

Drugs, scams, rapes: Crime graph on the rise across Goa

Data shows heinous and white-collar crimes are both on the upswing; only relief is police records that show nearly 97% detection rate of crimes in 2024

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Panjim: The year that was has set some serious crime records in Goa and if the sobering trends are anything to go by, police will have their task cut out in 2025.

According to data, cases of heinous crimes have steadily been rising, with 106 rapes and 29 murder cases being reported to the police in 2024. White-collar crimes have also risen exponentially, with the cash-for-jobs scam that broke in October 2024 ratcheting up figures of many crores that have been siphoned off.

The Anti-Narcotics Cell of Goa Police has also recorded the highest seizure of drugs in a calendar year in 2024, with 85 kg of narcotics worth Rs 6.75 crore being recovered. This included Rs 12 lakh worth of GHB (Gamma-hydroxybutyrate) a date rape drug, marking the first such seizure in Goa.

While the rise in crimes is a chilling reality for all Goans, one positive aspect on the policing front is that

MAJOR CRIMES IN THE PAST YEAR

Jan 7, 2024: CEO of IT firm Suchana Seth smothers her son to death at a resort in Candolim

Mar 8: Two shooters who killed the Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) Haryana President Nafe Singh Rathie, arrested in Goa after having travelled here in a taxi

Oct 29: Arrest of Pooja Naik by Bicholim police opens the Pandora's Box of the cash-for-jobs scam. Several arrested for cheating gullible Goans of crores

Dec 4: Former Mandrem Sarpanch Mahesh Konadkar assaulted on the road

Dec 13: Proclaimed offender Suleman Khan alias Siddiqui escapes from Crime Branch custody at Ribandar

Dec 31: Tourist killed after brawl between holidaying group and shack workers in Calangute

CRIME STATS 2024

- Murder – 29
- Rape – 106
- Narcotics seized – 85 kg worth Rs 6.75 crore

there is a 96.67% detection rate of heinous crimes.

Criticising the government, activist Roshan Luke Mathias said, "The political system is such that there is official patronage for illegal activities. The Government interferes in everything. We are lay people and even we know how many people are doing drugs in Goa. How

will crimes come down? Speaking about the rise in rape cases, Auda Viegas, the convenor of Bailancho Ekvott, said, "It has been seen that the grooming of victims happens online, minors fall prey and elope with the accused person. We have to think over whether kids are being made aware of such risks

by their guardians at home or in school. Laws can't get stronger, but is there thorough investigation, conviction and punishment – all of which act as deterrents?" According to retired police officer Mahesh Gaonkar, one of the reasons for the rise in crimes in Goa is the fact that it is a State that draws a lot of tourists and outsiders. "This

leads to the involvement of outsiders in crimes registered in Goa. However, the police too have done a good job by detecting almost all the cases of heinous crimes," he said.

The political system is such that there is official patronage for illegal activities. The government interferes in everything. We are lay people and even we know how many people are doing drugs in Goa. How will crimes come down? It has been seen that the grooming of victims happens online, minors fall prey and elope with the accused person... Laws can't get stronger, but is there thorough investigation, conviction and punishment – all of which act as deterrents? – Roshan Luke Mathias, activist

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USHERING IN THE NEW



'Mahila Batuk' along with priests perform Ganga Arti on the first day of the New Year, at Sangam in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh, Wednesday

2024 India's hottest year in over 120 years

PTI, NEW DELHI: The year 2024 was the warmest on record in India since 1901, with the average minimum temperature settling 0.90 degrees Celsius above the long-period average, the IMD said on Wednesday.

The year 2024 surpassed 2016, which had recorded a mean land surface air temperature 0.54 degrees Celsius above normal, making it the warmest year since 1901.

The average minimum temperature was the highest on record for July, August, September and October, and the second highest for February, according to India Meteorological Department (IMD) Director General Mrutyunjay Mohapatra.

According to the European climate agency Copernicus, 2024 likely ended as the warmest year globally and the first with average temperatures 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial (1850-1900) levels.

According to a yearly review by two independent groups of climate scientists — World Weather Attribution and Climate Central — the world experienced 41 additional days of dangerous heat in 2024.

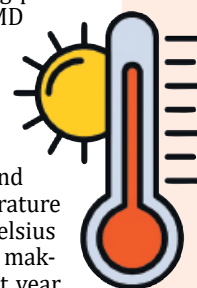
Mohapatra said the rise in minimum temperatures in 2024 was "quite high".

THE HEAT IS ON

■ The annual mean temperature in 2024 was 25.75 degrees Celsius, 0.65 degrees above the long-period average for India

■ The average maximum temperature in India stood at 31.25 degrees Celsius, 0.20 degrees above normal. The average minimum temperature was 20.24 degrees Celsius, 0.90 degrees above normal

■ According to the European climate agency Copernicus, 2024 is likely to be the warmest year globally



Agra man kills mom, 4 sisters in hotel room; shoots video

PTI, LUCKNOW: A 24-year-old man from Agra took his mother and four sisters to a hotel room here and allegedly killed them by slitting their throats and wrists on Wednesday, after which he recorded a video to say he did it because of 'helplessness and despair' following 'unimaginable atrocities' by people of his locality.

Central Lucknow Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Raveena Tyagi said the incident took place at Hotel Sharanjeet in the busy Naka area of the city.

"The accused, identified as Mohammad Arshad (24), allegedly killed five members of his own family. Following the gruesome act, the local police promptly apprehended the accused from the crime scene," she said.

The deceased have been identified as Alia (9), Alshia (19), Aksa (16) and Rahmeen (18) – all sisters of Arshad – and his mother Asma, according to the police.

The DCP said Arshad's family lived in Agra and preliminary inquiry has revealed that he took the step because of domestic disputes.

The purported video surfaced on social media shortly after the shocking incident came to light in which Arshad confessed to slitting the wrists and throats of his sisters and mother.

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Driver rams into New Year revellers in New Orleans, killing 10

AP, NEW ORLEANS: A driver wrought carnage on New Orleans' famed French Quarter early on New Year's Day, killing 10 people as he rammed a pickup truck into a crowd before being shot to death by police, authorities said.

More than 30 people were injured as Wednesday's attack turned festive Bourbon Street into macabre mayhem. The FBI is investigating it as an act of terrorism and said an Islamic State group flag was found in the vehicle.

The FBI identified the driver as Shamsud-Din Jabbar, 42, a US citizen from Texas.

Investigators were working to determine Jabbar's potential associations and affiliations with terrorist organizations, the FBI said. Jabbar was killed in a firefight with police following the attack around 3.15 am in an area teeming with New Year's revellers, the FBI said.

A photo circulated among law enforcement officials showed a bearded Jabbar wearing camouflage next to the truck after he was killed by police.

Sleuths found a handgun and an AR-style rifle after the shootout, a law enforcement official said.

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What happened?

Police said the driver sped through a crowd along Bourbon Street around 3.15 am on Wednesday as revellers had gathered to celebrate the start of the New Year. Ten people were killed and 30 were injured and taken to five local hospitals

Possible motive?

Police Commissioner Anne Kirkpatrick said the driver was hell-bent on creating the carnage and the damage that he did and he tried "to run over as many people as he could"

Sancoale panchayat seeks nod for fees to advocate

The Directorate of Accounts audit had earlier observed that the panchayat had not got financial approval for fees to be paid to the same advocate

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Sancoale Village Panchayat has approached the Directorate of Panchayats, seeking an approval for Rs 79,500 already paid to Adv Zeller C De Sousa as legal fees.

The Directorate of Panchayats has reportedly received a letter from the Mormugao BDO through the Sancoale panchayat, regarding the ex-post facto approval for the 10 bills dated May 22, 2023 dealing with study of matters, drafting and attending the hearings and all are dated.

Adv Zeller C De Sousa's professional involvement with the Sancoale panchayat has been under audit scrutiny after reports of the panchayat paying almost Rs 10 lakh as legal fees to Adv De Sousa to appear in five matters in 2023-24 with no financial approvals or an agreement of engagement, either on a retainer-

ship or a case-to-case basis. The Directorate of Accounts that conducted an audit of the Sancoale panchayat for the financial year 2023-24 had observed a total fees of Rs 9,55,550 in five matters. The auditors also observed that the village panchayat had not agreed with the advocate on the fees to be paid while it had not obtained any financial approval for fees to be paid. O Herald

– Tulshidas Naik, Sancoale Panch member

exceeded budget head on advocate fees. Till date, the Directorate of Panchayats has not given ex-post facto approval to the fees paid to the lawyer. What is important is that the panchayat has not received quotations and rates from advocate De Souza."

Eight bills pertain to matters where Adv De Sousa represented the panchayat before the Additional Director of Panchayats, Margao, and two are revision applications drafted by him. The panchayat had first forwarded these bills to the Mormugao BDO for administrative approval and expenditure sanction in October 2024.

Speaking on ex-post facto approval for the bills sent to the Directorate of Panchayats, Sancoale Panch member Tulshidas Naik said, "The panchayat had

two of the posts on X from the @The_Nehru handle that have drawn hundreds of reactions

'Blame Nehru' gets a parodic take on X, thanks to AI

On X, @The_Nehru is drawing thousands of followers with its mix of political commentary and satire

AGENCIES: Ridiculed, pumelled, castigated and blamed by the ruling BJP combine for many of India's misfortunes since Independence, India's first Prime Minister is having a go at its present one on social media, all thanks to AI.

A parody account of Jawaharlal Nehru on X, @The_Nehru, is taking the mickey out of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and some of his ministers, by 'taking the blame' for multiple current developments that are dominating public conversation and 9 o'clock TV headlines, like GST, foreign investment, rumours of Virat Kohli and Anushka Sharma leaving

Today I ordered Nirmala to impose GST on popcorn. Don't worry Narendra, I will cover for you



Two of the posts on X from the @The_Nehru handle that have drawn hundreds of reactions

Now you know the reason why Indian cricket team is not performing well in #INDvsAUS test tournament!



India, and more. In the process, the account is also offering a satirical, comedic take on politics in India at the moment.

What sets the account apart from other political analysts and their trenchant commentary on social media is the smart use of AI, with many of the parody posts accompanied by AI-generated images that juxtapose Nehru with Modi, Nirmala Sitharaman, Virat Kohli and others for visual drama that makes full use of the anachronisms for effect.

The satirical X account has the tagline, 'First PM of Independent India | Not letting the present

PM to work | Parody', and is reportedly managed by a man in his 20s, a former BJP supporter who remains anonymous, according to a report in The Print. The account was launched in 2021 under the name 'Gems of Modi'. Initially, it shared memes and reposted content with limited engagement.

However, it gained significant traction during the Winter Session of Parliament last year when the admin rebranded it, shifting the focus to Nehru parody. Within just eight days, the account's follower count skyrocketed from 1,600 to 10,000. By December 31, it had reached 17,800 followers. Posts now regularly attract thousands of likes and hundreds of shares, solidifying the account's rise in popularity.

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MAX. TEMP 34.5 °C
MIN. TEMP 22.0 °C

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