

# No irregularities in Panjim voter list, says CEO

Clarifies strict norms, verification mechanisms are in place to ensure only eligible citizens are enrolled

Team Herald

PANJIM: Refuting allegations of irregularities in voter enrolment made by former bureaucrat Elvis Gomes in the Panjim Assembly constituency, the office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Goa, has urged Gomes to assist Booth Level Officers (BLOs) by filing Form 7 (Application for Deletion of Name).

Responding to Gomes' claims that foreign nationals, particularly Nepali citizens, and individuals not residing in the State had been included in the electoral roll, the CEO's office clarified that strict norms and verification mechanisms are in place to



ensure only eligible citizens are enrolled. It stated that filing Form 7 would allow the appropriate authorities to examine and take necessary corrective action in accordance with prescribed procedures.

Gomes had filed two complaints dated May 12, 2025, and May 27, 2025, with both the CEO, Goa, and the Election Commis-

sion of India (ECI), New Delhi. These complaints concerned alleged irregularities in the voter list and mass transfers of BLOs in the Panjim constituency.

The CEO's office further informed that the appointment of newly proposed BLOs has been kept in abeyance pending the outcome of an inquiry by the North Goa Additional Collector-I. The

inquiry aims to verify the correctness of the proposed replacements in line with the ECI's instructions. Only 11 of the newly appointed BLOs had taken charge prior to the suspension of appointments, it added.

The CEO's office stated that stringent norms and verification procedures are in place to ensure that only eligible citizens are included in the electoral roll. However, if any specific cases emerge where individuals not ordinarily residing in Goa have been mistakenly enrolled, concerned citizens and complainants are urged to support the Booth Level Officers (BLOs) by submitting Form 7 (Application for Deletion of Name).

# Pedestrian killed by drunk driver in Arambol car rampage

Team Herald

PANJIM: A 71-year-old pedestrian was killed in a tragic accident at the Arambol parking lot on Friday evening, after being struck by a rashly driven vehicle reportedly operated under the influence of alcohol.

The accused, Arvind Singh Rawat (40), a resident of New Delhi, was driving a car (GA-03-AH-5264) from the direction of Love Temple restaurant when he allegedly lost control of the vehicle. According to police, Rawat was driving in a negligent and reckless manner, without exercising proper care or caution.

He allegedly hit and fatally injured Hanumant Annasaheb Kadam from Mumbai, who was walking along a kachha road. The victim was immediately

The vehicle, reportedly out of control, then rammed into two parked cars before continuing into the parking lot. It further crashed into another vehicle and a scooter, before finally colliding with an electricity pole and coming to a halt in the nearby bushes

rushed to the Community Health Centre (CHC) in Tuem, where he was declared brought dead.

The vehicle, reportedly out of control, then rammed into two parked cars—GA-08-V-7130 and GA-08-V-3445—before continuing into the parking lot. It further crashed into another vehicle (GA-11-T-2857) and a scooter (GA-03-AC-9178), before finally colliding with an electricity pole and coming to a halt in the nearby bushes.

Mandrem Police have registered a case under Sections 281 (rash driving)

valid licence) of the Motor Vehicles Act.

The incident has sparked serious concern over unchecked vehicular movement in tourist-heavy areas like Arambol, particularly involving drivers under the influence of alcohol. Local residents have called for stricter law enforcement and enhanced safety measures to prevent similar tragedies.

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## ROOTS OF NEGLECT

JOSEPH FERNANDES



Wild plants have sprung up at Tar junction on the Mapusa flyover, potentially weakening the structure, especially during the monsoon. Authorities are urged to act swiftly to prevent further damage

# Goa to set up cashew board to boost agriculture, exports

Team Herald

PANJIM: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Saturday announced that a dedicated Cashew Board will be established in Goa to strengthen agricultural development and boost exports.

The announcement came after Sawant chaired a high-level meeting at the Mantralaya in Porvorim, focused on "Unlocking Goa's Agricultural Export Potential."

The meeting was held in collaboration with the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APE-

DA) and Jaivik Bharat.

Among those present were Agriculture Minister Ravi Naik, Mayem MLA Premendra Shet, Poriem MLA and GFDC Chairperson Deviya Rane, Chief Secretary Dr V Candavelou, Director of Agriculture Sandeep Faldesai, APEDA Chairman Abhishek Dev, Secretary (Agri) Arun Kumar and other experts.

Sawant said, "Goa proudly stands as a naturally organic State and is set to form a dedicated cashew board to further boost agriculture. Together, we are paving the way for a sustainable and prosperous future for Goa's farmers and exporters."

## Two more held in Rs 5.36 cr Samagra Shiksha fraud case

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Crime Branch has arrested two more individuals in connection with the Rs 5.36 crore fraud involving the Goa Samagra Shiksha's government bank account.

According to the police, the accused have been identified as Mriganka Joarder (37), a resident of Rahampur, Nadia, West Bengal, and Subhashis Sikdar from Jodhpur Garden, Kolkata. The duo was brought to the Crime Branch Police Station on June 12, 2025. The police said that the mobile phones and SIM cards of the accused have been seized for further investigation.

# Khandola student dies by suicide after failing to clear exam

Team Herald

PONDA: In a tragic incident highlighting the growing mental health concerns among students, a 22-year-old youth from Khandola, Marcel, took his own life after reportedly failing his engineering exams.

He was studying in the second year of Mechanical Engineering at an Engineering College at Verna, was found hanging from the ceiling fan in the dining room of his residence.

Mardol Police conducted the panchanama, and during the enquiry with family members, it was revealed that the youth had failed his second-year examinations, which had left him deeply upset and is believed to be the reason

behind the suicide.

His body was sent for post-mortem examination to SGDH Margao, where the police surgeon certified the cause of death as 'asphyxia as a result of hanging'. In another case, a man from Dharbandora, died by suicide at his residence. During an enquiry, his father informed the police that his was a chronic alcoholic.

Meanwhile a fatal road accident claimed the life of a scooter rider at Gaunem-Bandora on Tuesday night. The deceased, Dikshay Gurudas Gaude (31), a resident of Rajaniwada, Gaunem-Bandora, died after his scooter collided with buffaloes on the road.

Locals rushed Dikshay to the Ponda Sub District Hospital, where he was declared

dead. According to a medical officer at the hospital, he was being shifted to GMC Bambolim for further treatment when he succumbed to his injuries. The police revealed that Dikshay was travelling from Konar Tisk to Gaunem Bandora when the accident occurred.

# Police crackdown on landlords for C-Form violations; 6 booked

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Goa Police have registered six cases against landlords for failing to submit the mandatory C-Form to the competent authorities over the past five months.

Between January 1 and May 31, 2025, a total of 23 foreign nationals were found to be staying illegally in the State—21 in North Goa and two in South Goa. Action has been initiated against them under the relevant provisions of law.

During the same period, six FIRs were registered against landlords who had rented out their premises to foreign nationals without submitting the required C-Form. Legal proceedings have been initiated, and further investigations are underway, the police confirmed. Of the six cases, two were

registered by Anjuna Police and one each by Mandrem, Mapusa, Verna, and Colva police stations.

The C-Form is a mandatory requirement under the Foreigners Act, 1946, and its associated rules. It obliges landlords, guest-house operators, and other accommodation providers to report the presence of foreign nationals within 24 hours of their arrival. The measure is essential for ensuring the safety, security, and traceability of all foreigners visiting the State.

The Goa Police have urged all landlords, guest-house owners, property managers, and hotel operators offering accommodation to foreign tourists to comply strictly with the C-Form submission requirement. Failure to do so will attract strict penal action under the applicable laws

# Cong welcomes heritage home scheme, demands inclusivity

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Goa Pradesh Congress Committee (GPCC) has welcomed the government's initiative to protect and preserve Goa's heritage homes, describing it as a long-overdue recognition of the State's rich cultural legacy. However, the party has stressed the need for inclusivity in the scheme, arguing that heritage conservation must not be restricted to Portu-

guese-era houses alone.

"We demand that ancestral homes of the Hindu community and all other communities that form Goa's diverse social and cultural fabric be brought under the ambit of the heritage protection scheme. Selective preservation will only serve cosmetic interests and fail the true spirit of Goan identity," stated GPCC Media Department Chairman Amarnath Panjikar.

The Congress has called

for the inclusion of heritage homes belonging to all Goan communities under the proposed protection scheme. It has also demanded an immediate moratorium on land conversions and the commercial exploitation of the State's natural resources. Further, the party has urged the formulation of a comprehensive Heritage and Environmental Protection Policy to safeguard Goa's identity in its entirety.

# Vanarmare tribe sees light, water flow into their lives

Team Herald

PONDA: Months after their huts were electrified, the Vanarmare tribe residing on the Nirankal plateau has now received access to tap water, bringing immense relief and joy to the community.

Until recently, women from the tribe had to fetch water from a tank located nearly 200 metres away, often navigating rocky terrain, especially difficult during night-time. Acknowledging the hardship, Human Touch Foundation and Hands of Hope Foundation, with support from the government, installed a new water tank close to their huts, enabling doorstep water access.

Tribal leader Gopal Pawar

With electricity and now tap water reaching their doorstep, the community's call grows for pucca homes, education, healthcare



expressed gratitude to the NGOs and the government for their sustained efforts in improving the tribe's living conditions. "Last year, the electricity department brought power to our huts.

Now we have water at our doorsteps. Our joy is doubled," said Pawar. He added, "Our only dream now is for pucca houses, and better education and healthcare for our children."

The Vanarmare, a nomadic community originally from Maharashtra and also known as the Karkari tribe, came into public focus in 2016 after their 13 huts were demolished by

unknown persons. Since then, with the support of NGOs and concerned citizens, they have received basic facilities. The Human Rights Commission had also directed the government to provide them essential services.

Currently, the community has a population of 115, including 50 children—23 in primary school, 13 in high school, and 9 in nursery. Men and women work as daily wage labourers. Due to efforts by NGOs and the government, 35 members have been issued voter ID and ration cards. Health camps are now being regularly organised to raise awareness on hygiene.

Vanarmare Tribe joy doubles as after electricity, tap water reaches at huts.

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