

If you can't manage, stop Lokotsav: Campal residents to authorities

Claim CCP is collecting the garbage at festival, when contract has been given to Vasco agency

Team Herald

PANJIM: Fed up of complaining to the government authorities about the alleged mismanagement with regards to garbage and parking during the ongoing Lokotsav 2025, the residents of Campal have demanded that the festival be stopped if the authorities cannot handle it.

Claiming that the Corporation of the City of Panaji (CCP) is collecting the garbage at the festival on a daily basis, while the contract has been given to a Super Clean Agency of Datta Waghmare of Vasco, former Councillor Patricia Pinto, while speaking to media persons said, "The ongoing Lokotsav is organised by the Department of Art and Culture and I have come to know that they have appointed an agency to put up stalls, organise parking, collect and segregate garbage. However, I am unaware as to where the garbage is being taken and the CCP is not involved in it in any way."

"But now it is being observed that a CCP vehicle is collecting the garbage from the venue and taking it to St Inez without getting paid for it. This has to stop. The agency which has been appointed for the work should collect the garbage," she said.



Alleging that most areas earmarked for parking of vehicles have been allocated to the stall owners, which is sheer greed for money, she said, "The people are compelled to park their vehicles in residential areas at Campal."

"The minister has the audacity to say that if the people of Campal are not complaining what is your problem. Mr Minister we are fed up with complaining. The Lokotsav has been appointed for the work should collect the garbage," she said.

"I have learnt that there are 500 stalls. If only 100 stalls can be handled, then permission should be given to only that many stalls," she said.

When O Herald contacted, CCP Commissioner Celen Madeira said, "The event is being organised by the Department of Art and Culture so they will be in a position to respond to these allegations."

Art and Culture Director Sagun Velip said, "The event has been organised by three

departments namely Art and Culture, Sports Authority of Goa and Corporation of the City of Panaji (CCP). The focus is on segregation of garbage at source. Once segregated, the garbage is dumped at a place and later picked by the CCP workers."

Sean AdEvent proprietor Seby Martins said, "The agency's mandate is to collect the garbage and segregate it to ensure CCP workers take the same to the Corporation's garbage treatment facility."



QUOTEROOM

"The minister has the audacity to say that if the people of Campal are not complaining what is your problem. Mr Minister we are fed up with complaining. The Lokotsav should be stopped if the authorities cannot handle it. I have learnt that there are 500 stalls. If only 100 stalls can be handled, then permission should be given to only that many stalls"

— Patricia Pinto, former CCP Councillor

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— Seby Martins, Sean AdEvent proprietor

Fire Department probes safety compliance after Verna blaze

Inspection revealed that the service centre had two fire hydrant points, but both were non-functional

Team Herald

MARGAO: The Verna Fire Station has sent a letter to the automobile service centre in the Verna Industrial Estate seeking details about the NOC (No Objection Certificate) obtained from the IDC for parking vehicles. The fire department has also inquired if all the cars gutted in the fire were insured and requested information about the area occupied by the service centre.

An inspection by the fire department revealed that the service centre had two fire hydrant points, neither of which was in working condition. Nitin V Raiker, Director of Fire and Emergency Services, along with Verna Station Fire Officer Dilesh Gaunker, visited the site where a massive fire broke out on Tuesday afternoon.



A report of the incident has been prepared and submitted to the department.

Verna Police Inspector Melson Colaco confirmed that the police have registered a fire case, and an investigation is underway. At present, the police have ruled out foul play. Mor-

mugao Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) Gurudas Kadam has also inspected the fire site.

The devastating fire, which started in a patch of dry grass 200 metres away, spread to the car service centre and destroyed 33 vehicles. The estimated loss is in crores. Efforts to

identify the owners of the damaged vehicles are ongoing. According to sources at the Verna Fire Station, some cars were brought in for servicing, while others were parked at the centre.

Sources revealed that besides the cars, a diesel generator, paint booth, and compressor were also dam-

CM meets PM, central top brass in New Delhi

Team Herald

PANJIM: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant met Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi on Thursday to brief him on various initiatives undertaken by the State government. During the meeting, Sawant also sought the Prime Minister's guidance to further accelerate Goa's development and progress.

The Chief Minister also held discussions with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, focusing on matters concerning Goa that fall under the Defence Ministry's purview. Speaking about the outcome, Sawant stated, "The Defence Minister has assured the expedited operationalisation of the helicopter maintenance and repair unit at Honda, Sattari."

During his visit, Sawant was accompanied by the newly-elected State BJP President, Damu Naik.

Together, they met Health Minister and BJP National President J P Nadda, as well as BJP National General Secretary (Organisation) B L Santosh.

Speaking to reporters at Dabolim Airport after returning to Goa, Sawant said, "Issues related to tourism, development, and the finance commission, among others, were discussed during my meetings with the Prime Minister and the Home Minister. While I focused on government-related issues, the party state president discussed party matters."

Sawant also met Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bhupender Yadav, to address various issues, including noise pollution. However, he did not respond to questions about a possible cabinet reshuffle.

Meanwhile, BJP State President Damu Naik said his discussions with top leaders in the national capital revolved around organisational matters and strengthening the party's presence in Goa.

Udupi resident held for robbery at Baina

Team Herald

VASCO: The Vasco police have arrested Suresh Pujari from Udupi in connection with the recent robbery at Fatima Manzil, Patrocin-Baina. The incident, which took place between January 18 and 19, involved the theft of Rs 25,000 from the office of Councillor and former Vasco BJP Mandal President Deepak Naik.

According to police reports, the accused gained entry to the premises by breaking the shutter lock and made away with the cash. Acting on a tip-off and following a thorough investigation, police apprehended Pujari at Vasco Municipal Garden.

A case has been registered under Sections 331 (1)(2) and 305 (a) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023. The investigation is being led by PSI Carey Fernandes under the supervision of PI Kapik Nayak and with guidance from Mormugao DySP Gurudas Kadam.

Mapusa police nab Mumbai based gangsters for duping residents of cash and gold

Cash, mobile phones recovered; vehicle used in commission of crime seized

Team Herald

PREVIOUS CRIME FILE

MAPUSA: The Mapusa Police have apprehended a gang spearheaded by a history sheeter who posed as representatives of a finance company and duped several gullible people of their cash and gold ornaments.

CAUGHT IN THE ACT

The gang, which has been linked to nine previous cases in Maharashtra, was led by mastermind Ambekar, 47. His accomplices Shivam Manish Ambekar, 24, Ravi Shreepati Chavan, 42, Karan and Yash Ravi Chavan, both 20, all residents of VTC Palaspe, Panvel, Raigad, Maharashtra were also arrested by the police.

The gang's activities came to light after Reshma Ogale, a resident of Ucassaim, Bardez, lodged a complaint with Mapusa Police. Ogale reported that on 21 January, an unknown man, claiming to be an employee of a finance company,

approached her near the Muthoot Finance Company building in Mapusa and offered her gold in exchange for Rs 1 lakh in cash. Sensing that this was a scam, Ogale raised an alarm, and the suspect fled the scene.

The investigation, led by Police Inspector (PI) Nikhil Palekar, utilised CCTV footage and checked

criminal records, leading to the identification and subsequent arrest of the suspects. During the operation, the police recovered Rs 59,500, mobile phones and a jeep used in the commission of the crime.

Ambekar and his gang have a history of criminal activity. In October 2021, Ambekar was arrested by the Navi Mumbai Crime Branch for robbing jewellers and shopkeepers. The gang's modus operandi involved cheating victims out of gold ornaments and valuables by using counterfeit currency notes.

According to a police official, the gang has committed similar crimes in Alibaug, Pen (Raigad district), Vashi (Navi Mumbai), and Gujarat. In total, 20 offences have been registered against them at various police stations.

The Mapusa Police's swift action has successfully brought this notorious gang to justice, ensuring the safety of local residents and deterring further criminal activity.

SC to hear Mhadei matter on January 29 or 30

Team Herald

PANJIM: The matter related to Mhadei river water diversion did not come for hearing before the Supreme Court on Thursday. The matter is now likely to be heard on either on January 29 or 30.

The special leave petitions (SLPs) have been filed by the three riparian States Goa, Karnataka and Maharashtra, along with the contempt pleas filed by the State government.

Earlier, the matter was heard in July 2023 and was further listed before the Apex Court in November last year after almost nine months of the previous hearing. However, it was adjourned to January this year without any hearing.

Expressing her dismay over the matter getting delayed, the former Min-

ister and Mhadei Bachao Abhiyan (MBA) convenor Nirmala Sawant stated that the State government counsels should seek an exclusive date from the Court to hear the matter.



"The matter was listed at Serial No 117 in Supreme Court and it will now be heard on regular days next week. On Friday and Monday there will be miscellaneous hearings. The officials and lawyers from Goa will have to either return home or spend five days in Delhi. Since the government is spending tax-payers money for litigation it should ask the counsels to seek an exclusive date for hearing."

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