

Herald Cafe



Freelancing before 25: Goa's youth turn passion into pay

Goa's young creative minds are laughing all the way to the bank with skills, stories, and side hustles. Cameras, Canva, and creativity lead the way. Freelancing isn't the future - it's their now

Ojal Gaitonde

Juggling deadlines, lectures, and client meetings, these freelancers aren't waiting for degrees to chase their dreams. Armed with laptops, cameras, and Canva accounts, they are turning side hustles into serious pay checks. These youngsters are exploring creative freelancing opportunities and getting earned for the same, even before they turn 25. Be it on editing screen, in social media marketing or behind the lens, these freelancers are students and recent graduates who balance their extracurricular

activities with their academic obligations. These young freelancers prove that creativity, teamed with consistency, and hustle can open doors even before graduation.



MIC AND MOTIVATION: The journey as a freelance emcee

For Sneha Tiwari, an emcee, it all began with her sister's words, "You're good at this." Encouraged by her love for speaking in public and a growing presence at family functions, the 20-year-old from Mapusa took her talent to the stage during college events. "After two years of emceeing in college, I knew it was time to step out of that bubble," she says. From hosting birthdays and parties in Goa to corporate events, Sneha's journey is a testament to confidence and passion. Her flexible schedule allows her to balance college and work. "Most gigs are in the evening. If needed, I adjust because this isn't just work, it's joy." For Sneha, every stage offers a new experience, a new thrill. "Things don't always go as planned, but that's the beauty of it. Emceeing brings me the kind of joy no other work could," she adds.

A TEEN WITH A BRUSH, a dream, and a festival stage

Ruhi Samant, a 17-year-old face painter, found her spark for art early on. "My attraction to vibrant colours was influenced by my mother, an internationally certified makeup artist from a young age. Observing her work inspired me to explore my own creativity through painting," she shares. At the age of 13, Ruhi began sharing her canvas arts on Instagram, which helped her gain attention of the viewers.

She says, "That led to initial sales among friends and family, eventually expanding my reach." Managing art while studying isn't easy. "Managing work alongside my studies has always been hectic. I study in the morning, and many times I stay up late to complete my orders," she says. She was given an opportunity at Sunburn 2022 where she showcased her face painting and artistic skills.

FROM FETE TO FESTIVALS: How a campus click sparked a career



Yuvraj Seth, a student from Mass communication who freelances in event photography, discovered his passion through college assignments. "The motivation to pursue event photography came when I was just an amateur shooting college events. The first full event I ever captured

was the Fete at my college, and that sparked my interest," he shares. "Music festivals like Martin Garrix, the EDM shows, watching photographers capture those raw crowd emotions really drew me in," he adds. He credits his professors for helping him in start earning. Managing studies along with shooting isn't easy task, but he's found his solution. "I avoid shoots during class hours. I carry my laptop to shoots and work during breaks. The most unforgettable event I've shot was Oktoberfest with the crowd, the energy, it was electric."

SELF-TAUGHT SKILLS: Turning family footage into frame-worthy films

Shawn Vaz, from St Xavier's College, Mapusa who freelances in photo and video editing, "I got into photography and video editing because I love visual storytelling. I started with family events and built my skills through practice and online tutorials." He now balances work along with his college projects. "One of my favourite projects was a music video for a studio. It challenged me creatively and made me proud of how far I've come," he says.



FRAMED FLAVOURS: Telling stories through spice and shutter

Rahul Chari, a food photography freelancer, started his journey with product shoots. "That helped me understand lighting and placement," he explains. "Working with social media agencies gave me exposure, and I began pitching to clients." A food shoot at a restaurant in Candolim was Rahul's favourite project that he completed. "I shot

30 dishes in a day using natural light. Balancing colours and lighting is tricky but once you master it, there's no going back."



A CLOSER LOOK AT GRANDMA'S HEALING WISDOM

CAN CINNAMON HELP LOWER CHOLESTEROL?

SWIPE RIGHT

Subhash Ghai confirms 'Khal Nayak' sequel



Veteran filmmaker Subhash Ghai has officially confirmed that a sequel to his iconic 1993 cult classic 'Khal Nayak' is in the works. Starring Bollywood heavyweights Madhuri Dixit, Sanjay Dutt, and Jackie Shroff, 'Khal Nayak' became a cinematic phenomenon. The 1993 film revolved around a guard from the prison pretending to be a dancer to catch an escaped criminal, Balam Prasad alias Ballu, and help her police inspector boyfriend. Now, a source close to the development revealed, "Subhash ji is excited about staging a sequel to 'Khal Nayak'. The story will feature new characters played by fresh faces, but it will retain the original film's essence. There's also a strong possibility that Madhuri Dixit and Sanjay Dutt will make special appearances." Reports also suggest that Ghai has already wrapped up the script for 'Khal Nayak 2' and is in talks with a new generation of actors to reprise the legendary role of Ballu Balam.

After Sports Emmy win, Lady Gaga a Step Away from EGOT

With 14 Grammy Awards, an Oscar for 'Shallow' from 'A Star is Born', and now a Sports Emmy under her belt, Gaga needs only a Tony Award to achieve EGOT status. The 'Abracadabra' singer earned her latest honour for her Super Bowl performance of 'Hold My Hand', the Oscar-nominated track from 'Top Gun: Maverick', earlier this year. During her rendition of 'Hold My Hand', Lady Gaga was joined by police officers, members of the US military and more to pay tribute to the New Year's Eve attack in New Orleans. She now joins the ranks of stars like Adele, Cynthia Erivo, and Cher who are edging closer to that rare accomplishment. Beyond her awards success, Lady Gaga released her seventh studio album, 'Mayhem', in February, and will embark on the Mayhem Ball Tour in July.



Urmimala Boruah and Snigdha Boruah become the first mother-daughter duo from India and the first from Assam to grace the red carpet at the Cannes Film Festival 2025. Urmimala Boruah is an Indian beauty pageant director and Snigdha is a spirited young actress.

Gaming addiction: A silent crisis consuming Goa's youth

What begins as a simple pastime can evolve into a toxic obsession. Gaming addiction disrupts mental peace, wastes time, and hinders productivity

Swati Suryawanshi

Escaping stress, entering a new trap

"We used gaming to escape stress, and now that escape has become the biggest stress itself," said Ganesh Suktakar, a postgraduate student, reflecting on how gaming addiction contributed to his academic downfall. Rather than solving their problems, people now turn to games to run from them. What was designed for short breaks has become a burden. Young people are unknowingly trapping their minds in the colours and designs of games, only to make their lives more complicated.

Gaming has become an obsession that's not easy to give up. It's common to see someone sitting quietly in a corner, phone in hand, eyes locked in intense focus—playing not just for fun, but with frustration, anxiety, and aggression.

It's time to take this seriously

"When your whole day is spent sitting in front of a screen, your time may move on — but your life stands still," remarked Bhuvan Subodh Shirsat, a fine arts student and aspiring filmmaker. Gaming addiction is no longer just a casual issue. It's a psychological and lifestyle crisis that demands urgent attention before more lives fade away in silence.

So absorbed are they in virtual battles that their real lives begin to suffer. Gaming addiction rarely makes headlines, yet its consequences are visible everywhere. Today, industry giants ensure every age group is targeted, whether it's PUBG, Free Fire, or even something as seemingly harmless as Candy Crush.

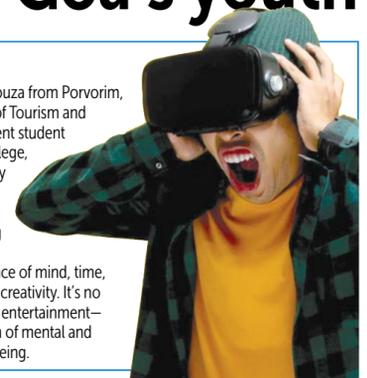


Mental health and lifestyle at risk

Gaming is fostering a personality prone to anxiety, sleep issues, and poor focus. "Students nowadays can no longer concentrate on studies. Their entire focus is on clearing a few game levels, ignoring everything else," shared Shubham Singh Rajput, an MBA student from Caranzalem, currently enrolled at the Akademia School of Business Studies in Porvorim.

Some have even lost money to in-game purchases. "Certain games have cost people real money, making the addiction financially damaging too,"

said Maurice D'Souza from Porvorim, a former Master of Tourism and Travel Management student from Dempo College, who once actively played online games. This excessive gaming habit has robbed many of their peace of mind, time, productivity, and creativity. It's no longer just about entertainment—it's a slow erosion of mental and emotional well-being.



Never too late to recover

Dr Kshipra Vora, a psychologist and academician at St Xavier's College, Mapusa, explains, "Gaming addiction can significantly impact mental health. Prolonged, compulsive gaming often leads to depression and anxiety, fuelled by social isolation, disrupted sleep, and a growing sense of failure in real-life responsibilities. It may also heighten

aggression, particularly in those heavily exposed to violent content or who use gaming to escape unresolved emotions. What starts as a way of coping over time, the virtual world can become a crutch, making it harder to cope with real-world stress and relationships. The risk of gaming addiction is severe and can even mimic substance use, abuse and withdrawal."