

Herald Cafe



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The Goan siesta: Making Sleep Health a Priority

Once a customary part of Goan lifestyle, siesta has now become more of a luxury than a necessity. On World Sleep Day, we examine if the siesta is practical and advisable

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A few years back, if you were caught up in the Mapusa market for shopping between 1 pm to 4 pm, you had nothing to do but wait for the shops to open after siesta time. However, times have changed and very few make that extra effort to actually nap in the afternoon. While having a long stretch of undisturbed sleep is very important, this afternoon nap helps rejuvenate the body and mind.

WHEN SIESTA IS A WEEKEND LUXURY

For music teacher Vinita Fernandes, as a parent her day is packed with her children's school and extracurricular activities. "When I was nursing my children, I had erratic sleep in the night and my husband would make sure that I got at least an hour of afternoon nap. Now, since the children are grown, the afternoons are spent picking and dropping them to different classes. I start my music classes by 4 pm to 6.30 pm. Afternoon siesta is now a luxury for us to be enjoyed during the weekends when we don't have classes," says Caranzalem-based Vinita.



GOA'S SLEEP EXPERT RECOMMENDS

Margao-based Dr Afshan Shaik is the only super-specialist in Goa with a DM in Pulmonary Medicine, sleep medicine and critical care. While sleep is very important for the body, Dr Afshan warns about sleeping at irregular times of the day.

"If one has been used to taking an afternoon nap, then it is good and nothing alarming. It helps improve memory and reduces fatigue. But if one is sleeping excessively more recently, especially in the afternoon, when they should not fall asleep, it's a warning sign that they have an Obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) or, this patient will have it in the future. The drawbacks will be the disruption

of nighttime sleep, worsening of metabolic health and make one more prone to obesity and diabetes," informs Dr Afshan.

With compulsory eight hours of sleep for children and teenagers and six hours of sleep for elders, Dr Afshan warns that people are nowadays reporting about insomnia. "People are sleeping late because of scrolling on their mobile screens which is affecting their sleep pattern. It's always advisable for them to keep their mobile shut for at least one hour before they tend to go to sleep. Sleep hygiene is something which is very important," says Dr Afshan. Teenagers tend to sleep less, while using mobile phones, ultimately their memory and concentration power gets affected. "With poor sleep, in the future one will tend to have cardiovascular problems, especially in elderly, and metabolic problems, later on in life," concludes Dr Afshan.



THE EFFECT OF BLUE LIGHT ON DISTURBED SLEEP

- Exposure to blue light in the hours leading up to bedtime can hinder sleep.
- Blue light suppresses the body's release of melatonin, a hormone that makes us feel drowsy.
- Being exposed to blue light in the evening can trick our brain into thinking it is still daytime, disrupting circadian rhythms and leaving us feeling alert instead of tired.

A MID DAY REJUVENATION

Clarice Vaz is a self trained artist and writer from Saligao. Her afternoon siesta is a must and a practice she has followed more recently in the last few years. She shares her schedule, "I need that one hour in the afternoon, I actually don't have a deep sleep but I rest my body and my dogs wiggle and waggle, as they know it's time for their biscuits, which is my wake up call. I can't miss out

on my siesta, I don't schedule anything during this time. It's like part 2 for the day because I wake up at 5 am which is my prayer and meditation time." Savia Viegas is an accomplished academic, writer, artist, and curator who now in her 60s, still does a lot of intense minute work that requires good eyesight and concentration. "I try to take a one hour break in the afternoons. It's not every day and I don't sleep, but I close my eyes. Considering my age, I have very good eyesight, and I protect it as this exercise helps me immensely. I need this work necessitated

THE EARLY BIRDS

Fr Noel Menezes is the local superior and assistant parish priest of St Michael Church, Anjuna. Waking up early in the morning to prepare the sermon and working through the day without a break can be challenging. "I usually take a one hour break in the afternoon as I wake up at 5 am to prepare for the sermon and be ready for the Mass at 6.30 am. If I don't sleep well, then I feel tired as the body needs that much required recuperation. I go to sleep early too," says Fr Noel.

A teacher at a high school, Desiree Fernandes from Anjuna finds her mornings to be very productive but being in school gives her just an hour break for lunch. "My sleeping patterns are so erratic that if I have 8 hours of sleep, then even a half an hour break in the afternoon to relax is sufficient. After lunch, we start with remedial classes for students before winding up for the day," explains Desiree.

SWIPE RIGHT

Tiger Woods biopic in the works

Tiger Woods' life story is getting the movie treatment. Amazon MGM Studios picked up the film rights to Kevin Cook's recent biography about the golf star, 'The Tiger Slam', according to studio reps.



Barack and Michelle Obama, through their production company Higher Ground, are in talks to produce. Reinaldo Marcus Green, who made the tennis biopic, 'King Richard', is being eyed to direct. 'The Tiger Slam', published in December 2024, is a 'gripping, inside-the-ropes account of an astonishing streak of victories that left Woods's rivals scrambling to keep up,' per a synopsis.

James Cameron confirms next Avatar is longest one yet



James Cameron is beginning to tease 'Avatar' fans about the lengthy – and emotional – 'Avatar: Fire and Ash'. Filmmaker Cameron, noted that the third 'Avatar' installment "will actually be a little bit longer than movie 2," which already ran for three hours and 12 minutes. On top of the movie's lengthy runtime, Cameron also said that his wife Suzy Amis Cameron watched "the whole thing from end to end" for the first time and walked away feeling significantly emotionally moved. "She bawled for four hours," he said of Suzy's reaction to the movie.



Aithya Shetty and KL Rahul dropped a heart-warming maternity shoot on Instagram. She flaunted her baby bump in an oversized white shirt and denim pants.

NATURAL COLOURS FROM GOAN COLLEGES TO LIGHT UP YOUR HOLI

Festival of colour, Holi is here and Goan students are promoting sustainable entrepreneurship by producing and marketing organic colours through two colleges in North Goa

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The festival of Holi will be celebrated in Goa today where the colours of spring are in the air. The Hindu festival is celebrated by throwing colored water and powders on one another in joyous revelry. Gaining popularity over the years in the State, the festival has progressed from using artificial and chemical laced colours to organic colours to protect the skin against harmful agents. Interesting, it is the colleges taking this initiative.

MASTERING ORGANIC

COLOUR PRODUCTION

Students of Vidya Prabodhini College of Commerce, Education, Computer and Management, Porvorim have successfully mastered organic colour production and



marketing. Led by assistant professor Rudresh Uttam Mhamal, this hands-on learning experience has equipped commerce students with essential skills in branding, production, and distribution while aligning with key Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The project received strong support from the college's Principal, Dr Bhushan Bhavne and Dr Ujjala Hanjunker, vice principal and head of the Commerce Department.

Environmentalism Suryakant Gaonkar conducted a workshop for the students on organic colour production. The students collaborated with Suryakant and Dhavrukh NGO engaged in designing labels, creating promotional materials, and utilizing digital marketing tools to boost product visibility. The students successfully sold over 200 kg of organic color.

Rohit Gaounder, a SYBCom student, shared that the project exposed him to

practical challenges in pricing and sales, while Falgun Priyolkar highlighted the importance of discounting strategies and consumer engagement.

THREE YEARS OF ECO-FRIENDLY COLOURS

With the strong collaboration with the Parents Teachers Association (PTA), the Alumni Association, Goa State Biodiversity Board's GoVan project and Goa State Pollution Control Board, Lions Club of Mapusa, Dnyanprassarak Mandal's College and Research Centre (DMC) in Assagao promotes natural organic and non-toxic holi colors made from flowers, seeds and herbs.

This initiative began as a pilot project in 2021, producing just a few kilograms of natural organic color, and has since expanded to produce nearly three tons of color. College Principal Prof D B Arolkar highlighted the dangers of commercially available toxic colors with heavy metals like mercury, copper, and cadmium, as well as harmful adulterants that can cause long-term health issues and environmental damage.

It is important to understand that we are not the only species on earth. Respect nature and celebrate nature. Our festivals are meant to celebrate nature and its gifts to us. Holi is one such festival of joy and happiness.

— Rudresh Uttam Mhamal,
Assistant professor, Vidya Prabodhini College, Porvorim

The college's eco-friendly colors are made from natural materials like turmeric, bixa seeds, beetroot and indigo leaves. The initiative has been certified by the Pollution Control Board. The Natural Holi Colours were officially launched marking a significant step towards a more sustainable and community-driven celebration of the festival.