

# Legal battle for Sinquerim hill begins, citizens oppose construction on plateau

## Court adjourns matter to March 25; locals vow to protect hill for posterity

Team Herald

**CALANGUTE:** The legal battle to protect Sinquerim Hill has begun with the Calangute Constituency Forum (CCF) raising serious objections against an application filed seeking land conversion for a hotel project before the Additional Collector, Mapusa, Pundalik Khorjuvekar on Friday. The matter was adjourned to March 25.

The citizens stiffly opposed the move of the hotel group seeking land conversion from agricultural to non-agricultural use for 1,38,900 square metres.



FILE PHOTO

The CCF stated that they received a notice of Friday's hearing only on Thursday at 5 pm, leaving them with insufficient time to reply.

After the adjournment, CCF President Prema-

nand Divkar revealed that the state government had signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the hotel group earlier this week to establish a skill development

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**– Premanand Divkar, CCF President**

centre at Sinquerim. He expressed concerns that the government might accelerate the land conversion process before the next hearing.

“Their plan was to build a club house with 88 rooms and other facilities, but because of our objection, they changed it to a skill development centre. We had highlighted in two re-

cent awareness meetings in Candolim that Sinquerim Hill is under threat. At the meetings, a resolution was passed that we will not allow any development on Sinquerim Hill,” Divkar stated.

He further warned that if the government insists on proceeding with the project, the CCF will take legal action.

“If the project is started, the entire hill will be destroyed, and it will become a concrete jungle as all surrounding land will also be developed. If all the hills are destroyed, then Goa as we know it will come to an end, and that will finish tourism,” he added.

The CCF previously filed a petition regarding an alleged illegal construction near Fort Aguada on Sinquerim by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). The Bombay High Court at Goa issued a stay order on the construction a few months ago.

## Cops form special teams to crack down on drugs

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** The special teams formed at police station level to crackdown illegal narcotics drugs trade booked 19 NDPS cases since the beginning of year 2025 to till date and seized substantial quantities of different types of narcotic drugs such as charas, ganja, MDMA, LSD Methamphetamine Ecstasy, weighing 16783.25 grams and totally worth Rs 40,10,500.

The police arrested 18 persons including 10 non Goans, seven Goans and one foreigner.

During this week, NDPS case was booked on each day by Calangute PS (Monday), Mandrem PS and Colvale PS (Tuesday), Anjuna PS (Wednesday) and Mapusa PS (Thursday), according to SP North Akshat Kaushal, IPS.

### PRIME PLOTS FOR SALE IN SOUTH GOA

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## GERA penalises builder for non-registration of project

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** The Goa Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA) has penalised a Panjim-based builder Rs 5 lakh for not registering themselves with the Authority and to pay Rs 1 lakh as costs to the complainant - the Colva Civic and Consumer Forum represented by its president Judith Almeida and secretary Shakuntala Mesquita.

The Goa RERA member Vincent D'Silva has directed the T R Constructions to file compliance report of the order in the form of an affidavit within two months of the order, failing which further legal action will be initiated by the Authority under the RERA Act, for execution of the order.

The respondents had undertaken plotted development in two phases for a total area 16,725 square metres in Survey No. 119/2, Ward-I of Colva Village, Salcete and had allegedly sold five plots. There was no mandatory board at the site indicating the name of developer, licences, and permissions etc, as per the rules. The project was based on a proposed road of six metres width towards the south and the existing access being only 3.50 metres wide and to

the north of the project, the existing access was only 4 metres wide when the requirement of the proposed access was 10 metres wide. There are several houses and some boundary walls along both the main roads leaving no scope for road widening. A new internal road was built leading from the main road to the site, internal roads within the project under construction and sub-division of plots was marked on the ground.

That despite the contours of the land not supporting plotted development and lack of mandatory main access road, the Town and Country Planning (TCP) Department, Margao allegedly in collusion with the respondents approved the plotted development land dated 20.04.2023.

According to the assistant parish priest, the donation box contained approximately Rs 25,000. There is no CCTV footage of the incident, but the police found marks at the scene indicating that a breaker machine might have been used to remove the box.

## Donation box stolen from St Anthony's Cross

Team Herald

**VASCO:** Unidentified persons entered into the St Anthony Cross at Tamsoddear-Chicalim, and decamped with donation box containing cash, on Friday night.

The theft of the donation box came to light on Saturday morning after the assistant parish priest informed the Chicalim-panchayat member Roman Vaz, who immediately rushed to the spot and called the police.

According to the assistant parish priest, the donation box contained approximately Rs 25,000. There is no CCTV footage of the incident, but the police found marks at the scene indicating that a breaker machine might have been used to remove the box.

The Vasco police have started questioning labourers residing in the vicinity and are gathering more details to track down the culprits.

### Novena to St. Jude

O Holy St. Jude, Apostle, Martyr, great in virtue and rich in miracles, near kinsman of Jesus Christ, faithful intercessor of all who invoke your special patronage in time of need to you, I have recourse from the depth of my heart and humbly beg to whom God has given such great power to come to my assistance. Help in my present and urgent petition. In return, I promise to make your name known and cause you to be invoked. Say three Our fathers, three Hail mary's and three Glorias. Publication must be promised. St. Jude pray for us and all who invoke your aid. AMEN. This Novena has never been known to fail. I have had my Request granted. ....  
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Dr. Afshan Shaik, who hails from Margao, completed her MBBS and MD in Chest Medicine from Goa Medical College. She further pursued a DM in Pulmonary Medicine, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine at AIIMS Bhubaneswar. In addition, she holds a European Diploma in Adult Respiratory Medicine (EDARM).

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