

4 cops suspended for drug smuggling at Colvale Jail

DySP among the accused; sources say drones being used to drop off contraband and mobile phones inside jail grounds

Team Herald

MAPUSA / COLVALE: Four policemen, among them a deputy superintendent, were suspended on Tuesday for their alleged involvement in smuggling drugs into the Central Jail at Colvale, putting another stamp on the prison's dubious status as a hotbed for crimes like smuggling and drug trafficking. Last month, an IRB constable, Navdeep Pavane, was suspended after he was caught attempting to smuggle narcotics and mobile phones into the jail during a routine frisking. Pavane is suspected of having links with policemen suspended on Tuesday. Those include Deputy Superintendent of Jails Krishna Usgaonkar, IRB ASI Suraj Toraskar, Head Constable Rameshwar Talkar, and Constable Prasad Shetye. They were accused of facilitat-

DUBIOUS RECORD

▶▶ The four suspended cops are Deputy Superintendent of Jails Krishna Usgaonkar, IRB ASI Suraj Toraskar, Head Constable Rameshwar Talkar, and Constable Prasad Shetye

▶▶ They were accused of facilitating the supply of drugs to inmates and had reportedly struck a deal worth Rs 5 lakh

▶▶ The incident first came to light last week after a raid was conducted in one of the accused's rooms, where they reportedly confessed to smuggling drugs into the facility



▶▶ Last month, IRB constable Navdeep Pavane was suspended after he was caught attempting to smuggle narcotics and mobile phones into the jail. He is suspected of having links with policemen suspended on Tuesday

activities at the Colvale Jail, which has become a hub for smuggling operations. Sources within the jail administration reveal that criminals - sometimes with political backing - have exploited advanced technologies, including drones, to bypass the high-security walls of the prison. Drones are reportedly used to drop contraband, such as drugs and mobile phones, into the jail grounds under the cover of darkness.

"Whenever we notice such activities, we increase surveillance, but these operations continue, often under the cover of night. Criminals use high-tech drones to deliver items to inmates," said a source within the jail administration. "At times, footballs stuffed with contraband are shot over the walls, targeting the inmates inside."

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Our work damaged water pipelines, admits Smart City CEO

Unsmart planning plagues much-delayed project as Panjim's cup of woes overflows

Team Herald

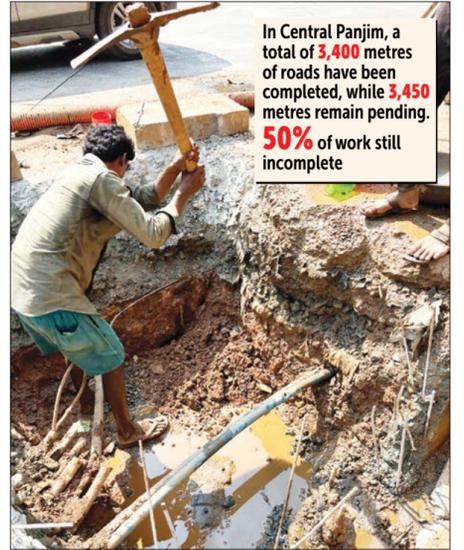
PANJIM: After their civic work dug up dozens of city roads, threw traffic out of gear and missed multiple deadlines - here is the big reveal. Imagine Panaji Smart City Development Limited (IPSCDL) CEO Sanjit Rodrigues admitted on Tuesday that the work had led to the damage of water pipelines in the capital.

"We have damaged pipelines and snapped cables while executing our work. Though our response time to rectify them may not be acceptable to the people, but we're making the effort to respond and repair," Rodrigues stated.

The question of people's acceptance is pertinent, since Panjim residents' patience has been running thin after multiple missed deadlines, with even the High Court questioning the pace at which the project is being executed. Data on the ground shows that over 50% of the roadwork in Panjim remain unfinished - while 3,400 metres of roads have been completed, a staggering 3,450 metres are still pending.

None of this seemed to affect Rodrigues too much, who claimed to be confident that the roads would be ready by the March 31 deadline. "As far as roads are concerned, we are fine with the March 31 deadline. As far as sewage is concerned, the major work is at St Inez and Tadmard for which also a deadline has been given. We do not want the public to face inconvenience on the road."

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In Central Panjim, a total of 3,400 metres of roads have been completed, while 3,450 metres remain pending. 50% of work still incomplete

File photo of PWD workers digging a road at St Inez in search of the water leakage point after a pipeline was damaged

HOW THE MARCH 31, 2025, DEADLINE WAS REACHED

March 26, 2024: AG Devidas Pangam tells HC that directives had been issued to complete all work May 31, 2024

April 23: IPSCDL compliance report placed in court states that it is on track to make road carriageway functional by May 31, 2024 at all locations where works has been taken up.

July 24: AG submits that all the roads have now been opened. Adv Shivan Desai submits that though the roads have been opened, but much work was still left

August 8: Petitioners' counsel submits photos of unsafe, incomplete works and unmotorable roads and

urges the court to set up an independent committee for scrutiny of the work

August 23: AG submits a plan for work on 200-metre stretch from Caculo Mall Junction from January 1 to February 2, 2025. Adv Desai again points out the deficiencies and gaps in the work

August 28: AG submits in court that temporary measures were being taken to mitigate the situation after the rains

January 8, 2025: AG tells the Court that work on three roads to be completed by January 20, and the Caculo work stretch by March 31

US military plane with 205 deported Indians flies in from Texas

Packed off on aircraft with just one toilet; highlights the dehumanising treatment meted out to deportees

AGENCIES, NEW DELHI: A US C-17 Globemaster military aircraft carrying 205 Indian nationals deported for illegal entry into the United States took off from Texas and is expected to land in Amritsar, Punjab, Wednesday morning, sources confirmed. This marks the first of many such deportation flights as part of US President Donald Trump's hard-line immigration policy. The flight, which reportedly had only one toilet for all 205 deportees, highlights the harsh conditions these individuals faced. The deportees, all verified as Indian nationals through New Delhi's involvement in the process, are part of a larger

group of 18,000 Indians identified for deportation. US authorities have recently stepped up efforts to locate and remove undocumented immigrants from the country.

"For the first time in history, we are loading illegal aliens into military aircraft and flying them back to their home countries," Trump told reporters earlier. Similar deportation flights have been conducted to Guatemala, Peru, and Honduras.

India has expressed willingness to facilitate the return of Indian nationals living illegally abroad, provided their nationality is verified.

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DIGITAL INDIA, ANALOG DELIVERY



Even as India enters the much touted 'Amrit Kaal', officials load hi-tech Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) atop a humble cycle-rickshaw for the Delhi Assembly Election 2025 at a distribution centre, in New Delhi, on Tuesday

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Goa bags 3rd gold at National Games

Team Herald

PANJIM: Goa secured its third gold medal in the 38th National Games being held in Dehradun, Uttarakhand. **Shubham Debnath** won a gold medal in traditional Yogasana yesterday. This is the third medal



for the State and all have been gold. Originally from West Bengal, Shubham now represents Goa. The 21 year old keeps shifting between the two States. He has been practising yoga from his days at school.

Sahitya Akademi excluding Romi for awards is an injustice: Activists

Team Herald

PANJIM: February 4, 1987, marked the day Konkani was declared the official language of Goa, but even 38 years later, the debate over script recognition for Konkani literature continues to simmer, with activists questioning Sahitya Akademi's decision to award only Konkani books written in Devanagari, but not in Romi.

Former Speaker and Konkani advocate Tomazinho Cardozo highlighted that while the Sahitya Akademi only recognises Konkani books in Devanagari script for its awards, this wasn't always the case. "In the past, books in various scripts were considered," Cardozo explained.

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Romi Lipi supporters hold a peaceful protest at Azad Maidan, Panjim on Tuesday

ROMI LIPI SUPPORTERS SEEK EQUAL STATUS FOR ALL SCRIPTS

PANJIM: Romi Lipi supporters held a peaceful protest at Azad Maidan, Panjim on Tuesday, demanding equal recognition to all the Konkani scripts as enshrined in Article 14 and 29 (1) of the Constitution. They warned the State government to take note of their demand to include

Romi Konkani as an official language of the state or face protests and court battles in the near future. They supporters alleged that many persons who took a part in the agitation for justice to Romi Konkani also did not do anything for the injustice meted out to the script. More on Pg 2 >>

"The Sahitya Akademi was founded to promote literature in all Indian languages, including those in diverse scripts. By focusing solely on Devanagari, it neglects works in Romi and Kannada, both of which hold deep cultural significance for Konkani speakers

- Kennedy Afonso, Global Romi Lipi Abhiyan president

"The Devanagari lobby's tactics are suppressing the diversity of Konkani literature. Romi script played a central role in the language's history, with the first periodicals and newspapers being published in Romi, and even major figures like Shenoi Goembab writing in it. The Sahitya Akademi's refusal to recognise Romi is an injustice to this history

- Michael Gracias, Konkani writer

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