

shorttakes

**PEDESTRIAN KILLED IN HIT-AND-RUN ACCIDENT AT CUNCOLIM**

**MARGAO:** A 32-year-old pedestrian has died in a hit-and-run accident in Cuncolim. The deceased has been identified as Sandeep Naik from Pairaband, Cuncolim. Police are searching for the vehicle involved in the accident. Cuncolim Police reported that they received a phone call from a resident of Cuncolim informing them that a male body was lying by the roadside. Upon investigation, police identified the deceased as 50-year-old Sandeep Naik from Pairaband, Cuncolim, Salcete, who was identified by his brother. Further enquiries revealed that the deceased had a habit of walking by the roadside at night. Police conducted a scene of Unnatural Death (UD) occurrence panchanama and an inquest panchanama. Based on their observations and the injuries sustained by the deceased, police believe he died in a vehicular accident. The body was sent for a post-mortem examination at SGDH Margao, where the police surgeon determined the cause of death to be head and chest injuries due to blunt force impact.

**BENGALURU MAN DROWNS AT BETALBATIM BEACH**

**MARGAO:** Bharath SK, a 37-year-old resident of Veer-abhadranagar, Bengaluru, drowned while swimming at Betalbatim Beach. He was declared dead upon arrival at South Goa District Hospital, Margao. Police enquiries with the family revealed that on March 3, at around 8 am, the deceased had gone swimming with his family after breakfast at Betalbatim Beach. While swimming, he drowned. He was taken to South Goa District Hospital, Margao, in a 108 ambulance, where he was declared brought dead.

**NEIGHBOUR BOOKED FOR HARASSMENT AND ASSAULT AT QUEPEM**

**MARGAO:** Vrutti Raut Dessai of Assolda, Quepem, has lodged a complaint with Quepem Police against her neighbour, Sadanand Raut Dessai, for allegedly assaulting and harassing her. According to the complaint, on February 22, at around 6 pm, the accused forcibly entered her house, pulled her hair, made sexually inappropriate remarks, demanded sexual favours, engaged in unwelcome advances, made obscene gestures, and verbally abused her with foul language. He also allegedly threatened to ruin her reputation.

**MAN FOUND DEAD AT HOME IN NUVEM**

**MARGAO:** Francisco Rafael De Menezes, a resident of Kirbhat, Nuvem, died by suicide by hanging himself with a towel. Maina-Curtorim Police reported that upon receiving information, they visited the site in Kirbhat, Nuvem, where they discovered that Francisco Rafael De Menezes had taken his own life. During the investigation, it was revealed that the deceased was diabetic and had undergone an amputation of his right limb. Due to prolonged medical treatment, he was suffering from depression.

**GOLD ORNAMENTS AND CASH STOLEN FROM MARGAO RESIDENCE**

**MARGAO:** Darshan Padwal of Palyem, Mapusa, and Mayuri Gawade of Aquem, Margao, have been accused of stealing gold ornaments worth approximately Rs 1,60,000 and Rs 15,000 in cash from a residence before fleeing the scene. Sumitra Padwal of Aquem, Margao, lodged a complaint with Margao Police, stating that the suspects had stolen four gold bangles, one gold mala, and one gold chain, along with cash.

**BURGLARY IN AQUEM ALTO, MARGAO**

**MARGAO:** Burglars stole gold worth Rs. 1.90 lakh from an apartment in Aquem Alto, Margao, on the evening of February 26. According to Margao Police, the crime took place between 2:30 pm and 5:00 pm when unknown culprits forced entry into the apartment of Mrigaksh Dave by breaking the main door lock. The thieves stole gold ornaments valued at Rs 1,90,000. Police visited the scene with a dog squad and fingerprint experts. No arrests have been made so far, and investigations are ongoing.

**SCOOTER RIDERS INJURED IN HIT-AND-RUN AT QUEPEM**

**MARGAO:** Sufala Dessai of Xeldem, Quepem, and her pillion rider, Alice Sequira of Demellowada, Carmona, sustained injuries after another scooter rider hit them while overtaking and fled the scene. According to Quepem Police, near the sports complex in Borimol, Quepem, Rajni Kumar Sethi of Cotta, Amona, Quepem, was riding a scooter in a rash and negligent manner without a valid driving licence. While overtaking another scooter, she collided with it, injuring the rider and causing severe head injuries to the pillion rider. The accused fled without informing the police or offering medical assistance.

**COLA RESIDENT INJURED IN COLLISION WITH JCB AT QUITOL, QUEPEM**

**MARGAO:** Lakshay Naik Dessai of Cola was seriously injured after his scooter collided with a JCB machine stationed on Naquerim-Fatorpa Road in Quitol, Quepem. He is currently undergoing treatment at Goa Medical College (GMC), Bambolim. Cuncolim Police reported that the JCB driver, Pramod Prajapati of Mastimol, Canacona, originally from Jharkhand, had negligently parked the vehicle without proper safety precautions. Due to this, Lakshay Naik Dessai, who was riding his scooter towards Fatorpa, crashed into the stationary JCB and sustained grievous head injuries.

**RED & BLACK DANCE AT SAMBA SQUARE, PANJIM TODAY**

**PANJIM:** The Panjim Carnival Committee and Samba Square will hold Clube Nacional's traditional carnival 'Red & Black Dance' on Tuesday, March 4 from 7 pm onwards at the Samba Square, Panjim. 'Black in White', 'Crimson Tide', 'Blue Waves' and 'Triology' will be performing. The dress code is strictly red and black combination.

# Illegal hill cutting and landfilling cases rise in South Goa

Violations highlight government laxity; Collector directs talathis to conduct inspections even on weekends and holidays; accused remain 'unidentified'

Team Herald

**MARGAO:** Violations related to the reclamation of low-lying areas and excavations into the hillsides have increased in South Goa, particularly in Canacona, in 2024. It is ironic that, despite multiple offences being registered against individuals, many accused have remained 'unidentified' to date, despite police conducting 'thorough' investigations.

According to information from the police, as of 18 December 2024, police stations across South Goa had registered a total of 21 cases, of which 16 were detected. In comparison, by the same date in 2023, only 15 cases had been registered, with eight detected.

Among the major cases reported, on 9 December 2024, Canacona police registered a case under Sections 17-A and 17-B of the TCP Act, 1974, against Dattaraj Kamat for allegedly carrying out illegal hill cutting. On the same day, acting on a complaint from Kashish Gauns

Dessai from the Office of the Deputy Town Planner, Canacona police also registered an offence against a builder accused of illegal landfilling in an area earmarked as paddy fields.

In November 2024, two more cases of illegal hill cutting were reported. Based on complaints from the Town and Country Planning (TCP) Department, offences were registered at Loliem-Polem and Agonda against alleged violators Anand Naik, Krishna Naik, and Ulhas Naik, residents of Polem. Another FIR was filed on November 7, 2024 against Purshottamot Naik Gaunkar for alleged illegal hill cutting on a property in Agonda. PSI Rajshekhar Reddy is currently investigating the case.

In December 2024, Rohan Gaonkar, an official from the Town and Country Planning Department in Margao, lodged a complaint with Cuncolim police regarding illegal hill cutting in Cuncolim village in Salcete. The case pertains to Survey



**HILL DESTRUCTION**

- Cases Registered: 21 cases (as of Dec 18, 2024)
- Cases Detected: 16 cases
- In 2023: 15 cases registered (8 detected)
- Govt Response: Talathis directed to conduct inspections on weekends and holidays

No. 474/1, where the accused, Abdul Gani Shaikh from Pairaband, Zuzegal, Cuncolim, allegedly carried out hill-cutting activities without obtaining the necessary permissions. Cuncolim police have since registered an offence.

In October 2024, following a complaint by Shailesh Naik, Deputy Town Planner of Quepem, the police registered a case of hill cutting in Rivona. According to the police, the accused, Devdatta Patil of Shree Subrahmanya Vangmayee Parishad, Sanguem, allegedly carried out illegal hill cutting on land bearing Survey No. 64/2 without securing prior written

permission from the Town and Country Planning Department. PSI Siddesh Naik of Quepem Police Station is investigating the case.

In September 2024, Ponda police booked Sameer Wachasundar for allegedly conducting illegal hill-cutting activities in Piliem-Dharbandora without proper authorisation. The case was registered following a complaint lodged by a planning draftsman from the Deputy Town Planner's office. The complaint stated that prior to 13 August 2024, Wachasundar, as the occupier of land in Survey No. 42/2 of Piliem village, Dharbandora, engaged in

hill cutting without the required approval from the Town and Country Planning Department.

According to the police, the Town and Country Planning Department has lodged complaints in these cases, which were subsequently registered at police stations across South Goa. Several cases against unknown individuals remain under investigation.

Notably, the state government has tasked talathis with monitoring and reporting incidents of hill cutting. The South Goa Collector has directed talathis to conduct inspections even on weekends and holidays,

ensuring immediate reporting of illegal activities.

A circular issued by the South Goa Collector and Chairperson of the District Disaster Management Authority mandates compliance with these directives, warning that failure to act promptly and diligently could result in disciplinary action.

The monsoon season in Goa has witnessed several minor landslides across the state. In response, the government, during a meeting of the State Disaster Management Committee, implemented a multi-pronged strategy to prevent further landslides. As part of these measures, all talathis in South Goa have been directed to conduct thorough inspections within their respective jurisdictions to identify and verify any unauthorised hill cutting and landfilling activities, including those on both private and public lands. Upon detection, talathis must immediately report such incidents to the district control room or the flying squad.

## Governor visits Matruchayya and Sr Christobele's Trust

Team Herald

**MAPUSA:** Governor P S Sreedharan Pillai recently visited Matruchayya, Khorlim, Mapusa, and Sr Christobele's Trust, Mother Teresa Roses (Girls Home), where he interacted with the inmates and presented financial assistance to both institutions.

In his address, the Governor emphasised the importance of serving the people, stating that the welfare of the people is paramount. He announced his intention to visit institutions working for the needy and provide financial assistance to support their efforts.

Praising the work of Matruchayya, Pillai described the organisation as an exemplary institution benefiting the underprivileged in the state.

Upon his arrival at Matruchayya, Deputy Speaker Joshua Peter D'Souza warmly welcomed the Gov-



ernor with a sapling.

Joshua D'Souza assured full support to Matruchayya, highlighting the organisation's ongoing efforts to provide children with the love and affection of parents.

Mihir Vardhan, Special Officer, provided an overview of the various activities conducted by Raj Bhavan and mentioned that over Rs 6 crore had been disbursed as financial assistance to needy patients across the state.

During the visit, a cheque for Rs 1 lakh was present-

ed to the President of Matruchayya, as well as to the Little Angels Home for children from Chorao village.

Later, the Governor visited Sr Christobele's Trust, Mother Teresa Roses (Girls Home) at Parra, Bardez, where he was welcomed by MLAs Michael Lobo and Delilah Lobo, who presented bouquets. Parra Sarpanch Daniel Lobo and other Panchayat members were also present. The Governor handed over a cheque for Rs 1 lakh to Sr Christobele's Trust, Mother Teresa Roses (Girls Home) at Parra.

## Vasco celebrates Carnival with spectacular floats parade



Team Herald

**VASCO:** Thousands flocked to witness the Carnival floats parade in Vasco on Monday evening.

The parade featured as many as 50 floats across various categories, including traditional, family, clubs and institutions, sponsored entries, fun and junk cars, as well as clowns and jokers. As is customary, King Momo and the Carnival Queen led the procession of floats.

The parade took place along Swatantra Path road, having been officially inaugurated by Panchayats Minister Mauvin Godinho, who

was joined by Vasco MLA Krishna 'Daji' Salkar, Mormugao Municipal Council Chairperson Girish Borker, Vasco Carnival Committee President Francisco De Souza, and other dignitaries.

Godinho remarked that Carnival is a festival of joy and togetherness, a time to eat, drink, and celebrate before the onset of Lent. He emphasised that the Carnival has flourished due to the affection of the Goan people, urging everyone to continue enjoying it in its true spirit.

Salkar highlighted that Carnival promotes communal harmony and unites people. He noted that it is

not only an event for Goans but also serves as a significant attraction for tourists, thereby adding considerable value to the tourism sector. He also expressed gratitude to Chief Minister Pramod Sawant for reviving traditional Goan performances and khell tiatrs through the Tiatr Academy of Goa.

Francisco De Souza stated that Carnival fosters unity and harmony, conveying important messages through its musical floats and performances.

The Vasco police made extensive arrangements to ensure the smooth conduct of the floats parade.

"Behold, I make all things new." (Rev 21:5)

**Crusaders Foundation Day**

AT THE SERVICE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

28 Fruitful years since inception

1997 → 2025

March 2025, St. Joseph Vaz - Sancoale

Auxiliary Bishop of Goa, Rev. Simião Purificação Fernandes seen addressing the Crusaders at the 28th Foundation Day of the ACJM on Sunday at Sancoale

Jill Fernandes

**Vasco:** The Association of Crusaders for Jesus with Mary (ACJM) on Sunday celebrated 28 years of its founding with a well-attended Thanksgiving Holy Mass at the Sanctuary of its Patron, St Joseph Vaz in Sancoale on 1st March Sunday. Leading the celebration at the Holy Mass was the Auxiliary Bishop of Goa, Rev. Simião Fernandes. In his encouraging homily, the Bishop exhorted the Crusaders to continue to be the instruments of newness and beacons of hope in line with the theme chosen for the Foundation Day - 'Behold, I make all things new' (Revelation 21:5).

The Holy Mass was followed by a function in the precincts of the Sanctuary during which a letter from Cardinal Filipe Neri Ferrao, Archbishop Of Goa was read out, conveying his blessing and deep appreciation of the Association's work and its shining witness in Goa and various dioceses in India as also in several countries outside India. Long-standing members of the Association who contributed their time and efforts to the cause of God's Kingdom quietly behind the scenes were also felicitated at

the function. A special publication titled "Towards Forming a People for Missionary Disciple: The Association of Crusaders for Jesus with Mary playing its part" was released on the occasion through the hands of the Auxiliary Bishop which highlighted the multifarious work and regular formation of cadres of the Association.

In his concluding address at the event, the Spiritual Guide and Founder of the Association Edmund Antao, urged the gathering to look beyond just doing activity for God and to respond to the call for personal holiness in life. He pointed out that many begin well in humility and later as they progress they develop arrogance and are led into the error of believing that God called me because others are not as good as I am. When an anointed person is led thus, he then takes God for granted and his right thinking is defiled because God does not speak to him—but only his mind does, he said, adding that we must ask God for the grace to remain genuinely humble like Christ notwithstanding all our achievements which buoy us up in pride.