

# 98 ha of paddy fields damaged across Goa

## Agriculture dept says 323 farmers affected

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** Over the past week of heavy rains, approximately 98 hectares of paddy fields have been damaged in various regions across the State.

According to the Director of Agriculture, Sandeep Faldessai, the affected areas include parts of Dharbandora, Quepem, Sanguem, Salcete, and Canacona. He stated that around 323 farmers have been impacted by this weather event.

The Agriculture Minister has directed that these farmers receive compensation under the Shetkari Aadhar Nidhi scheme. Faldessai mentioned that the application process has already begun, and as per the scheme's guidelines, eligible farmers will receive Rs 40,000 per hectare of damaged paddy crop.

He clarified that only paddy crops have been affected by the heavy rains, as other crops like vegetables had already been harvested.

Faldessai also highlighted that the excessive rainfall and prolonged rainy



Fields damaged at Paroda

season last year led to delays in the cleaning and repair of canals by the Water Resources Department (WRD). This, in turn, caused delays in the cultivation and harvesting of paddy fields, making the crops more susceptible to

the recent weather fluctuations.

He further informed that approximately Rs 40 lakh will be disbursed to the affected farmers as compensation, and the initial steps for this process are underway.

### AGRI DEPT INSPECTS DAMAGED PADDY FIELDS AT PARODA

**MARGAO:** Following reports of crop loss due to unseasonal rains, the Agriculture Department conducted an inspection of damaged paddy fields in Avedem-Paroda. The inspection was carried out in the presence of Congress Quepem MLA Altono D'Costa, who confirmed that a process to assess the extent of the damage and initiate compensation claims commenced on Wednesday. According to D'Costa, the department scheduled the assessment process from 9.30 am near Paroda Church. "All necessary formalities will be carried out efficiently to ensure timely support for the affected farmers," he stated. The inspection revealed a significant impact on paddy cultivation, and efforts are now underway to provide relief to those affected. D'Costa urged farmers to participate actively in the assessment and compensation procedure. "Farmers are encouraged to actively participate in this process and take full advantage of the benefits available," he said, adding that his office and the Agriculture Department will work closely to facilitate smooth coordination on the ground. The compensation drive comes in response to complaints from farmers who faced unexpected crop losses due to the recent spell of rain.

## State aims to finalise forest rights claims by Dec 19

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** Chief Minister Pramod Sawant announced on Wednesday that the State aims to finalise all forest rights claims by December 19, 2025.

Speaking to reporters at Mantralaya, he said out of the total 10,500 claims, only 871 have been disposed of so far, while 949 have been rejected for being related to non-forest land such as revenue land.

He said 150 more Sanads have been cleared and they will be given to the claimants on June 5.

The Chief Minister highlighted that although the claim process began in 2006, no claims were cleared until 2019. To expedite the resolution of the remaining cases, several

initiatives are planned.

He said special camps to address 1,965 pending cases will be held on June 14, 2025, at six talukas namely Quepem, Canacona, Sanguem, Ponda, Dharbandora, and Sattari and the claimants will be asked to bring the specific documents required by the Forest Rights Department for processing their applications.

In parallel, 3,970 cases currently pending with Deputy Collectors will be taken up for disposal on June 18, 2025. To support this effort, 150 out of 564 Sanads will be distributed during a program at Ponda on June 9, he said.

Additionally, special gram sabhas will be held on June 21, in panchayats where cases are still pending.



# The plastic trap: Can Goa break free?

## Tourists, residents, and policymakers all play a role in tackling the State's mounting waste crisis

ATHUL K P

The theme for this year's World Environment Day (June 5) is 'Ending Global Plastic Pollution' — a call that rings especially loud in Goa. The state, famed for its beaches and biodiversity, holds a less flattering distinction: the highest per capita plastic production in the country. And the crisis is only getting worse.

The volume of plastic waste — particularly non-recyclable varieties — is increasing by the day. While recyclable plastic is

relatively scarce, cheap and easily available single-use plastics dominate consumption. Many people don't even realise how much plastic they use, or where it ends up once discarded.

Clinton Vaz, founder of VRecycle Waste Management Services — a pioneer in Goa's recycling space since 1999 — notes a troubling trend: "The amount of plastic waste that cannot be recycled is growing day by day. Single-use plastics, multilayer packaging, and plastic carry bags are destroying the beauty of Goa."



His organisation currently collects waste from more than 50,000 households

across the state. From takeaway containers and snack wrappers to plastic bottles and bags, these disposable plastics are everywhere. Designed for convenience, they're used once and dumped — often finding their way into rivers, forests, and oceans. In a small state with a massive tourist influx, this deluge of waste only intensi-

fies. Each year, millions of tourists arrive with their packaged goods in tow, leaving behind a trail of trash. Beaches are strewn with wrappers; towns overflow with plastic bags.

Non-recyclable plastic is particularly sinister — it takes centuries to decompose and releases toxins into the soil, water, and air. It's not just unsightly; it's dangerous for the ecosystem and its creatures.

Roland Martins, Co-ordinator of GOACAN and member of the State Level Advisory Committee (SLAC), calls for urgent, visible action: "The government must eliminate single-use plastics at all official functions. Lawmakers must lead by example, not break the law. Weekly reports of raids, seizures, and fines will show that Goa is serious." He adds, "The battle against plas-

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— Clinton Vaz, founder of VRecycle Waste Management Services

tic pollution must begin on World Environment Day, 5th June 2025 — there is no time to waste."

Environmentalist Rajan S. Ghatge echoes this urgency. "Goa must become an eco-conscious state — before it's too late," he warns. While public awareness is

Goa must become an eco-conscious state — before it's too late. Public awareness is crucial, but enforcement is the missing link. The rules exist. The action doesn't. The government must act now

— Rajan S Ghatge, Environmentalist

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— Roland Martins, Co-ordinator of GOACAN

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The future of Goa hinges

on shared responsibility. Whether you're a resident, a tourist, or a policymaker, the message is clear: the fight against plastic starts with us. And it starts now.

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**World Environment Day 2025**  
Programme

UNEP theme 'ENDING PLASTIC POLLUTION GLOBALLY'  
On 5<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Venue & Time : Darbar Hall, Raj Bhavan at 09:30 am onwards

In the distinguished presence of,  
**Dr. Pramod Sawant**  
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Goa  
(Chief Guest)

**Shri. Aleixo Sequeira**  
Hon'ble Minister for Environment & Climate Change,  
Law & Judiciary, CoP  
(Guest of Honour)

**Shri. Shripad Naik**  
Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Power and New & Renewable Energy,  
Govt. of India  
(Guest of Honour)

**Shri. Sadanand Shet Tanawade**  
Hon'ble Member of Rajya Sabha,  
Govt. of India  
(Guest of Honour)

**Shri. Sachin Desai**  
Director, Dept. Environment & Climate Change

**Shri. Sanjeev Joglekar**  
Member Secretary GSPCB

**Shri. Arun Kumar Mishra, IAS**  
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E-mail: sadekarenviro@rediffmail.com | prs@sadekarenviro.com

LAB: B-306/1307, Plot No. 61, Patel Estate, Post Office Belim, Bardez-Goa 403101  
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