

# Paddy farmers in distress as relentless rains threaten harvest-ready crop in Salcete

Ryots report that they already suffered losses during the planting season when newly sown saplings washed away in the deluge, forcing them to replant; ripe paddy crop submerged in rainwater may rot, they fear

**“I don’t think the rains will lead to losses for the farmers. We have processed numerous claims made by farmers who reported losses due to heavy rains and flooding in their paddy fields - Shariff Furtado, Zonal Agricultural Officer, Salcete**



Fields submerged in Benaulum (file pic)

Team Herald

**MARGAO:** Farmers in Salcete taluka are expressing deep concern over the damage to their crops due to persistent and untimely rains, with reports of significant crop de-

struction surfacing from several areas. In a bid for relief, many are turning to the rain God, hoping for a break in the heavy downpour.

Despite these concerns, officials from the Agriculture Department remain optimistic, suggesting that the ongoing rains may not have as severe an impact on the crops as feared. This assessment, they believe, may offer some reassurance to the

anxious farmers. However, farmers are reporting that crops nearing harvest are now at risk of further damage due to the relentless rains. Those who have already suffered losses during the paddy planting season fear that continued rains will wipe out what remains of their crops.

Many farmers in Salcete are grappling with the aftermath of heavy rains, which washed

away newly sown paddy seeds and saplings, while also submerging sprouting crops. There is growing concern that these conditions may lead to rotting and more widespread damage.

“The fields have been inundated again, with persistent flooding wreaking havoc on our agricultural efforts. Many farmers who managed to save their paddy were now preparing for harvest, but the heavy rains have shattered our dreams of earning a livelihood,” lamented J. Santano Rodrigues, a farmer from Curtorim. He emphasised that the timing of the rains, coinciding with crucial harvesting preparations, will likely result in significant financial losses. Piedade Fernandes,

**“The fields have been inundated again, with persistent flooding wreaking havoc on our agricultural efforts. Many farmers who managed to save their paddy were now preparing for harvest, but the heavy rains have shattered our dreams of earning a livelihood - J Santano Rodrigues, farmer, Curtorim**

another concerned farmer, echoed these fears, stating, “Once again, we are witnessing flooding in the fields. We hope the rains stop, or we will be left with nothing after all our hard work.”

Shariff Furtado, the Zonal Agricultural Officer (ZAO) at the Salcete taluka office, sought to ease these concerns by reassuring farmers that the rains are unlikely to significantly affect paddy crops ready for harvest. “I don’t

think the rains will lead to losses for the farmers,” Furtado stated confidently, adding that many farmers have already received compensation for earlier losses during this season. “We have processed numerous claims made by farmers who reported losses due to heavy rains and flooding in their paddy fields,” Furtado noted, offering some hope to the farming community as they continue to monitor the situation.

## Over 20 new cholera cases emerge at Mobor, several workers hospitalised

Team Herald

**MARGAO:** Cholera cases continue to emerge from the Mobor and Cutbona jetties, with health officials confirming at least 20 additional infections this week. The latest cases are primarily concentrated in Mobor, where the outbreak is active.

State epidemiologist Dr Utkarsh Betodkar reported that the recent infections have been detected among crew members of fishing vessels that had not been previously impacted. While some patients are being treated at home, others have required hospitalisation. “Seven individuals have been admitted to private hospitals in Margao, four are receiving care at South Goa District Hospital, and several others are at the Primary Health Centre in Balli,” Betodkar stated.

**Fishing boat worker with vomiting, diarrhoea succumbs at Malim**

**PANJIM:** A labourer from Odisha, who reportedly fell ill while he was on board a fishing trawler for four days, was declared ‘brought dead’ at Goa Medical College, Bambolim on Tuesday. Police said Sachindra Khadia, 39, working onboard a boat in Malim jetty, Betim, was suffering from continuous vomiting and diarrhoea, but died before he could receive treatment.

Additionally, around seven people are being treated at home under medical supervision.

The outbreak has already claimed the lives of at least five migrant workers, with two suc-

cumbing to the illness before reaching the hospital. While the total number of confirmed cholera cases since the outbreak began stands at approximately 220, authorities have noted a decrease in daily cases compared to the initial surge.

However, Betodkar cautioned that further spikes could occur before the situation stabilises. “We might see a few peaks before the outbreak is fully under control. We cannot declare it contained until we go without new cases for double the incubation period,” he explained.

Efforts to contain the disease are ongoing, with special monitoring in place at the Mobor and Cutbona jetties. In response to hygiene concerns, 30 bio-toilets have been installed at the Cutbona jetty to prevent further contamination.

## FESTERING WITH DISEASE



Stagnant, scummy rainwater accumulated outside a stationery shop in the SGPD market complex, Margao, is a breeding ground for infection as garbage, rotting food and insect larvae mix in the stinking puddle

## Locals livid as South Goa District Hospital entrance disappears under flood water



Team Herald

**MARGAO:** Heavy rains on Tuesday caused severe flooding at the entrance of the South Goa District Hospital, triggering widespread frustration among citizens over the lack of response from the authorities. Many expressed anger at the lack of effective drainage on the stretch, which left water unable to flow properly.

Patients and visitors struggled to navigate the inundated area after the rains. The road and its edges vanished under brown water, raising concerns about safety and access to emergency services. Citizens are demanding immediate action to address the drainage issues and prioritise infrastructure

improvements to protect vital facilities like the hospital.

In the morning, it was evident that relatives of patients had to wade through floodwaters to reach the entrance of the hospital, which was completely inundated. The heavy rain had created a hazardous situation, with water pooling at the entrance. Observers noted that there was hardly any channel for the water to drain into the nearby nullah, exacerbating the problem. Speaking to reporters, Prabhav Naik voiced his frustration, highlighting the government’s negligence in improving road infrastructure and healthcare facilities for Goans. “The water logging at the entrance of the South Goa District Hospital not only inconveniences

**“The water logging at the entrance of the South Goa District Hospital not only inconveniences patients and visitors but also reflects a broader indifference from authorities. When will Health Minister Vishwajit Rane pay a visit to the district hospital in order to learn the shortfalls and improve the situation? Prabhav Naik, Margao local**

patients and visitors but also reflects a broader indifference from authorities”, he said. He questioned when Health Minister Vishwajit Rane will pay a visit to the district hospital in order to learn the shortfalls and improve the situation.

Mario D’Souza, another concerned citizen, pointed out that the flooding caused by heavy rains highlights the unplanned infrastructure around the hospital. He noted that there is barely any drainage, making flooding inevitable.

### PWD slammed: ‘Main road level higher than hospital entrance’

**MARGAO:** The Public Works Department (PWD) came under fire on Tuesday for its failure to address the persistent waterlogging at the entrance of the South Goa District Hospital. Shadow Council for Margao Convener, Savio Coutinho, strongly criticised the department for its negligence, stating that ailing people are forced to wade through dirty, stagnant water as they enter the hospital, which could potentially worsen their health conditions.

Coutinho explained that repeated hotmix carpeting of the main road in front of the hospital has raised its level above the hospital’s entrance. As a result, rainwater accumulates

at the entrance, causing significant inconvenience to patients and visitors. “The PWD needs to take very simple steps to allow the water to drain off, but their lethargic behaviour leads to all these problems,” he remarked. Coutinho also pointed out that a nearby cross drain could easily solve the issue if the department took the simple step of cutting open a small portion of the parapet wall that currently blocks water from draining.

“It doesn’t require rocket science to understand this solution,” he said, sarcastically urging the authorities to take immediate action to prevent further hardships for those visiting the hospital.

## MMC launches night patrols to nab, fine litterbugs in real time

**Teams of MMC officials assigned to watch over known black spots, border areas; residents encouraged to report people dumping garbage in the open**

Team Herald

**MARGAO:** The Margao Municipal Council (MMC) has intensified efforts to combat roadside garbage dumping by initiating a special nighttime patrol. The move is aimed at curbing illegal waste disposal and improving cleanliness across the town. Patrolling teams have been stationed at key locations, especially near the civic boundaries, to catch and penalise offenders.

Since Monday, the MMC has adopted a zero-tolerance policy towards littering, booking multiple offenders and imposing fines on those caught dumping garbage illegally. This rigorous approach underlines the council’s determination to uphold cleanliness and order in Margao, encouraging residents to actively report any instances of roadside dumping.

The Chief Officer of MMC has as-

signed special officers to monitor the town during late-night hours, focusing on black spots where garbage dumping is most prevalent. These areas, particularly at the borders, have continued to suffer despite the availability of door-to-door garbage pick-up.

Sources reveal that the MMC’s efforts have already yielded significant results, with fines amounting to lakhs of rupees being collected from violators caught in the act. Despite the persistence of some problem areas, the drive has seen a notable reduction in illegal dumping since its launch.

Before rolling out the nighttime patrols, the MMC convened a strategy meeting to form dedicated teams tasked with overseeing the drive. These teams were instructed to remain vigilant during late evening hours, concentrating their efforts on known dumping hotspots.

## Slogan ‘Amdharak Bhatt - Kodel zai vo Romi zai’ not meant to pressure MLAs, GKF clarifies

Team Herald

**MARGAO:** The Global Konknni Forum (GKF) sought to clarify its recent choice of slogan, “Amdharak Bhatt - Kodel zai vo Romi zai” (Meet the MLA - Do you want the chair or Romi script?), which has sparked public discussion.

GKF stated that the slogan was carefully selected by its core committee to encapsulate the sentiments of the people and the aspirations related to the Romi script issue.

GKF president Kennedy Afonso, explained that the slogan was not intended as a threat to the MLAs but rather as a question meant to encourage them to evaluate their priorities. He stressed that the GKF respects the autonomy of the MLAs and will accept whichever decision they make. “They are free to exercise their own free will,” Afonso added.

**“The slogan was not intended as a threat to the MLAs but rather as a question meant to encourage them to evaluate their priorities. The slogan is not a form of pressure but an invitation for the MLAs to decide freely, either to support the Romi script or prioritise their legislative positions Kennedy Afonso, GKF president**

The slogan, Afonso continued, resonates deeply with the public’s desires. He said that the people of Goa would see whether the MLAs support the cause of Romi script when the State Assembly meets in December. GKF believes that two Bills related to the Romi script will be tabled, and they have appealed to the MLAs to rise in support of them.

According to Afonso, those MLAs who stand up to speak in favour of the Bills will demonstrate that they value the Romi script and are in alignment with their constituents’ wishes. Conversely, failure to support the Bills,

despite having received resolutions from their constituency’s Gram Sabhas and direct appeals from their voters, would signal that they prioritise their positions over the public’s demand for Romi script recognition.

“It’s a conscious decision. The MLAs will be taking decisions as per their own discretion and wisdom in the august House,” he said. GKF also clarified that the slogan had only been featured on the organisation’s posters and had not been directly posed to any MLAs in their meetings. Afonso recounted a meeting with Curtorim MLA Aleixo Reginal-

do Lourenco, and confirmed that no one asked him “Kodel zai vo Romi Lipi zai?” In fact, Afonso said Lourenco himself had inquired about the slogan after the discussion. He expressed confidence that Lourenco, given his history of being elected on a Save Goa Front (SGF) ticket with Romi script as a core manifesto issue, would rise in support of the Bills during the December session and galvanize other MLAs, particularly those in the ruling BJP, to ensure the Bills’ passage.

Afonso also clarified a point regarding MLA Cruz Silva, noting that the GKF did not claim Cruz was the only MLA who had raised the Romi script issue in the Assembly. Instead, Afonso explained that during the last session, many MLAs, particularly those representing the same community, did not support Cruz when he spoke on the matter.



## DO YOU SUPPORT THE PEOPLE’S AGITATION?

**“Surely, I support the people’s agitation against mega projects. In a democracy, the voice of the people, the voice of dissent, matters. The government should not act as a deaf government. The government is elected by the people, for the people and that is why the government has to act according to the views of the people who are from the area. Now there is a tremendous churning among the people of Goa and villagers are increasingly coming out to voice dissent due to the infiltration of builders. Now the government seems to be of the builders, by the builders and for the builders instead of being a government of the people, by the people and for the people. The Goa Panchayat Raj Act says, the Gram Sabha is the final authority. The government has turned the Town and Country Planning Department into a Total Commission Party. They are only becoming land dealers and land agents. People’s views matter because till today, you don’t have proper infrastructure. You don’t have proper water supply in Goa 24x7. You don’t have road infrastructure. You create huge roads and you see the number of accidents taking place Rui Ferreira, advocate**

**“It’s heartening to see people from North and South Goa coming together to fight against these mega projects, especially in eco-sensitive areas. This unity is going to be the key towards achieving our goal not only against these mega projects but also against those politicians, bureaucrats, and ‘yes-men’ roped into technical committees to blatantly and shamelessly connive with the real estate lobby and the powers that be Patricia Pinto, former councillor, CCP**

### Shorttakes

#### 1 Body of Canacona man missing after fishing trip recovered two days later

**MARGAO:** Cuncoim police reported that a dead body was recovered from the sea at Cabo de Rama, Canacona, following a tip-off from Amrut Velip, a police officer on patrol. Local residents and fishermen found the body, later identified as Shaba Velip, 53, from Kuddeem, Cola, Canacona. Velip had gone fishing with two others on September 22 and was reported missing after he accidentally drowned around 2.30 pm. Cuncoim police conducted an inquest panchanama at the scene and referred the body for a post-mortem examination. The police surgeon confirmed the cause of death as “asphyxia due to drowning.” The body has since been handed over to the family for final rites, and further investigation is underway, led by PSI Sahil S. Pagui.

#### 2 Velim man abused, thrashed by gang of five from Navelim-Margao

**MARGAO:** Sarvesh Tari of Bapsora, Velim, lodged a complaint with Cuncoim police alleging he was attacked by a gang of men on September 22, between 5.30 pm and 5.45 pm. According to Tari, unknown occupants of a vehicle with registration No. GA-11-T-3022 and two scooters trespassed onto his private property in Muxer, Velim, and verbally abused him, threatening to kill him. During the confrontation, the complainant alleged that the group assaulted him with fist blows and slaps, also using a sharp object, resulting in simple bodily injuries. The police have registered offences under Sections 329(3), 352, 351(3), and 118(1) of the BNS 2023. Following the investigation, Cuncoim police identified the accused as Khaja Sayad, Mohammed Ajmat Hussain, Sohail Sayed, Sapnesh Naik and Afroz Sayed, all from Calcondia-Margao. All accused individuals have been served notices under Section 35/3 of the BNS. LPSI Kavita Rawat is investigating.

#### 3 Mega mutation camp to clear backlog at mamlatdar’s office on September 28

**MARGAO:** The Mamlatdar office of Salcete has announced a one-day Mega Mutation Camp on September 28, starting at 10 am, in response to the South Goa Advocates Association’s request. This initiative aims to clear the backlog of pending mutation applications related to Salcete, facilitating a speedy resolution to cases that have caused delays and inconveniences for the public. The decision follows a delegation from the South Goa Advocates Association, led by President Adv Prasad Naik, who recently met with the District Magistrate to express concerns over the pending mutation files in the Mamlatdar office. The Association had previously filed a petition with South Goa Collector Asvin Chandru, highlighting inefficiencies and malpractices in the mutation process, which have frustrated many residents.

#### 4 Curtorim man ends life in Fatorda; survived by wife, two children

**MARGAO:** Paul Domingo Dias, 58, of Maina-Curtorim, tragically took his own life at his residence in Fatorda on Tuesday. Currently residing in the Kurtarkar Building in Ambaji, Dias locked himself inside his flat while his wife and two children were outside. Upon being alerted, the police arrived at the scene and, with the assistance of fire brigade personnel, forcibly opened the main door.

MAX. TEMP	29°C
MIN. TEMP	25°C

idharudhar



Calm down! we are sending rescue personnel with you

