

GREEN TRIBUNAL ISSUES NOTICE TO GOA GOVT OVER MANDOVI SAND MINING CLEARANCE

Takes cognisance of petition alleging violation of CRZ norms in granting environmental clearance for extraction in protected river stretch

Team Herald

MARGAO: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has issued a notice to the Goa government following a petition challenging the environmental clearance (EC) granted for sand mining in the Mandovi River.

The Western Zone Bench of the NGT, comprising Justice Dinesh Kumar Singh and Expert Member Dr Vijai Kulkarni, issued the notice on June 16 and scheduled the next hearing for July 14.

The petition, filed by the Goa River Sand Protection Network (GRSPN), challenges the EC granted by the Goa State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (Goa-SEIAA) on February 3, 2025, to the Directorate of Mines and Geology (DMG) for sand mining in Zone 5 of the Mandovi, near Khandola in Ponda Taluka. The EC covers a stretch of 4.3 hectares, with an annual extraction limit of 1,000 cubic metres per permit us-



CAUSE OF ACTION

- ▶▶ National Green Tribunal (Western Zone Bench) issues notice to Goa government on June 16
- ▶▶ Goa River Sand Protection Network (GRSPN) challenges environmental clearance (EC) in zone 5 of Mandovi River near Khandola, Ponda Taluka
- ▶▶ Environmental clearance granted by Goa-SEIAA on Feb 3, 2025, to Directorate of Mines and Geology (DMG) for extraction over 4.3 hectares using traditional methods
- ▶▶ 1,000 cubic metres per permit annually
- ▶▶ Site falls within a Critically Vulnerable Coastal Area (CVCA), classified as CRZ-IVB — where sand mining is prohibited
- ▶▶ EC issued without mandatory clearance from GCZMA, breaching CRZ Notification, 2011

al extraction limit of 1,000 cubic metres per permit us-

ing traditional methods. GRSPN has argued that the site falls within a Critically Vulnerable Coastal Area (CVCA) classified as CRZ-IVB under the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notification, 2011, where sand mining is prohibited. The petition further states that the EC was granted in violation of CRZ norms, as the Goa-SEIAA did not obtain the mandatory recommendation from the Goa Coastal Zone Management Authority (GCZMA) before issuing the clearance.

The NGT bench directed that notices also be issued on the delay condonation application, returnable within two weeks. Meanwhile, the State government has approached the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), seeking an amendment to the CRZ Notifications of 2011 and 2019 to permit sand extraction under certain conditions.

Goa's hunt for forgotten manuscripts all set to begin on July 1

Archives team to search homes, churches, and libraries in bid to preserve hidden literary heritage

Team Herald

MARGAO: In a first-of-its-kind heritage initiative, the Goa Archives Department will launch a statewide survey from July 1 to trace and document centuries-old manuscripts hidden in homes, churches, temples, libraries, and family estates.

Under the Goa State Mission for Manuscripts, formed as part of the Gyan Bharatam Mission, the department aims to compile a digital-ready inventory of Goa's rich but undocumented manuscript heritage. The mission will function from Alinho, Panjim, and focus on documenting, not acquiring, manuscripts—unless owners voluntarily hand them over.

"This year, our focus is to complete a pilot study. We believe there are documents of immense historical and cultural value that have been handed down through generations or lie forgotten in old homes," said a department official, while speaking to the media. "Our appeal is sim-

Officials have clarified that the mission will not seek possession of any manuscripts unless the owners wish to hand them over voluntarily. The department's goal is to build a digital-ready catalogue, noting each manuscript's location and background, so future scholars can trace and access them without disturbing the collections

ple—allow us to document and preserve these treasures. We will not be taking them away. Custodians can retain ownership."

Among the documents the team hopes to uncover are letters exchanged between local rulers, communications with freedom fighters, and handwritten records that offer glimpses into Goa's past social, religious, and political life. The survey will begin with visits to libraries, churches, and temples before turning to private collections, particularly those belonging to historically significant families, including the descendants of aristocrats and liberation-era figures.

Officials have clarified that the mission will not seek possession of any manuscripts unless the owners wish to hand them

serve rare, handwritten texts for future use.

In May, the state government issued a notification confirming the establishment of the Goa State Mission for Manuscripts. According to the notification, the mission will function as a centralised agency for the documentation, preservation, and digitisation of historical manuscripts across the state.

"This is not just about preserving fragile paper—it's about safeguarding memories, voices, and the intellectual legacy of Goa for generations to come," the official added.

As the launch date approaches, the department has urged citizens, families, and institutions to come forward and support the initiative by opening their archives to the team for documentation.

Porvorim police nab history-sheeter, accomplices in extortion case

Team Herald

PANJIM: In a joint operation, Porvorim and Pernem Police have arrested three individuals, including notorious history-sheeter Tarzan Parsekar (38) his accomplices Sagar Patil (37) and Sanish Ghatwal (19) for allegedly extorting Rs 1 lakh from a businessman involved in the construc-

tion industry. Parsekar had been on the run for over a year after his bail was rejected in a case related to the assault of a man and his minor son. His arrest marks a significant development in ongoing efforts to curb criminal activities in the region.

They have been arrested under sec 126 (2), 308 (5) 351, 352 r/w 3(5) of BNS.

URBAN CAMPER



A vagrant sleeps on the pavement outside Dr Ambedkar Garden near Panjim's KTC bus stand—his suitcase and beer by his side. For many arriving in Goa's capital, this is the first glimpse of the Smart City: a reflection of the transient lives and challenges that accompany unchecked tourism and migration

Heavy rainfall likely this week

Team Herald

PANJIM: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Sunday issued a yellow alert for Goa, forecasting heavy rainfall at isolated places in both North and South Goa districts from June 23 to 28.

In its daily weather bulletin, the IMD stated, "Heavy rainfall is very likely at isolated places over North Goa and South Goa districts on June 23, 24, 25, 26, 27 and 28."

Meanwhile, several areas across the state received moderate showers in the last 24 hours, as recorded at 8:30 am on June 22. The rainfall figures are as follows: Quepem: 2.24 inches, Canacona: 0.9 inches, Sanguem: 0.6 inches, Dharbandora: 0.55 inches, Dabolim: 0.47 inches, Pernem, Sanquelim and Old Goa: 0.44 inches, Panjim: 0.39 inches, Mapusa: 0.35 inches and Mormugao: 0.29 inches.

Mapusa vendors protest over alleged verbal abuse by MMC staff, demand immediate action

Team Herald

MAPUSA: Tension flared at the Mapusa Municipal Market as local vendors came forward alleging verbal abuse and derogatory remarks by staff of the Mapusa Municipal Council (MMC). The vendors have demanded the immediate suspension of the official responsible, citing repeated harassment and disrespectful behaviour toward those trying to earn a daily livelihood.

According to the vendors, the incident occurred when MMC staff attempted to forcefully evict several of them from their designated spaces in the market, allegedly without prior notice or proper explanation. "One of the MMC staff used foul language and spoke to us in a very demeaning manner"

The situation has drawn strong reactions from concerned citizens and regu-



lar market-goers, many of whom have expressed solidarity with the vendors. "These vendors are part of the fabric of Mapusa. They provide essential goods and services. They deserve respect, not insults," said a one of the supporter who witnessed the incident.

The vendors also raised concerns over irregularities in the collection of the sopo (market fee). They claim that the agent responsible for collecting the fee often fails to provide official receipts, and in some cases, allegedly charges

more than the prescribed amount. "When we ask for receipts, we are ignored or threatened," a vendor said.

In light of the recent incident, the vendors to appeal a formal appeal to the Mapusa Municipal Council, urging the body to address their grievances promptly.

"The market is our only source of income. We are not encroachers—we are workers trying to support our families," said another vendor. "We urge the MMC to engage in dialogue and find a solution that respects our dignity."

Pune youth nabbed in drug bust at Chopdem

Team Herald

PANJIM: In a significant breakthrough in its relentless crackdown on narcotics, the Anti-Narcotic Cell (ANC) have arrested a 28-year-old man from Pune for allegedly possessing the highly potent and dangerous drug methamphetamine. The contraband, weighing 45.5 grams and valued at Rs 6.82 lakh, was seized during a raid at Chopdem on Saturday evening.

Acting on specific intelligence, ANC officers had been tracking the movements of the suspect, identified as Krushna Sonkellu, a resident of Dapo-

di, Pune, Maharashtra. Investigators had been monitoring him for three days using human intelligence and technical surveillance methods.

According to officials, Sonkellu arrived in Goa on Friday morning, allegedly planning to circulate the narcotics within the weekend party scene. He checked into a local guest house at Arambol and was under constant surveillance.

Based on a tip-off that he would be visiting Chopdem to sell the drugs, the ANC team acted swiftly and apprehended him before the narcotics could be distributed.

Preliminary interrogation has revealed that Sonkellu sourced the methamphetamine from Mumbai and transported it to Goa via Pune. His plan to infiltrate Goa's coastal party belt with narcotics was thwarted by the timely intervention of law enforcement.

The operation was led by PI Sajith Pillai, supported by Police Constables Godish Goltekar, Sanjay Gaonkar, Sairaj Naik, Vishal Shitole, and Lady Constable Jyoti Naik. The raid was meticulously monitored and supervised by DySP ANC Nerlon Albuquerque under the leadership of SP ANC Sunita Sawant.

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