

# Group calls for traditional June start of academic year

## Green Goa Foundation urges Directorate of Education to withdraw proposed amendment to School Education Rules, 1986

Team Herald

**MARGAO:** In a petition to the Directorate of Education, the Green Goa Foundation (GGF), a prominent environmental action group has urged the authorities to withdraw the proposed amendment and retain Rule 21 of the Goa School Education Rules, 1986, specifically sub-rule (2), clauses (iii) to (v), which advocate for the traditional June start of the academic year.

GGF emphasised the importance of allowing students and teachers sufficient time to refresh their minds and fully prepare for the new academic year.

GGF chairman Raison Almeida also raised concerns about the proposal

### ADHERE TO NCFSE 2023 GUIDELINES'

- GGF emphasises on allowing students and teachers sufficient time to refresh their minds and fully prepare for the new academic year
- Raises concerns over the proposal to increase the number of classroom instructional days
- Warns that such proposal will burden students and teachers, leading mental stress and trauma
- Urges adherence to NCFSE 2023 guidelines, which prescribe annual hours and recommend a balanced structure.
- Emphasises the objective of achieving equivalence among school boards
- Says this will make sure that all students receive a standardised, comparable quality of education, with equal opportunities in terms of curriculum, assessments, and administrative practices

to increase the number of classroom instructional days, stating that the current requirement of instructional hours is ade-

quately met. He warned that such an increase would burden both students and teachers, potentially leading to irre-

**“I am concerned about the proposal to increase the number of classroom instructional days. The current requirement of instructional hours is adequately met. Such an increase would burden both students and teachers, potentially leading to irreversible repercussions like mental stress and trauma**

**-Raison Almeida, GGF chairman**

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GGF urged adherence to the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE) 2023 guidelines, which prescribe annual hours and recommend a balanced structure.

This includes 220 school days, with 180 instructional days, 20 days allocated for assessments and examinations, 20 days for extracurricular activities (including 10 “bag-less” days), and a daily instructional time of

five-and-half hours to ensure a balanced, sustainable approach to education.

The petition also emphasised the primary objective of achieving equivalence among school boards. This goal, according to GGF, is not to enforce complete uniformity but to ensure that all students, regardless of their board affiliation, receive a standardised, comparable quality of education, with equal opportunities in terms of curriculum, assessments, and administrative practices.

# RERA directs builder to refund Rs 17 lakh to complainant

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** The Goa Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA) has directed a builder and two others to refund Rs 17 lakh to a complainant within next 30 days failing which interest of 11.10 per cent per annum will be levied.

The RERA ruled that filing of a civil suit is not a bar in filing application for refund with interest before the Authority. Though the suit is pending for last three years, RERA Member Vincent D'Silva disposed of application for refund with interest within three months.

The respondents are further directed to pay Rs 5 lakh as penalty under section 61 of the Act for violation of Section 13 read with Section 18 of RERA Act. They are also directed to file compliance report of the order in the form of an affidavit within 60 days of the order failing which further legal action will be initiated against them by the Authority.

Celina Rodrigues Braganza of Ponda had filed a complaint

**“As per section 13 of the Act, a promoter cannot accept a sum of more than 10 per cent of the cost of the apartment as an advance payment or an application fee without first entering into a written agreement for sale. In this case, the respondents accepted more than 56.66 per cent of the total consideration of Rs 30 lakh**

**-Vincent D'Silva, RERA member**

before the Goa RERA against a builder and three others. The complainant had approached the respondents to purchase a flat in an underconstruction project at Curti, Khandepar. She agreed to buy the flat for a total consideration of Rs 30 lakh and paid an advance of Rs 50,000, Rs 9.50 lakh, Rs 3.65 lakh and Rs 3.35 lakh between October 26, 2018 and November 6, 2019. Thus the complainant paid Rs 17 lakh towards the advance of purchase of the flat and the balance amount was to be paid at the time of the possession and the respondents undertook to execute an agreement by December 2019.

But to her surprise she received a demand letter dated December 10, 2020 calling upon her to pay an amount of Rs 4.48 lakh.

But when enquired, the respondents stuck to their

demand and hence the dispute arose as the latter did not keep their promise nor did they executed the agreement by December 2019.

The complainant issued a legal notice calling upon the respondents to execute a valid deed of sale or agreement of sale per the agreed terms.

The respondents in their replies contended that the complainant had already filed a civil suit seeking execution of the sale deed or in the alternative, a refund of the amount with interest. They claimed that they cannot be vexed twice for the same issue in different courts as the reliefs sought in both the proceedings were identical.

They said that the complaint was of a civil nature and does not pertain to any contravention.

## HEATWAVE INSULATION

ERWIN FONSECA



A watermelon farmer buries his fruits in hay, in the hope that it will keep them cool, so they can stay fresh longer. The scorching temperatures have been causing his melons to ferment rapidly and crack apart, he rues

## Panel seeks papers, info on Goa University paper leak

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** The High-Level Inquiry Committee investigating the alleged paper leakage at the School of Physics and Applied Sciences, Goa University, has sought authentic information and documents related to the case.

The four-member committee chaired by Justice (Retd) RMS Khandeparkar, has asked the University to submit it by an affidavit by April 1.

Meanwhile, the Goa University executive council meeting scheduled on Friday, March 28, will discuss the report submitted by a

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On March 17, the University suspended Assistant Professor Dr Pranav Naik from the School of Physical and Applied Sciences, following allegations of leaking an examination paper to a female student pending

inquiry proceedings.

The committee, set up on March 17, following two police complaints, was directed to submit the report within 48 hours.

Earlier, the university suspended Assistant Professor Dr Pranav Naik, from the School of Physical and Applied Sciences, on allegations of leaking an examination paper to a female student pending inquiry proceedings.

## Samil Volvaikar resigns from TMC

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** All India Trinamool Congress Party (TMC) joint convenor Samil Volvaikar on Thursday resigned from the primary membership of the party.

Volvaikar said that he resigned from both, as the joint convenor and also from the primary membership of TMC. He said that he was disappointed with the TMC for targeting the opposition leaders instead of ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Volvaikar said that he will decide his next plan of action after consulting his workers and voters from Cumbharjua constituency. He also hinted that though he had offers from many parties, he would prefer joining a national party. He had unsuccessfully contested 2022 Assembly elections on TMC symbol from Cumbharjua constituency.

Meanwhile, the TMC issued press release stating that “One person claiming to be ‘Joint Convenor’ of the Party’s Goa unit was removed from the said designation about three months ago”.

## HC disposes writ petition filed by Internet Service Providers Assn

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** The High Court of Bombay at Goa on Thursday disposed of a writ petition as withdrawn filed by the All Goa Internet Service Providers Association.

The court disposed off the petition as withdrawn by recording the fact that the petition has been worked out. Petitioner's counsel Adv Abhijit Gosavi said that the petition was disposed as withdrawn by the Court since the grievance to stop illegal cutting of cables was redressed by the government.

Adv Gosavi said that they had argued that they were not given 90 days' notice as per the Section 14 of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act.

## In 24 hours, two killed in separate accidents

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** Two individuals lost their lives in separate road incidents that occurred in Sirsaim and Bambolim on Thursday.

While Aniket Bugde, 27, was killed after he rammed his two-wheeler against a roadside electricity pole at Sirsaim, Mahima Gawade, 21, died in a hit-and-run accident at Bambolim.

In a tragic accident that occurred near the Sirsaim village panchayat office, a two-wheeler rider Aniket was killed after he lost control over his bike and rammed against a roadside electricity pole on Thursday morning.

He was rushed to the Asilo North Goa District Hos-

pital, Mapusa following the accident where he was pronounced dead upon arrival by the doctors.

The Colvale police later conducted the panchanama and sent the body for the post-mortem examination.

The autopsy report certified cause of death due to “Haemorrhage and shock as a result of fracture of Pelvic and both left upper and lower limb associated with underlying vital organ damaged consequent to blunt force impact from surface and or object.”

Later, the body was handed over to relatives for last rites. PSI Dattaraj Rane is conducting further investigations.

Meanwhile, in another accident, a 21-year-old

woman riding pillion died in a hit-and-run accident near the Athletic Stadium, Bambolim, after a rashly driven truck collided against a two-wheeler.

The deceased identified as Mahima Gawade from Chicalim succumbed to her injuries on the spot, while the rider Rahul Chodankar, 22 from Vasco, sustained injuries.

The truck driver fled the spot without reporting the incident or providing medical aid to the victims.

The Agassaim police conducted the panchanama and sent the body to the Goa Medical College and Hospital (GMC), Bambolim for post-mortem examination. Further investigations are on, police said.

## Panel to target fake helmets, offer support to road victims

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** The North Goa District Road Safety Committee on Wednesday decided to address safety awareness, fake helmets and offer support to victims.

The committee also discussed the growing menace of fake helmets being sold in Goa and proposed a meeting with ISI helmet manufacturers and Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) to prepare an action plan to weed out their sales in the state.

It further resolved to convene a meeting of the officials of the Konkan Railway Corporation Ltd and the Mopa International Airport to discuss plans for road safety awareness sig-

nage at the railway stations of Karmali, Tivim, Pernem and Mopa Airport so as reach out to the tourists.

The other issues discussed during the meeting were to coordinate with the Department of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services to prepare awareness materials on action to be taken to rescue animals involved in road accidents.

Another important proposal discussed was to provide compensation for severely injured road accident victims facing permanent disabilities. The panel then also proposed that the Directorate of Transport study ways for delivering financial aid to the victims of such cases.

## Allocate funds for women's safety, demands Mahila Cong

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** Questioning the government's apathy towards rising cases of crime against women in the State, Goa Pradesh Mahila Congress (GPMC) president Dr Pratiksha Khalap on Thursday demanded allocation of funds in the budget for women's safety.

Addressing a press conference along with the general secretary Liberata Madeira and executive member Adv Lavinia Da Costa, Dr Khalap sought details of how many rape victims were assisted by the One-Stop Centres.

“In 2024, 365 cases of crime against women were reported, which means an average of one case a day. In 2023, there were 288 cases. Apart from these, some cases are withdrawn,

**“Women are being used for votes. No chairperson has been appointed for the Child Rights Commission since the last 10 months. The Women and Child Development Department gets 60 per cent funds from the Centre and the balance is borne by the State government. But they have not made any provision on how many victims have got compensation**

**-Dr Pratiksha Khalap, GPMC president**

and many are not reported due to shame and trauma the victims face. There are cases of rape, domestic violence, abuse, molestation, etc. Of these, 106 are rape cases. What is the provision of safety for such women made by the State government?” she questioned.

Dr Khalap also said that in 2015, One-Stop Centres were launched in both the districts to help and support women affected by violence and in distress. These centres were supposed to provide counsel-

ling as well as legal and medical aid in cases especially of rape. Now such victims are made to go to the district hospitals. They undergo mental and physical trauma and are psychologically disturbed. If there is a rape case in a village, the rural, primary or urban health centre must be equipped to handle such cases and the personnel should be trained, she said.

There is no collaboration between the police and medical team and NGOs, etc, she said.

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