

shorttakes

MISSING 17-YEAR-OLD GIRL RESCUED BY POLICE IN CURCHOREM

MARGAO: A 17-year-old girl reported missing from Curcholem was traced and rescued by Maina Curtorim police. The victim's mother filed a complaint on March 28, stating that her daughter was kidnapped by an unknown person from Vodlemol-Kakoda, Curcholem, on the previous day. A search operation was launched using technical surveillance and local intelligence. The girl was located on March 28 and reunited with her family.

MAN FOUND HANGING NEAR QUEPEM HOTEL IN SUSPECTED SUICIDE

MARGAO: A man was found dead by suicide near a hotel in Quepem, with police confirming he hanged himself from a tree. The deceased, identified as Sudhakar Gaonkar of Balli-Quepem, was discovered near a hotel at Bendurdem. His brother informed police that Gaonkar was a chronic alcoholic. Quepem police conducted an inquest and sent the body to South Goa District Hospital (SGDH), Margao, for a post-mortem. A police surgeon confirmed the cause of death as asphyxia due to hanging.

PEDESTRIAN KILLED AFTER BEING KNOCKED DOWN BY SCOOTER IN FATORDA

MARGAO: A pedestrian was fatally injured after being hit by a scooter in Fatorda. The victim, Ulhas Wadkar of Borda, succumbed to his injuries at South Goa District Hospital (SGDH), Margao. The accident occurred on March 29, at around 12.05 am near Jackson Restaurant, Borda. A complaint stated that the accused, Bryan Franco Borges of Borda, was riding an electric scooter rashly while travelling from Bholsh Circle towards Holy Spirit Church, Fatorda. He allegedly struck Wadkar, who was crossing the road. A post-mortem confirmed the cause of death as 'cranio-cerebral damage due to blunt force impact'.

MAN'S BODY FOUND NEAR PETROL PUMP AT VERNA

MARGAO: The body of Dharma Singh, a native of Madhya Pradesh residing in Birla, was found near an Indian petrol pump at Zuarinagar. Verna police were alerted by an ambulance service and dispatched a team to the scene. Enquiries revealed that Singh was earlier seen lying in a gutter opposite his room. His roommates lifted him out and alerted emergency services. He was taken to PHC Cansaulim, where the doctor declared him dead. An inquest and scene panchanama were conducted, and the body was sent for post-mortem at SGDH Margao. A police surgeon confirmed the cause of death as asphyxia due to drowning.

MAN FALLS FROM MANGO TREE IN BORDA, DIES FROM INJURIES

MARGAO: An unidentified man, aged around 40-45, died after falling from a mango tree in Borda. Fatorda police were informed by SGDH Margao's casualty unit that the man was brought in dead. Enquiries revealed that he was seen climbing a mango tree before falling and sustaining severe injuries. He was taken to SGDH Margao, where he was declared dead. His body has been sent for post-mortem.

THREE ARRESTED FOR ILLEGAL LATERITE MINING AT CANACONA

MARGAO: A raid by the Directorate of Mines and Geology in Canacona uncovered an illegal laterite stone mining operation, leading to the arrest of three individuals. Jeetendra Viluskar, a geologist at the Directorate of Mines and Geology in Panjim, lodged a police complaint regarding the incident, which occurred on March 27, at Paryemol-Cola. The accused—Kumar Chawadi of Canacona (originally from Bagalkot, Karnataka), and Santosh Surin and Narayan Paryemol, both from Canacona and originally from Jharkhand—were caught illegally extracting laterite stone using a power tiller without the required licence. The operation caused an estimated loss of Rs 10 lakh to the State.

TWO ARRESTED, MINOR DETAINED FOR MOTORCYCLE THEFT AT CURTORIM

MARGAO: Maina-Curtorim Police have arrested two individuals and detained a minor in connection with the theft of a motorcycle worth Rs 50,000. The arrests followed a complaint by Lesly Lourenca Carvalho of Rumbordem, Curtorim, stating that his motorcycle was stolen from an open parking area near his residence on March 24, at around 1.30 am. Using technical surveillance and intelligence inputs, police tracked down the accused—Sujal Naik of Kiribat, Nuvem, Salcete, and Kunal Naik of Ambaji, Margao. Both are currently in custody, while the minor has been sent to Apna Ghar, Mercedes. During interrogation, they confessed to the crime. Meanwhile, Colva police are investigating another motorcycle theft reported by Ogdalino Fernandes of Mando, Benaulim. His bike, worth Rs 15,000, was stolen from outside his house.

GOVERNMENT ENHANCES FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR ARTISANS

PANJIM: The Department of Handicrafts, Textile and Coir has revised its support scheme for artisans, increasing financial assistance for purchasing tools to Rs 5,000. Under the new scheme, artisans will receive free raw materials for up to 180 days, with a possible extension of 90 days. Additionally, full stall rentals of up to Rs 15,000 will be covered for state exhibitions and Rs 20,000 for events outside Goa. Daily allowances for travel and participation will range from Rs 600 to Rs 1,000, while financial aid of up to Rs 3 lakh per artisan will be available for international exhibitions. During the handholding support period, artisans will receive a stipend of Rs 250 per day, whereas power loom artisans can earn up to Rs 500 per day, depending on production. The government has also introduced an assessment system to determine incentives for artisans, ensuring a structured approach to financial assistance.

power shutdown

CURTORIM: On March 30, from 8 am to 3 pm. Eclate will be affected areas; On March 31, from 8 am to 3 pm. Camarxeth Near Cool Place Bar will be affected areas.

Illegally extracted sand seized in midnight raid at Khandepar

Team Herald



The raiding party seen with the impounded sand at Khandepar.

PONDA: A late-night raid conducted by a joint team of the Captain of Ports, Ponda Mamlatdar, and Ponda Police at Murdi-Khandepar led to the seizure of 30 cubic metres of illegally extracted sand. The action was carried out at midnight following intelligence on illegal sand extraction.

Ponda Mamlatdar Biku Gawas confirmed the raid, stating that a case would soon be registered against those involved in the illicit activity.

Meanwhile, local residents, speaking on con-

dition of anonymity, expressed deep concern over the ongoing illegal sand mining along the Khandepar River. They revealed that complaints had been filed with the panchayat long ago, but no concrete action was taken. "For the past three months, residents of Bagwada have been raising concerns about illegal sand mining in the area, but their

PMC approves surplus budget, extends sopo contract

Team Herald

PONDA: The Ponda Municipal Council (PMC) has approved a surplus budget, with receipts amounting to Rs 36.10 cr and expenditure totalling Rs 35.90 cr. The budget was sanctioned during a council meeting held on Friday.

In addition to the budget approval, PMC has extended the sopo contract by three months due to the lack of response to the new tender for the upcoming year, however, the process to appoint a new sopo contractor will continue.

Speaking to the media following the meeting, PMC Chairperson Anand Naik credited the support and initiatives of Ponda MLA for the various development projects currently underway in the city. He highlighted that the construction of the Ponda Administrative Building and the Golden Jubilee Project is nearing completion.

"These buildings are expected to be completed by the end of May, as assured by the contractors. They will be inaugurated soon after," he stated.

Naik also revealed that PMC has successfully collected Rs 1.60 cr in outstanding house tax dues out of a total pending amount of Rs 2 cr. Further, he announced that following the hot mix carpeting of all roads, a pay-parking system will be introduced in Ponda City from April this year.

As part of its developmental agenda, PMC will soon lay the foundation stone for a new garden project near the council office. The project, to be executed by the Goa State Urban Development Agency (GSUDA), will cost Rs 5 cr and include a walking track, food stalls, and other amenities. Additionally, the foundation stone for the Palika Bazaar Complex at Ponda Market is set to be laid shortly.

Entrepreneurs oppose prepaid meters, call for reconsideration

Team Herald

PONDA: Hanumant Vasant Naik, an entrepreneur from Durbhat-Ponda, has called on the government to reconsider its decision to introduce prepaid electricity meters for entrepreneurs, arguing that the move would impose an additional financial burden on small business owners whose operations largely depend on credit transactions.

Addressing the media, Naik referred to the recent announcement by Chief Minister Pramod Sawant following a cabinet meeting, where he confirmed that the government had approved the implementation of prepaid electricity me-

ters for consumers across the state.

Naik highlighted that many small industries in Goa were severely impacted by the financial downturn during the Covid-19 pandemic. Several small-scale businesses have yet to recover, while some were forced to shut down due to mounting losses. The state's market is only now beginning to recover from the economic crisis brought on by the pandemic. Many small entrepreneurs experience months-long gaps—sometimes lasting five to six months—before receiving orders for goods.

At a time when small businesses are still struggling to regain stability, the imposition of prepaid

electricity meters will pose further challenges. While large enterprises may be able to adapt, small entrepreneurs operating on a limited scale will struggle to bear the additional financial burden. The requirement to pay for electricity in advance will place an extra strain on business operations, making it harder for small enterprises to sustain themselves.

Naik has urged the government to reconsider its decision and exempt small entrepreneurs from the prepaid meter mandate. He has called for the retention of the existing monthly billing system to safeguard the interests of small-scale industries in the State.

Rashtriya OBC Mahasangh expresses disappointment over budget neglect



Members of OBC Mahasangh disappointed over the injustice meted to them

Team Herald

PONDA: The Rashtriya OBC Mahasangh, Goa State, representing 19 communities, has expressed deep disappointment over the government's failure to address any of their 24 demands in the recently passed Rs 27,999 crore budget.

Following a meeting to discuss the budget, Madu Naik, President of the Rashtriya OBC Mahasangh, Goa State, voiced concern, stating, "Despite a pre-budget meeting with the government in February, no allocation has been made for the OBC community."

He lamented that the OBC population, comprising over 60% of the state's population, has been entirely ignored. "Even basic financial aid, such as Rs 20,000 for the final rites of poor OBC families, has not been considered, while

such schemes exist for the ST and SC communities," he added.

Naik pointed out that the ST community receives Rs 3 lakh for coaching, a scheme welcomed by the Mahasangh. However, they have also demanded a similar Rs 3 lakh provision for OBC students pursuing postgraduate and higher education, which has been ignored. Additionally, EDC loan facilities available to STs were requested for OBCs but were overlooked, along with their demand for an OBC Welfare Ministry.

He highlighted that a meeting regarding these demands was held in February 2025, facilitated by Mayem MLA Premendra Shet, with Chief Minister Pramod Sawant, Assembly Speaker Ramesh Tavadar, WRD Minister Subash Shirodkar, and MLA Viresh

Borkar in attendance. "We informed the CM about the miserable conditions of the 19 OBC communities, and we were asked to submit our demands, which we did. Yet, none were addressed," he stated.

Criticising OBC leaders, Naik alleged that the government lacks sympathy for the OBC community because its leaders are compromised, working for personal gain rather than the welfare of their people. He further urged Bhandari Samaj leaders, representing the state's largest OBC community, to lead an agitation so that all OBC communities can benefit.

Naik reaffirmed that the OBC Welfare Ministry, an OBC census, and all 24 demands have been completely neglected, calling for urgent action to address the concerns of the OBC population.

SANTOSH NAIK

complaints were ignored," alleged a local. They further highlighted that illegal sand mining using suction pumps has been taking place near two archaeological sites, posing a severe risk to their preservation. Villagers also reported that widespread soil erosion is occurring due to unchecked sand mining, which is damaging the local ecosystem. They believe that the midnight raid has confirmed the ongoing illegal activity in the region and are urging authorities to take strict measures to prevent further environmental degradation.

Quepem loan fraud: Police seize seals, fake paperwork used by govt staffer

MARGAO: Quepem police have seized seals and other forged documents used by Viresh Gaonkar, a Multi-Tasking Staff (MTS) at the Deputy Collector's Office in Quepem, who was arrested for fraudulently obtaining loans using fabricated salary certificates. Gaonkar was produced before the Judicial Magistrate First Class (JMFC) Quepem on Thursday and remanded to five days in police custody, police said. The fraud came to light when the Branch Manager of Deendayal Multi-purpose Co-operative Society Limited, Quepem, approached Deputy Collector Manohar Karekar regarding unpaid EMIs on a loan acquired under false pretenses.

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