

Defunct CCTV cameras leave a question mark on Margao's safety

State's commercial capital has become susceptible to criminal activities; locals claim violators dump garbage at night without fear of surveillance

Team Herald

MARGAO: Goa's commercial capital is currently facing a significant challenge as its entire CCTV surveillance network has been rendered non-functional, leading to a growing concern for residents and civic leaders, particularly due to the increase in crime, illegal garbage disposal, and the unrestricted entry of unidentified individuals into the town.

The existing surveillance system, initially installed in 2013 through the MPLAD scheme, has been inactive for several years due to the lack of a proper maintenance plan. These cameras, which were intended to bolster public safety and improve traffic management, are now merely non-functioning fixtures across key urban areas. Consequently, Margao is becoming increasingly susceptible to both criminal activities and a decline in civic discipline.

Residents have reported a notable rise in public garbage dumping incidents, especially during nighttime hours, as violators operate without fear of surveillance.



“There have been break-ins and thefts in the commercial areas, but we have no footage to trace the culprits. What’s the point of installing cameras if there’s no plan to maintain them?”
-Cedric D’Costa, Margao resident

“The town has no idea who’s entering or leaving, especially at night. This is not just a municipal oversight—it’s a public safety crisis. The cameras are the need of the hour”
-Vivek Naik, a social activist

Highlighting the issue, Cedric D’Costa, a local resident said, “There have been break-ins and thefts in the commercial areas, but we have no footage to trace the culprits. What’s the point of installing cameras if there’s no plan to maintain them?”

Social activists also emphasised that the absence of working CCTV coverage

presents a serious security vulnerability, especially given the town’s increasing number of visitors.

Vivek Naik, a social activist said, “The town has no idea who’s entering or leaving, especially at night. This is not just a municipal oversight—it’s a public safety crisis. The cameras are the need of the hour.”

NON-FUNCTIONING FIXTURES

- Margao's CCTV surveillance network, which is currently non-functional, has raised concerns due to increased crime, illegal dumping, and unrestricted entry of unidentified individuals
- Installed in 2013, the CCTV surveillance network has been inactive for years due to lack of maintenance
- Residents report a rise in garbage dumping and break-ins without surveillance footage
- Social activists emphasise the security vulnerability due to the absence of working cameras
- A recent meeting at the District Collectorate decided to instal approximately 30 CCTV cameras at strategic locations
- Law enforcement officials voice concerns about their hampered ability to respond to crime and manage traffic
- Residents feel restoring the CCTV system is critical for the town's safety

On a positive note, a recent meeting at the District Collectorate brought together officials, law enforcement, and other stakeholders to address the urgent need to reactivate the surveillance system. The outcome of this discussion was a decision to install approximately 30 CCTV cameras in the initial phase, with strategic locations being identified to ensure maximum coverage and effectiveness.

Law enforcement officials have also voiced their

concerns regarding how the lack of surveillance significantly impedes their ability to effectively respond to criminal activities and manage traffic violations. While other regions in Goa have advanced to centralised monitoring systems, Margao, despite its commercial importance, has not kept pace.

Residents believe that restoring the CCTV system is no longer simply an option but a critical requirement for the town's safety and future.

Curtorkars protest ‘illegal’ tree felling to facilitate housing project at Maina

Allege the cutting had exceeded permitted limits; demand thorough probe by forest dept and action against violators

Team Herald

MARGAO: Curtorim villagers on Wednesday met with Forest Department officials to protest what they described as unauthorised large-scale tree felling linked to a housing project at Maina.

Alleging that the cutting had exceeded permitted limits, residents demanded a full investigation and action against those responsible for the violations.

Congress leader Moreno Rebello told the media that permission had been granted for the felling of just 12 trees, but villagers observed that over 50 had been cut. He said the activity was carried out without proper consultation with the panchayat, under the pretext of development.

“We are not against development, but there must be transparency and accountability. The scale of deforestation here is alarming,” Moreno said, urging the Forest Department to probe the incident thoroughly and ensure elected representatives are involved in granting and monitoring permissions. Forest officials have acknowledged the complaint and assured residents that the matter will be looked into.

The meeting came a day after tensions flared at the Curtorim Village Panchayat office over the same project. On Tuesday, agitated residents, including Zilla Panchayat (ZP) member Michele Rebello and Moreno, several panchayat members including the local panch, demanded immediate revocation of the construction licence issued for the housing project.



CALL FOR TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY

- Locals claimed that permission had been granted to felling only 12 trees
- Observed that over 50 trees had been cut
- Alleged that the activity was carried out without proper consultation with the panchayat, under the pretext of development
- Called for transparency and accountability and termed the scale of deforestation as alarming
- Demanded that Forest Department probe the incident and ensure elected representatives are involved in granting and monitoring permissions

mediate revocation of the construction licence issued for the housing project.

They pointed out that the panchayat member concerned had been excluded from the inspection process prior to the approval being granted.

Curtorim MLA Aleixo Reginaldo Lourenco, who was present at the panchayat office during this meeting, advised Curtorim Sarpanch Alcinha D'Silva to initiate the process of revoking the licence, but to ensure due legal procedure was followed to avoid giving the developers any grounds for court appeals. Responding to the back-

lash, D'Silva told the media that the panchayat had issued the licence based on technical clearance from the Town and Country Planning Department (TCP). However, D'Silva said steps would be taken to re-examine the matter and, if needed, revoke the licence following legal protocols.

Moreno also alleged that the trees on the property were cut only after the licence was issued, and demanded legal action against the party behind the project. Later on, the villagers, along with the Sarpanch and panchayat members, carried out a site inspection.

Authorities ramp up efforts to improve Margao's infrastructure

Inspect Malbhat Railway Station to fast-track a proposed beautification project

Team Herald

MARGAO: Authorities have ramped up efforts to improve Margao's aesthetics and civic infrastructure, with a particular focus on the railway station precinct and key drainage hotspots across the town.

Margao MLA and former Chief Minister Digambar Kamat, along with officials from the Margao Municipal Council, conducted a detailed site inspection at the Malbhat Railway Station to assess and fast-track a proposed beautification project. The initiative aims to enhance the station's visual appeal, facilitate smoother pedestrian move-

ment, and provide commuters with a cleaner and more welcoming environment.

In a parallel development addressing long-standing monsoon-related issues, Kamat formally inaugurated a newly completed drainage system near Bal Bhavan, Bindolem-Aquem-Alto.

According to him, this project is expected to significantly improve stormwater management and offer relief from water logging, benefiting both local residents and visitors to the cultural hub.

Further demonstrating the urgency of infrastructure improvements, new drainage works were also initiated

opposite Hotel Green View in Malbhat, a busy commercial area. The project is designed to ensure efficient rainwater outflow and reduce the risk of seasonal flooding, which has long been a concern for businesses and commuters in the vicinity.

Continuing the push to strengthen Margao's drainage network, Kamat also laid the foundation stone for a drainage development project behind Vishant Theatre in Aquem-Alto. The initiative forms part of a broader civic strategy to upgrade basic infrastructure and improve the quality of life in residential zones.

UNWAVERING FAITH

JOSEPH FERNANDES



Parishioners participate in the procession to mark the feast of St Anne at Olaulim

Rumbler strips damaging our houses: Nuvem locals

Gorvotte residents complain vehicles passing over them cause noise pollution; claim their appeals have fallen flat

Team Herald

MARGAO: Voicing concerns regarding the rumble strips installed at a busy crossroads in their area, residents of Gorvotte, Nuvem, have complained that vehicles passing over these strips are causing severe noise pollution, disrupting sleep, and causing vibrations that may be damaging nearby homes.

Senior citizens residing close to the junction have particularly highlighted the unbearable noise created by vehicles crossing the rumble strips, especially at night. They claim that their appeals to the authorities have fallen on deaf ears.

Expressing disappointment, Jamin D'Costa, a resident of Nuvem said, “I wrote to all the authorities, but they turned a blind eye. I had demanded an inspection be carried out, but in vain. They should conduct an inspection, as the vibration is damaging nearby houses. Accidents continue to occur despite the rumbles. We demand proper speed breakers instead.”

DEMAND FOR SPEED BREAKERS

- Residents say they are experiencing structural damage to their houses due to vibrations caused by vehicles passing over the rumble strips
- Claim despite their presence, accidents continue
- Demand immediate inspection and want rumble strips replaced with proper speed breakers.
- Complain the rumble strips generate excessive noise, especially at night
- Urge the authorities to implement effective and less disruptive traffic calming measures

Residents contend that the rumble strips, intended as a traffic-calming measure, have not effectively reduced accidents. Instead, they produce a loud, jarring noise when vehicles, particularly heavy ones, pass over them at high speeds. This noise resonates throughout the neighbourhood at night, disturbing residents' sleep.

Furthermore, locals are concerned about the structural impact on their homes. They report that the continuous vibrations are beginning to cause cracks and other signs of damage, raising worries about potential long-term structural is-

sues if the situation goes unchecked.

Despite repeated complaints and requests for an inspection, residents assert that no official has visited the site to assess the situation. They have now urged the authorities to replace the rumble strips with more effective and less disruptive solutions, such as speed breakers made from sound-dampening materials or the implementation of appropriate signage and speed monitoring systems.

The residents hope that by bringing this issue to public attention, the authorities will finally take meaningful action to resolve their concerns.

Two flights cancelled at Dabolim airport amid ‘Operation Sindoor’

Team Herald

VASCO: Director of Dabolim International Airport, George Varghese, stated that two commercial flights were cancelled on Wednesday following the launch of ‘Operation Sindoor’ by India against Pakistan, in response to the Pahalgam terror attack.

“Two commercial flights have already been cancelled. We are monitoring the situation and are prepared for any developments,” Varghese said, adding that around 22 airports located near

the nodal region had been shut down.

Flights to Chandigarh, Amritsar, and Hindon operate from Dabolim International Airport, and two such flights were cancelled, he informed media personnel on the sidelines of a mock drill.

According to Varghese, similar drills are conducted on a regular basis. “We had a comparable exercise two weeks ago. Today’s (Wednesday’s) mock drill focused on evacuation and rescue, in coordination with the State administration and CISF personnel,” he added.

MAN BOOKED FOR USING FAKE FLIGHT TICKETS TO ENTER DABOLIM AIRPORT

VASCO: The Goa Police have registered a case of alleged forgery and cheating under the BNS against a 29-year-old man from Sancoale for entering Dabolim International Airport using fake air tickets. According to police, the man used tickets of Air India and Qatar Airways to gain access past CISF security on Tuesday, May 6, 2025, afternoon. The forgery was discovered at the airline counter when the tickets were found to be fake. The accused claimed he unknowingly purchased the tickets from a travel agency. An investigation is underway, police said.

Dhangar community at Codar plateau cries for basic infrastructure

Economically backward till date, Dhangars find it hard to eke a living

Team Herald

PONDA: The Dhangar community residing at the Codar plateau in Bethora-Conshem-Codar-Nirankal Panchayat continues to wait in vain for meaningful development, despite having lived in the area for over 150 years.

Local youth Sidhesh Kolekar highlighted the plight of the community, stating that around 15 houses are spread across the plateau. “Three to four generations have passed, but we have seen no major development. “Today, some of our youth are educated and employed, but many still rely on traditional goat-rearing to earn a livelihood.”

While a few families have managed to build perma-

LACKING NECESSITIES

HOUSING

- Some reside in pucca houses, many still live in huts
- Lack of proper access to their homes, in emergencies it is worse

POWER

- Residents receive electricity through makeshift

overhead cables drawn from roadside poles.

- Houses connected to power grid; cables often wear out

WATER

- Water supply provided via small pipelines; need for proper up gradation of infrastructure

Electricity too remains an issue. With no dedicated power poles in the locality, residents receive electricity through makeshift overhead cables drawn from roadside poles. Though the houses are connected to the power grid, these cables often wear out and have to be replaced annually. Water supply is provided via small pipelines, but



“Three to four generations have passed, but we have seen no major development. Today, some of our youth are educated and employed, but many still rely on traditional goat-rearing to earn a livelihood”
-Sidhesh Kolekar, local youth
according to Kolekar, the

infrastructure is inadequate. “The government does announce schemes for our community, but there is a clear need for proper upgradation of infrastructure,” he added.

Despite decades of residence, the Dhangar community at Codar plateau remains marginalised, awaiting the basic amenities necessary for a dignified life.