

Water to trickle down taps in Bardez after five days

CM expresses regrets; assures to initiate action against the engineer responsible for delay in opening gates of Amthane dam

Team Herald

PANJIM: Bardez and surrounding areas will finally receive tap water after a five-day shortage, following successful intervention by the Water Resources Department. With the help of Navy divers, the department has managed to open the jammed gates of Amthane dam in Bicholim, which will now allow water to flow to the Assonora water treatment plant.

It may be recalled that the water supply to Bardez was severely hit after left bank canal carrying water to Goa from the Tillari reservoir was breached on

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— Pramod Sawant, Chief Minister

Friday thereby plunging the whole of Bardez into drinking water crisis. While the supply from Tillari was entirely stopped to repair the canal, it turned out that the Water Resources Department (WRD) was unable to release water from the alternative source which happened to be the Amthane dam. It was reliably learnt after the Tillari supply was shut, the gates of Amthane dam were com-

pletely jammed.

For almost five days, after the Tillari canal ruptured, the Porvorim water treatment plant was shut down for want of raw water thus affecting supply to entire Bardez.

Chief Minister Pramod Sawant expressed regret over the delay and announced that an inquiry would be conducted into the issue. He assured that strict action would be tak-

en against the engineer responsible for the delay in opening the gates of Amthane Dam.

For the past five to six days, Bardez taluka has been relying on tankers for potable water. CM Sawant stated, “The entire Bardez region has faced a water shortage for the past five to six days. We regret this situation. The shortage occurred due to a rupture in the Tillari canal, which is now being fully renovated.” Authorities in Maharashtra have informed that the repairs to the Tillari canal at Bhomwadi, Kudase, will take three more days to complete.

Despite alternative arrangements being made through the Amthane Dam, the gates were not opened until now. CM Sawant confirmed, “Action will be taken against the engineer responsible for the crisis.”

Social worker Rajesh Dabholkar also weighed in, urging the government to conduct a comprehensive study of the recurring water shortages faced by Bardez and Porvorim areas every January. Dabholkar emphasised the need to identify the root causes and develop sustainable solutions for equitable access to water.

Cabinet nod to take over SEZ land at Bhutkhamb-Keri from Cipla

Team Herald

PANJIM: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Wednesday said that the government has taken over the Kerim Plateau land under new Special Economic Zone (SEZ) policy and a clean project will come up on the site.

It may be recalled that the Nylon 6,6 project was stopped after locals staged a violent agitation against it fearing that it would have adverse impact on the environment and the village three decades ago.

The villagers had launched massive agitation against the Nylon 6,6 project citing it was pollution oriented and would harm the water resources, bagayats plantations etc.

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pany Secretary and a Chartered Accountant in the Finance Department on contract basis.

“So far there was no system of having a company secretary and a chartered accountant in the finance department. For the time being it is being done on contract basis and later permanent posts will be created,” the CM said.

Sawant said the cabinet also approved the proposal for amendment to the Goa Provision for the Water

Supply Act 2003.

The CM also said the cabinet has also approved the proposal of filling two posts of lecturers in medical imaging technology and one post in Optometry on contract basis in allied health science courses of Goa Medical College and Hospital (GMC), Bambolim.

The Chief Minister said the cabinet also approved Goa VAT amendment bill and urgent repairs of Government College, Khandola and also approved the proposal for the amendment to Goa Goods and Services Tax (GST) Act 2017 as per the central GST.

“The cabinet has also approved the transfer of 4000 square meter of government land for the Directorate of Health Services (DHS) for Public Health Centre (PHC) at Mormogoa,” said the CM.

UP native arrested for extorting money from Siolim resident

Accused cheated victim through impersonation, using computer resources to facilitate the crime

Team Herald

PANJIM: A man from Uttar Pradesh has been arrested by the Cyber Crime Police for extorting money from a Siolim resident by threatening her with a fake police complaint.

The Cyber Crime Police Station registered a case under various sections of the BNSS and the IT Act after the victim was duped by an unknown person who impersonated a Delhi Crime Branch police inspector. The victim was informed that a police complaint had been filed against her and was sent forged letters in the name of the Supreme Court of India. The accused demanded that she transfer Rs 1 crore in several transactions to three different bank accounts.

The accused cheated the victim through impersonation, using computer resources to facilitate the crime.

Based on technical and

BIGGER LINK

■ During the probe, cops unearth two additional bank accounts linked to seven other cyber fraud cases across various states, amounting to a total fraud of Rs 2.58 crore

■ Two mobile phones, a laptop, a tablet and two hard drives recovered

■ Four other suspects in connection with the same crime arrested earlier

financial analysis, and following interrogation of the arrested individual, the police traced a suspect involved in operating mule bank accounts for money transfers. A team, led by senior officials from the Cyber Crime Police Station, travelled to Deoria, Uttar Pradesh, and arrested Rahul Mishra, who was involved in the scam.

During further questioning, investigators discovered details of two additional bank accounts linked to seven other cyber fraud cases across various states, amounting to a total fraud of Rs 2.58 crore. Mishra is currently in police custody.

The police have recovered two mobile phones, a laptop, a tablet, and two hard drives.

Cyber Crime Police have previously arrested four other suspects in connection with the same crime, bringing the total number of arrests to five.

The Goa Police Cyber Crime Unit has advised the public to remain vigilant against fraudulent calls from individuals claiming to be police or Enforcement Directorate officials demanding money. Before transferring any funds, citizens are urged to verify the bank account holder's name and contact the Cyber Crime PS, Ribandar, or dial 1930 immediately.

PIECE BY PIECE



Work for the Porvorim elevated corridor in full swing. A huge crane holding a slab to be used in the bridge

3-year-old drowns in swimming pool at Saligao

Team Herald

CALANGUTE: In a tragic incident, a three-year-old child from Mumbai allegedly drowned in a swimming pool at Saligao on Wednesday evening.

The incident occurred in a guest house situated at Grande Morod, Saligao where the three-year-old child accidentally fell into a swimming pool and drowned. The child, part of a family from Maharashtra

on vacation, was walking with his father near the pool when the tragedy occurred.

According to the police, the father was briefly distracted by a mobile phone call, during which time the

curious toddler wandered too close to the pool and slipped into the water. The child was immediately rescued and rushed to the Primary Health Centre (PHC), Candolim where he was declared brought dead.

The Saligao police have registered an unnatural death case in this connection and PSI David Costa is conducting further investigations under the guidance of Saligao PI Somnath Majik.

HC directs GCZMA to act against structures in turtle nesting sites at Agonda beach

Team Herald

PANJIM: The High Court of Bombay at Goa on Wednesday asked the Goa Coastal Zone management Authority (GCZMA) to take action against establishments built near the Olive Ridley turtle nesting site at Agonda Beach, a protected area, failing which it pass an order to seal all the premises.

During the hearing of a public interest litigation (PIL) writ petition filed by Aman Gupta regarding construc-

tion of buildings in No Development Zone (NDZ) and near the turtle nesting site at Agonda, the Court asked the GCZMA to take action failing which it will pass an order to seal all the premises.

The petitioner stated that Agonda Beach is a protected area marked as a nesting site of Olive Ridley turtles. The GCZMA had declared the beach as a No Development Zone (NDZ) and 82,000 square metres beach area was marked as a turtle nesting site and has

held that Agonda Beach has zero carrying capacity.

The petitioner further contended that some construction is going on next to the beach and any commercial activity would harm the ecosystem.

During the last hearing, the GCZMA had stated that it had inspected the area and had initiated some action. But none of the establishments has been shut, the petitioner said.

Petitioner's counsel Adv Vivek Rodrigues said that

as per the beach carrying capacity report, zero establishment can be put up at Agonda beach being a turtle nesting site.

The court also allowed an intervention application filed by the Alchemist Asset reconstruction through its officer Akshat Sharma. Sharma had had also filed complaints and based upon which some action like issuing show cause notices were taken by the GCZMA but the same not taken to its logical conclusion.

Nirmala urges govt to request for exclusive date on Mhadei issue

Team Herald

PANJIM: Former Minister and Mhadei Bachao Abhiyan (MBA) convenor Nirmala Sawant on Wednesday urged the State government to request the Supreme Court for an exclusive date for the hearing of Mhadei river matter.

In a press statement released ahead of the Mhadei matter in listed for hearing in the Supreme Court on Thursday, Sawant said, “Given that the matter is now at number 112 on the list, there is little chance for the Supreme Court to reach that number. Why can't the Goa government request the Supreme Court for an exclusive date for the hearing?”

The State government wants to demonstrate to the people of Goa how much concern the government has for Mhadei, so they are sending nearly half a dozen lawyers in addition to those from Mumbai and Delhi. There is a significant number of government officers present, as if it were a trial court, Sawant said.

The MBA convenor alleged that the State government was misleading the people of Goa, but they cannot continue to do so indefinitely at the cost of the government exchequer.

Porvorim police bust gang involved in auto, two-wheeler thefts

One arrested, two other accomplices besides a minor from Maharashtra on the run



Team Herald

PANJIM: The Porvorim Police Station has successfully uncovered a series of motorcycle and auto thefts in the PDA Colony area of Porvorim, as well as other parts of North Goa, leading to the arrest of one individual and the recovery of stolen property worth around Rs 4 lakh.

According to SP North, Akshat Kaushal, the police registered an FIR based on a complaint filed by Saurabh, a resident of Alto Porvorim. He reported that his Royal Enfield Himalayan (registration GA 04 P 5100), valued at Rs 1.5 lakh, was stolen from the PDA Colony area on January 19.

Following the FIR, Porvorim PI Rahul Parab formed a specialised team to investigate the case. Us-

ing CCTV footage and intelligence gathering, the team located and arrested 19-year-old Lalit Vaigankar from Sodiem, Siolim. The stolen Royal Enfield Himalayan was recovered in Porvorim, along with a KTM Duke stolen from Mapusa.

During interrogation, Vaigankar revealed his involvement with others in the theft of an Aprilia scooter from Assonora, within the jurisdiction of the Colvale Police Station. The scooter was subsequently recovered. Additionally, a Yamaha motorcycle stolen from Sawantwadi, Maharashtra, was also retrieved.

The Porvorim Police are now searching for two more suspects connected to these thefts.

Police also stated that the accused allegedly confessed that they were drug addicts, would steal the

bikes and then sell them off in Belgaum for a throwaway price to buy and inhale drugs.

The accused are history-sheeters and had befriended each other in various lock ups when they were lodged for petty crimes and offences earlier and today were a part of a large syndicate, said police.

The investigation also revealed Vaigankar's involvement in a temple theft in Moira, under the Mapusa Police Station's jurisdiction. A 17-year-old minor, originally from Maharashtra and residing in Mapusa, has been identified as an accomplice.

The investigation is ongoing, led by PI Rahul Parab, PSI Arun Shirodkar, and PSI Sachin Shirodkar, with supervision from Vishwesh Karpe, SDPO Porvorim, and SP North Akshat Kaushal.

ST panel tells Forest Dept not to stop cremations at Khandepar

Team Herald

PONDA: The Goa Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Chairperson Deepak Karmalkar visited at Opa, Khandepar, in response to a complaint filed by Jaiwant Audo Gaude and other local villagers of Opa, Khandepar against the officials for denying them from their traditional right of cremation which they were using from last so many years.

The Chairperson directed the Forest Department officials not to stop the villagers of Opa, Khandepar till the disposal of the pending matter and steps should be taken to resolve the issue by the Forest Department, Curti-Khandepar Village Panchayat and the



affected villagers of Opa, Khandepar.

Jiss Varkey, IFS, Deputy Conservator of Forest Panjim; Deepak E Tandel, Range Forest Officer (RFO) Ponda; Deepa A Redkar, Forest Guard Ponda; Ponda PI Vijaynath Kavlekar, Adv Upasso Gaunker, Curti-Khandepar

sarpanch Abhijit Gaude, Jaiwant Gaude, Sudesh Gaude and others members were present.

When contacted, sarpanch Abhijit Gaude told O Herald that as per traditional and rituals the ST communities living at Opa had been conducting cremation in the village. This

was going on till the government declared the forest areas. Due to this the Forest Department is not allowing villagers to perform their traditional and ritual in the area. In the past the Forest Department officials had stopped cremation midway much to the chagrin of ST community.

“Last week the panchayat members discussed the issue with Forest Department officials and told them not to stop cremation in the area. And that the ST community should not be deprived of their rights. The Forest Department officials have now told us to identify 2,000 square metres of land in the village for construction of a crematorium,” said Gaude, who also belong to ST community.