

# HC disposes petition against eight rebel Congress MLAs

Petitioner claims he is now free to approach Apex Court

Team Herald

PANJIM: The High Court of Bombay at Goa on Thursday disposed of writ petition filed by former Congress president Girish Chodankar and upheld the order of the Assembly Speaker Ramesh Tawadkar dismissing his disqualification petition against eight rebel Congress MLAs who had defected to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in September 2022.

During the hearing, the petitioner's counsel Adv Abhijit Gosavi submitted that the issues raised in the present writ petition were already covered by the decision given by this Court in another writ petition

filed by Chodankar against the Speaker's verdict against another 10 Congress who too broke away and merged with the BJP during previous term i.e. in July 2019.

Hence, Adv Gosavi did not wish to raise any other issues except the ones which were raised and answered in the previous writ petition filed in 2021 and which is challenged before the Supreme Court. Thus the Court dismissed the petition for the same reasons mentioned in the previous writ petition.

Later, the petitioner and his counsel Adv Gosavi stated that they were now free to approach the Apex Court to seek

**My goal is to put an end to the illegal defection motivated by the pursuit of power and money – Girish Chodankar, Petitioner**

definitive interpretation of the disqualification laws outlined in the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution. They expressed their gratitude to the High Court for disposing of the writ petition within 25 days of filing it. Chodankar said that since the Speaker delayed in disposing his disqualification petition for two years, he was constrained to escalate the matter to the

High Court and the Supreme Court seeking speedy disposal of the matter. "My goal is to put an end to the illegal defection motivated by the pursuit of power and money," he said.

Chodankar had prayed to set aside the order dated November 1, 2024 passed by the Speaker dismissing his disqualification petition against eight rebel party MLAs who defected to the BJP on September 14, 2022.

Chodankar had approached the High Court after the Supreme Court last month refused to entertain his special leave petition (SLP) against the Speaker's order on eight MLAs and advised the peti-

tioner to approach the High Court for redressal under Article 226 of the Constitution.

Meanwhile, another writ petition filed by Dominic Noronha who had also challenged the Speaker's order dismissing his disqualification petition against eight rebel Congress MLAs has been listed for hearing by the High Court on January 22.

Noronha had prayed to quash and set aside the Speaker's order dated October 14, 2024, contesting that the judgment was based on complete misreading, misconstruction and misinterpretation of the Paragraph 4 of the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution.

## BJP Goa chief's election today

Team Herald

PANJIM: The election for the new Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) State President will be held on January 17.

The results will be declared the next day, party spokesperson Premanand Mhambre said on Thursday while addressing a press conference.

Mhambre said the election will take place with 59 voters, including 10 per cent of party MLAs and two Members of Parliament (MPs), casting their votes. The MLAs who will participate in the voting include

Chief Minister Pramod Sawant, Health Minister Vishwajit Rane and Transport Minister Mauvin Godinho, and two MPs namely Sadanand Shet Tanavade and Shripad Naik.

National General Secretary Sunil Bansal will arrive in Goa to chair

the election, he said.

"The new State president will be announced on Saturday," he said, adding that seven shortlisted names were sent to the BJP central leadership for approval.

The names shortlisted included former ministers Dayanand Mandrekar, Dilip Parulekar, former Deputy Chief Minister Chandrakant (Babu) Kavlekar, former South Goa MP Narendra Sawaikar, former MLAs Dayanand Sopte, Damu Naik and senior party leader Govind Parvatkar.

Five years back, Tanavade was elected unopposed as the new State party chief. He had succeeded BJP's then Rajya Sabha member Vinay Tendulkar, who held the post for two consecutive terms from 2012.

Tanavade, the former MLA from Tivim, was the lone candidate to file nomination for the post.

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## HEIGHT OF NEGLIGENCE

SAGUN GAWADE



The overflowing gutters in the Smart City of Panjim, speaks volumes of the quality of construction carried out by the contractors entrusted with task

## Special drive in S Goa to act against unauthorised constructions

Team Herald

PANJIM: The South Goa Collectorate will conduct a special drive for disposal of pending applications under the Goa Regularisation of Unauthorised Constructions (GRUC) Act 2016 on January 25.

According to an order issued by District Collector Egna Cleetus, IAS, the special drive will be conducted to comply with the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) issued by the Revenue Department, Government of Goa, and to facilitate timely disposal of pending applications under the Goa Regularisation of Unauthorised Act 2016.

All the Deputy Collectors and SDOs or authorised officers have been asked to submit the pending

applications to the line departments by January 18 for timely submission of technical report.

The order has said that the applicants must be allowed to revise their plans to comply with the prescribed limits before any rejection and the applicant should be informed to submit revised plans before January 18.

A report on the number of cases disposed of during the drive along with the any remaining cases should be submitted to the Collector and in case if the Line Departments failed to submit the reports prior to January 20, the detailed list of departments should be submitted to the Collector for initiating necessary action, the order said.

## Porvorim corridor work: HC orders PWD to inspect affected stretches

Team Herald

PANJIM: The High Court of Bombay at Goa has directed the Public Works Department (PWD) to conduct an immediate inspection of the affected stretches of the Porvorim corridor work to determine whether pipeline leakages were impeding progress of the work for measures to resolve problems.

The Court has ordered PWD to file a report on its findings by January 17 and simultaneously, the contractor has been instructed to file an affidavit by January 21 detailing pro-

**Directs dept to determine whether pipeline leakages were impeding progress of the work to resolve problems; PWD told to file a report on its findings by today; contractor told to file affidavit by Jan 21 detailing progress made & the reasons for continued delays**

gress made and the reasons for continued delays.

The High Court of Bombay at Goa recently considered Public Interest Litigation (PIL) Writ Petition No. 2656 of 2024, filed by a public-spirited citizen Adv Moses Pinto, as the petitioner in person.

The PIL raised serious con-

cerns about incomplete road works on critical stretches of the Porvorim-Gurim highway and their implications for public safety. The case was heard before the Division Bench of Justices M S Karnik and Nivedita P Mehta on January 16.

The PIL focuses on persistent lapses in road infrastructure

management, traffic diversions, and enforcement mechanisms, particularly concerning the ongoing construction of the NH66 elevated corridor. The petitioner argued that these deficiencies violated the fundamental Right to Life under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution due to heightened risks of road accidents, traffic congestion, and delayed medical responses. Photographs depicting incomplete roadwork at prominent locations, including RG Hospital, O Coqueiro Junction, and showrooms like Toyota, Hyundai and Nexa were submitted.

The petitioner contended that inadequate planning of traffic diversions, coupled with delays in construction had caused considerable disruption and posed a severe safety threat to commuters.

Citing international standards, the PIL also sought judicial intervention for the adoption of modern traffic management technologies, such as Automated Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) systems, improved enforcement of traffic laws, and the establishment of trauma care facilities along accident-prone zones.

## Usgao-Ganjam VP Secretary gets interim relief in sexual harassment case

PONDA: Usgao-Ganjam Panchayat Secretary Honaji Morajkar was granted interim relief on his anticipatory bail application in a case involving allegations of outraging the modesty of a 22-year-old woman.

The next hearing is scheduled for January 21. The complaint, filed on January 14, alleged that the secretary sent lewd messages causing sexual harassment and outraged the modesty of the complainant, who was employed on a contractual basis. The day after the complaint was lodged, the

accused went on sick leave and filed an anticipatory bail application, which the court accepted, granting him interim relief.

In response to the incident, the Usgao Ganjam Panchayat has now appointed a new secretary. Addressing the allegations, Sarpanch Ramnathi Dangui stated, "The court will decide the matter regarding outraging the modesty of the girl." He however dismissed additional allegations of financial misappropriation made by the complainant.

## power shutdown

**TALEIGAO:** On 17 January from 9 am to 2pm at Rosary Chapel, Java Showroom and surrounding areas

**MARGAO:** On January 17 from 9 am to 3 pm at entire Gandhi Market, Verlekar Building, Sambari Book Stall, Railway Station Road and surrounding areas.

**MARGAO:** On January 18 from 9 am to 3 pm at St Joseph School, Forest Department, Behind Babu Naik House, Lawande Hospital, Rogtao Plaza, Pratibha housing society, Supreme Plaza Building, Power House Office, Vasant Vihar, Goa State Corporation, Preeti Hotel and surrounding areas.

**MARGAO:** On January 19 from 9 am to 3pm at Old Pick-up Stand (Lilly Garments) transformer, the areas affected are entire New Market, Royal Foods, Salcate Pharmacy and surrounding areas.

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