

# Shock and outrage in Usgao as locals protest brutal murder of 5-yr-old girl

Women meet Ponda PI, ask cops to probe murder from all angles, demand capital punishment for accused

Team Herald

**PONDA:** On International Women's Day, residents of Usgao, mostly women, gathered in shock and anger to protest at Ponda Police Station following the gruesome murder of a five-year-old child on March 6.

The crime, allegedly committed by a couple from Kasayale, Usgao, has left the community devastated.

The protestors met Ponda PI Vijayanath Kavlekar, demanding a thorough and fair investigation. Local panch member Manisha Usgaonkar urged authorities to probe the case from all angles. She called for the strictest possible punishment for the accused, stating, "The culprits should receive the maximum punishment so that no one dares to commit such a crime in the future. The innocent child, who had not even seen life or played any role in the quarrel, was lured with chocolate and cruelly murdered."

The protest was sparked by media reports suggesting that the police had ruled out black magic as a motive, with no evidence of ritualistic practices found at the crime scene. Locals had initially suspected that the murder was linked to black magic, believing it to be a ritual for



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— Manisha Usgaonkar, local panch

conceiving a child. Seeking further clarification, the child's mother, relatives, and other residents gathered at the police station. Officials have maintained that the murder result-

**“The gruesome murder of this child is a stain on humanity. The police should complete their investigation swiftly, as most of the evidence has already been gathered. The accused should not just receive a life sentence but should be hanged for this cruel act”**  
Tara Kerkar, social worker

ed from a heated argument between two families. Social worker Tara Kerkar strongly condemned the incident, stating that law and order had collapsed

and there was a need to instil fear of the law. "The gruesome murder of this child is a stain on humanity. The police should complete their investigation swiftly, as most of the evidence has already been gathered. The accused should not just receive a life sentence but should be hanged for this cruel act," she said.

Kerkar recalled a similar sense of horror felt in Goa during the crimes of serial killer Mahanand Naik, saying this murder had once again shocked the state. She also urged residents to install CCTV cameras for security, noting that footage from local cameras in Usgao had assisted the police in detecting the crime.

Meanwhile, Usgao residents expressed disbelief that the accused couple, who were known for their kindness towards animals, could have

committed such a brutal act. "They used to feed several dogs with chicken and mutton, showering them with love. It is difficult to believe that the same couple could have killed a little girl in such a cruel way," one local said.

Among the two accused, locals placed the primary blame on Pooja Alat, stating that as a woman, she played a significant role in the heinous crime.

## Road caves in during Porvorim flyover work

**PANJIM:** A portion of National Highway N 66 caved in near an automobile showroom at Porvorim during the drilling work of elevated corridor project on Saturday morning. The authorities began to repair it on a war-footing and to prevent any untoward incident, vehicular traffic proceeding from Panjim-Porvorim side towards Mapusa is diverted at O'Coqueiro junction to proceed via CHOGM road and further through the newly constructed road opposite to Wellness Pharmacy to reach upto Porvorim Bazaar slope on NH 66 for further journey. Traffic flow on other roads will remain same.

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(never known to all)

O most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel fruitful vine, splendour of Heaven Blessed Mother, of the son of God. Immaculate Virgin assist me in my necessary. O star of the Sea help me and show me herein you are my Mother.

O, Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to Succour me in this necessity (Make your request) There are none that can withstand Your power.

O show me, My Mother. O show me herein you are my Mother O Mary conceived without sin pray for Us who have recourse to thee (3 Times) Sweet Mother I place this Cause in Your hands (3 times) Thank you for your Mercy towards me and my loved ones. Amen

Amelia Pinto

This prayer must be said for three Days and after that the request will be Granted and the prayer must be published.

# Turmoil in Congress during block panel meeting

AICC Goa desk incharge tells local leadership to either perform or vacate chairs

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** Turmoil in Congress Party in the State once again came to fore during the block committee meeting convened by AICC Goa desk incharge Manikrao Thakare at Mormugao on Friday.

Party sources informed that visibly upset Thakare openly told the local leadership to either perform or vacate the chairs.

It all started with one Sahish Amerkar, who was appointed as Mormugao Block Congress president told Thakare that he had not received a letter of appointment from the Goa Pradesh Congress Committee (GPCC). Similarly, some other members who were present for the meeting also complained that they were neither given any letter of appointments nor were aware of their designations in the par-

## TIT-FOR-TAT

**■ In an attempt to counter Amit Patkar, Vikas Prabhudesai organised a Jana Sampark Yatra at Porvorim on Saturday and invited Girish Chodankar, MLA Carlos Alvares Ferreira, GPCC senior vice president M K Shaikh, vice presidents Tulio D'Souza and Sunil Kawthankar and presidents of frontal organisations**

**■ Surprisingly, Patkar, Leader of the Opposition Yuri Alemao and Quepem MLA Altone D'Costa did not find a mention in the invitation sent by the Porvorim Welfare Foundation**

ty. Congress members also told the Goa desk incharge that situation was

same in few other constituencies as well and demanded immediate revamp of the organisation.

Taken aback with the sudden outburst, GPCC president Amit Patkar who was present for the meeting tried to explain but Thakare was not in a mood to listen, sources informed.

Thakare arrived in Goa on Friday on a three-day visit. He held first meeting at Mormugao and later attended a meeting at Santa Cruz. He addressed two meetings on Saturday at Cumbarjua and Saligao. Earlier in the day, he met some senior leaders of the party in Panjim.

It may be recalled that demand for change in leadership had echoed during the visit of AICC co-incharge Dr Anjali Nimbalkar last month at Sankhali and Cuncolim.

**O Herald** had reported the story from Sankhali where workers had demanded sacking of Amit Patkar.

# Bethora villagers demand flyover, underpass on widened highway

Team Herald

**PONDA:** Residents of Bethora met with Assistant Engineer Chandra Parwar of NH Division XV at the PWD office in Ponda on Friday and submitted a memorandum demanding the construction of a flyover and underpass at Kannewal Bethora main road and Bondbag junction on the newly widened Bethora-Borim Highway.

Villagers expressed their concerns over safety issues, stating that the bypass road had been expanded into a

four-lane highway without adequate provisions for pedestrian crossings.

Locals fear that the prevailing chaotic situation could lead to serious accidents. "The current situation is dangerous and we are requesting the immediate construction of a flyover," said one of the villagers.

According to the residents, the four-lane expansion was carried out without incorporating essential infrastructure such as an underpass or flyover, leaving the development incomplete. They

stressed that until such infrastructure is built, a traffic signal system should be installed to regulate vehicle movement.

The widened road has resulted in a significant increase in traffic, particularly with heavy vehicles travelling between Margao and Belagavi. Additionally, congestion has worsened due to industrial estate workers commuting via the Bethora junction, especially during peak hours.

Villagers also highlighted that the road serves as

an essential route for several local panchayats, including Bethora, Nirankal, Conxem, Codar, Dabal, and Kirlapal.

Another major junction of concern is at Bondbag, near the Ganapati temple. Residents have described it as a highly dangerous crossing and are requesting either a flyover, an underpass, or a traffic signal system to ensure safety.

Authorities are urged to take immediate action to address these concerns before accidents occur.

# Transport Department suspends licences of three Margao buses

Team Herald

**MARGAO:** The Transport Department has suspended the operating licences of three private buses from Margao for a period of 45 days. The action was taken following complaints of alleged fights and irregularities in fare collection.

Margao Traffic Cell PI Sanjay Dalvi, who had sent a report to the Transport Department recommending the suspension, confirmed the decision. "I have received official communication regarding the suspension of the licences of three buses," he said.

The suspension follows a dramatic scuffle that broke out in broad daylight on the main road at Aquem, Margao, as bus conductors and drivers clashed over picking up passengers and violating route schedules. The Margao police had arrested eight individuals,

including drivers and conductors, in connection with the altercation.

The brawl, which lasted for over half an hour, saw two groups of bus staff engaging in a physical fight, causing chaos on the road.

According to the complaint filed by the Margao Traffic Cell, the incident involved conductors and drivers of different buses. PI Dalvi confirmed that all eight individuals were arrested under Section 151 of the CrPC as a preventive measure. Due to the altercation, passengers from both buses were forced to disembark, with some choosing to walk from Aquem to Margao.

The clash reportedly began when a bus, already carrying passengers, stopped at Aquem—an unofficial halt. A second bus soon arrived at the same location, triggering an argument between the two conductors over de-

parture delays. The verbal dispute quickly escalated into a physical fight, drawing in other individuals.

A traffic constable stationed at the site witnessed the altercation and attempted to intervene before alerting PI Dalvi. A police team later arrived at the scene, detained all those involved, and took them to the police station.

Following the incident, PI Dalvi submitted a report to the Transport Department recommending the suspension of the three buses' licences.

Despite Aquem not being an official bus stop, buses frequently halt there for extended periods to pick up passengers arriving from Margao Railway Station. Locals have raised concerns over why authorities continue to allow buses to park at the spot, leading to frequent congestion and disputes.

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