

# BOMB HOAX CALL SPARKS PANIC AT SANCOALE SCHOOL

Students were evacuated and assembled in the open ground as precautionary measure

Team Herald

VASCO: Panic gripped students and teachers at Mount Litera Zee School, Zuarinagar, Sancoale, after the institution received a bomb threat on Wednesday evening.

The school administration received the message around 9.15 am, and Principal Sandhya Venkatesh immediately informed the Mormugao Police. Upon receiving the information, Mormugao DySP Gurudas Kadam and his police team quickly responded, alerting the Bomb Detection and Disposal Squad and other emergency services, who promptly arrived at the school campus.

The Bomb Detection and Disposal Squad thoroughly searched the entire school



Students' school bags being individually checked

campus and confirmed that it was a bomb hoax. DySP Kadam stated that despite indications of a hoax, the police took no chances and treated the threat with utmost seriousness.

Panic-stricken parents also rushed to the school gates, while students were

evacuated from classrooms and assembled in an open ground as a precautionary measure. Students' school bags were individually checked, and every section of the campus was combed for any suspicious devices. The intensive operation yielded no explosive materials, con-

## FALSE ALARM

- The school administration received the threat at 9.15 am and immediately informed the Mormugao Police
- DySP Gurudas Kadam and his team quickly arrived, along with the Bomb Detection and Disposal Squad and other emergency services
- After a thorough search of the campus, the threat was confirmed to be a hoax
- Parents rushed to the school, and students were evacuated to an open ground
- School bags were checked, and the campus was searched, confirming no explosive materials were present

firming the threat was a false alarm, according to police.

School Principal Sandhya Venkatesh appealed to students and parents to remain calm and praised the quick response of all authorities.

Students were allowed to go home at 11 AM.

"We urged everyone to stay calm and cooperate with the school. Thankfully, it turned out to be a hoax, but safety remains our top priority," Venkatesh said.

## Emergency: Dark chapter to some, political tool to others

Team Herald

PANJIM/MARGAO: Nearly five decades after the Emergency was imposed by then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1975, the period remains one of the most controversial and divisive chapters in Indian political history. Across the country - and in Goa - even a mention of the Emergency continues to spark heated political debate.

At a state-level event held on Wednesday to mark Samvidhaan Hatya Diwas 2025, organised in collaboration with Vidya Vikas Mandal and Govind Ramnath Kare College of Law in Margao, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant described the Emergency as "one of the darkest chapters in independent India's history."

"The nation comes first, and no one stands above the Constitution," Sawant said, reflecting on what he termed the harrowing

days of the Emergency. "Many said the British era was preferable to the Emergency," he stated, highlighting how fundamental rights were trampled, the press silenced through censorship, and thousands of political leaders, journalists, and activists unjustly imprisoned.

Echoing these sentiments, BJP National General Secretary Arun Singh said at a press conference in the city, "All four pillars of democracy — the judiciary, executive, legislature, and media — were demolished during the Emergency. It is important to remind the people of this, especially the youth."

However, the ruling BJP's approach to commemorating the Emergency's 50th anniversary has come under criticism from the opposition.

Leader of the Opposition Yuri Alemo accused the BJP-RSS of politicising educational institutions under the guise of

marking the Emergency. In a strongly worded social media post, Alemo condemned a recent circular issued by the Directorate of Education directing schools to organise activities focused on the Emergency.

The circular calls for school assemblies to highlight the "importance and resilience of democracy," specifically referring to the Emergency as the "dark days of democracy." It also encourages student participation in essay competitions on related themes.

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## 3 arrested for peddling drugs into Colvale Jail

Minor produced before Juvenile Board

Team Herald

PANJIM: In an attempt to smuggle narcotic substances into Central Jail at Colvale, drug peddlers resorted to the aerial route.

In the early hours of June 14, seven packets of ganja valued at Rs 1.40 lakh were thrown into the jail premises, allegedly intended for delivery to an inmate.

However, a vigilant sentry stationed at Watch Tower No. 3 noticed the suspicious packages lying

in the passage between the inner and outer cordon walls, specifically between Watch Towers No. 3 and 4. The matter was immediately reported to senior prison authorities.

Following a detailed technical analysis and investigation, the police successfully dismantled the smuggling network involved in the operation. Three individuals were arrested in this connection, and a minor, whose identity has been withheld, was produced before the Ju-

venile Justice Board.

The trio arrested has been identified as Gautam Talwar (24), resident of Ansabhat, Mapusa, Samuel Pujari (24), resident of Ansabhat, Mapusa and Jaffer Mulla (24), resident of Khorlim, Mapusa.

The investigation is underway, and the authorities are exploring whether the gang has links to previous smuggling attempts, police said.

## Cong protests over Chorao ferry mishap

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Goa Pradesh Congress Committee (GPCC) staged a protest on Wednesday, marching to the River Navigation Department (RND) office in Betim to demand accountability for the recent Chorao ferry mishap.

The demonstration targeted the State government, which the Congress accused of gross negligence and systemic corruption. Led by senior Congress leaders, party

workers raised slogans demanding transparency and accountability from both the RND and the State administration. Protesters alleged that the government's inefficiency and mismanagement had compromised public safety.

"The ferry mishap is not merely an accident — it is the direct consequence of the BJP government's persistent failure to maintain critical infrastructure and its alleged ties to corrupt practices," a GPCC spokesperson stated during the protest.

The Chorao ferry incident, which sparked widespread public outrage.

## Bondla Zoo reopens after testing clears avian influenza fears

Team Herald

PANJIM: Bondla Zoo reopened to visitors on Wednesday, after a brief precautionary closure. This decision follows confirmation from the National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases (NIHSAD), Bhopal, that samples tested negative for Avian Influenza.

In a post on X (formerly Twitter), Goa Forest Minister Vishwajit Rane announced the reopening, stating, "After a brief closure as a precautionary measure, Bondla Zoo has now reopened to visitors starting Wednesday, following confirmation that the samples tested negative for Avian Influenza by NIHSAD, Bhopal."

He added, "The Forest Department of Goa acted promptly and responsibly to ensure the health and safety of both animals and visitors. All necessary biosecurity protocols were

followed during this period. We are pleased to welcome visitors back to Bondla Zoo - a vibrant habitat and an important centre for conservation and awareness in Goa. I commend the efforts of all officials involved for their swift and transparent action."

Goa's only zoological park, located within the Bondla Wildlife Sanctuary, was temporarily closed to the public in April this year after a suspected viral outbreak led to the deaths of three civet cats and two jungle cats.

Sources revealed that the animal deaths occurred between March 6 and 9, but the official order to quarantine the premises was issued only on March 30. As a result, the zoo remained closed to visitors from April 1 onwards.

## Caffeine drinks could act as gateways to drug addiction: SP

Team Herald

PANJIM: Anti-Narcotics Cell SP Sunita Sawant on Wednesday raised concerns over the rising consumption of high-energy drinks containing caffeine, warning that they could act as gateways to drug addiction.

"Many students today are consuming to stay awake and study. They feel that these drinks help them concentrate, but it slowly leads to dependence," she said during her speech to school students at an event organised by the Indian Red Cross Society to commem-

orate International Day against Drug Abuse and Illegal Trafficking.

She elaborated, "I'm giving you a simple, ground-level example. You take a drink like it has higher caffeine content, and you feel good after drinking it. Soon, you start thinking, 'I need this to stay awake and study', especially because you may have wasted your time earlier. But the issue is not with your need to study—it's with your lack of discipline. Learn to say no to such habits. Don't study just to score marks in exams."