

Suicides, subletting scams in rental homes worry South Goa landlords

Police intensify tenant verification drive, but crimes continue unabated

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MARGAO: While tenant verification has been made mandatory under the Goa (Verification of Tenants) Act, 2024, a spate of suicides and crime-related incidents involving tenants has left landlords in South Goa increasingly anxious.

In the past three months, several suicide cases have been reported from rented premises in areas under South Goa police jurisdiction. Among them are the deaths of a Jharkhand native in Colva, a 16-year-old student in Colva, another Jharkhand native in Cuncolim, a man in Collem, and

a Karnataka native in Sarcorda. Some recent kidnappings of young girls have also heightened concerns.

Most of those involved in these incidents were migrants from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, and Karnataka.

Laximan Naik, a landlord who rents out rooms to migrants, said that while the verification law has helped reduce some risks, suicides and crimes in rental units continue. "Tenant verification is a good tool. It helps landlords check a person's identity and background, reducing issues like rent defaults, property damage, or criminal involvement," he

said.

However, Naik pointed out a worrying trend: tenants subletting rooms without consent, collecting rent from sub-tenants, and then fleeing with the money. "This leaves the landlord in a helpless situation," he added.

Another landlord, Jasyant Pednekar, echoed this sentiment. "The verification process has worked well, especially after the new Act came into force. But with the high inflow of tourists and migrants, we are still liable for the risks — even guesthouses in Salcete have reported suicides and cases of kidnapping,"

To strengthen communi-

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counts for the highest number, with 6,155 verifications.

Advocate Vinay Parker noted that while renting property is lucrative, many landlords fail to conduct proper checks. "This is risky. Under the law, if a tenant is involved in a crime and wasn't verified, the landlord can be held accountable," he said.

He added, "The Act mandates landlords to submit tenant details to the police. Non-compliance can lead to fines of Rs 10,000. This law is a response to rising crimes involving non-local tenants. It's not just a formality — it's about supporting law and order."

KTC Margao restroom in shambles

Team Herald

MARGAO: The restroom facility for Kadamba Transport Corporation (KTC) bus drivers and conductors at the Margao KTC bus stand has fallen into a shockingly dilapidated state, with leaking walls, waterlogging, and exposed electrical wiring. Despite the glaring health and safety violations, when local journalists questioned a KTC official about the issue — instead of addressing the problem, the official escalated the matter to a senior authority in Panjim, who allegedly threatened the reporter, warning against publishing the story and even hinting at legal action if the matter was highlighted.

The appalling state of the facility has drawn sharp criticism from community advocates. Mahesh Dattaram Naik of the Jai Damodar Trust, said, "The condition is so dangerous that anyone attempting to rest there could end up hospitalised."

HAZARDOUS PIT STOP



KTC staff, including conductors and drivers endure terrible conditions at their restroom at the Margao bus stop - the walls, damp from persistent leaks, heighten the risk of electric shocks, while stagnant water has raised concerns over potential outbreaks of dengue and waterborne diseases



Konkani stage loses 'Comedy Queen' Querobina Carvalho

Multitalented tiatrist passes away at 65

Team Herald

MARGAO: Querobina Costa Carvalho, one of the most loved and multi-talented tiatristes, popularly known as the Comedy Queen of the Konkani stage, passed away on Thursday morning. She was 65. Her remarkable journey through the world of tiatr left an indelible mark on Goan and Konkani theatre.

Born on 24th October 1959 in Majorda, to Andrew Carvalho and Arcanjela Fernandes, Querobina came from humble beginnings. Her artistic journey began at the age of eight, when she sang a solo at a school event—a performance that earned her accolades and set the stage for her future. Encouraged by her uncle Agnelo Carvalho, she began singing duets in local tiatrs across villages like Majorda, Madel, Ambaji, and Betalbatim.

Her first major break came when Jose Mario Pereira offered her a role in a folk play aired on All India Radio, alongside renowned artists A.M. Pacheco and Peter D'Costa. Impressed by her performance, Pacheco cast her in two of his non-stop plays, Mr. Romeo and Odruxtt.

Querobina made her professional stage debut in Nelson Afonso's Asro, performed on a revolving stage with a new cast. Her career soared with a 12-year collaboration with Patrick Dourado, where she starred in shows like Patok, Sothi, Dev Borem Korum, and Ostori. It was in Ostori that she played a comedic role for the first time, earning her the title Comedy Queen from stage contractors Seby and Albert.

She performed with legends



such as C. Alvares, M. Boyer, Bab Peter, Jose Rod, and Prince Jacob, including a tour in London. Later, she moved to Kuwait in search of better opportunities but continued performing, contributing to tiatr even while abroad. She also acted in Bahrain and was felicitated in both countries for her performances.

Querobina produced two audio CDs (Dhinvas, Tragedy Queen) and two VCDs (Dukham, Tin Rukh). Her last known performance was in Zonvar by Jose-Ev-on.

Anthony Barbosa, President of the Tiatr Academy of Goa, expressed his deep condolences, stating: "Tiatr has lost one of its legends. She was a multi-talented artist who won the hearts of tiatr lovers with her exceptional talent. She was rightly called the Comedy Queen of the Konkani stage."

Marcos Gonsalves, Vice-President, TAG and Arnaldo Costa, President of Non-Stop Tiatrist and Tiatristanchi Sonvstha, also extended his condolences on behalf of the entire tiatr fraternity.

Police seize unregistered bikes in Margao, warn of strict action

Team Herald

MARGAO: The Margao Town Police have begun a focused crackdown on two-wheelers operating without valid number plates, with several motorcycles already seized in recent days. The initiative, aimed at improving road discipline and preventing misuse of such vehicles, underscores the police's intent to enforce registration norms more strictly.

Margao Town Police Inspector Suraj Samant said the drive gained momentum after officers stopped a youth riding a bike that had no number plates. "The rider had no convincing explanation," he said. "Later, someone claim-

Police warn that unregistered vehicles will be confiscated and released only after proper documents and number plates are produced, since vehicles without registration numbers are often linked to illegal or suspicious activity

ing to be the owner said the bike was bought from a third party and that the transfer process was still pending. But even then, they couldn't produce any paperwork at the station."

In another case, officers re-

covered a number plate-less motorcycle abandoned in the busy Margao market. So far, no one has come forward to claim it.

According to the police, these checks are part of ongoing enforcement efforts, especially since vehicles without registration numbers are often linked to illegal or suspicious activity. Samant stated that confiscated bikes are only released after proper documentation is shown and legal number plates are installed.

The department has urged vehicle owners to adhere to RTO guidelines and avoid unnecessary trouble by ensuring their two-wheelers carry clearly visible and valid registration plates.

Church committed to saving agriculture, says Auxiliary Bishop, as paddy planting begins at Rachol Seminary

Team Herald

MARGAO: With their feet in the mud and sleeves rolled up for the year's first planting, seminarians, priests, villagers and youth gathered once again at Rachol Seminary on Thursday to revive an annual tradition of cultivating the seminary's paddy fields — this time with Auxiliary Bishop Rev Simao Purificação Fernandes joining them on the field.

The Bishop not only blessed the fields before the cultivation began but also stepped in to help sow the saplings alongside others. He praised the event as a symbol of the Church's commitment to safeguarding Goa's agrarian heritage. "The Church in Goa is committed to saving agriculture," he said, urging the community, especially the younger generation, to take pride in Goa's farming tradi-



tions.

The community farming exercise took place despite a heavy downpour, with those present braving the rain to ensure the annual activity continued without interruption. Locals said the weather only strengthened their resolve to carry forward the tradition and preserve Goa's farmland for future generations.

The seminary's annual and

popular initiative, draws participants not just from Rachol but neighbouring villages as well, with some travelling from distant parts of South Goa to be part of the communal effort. In addition to the seminarians and priests, women from local villages, youth groups, and farmers came together in a show of solidarity to mark the beginning of the season.

Loutolim Comunidade accuses group of faking tenancy for compensation

Team Herald

MARGAO: The Comunidade of Loutolim has alleged that a group of individuals who recently met Fatorada MLA Vijai Sardesai are falsely projecting themselves as tenants of comunidade land in order to stake claims to compensation for lands under acquisition for the proposed Borim bridge. In a press statement issued on Thursday evening, the Comunidade condemned what it described as "misleading" news reports and viral videos related to the meeting, and accused the MLA of indulging in appeasement politics without verifying the facts.

According to the Comunidade, most of the individuals seen in the viral video, including those who accused it of obstructing tenancy rights, have not even filed tenancy claims before the Mamlatdar — the authority responsible for deciding such matters. The Comunidade alleged that these persons are using the media to push for tenancy recognition despite not having followed legal procedures.

The Comunidade further alleged that Albert Pinheiro, who was seen speaking on behalf of the others, is not a tenant of any comunidade land. It alleged that Pinheiro, a retired Customs Superintendent, had filed a tenancy case in 2021 based on a will from his maternal aunt, who, according to the Comunidade, was herself never declared a tenant.

The Comunidade also alleged that following the land acquisition notification issued over a year ago for the Borim bridge, several of these self-declared tenants had allegedly submitted applications seeking certificates stating that their ancestors cultivated the fields now being acquired. It claimed that this sudden interest in tenancy rights

appears to be driven by the compensation process, which is currently at an advanced stage.

The Comunidade further alleged a contradiction in the group's actions, stating that many of the same individuals had previously gone "pillar to post" pleading for the conservation of khazan lands. However, during their recent meeting with the MLA, there was no such appeal, the Comunidade said. It also claimed to have received confirmed information that some among them had approached the land acquisition officer expressing willingness to surrender the paddy fields, provided the entire compensation is paid directly to them.

Dismissing the allegations made against it, the Comunidade reiterated that tenancy rights must be proven before the Mamlatdar and not based on unverified claims made in public or political forums.

GRLA submits language, minority rights resolutions to BJP state president

Team Herald

MARGAO: The Global Romi Lipi Abhiyan (GRLA) on Thursday met BJP Goa president Damodar Naik at his residence and submitted a draft of two key resolutions the group wants tabled in the upcoming monsoon session of the Goa Legislative Assembly starting July 21. The first resolution calls for the phased introduction of Romi Konkani in Goa's schools beginning from Class 1, while the second seeks the early establishment of the Goa State Minorities Commission.

GRLA president Kennedy Afonso, who led the delegation, explained the urgent need to preserve Romi Konkani from ex-

inction and emphasised its historical significance. "Romi Konkani played a crucial role in preserving the Konkani language for over 450 years during Portuguese rule. It is a living script used by a large section of the Goan population, especially among the Catholic community," he said.

Afonso pointed out that many minority students struggle with the Devanagari script, and as a result, opt out of Konkani as a subject by Class 7, preferring French or Portuguese instead. "If our students are learning foreign languages like French and Portuguese with ease, why are they not allowed to study our own mother tongue in the script they're most comfortable

with?" he asked.

On the second resolution, Afonso reminded Naik that it was the BJP government in 2012 that had first introduced a Bill to establish the Goa State Minorities Commission. However, the Bill was sent to a select committee and has remained in abeyance ever since. He urged Naik to take the matter up with Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant and ensure both resolutions are passed during the upcoming Assembly session.

Naik gave the delegation a patient hearing and assured them he would try to facilitate a meeting with the Chief Minister so GRLA representatives could present their case directly before the session begins.

Vijai to raise Fontainhas locals' issues in Assembly

Team Herald

MARGAO: Goa Forward Party (GFP) President Vijai Sardesai will raise the issues faced by residents of São Tomé and Fontainhas in Panjim during the upcoming Assembly session after meeting locals from the area.

Sardesai made this announcement while speaking to the media after concluding GFP's Janata Darbar for Tiswadi Taluka, held at the party headquarters in Panjim. Addressing concerns, Sardesai stated, "People from Panjim, especially from the heritage areas, came to meet us regarding the unchecked

nuisance caused by the tourists visiting these places. I will take this up with the state administration during the upcoming Assembly session, as the locals are facing hardships—including senior citizens."

Referring to the controversial Smart City project, Sardesai remarked that instead of addressing the priorities of the people of the capital city, here the local resident is forced to stand up for themselves and repeatedly knock on the door of the authorities to attend to their grievances and wait for action to be taken on the ground.



Those participating stuck to traditional planting methods, with older farmers guiding the younger hands through the process. Organisers said this was intentional, to ensure that such