

FIELDS POLLUTED, SODIEM'S FARMERS FORCED TO QUIT CULTIVATION

The once-picturesque valley of Siolim, nestled between lush green hills and thriving fields, is now being consumed by unplanned development and pollution. Concrete structures are rapidly replacing green spaces, and the impact is being borne by the local villagers — especially farmers in Sodiem.

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Siolim**

have sky-rocketed from Rs 1,00,000 onwards per square metre, many villagers have sold off land that once sustained their families. In Xell, high-rise buildings, hotels and construction projects are discharging untreated sewage into local nullahs. This contaminated water has now found its way into the last remaining patches of paddy fields.

With fears of infection



and water-borne diseases, local farmers — mostly senior citizens — have been forced to abandon their fields for the first time in decades. What was once Siolim's rice bowl now lies fallow and festering.

Despite several complaints by the panchayat and the local biodiversity committee to the health

department and the Goa Pollution Control Board (GPCB), no action has been taken. Officials continue to ask residents to identify the exact source of pollution — a task beyond the villagers' means. As one resident commented, "It's like the police asking the public to catch criminals for them."

If swift intervention is



not undertaken, the contaminated area could become a breeding ground for mosquitoes, posing an even greater public health hazard. Authorities must stop shirking responsibility and act decisively — especially with World Environment Day (June 5) around the corner. The area has already suffered

extensive ecological disruption from the Tillari Irrigation Project, which many villagers consider more of a curse than a blessing.

It's time to move beyond symbolic environment programmes and take real action to protect what remains for future generations.

Black, greasy pollutants sully water bodies in Vasco

It has been observed over the past several days that black, polluted water is entering various water bodies in the port town of Vasco, including the Maimollem lake. This lake was supposed to undergo a major transformation and be developed into a tourist attraction. Instead, it is now overflowing with foul-smelling black water, which appears to be

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sewage. Life for locals has become miserable due to the unbearable stench and a proliferation of mosquitoes. Earlier, the lake was a spot for fishing activities. Today, the fish have disappeared, so have the frogs that once emerged during the monsoon, and the birds that were commonly seen are also gone. The water pollution has



become a serious health hazard. It appears that some residents in nearby buildings are discharging sewage directly into the lake due to the absence of a functional sewage system. While it is learnt that a sewage pipeline is now being laid and a

pumping station is under construction, the authorities must also identify the source of the sewage and bring the culprits to book. This issue has persisted for decades, but the problem has worsened significantly this year.

Benaulim Panchayat Ghar, surroundings in dire need of upkeep



The recently tarred area around the Benaulim Panchayat Ghar has collapsed after the first spell of rain. The entire surface has sunk and

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now resembles a swimming pool. The stagnant water has become a breeding ground for mosquitoes and other insects. The building houses important

facilities — a post office, a farmer co-operative milk outlet, a veterinary clinic, and the panchayat office itself. To make matters worse, a defunct garbage bailing machine has been rusting away nearby for over three years. The area has become a serious public health hazard. Would the authorities and the local MLA take some responsibility and act to improve the condition of this area — or is that asking for too much?

Mapusa left to rot while officials holiday abroad



While Mapusa's residents battle flooded streets, overflowing drains, and rampant public filth, some municipal leaders appear to be on vacation — both literally and figuratively.

As monsoon rains lash the town, water has entered homes and two-wheeler riders have been washed away. Market vendors and merchants are counting their losses, and customers are staying away in droves.

Adding insult to injury, silt from recently cleaned

gutters has been dumped right next to the drains, ready to be washed back in — a ploy, many say, to justify fresh contracts for repeated "desilting". Garbage remains uncollected for days, and the leachate it releases flows freely onto

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the roads, posing serious health risks.

Fleas and flies swarm over decaying waste before settling on food sold in the

market. The foul stench deters customers, hurting local businesses, restaurants and eateries.

Why is the Mapusa Municipal Council — despite employing scores of sanitation workers, pay-parking contractors, and 'sopo' collectors — failing to maintain basic cleanliness? If the authorities can chase vendors for pennies, can they not also be held accountable for public hygiene? All the public is asking for is cleanliness — not luxury. Is that too much?

Under construction retaining wall already crumbling

The newly under construction retaining wall near the Bamon Vaddo junction, built by Portuguese, was a solid and time-tested structure — far stronger than the concrete works being carried out today. These old drains were designed to allow water to seep

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into the ground, serving as a natural mechanism to prevent flooding. In contrast, today's corrupt engineering practices involve fully concreting drains, blocking water absorption and thereby worsening the risk of flooding. It seems more like a fast-track money-making racket than thoughtful infrastructure work.

Now, despite the onset of the rains, work is being carried out on this



very same age old retaining wall — and the newly built portion has already given way, barely days after construction. Is this not corruption in plain sight? Our hard-earned taxpayer money has literally gone down the drain.

Who authorised this work to be undertaken during the monsoons?

Has the panchayat issued an NOC for it? Was

any resolution passed to modify this sound structure?

I earnestly request the panchayat to stop the ongoing work immediately before it causes further damage — both to the culvert and to public funds. Please leave these strong, time-tested drains as they are. Some things are better left untouched.

Skeletal remains of a traffic booth at Khareaband an eyesore



The traffic control booth at the busy Khareaband junction in Margao is in a state of total disrepair. The junction sees a constant flow of traffic from Margao, Benaulim and Cavelossim con-

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Carmona**

verging at this point. A few years ago, a traffic policeman would be stationed here during peak hours as it was

deemed necessary. Sadly, what remains today is a ruin that now acts as a makeshift roundabout — one that many motorists choose to ignore, often leading to chaotic traffic situations. Apart from adding to traffic confusion, the structure reflects poorly on the city administration. I request the authorities to either deploy a traffic officer during peak hours or install a traffic signal.

Porvorim's CHOGM Road descends into chaos and filth

Once a peaceful, tree-lined stretch, CHOGM Road in Porvorim has evolved into one of North Goa's busiest commercial corridors. Lined with trendy restaurants, sprawling salons and retail shops, it has also become a shopping and dining hotspot for locals and tourists alike. As dusk falls, the street-lights lend a vibrant charm to the road — but that charm is

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being eroded by traffic chaos, lawlessness, and poor civic management.

The lack of visible traffic police has emboldened motorists to park illegally in no-parking zones, choking an already congested road.

A cop supposed to man traffic is also seen playing



on his cell-phone by parking his two-wheeler in the

no-parking zone. If law makers turn law breakers, then what can one expect from the common man?

Roadside vendors — many of them migrants — have set up unauthorised stalls, turning sections of the road into makeshift fish markets. The sight of fish sold and being cleaned on pavements, with waste strewn about, is not only an eyesore but a serious hygiene concern.

It raises several ques-



tions: Why is the local panchayat turning a blind eye? Why are Collector's orders to remove illegal roadside encroachments not being enforced in Porvorim?

This level of civic neglect in a prime area sends a damaging message to visitors and residents alike. If the government refuses to act, perhaps it should at least tax the violators — since the authorities appear more interested in revenue than regulation.

Building material turn Benaulim-Varca road into obstacle course



The junction of the Western Bypass and the Benaulim-Varca road seems to be a nev-

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Benaulim**

er-ending saga of construction. Besides being very poorly engineered and executed, the contractor has now started piling up building material at the crossing

without any hazard signs, warning lights or proper signage. Minor accidents are witnessed on a weekly basis, and the haphazardly placed metal barricades make things a nightmare for motorists. I request the government to either complete the project or at least restore the road to a usable condition before a fatality occurs. This has all the makings of another "Smart City" Panjim.

Duler's cratered roads threaten lives and common sense

A massive, crater-like pothole near a supermarket on Duler Road has become a hazard for motorists. Spanning the entire width of the road, it is unmarked, dangerous, and compounded by the pothole-riddled condition of the entire stretch. Authorities

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have now resorted to austerity measures and have now begun to fill it with mud and rubble which will get washed away with the rain and pose danger to commuters.



Even road-side nullahs opposite the court building along the slope is choked with garbage and waste. The bushes along the road need to be trimmed too.

Despite crores being spent on so-called road development, the harsh reality remains: Duler road is a death trap in disguise. When it rains, commuters are unable to

judge the depth of water-filled potholes, increasing the risk of serious accidents. An adjacent speed breaker — almost invisible with faded paint — only adds to the risk.



It's hard to understand how, despite paying road taxes, ordinary citizens are expected to navigate roads in such shoddy condition. The government's obliga-

tion is not just to collect tax but to ensure safe and reliable infrastructure in return.

In Western countries, public infrastructure failures often lead to lawsuits. In Goa, we shrug and accept — a symptom of the dangerous "chalta hai" attitude. Meanwhile, elected representatives live in comfort at the taxpayer's expense, while the people continue to suffer in silence.

It's time for the Public Works Department (PWD) to prioritise safety over patchwork solutions and fix Duler Road before it costs lives.