

Show cause notice to resort over illegal construction at Bambolim

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Department of Tourism has issued a show cause notice to a star hotel at Bambolim, for the unauthorised construction of a retaining wall and dumping of excavation debris along the beach area.

Acting on information received from reliable sources, officials from the department conducted an inspection on April 16. During the inspection, it was observed that the hotel had undertaken construction of a retaining wall approximately 300 metres in length abutting the beach. Additionally, debris from the excavation, including stones and remnants of metal wire,



VIOLATIONS GALORE: Debris, stones and remnants of metal wires dumped across the beach obstruct tourists, locals; hinder daily beach cleaning and lifeguarding operations

had been dumped across the beach. Such activities are in

violation of the Goa Tourist Places Protection and Maintenance Act, 2001, and constitute a public nuisance under the Act. The dumped material has

been obstructing tourists and locals, hindering daily beach cleaning and lifeguarding operations, and adversely impacting the tourism potential of Bambolim Beach.

The department has directed the hotel to immediately clear all debris from the site and submit a response within seven days of receiving the notice, failing which necessary action will be initiated under the provisions of the Act.

Separately, on Tuesday, the Goa Coastal Zone Management Authority (GCZMA) ordered the hotel to halt all work with immediate effect. The GCZMA also issued a show cause notice asking why demolition

of the structures and restoration of the site to its original condition should not be directed.

The hotel management has been instructed not to carry out any form of civil work at the site. They have been asked to submit their reply, along with a compliance report and relevant construction licences or approvals—if any—issued by the concerned authorities including the GCZMA, along with the approved plans, to the GCZMA office in Panjim by April 24.

Complaints regarding the alleged illegal construction were filed by Sant Andre MLA Vireesh Borkar, AAP leader Ramrao Wagh, and Goa Green Brigade convenor Avertino Miranda.

By-elections in three village panchayat wards on May 11

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Goa State Election Commission has announced by-elections to three vacant wards across village panchayats, scheduled to be held on May 11. The wards going to polls are Ward No 1 of Tivim Village Panchayat and Ward No VII of Assonora Village Panchayat, both in Bardez taluka, and Ward No 1 of Chicalim Village Panchayat in Mormugao taluka.

The Commission has appointed the District Collector of North Goa and the District Collector of South Goa as District Election Officers. The Mamlatdars of the respective talukas have been appointed as Returning Officers, while the Awal Karkuns in the offices of the Mamlatdars will serve as Assistant Re-

turning Officers.

The by-elections will be conducted by ballot, with polling scheduled from 8 am to 5 pm. Counting of votes will take place on May 12, from 8 am until completion. The voter list for the respective wards was published on April 8. The expenditure limit for each candidate per village panchayat ward has been fixed at Rs 40,000.

The Model Code of Conduct came into force on April 16 and will remain in effect within the jurisdiction of the above-mentioned wards until the completion of the election process. The Commission has also deployed General Observers and Expenditure Observers, as well as flying squads, to ensure the enforcement of the code.

Centre directs action on complaint against mining dump removal

Team Herald

PONDA: The Ministry of Mines, Government of India, has directed the Directorate of Mines and Geology, Government of Goa, to take appropriate action in response to a complaint filed by a Dharbandora resident, Jayesh Patil, regarding old mining dumps in Codli village.

Patil, a resident of Kir-lapal Dabal in Dharbandora Taluka, had written to the Union Minister of Mines a few months ago, urging that old mining dumps located in the vicinity of Codli village be retained. In response, the Ministry of Mines has written to Narayan Gad, Director of Mines and Geology, directing the state government to act on the matter as per provisions of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, and to keep both the complainant and the Ministry informed.

In his letter, Patil expressed concern over the removal of old mining dumps, stating that these dumps currently serve to protect locals and animals from open, unfilled pits left behind after ore extraction. He wrote:

"In Codli village, there are survey numbers 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 35, 36, 37, 54 and 57/2 of Codli village of Dharbandora Taluka, District South Goa, where mining leases were granted and ore was extracted. Thereafter, rejection material was dumped to protect the local population from any unforeseen events."

He further alleged "It is seen that the Goa Government, by force or by misguiding provisions of law, wants to remove the said dumps. This will affect local villagers and animals, as all pits, which are yet to be re-

It is seen that the Goa Government, by force or by misguiding provisions of law, wants to remove the said dumps. This will affect local villagers and animals, as all pits, which are yet to be refilled, will be exposed and there will be no protection, possibly leading to unforeseen events
— Jayesh Patil, complainant

filled, will be exposed and there will be no protection, possibly leading to unforeseen events."

Patil requested that the dumps located within or at the boundary of the mining leases be excluded from e-tender processes and retained for safety reasons. He concluded:

"I therefore, by this intimation/request letter, request your office to kindly look into the matter. The dumps which are protecting or are on the boundaries of the mining lease may be restrained or banned from being e-tendered, or the said dumps may be retained. I hope your office will consider my present request and act on it."

Meanwhile, Patil has also warned the Goa Government that he would approach the court should any illegal mining commence at Codli.

According to available information, one mining block in Codli has been e-auctioned. However, locals claim they are unclear about the exact location of the auctioned block, leading to confusion in the community.

HOT-CROSS BUNS

JOSEPH FERNANDES



Venissa Conceicao from Ucassaim's St Peter bakery displays her freshly-baked hot-cross buns, a sweet treat traditionally consumed during the Holy Week ahead of Easter. Believed to have pagan origins, when sweet cakes were eaten to celebrate the arrival of spring in Britain, the tradition evolved into a Lenten ritual by making the buns with crosses of dough

BJP will wrest Quepem seat in 2027, says CM

Team Herald

QUEPEM: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant has expressed confidence that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) will wrest the Quepem seat in the 2027 Assembly elections—provided all founding members and new entrants of the party join hands and put aside their differences.

Speaking at a workers' meeting organised by the Quepem BJP Mandal at Shree Shantadurga Bhumiapurush Saptakoteswar Sansthan hall, Fatorpa, Sawant appealed to both veteran workers and recent entrants to work in unison to ensure the BJP's victory in Quepem.

Dismissing claims by Congress MLA Alton D'Costa, Sawant clarified that reports suggesting he had invited the MLA to join the BJP were "com-

pletely false and misleading." "I have not invited anyone, and there is no need for the BJP to invite him," the Chief Minister stated.

Sawant further asserted that the current MLA should not claim credit for the development works ongoing in the Quepem constituency. "The development works being carried out in Quepem were planned and approved by former Deputy Chief Minister Chandrakant 'Babu' Kavlekar during his tenure. These works had remained pending due to the COVID crisis. As Chief Minister, I am only facilitating their completion," he said.

Meanwhile, Kavlekar added that he would disclose the list of works he had proposed—with supporting documents—at an appropriate time.

GOACAN voices concern about the increase in fire incidents

Urges fire services to draw up a district fire safety plan

Team Herald

PANJIM: On the eve of National Fire Service Day (April 14) and Fire Prevention Week (14-20 April), the Goa Civic and Consumer Network (GOACAN) has voiced concern over the increasing number of fire incidents in the State, urging the formulation of a District Fire Safety Action Plan for 2025-26 involving local bodies and civil society organisations.

In a letter addressed to Nitin V Raiker, Director of Fire and Emergency Services, GOACAN noted a surge in fire-related incidents across Goa. It pointed specifically to recent fires in a building in Margao and a supermarket in Mapusa during the past week as urgent wake-up calls for the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES).

"These fire incidents, we have noted, not only caused huge losses to families on the financial front but have also resulted in mental stress and prolonged anxiety. While we understand that many of these fire incidents could have been prevented, we have got feedback that in most of these cases, the persons and families involved had not put in place a 'Fire Safety Protection and Prevention Plan' for their places of work and business or homes," the letter states.

Given this situation, and in light of Fire Prevention Week from 14 to 20 April 2025, GOACAN proposed that the DFES draw up a District Fire Safety Action Plan for the year 2025-26, involving the participation of various stakeholders.

"This can be done by setting up

a co-ordination committee headed by the respective District Collectors, and District Fire Safety meetings could be held once every six months—effectively covering the summer season, monsoons and winter," the organisation suggested.

GOACAN proposed that committee members include representatives from Zilla Panchayats, Municipal Councils, Village Panchayats, Goa Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI), Travel and Tourism Association of Goa (TTAG), Goa State Industries Association (GSIA), Goa Industrial Development Corporation (GIDC), Kadamba Transport Corporation Limited (KTCL), Bus Owners Association, LPG and Petroleum Dealers Associations, Merchants Associations, Banks, Housing Societies, Consumer Forums, and Self-Help Groups.

Congress protests ED action against Sonia, Rahul in National Herald Case

Team Herald

PANJIM: The opposition Congress on Wednesday protested against the chargesheets filed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) against Congress Parliamentary Party Chairperson Sonia Gandhi, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, and other senior party leaders in connection with the National Herald case.

Speaking to reporters, Goa Congress President Amit Patkar condemned the chargesheet filed by the ED on April 9, on the final day of the 365-day investigation window, describing it as politically motivated rather than a legal action based on facts. He argued that the ac-

False cases are being filed against Congress leaders, and investigative agencies are being misused to silence the voice of the opposition
— Amit Patkar, Goa Cong President

tion was aimed at harassing the leadership of the Indian National Congress.

"Rahul Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi are not just leaders; they represent the spirit of sacrifice, struggle, and service to the nation. Their family's blood is in the soil of this country. They will not be silenced by political witch-hunts. The Indian National Congress will continue to speak fearlessly for every Indian—against hatred, injustice, and authoritarianism," Patkar said.

Patkar also accused the Narendra Modi-led govern-

ment at the Centre of attempting to divert public attention from critical issues such as unemployment, inflation, and crimes against women. "False cases are being filed against Congress leaders, and investigative agencies are being misused to silence the voice of the opposition," he added.

Leader of Opposition Yuri Alemo joined in, alleging that the false charges were intended to ensure that opposition leaders either remained silent or were coerced into joining the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Dr Pratiksha Khalap, President of the Goa Pradesh Mahila Congress, also condemned the chargesheets, describing them as part of a "calculated political witch-hunt" against a family that has "sacrificed generations in service to India." She accused the BJP-led central government of continuing to misuse investigative agencies to silence dissent and discredit leaders who have consistently defended India's democratic values.

"The Congress party will never be intimidated by such pressure tactics. Our fight for truth, justice, and the protection of the Constitution will continue with unwavering determination," Dr Khalap declared.

FDA orders closure of fast food centre in Navelim

PANJIM: The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has ordered the immediate closure of a fast food centre in Navelim, Salcete, following a complaint about unsanitary conditions at food joints in the area. This action is part of the FDA's ongoing efforts to ensure food safety and hygiene across Goa.

On Wednesday, the FDA conducted inspections of four premises in Navelim. Health Minister Vishwajit Rane confirmed that orders were issued with a five-day deadline for the rectification of deficiencies found during the inspection.

Minister Rane said, "One fast food centre was ordered to shut down immediately due to serious violations, including poor hygiene, lack of sanitary cards for workers, and unauthorised residential use of the premises."

He praised the FDA's swift and effective action, highlighting their dedication to protecting public health and maintaining the highest standards of food safety in the state. "We commend the FDA team for their prompt and diligent action, reflecting their continued commitment to protecting public health and upholding the highest standards of food safety in Goa," Rane said in a social media post.

Senior citizen dies by suicide, son alleges constant harassment by landlord

Team Herald

PONDA: A 67-year-old senior citizen, Prakash Kamat, resident of Manueshim, Mardol, allegedly died by suicide on April 17 by jumping into a well near his house. His son, Shrinivas Kamat, lodged a complaint at the Mardol Police Station on Wednesday morning, alleging that his father had been harassed by the landlord and his family members who had pressured him to vacate the house where he had lived his entire life.

According to Shrinivas's complaint, his father had been residing in the house since birth. However, over the past three to four days, the landlord's family began visiting the premises, allegedly harassing the elderly man. They reportedly demanded

that he either vacate the house or pay a monthly rent of Rs 7,000 by signing an 11-month agreement.

Shrinivas claimed that the constant pressure and harassment drove his father to take the drastic step. He further stated that he would not accept his father's body from the police or conduct final rites until a thorough investigation was conducted and justice was delivered.

Advocate Raju Mangueshkar, trade union leader and local resident, condemned the incident and urged the government to take the matter seriously. "If a person who has been living in a house for 60 to 70 years and paying electricity bills, house tax and water bills is told to vacate his home, what future lies ahead for Goa?" he questioned.