

Mandatory tenant verification order issued for South Goa

Landlords, hoteliers directed to report occupants to police

Team Herald

MARGAO: South Goa Collector and District Magistrate Egna Cleetus, IAS, has issued an order mandating the verification of all tenants and guests by landlords, hoteliers, and property owners in the district.

The directive applies to house, building, and flat owners as well as hotels, lodges, guesthouses, religious accommodations, and temporary rental properties across South Goa. It states that property owners must verify the bonafides of tenants and guests through identification documents such as Election Cards, Driving Licences, Aadhaar Cards,

DIRECTIVES

- Prohibits, renting, sub-letting, or leasing property without informing police
- Details of tenants to be submitted to police before occupancy
- Accommodation providers

Passports, and Smart Cards.

The order strictly prohibits renting, subletting, or leasing any property without informing the concerned police station. Landlords, tenants, and property owners must furnish the full details of tenants to the local police before occupancy.

ers required to allow inspection and record maintenance in a police software system.

■ Nationalised banks directed deploy security guards for ATM security, install CCTV cameras or Electronic Surveillance Systems

Additionally, all accommodation providers are required to allow inspection and record maintenance in a designated police software system.

The order further instructs all nationalised banks in South Goa to deploy security guards for round-the-clock ATM security. Banks must also install CCTV cameras or Electronic

Surveillance Systems (ESS) equipped with: Panic buttons and hooters, two-way communication systems, remote access control.

The order will be in effect from March 9, for 60 days, unless withdrawn earlier. Violations will be punishable under Section 223 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023.

The Deputy Collectors and Sub-Divisional Magistrates of South Goa are authorised to investigate violations and file FIRs before the concerned court or police station. The Superintendent of Police (South Goa) has been directed to ensure compliance by all police stations in the district.

The order cites a report from the Superintendent

of Police, South Goa, stating that criminals often stay in hotels or rented premises under false names and bogus addresses, making it difficult to trace them after crimes are committed.

Additionally, anti-social elements may use rental properties for illegal or immoral activities, making strict verification necessary. The order notes that some landlords and hoteliers rent out premises without background checks, increasing security risks. Considering these concerns, District Magistrate Egna Cleetus has invoked Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, to enforce these measures.

Two arrested in fake residence certificate scam in South Goa

Police crackdown on forged documents used for marriage registrations

Team Herald

MARGAO: Fatorda police have arrested Jose D'Souza and Gerald in connection with a fake residence certificate racket. The duo has been charged with fraud, impersonation, forgery, and cheating, allegedly facilitating the registration of marriages using forged documents.

The arrests come after the South Goa Advocates' Association (SGAA) lodged a petition with the Superintendent of Police, South Goa, highlighting widespread misuse of forged residence certificates at the Sub-Registrar's Office in Margao.

The association had alleged that fraudulent residence certificates were being used to register marriages, compromising the integrity of the marriage registration process.

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It has come to our attention that numerous forged residence certificates are being submitted at the Sub-Registrar's Office in Margao. These certificates are allegedly issued by agents or touts, some of whom falsely claim to be advocates, tarnishing the reputation of the legal fraternity

— Advocate Prasad Naik, President, SGAA

reputation of the legal fraternity," stated Advocate Prasad Naik, President of the South Goa Advocates' Association, in the petition.

In Goa, marriage registration requires one of the parties to produce a valid residence certificate to prove local residency. However, investigations have revealed that some individuals obtain forged residence certificates to register marriages, often with ulterior motives.

Upon inquiry at the Sub-Registrar's Office in Salcete, officials confirmed that they had already alerted authorities about such

fraudulent activities. Despite this, the police had not taken action, raising concerns about potential patronage or complicity with the accused.

The petition further alleged that police inaction has emboldened the perpetrators. "Non-action by the police allows criminals to continue their illegal activities unchecked. This raises a serious concern as to whether these individuals are acting in connivance with authorities," the association claimed.

In addition to fake residence certificates, the petition also pointed out that other forged documents, such as name correction certificates, were being accepted at the Sub-Registrar's Office in Salcete.

Following these revelations, the Sub-Registrar's Office filed a complaint with Fatorda police, urging strict action against touts involved in document forgery.

With the arrest of Jose D'Souza and Gerald, authorities are expected to intensify their investigation into the extent of the scam and the involvement of other individuals.

Seraulim family receives water bills despite year-long disconnection



Team Herald

MARGAO: A family in Duncolim-Seraulim has been receiving water bills for the past year despite their water connection being disconnected in February 2024 by authorities without explanation. The family's RTI application seeking answers has also remained unanswered for over a year.

Ditoza Fernandes and her family have been left struggling without water, describing the situation as ill-treatment and administrative negligence. Despite having no water supply since early 2024, the family recently received a bill of Rs 574, marking the second time they have been charged for a service not provided.

"I got the water connection in 2019, but in February 2024, authorities abruptly stopped our water supply and even removed the entire pipeline," said Fernandes. "Since then, I have repeatedly sought answers but have received no response."

She further stated, "I submitted an RTI application on February 28, 2024, requesting clarification, but a year has passed, and I have yet to receive any reply."

In December 2024,

I have already asked the department concerned to forward me the application and the bill copies

— Executive Engineer, PWD

months after their connection had already been severed, the family was billed Rs 166, followed by a fresh Rs 574 charge in February 2025, leading to growing frustration. After repeated complaints, the Executive Engineer of the Public Works Department (PWD), who recently joined office, has now assured an inquiry into the issue.

"I have already asked the concerned department to forward me the application and the bill copies. I am also unaware of the reasons behind the removal of the pipeline and the issuance of bills despite no water supply," he stated.

With no resolution in sight, the Fernandes family has appealed to the Chief Minister to intervene and restore their water connection.

In the meantime, the family remains entirely dependent on a well for their daily water needs, awaiting action from the authorities.

FADING HABITAT



A lone heron looks out for prey in a dwindling pond at Guirim. The fields along this stretch get inundated during the rains and have been rendered infertile

Power, water supply disconnected to two Nessai scrapyards

Team Herald

MARGAO: Acting on the directions of the Goa State Pollution Control Board (GSPCB), Salcete Mamlatdar Vinod Dalal, along with other concerned authorities, disconnected the water and power connections of two scrap yards located in the Nessai Industrial Estate on Tuesday.

It has been reported that these two scrap yards were operating without the required Consent for Operation (CFO) from the GSPCB. Mamlatdar Dalal, along with the officials, visited the site and initiated the disconnection process.

However, the owner of the scrap yards has been given three days to remove all materials from the site.

The GSPCB had previously ordered the sealing of both scrapyards for operating without the necessary consent, as confirmed by Mamlatdar Dalal.

Local residents had long raised concerns about the activities at these scrap yards, accusing them of causing significant nuisance in the locality. It was also alleged that wastewater from the yards was being discharged into open areas and nearby fields, creating hardships for the local community and farmers.

Garbage by roadsides continue to tarnish Margao's image

Chicken waste, coconut shells among other waste dumped under the cover of darkness, Penalties fail to deter wrongdoers

Team Herald

MARGAO: Despite regular door-to-door garbage collection and various efforts from the Municipal authorities, black spots along the roadsides continue to cause problems, creating a mess in several areas within and around the Margao Municipality.

It has been revealed that the primary waste found at these black spots includes chicken waste, coconut shells, and discarded cloth pieces from tailoring shops.

The Municipal body has identified nearly 16 black spots, which remain unchanged despite multiple awareness campaigns and the imposition of fines. Citizens have reported that much of this waste is dumped during the late-night hours, with many alleging that the culprits are primarily outsiders.

It is important to note that the South Goa police have registered 7,342 cases under the Goa Non-Biodegradable Garbage (Control) Act, 1996, until December 18, 2024.

However, the problem of open



garbage dumping continues to persist, particularly in Margao, a commercial hub that generates a significant amount of waste and is plagued by black spots.

As a commercial center, Margao sees increased waste generation, but as of December 17, 2024, only 572 cases of garbage dumping were recorded by the police.

Sagun Naik, a councillor, told O Herald that the civic body is doing a commendable job in regularly collecting waste. However,

he pointed out that some individuals are still found dumping waste during the night.

"In the past, the civic body has monitored the situation regularly, but it's impossible for the officials to keep constant vigilance every day," Naik said. He also noted that recently, coconut shells have become the most common waste found in the black spots.

Ronny Fernandes, a resident of Fatorda, mentioned that waste can be regularly seen on the roadside near Durga Petrol Pump and

the Tata Motors garage.

"What we've noticed is that the dumped waste is causing health hazards, particularly in residential areas. Shockingly, even after cleaning the black spots, waste reappears the very next morning," Fernandes shared.

Shashank Shirwaikar, another concerned resident, urged the Municipal body and relevant authorities to come up with more systematic plans to prevent waste dumping on the roadsides.

Damodar Shirodkar, Chairperson of the Margao Municipal Council, stated that his team is working diligently to tackle the garbage menace on the roadside.

"We have apprehended several individuals, many of whom are from outside the Margao municipality jurisdiction. We've also observed that some hotel owners and chicken vendors from neighbouring villages are responsible for dumping waste along the municipality's boundaries," Shirodkar explained.

He also mentioned that compared to previous years, the situation is significantly better, but there is still work to be done.

Colva traffic cell cracks down on drunk driving, books 67 offenders in two months

Team Herald

MARGAO: Amid a rise in minor and fatal accidents, mostly attributed to drunken driving, the Colva Traffic Cell has booked 67 individuals for the offence between January and February 2025.

According to the Colva Traffic Cell, breathalysers are being used to determine intoxication levels during traffic stops. In a bid to curb drunken driving, the police department has provided new alcoholometers for better monitoring of road safety.

Police Sub-Inspector Deu Mangaonkar of the Colva Traffic Cell stated that only 42 cases of drunken driving were recorded in the same period in 2024, with 28 cases in January and 14 in February.

He expressed confidence that up-



CAUGHT IN THE ACT

January 2025: 28 cases booked
February 2025: 39 cases booked

graded resources, including alcoholometers, would significantly improve the identification and prosecution of offenders. The Colva Traffic Cell has also taken strict action against helmet violations, tinted glass usage, and driving without a licence, leading to the collection of fines.



IS GOA GETTING CONVERTED INTO A CONCRETE JUNGLE?

The Supreme Court on February 7, 2025 had told the Goa Government "Don't turn Goa into a concrete jungle." On March 3, the Apex Court has again observed that forests are being destroyed in Goa. Herald Media asked people, "Is Goa getting converted into a concrete jungle as per Supreme Court's repeated observations?"

By sitting in New Delhi the Supreme Court judges can understand that Goa is being destroyed. That Goa is becoming just brick and mortar. That is what we mean when we say that Goa is being converted into a concrete jungle. My fear is not only that Goa is being converted into a concrete jungle, with so many flats, bungalows and swimming pools coming in and concretisation happening, the question is can Goa take this load? Nobody has done any study on the carrying capacity of Goa. How many complexes should be allowed? What about the three resources? Original Goans will not get even one percent of the resources. Be it electricity, water or roads. What will happen in the future?

— Anthony D'Silva, social activist

Now we have reached a time, when the honourable Supreme Court had to give a warning to the Goa government not to create a concrete jungle. Today I salute the Supreme Court because at least they are thinking of Goa and they care for our little Goa. Those whom we have elected to save Goa and Goenkarponn are not bothered about Goa and Goans. They only want money and power. The entire Goa has been left in the hands of the builders' lobby and the real estate lobby. At least today, you open your eyes, because the highest court—the Supreme Court has given you a warning to protect Goa. You are not listening to Goans, you are not bothered about Goans. You have destroyed everything. You have finished the once beautiful Goa.

— Mariano Ferrao, social activist

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Today the politicians have unleashed destruction. Who has saved Goa? It is the Rakhondars (protectors). Goa is not anyone's private property. Goa belongs to the Rakhondars. The Goa government is removing these Rakhondars who are present from Pernem to Canacona. The more we denounce the politicians, the less it is. Goa is not the private property of the politicians. I think there is no precedent in history where a devasthan has been taken out from the border of the village and erected outside it. Who gave them the authority? We know in the last few years how they have come together. Once again I'm saying Goa does not belong to us or to the politicians, it belongs to the Rakhondars.

— Rajesh Dhabolkar, social activist