

Residents stand their ground against resort construction on Sinquerim hill

Bat for conservation; Vow to protect seaside hill for posterity; awareness meet on Feb 19

Team Herald

CALANGUTE: Citizens of Candolim and neighbouring areas have joined hands to reject a hotel project on the Sinquerim Hill and have given a clarion call to oppose the government's decision to allow the development on the stunning seaside hill known for its pristine beauty and rich biodiversity.

Public spirited citizens have now called for a public awareness meeting under the 'Save Sinquerim Hill for the Next Generation' campaign near the St Lawrence Church, Sinquerim, on Wednesday, February 19. The campaign has been launched

by the Calangute Constituency Forum (CCF) to prevent Sinquerim Hill in Candolim from being commercially developed by a resort and other private entities.

In a recent complaint to the Chief Minister and other authorities, the CCF stated: "Villagers of Candolim, along with CCF and residents of Calangute constituency and surrounding areas are uniting to express their grave concern over the recent decision by the state government, which signed a supplementary lease agreement on August 13, 2024 with a top hotel group. This agreement permits them to de-



velop Sinquerim hill for commercial purposes on a property bearing survey no. 96/0 of Candolim village, covering a land area

of 300,000 square metres. "There is apprehension among the villagers that once this project begins, it will pave the way for the

destruction of the entire hill area," said Premanand Divkar, CCF president.

Premanand highlighted that several celebrities had purchased land on Sinquerim Hill and its slopes, including a Bollywood superstar who has already commenced construction work, despite the area being classified as a Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) no-development zone. "This issue will be a key point of discussion at Wednesday's meeting," he said.

In September last year, following a complaint by the CCF, the Goa Coastal Zone Management Authority (GCZMA) conducted a site inspection of an

alleged illegal construction taking place within 100 metres of Fort Aguada at Sinquerim, within survey no. 96/0.

According to the GCZMA's site inspection report from September, "The ongoing work at the Upper Fort Aguada is part of a project undertaken by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), Goa Circle. ASI officials informed that the construction of a reinforced concrete (RCC) structure is intended for a heritage interpretation centre, which will include an audio-visual room, toilets, exhibition galleries, a cafeteria, a souvenir shop, and a ticket counter.

Power minister urges people to reap benefits of solar energy

Team Herald

PONDA: Power Minister Sudin Dhavalikar has urged people to adopt solar energy, highlighting the benefits of free electricity and the opportunity to earn revenue from surplus power generation. He emphasised the need to reduce reliance on coal-generated electricity to curb environmental pollution and reduce the country's dependence on costly coal imports.

Speaking at a special session introducing the Solar Rooftop Scheme and PM-KUSUM 'A' and 'B' schemes at Bandora Village Panchayat, Dhavalikar said "Coal-generated power contributes to environmental pollution, and the country has to spend significant amounts of foreign exchange on importing coal. Over the years, we have extracted coal from domestic coalfields, but it is not



sustainable in the long run. India imports coal from Australia, which is an expensive affair. However, if we start generating power through rooftop solar panels, it will not only be profitable for the country but will also help protect the environment by reducing coal burning."

Dhavalikar appealed to residents to install solar rooftop panels under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's scheme, which provides free electricity up to 400 units for those switching to solar energy.

"Compared to Maharashtra and Karnataka, electricity rates in Goa are lower. Installing solar rooftop panels will be profitable for people, even when considering maintenance costs," said Dhavalikar.

He further stated that the Goa government provides a 50% subsidy for residential solar rooftop panel installations.

"For households with a terrace, the scheme ensures zero electricity bills. Residential consumers using up to 400 units per month will be eli-

gible for the free installation of rooftop solar plants (up to 5 kW) through empanelled vendors of the National Portal and the Goa Energy Development Agency (GEDA).

Dhavalikar also highlighted government schemes available for farmers, encouraging them to use fallow land, water bodies, and barren land to generate solar power.

Residents raised various concerns regarding solar panel costs, maintenance, and efficiency, which were addressed by GEDA officials.

Benaulim Congress calls to solve water issues in constituency

Team Herald

MARGAO: Benaulim Congress Block has called for urgent action to address the severe water crisis affecting several villages in the constituency, highlighting the non-functional status of overhead water tanks built nearly a decade ago.

Addressing the media, Block President Keith Gracias along with other leaders, drew attention to the persistent water shortage plaguing residents of Colva 2nd Ward, Fatrade, Varca and parts of Orlim, where low water pressure has become a critical concern.

They referred to two major overhead water tanks constructed by the PWD in 2016 - a 1000 cubic meter tank in Varca and a 500 cubic meter tank in Orlim - which remain unused due

to infrastructural inadequacies. The tanks, along with a 300 cubic meter facility in Carmona, were meant to resolve the area's water problems but have instead become symbols of failed planning and bureaucratic inefficiency.

Gracias criticised the PWD's recent claim that additional land is required for a sump and pumping station, questioning why such basic requirements weren't considered during the initial planning phase.

With summer approaching, Gracias demanded immediate intervention from the MLA and Chief Minister, who holds the PWD portfolio, to either operationalise the tanks or replace the inadequate pipeline network that currently prevents the tanks from being filled due to low pressure.

Unidentified man dies at Margao Railway Station entrance

MARGAO: An unidentified man, aged around 50, was found unconscious at the main entrance of Margao Railway Station and later died at South Goa District Hospital. Margao Police, alerted by a call from the hospital, found that the deceased was a rag picker who regularly slept in the area.

The body has been preserved at the hospital morgue for identification and a post-mortem examination. The cause of death is yet to be determined. PSI Nilesh Shirvoikar is conducting the investigation.

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Vedanta refutes charges made by Pilgao villagers

Team Herald

BICHOLIM: The residents of Pilgao have alleged that the mining company transported ore on Friday night but the company has strongly refuted the charge claiming that only material was being transported within the mining lease area.

Reacting to villagers allegations that the company illegally transported iron ore at night in contravention of the High Court order, the Vedanta Limited in a statement claimed that only material was being transported within the mining lease area and that no iron ore was being transported to Sarmanas Jetty beyond the stipulated time approved by the authorities. No trip can be generated beyond the time fixed in the server, it said.

Congmen demand action against dumping of garbage at Baga beach

Team Herald

CALANGUTE: Congress workers from the Calangute have called on the state government to take immediate action to address the unchecked dumping of garbage by the Tourism Department's contractor at the Baga beach. They warned that the issue could 'damage the region's reputation as a tourist destination'.

In a formal complaint submitted on Saturday to Dr Roshan Nazareth, Health Officer at Candolim Primary Health Centre (PHC), the Congress Block President, Lourenco Silveira, highlighted concerns over the mismanagement of waste disposal at Baga. Silveira urged the health department to take swift action by conducting an inspection of the affected areas, assessing the associated health

risks, and enforcing stricter penalties for negligence in waste disposal.

Following the complaint, Dr Nazareth confirmed that a site inspection will be conducted on Monday.

Earlier this week, the Calangute panchayat had already issued a notice to the Tourism Department, instructing them to clear the dump yard in Tito's Lane within seven days.

"Improper garbage disposal and a huge dumping site created by the contractor responsible for waste management under the Tourism Department are negatively impacting public health and the environment," Silveira stated.

They warned that the increasing waste accumulation in key tourist areas has led to unhygienic conditions, attracting pests and raising the risk of disease outbreaks.

"The sight of overflowing garbage bins, ripped-open rubbish bags, improper waste segregation and irregular collection schedules has exacerbated the problem," the complaint noted," said the Congmen and urged authorities to take urgent steps to address the situation before it further tarnishes Goa's image as a leading tourist destination.

Local transporters protest against MPA using outsiders in cargo business

Team Herald

PANJIM: The All Goa Lorry Owners Association, Transport Association and Tipper Truck Associations on Wednesday staged protest against outsiders being given transportation contracts at the Mormugao Port Authority (MPA).

The protesters claimed that transportation by outsiders was depriving locals of livelihood opportunities and also causing huge revenue losses to the State government.

All Goa Lorry Owners Association president Shrikant Chari slammed the company handling wood chip cargo, which according to him, arrived at the MPA after eight years, and for neglecting local transporters.

Chari said that though they were happy that the MPA had got new cargo, but were disappointed because 99 per cent of transporters appointed were from other States. The government's slogan 'Vocal for Local' has been ignored, and Goan transporters

have been sidelined.

Chari pointed out that other ports like Mangaluru and Jaigarh had rules providing 100 per cent preference for local transporters and demanded that similar regulations be imposed by the MPA.

Another local transporter Wasim Shaikh said that despite submitting quotations in consultation with all stakeholders, the company never responded and commenced transportation with 30 outsider transporters. The company is also trying to appoint 20 more transporters and if this trend continues then it will spell doom to Goan transporters, Shaikh said.

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

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Technician Process	RF & Power Ops - Goa	Diploma / Bachelor's in Engineering (ECE / Mechanical / E&E).	3+ years of related experience	Shifts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work closely with Team Leaders and Process Engineer to implement standard production processes. Modify or develop new processes / methods, tools, fixtures or equipments for repeatable, reliable and cost effective manufacturing. Must have experience in a medium volume / mix electro-mechanical manufacturing or production environment with an emphasis on manufacturing processes.
Team Leader	RF & Power Ops - Goa	Diploma / Bachelor's in Engineering (ECE / Mechanical / E&E).	4+ years of related experience	Shifts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for coordinating, monitoring, supervising and executing the activities of one or more production areas. Assists in the development of departmental personnel to enhance skills, improve responsiveness. 2-5 years of shop floor experience. Candidate must have high level of skill and knowledge in manufacturing / production operations with demonstrated ability to function in a leadership role. Very good interpersonal and communication skills.

"Walk-in interviews will be conducted between 10:30 am to 3:30 pm at ""Amphenol Andrew Antennas India Pvt Ltd"" , Gate no. 2, Plot No. N-2, Phase IV, Verna Industrial Estate, Verna, Goa. Please bring your updated bio data."

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Interested candidates may send their CV (mentioning current and expected remuneration) within 10 days, by post/email to hrd@vmsalgaocarcorp.com or apply online through CAREERS at www.vmsalgaocarcorp.com



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