

Liquor trader whisked off by Gujarat police

Association claims Mapusa merchant was held without informing local cops or a transit warrant, meets CM to seek release

Team Herald

PANJIM: A Gujarat Police team swooped in on liquor store owner Saish Sawant from Mapusa late on Wednesday and arrested him in connection with a bootlegging case, leading to howls of protest from the Goa Liquor Traders Association, which has called the action an overreach and demanded protection from the State government.

Authorities in Gujarat claim Sawant supplied liquor to an accused who was later apprehended for illegally transporting alcohol into the dry state, where prohibition laws are strictly enforced.

However, Dattaprasad Naik, President of Goa Liquor Traders Association, claimed that a customer had bought liquor from Ramesh Wines, a store owned by Sawant, and had transported it to Gujarat, where he was caught by the police. "It is not our lookout where

This (the arrest) is a clear violation of the Goa Excise Act. As per the law, no excise official or police from another state can enter licensed premises in Goa without being accompanied by a local excise officer. That protocol was completely ignored

Dattaprasad Naik, President of Goa Liquor Traders Association

a customer takes liquor bottles purchased in Goa. We have not facilitated the transport. We only sell liquor bottles by adhering to the Goa Excise Act," Naik added.

The association also alleged that the arrest was carried out without a transit warrant or coordination with local authorities. "This is a clear violation of the Goa Excise Act," said Naik. "As per the law, no excise of-

ficial or police from another state can enter licensed premises in Goa without being accompanied by a local excise officer. That protocol was completely ignored."

Naik emphasised that Goan traders cannot be held accountable for where customers take liquor after purchase. "We sell liquor in full compliance with the Goa Excise Act. We do not facilitate or encourage transport of alcohol across state borders," he said.

The incident has sparked broader concerns among liquor vendors in Goa, who say this is not an isolated case. Naik recalled a similar attempt in November last year, when police from Dodamarg, Maharashtra tried to detain another Mapusa trader, Dinesh Kenaudekar, after seizing liquor being taken into Maharashtra during election season.

Cont on Pg 11 >>

ATM usage charge hiked by Rs 2

PTI, NEW DELHI: The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) instructions on revised Automated Teller Machine (ATM) usage cost have come into effect from Thursday under which banks can charge Rs 23 per cash withdrawal once a customer exhausts the free permissible limit in a month. Earlier, banks were allowed to charge up to Rs 21 per such transaction.

Customers are eligible for five free transactions (inclu-

sive of financial and non-financial transactions) every month from their own bank ATMs.

They are also eligible for free transactions (inclusive of financial and non-financial transactions) from other bank ATMs—three transactions in metro centres and five in non-metro centres.

On March 28, the RBI had issued a circular on 'Usage of Automated Teller Machines / Cash Recycler Machines -

Review of Interchange Fee and Customer Charges'.

"Beyond the free transactions, a customer may be charged a maximum fee of Rs 23 per transaction. This shall be effective from May 1, 2025," the RBI's circular said.

The revised instructions also apply to transactions done at cash recycler machines (other than for cash deposit transactions).

Cont on Pg 11 >>

Focus on equal status for Romi Lipi

MARGAO: Hundreds of Romi Konkani supporters thronged Ravindra Bhavan, Margao, under the Global Konknni Forum (GKF) banner to demand equal status for the Romi script under Goa's Official Language Act. GKF president Antonio Alvares stated the government has long ignored Romi Konkani speakers. Movement founder Domic Fernandes clarified their focus is on equal status for the Romi script, not against any other script.

More on Pg 2 >>

MAX. TEMP 25.2 °C
MIN. TEMP 28.0 °C

idharudhar



Not blood —we're here for drinking water!

Green panel's pollution lens on Velsao fish mortality

Tribunal takes note of May 2024 O Herald report; GSPCB says it got a bank guarantee of Rs 25 lakh from Zuarinagar company

MAY 26, 2024

Untreated effluents cause widespread fish mortality at Velsao bay, rivulet

Fishing community blames Paradeep Phosphates Ltd for discharging untreated effluents into the Arabian Sea; calls on GSPCB to intervene and take stringent action against violators; company says its entire waste is connected to the effluent treatment plant

Team Herald

PANJIM: Taking note of O Herald report on the untreated effluents causing widespread fish mortality at Velsao Bay rivulet, the National Green Tribunal (NGT), Western Zone Bench, Pune has disposed of an application regarding fish mortality at the rivulet after the Goa State Pollution Control Board (GSPCB) stated that it levied EDC (Environmental Damage Compensation) to the extent of Rs 12,37,500 and obtained a bank guarantee of Rs 25 lakh from the Paradeep Phosphates Ltd, Zuarinagar.

The Tribunal was hearing a suo motu application of a news item "Untreated effluents cause widespread fish mortality at Velsao bay rivulet" published by O Herald dated May 26, 2024.

The GSPCB in its affidavit stated there was no role of the Paradeep Phosphates Ltd found in mortality of

the fish, and it appears to be the only one-off incident even as it stated that initially pollution was found at the site due to the activities of the fertiliser company, pursuant to which EDC of Rs 12,37,500 and a bank guarantee of Rs 25 lakh was taken from them.

The GSPCB had submitted that during their inspection, fish was found dead, but that was only one case as the occurrence was reported in the newspaper and thereafter, no such incident had happened at the site, which was being attributed to the activities of the company.

The GSPCB in its affidavit stated that in view of the incidents of fish mortality at Velsao bay rivulet, it conducted site inspections of the unit of M/s Paradeep Phosphates located at Zuarinagar, Sancoale, on May 26, June 8, July 13 and August 16, last year.

Cont on Pg 11 >>



CASTE CENSUS: HISTORY, POLITICS AND POSSIBLE IMPACT

In a major policy shift, the Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs (CCPA) on April 30 approved inclusion of caste data in the next national Census. What you need to know:

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

■ India's census, held every 10 years, has been conducted 15 times since 1872, with the last full enumeration completed in 2011

■ The 2021 census was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic

■ Caste was enumerated in censuses from 1881 to 1931; the 1941 census included caste data but it was never published due to World War II

■ Post-Independence, censuses since 1951 recorded data only on SCs and STs as per 1948 Census Act

■ The 2011 Socio Economic and Caste Census (SECC), conducted under UPA, collected caste data but never released it publicly



STATE-LEVEL PRECEDENTS

■ Bihar released comprehensive caste survey data in 2023, triggering renewed calls for national enumeration

■ Congress-ruled Telangana and Karnataka also conducted similar surveys; Karnataka's data was tabled in April 2025, a decade after it was commissioned

CHALLENGES

■ Releasing caste data could trigger demands for quotas beyond the Supreme Court's 50% cap on reservations

■ Mere collection of data meaningless unless it is used for policy reforms or reservation realignment

■ The govt yet to announce a timeline for the census

WHY NOW

■ The Congress and allies have long demanded caste census, arguing it is key to social justice and equitable policy design

■ Rahul Gandhi has claimed BJP's U-turn is a vindication of opposition's campaign

■ The BJP's decision comes after it failed to secure simple majority in 2024 Lok Sabha elections, where OBC and SC voters played pivotal role

■ Announcement comes ahead of the Bihar Assembly polls, where caste is central to voter alignment



More on Pg 7 >>

A month later, PWD still clueless, Taleigao locals get 'sewage water'

Agitated Vodlem Bhat & Borbhat residents complain of dirty and stinking water

Team Herald

PANJIM: It's over a month, there appears to be no solution to their problem as the residents of Vodlem Bhat and Borbhat in Taleigao constituency continue to receive contaminated water with the Public Works Department (PWD) yet to plug the leakage point where the drinking water is getting mixed with 'sewage'.

According to the residents, it's been over a month that they have



A road dug up by PWD in Taleigao

been receiving dirty water in their taps with no solution in sight. Though PWD has dug roads at various locations in

these wards, the department's efforts have not materialised.

Cont on Pg 11 >>

Our problem has not been solved yet. We visited the PWD with bottles of the bad quality of water we receive. The PWD officials visited us and went by just stating that work is in progress. The water we receive is dirty and stinking

— Liberata Fernandes, a resident of one of the affected wards

The work of replacing the pipeline will start tomorrow. Preliminaries have been done today. Health officer has issued notices to some buildings for letting sewage into the open drains. Water supply to Borbhat and Vodlem Bhat has been stopped temporarily and tankers have been pressed into service to ensure supply to these areas

— Senior PWD official

Second student suicide in 2 months at BITS Goa campus

Team Herald

VASCO: Tragedy has struck the BITS Pilani campus in Zuarinagar, Goa, for the second time in less than two months, as another student died by suicide on Thursday morning, prompting serious concern among students, faculty, and local authorities.

The body of Krishna Kaseria, a 20-year-old student from Lucknow, was discovered in a suspected suicide case. The Verna Police responded to the incident around 10.30 am, registering a case of unnatural death under Section 194 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). The investigation is currently underway, led by PI Anand Shirodkar and Mormugao DySP Gurudas Kadam.

This incident comes just weeks after a similar case rocked the same campus. On March 5, Atharv Desai, also 20, was found dead in his hostel room following what authorities later confirmed as suicide. Desai, a resident of Bicholim

CAUSE FOR CONCERN

May 1: 20-year-old Krishna Kaseria from Lucknow died by suicide

March 5: Atharv Desai, 20, found dead in his hostel room following what authorities later confirmed as suicide. Desai was a resident of Bicholim and the son of an Army dental surgeon

and the son of an Army dental surgeon, had celebrated his birthday just two days prior. Desai was reportedly preparing for semester exams that began on March 3. According to the institute, fellow students alerted authorities after finding his room locked and unresponsive. A postmortem conducted at South Goa District Hospital confirmed death by asphyxia due to neck constriction.

Cont on Pg 11 >>

Don't want people going after Muslims, Kashmiris: Martyred Navy officer's wife

Hundreds gathered in Lt Vinay Narwal's hometown of Karnal to celebrate his life by taking part in a blood donation camp

PTI, KARNAL (HARYANA): "We don't want people going after Muslims and Kashmiris," Himanshi Narwal said on Thursday, stoic and firm as she mourned her husband, Naval officer Lt Vinay Narwal, who was gunned down in Pahalgalam just 10 days ago. He would have been 27 today.

A week after Narwal's ashes were immersed in Ganga, hundreds of people gathered in Karnal, the naval officer's hometown, to celebrate his life by taking part in a blood donation camp. "We want peace and justice. People who have done wrong with him should be punished," said Himanshi, who got married to Lt Narwal just a week before the April 22 terror attack.

The couple was on their honeymoon in Pahalgalam when terrorists shot the Naval officer at point blank. Wiping tears off her face, Himanshi offered floral tributes to her late husband



Lt Vinay Narwal

We don't want people going after Muslims and Kashmiris. We want peace and justice. People who have done wrong with him should be punished

— Himanshi Narwal, wife of deceased Lt Vinay Narwal's (left)



also done a lot," Shristi said. The camp was organised by Karnal-based NGO National Integrated Forum of Artists and Activists (NIFA). Various speakers while addressing the gathering said the late officer dedicatedly served his nation while in service and will continue to live in everyone's hearts forever.

A youth who was supposed to serve the country for many years was snatched away by terrorism. A soldier on the battleground saves people's life by shedding blood. We are today donating blood in his honour to save people's lives," Chairperson of NIFA Pritpal Singh Pannu said.

Narwal's mother and wife Himanshi became teary eyed as tributes were being paid to the Naval officer at the camp. One of the attendees who donated blood at the camp said, "The nation will always be grateful to Narwal for his sacrifice. We can only pay our tributes by donating our blood but nobody can fill the void created by his death."

Narwal was among the 26 people gunned down by terrorists at the Baisaran meadows in Pahalgalam on April 22. Narwal was serving at the Southern Naval Command in Kochi for the past one-and-a-half years after joining the Navy in 2022.