

# Ponda underpass faces gas safety concerns

Locals demand coordination between all stakeholders; gas agency conducts site inspection

Team Herald

**PONDA:** In light of the gas pipeline rupture incident at Bhatlem in Panjim, Ponda residents have expressed concerns that a similar situation could occur at the ongoing underpass construction near the KTC bus stand. Locals have demanded that all the stakeholders—such as PWD, NH authorities, and the gas company should coordinate to ensure that the work is executed by adhering to all the safety measures. On Sunday, February 9, a gas pipeline was allegedly damaged by workers carry-

ing out the Smart City works in Bhatlem area in Panjim. A video showing the natural gas leak and workers fleeing for their lives during sewage work for the Smart City project went viral on social media and has raised concerns among locals in Ponda. It is important to note that the four-lane widening project of NH 4A has been underway since last year, starting at the KTC bus stand in Ponda, with the underpass construction now nearing completion. However, the gas pipeline that runs along the construction route has not been relocated, despite more than

80% of the work completed. While the underpass construction progresses, with workers engaged in tasks such as laying steel rods, preparing foundations, and conducting welding work, the gas pipeline remains an obstruction. The remaining tasks cannot proceed due to the gas line running under the shoulder of the old road. After significant excavation, the road's mud shoulder, which has a width of about 1.5 meters and a height of around 7 meters, is still obstructed by the gas pipeline, preventing further excavation and construction. Despite this, workers continue their tasks in the immediate vicinity of the gas lines. Naresh Naik, a local resident said, "The underpass is crucial as it will provide vehi-

cles access to the KTC bus stand, located nearby. Given that welding is being used in the foundation and slab work, stringent safety precautions should be taken, particularly as the area is crowded. A gas leak in such a scenario could result in a devastating fire." Chanda Parwar, Assistant Engineer for PWD NH, stated that a joint inspection by the PWD and Goa Natural Gas Pvt. Ltd. (GNGPL) was conducted on December 18, 2024. "A letter was sent to GNGPL regarding the gas line obstructing the underpass construction. GNGPL has since responded, assuring that safety measures will be implemented and a consultant has been appointed to ensure the work continues without risk," he added. When contacted GNGPL, an official at Porvorim informed O Herald that they had already discussed the issue with NH authorities and conducted a site inspection of the underpass construction on February 11. They assured that appropriate actions would be taken to safeguard the public and workers by relocating the gas line obstructing the underpass construction area.

# Colvale prisoner shoves pen into fellow inmate's eye

Team Herald

**MAPUSA:** In a rare and shocking incident, a prisoner attacked another with a pen, causing serious injuries to his eye and face. The incident occurred on Monday evening at Colvale Central Jail, when a prisoner assaulted Aziz Asif while he was asleep. Although fights and attacks between prisoners are not uncommon in jails, the use of a pen as a weapon is an unusual and concerning occurrence. The injured prisoner, Asif, was quickly taken to the North Goa District Hospital. He sustained sig-

nificant damage to his eye, and his face was also badly bruised in the attack. The assailant, an under-trial prisoner, had only recently been transferred to Colvale Jail. Sources informed that he had been moved from one cell to the same cell as Asif, and despite requests from Asif, he was not re-assigned to another cell by the authorities. Sources indicate that the injured inmate, Asif, had previously been involved in an altercation with another prisoner. It is believed that this latest attack may be linked to the earlier incident.

# Zero tolerance towards lawbreakers: DGP Alok Kumar

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** Director General of Police (DGP) Alok Kumar, has warned that there will be zero tolerance towards those who take the law into their own hands and damage the peaceful image of the State. He also urged stakeholders to act more responsibly. DGP Kumar stated, "We have taken strict action and preventative measures in Goa, especially in tourist areas. We have coastal and tourist police, along with additional nakabandi in these areas." He added, "Whether tourists or locals, we are booking cases and arresting those involved in criminal activities. Everyone is requested to ensure that the peaceful image of Goa is maintained." The DGP also called on stakeholders to act responsibly in managing law and order incidents. Kumar made these remarks after the launch of the 'Swasth Police - Sashakt Police' initiative, a collaborative effort with VIANAAR, the Indian Medical Association (IMA), Bicholim, and the Telemedicine Society of India (TSI), Goa Chapter. The initiative was launched by Chief Minister Pramod Sawant. Kumar commended the initiative, emphasising the importance of accessible healthcare within police

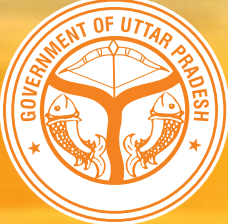
stations. He acknowledged the significant contribution of Vianaar, IMA Bicholim, and TSI in improving the health and well-being of the police force. As part of the initiative, essential medical equipment and consumables were donated to 14 North Goa Police Stations. The equipment was officially handed over to DGP Alok Kumar in the presence of DIG (HQ) Ajay Krishan Sharma, IPS, SP North Goa Akshat Kaushal, IPS, SP (Training) Sucheta Desai, and other senior police officers, including SPs and DySPs. To ensure effective use of the new equipment, selected police personnel underwent hands-on training, conducted by IMA Bicholim and TSI Goa Chapter, on the same day. This initiative highlights the power of collaboration in building a resilient and well-equipped police force, ensuring that they are prepared to handle medical emergencies while serving the community.

# GMC introduces queue management system at super specialty block


Team Herald

**PANJIM:** The Goa Medical College (GMC), Bambolim introduced queue management system at its Super Specialty block. A circular issued by the GMC medical superintendent Dr Rajesh Patil states, "The token numbers for Out-Patient Departments (OPDs) through the Queue Management System (QMS) at the Super Specialty Block shall be issued to patients at 8 am on all OPD days by the staff designated by the nodal officer, following which the patients shall be registered at the respective OPD registration counters." This is as per the OPD registration timing followed at the GMC, the circular added. Meanwhile, the Goa State Pharmacy Council (GSPC) has warned medical stores and registered pharmacists against advertising discounts on medicines through signboards or social media. "The GSPC has received complaints that some of the owners of medical stores put boards at their premises and also through social media to offer discounts to attract

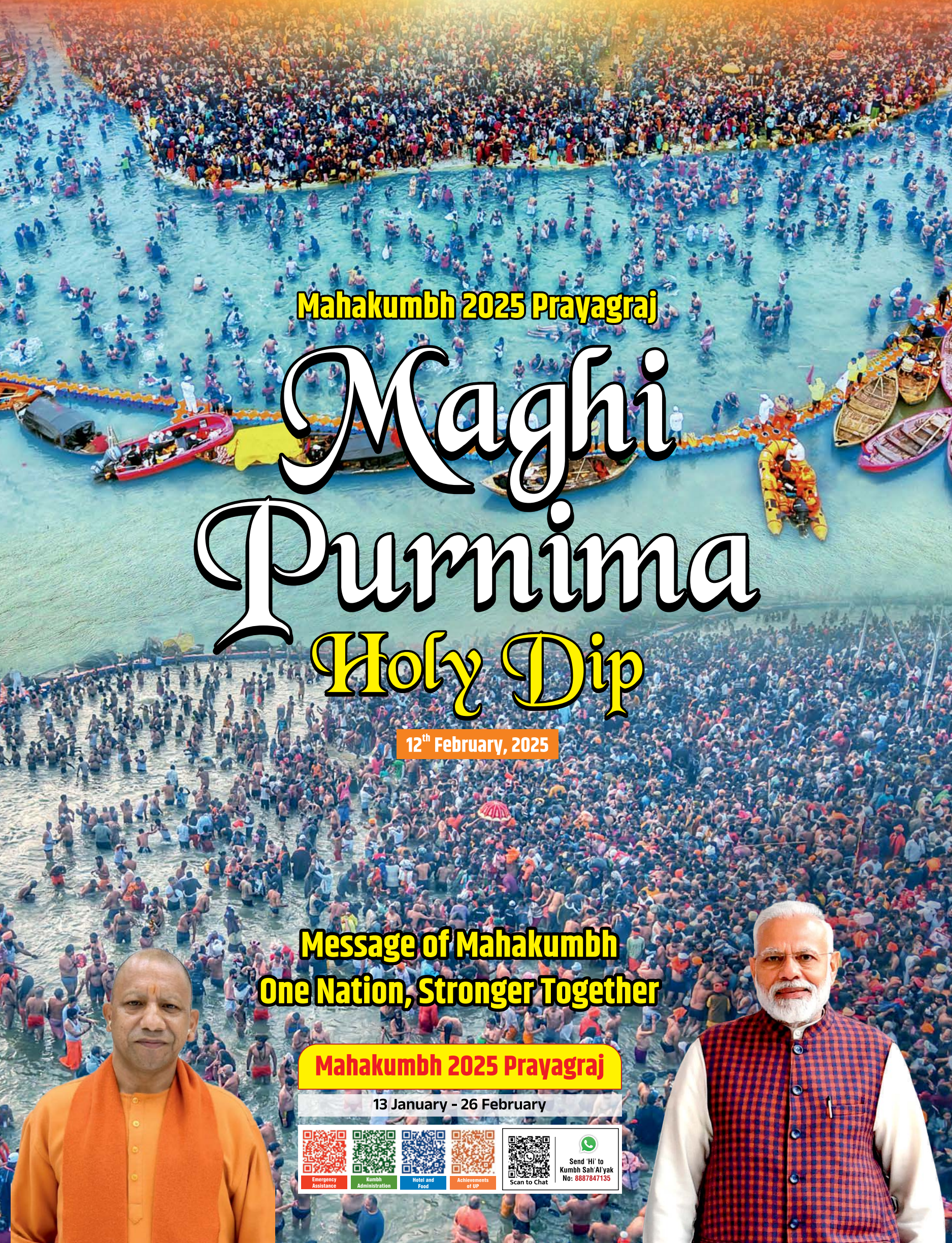
consumers/patients for purchase of medicines from them," it said. The Council further stated that such practices violate the Pharmacy Practice Regulations 2015 and the Pharmacy Act 1948, and pharmacists failing to comply could face suspension or cancellation of their registration. The notice also highlights that such promotions lead to unhealthy competition among medical stores. The Council has resolved to take strict action and urged stakeholders to refrain from engaging in these unethical practices.



## माघमासमिमं पुण्यं स्नाय्यहं देव माधवः



Divine-Grand-Digital Mahakumbh of Unity



# Mahakumbh 2025 Prayagraj



# Maghi Purnima

# Holy Dip

12<sup>th</sup> February, 2025







## Message of Mahakumbh

## One Nation, Stronger Together



### Mahakumbh 2025 Prayagraj

13 January - 26 February



### Upcoming Snan Date

Maha Shivaratri - 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2025

### Mahakumbh Helplines

1920 Mahakumbh Mela Helpline	112 Emergency Service	1010 Food and Civil Supplies Helpline	102, 108 Ambulance Service	18004199139 Railway Helpline
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