

DENIED JUSTICE BY POLICE, MAN GETS COURT REPRIEVE

Judge finds prima facie evidence suggesting commission of cognisable offences, directs police to act in land forgery case

BASURI DESAI

PANJIM: In a stark reflection of the hurdles faced by ordinary citizens in seeking justice, a local resident from Colvale, Bardez, was forced to approach the court after repeated appeals to various government departments failed to initiate action against alleged forgery of land records.

Following the court's direction, the Goa Police have now registered an FIR and launched an investigation into the matter.

The case involves Amul Prakash Mainkar, a resident of Chikali, Colvale, who alleged that two individuals, Firoz Khan and Tulshidas Tukaram Harmalkar forged a government land survey plan to falsely depict a road access through his family's tenanted agricultural land in Survey No. 277/0 of Colvale village. This alleged forgery was reportedly done to support claims in a civil dispute filed before the Joint Mamlatdar.

According to the complaint and documents produced in court, the accused are said to have fraudulently altered a certified survey



"I knocked on every door — from the Mamlatdar to the Police and even the Survey Department — but no one was willing to act against such blatant forgery — Amul Prakash Mainkar, complainant"

SYSTEM FAILURE

- ❖ Firoz Khan, Tulshidas Tukaram Harmalkar forge government land survey plan
- ❖ Falsely depict road access through complainant's tenanted agricultural land in Colvale
- ❖ Manipulated plan submitted as evidence to falsely establish a right of way
- ❖ Original plan shows

no such markings, reveals discrepancy

- ❖ Despite filing formal complaints with multiple authorities, no action initiated
- ❖ Complainant files criminal application before JMFC, Mapusa
- ❖ Court observes prima facie evidence suggesting commission of cognisable offences; directs Mapusa Police to register an FIR

vey plan by drawing two parallel lines to indicate an access road through Mainkar's tenanted land, which does not exist in the original records.

The manipulated plan was then submitted as evidence in official proceedings to falsely establish a right of way. However, the original plan obtained through RTI showed no such markings, clearly revealing the discrepancy and the intent to deceive authorities for personal gain.

"I knocked on every door — from the Mamlat-

dar to the Police and even the Survey Department — but no one was willing to act against such blatant forgery," said complainant Amul Prakash Mainkar. "I had no choice but to approach the court to protect my family's land from being encroached upon through manipulation of government records."

He further added, "What is most shocking is how official land records can be tampered with so easily and used to mislead authorities. This is not just a personal issue — it is a serious

threat to public trust in the system."

Despite filing formal complaints with multiple authorities, including the Deputy Collector's office (Mamlatdar, Bardez), Mapusa Police, and the Directorate of Survey and Land Records, Mainkar's efforts were met with inaction. Left with no alternative, he filed a criminal application under Section 156(3) of the Criminal Procedure Code before the Judicial Magistrate First Class in Mapusa.

In her order dated April 19, 2025, the Judge Vaisha-

li A Lotlikar found prima facie evidence suggesting the commission of cognisable offences, including forgery, use of forged documents, cheating, and criminal conspiracy. Citing the forged survey plans produced by the accused, the Court directed the Mapusa Police to register an FIR under several sections of the Indian Penal Code, including Sections 463, 465, 466, 468, 471, 177, 182, 120B read with Section 34.

The order emphasised that despite detailed complaints and supporting documents submitted under the RTI Act, the local authorities failed to act, leaving the complainant with no choice but to invoke judicial intervention.

This development sheds light on the growing number of property-related forgeries reported in Bardez and raises concerns over the apparent apathy of state agencies in addressing them. The case will now proceed under police investigation, with wider implications for the misuse of public records and the role of land management bodies in Goa.

Locals demand reinstatement of Durbhat-Rasoi ferry service

CoP halts service after video showing children jumping into river from ferry ramp goes viral

Team Herald

PONDA: Residents of Durbhat have urged the government to resume the Durbhat-Rasoi ferry service at the earliest, citing public inconvenience and the safety of women travelling at night.

The Captain of Ports (CoP) had halted the service after a video went viral showing children jumping into the river from the ferry ramp to bathe, raising safety concerns.

However, local social worker Hanumant Naik said the ferry is essential, especially as the Durbhat ramp is located in a residential area near a bus stop, making it safer and more accessible for passengers, particularly women. "Bathing at the Durbhat



river is not new. We did it when we were young too," Naik said. "The ferry staff have always warned children during arrival and departure. The service should not be stopped because of this."

Naik confirmed he had met Captain of Ports officials to press for the ferry's reinstatement. He argued that alternatives like Adpoi ramp are inconvenient as they are isolated, far from the main road and bus stop, and pose a safety risk

to women who must walk through deserted areas frequented by labourers.

Locals at Adpoi also expressed concerns, noting that the increased traffic due to rerouting of vehicles is burdening their narrow internal roads. They said the operation of two ferries via Adpoi has caused daily inconvenience.

Sources indicated that the Durbhat-Rasoi ferry may likely resume service once schools reopen in June.

NIO report on Mhadei water diversion triggers protest

Team Herald

PANJIM: A protest was held on Thursday near Dona Paula following a recently published report of the CSIR-National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) which claimed that the diversion of Mhadei river water by neighbouring Karnataka would have "less impact" on Goa.

Members of the Mhadei Movement and several citizens demonstrated outside the NIO complex, demanding an explanation from the leading institute about the study conducted by its three hydrologists.

The report, published in the Journal of Earth System Sciences, said that Karnataka's plans to divert Mhadei water, as approved by the Water Dispute Tribunal, will have less impact on Goa and can be addressed through mitigation measures.

The Mhadei River originates in Karnataka and runs through Maharashtra into Goa, meeting the Ara-

bian Sea near Panjim.

Earlier, Environmentalist Rajendra Kerkar, who has done extensive research on Mhadei, claimed that the NIO scientists prepared the report "sitting in their office".

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Row over illegal clearing of beach vegetation at Calangute

Forum calls for probe, demand action under Environmental Protection Act and restoration of areas to natural state

Team Herald

CALANGUTE: The Calangute Constituency Forum (CCF) has alleged that a developer had destroyed beach vegetation in a CRZ no-development zone located on survey number 208/1C of Calangute village, in violation of the Environmental Protection Act.

In a complaint addressed to the Chief Secretary and other authorities on Thursday, the NGO expressed concern that the clearing was conducted despite a High Court directive in suo motu case No. 1 of 2021, which was initiated following a previous complaint by CCF.

"As a conscientious NGO and advocate for environmental preservation, we find it deeply troubling that such actions by the firm are repeatedly being carried out without regard for the delicate ecosystem and the laws in force to protect it,"



Destroyed beach vegetation in a CRZ no-development zone

said Premanand Divkar, president of CCF.

"It is evident that these actions not only pose a direct threat to the biodiversity and ecological balance of our coastal areas but also undermine the efforts of the community to promote sustainability," he added. Divkar emphasised the potential consequences of such destruction, including coastal erosion, habitat loss, and reduced recreational value for both locals and tourists.

CCF has called for an

immediate investigation and strict action under the Environmental Protection

"It is evident that these actions not only pose a direct threat to the biodiversity and ecological balance of our coastal areas but also undermine the efforts of the community to promote sustainability."

—Premanand Divkar, CCF President

Act, 1986, as well as restoration of damaged areas to their natural state.

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