

# DEATH TRAPS IN SEA: 'Ghost nets' threaten marine life in Goa

Multiple turtles were found entangled in 'ghost nets' along South Goa's beaches; eco-warriors call for financial incentives for fishers to prevent them from abandoning 'ghost nets' and damaged nets at sea

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**MARGAO:** Recent incidents involving 'ghost nets' along Goa's coastline have sparked renewed concerns for marine wildlife and prompted discussions about potential solutions. These nets that degrade into harmful microplastics, pose a significant threat to sea creatures, particularly turtles.

Multiple turtles were found entangled in ghost nets along South Goa's beaches. At Betalbatim, lifeguards removed a net from a severely injured turtle, now under veterinary care supervised by Forest Department. The animal sustained cuts to its flippers. Another incident at Benaolim resulted in a turtle fatality. The department conducted a post-mortem examination to determine the cause of death. In Ma-

jorda, Olive Ridley hatchling and adult Hawksbill turtle were found stuck in a 'ghost net'. Lifeguards were able to rescue them, and the department officials took them for treatment and potential release.

Conservationists said that response system is in place for rescues, but more needs to be done to address the root causes of these injuries and deaths.

Experts called for a collaborative effort involving government, local communities, and industry stakeholders to tackle the issue.

A conservationist called for creating financial incentives for fishers to ensure 'ghost nets' and damaged nets are not abandoned in the sea.

The eco-warrior suggested implementing proper storage solutions.

Dr Sebastiao Rodrigues, National Council Member



A lifeguard rescues a turtle that got entangled in ghost nets at Betalbatim

## Two turtles caught in 'ghost nets' rescued at Colva

**MARGAO:** Two Olive Ridley turtles caught in ghost nets were rescued at Colva beach by fishermen on Monday. The rescued turtles were handed over to the Forest Department and lifesavers for treatment.

The department officials said that they have been conducting periodic workshops for fishermen creating awareness about rescue of turtles and other sea creatures.

of the National Platform for Small Scale Fish Workers, identified layers of insensitivity contributing to the proliferation of ghost fishing which include lack of awareness leading to the abandonment of stripped gillnets, conflicts between water sports boats, barges, and fishing vessels resulting in torn nets left in the water, and inadequate waste disposal systems, turning rivers and Arabian Sea into dumping grounds for fishing nets.

Dr Rodrigues pointed out the shift to petrochemical-based net manufactur-

ing, with no responsibility placed on manufacturers for the nets end-of-life disposal, and the role of middlemen involved in selling industrially manufactured fishing nets without accountability for their disposal. He said that addressing these layers of insensitivity is crucial to combating the 'ghost net' problem.

The Forest Department's Wildlife Division has installed a signboard warning about ghost nets in one area of South Goa, with conservationists urging the department to expand this

## ENCOUNTERING STRANDED MARINE LIFE: DO'S & DON'T'S

### IF THE ANIMAL IS ALIVE

- Maintain a respectful distance
- Avoid crowding or making noise
- Do not attempt to move the animal

### FOR DECEASED ANIMALS

- Keep a safe distance
- Do not attempt to handle or bury the carcass

### REPORT IMMEDIATELY TO:

- Forest Department
- Nearest lifeguard tower

### CONTACT NUMBERS:

- North Goa: 0832-2228772
- South Goa: 0832-2750246

initiative to more sites.

An expert called for a State-wide plan integrating waste management, marine conservation and beach management.

The expert said, "This compartmentalisation of issues creates the gaps." There should be better co-ordination between the Fisheries and Forest Departments to create effective schemes."

The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) initiated the collection and recycling of discarded plastic fishing nets on four beaches and expanded the project along the coastline. TERI estimated that approximately 40-50 tonnes of plastic waste from fishing nets are discarded monthly.

Experts say that long-term strategies will address the ghost net problem. A multi-pronged approach involving awareness campaigns, financial incentives, improved waste management systems and stricter regulations on net manufacturing and disposal is necessary to protect marine life.

## Bhoma mom sits on Mamlatdar's doorstep when administration doesn't reach her doorstep

Fed up by government inaction on encroachment on their land, mother-son duo from Bhoma sat on a dharna at the Ponda Mamlatdar's office

Team Herald

**PONDA:** When administration at doorsteps did not reach this mother from Bhoma, and her son decided to sit on the Mamlatdar's doorstep.

Mother and son duo from Bhoma, senior citizen Prema Naik and her son Suresh have been seeking action on their complaint against their neighbour for allegedly encroaching upon their property since the last four months, but there has been no action from the authorities.

Miffed with the government inaction on their complaint, the duo on Monday, decided to protest by staging a sit-in at Ponda Mamlatdar's office to save her house from encroachment by her neighbour.

According to Suresh Naik, his neighbour has started repair work of his house for which he has no objection. However, the neighbour has encroached into his property, due to which rainwater is directly entering into his house property. Further, the neighbour has built a septic tank, which is encroaching onto his property.

According to Suresh, following his complaint filed in January this year, the local panchayat issued a stop work order to his neighbour.

But the very next day, without proper verification, Bhoma-Adcolna Panchayat revoked its order and gave permission for conducting repairs of the house and in this regard, he had filed complaint in last



Prema Naik and her son Suresh staged a sit-in, asking for justice to save their house

February to BDO, Mamlatdar, asking for justice and even warning to stage sit-in, if no justice was done. Ponda Mamlatdar directed the panchayat to take proper action into the matter, but it failed to Act. Thereafter, he again made a com-

plaint under Section 66/1of Goa Panchayat Raj Act. However, the Sarpanch and Secretary inspected the site, but failed to take any action.

Suresh further said that since the panchayat and government authorities were not taking action into the encroachment issue, he has been forced to stage a sit-in in front of Ponda administrative building, having the office of Deputy Collector, Mamlatdar and the BDO. He said his agitation will continue till his family gets justice. He said if the authorities fail to take action, all the 13 members of his family will join the agitation.

Meanwhile, when the media approached Ponda BDO, Ashwin Desai on the issue and asked

him why no action was taken by the panchayat for the past four months, he said he will direct the panchayat to take action.

He said that based on the permissions received from the BDO, the panchayat gave the permission to repair the house.

"However, if the house owner has violated the terms and conditions and encroachment into other's property, then the panchayat needs to verify or take action on complaint. It's the responsibility of the panchayat to verify complaints filed by the citizens and act on violations, if any, after site inspection and verifications of documents of both the parties," Ponda BDO, Ashwin Desai, said.

## If denied permission, will hold public meet in front of MMC on July 4: Vijai

Says as an elected representative, holding Janta Darbar is his right; Margao civic body chief says such event has never been held in MMC Hall in the past

Team Herald

**MARGAO:** An attempt by the Margao municipality to deny permission to Goa Forward Party (GFP) president Vijai Sardesai to hold a public meeting in the municipal hall has escalated tensions between the two groups of councillors supported by Fatorda and Margao MLAs.

Sardesai sought permission from the MMC hall to hold a 'Janta Darbar' to meet the general public on Thursday, July 4.

Sources revealed that as of Monday, MMC was unlikely to grant permission, although this has yet to be formally conveyed to Sardesai's camp.

Reacting to this development, Sardesai pointed out that the Chief Officer (CO) has yet to inform him about the decision.

He added that if permission

**"This is not something bestowed upon me but it is my right as the elected representative. If they give permission or not, we will hold the Janta Darbar on that day - Vijai Sardesai, Goa Forward Party president"**

is indeed denied, he would go ahead and hold the meeting with the people in front of the municipal building.

Sardesai emphasised his statutory powers as an associate member of the Margao Municipality, stating that holding the Janta Darbar is his right as an elected representative, regardless of permission. "This is not something bestowed upon me but it is my right as the elected representative. If they give permission or not, we will hold the Janta Darbar on

that day," said Sardesai.

When contacted by mediapersons, MMC chairperson Damodar Shirodkar hinted that the request to hold the meeting is not being considered by the CO.

Shirodkar explained that such a Janta Darbar has never been held at the MMC Hall in the past.

He clarified that only government-sponsored events are allowed at the MMC Hall, apart from meetings organised by the MMC.

Sardesai pointed out that he held a Janta Darbar when he was a minister.

The Fatorda MLA questioned whether it is democracy if an elected representative cannot meet and hear the grievances of people, which is the purpose of holding the meeting.

GFP office bearers also questioned the rationale behind denying permission for a public meeting.

## Fatorda residents fume over discarded branches on footpaths



Team Herald

**MARGAO:** The unattended trimmed tree branches discarded on the footpaths near Ravindra Bhavan in Margao and in the vicinity of Fatorda football stadium for several days, have left Fatorda residents fuming.

The entire stretch of footpath from the entry point of the South Goa Planning and Development Authority (SGPDA) to the swimming pool is cluttered with tree branches for days.

The branches, left unattended, posed a significant inconvenience to pedestrians navigating the area.

Residents highlighted the potential hazards posed by these obstructions, calling for immediate action from local authorities to clear the pathways and ensure public safety.

It is learnt that the contractor has left behind branches on the footpaths after cutting the trees which has led to obstructions and inconvenience to pedestrians.

The residents have demanded that the contractor clear the branches to ensure public safety and accessibility.

Milagres Dias, a resident, said that the unattend-

ed branches have caused hardships to pedestrians and senior citizens.

"We can observe several residents, including senior citizens near the Fatorda football stadium and in the vicinity of the swimming pool, who come here for a walk. However, the presence of tree branches on the footpath at several locations has made it difficult for them to walk," he complained.

He said that it is the responsibility of the contractor or Margao Municipal Council to remove the tree branches.

Suresh Kurtarkar, another resident, informed O Herald that branches have been on the footpath for several days.

"We don't understand how the district authorities are tolerating such incidents from the concerned contractor. The branches should have been removed immediately. This is a totally irresponsible attitude of the contractor and the authority concerned," he added.

## Shorttakes

### 1 Three lady masseurs arrested by tourist police unit at Candolim beach

**CALANGUTE:** Three lady masseurs who were engaged in massage activities at Candolim Beach were arrested by the tourist police unit (TPU) on Monday morning following complaints from locals.

According to the TPU, constables who were patrolling in the area noticed the three women at around 11.30am 'indulging in massage activities' which are illegal, and apprehended them.

They were later handed over to the Calangute Police and fined Rs 25,000 each under the Goa Tourist Places (Protection and Maintenance) Act, 2001 as they could not produce any legal permission from the competent authority for providing massage services to the public.

The three accused women, identified as: Sunita Lamani, 36, Madhavi Chauhan, 38, both residents of Candolim, and Sumitra Naik, 36, a resident of Verem, were, however, unable to pay the fine amounts when produced before the Tourism Director on Monday, following which Calangute Police have initiated further action.

### 2 Navelim resident held for raping 15-year-old girl from Salcete village

**MARGAO:** Margao Police arrested Santosh Raiker from Navelim for allegedly raping a 15-year-old girl from a village in Salcete.

The police said that based on the complaint an offence under Sections 376 and 8 of Goa Children's Act and POC-SO has been registered.

Police sources said that the minor girl was studying in Class VII. The police said that the accused allegedly lured the victim by giving money and abused her. The girl has been sent to GMC Bambolim for medical check up. The police said that JMFC, Margao remanded Santosh in police custody for five days and the accused will be taken to GMC for medical examination.

### 3 Interstate 'Irani Gang' member arrested for gold thefts in Panjim

**PANJIM:** The Panjim Town Police have arrested a 30-year-old man from Karnataka who is member of interstate 'Irani Gang' in connection with thefts at two jewellery shops in the capital and recovered from him gold ornaments worth Rs eight lakh.

The accused identified as 30-year-old Abrar Beg was held in overnight operation at Kudachi, Raibag, Belagavi, on June 28.

Abrar and his gang members targeted two jewellery shops in Panjim- Vailankanni Jewellers opposite Pharmacy College (on January 12) and PNG Store, St Inez on June 24, 2024, and stole two gold chains and two gold/diamond necklaces, all worth Rs 12 lakh.

In both cases, they entered the shops posing as customers and stole the gold ornaments while the staffers were busy showing them the jewellery patterns.

The police said during investigation, the accused admitted commission of crime at Goa at Vailankani Jewellers and PNG Jewellers along with other accused.

An offence under Section 380, read with 34, of IPC has been registered. The accused was produced before JMFC, Panjim, which remanded him in four days police custody.



## SHOULD THE GOVT BUILD VILLAGE ROADS AND INFRASTRUCTURE BEFORE BUILDING MULTI-CRORE BRIDGES AND FLYOVERS?

**"The Goa government speaks about reaching to the last person, so says the chief minister. I congratulate Team Herald for going to Sanguem and doing the ground report about Carla village. Today, the government is only focusing on making the city sparkle. But there are many villages where students don't have access to schools, they have to cross through jungles. Though the government may have to look after cities at the same time, it has to build the infrastructure in villages. The government has to focus on transportation and roads in villages"**

Ashwinkumar Naik

The government has spent crores of rupees on building highways and fancy bridges. Even a viewing tower and restaurant has been proposed on the new Zuari Bridge. Looking at the condition of rural roads and the troubles that students are facing in places such as Carla village in Sanguem, Herald TV asked people if the government should build village roads and infrastructure before building multi-crore bridges and flyovers, in this edition of Street Voices.

**"Those living in the villages do not have many of the facilities available in towns and cities. Most infrastructure, especially roads in villages are in bad shape. Culverts are in bad shape. Even then the government spends crores on bridges and highways in the cities. The government should repair the roads and culverts connecting villages to cities. It appears that the State government did not utilise funds under the Centre's Gram Sadak Yojana and returned the money to the Centre. This should be fully utilised for developing villages. Students suffer during the rains. Sometimes the small bridges overflow with water."**

Ramnath Parab

**"The government does not have a policy for developing village roads. There is an urgent need for such a policy. Seventy per cent of India's population lives in the villages. Many villages in Goa don't have roads. Many roads are plagued with potholes which are not filled. The process is long drawn. The panchayat or municipality has to pass a resolution, then tenders are floated. By that time there are several accidents in which many die. Contractors dig the roads then they don't repair them. Roads should connect all houses in the villages"**

Shivaji Desai

## Rachol seminarians cultivate paddy, spread message to preserve agri fields for posterity

Team Herald

**MARGAO:** Sending out a message to fellow Goans, especially the youth, to take up farming and preserve agricultural fields for posterity, the seminarians at Rachol Seminary along with members of the public carried out their annual community initiative of paddy cultivation in the fields of the seminary.

Locals from Rachol and neighbouring villages along with others from other parts of South Goa like Raia, Agalli-Housing Board-Borda, Nuvem, Margao, Loutolim and Shiroda had gathered at the seminary to join hands with the seminarians. There were over 125 people including the youth and children, for the collaborative exercise.



## ANNUAL COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

What made the occasion even more special was the words of praise, encouragement by the Archbishop of Goa and Daman Filipe Neri Cardinal Ferrão and new Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese Rev Fr Simião Purificação Fernandes, who also blessed the fields, the farmers and the seminarians.

The Rector of Rachol Seminary, Fr Donato Rodrigues and a teacher from Our Lady of Snows High

School, Raia, Greta Oliveira, spoke on the occasion.

A group of farmers stuck to traditional methods as a way to teach the youngsters present how they used to cultivate the fields in the past so that such ground level knowledge is passed on to the future generation.

Food and refreshments were also provided while popular Konkani hit songs were also played.

Staff at Rachol Seminary said that the rice harvested from the fields is then kept for the seminarians for their food throughout the year and then whatever additional amount is harvested, is then sold. The seminarians called upon Goans not to leave any field abandoned and ensure that age-old agricultural practices are carried forward.