

Bethora villagers unhappy with functioning of village panchayat

Flay civic body for keeping them in the dark on matters pertaining to development

Team Herald

PONDA: Villagers from Bethora, Nirankal, Conshem, and Kodar under the jurisdiction of the local panchayat held a press briefing, voicing strong dissatisfaction over the functioning of the panchayat body. They urged the sarpanch and panchas to involve them in the decision-making process and refrain from passing resolutions that negatively impact residents without consultation. The villagers demanded greater transparency and accountability in governance.

The villagers expressed frustration with the Panchayat Secretary for failing to provide adequate information under the Right to Information (RTI) Act. They also highlighted



The villagers voiced their concerns, highlighting ongoing hardships due to the lack of an underpass, flyover, traffic signal system, and proper hotmix carpeting on the main road

ongoing hardships due to the lack of an underpass, flyover, traffic signal system, and proper hot mix carpeting on the main road, which they said severely affects daily life.

Nyaneshwar Khandeparkar criticised the panchayat for unilaterally increasing house tax without discussing the issue at

the gram sabha. He stated that, "On the last Sunday, after two hours of discussion at the gram sabha, members managed to pass a resolution to reduce the exorbitant house tax hike." He further asserted that such public matters must be discussed in the gram sabha prior to any decisions by the body. A signature cam-

paign with the support of 500 villagers had preceded the resolution.

Khandeparkar also condemned the inadequate RTI responses, citing the example of a company's house tax issue. "Villagers said they spend a lot of money for getting documents, but documents related to the garbage plant and reply to

the house tax matter of one company under RTI were not satisfactory," he said.

He reiterated the villagers' primary demand for a flyover on the four-lane highway at the Bethora main junction, citing safety concerns for the large number of workers employed in nearby industrial estates and the high residential population in the vicinity.

Devendra Chari raised concerns regarding development work in Survey No. 215. He said, "One panch told us that the NOC issued for work will be cancelled after six months and hence the BDO officials should look into the matter."

He also noted that the Bethora main road has not been hot mixed for a long time, despite new electricity cables being laid.

Sadanand Gaude echoed

the villagers' demand for a traffic signal on the Borim-Bethora widened road, along with a flyover and underpass. He added that the release of gutter water from Bondbag into internal roads is causing severe hardship to locals.

Inacino Azario highlighted sanitation issues in Saterimal, Nirankal. "Garbage is being dumped at the bus stand, on roadsides, and gutters are choked with waste," he said. He also raised concerns over the rising population of stray cattle and dogs, which he said are contributing to traffic accidents.

The villagers concluded their briefing by reiterating their call for inclusive governance and immediate attention to long-standing infrastructural and civic issues.

shorttakes

MAN DIES AFTER ACCIDENTAL FALL FROM TERRACE WHILE TALKING ON PHONE IN CANCA

PANJIM: Kamlesh Kumar, 34, a native of Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh, who was residing at Canca in Bardez, succumbed to injuries sustained in an accidental fall from a terrace while speaking on his mobile phone. According to police, the incident occurred on the evening of April 29, at approximately 8:30 pm. Kamlesh reportedly slipped and fell from the terrace of his residence while engaged in a telephonic conversation. He was immediately rushed to Goa Medical College (GMC), Bambolim, for treatment but died while undergoing medical care. Investigations into the exact circumstances of the fall are underway, although preliminary findings suggest it was accidental.

KARWAR MAN DIES BY SUICIDE ON RAILWAY TRACK NEAR MARGAO

MARGAO: Siddhesh Gaundi, 35, from Karwar, Karnataka, died by suicide after being struck by a train on the Chandor-Margao down line on Wednesday. Vasco Railway Station's Deputy Station Manager received a message at 13.10 hrs from the MRHER Train Manager, reporting the incident, which occurred at 12.37 hrs. Police who arrived at the scene found the body of a male, later identified as Gaundi, lying beside the tracks. Investigations revealed he had jumped from a railway overbridge and collided with the train. The autopsy confirmed the cause of death as "damage to head, chest, abdomen and spine consequent to blunt force impact."

OVER 130 CUBIC METRES OF SAND ILLEGALLY EXTRACTED AT XELVONA

MARGAO: Illegal sand mining of approximately 131.264 cubic metres was detected in Xelvona village, Quepem, near Timblo Dry Dock, where sand was extracted from the Zuari River using a metal canoe with a suction pump and pipes. Mamlatdar and Flying Squad in-charge Nathan Afonso lodged a complaint with Curchorem Police, stating the sand was stacked in the village without permission from the Mines Department.

CUNCOLIM RESIDENT FOUND WITH DRUGS WORTH RS 21 K

MARGAO: Cuncolim resident Maxwell Macanbare Fernandes was allegedly found in possession of approximately 244 grams of a substance suspected to be ganja, worth Rs 21,500. PSI Sudan Bhosale filed a complaint stating that the incident occurred near Cuncolim bus stand between 10:55 pm on April 29, and 12:10 am on April 30.

CAR, TRUCK DRIVERS INJURED IN A COLLISION AT ANMOD GHAT

MARGAO: The drivers of a car and a truck sustained injuries in a collision near the Dudhsagar Temple at Anmod Ghat, Mollem. Bhairu Zore of Collem Police Station filed a complaint stating that Bhalchandra Ingale of Aquem, Margao, allegedly drove his car in a rash and negligent manner from Mollem towards Anmod Ghat, which resulted in a collision with an oncoming truck travelling from Anmod Ghat towards Mollem. The impact was such that both drivers and passengers sustained injuries.

FOUR ARRESTED FOR THEFT OF WIRES AT NUVEM

MARGAO: The Maina-Curtorim police arrested four individuals in connection with a theft of aluminium conductor wires, worth Rs 40,000 at Nuvem. The arrested include 22-year-old Sayyed Ali, a native of Uttar Pradesh; 18-year-old Saif Ali from Maharashtra; 26-year-old Israh Khan from Uttar Pradesh and Asif Siddique. They were arrested following a complaint lodged by Kavendra Naik, Assistant Engineer, Sub Division-III, Electricity Department, Verna, stating that the aluminium conductor wires, valued at approximately Rs 40,000, were stolen from an open area near the Nuvem Electricity Section Office, opposite Carmel College, Nuvem, Salcete. According to the police, dedicated teams were formed, and through technical surveillance and specific intelligence, the three accused were arrested. During interrogation, they confessed to their involvement in the theft. The stolen property was recovered based on the statements from Siddique, who has also been arrested for receiving the stolen goods.

SÃO MATIAS GRAM SABHA ON MAY 4

PANJIM: The ordinary gram sabha meeting of the village panchayat of São Matias, Tiswadi, will be held on May 4, at the São Matias Sports Complex Hall. According to a public notice issued by the panchayat, "All the gram sabha members of Village Panchayat São Matias, Tiswadi, Goa are hereby informed that the ordinary gram sabha meeting of the panchayat will be held on May 4." The agenda for the meeting includes the reading and confirmation of the proceedings of the previous Gram Sabha meeting; approval of the income and expenditure statement (Form 10) for the financial year 2024-25; approval of the audit report for the year 2023-24; approval of the administrative report for 2024-25; and discussion on development work proposals received from Gram Sabha members, if any.

APPOINTMENTS

SHRI LAL BHADUR SHASTRI NATIONAL SANSKRIT UNIVERSITY
(CENTRAL UNIVERSITY),
B-4, QUTUB INSTITUTIONAL AREA,
NEW DELHI-110016



Advt. No. 02/2025

Applications are invited from the eligible candidates for recruitment to the teaching posts through online mode. For viewing the eligibility criteria, payment of application fees, last date for submission of applications along with detailed terms and conditions of recruitment, the candidates are required to go through the website www.slbsrsv.ac.in of the University and Chayan Portal of UGC (<https://curec.samarth.ac.in/index.php/search/site/index>).

REGISTRAR (I/C)

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CROWNING GLORY

SAVIO MADEIRA



Joana Fernandes places a crown of white paper roses on the life-size statue of Our Lady of Fatima in the courtyard of Mãe de Deus Chapel, Gaunsavaddo-Siolim, on Thursday evening. As per an 80-year-old tradition, on May 1, a young maiden from the Vaddo is given the opportunity to crown the statue-usually a prospective bride

Kundaim locals urge traffic diversion after another near-miss at Manaswada junction

Team Herald

PONDA: Following yet another accident at the accident-prone Manaswada Junction, locals from Kundaim have renewed their demand for National Highway (NH) traffic to be diverted via the newly widened Kundaim bypass, instead of the village road.

Kundaim Sarpanch Survesh Gaude recounted a terrifying incident on Monday when a heavily loaded truck lost control on the slope near the junction. "It narrowly missed pedestrians and roadside shops but got stuck in a crater, which prevented a major disaster," he said.

In response to local agitation, authorities had widened the Kundaim bypass, which can now accommodate two-way traffic. However, traffic from Ponda to Panaji still continues to pass through Manaswada, with only Panaji to Ponda traffic using the bypass.

Gaude said the current arrangement continues to endanger lives. "We request the government to divert all NH traffic through the bypass immediately, as the village route is unsafe for heavy vehicles," he added.

Dhonds of Goddess Lairai Devi observe fasting in festive spirit ahead of Shirgao Zatra

Team Herald

PONDA: The devotees of Shirgao's Goddess Shri Lairai Devi go through a lot of fasting and penance ahead of the zatra and the faithful Dhonds from Savoiverem have been preparing themselves to take part in the Homkund ritual.

They continued their five-day vrat (fast) ahead of the utsav, which will begin on Friday, May 2.

A total of 70 Dhonds have come together to observe the ritual, fostering a strong sense of brotherhood during their stay at the Shantadurga Temple in Savoiverem.

Aspiring Dhonds stay away from their homes and restrict themselves to a strict vegetarian diet, commit themselves to a celibate life filled with five days of prayer, abstinence and meditation ahead of the zatra.

The major attraction of the utsav is the devout and faithful Dhonds walk over a bed of red hot embers once the Homkund is lit.

The Lairai Devi Zatra at Shirgao in Bicholim is renowned not only across Goa but also in neighbouring states,



Devotees cooking meals for Dhonds at Savoiverem

particularly for its unique Homkhan ritual. Dhonds traditionally observe a five-day vrat in their respective areas before joining the main celebrations and participating in the Homkhan on the final day. This shared spiritual experience is deeply rooted in devotion and communal unity.

Yesterday marked the fourth day of the vrat at Savoiverem. As part of the day's observances, Mahaprasad was served to devotees and local residents. A special highlight of the occasion was a devotional artwork created by local youth Nishan Mangaldas Palkar, who crafted a striking portrait of Goddess Lairai Devi using turmeric and soda powder.

The Dhonds collectively

participated by applying the mixture with their hands to shape the image of the deity. "I am delighted to draw this portrait of Lairai Devi," said Nishan, expressing his joy at contributing artistically to the festivities.

Senior Dhond Maddu Jenu Naik shared insights into the long-standing tradition, stating, "Since 1980, Dhonds have come to stay at the Shantadurga Temple in Savoiverem to observe vrat. Earlier, there were only seven Dhonds, but now 70 have joined the practice." He added that after the completion of the vrat, the group would visit the Anant Temple and then travel together by bus to Shirgao for the Zatra.

Codar agriculture farm transforms barren land into fruitful reality

Rocky terrain in now a thriving orchard of 126 mango varieties

Team Herald

PONDA: In a major initiative aimed at encouraging local farmers and increasing agricultural income, the government agriculture farm at Codar-Ponda, has successfully transformed a vast rocky area into flourishing plantations of high-yielding fruit-bearing trees. These include grafts of mango, jackfruit, cashew, areca nut, and others.

The objective is to propagate grafted saplings and distribute them to Goan farmers, thereby encouraging a return to agriculture while boosting their earnings. Alongside this, the Agriculture Department is working to introduce new technologies, offer subsidies, and provide expert guidance.

Addressing the media, Agriculture Director Sandeep Faldesai, Codar Farm Superintendent Rajesh D'Costa, and Mandar Shirodkar detailed the progress. Faldesai stated that Codar Farm spans 110 hectares, much of which was once rocky and overgrown. "With support from Agriculture Minister Ravi Naik, we aimed to develop Codar as a model farm," he said.

"Developing the rocky



We collected and grafted these prize-winning types. Today, 55 local Goan mango varieties are preserved and growing on the farm. In addition, we have 30 exotic mango varieties, 23 hybrid varieties, and 18 Indian varieties

— Sandeep Faldesai, Agriculture Director

area was a challenge. We dug pits, broke rocks and developed plots for a variety of plantations," Faldesai added. "We have now developed 4.5 hectares—approximately 45,000 square metres—for mango cultivation. In this area, we have planted 126 mango varieties, including 55 local Goan varieties."

He noted that over the past few years, the Agriculture Department has organised mango exhibitions and awarded prizes for the best Goan varieties. "We collected and grafted these prize-winning types.

Today, 55 local Goan mango varieties are preserved and growing on the farm. In addition, we have 30 exotic mango varieties, 23 hybrid varieties, and 18 Indian varieties. These are now nearly two years old."

Among the exotic varieties are mangoes with low sugar content and vibrant colours—ideal for diabetic consumers. Hybrid mangoes were chosen keeping in mind Goa's changing climate.

Faldesai also highlighted the plantation of cashew grafts over a 7-hectare area (70,000 square metres), fea-

turing 14 varieties, including Jamubvan from Tamil Nadu. "Some cashew seeds weigh up to 30 grams. We are also offering guidance on pest and stem borer control. Currently, 53,000 farmers have registered for various schemes under the Krishi Card," he said.

Jackfruit grafting was carried out over the last two years on 1.5 hectares of land, involving 38 varieties—both exotic and Indian. "Wild bison posed a major challenge, but we overcame it," Faldesai said. "Some jackfruit trees begin bearing fruit within two years, while others take up to five."

Codar Farm has also undertaken infrastructural developments, including new farm roads, drip and sprinkler irrigation systems, and the introduction of hybrid varieties of guava, areca nut, nutmeg, and dragon fruit.

FARM OVERVIEW

Total area: 110 hectares
Developed area (2019–2025): 14.5 hectares
Objective: Promote high-yield fruit trees, boost farmer income, and revive local agriculture.

MANGO PLANTATION

Total mango varieties planted: 126
Goan varieties: 55
Exotic varieties: 30
Hybrid & Indian varieties: 41 (23 hybrid + 18 Indian)
Plantation area: 4.5 hectares (45,000 sq. m.)
Special features:
■ Some exotic mangoes have low sugar, suitable for diabetics.
■ Grafted from award-winning local varieties.

CASHEW PLANTATION

Area covered: 7 hectares (70,000 sq. m.)
Total varieties: 14
■ Includes Jamubvan from Tamil Nadu
■ Some seeds weigh up to 30 grams
■ Pest control and stem borer guidance provided.

JACKFRUIT PLANTATION

Area developed: 1.5 hectares
Total varieties: 38 (Exotic & Indian)
Fruit-bearing time: 2–5 years
Challenge faced: Wild bison intrusion

OTHER CROPS INTRODUCED

Fruits: Guava (Red)
Dragon fruit (Pink & Red)
Lemon

SPICES & NUTS:

■ Nutmeg (7 varieties)
■ Hybrid Areca nut

INFRASTRUCTURE & SUPPORT

New infrastructure:
■ Farm roads
■ Drip & sprinkler irrigation systems

FARMER SUPPORT:

■ 53,000 farmers registered under Krishi Card
■ Focus on technology, subsidies, and expert guidance
■ Grafting methods used to multiply planting material