

HC refuses to stay elections of Ramnath Damodar Devasthan managing committee

Mamlatdar directed to keep votes cast by newly added, and deleted members in different ballot boxes, seal them until further orders

Team Herald

PANJIM: Refusing to stay elections of the managing committee of Shree Ramnath Damodar Saunathan, Zambaulim, the High Court of Bombay at Goa has directed the Sanguem Mamlatdar to keep votes cast by newly added and deleted members (mahazans) in different ballot boxes and to seal them until further orders on February 26.

The elections to elect the new managing committee Shree Ramnath Damodar Saunathan, Zambaulim is scheduled on Sunday, February 9.

Omkar Kamat Sambaray, Prasad Ghode and Raghav-

The Court has asked the Sanguem Mamlatdar, who is the Administrator of the devalayas to issue a public notice in newspapers and also to display on the notice of board of the Devasthan the names of deleted mahazans so that they can cast their votes in the elections on Sunday. All three ballot boxes sealed and segregated shall remain in the custody of the Mamlatdar/Administrator until further orders by the Court

endra Pai had filed separate writ petitions challenging the addition of new mahazans and deletion of mahazans from the catalogue having approximately 3,000 mahazans, by the present managing committee.

Representing the managing committee, Adv G K Sardessai submitted that

The Court should not interdict with the elections and there were other remedies available to the petitioners to air their grievances. He further said that the members who were added in the catalogue were lineal descendants of the mahazans. But the Court found some merit in the conten-

tions of senior advocate S S Katak, who appeared for the petitioners. Considering the large number of members who have been added and deleted just before the elections, the Court said that it requires scrutiny of the matter especially in the light of observation made by the Court while hearing a writ petition in 2022.

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elections on Sunday. All three ballot boxes sealed and segregated shall remain in the custody of the Mamlatdar/Administrator until further orders by the Court.

The next hearing has been fixed on February 26.

It may be recalled that in March 2022, the Court had allowed elections of the managing committee but had directed the Sanguem Mamlatdar/Administrator to maintain separate ballot boxes after some mahazans challenged the deletion of 2,352 mahazans out of a total of 3,084 from the list of mahazans entitled to vote to elect the new managing committee.

Tourists, security guards clash at Candolim hotel

Team Herald

CALANGUTE: In yet another incident of violence against tourists in the Calangute-Candolim tourism hub, a group of tourists from Kalyan-Thane, near Mumbai, were involved in a brawl with security guards at a hotel in Candolim late on Thursday night, leaving two individuals hospitalised.

Calangute police stated that the incident occurred at around 10 pm. The group of six tourists had booked a villa at a hotel in Bamonwaddo, Candolim, for their stay. However, upon checking in, they found the accommodation to be in poor condition and decided to check out. Following discussions, the villa owner refunded their booking amount. As the tourists were leav-

ing the hotel, a staff member alleged that one of them, Dheeraj Chaudhary, had urinated in the compound. An argument ensued, escalating into a physical altercation between Chaudhary and a security guard, Gulzar Ali, with both men assaulting each other.

Chaudhary's brother and other members of his group rushed to his defence, while additional security guards came to assist Ali. The fight resulted in both Chaudhary and Ali sustaining injuries, and they

were subsequently taken to Goa Medical College (GMC), Bambolim for treatment.

Calangute police have registered a cross FIR under Sections 351(3) and 118(1) read with (5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) 2023 against both parties. The FIR follows a complaint filed by Neeraj Chaudhary, Dheeraj's brother, against security guards Gulzar Ali, Mujabir Hussain, and Suleman Rehman, while the security guards have also filed a complaint against the tourists.

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Row over illegal sub-division of devasthan land at Balli

Team Herald

PANJIM: Some of the mahazans of Shree Shantadurga Ballikarin Saunathan, Balli have demanded action against some of the present and former managing committee members for allegedly committing illegalities and not to allow them to contest the elections scheduled on Sunday, February 9.

Speaking to reporters at Panjim, mahazan Mandar Fal Dessai alleged that some of the present and previous members of the managing committee had illegally and without obtaining necessary permission from the Quepem Mamlatdar who is also the Administrator of Devalaya, sub-divided the devasthan land into plots.

He said that 16 plots were

made and they were given to present and previous managing committee members on lease for a period of 98 years without conducting auction. These plots were leased out at a lesser price than the prevailing market rate and caused loss to the Devalaya.

Fal Dessai said that when enquired, the Administrator of devalaya told him that he had no information about the sale of plots and charged that the authorities concerned were reluctant to initiate action due to political pressures.

Meanwhile, Fal Dessai and other mahazans have demanded that all those involved in illegalities should not be allowed to recontest the managing committee elections scheduled on Sunday.

GBA: TCP granted permissions in Panjim by violating HC order

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Goa Bachao Abhiyan (GBA) has urged the Town and Country Planning (TCP) Department to revoke the development permissions issued in subversion of the High Court's stay order on Panjim Outline Development Plan (ODP) 2021.

The GBA said that the development permissions granted in Panjim were in direct contravention to the High Court order wherein the Goa Bachao Abhiyan was one of the petitioners challenging arbitrary zone changes made in ODP 2021.

According to the GBA, on August 31, 2023, the TCP Department constituted a committee for scrutinising, verifying and examining proposals received from applicants for additional

According to the GBA, the property falls within flood prone areas when the TDP Department had stated that "flood prone areas shall not be considered for change of zone during preparation of the ODP of Panjim planning area

leaving aside the nomenclature of the one. The NGPDA had changed the actual effect of the zone from S1 to C1 (SPL) 250 FAR which was in line with the recommendation of Regional Plan 2021.

According to the GBA, the property falls within flood prone areas when the TDP Department had stated that "flood prone areas shall not be considered for change of zone during preparation of the ODP of Panjim planning area."

The TCP Department must revoke the development permissions issued through the use of the additional FAR and height amendment using Gazette Notifications as it circumvents the spirit and meaning of the Court's stay order on the ODP 2021. The TCP department must henceforth stop such subversive actions for the damage they cause, the GBA said.

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