

Margao municipality truck caught dumping waste in open area

Vigilant residents of Peda-Margao compel sanitation workers to re-load the waste and clean up the site; demand police action against civic body

Team Herald

MARGAO: In a shocking embarrassment to local governance, the Margao Municipal Council (MMC), which has repeatedly claimed to have an efficient waste management system, was caught violating its own waste disposal norms, triggering outrage among residents.

On Wednesday, locals spotted an MMC truck unloading waste in an open space in the Peda-Margao area, an act that not only contradicts the civic body's stance on waste management but also raises serious concerns about the effectiveness of the system. Furious with what they witnessed, residents called for the police to take strict action against the Municipality, including penalties for creating a public nuisance in their locality.

Savio Coutinho, a Mar-



The workers were asked to re-load the waste in the same truck

gao resident and activist, expressed his frustration with the repeated lapses in Margao's waste management practices. He emphasised that if individuals and private establishments face fines and penalties for improper waste disposal, the Municipality should also be held accountable.

"This is how the civic body is handling waste within its jurisdiction? It is complete-

ly unacceptable to simply shift waste from one site and dump it in another public space," Coutinho said, pointing out the sheer negligence on the part of the authorities.

He further questioned the use of taxpayer money on what he described as a "failing waste management model." He noted that this was not an isolated incident, alleging that MMC trucks had been spotted on multiple

occasions dumping garbage in open spaces rather than following proper disposal procedures at the Sonsoddo waste treatment facility.

In response to the incident, a group of residents in Peda-Margao took matters into their own hands. They confronted the municipal workers on-site and forced them to re-load the waste and clear the area.

Repeated attempts to reach MMC Chairperson Damodar Shirodkar for his comments on the incident were futile, as he remained unavailable.

Meanwhile, another resident, Rupesh Naik, raised concerns over additional waste disposal violations by MMC staff. He claimed that several residents had witnessed municipal workers burning garbage early in the morning, an act that not only creates environmental pollution but also poses a serious health hazard to the community.

"The Municipal Council is quick to penalise residents and commercial establishments for littering or illegal dumping, yet here they are, committing the very same offence without consequence. This only highlights the deep-rooted flaws in the waste management system"

— Savio Coutinho, former MMC Chairperson

"We've seen MMC workers setting fire to garbage piles. The smoke from burning waste contains harmful toxins, which can cause respiratory problems and other health issues. This reckless behaviour must stop immediately, and those responsible should be held accountable"

— Rupesh Naik, Margao local

"We've seen MMC workers setting fire to garbage piles. The smoke from burning waste contains harmful toxins, which can cause respiratory problems and other health issues. This reckless behaviour must stop immediately, and those responsible should be held accountable," Naik said.

The incident has sparked widespread criticism, with

locals questioning whether the civic body will take responsibility for its mismanagement or if such violations will persist without consequence. Residents are now urging higher authorities to intervene and ensure that waste management regulations are enforced uniformly, regardless of whether the violator is a citizen or the Municipality itself.

HC questions Goa govt's handling of noise pollution complaints

Set to finalise independent Noise Monitoring Committee at Feb 4 hearing; orders Anjuna police to furnish missing CCTV footage from noisy nightclubs during December 2024

AUGUSTO RODRIGUES

REPORTS: The Goa Bench of the Bombay High Court on Wednesday continued hearings on Contempt Petition 12 of 2023, addressing the State's failure to curb noise pollution, particularly in Anjuna.

Amicus Curiae Nigel Costa Frias proposed activist Inacio Fernandes as one of the two members for the court-monitored Noise Monitoring Committee (NMC). However, when Attorney General Devidas Pangam pressed for a second name, Costa Frias sought more time, stressing that the nominee must be "worthy." Justices M S Karnik and Nivedita P Mehta agreed, emphasising the need for credible individuals, as the existing enforcement mechanisms had failed. "Reports claim there's no noise, yet people continue to suffer," noted Justice Karnik.

Representing W Hotel, advocate Gilman Coelho Pereira questioned the need for a separate committee, arguing that the government was already monitoring the issue. Justice Karnik countered, stating, "We are still nowhere near solving the problem."

"In that case," requested Coelho Pereira, "let the other name be suggested by the government."

"The Government already has its representation in the committee. Don't be under the impression that the new members will be going by themselves and doing what they want," retorted Justice Karnik. While some advocates opposed new members, Justice Karnik insisted that citizen involvement

Reports are made that there is no noise pollution, but people are still suffering because of it, hence the need to appoint people (to the Noise Monitoring Committee), who will be above board. Get people from other villages. There are bound to be honest people elsewhere"

— Justice M S Karnik

was necessary. "Let the people be involved. The committee will work alongside the government," he said.

A fresh controversy arose over missing CCTV footage. Costa Frias pointed out that Anjuna Police had failed to provide footage requested by the court on January 15. In its affidavit, police claimed that footage from 21 establishments had been overwritten due to DVR storage limits. Expressing dissatisfaction, Justice Karnik ordered authorities to submit footage of post-10 PM music violations before the next hearing on February 4. "You need to provide the CCTV footage," said Justice Karnik. "We will finalise the Noise Monitoring Committee during the next hearing on February 4 after which, we will file a comprehensive order," he concluded.

Siolim resident Aaron Fernandes, present at the proceedings, criticised the State's inaction. "It's clear the noise pollution offenders want the ball back in the government's court. If needed, I'll file another PIL," he said, recalling an incident where he was denied beach access in Anjuna due to a private party.

Goa police steps up security on Calangute-Candolim stretch

Team Herald

CALANGUTE: In response to recent incidents of violence against tourists and accidents related to water sports, Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) Varsha Sharma, IPS, along with senior officers, conducted a late-night security review of the Calangute-Candolim tourism belt on Tuesday.

Accompanied by SP (North) Akshat Kaushal, DySP Vishwesh Karpe, and other officials, Sharma assessed ongoing security

measures and directed intensified police patrolling along the beach stretch. Police have now deployed round-the-clock surveillance to prevent assaults on tourists and to ensure that beach shacks close by 11 pm.

ATTACKS ON TOURISTS

Additionally, the tourism department and the tourist police unit (TPU) have launched a crackdown on illegal activities along the coast, while the coastal police have begun conducting random checks on water sports operators to ensure compliance with safety regulations.

Cavelossim P'yat calls for govt support after stray dogs maul tourist on Mobor beach

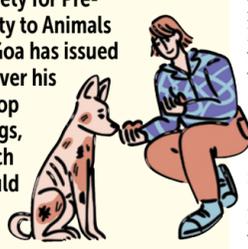
Team Herald

MARGAO: The village panchayat of Cavelossim has raised serious concerns regarding recent stray dog attacks on tourists and called for support from the relevant authorities to address the issue.

Speaking to reporters, Dixon Vas, Sarpanch of Cavelossim village panchayat, emphasized the community's willingness to help resolve the situation. "We are ready to provide all necessary resources, including funding, but a proper mechanism for control and sterilization is needed, along with the support of experts in the field," said Vas.

The response follows an incident the previous day, in which a foreign tourist was attacked by a pack of five dogs while walking alone along the Mobor

The District Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (DSPCA) South Goa has issued a notice to Vas over his suggestion to stop feeding stray dogs, warning that such an approach could amount to animal cruelty



beach stretch. This incident has again highlighted the issue of safety and security for tourists and other visitors to the area.

The Mobor-Cavelossim beach stretch has seen several similar dog bite cases this season, with multiple reports of dogs attacking guests

strolling along the beach near the mouth of the River Sal. "We've already taken steps to address the issue, including initiating a dog shelter project in collaboration with a renowned resort as part of their corporate social responsibility efforts. However, we have been informed that the stray dog problem continues to affect the

beaches, and we need the support of the concerned authorities to fully resolve it," the Sarpanch explained.

Vas also raised concerns about the impact of stray dogs on local wildlife, particularly noting that turtle nesting areas are being dug up and disturbed by the animals.

Traffic reforms planned to ease congestion in Fatorda

Sardesai vows action against encroachments, rent-a-car vehicles parked on the streets



A traffic snarl outside the SGPDA market in Fatorda due to cars parked illegally on the roadsides - file pic

Team Herald

MARGAO: Over the next 10 days, traffic police and other agencies will focus on raising public awareness about road discipline and proper parking in an effort to alleviate traffic congestion in the Fatorda area.

On Wednesday, Fatorda MLA Vijai Sardesai, along with his councillors, Goa Forward Party workers, supporters, traffic police, and Margao Municipal Council (MMC) officials, conducted an inspection from St. Joaquin Circle to Jackson Bar in Borda to assess and discuss potential solutions to improve traffic flow.

During the inspection, Sardesai raised concerns over the presence of unsightly overhead TV and internet cables, emphasising that Fatorda already has underground cabling infrastructure in place. "Overhead cables are an eyesore and should be removed immediately," he said, advocating for a cleaner and more organized urban environment.

Borda, and the establishment of designated parking lanes for cars and bikes in front of the Multipurpose College.

Sardesai also highlighted the issue of rent-a-car businesses occupying roadside spaces along Borda Road.

"I will write to the RTO urging strict action against rent-a-car owners who misuse widened roads as parking lots. Roads are meant for traffic movement, not private businesses to park their vehicles," he stated.

Sardesai also announced that traffic police and other relevant agencies would focus on public awareness regarding road discipline and proper parking over the next 10 days. During this period, road markings will be drawn, and slip roads will be constructed. After this awareness phase, stricter enforcement measures, including fines and challans, will be implemented. "Without discipline, our constituency cannot progress," he added.

TANGLED EYESORE



Internet cables and other assorted wires crisscross overhead and hang on electricity poles along the highway in Porvorim. The High Court recently gave the Power Department a free hand to cut cables from private service providers from streetlights and poles belonging to the Department.

Two tourists from Vengurla brutally beaten up at Arambol

Team Herald

PERNEM: Two tourists from Vengurla were brutally assaulted by four persons from Arambol for drinking in a public place at Bhoma, Palyem on Wednesday. The incident occurred when accused persons from Arambol questioned them for drinking in the public. This led to heated altercation between the them and local boys assaulted them. Soon the mob too joined in the assault, according to the Mandrem police. The names of both the injured were not immediately made available.

They were first taken to Community's Health Centre, Tuem and later shifted to North Goa District Hospital, Mapusa. Later that night both the injured were referred to the Goa Medical College and Hospital, Bambolim for further treatment. The Mandrem police are investigating the case

South Goa police intensify action against tobacco violations, book 5,224 cases in 2024

Team Herald

MARGAO: Police in South Goa ramped up enforcement of the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), booking 5,224 cases in 2024, a sharp rise from the 3,924 cases registered in 2023.

Despite the law restricting the sale of tobacco within 100 yards of educational institutions, Margao resident Sandeep Pednekar noted that enforcement gaps remain. "Sale of cigarettes and vapes continue. Display boards prohibiting tobacco sales to minors are required at points of sale and outside educational institutions, but it appears that very few have complied," he said.

Data reveals that in 2023, police stations in South Goa had booked 1,938 cases by May, sig-

UP IN SMOKE

The Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act prohibits smoking in public places, except in designated smoking zones at:

- Hotels and restaurants
- Airports
- Open spaces

Additionally, smoking is restricted in various locations, including:

- Auditoriums and movie theaters
- Hospitals and healthcare facilities
- Public transport (aircraft, buses, trains)
- Government and private offices
- Courts and judicial buildings
- Post offices and markets
- Educational institutions

nificantly up from 1,206 cases during the same period in 2022. By December 2022, a total of 3,401 cases had been recorded.

Among the top enforcers in 2022 were Dabolim Police (516 cases), Margao (388), Vasco Railway Police (382), and Col-

Cuncolim IDC factory not permitted to store slag

Team Herald

MARGAO: The Cuncolim Municipal Council has decided not to renew the No Objection Certificate (NOC) sought by Shradha Ispat Private Limited for the storage of slag at a private property in the Cuncolim Industrial Estate.

At the Council meeting on Tuesday, chaired by Chairperson Landry Mascarenhas, members unanimously agreed not to issue the NOC to the industry for the storage of industrial slag, which is a by-product produced by the smelting of metal. Slag is often used for

road construction purposes.

This resolution is significant, particularly in light of the complaint filed by local citizens urging the council not to grant the renewal. The issue was discussed following a hearing conducted by Chief Officer John Fernandes, who had received the complaint.

The Chief Officer explained that Shradha Ispat was originally granted a NOC for slag storage by the Cuncolim Municipal Council and had now approached the Council with the necessary documents from the Goa State Pollution

Control Board to request a renewal. The matter was then referred to the Council for a final decision.

Additionally, the Council discussed the growing issue of residential rooms constructed along the Salaulim irrigation canal near the Cuncolim Industrial Estate.

In response, Chief Officer Fernandes explained that he had issued a notice to the Water Resources Department (WRD), which informed him that it is currently conducting a demarcation of the acquired property along the irrigation line.

smoking in public places such as theatres, hospitals, transport hubs, restaurants, bars, offices, markets, and educational institutions, with designated smoking zones allowed only in specified locations.

Advocate Vinay Patker stressed the importance of enforcing Section 6(a) of the Act, which prohibits the sale of tobacco to minors. "Vendors must verify a buyer's age, but this rarely happens. Smoking among underage youth remains rampant," he said.

Section 6(b) restricts the sale of tobacco within 100 yards of educational institutions, yet activists say violations persist. Social workers have urged stricter implementation, particularly ensuring required display boards are installed at sales points and schools.

COTPA, 2003, prohibits