

## Locals blame construction work for Odxel mudslide

### Mud dug up from a pit flowed down and into their homes, claim villagers; builder's rep claims 'no mudslide, issue resolved'

Team Herald

PANJIM: Three families residing in Odxel, Taleigao, who were forced to evacuate on Tuesday evening after heavy rain sent a torrent of mud cascading down the hill behind their homes, managed to return home on Wednesday.

The residents blamed the mudslide on an excavation site where a builder is reportedly undertaking construction for a new phase of the Anantam Project. They said the mud that was piled up after a pit had been excavated got washed down in the rain.

However, Nirav MG, sales executive for the Anantam Project, said, "There is not much issue. We had approval from RERA, and there was no mudslide. We spoke to the villagers, and the issue is resolved."

Local authorities, including Panjim Deputy Collector and Sub-Divisional Magistrate Rajendra Aigaoankar and Tiswadi Taluka Mamladar Kaushik Dessai, conducted an emergency inspection



The mudslide that threatened people's homes at Odxel

following a complaint. The North Goa Collector B Yashaswini has since directed the Public Works Department (PWD) and the Town and Country Planning (TCP) Department to submit a detailed report on the matter.

**MORE ON PG 2 & 3**

For many residents, the mudslide is not just an isolated incident but part of a larger pattern of neglect. Nisha Sarmalkar, one of the affected residents, expressed frustration: "We have been staying here for many years, but this is the first time such a thing has happened.

When we noticed the pit being dug, we approached the builder and warned them. No action was taken."

The Sarmalkar family had previously suffered damage to their home when a mango tree fell on their property three years ago. "We couldn't rebuild the wall due to financial constraints, and our appeals to politicians went unheard," said Nisha, adding that the local MLA only visits the area during elections. Despite the latest evacuation, she declared, "We will not leave our home again, no matter what."

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"We have been staying here for many years, but this is the first time such a thing has happened. When we noticed the pit being dug, we approached the builder and warned them. No action was taken"

- Nisha Sarmalkar, local

"Mud and water entered our bathroom, making it impossible to use. We were relocated to a hotel for the night, but this cannot continue. The authorities need to act before something worse happens"

- Jayshree Sarmalkar, local

**TALEIGAO MLA IN EYE OF STORM FOR 'PUSHING' AAP ACTIVIST**

Team Herald

PANJIM: The mudslide that triggered panic in Odxel on Tuesday night also sparked a political firestorm as activist and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) member Cecille Rodrigues confronted Taleigao MLA Jennifer Monserrate over the incident, leading to a heated exchange and a scuffle.

The altercation occurred around 8.50 pm on Tuesday when Monserrate, accompanied by panchayat member Sidney Barreto and her supporters, arrived at the site where Rodrigues and AAP's Francis Coelho were interacting with anxious and distressed residents affected by the mudslide. According to eyewitness accounts, the confrontation turned physical when Monserrate allegedly pushed Rodrigues.

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## NO ESCAPE FROM TRENCHES

HERALD PIC



Come rain, shine or deluge, the ever-present JCB is a constant feature on Goa's roads. Here's one doing duty - ripping up the asphalt - in Saligao on Wednesday

## Relief for Veena Kumar as SC puts her back in chair

### Says govt failed to provide valid justification for her replacement as animal husbandry head

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Supreme Court on Wednesday reinstated Dr Veena Kumar as the officiating Director of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services (AH&VS), with immediate effect.

A Bench comprising Justices Sanjay Kumar and KV Viswanathan stated, "Dr Veena Kumar shall continue as the in-charge Director of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services, Panjim, until further orders."

Dr Kumar, the senior-most officer in the department, was initially appointed as the officiating director. However, she was later replaced by Deputy

Director Dr Nitin Naik, following a recommendation by Animal Husbandry Minister Nilkanth Halarnkar. Challenging the appointment of Dr Naik, Dr Kumar approached the High Court of Bombay at Goa, which declined to intervene. She then filed a Special Leave Petition (SLP) before the Supreme Court, represented by Adv Salvador Santosh Rebello.

During the hearing, State counsel Adv Abhay Anturkar read from the affidavit filed before the High Court and sought time to submit a counter affidavit. However, the Bench remarked that Dr Kumar's initial appointment had been made by the government and that

her subsequent removal - allegedly influenced by "someone pulling strings" - warranted explanation.

The Court observed that the State failed to provide a valid justification for replacing Dr Kumar with Dr Naik, despite her appointment on June 4, 2024. It suspended the June 20, 2024 order issued by the Under Secretary (Personnel-II), Department of Personnel, which had appointed Dr Naik, and directed Dr Kumar's immediate reinstatement.

The matter has been posted for further hearing on July 22, with the Court granting the State time to file its response.

## Landslide fear stalks Mandrem, Morjim

### Villagers blame unchecked construction; is the panchayat 'powerless'?

AUGUSTO RODRIGUES

MANDREM/MORJIM: The fruits of unchecked development are being reaped in Mandrem and Morjim as villagers living on the foothills were pummeled by rain over the past two days, sparking fears of a landslide.

As they prayed for the rain to stop, all eyes were turned towards 18 villas and 60 apartments that

have been granted permission despite protests.

"The roads were flooded because the PWD has not completed their work. With work on the roads half done and water outlets choked, water remained on the road and started entering shops," explained Mandrem Sarpanch Robert Fernandes.



Construction atop a hill along the Mandrem-Morjim road poses landslide risk

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## INDIAN AUTHOR BANU MUSTAQ WINS INTERNATIONAL BOOKER PRIZE FOR 'HEART LAMP'



MORE ON PG 10

MAX. TEMP 31.1 °C  
MIN. TEMP 24.6 °C

idharudhar



Regular bikes sink in these heavy rains. Mine sails!

## SC grants interim bail to Ashoka

### University professor Raps prof for 'cheap publicity' in Op Sindoor post; asks Haryana DGP to set up 3-member SIT to probe case

PTI, NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Wednesday granted interim bail to Ashoka University professor Ali Khan Mahmudabad, arrested for his contentious social media posts on Operation Sindoor, but refused to stay the investigation against him.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N Kotisar Singh directed the Haryana director general of police to constitute a three-member special investigation team (SIT) headed by an inspector general (IG) rank officer also including a superintendent (SP) rank woman officer within 24 hours to investigate the case.

The top court said the interim bail was granted to the petitioner to facilitate further investigation and directed Mahmudabad to surrender his passport.

The SIT, the bench said, should comprise three directly recruited IPS officers - not from Haryana but serving in the State. The bench said aside from the IG rank officer, two others should be police superintendents or above rank officers.

The bench, which examined the online post by the professor, who heads the political science department in the Sonapat-based Ashoka University, questioned his choice of words, saying they were used deliberately to humiliate, insult, or put others in discomfort.

"The choice of words are deliberately made to insult, humiliate or cause discomfort to others. The professor, who is a learned person can-



"The choice of words are deliberately made to insult, humiliate or cause discomfort to others. The professor, who is a learned person cannot lack a dictionary... he could have conveyed the very same feelings in a simple language without hurting others. He should have shown respect for the sentiments of others. He could have used a simple and neutral kind of language, respecting others"

- Supreme Court

not lack a dictionary... he could have conveyed the very same feelings in a simple language without hurting others. He should have shown respect for the sentiments of others. He could have used a simple and neutral kind of language, respecting others," Justice Kant said.

The bench said though everybody had the right to freedom of expression, Mahmudabad's remarks seemed like "dog whistling", used in legal parlance.

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## K'taka BJP MLA Munirathna booked for gangrape

PTI, BENGALURU: An FIR has been filed against Karnataka BJP MLA Munirathna and his accomplices after a 40-year-old woman accused him of gang-raping her, urinating on her face and injecting her with a deadly virus, police said on Wednesday.

The FIR was registered based on the complaint of a BJP worker at RMC Yard police station on Tuesday.

In her complaint, the woman alleged that the incident occurred at the MLA's office in Mathikere on June 11, 2023. The complainant alleged that she was taken to his office in a car by his accomplices.

Three accomplices of the MLA have been named in the FIR while the identity of the fourth accused is unknown.

She alleged that after reaching his office, the MLA along with two of his accomplices allegedly stripped her despite her pleas and he even threatened to kill her son if she did not co-operate. Munirathna then allegedly instructed the two men to rape her, the FIR stated.

The woman further alleged that the MLA also urinated on her face and during the incident, an unknown man allegedly entered the room and gave the MLA a white box. He took a syringe out of it and injected her; she alleged.

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## CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF



BORN: 12/10/1957

DIED: 20/05/2025

FRANCISCO JOAO LOURDES DA CUNHA  
ABU DHABI - MOIRA

LOVING HUSBAND OF HYACINTHA DA CUNHA

BELOVED FATHER / FATHER-IN-LAW OF LATE TYRA, TRACY / IRWIN CORDO, TRUDY / STANLEY CARVALHO.

LOVING SON OF LATE JOSEPH / LATE ROSY DA CUNHA

SON-IN-LAW OF LATE FLAVIANO / LATE ANASTASIA D'SOUZA.

BROTHER / BROTHER-IN-LAW OF LATE SEBASTIAN (SEBY) / ANCY DA CUNHA, JOEL / JAMILA DA CUNHA.

BROTHER-IN-LAW OF TONY D'SOUZA, IVO / MICHELLE D'SOUZA.

LOVING UNCLE OF SHAYNE, SHARON / JAKUB, SHADWELL, JUBAL, JONELLE, JARIUS, JOSETTE, ISAIAH, IAN.

DOTING GRANDFATHER TO OZIEL, OZANNE, ZARAIHA, ZEEV.

FUNERAL CORTEGE WILL LEAVE HIS RESIDENCE FROM BAMBORDEM, BEHIND MOIRA CLUB, TODAY, 22<sup>ND</sup> MAY 2025, AT 3:30 PM, TO OUR LADY OF IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH, MOIRA, FOR EUCHARISTIC CELEBRATION, AT 4:00 PM, FOLLOWED BY BURIAL.

JOIN US LIVE ON YOUTUBE

<https://youtube.com/live/nvJKfPycXio?feature=share>

RELATIVES & FRIENDS KINDLY ACCEPT THIS AS THE ONLY INTIMATION