

FLYOVER WORK LEAVES PORVORIM GASPING

A thick layer of dust has gathered on the walls of buildings and vehicles parked along the project site

Team Herald

PANJIM: The six-lane elevated corridor project at Porvorim has forced the people staying along the road to face dust pollution and prepare for respiratory diseases.

Residents are questioning who will be responsible for the respiratory diseases that will be caused due to the pollution or who will take care of those who are already suffering from diseases like Asthma.

It has been barely a few months since the work started, but it has thrown the lives of the people haywire. A thick layer of dust has gathered on the walls of the buildings and the vehicles parked there, giving enough indication of how much people are suffering due to the work. To protect themselves from the polluted air filled with minute dust particles, people have covered some parts of their houses with plastic and steel sheets.

The residents of the area questioned why there is no standard operating procedure (SOP) during the execution of the project and why the different departments of the government cannot work in coordination, so that people are not inconvenienced?

Parekh Shirodkar, proprietor of a restaurant, admitted that there has declined in the business as dust was entering and gathering on



HIGHWAY TO HELL: Plumes of dust emerge from the heaps of excavated mud that dot the under-construction Porvorim highway



PICS: SAGUN GAWADE

“The main problem being faced is dust pollution. Everybody is facing this problem. Then there is traffic congestion. However, we cannot do anything as it is a central project
— Parekh Shirodkar, restaurant proprietor

“We are facing heavy dust pollution. The internal roads which we use now to avoid highways have been tarred suddenly. Sewage work has started near Sanjay School. It has become dangerous for two-wheelers
— Soter D'Souza, former Socorro panchayat member

“I come to Panjim daily for work. Driving a two-wheeler has become very risky. Most of the time there is traffic congestion in the morning and evening, but what to do? We just have to bear it
— Manoj Pawaskar, daily commuter to Panjim

tables and chairs.

“The main problem being faced is dust pollution. Everybody is facing this problem. Then there is traffic congestion. However, we cannot do anything as it is a central project. As there is too much traffic congestion on the road, customers are

avoiding to visit the shops as they are not finding space to park their two or four wheelers,” he said.

It is not only the residents who are at the receiving end of the project. Commuters travelling between Mapusa and Panjim are also grappling with hardships

caused by dust pollution and bad roads.

Former Socorro panchayat member Soter D'Souza said, “We are facing heavy dust pollution. The internal roads which we use now to avoid highways have been tarred suddenly. Sewage work has started

near Sanjay School. It has become dangerous for two wheelers. In the traffic congestion the two wheelers are affected as there are no dedicated lanes for two wheelers. All the vehicles are trying to avoid rough patches. Nothing has been discussed with the locals.”

“When the work was started all the departments must have got together and decided what they were going to do. Why should a citizen go to high court and then you tell the high court what you are going to do to mitigate the problem. This should be part of the stand-

ard operating procedure. Without people having to ask it should have been incorporated,” he said.

D'Souza asked why the citizens should suffer after electing a government and paying their hard earned money in form of taxes. “It is ridiculous that you

do not do anything and every time citizens have to knock on the door of the court to make you move,” he said.

Manoj Pawaskar, a daily commuter to the city, said that life has become horrible for those who come to Panjim for work.

“I come to Panjim daily for work. Driving a two-wheeler has become very risky. Most of the time there is traffic congestion in the morning and evening. But what to do? We just have to bear it,” he said.

Meanwhile, the village panchayat of Socorro has issued a public notice informing villagers that a detailed presentation of the construction of a six lane elevated corridor is fixed on December 11, 2024 at the panchayat office at 11 am.

BJP Yuva Morcha intensifies protest against Aldona MLA in 'sextortion' case

Demands resignation of Carlos Ferreira for his alleged involvement in the case

PANJIM: BJP Yuva Morcha has demanded resignation of Aldona MLA Carlos Ferreira for being involved in sextortion case. BJYM led by Samir Mandrekar and former Aldona MLA Glen Ticlo protested outside Goa Pradesh Congress Office.

An Aldona resident has meanwhile filed an application seeking to intervene in the bail hearing of the accused in the sextortion case.

Ticlo said that the claim of Ferreira of having filed the complaint one year back is false and that the accused was immediately arrested after the complaint was filed recently.

“Where are the Congress members and their partners now? They have been pinpointing against the Chief Minister of Goa while their own MLA has been exposed,” he said.

Ticlo has demanded his immediate resignation. “Why is the MLA silent? If you are not wrong why did you pay money? People of Aldona and Goa want to know,” he asked.

BJYM President Samir

ACCUSED MOVES FOR BAIL: ALDONA RESIDENT FILES INTERVENTION APPLICATION

MAPUSA: A resident of Aldona on Tuesday filed an intervention application before the Mapusa Court, in the ‘Sextortion case’ involving a sitting MLA.

In his intervention application, Devidas Panjikar has stated that he was a voter of Aldona constituency and was annoyed with the protest over the alleged involvement of the local MLA in the case.

Adv Vinayak Porob, who argued on behalf of the intervenor told the Court that the truth whether the video is morphed or genuine has to be found out and if the video is genuine then police and the process of the court cannot be abused as it would amount to using police and abusing process of the court by the MLA to recover and destroy the genuine video. Adv Porob further argued that if the video is morphed then why the MLA pay money to the accused and

took one-year to file a complaint.

The Judicial Magistrate First Class (JMFC), Mapusa heard the intervention application and posted it for orders on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the Crime Branch police have opposed the bail application filed by accused Kakesh Raut of Odisha, who is currently remanded in 14 days judicial custody. The police in its say has stated that the investigation was in preliminary stage and the accused was required in the custody for thorough probe to find out details of his associates. Criminal lawyer Kapil Kerkar represented the accused.

The police have sent the cell phone of the accused to the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL), Verna to extract all vital data to gather evidence to facilitate further investigation into the case. Adv Kapil Kerkar represented the accused.

Mandrekar said that the youth who meet MLAs for day today work are today feeling insecure because of his involvement in the sextortion case.

“MLA needs to come clean on the matter. The Congress should get rid of

these elements from their party,” he demanded.

Meanwhile, an Aldona resident has filed an intervention application in the Mapusa JMFC Court, seeking to intervene in the bail hearing of accused Kakesh Raut. Both the prosecution and de-

fence opposed the plea, with the court reserving its order for Wednesday.

Arguments on Raut's bail will follow the decision on the intervention plea. Raut, the accused in the sextortion case was arrested recently.

ED probes cash-for-jobs scam in Goa

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Panjim zonal office of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has now started investigations into the cash-for-jobs scam in the State under the provisions of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002.

The ED has registered an enforcement case information report to probe the alleged cash-for-jobs scam reported in the State.

Though the senior police officers remained tight-lipped, it is learnt that the ED had already sought information from the police in connection with the cases registered at different police station.

Over 30 cases related to cash-for-jobs scam have been registered and about 35 persons have been arrested by the police for cheating gullible job aspirants to the tune of crores of rupees.

Among the arrested accused, the notable were two queen pins Pooja Naik of Old Goa and Deepashree Mhatre e Sawant of Amona, Sankhali, who are involved in maximum cheating cases.

AAP Youth Wing mimics BJP stall selling government jobs

Unique protest at Dempo College to highlight job scam

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Youth Wing leaders staged a unique protest at Dempo College complex to highlight the multi-core cash-for-jobs scam by mimicking a BJP stall selling government jobs, on Tuesday.

AAP Working President Valmiki Naik declared, “The BJP has put government jobs up for sale, destroying the future of countless youth. AAP will not stop until justice is served. We demand an independent Judicial Commission to investigate this scam and urge protection for whistleblowers under the Whistleblower Act. This is not just a scam—it's a systematic betrayal.”

Naik added, “Police officials themselves admitted the scam has been running since 2014. Such corruption cannot persist without government backing. The BJP's intimidation tactics are preventing victims from coming forward, further proving the need for an independent inquiry.”

AAP State Youth Wing President, Rohan Naik slammed the BJP's reluctance to act, saying, “BJP asked for proof and we delivered. From leaked audio clips of BJP Curtorim leaders demanding Rs 25 lakh as bribe to statements by BJP's own leaders accus-



ing ministers of selling jobs, the evidence is overwhelming. Yet, BJP continues its delaying tactics to suppress the truth.”

Taking a dig at BJP leaders over its recent press conference, dismissing former Governor Satyapal Malik's allegations of corruption against the State government, AAP General Secretary (Campaign and Communication), Francis

Coelho said, “When Malik exposed the BJP's corruption, he suddenly became a ‘blabbering’ individual in their eyes. But let's not forget, he was BJP's National Vice President and hand-picked by PM Modi to oversee critical events like the abrogation of Article 370 in J&K. He was perfect until he revealed their wrongdoings,” Coelho remarked.

Archaeology Dept yet to receive report into burial of body at British cemetery

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Department of Archaeology is yet to receive investigation report from the North Goa Collector and the Goa Police regarding the burial of a person at the British Cemetery, Dona Paula, a protected monument, in May last year.

The incident had come to light after Corporation of the City of Panaji (CCP) Councillor Nelson Cabral complained to the Commissioner Glen Madeira seeking investigation into the burial of a person on May 27, 2023, at the British Cemetery, Dona Paula, a protected monument as per the Goa Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act 1978 and Rules 1980.

Following a complaint, the

CCP Commissioner wrote a letter to the Department of Archaeology to look into the matter.

In the past, the Department of Archaeology had submitted several complaints regarding unauthorised locking of gates by unknown persons at the British Cemetery and also about illegal structure erected inside the cemetery.

Accordingly, Director of Archaeology Dr Nilesh B Fal Dessai wrote to the North Goa Collector and the Superintendent of Police (SP), North, requesting them to investigate the matter and to lodge a complaint as per provisions of the ‘Indian Penal Code’ and Section 295 and section 441 and ‘The Goa Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act of 1978 and Rules 1980’ and to take



“The complainant and the letter written by Director of Archaeology seem to be an attempt to protect multiple illegal constructions in the buffer zone of the British Protestant cemetery. The Director had never passed any order against the religious customs of burial in the land granted under the Portuguese regime. Burials have been recorded till the present and there exists no permanent structure in the cemetery being maintained by the owners Methodist Church Executive Board

“When contacted, Dr Fal Dessai said, “We have not received the investigation report yet. British Cemetery is a protected area under ‘The Goa Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act.’ It was a burial place earlier. Now it is a monument. Burial is not allowed there
Dr Fal Dessai, Director of Archaeology

stern steps so as to ensure safety of the archaeological heritage of the State.

When contacted, Dr Fal Dessai said, “We have not received the investigation report yet. British Cemetery is a protected area under ‘The Goa Ancient Monuments and Archaeological

Sites and Remains Act.’ It was a burial place earlier. Now it is a monument. Burial is not allowed there.”

Reacting to this, the Methodist Church Executive Board stated that the complainant and the letter written by Director of Archaeology seem to be an attempt to protect multiple illegal constructions in the buffer zone of the British Protestant cemetery. The Director of Archaeology had never passed any order against the religious customs of burial in the land granted for the said purpose under the erstwhile Portuguese regime. Burials have been recorded till the present day by statutory authorities and there exists no permanent structure in the cemetery which is being maintained by the owners.

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