

Constable convicted for exploiting sex trafficking victim inside police station

Team Herald

PANJIM: A Goa police constable was convicted by the Court after he was found guilty of engaging in unnatural sex with a woman who had been brought to the Mapusa Police Station after being rescued within the town.

According to the prosecution's account, the incident occurred on August 23, 2011 when Vishwajay Parab, who was serving as a constable at the Mapusa Police Station, allegedly verbally abused the woman with offensive language and indecent remarks, insulted her modesty, physically assaulted her and touched her inappropriately.

PROTECTOR TURNING PREDATOR

■ On August 23, 2011 cop allegedly verbally abused woman with offensive language, indecent remarks, insulted her modesty, physically assaulted her and touched her inappropriately.

■ He is accused of forcibly performing oral sex on the survivor in the police

lock-up and threatening her against disclosing the incident.

■ No nonsense Crime Branch PI Sunita Sawant, currently Superintendent of Police probes case, brings it to logical conclusion.

■ Mapusa JMFC finds cop guilty, finally convicted

then Crime Branch Police Inspector Sunita Sawant, currently the Superintendent of Police at the Anti-Narcotics Cell (ANC).

During the court proceedings, Judicial Magistrate First Class of Mapusa, Purva Naik, addressed the defence's attempts to question the survivor's identity. The Magistrate stated that there was no evidence to suggest that the survivor was not the complainant. The court noted that the

survivor was confirmed to be from Mumbai by other prosecution witnesses and the investigating officer, thus dismissing the defence's argument. Additionally, the Magistrate found no indication that the victim held any prior animosity towards the accused that would lead her to falsely implicate him. The court also highlighted the victim's clear identification of the accused in court, even after several years, based

“A police constable, who exploited a victim of sex trafficking inside a police station, a place meant for protection, has been convicted. This hard-won verdict is a testament to unbiased investigation by the police and victim's incredible courage, unshakable determination, and faith in the justice system

—Arun Pandey, Founding member, ARZ

on a distinct facial mark.

The accused has been convicted under several sections of the law, including Section 377 (unnatural offences), Section 354 (assault or criminal force to a woman with intent to outrage her modesty), Section 509, and Section 506 (criminal intimidation) of the Indian Penal Code, as well as Section 248 (2) of the Criminal Procedure Code.

Reacting to the verdict, Arun Pandey, the founding member of ARZ (Anay Rahit Zindagi), commented on social media, stating, “Justice delayed, but thankfully not denied. After 15 long years, justice

has finally been served.” He further added, “A police constable, who exploited a victim of sex trafficking inside a police station, a place meant for protection, has been convicted. This hard-won verdict is a testament to unbiased investigation by the police and victim's incredible courage, unshakable determination, and faith in the justice system. Despite the trauma and the odds, she stood strong, spoke her truth, and never gave up. Salute to her bravery. Her strength is a reminder that justice is possible, even when the road is painfully long.”

Mystery metal pellets trigger crowd frenzy on Nuvem highway

Team Herald

MARGAO: What started as a normal day on the Arlem-Nuvem highway quickly turned chaotic on Sunday afternoon, when a large number of commuters and bystanders rushed onto the road to pick up strange metallic balls that had spilled onto the tarmac.

According to eyewitnesses, the small spherical objects appeared without warning along a stretch of the highway, prompting speculation and excitement. Within minutes, vehicles were seen pulling over on both sides of the road. People began collecting the objects using their hands, plastic bags, and even helmets, in a desperate attempt to gather as many as possible.

“It was chaos. People were jumping out of their cars,



Mad scramble led to severe traffic congestion

some even blocking traffic just to grab as many of the pellets as they could,” said Rajiv Naik, a local commuter who witnessed the incident.

The mad scramble led to severe traffic congestion in both directions. Several vehicles were parked hastily in the middle of the road, with others narrowly avoiding collisions in the confusion.

While some believed the pellets to be made of a precious metal, others claimed they were magnetic and held industrial importance.

Police teams reached the site shortly afterwards to disperse the crowd and restore normal traffic flow. Authorities suspect that the pellets may have fallen from a passing truck due to improperly secured cargo.

“We are currently investigating the source of the spill and trying to identify the vehicle responsible,” a police official stated. “Such incidents not only endanger lives but also disrupt the smooth flow of traffic. We urge the public to avoid such risky behaviour.”

Most panchas shy away from Curti gram sabha

Team Herald

PONDA: The Curti Khandepar gram sabha convened under the chairmanship sarpanch Nilkant Naik on Sunday focused on various development projects within the panchayat area.

Despite significant interest from local residents who wished to discuss critical issues such as monsoon preparedness, the poor condition of internal roads, the potential for Khandepar river flooding during the monsoon, and other ward-specific concerns, the meeting saw the presence of only four out of eleven panchayat members, including the Sarpanch. This absence prompted questions from the attendees directed at the Sarpanch and the Secretary. The Secretary clarified that notices for the gram sabha had been duly issued to all panchayat members and displayed publicly.

A key demand from the locals was the installation of dustbins at the OPA Khandepar Junction, where the dumping of food waste and plastic along the roadside is creating a risk of clogged gutters and drains, potentially leading to flooding during the monsoon season.

Concerns were also raised regarding the recently developed fencing and road near the Khandepar river, which involved cutting a large boulder. Residents of Baagwada fear this development increas-

es the risk of flooding to their homes and urged the panchayat to inspect the area and take necessary preventative measures. The Sarpanch and Secretary assured the locals that they would inspect the site on Monday and instruct the landowner to undertake restoration work.

The Secretary further informed the gram sabha that two employees have been assigned to register the number of tenants residing

“Refrain from feeding raw meat to stray dogs, as this can lead to aggressive behaviour
— Nilkant Naik, Sarpanch

within the Panchayat area.

Residents highlighted the issue of internal roads that were dug up for development purposes but have not been properly restored, which could cause significant inconvenience during the upcoming monsoon. They also appealed to the Panchayat to establish Umeed Centres for the benefit of elderly citizens, for which government funds have already been allocated.

Sarpanch Nilkant Naik appealed to the community to “refrain from feeding raw meat to stray dogs, as this can lead to aggressive behaviour.” He also announced that gutter cleaning work has commenced within the Panchayat. Furthermore, he called upon the government to establish Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) and provide sewage connections to local residents, noting that the current practice of sewage discharge into gutters creates challenges for cleaning efforts.

SEASONAL SCOURGE

ANISHA FRANCIS



Tar balls, which are weathered blobs of oil mixed with dirt, have begun to wash up on the beaches of Salcete. A phenomenon that appears every year ahead of and during the monsoon, tar balls are remnants of old oil spills, carried hundreds of kilometres by ocean currents. They stick to the skin and are very difficult to wash off

Teen killed in road accident at Porvorim

Team Herald

PANJIM: A 19-year-old two-wheeler rider from Marina Wado, Socorro-Porvorim, lost his life in a fatal road accident near Majestic Hotel in Porvorim early morning on Sunday.

The deceased has been identified as Faraaz Naik.

According to police, Faraaz was moving towards Porvorim from Panjim at around 4 am and when he reached near Majestic Hotel, he lost his control over the vehicle and dashed against a bus parked by the side of the road. Faraz was rushed to Goa Medical College and Hospital (GMC), Bambolim, but he was declared brought dead by the doctors in the casualty ward.

Desilting work begins in Madel-Margao

Team Herald

MARGAO: With the monsoon fast approaching, desilting work has commenced in Madel-Margao to ensure the smooth flow of storm-water and prevent flooding. However, the local councillor has also issued strict warning to that releasing sewage water into drains and nullahs.

The desilting operation, which began four days ago, is progressing steadily and is expected to be completed soon.

Local councillor Francis Joanes, who is overseeing the work, said the effort is being treated as a priority given the urgency of the season.

“We have started desilting work in the nullahs since the past four days. All necessary work will be completed at the earliest to

avoid any water logging issues during the monsoon,” Joanes stated.

While the physical cleaning of drains is underway, Joanes expressed serious concern over the illegal discharge of untreated sewage into the drainage system by a few residential buildings. According to him, some complexes have not yet connected to the main sewerage network, resulting in waste being released directly into nullahs.

“There are three to four buildings in Ward 1 which have not yet connected to the sewage system. As a result, raw sewage is being released into the drains and nullahs, which are contaminating not just surface water but also underground water sources,” he said.

IMD issues orange alert for 3 days

Team Herald

PANJIM: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Sunday issued orange alert for May 20, 21 and 22 while yellow alert for May 18, 19, 23 and 24.

The IMD forecasted moderate to heavy rainfall at most places over North and South Goa districts of the state on May 20, 21 and 22.

“Very heavy rainfall at isolated places with heavy rainfall at a few places is very likely over North and South Goa districts. Moderate to heavy rainfall is very likely at most places over North and South Goa districts of the state on May 20, 21 and 22, 2025,” the weather office said.

Ex MLA: Demolition drive in Anjuna is ‘goondagiri’

Team Herald

CALANGUTE: Condemning the recent demolition drive in Anjuna led by Calangute MLA Michael Lobo, Former Calangute MLA Agnelo Fernandes on Thursday labelled it as “goondagiri” and a complete disregard for the due process of law.

Speaking to the media in Candolim on Thursday, Fernandes questioned the urgency of these demolitions, especially in light of Chief Minister Pramod Sawant's announcement that the State government would seek ways to regularise structures affected by the recent High Court order.

Fernandes pointed out the contradiction between the Chief Minister's statement and Lobo's actions, stating that the due process

of law mandated by the High Court order was not followed. He claimed that even a chapel compound wall was among the structures demolished.

Expressing his concerns further, Fernandes questioned why such demolitions were seemingly limited to Calangute and Siolim, alleging “dadagiri” and criticising the Chief Minister's silence on the matter. He went on to describe the current state of governance as akin to a “mafia.”

Fernandes raised the issue of Michael Lobo's involvement in Siolim, where his wife, Delilah Lobo, is the MLA. He suggested that if she is unable to fulfill her responsibilities, she should consider resigning, as her husband appears to be consistently intervening in her constituency.

Cashew fest celebrates Goa's agro heritage with new products and plantation drive

Team Herald

PANJIM: The third edition of the Goa Cashew Fest began on Friday with the launch of three major initiatives focused on sustainability, rural livelihoods, and heritage promotion.

Chief Minister Pramod Sawant inaugurated the event, which was also attended by Union Minister Shripad Naik, state ministers Vishwajit Rane and Rohan Khaunte, and other dignitaries.

The Goa Forest Development Corporation (GFDC) introduced Sylvan, a packaged cashew product aimed at offering premium-quality

nuts sourced from government-managed orchards.

The initiative emphasises sustainable farming practices and features QR-coded packaging that allows consumers to trace the origin of each packet. Despite the emphasis on quality and eco-conscious branding, Sylvan products will be priced at par with market rates to ensure affordability. A second initiative—a coastal cashew plantation drive—was also launched.

The effort aims to restore degraded stretches of the coastline, particularly in Salcete taluka, using cashew plantations to combat soil erosion and promote



Major initiatives focused on sustainability, rural livelihoods, and heritage promotion

climate resilience. The plantation drive is expected to generate seasonal employment in



Live music performances by local and national artists including Meet Bros and Neeti Mohan

coastal communities and ecological restoration. The third announcement was

the launch of Ozzo Feni by Cazcar, described as India's first Geographical Indication (GI)-tagged feni.

The move gives formal recognition to feni as a region-specific product and is expected to help Goan distillers access broader markets. Officials said the GI tag protects the authenticity of the traditional liquor and supports local artisans involved in its production. The festival also featured technical sessions on cashew processing, farming practices, and market potential.

These discussions brought together stakeholders from the cashew industry to exchange ideas

and identify opportunities for growth. In the evening, the event transitioned into a cultural showcase, with live music performances by local and national artists including Meet Bros and Neeti Mohan.

A cashew-themed fashion show curated by local designer Philu Martins and over 50 food and beverage stalls offering cashew-based and Goan cuisine added to the festive atmosphere. Organisers said the festival aimed to position cashew as a symbol of Goan identity while promoting entrepreneurship, environmental awareness, and innovation in the sector.

