

Bhutani, the latest flashpoint over rampant environment destroying mega projects

Intra-department passing the buck on who "permitted these projects" continues; public outcry spreads from Sancoale to Old Goa to Reis Magos

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SANCOALE: Amidst huge public and Opposition outcry, the passing of the buck continues over the conception of mega projects by converting non-development lands in Goa. Mega projects, conversion of eco-sensitive lands has started sprouting all over Goa. Projects that were opposed when the land was converted have begun construction.

However, new fires are being lit and along with the Opposition, even MLAs supporting the ruling dispensation are getting involved in opposing the environmental degradation. The Leader of the Opposition, Yuri Alemao, said that the government is protecting the non-Goans and is giving rise to the bouncer culture, forcing people to live in fear. "BJP Ministers are passing the buck claiming innocence in the conversion

“BJP Ministers are passing the buck claiming innocence in the conversion matter. The BJP government has attempted to change the TCP Act. When the TCP Minister says that he has not given permissions, who will take action?” - Yuri Alemao, Leader of the Opposition

“Visit any government office, one will see there is no law. The departments are following Ministers. All this is in contravention of democracy. Like 2006-07, the people will have to come out and agitate to save what is left of Goa currently” - Abhijit Prabhudesai, environmentalist

“The zone was changed from a private forest to a settlement to help the developer (Bhutani Infra). The villagers are suffering due to lack of water supply and basic amenities. How permission for a 742 unit project was given when there was a lack of basic needs?” - Alina Saldanha, former Cortalim MLA & ex-Minister

“The protest is just a start. I urge the Chief Minister not to take the people lightly. The world is looking at you” - Altone D'Costa, Quepem MLA

permission, who will take action?” asked Alemao. On Tuesday, protests again erupted at the Bhutani work site, when Opposition MLAs, GPCC President Amit Patkar, South Goa MP Capt Viriato Fernandes and locals went to the site to check on the alleged destruction done at the site. Locals have alleged that the illegalities that have been noticed are just a tip of the iceberg. “The BJP government

has facilitated the process of making corporates from Delhi crorepatis,” he added. GPCC President Amit Patkar said, “It has been twelve and a half years the BJP has not fulfilled the promise that was made for creating a new Regional Plan. Now they are planning to have zoning plans to help their cronies like Bhutani and others,” he said.

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Guidelines on words like erroneous, inadvertent, inconsistent & incoherent missing in Sec 17(2) of TCP Act: PIL in HC

Petitioner prays to set aside newly added Section 17 (2) of TCP Act and strike down modifications made in the Regional Plan

Team Herald

PANJIM: The final hearing in the Public Interest Litigation (PIL) challenging the validity of the Section 17 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act, started on Tuesday before the High Court.

Petitioner Goa Foundation, while placing its submissions before the HC, said that there are no guidelines explaining what the words “erroneous, inadvertent, inconsistent and incoherent” in the Section 17(2) of the Town & Country Planning Act mean.

Adv Norma Alvares, representing the petitioner, further said that the changes introduced to the Act are bound to create chaos and anarchy. She also mentioned that the land under question is in fact more than 9 crore sq mtrs, which is spread across Goa.

The final hearings on the two petitions of Pravin Singh Shedgaonkar of Betim and Goa Foundations will be held for the next few days.

The petitioners have prayed to set aside the newly added section 17 (2) of TCP Act and to strike down the alternations and modifications made in the Regional Plan for rectifying errors and correction of inconsistent/zoning proposals Rules 2023.

The writ petitions chal-

“The changes introduced to the Act are bound to create chaos and anarchy. The land under question is in fact more than 9 crore sq mtrs, which is spread across Goa” - Adv Norma Alvares, counsel for petitioner Goa Foundation

lenging Section 17 (2) of the Town and Country Planning (TCP) Act, allowing conversion of lands from orchard and other zones to settlement on grounds of errors in the Regional Plan were filed by several individuals earlier in 2023. The hearings will continue on Wednesday.

On the eve of Statehood day last year, public-spirited Goans decided to challenge before the High Court the State government's decision to amend 17 (2) of the TCP Act, to convert land to settle in the Regional Plan.

The Section 17 (2) of the TCP Act does not provide for any public consultation before the government makes any changes in the Regional Plan, activists state.

Three activists Pravin Singh Shedgaonkar of Betim, Mayur Shetgaonkar of Morjim and Swapnesh Sherlekar of Bicholim along with Goa Foundation, filed an amended PIL writ petition before the

High Court of Bombay at Goa praying to strike down Section 17 and sub-section 2 of Goa TCP Act, 1974.

They also prayed to strike down the alternations and modifications made in the Regional Plan for rectifying errors and correction of inconsistent/incoherent zoning proposals Rules 2023.

The petitioners prayed that the Chief Town Planner (CTP) be directed to immediately inspect the properties at Morjim where huge strata of land has been converted from Orchard to Settlement and to submit the report to the Court.

They stated that despite their complaints to the government to remove the illegal road and to initiate action as per law, the government authorities granted permissions for construction of farmhouses considering the illegality-constructed road as the right to way for those project sites.

According to the petitioners, M/s Gangareddy Infra Pvt Ltd and Konidela Ramcharan Tej made applications to the TCP department on March 27, 2023 under Section 17 sub-section 2 of TCP Act for correction of inconsistent/incoherent zoning provisions in the Regional Plan 2021 in respect of land admeasuring 13,964 sq mt under survey number 245, sub-division number 8 at Morjim.

GIVING COMFORT



A woman holds a girl who suffered head injuries due to landslides while returning after visiting Maa Vaishno Devi shrine, in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh, on Tuesday

Goenchea Ramponkarancho Ekvott hits out at Fishing Directorate for failing to impose ban on LED fishing

Alleges that the Directorate is turning a blind eye to the use of LED lights; actively facilitating continued use of the same by allowing generators on fishing vessels

Team Herald

MARGAO: In a scathing critique of the State's fisheries management, the Goenchea Ramponkarancho Ekvott (GRE), came down heavily on the State Directorate of Fisheries for failing to enforce ban on fishing trawlers using LED lights.

Hitting out at Fisheries Director Shamila Monterio, the GRE has alleged that the Directorate is not only turning a blind eye to the use of

“Directorate of Fishing is not only turning a blind eye to the use of LED lights, but is actively facilitating continued use of the same by allowing generators on fishing vessels. This enables purse-seine trawler owners to power the prohibited LED lights, effectively circumventing the ban and perpetuating what many consider a destructive fishing method” - Goenchea Ramponkarancho Ekvott

LED lights, but is actively facilitating continued use of the same by allowing generators on fishing vessels.

GRE claimed that this enables purse-seine traw-

lers to power the prohibited LED lights, effectively circumventing the ban and perpetuating what many consider a destructive fishing method.

GRE contended that the continued use of LED lights in fishing, has been responsible for a noticeable decline in fish availability in Goan waters. It also lamented that despite the matter being heard presently by the High Court, the purse-seine trawler owners appear undeterred and brazenly employing LED lights and other controversial fishing gear with no fear for the law.

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AAP, Congress alliance in Haryana?

AGENCIES, NEW DELHI: The Congress and the Aam Aadmi Party have reached an 'in-principle understanding' to fight next month's Haryana Assembly election together, sources said on Tuesday.

The next step is divvying up the Assembly's 90 seats - a potentially tricky topic.

Sources said that in the early exchanges the AAP has demanded 10 seats, while the Congress is willing to give between five and seven only. The Congress is reportedly also willing to give one seat to the Samajwadi Party of ex Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav, the NDTV reported.

AAP Rajya Sabha MP Raghav Chadha and Congress General Secretary KC Venugopal will likely meet Wednesday to sort this out, sources added.

The deadline for nominations is October 4 with voting on October 5.

There is no word on this alliance, should it hold through the Haryana election, extending into 2025 and the Delhi Assembly election, in which the AAP has triumphed every time since 2013 but faces a stern test this time, with Chief Minister and party boss Arvind Kejriwal still in jail in the liquor policy case.

All of this comes hours after it emerged that Rahul Gandhi, the Leader of the Opposition, suggested the INDIA bloc members continue the partnership formed before the April-June general election.

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MIN. TEMP 27.4 °C

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TMC suspends doctor over 'presence' in RG Kar hospital room

PTI, KOLKATA: The Trinamool Congress students' wing on Monday suspended a senior member of the organisation following allegations that he was seen, along with the police, in a room in a state-run hospital where the body of a woman doctor was found on August 9.

Trinamool Chhatra Parishad state president Trinankur Bhattacharya said in a statement that Avik Dey, who is also a post-graduate trainee of SSKM Hospital, has been suspended from the organisation with immediate effect in the wake of "certain allegations against him regarding the crime scene following the unfortunate incident at RG Kar".

"TMC has suspended him from the organisation... until the ongoing investigation is concluded," Bhattacharya



Junior doctors continue sit-in near Kolkata police headquarters, on Tuesday

said in the notice. A section of the media claimed, quoting some doctors, that a person, wearing a red shirt, seen in a video after the discovery of the body of the woman medic in the seminar hall of the hospital resembled Dey.

Former Goa Velha panch member Simon Caiado passes away

He was actively involved in all the major social movements like the Opinion Poll, Konkani agitation and Statehood

Team Herald

PANJIM: Former St Andre (Goa Velha) panchayat member and social worker **Simon Caiado** passed away after a brief illness at his residence at Zuari, on Tuesday. He was 74.

Caiado was the president of All Goa Bull Owners' Association and former president of Goa Velha Sports Club. He was the panchayat member for 20 years. He was actively involved in Goa's politics for the last



50 years. He was the leader

of 'Caiado Brothers' Group from Goa Velha, which comprised five brothers.

He was actively involved in all the major social movements like the Opinion Poll, Konkani agitation and Statehood. He was a strong voice during Gram Sabha meetings and took up various issues concerning the State and village, in particular. Besides this, he was also active in cultural field and directed tiatrs, apart from acting.

He was always in the forefront to help any villager, trying to organise various programmes in the village.

He is survived by two sons and two daughters. One of his daughters, Emilia, is currently panchayat member and also former sarpanch of Goa Velha.

The last rites will be held at St Andrew's Church, Goa Velha at 3.30 pm on Thursday, September 5, informed family members.