

## MHAJI BUS SCHEME SET FOR ROADBLOCKS AHEAD

Private operators slam scheme over unpaid subsidies, even as Kadamba Managing Director remains optimistic

Team Herald

PANJIM: Barely five days after the Kadamba Transport Corporation Limited (KTCL) announced its new 'Mhaji Bus Scheme 2025', private bus operators seem set on a collision course with the corporation, with KTCL authorities insisting all is well and the bus operators calling them out over unpaid fuel subsidies amounting to a whopping Rs 18 crore.

Despite the mounting

“Everyone will come on board... A part of the payments will be released in the coming days”  
– Rohan Kaskar, KTCL MD

“We told the government we're capable of managing on our own. We just want to be left alone”

– Sudip Tamankar, All Goa Private Bus Owners Association General Secretary

opposition, KTCL Managing Director Rohan Kaskar remained upbeat. “Everyone will come on board,” he said, expressing confidence that the scheme would

gain wider acceptance. Acknowledging the government's dues to private operators, he added, “A part of the payments will be released in the coming days,”

“We've spoken to the Chief Minister and conveyed our concerns. So far, we've only received vague assurances. Unless the dues are cleared, we cannot take this any further”

– Sudesh Kalangutkar, Stage Carriage Bus Operators Association President

though he declined to specify a timeline. His reassurances, however, have failed to convince private bus owners, who remain deeply sceptical of the government's intent

and track record.

All Goa Private Bus Owners Association General Secretary Sudip Tamankar dismissed the scheme as a recycled version of earlier initiatives. He recalled that the fuel and insurance subsidy schemes were first notified in 2014 following a court order, after the government introduced a concessional pass system that diverted all fare revenue to KTCL.

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## SC slams MP minister over 'filthy' remark on Qureshi

AGENCIES NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Monday delivered a blis-

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**NO AGE BARI**

tering rebuke to Madhya Pradesh minister Vijay Shah for his 'crass' and 'filthy' comments about Colonel Sofiya Qureshi, a decorated Army officer who gained national prominence for her role in media briefings during Operation Sindoor.

The court rejected Shah's apology, saying it lacked sincerity, and ordered the formation of a three-member Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the FIR against him.

“The entire nation was in shame due to the comments... We saw your videos, you were on the verge of using very filthy language but somehow better sense prevailed or you did not find suitable words. You should be shameful”  
– Supreme Court



A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N Kotiswar Singh said Shah had 'ruthlessly hurt' public sentiment.

“You were on the verge of using very filthy language. Somehow better sense prevailed — or you just didn't

find the words,” remarked Justice Kant.

The court said it would not accept 'artificial apologies' made to avoid legal consequences.

“You should be ashamed,” the bench told

Shah's lawyers.

The SIT will comprise senior IPS officers of the Madhya Pradesh cadre, including one woman officer, with the state's Director General of Police instructed to constitute the team immediately and submit a status report by May 28.

Shah's arrest has been stayed for now, but he must fully cooperate with the investigation.

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## That dirty ice may end up in your food at Sanguem's Purumentachem Fest!

Devotees fear 'unhygienic' ice blocks used in gola and lemon soda; demand swift action, inspection of stalls to prevent any outbreak

GAURESH SATTARKAR

SANGUEM: Serious health and food safety concerns have surfaced during the ongoing Purumentachem Fest or Our Lady of Miracles feast in Sanguem due to the alleged unhygienic storage and transportation of ice blocks used in popular refreshments such as gola and lemon soda.

“Following reports on Herald TV about the unhygienic use of ice at feasts, I request the municipality to take immediate action to ensure that ice used in items like lemon soda and ice gola is handled hygienically and never placed directly on the ground. I urge health officials to supervise all food items sold during the feast to protect public health and safety”  
– Fauzia Shaikh, Sanguem Councillor

Eyewitnesses indicated that ice is being kept on unclean surfaces and is exposed to potential contaminants, which is particularly



### HEALTH CONCERNS

■ Locals and concerned citizens have called upon the Health Department and Food Safety Officers to inspect the stalls, enforce hygiene standards, to ensure that vendors follow basic food safety protocols

■ Demand swift action to prevent any outbreak or health-related incidents  
■ Requested the authorities to ensure regular monitoring during all future public events involving the sale of food and beverages

worrisome given the popularity of these ice-based treats among children and families attending the feast fair.

Despite the large number of devotees, it appears there is a lack of inspection or oversight by health and food safety authorities, allowing vendors to potentially use unsafe materials in their products.

Considering the increasing temperatures and high festival turnout, the situation poses serious public

health risks, including the potential for water-borne infections and food contamination.

Concerned citizens have urgently called upon the Health Department and Food Safety Officers to conduct immediate inspections of the stalls.

They have urged the department to enforce hygiene standards, to ensure that vendors follow basic food safety protocols.

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## Government of Goa

### Welcomes

## Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar

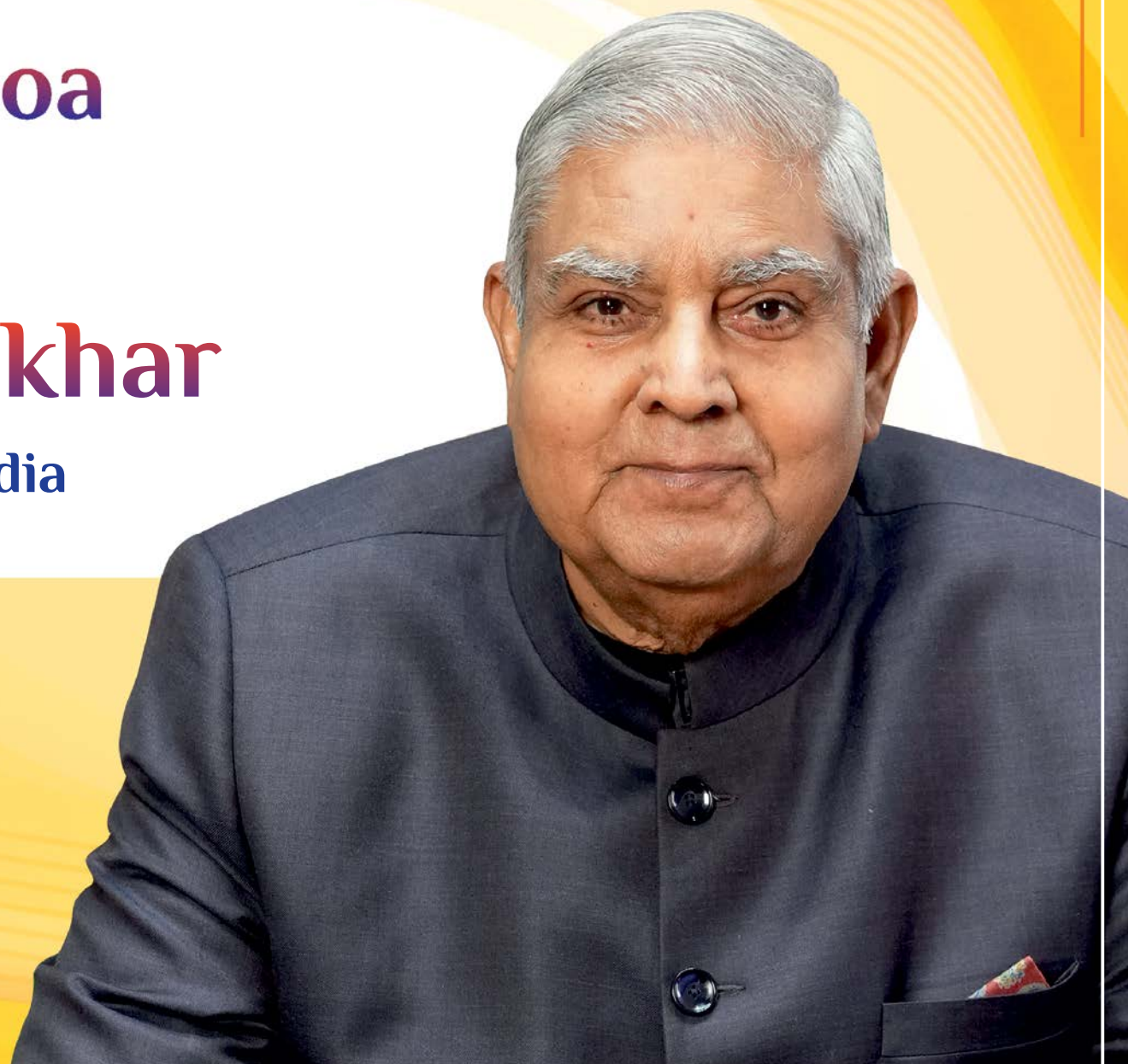
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