

# 9 additional wetlands approved for notification, total rises to 34

Staff Reporter

Panaji

The Goa State Wetland Authority (GSWA) has approved the final notification of nine additional wetlands under the Wetland (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017.

With this, the total number of wetlands officially notified in Goa rises to 34.

The nine wetlands approved for final notification are Dhakte Lake (Diuler Tollem), Ita Lake, Orlim Lake, Vodle Lake, Adsole Lake, Manali Lake, Ambulor Lake, Kamala Lake, and Lago De Cima, all located in South Goa.

Ten other wetlands remain in the draft notifica-

## CONSERVATION PUSH

► 25 wetlands officially notified

► These include Nanda Lake in Quepem, Carambolim Lake in North Goa, and Durga Lake (24.85 ha) in South Goa

► Others wetlands include Dashi Lake, Toyyar Lake, Cottambi Lake, Xeldem Lake, Sarzora Lake, Pilerne Lake, Bondvol Lake, Batim Lake, Coneix



(Conem) Lake, Arvalem Lake, Pali Lake, Sulabhat Lake, Panchami Lake, Macasana Lake, Bandolem Lake, Kodol Lake, Arla Keri Lake, Kolamwada Lake, Parra Lake, Betal Lake, Sapu Lake or Tollem Bandar, and Talaulim Lake or Talsal Tollem

tion stage. These are Ud-den Lake, Dhulpe Lake (Chicungal Tollem), Bebbi Lake, Bachbhatt Lake, Maimollem Lake, Vodle-Dhakte Complex, Lamgao

Lake, Zuari Lake, and Moingal Lake in South Goa, and Maem Lake and Lamgao Lake in North Goa.

Currently, 25 wetlands covering around 205 hec-

tares are officially notified under the 2017 rules. These include Nanda Lake (42.01 ha) in Quepem, Carambolim Lake (58 ha) in North Goa, and Durga Lake (24.85 ha) in South Goa.

Other notified wetlands include Dashi Lake (0.5 ha), Toyyar Lake (5.85 ha), Cottambi Lake (1.1 ha), Xeldem Lake (0.2 ha), Sarzora Lake (10 ha), Pilerne Lake (4 ha), Bondvol Lake (8 ha), Batim Lake (16.68 ha), Coneix (Conem) Lake (0.9 ha), Arvalem Lake (4.53 ha), Pali Lake (4.4 ha), Sulabhat Lake (5.4 ha), Panchami Lake (0.96 ha), Macasana Lake (0.7 ha), Bandolem Lake (0.85 ha), Kodol Lake (0.76 ha), Arla Keri Lake (3.7 ha), Kolamwada Lake (1.05 ha),

Parra Lake (0.2 ha), Betal Lake (0.4 ha), Sapu Lake or Tollem Bandar (20.7 ha), and Talaulim Lake or TalsalTollem (0.53 ha).

Of the 19 wetlands under draft notification, nine have now received final approval.

According to GSWA, 50 wetlands in Goa have been identified. Of these, 44 were considered for notification under the 2017 rules based on scientific studies by agencies like CSIR-National Institute of Oceanography and reviewed by the Space Application Centre. The remaining six were excluded due to overlap with Coastal Regulation Zones (CRZ), which are covered under separate protection laws.

# Irked, bus operators take up repair work on Queenynagar rd

Staff Reporter

Vasco



Bus drivers, conductors, and owners plying the Vasco-Verna route on Friday took matters into their own hands by filling potholes on the internal road in Queenynagar. They said that despite various incidents, including a recent fatal one, on the stretch, the authorities and contractor have failed to act.

A bus owner said, "I got a call from my driver that our bus almost tilted because of a huge pothole. Some women passengers were scared and got down, walking part of the way before reboarding. The road is becoming dangerously

fatal one, the authorities and contractor have failed to act.

accident-prone."

The group collected mud and began filling several large potholes themselves, particularly on the road leading to Birla from Queenynagar.

Residents said that around 20 days ago, a

bus overturned just a few metres from the spot, killing two—including the conductor—and injuring several others.

Locals blamed the contractor for leaving dangerous pits open without precautionary measures.

# Rainfall activity drops; no heavy rain likely till June 3

Staff Reporter

Panaji

Rainfall activity across Goa has reduced due to the absence of any active weather system in the Arabian Sea, with the India Meteorological Department (IMD) stating that intense precipitation is unlikely until June 3.

The state recorded an average of 31.8 mm rainfall on Friday, down from 70.1 mm on Thursday.

The IMD classified Friday's weather as "light to moderate rainfall" at a few places in both North and South Goa districts.

The depression over North Bangladesh and adjoining Meghalaya has moved north-northeastwards and weakened into a well-marked low-pressure area over Meghalaya. It is expected to weaken further into a low-pressure area over Assam within 12 hours, reducing its influence on Goa's weather.



After days of heavy showers, the rains took a break on Friday. For most parts of the day, the sky was clear. The state experienced a bright and clear sunset. ■ Nandesh Kamblil

Daily rainfall data for the 24-hour period ending 8.30 am on Friday showed Quepem receiving the highest rainfall at 100 mm, followed by Canacona with 92 mm. Margao recorded 36.1 mm and Panaji 26.2 mm. In North Goa, Mapusa recorded 3.4 mm.

Since March 1, Goa has received a state average of 665.3 mm of rainfall, a 960.9% departure from normal. Margao recorded 826 mm, Quepem 853.2 mm, and Sanguem 720.8 mm.

According to the IMD's seven-day forecast, light to moderate rainfall will continue through June 1, with increased intensity from June 2-3. Heavy rainfall at isolated places, along with winds of 30-40 kmph gusting to 50 kmph, is expected on June 2-3.

Squally weather with wind speeds of 35-45 kmph gusting to 55 kmph is expected along coastal areas through May 31. Fishermen have been advised not to venture into the sea.

# Sawant to address Goans on monsoon preparedness today

Staff Reporter

Panaji

The state government under the Swayampurna Goa initiative will hold a live public interaction on monsoon preparedness, on May 31, 10.30 am, from the Chief Minister's Official Residence, Altinho, Panaji.

The interaction will be led by Chief Minister Pramod Sawant, who also serves as the Chairperson of the Goa State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA). The session will focus on the State's proactive measures to mitigate and manage risks associated with the upcoming monsoon season. This live address is aimed at communicating key monsoon safety measures and contingency plans undertaken by the state, raising public awareness about community-level preparedness

and safety protocols, highlighting the coordinated efforts of SDMA, DDMA and line departments/agencies to ensure a timely and effective disaster response. The interaction will be broadcasted via Youtube.

It is expected to highlight the operational readiness of emergency infrastructure, the use of technology, including AI-enabled disaster communication systems, the role of trained community volunteers and local bodies, institutional mechanisms such as emergency operations centres and cyclone shelters, government support for panchayats and municipalities in disaster preparedness activities, CAP Integrated Alert System (SMS, mobile app and satellite media) and ERSS (Dial 112) for emergency support during disaster emergencies.

# Politician's PA reports theft, maid held

Staff Reporter

Panaji

A Nepali woman employed as a maid by a politician's personal assistant in Tiswadi was arrested for allegedly stealing gold worth lakhs of rupees and cash of over Rs 9 lakh.

Police officials said that the accused, Karishma alias

Shanu, committed the theft at her employer's house and deposited cash of Rs 9 lakh in her bank account in Nepal. A crime branch police team is in Nepal where they nabbed Karishma.

The incident occurred earlier this month wherein the accused allegedly committed theft of gold and cash and fled to Nepal,

police said.

Police have recovered Rs 9 lakh and further investigation is on to trace the gold, sources said.

Police believe that there is more than one person involved in what appears to be pre-planned crime, and efforts are on to track down her other accomplices, sources said.

# Hy'bad tourist remanded in casino murder case

**PANAJI:** Abdul Altaf (25), a tourist from Hyderabad, who was arrested for allegedly killing security guard Dheeru Sharma (33) at a land-based casino in Panaji, has been remanded in seven days of police custody. The incident took place in the early hours of Thursday. Police said Altaf assaulted multiple security personnel using a wooden rod with an iron clamp, extracted from a staircase inside the premises. The weapon has been seized. Another guard, Satyam Gaonkar (27), who suffered head injuries during the assault, has been discharged from Goa Medical College, Bambolim. According to police, Altaf began creating a nuisance inside the casino. When asked to leave by the security personnel, he turned violent and began attacking them. Altaf, described as a rowdy-sheeter by Hyderabad police, was arrested while attempting to flee towards Dabolim airport.

# Dental college student booked for voyeurism

**PANAJI:** Agacaim police have recorded the statement of a final-year student of Goa Dental College and Hospital, Bambolim, who has been accused of trespassing into the girls' hostel premises and attempting to record videos of female students while they were bathing. The incident allegedly occurred on the night of May 19. Following a complaint lodged on May 24 by the hostel secretary, an FIR was registered against the student under charges of trespass and voyeurism. According to police, the accused criminally trespassed onto the ground floor premises of the hostel between 9.45 pm and 10 pm. He allegedly tried to observe and record female students through the bathroom window using a mobile phone, which has since been attached by the police as part of the investigation. The student, however, has claimed innocence in his statement to the police. Further investigation is under way.

# Hit by bus, 68-yr-old from Margao succumbs to injuries

**MARGAO:** A 68-year-old man, Joseph Baptista, resident of Malbhatt, Margao, died on the spot after being hit by a private bus at Old Market Circle on Friday morning around 6.30 am. Sources said Baptista was crossing the road to collect a newspaper when the accident occurred. He suffered serious injuries and was rushed to the South Goa District Hospital, where doctors declared him brought dead. The bus was reportedly en route to Verna after picking up company staff. The Fatorda police have registered an accident case and booked the bus driver. Investigations are underway.

# 10 arrested for stealing diesel worth ₹1.78L

**VASCO:** Mormugao police arrested 10 men for stealing diesel worth Rs 1.78 lakh from Indian Oil tankers and illegally transporting it in rickshaws, endangering public safety. Police said the accused Brito Michael Raj (49), Suraj Jaiswar (27), MuttapaKangiri (47), Mohan Patil (50), Bablu Patel (22), Gulab Patel (49), Niraj

# 1 booked for illegally storing sand, laterite stones

**MARGAO:** Maina-Curtorim Police on Friday registered an FIR against G Lamani for illegally transporting and storing approximately 580 cubic metres of sand and 530 cubic metres of laterite stones in Loutolim without the required permissions. The action followed a complaint lodged by the Deputy Director of the Department of Mines and Geology, Panaji. The offence was registered under Section 4(1A) read with Section 21 of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, and Rule 3 of the Goa, Daman and Diu Minor Mineral Concession Rules, 1985. Police investigations are ongoing.

# Pernem resident booked for outraging modesty

**PONDA:** A 62-year-old Pernem resident was booked by Ponda police for allegedly outraging the modesty of a Ponda-based woman. The accused, Bharat Petkar, allegedly sent unwelcome and provocative messages to the victim on several occasions and even made unwanted advances. According to police, from 2021 to 2025, the accused started reacting to the WhatsApp posts of the victim and sent unwanted messages and photos. Further, when the victim and accused came face to face, the accused made unwanted advances on several occasions despite strict warning. Fearing the ill intentions of the accused, the victim filed a complaint with the police and based on the primary investigation, an offence was registered against the accused under Section 78(2), 79, 351(2) of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023. Further investigation is under process.

# Kerala native arrested for possession of weed, LSD

**PANAJI:** The Anti Narcotics Cell (ANC) of Goa police arrested a 29-year-old youth, a native of Kerala for being in possession of hydroponic weed and LSD blot papers worth around Rs 22 lakh during a raid at Siolim on the intervening night of Thursday and Friday. Police said that since the last several weeks, ANC sleuths were maintaining watch on the accused through technical surveillance and human intelligence, following which the accused was nabbed at Siolim along with the contraband. The accused was produced before the magistrate and remanded in five days of police custody. The raid was conducted by the ANC team led by PSI Dindayal Redkar under the supervision of PI Sajith Pillai. The raid was monitored by DySP Nerlon Albuquerque and SP Sunita Sawant.



# State govt takes up ex-servicemen medical treatment issue with Centre

Staff Reporter

Vasco

Chief Minister Pramod Sawant and Vasco MLA Krishna Salkar met Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday to discuss the concerns raised by the United Veterans Association (UVA) over medical treatment under the Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) in Goa.

Salkar handed over a letter from UVA to Singh during the meeting. The letter highlighted dif-



A letter from United Veterans Association has been submitted to Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.

facilities veterans face due to limited hospital options and frequent interruptions in cashless treatment services at Manipal Hospital—Goa's

only fully equipped empanelled facility under ECHS.

"We have over 2,000 veterans and dependents associated with us. ECHS is meant to look after the health of ex-servicemen, but in Goa, we face frequent issues," the letter stated.

It further said, "Many patients undergo dialysis and chemotherapy at Manipal. Repeated messages about stoppage of cashless treatment due to non-payment of dues from the central government only escalate anxiety among veterans."

# Compensate Velim ryots for rain loss: Silva

Staff Reporter

Margao

Velim MLA **Cruz Silva** on Friday urged the government to provide immediate compensation to farmers in the constituency whose fields have been damaged by the unseasonal showers and the early onset of the monsoon.

Accompanied by Zonal Agriculture Officer Rajesh Da Costa and assistant Rangel, Silva inspected farmlands where crops were severely dam-

aged due to the recent unexpected rainfall.

He said around 30 farmers have been hit, with total crop damage covering nearly 60,000 square metres.

"The farmers need immediate compensation. The government must step in and ensure swift relief measures," he said.

The unseasonal rains earlier this month impacted several parts of the state, particularly affecting farmers who were nearing harvest.



# Goa adopts Centre's 7.1% interest rate for GPF

Staff Reporter

Panaji

The Goa government on Friday announced the adoption of the Central Government's resolution fixing the interest rate for General Provident Fund (GPF) and allied funds at 7.1% per annum for the first quarter of the 2025-26 financial year.

The interest rate will be applicable from April 1, 2025, to June 30, 2025, and will cover a range of funds including the GPF (Central Services), Contributory Provident Fund (India), All India Services Provident Fund, State Railway Provident Fund, and Defence Services Officers Provident Fund, among others.

The state government's move aligns with the Centre's fiscal policy for provident fund returns.

# Strengthen counter-terrorism by joining NSG, DGP urges Goa Police

Staff Reporter

Panaji

Director General of Police (DGP) Alok Kumar urged Goa police personnel to consider joining the National Security Guard (NSG) on deputation while stating the importance of strengthening counter-terrorism forces. He said that trained personnel returning from such elite forces would serve as valuable assets and resource persons for the state police.

"NSG has a very glorious history. Whenever its presence was required during counter-terror operations, it ensured the mission's success," Kumar said.

He was speaking at the concluding ceremony of a two-week NSG-led training programme for Goa's An-



A two-week NSG-led training programme for Goa's Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) commandos concluded in the state.

ti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) commandos, held at Altinho, Panaji

"NSG is a dedicated force. There is a five per cent quota for state police forces in the NSG (on deputation). You can become an asset and resource person for the state police," he said.

Kumar said that joining the NSG would provide extensive learning opportunities along with additional

financial benefits. "When you move to a different organisation, you learn a lot," he said.

The training programme covered modules such as unarmed combat, VIP rescue and security, access control, tackling security violations, and vehicle drills.

He said that discussions are ongoing at the central level on how NSG expertise can be utilised

to strengthen state counter-terrorism forces. "Next month in Delhi, a conference on counter-terrorism will deliberate on how to bolster CT forces," he said.

The Goa police have been working closely with the NSG through multiple joint counter-terrorism exercises. "Police are the first responders; learning such techniques is crucial," Kumar said.

Also present were SP ATS Kiran Podwal, SP Training Suchita Dessai, NSG Major Bharat Veer, and other officials.

On the occasion, Kumar honoured ATS commando Jaidev Sawant, who was injured in a grenade explosion during an anti-terror mock drill conducted in 2021 at the GMC, Bambolim.