

## Farmers from Barcem in Quepem don't know who their candidates are

### Farmers are unaware as to who their present candidates are; first-timers say only false promises are being dished out with no accountability; want elected representatives to concentrate on development

Team Herald

**CUNCOLIM:** Barcem farmers while in tune with nature as they live amidst verdant fields and winding river, appear to be totally ignorant of the political process as they are not even aware of the elections they are going to participate in shortly.

While these farmers till their lands and come to urban areas like Cuncolim to sell their produce, they are totally in the dark of the Lok Sabha elections as they did not even know the names of the present candidates.

The vendors at Cuncolim market selling their vegetables could not answer basic questions like what they would want

“Unfortunately, election activity is reduced to corruption and dishonesty with only false promises being dished out with no accountability”  
—Ms Furtado, a resident of Sarzora, Sociology graduate

their MP to do, though some of them did say that Francisco Sardinha was the outgoing MP. In contrast, first-time voters

at the ensuing elections were quite excited over their participation in the democratic process and also vocal about what

they desired from their elected representatives.

Sociology graduate Ms Furtado from Sarzora said

elections are an important component of the democratic process.

“Unfortunately, today it is reduced to corruption and dishonesty with only false promises being dished out with no accountability absolutely,” she said.

Deepak Azrekar, another first-time voter said elected repre-

sentatives should concentrate on development while ensuring that benefits of this accrue to the younger generation.

“I would like to see an India where farmers engage with candidates demanding accountability,” said Deepak adding that this would be a true indication of success of democracy.

## Tale of two affidavits

**PALLAVI DEMPO (BJP)**  
Cumulative: Rs 1,250 cr + (rounded off)

**BREAK-UP**

**Movable Wealth**

Cash ₹ 4 lakh  
Bank ₹ 9.91 cr  
Bonds ₹ 217.11 cr  
Postal NSS ₹ 12.92 cr  
Gold (3.753kg) ₹ 5.69 cr  
Other assets ₹ 9.75 cr  
Total movable ₹ 255.44 cr

**Immovable**

Rs 28.20 cr  
Income shown Rs 10 cr  
Total: Rs 283.64 cr  
Spouse Cumulative assets ₹ 994.83 cr (rounded off)

**VIRIATO FERNANDES (CONGRESS)**  
Cumulative: Rs 1.96 cr

Cash in hand: Rs 38,000  
Movable assets: Rs 72.56 lakh  
Immovable assets: Rs 1.23 cr  
Total: Rs 1,96,37,047  
Loan from banks: Rs 1,89,920

## Ordinary Goans are my real assets: Capt Viriato

“My assets, are people of Goa; all those suffering because of various issues including, fishing community, motorcycle pilots, unemployed youth, those related to taxi business, and women facing injustice,” said Captain Viriato when asked about his assets in the context of the affidavit filed by his rival BJP candidate. Pg 3 >>

### VIRIATO'S 'REAL ASSETS'

## LITTLE GODDESSES



A devotee seeks blessings from a young girl during 'Kumari Puja' on the occasion of 'Ram Navami' festival, at the Dakshineswar Ramkrishna Sangha Adyapeath, in Kolkata, on Wednesday

## Rape & murder of 5-yr-old in Vaddem pinnacle of crimes against minors

### “No fear of the law,” say stakeholders; trafficking, kidnapping and rapes shock Goans; two rapes in two days in the middle of the poll campaign haven't been enough to make this a campaign issue

Amidst the din of day-to-day campaigning, speeches and allegations and counter allegations, during any elections, what gets missed out are the issues that people live with each day.

Some issues may be local and State issues, while others deserve national attention. But even the smallest of problems can get solved if they are magnified at the highest levels. Many of them have interstate ramifications, like Mhadei. Others like double tracking involve national institutions like the railways or ports.

After the voting ends and the results are out, what matters is who will address them as crucial issues beyond anything else. Who will not take the cover of courts or otherwise legalise to pass the buck or avoid addressing them?

Most importantly, will a real leader be a real voice who will raise these issues and resonate the sentiment of Goans in the highest office of democracy - PARLIAMENT? This is irrespective of what gender, economic background or ideology the candidate comes from. Because Goa matters above anything else.

In ISSUES THAT MATTER we raise yet again - you got that right - issues that matter

PRATIK PARAB  
pratik@herald-goa.com

**MARGAO:** Cases of heinous crimes against minors and women have continued to rock the State of Goa signalling serious concerns about law and order in the State. The dastardly incident of rape and murder of the five-year-old girl in Vaddem and several house-breaking and theft cases has left Goans thinking that salt has been rubbed into their wounds.

that there were an average of two cases of crimes against women and children per day in August 2023. The majority of these cases were sexual abuse, with teenagers being the main victims. The report also noted a rise in cases of sexual harassment by teachers.

“Each agency is operating

“Goa has become a place where children are being trafficked, illegally adopted, violated, kidnapped, and raped. We are shocked”  
—Auda Viegas, Convenor, Bailancho Ekvott

“Since I took over as SP South, I have taken time to visit the police stations or either call up the PIs to sensitise the staff particularly on crimes against women. I have also made it a point that the police in charge visit every school & sensitise students regarding crimes, cyber crimes and social networking sites. Heinous crimes mar the image of the touristic State and in my capacity, I will uphold the law of land in letter and spirit”  
—Sunita Sawant, Superintendent of Police, South Goa

### ISSUES THAT MATTER

in isolation, though they are committed to tackling the problem. Their coordination and cooperation must improve so that child abuse victims are given maximum attention”, Emidio Pinho, VAO Incharge in September 23, was reported as saying.

In April two rapes, two kidnappings of minor girls and a case of stalking was registered in various police stations in Goa. On February 24, cases of rape and sexual assault against minor victims and women were registered. Comments on the law and order situation in the State going to dogs were making rounds on social media platforms after cases of rape and da-coities being registered every day irked Goans.

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### NCRB DATA OF 2022 RELEASED IN 2023

- ▶▶ Rape Cases: 73 rapes
- ▶▶ Minor Victims: 57 (girls)
- ▶▶ Rapes of Minors: 76% of the total reported rapes in the State
- ▶▶ Known Accused: In 93.2% of the rape cases, the accused was known to the victim
- ▶▶ Family Members Involved: Nine of the accused were family members
- ▶▶ Other Crimes against Women: 273

### RAPES AGAINST MINORS AGE GROUP WISE\*

- Below six years of age: 2
  - Between 6 to 12 years: 12
  - Between 12 to 16 years: 26
  - Between 16 to 18 years: 17
- (Source\*: NCRB 2022)

### 2024: THE HORRIBLE TREND CONTINUES

- April 2 - Woman from Anjuna becomes a victim of stalking
- April 4 - Minor girl kidnapped in Anjuna
- April 8 - A 14-year-old minor girl kidnapped in Vasco, Mormugao
- April 11 - A 5-year-old girl was raped and murdered in Vaddem, Vasco
- April 12 - 15-year-old minor girl raped in Maina-Curtorim

“The burglary attempt caught on camera in Betalbatim is glaring proof that there is no fear of the law. A five-year-old girl is raped and murdered and the government doesn't even blink”  
—Vivek Naik, resident of Margao

“There are no proper arguments and there are more acquittals than convictions. Rapes are more heinous than murders as rape victims have to carry a stigma for their entire life. Those who commit crimes should be awarded capital punishment”  
—Tara Kerkar, convenor, Savera (NGO)

## There's a lot of heat in these elections, and yes it's the weather

### Energy sapping temperatures are making Pondaites go cold towards polling

Team Herald

**PONDA:** The upcoming Lok Sabha elections are being overshadowed by the scorching heat in Ponda, with people more concerned about the weather than the political campaigns.

Umesh Naik, resident of Ponda, observed that the election fever is yet to pick up and will likely intensify

“The election fever is yet to pick up and will likely intensify during the last week when public meetings commence. In my opinion elections should be held during the winter season due to the extreme heat”  
—Umesh Naik, Ponda resident

during the last week when public meetings commence. He felt elections should be held during the winter sea-

“I desire to sit in front of cool water to escape the heat. People are flocking to riverside picnic spots to find some respite from the scorching conditions. Discussions about protecting nature and controlling industrial pollution have also emerged amidst the heat-related concerns”  
—Anand Naik, another local

son due to the extreme heat. The intense heat has become the primary topic of discussion, with people expressing concerns about how to cope with the rising temperatures. Political party candidates

have been campaigning in Ponda, but the public's attention remains focused on the hot climate rather than the election.

To combat the heat, people are consuming more soft drinks, lemon, fruit juice, and watermelons, leading to increased prices for these items.

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## Goa EC not satisfied with mines dept explanation on signing lease deed with Vedanta after Model Code kicked in

### Chief Electoral Officer refers the complaint to Election Commission of India; GF alleges that ruling party using the agreement to state that mining has resumed in Goa, during poll campaign

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** In an important development Goa's Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), has referred NGO Goa Foundation's complaint on signing of Vedanta lease deed after commencement of Model Code of Conduct.

The Goa Foundation had filed a two-page complaint on April 5, 2024, with the CEO alleging that the Goa government had signed a lease agreement with Vedanta Ltd for commencement of mining operations on its lease at

### VEDANTA LEASE AGREEMENT VIOLATES MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT: GOA FOUNDATION

- ▶▶ Goa Foundation files complaint with CEO over Goa gov't signing lease agreement, post announcement of the Model Code of Conduct with Vedanta Ltd for commencement of mining operations at Bicholim
- ▶▶ Assistant CEO wrote to the Mines Dept asking it to submit a clarification as to how signing of lease deed after commencement of Model Code of Conduct
- ▶▶ Mines Dept says the lease agreement is in continuation of the process of auction initiated on September 9, 2022, and had to be concluded by April 12, 2024
- ▶▶ Not satisfied with the DMG's reply, the CEO office refers the matter to ECI, New Delhi

Bicholim, three days after the Model Code of Conduct for Lok Sabha polls had come into force.

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## BJP, Sudin face backlash from anti-coal crusaders over double tracking comments

### Power Minister mocked for trying to play down the marathon protests against linear projects; crusaders claim Pallavi Dempo's selection indicated BJP intends to destroy Goa for gains of corporates

Team Herald

**MARGAO:** The statements by Power Minister Sudin Dhavalikar and BJP party workers that 'double tracking is required in Goa', was criticised by anti-coal activists, who mocked the minister for the manner in which he was trying to play down their marathon protests against linear projects in Goa like the ongoing double-tracking work.

Dhavalikar and BJP workers made these statements when media persons

During the Supreme Court hearings regarding the (CEC) report rejecting the double tracking project, railway authorities informed that double tracking is for coal. The apex court has made it clear that the government should use existing infrastructure from Krishnapatnam Port on the East Coast

—Abhijit Prabhudesai, Founder of Rainbow Warriors

had asked the South Goa BJP candidate Pallavi Dempo to respond to the people of South Goa protesting against double tracking, but she chose not to reply.

“How can such a statement be made when we know that double tracking is going to throw people out of their homes, people are going to be on the road. How can this be called development when our water bodies and life in them will be destroyed, villagers' health will be destroyed? Can this be called development?”