

Herald Cafe

Viva Sao Joao: United by Kopels, bound by wells

Goa doesn't just greet the monsoon—it cannonballs into it, kopel-first. São João, the feast of Saint John the Baptist, plays out across the state with wet hair, leafy crowns, and an attitude that says: joy is non-negotiable

Team Café cafe@herald-goa.com



HODANT, VASCO

PICS: KIRAN BORKER



VADDEM, VASCO



PEDDA BENAULIM

MOHIT KHARANGATE



SIOLIM

PICS: MPOJA JOANES



GAURESH SATTARKAR



MOLCORNEM



PIRNA

The story may begin in scripture with St John the Baptist's leap in the womb and Jesus' baptism but in Goa, it's evolved into something far more local and loud. Think wells over water tanks, ghums over gospel choirs, and a grand lunch for the celebrations. The spirit of the festival runs deepest in its villages.

"San Joao is where tradition and community come together. It's not just our festival, it's something we celebrate with our brothers and sisters from other faiths too. We exchange food, gather for rain dances, host small ward parties, and share patoleo and fruits. Many people even donate fruit in large quantities. We sing traditional songs, and for a day, everyone slows down. It's a celebration that pulls us out of our busy lives and brings us back to each other," says Angela Fernandes from Benaulim.

One of the most cherished customs remains the Zanvoiamchem Fest, where the newlywed son-in-law is welcomed with prayers, sweets, songs, and a vojem, a generous bamboo basket of seasonal fruit shared in goodwill. "Traditional San Joao was when the family of the newlywed used to go to the in-laws with fruits and eatables, and jumping in the well was one of the main things," shares Eurico Souza Eremita, lawyer from Mapusa.

Nowadays, even though in some parts of Goa this culture remains, it has become a commercial event, where people celebrate San Joao in pools rather than the traditional way. And yet, whether it's in a mossy well or a blue-tiled pool, São João continues to bring Goa together, drenched in joy, crowned in greens, and rooted in something far deeper than water.

Pride lands at Mopa Airport: A colourful surprise for travellers

Amid the usual rush at Goa's Mopa Airport this weekend, travellers were met with a joyful surprise: two baggage carousels wrapped in vibrant Pride colours, adding a burst of celebration to the everyday scene

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Passengers arriving at Mopa Airport this weekend were greeted by vibrant and unexpected rainbow hues adorning two baggage carousels, terminal walls, and signboards of the airport, transforming the space into a dazzling celebration of Pride. Something that is usually a dull wait for travellers became a moment of celebration, inclusivity, and pride. Travellers paused, clicked pictures, and shared this striking moment on their socials. The airport's signboards read, "You came out. So did your luggage," and "Labels belong on luggage, not on people." The space was designed to be not just functional but Instagram-worthy. This was more than a marketing move; it was something that made people stop, take a moment, and perhaps even smile or celebrate a little more openly.

KNOW ABOUT THE COLLABORATION

This eye-catching display, named "Claim with Pride," was a collaboration between brands Myntra and Nasher Miles to celebrate Pride Month and deliver a powerful message of inclusion. As part of the experience, a few Nasher Miles trolleys from their Pride collection were mixed in with actual passenger bags, blending the message with the products in a cool way. Even the radio announcements and the nonstop TV ads inside the terminal joined the celebration, turning the whole airport into a lively tribute to queerness and individuality.

This collaboration became something way more than a marketing stunt. It was a thoughtful gesture, one that made people



PRIDE EVENTS AROUND THE WORLD

- São Paulo, Brazil – Hosts the world's largest Pride parade with over 4 million attendees.
- Amsterdam, Netherlands – Features canal boat parades where floats sail through the city.
- Taiwan – Home to the biggest Pride event in Asia.

pause and take notice. Adding a personal touch, content creators and influencers from the LGBTQIA+ community, like Jason Arland and Sumedhh Bilgi, were on the ground, asking travellers candid questions like "What's something you've claimed that made you proud?" and "If your bag had a personality during Pride Month, what would it be?" and more.

UNDERSTANDING THE PRIDE FLAG AND ITS MANY VARIATIONS

The rainbow Pride flag, a prominent symbol of LGBTQ+ pride and social movements, was

designed by Gilbert Baker in 1978. He created it at the request of Harvey Milk, a prominent figure in the fight for LGBTQ+ rights. The flag is more than just a colourful symbol; it's a powerful expression of love, identity, and community. While Gilbert Baker's original rainbow flag featured eight colours, the most widely used version since 1979 has six stripes: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet. It's usually displayed horizontally, with the red stripe at the top, mirroring the order of colours in a natural rainbow.

Hot pink stood for sex, celebrating freedom of expression and desire. Red symbolised life, while orange represented healing, a reminder of the resilience within the community. Yellow

captured the warmth and energy of sunlight, and green honoured nature and the grounding power of the natural world. Turquoise was included to celebrate art and magic, highlighting creativity and individuality. Indigo, later changed to royal blue, stood for serenity and harmony, and violet embodied the spirit that unites and drives the LGBTQ+ movement.

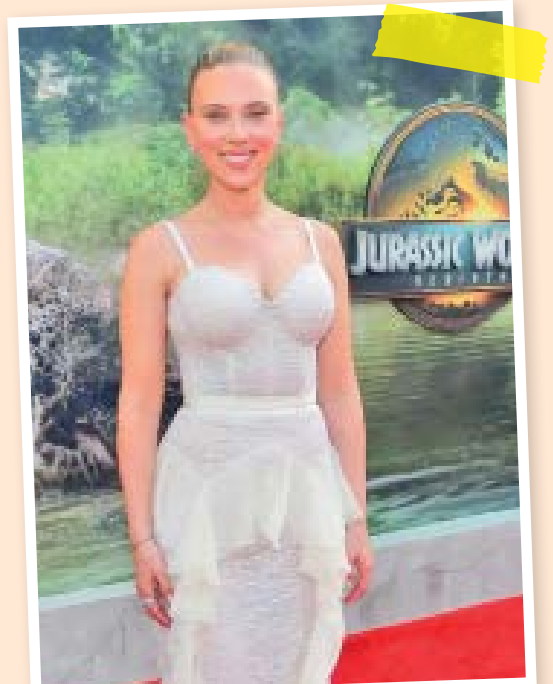
While hot pink and turquoise were dropped, the flag continues to serve as a vibrant and enduring symbol of pride, resilience, and unity. In addition to the rainbow, many other flags and symbols are used to communicate specific identities within the LGBTQ+ community. There isn't a single, universally agreed-upon number for the total number of Pride flags. While the rainbow flag is widely recognised, many other flags represent different genders and orientations within the LGBTQ+ community. Some sources mention over 20 different Pride flags, while others refer to 150 or more, including those representing various orientations and gender identities.



SWIPE RIGHT

'Sholay's restored version to premiere in Italy

Bollywood classic 'Sholay' is making a grand comeback as fully restored, uncut version is set to premiere at Italy's Il Cinema Ritrovato Festival on June 27. The 1975 epic, starring Amitabh Bachchan, Dharmendra, Hema Malini and Amjad Khan, will be screened in Bologna's famed open-air Piazza Maggiore, marking the film's 50th anniversary. Restored by the Film Heritage Foundation and Sippy Films, this version includes the original ending and deleted scenes unseen for decades. The restoration involved rare archival materials from Mumbai and London, with technical work completed in Italy and support from the British Film Institute. A timeless tribute to one of Indian cinema's greatest films.



Scarlett Johansson, 40, stuns in an ivory floral-appliqué gown in a mermaid silhouette at the New York premiere of 'Jurassic World Rebirth' with her costars

