

These railway stations are part of the Konkan Railway's broader plan to improve efficiency and operations, and the Goa government cannot stop the project. The proposal is not something new. The Goa government cannot ask Konkan Railway to halt this project

— Mauvin Godinho, Transport Minister

HEARD IN THE HOUSE

It is a fact especially in new areas where PDAs have come and where development is massive there is a tanker mafia. As per the PWD records there was a shortfall of 91 MLD per day and it could be more if one looks at the movement of water tankers in some of the towns

— Vijai Sardesai, Fatorda MLA

Residents of Taleigao were facing acute water shortage. Areas of Aivao, Morod, Porbhat, Odxel, Oitem and areas of Dona Paula were experiencing water shortages. These areas fall at the tail end of the distribution line and the government should find a solution to the problem

— Jennifer Monserrate, Taleigao MLA

NEW RAIL STATIONS NOT MEANT FOR PASSENGERS: CM

Govt says KR's proposal to construct three new stations at Sarzora, Neura and Mayem will help Goa get a fast train connecting both districts

Team Herald

PANJIM: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Monday stated that the new railway stations were crossing stations and not meant for passengers.

On an average, passenger trains take 15 to 18 minutes and freight trains take 20 to 25 minutes, Sawant said during Question Hour in the Legislative Assembly.

The State government has backed the Konkan Railway's proposal to construct three new railway stations at Sarzora, Neura, and Mayem villages stating that it will improve operational efficiency and help the State to have a fast train connecting North Goa with the South Goa.

The House witnessed nearly half-an-hour debate on the proposed railway stations as opposition claimed that the people from those villages had strongly raised their objection to the project citing environmental concerns. They also charged that the railway route may facilitate coal transportation in future.

Chief Minister Pramod



Sawant, however, clarified that these stations are meant for operational efficiency, and not for passenger usage and at one point for railway crossing.

He said that the three railway stations, doubling of railway lines will help boost the State's fast train concept from Canacona to Pernem thus benefiting locals to a large extent.

The Chief Minister assured the House that he would speak to Union Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnav about increasing train stoppages at Karmali Railway Station for the convenience of commuters and help them to reach the capital city faster.

Sawant also told Leader of the Opposition Yuri Alemão that if required, an

FAST TRAIN CONCEPT ECHOES IN HOUSE

- The House witnesses a debate on proposed railway stations
- Opposition claims the people from Sarzora, Neura & Mayem objected to the project, citing environmental concerns
- Charges that the railway route may facilitate coal transportation
- CM clarifies these stations are meant for operational efficiency, and not for passenger usage and at one point for railway crossing
- Says these stations and doubling of railway lines will help boost State's fast train concept from Canacona to Pernem
- Assures to speak to Union Railways Minister to increase train stoppages at Karmali Station
- Informs Opposition that if needed, EIA will be conducted
- Tells Velim MLA that the new crossing station has been proposed at Sarzora

environment impact (EIA) study will be conducted for the construction of three stations.

He also told Velim MLA Cruz Silva that the new crossing station has been proposed at Sarzora and not at Sao Jose De Areal.

Replying to a starred question tabled by Sant Andre MLA Viresh Borkar, Transport Minister Mauvin Godinho clarified that these stations are part of the Konkan Railway's broader plan to improve efficiency and

operations, and the Goa government cannot stop the project.

"The proposal is not something new. The Goa government cannot ask Konkan Railway to halt this project because it is essential for improving the efficiency and operations of the railway network," Godinho said.

He explained that several existing railway lines and blocks are saturated, leading to delays in train operations. The stations are part

of the original plan prepared in 1998 to address these issues.

Godinho also emphasised that the new stations are primarily for crossing purposes, not for passenger traffic. "The stations are needed to reduce delays, and the planning was done for operational reasons and for reducing time of trains. About 58 minutes will be saved with the construction of three new crossing stations," he added.

The Goa government had already forwarded public feedback to Konkan Railway regarding the project.

Borkar raised his concerns, questioning why a study was not conducted before the proposal and noting that locals have opposed the project. "The response from the Minister has been unsatisfactory," he said.

Godinho responded by recalling the initial opposition to the Konkan Railway project, saying, "People once opposed Konkan Railway, but today they use it extensively. These new stations are meant to improve operational efficiency," he reiterated.

Over a lakh patients referred to GMC in five years, Rane informs House

Opposition says govt hospitals lack facilities & specialised doctors

Team Herald

PORVORIM: Of the 1,80,256 referrals from the health centres across the State in the last five years, 1,00,872 (56 per cent) were made to the Goa Medical College and Hospital, Bambolim, Health Minister Vishwajit Rane informed the Goa Assembly on Monday.

The South Goa District Hospital should be downgraded and renamed as Primary Health Centre. There were neither facilities nor specialised doctors in the government hospitals required as per the Indian Public Health Standards.

— Yuri Alemão, Leader of the Opposition

He was replying to a starred question jointly tabled Leader of the Opposition Yuri Alemão and MLAs Venzy Viegas, Cruz Silva and Altone D'Costa.

The Minister said that 1,80,256 patients were referred from CHCs, PHCs and UHCs to the GMC, Bambolim, Asilo North Goa District Hospital, Mapusa, Hospicio South Goa District Hospital, Margao Mapusa, Sub-District Hospital, Ponda, TB Chest, and private hospitals during last five years.

Highlighting the lack of facilities at hospitals other than GMC, Alemão said that the health situation in the State is like overdose of hardware crying for software.

Pointing out there are large number of referrals made to the GMC even from District Hospital, Margao due to lack of equip-

GOA'S HEALTH CENTRES AILING: OPPN

■ The Opposition says a large number of referrals were made to GMC even from District Hospital, Margao due to lack of equipment and doctors

■ Calls for downgrading South Goa District Hospital and renaming it as Primary Health Centre

■ Alleges there are neither facilities nor specialised doctors in govt hospitals required as per the Indian Public Health Standards.

■ Claims the number of patients referred to the GMC has increased in the last five years *Urges the government to provide facilities in district & sub-district hospitals

ment and doctors, he said that South Goa District Hospital should be downgraded and renamed as Primary Health Centre.

Alemão pointed out that there were neither facilities nor specialised doctors in the government hospitals required as per the Indian Public Health Standards.

He said that number of patients referred to the GMC has increased in the last five years and urged the government to provide facilities in both the district and sub-district hospitals.

The minister said that the government is in the process of recruiting specialised doctors who will be appointed on contractual basis.

'Help refund depositors' cash blocked in liquidated banks'

Team Herald

PORVORIM: Curtorim MLA Aleixo Reginaldo Lourenco on Monday urged the government to take measures to refund money of depositors and shareholders of liquidated banks and cooperative credit societies in the State.

Making a mention during Zero Hour in the Legislative Assembly, Lourenco said that there is fear and anxiety in the minds of shareholders and

depositors since their hard earned money and savings have been blocked due to liquidation of the Mapusa Urban Co-operative Bank Ltd and the Madgaum Urban Cooperative Bank Ltd and the Visionaries Credit Society Ltd.

He said there are bleak chances of getting back their money for no fault of theirs and urged the government to look into the issue and to arrive at a solution to ensure that they get back their money.

House congratulates NASA astronauts

Team Herald

PORVORIM: The Goa Assembly on Monday congratulated NASA Astronauts Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore, for safely landing on Earth after completion of their successful mission in space.

The House also congratulated Varun Albuquerque, for being conferred as the Honorary Consul of the Russian Federation in Goa and the Indian Cricket Team for winning Champions Trophy 2025 for the third time thus bringing

laurels to the country and making Indians proud globally

The House congratulated Benaullim MLA Venzy Viegas for winning the Sagar Ratna award for Maritime Excellence. He is the first and the only Master Mariner to become a legislator. It also congratulated veteran freedom fighter Libia Lobo Sardesai for being honoured with Padmashri.

Rohan Gauns Dessai, GCA Secretary for being elected as the Joint Secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).

Oppn claims Dabolim turning into a 'ghost' airport

Says shifting of operations to Mopa will severely impact cabbies & hoteliers

Team Herald

PORVORIM: The Opposition on Monday said that with some airlines shifting their operations to Mopa, the Dabolim airport is turning into a "ghost" airport.

Raising the issue during Zero Hour in the State Assembly, Leader of Opposition Yuri Alemão said the shifting of operations will have a severe impact on taxi operators and hotel owners.

"There is fear and anxiety among the tourism stakeholders like taxi owners,

hoteliers and other businessmen, particularly from South Goa, with regards to the announcements made by the national carrier Air India," he said.

Alemão pointed out that the shifting of international operations from Dabolim to Manohar International Airport since its commissioning, many airlines have shifted their operations from Dabolim to Mopa and this trend is going on.

Till August 5, 2024, three operators have shifted their operations from Goa International Airport, Dabolim,

to Manohar International Airport, Mopa, and despite appeals, the government failed to stop the shifting of airlines from Dabolim to Mopa, he said, adding that this move will have severe impact on the tourism industry in South Goa.

"There is a fear among the stakeholders and people that the Dabolim airport will be shut to help Manohar International Airport to grow. Dabolim airport was dying a slow death and was on the ventilator, which the current government is trying to remove," he alleged.

Fatorda MLA calls for caste census of OBC communities

Team Herald

PORVORIM: Fatorda MLA Vijai Sardesai on Monday urged the government to undertake caste census of Other Backward Classes (OBC) communities, who constitute 60 per cent of Goa's population.

Raising the matter during Zero Hour in the Legislative Assembly, Sardesai said that OBC communities are deprived of socio-economic benefits due to incorrect and

inadequate population data for more than a decade. OBC has 19 communities majority in Bhandari Samaj and last caste-based census was conducted in 2011.

He said the census is essential for accurate representation in government schemes and, welfare programmes, political representation and for their development. He said that the census be conducted for better planning, development and implementation of welfare schemes for OBC communities.

Three bills introduced in House

Team Herald

PORVORIM: The government introduced three important bills during the ongoing budget session of the State Assembly on Monday.

The first bill introduced was The Goa Outdoor Advertisement (Regulations & Control) Bill, 2025 in the assembly, proposing to appoint the Entertainment Society of Goa (ESG) as the competent authority to regulate and control the erection and placement of outdoor advertisement devices across the State.

The government also introduced a bill to amend the Goa Private Universities Act, 2020. The amendment seeks to make it mandatory for those planning to establish a private university to own or lease a minimum of 50,000 sqms of land for at least 30 years.

It also introduced a bill in the assembly to amend the Employment Exchange (Compulsory Notification of Vacancies) Act to increase fines on private companies failing to advertise job vacancies in Goa.

The proposed fines range from Rs 5,000 to Rs 30,000. The amendment aims to collect data on jobs expected to be created in the next six months.

Govt mulls Nand Ghar-like anganwadis

Team Herald

PANJIM: The State government is contemplating cluster-based facilities through CSR initiative on the lines of Nand Ghars in Rajasthan for improving anganwadi infrastructure in Goa, informed Minister Vishwajit Rane, on Monday.

Replying to a starred question tabled by Mayem MLA Premendra Shet in the Legislative Assembly, Rane asked the MLAs to identify land in their respective constituencies to set up anganwadis in government land since maintaining them in the private rented premises was becoming difficult.

Responsibility of building anganwadis in 18 locations is assigned to the Goa State Infrastructure Development Corporation (GSIDC), he added. Incidentally, Nand Ghars in Rajasthan are modernised Anganwadis established by the Vedanta Foundation in partnership with the government, providing early childhood education, nutrition, and healthcare services.

Mayem MLA Premendra Shet raised the issue of meagre incentives paid to anganwadi worker/helpers in the State. Fator-

da MLA Vijai Sardesai also urged the government to enhance the honorarium of anganwadi workers and helpers as they were paid less compared to other States. Benaullim MLA Venzy Viegas too urged the government to revise their honorarium, regularise them and retirement benefits.

During the Annual Programme Implementation Plans of States/UTs for the Year 2025-26 meeting organised by the Ministry at New Delhi on March 3, 2025, the WCD department has requested to increase the honorarium of anganwadi workers/helpers, the minister told the House.

FRAMED IN THE HOUSE



Vijai Sardesai displays O Herald on the Old Goa heritage site issue



Chandrakant Shetye raises the Mulgao mining issue



Cruz Silva spoke on the issue of railway stations coming up in three villages



Jennifer Monserrate and Carlos Alvares Ferreira voice concern over acute water scarcity in Taleigao and Aldona