

# Early rains stall school roof repairs, students left in limbo

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** The early onset of the monsoon has disrupted ongoing repair work at two government primary schools in Taleigao and Chincholem-Bhatlem, leaving classrooms exposed to rainwater just days before the academic year is set to begin on June 4.

Repairs began mid-May with the removal of roof tiles to replace them with polyurethane foam (puf) sheets. However, the project remains incomplete, resulting in significant water seepage that has damaged projectors, furniture and teaching materials.

"The tiles were removed for repairs. The contractor is undertaking repair of two government primary schools at Taleigao and Bhatlem. But till date the contractor has completed the verandah work while the roof work is pending and the contractor is telling us that he needs a crane to



The open roofs of the government primary schools in Taleigao and Chincholem-Bhatlem have left classrooms exposed to rainwater

fit the puf sheets," said Varshali Verekar, Headmistress of the Government Primary School, Taleigao. She added that a report has been submitted to the Tiswadi ADEI and expressed concern over the lack of clarity regarding relocation plans for the 136 students enrolled, including those in the pre-primary section.

The school in Chincholem-Bhatlem is facing

similar issues, with temporary plastic sheeting currently covering the exposed roof. Tiswadi ADEI Neena Phaladesai acknowledged the situation, stating, "ADEI Pramila Naik and I have inspected both the schools. We are also corresponding with the PWD engineer, who was awarded the work."

Contractor Shyamal Das attributed the delay to

sourcing difficulties. "We are replacing tiles with puf sheets. These are not ordinary sheets and have to be procured from Odisha. I am in constant touch with the supplier. I am regularly telephoning him but he is also facing difficulty in transporting them due to weather conditions. Now puf sheets are expected to reach Goa on Sunday and we will fit them on Monday



before the schools reopen." He denied any damage to equipment or materials inside, claiming that all items were covered with plastic. Meanwhile, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) local leader Cecille Rodrigues criticised the Public Works Department (PWD) for its sluggish progress, especially in light of the yellow alert issued by the India Meteorological Department since May 20.

A similar situation has unfolded at the government primary school in Bhirone-Pernem, where repair work that began in April remains unfinished. Classrooms have suffered rain damage, affecting furniture, documents and teaching materials. The Assistant Director of Education has confirmed that classes will be temporarily relocated when schools resume.

# Ex-chief blames Lairai temple managing panel for stampede

Team Herald

**BICHOLIM:** Refuting all allegations made against the former committee, ex-president of Shree Lairai Temple managing committee Ganesh Gaonkar has charged that the recent stampede incident was a result of the current committee's negligence.

Speaking to reporters, Gaonkar recalled that when he took over charge of the new managing committee on April 2, 2022, the outgoing president had never made any arrangements for the annual zatra. "We did all the arrangements at our level by writing a letter to Bicholim Mamlatdar, who is also the administrator of the devalaya. The present committee president (Dinanath Gaonkar) was elected on February 9, 2025 but he never approached us for arrangements," Ganesh said and sought to know how the present president blamed him for the stampede. "On the next day of the stampede Dinanath had blamed dhonds, then blamed me and then blamed the State administration. The fact-finding committee has never held us (former committee) responsible for

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— Ganesh Gaonkar, ex-chief of Shree Lairai Temple managing panel

the stampede," he said. Ganesh further alleged that Dinanath had tried to stall construction works and the Court had remarked that the cases were filed to stall the ongoing works of the devalaya. He is trying to defame the former committee and save his skin.

Ganesh pointed out that the fact-finding committee has held the present temple managing committee responsible for the stampede and has strongly recommended that the government should explore the possibility of dissolving it and appoint an administrator, after following due process of law.

## Traditional fishermen bat for 90-day fishing ban Demand ban on LED lighting and bull trawling

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** Citing Gujarat's 76-day fishing ban as an example, Goenchea Raponkaranchi Ekvott (GRE) has demanded that the ban be extended to 90 days.

The annual fishing ban in Goa, which will come into effect from June 1 and continue till July 31, aims at conserving fish stocks and supporting breeding.

Olenio Simoes of Goenchea Raponkaranchi Ekvott (GRE) said, "I wrote to the Fisheries Minister and the Director of Fisheries demanding a ban on LED lighting, bull trawling, and pair trawling. I also appealed to the Coast Guard, coastal police, and fisheries department to ensure strict enforcement of the ban. We want a 58-member enforcement team to be set up. Additionally, all gensets used for LED lighting should be banned," he demanded.

Meanwhile, during the ban period (June 1 to July 31), fishing boats equipped with mechanical propulsion systems and purse seine nets will not be permitted to operate. However, registered motorised canoes using gill nets and fitted with outboard or inboard motors of up to 10 HP capacity will be allowed to fish.

A senior official from the fisheries department said that all jetties have been sealed, and monitoring teams have been formed to ensure there are no violations.

He added that nothing

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would be available at the jetties, including fuel and ice, making it nearly impossible for anyone to operate during the ban.

Jose Philip D'Souza, president of the All Goa Boat Owners Association, said all the boats would now undergo maintenance. He noted, "We fish for ten months, and these two months are used for maintenance. It hasn't been a great season. Let's put it this way—out of 100 boats, only about 30 make a profit. The rest don't."

Highlighting staff issues, he said, "Ninety-five percent of our crew comes from Odisha and Jharkhand. They come here to work and earn a commission when we get a good catch."

He said that due to rough seas, no boats had ventured out in the past 10 days and that most crew members had already returned home.

## Tension in Collem as two forest guards injured in knife attack

Two tourists arrested for assaulting the guards who questioned their unauthorised visit to Dudhsagar Falls

Team Herald

**PONDA:** Tension rent the air in Collem as two tourists attacked two forest guards with a knife after being questioned over their unauthorised entry to visit Dudhsagar Falls.

The forest guards identified as Nagu Dahifode and Mangaldas Gaonkar, both residents of Collem, sustained head, neck, and other bodily injuries in the attack.

The two tourists fled into the deep forest after the incident. A police complaint was filed and subsequently, a search operation was launched. The Collem Police finally arrested the two prime suspects involved in the attack.

The injured guards received medical attention at Pilem Health Centre at Usgao.



According to the locals, the Goa Forest Department has imposed a monsoon ban on entry to the waterfalls. Several times, the tourists arrive from Karnataka by railway, reportedly enter the restricted area near Dudhsagar without permission.

Four tourists from Karnataka encountered the forest guards in the forest after visiting the waterfall. When questioned about entering despite a ban, two of the tourists assaulted the guards.

Senior forest officials visited the site and assured

staff they will be provided safety equipment.

Dudhsagar Falls is currently closed due to the overflowing river, though it can be viewed from the railway line. Some individuals continue to enter the restricted area illegally during the monsoon.

## Casino security guard killed, Hyderabad rowdy sheeter held

Deceased identified as Dheeru Sharma from MP; Shiroda local Satyam sustained injuries in attack

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** The Panjim Police arrested Abdul Altaf (25), a rowdy sheeter from Hyderabad, in connection with the assault on multiple security personnel at an off-shore casino.

The incident resulted in the tragic death of one guard, Dheeru Sharma (33) from Madhya Pradesh, and injuries to another, Satyam (27) from Taravale, Shiroda.

Altaf, who had entered the casino as a guest, allegedly

used a wooden danda with an iron clamp taken from a staircase to attack the guards. Authorities stated that the nature of the weapon suggests an intent to kill

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The accused was traced and arrested by Panjim Police while he was on his way to the Dabolim Airport in a bid to leave the State. Police confirmed that Altaf has a record as a rowdy sheeter with the Mailardevaly Police Station in Hyderabad.

The Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) team visited the crime scene, and a First Information Report (FIR) is being registered. Further investigation is underway.

## Bicholim council tells company officials to inspect mining pits

Team Herald

**BICHOLIM:** The Bicholim Municipal Council (BMC) on Thursday instructed the mining company officials to inspect the mining pits and to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to manage the water discharge from the filled pits.

Bicholim Municipal Council Chairperson Vijaykumar Natekar stated that a team comprising the Bicholim Sub-Divisional Officer (SDO), and officials of the municipality, the Goa State Pollution Control Board (GSPCB), Directorate of Mines and Geology and forest officials will conduct a joint inspection of mining pits on June 4.

During the meeting the representatives of the mining company assured the council that all the work will be completed within the next 15 days, Natekar said.

However, Bicholim councillor Rajaram 'Satish' Gaonkar slammed the mining company for not working in public interest and demanded that they take all the measures during monsoon. He demanded that the District Mineral Fund should be exclusively utilised for the welfare of people residing in mining affected areas.

### CORRIGENDUM

In a news item published with the headline, "3 Panjim buildings face demolition" (dated May 27, 2025), it was erroneously mentioned that Mary Immaculate Building, which houses a school, is under the scanner. The building in question is near the Mary Immaculate Church and has no connection with the Mary Immaculate Girls' High School on Rua de Ourem. The error is regretted.

## North Goa Police open 11 new history sheets to curb repeat offenders

Number of history sheets in the district stands at 135

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** The North Goa district police have opened 11 new history sheets over the last one week. The action follows a review of district-level crime records, which identified several individuals accused in multiple criminal cases as fit for surveillance. With this addition, the total number of history sheets in North Goa now stands at 135.

The Old Goa Police Station tops the list with 23 history sheeters followed by Calangute with 20, Mapusa with 17

and Panjim with 15 history sheeters. Meanwhile, over 28,000 tenant and servant verifications have been carried out during the last one month. In the same period, 1,648 individuals were rounded up, and 241 persons were arrested under various preventive sections of law.

According to SP North Rahul Gupta, IPS, crime records at district-level were studied and many individuals who were accused in multiple cases were found fit for opening history sheets. The police will continue to maintain surveillance over these individuals so that they don't indulge in crime again, he stated.

Blessed are those who trust in the LORD; the LORD will be their trust. — Jeremiah 17:7

### Happy 50th Birthday

(30th May 2025)

**REV. FR. XAVIER N. BRAGANZA**  
(Parish Priest of Our Lady of Desterro Church) (Desterro, Vasco)

A humble Servant of God, your life is a testament to the power of faith, love and compassion. May this Milestone be filled with joy, laughter and blessings. We are grateful for your service and leadership in our Faith Community.

Wishes from Members of:  
Cofre, Parish Pastoral Council, Confraria, Catechetical Association, St. Vincent de Paul, Divine Mercy Group, Parish Youth, Ursuline Sisters of Mary Immaculate, Spiritual Brethren Group, Altar Servers Association and Extra Ordinary Ministers of The Holy Eucharist.

### Happy Birthday!

## ULHAS TUENKAR

Hon'ble MLA Navelim Constituency  
Chairman Kadamba Transport Corporation Ltd.  
May you blessed with good Health and lost of Happiness

GOD BLESS YOU ALWAYS

Best Wishes from

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