

# Kundaim farmers demand action against CRZ violations

Cry out for help to save paddy fields; want govt to repair bandharas

Team Herald

**PONDA:** Farmers from Kundaim have urged the government to take immediate action against construction activities violating Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) rules. They have also demanded the urgent repair of a breach in the riverside bandhara to prevent saline water from entering their paddy fields.

Vijesh Naik, president of the Kundaim Chikhalpaine Farmers' Tenant Association (KCFTA), expressed serious concerns over certain unauthorised constructions taking place in

**“If construction activities in the CRZ area continue to be encouraged, it will destroy fishing activities for local farmers. This area is crucial as a catchment zone during heavy rainfall, helping to prevent flooding**

– Vijesh Naik, KCFTA president

the CRZ area. He emphasised that the government act swiftly to prevent such activities, as violations of CRZ rules could have a devastating impact on local farmers' fishing activities.

“If construction activities in the CRZ area continue to be encouraged, it will destroy fishing activities as well. This area is crucial as a catchment zone during

heavy rainfall, helping to prevent flooding,” said Naik.

Naik brought to the government's attention that a 1-kilometre-long bandhara, constructed along the riverside to protect paddy fields, has been breached over a 150-metre stretch. This breach has allowed saline water to enter the fields, submerging them and making cultivation impossible.

“It has now been five years since our farming has come to a halt, as the fields remain submerged during high tide,” he lamented.

Naik pointed out that although the government had previously undertaken repairs on the bandhara at a cost of Rs 2 crore, the work carried out by the contractor was substandard. As a result, the repair efforts have failed to provide any benefit to the farmers.

He urged the government to direct the contractor to undertake proper repairs so that farmers could resume paddy cultivation at the earliest.

## HSSC exams starts from tomorrow

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** A total of 17,718 (regular category) candidates will appear for the Class XII examination conducted by the Goa Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education from Monday, February 10 to March 1, 2025.

The exams will be held across 20 centers in the State. The examination will begin at 9:30 am for all streams including Arts, Commerce, Science and Vocational. Candidates are advised to be present at the examination centre at least 45 minutes before the commencement of the exam.

## CANVAS OF TALENT

SAGUN GAWADE



Visitors browse through the State Art Exhibition at Kala Academy, that showcases local artists' creative talents and providing a platform for artistic expression

## PMC considers house tax hike amid rising expenses

Team Herald

**PONDA:** Ponda Municipal Council (PMC) Chairperson Anand Naik has stated that the council is considering increasing house tax due to rising administrative expenses. He noted that house tax rates have not been raised for the past few years, despite other B-grade municipalities in Goa increasing their rates to Rs 20 per square metre. Some panchayats in the taluka have also revised their house tax rates. The last hike was implemented in 2019, and Naik emphasised that house tax should be revised every four years.

Naik confirmed that the council will deliberate on the house tax revision in its next meeting. Meanwhile, the budget meeting for the financial year 2025-26 was held, approving an estimated budget of Rs 39.36 crore, which remains balanced. He highlighted that PMC's income and expenditure are nearly equal, with the main focus on recovering rent and other tax dues. Over the last two months, the council has successfully

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Additionally, the Goa Waste Management Corporation has issued a letter directing PMC to pay Rs 1 crore towards waste disposal. This payment pertains to the disposal of PMC's waste at the Saligao Waste Treatment Plant over a one-year period. Currently, PMC collects Rs 70 per household every month for waste disposal services.

Naik further revealed that PMC incurs a monthly expenditure of Rs 40 lakh on staff salaries, along with Rs 10 lakh allocated for pensioners.

## OBC leaders meet CM, demand welfare ministry and reservation

Team Herald

**PONDA:** A crucial meeting was held in the cabin of Goa Legislative Assembly Speaker Ramesh Tawadkar to discuss the long-pending demands of the Other Backward Classes (OBCs). The meeting was attended by Chief Minister Pramod Sawant, OBC leader and Minister Subhash Shirodkar, and MLA Viresh Borkar, along with representatives of the Rashtriya OBC Mahasangh.

Goa State President of Rashtriya OBC Mahasangh, Madhu Naik, stated that several long-standing issues were discussed, including the demand for reservations in postgraduate courses at Goa Medical College (GMC) for OBCs, Scheduled Tribes (ST), and Scheduled Castes (SC). Other key concerns included conducting an OBC census, the creation of an OBC Welfare Ministry, and financial assistance for OBCs during final rites.

Following the discussions, Water Resources Minister Subhash Shirodkar submitted a memorandum to Chief Minister Pramod Sawant outlining the key demands of the OBC community.

Caste based census in Goa, creation of an OBC welfare ministry, construction of an OBC Bhavan, community centre to serve as a hub for OBC welfare initiatives, hostels for OBC students, State Honours for B P Mandal, self employment schemes, revision of non-creamy layer income limit, Savitribai Phule Prashikshan Yojana, Savitribai Phule Prashikshan Yojana, expansion of Tribal Welfare Schemes, scholarship increases, tuition fee subsidies, admissions, reservation and loan subsidies and overseas scholarships, were some of the demands of the community that were discussed.



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## Davorlim man held for sharing child porn

The cyber crime police tracked down Sachin Joglekar using his IP address and found incriminating material on his phone

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** The Goa Cyber Crime Police arrested a 52-year-old Margao resident for the possession and transmission of Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM), following an investigation initiated based on a report from the Ministry of Home Affairs Portal Cyber Tipline.

The accused identified as Sachin Joglekar, a resident of Adanwada, Madkai and currently residing at Davorlim was arrested by the police. He was traced using the IP address reported by Cyber Tipline. The accused had stored and transmitted objectionable content using his email id and mobile number and incriminating material was found on his mobile, informed police.

The case was registered after receiving information from Google through Cyber Tipline portal under MHA, which flagged a file containing explicit material involving minors. The data analysis revealed that the said file was produced on September 17, 2024 using a mobile phone, with its GPS location tracked. Based on technical analysis and local surveillance, the suspect was identified for storing and transmitting the illegal material electronically.

The investigation further revealed that on November 24, 2024, the accused, had stored and transmitted objectionable content using his email id and mobile number.

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On February 7, a police team led by PSI Mandar Gaonkar, along with constables Yash Kole and Sumay Bhagat, under the supervision of SP (Cyber Crime) Rahul Gupta, IPS, ASP Akshat Ayush, IPS and PI Deepak Pednekar, conducted operations in Ponda and Margao, leading to the arrest of the accused.

During interrogation, incriminating material was found on the accused's mobile phone, which was seized under panchanama.

The Cyber Crime police have registered the case under Section 67-B of the Information Technology Act and Section 15 (1) of POCSO act. The accused is presently remanded in police custody and PI Deepak Pednekar is conducting further investigations.

The Goa police has appealed to the public to report any suspicious online activities through cyber-crime.gov.in or nearest police station.

## Authorities issue ultimatum on abandoned vehicles in Candolim

Team Herald

**CALANGUTE:** The Candolim panchayat has issued a public notice instructing owners of abandoned vehicles to remove them from the roads or face seizure and auction.

The North Goa district collector had previously issued a similar directive, highlighting that these vehicles are causing traffic obstructions, hindering road-widening projects and inconveniencing the public. Furthermore, officials warned that the abandoned vehicles have become breeding grounds for mosquitoes, increasing the risk of vector-borne diseases.

Authorities have identified 42 such vehicles within the Candolim panchayat area, including 18 two-wheelers and 24 four-wheelers, all of which are liable to be seized.

Vehicle owners have been given a six-month window to submit their claims. If no claims are received within this period, the vehicles will be confiscated and auctioned as per legal provisions.

## Sex trafficking: Andhra man held for exploiting Vasco woman in Muscat

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** The third accused in the Vasco human trafficking case, involving the exploitation of victims under the pretext of offering jobs abroad, was arrested at Chennai International Airport.

The accused has been identified as Akram Shaikh from Andhra Pradesh. The Crime Branch police had previously arrested two individuals—35-year-old Vasco resident Sayyed Shaikh and Margao resident Masthan Khan alias Pathan—in November 2024. Both accused are currently in judicial custody.

According to the police, the duo acted as overseas recruiting agents and deceived a woman from Vasco by promising her a job as a housemaid in Muscat. Upon arrival, she was confined in

a flat along with 11 other Indian women, where they were deprived of proper food and accommodation. With the assistance of other accused individuals in Muscat, the victim was transported to a Sheikh's house for work as a housemaid, where she was pressured to provide sexual favours.

After escaping from Muscat, the victim filed a police complaint with the help of NGO ARZ's founder and director Arunendra Pandey. Based on her complaint, the police arrested Sayyed Shaikh and Masthan Khan. Following their interrogation, a Red Corner Notice was issued against the third accused, Akram Shaikh, who was allegedly involved in the illicit trade and operating in Muscat. He was apprehended at Chennai International Airport upon his

arrival in India.

The police have already charge-sheeted Abdulla Sheikh and Masthan Khan, while Akram Shaikh was listed as absconding in the charge sheet, officials said.

As per information provided by Akram, the human trafficking racket, which lures Indian women with false job offers abroad, is allegedly operated by one Humood Sheikh from Muscat. He is reportedly running a recruitment agency and recruiting women from various states across India. Police stated that they have contacted the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), and the respective state police regarding other women trafficked by the gang and to take necessary action against the recruitment agency.

## Assagao panchayat warns owners of ferocious dogs

Team Herald

**ASSAGAO:** The Assagao village panchayat has issued a stern warning to owners of ferocious dogs, stating that strict action will be taken if they are found unleashed in public areas.

A public notice issued by the panchayat highlights that incidents of dog bites have occurred within its jurisdiction. It also reiterates that the government has banned certain breeds, including Pit Bulls and Rottweilers, in the country.

“Therefore, owners of such breeds must not leave them unattended or allow them to roam in open public spaces. If found violating this directive, strict action will be taken against them as per the law,” states the public notice issued by Assagao Sarpanch Hanu-mant Naik.



The warning comes in the wake of a recent incident in which a 40-year-old resident, Vinil Salgaonkar of Badem-Assagao, was bitten twice by a Rottweiler. The attack, which resulted in injuries to his leg, occurred after the dog's owner had unleashed it during the night.

The panchayat has urged residents to comply with the regulations to prevent further such incidents.

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**Deadline for submissions: 12th February 2025**  
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