

Siolim locals shocked, say hydrogeological report will spell doom for Oxel Spring

Report says construction activity unlikely to pollute the Spring; locals fear report will adversely impact springs across Goa

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Central Groundwater Board's (CGB) hydrogeological report stating that any construction activity adjacent to the Oxel Spring is unlikely to affect the groundwater flow or cause contamination has left the Oxel, Siolim residents shell-shocked as they fear that the report will not only spell doom for the local spring and will also adversely impact all the springs across Goa which need protection.

Petitioner Avertino Miranda said, "The spring needs protection. Even if there is a Sewage Treatment Plant (STP), the sewage will flow into the spring water. Already the spring

water level has reduced to an alarming level after construction activity."

"We will soon have a meeting to discuss and analyse the report of the Ground Water Board with our legal team and the Oxel residents too," Miranda said.

Miranda said, "Goa Green Brigade is convinced of having at least 200 metres buffer zone for the spring to ensure its protection."

Alex Noronha, a resident of Siolim, who is actively involved in the movement to protect the Oxel Spring, said, "The report is bias in supporting construction activity near the spring and will spell doom for the Oxel Spring. This report will have an adverse impact on the springs across Goa that



The spring needs protection. Even if there is a Sewage Treatment Plant (STP), the sewage will flow into the spring water. Already the spring water level has reduced to an alarming level after construction activity

- Avertino Miranda, petitioner

The report is bias in supporting construction activity near the spring and will spell doom for the Oxel Spring. This report will have an adverse impact on the springs across Goa that need protection

- Alex Noronha, Siolim resident

need protection." However, at the same time

the CGB report stressed the need to exercise caution

in the spring shed area for possible anthropogenic

factors that may cause pollution or may hamper the

The surface runoff flows radially away from the Oxel Spring and is located at a distance of 34.50 m from the proposed compound wall of the villa construction site. The groundwater does not flow towards the spring, rather it flows away. Consequently, any construction activity adjacent to the Oxel Spring is unlikely to affect the groundwater flow of the spring or cause contamination of the spring water, given the absence of direct groundwater inflow towards the spring from these areas

- Central Groundwater Board's hydrogeological report

spring's existence.

Anthropogenic means effects, processes, objects, or materials are those that are derived from human activities, as opposed to those occurring in natural environments without human influences. The report has recommended continuous monitoring and surveillance of the spring water for quantity and quality aspects.

The report says, "The surface runoff flows radially away from the Oxel Spring and is located at a distance of 34.50 m from the proposed compound wall of the villa construction site. The groundwater does not flow towards the spring, rather it flows away. Consequently, any construction activity adjacent to the Oxel Spring is

unlikely to affect the groundwater flow of the spring or cause contamination of the spring water, given the absence of direct groundwater inflow towards the spring from these areas."

The report further says, "Moreover, the spring is protected by barriers or protection wall from external contamination. There is no direct groundwater inflow from the construction site to the spring, further minimising the risk of any adverse impact on the spring's water quality. Considering the above facts, it is concluded that the construction activities near the spring are unlikely to cause any disruption to the spring flow or contamination of the spring water."

Paragliding at Colva beach is legal, fully licenced: Authorities

Team Herald

MARGAO: Authorities have confirmed that the operators of paragliding activities at Colva beach

hold all necessary licences, including those from the Department of Tourism, to carry out the business. This clarification addresses allegations from local resident Simao Rodrigues and others, who claimed the operations were being conducted illegally and without adequate safety measures.

It was clarified that the location used for paragliding

is not a densely crowded area and falls exclusively under the jurisdiction of the Department of Tourism, removing the Village Panchayat of Colva from its oversight.

Previously, Colva panchayat had raised concerns about the legality of the activities, prompting further inquiry. However, it has been verified that no additional permissions from the panchayat are required for the operations, as the site is regulated by the tourism department.



VIBRANT CULTURE



Artistes perform during the Lokotsav 2025 at the Darya Sangam, Kala Academy, Campal, Panjim, on Tuesday

Margao locals demand clean-up of leachate from garbage trucks

Team Herald

MARGAO: Residents of Margao, particularly those living in and around Model High School, voiced their anger on Tuesday over the nuisance caused by garbage collection trucks in their area.

The residents expressed concerns about the health and safety hazards posed by the mess created by waste water leaking from the trucks and demanded immediate action to address the problem.

A delegation led by Rajendra Azgaonkar, accompanied by several local residents and shop owners, met Damodar Shirodkar, Chairperson of the Margao Municipal Council, to raise their concerns.



Speaking to reporters, Azgaonkar said that despite bringing the issue to the civic body's attention earlier, the situation has not improved.

"What we have noticed is that the waste water from the garbage trucks spills onto the road, creating a

stench and a mess. This is not only affecting the residents but also causing difficulties for the shop owners in the area, and putting two-wheeler riders at risk of skidding," Azgaonkar said.

He further warned that the residents would take to

the streets if the issue is not resolved soon.

Another resident also pointed out the lack of proper management and maintenance of the garbage collection trucks, which contributes to the problem.

In response, Chairperson Damodar Shirodkar acknowledged that there are minor issues with waste water leakage from the trucks during garbage collection.

He assured the residents that the civic body would take steps to resolve the problem.

"We have assured the citizens that the issue will be addressed, and the Margao Municipal Council will ensure that such problems do not occur in the future," Shirodkar assured.

Goan culture to take centre stage on Mandovi River cruises

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Department of Tourism has issued an advisory to all tourist cruise boat operators, urging them to exclusively feature Goan traditional music, folk songs, dances, and local cuisine during the daily one-hour evening tours along the Mandovi River. However, this directive does not apply to privately chartered cruises or those hosting private parties.

The State government aims to promote Goa's rich cultural heritage and highlight its diverse cuisine to both domestic and international tourists. The

initiative seeks to enhance the onboard experience, providing visitors with a deeper appreciation of the State's unique cultural identity. Additionally, the advisory is expected to create new opportunities for locals, showcasing their talents and fostering potential livelihood avenues.

The folk dances of Goa, such as Dhalo, Fugdi, and Mando, alongside traditional Goan music and cuisine, form an integral part of the state's cultural fabric. Through this initiative, the government hopes to offer tourists a genuine taste of Goa's vibrant traditions while also supporting local artisans and performers.

SIC: Panchayats must provide RTI response within 15 days

Flags ambiguity in RTI appeals, mandates typed entries, calls for record retention guidelines in govt depts

Team Herald

MARGAO: The Goa State Information Commission (SIC) has directed the Public Information Officer (PIO), who is also the Secretary of the Village Panchayat of Utorda-Majorda, to ensure that requested information is provided to the seekers within 10 to 15 days going forward.

Atmaram R. Bhavre, the State Information Commissioner, further instructed the Panchayat Department to immediately initiate steps to implement a record retention policy for both documentary and electronic records under its administrative authority. The department was also directed to submit a compliance report on or before February 15.

The issue arose when Sharlet Fernandes, a Panchayat member, sought information under the Right to Information (RTI) Act. However,

the Panchayat Secretary informed her that the information she requested was unavailable and could not be provided. As a result, Fernandes appealed to the State Information Commission.

Upon reviewing the case, the SIC observed that the roznama entry, through which the first appellate authority had disposed of the appeal, was handwritten and largely illegible, creating significant ambiguity. This issue was highlighted as something that needed to be addressed by the concerned parties.

While disposing of the matter, the SIC emphasized that electronic data, including CCTV footage, is subject to the Right to Information Act. The Commission also instructed the Panchayat Department to issue proper guidelines to first appellate authorities, ensuring that the roznama is recorded in a typed format, rather than handwritten.

Goa's poultry traders cluck at rising costs, supply chain hurdles

Decades-old industry pins survival hopes on CM's intervention as mounting operational challenges threaten local businesses

Team Herald

MARGAO: Rising production costs and restrictive procurement practices have pushed Goa's local poultry industry to a critical juncture, with traders seeking urgent government intervention to protect their four-decade-old businesses.

During their recent meeting with Chief Minister Pramod Sawant, the South Goa Poultry Products Shopkeepers and Traders' Association highlighted how operational costs in Goa have escalated significantly compared to neighbouring States, severely impacting their profit margins. The industry, which has been a significant contributor to the

local economy since the 1980's, is grappling with multiple challenges including a shortage of skilled labour and difficulties in accessing poultry stocks.

A major concern raised by the traders is the current restriction on direct procurement of live chickens from companies. The association emphasised that being forced to purchase through intermediary associations not only limits trader autonomy but also promotes monopolistic practices in the sector. This has led to alleged harassment of non-members, including unauthorized vehicle stops and unwarranted document checks at checkpoints.

The traders drew parallels between their situation

THE MAJOR CONCERNS

» Operational costs in Goa are significantly higher than neighbouring States

» Traders are barred from directly sourcing live chickens, relying on intermediaries, which promotes monopolistic practices

» Non-member traders face alleged harassment, including unauthorised vehicle stops and document checks; accusations of transporting diseased birds



» Adverse weather conditions and limited access to stocks hinder traditional poultry farming, keeps traders dependent on birds from Karnataka, Maharashtra

and the recent taxi mafia scandal in Goa, highlighting how some operators face baseless allegations of transporting diseased chickens despite their long-standing record of supplying hygienic poultry

products to consumers. The situation has become so challenging that Goa, once known for its local poultry farming, has increasingly become dependent on imports from Maharashtra and Karnataka.

To address these concerns and ensure transparency in operations, the traders have proposed implementing a QR code system. This technological solution could help streamline the supply chain and prevent unauthorised interference in their business operations.

Environmental factors have further complicated matters for these traditional poultry farmers. Adverse weather conditions have affected farming practices, while the scarcity of essential raw materials has added to their operational difficulties. These combined factors have forced many local farmers to shift from production to trading.

The association, representing some of Goa's

original poultry farmers, is seeking a balanced resolution that would protect both local businesses and consumer interests. Their appeal to the Chief Minister emphasizes the need for regulatory measures that would ensure the survival of local poultry businesses while maintaining fair competition in the market.

Following the detailed presentation of their grievances, Chief Minister Sawant assured the delegation that the government would carefully examine their demands and work towards finding an amicable solution to protect the interests of local poultry traders while ensuring fair business practices in the sector.

FREE SEMINAR

ON

CYBER CRIME AWARENESS & ONLINE SAFETY

Guest Speaker:
Tulsidas Naik (PI Margao Police Station)

Date: 23rd January 2025 at 10.30 am at Hotel Woodland Margao

For registration call 9028586440

LOKMANYA

SHUBHARAMBH 2025

YOJANA

A FRESH START FOR A BRIGHTER TOMORROW

* HIGHEST INTEREST RATE

Minimum Investment 10,000/- | Duration 13 Months | Senior Citizens Additional 0.50% Interest

Lokmanya

Since 1995

Maharashtra • Karnataka • Goa • Delhi

Founder Chairman: Dr. Kishan Thakur, Advisory Editor: Tarun Bhatnagar, Belgaum

Call 1800 212 4050 | lokmanyasociety.org