

Noise Monitoring Panel: Govt rejects names proposed by Amicus Curiae

Concerns in Anjuna, Vagator on govt's proposed candidates, locals question motive

AUGUSTO RODRIGUES

VAGATOR/PORVORIM: The government's decision to reject the two names recommended by Amicus Curiae Adv Nigel de Costa Frias on the Noise Monitoring Committee and instead propose its own candidates, has raised concerns among locals in Anjuna and Vagator. They hope that the High Court judges will uphold the dignity and rights of the sick, children, and vulnerable people.

NOISE POLLUTION CASE

"The government has rejected both the names suggested by me and have instead recommended two others. From the two, one is okay but there are concerns about the other and I should be able to provide the other name during the next hearing," Adv Frias informed Justices M S Karnik and Nivedita

P Mehta as hearing on contempt petition 12 of 2023 came up for hearing on Wednesday.

Adv Gilman Coelho Pereira, representing W Hotel, requested to be informed of the proposed names before a decision was made, prompting Justice Karnik to ask for a final decision by Tuesday, February 18.

Adv Frias had recommended the names of Inacio Fernandes and Jeremy Ferreira through his subordinate Adv Shane Coutinho during his absence during the last hearing.

A note titled Names suggested by State, passed during the hearing mentioned the names of Nyron Reginaldo Dias and Rohan Gadekar. "I do not know who they are. Those are the names suggested by the government," stated Adv Frias during the hearing.

Nyron Reginaldo Dias, according to the note, has been a "Resident of Anjuna since birth. He has been active in social life through



an NGO Niz Anjunks. Working as Assistant Manager in Ivis Resort Anjuna. He has always been proactive in social issues pertaining to Anjuna village. Also, very well versed with the local issues and efficient to take up public issues."

Dias, according to reports available with Anjuna Police, was one of the five people arrested Under Section 143, 147, 148 and 149 of IPC for allegedly attacking a tour-

ist outside the Spazio Leisure Resort in Anjuna on March 5, 2023.

His Facebook account has pictures of him with Gajanan Tilve, who was seen in a video, assaulting Inacio Fernandes - one of the names suggested by the Amicus Curiae - during the Anjuna gram sabha in the presence of the police. Fernandes was allegedly assaulted for his crusade against noise pollution.

Rohan Gadekar, the note from the government states, "Is a young sportsman who is actively being a part of Anjuna Gymkhana. He is a young businessman who is passionate towards sports yet professional in his business. He is part of the water sports industry as well as the transport business. A dedicated young individual who has sympathy towards humankind, especially the village of Anjuna."

In a video titled Anjuna Files and dated November 30, 2024, Gadekar can be heard complain-

ing that tourists are not coming in numbers to Anjuna because there is no music after 10 pm.

"It is clear that the government is all out to sabotage the plans of the High Court by suggesting these two names. The government intends to continue fooling the High Court with wrong reports that no loud music is played by getting these two in," complained Anna Fernandes from Anjuna.

"At one time, I thought that with the help of the High Court, we were going to be able to sleep in peace again. I hope the High Court reads through the government game and accepts the names recommended by the amicus curiae," hoped septuagenarian Alex Noronha from Anjuna.

"The Advocate General thinks he can keep fooling all the time. It is time for me to bring to the notice of the court how he acted in collusion with noise polluters before he was appointed AG," said petitioner Desmond Alvares.

Complaint against bank for violating disability rights

Team Herald

PANJIM: Disability Rights Association of Goa (DRAG) has filed a complaint with the Executive Magistrate alleging discrimination and insult towards persons with disability by Bank of Maharashtra, Bambolim Branch, and Reserve Bank of India, Panjim.

In a representation, DRAG President Avelino de Sa said, "We wish to bring to your notice that the Bank of Maharashtra Bambolim Branch and ATM is not accessible for persons with disability thereby discriminating against persons with disability and in violation of Section 3 and Section 40 of the Rights of Persons with Disability Act 2016. They have constructed a ramp which endangers human life and it is not as per the standards laid down under Section 40 of the Rights of Persons with Disability Act 2016."

He pointed out that recently the bank has put up a notice stating that door step

service will be provided to senior citizens and persons with disability.

"This is an insult to persons with disability as it is against the principles of non-discrimination and equal opportunity to persons with disability," he said.

The DRAG has urged the Magistrate to direct the police to file complaint against Manager, Bank of Maharashtra, Bambolim Branch, and Regional Manager, Bank of Maharashtra, Panjim, under Section 7 and 92 of the Rights of Persons with Disability Act 2016 for discrimination and insult to persons with disability.

He also pointed out DRAG had taken up the above matter with the Reserve Bank of India, Panjim Branch, but they have not taken any action to resolve the matter till date.

The DRAG has urged the Magistrate to direct the police to also make the Regional Director, Reserve Bank of India, also a party to the complaint.

CM slams Mayem locals for opposing law college

Team Herald

BICHOLIM: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Wednesday criticised those opposing development projects in Mayem village and said that this mindset was harmful for the next generation.

Speaking after laying foundation stones for key development projects in Mayem constituency, Sawant condemned the decision of some of the Mayem villagers opposing non-polluting projects like the proposed international law college.

He said, "Few people who are adamant in not bringing development into the village should stop it as it would cause harm to the next generation. The proposed international law college at Mayem will change dynamics and overall development of the village."

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Mayem MLA Premendra Shet, North Goa ZP Adhyaksh Shankar Chodankar, ZP Member Mahesh Sawant, Mayem sarpanch and panchayat members and other dignitaries were present.

The Goa government remained committed to holistic development, improving infrastructure, tourism, and economic growth, and enhancing the overall quality of life for residents and visitors alike, Sawant said.

AVIAN HAVEN



The once-cultivated fields of Gaunsavaddo-Siolim now thrive as a biodiversity haven, attracting a variety of wild birds, including the striking Swamp Hen (top right) and the sleek snake bird or Anhinga (bottom left), among others

Goan transporters protest outsiders handling Mormugao Port cargo

Team Herald

VASCO: The All Goa Lorry Owners Association, the Transport Association, and the Tipper Truck Associations staged a protest on Wednesday against the awarding of transportation contracts to outsiders at the Mormugao Port Authority (MPA).

The protestors claimed that outsourcing transportation was depriving locals of livelihood opportunities and causing significant revenue losses to the State government.

All Goa Lorry Owners Association President Shrikant Chari criticised the company handling the wood chip cargo, which, according to him, had only arrived at the MPA after eight years, and accused it of neglecting local transporters.

Chari said that although they were pleased the MPA had secured new cargo, they were disappointed because 99 per cent of the

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transporters appointed were from other States. He pointed out that the government's slogan, "Vocal for Local," had been ignored, and Goan transporters had been sidelined.

Chari also noted that other ports, such as Mangalore and Jaigarh, had regulations in place that provided 100 per cent preference for local transporters. He called for similar regulations to be implemented at the MPA.

Chari further pointed out that Rule 145 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1991, mandates that transportation agents must be registered in Goa, but transporters from other States had failed to comply. He stated that

this non-compliance was resulting in losses to the State exchequer, as these transporters were not paying local taxes or GST.

Another local transporter, Wasim Shaikh, said that despite submitting quotations in consultation with all stakeholders, the company had never responded and had started transportation with 30 transporters from other States. He added that the company was also trying to appoint 20 more transporters, and if this trend continued, it would spell disaster for Goan transporters.

Hemant Shetgaonkar of the Tipper Truck Association warned that transporters would be forced to protest on the streets if they continued to be deprived of business.

The protestors have now decided to meet Chief Minister Pramod Sawant again to demand that maximum business at Mormugao Port be reserved for Goans.

Foundation laid for new Chicolna-Bogmallo panchayat ghar

Team Herald

VASCO: The foundation for the new Chicolna-Bogmallo Pyat Ghar was laid by Panchayats Minister Mauvin Godinho.

The new, modern panchayat ghar will be built under the Deendayal Panchayati Raj Infrastructure Development Scheme.

Speaking on the occasion, Godinho emphasised the importance of the project in strengthening grassroots governance and enhancing community development. "The new, modern and well-equipped panchayat ghar aims to improve local governance and provide better services to the villagers," he said.

The construction of Phase 1 of the panchayat ghar is estimated at around Rs 2.73 cr, while Phase 2 will consist of additional internal works. Initially, the village panchayat was sanctioned Rs 1 crore, but is now expected to rise to Rs 6 crore, the Minister informed.

SC stays High Court ruling on pension benefits to former SCIC

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Supreme Court of India has stayed the order of the High Court of Bombay at Goa, which had directed the State government to provide pensionary benefits, including arrears, to former State Chief Information Commissioner (SCIC) Prashant S P Tendolkar.

The Supreme Court Bench, comprising Justice J K Maheshwari and Justice Aravind Kumar, condoned the delay and admitted the special leave petition (SLP) filed by the Goa government. The Court issued notices to the respondents, returnable in six weeks.

On August 1, 2024, the High Court had directed the State gov-

ernment to calculate the pensionary benefits and pay the arrears to Tendolkar within three months of the order's date.

However, the government has contested that Tendolkar was never in pensionable service, both as the Additional President of the Administrative Tribunal of Goa, Panjim, and as the State Chief Information Commissioner.

The government became alerted after former Congress president Girish Chodankar filed a complaint with Chief Secretary Dr V Candavelou, IAS, accusing Tendolkar of 'falsely' claiming pension benefits. In his complaint, the former Congress president called for a review of the High Court's judgment.

By-election for Ward X of Cuncolim municipality on March 9

Team Herald

CUNCOLIM: The Goa State Election Commission (GSEC) has announced the by-election for Ward No X of the Cuncolim Municipal Council in Salcete taluka, which will be held on Sunday, March 9.

The process of filing nomination papers will begin on Wednesday, February 12, from 10 am to 1 pm, with the last date for submitting nominations being February 19. If necessary, polling will take place on March 9.

The by-election for Ward X (General) has been necessitated by the death of sitting

councillor Rahul Dessai in October last year.

The South Collector has been appointed as the Municipal Council Election Officer, while the Deputy Collector/SDM of Salcete taluka will serve as the Returning Officer, and the Salcete taluka Mamlatdar will act as the Assistant Returning Officer.

The Commission has also appointed a general observer and an expenditure observer, while the District Magistrate will appoint a flying squad to monitor the enforcement of the model code of conduct, which came into effect in the ward on Monday.

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CM urges Goan industrial diaspora to avail benefits of schemes announced in Union Budget

Team Herald

PANJIM: Noting that the Goan industrialists don't take the benefit and utilise the schemes of the Union government, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Wednesday urged the industrialists of Goa to avail maximum benefits of the schemes that have been presented in the Union Budget 2025-26.

Sawant was speaking at the interaction of the Union Budget organised by the Goa Pradesh BJP for the business community of the State. Union Minister of State for Commerce

and Industry Jitin Prasada also presented an array of upsides that the recent budget has brought about for Goa through funding and budgetary allocation for various sectors.

Sawant said, "We have a great opportunity for industries to take benefit of the schemes that have been presented in the budget. A higher budget allocation that is going to directly and indirectly benefit various sectors of Goa is an achievement of the State - Pramod Sawant, Chief Minister

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"Not a single criticism was heard because this is a historic budget that has been presented. This time the budget is of aspirational India, the salaried people, the middle class. At least seven of the eight crore tax payers of India will benefit from the tax relaxation. It is giving spending power to the people," he said. "Challenges have been immense, Covid-19 conflicts and climate change.

Despite these downsides, the Indian economy is intact," Prasada said. "Tourism is the focus and Goa will be the biggest beneficiary. All tourism sites of Goa will be redeveloped in PPP mode," he added while speaking of all the benefits that Goa will get through the Union budget" he added.

BJP State President Damodar 'Damu' Naik said, "In the days to come and in the budget of Goa we as a party will take inputs from all the stratas of Goa and will create a budget that will be good and beneficial for all."

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