

shorttakes**ONE TONNE OF CHEMICALLY-TREATED BANANAS DESTROYED AT MAPUSA**

MAPUSA: Maintaining its strict vigil at the Mapusa sub yard, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on Saturday caught a vendor allegedly dipping bananas in Ethapone liquid. Around one tonne of contaminated fruit was destroyed on the spot, and a police complaint has been filed against the vendor. In separate actions, FDA inspectors ordered two bakeries in Mapusa and Siolim to shut their kitchens due to unhygienic conditions. Additionally, two restaurants in Assagao were served improvement notices for failing to meet hygiene standards. The FDA stated that its ongoing drive against the use of chemicals in fruit ripening will continue, with stringent action against violators.

MAN DIES AFTER HIT-AND-RUN ACCIDENT AT ANJUNA; POLICE LAUNCH INVESTIGATION

MAPUSA: Ujwal, 35, was seriously injured after being struck by a two-wheeler while crossing the road, has succumbed to his injuries at the Goa Medical College and Hospital (GMC), Bambolim. The accident occurred near a paint factory at Anjuna, where an unknown two-wheeler rider knocked Ujwal down and fled the scene without informing the police or arranging medical assistance for the injured victim. Ujwal was subsequently shifted to GMC Bambolim by ambulance but succumbed to his injuries while undergoing treatment. The Anjuna police have registered a case in connection with the incident. Head Constable D G Gawandi is conducting further investigations.

ONE ARRESTED FOR MISAPPROPRIATING FUNDS FROM CANDOLIM HOTEL

CALANGUTE: A Saligao resident was arrested by Calangute Police on Saturday for allegedly misappropriating Rs 2.57 lakh from a hotel where he was employed in Candolim. Calangute Police said they received a complaint on Saturday afternoon from Ganesh Naik, an HR executive at Indie Stays Hotel, Marquis Waddo, Candolim, stating that prior to April 22, the accused, Prashil Raikar, 40, a resident of Muddewadi, Saligao, who was also employed at Indie Stays Hotel, Marquis Waddo, Candolim, had misappropriated company funds amounting to Rs 2,57,250 and had absconded from the hotel without informing the hotel management, thereby committing an offence. Following the complaint, Raikar was arrested from Saligao. Further investigation is in progress.

TWO ARRESTED WITH OVER 2 KG GANJA AT CORLIM

PANJIM: The Old Goa Police arrested two persons on charges of possessing ganja worth Rs 2.35 lakh during a late-night operation near the Konkani Railway over-bridge at Mollar, Corlim in Tiswadi taluka on Friday. The accused have been identified as Niraj Kumar, 38, a native of Haspura, Bihar, currently residing at Marcel, and Upendra Ram, 40, a native of Saran Jalapur, Bihar, currently residing at Amona, Bicholim. Both were caught red-handed by the police. Police seized 1.020 kg of ganja from Niraj Kumar and 1.015 kg from Upendra Ram, with the combined estimated value of the seized drugs amounting to approximately Rs 2.35 lakh.

PEDESTRIAN SERIOUSLY INJURED IN HIT-AND-RUN INCIDENT AT CHINCHINIM

MARGAO: An unknown pedestrian sustained serious injuries after being knocked down by a car near Union Bank, Dandevaddo-Chinchinim. According to Cuncolim police, the driver initially informed the 108 ambulance service and shifted the injured man to hospital, but fled the scene without notifying the police. The injured pedestrian is currently undergoing treatment at GMC, Bambolim. Assistant Sub-Inspector Mangesh Satodkar of Cuncolim Police Station lodged a complaint stating that the accused, identified as Paul Bonaventure of Guirim-Mapusa, was driving a car in a rash and negligent manner while travelling from Chinchinim towards Cuncolim. Upon reaching near Union Bank, Dandevaddo-Chinchinim, the vehicle struck the pedestrian, causing grievous injuries. Following the accident, the accused reportedly contacted the ambulance service and ensured the victim was taken to hospital, but absconded without informing police authorities.

BICHOLIM MUNICIPAL MEETING POSTPONED OVER STANDING COMMITTEE ISSUE

BICHOLIM: The ordinary meeting of the Bicholim Municipal Council convened on Thursday was postponed after councillors raised concerns that the new standing committee had not been constituted. Following the election of Vijaykumar Natekar as chairperson in January this year, a new standing committee comprising the chairperson was required to be formed. However, when the meeting commenced on Thursday, several councillors pointed out that the new standing committee had yet to be constituted after Natekar's election. Acknowledging their concerns, Natekar agreed and informed the councillors that another meeting would be convened on Monday, April 28, to elect the new standing committee. The ordinary meeting to discuss the agenda will then be held on May 5.

Slow progress on highway works causes concern among locals

Team Herald

PONDA: Slow-moving highway expansion works have raised concern among locals, particularly due to a rise in accidents at two key junctions. Residents are now demanding authorities expedite the completion of service roads and underpass construction at Bandora Junction.

It may be recalled that four-lane expansion works are currently underway at both the Safa Masjid and Bandora junction. In addition, construction of service roads and the approach roads to the underpass is ongoing. Although most of the approach road works and the underpass



Work progressing on the national highway at a snail's pace at Ponda

structure itself have been completed, pending work on the service roads and delays in shifting a gas pipeline have held up the opening of the underpass

to traffic. National Highway officials have assured that efforts are being made to complete the work at the earliest in order to ease traffic congestion.

Local resident Naresh Naik pointed out that several accidents have been reported at the junction over the past few months, including a fatal truck-bike

collision which claimed the life of a Ponda local.

He stated that vehicles from internal roads and incomplete service roads are merging directly onto the highway at these junctions, leading to dangerous situations and accidents. Therefore, he stressed, the pending work on the service roads and underpass must be completed urgently to prevent further incidents.

In light of the increasing accident risk at Bandora and Safa Masjid junctions, locals have urged the authorities to accelerate the work and complete it before the onset of the monsoon, in order to ensure safer travel for commuters and residents alike.

Ponda council warning on water disconnections yields positive results

Team Herald

PONDA: Following a warning issued by the Ponda Municipal Council (PMC) to disconnect water connections, several residential buildings have begun taking sewage connections, marking a positive shift towards improved sanitation in the city.

Earlier this month, PMC had served notices to 88 residential buildings, flats, and hotels for discharging waste into open spaces, thereby polluting water bodies, nullahs, and drains. In response, some building owners have now commenced the process of connecting to the city's sewerage system. Workers were seen busy digging roads across various parts of Ponda to link residential soak pits and septic tanks to the sewerage network.



Residential buildings have begun taking sewage connections, marking a positive shift towards improved sanitation in the city

It may be recalled that the 15 MLD (million litres per day) Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) for Ponda City has been operational for over a year. However, there had been a lukewarm response to calls for sewage connections, despite the imposition of fines for non-compliance.

The PMC had recently stepped up enforcement by issuing water disconnection notices to residential and commercial buildings, directing them to secure immediate sewage connections or risk losing their water supply.

A PMC official stated,

"We issued disconnection notices to fifteen buildings. Following this, several have now initiated the procedure for obtaining sewage connections. Our aim is to ensure that 100 per cent of residential buildings are connected to the sewerage system to maintain a clean city."

TCP notifications, approvals subject to outcome of PIL: HC

Team Herald

PANJIM: The High Court of Bombay at Goa has ruled that notifications and approvals granted under Section 39A of the Town and Country Planning (TCP) Act will be subject to the outcome of pending public interest litigation (PIL) writ petitions.

The court was hearing two PILs filed by the Goa Foundation and the Federation of Rainbow Warriors, challenging Section 39A of the TCP Act. The petitioners alleged that the government was permitting ad hoc and arbitrary conversions of privately owned plots in the Regional Plan and notified Outline Development Plans (ODPs).

They argued that the decision to allow zoning conversions displayed manifest arbitrariness, could result in unbalanced, unplanned, and undesirable development in the State, and would create confusion contrary to the interests of citizens and the State's ecological requirements.

The TCP Department filed an affidavit opposing the interim relief and sought permission to submit an additional affidavit, which the Court granted with a three-week deadline. The matter has been posted for hearing on June 23.

Builder directed to transfer Rs 16.95 lakh corpus fund to Ponda housing society

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA) has directed a builder to transfer a corpus fund of Rs 16.95 lakh to a housing society.

The builder had collected the corpus fund but was refusing to transfer it to the Co-operative Housing Society Ltd, Dhavlim-Ponda, after its formation. The corpus fund, in particular, is a reserve fund meant to be used only in exceptional cases involving substantial expenses. If utilised, the builder is required to transfer the residual amount to the society.

The complainant had prayed that the builder be directed to refund the corpus fund amounting to Rs 16,95,750 along with interest at the rate of 11.10 per cent, collected from purchasers of the flats within a period of three months. He had also urged the Authority to direct the builder to complete the structural

defects as per the agreement, and further to direct the respondent to refund Rs 1.90 lakh to the Society towards the construction of a badminton court and a second soak pit.

The respondent submitted that he was compelled to incur expenses, including maintenance of the building and electricity charges. He claimed that the complainant was not entitled to any reliefs.

He further informed the Authority that the corpus fund had been utilised for the formation of the society and contributions towards shares and other miscellaneous expenses.

Real Estate Regulatory Authority member Vincent D'Silva found that the builder had unauthorisedly retained and utilised the corpus fund without any justification.

The complainant was therefore entitled to a refund of the corpus fund amounting to Rs 16,95,750 with interest due from the respondent.

Youth feared drowned during picnic on b'day

PONDA: A 21-year-old college student, Pratham Suraj Sawant from Canacona, is feared drowned in the Dudhsagar river while on a birthday picnic with friends at Okhamb-Dharbandora. The incident occurred at around 4.30 pm yesterday. Following reports of the mishap, Ponda Police and Fire Services launched a search operation; however, the student remains untraced at the time of writing.

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Aakash Edu Services ties up with Bharat Academy to boost NEET, JEE preparation

Team Herald

PANJIM: In a significant step towards empowering aspiring doctors and engineers, the Panjim branch of Aakash Educational Services Limited (AESL) has partnered with Bharat Academy in Sanquelim.

This collaboration aims to provide focused and high-quality coaching for NEET and JEE aspirants. The joint initiative between Aakash Educational Services Ltd, Panjim branch, and Bharat Academy will enable students to enrol in a focused two-year course immediately after their Class XI examinations, seamlessly integrating school academics with comprehensive preparation for medical and engineering entrance exams.



Deepti Savaikar - asst. branch manager, Sriram RL - deputy branch head-Aakash Institute, Arshad Haroon - assistant director, Sneha Prabhu Sinari - in-charge Bharat Academy at the partnership event

The course will offer regular and experienced faculties. Lev-classroom coaching for Class XI and XII students under the approach, students will be provided with highly qualified

hensive study materials, along with iTutor pre-recorded video lectures on a secured platform. Weekly practice tests and assessments will be conducted to help students excel in national competitive examinations such as JEE, NEET, and Olympiads.

The curriculum will extensively cover subjects such as Physics, Chemistry, Botany, and Zoology for NEET aspirants, and Physics, Chemistry, and Mathematics for JEE aspirants. NEET students will receive study materials in Physics, Chemistry, Botany, and Zoology, while JEE students will be provided study materials in Physics, Chemistry, and Mathematics.

Students will also have access to the highly engaging All India Aakash Test Series (AIATS) for

practice sessions. With the support of world-class infrastructure and technologies, students can learn core subjects and resolve their doubts with the help of experienced teachers. Admissions to the courses are now open.

Speaking to O Herald about the use of AI in the course, Arshad Haroon, Assistant Director, Aakash Educational Services, Goa, said, "We are using AI to train the students. We have already launched a few courses based on the usage of AI. We analyse the marks of the students using AI tools, and we provide inputs, analysis, and help the students prepare in the weak areas where they need more intervention."

In the recently concluded batch, 83 students were absorbed by Goa Medical College (GMC).