

Leaking roof, slippery court pose risks to players at Navelim indoor stadium

Rainwater drips onto wooden floor through gaps in roof; temporary fix trialled during last year's monsoon was left unaddressed in the dry months—resulting in a repeat of 2024's problems for the sports hub

Team Herald

MARGAO: Persistent leaks at the Manohar Parrikar Indoor Stadium have once again disrupted sporting activities, with rainwater seeping through roof-mounted exhaust fans and forming puddles on the wooden court. Despite repeated complaints and official acknowledgment of the issue, no permanent fix has been carried out, raising serious safety concerns among players and local residents.

The latest spell of rain has laid bare the stadium's vulnerability. On Thursday, a visit revealed several buckets scattered across the court, collecting water dripping steadily from above. According to sources, the leakage points are concentrated around the exhaust fans—an issue that has plagued the facility for years without resolution.

The biggest casualty is the imported wooden flooring, which is highly susceptible to water damage. Warping can



render the surface uneven and hazardous, increasing the risk of injuries. "The imported wooden floor is expensive, and water accumulation can make it uneven. If this infrastructure is spoiled, replacing it, with the same quality will be difficult. We must maintain it," said social activist Savio Coutinho.

In response to a Right to Information (RTI) query, officials confirmed that the problem was identified during the 2024 monsoon season, and a temporary solution—installing a

PVC gutter around one of the exhaust fans—was trialled at a cost of Rs 16,500. Encouraged by the initial results, an estimate of Rs 4.96 lakh was prepared to replicate the solution across all fans, but the work remains pending.

Athletes using the facility are now feeling the impact. "It's risky to play when there's water on the floor," said a badminton player who requested anonymity. "On Wednesday, many of us had to shift courts inside the stadium to avoid slippery spots caused by the leaks."

Both players and community activists are urging authorities to act immediately, warning that further delays could lead to permanent damage to the stadium's infrastructure and compromise the safety of its users.

Citizen serves legal notice, sets 7-day deadline for fix



Team Herald

MARGAO: Authorities overseeing the Manohar Parrikar Indoor Stadium in Navelim have been served a seven-day ultimatum to rectify severe infrastructural issues or face legal action. The stadium, plagued by persistent roof leakages and unsafe playing conditions, has prompted a legal notice to be sent to senior state sports officials.

Issued by a local lawyer on behalf of his client—a resident of Navelim—the notice warns that failure to act will result in the filing of a writ petition before the Bombay High Court at Goa.

The legal complaint highlights the stadium's deteriorating condition, particularly the damage caused by rainwater seeping through the roof and collecting on the wooden flooring. The accumulation has reportedly created dangerously slippery conditions for athletes, especially during the monsoon season. "My client has witnessed several incidents where

My client has witnessed several incidents where players have slipped and sustained injuries due to the unsafe flooring. This is gross negligence from the authorities — Advocate representing Navelim local

players have slipped and sustained injuries due to the unsafe flooring," the notice states. "This ongoing hazard reflects gross negligence on the part of the concerned authorities."

The complaint has been addressed to the Director of Sports (Government of Goa), the Executive Director of the Sports Authority of Goa, and the Honourable Minister for Sports. It further points out that the issue was brought to the notice of officials as far back as last year, yet no effective action has been taken.

"If no action is taken within seven days of receipt of this notice, my client will be constrained to initiate appropriate legal proceedings," the advocate stated.

Housing society wall collapses onto neighbours compound in Margao

Team Herald

MARGAO: A significant portion of the retaining wall belonging to the Alta Monte Society in Margao collapsed on Wednesday, crashing onto the adjacent Damodar Chamber Society.

Residents of both societies were shaken by the incident, which fortunately did not result in injuries. However, the collapse has reignited fears, as a smaller section of the same wall had given way two years ago—a warning sign that went largely unheeded.

According to residents, the earlier incident had been promptly reported to disaster management authorities. Despite repeated appeals, no substantial remedial measures were taken, leaving the weakened structure vulnerable to further failure.

"This was a disaster waiting to happen," said a resident of Damodar Chamber Society. "We had warned the authorities, but our concerns were ignored. Now a much larger section has collapsed, and it's only by sheer luck that no one was hurt."

The fallen debris has damaged the compound area and created access issues for the affected society. Residents are now demanding immediate intervention from the Margao Municipal Council and the Goa State Disaster Management Authority to assess the structural stability of the remaining wall and prevent further incidents. Urban safety advocates are calling for a full investigation into why no action was taken after the first warning in 2023, and whether the construction and maintenance of the retaining wall met engineering and regulatory standards.

Velim MLA demands political reservation for ST community ahead of 2027 polls

Team Herald

MARGAO: Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA Cruz Silva has renewed his demand for political reservation for the Scheduled Tribe (ST) community in the Goa Legislative Assembly, urging immediate action ahead of the 2027 state elections.

Silva, who represents Velim, emphasised that the ST community—officially recognised in Goa in 2003—has waited far too long for fair political representation. He described the delay as a "historic injustice" that needs urgent correction.

"For too long, our ST brothers and sisters, who form a significant portion of our population, have been denied their rightful share of representation in the Goa Assembly," Silva said. "This is a fundamental democratic right enshrined in the Constitution, and it must be realised without any further delay."

He cited the Readjustment of Representation of Scheduled Tribes in Assembly Constituencies of the State of Goa Bill, 2024, introduced in the Lok Sabha last August, as a step forward—but urged Parliament to fast-track its passage.

"While the introduction of this Bill is a step in the right direction, its swift approval and execution are absolutely critical," he said.

Silva pledged to continue raising the issue on all platforms, saying, "It is high time the voices of our tribal communities are heard loud and clear in the legislative corridors of our state."

Silva's statement comes amid increasing pressure from tribal groups in the state who have long campaigned for political inclusion and representation in line with constitutional provisions.

Goa sugarcane farmers slam govt directive as 'impractical'

Demand clarity on cultivation policy; claim monsoon not conducive to growing cane

Team Herald

PONDA: Distressed and confused by a recent government notification regarding sugarcane cultivation, sugarcane farmers across Goa have expressed disappointment and unease over the lack of clarity in the directive, which instructs them to harvest and transport their produce directly to the Sanjivani sugar factory premises for payment.

The notification, issued after a considerable delay and coinciding with the onset of the rainy season, has drawn strong objections from the farming community. Farmers have emphasised that the monsoon period is not conducive to sugarcane cultivation, as the crop requires adequate sunlight and a humid climate to thrive.

In response to the directive, the Sanjivani Sugar Cane Farmers Association (Gomantak



Members of the Sanjivani Sugar Cane Farmers Association meet to discuss the way forward

Uss Utpadak Sangatana) held a meeting at the Sanjivani sugar factory in Dharbandora to articulate their concerns.

The Association criticised the timing of the government's move and urged the authorities to reissue the notification only after meaningful consultation with the farming community and a thorough understanding of their situation.

A central demand of the farmers is for the government to clearly

state its policy regarding the future of the Sanjivani sugar factory—specifically whether the facility will be restarted or if its closure is final. In the same vein, they have called for clarity on the future of sugarcane cultivation in the State.

Rajendra Desai, president of the Uss Utpadak Sangatana, pointed out that farmers had been requesting the cultivation notification since last August. He noted that while the Chief

Minister had provided verbal assurances, the formal notification was only issued on May 5, rendering cultivation during the rainy season impractical.

Desai further highlighted that the five-year compensation policy, which was implemented following the factory's closure in 2019-20 and came with the promise of a new factory, has now expired. Farmers' appeals for a two-year extension of this scheme until the new facility becomes operational have not yet received a response.

Amid the prevailing uncertainty about the reopening of the factory, the farmers have reiterated their demand for a revised notification that is developed in consultation with them, along with a two-year extension of the compensation scheme until Sanjivani resumes operations.

Govt puts Margao council in dock over illegal gaddas at Aquem

Team Herald



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MARGAO: The Department of Urban Development has issued a formal notice to the Chief Officer of the Margao Municipal Council (MMC), directing immediate action against unauthorised stalls and shops obstructing the premises of the Electricity Department at Aquem, Margao.

The notice follows a complaint filed by Executive Engineer Kashinath Shetye, who had raised concerns over the illegal encroachments near the Electricity Department's office. According to sources, the stalls have been blocking access to the premises, causing inconvenience to both employees and the public seeking services at the department.

In his complaint, Shetye had

urged the concerned authorities to take swift action to clear the encroachments, citing operational difficulties and safety concerns. However, shortly after filing the complaint, Shetye was transferred from his post, raising questions about the timing of the move. While no official statement has linked the transfer to the complaint, the sequence of events has drawn public attention.

The Urban Development Department has now intervened, directing the MMC to remove the unauthorised structures without delay and ensure that government premises remain free from illegal occupation. The department emphasised that encroachments on public properties, especially those belonging to essential services like the Electricity Department, will not be tolerated.

MAX. TEMP 28.6 °C
MIN. TEMP 24.4 °C

idharudhar



Ridiculous! Homes are flooded, yet drainage pipes remain dry!

Artist blasts Ravindra Bhavan mgmt for poor planning, funds misuse

Team Herald

MARGAO: Artist and former member of the Goa State Cultural Development Committee, Vishal Pai Cacode, has strongly criticised the management of Ravindra Bhavan, Margao, following the sudden closure of the Pai Tiatr Auditorium for roof repairs.

Cacode accused the institution's leadership of poor planning, insensitivity, and financial mismanagement, urging for transparent and culturally rooted governance.

"We don't need cheerleaders of the government. We need administrators who understand culture and stand by the artistic community," said Pai Cacode, as he stressed that Ravindra Bhavan must function in a manner that reflects Goa's diverse cultural legacy, with transparency and inclusivity at its core.

The closure of the auditorium until May 25, announced abruptly by the management, has drawn sharp criti-

Artists are facing inconvenience and losses because of the Chairman's failure to plan or communicate in time. Such behaviour undermines the spirit and function of a cultural institution — Vishal Pai Cacode, artist

cism from the artistic community.

Pai Cacode labeled the move as an example of misplaced priorities and administrative failure, directly blaming Chairman Rajendra Talak for failing to plan or communicate effectively.

"Artists are facing inconvenience and losses because of the Chairman's failure to plan or communicate in time. Such behavior undermines the spirit and function of a cultural institution," he said. Cacode also raised serious concerns about repeated and expensive repair work at the facility. Citing official documents obtained from government sources, he revealed that

nearly Rs 2 crores have already been spent on roof repairs at Ravindra Bhavan over the past two years.

"If crores have already been spent on repairing the roof, what justifies more repairs now?" he questioned, suggesting the pattern points to potential financial irregularities. He added that nearly Rs 1 crore had also been spent on air conditioning repairs, and another Rs 50 lakhs on lighting and illumination.

"There appears to be a pattern of spending large amounts on recurring repairs. This kind of administration smacks of a commission-driven approach, not one rooted in public interest," Pai Cacode alleged.

He further questioned the timing of the latest repairs, asking why the work was initiated in the last week of May, during a period with scheduled performances. "It shows either gross negligence or a deliberate attempt to derail cultural activities for ulterior motives," he concluded.

Tiatr hall opening now pushed to June 1

Team Herald

MARGAO: The closure of the Pai Tiatr Joao Agostinho Fernandes Auditorium at Ravindra Bhavan, Margao, has been extended until June 1, as ongoing maintenance and renovation works have been disrupted by unseasonal rain.

According to officials, heavy showers have made it unsafe for workers to carry out tasks on the curved roof structures, forcing a temporary halt in operations. Originally, the auditorium was scheduled to reopen by May 25. However, due to the recent weather conditions, the management at Ravindra Bhavan announced an extension of the closure. Safety of workers has been prioritized, and work

will resume once conditions improve.

The abrupt closure has had a significant impact on the local theatre scene, particularly the tiatr community. Sources have revealed that nearly 10 tiatr shows have already been canceled as a result of the shutdown. Many of these productions had been planned and scheduled months in advance, involving substantial logistical and promotional efforts. Producers and theatre groups affected by the cancellations are now being offered the option to reschedule their shows. However, due to the high demand and limited availability, most rescheduled performances are likely to take place in September or later, depending on booking availability at the auditorium.