

'Fake' sexual harassment complaint: ITI staffer seeks action against his boss

Moves Labour Court seeking to quash the report/decision of Internal Complaints Committee and to hold the principal liable for making false complaint; principal refutes allegations against him

Team Herald

PANJIM: Aggrieved by the false sexual harassment complaint, a Lower Division Clerk (LDC) employed at the Government ITI, Altinho-Panjim, has now approached the Industrial Tribunal and Labour Court, Panjim, seeking to quash and set aside the report/decision of the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) and to hold the principal liable for action for making false and malicious complaint against him by taking advantage and using a woman staff.

When contacted, principal Dattaprasad Palni refuted all the allegations and claimed that it was a fake

APPEAL FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- Petitioner Shrinivas Shinde prayed that Directorate of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship be directed to initiate disciplinary action against principal Dattaprasad Palni for making false and malicious complaint
- Shinde said ICC ignored the fact that Palni had taken advantage of the disability of the woman staff by threatening her with dire consequences
- The woman staff had identified that the principal was the perpetrator and confirmed it on two occasions
- ICC recorded these facts in its report and yet ignored
- Shinde said the principal instigated and forced the woman staff to file the false sexual harassment complaint

case against him.

In his appeal, petitioner Shrinivas Shinde has prayed that the Directorate of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship be directed to initiate disciplinary action against principal

Dattaprasad Palni for the serious misconduct and for making false and malicious complaint.

According to the petitioner, the ICC ignored the fact that Palni had taken advantage of the disability of the

woman staff by influencing and threatening her with dire consequences. This was a clear case of criminal intimidation.

The ICC could not write in its conclusion that the perpetrator was "unknown" as this is not factually true. The woman staff had identified that the principal was the perpetrator and she confirmed it on two occasions. These facts were recorded by the ICC in its report and yet ignored.

The ICC wanted to protect the principal for reasons best known to it. However, it could not have waived off any penalties as recorded since the present case covered by Section 15 of the Act, Shinde said.

The petitioner has stated that once it came to light that it was the principal who instigated and forced the woman staff to file the false sexual harassment complaint, the ICC had to recommend disciplinary action against the principal.

Meanwhile, the Goa Government ITI Employees Association president Anil Bhonsle has demanded an independent inquiry into principal Palni's actions for justice be done to Shinde.

He said that Palni's conduct has been unfair and harassing the staff. He alleged that the principal created a conspiracy against Shinde and demanded his suspension to prevent further harm to the staff.

Double tracking, Porvorim shrine demolition issue raised in LS

Team Herald

PANJIM: South Goa MP Capt Viriato Fernandes on Monday raised the issue of demolition of the Dev Khapreshwar at Porvorim in the Lok Sabha.

Fernandes said that Goa was becoming a coal hub and highways and railways are being expanded to send the coal to other States. Goa is getting destroyed in the bargain, he alleged.

He also said that those opposing the Dev Khapreshwar shrine demolition and the double tracking work on private property including the Velsao-Pale-Issorcim woman sarpanch had been booked by the police.

"Irony would be today we are again becoming slaves of a trade which has come by sea, where the coal is brought from Australia and when it comes to the Mormugao Port Authority (MPA), and to take it to other States, they (authorities) are expanding railway tracks. In the bargain Goa is getting destroyed," he said.

Fernandes pointed out that even the iconic Dev Khapreshwar temple at Porvorim was demolished to facilitate expansion works (to transport coal). Even the local authorities have become agents of the Central agencies to suppress the people's agitation, he charged.

DIRTY PICTURE



Discarded tender coconut shells dumped just metres away from the entrance of Goa Medical College and Hospital, Bambolim

State ST chief calls for registering FIR against four Azossim residents

Team Herald

PANJIM: Taking note of complaints of atrocities under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, the Goa Commissioner for SC/ST Deepak Karmalkar has recommended to the SP North to register an FIR and to take necessary action against four persons from Azossim.

The Goa Commission for SC/ST has directed complainant Devu Mashelkar of Azossim to approach SP North and to submit the

required information and documents, so as to register the complaint.

Mashelkar had filed a complaint on November 29, 2018 against four respondents Atmanand Parab, Satyavan Parab, Vimal Chari and Baburao Naik, under Section 3(1)(p) and 3(1)(q) of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, for filing a false complaint against Mashelkar and his family and thereby causing harassment through government authorities.

All the respondents were neighbours of the complainant. On August 10, 2018, the four respondents filed a false complaint against Mashelkar to the Azossim-Mandur sarpanch. Further the respondents filed an application before the village panchayat for construction of a compound wall of their house mentioning that the complainant was discharging wastewater causing nuisance to the residents.

Mashelkar claimed that the complaint was false and that the government

authorities for this reason were harassing him.

The panchayat neither issued any licence to construct the compound wall nor took any action on the complaint, but showed that the complaint filed by the respondents was totally false.

It proves that the respondents were wilfully making complaint to harass Mashelkar belonging to the ST community, which attracted offence under Sections 3(1)(p) and 3(1)(q) of the SC and ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.

Confined & exploited, Goan youth among 283 Indians rescued from Myanmar

In Myanmar, he was confined within a compound, heavily guarded and isolated, police said; subjected to work 14-hour shifts daily without weekly off

Team Herald

PANJIM: A Goan youth, who was allegedly trapped on pretext of providing a job in Thailand and later subjected to exploitative working conditions in Myanmar is among 283 Indian nationals rescued by the Ministry Of External Affairs (MEA) from Myanmar.

According to police, in January 2025, the victim, a young engineering graduate from Goa, seeking overseas employment, came across a recruitment advertisement on Instagram for a call centre job in Thailand.

The job offer included attractive terms such as free accommodation, food, and a monthly salary of Rs 60,000. The recruitment process was conducted entirely online, with the individual communicating with the agent via WhatsApp, without any direct interaction. The agent facilitated his travel arrangements, including the flight booking to Bangkok.

Upon arrival in Thailand on a tourist visa on January 14, 2025, the youth was initially accommodated at a resort in Mae Sot. However, the following day, he was clandestinely transported across the border into Myanmar via a river crossing. Upon reaching Myanmar, he was confined within a secured compound, heavily

EXPLOITATIVE WORKING CONDITIONS

- The job offer included free accommodation, food and salary of Rs 60,000
- Recruitment process was conducted online, with the individual communicating with the agent via WhatsApp.
- The agent facilitated his travel arrangements, including the flight booking to Bangkok.
- After arriving in Thailand on a tourist visa on Jan 14, he was accommodated at a resort in Mae Sot
- Was clandestinely transported across the border into Myanmar via a river crossing.
- In Myanmar, he was confined within a secured compound, heavily guarded and isolated, police said
- Subjected to exploitative working conditions, being required to work 14-hour shifts daily without weekly off
- His role involved sending mass messages to potential victims, primarily US citizens using fraudulent pretexts

guarded and isolated, with no means of independent movement, police said.

Subsequently, he was subjected to exploitative working conditions, being required to work 14-hour shifts daily without any weekly off. He was assigned to a team under a foreign national acting as a supervisor. His role involved sending mass messages to hundreds of potential victims, primarily US citizens, using fraudulent pretexts. Any responses received were escalated to senior operatives who engaged in further deceptive practices, including investment fraud and honey trapping, police added.

Meanwhile, Cyber Crime

SP Rahul Gupta said, "It is again reiterated that foreign-based jobs should only be applied through MEA registered agents. In all other cases, there is a high chance of fraud. Citizens must stay vigilant and report any such suspecting agents to Cyber Police Station or Local Police Station. Citizens can report through the 1930 helpline or Cyber-crime.gov.in website."

It may be noted that Goa NRI Commissioner Narendra Sawaikar had informed local media last month that eight Goans have been stranded in Thailand after they were lured by the promise of lucrative jobs and that efforts were on to rescue them.

Police conduct tenant verification drive in North Goa

Team Herald

PANJIM: The police in North Goa conducted a tenant verification and labour verification drive at various locations in North Goa on Monday.

According to the police, during the drive verification of 278 tenants and 1,274 labourers was carried out.

The police stations under whose jurisdiction the verification drives were conducted were Panjim, Old Goa, Agacaim, Mapusa, Anjuna, Colvale, Porvorim, Calangute, Saligao, Pernem, Mandrem, Mopa Airport, Bicholim and Valpoi.

Labour Verification Camps were organised at various construction sites and workplaces. Similarly, the police stations under whose jurisdictions the tenant verification drive was conducted included Panjim, Old Goa, Mapusa and Colvale.

The tenant verification camps were organised at KTC Bus Stand, Panjim, Karmali Railway Station,

POLICE STATIONS	LABOURERS VERIFIED
Panjim	65
Old Goa	490
Agacaim	22
Mapusa	30
Anjuna	63
Colvale	13
Porvorim	125
Calangute	47
Saligao	71
Pernem	65
Mandrem	84
Mopa Airport	70
Bicholim	69
Valpoi	60

POLICE STATIONS	TENANTS VERIFIED
Panjim	40
Old Goa	160
Mapusa	40
Colvale	38

Mapusa KTC Bus Stand and Thivim Railway Station.

According to police, for the current year till date, 11,465 tenants and 6,059 servants (house helps) have been verified in North Goa District.

Officials to fast-track Forest Rights cases: CM

Team Herald

PANJIM: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Tuesday said that officials have been directed to fast-track pending cases, ensuring the expedited issuance of Land Rights Sanads to eligible beneficiaries.

In a post on X (formerly Twitter), the Chief Minister said, "Chaired a meeting with Forest Rights Claimants in the presence of the North Goa Collector, officials and claimants from Sattari and North Goa to address matters related to land rights claims."

Sawant said he emphasised the need for swift resolution and directed officials to fast-track pending cases, ensuring the expedited issuance of Land Rights Sanads to eligible beneficiaries.

In January this year, a senior government official had told O Herald that the government is actively working to reduce the backlog of forest settlement rights cases in the State, with State-level executive committee meetings now being held more frequently.

"We are very serious about reducing the number of pending cases. State-level executive committee meetings are now being held frequently, unlike before," the official had said. Last year, the High Court of Bombay at Goa directed the State government to determine and settle the rights and claims of Scheduled Tribes (STs) and other forest dwellers as per the law within 12 months. This directive was part of the Court's order dated July 24, 2023 concerning the notification of a Tiger Reserve.

Smart City works force change in Shigmo route

Parade will be held on D B Road, instead of traditional 18th June Road

Team Herald

PANJIM: Blame it on the Smart City works. This year there is a change in the route of Shigmotsav parade in the state's capital. The parade will be held on D B Road, instead of the traditional route on 18th June Road.

The city residents will witness the vibrant colours and music, as the Shigmotsav festivities will begin with Gulalotsav at Azad Maidan on March 14, followed by a grand parade on March 22, and a 5-day entertainment programme at Azad Maidan from March 19 to 23.

Addressing a press conference, Shrinivas Dempo, President of Panjim Shigmotsav Samiti said this year, the Shigmotsav parade will be held on D B Road, instead of the traditional route on 18th June Road due to Smart City works.

"We are changing the route as we do not have an option. We have been told by the Corporation of the City of Panaji (CCP) also the shift to route from Old Secretariat to



(Left) A dance troupe performs during the Panjim Shigmo parade. (Right) A float featuring scenes from Hindu mythology



Campal. It will be the route which was used for the Carnival parade," he said.

However, he requested CCP Mayor Rohit Monserrate to ensure that the traditional route is made available for Shigmotsav next year.

CCP Mayor Rohit Monserrate said that there will be a five-day long programme at Azad Maidan as hosted last year.

He said D B Road is the best option to hold Shigmotsav as Smart City works

are underway in the city.

Dempo said, "Panaji Shigmotsav Samiti has been organising Shigmotsav for the last 37 years with an aim to showcase the art and culture of rural parts of the State. Panaji Shigmotsav Samiti is the first Samiti in the State which has made such efforts. It feels very good to see that now almost in all parts of the State Shigmotsav is held. Gulalotsav will be celebrated on March 14, 2025, and I call upon

people of the State to participate in it."

He said on March 19 there will be an orchestra, while on March 20 a drama will be staged followed by a religious song programme on March 21.

Stating that Lavni will be held on March 23, Dempo said three artists namely Santosh Gaokar, Mahadev Datta Naik and Avito Fernandes will be felicitated on the same.

He said three rolling

trophies will be awarded on the occasion. The rolling trophies are Chitrapat Category, instituted by Mangaldas Naik, in memory of his mother late Srimati Puti Naik, Romtamel, a category instituted by Kishor Narvekar, in memory of his brother late Krishna V Narvekar and Folk Dance Category, instituted by Sunil Naik, in memory of his father Late Anant B Naik and mother late Sushilabai A Naik.

PRIME PLOTS FOR SALE IN & AROUND MARGAO

- 3000m2 & Above PLOTS (2 Nos.) on Goa Bottling to Fatorda Stadium Road, near Sincro Hotel & PWD, FATORDA.
- 700m2 PLOT with Ground+3 BUNGALOW near Nagesh Garden, above old Hospicio Hospital, Alto Monte, MARGAO.
- 725m2 PLOT opp. KTC, near Rebello Hospital, MARGAO.
- 10,000m2 PLOT near Marriott Fairfield, walking distance from beach at BENALIM.
- 10,000m2 PLOT with large frontage, near Church, RAIA.
- 10,000m2 PLOT near Salgaonkar Catering College, RAIA.
- 12,000m2 PLOT with Sanad, near Tropica & Umiya Mercado, on KHAREBAND - VARCA Road.

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