

NSUI protests awareness drive in schools against 'Emergency'

Corner Education Director; calls for withdrawal of politically charged directive; insists schools must remain neutral spaces for learning

Team Herald

PANJIM: The National Students' Union of India (NSUI), Goa, staged a protest on Thursday outside the Directorate of Education in Porvorim, opposing a circular that directed schools across the State to observe 'Samvidhan Hatya Diwas' (Constitution Murder Day) on June 25 - the anniversary of the imposition of Emergency in 1975.

DISSENTING VOICES

During the protest, NSUI leaders submitted a memorandum to the Director of Education, urging the immediate withdrawal of the circular. They argued that educational institutions should remain apolitical spaces focused on learning and not be drawn into politically charged narratives. NSUI Goa State President Naushad Chowdhari stated, "While we acknowledge the intent to promote democratic awareness, we strongly urge the withdrawal of the circular. Schools must remain neutral educational environments. Involving students in politically sensitive interpretations of historical events like the Emergency risks exposing them to bi-



National Students' Union of India members clash with police outside the Directorate of Education at Porvorim during a protest against the circular mandating observance of 'Samvidhan Hatya Diwas' in schools on June 25

“The Emergency period (1975–77) was a complex and challenging time, marked not only by concerns over national security and political stability but also by efforts to curb inflation, boost agricultural productivity, and promote family planning. Reducing it to a mere 'dark day' oversimplifies its historical context and denies students a nuanced understanding

– Naushad Chowdhari, NSUI Goa State President

“School premises are not political hubs. Schools are places where young minds are nurtured and critical thinking is developed. It is not an ideological battleground. The Government should promote civic education, constitutional values, and the journey of democracy through all its challenges, rather than playing politics on school playgrounds

– Maithily Chumbalkar, NSUI State Executive Member

exhibitions might place an additional burden on students and teachers, especially when the themes are not part of the standard curriculum. "The Emergency period (1975–77) was a complex and challenging time, marked not only by concerns over national security and political stability but also by efforts to curb inflation, boost agricultural productivity, and promote family planning. Reducing it to a mere 'dark day' oversimplifies its historical context and denies students a nuanced understanding," Chowdhari said.

Echoing the same concerns, NSUI State Executive Member Maithily Chumbalkar said, "School premises are not political hubs. Schools are places where young minds are nurtured and critical thinking is developed. It is not an ideological battleground. The Government should promote civic education, constitutional values, and the journey of democracy through all its challenges, rather than playing politics on school playgrounds."

The NSUI reiterated its stand that political neutrality in schools must be preserved and called for a balanced and comprehensive representation of history within the academic framework.

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Goa to issue class X/XII equivalent certificates for special needs students

CM proposes skill-based certification to boost employability under 4 per cent quota

Team Herald

PANJIM: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Thursday announced that the Goa government is actively considering a proposal to issue Class X or XII equivalent certificates to students with intellectual disabilities, based on a skilling-based assessment mechanism.

Speaking to the media, Sawant said the proposal would be deliberated with the Goa Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education, the Directorate of Education, and other relevant bodies before being formalised into policy. The move, he said, is part of the government's broader push towards inclusive development.

"If we are talking about skilling, we must also con-

“It's not just about training – we are also looking into certifying their skills. Goa will be the first state where individuals with intellectual disabilities will receive certificates equivalent to Class X

– Pramod Sawant, Chief Minister

sider the skilling of persons with intellectual disabilities," Sawant stated. "It's not just about training — we are also looking into certifying their skills. Goa will be the first state where individuals with intellectual disabilities will receive certificates equivalent to Class X."

He explained that after completing five years of skill-based training, individuals will be eligible to receive certificates equivalent to Class X or XII. "Further, they can pursue ITI courses, diplomas, or even graduation-level education. This initiative will

significantly enhance their employability and help integrate them into the workforce," he said.

Sawant emphasised that the certification would also make such individuals eligible for employment under the 4% reservation quota for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).

Highlighting the success of previous inclusive employment efforts, the Chief Minister pointed out that 250 youth with physical disabilities had secured private sector jobs in the past year alone through the State Social Welfare Department's initiatives.

Goa to host Int'l Purple Fest 2025 from Oct 9

Festival to spotlight 'Universal Design and Inclusive Thinking'; registrations open via official app

Team Herald

PANJIM: Goa will host the International Purple Fest 2025 from October 9 to 12, in collaboration with the United Nations and the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. The announcement was made by Chief Minister Pramod Sawant during a media briefing held in Porvorim.

This year's theme, "Universal Design and Inclusive Thinking," will shape the festival's agenda, with a focus on creating accessible and inclusive environments. The Chief Minister also launched the official registration app, now available at purplefest.goa.gov.in, through which all registrations for the event must be completed. The app is available for both Android and iOS platforms.

The Purple Fest will include a range of pre- and post-event activities aimed at promoting

accessibility across sectors. Last year's edition witnessed participation from delegates representing 15 countries.

Speaking at the launch, Sawant said, "Purple Fest has become a platform where the voice of every individual is valued. This year, with the focus on Universal Design, we aim to redefine inclusion not just as a goal, but as a design philosophy that touches every part of daily life. Our commitment to persons with disabilities must extend beyond policy to practical solutions. Through Universal Design, we want to empower change at every level—from the metro cities to the smallest rural villages."

This year's edition will highlight Think Inclusive—the idea of designing spaces, products, technologies, and services to be usable by all people, regardless of age or ability, without the need for adaptation.

USE AND DUMP



A police barricade, once used for traffic control or diversions, now lies on the Mapusa-Guirim highway, gradually corroding due to continuous rainfall. The deteriorating condition reflects sheer negligence in its upkeep. Locals hope the authorities take stock and address the issue promptly

5 unauthorised service providers booked under Tourist Trade Act

Team Herald

PANJIM: In a continued crackdown on unauthorised service providers, the Department of Tourism, Government of Goa, in coordination with the Tourist Police Unit, has taken action against five individuals found operating in violation of the Goa Registration of Tourist Trade Act, 1982.

The incident occurred near Manohar International Airport, Mopa, where the individuals were reportedly involved in illegal activities that caused inconvenience to visitors and obstructed the smooth movement of tourists in the area.

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Those apprehended have been identified as Mud-dasar Bepari, 22, from Reis Magos; Ummeasma Jahagirdar, 34, from Salcette;

Siraj Shadguppi, from Margao; Rohan Korgaonkar, 36, from Tambudki; and Badshah Khan, 37, from Margao.

All five have been produced before the Department of Tourism for further necessary action under Section 2(g) read with Section 26 of the Goa Registration of Tourist Trade Act, 1982.

"The Department, along with the Tourist Police Unit, will continue to take firm action against unauthorized operations to safeguard the interests of tourists and uphold the integrity of Goa's tourism sector," stated the Department of Tourism.

Salcete sees surge in rape complaints: Colva, Fatorda police report 4 this month

Promise of marriage used as ploy in multiple cases

Team Herald

MARGAO: Salcete taluka, home to several villages and a coastal stretch, has reported a disturbing spike in rape cases over the past 24 days, with four cases registered across police jurisdictions in June alone. In at least two instances, the survivors were allegedly misled under the false promise of marriage before being sexually assaulted.

Colva Police Station alone has registered three of the four cases, while the remaining one falls under the jurisdiction of Fatorda Police. So far, only one arrest has been made—a 17-year-old boy who allegedly assaulted a minor girl. The remaining three cases are still under investigation, with the accused yet to be

apprehended.

In a recent incident between 23 and 24 June, Colva police booked 24-year-old Akash Lamani of Baga on serious charges under various sections of the Indian Penal Code, Goa Children's Act, and POCSO Act. The complainant stated that the accused developed a relationship with her while she was a minor and, under the pretext of marriage, repeatedly forced himself on her over several years. She further alleged that when she resisted, he assaulted and threatened her. Police have not arrested him yet.

Another case involves a 14-year-old girl from a Salcete village who was reportedly abducted and raped. The incident came to light during a routine medical check at a hospi-



CRIME DATA: RAPE

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| ● Rape cases reported - 4 (in last 24 days) | ● 2023 rape cases (South Goa) 34 |
| ● Arrests made - 1 (minor boy, Fatorda police) | ● Rape cases in 2024 (Goa-wide) - 106 |
| ● Pending arrests - 3 cases (suspects absconding) | ● Of the 106 rape cases in 2024, 100 were detected |

tal in Margao. The girl had been taken from her legal guardian without consent and allegedly assaulted at an abandoned house and

a guesthouse in the region. Her father filed the complaint, and police have booked the accused under kidnapping and rape-re-

lated offences. The girl has undergone medical examination, and her statement has been recorded.

Colva police also registered a third case based on a complaint forwarded by the Crime Branch in Panjim. The complainant, a woman currently in judicial custody at Colvale Jail, alleged that she was raped by four individuals, including two suspected to be advocates. As she remains on remand in a case under the NDPS Act, her detailed statement is yet to be recorded. The complaint was received from the Crime Branch and forwarded to Colva police, who have since filed a case and transferred it to the Margao Women's Cell for investigation.

Meanwhile, Fatorda police arrested a minor boy

for allegedly sexually abusing a minor girl in December 2024. The complaint was lodged by the State. Following the necessary legal procedures, the accused was sent to Apna Ghar. A medical examination of the victim has been conducted, and the report is awaited.

According to police data, 34 rape cases were registered in South Goa in 2023, one fewer than the 35 recorded in 2022. Statewide figures indicate that crimes against women rose in 2024, with 106 rape cases reported, of which 100 were detected.

Inmates caught partying in Colvale prison cattle shed

Guard faces disciplinary action

Team Herald

PANJIM: A startling breach of prison protocol occurred at Colvale Central Jail on 22 May 2025, when five inmates were discovered partying inside a cattle shed on the jail premises. The incident came to light after Indian Reserve Battalion (IRB) personnel, while patrolling, noticed suspicious activity near the shed.

Upon further investigation, four inmates were initially found celebrating. IRB personnel immediately alerted PSI Gaurish Rao, prompting a swift response team led by PSI Vishesh Chodankar, along with Head Constable Ma D'Costa and constables Madhu Salgaonkar, Babli Gadekar, and Pritesh Talav.

The team seized a smart

The team seized a smart mobile phone, a bluetooth speaker, two packets of an undisclosed substance, and food items, including packets of fish

mobile phone, a bluetooth speaker, two packets of an undisclosed substance, and food items, including packets of fish, from the site.

According to officials, the inmates were originally escorted to the shed for cleaning and milking duties. However, the assigned security guard reportedly left them unsupervised and remained unreachable for over 45 minutes.

Inspector Saroj has called for disciplinary action against the guard, citing gross negligence in the performance of duty.