

EMBARRASSMENT FOR CONGRESS AS KHARGE EVENT SCRAPPED

Cancellation of Statehood Day function sparks doubts over the leading opposition party's ability to counter BJP

Team Herald

PANJIM: In what is being seen as a major embarrassment for the Congress party, the much-anticipated public meeting of All India Congress Committee (AICC) President Mallikarjun Kharge, scheduled to be held at Navelim on Goa Statehood Day (May 30), has been cancelled.

While the official reason cited by the party is "bad weather," party insiders and observers indicate a more serious issue — an alarming lack of organisational readiness and inability to mobilise public support. According to party sources, senior leaders in Goa failed to assure the visiting AICC desk in-charge Manikrao Thakare that they could gather a crowd appropriate for the stature of the national party president.

The prevailing sentiment on the ground is that with such a weak opposition in Goa, the ruling BJP has little to worry about.

Thakare, who arrived in Goa earlier this week to

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— M K Shaikh, Senior GPCC leader

"This is unfortunate. Just two days ago, GPCC President Amit Patkar and Leader of the Opposition Yuri Alemo met Kharge and invited him. Were they unaware of the rains? Or that the selected venue reportedly had leakages? This is nothing short of a failure of local leadership"

— Congress leader (South Goa)

"I have no comments as this is their internal programme. As a pre-poll ally and part of the INDIA bloc, there was no communication about this event. I can only wish them well in living up to the expectations of the people as the principal opposition"

— Vijai Sardesai, Goa Forward Party president

tained the cancellation was due to monsoon conditions. "We were preparing for Kharge's maiden visit. After assessing the situation with Thakare, it was decided to postpone the event due to weather forecasts. A new date will be decided after the monsoon subsides," he said.

However, not all within the party are convinced. A South Goa Congress leader, requesting anonymity, expressed dismay at the state unit's handling of the situation. "This is unfortunate. Just two days ago, GPCC President Amit Patkar and Leader of the Opposition Yuri Alemo met Kharge and invited him. Were they unaware of the rains? Or that the selected venue reportedly had leakages? This is nothing short of a failure of local leadership," the leader said.

Goa Forward Party president and former minister Vijai Sardesai, reacting to the cancellation, said, "I have no comments as this is their internal programme."

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COLLATERAL DAMAGE



Pony-wallahs stage a protest demanding the reopening of tourist spots closed after the recent terror attack, in Pahalgam, on Wednesday. They claimed they were promised resumption of operations in a meeting with the Chief Minister on Tuesday, but were denied access by local authorities citing lack of formal orders

Hamas Gaza chief Sinwar eliminated: Netanyahu

AFP, JERUSALEM: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Wednesday said the military had killed



Mohammed Sinwar, the presumed leader of Hamas in Gaza and the brother of slain former chief Yahya Sinwar.

"In 600 days of the 'War of Revival', we have indeed changed the face of the Middle East," Netanyahu told parliament.

"We drove the terrorists out of our territory, entered the Gaza Strip with force, eliminated tens of thousands of terrorists, eliminated... Mohammed Sinwar."

Israeli media had reported that Sinwar was targeted in Israeli air strikes in the southern Gaza city of Khan Yunis on May 13.

At the time, the Israeli military said it conducted "a precise strike on Hamas terrorists in a command and control centre located in an underground terrorist infrastructure site beneath the European hospital in Khan Yunis."

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Gaude's volte face fails to convince party leadership

BJP chief Damu Naik says he'll hold Gaude accountable; show cause notice likely

Team Herald

PANJIM: Art and Culture Minister Govind Gaude, who stirred up a storm with his explosive remarks about corruption in the Tribal Welfare Department — under the watch of Chief Minister Pramod Sawant — tried to roll back his statements on Wednesday, blaming the media for "misinterpreting" him.

But the all-too-familiar tactic of blaming the media may not work this time. His own party president, Damodar (Damu) Naik, wasn't buying it. "This is happening too often," Naik told O Herald.

"Then he says he was misquoted. But now video clips are available — it's there for all to see who said what. You can't just point fingers at others."

Naik added that he would meet Gaude on Thursday for a direct discussion. "No one can take the party for granted," he stated bluntly.

Gaude's abrupt about-turn suggests that the fear of losing influence has outweighed his alle-

"The media has misinterpreted my statement. I never said that the Chief Minister is involved in corruption. He is my friend, and we have worked together for the last five years. I cannot help it if the media is allergic to my statements"

— Govind Gaude, Art and Culture Minister

"This is happening too often. Then he says he was misquoted. But now video clips are available — it's there for all to see who said what. You can't just point fingers at others. No one can take the party for granted"

— Damu Naik, Goa BJP president

gations of corruption. As a result, the truth may now never come out.

Gaude, who was out of station, returned to Goa on Wednesday and attended the Cabinet meeting. Before the meeting, he spoke briefly with the media in an apparent effort to contain the fallout.

"The media has misinterpreted my statement. I never said that the Chief Minister is involved in corruption," Gaude insisted.

"He is my friend, and we have worked together for the last five years. I merely expressed my views about the Tribal Bhavan and the overall functioning of the

Department of Tribal Welfare." He added, "I cannot help it if the media is allergic to my statements."

Chief Minister Sawant confirmed that Gaude had met him to offer a clarification but declined to share further details.

Speaking from Delhi, Naik reiterated his intent to take the matter seriously. "I am returning to Goa tomorrow (Thursday) and will hold a meeting with Gaude about his outburst. We have to follow party discipline. No one can act out of line or behave in an undisciplined manner."

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Former IndusInd Bank MD Kathpalia, 4 others banned from securities market

PTI, NEW DELHI: Markets regulator SEBI on Wednesday barred former CEO of IndusInd Bank, Sumant Kathpalia, and four other senior officials from accessing the securities markets in connection with an alleged insider trading in the bank's shares.

In addition to the market ban, SEBI has impounded Rs 19.78 crore collectively from the five individuals, according to an interim order passed by the regulator.

The other officials of IndusInd Bank Ltd (IBL) restrained by SEBI are Arun Khurana, who was Executive Director and Deputy CEO at the time of the alleged violation; Sushant Sourav, Head, Treasury Operations; Rohan Jathanna, Head, GMG Operations; and Anil Marco Rao, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), Consumer Banking Operations.

These senior executives allegedly traded in IndusInd Bank shares while in possession of unpublished price-sensitive information (UPSI) related to discrepancies in account balances of the bank's derivative portfolio. By doing so, they violated insider trading regulations.

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US halts student visa appointments globally

Plans on expanding social media vetting

AP, WASHINGTON: The US State Department has halted the scheduling of new visa interviews for foreign students hoping to study in the US while it prepares to expand the screening of their activity on social media, officials said.

A US official said Tuesday the suspension is intended to be temporary and does not apply to applicants who already had scheduled their visa interviews.

The official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss an internal administration document.

A cable signed by Secretary of State Marco Rubio and obtained by The Associated Press says the State Department plans to issue guidance on expanded social media vetting.

"We will continue to use every tool we can to assess who it is that's coming here, whether they are students or otherwise"

— Tammy Bruce, State Department spokesperson



"Effective immediately, in preparation for an expansion of required social media screening and vetting, consulate sections should not add any additional student or exchange visitor visa appointment capacity" until the guidance is issued, the cable says.

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Orangutan calls offer clues to origins of human speech

COVENTRY (UK): In the dense forests of Indonesia, you can hear strange and haunting sounds. At first, these calls may seem like a random collection of noises — but rhythmic analyses reveal a different story.

Those noises are the calls of Sumatran orangutans (Pongo abelii), used to warn others about the presence of predators. Orangutans belong to the same animal family as humans — we're both great apes. That means we share a common ancestor — a species that lived millions of years ago, from which we both evolved.

Like humans, orangutans have hands that can grasp, they use tools and can learn new things. We share about 97 per cent of our DNA with orangutans, which means many parts of our bodies and brains work in similar ways.

That's why studying orangutans can also help us understand more about how humans evolved, especially when it comes to things like communication, intelligence and the roots

PRIMAL PATTERNS

- Orangutan alarm calls are rhythmically structured, not random
- Female Sumatran orangutans produce calls with three rhythmic layers, more complex than the two-layered calls of Bornean males
- These patterns suggest recursive communication — a key feature of human language — evolved millions of years ago
- Orangutans used more regular and urgent rhythms in response to realistic threats (eg, a 'tiger' model), indicating



rhythm conveys urgency and meaning

Findings challenge the idea that only humans have layered vocal structures, pointing to evolutionary continuity in communication

of language and rhythm. Research on orangutan communication conducted by evolutionary psychologist Adriano Lameira and colleagues in 2024 focused on a different species of orangutan, the wild Bornean orangutan (Pongo pygmaeus wurmbii). They looked at a type of vo-

calisation made only by males, known as the long call, and found that long calls are organised into two levels of rhythmic hierarchy.

This was a groundbreaking discovery, showing that orangutan rhythms are structured in a recursive way. Human language is deeply recursive. Recursion is when something

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Aided schools blame govt for staff shortage

Team Herald

MARGAO: The Goa Headmasters Association has raised serious concerns over the persistent shortage of full-time teaching and non-teaching staff in aided schools, warning that the gap is disrupting academic quality and student learning across the State.

At a meeting in Margao attended by over 70 aided school management representatives, the Association reiterated its demand for the sanctioning of permanent positions and criticised the government's continued reliance on contractual appointments.

"Five years ago, private managements received timely approvals to hire permanent teachers. Why is that not happening now? The government must explain," said Prashant Naik, President of the Headmas-

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— Prashant Naik, President, Goa Headmasters Association

ters Association. The lack of regular staff has left schools struggling to maintain consistency in education. Frequent teacher turnover due to insecure contract jobs has led to instability in classrooms, affecting both learning outcomes and morale.

The plight of long-serving contract teachers was also highlighted. "Many have served for 10-15 years," said Pandurang Nadkarni.

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MAX. TEMP 27.8 °C
MIN. TEMP 23.6 °C

idharudhar



Don't complain — you'll get your turn next year.