

shorttakes

EDUCATION DEPT REVISES MID-DAY MEAL RATES FROM DEC 2024 ONWARDS

PANJIM: The Directorate of Education has announced a revision in the rates for mid-day meals provided to students under the PM POSHAN scheme, effective from December 1, 2024. In an order issued by Shailesh Zingade, the Director of Education, it was stated that the government has decided to revise the cooking costs for all the Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), Self-Help Groups, and Mahila Mandals responsible for providing mid-day meals at government and government-aided pre-primary, primary, and upper primary schools across Goa. The new rates are Rs 8.74 per child per day for pre-primary and primary school students, and Rs 11.12 for upper primary students. The order specified that the menu, quantity, calories, and other provisions will remain unchanged.

BUS DRIVER ARRESTED AFTER FATAL ROAD ACCIDENT IN MARGAO

MARGAO: On January 13, the Margao Police arrested Samir Khan Pathan, a bus driver from Dando, Sanguem, for driving recklessly and causing the death of Joseph Ferreira, a 52-year-old businessman from Borda, Margao. The incident occurred near Borkar Nursing Home in Margao at 8:20 am when Pathan's bus collided with Ferreira's scooter, causing severe injuries. Ferreira succumbed to his injuries while being transported to GMC Bambolim. Pathan has been charged under sections 281 and 106(1) of the BNS 2023 and was later released on bail. The investigation is being conducted by PSI Nilesh Shirvoiker.

MAHARASHTRA MAN ARRESTED WITH CHARAS WORTH RS 1.1 LAKH IN MANDREM

PANJIM: A 36-year-old man from Maharashtra was arrested in Mandrem on charges of drug possession after he was found in possession of 110 grams of charas, valued at Rs 1.10 lakh. The accused, identified as Delin Dsouza, a resident of Arambol, Pernem, and native of Bhayandar West, Thane, Maharashtra, was caught red-handed by Mandrem Police. Along with the drugs, a mobile phone and a scooter worth Rs 80,000 were seized from Dsouza. An FIR has been registered, and the case is being investigated by PSI Abhishek Chodankar.

PRIVATE BUS DESTROYED IN FIRE NEAR MAPUSA, LOSS ESTIMATED OVER RS 5 LAKH

MAPUSA: A private bus, parked for repairs near Cunchelim, Mapusa, was completely destroyed in a fire on January 13. The bus, which had been parked at the location for several days, caught fire when dry grass underneath it was allegedly set ablaze. The owner of the bus claimed that the fire was intentionally started, leading to a loss estimated at over Rs 5 lakh. The police are currently investigating the incident.

MAN ARRESTED FOR ASSAULTING WIFE IN SALTETE

MARGAO: A man from the coastal belt of Saltete has been arrested for allegedly pretending to be an educated engineer, marrying a woman from the area, and subjecting her to assault and forced unnatural sex. The complaint was filed by the woman, who claimed that the accused, after marrying her, repeatedly assaulted and extorted money and property from her and her family. The Colva Police have registered a case under multiple sections of the BNS 2023, and further investigations are ongoing.

THREE ARRESTED FOR ABUSING AND ASSAULTING MINOR IN MARGAO

MARGAO: The Margao Police have arrested three individuals for forming an unlawful assembly and assaulting a minor boy with filthy language and physical violence. The accused—Shabaz Hawaldar, Saad Arkati, and Mohamad Usama Killedar—reportedly threatened the minor and circulated a video of the incident on social media. An FIR has been filed under various sections of the BNS 2023 and the Goa Children Act. The minor boy received medical treatment, and further investigations are underway.

Fertile land destroyed by highway expansion, farmers seek relief

Express concerns over debris and obstructions preventing paddy cultivation

Team Herald

PONDA: Farmers in Kerya-Khandepar have voiced their concerns over the ongoing impact of the National Highway (NH) expansion, which they say has brought farming activities to a halt. They claim that the fertile paddy fields, once thriving with crops, have been turned into dumping grounds for debris, including mud, small stones, and other waste, during the highway's widening process.

According to the farmers, the four-lane expansion at Kerya has severely damaged agricultural land, particularly at Shetate, and they are now calling on the authorities to clear the debris from their fields. "The fertile land is now



SANTOSH NAIK

“The fertile land is now filled with rough stones, gravel, and even medical waste, which is preventing us from resuming paddy cultivation – local farmer

“A few months ago, the NH authorities inspected the site and promised to clear the waste, but the mud and debris remain – Rocky Dias, farmer

filled with rough stones, gravel, and even medical waste, which is preventing us from resuming paddy cultivation," said one local farmer. Rocky Dias, a farmer

from the area, explained that despite previous complaints to the National Highway authorities, the promised clean-up of the site has yet to happen. "A few months ago, the NH au-

thorities inspected the site and promised to clear the waste, but the mud and debris remain," he said.

Farmers, including Dias and Ranganath Gaude, noted that paddy cultivation

has been at a standstill for the past few years due to the ongoing expansion works. While a few farmers have begun cultivating vegetables such as Vaigan, the majority are unable to till their land because of the large amounts of mud, rough stones, and gravel that have accumulated in the fields.

The farmers also pointed out that the highway's construction has had a negative impact on local wildlife, with the construction of large retaining walls hindering the movement of animals, including bison, across the highway. "The highway authorities have not considered the needs of local farmers or the wildlife in this area," said another local resident.

Complaint against Vagator clubs for noise pollution

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Goa State Pollution Control Board has lodged a complaint against the owner and manager of two clubs in Vagator for allegedly playing music beyond permissible limits and causing noise pollution during the last week of December.

According to the police, the complaint has been filed against the manager of Hill Top and Salud. Both clubs are accused of playing music above the allowable decibel limit, with readings recorded at 65.7 dB.

An FIR has been filed under Section 5 of the Noise Pollution (Regulation and Control) Rules, 2000, and Section 15 of the Environment Protection Act, 1986. The case is currently under investigation by Sandesh Chodankar, SDPO, Mapusa.

Min says no complaints from Campal residents over Lokotsav

Team Herald

PANJIM: Art and Culture Minister Govind Gaude on Tuesday claimed that his department had not received any complaints regarding inconvenience caused to Campal residents due to the annual Lokotsav, which will be held at Kala Academy, Darya Sangam, Campal, Panjim, from January 17 to 26.

"I am hearing this from you. To date, we have not received any complaint regarding hardships faced by the Campal residents. Adequate parking arrangements have been made in Campal to ease the movement of traffic. Everyone may face some problems, but all necessary measures will be taken," Gaude said.

"Lokotsav is a brand of Goa. Last month, we shifted the annual arts festival to the Taleigao plateau, but there, too, I received complaints about noise pollution. We are here to resolve problems, not to close down any festival. I don't want to inconvenience anyone," he added.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant will inaugurate the 10-day Lokotsav at 6 pm on January 17.

FESTIVAL FUN



SAGUN GAWADE

A boy flies a kite at Miramar Beach on the occasion of Makar Sankranti, the harvest festival, on Tuesday

One dead, two seriously injured in two road accidents

Team Herald

PONDA/PANJIM: A 75-year-old woman pedestrian succumbed to her injuries after being struck by a speeding two-wheeler in Borim.

The accident occurred on January 12, around 6:45 pm when Kalpesh Patil, aged 40, a resident of Parpatiwada, Borim, was riding his two-wheeler recklessly and collided with Suman Ram Naik, 75, from Mangirwada, Borim. Naik was rushed to Goa

Medical College and Hospital (GMC), Bambolim, but despite receiving medical treatment, she succumbed to her injuries. PSI Sandeep Nimbalkar is handling the investigation into the incident.

In a separate incident on Tuesday, two women were seriously injured when a speeding car driven by an intoxicated driver rammed into their two-wheeler near Ram Mandir at Old Tar, Colvale. The victims, identified as Zarina D'Souza, aged

43, and her 13-year-old daughter, Larissa, both from Revora, were admitted to hospital in critical condition.

The driver, Akash Lingudkar, was found to be drunk and was driving in the wrong lane at the time of the collision. Medical tests confirmed he was under the influence of alcohol. ASI Anil Pilgaonkar is leading the investigation, under the supervision of Colvale PI Vijay Rane Sardesai.

Three arrested for robbing Sancoale businessman

Team Herald

VASCO: The Verna Police have arrested three individuals allegedly involved in robbing a businessman from Sancoale.

The accused have been identified as Sachit Naik (55), also a businessman from Sancoale, Gokuldas Naik (45) of Borim, and Mandar Prabhu (31) of Shiroda. One of the assailants remains at large. The arrested individuals have been remanded in three days of police custody.

Mandar Prabhu has a history of criminal involvement, with cases registered against him at the Ponda and Quepem police stations, informed SP South, Sunita Sawant.

The incident occurred near Loto Garage, Santrant, Cortalim, on January 8, when the accused allegedly assaulted Vijayan T. Thottarayath (52), a businessman and proprietor of Jim Cam Souparnika Bar and Restaurant, and robbed him as he was travelling towards Margao in his car.

The robbers allegedly snatched a gold chain, a mobile phone, and Rs 10,000 in cash from Thottarayath, with the total value amounting to Rs 2 lakh. The victim sustained injuries to his right leg, wrist, and head.

Based on intelligence inputs, the police arrested the three accused. During the investigation, the police discovered that the assault was motivated by business rivalry. Thottarayath had previously worked at a bar and restaurant owned by Sachit Naik but had quit the job about a year and a half ago to open his own establishment.

The police have recovered the car, which had a fake number plate, along with five money caps, two iron pipes, a baseball bat, and an iron lever.

The accused have been remanded to police custody. The Verna police have registered the case, and further investigations are ongoing under the guidance of Verna PI Melson Colaco.

Crackdown on cyber fraud: South Goa Police solve 53 cases of cheating in 2024

Team Herald

MARGAO: In light of a sharp increase in cybercrime, police stations in South Goa have successfully resolved 53 out of 60 cheating cases registered in 2024. These cases encompass a range of fraudulent activities, including job recruitment scams, online phishing, delivery fraud, false marriage promises, and forgery.

Interestingly, the year 2023 saw a decline in cheating cases, with South Goa police registering only 35 incidents, of which 29 were solved. In 2022, the district recorded 56 cheating cases, with 28 successfully resolved. Over the past three years, many fraudsters have employed tactics such as obtaining victims' ATM PINs and OTPs through phone calls or by persuading them to click on malicious links.

Desperate job seekers have often been lured into depositing substantial sums into fraudulent accounts, enticed by the promise of high-paying positions with reputable companies or aboard cruise liners. The police have also

FRAUDULENT ACTIVITIES

Cases Registered in 2024: **60**
 Cases Solved: **53**
 Cases Registered in 2023: **35** (29 solved)
 Cases Registered in 2022: **56** (28 solved)



dealt with cases involving bounced cheques, misappropriation of funds, and fees for non-existent courses at fictitious institutions. In 2024, several cases were initially registered by police stations in South Goa but were subsequently transferred to the economic cell for further investigation.

A notable case occurred in November 2024 when Margao town police arrested Vishaya Gaude from Sao Jose de Areal and Soniya alias Roshan Somnath Achari from Achariwada-Sadashivgad, Karwar, in connection with a cash-for-job scam. Following a complaint from Sunil Borkar of Nagmodem, Navelim, an offence was registered against the duo under Section 420 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). The com-

plaint detailed that between January 20 and June 30, 2020, the accused dishonestly induced the complainant to pay Rs 16,12,500 under the pretext of securing a job in Karwar.

In another incident in November 2024, Margao police registered an offence against Bala Nandeshwar Rao and Shanti Bala Rao, a husband-wife duo, for allegedly defrauding a Curtorim resident of Rs 8.5 lakh by promising him a job abroad. The complaint stated that between September 2023 and April 2024, the accused, operating under the name Dream for Overseas Consulting Private Limited, induced the victim to make multiple bank transfers.

In a significant crackdown in November 2024,

Curchoem police arrested Tanvi Vast and Anand Jadhav, the branch manager of the Central Bank of India's Curchoem branch, for allegedly defrauding elderly account holders. The duo is suspected of orchestrating fraudulent transfers and misappropriating large sums of money, with estimates suggesting the total scam could reach crores. Following numerous complaints of unauthorised transactions, the suspects were remanded to police custody for further investigation.

Advocate Vinay Patker emphasised that such cheating cases often arise from a lack of awareness regarding safety measures when using internet banking or making online purchases. He noted that investigations typically involve gathering evidence such as witness statements, financial records, and digital evidence to establish the accused's deceitful actions.

A police inspector recently transferred from Colva police station advised the public to refrain from sharing personal and confidential information

with anyone claiming to be bank employees or police officers over the phone. He highlighted the complexity of detecting cheating cases, particularly with the rise of cyber fraudsters who extort money and threaten victims with false legal actions. The inspector also shared alarming examples of local

residents falling victim to scams, including one woman who lost Rs 7,50,571 after clicking a fraudulent link to pay her electricity bill. Another victim was convinced to part with Rs 40,000 under the promise of receiving larger rewards, while a Curtorim resident lost Rs 57,500 in a job scam.

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For positions below, Walk-in interviews will be conducted on 17th & 18th January 2025
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Position	Department	Qualification	Years of Exp	Shifts	Job Description
Team Leader	RF & Power Ops - Goa	Diploma / Bachelor's in Engineering (ECE / Mechanical / E&E)	4+ years of related experience	Shifts	*Responsible for coordinating, monitoring, supervising and executing the activities of one or more production areas. Assists in the development of departmental personnel to enhance skills, improve responsiveness. * 2-5 years of shop floor experience. * Candidate must have high level of skill and knowledge in manufacturing/production operations with demonstrated ability to function in a leadership role. * Very good interpersonal and communication skills.
Technician Process	RF & Power Ops - Goa	Diploma / Bachelor's in Engineering (ECE / Mechanical / E&E).	3 + Years related experience	Shifts	* Work closely with Team Leaders and Process Engineer to implement standard production processes. * Modify or develop new processes / methods, tools, fixtures or equipments for repeatable, reliable and cost effective manufacturing. * Must have experience in a medium volume / mix electro-mechanical manufacturing or production environment with an emphasis on manufacturing processes.

Walk-in interviews will be conducted between 10:30 am to 3:30 pm at "CommScope India Pvt. Ltd.", Plot No. N-2, Phase IV, Verna Industrial Estate, Verna, Goa.
 Please bring your updated bio data.

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