

CHILD SAFETY CRISIS: Ignored pool directives lead to more drownings

Without strict enforcement of existing guidelines by authorities and hotels, tragic but preventable incidents may continue, warn experts

Team Herald

MARGAO: A fresh spate of child drownings in hotel swimming pools across Goa has reignited alarm over the persistent failure to implement long-standing safety measures. This marks the third such wave within a decade, with similar incidents reported around eight years ago.

Former Chairperson of the Goa State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (GSCPCR), Peter Borges, criticised authorities and hospitality establishments for their "deliberate inaction," despite safety directives issued in 2023. "No lifeguard. No safeguards. No action from the authorities. This isn't a tragic exception—it's a predictable outcome," he



said. The GSCPCR's 2023 guidelines required hotels, resorts, and guesthouses to employ trained lifeguards, install childproof barriers, display warning signage, and conduct regular safety audits. Establishments were also advised to provide approved flotation devices for children under seven and be held accountable for negligence if pool safety standards were unmet.

Borges stressed that hospitality providers have a duty of "reasonable care" to ensure guest safety, particularly for children, by maintaining pool areas in a safe condition and warning of potential hazards. The Commission also urged the Tourism Department to enforce the presence of lifeguards during pool operation hours,

prohibiting access outside those times. These recommendations followed what the GSCPCR called "very tragic" but preventable deaths. Separately, on Thursday, the Water Resources Department issued a public warning against bathing in irrigation canals or using their inspection paths as roads, citing serious drowning risks. Child safety advocates warn that without strict enforcement, each neglected directive risks becoming, as Borges put it, "a death foretold."

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SAFETY GUIDELINES

- Hotels, resorts and guesthouses directed to employ trained lifeguards
- Install childproof barriers, display warning signage
- Conduct regular safety audits
- Advised to provide approved flotation devices for children

PWD asked to provide water to occupants of house portion

Maintains essential services such as water, electricity supply are human rights; vital to maintain basic living conditions

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Goa Human Rights Commission (GHRC) has recommended that, in the interest of public health and to protect the human rights of the occupants of the portion of the house occupied by the complainant, a fresh water connection be provided, with the cost to be borne by the complainant.



istered to Krishnanath Vithal Naik.

The two-member Commission, comprising Desmond D'Costa and Pramod V Kamat, held that under the provisions of the Goa Public Health Act 1985, essential services such as water and electricity supply are human rights, and are vital to maintaining basic living conditions.

Lata Rajendra Naik, residing in Shiroda, Ponda taluka, filed her complaint on April 29, 2025, stating that she was denied water supply to the portion of the house where she lives with her family.

On reviewing the complaint, the Commission issued notices to the PWD Executive Engineer (Water Supply Division), Ponda; the Shiroda Panchayat Secretary; the Medical Officer of the Primary Health Centre, Shiroda; and Krishnanath Vithal Naik, who also resides in House No. 792, Shiroda.

Except for the PWD Executive Engineer, no replies were filed by the three respondents, although all were present at the hearing.

The Commission found that House No. 792 is registered in the name of Vithal Gopinath Naik, father-in-law of the complainant, and that a water connection was issued for the entire house, reg-

Lata Naik complained that on April 2, 2025, the water supply to the portion of the house she occupies was disconnected, affecting her daily life. She applied to the Shiroda Village Panchayat for a No Objection Certificate (NOC) to obtain a separate water connection but was denied on the grounds that only one water connection is allowed per house number.

The complainant also submitted an application in Form-1 to the PWD Assistant Engineer for a water connection to her portion of the house for domestic purposes.

After hearing the complainant and the three respondents, the Commission reiterated, based on the Goa Public Health Act 1985, that essential services such as water and electricity supply are human rights, necessary to maintain basic living standards.

During the proceedings, Krishnanath Vithal Naik stated he had no objection to a separate water connection being granted to his elder brother, Rajendra Naik.

Following this, the Commission disposed of the complaint, recommending that the PWD provide a water connection to the complainant's portion of the house.

Court denies bail to accused in Ambedem murder case

Team Herald

PANJIM: The North Goa Additional Sessions Court, Mercas, has dismissed the bail application filed by Vasudev Nakul Ozarekar of Ambedem, Nagargao, who was arrested on charges of murdering 24-year-old Shruvan Barve at Ambedem last month.

In his bail plea, Ozarekar contended that he had been arbitrarily and falsely implicated and arrested by Valpoi police on 18 April. He further claimed he was produced for remand the following day, well beyond 24 hours from the time of his arrest, in contravention of the provisions of the BNS.

Adv V Porob, representing the accused, argued that the grounds of arrest were not communicated to Ozarekar, nor to his family members, friends, or relatives, as required under Section 47 of the BNS.

Adv Porob also submitted that Ozarekar

has a dependent family, including a wife and three children, and pleaded for bail on humanitarian grounds.

Public Prosecutor S Patil supported the investigating officer's statement, telling the Court that the accused had confessed to the crime. Therefore, he argued, there was no necessity to inform the accused of the grounds of arrest, as he was already aware of them.

Patil further emphasised the seriousness of the offence, noting that a young man had been killed in the prime of his life. He stated that the presence of the accused was necessary for tracing his associates and for the collection of crucial evidence.

After considering all arguments, Judge Apurva Nagvenkar of North Goa Additional Sessions Court-3 rejected the bail application.

In addition to Ozarekar, Valpoi police have also arrested Devidas Barve and his elder son, Uday, in connection with the brutal murder.

ROTTING REALITY



Uncollected fish waste at the entrance of the Mapusa fish market poses a health hazard

Demolition of illegal resort in Calangute suspended midway after p'yat intervention

Secretary states status of remaining structures requires verification; by the time demolition was stopped, three structures were razed by squad

Team Herald

CALANGUTE: The demolition of illegal structures at a four-star beach resort in Calangute, which began on Monday morning following directions from the Bombay High Court at Goa, was abruptly halted a few hours later after the Calangute Village Panchayat (VP) secretary Arjun Velip stated that the status of the remaining structures required verification.

By the time the demolition was stopped, three structures at the resort - located in Survey No. 242/1 at Sauntavaddo in Calangute—had already been razed by the demoli-



tion squad of the Block Development Officer (BDO), Bardez, acting on the High Court's order.

Sylvester D'Souza, the petitioner and complainant in the case, expressed strong objections to the halting of the process. "The stopping of the remaining demolitions by officials amounts to contempt of

court as there was no stay order," said D'Souza, a resident of Calangute.

D'Souza had originally lodged a complaint in 2010 alleging that the four-star resort had been built illegally. In response, the Calangute VP conducted a site inspection on 20 July 2011. The inspection report, prepared by then VP

“The stopping of the remaining demolitions by officials amounts to contempt of court as there was no stay order
— Sylvester D'Souza, Petitioner

secretary Subodh Prabhu, stated: "During the site inspection it is noticed that Lalan Jacques and Joseph Rosa have constructed various structures in gross violation of CRZ notification of 1991. It is noted that sand dunes have been cut for carrying out the illegal construction."

The report also noted that the resort had been built without a construction licence, lacked approval from the Town and Country Planning (TCP) Department, and did not possess an occupancy certificate. Consequently, the VP issued a demolition order on 22 December 2011.

However, as the VP failed to act on the order, D'Souza escalated the matter to the High Court, which on 7 May 2025 directed the VP to implement the 2011 demolition order.

According to D'Souza, the resort comprises 16 illegal structures and spans an area of approximately 40,000 square metres.

Karaswada youth dies after crashing motorcycle at Bastora

Team Herald

PANJIM: A 21-year-old youth from Mapusa lost his life in a road accident at Bastora on Monday. The deceased has been identified as Sairaj Morajkar, a resident of Karaswada.

According to police, the accident occurred when Morajkar lost control of his motorcycle and crashed into a wall at Bastora, sustaining severe head injuries. He was immediately rushed to the District Hospital in Mapusa and later referred to Goa Medical College and Hospital (GMC), Bambolim, where he succumbed to his injuries while undergoing treatment.

A case has been registered at the Mapusa Police Station, and further investigation is underway.

MAX. TEMP 34.2 °C
MIN. TEMP 27.0 °C

idharudhar



We want him to make sure this flyover doesn't collapse!

KTC launches Goa-Dhobitalao bus service, fulfils long-standing demand of Goans

Team Herald

MARGAO: In a significant move to enhance inter-state connectivity, the Kadamba Transport Corporation (KTC) has launched direct bus services between Goa and Dhobitalao (Mumbai), fulfilling a long-pending demand of Goan commuters.

The new service commenced on Sunday and is expected to benefit thousands of passengers who frequently travel between Goa and Mumbai for work, education, and medical needs.

Speaking at the launch, KTC Chairman and MLA Ulhas Tuenkar expressed gratitude to the state government for making the initiative a reality. "There was a huge demand from the commuters to start inter-state bus services, as many Goans travel to Mumbai on a regular basis," Tuenkar said.

“This inter-state bus service is a major step forward. It will surely help Goans on a large scale, whether they are daily commuters, students, or patients seeking treatment in Mumbai

— Ulhas Tuenkar, KTC Chairman



He added that the KTC is committed to providing high-quality service to passengers and noted that the newly introduced Mahaji Bus scheme is aimed at benefiting local bus operators while expanding travel options for the

public. "This inter-state bus service is a major step forward. It will surely help Goans on a large scale, whether they are daily commuters, students, or patients seeking treatment in

Mumbai," Tuenkar stated.

The launch of the Goa-Mumbai route underlines KTC's renewed focus on improving public transport and enhancing passenger convenience. The service is also expected to offer a more affordable and safer alternative to private operators, with the added assurance of government-backed reliability.

The move has been widely welcomed by citizens, especially those who had been relying on limited or expensive transport options to reach Mumbai. Regular commuters have long advocated for a state-run, efficient inter-state bus service connecting Goa to the financial capital.

KTC officials have said that more details, including fare structure, schedules, and booking options, will be made available to the public shortly.

Congratulations !!!

AGNEL FERNANDES

On being elected as Sarpanch Of Goa Velha Village Panchayat.

God bless you with good health to serve the people of our Village. We are proud of you.

Wishes from:

- Sacrament Fernandes
- Ruth Cardozo, Veronica & Vania Fernandes
- Anton Fernandes & Helena Da Silva
- Francisco Jacob Fernandes & Snovey Fernandes
- Joaquim Da Cunha & Elvira Fernandes
- Lesley Fernandes & Annet Alfonso
- Girol Cardozo & Silvester Cardozo
- Lenin Fernandes & Anna Pereira
- Florencio Anthony Fernandes & Clancy Rego