

Actor-writer Sharad Ponkshe takes pot shots at Art & Culture Minister over 'suparibuzz' remarks

Says those who live in a world where 'supari and money' is taken speak in such a manner

Team Herald

PANJIM: A day after Art and Culture Minister Govind Gaude accused film, theatre actor and writer Sharad Ponkshe of maligning his name because he had taken a "supari" to do so, the veteran actor shot back, saying those who live in a world where "supari and money" is taken speak in such a manner.

WAR OF WORDS

Reacting to Gaude's offensive, Ponkshe said, "What connection do I have with taking supari? Those who live in the world where supari and money are taken think like this. My drama was disrupted. That is why I said sorry to the audience who had come to watch the drama. In the auditorium, people were saying 'Gaude, Gaude'. I asked, 'Who is Gaude?' and then I got



to know that they were talking about the Art and Culture Minister. Before that, I did not have any information about him."

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was leakage in the air-conditioner. So where was the money spent? Instead of saying sorry, the minister is branding me as a Suparibaaz. In fact, taking supari is their religion. It is their system. I am an artist, not a goonda to take supari. The drama was disrupted for around

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— Govind Gaude, Art and Culture Minister

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10-12 minutes. Gaude should have apologised to those who love art, taking responsibility for what had happened," Ponkshe said.

The veteran actor continued, "It would have been better had he (Gaude) said that he accepts the mistake and assured that

such incidents would not happen in the future. But instead, he termed me a Suparibaaz. The Kala Academy should be handed over to someone who knows what art is. A person who understands art should be appointed as a manager with a proper salary. Most important-

ly, sound and light engineers should be present during shows so that they can take quick action if there are disruptions. Gaude is great, and so is the Minister for Art and Culture."

Ponkshe was responding to Govind Gaude's allegations that the actor took his name just to malign him. "He (Ponkshe) took my name in the media just to malign me. These people have taken supari to spoil my image," Gaude had alleged.

Gaude also refuted Ponkshe's claim that the production team did not use the Kala Academy's sound system. "If there's a technical fault, it can be fixed. Why drag me into it?" he snapped.

The war of words began after Ponkshe's Marathi play Purush was disrupted last Sunday. Visibly disturbed, Ponkshe apologised from the stage and later openly criticised the State government.

Two tonnes of chemically-ripened bananas destroyed

Team Herald

MAPUSA: Two tonnes of Velchi bananas were destroyed in the interest of public health in the Mapusa Market yesterday.

In a post on social media, Health Minister Rane stated, "Acting on findings from a recent seizure, two tonnes of Velchi bananas were taken up for destruction in the interest of public health, with assistance from Mapusa Municipality."

He added that laboratory analysis conducted by an FSSAI-approved facility revealed the presence of ethapone, a chemical not permitted for use in fruit ripening under food safety regulations.

"This chemical is not permitted for use in ripening as per food safety guidelines, which only allow ethylene gas. We continue to take firm steps to ensure that Goans receive fruits that are safe and naturally ripened," the Minister said.

Despite oppn, Mandrem VP clears 90-villa project

Team Herald

PERNEM: A storm has erupted in Mandrem after the local panchayat approved proposals for the development of 90 luxury beachside villas, igniting opposition among villagers and raising eyebrows over an apparent shift in stance by local MLA Jit Arolkar.

The approvals, granted during a recent ordinary panchayat meeting, pertain to two substantial real estate projects and have sparked fierce criticism over potential violations of land use policy, zoning regulations, and water availability norms.

The controversy deepens as villagers point to MLA



An aerial view of where the 90 villas are likely to be constructed

Arolkar's earlier public opposition to land conversions in non-development zones. The panchayat, dominated by his supporters, nonetheless cleared the projects, prompting allegations of a political U-turn.

Official sources confirm that one of the proposals is by Raigo Homes Pvt

Ltd, which seeks to build villas, a swimming pool, and a boundary wall on land listed under Survey No. 365/2(A). The parcel reportedly includes areas zoned for settlement, orchard use, and non-development.

The second project, submitted by Mahasir Ho-

tels and Resorts Pvt Ltd, pertains to Survey Nos. 211/2(P) and 210/1-A(P), and similarly includes plans for villas and pools. Both proposed sites are situated within the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ), raising serious concerns regarding the Town and Country Planning Department's decision to issue technical clearances.

Tensions are exacerbated by recent history. In October 2024, MLA Arolkar had formally urged the Pernem Deputy Collector to halt new construction in the Mandrem constituency until the completion of a proposed 30 MLD water supply scheme, citing severe strain on the

taluka's drinking water resources. This had led the Deputy Collector to advise all panchayat secretaries to refrain from issuing new construction licences.

However, the latest approvals appear to flout these instructions, fueling speculation that political pressure may have influenced the panchayat's decisions.

Public anger reached a tipping point following the panchayat's approval of the villa projects on April 17, a move which locals say breaches an earlier gram sabha resolution prohibiting new construction without community consent.

Advocate Prasad Sha-

hapurkar stated that a delegation of concerned villagers intends to confront the sarpanch and panchayat secretary on Saturday, April 19 at 12.30 pm at the Mandrem panchayat office. The group aims to obtain official documents, including survey details, terrain classifications (such as hilly, agricultural, or residential land), and the reasoning behind the controversial approvals.

Vinayak Chari, a village representative, added, "If people from Delhi are coming here to illegally level our hills and build villas, we will stop them. It is our responsibility to protect our land for future generations."

HC directs TCP to inspect alleged illegal structures in NDZ at Anjuna

Pollution Control Board to check if structures have 'consent to operate'; told to seek police assistance to carry out inspection

Team Herald

PANJIM: The High Court of Bombay at Goa has directed the Town and Country Planning (TCP) Department to inspect two alleged illegal structures located in the No Development Zone (NDZ) at Anjuna, while also instructing the Goa State Pollution Control Board (GSPCB) to verify whether the structures have obtained the mandatory 'consent to operate'.

The directions were issued while hearing a writ petition filed by Wayne Constantine Pereira and Agnes A Monteiro de Souza from Gaunvaddi-Anjuna. The Court asked the Deputy Town Planner to revisit the two structures

and conduct a site inspection. In the event of resistance from the project proponents, the Court directed the Deputy Town Planner to seek police assistance. However, counsel for both proponents, who were present in court, assured that the inspection would be allowed.

The Division Bench comprising Justice Bharati Dangle and Justice Nivedita P Mehta enquired about the course of action to be followed pursuant to the site inspection report, particularly concerning the two specific structures mentioned therein.

The counsel for the TCP Department submitted that, if violations of permissions are found, the

permissions in question would stand withdrawn.

The Court also directed the GSPCB to verify whether the project proponents, who are operating commercial activities, possess the required "consent to operate". The Bench stated, "We expect the blueprint of the action to be initiated based on the site inspection report to be placed before us within a period of two weeks, so that we can trust the authorities that it has already initiated the action."

Arguing for the petitioners, Adv Rohit Bras De Sa sought appropriate directions to the State authorities to restore the land in Survey Nos. 509/1 and 509/1-A of Anjuna Village

to its original condition, noting that the area falls within an eco-sensitive or protected zone (natural cover and no development slope).

Adv De Sa also sought a direction to seal the said premises on the grounds that commercial activity is being conducted without an occupancy certificate, in violation of Section 3.11 of the Goa Building Rules and Regulations, 2010. He further argued that the property, being in a command area, cannot be subject to any construction without prior NOC from the Command Area Development Board.

The matter has been posted for further hearing on April 30.

Two young lives lost in tragic collision near Quepem

Bus driver flees from site; traced and arrested in Karnataka

Team Herald

MARGAO: Two persons lost their lives in a tragic road accident at Padi near Quepem on Thursday night after their scooter was allegedly struck from behind by an interstate bus. Cuncolim Police reported that the incident occurred at around 8:45 pm near a sharp turn in a known accident-prone zone.

According to police, the bus—loaded with passengers and headed towards Canacona and further to Bengaluru—was travelling in the same direction as the two-wheeler when it collided with the scooter from behind near the sharp curve. The victims were identified as Dilip Velip, 28 and Sandesh Gaonkar, 26 both residents of Gokuldham near Barcem.

Police stated that Dilip was employed at a hotel in the coastal belt, while Sandesh worked on a contractual basis in Quepem. Dilip, who was married and Sandesh had returned home from work

earlier in the evening and were on their way to attend a function in the Padi area when the accident occurred.

The impact caused both to fall onto the road with grievous injuries. A constable attached to Cuncolim Police Station, who was returning home after duty, came across the scene and alerted the Police Control Room. PSI Aditya Sawant, along with local residents, rushed to the site and arranged for both injured persons to be shifted to South Goa District Hospital.

However, Sandesh who was riding the scooter, succumbed to his injuries during treatment at the hospital, while Dilip was declared brought dead at the PHC Balli by the attending doctor.

Cuncolim Police confirmed that the accident took place on April 16, at approximately 8.42 pm. ASI Mangesh Satodkar of Cuncolim Police Station registered a formal complaint. The accused driver, identified as Rajesh Shivaly of

Sirvoi, Quepem, allegedly drove the Volvo bus in a rash and negligent manner while proceeding from Balli towards Barcem. Upon reaching Padi, he reportedly rammed into the scooter, which was heading in the opposite direction—from Padi towards Balli.

After the accident, the bus driver fled the scene with the vehicle and failed to provide medical aid or inform the authorities. Police stated that he was later traced and arrested by Karnataka Police in Yellapur, from where the bus was also recovered. Meanwhile, the passengers on board reportedly made alternate arrangements to continue their journey to Bengaluru.

Local residents have raised concerns over the dangerous conditions at the accident site, citing the narrow road and frequent accidents. They have urged the government to improve road infrastructure and implement safety measures in the area.

Easter Fiesta!

Truly Egg-citing
Swiss Chocolate Eggless
₹500

Choco Solid Egg
Egg small
₹90

Bunny Buzz
₹500

Easter Fiesta
Dutch Truffle Egg and Eggless Small/Large
₹500 / ₹1000

Bunny Fun
Red Velvet Eggless
₹550

Easter Gold
Choco Roast Almond Egg
₹500

Easter Mix
₹150

Easter Lollipop
₹50

Mini Delight Pastry
Pure Marzipan dipped in Chocolate with Egg
₹50

Easter Fantasy
Red Velvet, Sponge dipped in Cheese Cream Eggless
₹50

Little Wonder
Red Velvet Cup Cake with Egg
₹25

Bunny Surprise
₹80

Choco Hollow Egg
Large / Medium
₹220 / ₹170

East-a-doodle-do
₹100

Sweet Bunny
₹80

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