions about procedural lapses and unclear permissions.

Classified as Survey Number 27/34, the field that features a natural rivulet flowing year-round,

was being filled up to build the road, but the work was halted by the Deputy Collector of Sanguem after a complaint was filed by local resident Santano Rodrigues.

Curiously, locals al-

leged that the debris used in the land-filling was actually brought from the demolished Sanguem Town Hall. Now, questions are being asked about who will be responsible for removing the soil that has already been filled in the area?

Local resident Yeshwant Naik from Uguem highlighted the issue, stating, "The land-filling has been done to construct a road, and to do so, debris from the recently demolished Sanguem Town Hall has been dumped in the field."

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