

shorttakes

Two Andhra Pradesh tourists held with ecstasy powder

CALANGUTE: Two tourists from Andhra Pradesh were arrested by Calangute police on Thursday evening after being found in possession of suspected ecstasy powder. The accused, identified as Siva Prakash (26) and Vishwanath Raju (26), both residents of Warangal, were apprehended during a narcotics raid conducted near the HP gas godown at Naikawaddo between 4.45 p.m. and 5.30 pm. Police recovered 1.55 grams of suspected ecstasy powder from each individual, with the total seizure valued at approximately Rs 31,000. Following the seizure, both were taken to the Calangute Police Station and formally placed under arrest at 9.30 pm.

Man caught red-handed accepting matka bets in Calangute

CALANGUTE: Calangute police on Thursday arrested Imamhusen Bepari, 42, after he was caught red-handed accepting matka bets from members of the public in an open space. The accused, a resident of Gauravaddo, Calangute, was apprehended during a raid conducted between 7.30 pm and 10.45 pm near the Sea Food Junction at Naikawaddo. Police seized a matka slip book, two pieces of blue carbon paper, one ball pen, and Rs 2,050 in cash of various denominations from his possession.

Coconut tree collapse damages house in Curti

PONDA: A house belonging to Sitaram Naik at Nagzar, Curti, was damaged after a coconut tree collapsed on it on Tuesday. The incident caused significant damage to the roof, including roof sheets, tiles, and rafters. Local zilla panchayat member Priya Chari and panch member Babu Chari visited the site to assess the damage. Personnel from the Ponda Fire Station were deployed to clear the fallen tree from the house.

Pedestrian seriously injured in road accident at Upasagar

MARGAO: A 56-year-old pedestrian, Topilal Sunal of Upasagar, sustained grievous injuries after being knocked down by a car driver. He is currently undergoing treatment at Goa Medical College (GMC), Bambolim. According to the complaint, the accident occurred on June 24, 2025 at Upasagar, when the accused, identified as Nayum Shaikh (38) of Mangor Hill, allegedly drove his car in a rash and negligent manner while proceeding from Vasco. Upon reaching Upasagar, he reportedly hit the pedestrian, resulting in severe injuries.

Fire damages refrigerator in Chinchinim home; banyan tree falls in Chandor

MARGAO: A fire broke out in a residential house near St. Sebastian Chapel at Mingfol, Chinchinim, damaging a refrigerator and causing an estimated loss of Rs 20,000. According to Station Fire Officer Gil Souza, the fire was caused by a short circuit in the refrigerator. Fire personnel managed to save property worth Rs 2 lakh. One fire tender was deployed, and the operation was led by Leading Fire Fighter P P Dessai, along with other crew members. In a separate incident, a massive banyan tree fell across the road at Gallim, Chandor, leading to traffic congestion.

Cortalim man found hanging at home; Verna police initiate probe

MARGAO: Verna police have registered an unnatural death case after 49-year-old Pashcoal Socoor Barbosa, a resident of Zambol, Cortalim, was found hanging from the roof of his house using a cotton rope. Police said the information was received via the Panaji PCR, following which a team visited the site. Barbosa was reportedly residing with his elderly parents. An inquest and scene panchanama were conducted, and the body was sent to South Goa District Hospital for medico-legal formalities.

Fire damages AC unit in Fatorda flat; jackfruit tree falls in Navelim

MARGAO: A fire broke out in Flat No. 303B of CD Acres, Ambaji-Fatorda, after an air conditioning unit caught fire, causing damage estimated at Rs 50,000. The prompt response by the Margao Fire Services prevented further loss, saving property worth Rs 20 lakh. Station Fire Officer Gil Souza said one fire tender was deployed to the site, and the blaze was controlled within an hour under the supervision of Sub Officer AK Velip. In a separate incident, a jackfruit tree fell on an internal road near the Renault showroom at Kalwar-Navelim. Fire personnel cleared the debris and restored traffic flow.

NHRC invites entries for 11th short film contest on human rights

PANJIM: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has invited entries for the 11th edition of its short film competition on human rights, open to participants of all age groups. The competition, instituted in 2015, aims to raise awareness and promote discussion on human rights issues through cinema. The top three films will receive cash prizes of Rs 2 lakh, Rs 1.5 lakh and Rs 1 lakh respectively. Additionally, the NHRC may award up to four films a 'Certificate of Special Mention' with a cash prize of Rs 50,000 each, subject to the Jury's recommendation. Winners will also receive certificates and trophies.

EDC to host live interaction on loan schemes on June 28

PANJIM: EDC Limited will conduct a live interaction session on June 28, at 10.30 am, to raise awareness about its financial schemes under the Swayampurna Goa initiative. Citizens can participate via their local panchayats or the Chief Minister's YouTube channel. Chief Minister Pramod Sawant has urged Goans to contact their Swayampurna Mitra and attend the session in large numbers. EDC, a government-owned financial institution, offers low-interest loans under the Chief Minister's Rozgar Yojana, Goa Tribal Employment Generation Programme, and other term loan schemes aimed at supporting entrepreneurship.

power shutdown

PORVORIM: On June 28, from 9 am to 12.30 pm. Affected areas are Datta Mandir, Claramount, Darius Paradias, Jagdish Wagh, Sun Escora, Ambe Car Wash and surrounding areas. From 3 pm to 5 pm. Affected areas are Socorro VP, Prabhu Construction, 20 Point Socorro, Samarat Nagar, Police Housing Society, Holy Family School and surrounding area.

Kundaim farmers distressed as saline water floods khajan fields

High tide causes river to overflow through newly renovated bandhara; farmers demand urgent measures to save their livelihood

Team Herald

PONDA: The Khajan fields of Chikhalpaine in Kundaim have been submerged under saline water in recent days due to overflow from the Cumarjua canal during high tide, causing serious concern among local farmers. The water is entering through the recently renovated bandhara, which was constructed to protect these fields.

IN TROUBLED WATERS

Farmers fear this recurring flooding will damage the khajan lands beyond recovery, threatening the livelihoods of over 300 families who depend on the fields for cultivation.

The affected cultivators have now urged the government to take immediate action by raising the height of the retaining wall of the bandhara by half a metre and directing the contractor to plug the leakages along a 150-metre stretch where water is seeping in.

Vijesh Naik, President of the Chikhalpaine Khajan Tenant Association (CKTA), said, "Extending the height of the retaining wall along the entire one-kilometre bandhara is the only solution to prevent the entry



PICS: SANTOSH NAIK

of overflowing saline water." He added that he has already brought the issue to the attention of the Soil Conservation Department.

Naik expressed concern over the deteriorating condition of the recently renovated bandhara, which was repaired at a cost of Rs 3 crore. "During high tide, the water level has risen significantly in the past few days and is nearly breaching the newly constructed structure. If this continues, there is no guarantee that the bandhara will hold up much longer," he warned.

He further stated, "The government has spent Rs 3 crore on the bandhara and

There are multiple leak points in a 150-metre stretch, allowing the river water to seep in. This poses a serious threat to the bandhara's survival, on which our fields and livelihood depend

- Vijesh Naik, CKTA President

its retaining wall, but no official has visited to inspect how the saline water is entering our fields. The mud on the bandhara is already beginning to wash away."

Naik recalled that earlier, breaches in the bandhara had caused repeated flooding, rendering the fields uncultivable for over six years. With the recent renovation, farmers had hoped to resume cultivation this year.

However, their plans have now been dashed due to the rising sea level and the inflow of river water during high tide, which is once again leaving the fields submerged in saline water.

Adding to their woes, plastic waste—particularly bottles and broken glass—has been swept into the fields. "While we can remove plastic bottles, broken glass poses a major hazard. If the

overflow continues, cultivation may become impossible," Naik said.

He stressed that the government must act swiftly to prevent further damage. "Raising the retaining wall by half a metre is crucial to stop the future entry of river water," he reiterated.

Naik also said he had written to the Captain of Ports, requesting a halt to barge movement in the Cumarjua canal, as waves generated by the barges are accelerating soil erosion and have already uprooted several mangrove trees.

Accusing the contractor of substandard work, he alleged that the leakages are a result

of poor construction. "There are multiple leak points in a 150-metre stretch, allowing the river water to seep in. This poses a serious threat to the bandhara's survival, on which our fields and livelihood depend."

He confirmed that videos and reports of the overflowing river have been submitted to the soil conservation officials, and the farming community now awaits immediate government intervention.

"If the retaining wall is raised and leakages repaired, we will be in a position to resume cultivation from next year," Naik concluded.



Car gutted in flames on Dhavli-Farmagudi highway

Team Herald

PONDA: A moving car was completely gutted in a massive fire on the Dhavli-Farmagudi Highway on Friday evening, sparking panic among motorists and briefly halting traffic along the busy stretch. The youth driving the vehicle managed to escape unhurt by quickly alighting from the car upon noticing the fire. He was accompanied by another occupant, and together they attempted to salvage some belongings before the flames engulfed the vehicle. Passers-by promptly alerted the fire brigade, which rushed to the site. However, by the time fire personnel could intervene, the fire had spread rapidly, reducing most of the car to ashes.

According to the car owner, a suspected short circuit in the dashboard may have triggered the blaze. No injuries were reported in the incident, but the dramatic visuals of the burning vehicle caused considerable alarm among onlookers.



SANTOSH NAIK

30 comunidades risk being declared 'in default' over missed elections

Team Herald

MARGAO: After serving notices to 30 comunidade bodies in South Goa for not conducting elections for the 2025-27 term, the South Goa Administrator of Comunidades is now preparing to escalate the matter, as just four of them replied before the deadline lapsed on June 24.

The remaining 26 failed to respond to the show-cause notices that were issued earlier this month. Most of the replies received claimed they could not conduct elections due to lack of quorum, according to Administrator Abhijeet Nikam, while responding to queries from the media.

With minimal compliance and little justifica-

tion from the defaulting bodies, Nikam said he would now follow the procedure outlined in the amended Code of Comunidades. "I will be forwarding a report on all 30 cases, including those that submitted explanations, to the government. It will be for the government to decide on the next course of action," he said.

The Administrator is acting under Article 181-A(1) of the code, which allows for a comunidade to be declared 'in default' if it fails to elect its managing committee due to issues like non-constitution or failure to deliberate as required. The declaration follows an inquiry and submission of findings to the government, which holds the final authority to assign the 'default' sta-

tus. Nikam added that the internal inquiry process was nearing completion and that all procedural steps would be followed before referring the matter to the authorities.

Those still wishing to present their case in person have been given one final opportunity. A hearing has been scheduled for July 1, 2025, at 11:30 am, where representatives may appear before the Administrator either directly or through authorised pleaders.

The outcome could impact the autonomy and functioning of these traditional community landholding institutions, especially if they are stripped of their ability to operate without a duly elected managing committee.

Residents protest closure of Desterro foot overbridge

Team Herald

VASCO: Residents of Desterro on Friday strongly protested against the Mormugao Port Authority (MPA) for closing the foot overbridge connecting Desterro and Vasco.

The sudden closure of the entry and exit points of the overbridge by the MPA sparked public outrage, with locals accusing the authority of acting in a high-handed manner without consulting the Mormugao Municipal Council (MMC) or the community.

The foot overbridge is a vital link used daily by hundreds of residents, including devotees visiting the Vailankanni Chapel and the Damodar Temple during the annual Saptah celebrations.

Upon learning of the closure, Vasco MLA Krishna 'Daji' Salkar rushed to the site and condemned the MPA's action. "This is blatant dadagiri

by the MPA. They cannot keep testing the patience of the people. Many devotees use this foot overbridge to visit the Vailankanni Chapel. Some people cannot afford bus fare or hire motorcycle pilots and solely depend on this bridge. MPA must open it immediately," Salkar demanded. He added that the MPA had not informed the MMC, local MLAs or administrative authorities before taking such a drastic step.

"The MPA is acting as if it is their fiefdom. First, they installed gates at the Baina flyover, and now they have closed this bridge. They must coordinate with the municipality, the Deputy Collector, Mamlatdar and other departments, as engineers from these offices can assess the safety of the structure," Salkar said.

He further stated that while the MPA had earlier displayed a cautionary banner dated June 6 mentioning maintenance work, the

bridge was only closed on June 27.

"What were they doing for 21 days?" he asked.

MMC chairperson Girish Borker also expressed disappointment, saying, "The MPA is always shocking us with such actions. The footbridge has been used by the weaker sections of society for years." Borker stated that the MPA had not communicated with the municipality and demanded the immediate reopening of access to the bridge.

"Otherwise, we will be forced to open it ourselves," he warned, calling on the MPA to submit a written explanation of its plans and ensure no inconvenience is caused during the Saptah festival next month.

While the MPA has claimed that the closure is for maintenance purposes, no official communication has been issued to the concerned authorities or the public.

Govt, NGO join hands for women's empowerment in Mormugao

Team Herald



Team Herald

PANJIM: The Department of Women and Child Development, in collaboration with NGO ARZ (Anay Rahit Zindagi), has launched 'SANKALP', a training programme in Mormugao Taluka aimed at empowering women who are single mothers, survivors of violence, and economically disadvantaged.

This is the first such training programme in the State under SANKALP, fully sponsored by the Department and implemented through a public-private partnership with ARZ.

The initiative has been designed by ARZ in collab-

oration with District Mission Coordinator Ekrupa Mahale, under the guidance of Director of Women and Child Development Jyoti Desai and ARZ. The programme focuses on providing vocational training and capacity building for the selected women.

According to ARZ Co-founder and Director Arun Pandey, the training will benefit around 50 women, with skills imparted in screen printing, iron press printing, marketing, costing, and more. The programme also includes expert-led sessions on preventing child sexual abuse, domestic violence, and cybercrime.

Ekrupa Mahale said she

was pleased with the response from participants. "Before starting the programme, we conducted a survey with ARZ to identify women survivors of violence and those economically disadvantaged. After shortlisting, the women were provided with information and counselling. Once they gave their consent, we began the training in Birla, Vasco, close to their homes," she said.

The first phase includes three training batches, each comprising around 15 women and running for seven days. The first batch has begun with women from Birla slums, while the second will be for women from Mangor.

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