

South Goa mandates stricter security for ATMs, tightens accommodation rules

Team Herald

MARGAO: The South Goa District Magistrate has directed all heads and in-charges of nationalised banks in the region to ensure 24/7 security for ATMs. This includes the mandatory installation of CCTV cameras or an Electronic Surveillance System (ESS) with panic buttons, two-way communication, hooters, and remote control.

Additionally, property owners—including those of residential establishments, hotels, shacks, private guest houses, and religious bodies—must verify the identities of individuals before providing temporary accommodation. Non-compliance will result in FIRs being filed for violations.

Unlike previous practices that allowed violators to evade accountability due to jurisdictional gaps, the re-

CRIME PATROL

24/7 ATM Security: Banks must ensure round-the-clock security at ATMs, including CCTV or Electronic Surveillance Systems (ESS) with panic buttons, two-way communication, hooters, and remote control

Identity verification for accommodation: Property owners must verify guest IDs using Voter IDs, Aadhaar, Passports, or Driving Licences before providing temporary stays.

Mandatory PATHIK registration: Accommodation providers must record guest details in the police-monitored PATHIK software.

Compliance inspections: Properties must be open for inspection, with updated records maintained as per police guidelines.

Strict action for non-compliance: FIRs will be filed against those who fail to adhere to these orders.

Enhanced accountability: Deputy Collectors and Sub-Divisional Magistrates will actively monitor and address violations, filing FIRs and reporting to Judicial Magistrates.

Police coordination: Local police stations must follow guidelines, report violations, and support Deputy Collectors in enforcing rules

Countering criminal misuse: Stricter checks are mandated to prevent criminals from misusing fake IDs or false addresses to secure temporary accommodations

vised order empowers Deputy Collectors and Sub-Divisional Magistrates across South Goa to monitor and address violations actively. They are authorised to file FIRs at police stations and submit complaints to Judicial Magistrates.

The South Goa Superintendent of Police has been instructed to ensure that all local police stations

are aware of and adhere to these guidelines. The order also requires them to report violations to the appropriate Deputy Collectors or Sub-Divisional Magistrates for swift action.

The Magistrate's directives follow a report by the Superintendent of Police, South Goa, highlighting the rising misuse of fake identities and false addresses by

criminals to secure temporary accommodations. This practice has made it difficult for law enforcement to trace suspects after committing crimes.

To counter this, the Magistrate has called for stricter checks, requiring accommodation providers to verify identities with legitimate documents such as Voter IDs, Aadhaar Cards, Pass-

ports, or Driving Licences.

The directive specifically requires all such establishments to maintain detailed entries in the PATHIK (Programme for Analysis of Traveler and Hotel Informatics) software prepared by the police. This software must be updated regularly with comprehensive details of all customers and visitors, ensuring a thor-

ough documentation of temporary residents across South Goa.

Under the strict provisions of the order, no landlords, tenants, owners, or property managers within the territorial jurisdiction of South Goa District shall let, sublet, or rent out any accommodation to any person unless the complete particulars of the tenants have been furnished to the Officer-In-Charge of the concerned Police Station. This mandatory reporting mechanism aims to create a robust tracking system for temporary residents and visitors.

Furthermore, all in-charges of accommodations are required to provide full facilities for inspection and maintain records in the aforementioned PATHIK software, allowing police authorities and other authorised entities to conduct comprehensive surveillance and verification.

Margao municipality to launch 45-day drive against 'visual pollution'

PLAN AND EXPECTATIONS

SPECIAL DRIVE: 45 days targeting all unauthorized defacements.

FOLLOW-UP: Regular maintenance drives post completion.

DOCUMENTATION: Detailed compliance

report with photographic evidence to be submitted within 60 days

COORDINATION: Collaboration between MMC staff, enforcement teams, and other agencies to ensure a streamlined effort

Team Herald

MARGAO: In a bid to tackle the growing problem of unauthorized advertisements and graffiti defacing public spaces, the South Goa District Magistrate has instructed the Margao Municipal Council (MMC) to initiate a 45-day special drive to remove such defacements.

Egna Cleetus, South Goa Collector, announced the directive on Wednesday under Section 7 of the Goa Prevention of Defacement of Property Act, 1988. The drive aims to restore Margao's aesthetic appeal by targeting unauthorised posters, banners, graffiti, and other forms of defacement that have marred the town's public properties.

The municipal officials have been tasked with identifying affected areas, allocating resources, and coordinating with enforcement teams to execute the initiative. They are required to submit a compliance report, including photographic evidence of the areas before and after the clean-up.

"This visual pollution not only diminishes Margao's aesthetic charm but also inconveniences residents and tourists. Such activities

This visual pollution not only diminishes Margao's aesthetic charm but also inconveniences residents and tourists. Such activities compromise the visual integrity of public spaces and must be curtailed

-Egna Cleetus, South Goa Collector

compromise the visual integrity of public spaces and must be curtailed," said the Collector.

An awareness campaign will also be launched alongside the drive to educate the public on the legal consequences of defacement, aiming to deter such activities in the future.

The Collector stressed the importance of sufficient manpower and resources for the initiative's success. Failure to comply with the directive will invite strict legal action against responsible officers or individuals.

The initiative is expected to significantly improve Margao's environmental and aesthetic integrity, making the town cleaner and more welcoming.

Baina flyover will remain open for public use: Vasco MLA

Team Herald

VASCO: MLA Krishna Salkar has condemned the Mormugao Port Authority (MPA) for trying to block access to the new flyover inaugurated at Baina on Tuesday, asserting that the flyover and the entry and exit ramps were built for public use and will remain accessible. Salkar vowed that MPA would not be allowed to block these essential routes.

"We condemn MPA's actions, which are entirely wrong. An MPA official also behaved rudely and arrogantly with the Mormugao Municipal Council (MMC) Chairperson, the first citizen of the town. This behaviour is unacceptable. The MPA must respect the Chairperson's position; if they fail to show respect, they should not expect respect in return," said Salkar.

The MLA expressed his disappointment, stating that during the flyover's inauguration, he had raised concerns with Chief Minister Pramod Sawant about the possibility of MPA closing the gates but did not expect this issue to escalate so

We are committed to ensuring the flyover and ramps in Vasco and Baina remain open for public use. The government has invested significant funds in this infrastructure for the people's benefit, not for any private entity. We will take every possible step to ensure it continues to serve the public -Krishna 'Daji' Salkar, Vasco MLA

quickly.

He disclosed that he had spoken to the MPA Chairman and Sawant about the issue, and the Chief Minister has called for a meeting to resolve the matter within two days.

"I assure the people of Vasco that their needs are our priority, and the flyover will remain open to all," he said, reiterating the government's commitment to ensuring public welfare.

ALWAYS IN SEASON



A vendor sells massive locally-grown watermelons by the roadside at the Taleigao market. The fruit, which was once a seasonal summertime treat, is now available throughout the year

Pernem man killed, biker injured by speeding car near Verna

Team Herald

MARGAO: A scooter rider was killed, and his pillion grievously injured when a speeding car hit the two-wheeler on NH-66 near Utorda Bypass Road on Thursday evening. The car, bearing temporary registration number MH-14-TCM-605, was driven by Prashant Gaikwad, a resident of Raigad, Maharashtra. According to sources, Gaikwad is a social media influencer and had allegedly come down to Goa to shoot 'reels' to promote the newly-launched car.

The Verna police said that the driver was allegedly driving rashly and negligently, endangering human life while traveling from Margao toward Panjim. Near the Utorda bypass, the car veered onto the wrong side of the road and collided head-on with the scooter.

The scooter rider, identified as Sitaram Karapurkar of Bhat Pawni, Pernem, and the pillion rider, Ravindra Kumar Singh, a native of Jharkhand, suffered severe injuries. Tragically, the rider succumbed to his injuries at South Goa District Hospital in Margao.

The accused driver, Prashant Gaikwad, was arrested but later released on bail.

Margao restaurant closures: Special camp for pollution compliance today

Team Herald

MARGAO: In compliance with directions from the Goa State Pollution Control Board (GSPCB) and subsequent orders from the High Court, the district administrations have begun sealing establishments violating environmental norms earlier this month. At least 21 eateries found to be operating illegally were sealed, while authorities initiated action against 46 units whose owners failed to obtain the requisite consent from the Goa State Pollution Control Board. According to official records, the GSPCB had previously ordered the suspension of operations for 107 units in Margao city due to a lack of consent and improper effluent

discharge. Following these actions, 53 establishments submitted the necessary applications, resulting in the revocation of closure orders for those units.

To facilitate compliance, the GSPCB has scheduled a special camp to assist with online applications for Consent to Operate and Renewal under the Water and Air Acts. The camp will take place on January 24, from 2.30 pm to 6 pm at the Collectorate Building, South Goa.

Establishments are advised to bring all required documents to ensure a smooth application process and avoid future closures. This initiative aims to streamline compliance and support local businesses in adhering to environmental norms.

Rs 20 lakh paver project launched at Belabai-Vasco

Team Herald

VASCO: Paver works worth Rs 20 lakh were inaugurated at Belabai on Thursday, marking a significant development milestone spearheaded by Mormugao Municipal Council (MMC) Chairperson Girish Borker.

Borker highlighted Belabai's lack of development for five decades and outlined future plans for internal roads at Mestawada and Orulem, as well as laying new sewage pipelines. "I am the first councillor to take up this work since MMC's inception. We are also launching the construction of a



new culvert at Orulem," he said.

Vasco's developmental focus includes equitable infrastructure upgrades across all 25 MMC wards, with Rs 25 lakh worth of works sanctioned per ward, amounting to Rs

5.5 crore. "Additionally, projects such as the Rs 7 crore MMC garden development at Baina, with Navy clearance obtained, and the Rs 12 crore Swatantrata Path beautification are in the pipeline," added Vasco MLA Krishna Salkar, who inaugurated the paver project on Thursday.

Authorities have sought public cooperation for the upcoming sewage pipeline works. The region, lacking sewerage infrastructure for 50 years, will see five sewage pumping stations installed, with temporary inconveniences expected due to road digging.

Biker falls into Benaulim culvert left incomplete for nearly a year

The poor condition of the Khareband stretch has made it hazardous for vehicles, leading to injuries and frequent mishaps

Team Herald

MARGAO: The incomplete construction of a culvert in Benaulim for over a year has resulted in numerous accidents, with locals voicing concerns about the danger it poses to commuters. A food delivery agent suffered injuries after falling over the low barricade, and into the water, while navigating the poorly maintained stretch. Locals reported that they had raised

the issue with the South Goa Collector a year ago, highlighting the excessive height of the culvert and the need for urgent repairs. However, no steps have been taken to address the issue, leaving the road in a deteriorating state.

Residents also pointed to substandard construction, which they claim has made the area particularly prone to accidents. "Several vehicles have gone off the road, including a car that

recently fell into a waterlogged section. The deteriorating road condition forces motorists to swerve into the opposite lane to avoid potholes, increasing the risk of collisions," said social activist from Benaulim, Santan Pereira.

To mitigate accidents, locals have taken the initiative to place barrels on the road as a warning for drivers. However, they emphasise that this is a temporary measure and urged the au-

thorities to take immediate action to repair the road and ensure commuter safety.

"The road has become extremely dangerous, and despite repeated complaints, nothing has been done to improve the condition. We appealed to the authorities a year ago, but no action has been taken," added Pereira.

On Wednesday, a meeting was held to address the safety risks on the Mercado stretch.

