

Cab aggregator policy sparks outrage among taxi operators

Govt issues draft guidelines to regulate services; traditional taxi unions threaten to retaliate at 2027 polls if demands are not met

Team Herald

PANJIM: Traditional taxi unions in Goa have issued a stern warning to the government over its draft policy for cab aggregators, vowing to 'teach a lesson' during the 2027 Assembly elections if their concerns are ignored.

The government has released a draft policy aimed at regulating cab aggregators and has called for public suggestions within 30 days of its publication in the Official Gazette.

As per the proposed policy, taxi drivers will be permitted to operate through any aggregator app of their choice without the requirement of installing digital meters, provided they comply with uniform government-notified fares.

In a move to encourage

“We have always opposed the app-based taxis and are still against it. If the government goes ahead with the policy, then all the registered unions in the state will decide what to do. If the government decides to go ahead then it should also think about 2027 assembly elections”

— Sunil Naik, President NSGTOA

app-based transport and increase the participation of women drivers, the government has announced several incentives. These include reimbursements on insurance premiums and subsidies of up to Rs 1 lakh for women purchasing electric taxis. Aggregators employing at least 20 per cent women drivers will also receive a complete waiver on licence renewal fees.

The hire charges specified under the policy range from Rs 1,050 for regular vehicles for four hours to Rs

8,700 for high-end vehicles over eight hours.

However, the draft policy has drawn sharp criticism from traditional taxi unions. Speaking to O Herald, Sunil Naik, President of the North and South Goa Taxi Operators' Association (NSGTOA), reiterated the union's long-standing opposition.

“We have always opposed the app-based taxis and are still against it. If the government goes ahead with the policy, then all the registered unions in

the state will decide what to do. If the government decides to go ahead then it should also think about 2027 assembly elections,” Naik said.

He further stated, “When we had a meeting with the Transport Director, it was made clear that taxis in the state are against app-based taxis. The app-based taxis are not feasible in Goa. There are already two apps in operation and you can see how many times fights erupt. We have also demanded that rates should be uniform for everyone. We are charging government rates but Goa Miles is charging lesser amount. I do not know who has given the right to do so. The government should implement common rates for all for three months and see

who provides better service, we or the Goa Miles. What is the point of having government-notified rates when someone is having different rates and this not taken note of? If we too can charge according to our wish, then we will charge less than what Goa Miles is charging.”

“The government-notified rate should be applicable to everybody. App-based aggregator is charging according to the vehicles they have but yellow black taxis are not allowed to do so. Even taxis have allocated stands at particular locations. Like a taxi from Karmali Railway Station stand cannot go and pick up passengers from Margao Railway Station. If we are found to be at two stands, then RTO can penalise us,” he added.

No new Covid cases reported in State, testing continues

Team Herald

PANJIM: Goa recorded another day without any newly reported Covid-19 cases, according to Dr Utkarsh Betodkar, the State epidemiologist. Despite the absence of fresh infections, testing continues at Goa Medical College (GMC) and at various district hospitals for all incoming patients.

Dr Betodkar noted that no updated guidelines have yet been issued by either the Central or State government regarding Covid-19 protocols. He warned against complacency, stating, “Just because there's only one reported case doesn't mean Covid is gone — it's still around.” He added, however, that the current scale

of testing cannot match the intensity witnessed during the peak of the pandemic.

Meanwhile, a senior Goa-based doctor has criticised the government for failing to clarify the status of the State's only known Covid-19 patient, who was mistakenly reported dead by a media outlet. The patient is presently undergoing

treatment at the Chest Disease and TB Hospital.

The doctor stressed the importance of continued testing, remarking, “Both Antigen and RTPCR testing should go on without fail. RTPCR remains the gold standard, while Antigen tests are conducted in larger numbers due to their cost-effectiveness.”

Private MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITAL in North-Goa is HIRING the following Staff

- 1) RESIDENT MEDICAL OFFICERS
- 2) STAFF NURSES
- 3) RECEPTIONISTS
- 4) X-RAY TECHNICIANS
- 5) LABORATORY TECHNICIANS
- 6) AMBULANCE DRIVERS
- 7) ACCOUNTS PERSONNEL

Interested persons should send their CVs on WhatsApp No. 9096067859, latest by 30th May 2025.

Durbhat locals demand removal of collapsed ferry ramp debris

Team Herald

PONDA: Residents of Durbhat have called on the authorities to clear the remains of a collapsed section of the old ferry ramp in the Zuvari River, warning that it poses a serious threat to commuters, fishermen and children.

According to locals, the remnants of the old ferry ramp lie dangerously close to the operational ramp currently in use. They fear this could endanger ferries transporting passengers, especially during high tide, as well as locals and fishermen navigating the river. Children also frequently jump into the river



for a swim during the summer, adding to concerns.

“Once, Durbhat was among the busiest ports in Goa alongside Vasco,” recalled a local. “It was well known for the import and handling of roof tiles and essential commodities. But over the years, it has been left to deteriorate.”

Locals said the original ramp suffered damage around 35 years ago when a barge collided against it and the remaining structure has since deteriorated further. The recent collapse of a large portion of the ramp has left behind debris that now threatens fishing canoes, ferry traffic, and the safety of river users.

Many commuters travel daily between Rasoi and Durbhat via the ferry service. With the remains of the old port situated close to the new ferry ramp, locals are urging immediate action to remove the submerged structure before an accident occurs.

Police rescue teen girl attempting to flee home

Team Herald

MARGAO: An 18-year-old girl from Maina-Curtorim was intercepted near Chandor around 3 am while attempting to run away from her rented home.

PSI Veronica Coutinho, on night patrol, found the girl waiting for transport to go to Margao. She was taken into custody and handed over to her mother.

The girl had recently returned home from Apna Ghar, sources said.

Mendonsa Foundation

Career Guidance SEMINAR

SHAILAJA MULAY

CAREER COUNSELLOR

DR. SHUBHALAXMI ACHARYA

FOUNDER & CHIEF BEHAVIOURAL OFFICER AT MIND ELEMENTS

24th May, 2025, Saturday

Conference Hall,
Clube Harmonia, Margao
10 am – 12 noon

Lecture Hall
Sanskriti Bhavan, Panjim
3:30 pm – 5:30 pm

Compère Sasha D'Souza

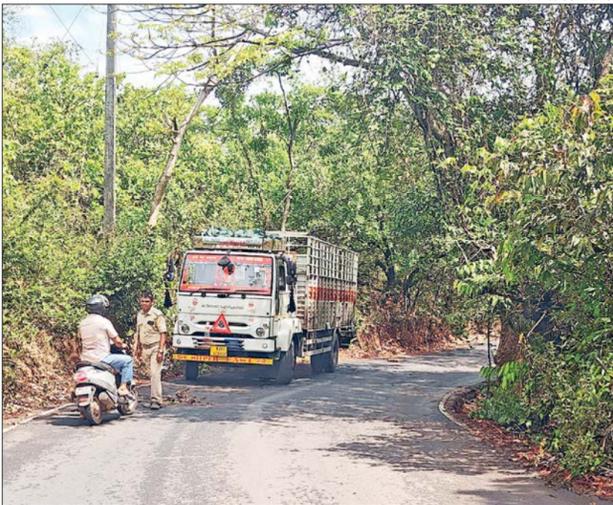
Supported By

₹ Per parent- Rs. 250/-
Children/students- Free

Please pre register and GPay
98202 88817

SLOPE MISHAP

JAMES CORDEIRO



A Rajasthan registered truck broke down on the wrong side of busy and accident-prone slope that leads to Siolim from Ganeshpuri-Mapusa. Traffic snarls were witnessed during the entire day, until a huge crane towed the truck away

Mystery surrounds death of toddler in Zuarinagar

Team Herald

MARGAO: Ram Yadav, a two-year-old boy from Zuarinagar and a native of Uttar Pradesh, was brought dead to the casualty ward of the Sub District Hospital, Chicalim, by his parents.

Following the incident, Verna Police registered a case of unnatural death and have commenced an investigation. The precise cause of death has not yet been established.

During preliminary enquiry at the hospital and with the family members, it was revealed that the child had been suffering from a fever for the past two days. On the day of the incident, the boy reportedly experienced uneasiness, prompting his parents to rush him to the hospital, where he was declared brought dead.

13 shops in old Panjim market directed to vacate within 24 hrs

Team Herald

PANJIM: The Corporation of the City of Panaji (CCP) has issued eviction notices to 13 shops located adjacent to the Falcon building in the city's old Municipal Market, instructing them to vacate the premises within 24 hours.

As per the order issued by the CCP, the decision was based on a structural analysis conducted by Goa Engineering College (GEC), Farmagudi. The CCP had requested the study of the building's premises, and the GEC's report, submitted in April this year, declared the building unsafe and recommended immediate evacuation to ensure the safety of occupants and the general public.

It may be recalled that O Herald had recently reported that at least two buildings—out of the 20 under the jurisdiction of the



CCP that have been declared unsafe and dangerous—will be demolished before the onset of the monsoon.

“We have received the report of two buildings, one in Panjim and another in Ribandar and have started issuing notices to the occupants. These buildings have been declared dangerous and require demolition. Initially, 12 buildings were identified as unsafe, but new buildings have now

been added and the list stands at 20. The building in the capital city will have to be demolished as it is unsafe now,” a CCP official had told O Herald.

According to the official, this course of action was initiated after the GEC submitted its report stating that the buildings posed structural risks and required demolition.

Last year, the CCP had identified 12 buildings in

the capital city in a dilapidated and dangerous state and had accordingly written to the GEC to conduct a Structural Stability Study.

The current move by the CCP comes in the wake of the partial collapse of an unoccupied building at St Inez on 17 August 2024, following heavy rainfall. In the aftermath of that incident, CCP Mayor Rohit Monserrate and then North Goa District Collector Sneha Gitte, IAS, had visited the site. After inspection, Monserrate had stated that stability reports of other buildings would be sought and, if necessary, those deemed unsafe would also be demolished following approval from the District Collector.

He had further mentioned that the CCP would approach either the GEC or the Government Polytechnic, Altinho, to carry out structural audits of the buildings under scrutiny.

Public Works Department
Government of Goa

Empowering Goa through World Class Tourism Infrastructure

Groundbreaking Ceremony

OBSERVATORY TOWERS & VIEWING GALLERIES ON NEW ZUARI BRIDGE

BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT

- Boost to Tourism.
- Boost to Economic Activities.
- Developing Goa as Tourist Capital of the Country.
- Viewing Galleries on the lines of Eiffel Tower of Paris.

On Friday 23rd May 2025 | 05.00 pm | Venue : Village Panchayat Hall Chicalim

AT THE AUSPICIOUS HANDS OF

SHRI NITIN GADKARI

(Hon'ble Union Minister of Road Transport & Highways)

PRESIDED BY

DR. PRAMOD SAWANT

(Hon'ble Chief Minister, Goa)

IN THE DISTINGUISHED PRESENCE OF

SHRI SHRIPAD NAIK

(Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Power and New & Renewable Energy)

SHRI MAUVIN GODINHO

(Hon'ble Minister for Transport, Goa)

SHRI SADANAND SHET TANAWADE

(Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha)

CAPT. VIRIATO FERNANDES

(Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha)

SHRI ANTONIO VAS

(Hon'ble MLA, Cortalim Constituency)

SHRI VIRESH BORKAR

(Hon'ble MLA, St. Andre Constituency)

SHRI KRISHNA SALKAR

(Hon'ble MLA, Vasco Constituency)

SHRI SANKALP AMONKAR

(Hon'ble MLA Mormugao Constituency)