

Ruckus at Sancoale, locals allege mismanagement of funds

Opposition panchas claim bills amounting to Rs 40L passed without discussions & proper meetings; Deputy Sarpanch refutes allegations, accuses opposition of disrupting meetings without reasons

Team Herald

VASCO: The ordinary meeting of the Sancoale Village Panchayat on Tuesday was marred by tension and chaos with the two opposition panchas and villagers alleging corruption and mismanagement of funds by the ruling panel.

The opposition panchayat members charged that the bills amounting to Rs 40 lakh were passed without discussions and proper meetings. They also alleged garbage mismanagement and that the funds were not utilised in building a new panchayat ghar.

Deputy Sarpanch Derrick Vales refuted all the allegations by stating that they had not passed any bill and

that the opposition was disrupting meetings without reasons. He claimed that the meeting was held and it deliberated the entire agenda.

However, Vales said that the disruptions by the opposition were affecting discussion of several important files related to house tax, construction licences, and other local matters. He alleged that the opposition panchayat members' sole agenda was to make baseless allegations, bring villagers and disrupt the meeting.

"When we don't react, they resort to snatching documents and office files and create a ruckus in a bid to adjourn the meeting. The opposition members are frustrated about not being in power," Vales said.

“When I insisted on reading the minutes and signing my presence for today's meeting, the Deputy Sarpanch refused to give me the book. However, the same book was handed over to another panch who arrived late. When I persisted, they abruptly ended the meeting, even though it was never conducted properly

— Tulshidas Naik, Opposition panchayat member

Vales claimed that all bills were properly included in the agenda and cleared following due procedures.

He disclosed that the village panchayat had now given the garbage collection to the Paradeep Phosphate Limited, thereby reducing the additional costs. The company will start collecting garbage in the village from April 1 this year.

Referring to the payment of fees to the lawyer, Vales

said that a small amount was paid to the lawyer while all his bills have been forwarded to the Director of Panchayats, for approval.

Opposition panchayat member Tulshidas Naik alleged that the gram sevak Orville C Vales was "illegally" officiating as panchayat secretary for the last two years. He sent a meeting notice with an agenda of 19 pages. He pointed out that the last meeting held on De-

ember 4, 2024 was wound up by the ruling group within a few minutes and they even filed a police complaint against him for allegedly damaging a book.

According to Naik, the ruling members and the gram sevak deliberately prevented him from accessing the minutes book of the previous meeting.

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High Court stays hotel construction at Arossim

Finds that the technical clearance granted by TCP Dept was renewed in March 2023 when the same had expired in 2022

Team Herald

PANJIM: The High Court of Bombay at Goa stayed a hotel project at Arossim after it was found that the technical clearance granted by the Town and Country Planning (TCP) Department was renewed in March 2023 when it had expired in 2022.

Jose Joaquim Fernandes and three villagers of Arossim had filed a public interest litigation (PIL) writ petition challenging the grant of technical clearance by the TCP Department for the construction of a hotel by M/s Goa Inn Private Ltd at Arossim village in Mormugao taluka, within CRZ area.

The petition was filed, among other grounds, on the basis that Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) and Town and Country Planning (TCP) laws were violated by granting technical clearance order, and that the project threatened the eco-sensitive sand dunes and low-lying paddy fields that were critical for the survival of the village.

The petitioners had highlighted the violation of orders of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) directing

CRZ & TCP LAWS VIOLATED: PETITIONERS

■ Arossim locals filed a PIL writ petition challenging the technical clearance by TCP Dept for the construction of a hotel by M/s Goa Inn Private Ltd in CRZ area

■ The petition was filed on the basis that CRZ & TCP laws were violated and the project threatened the eco-sensitive sand dunes and low-lying fields

■ It highlighted the violation of NGT orders direct-

ing authorities to mark all low-lying areas, stormwater drains, and water bodies in Arossim, before granting any permissions

■ Pointed out the sand dunes that shall be destroyed by the project

■ Contended there was no road access and the construction of the mandatory road access was impermissible in the NDZ and sand dunes, through which it was proposed

authorities to mark all low-lying areas, stormwater drains, and water bodies in Arossim village, before granting any permissions, and also pointed out the sand dunes that shall be destroyed by the project.

The petitioners contended that there was no road access to the project site and the construction of the mandatory road access was impermissible in the No Development Zone (NDZ) and sand dunes, through which it was proposed.

The matter was heard by

the division bench comprising Justice M S Karnik and Justice Nivedita P Mehta and noted that the technical clearance order was renewed in 2023 on the basis of a CRZ clearance that had already expired in 2022. Thus the Court granted an ad-interim stay order restraining the project proponent from carrying out any construction for the said project.

The petitioners were represented by Adv Charles Elton Da Gloria Furtado and Adv Dhruv Dhawan.

Panel calls for 2nd attempt exam of commercial tax officers

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Goa Commission for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe has recommended the Commissioner of Commercial Taxes to immediately conduct a second attempt examination of commercial tax officers, assistant commercial tax officers and commercial tax inspectors to fill the backlog of vacancies reserved for ST communities.

The Commission has also recommended that the necessary amendment be carried out to the Recruitment Rules notified under Notification dated April 24, 2018 by inclusion of second attempt examination to fill the backlog vacancies reserved for ST category and also by providing the relaxation and concession in passing marks for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes category for the said examination.

GAKUVED Federation president Adv Suresh Palkar had filed a complaint on behalf of employees belonging to ST community working in the Commercial Tax Department, seeking direction to the Department to make concerted effort to fill up the backlog reserved vacancies of commercial tax officers, assistant commercial tax officers and commercial tax inspector and UDC as soon as possible from the eligible candidates of STs only.

SAFETY CONCERN



The damaged concrete drain cover with its metal bars exposed poses danger to motorists and pedestrians along the road near National Theatre, Panjim

Bridge will be constructed for builder lobby: Sao Matias locals Want VP to inform govt about their objection; claim Divar is not receiving proper water supply

Team Herald

PANJIM: Claiming that Divar is not getting proper water supply for the last few days, Sao Matias villagers demanded that the village panchayat write to the government that it is opposed to the bridge being proposed in Divar.

They opined that the bridge will be construct-

ed for the builders lobby. They pointed out that the issue of basic facilities like water supply and roads are not being addressed but the government is talking about construction of bridges.

They asked the panchayat to send its objection to the bridge to the department concerned. The gram sabha also

discussed issues like shopping complex, underground cabling work, panchayat ground, hall, bus service and ferry service among others.

When the issue of issuing No Object Certificate (NOC) was discussed, the villagers said that permission should neither be given for swimming pools nor for borewells. The vil-

lagers told the panchayat not to allow laying of underground cables in the manner they are being laid in Panjim as part of Smart City works.

Dominic D'Souza, a villager, said, "The village feast will be celebrated on the 2nd Sunday of May. So it will be better if the works are completed well in advance."

Govt gets breather to complete ongoing Smart City works

Road works undertaken in haphazard manner: Petitioners

Team Herald

PANJIM: The High Court of Bombay at Goa on Tuesday granted the State government more time to complete the ongoing Smart City works in the State's capital city.

The Imagine Panaji Smart City Development Limited (IPSCDL) chief general manager Vivek Valke filed an additional affidavit stating that all roads in Panjim will be made operational by March 31, while work of footpaths, beautification and other ancillary works of landscaping, tree plantation, etc, will be completed by June 30 this year.

The Division Bench comprising Justice M S Karnik and Justice Nivedita P Mehta accepted the additional affidavit and the time-line and the status of road works submitted by the IPSCDL.

However, during the hearing the counsel for the petitioners told the Court that the road works were undertaken in the most haphazard manner and causing

ALL CITY ROADS TO BE READY BY MARCH 31: IPSCDL

■ In its affidavit, IPSCDL stated that all roads in Panjim will be made operational by March 31

■ It said that work of footpaths, beautification and other ancillary works of landscaping, tree plantation, etc, will be ready by June 30

■ The court accepted the additional affidavit and the timeline and the status of road works submitted by IPSCDL

■ Petitioners' counsel told the court that the road works were undertaken in



the most haphazard manner and causing immense inconvenience to the public

■ Sought time to place additional materials on record indicating that more roads have been dug up in the city, which is causing inconvenience to residents & road users

immense inconvenience to the general public.

Adv Abhijit Gosavi, counsel for the petitioners Christus Cecilio Lopes and Sadanand Vaingankar sought time to place additional materials on record indicating that more roads have been

dug up in the city, which is causing maximum inconvenience to the residents as well as the road users.

The Court asked him to file rejoinder within a week and also asked the authorities to respond by next date i.e. on February 25.

NAKSHA: Ensuring accurate documentation of land ownership

CCP, Margao & Cuncoim civic bodies among 152 urban local bodies chosen for Centre-funded project

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Corporation of the City of Panaji (CCP), Margao Municipal Council and the Cuncoim Municipal Council are among 152 urban local bodies selected for the Centrally-funded National Geospatial Knowledge Based Land Survey of Urban Habitations (NAKSHA) pilot project.

The NAKSHA programme aims to create and update land records in urban areas to ensure accurate and reliable documentation of land ownership.

Speaking at a function organised by the Directorate of Settlement and Land Records in Panjim on Tuesday, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said that the NAKSHA, the pilot project will help in urban planning in the long run and will facilitate seamless and fair land dealings, besides helping in

NAKSHA, the pilot project will help in urban planning in the long run and will facilitate seamless and fair land dealings, besides helping in urban planning and disaster management.

— Pramod Sawant, Chief Minister

"Goans are fortunate," Sawant said, adding that despite Goa being a small State, Panjim, Margao and Cuncoim were selected for this project. He also allayed fears that may come up in people's minds over the project which will be implemented in phases - survey through drones and preparing GIS based 3-D maps and title deeds, updating relevant property tax records based on the

GIS system of the properties and integration of all maps-said that people should not get scared.

"This project will not change any records such as land titles. "These GIS based 3-D maps will be available for taxation, encroachment removal and city planning activities," Sawant said.

Commissioner-cum-Secretary (Revenue) Sandip Jacques, IAS, said that this project will help the government and the common man. It will help improve land revenue collection, remove land disputes and seek the cooperation of these urban bodies for the survey to be completed within the stipulated time frame.

Earlier, Director of Settlement and Land Records Rohit Kadam in his welcome address said that NAKSHA would efficiently help manage land records.

Exploring Goa: Developers' body invited to invest in State's real estate sector

Goa Rehabilitation Board says State offers potential to global investors who are willing to invest in leisure homes and luxury villas

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Goa Rehabilitation Board and Goa Housing Board have called upon the real estate developers' body National Real Estate Development Council (NAREDCO) Maharashtra to explore investment opportunities in the development in the residential, commercial, mixed - used, redevelopment and business parks segments of the State.

The senior representatives of Goa Rehabilitation Board and Goa Development Board presented the landscape of 'Unlocking Real Estate Opportunities in Goa' to the developer members NAREDCO Maharashtra, which organised its Annual Members Meet 2025.

Speaking on the occasion, Aleixo Da Costa, Secretary,



Goa Rehabilitation Board said, "Goa is not just a tourism destination now, but a fast - growing State for scaling businesses including the real estate offering an exponential potential to the developers who are looking for setting up of new residential and commercial projects along the coastline or in the States' hinterland and also for the global investors who are willing to invest in second or leisure homes, luxury villas, rental homes or hospitality ventures."

Da Costa said, "The public sector is looking at redevelopment of its used land parcels combined with monetisation of its unused land parcels through the public - private partnerships."

"We are planning to take all these land parcels together, release the unused land in Sada Vasco for rehabilitation purposes first and then monetise the rest of the land parcels in a PPP model where private developers can participate. The tenders will be issued very

soon for monetization of the land," Da Costa said.

Sadashiv Gaonkar, Housing Engineer, Goa Housing Board, said, "Goa's real estate is experiencing an unprecedented growth driven by increasing demand by professionals, remote workers and institutional investors and the State is ready for investment, as there is a need to meet the rising demand for diverse accommodation options, residential development and mixed - use projects."

Calling the Annual Meet of NAREDCO Maharashtra in Goa to be an opportunity to understand the State's real estate landscape better and the Chief Minister's approach towards the national real estate industry collaborative, Prashant Sharma - President, NAREDCO Maharashtra said,

"NAREDCO Maharashtra is privileged to explore opportunities for real estate development in Goa to unleash the State's potential. Goa is not just an international tourism destination now, but it is transforming into a real estate development hub attracting global investors moving its property markets northwards. Goa's initiative to invite the developers to tap the real estate opportunities in the State is a welcome step."

Hari Babu, President, NAREDCO said, "Goa has been witnessing real estate investments by affluent Indian and overseas buyers in the recent times owing to their inclination for acquiring income-generating commercial assets or second homes along side their primary city homes."