

Velsao on the boil as rlys start work again

Tense face-off between railway officials and Sarpanch; mud dumping starts despite panchayat's stop-work order

Team Herald

MARGAO: A fresh confrontation unfolded at Primeiro Vado, Velsao, on Friday, as Sarpanch Diana Gouveia, along with local residents, clashed with RVNL contractors and railway officials over unauthorised construction work. The tense standoff, which involved heated exchanges, highlighted the ongoing battle of villagers to protect their ancestral land and traditional Right of Way - areas obstructed by mud dumping and construction activities.

The dispute erupted when railway contractors, backed by police personnel, resumed work in the area despite a stop-work order issued by the Velsao-Pale-Issorcim



Sarpanch Diana Gouveia confronts the contractors and railway officials at the site where the workers started dumping mud at Velsao, on Friday

“How can you come here again and again without documents to prove your ownership? The panchayat has not lifted the stop-work order, and the matter is still in court. This is a blatant disregard for the law and the rights of the villagers” - Diana Gouveia, Sarpanch of Velsao-Pale-Issorcim Panchayat

“We are trapped in our own homes. This is not development; this is destruction” - A local resident

“The panchayat has not lifted the stop-work order, and the matter is still in court. This is a blatant disregard for the law and the rights of the villagers,” she said, her frustration evident.

She also raised concerns over the railways' treatment of the locals and the panchayat. “Why are proper procedures not being followed? Why are you acting as if the law does not apply to you? This is not just about land; it's about our homes, our heritage and our future,” she added, capturing the sentiment of the gathered crowd.

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WOMEN OF COURAGE



Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) women personnel march during the 56th CISF Raising Day Parade in Ranipet district, Tamil Nadu, on Friday

US wants full access to India mkt

US Trade Secy rejects idea of 'product-by-product' trade deal

PTI, NEW DELHI: The US on Friday pitched for a macro, large and grand trade agreement with India, and not 'product-by-product' arrangement to boost bilateral ties between the two countries.

US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick said India needs to open its agriculture market, emphasising that it cannot be 'off the table' when the country is negotiating with its

largest trading partner. “Because India is so gigantic, and the US is so gigantic, the right way to do it (trade pact) is a macro, and that's why we think we can get it done. The US is interested in doing a macro, large-scale, broad-based trade agreement with India that takes everything into account and that I think it can be done.”

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“India is the eye in BRICS... trying to create a currency to replace the dollar as the global economic currency of the world... These kinds of things do not create the love and affection that we really deeply feel towards India”

“How you treat us is how we would like to treat you. And I would like to tell you that India has some of the highest tariffs in the world, and that will require a rethinking of the relationship, the special relationship, between India and the United States” - Howard Lutnick, US Commerce Secretary

2 IAF aircrafts crash in separate incidents

Jaguar fighter jet crashes in Haryana, AN-32 aircraft in WB; crew ejected safely in both cases



Pilot of a Jaguar aircraft of the IAF that crashed in Panchkula, Haryana, on Friday

PTI, CHANDIGARH/ NEW DELHI: In two incidents on a single day involving Indian Air Force's aircraft, a Jaguar fighter jet crashed shortly after taking off from the Ambala airbase in Haryana, while an AN-32 transport plane crash-landed in West Bengal's Bagdogra.

In both incidents, the air crew ejected safely, according to officials.

While the Jaguar aircraft crashed after encountering a technical snag, the reason behind the

crash-landing of the AN-32 plane is not immediately known.

“A Jaguar aircraft of the IAF crashed at Ambala, during a routine training sortie today, after encountering system malfunction. The pilot manoeuvred the aircraft away from any habitation on the ground before ejecting safely,” the IAF said in a brief statement.

It said an inquiry has been ordered to ascertain the cause of the accident.

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Khaphreshwar: Complaint against contractor's men, cops, PWD

Team Herald

PANJIM: A group of activists have lodged a complaint with the police against the Porvorim high-way project contractor's team, accusing the group of criminal conspiracy aimed at demolishing the Lord Khaphreshwar Temple early on Monday.

Demanding an FIR against the contractor's men, government and police personnel, the activists - Swapnesh Sherlekar, Pravinsingh Shetgaonkar, Dharendra Phadte, Dipesh Naik an, Suraj Arondekar and Mayur Shetgaonkar - alleged that they intentionally demolished the temple without adhering to the due process of law and that these actions amounted to criminal trespass.

On Women's Day, rising crime graph a worry

Team Herald

PANJIM/ MARGAO: Goa is among the most affluent States in India, where social and economic indicators - as well as the State's common civil code - have ensured that women have equal opportunities in all spheres of public life. But a recent and disturbing trend has emerged in the sunshine State - that of rising instances of crimes against women. In a Women's Day special, O Herald spoke to women activists to understand the reasons behind this alarming development.

■ In 2024, a total of 365 cases of crimes against women were registered across the State, among these were 106 cases of rape

■ In 2023, police had registered 288 cases of crimes against



women, which shows that 2024 saw an alarming increase of over 25% in such crimes

■ In S Goa, 39 rape cases were reported in 2024, while there were 34 rape cases filed in the district in 2023

“Crime against women is on the rise, and women often face hostility when trying to register a complaint at the police station. Many times, their complaints are not registered at all. We have initiated monthly meetings with police officials to address these issues, highlighting concerns over the failure to follow mandated protocols”

- Sabina Martins, convener of the NGO, Bailancho Saad

“Every week, I see cases being filed by women who have been violated. There are also many cases involving children, including the recent horrific murder of a five-year-old girl. To put an end to this, we need stronger deterrents, such as convictions, to send a clear message to criminals that they will not get away with such crimes”

- Auda Viegas, Bailancho Ekvott, president



“There is a lack of confidence in the police and women are often discouraged from coming forward. When they do, they face victimisation or undue influence from powerful individuals. Wine stores at nearly every street corner contribute to unsafe environments for women. Education and employability skills are crucial for women to sustain themselves independently”

- Dr Babita Angle, former Margao Municipal Council chairperson

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