

# High Court upholds action against illegal overhead cables

**Dismisses cable operators' petition against removal of cables from electricity poles; electricity dept now free to remove unauthorised wires**

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** In a significant ruling on Wednesday, the High Court of Bombay at Goa dismissed a Civil Application filed by the Goa Cable TV Networking and Service Providers Association, allowing the Electricity Department to proceed with the removal of illegally strung cables on electricity poles across.

The court also noted that the unsightly cables had not only marred the appearance of the city but had also posed a threat to public safety in several instances.

The Goa Cable TV Networking and Service Providers Association had requested the court for protection from the ongoing cable removal operations, arguing that the cables were essential for their business and subscriber connectivity.

**“The operators have neither applied for the required permissions nor obtained approval for the cables. The unsightly cables had not only marred the appearance of the city but had also posed a threat to public safety in several instances**

**– High Court observations**

However, the court rejected their plea, stating that the operators had not applied for the necessary permissions to string the wires. The court further granted the Association the liberty to apply for permissions under new government rules, which came into effect on January 1.

**“Till now, we haven't received any fresh applications from cable operators as they lack GIS mapping and the necessary permissions. We began our process of removing cables to recoup losses we have been facing since 2020. We can no longer bear these losses. Further actions will be taken as per government instructions**

**– Kashinath Shetye, executive engineer**

“The operators have neither applied for the required permissions nor obtained approval for the cables,” the court observed, aligning with the Government's stance that it would not support actions that violate legal norms.

In response to the ruling, Electricity Department Executive Engineer Kashinath Shetye stated, “Till now, we haven't received any fresh applications from cable operators as they lack GIS mapping and the necessary permissions. We began our process of removing cables to recoup losses we have been facing since 2020. We can no longer bear these losses. Further actions will be taken as per government instructions.”

The Electricity Department had previously halted cable removal operations, but with the court's decision, it is now free to continue the work of removing cables that have been strung without proper authorisation. Internet Service Providers (ISPs) are now left with little choice but to apply for fresh permissions, pay the necessary fees and fines, and ensure that their services remain operational.

# Curtorim roads in ruin: Residents urge authorities to prioritise repairs



Team Herald

**MARGAO:** Residents of Curtorim have voiced their growing frustration over the poor condition of roads that were dug up for underground cabling works. Despite numerous complaints, the uneven backfilling and dusty conditions left behind have rendered the roads hazardous for both pedestrians and vehicles, significantly disrupting daily life.

While some patchwork repairs were carried out after the monsoon, the work has been inexplicably abandoned, leaving large sections of the roads in a deplorable state. “The situation has become intolerable. The authorities have shown no urgency

in addressing these issues despite repeated complaints,” said Roque Mascarenhas, a local resident and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader.

Mascarenhas pointed out that efforts by residents to engage with the Public Works Department (PWD) have been in vain. Complaints and petitions have gone unanswered, with no timeline provided for the completion of road restoration. “It's not just about inconvenience; it's about safety. These roads pose a serious risk to anyone using them,” he added.

“The uneven backfilling has created an unsafe environment, with potholes and loose soil endangering motorists and pedestrians alike. The dusty conditions

have worsened the situation, affecting air quality and posing health risks,” Mascarenhas continued. Residents have called for immediate action to ensure proper backfilling and resurfacing of the roads, restoring them to safe and usable conditions.

“This reflects poorly on the governance of basic infrastructure,” Mascarenhas remarked, urging accountability and the prioritisation of pending repairs. He called on the authorities to act swiftly to prevent further deterioration and ensure the safety and well-being of the community.

The residents of Curtorim are hopeful that prompt and timely action will be taken to resolve this issue.

## Suspended TCP draftsman cleared of allegations

**PANJIM:** Chandrashekar U Tuenkar, a draftsman in the Town and Country Planning (TCP) Department, who was suspended in March 2023 for allegedly demanding bribes and harassing the public, has been exonerated of all charges except one by the Disciplinary Authority.

The Disciplinary Authority, in its order dated January 21, 2025, cleared Tuenkar of all charges except the one under Article II, for which a minor penalty of withholding his annual increment for two years and censure was imposed. He has also been warned to refrain from repeating such actions in the future.

Following the decision, the High Court of Bombay at Goa disposed of the writ petition filed by Tuenkar, as the relief sought was no longer relevant. The TCP Department had suspended Tuenkar on March 14, 2023, after complaints of alleged extortion and harassment surfaced.

## CULTURAL FEST



Artistes from Jharkhand perform at the Lokotsav at Darya Sangam, Kala Academy, Campal, on Wednesday

# BJP has no control over paragliding activities: Youth Congress

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** The Goa Pradesh Youth Congress on Wednesday held the paragliding operator and the government responsible for the tragic accident which led to the death of the pilot and tourist at Keri.

Addressing a press conference, Mahesh Nadar, State Working President, Youth Congress, said, “Who should be blamed for the disaster? Is the operator who was running the activity responsible or is it the government? This insensitive BJP government has been ignoring all adventurous sports in the coastal areas and has failed miserably in keeping a check on paragliding activities

– Mahesh Nadar, State Working President, YC

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**– Mahesh Nadar, State Working President, YC**

**“Many have ditched Goa and now they are visiting countries like Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Thailand. The unplanned development in Goa has led to major disaster. The beaches have become overcrowded, roads are bad and the eco-system is suffering. You can see garbage on the beach side with tourists now drinking and playing cards openly on the beaches. Where is the law and order?**

**– Rinaldo Rozario, North Goa District YC President**

disert but now we see videos of deserted beaches and empty shacks even during the peak tourist season. We have seen lots of videos of influencers saying tourism is dying in Goa and the beaches are empty. As per the number given by the tourism department, 9.4 lakh foreign tourists visited Goa in 2019 but 2023, it declined to 4.3 lakh. It clearly shows that international tourism is on the downside. The shack owners used to cater to foreign tourists but today they are

catering to none,” he said. “Many have ditched Goa and now they are visiting countries like Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Thailand. The unplanned development in Goa has led to major disaster. The beaches have become overcrowded, roads are bad and the eco-system is suffering. You can see garbage on the beach side with tourists now drinking and playing cards openly on the beaches. Where is the law and order,” he wondered.

## Goa's Republic Day tableau to showcase heritage

**PANJIM:** Goa will present its tableau at the 76th Republic Day cultural pageantry in New Delhi on Sunday, January 26.

The State's tableau will be presented under the aegis of the Department of Information and Publicity, Government of Goa, with the theme “Swarnim Bharat, Virasat aur Vikas” (Golden India, Heritage and Development), reflecting Goa's rich culture and progress.

The fabrication of the tableau began on December 26, 2024, at the Rashtriya Rangashala Camp in Delhi Cantt. The team of 30 Goans, led by renowned artist Sushant Khedekar and Purnanand Paidarkar, worked tirelessly to complete the tableau. It also includes contributions from artisans, fabricators, and musicians such as Dinesh Priolkar, Nishad, and Dr Saish Deshpande.

Sagar Naik Mule, a talented Kaavi artist, added the finishing touches to the tableau, bringing a distinct Goan touch to the presentation. The full dress rehearsal was held on January 23, with the tableau also set to be displayed in front of the Red Fort from January 26 to 31, as part of the Bharat Parv celebrations.

## Vijaykumar Natekar elected as Bicholim chairperson

**BICHOLIM:** Vijaykumar Natekar was elected unopposed as the chairperson of the Bicholim Municipal Council on Wednesday, following the resignation of Kundan Falari two weeks ago.

The election was conducted in a special meeting, with presiding officer Bhimnath Khorjuvankar and Bicholim Chief Officer Sachin Dessai overseeing the process. All 14 councillors were present for the meeting.

After being elected, Natekar pledged to make Bicholim a garbage- and plastic-free town, promising to involve all councillors in the town's development. He also stated that he would focus on making the Solid Waste Management (SWM) Plant a tourist attraction for Bicholim. Natekar was chosen unanimously during a meeting with Chief Minister Pramod Sawant and Bicholim MLA Chandrakant Shetye, among others.

## Sewerage network upgradation completed before Court's deadline: IPSCDL

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** The Imagine Panaji Smart City Development Ltd. (IPSCDL) has successfully completed the interconnection of Panaji city's sewerage network, ahead of the High Court of Bombay at Goa's mandated deadline of January 25.

This significant infrastructure project involved the installation, testing, and commissioning of a state-of-the-art sewerage network using trenchless technology. Following the monsoon season, IPSCDL resumed the sewerage work, which included the construction of six additional manholes at strategic locations to enhance maintenance and operational efficiency, according to a

press release.

The project included 15 strategically placed interconnections to ensure seamless integration and improved functionality of the sewerage system. These interconnections were executed at depths ranging from 2.1 to 4 metres, with lengths varying between 3 and 12 metres, reflecting meticulous planning and engineering expertise.

To further strengthen the system and improve maintenance access, six additional manholes were constructed at critical points. Each interconnection and manhole was designed to optimise sewage flow and ensure the long-term sustainability and reliability of the system.

## power shutdown

**VASCO:** On Jan 23, from 9 am to 2 pm, near Non-Mon, Khariwada, Beach area and near State Bank of India at Vasco

**MAYEM:** On Jan 23, from 9 am to 2 pm at Sharada Colony, Kelbaiwada, Tirthbag and PHC Mayem

**VASCO:** On Jan 24, from 9 am to 2 pm, behind police quarter and Chicalim

**CUNCOLIM:** On Jan 25, from 9 am to 2 pm at Pattem, Public Health Centre – Balli, Balli Railway Station and Brahmanagar

**MAYEM:** On Jan 25, from 9 am to 2 pm, near Murdi Narve, Thikajan and surrounding areas

**TALEIGAO:** On 25 January, from 9 am to 2 pm, opposite Manipal Hospital and surrounding areas

## CM meets Amit Shah, Nirmala Sitharaman in Delhi

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** Chief Minister Pramod Sawant met Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, and Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Bhupender Yadav in New Delhi on Wednesday.

Sawant briefed Shah on various State initiatives and sought his guidance. He also reiterated Goa's demand for a higher share in the devolution of taxes

during his meeting with the Finance Minister. The State government has requested an increase in tax devolution from 41 per cent to 50 per cent.

The Chief Minister also raised the issue of villages proposed to be dropped from the Western Ghats Ecologically Sensitive Areas (ESA) notification during his meeting with Yadav. The State government has already submitted a proposal to the Expert Committee on Western Ghats to drop 21

villages from the draft ESA notification. In August 2024, the MoEF&CC had issued a draft notification proposing to include 108 Goan villages in the ESA list.

Additionally, Sawant requested the Union Minister for the early finalisation of the Coastal Zone Management Plan (CZMP) 2019 for Goa. The State government, after missing deadlines in October 2023 and May 2024, has set January 2025 as the new target date for its completion.

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