

# No space for pedestrians as widened roads take over Ponda footpaths, walkways

Locals allege authorities violating Pedestrian Policy, demand to sort out issue immediately

Team Herald

**PONDA:** The recent widening of several roads in Ponda taluka has raised concerns among locals, as mud shoulders have also been asphalted, leaving no space for footpaths or pedestrian walkways. This has sparked debate over whether roads are being designed solely for vehicles, with little consideration for pedestrian safety.

## NO RIGHT OF WAY

Vishal Fadte, a resident of Ponda, highlighted the issue, stating, "Many roads in Ponda have been widened, leading to an increase in vehicle speeds. The side border lines, meant to alert



vehicles, have been marked at the extreme edges of both sides of the road. However, due to the widening process, the mud shoulders have been eliminated, forcing pedestrians to walk on the road itself, putting them at risk of being hit by vehicles.

He further criticised the authorities for prioritising vehicle movement over pe-

**“Where will people walk if no space is left for them? The road edge directly meets open gutters, leaving pedestrians with no choice but to walk on the road. No safe passage has been provided to pedestrians**

– Vishal Fadte, Local resident

**“Roadside lines are meant to define the edge or boundary of the road and indicate the driving area, preventing vehicles from veering off. However, for pedestrian safety, the PWD must implement necessary measures**

– Traffic Official, Ponda

destrian safety, questioning, "Where will people walk if no space is left for them? The road edge directly meets open gutters, leaving

pedestrians with no choice but to walk on the road" He also emphasised the need for footpaths near schools, stating that student safety

should be a priority but it has been ignored.

Fadte pointed out that while footpaths are visible in city areas, they are rarely

found on internal roads in villages. He suggested that wherever roads are narrow, the government should create footpaths, and in places where roads have sufficient width, the edge line should be drawn at least half a metre inside to allow pedestrians to walk safely.

A traffic official, speaking on condition of anonymity, explained that "roadside lines are meant to define the edge or boundary of the road and indicate the driving area, preventing vehicles from veering off. However, for pedestrian safety, the PWD must implement necessary measures."

Residents continue to urge the authorities to address this issue, ensuring that road development does not come at the cost of pedestrian safety.

## DGP orders probe into 'VIP treatment' to murder accused

Pernem SDPO submits report into use of a private vehicle while transporting accused

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** After the **O Herald** reported about 'VIP treatment' of Delhiite who ran over a local woman with his car and Mandrem and killing her on the spot, the Director General of Police (DGP) Alok Kumar on Tuesday ordered an inquiry into the issue. Sources revealed that the Sub Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) of Pernem Asish Shirordkar has submitted a report into the use of a private vehicle while transporting accused Deepan Batra for legal procedures.

## MANDREM MURDER CASE

Superintendent of Police (SP) North Goa Akshat Kaushal has assured that if any deliberate lapse is found, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against the responsible officers.

The Mandrem Police have faced strong criticism and public outrage, particularly from the locals after it was revealed that Batra, who is accused of murder, was transported in a private car with tinted windows.

Kaushal confirmed that an inquiry report on the matter has been submitted and that action will follow if required. He also stated

that the police have gathered all necessary evidence to build a strong case and ensure that the accused is chargesheeted.

Mandrem MLA Jit Arolkar stated that he, along with the villagers, has demanded a thorough investigation into the entire incident. "The accused has been booked for murder, and we will ensure that the case is investigated properly," Arolkar asserted.

Meanwhile, the Mandrem Congress has also condemned the police for allegedly providing VIP treatment to the accused. The party criticised the authorities, stating, "An activist is taken to court in a black mask like a criminal, but a murder accused is transported in a tinted glass vehicle."

It may be recalled that a tragic accident in Mandrem on Friday night resulted in the death of Marieleliz Fernandes, a resident of Junaswada, after she was allegedly hit by a speeding car.

The accused, identified as 23-year-old Deepan Rajeev Batra from Delhi, was driving an i20 (DL 4CBC 2576) when he rammed into Fernandes, who was standing by the roadside. Police investigations suggest that the accused and the victim had prior disputes, which may have led to the deliberate act of ramming the car into her.

## MAIDEN VOYAGE

DENZIL SEQUEIRA



The first Olive Ridley turtle hatching of the season took place on Mandrem beach at 8 pm, on Wednesday, where 91 healthy hatchlings made their way to the sea under the watchful supervision of Naneshwar from the Goa Forest Department. Out of 127 eggs, 29 were infertile, while 7 hatchings were found dead beneath the sand

## Now, a youth panel to demand equal status for Romi Lipi

Team Herald

**MARGAO:** Global Romi Lipi Abhiyan (GRLA) has taken the movement to demand equal status for Roman Script Konknni to a new level with the launch of its youth committee.

Kennedy Afonso, President of GRLA, announced the formation of the committee and the appointment of key members. Matthew Almeida has been appointed as Youth President, Frazier Colasco, Vice President, Melkevar Fernandes, Secretary and Dr Risia Pasanha as Treasurer.

The executive committee also includes Luke Pereira, Maria Fernandes, Edmer Barretto, Manisha Pereira, Joyson Faleiro, and Amberley Romao.

Afonso emphasised the importance of youth involvement in the movement, stating, "The revival and preservation of the Roman Script Konknni movement needs the positive energy and vigour that only youth can bring. The formation of this youth committee will provide that much-needed momentum."

Matthew Almeida, Youth President of GRLA, said, "38 years ago, our elders fought to make Konknni the official language of Goa. However, when the Official Language Act was enacted, they were betrayed as only Devanagari was recognized as the official script for Konknni, leaving the Roman Script Konknni behind."

## Usgao traders to down shutters on March 4 over poor road conditions, dust pollution

Team Herald

**PONDA:** The Traders' Association at Usgao has announced a complete shutdown of the Tisk-Usgao market on March 4, in protest against deteriorating road conditions, dust pollution and the hardships faced by vendors in the market.

Shopkeepers will close their businesses to highlight

their grievances regarding the road, which has been dug up for development but has not been resurfaced, leading to severe dust pollution and financial losses.

The Traders' Association said that the road leading to the Tisk-Usgao PDA market has been in a damaged state for a long time. The traders had initially submitted a written demand for asphaltting the road after the

2022 Panchayat elections and reiterated the demand again in 2024. However, no action has been taken.

The traders stated that dust pollution caused by the broken road has already led to financial losses. The poor condition of the road, coupled with ongoing excavation work, is generating large amounts of dust, which is damaging goods in shops. Additionally, traders and

customers alike are facing an increased risk of respiratory illnesses due to prolonged exposure to dust.

The road in the PDA Market area, Avanti Nagar and Kasayle was last asphalted eight years ago. Now, all internal roads in the area have also become unfit for traffic. Drivers, especially those using two-wheelers and four-wheelers, are struggling to navigate these roads.

## Cyber Crime investigation training successfully conducted for Goa Police Cyber Cell

Team Herald

**RIBANDAR:** The Goa Police Cyber Cell team participated in a highly informative and specialised Cyber Crime investigation training held at the Cyber Crime Branch, Ribandar.

The training was conducted by Dr Rakshit Tandon, India's top Cyber Security Expert, and was attended by over 90 police officers from various police stations across Goa, particularly those from the Cyber Crime Cell section. The training was facilitated by Cogniflux Trainings and Consultancy Services (formerly Sigma+) in association with Goa Police. The session was graced by dignitaries, including Alok Kumar (DGP - Goa), Rahul Gupta, IPS (SP - North), Deepak Pednekar (PI-Cyber Crime), Dr M B Gururaj (CEO of Cogniflux), Manoj Patil (Special Invitee) and Gajanan N Kerkar (CCI+).



This crucial training training, officers were given hands-on exposure to various aspects of Cyber Crime Investigation, including Cyber Crime Detection, Cyber Footprints Tracking, Cyber Security & Safety for Citizens, Quick Analysis of a Crime, Live Demonstrations of Cyber Criminal Tracking, and strategies to provide guidance on assisting citizens with Cyber Security Concerns, Awareness and Education on Data & Digital Information Protection.

programme enhanced the knowledge and preparedness of Goa police officers in tackling cyber-related offenses more efficiently. With the increasing digitalization and cyber threats, this initiative is a significant step towards ensuring the security of local citizens, tourists, business professionals, and visitors in Goa.

Dr Rakshit Tandon emphasised the importance of continuous upskilling in cyber investigations and ensuring robust dig-

ital safety for the public. The Goa Police, with renewed expertise, is now better equipped to handle cybercrimes, protect sensitive data, and provide timely assistance to victims of cyber fraud and online threats. The successful execution of this training program marks a progressive step towards strengthening cybersecurity and law enforcement capabilities in Goa, making the state a safer place for residents and tourists alike.

## Resolve sewage issues or face action, Fatorda MLA warns Margao Council

Team Herald

**MARGAO:** Expressing his disapproval over the failure of the authorities to crackdown against some hoteliers releasing sewage water into gutters, Fatorda MLA Vijai Sardesai issued a stern warning to the Margao Municipal Council (MMC), stating that unnecessary activities would not be tolerated within the Fatorda constituency.

He directed the civic body to investigate who is responsible for releasing sewage water into the gutters. Sardesai, responding to several complaints from local residents, also alleged that some officers within the Margao Municipality have been accepting bribes from hotel owners, allowing them to dump sewage water into the gutters.

On Wednesday, the MLA conducted an inspection in Borda with relevant of-

ficials concerning the ITI project.

He emphasised, "I have already alerted the Municipality about the sewage issue and instructed them to identify those releasing sewage water into the gutters. Solutions regarding the shifting of the ITI project to land owned by the Sewage Department will be possible only after a thorough inspection and survey. This will address issues like parking and access ramps for people with disabilities."

Sardesai also expressed frustration over the proliferation of illegal "bhelpuri" stalls in the Fatorda constituency and called for immediate action by the civic body to address this issue.

Additionally, the MLA took strong exception to opposition over the reconstruction of the wholesale fish market without the inclusion of a cold storage facility.

## shorttakes

### TRAFFIC POLICE TO ENFORCE DIGITAL-ONLY PAYMENT FOR CHALLANS FROM MARCH 1

**PANJIM:** The Deputy Superintendent of Police, Traffic (HQ), Panjim has announced that, effective March 1, 2025, cash payments will no longer be accepted for compounding challans issued under the Motor Vehicles Act/Rules. "To promote digital payments and facilitate hassle-free transactions, all traffic challans will now be compounded only through digital payment modes. Motorists will have the option to pay using debit/credit cards, QR codes (generated on the e-challan machine), or through the official website <https://echallan.parivahan.gov.in/index/accused-challan>", says a press release issued by the Department of Information & Publicity.

"Additionally, violators will receive a payment link via SMS on their registered mobile numbers, enabling them to clear their uncompounded challans seamlessly," the release added.

### CHANDOR RESIDENT FILES COMPLAINT AGAINST TRESPASSERS FOR ATTEMPTED THEFT

**MARGAO:** George Joaquim Antao, a resident of Chandor, Salcete, has lodged a complaint against three unidentified individuals for trespassing, property damage, and attempted theft at his residence. According to the complaint filed at Cavorim-Chandor, Salcete, the unknown accused trespassed onto the complainant's property with a common intention to commit theft. They allegedly damaged the window frame and metal grills of the bedroom and kitchen, causing a financial loss estimated at Rs 28,000. The Maina-Curtorim police have registered an offence under Section 329 (3), 324 (4), 62 R/w 3(5) BNS. Further investigations are being carried out by PSI Sagar Kamat of Maina Curtorim Police Station.

### ELDERLY WOMAN IN PONDA JUMPS INTO WELL, DIES

**MARGAO:** A woman identified as Jayu Naik, a resident of Kuncolim-Mardol, Ponda, allegedly committed suicide by jumping into a well in Kuncolim-Ponda. According to sources at the South Goa District Police Headquarters, the Mardol police received a phone call from Rajesh Naik, informing them about the incident. Upon receiving the report, the police visited the site, where the Fire and Emergency Services team retrieved the body from the well. During the investigation, Purshottam Naik identified the deceased as his mother, Jayu Naik. Police enquiries revealed that she was elderly and had been suffering from depression due to a prolonged illness. Authorities conducted a scene of unnatural death (UD) occurrence panchanama and an inquest panchanama. The body was then sent for post-mortem examination at the South Goa District Hospital, Margao, where a police surgeon confirmed the cause of death as "asphyxia as a result of drowning in water." Police continue to investigate the case.

### PRE-MATRIC SCHOLARSHIP FOR CHILDREN OF HAZARDOUS CLEANING WORKERS

**PANJIM:** The Directorate of Social Welfare has invited applications for the Pre-Matric Scholarship for children of parents engaged in hazardous cleaning occupations, awarded by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, New Delhi. The scheme is applicable to students from Class I to X in government and recognised private schools. Hazardous cleaning refers to manual sewer or septic tank cleaning without protective gear or safety measures, as defined under the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and Their Rehabilitation Act, 2013. The scholarship provides Rs 225 per month for day scholars (Class I-X) and Rs 700 per month for hostellers (Class III-X), along with annual ad-hoc grants of Rs 750 and Rs 1,000, respectively. The deadline for applications is February 28, to be submitted through the head of the institution to the Directorate of Social Welfare, Panjim.

### HEAVY VEHICLES BANNED ON DURBHAT-AGAPUR ROAD TILL MARCH 10

**DURBHAT:** The Durbhath-Adpoi-Agapur Panchayat road has been closed to heavy traffic until March 10 due to ongoing underground power cabling work.

According to sources in the Durbhath-Adpoi-Agapur Panchayat, excavation for laying underground power lines began on February 25 and as a result, the main road from Durbhath to Agapur will remain partially obstructed, allowing only one vehicle to pass at a time.

Authorities have urged heavy vehicle drivers to avoid this route during the specified period to prevent congestion and ensure smooth traffic flow. They have also appealed for public cooperation to minimize inconvenience.

### POWER SHUTDOWN

**BICHOLIM:** On February 27 and 28, from 9 am to 2 pm. Affected areas are Sastiwada, Housing Board Bordem, ITI and surrounding areas at Bicholim.

## APPOINTMENTS

### Urgently Required

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Contact : 8421954374

Email : recruitment.vch101@gmail.com