

Parched Colmorod locals lose sleep waiting for just a trickle of tap water

Apartment residents struggle with poor water pressure; forced to buy packaged water for basic needs; say complaints have not elicited any response, while PWD denies there is even a supply problem

Team Herald

MARGAO: Residents of Comorod-Margao are growing increasingly frustrated with a persistent water shortage, forcing many to stay up late at night just to collect water for the next day.

Reports from locals indicate that due to low water pressure, hundreds of residents in complexes and flats are unable to get adequate water supply during the day. It is only after 11 pm that their taps finally have enough pressure to provide water.

As regular water supply remains disrupted, many have been left with no choice but to purchase water from shops to meet their daily needs.

The issue has sparked widespread concern among residents, who say that despite raising the matter with authorities, no action has been taken.

Savio Coutinho, a local resident, told **OHERALDO** that the low water pressure in Comorod has been a persistent problem for several months.

"Water tanks in buildings only get filled after 11 pm and, for



the rest of the day, there's hardly any water supply. The authorities have suggested installing ground-level tanks and pumping the water to the top tanks, but that is an impractical solution," he said.

Another resident recounted similar issues in the past, where they had to buy water tankers at their own expense.

Nicolau Barretto, another resident, expressed her frustration: "We need more water. The authorities keep offering excuses, but it's hard to understand why

other areas are receiving water while we continue to struggle. We're forced to wait until 11 or 12 p.m. to store enough water for the day."

Edgar Monteiro also shared his frustrations, adding, "We are bearing the brunt of this water crisis. As a temporary measure, we've had to buy bottled mineral water. My house is now filled with plastic bottles. We urge the authorities to take immediate action to address our suffering."

Adv. Snehal Onskar too expressed her anger over the water

"We need more water. The authorities keep offering excuses, but it's hard to understand why other areas are receiving water while we continue to struggle. We're forced to wait until 11 or 12 p.m. to store enough water for the day
—Nicolau Barretto, Margao

"The water supply is normal, but the pressure can sometimes be low due to several technical reasons. When water consumption is high during the day, pressure tends to drop. However, after 11 pm, when the demand decreases, the pressure improves
— PWD engineer, Margao

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crises in the locality.

In response, a concerned engineer at the Public Works Department (PWD) clarified that there is no actual water shortage in the area. "The water supply is normal, but the pressure can sometimes be low due to several technical reasons," he explained. "When water consumption is high during the day, pressure tends to drop. However, after 11

p.m., when the demand decreases, the pressure improves."

The engineer further noted that PWD has proposed two new pipelines: one from Navelim Church to the Konkani Railway Overbridge, and another from the Konkani Railway Station entrance to Khareband. These projects, he assured, will address the water supply issues and provide the necessary pressure for the area.

'Devanagari monopoly is killing Konkani': Romi script activists demand policy overhaul



Team Herald

MARGAO: The Global Romi Lipi Abhiyan (GRLA) strongly criticised the Sahitya Akademi's "one language, one script" policy, calling it a threat to Konkani's linguistic diversity. At a press conference on Friday, GRLA President Kennedy Afonso condemned the Akademi's decision to recognise only the Devanagari script, arguing that it has marginalised four other scripts—Romi, Kannada, Malayalam, and Perso-Arabic—while eroding Konkani's rich literary heritage.

GRLA has demanded an urgent reversal of this policy and a restructuring of the Konkani Advisory Board to ensure fair representation for all scripts. The press conference was held ahead of a two-day seminar, My Country and Foreign Land in Konkani Literature, organized by the Sahitya Akademi in collaboration with the Goa government and the Education Department. The event, scheduled for February 22-23 in Porvorim, will be addressed by Sahitya Akademi General Council member Purnananda Chari and Konkani Advisory Board member Shashikant Punaji. GRLA said it intends to use this platform to send

a strong message to these Akademi dignitaries, urging them to move beyond what it termed "white-washing seminars" that promote only the Devanagari script.

"Instead of restricting their focus, the Sahitya Akademi should hold a joint seminar in Goa with representatives of all five Konkani script associations to discuss the damage done by their failed policy and explore ways to rectify it," Afonso stated.

GRLA asserted that the policy of promoting only one script violates fundamental constitutional rights. "The 'one language, one script' policy directly contradicts Article 14, which guarantees equality before the law, and Article 29(1), which grants minority communities the fundamental right to preserve their language, script, and culture," Afonso said. He pointed out that the Konkani-speaking minority in Goa has long struggled for recognition of the Roman script, which remains excluded from the Official Language Act of 1987. GRLA further alleged that this exclusion has led to Roman script Konkani being denied as a medium of instruction even in minority-run diocesan schools.

"Since 1981, the outgoing Advisory Board has been handpicking new members who are hardcore Devanagari supporters, ensuring that other scripts remain excluded. This manipulation must stop. Each script's academy or association should be allowed to nominate its own representatives to ensure fair participation
— Kennedy Afonso, president, GRLA

The group also highlighted census data showing a decline in Konkani speakers. "Since 2001, the number of Konkani speakers has dwindled by two lakh," Afonso said. "Konkani is now classified as an endangered language by UNESCO, and international funding is being allocated to revive it. Yet, instead of embracing its diversity, the Sahitya Akademi and the Goa government continue to stifle it."

GRLA has demanded that Chari and Punaji convey their concerns to the Sahitya Akademi and push for a policy change. "Not only does the 'one language, one script' approach go against the Constitution, but it is also actively killing the four other scripts of Konkani. If the language is to flourish, all its literary traditions must be given equal recognition," Afonso asserted. GRLA said it is working with other script associations to organise an All India Konkani Maha Sabha to address these critical issues.

Fish wash up dead on Majorda-Utorda beach

Team Herald

MARGAO: The sight of dead fish washing up on Majorda and Utorda beaches has raised alarm among locals, fisherfolk and conservationists.

Citizen Mervin D'Souza, who first spotted the beaching, reported that the shoreline was littered with a significant number of dead sardines and mackerel. He questioned whether pollution or an oil spill might be responsible for the mass die-off.

The incident follows previous cases of dead dolphins and turtles washing ashore, deepening concerns among



wildlife conservationists. They stress the urgent need for authorities to investigate these recurring events and implement long-term solutions. In June last year, thousands of fish washed up on Velsao beach in one of the largest incidents of

mass fish kill Goa has witnessed. It was later found that a fertiliser factory close to the beach had laid two pipes to release its effluents into the sea, posing a danger to the health and livelihoods of fishermen as well as beach-goers.

JUICY HARVEST



Uday Naik, a farmer from Nerul, harvests large watermelons of the premium honeydew variety, which is now grown all year round in Goa

Citizens allege multi-crore fraud in Margao, protest at PWD's Altinho office

Team Herald

MARGAO: The Margao Congress Block, along with a group of residents from the commercial town, staged a protest outside the office of the Principal Chief Engineer, PWD at Altinho on Friday, demanding an inquiry into what they described as a multi-crore fraud in Margao.

The protesters alleged that substantial amounts of public funds were lost due to corrupt practices associated with projects executed by the PWD, through Works Division VI and VIII under the Viksit Bharat programme, particularly in preparation for the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi on February 6, 2024. Savio Coutin-

ho, a prominent member of the Margao Congress, said, "Upon reviewing the information provided by the PWD office under the RTI Act and visiting the sites, we found that the measurements recorded in the bills do not align with the actuals at the respective locations. In many cases, these measurements are alarmingly inflated," Coutinho alleged.

He claimed that a letter dated 26/08/2024 had been sent to the department requesting clarifications on certain executed works. However, no response was received, which Coutinho attributed to the falsehood surrounding the projects.

A list of five out of the 33 works mentioned in the representation submitted to the PWD was identified, suggesting potential fraud and massive siphoning of public funds. The protesters, including Lincoln Gomes, Lalan Parsekar, Camilo Camara, Damu Onskar, Aziz Shah, Robert Vaz, Pratibha Borkar, and others, challenged the PWD to conduct a joint inspection and verify the measurements alongside them, to disprove the allegations.



Due to the lack of jobs and corruption in government recruitment in Goa, Goans are desperately looking for overseas jobs. However, they are getting entangled in job rackets. Chief Minister Pramod Sawant himself admitted that Goans are losing Rs 100 crore a year due to such job and visa scams. Herald Media asked citizens if they believe the Goa government has the capability and inclination to raise awareness about such rackets and crack down on people duping innocent job-seekers

DO YOU THINK GOVT IS READY TO EDUCATE PEOPLE AND CRACK DOWN ON OVERSEAS JOB RACKETS?

"I think we can't put everything on the government. People know what they're doing is improper, illegal, and not in the interest of society or the state. They're driven by selfish interests. Do people need to be educated not to play matka? Everyone's aware of it, yet families are being ruined. Matka thrives due to tremendous public support. Regarding the overseas job racket, how can you stop someone from paying for an illegal job? The issue arises when the problem surfaces, and the job doesn't materialize. Both the giver and receiver are equally guilty
— Trajano D'Mello, political analyst

"People know, but they do not keep away (from such agents). Only after they get cheated, they learn their lessons. Then they come to us and ask us to take up these issues. People have to take responsibility for their actions and go ahead. We are behind them. We always back them. But people who have been cheated should come forward
— Tara Kerkar, social activist

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Margao New Market Traders Assn de-registered for false reporting

HERALD PIC



Team Herald

MARGAO: The District Registrar has cancelled the registration of the Margao New Market Traders Association for providing false information and submitting inconsistent reports, including one that indicated that a deceased member

ing footfall to the market.

Additionally, the traders have expressed the need for better toilet facilities, particularly for women, and have called for the construction of a water tank to ensure quick access to water in case of fire emergencies.

The Margao New Market Traders Association was originally registered in 1997, with Ashok Mayekar present at the association's meeting on June 29, 1997, to sign the necessary documents.

However, Ashok Mayekar had passed away in 1996, leading to inconsistencies in the reports submitted by the association. The Registrar took action by cancelling the registration for these discrepancies.

With the help of advisors Vinod Shirodkar, Rajan Aijaonkar, and Amit Naik, the new committee has been formed to tackle these issues and ensure transparency.

Vinod Shirodkar also urged the municipal administration and all three local MLAs to make concerted efforts to improve the conditions of the Margao New Market.

The Association was originally registered in 1997, with Ashok Mayekar present to sign the documents. Ashok Mayekar passed away in 1996, but was misrepresented as still alive, leading to inconsistencies in the reports submitted to the District Registrar

MAX. TEMP 32.5 °C
MIN. TEMP 24.0 °C

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Guys, we need a new excuse for the next missed deadline!