

WRD begins pumping water from mining pits at Codli

Team Herald

PONDA: The Water Resources Department (WRD) has commenced pumping water from hazardous mining pits in Codli into the Opa-Khandepar River, following a joint meeting between the Disaster Management Authority, WRD, and the Mining Department last week in Panjim.

The move comes after concerns were raised by locals regarding the risk of mining pits bursting during the upcoming monsoon season. The issue was initially highlighted by **O Herald**, under the headline Mining pits a ticking time bomb, prompting authorities to take action. In addition to mitigating flood risks, the water pumping process is expected to increase water levels in the Opa-Khandepar River. However, locals have been cautioned about a potential rise in the river's water level due to the operation.

It may be recalled that last year, excessive rainfall caused two massive



mining pits to fill with water. The mud bandhara (embankment) separating them collapsed, leading to the pits merging, with water from one overflowing into the other, creating the appearance of a sea. Following this, the 30-metre-wide road or buffer zone separating the mining pits from the Opa-Khandepar River developed cracks, heightening fears among locals that a further breach could cause

flooding in downstream villages. Consequently, residents had urged authorities to drain water from the pits before the monsoon.

To carry out the operation, two pontoons have been installed in the pits, each equipped with two 200 HP water pumps. These pumps discharge approximately 1,560 cubic metres of water per hour, amounting to 35 MLD (million litres per day) being pumped from the pits into the Opa-Khandepar River via pipelines.

The WRD initiated pumping operations at the mining pits in Codli following directives from the Deputy Collector of Dharbandora and the Directorate of Mines, as per instructions given during a meeting chaired by the South Goa Collector.

The WRD has also issued a public advisory, warning residents of surrounding areas to remain vigilant due to the anticipated rise in river water levels. Meanwhile, the people of Codli have expressed their appreciation for the prompt action taken by the WRD Dharbandora team in addressing the issue.

Old Kali river bridge under repair collapses again

Team Herald

CANACONA: Major tragedy was averted as a section of old bridge on Kali river at Sadashivgarh, Karwar, collapsed on Friday. The bridge, which connects Goa and Karwar on the National Highway 66, was not in use and repairs were underway.

This is the second incident of collapse of the bridge. It had collapsed in August last year when a loaded truck travelling from Goa to Kerala was crossing over it. The truck driver Bala Murugan (37) from Tamil Nadu was injured and was rescued by the Karwar fire personnel and Coastal Police, with the help of local fishermen. Murugan managed to escape by breaking the windshield and standing on the cabin, cried for help.

The District Magistrate had instructed the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) to assess the stability of the new bridge before resuming traffic flow. The NHAI officials in Bengaluru and Honnavara were directed to coordinate the inspection and submit a report.

Panchayats accused of not cooperating in Goa's fight against vector-borne diseases

PANJIM: The Tiswadi Block Committee for vector-borne disease control held on Friday under the chairmanship of the Deputy Collector raised serious concern over the lack of cooperation from panchayats in efforts to curb the number of cases.

Speaking to reporters, GOACAN coordinator Roland Martins, who attended the meeting, stated, "It has been noticed that there is no cooperation from panchayats. We have observed that committees such as the garbage management committee and the village water and sanitation committee are not holding meetings at the panchayat level, and the burden of maintaining cleanliness is falling on doctors."

He emphasised the need for panchayats to take the lead in cleanliness drives. Doctors from Chimbél, Mercés, and Bhetki Health Centres, as well as the Urban Health Centre in Panjim, stressed that cooperation from panchayats must improve within two months.

"Our target is April 25, which is World Malaria Day. Currently, the number of cases is low, but if we remain idle, they may increase. The major source of infections is migrant labourers, but they are often unaware of their role in the spread of disease. Therefore, it has been decided to hold a meeting with panchayat secretaries and educational institutions when they reopen in April," Martins said.

The meeting was part of a special programme in which Deputy Collectors are convening block committee meetings to discuss strategies for controlling vector-borne diseases.

"The idea is to improve inter-departmental coordination. Today's meeting was held with this objective in mind. The goal is also to bring together and involve the Directorate of Panchayats, Corporation of the City of Panaji (CCP), Water Resources Department (WRD), Public Works Department (PWD), Goa State Infrastructure Development Corporation (GSIDC), and Imagine Panaji Smart City Development Limited (IP-SCDL)," he added.

shorttakes

TRAFFIC POLICE CRACK DOWN ON NOISY BIKES IN CALANGUTE

CALANGUTE: The Calangute Traffic Cell police, in an ongoing drive against noise pollution, seized another modified two-wheeler on Friday in Candolim. The Bullet motorcycle, which had a modified exhaust producing excessive noise and was without a number plate, was confiscated. PI Sachin Narvekar confirmed that the offender will be produced before the Judicial Magistrate First Class (JMFC) in Mapusa for further action.



This follows a similar incident on Thursday when another two-wheeler with a modified silencer was seized in Baga as part of the crackdown.

NO-CONFIDENCE NOTICE Tabled AGAINST CALANGUTE DEPUTY SARPANCH

CALANGUTE: In a surprising turn of events, nine members of the 11-member Calangute panchayat have filed a no-confidence motion against Deputy Sarpanch Geeta Parab. Panchayat members confirmed that the voting on the motion is scheduled to take place on February 20.

CORTALIM GEARS UP FOR GRAND CARNAVAL CELEBRATION

CORTALIM: Cortalim Kala Kendra, in collaboration with the Directorate of Art and Culture, is set to host the Cortalim Viva Carnival - 2025, a three-day extravaganza from March 2 to 4 at Bandiantulo Khuris, located along the National Highway in Cortalim. The event will feature a variety of competitions, cultural performances, and a fancy dress competition, culminating in a grand All-Goa Float Parade on the final day. A range of prizes has been announced for the competitions, including: Float parade: 1st Prize - Rs 1 lakh; 2nd prize - Rs 50,000; 3rd prize - Rs 30,000. Fancy dress competition: 1st Prize - Rs 8,000; 2nd prize - Rs 5,000; 3rd Prize - Rs 3,000. Additionally, five consolation prizes of Rs 10,000 each will be awarded.

SANKHALI COLLEGE WINS GEOSPHERE 2025



PANJIM: Government College, Sankhali emerged as the overall champion of GEOSPHERE 2025, an inter-collegiate event organised by Dnyanprassarak Mandal's College and Research Centre, Assagao, in collaboration with the Geological Society of Goa. The event featured multiple competitions, with Goa University winning the Quiz, and Chowgule College finishing second. Sankhali College secured first place in the Crossword Puzzle and Treasure Hunt, with Chowgule College as runner-up in both. In the Mascot competition, Government College, Borda claimed first place, followed by Sankhali and Dhempe College. A sculpture-making contest using sea shells saw Sankhali and Chowgule College finish first and second, respectively. Chowgule College won the video-making competition, with Dhempe College in second place. The event was inaugurated by Prof LS Chamyal, a Quaternary Geologist and former Head of Geology at Maharaja Sayajirao University, Vadodra, who delivered a keynote address on the impact of tectonism on geomorphology. He urged young geologists to pursue research, emphasising their role in resource management and national development. Principal Prof D B Arolkar praised the organising team for successfully hosting the event for five years. Dr Anthony Viegas, President of the Geological Society of Goa, introduced the Society's initiatives, while Dr Glancia Fernandes from the Directorate of Mines and Geology delivered a lecture on Turbidite and Greywacke deposits in Goa. She encouraged students to explore careers in state and central geological sectors, highlighting the growing role of women in the field. The event concluded with a vote of thanks by Organising Secretary Yogita Karkhanis. Around 150 students, academicians, and industry professionals participated in the day-long academic programme.

POWER SHUTDOWN

CANDOLIM: From February 15 to February 21, from 7.30 am to 3 pm. Affected areas are Xmer, Anavaddo, Camutiwaddo, Arady, Pinto vaddo, Souzavaddo, Dando, Sinquerim, Mudda, Bamanvaddo, Confrariavaddo, Orda, Saipem, FABR Sinquerim, Pilerne Industrial Estate, Science and Technology as informed by Department of Information and Publicity.

TALEIGAO: On February 15, from 9 am to 2pm. Areas affected are Parab Hospital and surrounding areas.

Sewage violations: Daag residents face water supply disconnections

Team Herald

PONDA: The residents of a housing society at Daag in Ponda run the risk of their water supply being disconnected by the Ponda Municipal Council (PMC).

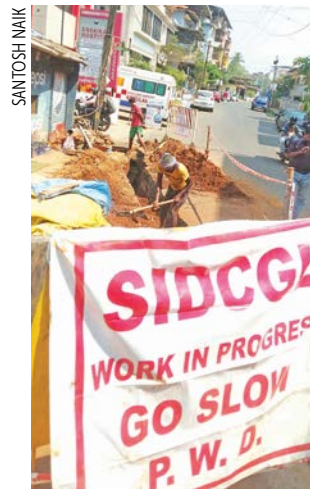
The civic body has issued a stern warning to residents of Daag, Ponda, regarding the persistent issue of sewage flowing into open drains. PMC Chief Officer Yogiraj Gosavi has stated that residents must find a permanent solution within seven days or face water disconnection.

The warning comes in response to repeated com-

If the issue is not resolved the PMC will serve a water disconnection notice to the residents
- Yogiraj Gosavi, PMC Chief Officer

plaints from locals about untreated sewage being released from a residential building in Daag, Ponda, creating a foul odour and causing inconvenience to the public. The affected building comprises approximately 60 flats.

"It may be recalled that complaints were received in 2023, 2024, and now in



2025 against this building for releasing sewage into the open," said Chief Of-

ficer Gosavi. "If the issue is not resolved the PMC will serve a water disconnection notice to the residents."

According to Gosavi, the building's society management had been issued notices on previous occasions, yet this marks the third instance of sewage being released openly. PMC officials inspected the site and directed the building society to take corrective measures. It has been learned that the building's Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) has become defunct, leading to the overflow.

The PMC Chief Officer

has urged all residential buildings and societies in Ponda to obtain proper sewage connections to avoid penalties and contribute to maintaining cleanliness in the city. He emphasised that PMC buildings are already connected to the sewage network, along with some hospitals.

"There are fines for not taking sewage connections," Gosavi warned. "The 15 MLD sewage treatment plant is functional, and some government buildings are connected to it. Residential buildings should also apply for proper sewage connections."

Cable operators fined for illegally using electricity poles

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Electricity Department has issued show-cause notices to multiple internet and cable service providers, imposing hefty fines on two companies for using electricity poles to string their cables without authorisation.

The companies have been granted a 15-day period to either register with the department and properly organise their cables or remove them. Fines amounting to Rs 3.45 crore and Rs 1.80 crore have been imposed on Jio Digital Fibre Pvt Ltd and BLITS Global Technologies Pvt Ltd, respectively.

Speaking to reporters, Electricity Department Executive Engineer Kashinath Shetye said, "We had issued a public notice granting ten days for the removal of cables. The High Court also directed cable operators to submit applications to us so that we could decide on them. Upon reviewing these applications, we found that the operators had not paid fees for nearly five years. We have included the outstanding fees and compensation for this period and have subsequently dismissed their applications."

He further stated, "We have rejected the applications as there is no provision for the regularisation of these cables. Jio Digital Fibre Pvt Ltd has been ordered to pay Rs 3.45 crore, while BLITS

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Global Technologies Pvt Ltd has been directed to pay Rs 1.80 crore."

"Besides the penalty, we issued show cause notices separately asking them to pull down the cables within 15 days. If they fail to comply then the Electricity Dept will be compelled to cut the cables," said Shetye.

Shetye said that "the power department officials from the JE, AE and EE will also be held accountable and penalised Rs 300 per day if the cables are not removed within the stipulated time."

The official confirmed that around 50 applications have been received but reiterated that all overhead wiring remains illegal, as no permissions have been granted for such installations.

BJP Goa president Damu Naik meets Union Minister

Team Herald

VASCO: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) State president Damodar 'Damu' Naik, who returned from Delhi on Friday, stated that he held discussions with Union Home Minister Amit Shah on strengthening the party organisation but declined to divulge more details.

Speaking to reporters at the Dabolim international airport, Naik said that Shah had called him to Delhi, and that they held productive discussion on strengthening the party organisation in the State.

Naik said that after becoming the party president it was his first official interaction with Shah, who he added, has extended all his support to the party and emphasized the importance of organisational development.

Describing the meeting as 'fruitful', Naik said, "Our focus is to strengthen the party and work towards success in the 2027 Goa Assembly elections."

According to Naik, during the meeting several strategies were discussed, and its impact would be visible in the coming months. However, he declined to divulge more details.

Baga beach turning into dumping ground: Calangute Sarpanch

Team Herald

CALANGUTE: Calangute Sarpanch Joseph Sequeira has accused the Tourism Department of turning Baga beach into a 'Sonsoddo', alleging that garbage collected from beach shacks is being dumped in Tito's Lane.

In a letter to the Tourism Department on Wednesday, Sequeira stated that waste is being segregated near Sulabh Souchala toilets in Sauntavaddo, creating a health hazard for tourists and pedestrians. He demanded immediate action within seven days.

"If the Tourism Department fails to act, the



panchayat will intervene under the Goa Panchayat Raj Act and the Goa Non-Biodegradable Garbage (Control) Act," he warned.

Sequeira said they were shocked to find the beach being used as a dumping ground for waste from shacks in Calangute, Candolim, and Nerul. "They

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- Joseph Sequeira, Calangute sarpanch

claim they are segregating garbage, but it stinks and looks like a dump yard. We have offered them an alternative site," he added.

The Calangute panchayat had previously passed a resolution on 21st January, urging the tourism department to clear the area.

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