

shorttakes

UNLICENSED RIDER CAUSES ACCIDENT IN MAINA-CURTORIM

MARGAO: Maina-Curtorim police have registered an offence against scooter owner Rechal Mascarenhas for allowing unlicensed rider Kusal Oraon to operate the vehicle. The case has been booked under Section 281, 125(a) of the BNS and Sections 3, 180 of the Motor Vehicles Act. According to a complaint filed by ASI Suresh Velip, Oraon, a resident of Baghat-Maina, and native of West Bengal, was riding a Honda Grazia scooter rashly and negligently when he collided with an oncoming Hero Honda Splendor motorcycle. Both Oraon and the motorcyclist, Shambu Gaonkar, sustained injuries. Investigations are ongoing.

STOREROOM AT CREMATION GROUND SET ABLAZE IN MIRABHAG

MARGAO: Unknown miscreants set fire to a storeroom at the Hindu cremation ground in Mirabhag, causing an estimated loss of Rs 3 lakh. Curcholem police registered an offence under Section 326(g) of the BNS 2023 based on a complaint by Sanjay Naik of Mirabhag, Sanvordem. The incident occurred at around 7:30 am on March 6. Police visited the site and conducted a panchanama. PSI Dinesh Gaonkar is investigating.

TWO ARRESTED FOR IMPERSONATION AT GOVERNMENT GUEST HOUSE

MARGAO: Fatorda police arrested Deepak and Ramraje, both natives of Pune, Maharashtra, for impersonating government officials at the Government Guest House, Monte Hill, Margao, with the intent to cheat. The accused allegedly used fake IDs claiming to be from the "Jeevan Help Council" under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs. They bypassed the official booking procedure to secure a stay at the guest house. Based on a complaint by Sanjit Kachhua, an employee at the guest house, police registered an offence under Section 319(2) r/w 3(5) of the BNS 2023. The duo has been granted bail by the Margao court.

SCOOTER STOLEN, SUSPECT NABBED IN BORIM

MARGAO: Maina-Curtorim police arrested Roshan Kumar, a native of Bihar, for stealing a scooter worth Rs 40,000. The scooter, registered in the name of Joao Fernandes, was stolen from Amora-Raia, on March 5. During patrolling near Borim, police spotted a man on a similar scooter. Upon questioning, he admitted to the theft. Kumar has been remanded to 14 days in judicial custody.

FOREST OFFICIALS OBSTRUCTED IN COTIGAO, THREE BOOKED

MARGAO: Canacona police have booked three individuals for obstructing forest officials at Cotigao Wildlife Sanctuary from performing their duty. On February 23, Range Forest Officer Anand Mestri filed a complaint stating that accused Umesh @ Daya Tolu Gaonkar, Gajanan Velip, and Kalpesh Gaonkar forcibly stopped the construction of an anti-poaching camp. They allegedly snatched JCB keys, threatened the driver, and forced him to refill the dug foundation. Police registered the case under Sections 132, 351(3) r/w 3(5) of the BNS 2023. Investigations continue.

TRANSFORMER FIRE, TREE FALL AND DRY GRASS BLAZE IN MARGAO

MARGAO: A transformer near Lohia Maidan caught fire, causing significant damage before firefighters controlled the blaze within an hour. Separately, a mango tree fell on the road near Junta Bar, Navelim, obstructing traffic. Fire personnel cleared the road in 45 minutes. Meanwhile, dry grass near Margao Municipality also caught fire, requiring firefighting intervention. SFO Gil Souza confirmed that prompt action prevented further damage.



Members of Merces free legal aid cell led by the students of VM Salgaocar College of Law in collaboration with Goa Police, conducted an awareness programme on occasion of women's day, on the topic 'Empowering Women, Ensuring Safety: Breaking Down Barriers' for the students of Fr Agnel college of Arts and Commerce. Police Inspectors Devyani Naik and Sandhya Gupta were also present

CYBER AWARENESS CAMPAIGN HELD ACROSS SOUTH GOA

MARGAO: Cyber Jaagrookta Diwas was observed across police stations in South Goa to raise awareness about cyber security and crime prevention. Events were held in Margao, Colva, Cuncoim, Fatorda, and Maina-Curtorim, as well as in Quepem, Sanvordem, Canacona, Ponda, Mardol, Vasco, and other locations. Police educated the public on online fraud, cyber threats, and digital safety measures.

ST JOSEPH CONVENT HIGH SCHOOL TRIUMPHS AT SCISPARK 2025



MARGAO: St Joseph Convent High School, Nagoa-Verna, emerged as the overall winners of SciSpark 2025, a science and innovation competition organised by Our Lady of Succour High School, Nagoa-Salcete. The event, held in collaboration with the Department of Science and Technology and Waste Management, Porvorim, showcased students' scientific knowledge, teamwork, and creativity. A total of seven schools participated in the competition: St Joseph Convent High School, Nagoa-Verna; Holy Rosary High School, Nuvem; St Thomas High School, Cansaulim; Marina English High School, Verna; Mae Dos Pobres High School, Nuvem; St Anthony's High School, Majorda; and the host school, Our Lady of Succour High School, Nagoa-Verna. The event featured six competitions: On-stage, Lab Challenge - Junior Scientist, Mime, Off-stage, Micro Greens, Working Models, and Recycled Bags. It served as a platform to foster innovation, critical thinking, and collaboration, while promoting science education among students. The programme began with a welcome address by Headmistress Olympia Pereira, who introduced the chief guest, Dr Dominic Savio Dias, a renowned homeopathic practitioner. Manager Rev Fr Edson Fernandes delivered the vote of thanks.

Statue of Saint Francis stolen near Quepem police station

Team Herald

QUEPEM: A statue of Saint Francis was stolen by some unknown persons from the Denvil Pereira's grotto, situated near the Quepem police station.

The theft occurred on March 3, when the complainant had gone to attend a family function at around 8 pm. "When we woke up the following morning, we were shocked to discover that the statue from our grotto was missing, clearly indicating it was stolen during night", Pereira said.

What was alarming was that this theft occurred just 30 metres from the police station. He further questioned what could be happening in areas farther away from the police if robberies can take place so close to law enforcement.

At first, the complainant decided not to take further action because the Quepem PI had promised that the thief would be caught. However, after



seeing no progress, the complainant approached the police again which

“When we woke up the following morning, we were shocked to discover that the statue from our grotto was missing, clearly indicating it was stolen during night - Denvil Pereira, Complainant

led the PI to officially file a complaint and start an investigation.

Denvil's brother Dexan shared that their father had put up the statue around 30 years ago, and it was bought for Rs 12,000. Meanwhile, Francis, a neighbour of Denvil, raised a question about why St Francis Xavier seems to be targeted lately. He wondered if there are individuals trying to create divisions among Goans, emphasizing that no one will succeed in disrupting the harmony among the diverse faiths in Goa.

Bison calf rescued from residential area in Ponda

Team Herald

PONDA: A wild bison calf that had been trapped near a residential building in Shantinagar, Ponda, since Thursday night was successfully rescued by locals and forest officials.

According to residents, herds of wild bison frequently enter the city, causing damage to fruit-bearing trees and other plants.

On Thursday night, a bison calf was trapped near a compound wall in Shantinagar and was unable to leave the area. Concerned locals alerted forest officials, who arrived to carry out the rescue operation.

Efforts were made to free the calf, and once it was successfully released, its mother and another male bison, who had remained in the area overnight, left the locality. Their departure brought relief to residents.

Locals have expressed growing concerns about wild animals frequently straying into city areas. They have urged forest officials to take measures to protect the natural habitat of wildlife.

Kishan Naik, a resident, stated, "In recent times, forest areas have been encroached upon for road expansion and house construction. Disturbed animals are now entering the city."

Locals have appealed to the authorities to safeguard forests and hills from further destruction. They have also suggested planting fruit-bearing trees and fodder in forested areas, as well as digging trenches and ponds to provide water for wild animals. These measures, they believe, will help keep wildlife within their natural habitat and prevent them from venturing into human settlements.

FOR THE GRAM



Tourists wander the streets of Fontainhas, posing for photographs and blocking the road, ignoring govt guidelines and oblivious to the inconvenience they pose to residents and commuters. The locals of Panjim's heritage precincts complain that the tourists leave scuffs and shoe prints on their walls and doors, park poorly and have no regard for their privacy

Cong alleges Rs 7.2 cr land conversion scam, demands Rane's removal

Team Herald

PANJIM: The opposition Congress on Friday accused Town and Country Planning (TCP) Minister Vishwajit Rane and Chief Town Planner Rajesh Naik of causing a loss of Rs 7.2 crore to the state by undervaluing land conversion fees and demanded their immediate removal from office.

Addressing a press conference, Goa Pradesh Congress Committee (GPCC) Vice President Sunil Kawthankar said, "We demand that Vishwajit Rane and Chief Town Planner Rajesh Naik be immediately sacked from the TCP for rampant land conversions, including those in No Development Zones (NDZs), green covers, private forests, low-lying paddy fields, and agricultural land. These conversions amount to nearly 21.29 lakh square metres between March 2023 and July 2024—al-

RATES FIXED FOR LAND CONVERSION WILL HAVE TO BE PAID: MIN

PANJIM: Rates fixed by the government for land conversion will have to be paid, and there is no question of deviating from that, claimed Town and Country Planning (TCP) Minister Vishwajit Rane. He was reacting to query by media persons over the directions by the High Court of Bombay at Goa to the government to specify the steps taken to recover fees of over Rs 7.16 crore from applicants seeking land conversions due to undervaluing the Assessment Order, under Section 17 (2) of the TCP Act. The court directions came in the PIL writ petition filed in this regards which

alleged that TCP Department officials deliberately undervalued the Assessment Order for fees and charged the old fee of Rs 200 per sqmtr instead of the revised Rs 1,000 for land conversions of area of 20,001 sqmtr. "Orders have already been issued. TCP Department had kept it for discussion with CREDAI and GCCI. The payments will be as per the rates fixed. There is no issue," Rane said. During the hearing, the court was told that the State government had already issued due deficit fee recovery notices as per revised rates to around 120 land conversion applicants.

most 0.52% of Goa's total land mass, and ten times more than the land converted between 1986 and 2005."

Kawthankar further alleged that crores of square metres of land were being converted through the misuse of Sections 39(A) and 17(2) of the TCP Act, including nearly 55 hectares

of land in Karapur village belonging to Rane himself.

He also claimed that criminal proceedings should be initiated against Rane and Naik for deliberately causing aRs7.2 crore loss to the state exchequer by undervaluing official conversion fees for a land parcel measuring 89,500 square metres. Furthermore, Kaw-

Casarvanem residents hit out at cops for failing to probe case of missing idols



Team Herald

PERNEM: The residents of Casarvanem on Friday alleged that five statues of Shree Dev Mharingan, situated near Sateri temple, were found missing and alleged that the police were not acting on their complaint.

According to former Casarvanem sarpanch Shamsundar Naik, first two idols were reported missing on January 30 this year and again three idols were stolen on February 24.

The villagers mostly mahazans stated that they had filed a complaint with the

Mopa police station and copies of the complaint were also given to the SP North, Pernem Deputy Collector but till date no action has been taken by the police.

Temple managing committee attorney Govind Naik said that when he enquired with the police, the latter were yet to take action. They have demanded that the police should investigate the case and nab the culprits.

The mahazans further alleged that the new managing committee was keeping the temple door closed and were not allowing them to inspect the temple.

Senior citizen killed in road accident at Ponda

Team Herald

PONDA: A tragic accident at Safa Masjid junction near the KTC bus stand in Ponda claimed the life of a 67-year-old bike rider, Eknath Shetkar, from Santacruz-Ponda. The accident, which involved a collision between his motorcycle and a goods carrier truck, occurred at around 3:45 pm on Thursday.

According to police, Shetkar was riding towards Farmagudi, with the truck travelling in the same di-

rection. At the Farmagudi KTC junction, both vehicles collided, resulting in serious injuries to Shetkar. He was rushed to the Sub-District Hospital in Ponda but later succumbed to his injuries. His wife Sulochana Shetkar (57), sustained injuries and was shifted to Goa Medical College (GMC) for further treatment.

Following the fatal accident, locals have urged authorities to implement safety measures at Safa Masjid junction, highlighting its dangerous layout.

Goa introduces cashless e-challan system for traffic fines

Team Herald

PANJIM: The coastal state of Goa has implemented a cashless e-challan system from March 1 to collect fines from errant motorists under the Motor Vehicles Act, officials have confirmed.

The Pramod Sawant-led government has rolled out e-challans for traffic offenders in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Digital India initiative, they said.

Superintendent of Police (Traffic) Prabodh Shirvoikar stated that the new system has proven useful for traffic police officers, who have been intensifying their crackdown on road safety violations across Goa.

"There is no transaction through cash to pay fines against e-challans.

The challan is generated through the e-challan system, and the payment has to be made digitally," Shirvoikar said.

Fatal accident claims life of senior citizen at Arambol

Team Herald

PERNEM: Ulhas Gokarankar, 68, a pedestrian was killed in a fatal accident occurred near the Arambol bus stand on Friday.

The accident occurred after a speeding two-wheeler allegedly rammed into Gokarankar, dragging him for a short distance before colliding with an oncoming two-wheeler.

Gokarankar was immediately rushed to the Primary Health centre (PHC) Tuem and succumbed to his injuries on the way to the Goa Medical College and Hospital (GMC), Bambolim. He was a retired employee of the Water Resources Department (WRD).

Mandrem PI Sherif Jacques said that they arrested the accused, and sent him to the hospital for medical examination.

The accused also suffered fracture to his hand and was admitted to the North Goa District Hospital, Mapusa. The accused identified as Sohan Vast is learnt to be a police constable and he was taken into custody after he was discharged from the hospital.

Demanding justice, the family members marched to the police station and said that they will not take possession of the body if the police refuse to give copy of the FIR. They even accused the Mandrem police of siding with the accused and shielding him.

Teenager drowns at pond in Majorda



Team Herald

MARGAO: Ravi Kishan Kumar, 14, from Majorda met with a watery grave while trying to retrieve a ball which fell in a pond yesterday. Police stated that a group of boys were playing when their ball fell into the pond.

Ravi went to retrieve the ball and met with a tragic end. He was shifted to the South Goa District Hospital but was declared brought dead. The body has now been preserved at the hospital morgue for post mortem examination.

South Goa MP backs Bellem, Velsao villagers over right of way

Team Herald

VASCO: South Goa MP Capt Viriato Fernandes has extended his support to the villagers of Bellem, Velsao fighting to retain their traditional access and strongly condemned the move of the private builder to issue 'passes' to locals to access their own land.

During his visit, Capt Fernandes met former Sancoale panchayat member Mariano Rodrigues, former Velsao-Pale-Issorcim panchayat member Roqueizinho D'Souza, and other locals. During the meeting, the locals expressed their growing concerns over a private construction company fencing off land at Zuarinagar, allegedly restricting age-old access to villagers, including pathways leading to a cre-

matorium and a site with a historic holy cross.

Capt Fernandes opposed the ongoing land takeovers, and blamed large-scale changes in zoning plans since 2018. He told villagers, "This is not new and we have seen Outline Development Plans (ODPs) and Regional Plan being manipulated, converting NDZs into settlement areas, destroying Goa's farmlands, orchards and hills. We need to stay united in this fight. This is not about Congress or any political party and I am here as a South Goa MP. If we do not act now, future generations will hold us responsible," he warned.

Condemning the builder for blocking the access and his move to issue 'passes' to locals to access their own land, Capt Fernandes

said that it was a shameful insult to Goans. "Outsiders are now telling us that we need a pass to enter our own village. Some Goans have sold themselves to these builders, and it's time to liberate Goa from this exploitation. This fight will start from Velsao," he thundered.

Capt Fernandes demanded to know how Comunidade land was sold to private firms without consulting locals.

He cautioned that unchecked land sales would lead to severe consequences for local infrastructure including water and electricity supply, while also restricting free movement of people within villages.

Mariano Rodrigues said that people were facing lot of hardships due to blocking of the traditional access.