

Locals brace for fight as Bhutani rolls in with machinery, police

We are only testing soil, says company; watchful locals warn of collective fight ahead

AUGUSTO RODRIGUES



(L) Security guard has a snooze as locals seethe with disgust



Sancoale locals protest against the Bhutani project

AUGUSTO RODRIGUES

SAVORFOND, SANCOALE: Locals from Sancoale and are seething with anger and ready to come out of their homes again as project proponents of Bhutani Infra on Wednesday brought in machinery - with police protection - for soil testing despite the

matter being heard at the Goa Bench of the Bombay High Court. "I have said it before and am repeating that we will start work only after we get permission from the High Court or the proper government authority," said Amit Taneja, CEO of Bhutani Infra. "We asked for police

protection based on the High Court direction of December 18, 2024. We brought in machinery to do soil testing to get environment clearance and not to construct," assured Taneja. To the locals, "by getting machinery with the help of the police," is evidence that the gov-

ernment is against the people. "We were quiet but not asleep. If Bhutani thinks they can silence our voice with the help of the government, we will make them shudder with our collective shout," warned Sancoale panch Tulshidas Naik.

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"We were quiet but not asleep. If Bhutani thinks they can silence our voice with the help of the government, we will make them shudder with our collective shout... Our patience cannot be played with and we are ready to come out again in larger numbers. The people of Goa are still with us. This is our collective battle - Tulshidas Naik, Sancoale panch

"We will start work only after we get permission from the High Court or the proper government authority... We asked for police protection based on the High Court direction of December 18, 2024. We brought in machinery to do soil testing to get environment clearance and not to construct - Amit Taneja, CEO, Bhutani Infra

Oppn cracks show after Venzy compares Sawant to Bandodkar

Political pundits feel Opposition members, who were supposed to fight unitedly, have indulged in mud-slinging and are not in a position to create confidence in the people

Team Herald

PANJIM: The recent statement by Benaulim MLA Venzy Viegas comparing the present Chief Minister Pramod Sawant to Goa's first Chief Minister late Dayanand 'Bhauasheb' Bandodkar has resulted in internal strife within the already crippled Opposition.

During a public function held at Colva last week, Viegas went on a praising spree of Sawant and equated him to the legendary leader late Bandodkar. The MLA went to the extent of saying that just as Bandodkar had carried out construction of government primary schools in Salcete taluka after the Opinion Poll, so too Sawant was carrying out development works in constituencies represented by Opposition MLAs.

Goaded by the success in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the Opposition parties under the banner of India Bloc were gearing to provide a compelling alternative to the BJP. But Venzy's statement has now resulted in internal strife within the already crippled Opposition members.

O Herald spoke to politicians and pundits to know if the Opposition parties would overcome internal differences and rise to the challenge to fight the dominant BJP.

Brushing aside the ongoing

"One thing is certain. If we stand divided, the BJP will get advantage. As Opposition Leader my duty is that we fight the government unitedly and I am confident that we will fight against this government irrespective of our differences - Yuri Alemao, Leader of the Opposition

"The question is when there are so many issues of corruption plaguing the State and when the Opposition members were supposed to fight unitedly they have indulged in mud-slinging. This Opposition is not in a position to create confidence in the people that they are really one and interested in fighting against the ruling BJP - Trajano D'Mello, political analyst

"Let us come together and focus on building the brand Goa. I do not want to create divisions within the Opposition. If I have said something wrong please tell me in the right manner. I am not a criminal. Let us forget and move ahead. Only if we are united we can corner this government - Venzy Viegas, Benaulim MLA

ing strife between the Opposition members, Leader of the Opposition Yuri Alemao said that he will speak to all Opposition members for better floor coordination during the upcoming Assembly session.

"One thing is certain. If we stand divided, the BJP will get advantage. As Opposition Leader my duty is that we fight the government unitedly and I am confident that we will fight against this government irrespective of our differences," he said.

According to Yuri, whatever Benaulim MLA had stated was in his personal capacity. However, Benaulim MLA

Venzy Viegas has reiterated that he is with the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and will continue serving the people of his constituency.

"Let us come together and focus on building the brand Goa. I do not want to create divisions within the Opposition. If I have said something wrong please tell me in the right manner. I am not a criminal. Let us forget and move ahead. Only if we are united, we can corner this government, and we still have the strength to unite and come together and expose them for their failures," Viegas said.

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Delhi court accepts CBI closure report

PTI, NEW DELHI: A Delhi court on Thursday accepted a closure report filed by the CBI in an alleged case of irregularities by ICICI Bank in accepting loan repayment from NDTV, saying 'it appeared to be satisfactory'.

Special judge Shailender Malik accepted the closure report after going through the report, and the submissions made by the CBI, and the complainant in the case, who said he did not want to file any protest petition being satisfied with the investigation.

"Upon going through entire closure report, documents annexed with the same coupled with submissions made by public prosecutor for CBI as well as statement given by the complainant to the effect that he is satisfied with the investigation of CBI in the present case, this court accepts the closure report... as no criminality or violation of Section 19(2) of Banking Regulation Act, 1949 has been found by any of the accused persons. Therefore closure report appears to be satisfactory and hence it is accepted," the judge said.

The closure report was submitted last year after its six-year-long probe did not find any irregularities in the transactions between the ICICI Bank and former NDTV promoters.

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Make your products in America or pay tariffs: Trump tells Davos

AFP, DAVOS: US President Donald Trump told world business leaders Thursday to manufacture in the United States or face tariffs, in his first major speech to global leaders since returning to the White House this week.

Since his inauguration on Monday, Trump has said that Washington could impose steep tariffs on major trading partners Canada, Mexico and China as soon as February 1.

He has also signed a flurry of executive orders, pulling the United States out of the Paris Climate Accords and the World Health Organisation.

"Come make your prod-

PEACEFUL PROTEST



Farmers stage a protest to press the Centre to accept their demands, including legal guarantee for minimum support price (MSP), on the outskirts of Amritsar, on Thursday

Jalgaon victims had enough time to move to safer area: Railway officials

PTI, JALGAON (MAHARASHTRA): Passengers of the Pushpak Express, who got down from the train due to a fire rumour, had sufficient time to move to safer location as the Karnataka Express which mowed down 12 of them here arrived 20 minutes later, railway officials said on Thursday.

The officials in New Delhi stated that those who alighted from the train, which had stopped due to pulling of emergency chain between Maheji and Pardhade stations at 4:45 pm on Wednesday, remained on the side tracks unaware of the imminent danger.



Injured being treated at a hospital a day after a train mishap, in Jalgaon district, Maharashtra, on Thursday

The approaching Karnataka Express which run over 12 passengers passed by at around 5:05 pm, they said while dismissing reports that some passengers of

Pushpak jumped off the train in a hurry.

The officials said the passengers who got down from Pushpak, travelling from Lucknow to Mumbai,

were likely walking on the adjacent railway tracks and did not react in time upon seeing the oncoming train.

Several videos shared by passengers prior to the tragedy also suggest the same, they said.

"The initial version reported by many suggested that passengers didn't have time to move to a safe place and they had no option but to jump on the tracks. But, it is incorrect. We are investigating the cause of chain pulling," a railway official said.

Passengers who saw the Karnataka Express approaching moved out of the track.

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Andhra student jumps to death, caught on CCTV

PTI, SOMALADODDI (ANDHRA PRADESH): A 16-year-old boy jumped to death from the third floor of his junior college on Thursday here in Anantapur district, said a police official.

Anantapur Rural sub-divisional police officer T Venkateshulu said the boy just returned to college from Sankranti holidays on Thursday morning and died by suicide at 11:55 am.

"After the holidays, this boy came to the college around 9:30 am on Thursday. While the class was going on, around 11:55 am, he suddenly came out from the classroom and jumped from the third floor," Venkateshulu told PTI.

The college management shifted the injured boy to a local hospital where doctors examined him and declared that he was dead.

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Indian short film 'Anuja' nominated for Oscars

PTI, NEW DELHI: 'Anuja', a New Delhi-set short film, on Thursday bagged a nomination in the Live Action Short category at the 97th Academy Awards.

'Anuja', directed by Adam J Graves and Suchitra Mattai, is pitted against 'A Lien', 'I'm Not a Robot', 'The Last Ranger' and 'The Man Who Could Not Remain Silent' at the awards gala.

The nominations for the 2025 Oscars, which were twice postponed earlier this month due to wildfires in Los Angeles, were announced by Bowen Yang and Rachel Sennott.

'Anuja' follows a gifted nine-year-old Anuja, who must make a choice between education and factory work alongside her sister - a decision that will shape both their futures. It stars Sajda Pathan and Ananya Shanbhag.

The film has two-time Oscar winning producer Guneet Monga on board as executive producer and Hollywood star-writer



Mindy Kaling as producer. It is produced in collaboration with the Salaam Baalak Trust (SBT), a non-profit founded by filmmaker Mira Nair's family in support of street and working children, alongside Shine Global, and Krushan Naik Films.

Recently, actor Priyanka Chopra Jonas boarded the project as an executive producer.

Besides 'Anuja', 'I Am Ready, Warden' is another movie with an India connect.

Nominated in the Documentary Short Film category, the film is directed by Indian-origin American filmmaker Smriti Mundhra.

Security measures spark protests at Ashoka varsity

PTI, NEW DELHI: Students at Ashoka University in Haryana's Sonapat are on a warpath against the administration after it clamped new security measures involving a vehicle check and prohibition on carrying cigarettes and alcohol on campus.

The new protocols, reportedly outlined in a January 13 email by the varsity's Vice President of Operations, also include shifting student movement to another gate, Gate 2,

and submitting students to pocket checks.

Students have criticised the measures as invasive and an overreach of authorities, demanding a roll-back.

The Ashoka University Student Government alleged the students were informed about the decision without any prior consultation.

A petition opposing the protocols, issued hours after the announcement, has reportedly garnered over 1,100 signatures.

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