

Beef shortage over festive weekend leaves Margao locals fuming

Butchers report insufficient supply; many buyers return empty-handed from market; shortage dampens celebratory meals for Eid on Saturday and Holy Spirit feast on Sunday

Team Herald

MARGAO: A beef shortage has hit the South Go Planning and Development Authority (SGPDA) Retail Market in Margao during the Holy Spirit Church feast, leaving many customers disappointed as they were unable to purchase meat for their festive meals.

The shortage comes at a time when demand traditionally surges. Vendors at the market reported that beef supply has been irregular for the past 3 to 4 days, and the situation worsened during the feast weekend.

“This has become a repeated feature and that too during the festive season. The government and concerned authorities need to resolve this issue of continuous beef shortage –Milagres Fernandes, social worker, Fatorda

“We are not getting enough beef from our usual suppliers,” said a local butcher, adding that several customers had to go back empty-handed despite visiting early in the morning.

Local residents and beef lovers expressed frustra-

tion over the timing and repeated nature of such shortages.

Milagres Fernandes, a social worker from Fatorda, criticised the lack of preparedness and called for immediate government intervention. “This has become a repeated feature and that too during the festive season. The government and concerned authorities need to resolve this issue of continuous beef shortage,” he said.

According to Fernandes, the issue has not only inconvenienced regular customers but also affected

local celebrations and traditional meals.

Shabbir Bepari, Vice-President of the All Goa Beef Traders Association, clarified that the current shortage is due to the festival of Eid and the associated practice of ‘Kurbani’, which affects the supply chain temporarily.

“Due to ‘Kurbani’ in view of the Eid festival celebrated recently, there was a shortage of beef in the state of Goa. However, regular supply will resume in one or two days,” he assured.

Despite these assurances, many consumers remain

concerned about the ongoing disruptions and their impact on local traditions and food security. Vendors too are facing losses due to reduced business during what is usually a peak sales period.

The incident has once again highlighted the need for better coordination between authorities, suppliers, and traders to ensure that essential food items remain available during festive seasons. Regular monitoring and proactive planning could help avoid similar shortages in the future.

Years after NGT nod, Cutbona fishers still await river mouth safety wall

Boat owners and traditional fisherfolk worry they may lose another season as authorities are yet to secure the nod for critical breakwater project for safe sailing

Team Herald

MARGAO: With less than two months to go before the monsoon fishing ban ends, boat owners and traditional fishermen operating from and near the Cutbona Jetty are once again grappling with uncertainty. Despite repeated assurances and the National Green Tribunal’s (NGT) conditional go-ahead nearly four years ago, the Environment Clearance (EC) for the proposed training wall at the mouth of River Sal remains elusive.

The absence of a breakwater facility at the Betul end of the river mouth has left the region’s fishing community dependent on calm tides to set out to sea and return safely. When the tidal currents turn hostile, fishermen are forced to stay ashore for days, unable to earn a living.

At the heart of the issue lies the stalled 483-metre training wall project, which the Fisheries Department initiated through the Goa State Infrastructure Development Corporation (GSIDC) more than five years ago. However, construction was abruptly halted after the Cavelossim Villagers Forum moved the NGT in 2017, arguing that the project had commenced without the legally required EC under the EIA Notification of 2006. The Tribunal sided with the Forum and directed the government to obtain the clearance before any work could resume.

Though the NGT ruling came in November 2021, boat owners say there’s been little visible progress since. “We keep hearing that a consultant has been hired and meetings have been held, but there’s no clarity on when we’ll actually see work begin,” said one of the local fishermen. “Every year,



A sandbar at the mouth of the River Sal restricts fishing boats’ access to the sea, forcing fisherfolk to depend on calm tides to set out and return safely to the jetty

we’re left to face the same danger at sea.” Savio D’Silva, Chairman of the Cutbona Fisheries Society, in a comment to the media, voiced frustration over the government’s inaction. “We don’t understand why the project is stuck when the NGT has already allowed it to proceed post-clearance. The fishermen are tired of hearing that the application is under process.”

Even as some sanitation issues at the jetty are being addressed following last year’s cholera outbreak — including the near-completion of a new toilet block and removal of scrap vessels — the State government has yet to match that urgency in resolving the critical safety problem at the river mouth.

Local leaders, including Cavelossim Sarpanch Dixon Vaz, had earlier met Environment Minister Aleixo Sequeira to press for the EC given the Ministers role in reviewing infrastructure and sanitation issues at Cutbona last year. Sequeira had promised to follow up, but fishers now fear they will miss yet another season unless the government acts swiftly.

PWD awaits clearance to demolish two unsafe buildings in Margao

Team Herald

MARGAO: The Public Works Department (PWD) has announced plans to initiate the demolition of two unsafe buildings in Margao’s commercial area, following recent incidents involving partial collapses of these structures.

The South Goa District Collector had earlier directed the PWD to take immediate action to demolish the two hazardous buildings to safeguard public safety.

However, officials have now revealed that the demolition cannot proceed until all necessary legal formalities are completed. The PWD has communicated to the Collector’s office the specific procedural requirements and the estimated timeline needed to

The Margao Municipal Council had initially identified 21 buildings as unsafe during its first survey. However, a subsequent resurvey conducted by municipal authorities has narrowed the list to 10 to 12 buildings that require urgent demolition to prevent any further accidents

carry out the demolitions.

These developments come amid increasing concerns over the structural safety of several buildings across Margao. The Margao Municipal Council had initially identified 21 buildings as unsafe during its first survey. However, a subsequent resurvey conducted by municipal authorities has narrowed the list to 10 to 12 buildings that require urgent demolition to prevent any further

accidents.

According to officials, the decision to demolish these buildings is part of a broader effort to enhance public safety in the commercial hub of South Goa. The PWD has assured the public that all steps will be taken to ensure the demolition process is handled efficiently and with minimal disruption to the surrounding areas.

Residents and business owners in Margao have expressed mixed reactions

to the news. While some have welcomed the move as necessary to prevent potential disasters, others have raised concerns about the impact of demolition on local businesses and traffic.

The Collector’s office emphasized the importance of adhering to legal protocols before demolition can commence, citing the need to follow due process to avoid any legal complications.

As of now, the PWD is preparing to complete the required paperwork and clearances. Once all formalities are in place, demolition work is expected to begin promptly.

Authorities urge citizens to stay cautious around the identified buildings and report any signs of structural damage to local officials.

‘Fisheries dept needs full-time director’

Team Herald

MARGAO: The All Goa Small Scale Responsible Fisheries Union has urged CM Pramod Sawant to appoint a full-time Director of Fisheries, citing severe delays in clearing routine files. In a letter submitted on Monday, the union said paperwork has been pending for four to five months due to additional responsibilities held by current Director B Yashaswini. “Matters have worsened since May 4, when she was given charge as North Goa Collector after the Sirgao stampede,” said union president Shaila D’mello. They stressed the need for a Konkani-speaking director to support traditional fishers.

Seafarers celebrate amendments to Int’l Maritime Labour convention

Team Herald

MARGAO: In a significant victory for maritime workers, the International Labour Conference, during its 113th session in Geneva, adopted seven key amendments to the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC, 2006), aimed at strengthening protections and improving working conditions for seafarers worldwide.

The amendments, passed on June 6, mark a new chapter in the fight for seafarers’ rights, addressing issues such as repatriation, shore leave, medical training, and the prevention of harassment at sea.

The Goan Seamen Association of India (GSAI) welcomed the development, calling it a landmark achievement for the global seafaring community. Frank Viegas, President of GSAI, informed that these changes represent “a long-overdue recognition of the vital contributions of seafarers and a commitment to their dignity, safety, and fair treatment.”

Among the amendments, repatriation without discrimination was a key highlight. Member states are now required to ensure that all seafarers—regardless of the flag of the

SEAFARER’S BODY URGES PENSIONERS TO LINK AADHAAR FOR TIMELY PAYMENTS

Team Herald

MARGAO: The Goan Seamen Association of India (GSAI) has issued an urgent advisory to all Goa Seafarers Welfare Pension Scheme beneficiaries, including retired seafarers and widows, to link their bank accounts with Aadhaar. Following a Government of Goa directive, pension payments will now be made only through the Aadhaar Payment Bridge (APB), discontinuing transfers

ship they work on—are entitled to return home without facing bias.

In addition, shore leave must be granted without discrimination or the need for visas or special permits, provided basic port entry conditions are met. Authorities are now obligated to provide written reasons if shore leave is denied.

Other major updates include the formal recognition of seafarers as key workers, improved measures for the fair treatment of those involved in marine casualties, employer accountability for repatriation costs,

to non-Aadhaar linked accounts. GSAI President Frank Viegas urged beneficiaries to complete Aadhaar seeding promptly to avoid payment interruptions. Beneficiaries must visit their bank, submit Aadhaar details, obtain confirmation, and forward it to the NRI or GSAI office in Madel, Margao. Only Aadhaar-seeded accounts will receive future pension payments. For assistance, beneficiaries can contact the GSAI office or their bank branch.

enhanced medical training standards, and policies aimed at eliminating violence and harassment on board.

“These reforms ensure that seafarers are not treated as second-class workers,” Viegas informed. “They uphold the rights of individuals who keep global trade moving, often under difficult and isolated conditions.”

The amendments further mandate that detained seafarers in foreign ports must be provided due process and consular protection, in line with ILO/IMO guidelines.

Taxi app row: Cabbies protest in Colva, condemn ‘defamatory remarks’

Team Herald

MARGAO: A large group of tourist taxi operators gathered at Colva on Monday to protest what they described as repeated attempts to defame and marginalise them through public statements and policy changes. They were joined by an NGO that expressed strong resentment toward a recent remark made by a senior minister, who referred to taxi operators as indulging in ‘dadagiri’.

The NGO hit back, accusing the minister himself of indulging in ‘dadagiri’ by allegedly trying to dismantle Goa’s traditional taxi system. They warned that if such language continues to be used by those in power, larger protests will be organised across the state.

The taxi operators echoed the NGO’s concerns and alleged that top state officials are pushing a covert plan to replace local operators with outsiders through the backdoor introduction of app-based taxi services. They affirmed that they would not stay silent if their livelihoods were threatened. The NGO, meanwhile, announced it is preparing a

ARPORA-NAGOA P’YAT BACKS TAXI DRIVERS

CALANGUTE: Arpora-Nagoa sarpanch Roshan Redkar on Monday assured taxi owners that the village panchayat fully supports them after they held a protest meeting at the panchayat demanding the scrapping of the proposed transport aggregator guidelines and all app-based taxi services. The taxi owners submitted a memorandum listing out their demands, stating that app-based taxi services are incompatible with Goa’s infrastructure, narrow roads and other logistical issues, and urged the panchayat to pass a resolution to stop the operations of GoaMiles and Goa Taxi app in the panchayat jurisdiction. Sarpanch Redkar said that such services are not feasible in a non-metro state like Goa and assured full support to local taxi operators.

formal complaint addressed to the Prime Minister and President, accusing the state government of enabling a system that could economically displace Goan families.

This protest is the latest flashpoint in the ongoing opposition to the draft Transport Aggregator Guidelines, which traditional taxi operators view as a direct threat to their survival. The proposed regulations would open the state’s tourism-dependent taxi sector to large-scale app-based platforms.

While the government argues that such services are necessary to ensure transparency and fair pricing for visitors and locals alike, operators say the new system was drafted without consulting them and will pave the way for large companies to dominate the market. The transport minister, defending the draft, criticised local operators for their continued resistance, calling their approach a form of “dadagiri” and asserting that modernisation cannot be delayed to protect monopolies.

Mobility gaps limit womens’ freedom, say Goan professionals

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Women’s Wing of the Goa Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI), led by Chairperson Asha Arondekar, held a meet that drew Goan women—students, homemakers, professionals and entrepreneurs—who voiced a growing demand for reliable app-based taxi services in Goa.

Participants said the absence of structured, dependable mobility restricts their freedom and curbs economic and social participation.

Arondekar observed: “As women, we face transport challenges every day. Existing apps help, but we need a wider network, perhaps a Goa-based app. With the right support system, even cost issues can be tackled.”

Uniform manufacturer Anita Bagla explained that hiring cabs for multiple client visits eats into her profits because she cannot drive; architect Jyoti Bhonsle said she declines South

Goa projects due to lost productive time while commuting.

College student Niharika shared that relying on her parents for rides limits her freedom and makes metro cities more attractive for study. Communications professional Rina Barreto said being her family’s default driver leaves little time for her own work, while teacher Rahila Khan described the emotional toll of depending on male relatives or inconvenient public transport.

Entrepreneur Ruchika Dhaval added: “We work odd hours in the event industry and need reliable rides home. Let’s stop being tourist-centric—Goans need dependable transport too.”

Natasha Bhardwaj, of the South Asian Institute of Crime and Justice Studies, concluded: “This is something 50 per cent of the State’s population was missing. We all need a system that is dependable, accessible and affordable. That’s what makes us feel free.”

MAX. TEMP 30.0 °C
MIN. TEMP 23.9 °C

idharudhar



If you don’t pay him now, I’ll pay the price during the polls



HAS GOA BECOME THE NUMBER ONE PLASTIC WASTE PRODUCER?

“We Goans, and all those who reside in this beautiful state, should take a vow to follow the ‘use, reuse, reduce and recycle’ mantra of plastics. Reports and surveys suggest that Goa is the highest producer of plastic waste in the country, which is very dangerous. We have seen what a disaster it is. Plastic is non biodegradable and can remain for decades. Having introduced various rules, imposed fines, it has not had any effect. The reason is that rules are not being implemented and there is no consistency, so we are unable to deter people from making a mess with plastic – Trajano D’Mello, political analyst

“In 2012, then CM Manohar Parrikar had made a commitment that if his government was elected, he would ensure that no plastic or garbage would be seen by the roadside or anywhere. But Parrikar could not do it, nor have the BJP governments that followed been able to do anything. They just want to put the blame on citizens without providing dustbins. The whole 15 km-stretch from Betul to Navelim has only maybe 3 dustbins – Anthony D’Silva, social activist

YouTube



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“Congratulations to all Goans. Goa has got another certificate. Goa has become the number one state as a plastic garbage producer. Wherever we go, whether roads, fields or hills, rivers or seas, this plastic waste has made us the number one producer. Who is responsible for this? The common folks, those who stay in Goa, tourists, businessmen, industrialists and the Goa government. The NGOs, activists and many people raise their voices against and we even clean the garbage with our hands but neither the people nor is the government sensitive to this – Mariano Ferrao, activist