

ENHANCING ACCESSIBILITY: Parking spaces for PwDs in South Goa

Collector directs officials to submit Action Taken Report with photos of the completed work within a month

Team Herald

MARGAO: To enhance accessibility for persons with disabilities (PwDs), the South Goa Collector issued a notification designating parking spaces for such persons at various public locations across the district.

Collector Egna Cleetus instructed the Public Works Department (PWD) officials to take necessary actions to earmark parking slots, install an appropriate number of signboards, and implement other measures to enhance accessibility for persons with disabilities.

The notification emphasises that non-compliance with these orders will result in penalties under Section 223 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023. It has been issued under the powers conferred by Section 112 and 116 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 (Central Act 59 of 1988) and Rule 264-A of the Goa Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Rules, 2005.

Officials have been directed to submit an Action Taken Report (ATR), along with photographs of the completed work, to her office within 30 days.

For Margao, the designated parking areas for Persons

with Disabilities include, Sapna Plaza Building, Pajifond, Caro Corner, Margao, near Champs Sports Shop, New Market, Ravindra Bhavan, Margao, opposite Union Bank of India, Margao, Margao Residency, opposite Fatima Convent, in front of State Bank of India (SBI), Margao, in front of Ulhas Jewellers, Margao, and opposite MPTS Sulabh.

In addition, similar designated parking areas have been notified for Persons with Disabilities in Vasco, Ponda, Curcholem, Canacona, Quepem, Dabolim, as well as at the Colva Beach Circle (1st ramp) and Benaulim beach.

PLACES DESIGNATED

Collector Egna Cleetus instructed PWD officials to take necessary actions to earmark parking slots install an appropriate number of signboards, and implement other measures

Says non-compliance with these orders will result in penalties under Section 223 of the BNS, 2023

IN MARGAO: The designated parking areas include Sapna Plaza Build-



ing, Pajifond, Caro Corner, near Champs Sports Shop, New Market, Ravindra Bhavan, opposite Union Bank of India, Margao Residency, opposite Fatima Convent, in front of SBI, in front of Ulhas Jewellers, and opposite MPTS Sulabh

OTHER PLACES: Similar parking areas notified in Vasco, Ponda, Curcholem, Canacona, Quepem, Dabolim, at Colva Beach Circle (1st ramp) and Benaulim beach

FROM PAGE 1

BORIM BRIDGE: NGT REFUSES STAY, HEARTBREAK FOR LOUTOLIM FARMERS

Farmers have expressed their concerns over what they believe to be a deliberate delay tactic by the government. On one hand, they argue, the government has been moving swiftly with land acquisition, dismissing their objections without due consideration. On the other hand, the government continues to seek extensions in the NGT hearings, leading farmers to suspect that this is a strategy to clear the way for the bridge project without facing legal hurdles.

Pinheiro said, "We are still waiting for the copy of the order. Once we receive and review it, we will decide our next course of action. Our petition is comprehensive, spanning over 900 pages."

In addition to their NGT plea, the farmers are petitioning to take the matter to the High Court. "Yes, we will be filing our petition before the High Court soon," Pinheiro confirmed. The farmers have also raised concerns with the Town and Country Planning (TCP) Department regarding the incorrect classification of their khazan lands in the Regional Plan.

Further, a petition has been filed with the Goa Coastal Zone Management Authority (GCZMA),

citing potential damage the bridge's construction could cause to the khazan lands, which are protected under the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) rules.

The farmers argue that the proposed bridge design, situated on NH-17B (NH-566), ignores the environmental sensitivities of the area, including the presence of CRZ zones, forests and vital khazan lands. They contend that the project threatens eco-sensitive areas, which are crucial for local agriculture and aquaculture.

The petitioners also highlighted the significance of the Zuari River, Goa's largest, and its saline wetlands, which have been reclaimed for agriculture over 4,000 years by indigenous communities. These khazan fields feature an intricate system of clay bunds, sluice gates, and fish-breeding bodies of water, all essential for sustainable livelihoods.

In their plea, the farmers urge authorities to reconsider the bridge's design and obtain the necessary environmental clearances under the EIA Notification of 2006, stressing that proceeding with the current plan would result in irreversible damage to the khazan ecosystem.

STANDALONE BRIDGES DON'T NEED EC: CENTRE TELLS NGT

However, regarding the specific Borim bridge project, the Ministry maintained it cannot provide a definitive opinion as no project proposal has been received yet. "The proposal for the project in question has not yet been received by this Ministry. As a result, the specific dimensions and details of the project are not available to render a definitive opinion about the permissions/clearances required for the project at this stage," the affidavit stated.

In its detailed reply affidavit filed before the NGT's Western Zone Bench in Pune, MoEF&CC stated that "the construction of a standalone bridge does not attract the provisions of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006 as amended, unless it forms part of a National Highway project, which is covered under Item 7(f) of the said Notifica-

tion." The Ministry added that bridge construction is permissible and regulated in specific zones within coastal areas under both the CRZ Notification of 2011 and 2019.

The reply, filed through Scientist 'E' Suresh Kumar Adapa from the Ministry's Bengaluru Regional Office, came in response to the NGT's order dated December 2, 2024. The Tribunal had specifically directed the Ministry to clarify whether the project would require Environmental Clearance. At the outset of its reply, the Ministry stated that it denies all averments, submissions, statements, and allegations made in the matter except those specifically admitted in their affidavit. MoEF&CC also requested the Tribunal to pass appropriate orders as deemed fit in the interest of justice, while reserving its right to file an additional affidavit at a later stage if necessary.

Motorists confused, Western Bypass not yet notified as part of NH 66

BYPASS PLAGUED WITH SAFETY CONCERNS

Installation of signboards at critical entry & exit points at Navelim & Verna delayed

Plans to divert heavy vehicles between Canacona & Ponda to the bypass confined to paperwork

Authorities admitted that the notification process is on

The bureaucratic delay has created ripple effects on traffic management

Safety concerns have plagued the bypass since its commissioning

Team Herald

MARGAO: The Margao western bypass, inaugurated with much fanfare just before Christmas, has quickly turned into a source of frustration and concern for locals and commuters alike. The bypass, which includes the newly-opened 2.75 km Benaulim-Seraulim stretch, remains without a proper notification designating it as part of National Highway 66.

Meanwhile, the original NH66 passing through Margao has not been de-notified, leaving motorists confused and traffic management plans in limbo.

The delay in putting up signboards at critical entry and exit points at Navelim and Verna was another key point of frustration. Plans to divert heavy vehicles travelling between Canacona and Ponda to the bypass, which were expected to alleviate congestion in Navelim, remain confined to paperwork. Authorities have shifted responsibility between departments, admitting that the notification process for the bypass is still underway. This bureaucratic delay has left the bypass in administrative ambiguity, creating ripple effects on traffic management in the region.

Safety concerns have also plagued the bypass since its commissioning.

Benaulim MLA Venzy Viegas and other local residents have also repeatedly expressed frustration over a lack of planning, citing frequent accidents on the service roads due to inadequate traffic control measures.

Viegas criticised the authorities for failing to install effective speed control mechanisms, pointing out that the existing rumble strips are too thin to regulate speeding. During a recent inspection, suggestions were made to thicken the rumblers and extend them closer to the underpass to curb reckless driving, but no immediate action has followed.

The bypass has also been a sore point for residents of Benaulim, who had long demanded its construction on stilts to minimise environmental and community impact. Viegas lamented that even this basic demand was ignored, leaving villagers to deal with the fallout of a poorly executed project. He attributed the current challenges to the lack of foresight by previous governments and urged the authorities to implement immediate measures to reduce accidents and improve traffic safety.

SHAPING OUT A MASTERPIECE



An artist gives shape to a sculpture made from thermocol for the upcoming Lokotsav 2025 which will be held from January 17 to 26 at Darya Sangam, an exhibition ground at Kala Academy, Campal Panjim

No solution in sight to tackle stray dog menace in Salcete

Team Herald

MARGAO: The ongoing issue of stray dogs in Salcete, along with beaches has been causing significant concern among locals and tourists alike.

Residents and visitors continue to voice their frustrations, especially in light of recent incidents where unsuspecting individuals, including foreign nationals, were attacked by aggressive packs of stray dogs. These incidents have left both locals and tourists feeling vulnerable, with many demanding urgent intervention from the authorities.

While the local community expresses concern, some positive steps have been taken by the Cavellossim Village Panchayat and 'We for Fatorda', who have been proactive in tackling the issue without relying solely on the government.

Despite their efforts, stray dogs can still be seen not only on the beaches, but

CANINE DANGER

A 24-year-old woman from Loutolim was attacked by stray dogs while jogging on Benaulim beach

A senior citizen from Colva was chased by stray dogs after his morning run

The Colva gram sabha had raised concerns about the growing stray dog menace,

urging the panchayat to seek help from govt 7 Tourism Dept for resources and infrastructure

There have been calls for humane and sustainable solutions to the issue

Human negligence & poor waste management have contributed to the increasing stray dog population



dogs on the beaches are suddenly attacking them. Even the locals are afraid of being attacked," he said.

In response to this growing concern, 'We for Fatorda', an initiative led by the Fatorda MLA, recently conducted a canine sterilisation camp in Fatorda. This camp is aimed at managing the stray dog population more effectively, using animal birth control as a responsible solution.

The authorities have urged cooperation with animal welfare organisations to develop a sustainable, long-term approach to the problem.

MLA Vijai Sardesai said, "The failure of the Margao municipality to tackle this problem has led us to take the initiative."

The situation remains serious, and residents continue to hope for greater collaboration between local authorities, animal welfare groups, and the public to find a lasting solution.

Ratna Raikar, a resident of Margao.

Ratna said, "Even senior citizens are finding it difficult to go for walks due to the several stray dogs roaming on the streets."

Rohan Fernandes, a Benaulim resident, shared similar concerns, particularly about the effect on tourists.

"Tourists are facing hardships because the stray

TAG seeks increased allocation of funds for schemes, new projects

Team Herald

MARGAO: The Tiatr Academy of Goa (TAG) has appealed to the government for an increased allocation of funds to implement various schemes and new projects planned for the future.

In response, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant assured the delegation that the auditorium and unused space of Kala Bhavan in Sancoale would be handed over to the TAG to facilitate its activities.

A TAG delegation, led by president Anthony Barbosa and vice-president Marcos Gonsalves, met the Chief Minister at his office in the Secretariat.

During the meeting, they submitted a memorandum outlining several new proposals and requested additional financial support. The Chief Minister assured them that their demands

I express gratitude on behalf of the committee. The CM's support was crucial. The Chief Minister also endorsed a proposal to start a research journal on tiatr and support the renovation and reconstruction of the old house of Pai Tiatrist Joao Agostinho Fernandes in Margão

-Anthony Barbosa, TAG president

would be met and instructed officials to initiate the necessary process.

Regarding the request for a plot of land to build a Tiatr Bhavan, the Chief Minister extended his full support. While the land acquisition process is underway, he offered to take charge of Kala Bhavan in Sancoale, enabling TAG to carry out its programmes, including the staging of tiatr shows.

The Chief Minister promised to table a resolution in the Assembly concerning TAG's proposal for UNESCO recognition to

even abroad.

He encouraged the TAG committee to document these efforts, with an emphasis on tiatr's national and international reach, and assured to recommend a prominent tiatr artist for Padma Shri award.

TAG president Anthony Barbosa expressed gratitude on behalf of the committee, stating that the CM's support was crucial.

He said that the Chief Minister had also endorsed a proposal to start a research journal on tiatr and support the renovation and reconstruction of the old house of Pai Tiatrist Joao Agostinho Fernandes in Margão.

The delegation included Fr Doel Dias, Avito Pires de Menezes, Pradeep Naik, Jesus Antao, William Fernandes, Aplon Rebello, Antoneta D'Souza, Pedro Vaz, and Simon Rebello.

Fr Chrysologus no more

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PANJIM: Fr. Chrysologus D'Cunha a Salesian of Don Bosco, who passed away on January 6, at Don Bosco, Panjim was given a grand final adieu, with the funeral mass presided over by Auxiliary Bishop Fr Simiao Purificação Fernandes and concelebrated by Goa Provincial Fr Clive Telles, Vice Provincial Fr Banzelao Teixeira, Ex Provincial of Mumbai Province Fr Godfrey D'Souza, Economist Fr Francis Silveira, Rector Fr Tamatur Cardozo and Principal Fr Avin Carvalho.

Fr Chrys's mortal remains were laid to rest at Don Bosco Fatorda cemetery. Fr Chrys was ordained a priest on December 16, 1972, at Panjim. He served as Rector at And-



heri, Matunga and Quepem, besides other postings.

Fr Chrys was extremely jovial and always greeted everyone with a smile and was very witty. As Fr Lody Pires, Director of the DB Shrine recounts, "When some of his theology colleagues at Kristu Jyoti College, remarked that the

building was too posh for a theologate, (then) Br. Chrys said, "Why not 'white wash the building with black paint? His record of 17 years of hard work as the Farm Manager at D B Sulcorna is unforgettable."

Former Provincial of Goa Province Fr Felix Fernandes, recounts how in 1992, "Fr Chrys who was Parish Priest actually put together two wooden benches, placed a mattress on top to make a bed for me, in the tiny presbytery in Tuem village. I had never seen anyone do that for me before."

Fr Nelson Carvalho, Campus Minister at Kurla said, "Fr Chrys was a simple Salesian, who would come alive on a football field, but dedicated his life especially to nourish young underprivileged children."

Fr Lionel Braganza, Rector, Don Bosco Academy, Sutgatti - Hubballi said, "He was full of zest for Don Bosco and full of love for poor youngsters."

Fr Michael D'Costa, Director, Don Bosco Vocational Training Institute Igramol Quepem Goa recounted, "Football was his passion. He coached the Don Bosco HS team in the 1960s and they emerged winners of inter school tournaments."

Fernandes, Emeriti Association Goa said, "Fr Chrys' sensitivity towards the poor stood out. His passion for football and hockey and Goan Food and Feni was well known."

Nazario D'Souza said, "Simple and humble person who made us feel at home on the very first day at Fatorda."