

Assagao locals cry injustice over SIT move to let off ‘Queen Bee’

Say by keeping Pooja Sharma out of the FIR proves police want to hush up the matter; refuse to accept CB’s claim that there was no evidence to file charges against her

AUGUSTO RODRIGUES

ASSAGAO: Tremors of injustice are being felt in Assagao, as the residents, who had stepped out of their homes in support of the Agarwadekar family, whose house was partially demolished last year, have now been left disappointed with the Special Investigation Team (SIT) deciding to let off from the First Information Report (FIR)

ASSAGAO HOUSE DEMOLITION

‘Queen Bee’- Pooja Sharma, the landowner, who attempted the forced eviction of the Agarwadekars using bouncers and earthmoving machinery. “By keeping Pooja Sharma out of the FIR proves that the police want to hush up the matter. If the owner of the house is not involved, what intent do third parties have to go and kidnap family members and demolish



FILE PHOTO

portions of the house,” asks an amused Assagao Sarpanch Hanumant Naik. The Sarpanch said, “Villagers braved the rain to stand in solidarity with the family who was targeted and the FIR filed is a slap on the face of the government. How are we supposed to believe that the police did not book Pooja on grounds of any evidence?” If the residence of the Agarwadekars was a hive of activity last year, on Saturday, it was covered by tar-

aulin and silence written all over. “The family has been living quietly and peacefully after the incident and does not like to speak about the incident anymore. There appears to be some understanding,” whispers a neighbour on the condition of anonymity. The villagers are finding it difficult to accept the Crime Branch claim that there was no evidence to file charges against Pooja as she was described as

“Villagers braved the rain to stand in solidarity with the family who was targeted and the FIR filed is a slap on the face of the government. How are we supposed to believe that the police did not book Pooja on grounds of any evidence?” —Hanumant Naik, Assagao Sarpanch

“When there was trouble, the CM went in the rain to promise the Agarwadekar family help. With the shots now being called from New Delhi, he has changed his tunes” —Ramiro D’Souza, Assagao resident

“Queen Bee” by the Public Prosecutor during her rejected bail application in the Court of the Sessions Judge, North Goa.

Cont on Pg 9 >>

Hasina indicted on mass murder charges

PTI, DHAKA: Bangladesh’s International Crimes Tribunal on Sunday indicted former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and two others on several charges, including mass murder, for their alleged role in the violent crackdown on student-led protests last year.

Sunday’s proceedings marked the start of Hasina’s trial in absentia nearly 10 months after the ouster of her government following the protests. “We do hereby take into cognisance the charges,” the three-judge ICT-BD bench led by Justice Golam Mortuza Majumdar said after a prosecution team formally accused them of attempting to tame the protests using brutal force. The tribunal, after hearing a 145-page excerpt during the indictment proceedings, simultaneously issued a fresh arrest warrant against Hasina and then home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal.

More on Pg 7 >>

Wanted narcotics smuggler arrested, operated three liquor stores in Goa

Bhagirath Ram was involved in narcotics & smuggling cases across 3 States; arrest highlights potential oversight by Goa Police & Excise Dept

BASURI DESAI

PANJIM: A wanted narcotics smuggler on the run for seven years has been arrested in Goa, where he was shockingly found operating three liquor stores, raising sharp concerns over law enforcement and regulatory lapses in the State. Bhagirath Ram, who had a Rs 5,000 reward on his head and was wanted in multiple narcotics and smuggling cases across six districts of Rajasthan and two other States, was finally nabbed by Jodhpur Police after years of evading capture. He was one of five wanted men arrested this week, collectively carrying a bounty of Rs 1.20 lakh. Despite being a known

FUGITIVE OPERATIVE

➤ Bhagirath established two liquor shops in North and South Goa, including one in Canacona, near the Goa-Karnataka border, and was reportedly acquiring a third

➤ His recent arrest raises questions about how Bhagirath, wanted for narcotics offences, could openly reside and manage licenced businesses in Goa without detection

➤ Investigators suggest his involvement in narcotics

began through his wife and in-laws, and he was implicated in smuggling opium and poppy husk

➤ His arrest highlights potential oversight by the Goa Police and Excise Department for not identifying a narcotics fugitive operating liquor stores in the State

➤ His accomplice, Dinesh, who operates a B.Ed College in Barmer, allegedly provided shelter and logistical support to the smuggling operation

fugitive, Bhagirath had successfully set up two liquor shops each in North and South Goa, including one in Canacona near the

Goa-Karnataka border, and was reportedly in the process of acquiring a third.

Cont on Pg 9 >>

MOVING TO SAFETY



A villager uses a makeshift raft to reach safer ground in flood-hit Amtola village in North Lakhimpur, Assam, on Sunday.

Detailed coverage on page 5 >>

Cong insists on Parl session after CDS’ remarks

PTI, NEW DELHI: The Congress on Sunday demanded the immediate convening of a special session of Parliament to discuss the military and foreign policy strategy in the wake of revelations made by Chief of Defence Staff Gen Anil Chauhan.

The Congress also demanded that the government take all parties and the nation into confidence and discuss India’s defence preparedness and strategy after Operation Sindoor.

Congress general secretary, communications, Jairam Ramesh said the prime minister or the defence minister should have informed the opposition leaders in the all-party meeting what Gen Chauhan has stated in Singapore.

“The Chief of Defence Staff Gen Anil Chauhan has made some important statements on Operation Sindoor in, of all places, Singapore. It would have been better if the prime minister or the raksha mantri had briefed opposition leaders first in an all-party meeting. Gen Chauhan’s statements strengthen the case for the immediate convening of the Parliament to discuss larger strategic foreign policy and economic issues in the post Operation Sindoor era,” Ramesh told PTI.

On Saturday, Gen Chauhan in Singapore said that India rectified tactics and hit deep inside Pakistani territory after suffering losses of aircraft in the recent military clashes with Pakistan. He also dismissed as “absolutely incorrect” Islamabad’s claim of downing six Indian jets.

FIR against four sons of the soil has Velsao on the boil

Locals claim police did not verify ownership documents; another resident alleges criminal trespass by RVNL subcontractor executing SWR’s double tracking work

Team Herald

VELSAO: Anger continues to simmer in Velsao village as residents question how police ignored their complaints and proceeded with an FIR against four persons without verifying the ownership documents of the railways or the complainant, while disregarding ownership documents submitted by locals.

They have asked why police have not acted when their land has been encroached upon.

Of the four persons against whom FIRs were registered by police, two – Olencio Simoes and Orville Dourado Rodrigues – visited the police station where their statements in connection with this case were recorded. The remaining two, Sandra Rodrigues and Sarpanch Maria Diana Gouveia, are likely to be called to the police station in the coming days.

The controversy stems from criminal charges filed against the four residents based on a complaint by the Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) contractor for allegedly blocking workers from carrying out railway double tracking work in disputed property, causing financial losses.

The dispute involves a traditional pathway to ancestral houses where no land acquisition was done by railways, leaving residents landlocked. In what appears to be a cruel irony, locals assert that the land in question



Senior citizen Michael De Souza standing near his house as the trains pass by

FIR AGAINST FOUR CRUSADERS

➤ Police have registered FIRs against Olencio Simoes, Orville Dourado Rodrigues, Sandra Rodrigues and Sarpanch Maria Diana Gouveia

➤ Olencio Simoes and Orville Dourado Rodrigues visited the police station

where their statements in connection with the case were recorded

➤ Sandra Rodrigues and Sarpanch Maria Diana Gouveia are likely to be called to the police station in the coming days

CRIMINAL TRESPASS CHARGE

➤ Dr Sanjay Coelho, whose heritage residence has been affected, has written to police and administrative officials alleging criminal trespass by the RVNL subcontractor

➤ Stated that a civil engineer employed with the contractor has illegally trespassed into his motorable Right of Way, dumped mud and construction material on his property

➤ Pointed out that the panchayat had issued a stop work order dated Jan 29, 2025, against the construction activity

➤ Claimed the dumping of mud and construction debris has led to rainwater collection in his compound

➤ Requested authorities to lodge FIR against the civil engineer and his employer

doesn’t belong to the railways at all, yet they are the ones facing criminal charges for defending what they claim is their property. Despite multiple complaints by locals about land encroach-

ment and denial of access to their homes, police lodged an FIR based on the contractor’s complaint, ignoring villagers’ ownership documents.

Cont on Pg 9 >>

MAX. TEMP 32.5 °C
MIN. TEMP 27.0 °C

idharudhar



He swears: no more irresponsible statements!

Coinbase suffers massive data breach affecting over 69,000 customers

Security failure could cost company \$400 mn; hackers bribed call centre agents in India to leak sensitive user data

AGENCIES, NEW DELHI: Cryptocurrency exchange Coinbase recently announced that it had suffered a massive data breach in January this year, affecting over 69,000 customers—the crypto giant’s biggest security failure till date.

The data breach, which could cost the company a whopping \$400 million, reportedly took place after hackers bribed call centre agents in India to leak sensitive data about users.

According to a report by Fortune, Coinbase’s customer care was handled by a business process outsourcing (BPO) firm named TaskUs, which offered the

“As we’ve already disclosed, we recently discovered that a threat actor had solicited overseas agents to capture customer account information dating back to December of 2024. We notified affected users and regulators, cut ties with the TaskUs personnel involved and other overseas agents, and tightened controls” —Coinbase

crypto giant low rates by employing cheap labour overseas. Despite being US-based, TaskUs has a large presence in India, and

the firm’s agents in Indore primarily handled support for Coinbase, according to filings dating back to 2017.

However, in January this year, TaskUs laid off 226 of its Indore employees, weeks after the data breach was first detected, and it is understood that the firm traced the breach to some of these individuals.

“As we’ve already disclosed, we recently discovered that a threat actor had solicited overseas agents to capture customer account information dating back to December of 2024,” Coinbase was quoted as saying in a statement.

Cont on Pg 9 >>

Centre’s dredging plan an environmental disaster in the making, says GFP

Flays DPR for capital dredging of Mandovi, Zuari, and Cumbarjua rivers; vows not to allow Goa to be transformed into a logistics corridor for outsiders

Team Herald

MARGAO: Terming the Centre-backed Rs 310 crore river dredging plan as environmental and social disaster in the making, Goa Forward Party (GFP) president Vijai Sardesai criticised the recently approved Detailed Project Report (DPR) for capital dredging of the Mandovi, Zuari, and Cumbarjua riv-

ers and vowed not to allow Goa to be transformed into a logistics corridor for outsiders.

Speaking after the GFP’s State Executive Committee meeting, he pledged to stand with the people to safeguard Goa’s rivers.

Sardesai said the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI)’s plan involves removing 6.5

million cubic metres of riverbed, posing a direct threat to traditional fishing communities and Goa’s riverine ecology. He warned that the move is part of a larger agenda to turn the State into a “coal corridor” under the guise of promoting inland waterways for passenger transport.

Cont on Pg 9 >>