

## Fate of flyover clouds Dabolim's future ops

### Despite four attempts by the Navy to warn NHA, why did work on flyover carry on, ask furious local residents

AUGUSTO RODRIGUES

ZUARINAGAR, VASCO: Alarm bells have started ringing with regards to the construction of four-lane flyover from Zuarinagar to Bogmalo, which could spell "doom" for commercial flight operations at Dabolim International Airport if the Indian Navy grants No Objection Certificate (NOC) to the flyover.

Part of the flyover work, started by the National Highway Authority of India (NHA), falls under the Obstacle Limitation Surfaces (OLS) and construction with no NOC from the Navy leads to violation of International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) parameters.

The permission from the Navy is essential can be seen on Page No. 79, point 6 of the Ministry of Civil Aviation Notification of September 30, 2015, which states: "The following steps shall be taken for calculating the maximum permissible heights for cases where



**FLIGHT OF PERIL:** With pillars built above the prescribed nine metres, landing at Dabolim airport will lead to safety red flags if the flyover is completed

there is a requirement of NOC from AAI or from Defence authorities." Annexure 14 of the notification reiterates on Page 108 "ICAO Annexure 14 surface height in

metres provides maximum heights in metres" and if not adhered to, commercial flights will not be permitted.

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“The construction of pillars from MES College junction to MO Goa junction is approximately around 20.8 metres high when the maximum height permissible for safe landing of an aircraft is nine metres. What NHA has built is more than double the height — Atul Pant, petitioner & Retd Cdr of Indian Navy

“This is another classic case of the government thinking that they can keep lying to people that the Dabolim Airport will not shut down. If so, why was the NHA allowed to build the flyover despite four objections by the Navy, whose NOC is mandatory? — An engineer on condition of anonymity

“It is shocking that the government allowed the highway authorities to go ahead with the work despite the Navy writing to MPDA not to permit it. When questioned, we were told the flyover is being built to ease traffic — Tari Lamani, transport operator

## MAHA KUMBH ENDS ON NOTE OF DEVOTION



PICS: PTI

■ Billed to be the world's largest gathering, Maha Kumbh ended on Wednesday, with lakhs of devotees surging towards the waters of the Sangam, the confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna and mythical Saraswati, for a dip on Shivratri

■ According to the UP govt, 1.44 cr people took a holy dip till 6 pm on Wednesday

■ It said 66.21 cr people visited Prayagraj since January 13, a number exceeding the populations of all countries except China & India

■ The religious fair witnessed unprecedented security measures, including anti-drone systems and AI-enabled cameras, to man the Mahakumbh Nagar's UP's makeshift 76th district set up for the event, spread across 40 hectares which remained abuzz with activity 24x7 over the past six weeks



## Mollem land acquisition: HC notices to Rlys, Survey Dept

Team Herald

PANJIM: The High Court of Bombay at Goa issued notices to the South Western Railway (SWR) and the Directorate of Survey and Land Records (DSLRL) directing them to appear before it based on a

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writ petition filed by the Goa Foundation challenging the land acquisition proceedings taking place within the precincts of the Mollem Wildlife Sanctuary.

The petition has been filed in response to significant encroachment into lands within the Bhagwan Mahaveer

“Despite the Supreme Court revoking all permissions for railway track doubling work within the sanctuary in 2022, land acquisition proceedings and alterations to land revenue records have nevertheless been initiated in favour of the South Western Railways, within the protected area, in blatant violation of the provisions of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 (WLPA)

— Goa Foundation, the petitioner,

(Mollem) Wildlife Sanctuary in Kalay village, ostensibly for the purpose of doubling the Hospet-Hubballi-Tinaighat-Vasco railway line and connected works.

According to the petitioner, despite the Supreme Court revoking all permissions for railway track doubling work within the sanctuary in 2022, land acquisition proceedings and alterations to land revenue records have nevertheless been initiated in favour of the South Western Railways, within the protected area, in blatant violation of the provisions of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 (WLPA).

The WLPA explicitly bars accrual of any rights in, on, or over land within a notified sanctuary. The PIL writ petition details two distinct methods relied upon for such encroachment by the SWR into the protected area.

The first part lays out the illegal land acquisition proceedings under the Railways Act.

The second part deals with changes in the land revenue records carried out in 2024 for the creation of a new survey number 165/1, in Kalay village in favour of the SWR.

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## MLA extortion: Arrested man seeks to quash FIR in HC

Team Herald

PANJIM: Kukesh Routa, an Odisha native who was arrested for extorting money from Aldona MLA Adv Carlos Alvares Ferreira by threatening to release a morphed obscene video, has approached the Bombay High Court at Goa seeking to quash the FIR filed against him. However, the Crime Branch has opposed his petition.

Routa, a resident of Ganjam, Odisha, filed a criminal writ petition arguing that the matter has been resolved amicably with the complainant, Adv Alvares. During the hearing, senior advocate Nitin Sardesai stated that there was a misunderstanding between the accused and the complainant. He further explained that since the issue has been settled between the parties, the petition was filed to quash the FIR. Sardesai cited the legal principle that if the

prosecution is unlikely to reach a logical conclusion or if the offence is personal in nature and both parties agree to a settlement, continuing the case would be a waste of court resources and prosecution efforts.

However, the Crime Branch opposed the petition, arguing against the quashing of the FIR. Since the public prosecutor was absent, the Court has scheduled the matter for further arguments on Monday, March 4.

Routa was arrested in December last year for allegedly extorting Rs 5 lakh from MLA Alvares by blackmailing him with a morphed video, in which the MLA is allegedly shown in a sexually explicit clip with a woman. The complainant stated that the accused contacted him via video call, recorded the conversation without his knowledge, and later morphed it into obscene material.

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## Hit-and-run horror at Siolim, mother-son hurt



The front portion of the multi-purpose vehicle was completely damaged



The two-wheeler lying on the road following the accident

Team Herald

SIOLIM: Siolim was shaken once again by a hit-and-run accident, marking the second such case in just one week. This latest incident occurred on the Mapusa Housing Board Siolim Marna shortcut route on Wednesday, when a mother and son were struck and dragged by a multi-purpose vehicle (MPV) for approximately 50 metres, leading to multiple injuries for both.

Around 2.30 pm, 45-year-old Bertha Perreira from Igrejwaddo, Marna-Siolim,

was traveling with her 13-year-old son, Aaron, on their two-wheeler en route to a football coaching class in Mapusa when the accident occurred. The MPV, registered in Margao and driven by 20-year-old Honey Chawla from Nagpur, collided with the duo after Chawla attempted to overtake a vehicle, veering into the wrong lane.

The force of the collision caused Bertha and Aaron to be dragged for about 50 metres. Aaron sustained bruises and skin abrasions, while Bertha suffered injuries to her ankle and knee.

She also reported feeling dizzy and unable to walk. A family member confirmed that Bertha would be transferred to a private hospital for further treatment.

Following the accident, the accused driver fled the scene without reporting the incident to the authorities or seeking medical help for the victims. Prior to the collision, the MPV is said to have also struck two oncoming vehicles, including a truck. Both the MPV and the two-wheeler sustained damage.

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MAX. TEMP 37.6 °C  
MIN. TEMP 22.3 °C

idharudhar



May I know which one of you is the doctor?

## Trump dangles \$5 million 'gold card' citizenship carrot to lure wealthy investors

AP, WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump said Tuesday that he plans to offer a 'gold card' visa with a path to citizenship for \$5 million, replacing a 35-year-old visa for investors.

"They'll be wealthy and they'll be successful, and they'll be spending a lot of money and paying a lot of taxes and employing a lot of people, and we think it's going to be extremely successful," Trump said.

Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick said the "Trump Gold Card" would replace EB-5 visas in two weeks. EB-5s were created by Congress in 1990 to generate foreign investment and are available to people who spend about \$1 million on a company that employs at least 10 people. Lutnick said the gold card



— actually a green card, or permanent legal residency — would raise the price of admission for investors and do away with fraud and "nonsense" that he said characterize the EB-5 program. Like other green cards, it would include a path to citizenship. About 8,000 people obtained

“It's somewhat like a green card, but at a higher level of sophistication, it's a road to citizenship for people, and essentially people of wealth or people of great talent — Donald Trump

investor visas in the 12-month period ending Sept. 30, 2022, according to the Homeland Security Department's most recent Yearbook of Immigration Statistics. The Congressional Research Service reported in 2021 that EB-5 visas pose risks of fraud, including verification that funds were obtained legally.

Investors' visas are common around the world. Henley & Partners, an advisory firm, says more than 100 countries around

the world offer "golden visas" to wealthy individuals, including the United States, United Kingdom, Spain, Greece, Malta, Australia, Canada and Italy.

Trump made no mention of the requirements for job creation. And, while the number of EB-5 visas is capped, Trump mused that the federal government could sell 10 million "gold cards" to reduce the deficit.

"It's somewhat like a green card, but at a higher level of sophistication, it's a road to citizenship for people, and essentially people of wealth or people of great talent, where people of wealth pay for those people of talent to get in, meaning companies will pay for people to get in and to have long, long term status in the country," he said.

## HC stays 'conversion' of Chopdem land

Team Herald

PANJIM: In a major relief for the villagers of Chopdem in Pernem taluka, the High Court of Bombay at Goa on Wednesday stayed permissions granted to convert the existing settlement area of 2,84,512 square metres on the Regional Plan to 6,70,888 square metres, an increase of 130 per cent by using the method of correction of "error" under Section 17 (2) of the Town and Country Planning (TCP) Act.

Mayur Shetgaonkar, Sitaram Raut, Zeferino Fernandes and Shubham Sawant had filed PIL writ petition challenging the permissions granted under

Section 17 (2) of TCP Act in Survey No. 17/1 (part); in Survey No. 10/1-E (part); in Survey No. 17/1 (part) and in Survey No. 20/1-A (part) Chopdem village in Pernem Taluka.

The petitioners claimed that these permissions are illegal, ultra vires the provisions of the Goa TCP Act 1974 as well as violative of Article 14, 19 and 21 of the Constitution of India as being arbitrary and unconstitutional.

Arguing on behalf of the petitioners, Adv Rohit Bras De Sa stated that these permissions entail large-scale changes to the land use map of the village.

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