

# Herald Cafe



SIBLING DUO 'NEXT DOOR NEIGHBOURS' DEBUT WITH 'CITY OF LIES'



INDIAN AUTHOR BANU MUSHTAQ WINS INTERNATIONAL BOOKER PRIZE FOR 'HEART LAMP'

## Why biodiversity matters more than ever



Malabar Pit viper

The International Day for Biological Diversity, observed by the UN, celebrates the rich diversity of life on Earth and underscores the urgent need for its protection. This year's theme, "Harmony with Nature and Sustainable Development," emphasises the importance of engaging young people in environmental action

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As Goa grapples with climate change, habitat loss, and species decline, World Biodiversity Day reminds us of our shared duty to protect nature. Amid the challenges, hope shines through the growing awareness and involvement of the youth.

### THE SILENT NATURE OF REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

As an ecologist and researcher working with reptiles and amphibians, Nirmal Kulkarni stresses that living in harmony and coexistence with these lesser known biodiversity species is a need of the hour. "We often take ecological services rendered by frogs, lizards and snakes for granted due to their silent nature of going about their own lives. But remember, these

important lesser known fauna keep rodent and insect populations in check and thus help keep vector borne diseases at bay. We have always had a reverence for all life forms and this is our culture. However in recent times, tolerance

for reptiles from snakes to crocodiles and monitor lizards is dwindling due to lack of awareness and this must be addressed," he says.



Malabar gliding frog

### WHEN GOA RANKS FOURTH IN INDIA FOR MOST OBSERVATIONS ON NATURE

Recently, the City Nature Challenge (CNC) encouraged citizens to document local flora and fauna, focusing primarily on their own backyards. While Goa ranked 18th last year with just 843 entries, this year the state made a remarkable leap, recording 1,927 species and securing the fourth position in India for most observations with 20,265 in total. A total of 155 people from Goa participated, with two rare butterfly species, the Aberrant Oakblue and the Banded Royal, both observed by Devesh Naik during the challenge.

"Documentation of biodiversity is an important activity towards inculcating a sense of nature stewardship amongst citizens. Nature documentation encourages people to learn about the biodiversity in their surroundings and help conserve it. It is also a means of collecting large amounts of data in a short span of time, which is often difficult for the scientific community to achieve due to lack of time and capital. The information collected during CNC is vetted by experts and is used to enhance scientific knowledge about biodiversity of an area," says Aditya Kakodkar, State Coordinator Goa, WWF-INDIA.



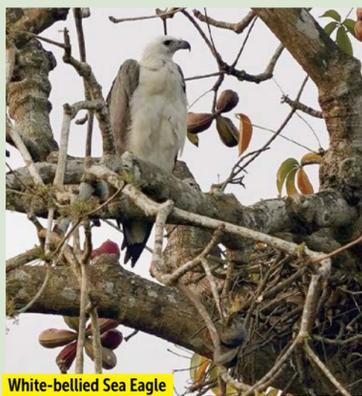
Aberrant Oakblue

Banded Royal

### SATELLITE MAPPING FOR THE WILDLIFE

The Wildlife Conservation Trust (WCT) has secured a grant to enhance conservation efforts in the Chambal River region, focusing on crocodiles and turtles. A dedicated team, including Goa-based Dr Madhura Niphadkar and three colleagues, developed a proposal that led to this award. "The primary objective is to utilise high-resolution satellite imagery to map nesting sites and habitats of these species without direct field visits. This approach is crucial due to the area's safety concerns, including the presence of criminal activities and sand mining operations," explains Dr Madhura. The project encompasses three rivers: Chambal, Soon, and Bhadra, and is set to span one year.

Closer to home, she has been involved in the white-bellied sea eagle project run by the Goa Bird Conservation Network and hopes it will get an extension this year.



White-bellied Sea Eagle

### WHY YOUTH ENTHUSIASM NEEDS ADULT SUPPORT

Young people today are increasingly aware of the importance of biodiversity and environmental conservation. However, there's a critical gap in the support system meant to nurture this passion. "Teachers and educators are doing their part. Influencers and environmental activists are spreading awareness. But the message, while well-delivered, often doesn't take root at home. The problem is not with the youngsters as they are interested. The problem is that the support they should receive from their parents is lacking," says Cyril Fernandes, president of the Chicalim Bio-Crusaders.

"Students are intelligent, curious, and passionate. But without consistent reinforcement at home, their understanding and values risk stagnation." The teachers

do what they can within school hours. People like us take them on nature trails or heritage walks, but after that, it has to be reinforced at home," he explains. Even an hour or two from parents, spent listening, discussing, and strengthening what children learn, could make a huge difference.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF MONSOON FOR THE WESTERN GHATS

"The monsoons are crucial for our study of herpetofauna (reptiles and amphibians) as it is the breeding season for these creatures. Erratic and unseasonal rainfall as well as short days of rain days in the south west monsoons has affected herpetofauna sightings in the past few years. We do not know long term impacts yet, but there is a growing concern about the impact of temperature rises and uncertain rainfall patterns on endemic species of reptiles and amphibians in the Western Ghats of India," explains Nirmal.

## Style recycled: Goa's Gen Z makes sustainability look cool

From thrift store finds to DIY fashion, young Goans are redefining style with creativity, expression and second-hand flair

Surabhi Thakur

In the colourful chaos of Goa's flea markets and the scroll-worthy pages of Instagram thrift stores, a quiet revolution is unfolding. Goa's Gen Z isn't just shopping they're storytelling. Through every second-hand jacket and reworked skirt, they're crafting a narrative that's equally expressive and ethical. Across Goa, college students are not just wearing second-hand clothes, they are selling them too. The rise of local thrift pages, curated racks at pop-ups, and Instagram drops are becoming the new norm.

### Thrift as a voice of identity and rebellion

"Fashion is a tool for change and expression and even rebellion whether to show class or revolt," says Naomi Remedios, a student studying BBA who also owns a thrift page on Instagram. "Everything that we wear shows what we think and what we are, whether consciously or subconsciously," she adds.



On college campuses, the fashion scene is shifting fast. Thrift pop-ups now share space with food stalls, and DIY upcycling workshops draw more buzz than fast fashion sales. Clothes once discarded now hold new meaning they're revived, repurposed, and re-loved.

### A budget-friendly canvas for Gen Z's creative expression

"Gen Z is using thrifted clothes to show their style in a creative way they like mixing different pieces from different eras to make unique outfits," says Megha Dnupdale, a Psychology student. She adds, "Many also enjoy customising their clothes, like cutting or adding details. Thrifting is also very affordable, it depends on the locality which is important to a lot of them."



### Styling as storytelling and sustainability

"Thrifted fashion is one of the most exciting avenues for creative expression today. As a model, wearing garments from so many designers, I've come to appreciate how styling isn't just about wearing the newest collection it's about the art of transformation," says fashion model Charlene Delilah Heredia.

Creating new outfits from thrifted pieces pushes boundaries, mix eras, and give garments a second life. It's sustainable, personal, and often results in the most unique looks. "I truly believe thrift fashion challenges us to be more intentional and resourceful and that's where real style begins," says Charlene.

### Style with substance: Fashion meets responsibility

With climate change conversations getting louder and the truth behind fast fashion harder to ignore, Gen Z is dressing with intention. They're rejecting the idea that new is better, and embracing clothes that reflect not just their style, but their values.

### A conscious shift from trends to expression

"We're not just shopping differently, we're thinking differently," says 20-year-old Sasha Naik, a Biotech student. "Wearing thrifted clothes is empowering. It gives you an opportunity to explore, create, and express through fashion."

Thrift culture encourages individuality, reducing the pressure to keep up with fleeting trends. Each piece has a past, and when reimagined by young hands, it gains a new story.

