

Panchayats ordered to act on plastic ban

Directorate of Panchayats issues urgent directive after O Heraldo highlights widespread violations

Team Herald

PANJIM: In response to O Heraldo's report highlighting the rampant violation of the single-use plastic ban across Goa, the Directorate of Panchayats has issued a directive to all Block Development Officers (BDOs) to ensure that village panchayats urgently convene meetings of their Garbage Management Committees to discuss imple-

All the Block Development Officers are directed to direct all the village panchayats under their jurisdiction to urgently convene a meeting of the Garbage Management
– Siddhi Halarnakar, Director of Panchayats



(SUP).
 The move follows O Heraldo's detailed exposé on how plastic bags and waste continue to litter roadsides, beaches and water bodies, revealing a stark gap between official policy and enforcement on the ground.

mentation of the ban order. In a circular issued by Siddhi Halarnakar, Director of Panchayats, it has been stated: "All the Block Development Officers are directed to direct all the

village panchayats under their jurisdiction to urgently convene a meeting of the Garbage Management Committee to discuss the implementation of the ban Order on Single Use Plastic

Although Goa was one of the early states to impose a ban on plastic bags below 40 microns, the regulation has remained largely ineffective in practice.

Despite repeated assurances from ministers and local representatives, enforcement has been weak. Plastic carry bags remain widely distributed, particularly in busy areas such as the CCP Market in Panjim.

At a World Environment Day function, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant acknowledged the failure to enforce the single-use plastic ban effectively. He, however, assured the public that strict implementation would follow this year.

Mystery shrouds Goan social worker's suspicious death in Ghaziabad

Team Herald

MARGAO: Mystery surrounds the death of 33-year-old Sameer Babul Shaikh, a social worker from Sanvordem, whose semi-decomposed body was found under suspicious circumstances in a rented room in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh. Sameer, who was working with an NGO in North India, had reportedly left Goa for Delhi on May 30, stating he was attending a meeting.

His family lost contact with him the same day, prompting his sister to visit the Curcholem Police Station multiple times. A formal missing person complaint was lodged on June 2. Acting on Sameer's last known mobile location, a police team from Curcholem, headed by PSI Gautam Shetker and PC Abhinav Chohan, was sent to Delhi to trace his whereabouts.

During the investigation, Curcholem Police discovered that Sameer had booked a Rapido taxi from Delhi to Ghaziabad and had also transferred money to a bank account, the details of which were retrieved by police. With this information, the team traced a rented room in Ghaziabad, reportedly shared by Sameer and four others. Two of the individuals have been detained by Uttar Pradesh Police, while one is missing and another remains untraceable, with his mobile phone switched off.

Upon reaching the accommodation with the help of the landlord, police found the premises locked. After breaking into the bathroom, which was also locked from outside, officers discovered Sameer's body in a semi-decomposed state. The UP Police conducted a panchanama, and the post-mortem report is awaited to ascertain the cause of death.

Curcholem Police revealed that Sameer had earlier worked in Pune and had visited Goa for Eid celebrations. He had reportedly received an email that led to his travel to Delhi. Police also noted that a payment of Rs 250 made by Sameer has been confirmed during the investigation.

While no offence has been registered so far, both Curcholem and Ghaziabad Police are continuing inquiries to determine the motive and circumstances behind Sameer's death.

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