

AT MOPA, KTC SERVICE IS A MISSING LINK

Citizens call for improved accessibility; demand better facilities to make it a viable alternative to costly taxis

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MARGAO: As Mopa Airport continues to welcome travellers from across the globe, a growing number of visitors have raised concerns about the lack of awareness and accessibility of the Kadamba Transport Corporation bus service, which offers a far cheaper alternative to the steep taxi fares.

While the bus service provides an affordable option for travellers heading to key destinations like Mapusa, Panjim, Calangute and Margao, many passengers find the experience challenging due to poor signage, inadequate facilities, and a lack of assistance with luggage.

The KTC bus service, which charges a mere Rs 150 for a trip from Mopa to Mapusa, stands in stark contrast to the Rs 1,300 or more quoted by taxi drivers. While the fare to Mapusa is relatively lower, taxi fares to Margao and other parts of Goa are significantly higher, making the bus service a more attractive option for budget-conscious travellers, especially locals. However, the service remains underutilised, largely due to lack of awareness and the logistical hurdles passengers face when trying to access it.

Albano Fernandez, a Goan residing in the UK and a media representative of the Goan community there, recently reviewed the service. Armed with a 23 kg suitcase, a 7 kg hand luggage, an airport bag, and a winter jacket, Albano embarked on the journey to assess its viability for travellers with heavy luggage. His findings, shared widely on social media and his YouTube channel 'Goa Channel UK', highlight both the potential and the



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— Albano Fernandez, a media representative of Goan community

“Tourists, particularly foreigners, find the service impractical due to the lack of awareness and accessibility. The service is cheap, but the hassle of navigating with luggage makes it unappealing

— Emma Davies, British tourist

Mapusa or Margao,” said Raviraj Kamat, a frequent traveller. “But it's not ideal for those with heavy luggage or those heading to more remote areas.”

“Tourists, particularly foreigners, find the service impractical due to the lack of awareness and accessibility. The service is cheap, but the hassle of navigating with luggage makes it unappealing,” said Emma Davies, a British tourist.

Many have called for better signage and a more prominently located kiosk at the airport to provide clear instructions on how to access the service. “If I knew what to expect, I might have taken the bus,” said John Fernandes, another Goan now living in Australia.

The challenges faced by passengers are compounded by the marketing spectacle that unfolds when a flight arrives at Mopa. “Cab drivers, both registered and private, swarm the exit, competing for passengers,” Albano observed. “It's overwhelming, and many people just give in and take a cab without realising there's a cheaper option.”

During his trip, Albano noted that the bus had only 6-8 passengers, but the luggage took up so much space that it felt full. “I think even the staff use this service, but I'm not sure. Some passengers had no luggage,” he added.

The feedback from travellers underscores the need for improvements to make the KTC bus service more accessible and user-friendly. As Goa continues to position itself as a global tourist destination, the need for an efficient, accessible, and well-publicised public transport system from Mopa Airport becomes increasingly evident. For now, the KTC bus service remains a hidden gem—one that could shine brighter with a few improvements.

pitfalls of the service.

“The bus counter located outside the exit point is easy to miss,” Albano noted, adding: “First-time arrivals, especially foreigners, wouldn't even know this service exists.” He clarified that while there are kiosks inside the airport, the bus counter is located outside, making it less visible to passengers. “The bus counter should be visible from inside while coming out, before passengers encounter the taxi drivers,” he suggested.

Albano said that the counter lacked currency change, forcing passengers to pay the driver directly. The bus stop, located 30 to 40 metres away,

KADAMBA TRANSPORT CORPORATION LTD.
(Govt. of Goa Undertaking)

New Goa Manohar International Airport A/C BUS SERVICE

Departure Timings

Sr. No.	From Margao	From Panaji	From Mapusa	From Airport
1	04:00	05:00	05:20	08:00
2	06:00	07:00	07:20	09:30
3	08:00	09:00	09:20	11:30
4	10:00	11:00	11:20	14:30
5	16:00	17:00	17:20	21:30
6	17:00	18:00	18:20	23:00

Special Introductory Fares from New Goa Manohar International Airport

Sr. No.	From Sinquerim	From Mapusa	From Airport
1	05:00	05:30	08:00
2	07:00	07:30	11:30

Special Introductory Fares from New Goa Manohar International Airport

From	To	Fare
MAPUSA	TO MARGAO	150/-
SINQUERIM	VIA CALANGUTE	200/-
PANAJI	TO MARGAO	400/-

JUST ₹

0832 - 2437067 | 9284862144

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

■ **Better signage:** Clear and visible signs inside and outside the airport to guide passengers to the bus counter and stop

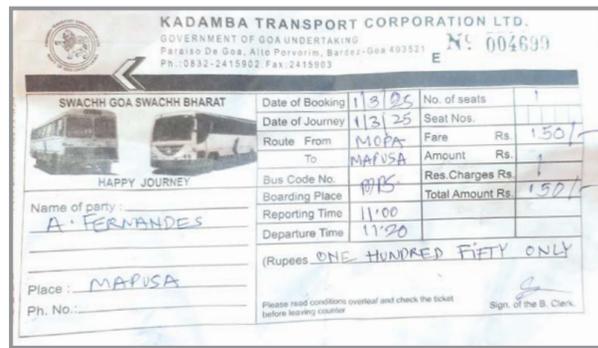
■ **Prominent kiosk:** A centrally-located kiosk inside the airport to provide information about the bus service

■ **Accessible pathways:** Flat slopes between dividers to allow luggage trolleys to reach the bus stop easily.

■ **Luggage assistance:** Dedicated staff or conductors to help passengers with loading and unloading luggage.

■ **Immediate transport options:** Coordination with local transport services at drop-off points for seamless onward travel.

requires passengers to cross two roads and navigate around dividers that make it impossible to use luggage trolleys. “There are no flat slopes between the dividers, so you have to lift and



drag your luggage. It's a struggle, especially after a long flight,” he said.

Once on the bus, passengers face additional challenges. Despite the ticket stating that luggage will be stored in a compartment, all bags are placed in the passenger area, creating a tripping hazard. “The bus is managed solely by the driver, with no conductor to assist with loading or unloading,” Albano explained. “Passengers are left to handle their luggage, which is inconvenient and unsafe.”

The journey is comfortable, thanks to the efficient air conditioning system. However, the lack of seat belts

and the absence of immediate transport options at the drop-off point in Mapusa add to the inconvenience.

“Even after the bus ride, you have to spend extra to get to your final destination,” Albano said. “I had to take a lift from a friend, but if I hadn't, I would have spent another Rs 200 on a rickshaw.”

Albano's experience has sparked a wave of feedback from locals, domestic tourists, and foreigners alike. Many appreciate the affordability of the service but acknowledge its limitations. “It's a lifesaver for those travelling to common bus stands like

Opposition mounts against proposed jetties and cruise tourism on River Sal

Team Herald

MARGAO: Opposition is growing against the government's proposal to introduce floating jetties and a cruise circuit along the Salcete coastline, with traditional fishermen and local representatives raising concerns over its environmental and economic impact. The project, led by the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI), has sparked fears about the sustainability of cruise tourism in the region, particularly along the Betul-Cutbona stretch of River Sal, which is already heavily used for fishing.

Fishermen and panchayats have criticised the lack of transparency in the plan, questioning whether any assessment has been conducted to determine the river's capacity to handle additional vessel traffic. The proposed cruise circuit, connecting Cavellissim, Betul Fort, and the Betul Lighthouse, would rely heavily on River Sal, but key details, such as the number of cruise boats and jetty locations, remain unclear.

Local fishermen fear the project will disrupt the delicate marine ecosystem that supports shellfish and fish species and warn that increased vessel movement could destroy habitats and harm their trade.

MAX. TEMP 34°C
MIN. TEMP 23°C



Women's Day should be celebrated 365 days a year!

Velsao residents feel betrayed as Railways resumes work, damages heritage homes

Despite assurances, RVNL continues work with heavy machinery, causing damage to 400-year-old heritage houses, villagers accuse officials of betrayal

Team Herald

MARGAO: Velsao residents accused railway officials of breaking their promises as heavy machinery and stone metal dumping resumed in Primoiro Vaddo, causing significant damage to centuries-old heritage homes. The move has left villagers feeling betrayed and questioning the credibility of the state administration and the railways.

MIGHT ISN'T RIGHT

The confrontation began when railway officials, contractors, and armed railway police arrived at the site, accompanied by Verna police.

Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) attempted to pass through a temporary blockade set up by villagers, using a heavy compactor to level mud dumped earlier. Residents claim the machinery's vibrations are severely damaging heritage houses on both sides of the tracks.

Sandra Rodrigues, a local resident, expressed her frustration. “Yesterday, in the presence of South Goa MP Captain Viria to Fernandes, the magistrate promised that only four truckloads of mud would be dumped away from our homes, and no further work would proceed. We also highlighted how heavy compaction machinery was damaging our 400-year-old heritage houses. Based on this assurance, we lifted the blockade, and the police left. But by yesterday evening, they resumed work, and today, they brought heavy compactors and started dumping stone metal. We've lost all faith in the administration,” she said.

Villagers had temporarily lifted their blockade after Friday's assurances but now feel deceived. “They are towing away vehicles blocking their entry and using heavy machinery without regard for



SAVE MOLLEM LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTING VELSÃO VILLAGERS' PLIGHT IN DOUBLE-TRACKING BATTLE

Team Herald

MARGAO: The Save Mollem group has launched a powerful social media campaign to highlight the struggles of Velsao residents, who are losing their traditional right of way and witnessing damage to their centuries-old heritage homes due to the double-tracking project.

Through this strategic digital initiative, the organization—which previously mobilized widespread public opposition to railway double-tracking—is exposing what the protestors describe as the destructive environmental and cultural impact of the railway expansion across

“We will not back down. This is our land, history, and future. We'll fight for justice

—Sandra Rodrigues, Velsao resident

“They are towing away vehicles blocking their entry and using heavy machinery without regard for the damage to our homes. This isn't just about land; it's about our history and heritage

— Velsao villager

the damage to our homes. This isn't just about land; it's about our history and heritage,” said another resident.

The use of heavy compactors has raised significant concerns among the community. Residents fear the continuous vibrations will further weaken their centuries-old structures, many

built with traditional materials ill-equipped to withstand such disturbances. “These houses were built with lime and mortar, not concrete. The vibrations are causing cracks in walls and foundations. If this continues, these structures will collapse,” said a local, pointing to visible damage already appearing in

several homes.

What particularly troubles residents is the apparent disregard for legal processes. Despite pending court cases challenging the railway expansion and a stop-work order issued by the local panchayat, construction continues under police protection. This approach has left many feeling that their legal rights are being deliberately undermined.

As tensions continue to rise in the coastal village, residents remain determined to protect their community's heritage and future. “We will not back down. This is our land, history, and future. We'll fight for justice,” said Sandra Rodrigues.

Central nod for extension of Verna flyover up to Western Bypass

Team Herald

MARGAO: The Union Ministry of Road Transport has approved the extension of the Verna flyover along NH66, up to the Western Bypass at Margao, a move aimed at alleviating chronic traffic congestion and improving safety at the Pirnim junction. The decision comes after efforts by the State Government in urging the Union Highway Ministry to approve the extension beyond the initially planned termination at Maharaja Hotel.

While addressing the media after his weekly public grievance meeting at the South Goa Collectorate, Environment Minister Alexio Sequeira, expressed satisfaction over the development, stating that the extended flyover would help reduce accidents and streamline traffic flow in the area.

He emphasised that the earlier plan would not have been sufficient to tackle the traffic problems at the busy Pirnim junction. “I had a detailed discussion with Union Minister Nitin Gadkari during his visit to Goa, explaining that the Verna flyover, if left short of the western bypass, would fail to resolve the existing traffic woes. After consultation with Chief Minister Pramod Sawant, we convinced him to extend it to the Margao western bypass,” Sequeira said.

The minister also highlighted that the PWD and National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) foresee some challenges in the construction phase. To address this, the PWD has devised a traffic diversion plan that will reroute vehicles through the old Verna-Nuvem highway until

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— Environment Minister, Alexio Sequeira

the new infrastructure is operational.

In addition to the flyover extension, the government has planned interim measures to manage the heavy traffic in the region. Traffic signals will be installed at three crucial intersections: Verna-Cansaulim, Verna-Majorda, and Verna-Dulape. Sequeira noted that these signals would help regulate movement and reduce congestion until the flyover is completed. “The installation of traffic signals is a short-term measure to ensure smoother traffic flow and minimize accidents while construction is underway,” he added.

Meanwhile, Sequeira, who is also the Nuvem MLA, firmly stated that there would be no reconsideration of the PWD's plan to improve the Fr Agnel Ashram-Carmel College Road in Nuvem, dismissing concerns raised by a section of local residents. A delegation of Nuvem villagers met Sequeira during his weekly interaction, voicing fears that the road expansion would obstruct access to their homes and introduce inconvenient medians.