

Bhomkars want bypass, CM would have none of it

Meet CM on highway expansion issue; demand formal communication from Centre that aligns with Goa govt's assurances; Sawant says plan changes will delay the project

Team Herald

PANJIM: The residents of Bhoma on Monday stated that homes can be rebuilt, but the culture of the temple cannot, reiterating their demand that the Goa government should consider a bypass instead of a flyover. However, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant stated in reality, only a 25-metre-wide flyover is proposed at Bhoma and making changes to the plan would require fresh permissions, which would significantly delay the project.

Alleging that politics is being played over the highway expansion issue, the residents demanded a formal communication from the Centre that aligns with assurances given by the State government.

Speaking to mediapersons, after meeting Chief Minister Pramod Sawant over the long-pending issue of expansion of National Highway, the villagers said that during the meeting they were told that four roadside structures would be affected, but no houses or temples would be impacted.

Putu Gaude, a villager, said,



Bhoma residents speaking to mediapersons, after meeting Chief Minister Pramod Sawant over the issue of NH expansion

"We have been protesting for the past two-and-a-half years, and not a single official has visited our village. If this plan was made in 1999, why were land acquisition notices not issued then?"

Alleging that politics is being played over the highway expansion issue, he said that the firm decision of the villagers is that there should be a bypass road.

He said, "We are being asked to show the place where the bypass can be constructed. If we show the place then what is their role?"

Pointing out that the original highway plan included two alternative routes, Kishore Naik, another resident, said, "We brought this to the Chief Minister's atten-

tion, but he was unwilling to discuss the bypass options. Our demand has been clear since 2010. We want a bypass, not a flyover. Our demand is firm. We want bypass only. This was assured by former Chief Minister late Manohar Parrikar and Union minister Shripad Naik."

Alleging that the authorities are changing plans as per their requirement, another villager said, "We came here to meet the Chief Minister because our meeting with the MLA and discussion with him did not bear any fruit. Homes can be rebuilt but the culture of the temple cannot. If we have to save our village then we need a bypass."

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"We have been protesting for the past two-and-a-half years, and not a single official has visited our village. If this plan was made in 1999, why were land acquisition notices not issued then? Politics is being played over the highway expansion issue and the firm decision of the villagers is that there should be a bypass

– Putu Gaude, Bhoma resident

"Someone has wrongly told the villagers that a 60-metre-wide highway is planned. In reality, only a 25-metre-wide flyover is proposed at Bhoma. Only four houses would be impacted and affected residents would be adequately compensated and rehabilitated

– Pramod Sawant, Chief Minister

DIGITAL ARREST SCAM: HOW TO STAY SAFE

RECENT CASES IN GOA

■ **April 2025** (North Goa) – A senior citizen duped of ₹**1.47 crore**

■ **January 2025** (Siolim) – A woman was "digitally held" for three days and made to cough up ₹**1 crore**. This marked Goa's 9th digital arrest case



REST OF INDIA

■ **Mar 2025** (Gwalior) – Swami Supradiptananda of Ramakrishna Mission lost over ₹**2 crore**

■ **Sept 2024** (Punjab) – S.P. Oswal, textile tycoon lost ₹**6.9 crore**

■ **Aug 2024** (Lucknow) – Dr Ruchika Tandon, a neurologist forced to part with ₹**2.81 crore**

■ **Nov–Dec 2024** (Bengaluru) – Software engineer defrauded of ₹**11.8 crore**

■ **Dec 2024** (Kochi) – Woman lost ₹**4.12 crore**

WHAT IS A DIGITAL ARREST SCAM?

A cybercrime where fraudsters impersonate officials (CBI, Customs, Police, etc.) and claim the victim is involved in a crime. They then 'digitally arrest' the person over a video call and extort money to "avoid legal action."

HOW DO THEY TRAP VICTIMS?

■ Claim victim's documents/accounts are linked to criminal activity

■ Insist on a video call for interrogation

■ Fake backdrops showing a police station or office

■ Keep the victim iso-



lated under psychological pressure

■ Demand money through bank/UPI transfers to "settle" the issue

ARE THERE INTERNATIONAL LINKS?

Yes. Many scammers operate from call centres in Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam, and Thailand, often inside Chinese-run casinos

FAQ

IS 'DIGITAL ARREST' LEGAL?

No. There is no provision for "digital arrest" under Indian law. Law enforcement cannot arrest or interrogate over a phone or video call

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

■ Stay calm, don't panic
■ Fear is their main tool. No official will demand immediate payment via video call
■ Never share personal info
■ Avoid giving Aadhaar, bank details, OTPs, or clicking on

unknown links
■ Always verify
■ Ask for the caller's ID, then verify via official numbers or visit a nearby police station
■ Cut the call and report it
■ Don't stay on call. Hang up and report immediately



WHERE TO REPORT?

Cyber Crime Helpline: **1930**
National Cyber Crime Portal: www.cybercrime.gov.in
Report spam numbers: www.sancharsaathi.gov.in/sfc
Goa Police Financial Cyber Fraud mobile no: **7875756222**
Mumbai Police helplines: **7715004444 / 7400086666**

LEGAL PROTECTIONS YOU SHOULD KNOW

■ No digital arrest is lawful.
■ Any arrest must follow due legal procedure under BNSS, 2023 as well as Article 21 & 22 of the Constitution
■ You have the right to demand an official summons or in-person interaction at a police station

Pilgao villagers block trucks from transporting ore to Sarmanas jetty

Accuse mining firm of using 80,000 square metres of farmland for dumping iron ore

Team Herald

PILGAO: Demanding fair compensation for their agricultural land or the return of the land, farmers, tenants, and villagers from Pilgao blocked tipper trucks transporting iron ore from the mining block to the Sarmanas jetty on Monday.

The protesting farmers stated that a mining company has used approximately 80,000 square metres of farmland for dumping ore. About 50 farmers participated in the protest, which was suspended after four



Farmers from Pilgao participated in the protest, which was suspended after four hours

hours when authorities, including the Bicholim Mamlatdar, assured them that an amicable solution would be proposed by Wednesday.

The farmers have re-

solved to resume their agitation on Thursday if their demands are unmet.

Transportation resumed in the afternoon.

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ACB raids KR police station, seizes cash from cop's cabin

Team Herald

MARGAO: Following allegations of corruption, the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) of the Goa Police conducted a raid at the Konkarn Railway (KR) police station and seized Rs 25,000 from a police officer's cabin.

ACB sources reported that officers at the KR police station summoned a meat trader from Karnataka after seizing beef and demanded Rs 2 lakh from him. Allegedly the officers told the traders: "We have evidence that you are the main supplier of this consignment, but we will let you off if you pay Rs 2 lakh and allow you to continue your trade, provided you pay Rs 25,000 a month as protection money."

When the dealer refused to meet their demands, the officers threatened to arrest him. The dealer reportedly contacted senior officials in Panjim, recounting how the police had threatened him with false charges and arrest.

Sources indicate that after negotiations, the dealer agreed to pay Rs 25,000 per month to continue his trade. Subsequently, a police constable and a senior officer negotiated the deal. A trap was set, and the dealer went to the Konkarn Railway Police Station and paid the money.

ACB personnel then raided the office and recovered the money from a senior officer's cabin.

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36 hours after Nagali robbery, cops still grope in the dark

Thieves assaulted security guard, tied up elderly couple and stole valuables

Team Herald

PANJIM: More than 36 hours after there was a daring robbery on the early hours of Sunday at the residence of an elderly couple from a prominent business family in Nagali, Dona Paula, the police are still clueless about the identity or the whereabouts of the couple.

The police said multiple teams have been formed to investigate the case and trace the accused. "Four to five unidentified persons entered the residence of

"We have been raising the breakdown of law and order for quite some time. Here a group of people entered a house which has a security guard and cameras. It has been done in a planned manner. The whole house was ransacked. It is heartbreaking. We have heard incidents like this happening in the rural areas. Now it is happening in the city

–Cecille Rodrigues, social activist

the victim at Nagali Hills, Dona Paula, and committed robbery of ornaments and cash. In this connection, an FIR has been registered at Panjim Police Station under relevant sections of law," a statement from police said.

Speaking to mediapersons, Crime Branch SP Rahul Gupta added that both district police and crime branch are working on the case.

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Wife arrested in K'taka former DGP Om Prakash murder case

'Domestic violence' was the reason behind the extreme step: Pallavi

PTI, BENGALURU: Police probing former Karnataka DGP Om Prakash's murder case have arrested his wife Pallavi on a complaint by their son Kartikesh that he suspected that his mother and sister were involved in the murder.

"Investigation Officer has arrested Pallavi Om Prakash (64). She will be produced before the Magistrate," an officer said.

He added that the case has been transferred to the Central Crime Branch of Bengaluru (CCB) for further investigation.

Meanwhile, when police took Pallavi to the scene of crime, she told reporters present there that "domestic violence" was the reason behind the extreme step.

Prakash, a 1981 batch IPS

"It is learnt that after a heated exchange of words, Pallavi allegedly threw chilli powder on Prakash's face before stabbing him to death. As the former police chief scrambled for relief from the burning sensation, Pallavi stabbed him multiple times with a knife and bottle, killing him on the spot. She then made a video call to her friend and said, "I have killed the monster"

– Police sources

officer hailing from Bihar, was found dead in a pool of blood in the ground floor of his three-storeyed house in the posh HSR Layout in the city on Sunday.

It is learnt that after a heated exchange of words, Pallavi allegedly threw chilli powder on Prakash's face before stabbing him to death, police sources said.

As the hefty former police chief of Karnataka scrambled for relief from the burning sensation, Pal-

lavi stabbed him multiple times with a knife and bottle, killing him on the spot, sources said.

She then made a video call to her friend and said, "I have killed the monster," sources claimed.

In his complaint, Kartikesh alleged that his mother Pallavi had been threatening to kill his father for the past one week.

"Due to these threats, my father had gone to stay at his sister's house," he stated.

"Two days ago, my younger sister Kriti went there and pressured my father to return home. She brought him back against his will," Kartikesh alleged.

He said on Sunday around 5 pm, when he was at the Karnataka Golf Association in Domlur, his neighbour called him and informed that his father was found lying downstairs.

"I rushed home (located in HSR Layout) and found police officers and people present on the spot. My father was lying in a pool of blood with injuries on his head and body. A broken bottle and a knife were there next to his body. He was then taken to St John's Hospital," he explained.

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Won't tolerate any deals with US at our expense, China warns nations

Threatens to impose countermeasures

PTI, BEIJING: China on Monday threatened to impose countermeasures on countries seeking to strike trade deals with the US at its expense in order to get American tariff exemptions.

In a pre-emptive move to stall a host of nations with whom China has lucrative trade ties from striking exclusive trade deals with the US to get tariff exemptions, the Commerce Ministry spokesperson warned that Beijing will firmly oppose such agreements.

The spokesperson made these remarks in a statement while responding to reports that the US is preparing to pressure other countries to restrict trade ties with China in exchange for tariff exemptions, State-

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"If such a situation arises, China will not accept it and will resolutely take corresponding countermeasures," the spokesperson said, adding that "trying to trade away others' interests for temporary gains is like bargaining with a tiger for its skin – it will only backfire."

The ministry warned that it will not tolerate any

deals made by foreign governments at the expense of Chinese interests.

It added that China has the right to resolve and the capability to safeguard its legitimate rights and interests.

"This is essentially using the banner of 'reciprocity' as a pretext to pursue hegemonic politics and unilateral bullying in the field of international economy and

trade," it said.

China's tough stand came against the backdrop of reports that several countries, against whom US President Donald Trump imposed varied tariffs, are now seeking to work out bilateral trade deals with Washington to resume their exports to access the lucrative US market.

Last week, the Wall Street Journal reported that the US plans to use tariff negotiations to pressure dozens of countries into imposing new barriers on trade with China.

Several countries and groups, including Japan, the EU and ASEAN, have lucrative trade with both China and the US.

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