

Shanty tragedy spurs calls for rehab of Margao's footpath-dwellers

With no shelter homes or government resources available to relocate homeless people, beggars and vagrants who are rounded up by the police are inevitably released back onto the footpaths

Team Herald

MARGAO: The recent tragic incident in Verna, where a bus crashed into temporary huts, claiming the lives of four labourers, has once again highlighted the urgent need for action on the issue of migrants and beg-

gars occupying footpaths in Margao and surrounding areas at night. The people of Margao are expressing concern that the authorities have not yet taken any decisive steps to address this issue that they have raised time and again. Despite the risks involved,



a significant number of migrants and beggars continue to seek shelter on the roadside footpaths in Margao, including areas near the KTC bus stand. This situation poses significant dangers to both the pavement dwellers

as well as the commuters.

Recently, a bus carrying employees of a private firm collided with temporary huts at Verna IDC. This devastating accident resulted in the loss of four lives and left four others injured. The

driver was allegedly under the influence of alcohol and reportedly lost control of the vehicle, leading to the crash. This tragedy serves as a stark reminder of the dangers posed by inadequate road safety measures

and the need for immediate action to prevent such incidents in the future.

Sources have revealed that a meeting to discuss and formulate a plan to address the issue of migrants and beggars occupying footpaths has not been convened for several months. This delay is concerning, especially since all relevant authorities are expected to contribute to resolving this pressing issue.

Further compounding the issue is the lack of shelter homes, due to which there are no options for the rehabilitation of beggars and vagrants occupying footpaths.

It's the responsibility of the government to address the issue seriously to prevent further tragedies like the one in Verna. Merely stating the lack of proper infrastructure cannot absolve them of their duty
Milagres Fernandes, Margao local

"With no other option, police have to release the beggars after taking them into custody, and later those beggars are again found on the foot-

paths," said an official who did not want to be named.

Citizens have strongly objected to the approach of the concerned authorities on this issue. "It's the responsibility of the government to address the issue seriously to prevent further tragedies like the one in Verna. Merely stating the lack of proper infrastructure cannot absolve them of their duty," said Milagres Fernandes, a citizen of Margao.

He further noted that in recent days, the presence of beggars in Margao has created a problem not only for commuters but also for local residents.

SPOILT FOR CHOICE

SAGUN GAWADE



With the monsoon season setting in early, customers select umbrellas and raincoats from a colorful range displayed at a shop in the Panjim Municipal market on Friday

Unemployment drives 23-yr-old Xeldem local to end life

Team Herald

QUEPEM: The body of Prakalp Ga-was Desai, the youth from Xeldem who was reported missing since early Thursday morning, was found floating near the banks of the Zuari River on Friday morning, following a 24-hour search operation. Praklap was 23 years old and is believed to have committed suicide because he was unemployed.

Prakalp had sent a message to his father in the early hours of Thursday, stating his intention to commit suicide, after which the police were informed, and began searching for him. Curcholem PI Vaibhav Naik said that Prakalp was stressed about his future and suffering from depression because he had completed his diploma a few years ago, but had not been able to find a job.

On Thursday morning, his scooter



and mobile phone were found abandoned on the Sanvordem bridge, leading authorities to believe he had jumped into the Zuari River.

Marine police and fire services conducted search operations until midnight, and his body was discovered on Friday, near the ACM jetty.

The body has been sent to the South Goa District Hospital in Margao for a post-mortem examination. PI Vaibhav Naik confirmed that the cause of death was drowning.

Curtorim's pristine image tarnished as garbage piles up at Vagullem



Team Herald

MARGAO: The sight and smell of garbage strewn along the roadside at Vagullem on Mugalli road in Curtorim has prompted citizens to demand immediate action from authorities. This situation has not only resulted in an environmental hazard but also created significant health risks for residents. The issue is further exacerbated by stray cattle and dogs consuming the garbage, leaving it scattered in the locality.

Local resident Peter Fernandes expressed his dismay, stating that the prevailing conditions have tarnished the once-pristine image of the village. "We have been raising this issue on several occasions for the last several years, but concerned authorities failed to

address it," he said. "Cattle eating the waste has added more to the mess." Fernandes also blamed residents for continuing to dump their waste on the secluded road despite warnings.

Roshni Vernekar, another resident, emphasised the need for authorities to develop an effective plan for maintaining vigilance at the site. "Merely blaming the authorities would not solve the issue, as this is a man-made health hazard," Vernekar pointed out, demanding the imposition of heavy fines on those caught dumping waste.

Residents are urging the implementation of proper waste management systems and raising awareness about the importance of keeping the environment clean.

Ponda road-users raise alarm over landslide risk due to hill-cutting in Curti

The soft soil from the vertically-cut hill is already streaming down onto the highway with rainwater, creating a slushy, slippery mess at Amigos Junction in Curti; lack of a gutter system and parked trucks raise risk of accidents

Team Herald

PONDA: Residents of Ponda have expressed serious concerns over the dangerous road conditions at Amigos Junction in Curti. The massive, vertically-cut hill, with soft soil spilling out of it, poses a significant risk of landslides, endangering commuters, they say. Locals are urgently calling for an inspection of the junction by the Disaster Management team and PWD Engineers, to implement safety measures and prevent a potential disaster on the National Highway. Additionally, the truck parking area at the junction increases the risk of accidents.

Every year, the accumulation of rainwater at the underpass junction causes traffic chaos. This critical junction connects roads towards Khandepar, Belagavi, Panjim, Margao, and Ponda.

Rocky Dias, a local resident, criticised the vertical hill cutting, warning that



during heavy rains, the soft soil could collapse, causing road blockages, accidents, and severe traffic jams. He alleged that the hill was cut for the vested interests of certain individuals without considering the potential dangers. "Government officials need to take proper care in road widening projects. The lack of a gutter system and truck parking all along this junction further exacerbate the risks to commuters," he said.

Viraj Sapre, a social worker, warned of filing a police complaint if a fatal accident occurs at the site. He stressed the importance of an immediate inspection by PWD Engineers, the Deputy

Collector, and the Disaster Management team. Sapre pointed out that the site marks the beginning of the four-lane expansion of the Bethora-Borim road and requires urgent attention to prevent a disaster.

Sapre also recalled a major landslide five years ago at Kerya-Khandepar that halted NH traffic, forcing a diversion to internal roads. "The ongoing highway work at Amigos Junction lacks proper signboards, and two people have already lost their lives during the recent widening efforts," said Sapre. He also noted that the slippery road conditions due to rain and mud further increase the risks at the site.

Quarry at Cansaulim barricaded to prevent drowning deaths

Team Herald

VASCO: In response to the tragic drowning of two students last year, Cortalim MLA Anton Vas, along with government officials, conducted a joint inspection of the quarry on the Cansaulim-Cuelim road on Friday and instructed that it be barricaded.

During the inspection, officials noted that safety measures had been implemented. A portion of the quarry was landfilled, and effective drainage systems were established to prevent water accumulation, to reduce the risk of drowning.

The main road was barricaded to prevent unauthorised entry, and warning signs were erected to alert the public of potential dangers. "We have implemented these measures to ensure such a tragedy does not happen again," said Vas.

Group of Velim residents booked for trespass, assault of local woman

Team Herald

MARGAO: Cuncoim police have booked four individuals following a complaint from Anita Fernandes, a resident of Combiabhat, Velim, alleging abuse, assault, and threats.

Fernandes reported that the group trespassed onto her property in Velim while she was plucking cashews. She claimed they assaulted her with a stick and slapped her, used abusive language, and threatened her with dire consequences.

Police have registered a case under Sections 447, 324, 504, and 506(ii), read with 34 of the IPC, against Girgolia Fernandes, Max Fernandes, and Joy Fernandes, all residents of Khursabhat, Velim, and Assucena Rebello, a resident of Combiabhat, Velim.

The complainant alleged that Assucena Rebello instigated the others to abuse her. The case is being investigated by PSI Suhas Velip.

Shorttakes

1 Ponda man hospitalised after assault with wooden planks, two arrested

PONDA: Devendra Chepo Gaonkar, 30, from Davkon, Dharbandora, was attacked by two men who trespassed into his home in the early hours of June 5, causing serious injuries. Collem Police reported that the incident stemmed from a monetary dispute. Police arrested the alleged attackers, Kanta Bethkikar, 41, from Kankire - Guleli, and Mahadev Gaude, 36, from Nanus-Usgao. Both were produced before the Saguem JMFC and remanded to five days in police custody. The injured Devendra Gaonkar, who was beaten with wooden planks, was shifted to Ponda Sub-District Hospital with fractures on his hand and injuries to his legs. According to Collem PSI Vibhavari Gaonkar, the victim and the accused were business associates. Gaonkar had loaned money to the accused and was attacked when he demanded repayment.

The attackers also allegedly stole Gaonkar's gold chain, mobile phone, and Rs 20,000 in cash. Locals suspect the incident may be related to gambling activities in the area and have called for increased police vigilance. The police have booked the offenders under Sections 452, 324, 380, and 504 read with 34 of the IPC.

2 Locals rescue accident victims, firemen tackle oil spill at Dramapur

MARGAO: Locals rescued three people trapped in a car following an accident at Dramapur before Fire Services personnel arrived. Margao Station Fire Officer Gil Souza reported that a fire tender was dispatched upon receiving the call. The car sustained minimal damage. In another incident, Margao firefighters cleared an oil spill at Dramapur junction.

3 Mapusa attack: Three more suspects arrested, one remains at large

MAPUSA: Three additional suspects have been apprehended by Mapusa police in connection with the brutal assault on two individuals from the Housing Board area. The arrested individuals have been identified as Sharanbasu Gaikawad, 27, Nagraj Pujari, 19, and Viresh Pujari, 38. They had been on the run since the attack occurred on May 30. Following the incident, three other individuals - Shridhar Killedar, Abhishek Pujari, and Manthan Chari - were arrested in connection with the crime.

However, one suspect, Ramkrishna Bhalekar alias RK, remains at large. The victims, Ahmed Devadi and Sandesh Sarkar were assaulted with an iron rod allegedly by a group of four individuals late at night on May 30.

4 Telangana tourist tries to flee while driving car on Baga beach; gets stuck, arrested



CALANGUTE: Sandaraju Ranjit, a tourist from Telangana who was spotted by police driving his car on the beach at Baga, Calangute on Friday, was nabbed after the vehicle got stuck in the sand while attempting to escape from the spot. The incident took place at around 12.35pm. He was later handed over to Calangute police and fined under the MV Act. On Tuesday, a tourist from Maharashtra was apprehended with his car on the beach.

5 Unknown suspect booked for theft of scooter in Chandor

MARGAO: Maina-Curtorim police have initiated a theft case following a complaint by Clinton Pereira from Chandor. According to the complaint, a scooter valued at approximately Rs 25,000, belonging to the complainant's wife, was stolen from an open space near Chandor ground where it was parked. PSI Praful Giri has registered an offence under Section 379 of the IPC and is currently investigating the matter.

CORRIGENDUM

The news item titled 'Govt employee convicted for raping minor girl' dated June 6, 2024, was erroneous. The Goa Children's Court had convicted the accused under Section 354 A (1) (iii) and 342 of IPC and under Section 8 of Goa Children's Act. The error is regretted.

MAX. TEMP 28°C
MIN. TEMP 24°C

idharudhar



Forget the bulletproof vest, try this slap-proof mask

Colva Traffic Cell cracks down on drunken driving, books 82 offenders in four months

A total of Rs 24,16,500 was collected in fines for Motor Vehicle Act violations in the Colva police jurisdiction from January to April this year

Team Herald

MARGAO: In response to a surge in fatal accidents largely attributed to drunken driving, the Traffic Cell of Colva has booked 82 individuals for driving under the influence in the first four months of this year.

Traffic police reported that the breath analysers provided to them have been instrumental in determining intoxication levels during traffic stops. Salcete has received 10 new breath analysers, enhancing the effectiveness of alcohol concentration tests. Number of Drunken Driving Cases Booked as of April 24: Additionally, during the same period, 318 cases of riding two-wheelers without wearing a helmet were booked. Moreover, 3,785 cases of wrong parking, over speeding,

HELMET VIOLATIONS		DRUNKEN DRIVING	
MONTH	NO OF CASES	MONTH	NO OF CASES
January	122	January	50
February	71	February	14
March	91	March	17
April	34	April	1

vehicles with tinted glasses, driving without a licence, and other offences were recorded during the same period. A total of Rs 24,16,500 was collected in fines from these offenders.

With only two police stations in Salcete having Traffic Cells, namely Colva and Margao, officials face challenges in monitoring traffic across this large taluka.

The Colva Traffic Cell previously had only one alcometer but has recently been provided with two more, improving their ability to monitor drunken driving.

A Traffic Cell officer anticipates a substantial increase in the identification and prosecution of people driving under the influence due to the upgraded equipment.