

# Monsoon Assembly session from July 22, says CM

## Cabinet approves State Heritage Policy 2025; aims to protect, promote Goa's cultural and architectural legacy

Team Herald

PANJIM: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Wednesday announced that the State Cabinet has approved convening the monsoon session of the Goa Legislative Assembly starting July 22. The exact duration of the session will be announced later, he said while addressing media after a Cabinet meeting held at Mantralaya, Porvorim.

The upcoming session follows the previous sitting held in March 2025, during which the Chief Minister, who also holds the finance portfolio, presented the State Budget for 2025-26.

On another note, Sawant said the government is working to resolve the ongoing issue with traditional taxi operators, who are opposing the draft guidelines concerning transport aggregators. "We will resolve the matter by taking all stakeholders into confidence," he assured.

Meanwhile the Chief Minister on Wednesday announced that the State Cabinet has cleared the State Heritage Policy 2025,

### KEY CABINET DECISIONS

- Approves the appointment of a new surveyor to complete pending Forest Rights Claim case surveys
- Clears the construction of the Unity Mall in Chimbel-Acknowledged Mumbai-based Goan designer Troy Costa, who will represent India at the 'Namaste India' event in Milan, Italy.
- Sanctions the installation of two 4G mobile towers at Vagheri (Sattari) and Sanguem to improve network connectivity.
- 2,000 sq. mts of land in Mandrem for setting up crematorium identified
- Approves hiring of 19 Medical Officers and 4 ENT Surgeons on a contractual basis

aimed at protecting and promoting Goa's cultural and architectural legacy.

The policy seeks to safeguard over 200 historic, archaeological, and heritage sites, along with more than 100 privately and government-owned heritage buildings. First released in draft form in December 2024, the policy provides for financial and technical assistance to private owners of heritage homes and encourages their adaptive reuse for tourism purposes.

The policy covers 14 core

thematic areas, recognises 46 traditional folk art forms, and acknowledges 61 traditional occupations integral to Goa's cultural identity.

The Chief Minister said the cabinet also approved the appointment of a new surveyor to handle surveys related to Forest Rights Claim cases, as the previous agency has left the work incomplete. It also approved the work order for the construction of the Unity Mall in Chimbel, acknowledged that Mumbai-based celebrity Goan designer

Troy Costa will represent India at Namaste India in Milan, Italy, sanctioned the installation of two 4G towers at Vagheri-Sattari and Sanguem, identified 2000 sq meters of land for a crematorium in Mandrem Village Panchayat, approved the hiring of 19 Medical Officers and 4 ENT Surgeons on a contract basis.

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### GOA BRACES FOR HEAVY RAINFALL TODAY

Team Herald

PANJIM: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Wednesday issued a red alert for June 12, warning of heavy to very heavy rainfall in North Goa and South Goa districts, orange alert for June 13, and yellow alert for June 14, 15, 16 and 17.

"Heavy to very heavy rainfall with extremely heavy rainfall is very likely at isolated places over North Goa and South Goa districts. Thunderstorm and lightning with strong surface winds with speed 30-40 kmph gusting to 50 kmph is very likely at isolated places over North Goa and South Goa districts on June 13, 2025," the IMD said.

For June 13, 2025, the IMD said, "Heavy to very heavy rainfall is very likely at isolated places over North Goa and South Goa districts. Thunderstorm and lightning with strong surface winds with speed 30-40 kmph gusting to 50 kmph is very likely at isolated places over North Goa and South Goa districts."

For June, 14, 15, 16 and 17, 2025, the weather office said heavy to very heavy rainfall is very likely at isolated places over North Goa and South Goa districts with thunderstorm and lightning with strong surface winds.

## Goa reports six active Covid cases; no cause for alarm, says State epidemiologist

Team Herald

PANJIM: Goa currently has six active Covid-19 cases, with one new case confirmed on Tuesday at the South Goa District Hospital, Margao, according to State Epidemiologist Dr Utkarsh Betodkar. The new infection emerged from among 14 tests conducted at the facility.

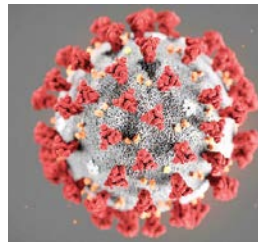
This comes after five consecutive days of zero reported cases. All current infections are said to be mild, with no hospitalisation required. Dr Betodkar emphasised that there is no cause for concern, as the virus is behaving like seasonal flu unless a major mutation occurs.

"Covid is now manifesting like the flu. Most people will eventually be exposed. The virus is not behaving aggressively, and there's no evidence of a dangerous new strain," he said.

Surveillance testing continues across the state. Hospitals have been instructed to test patients with undiagnosed fever, respiratory distress, and especially those at high risk—including the elderly, children, and people

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— Dr Utkarsh Betodkar, Epidemiologist



with comorbidities such as uncontrolled diabetes or asthma.

Dr Betodkar added that a new case is now being detected every 3-4 days, and most are being treated at home or OPD level. "If Covid begins to rise again, it will first impact the vulner-

able groups. So far, there's no sign of that," he noted.

He advised the public to follow basic flu precautions: avoid large gatherings if symptomatic, consult a doctor for flu-like symptoms, and practice cough and sneeze etiquette.

### GIVING A LEG-UP



Welfare for Animals in Goa workers rescue a stray calf with a serious case of lumpy skin disease in Siolim. NGOs who work with stray animals report that the highly infectious disease is doing the rounds in the State, with high probability of it spreading to cattle traded for milk and meat. Lumpy Skin Disease, a viral infection similar to goat pox, is transmitted by insects that feed on the blood of cattle and is considered to be fatal for cows. The issue was highlighted in the O Herald yesterday

## Mapusa court denies bail to 3 accused; remanded in judicial custody for 14 days

Team Herald

MAPUSA: The Mapusa District Court-II and Additional Sessions Court on Wednesday dismissed the bail applications of Ranganath Shetye, Vinod Shetkar alias Shetye and Adv Kaushal Shetye, all from Moira, accused in the Bastora assault case.

### BASTORA ASSAULT CASE

Before the rejection of their bail applications, the trio was remanded in 14 days judicial custody by the Judicial Magistrate First Class (JMFC), Mapusa. The investigating officer had prayed for extension of five days police custody.

The accused were earlier in police custody for seven days after their arrest on June 3. They were produced before the JMFC, Mapusa upon the end of their total seven days police remand. First they were remanded in five days police custody which was later extended by two more days on Mon-

day.

Adv Vinayak Porob said that Mapusa police were unable to recover the weapons used during the assault and were also unable to ascertain the names of the co-accused from the three arrested accused.

It was after two co-accused filed anticipatory bail applications, the two victims Vivek Shirodkar and his wife Shruti from Nachinola gave their names in their supplementary statement. The police can still arrest the two co-accused because the Additional Sessions Court had not granted interim relief to them. At the same time, the police can again take the three accused into custody for further custodial interrogation.

Adv Porob said that he will approach the Magistrate seeking to monitor the case and after study may also approach the High Court of Bombay at Goa for necessary directions. He regretted that the police were unable to recover the weapons and get the names of co-accused, who are still at large.

The Mapusa police have registered a case under Sections 126 (2), 352, 351 (3), 118 (2), 79 and 109 read with 3(5) of BNS has been registered against the accused.

## OBC group alleges grave human rights violations in caste certificate process

Team Herald

PANJIM: A faction of the Gomantak Bhandari Samaj (United Group) has filed a formal complaint with the Goa Human Rights Commission (GHR), highlighting what it terms as grave violations of human rights faced by members of the Other Backward Classes (OBC) community in the process of acquiring caste certificates.

The group has strongly objected to the "arbitrary" imposition of a socio-status Samaj certificate as a mandatory prerequisite for obtaining a caste certificate, calling it a practice that violates legal norms and constitutional provisions.

Speaking on behalf of the group, Sanjeev Naik, the spokesperson, stated, "The Supreme Court of India and the Goa State Social Welfare Department have both clearly said that a Samaj certificate is not required for obtaining a caste certificate. Yet, authorities continue to en-

force this non-mandatory condition, causing undue hardship and depriving OBC applicants of their rightful benefits."

He cited the example of a Class XII student from Ponda, whose caste certificate was challenged despite the student belonging to the recognised Bhandari Naik Samaj. The objection, raised by a rival group, questioned the validity of the student's certificate solely because it was issued by a different Samaj organisation. "This is a clear case of discrimination based on organisational affiliation, which violates not just administrative guidelines but also the fundamental rights of the student," Naik asserted.

Describing such acts as deliberate harassment and a blatant abuse of power, the Gomantak Bhandari Samaj (UG) has demanded that the govt eliminate the requirement of socio-status certificates in caste certificate applications.



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