

## TCP ACT: HC STRIKES DOWN CONTROVERSIAL SECTION

### Petitioners hail order, TCP Minister says govt will move SC against it

Team Herald

PANJIM: In a significant victory for public-spirited citizens who have opposed the spot zoning and changes to the Regional Plan 2021, the High Court of Bombay at Goa on Thursday struck down the rules and the guidelines that enable the operation of Section 17 (2) of the Town and Country Planning (TCP) Act, prompting the Town and Country Planning (TCP) Minister Vishwajit Rane to disclose that the government will approach the Supreme Court against the order.



Speaking to mediapersons at his Miramar residence, Rane said, "Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi will represent the State in the case. There were several errors in the Regional Plan 2021. Section 17(2) was brought in to give people a chance to correct these errors. We have been given six weeks time to approach the Supreme Court." "I respect the judiciary. Implementing suggestions given by the judges regarding operationalisation and interpretation is not a problem," he said.

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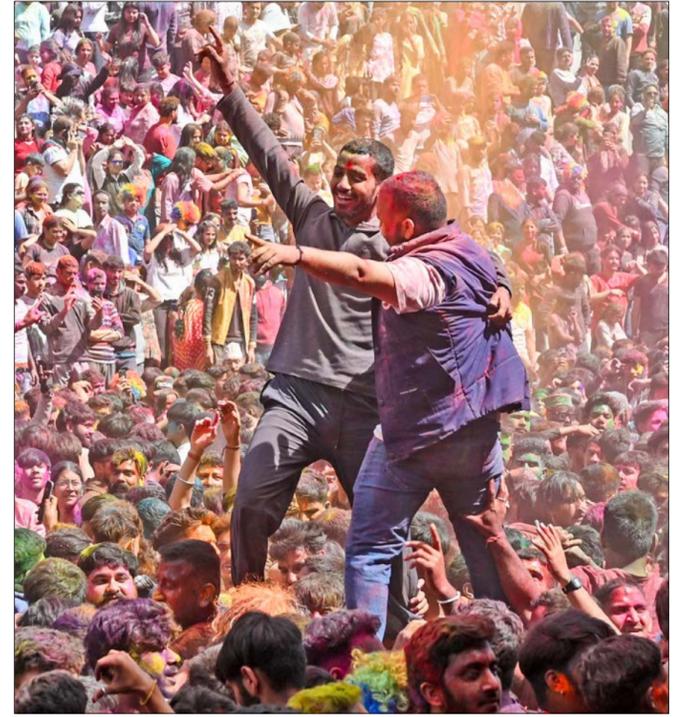
"This is a good victory for people, because, we were opposed to the zoning which was being changed spot by spot in different places changing the entire context of the landscape of Goa and literally casting aside the Regional Plan 2021, which is still valid and holds good for people of Goa, protecting Goa's ecology and environment while also allowing for development in certain areas" - Norma Alvares, senior advocate & petitioners counsel

"Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi will represent the State in the case. There were several errors in the Regional Plan 2021. Section 17(2) was brought in to give people a chance to correct these errors. We have been given six weeks time to approach the Supreme Court" - Vishwajit Rane, TCP Minister

"The High Court has given relief which it normally does when there is a constitutional matter. The government which is supposed to protect the eco-zones has become an enemy of it. So citizens of the State had no recourse but to approach the High Court" - Dr Claude Alvares, Director of Goa Foundation

"The High Court bench understood the gravity of destruction Goa is subjected to and put a halt to some extent. There are many more violations that are currently in court and we are hopeful justice will be done. The government should not waste public money by going to Supreme Court" - Sabina Martins, Goa Bachao Abhiyan co-convenor

## COLOURS OF JOY



People celebrate Holi festival, in Mandi, Himachal Pradesh, on Thursday

## British woman raped, molested in Delhi hotel after Goa visit; two arrested

### Police say victim allegedly raped by social media pal in a hotel, then molested by a housekeeper in lift

AGENCIES, NEW DELHI: A British woman, who travelled from Goa to Delhi, was allegedly raped by man at a hotel in Mahipalpur in the national capital after befriending her online and later molested by the hotel's housekeeper when she tried to complain with the hotel staffers, a police official said on Thursday.

### HOTEL HORROR

- The woman, who travelled to India a month ago, stayed in Maharashtra before visiting Goa
- She came to Delhi on March 11 to meet Kailash, whom she met through Instagram
- Had booked a room at a hotel in Mahipalpur

and had a few drinks with Kailash before he allegedly raped her, a Delhi Police official said

- When she tried to complain, a hotel staffer touched her inappropriately in the lift, the official added
- Police arrested the duo and intimidated the British High Commission about the incident

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## Bhutani seeks fresh EC, petitioners raise questions about the old one

### Challenge conversion sanad allegedly obtained within three months

Team Herald

PANJIM: In its affidavit filed before the High Court of Bombay at Goa, Parmesh Construction Company Limited or Bhutani Infra stated that it is in the process of applying for fresh environmental clearance (EC) for its proposed multi-family dwellings and villas at Savorfond, Sancoale, which is vehemently opposed by the villagers. The company filed its affidavit to the writ petition by Peter D'Souza and four others.

"They (Bhutani Infra) have said that they have appointed an agency to apply for the environmental clearance. They have said that they could not apply for EC due to factors such as excessive rainfall. The company has so far obtained development permission and construction licence. They do not have fresh environmental clearance"

- Adv Richard Almeida, representing the petitioners

environmental clearance. They have submitted that they will not start work until and unless they get environmental clearance. They have said that they have appointed an agency to apply for the environmental clearance. They have said that they could not apply for EC due to factors such as excessive rainfall. The com-

pany has so far obtained development permission and construction licence. They do not have fresh environmental clearance."

Adv Almeida said that he had questioned the validity of the old environmental clearance and the company has stated that they have engaged an agency to do soil testing. The

petitioners also challenged the development permission which the Bhutani Infra has obtained. The National Green Tribunal (NGT) NGT had passed an order in September last year but in three months the company was given the conversion sanad and the petitioners sought to know how they could do it. The petitioners have challenged conversion sanad.

The Bhutani Infra was granted development permission by the MPDA on February 2, 2024, while the Sancoale Village Panchayat issued a construction licence on March 11 last year.

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## TN replaces rupee symbol with Tamil letter in Budget logo

### Logo has 'ru', the first letter of the Tamil word 'rubai' instead of the rupee symbol which uses Devanagari script

PTI, CHENNAI: Intensifying its language tussle with the Centre, the Tamil Nadu government on Thursday replaced the Devanagari rupee symbol with a Tamil letter in its logo for the budget 2025-26, in an unprecedented move signalling its unrelenting stance against the three-language formula



### NEP SHOWDOWN

under the NEP. The move comes amidst a political firestorm over the issue after the TN government rejected the NEP.

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TN MOVE SIGNALS A DANGEROUS MINDSET: FINANCE MINISTER  
PTI, NEW DELHI: DMK-led Tamil Nadu government move to replace the rupee symbol signals a dangerous mindset that weakens Indian unity and promotes secessionist sentiments under the pretence of regional pride, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Thursday. Launching a scathing attack on DMK, she said the party should have protested when the rupee symbol was adopted by the UPA in 2010.



## Sunita Williams' return delayed yet again

AGENCIES, WASHINGTON: The return of Starliner astronauts Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore has been further delayed as NASA and SpaceX postponed Crew-10 launch. Crew-10 is supposed to replace the Crew-9 team which Sunita Williams is part of. Crew-9 cannot return from space unless Crew 10 reaches the ISS and take over the mission. Williams and Wilmore were 'stuck' onboard the International Space Station (ISS) following technical issues.

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## Navy seeks fresh NOC to keep flyover within prescribed height limits

### Flag Officer Goa Area's request to NHAI could provide relief to South Goa residents, dependent on Dabolim Airport for survival

AUGUSTO RODRIGUES

DABOLIM, VASCO: The Indian Navy has sought a fresh No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) to keep the height of the flyover within limits prescribed by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).



ed relief to lakhs of people from South Goa, who are dependent on the Dabolim airport for their survival.

"The NHAI has been intimated that they cannot go ahead with the present height as they are against ICAO parameters. They have been asked to re-apply again with changes"

- Senior naval officer on condition of anonymity

The Bombay High Court at Goa in its order dated February 24, 2025, on a Public Interest Litigation

by Atul Pant, a retired Commander of Indian Navy stated: "We have no doubt that the Navy will expedite the consideration of issuance of a No Objection Certificate (NOC) if not already decided. If the decision is already taken by the Navy, the decision to be communicated forthwith and if the said decision is not taken, the same be taken in accordance with law within a period of two weeks and if necessary by giving an opportunity of a

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