

shorttakes

IPL BETTING RACKET BUSTED IN PANJIM; 4 ARRESTED

PANJIM: The Panjim police busted an IPL cricket betting racket with the arrest of four persons on Friday night. The accused have been identified as Manishkumar Krishnani, 39; Gopalbai Kokra, 45; Sandeep Panjwani, 30; and Jitendra Karmani, 36 — all residents of Ahmedabad city, Gujarat. They were caught red-handed while accepting bets via mobile phones and online platforms on the ongoing IPL cricket match between Kolkata Knight Riders and Chennai Super Kings, at a hotel in the city. Police seized six mobile phones, one laptop, and other accessories, all collectively valued at approximately Rs 4.10 lakh.

GHANA NATIONAL HELD WITH MDMA WORTH RS 15 LAKH

PANJIM: The Crime Branch police have arrested Sebastian Duah, 35, a national of Ghana currently residing in a rented room at Nagoa, Bardez, on charges of possessing 60 MDMA tablets, weighing 26.304 grams. The estimated value of the seized narcotics is approximately Rs 15 lakh in the international market. The drugs were found concealed in the dickey of a two-wheeler, which was also seized under a search and seizure panchanama conducted on Friday. A case has been registered against Sebastian Duah under Section 22(c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985. PI Vikas Deykar is conducting further investigations under the supervision of DySP (Crime Branch) Rajesh Kumar and SP (Crime Branch) Rahul Gupta, IPS.

CAR GUTTED IN FIRE AT ORDA-CANDOLIM

CALANGUTE: A parked car was completely gutted in a fire at Orda, Candolim on Saturday afternoon. Officials from the Pilerne fire station said they received a call at approximately 3.30 pm regarding the fire near the ice factory at Orda. Firefighters rushed to the scene and extinguished the blaze, but the vehicle, owned by Raju Chavan, had already been destroyed by the time they arrived.

SUNIL ELECTED UNOPPOSED AS SARPANCH OF BHOMA-ADKONA P'YAT

PONDA: Sunil (Sonu) Ashok Naik has been elected unopposed as the Sarpanch of Bhoma-Adkona panchayat. The position had fallen vacant following the resignation of former Sarpanch Damodar Naik. Naik, who submitted the sole application for the post, was declared elected unopposed by Returning Officer Babu Naik. Panchayat members Damodar Naik, Pratima Phadte Gawde, Sunil Dharma Jalmi, Shaila Naik, Mithali Phadte, and Abdul Khan were present during the proceedings.

HOLY CROSS INST CAVELOSSIM SECURES 100% RESULT IN SSC EXAM FOR TENTH TIME

CAVELOSSIM: Holy Cross Institute, Cavelossim has once again demonstrated academic excellence by achieving a 100% pass result in the Goa Board SSC Examination — marking the tenth consecutive time the school has attained this milestone. Out of the successful candidates, five students secured distinction, eleven obtained first class, and another eleven were awarded second class. Shaish Bhandokar topped the school with 85.16%, having opted for mathematics level 1. Larisa secured the second position with 80.33%, while Wyant Dias stood third with 79.5%. Manager Rev Fr Ubaldo Fernandes and Headmistress Viliana Rodrigues congratulated the teachers, students, and parents for their commendable efforts that led to this outstanding achievement.

power shutdown

CURTORIM: On April 14, from 8 am to 3 pm. Affected areas are Camerxeth, Dondolem, Sorla and Cool Place bar.
CURTORIM: On April 15, from 8 am to 3 pm. Affected areas are Combhat and Doguale.
MARGAO: On April 15, from 9 am to 6 pm. Affected areas are Allen Solly, Near Bata, City Hospital, Ashirwad Bldg, Cotton Cottage, Jyothi Plaza Hotel, IDBI Bank, Anand Bldg, Opp Meenaxi Hotel, D A Verlekar and surrounding areas.
PONDA: On April 15, from 9 am to 2 pm. Affected areas are near Nagamasjid Curti, Near Lotlikar Apartment and surrounding area.
MARGAO: On April 16, from 9 am to 2 pm. Affected areas are Hotel Nandini, Near Bata Showroom, Sai Darbar and surrounding areas as informed by Department of Information and Publicity.
CURTORIM: On April 16, from 8 am to 3 pm. Affected areas Vetnem, Urgirim and Paldem. From 9 am to 2 pm. Affected areas are Varkhandem, Near Vrundavan Garden and Surrounding area.

FDA cracks down on food safety in Karaswada 8 eateries shut down over unhygienic conditions

Team Herald

MAPUSA: In a renewed push for food safety, the Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) has carried out a sweeping inspection across 18 premises in Mapusa, Karaswada, and Tivim, resulting in the immediate closure of eight food establishments. Among those ordered to shut down were bakeries, food stalls, and juice centres, all found to be operating under highly unhygienic conditions that posed serious health risks to consumers. FDA officials confirmed that the inspections were part of a broader initiative to enforce food safety standards ahead of the peak tourist and summer season. The crackdown follows an increase in complaints from both locals

and tourists regarding unsanitary practices in food outlets across the region. "The premises were operating in violation of basic hygiene norms, including improper food handling, lack of cleanliness, and unsafe storage conditions," an FDA spokesperson said. The agency has issued notices to all non-compliant establishments and has warned of strict legal action in the event of repeated violations. Further inspections are expected in the coming weeks as part of the FDA's ongoing food safety campaign. Meanwhile, in yet another inspection resulted in another kiosk being sealed by the FDA for unhygienic conditions. The food stall was sealed for non-compliance of health and public safety rules.

GOA COURTS FALL SHORT OF NATIONAL JUDGE-POPULATION RATIO

High Court faces over 5,800 pending cases with 15% unresolved for more than a decade

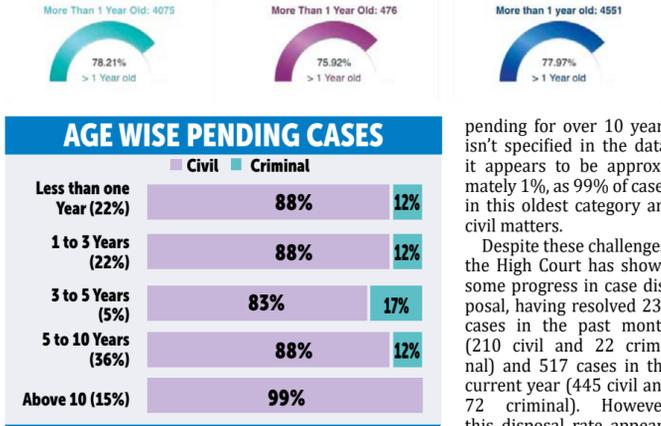
KARSTEN MIRANDA

MARGAO: The judicial crisis in Goa extends beyond just the District and Subordinate Courts, as revealed by data from the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG) and previous information shared by the Union Law & Judiciary Ministry in the Lok Sabha.

According to the recommended judge-to-population ratio of 50 judges per million citizens, Goa, with its population of approximately 15 million, should have a sanctioned strength of 72 judges across all levels of the judiciary. However, the state currently functions with just 44 judges — 3 at the High Court level and 41 at the District and Subordinate Court levels, falling significantly short of the national recommendation.

The situation at the High Court of Bombay at Goa further illustrates the judicial crisis. Real-time statistics from the NJDG show 5,837 cases pending at the High Court level alone, with an alarming 78% of these cases pending for over a year. Even more concerning, 15% of these cases have remained unresolved

Civil Cases 5,210 Criminal Cases 627 Total Cases 5,837



Live data from the National Judicial Data Grid shows that 5,837 cases are pending at the High Court of Bombay at Goa, with almost 78% pending for over a year, and 15% pending for over 10 years!

for more than a decade.

Of the pending High Court cases, 5,210 are civil matters and 627 are criminal proceedings. Breaking down the civil case backlog by age reveals a troubling pattern: approximately 22% of cases are 1-3 years old, 5% are 3-5 years old, 36% have been pending for

5-10 years, and 15% have remained unresolved for over 10 years.

The criminal case distribution shows a similar trend, with approximately 12% of cases pending for 1-3 years, 17% for 3-5 years, and 12% for 5-10 years. While the exact percentage of criminal cases

pending for over 10 years isn't specified in the data, it appears to be approximately 1%, as 99% of cases in this oldest category are civil matters.

Despite these challenges, the High Court has shown some progress in case disposal, having resolved 232 cases in the past month (210 civil and 22 criminal) and 517 cases in the current year (445 civil and 72 criminal). However, this disposal rate appears insufficient to significantly reduce the substantial backlog that continues to delay justice for thousands of Goans.

When combined with the nearly 60,000 pending cases in the District and Subordinate Courts, the total judicial backlog across Goa stands at approximately 65,837 cases, with an especially concerning situation at the High Court level where over 15% of cases have remained unresolved for more than a decade.

FROM PAGE 1
33% JUDICIAL POSTS VACANT IN GOA'S LOWER COURTS

The Court of Civil Judge Senior Division and JMFC 'B' Court at Mapusa holds the distinction of having the highest number of pending cases in the State with 3,002 matters awaiting resolution, including 1,606 civil cases and 1,396 criminal cases.

When questioned about steps taken to address these vacancies, Sequeira informed the Assembly that recruitment efforts have been ongoing. For the year 2020, three posts of Civil Judge Junior Division and JMFC were advertised in 2022, resulting in only one candidate being appointed in July 2024.

Eleven similar positions for 2023 were advertised in 2024, with a select list prepared in January 2025. Four additional posts for 2024 were advertised last year with recruitment still in process, along with one District Judge position.

According to the LAQ reply, the High Court is actively monitoring the disposal rate of all courts in Goa.

However, a senior lawyer based in Margao

noted that filling vacancies would only partially resolve the problem. "Litigants get frustrated because of the long delays in delivery of justice. Many courts in Margao, for example, are without judges. The strength of the High Court of Bombay at Goa may also need to be increased in view of the pendency," the lawyer stated, pointing to growing public disillusionment with the judicial system.

Further complicating matters, separate information obtained from a document downloaded from the High Court's website reveals that for the District Judge position currently under recruitment, none of the 10 candidates who qualified for the main examination obtained the minimum qualifying marks, meaning this critical vacancy will remain unfilled for the foreseeable future.

The significant judicial vacancies continue to hamper efficient case resolution, leaving thousands of Goans waiting for justice in the District and Subordinate courts.

Fish breeding project launched at Arambol ...To boost marine life and support local fishermen

Team Herald

PERNEM: In a bid to enhance marine biodiversity and support the livelihood of coastal communities, a fish breeding initiative has been launched at Arambol beach. The project aims to increase fish populations in the sea by encouraging local fishermen to participate in sustainable fish farming. On Saturday, Mandrem MLA Jit Arolkar and officials from the Department of Fisheries met local fishermen to outline the objectives and benefits of the project. As part of the initiative, the government will provide free fish seeds to fishermen and assist in their release into the sea.

"The goal is to increase fish production along the Goan coastline and ensure a stable income for the traditional fishing community," said an official from the Department of Fisheries.

He added that the fish seeds would be introduced into the waters in

the presence of local fishermen to ensure transparency and participation. Arambol is one of 14 coastal locations identified by the State for this fish breeding programme. The initiative is expected to replenish marine stocks, promote ecological balance, and provide long-term sustainability to the fishing industry. Fishermen welcomed the move, expressing hope that the project will improve catch volumes and support their livelihoods in the coming seasons.

In addition, Cacra in Tiswadi taluka and Arambol are among 100 coastal villages across the country selected as Climate Resilient Coastal Fishermen Villages (CRCFV), aimed at making them economically vibrant and sustainable fishing communities. These villages have been selected by the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Department of Fisheries, New Delhi.

Once a lifeline, Curti nullah now choked with plastic, other waste

Team Herald

PONDA: The once-pristine Curti nullah, a vital water source for agricultural communities downstream, has now degenerated into a dumping ground, locals allege. Choked with plastic, domestic and hotel waste, even animal carcasses, the nullah has become a major health hazard and environmental concern for residents of Curti and Ponda.

Originating at the Bethora Industrial Estate, the nullah flows through Curti-Khandepar Panchayat, into the Ponda Municipal Council jurisdiction, and finally empties into the Zuari River at Udir-Bandora, covering a distance of approximately 13 kilometres.

Local resident Mahesh Panshikar expressed deep concern over the current state of the nullah, which once supported local agriculture and daily life. "Two decades ago, it was clean and used for bathing, washing, and irrigating fields. Now, it carries black and green water and emits a foul stench. It's filled with plastic, garbage, even dead animals and poultry waste,"



Two decades ago, it was clean and used for bathing, washing, and irrigating fields. Now, it carries black and green water and emits a foul stench. It's filled with plastic, garbage, even dead animals and poultry waste — Mahesh Panshikar, local resident

he said. According to Panshikar, internal springs that flow year-round feed into the main nullah, supplying a significant volume of water. However, pollution begins at the source: untreated chemical waste from industries in Bethora is allegedly released directly into the nullah basin. As the watercourse moves downstream, the situation worsens, with increasing population pressure and

indiscriminate dumping by households and market vendors in Ponda City further contaminating the flow.

Farmers who once relied on the nullah for irrigation now refuse to use the polluted water, citing skin rashes and health issues. "Many have abandoned farming or left their lands fallow," said Panshikar. "What was once a lifeline has now become a life-threatening stream." Locals are demanding im-

mediate action to clean and restore the nullah, warning that if left unchecked, the environmental and public health consequences will only worsen. Panshikar added, "If the nullah is properly maintained, it can provide water throughout the year — for gardening, construction, even industrial use."

Residents are calling on the authorities, Panchayat bodies, and environmental regulators to step in, clean the nullah, penalise illegal dumping, and implement long-term waste and water management strategies.

Locals allege that even night soil tankers have been spotted illegally emptying sewage into the nullah.

Muslims in Goa reject Waqf Bill

Team Herald

PANJIM: Muslims in Goa have unanimously rejected the Waqf Amendment Bill 2024 and strongly condemned its passage by both Houses of Parliament, without addressing the numerous objections raised by Indian Muslims.

From its very conceptualisation, the Bill stands in violation of the basic and fundamental principles enshrined in the Constitution of India. It discriminates against Muslims and seeks to legitimise the appropriation of Waqf properties, said Asif Hussain, State President of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, Goa.

While the government speaks of civil liberties and one nation, one law, its actions betray a consistent undermining of the democratic and fundamental rights of minorities, particularly Muslims. The government, which has long exercised control over Waqf bodies, is now attempting a direct and systematic seizure of these properties, he said.

Fatal accident at Salaulim canal sparks demand for permanent safety railings



Team Herald

SANGUEM: A fatal accident at the Salaulim canal in Cortalim has triggered widespread outrage among local residents, who are now urgently demanding the installation of permanent iron railings on both sides of the canal to prevent further tragedies.

The incident, which occurred just days ago, led to the untimely death of Prakash Gaonkar, a local resident who fell into the canal. His death has left the community in mourning

and has once again drawn attention to longstanding safety concerns regarding the canal's unguarded edges — a route frequently used by pedestrians, two-wheelers, four-wheelers, and even ambulances during emergencies.

In the aftermath of the tragedy, the Water Resources Department (WRD) has installed a temporary bamboo railing, but only on one side of the canal — ironically, the same side where the accident occurred. The opposite side remains

completely exposed, prompting serious concerns about the effectiveness and urgency of the department's response.

Locals have criticised the half-measure, calling the bamboo fencing unstable and inadequate. "It is the need of the hour that a steel railing be put along the side of the canal to ensure the safety of the people around," said Nita Naik, a concerned resident. "With children and cattle nearby, this open canal is a serious threat to life."

Another resident, Sush-

APPOINTMENTS

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