

Planting hope, but Goa's green drive faces tree-mendous test

PWD BEGINS PLANTATION CAMPAIGN EVEN AS THOUSANDS OF TREES FACE THE AXE FOR HIGHWAY WIDENING PROJECTS

THE GOAN | NETWORK

MARGAO

The Goa government's World Environment Day initiative to plant thousands of saplings along National Highway-66 (NH66) has brought into sharp focus a critical question: Will the plantation drive help curb the Public Works Department's (PWD) long-pending tree compensation backlog, or merely offset fresh tree losses resulting from ongoing highway expansion projects?

The issue has gained prominence following the PWD's proposal earlier this year to fell 2,395 trees standing on its property for the widening of NH66 between Navelim and Cumolim and along the Cortalim-Verna stretch.

Of the total trees marked for felling, 1,918 are located along the Navelim-Cumolim section, while another 477 trees are proposed to be cut on the Cortalim-Verna stretch.

While granting permission for the felling, the Tree Authority directed the PWD to undertake compensatory afforestation by planting three saplings for every tree removed. The Authority also instructed the department to translocate at least



File photo of hundreds of trees marked for felling on the Navelim-Cumolim NH66. The green cover on the NH66 passing through Chinchinim village.

10 per cent of the affected trees wherever feasible.

PWD's senior engineer (National Highways) told The Goan that the department has already commenced a plantation drive along the Canacona and Nuvem stretches of NH66 over the last two days. "The contractor appointed by the PWD has begun clearing trees along the Cortalim-Verna stretch of NH66. Work on the Navelim-Cumolim stretch will commence shortly," the engineer said.

He further maintained that the department has initiated efforts to clear its backlog of compensatory plantation along highways and open spaces under PWD jurisdiction. "Any-one free to cross-check with Forest Department officials regarding the trees planted by the department to clear the backlog till date," he added.

Chinchinim p'yat seeks protection for decades-old trees

Even as it welcomed the government's green initiative to plant saplings along NH66 as part of its commitment to environmental conservation and sustainable development, the Chinchinim Village Panchayat has urged the Forest Department and other concerned authorities to take all possible measures to protect decades-old trees proposed to be felled for the highway expansion project.

The panchayat's appeal pertains to the NH66 widening project area, where alleged under PWD jurisdiction, "Any-one free to cross-check with Forest Department officials regarding the trees planted by the department to clear the backlog till date," he added.

Chinchinim Sarpanch Frank Viegas said residents of Dandevad have, for decades,

Will the drive wipe out mounting pendency?

Statistics show that a total of 44,995 trees have been pending since the last five years for plantation by various government agencies, including the PWD. In fact, of the total pendency of 44,995 trees, total of 33,723 trees awaiting plantation falls in the domain of the PWD.

To the proposal to free trees on the Navelim-Cumolim and Cortalim-Verna NH66, Deputy Conservator of Forest, South had directed the PWD to plant three times the number of trees felled, over and above the mandatory median and roadside plantations required under NHAI guidelines. The species to be planted will be finalised in consultation with the Forest Department and the GSBB, based on the suitability of the planting area.

The DCF had also suggested the translocation of approximately 10 per cent of the trees, subject to feasibility and species suitability. The PWD was further told to plant only indigenous mixed tree species, maintain a geo-tagged record of all plantations, and submit the data for monitoring by the Forest Department.

advocated a bypass solution to address traffic congestion and road safety concerns.

The panchayat reiterates the long-standing demand of the local community for a bypass on stilts, which would substantially reduce the need for tree felling while achieving the intended infrastructure objectives," Viegas said.

He stressed that the mature trees form an integral part of the local ecosystem, providing environmental, ecological and social benefits that cannot be immediately replaced by new-

ly planted saplings. "Preservation of existing green cover should remain a priority while undertaking developmental projects," he added.

The panchayat has appealed to the government, Forest Department and National Highway authorities to explore environmentally sustainable alternatives that strike a balance between infrastructure development and environmental conservation, while safeguarding the area's natural heritage for future generations.

Tensions in Rivona as forest officials halt playground work

Officials threaten action over use of mining rejects for ground; minister questions move

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SANGUEM

Tension prevailed in Rivona on Saturday after officials of the Forest Department halted a community-led initiative by villagers and local youth to level a playground for children using mining reject material that had been dumped in forested area over a decade ago.

The issue arose when villagers began removing a small quantity of the mining reject material to level a ground that has been used by local youth for football and volleyball since 2011. According to Social Welfare Minister and Sanguem MLA Subhash Phal Dessai, nearly 100 villagers participated in the voluntary shramdaan, bringing machinery and a truck to transport the material from a large dump located about 50 metres away.

The mining reject dump, reportedly consisting of 100-200 truckloads of material, has remained at the site which is in forested area for nearly 10 years.

However, the work came to a halt after forest guards, departmental officials and the Deputy Conservator of Forests arrived at the location and warned villagers that a forest offence would be registered if the activity continued.



Social Welfare Minister and Sanguem MLA Subhash Phal Dessai in a heated discussion with forest officials at Dandoleim-Rivona.

On hearing the news, Phal Dessai rushed to the site and confronted the officials.

He questioned the department's action, alleging that authorities had failed to take action when large quantities of mining waste were illegally dumped in the forest area years ago.

He criticised the officials for targeting villagers for using a small amount of the discarded material to create a playground for local children.

The incident has also revived concerns among residents of Rivona, Netravali and Bhati over restrictions imposed under forest regulations, which they claim have limited the availability of land for community infrastructure and recreational facilities.

Phal Dessai pointed to the difficulties faced in securing

land even for basic public projects, including waste management facilities.

Expressing solidarity with the villagers, the minister said he fully supports their demand for a playground and maintained that if the Forest Department chooses to initiate legal action against the villagers, it should also proceed against him as he stands firmly with the community.

Accusing the authorities of not acting firmly against illegal timber smuggling in the past, Phal Dessai said they were moving swiftly against villagers engaged in community work without conducting the situation as unfair, he called for a balanced approach that addresses past environmental violations while also taking into account the needs of local communities.

Gunfire, intimidation at Shirgao; 2 arrested

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BICHOLIM

Two persons have been arrested in connection with criminal intimidation, gunfire and trespass at Madhalawada in Shirgao on Friday night.

According to police reports, the complainant, Upendra Gaonkar (66) of Madhalawada alleged that the incident took place at about 8.30 pm when the accused, Prayot alias Shirish Gaonkar and Girish Gaonkar, first contacted him over the phone, where they allegedly abused and threatened him with dire consequences, including death threats.

According to the complaint, when Upendra Gaonkar reached his residence, Prayot alias Shirish Gaonkar was allegedly waiting in the veranda armed with a firearm. The accused reportedly aimed the weapon directly at the complainant and fired a round. The complainant narrowly escaped the attack by running away from the

spot.

The complaint further states that the armed accused entered the complainant's house and allegedly fired at other shot inside the premises, creating panic and endangering lives. The accused also allegedly pointed the firearm at the complainant's wife and threatened to kill her. She reportedly escaped through the back door of the house.

The incident allegedly escalated further when both accused entered the nearby residence of the complainant's cousin, Nagesh Gaonkar, while carrying the firearm and searching for him, causing fear among the occupants before fleeing the locality.

Following the complaint, Bicholim Police arrested both accused on Saturday morning under Sections 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

Mapusa student's death: Mother seeks FIR against cops

Alleges son was repeatedly isolated, traumatised during hours of questioning at police station

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MAPUSA

The mother of the 22-year-old Mapusa youth who allegedly died by suicide after being named in a garbage-dumping case has demanded criminal action against police officers, alleging that her son was repeatedly isolated from his family and subjected to severe mental trauma during hours of questioning at the Mapusa Police Station.

In a detailed complaint addressed to the North Goa Superintendent of Police, with copies marked to the Chief Minister, Director General of Police and Home Secretary, Genevieve De Braganca, the mother of the deceased youth, sought registration of an FIR against the police officers concerned for alleged abetment of suicide and other relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

She also demanded action against the creator of the viral video that triggered public outrage against her son and called for an inquiry into the functioning of several electronic media platforms that, she alleged, circulated unverified content and disclosed her son's identity before any guilt had been established.

Providing a graphic account of the events preceding her son's death, De Braganca alleged that she, her son and her two daughters were summoned

Key question: How did youth get revolver?

MAPUSA: Even as public attention remains fixed on the circumstances that allegedly drove a 22-year-old Mapusa college student to take his own life, police are now grappling with another troubling question: how did the young man obtain the revolver used in the shooting?

The firearm, believed to be an illegal weapon, has been recovered by the police and is now at the centre of a parallel investigation. "We are also investigating how the illegal gun came into the possession of the youth," a police officer associated with the probe said.

Police are expected to examine whether the weapon was procured recently, borrowed from someone known to the youth, or sourced through illegal channels. The answers could open an entirely new dimension to a case that has already sparked widespread public scrutiny.

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However, inquiries are likely to begin once family members are in a position to cooperate with the investigation.

Post-mortem report, CCTV footage sought through RTI

MAPUSA: The mother of the 22-year-old youth late Saturday evening moved an RTI application seeking certified documents related to her son's case, including the post-mortem report.

The application was filed before the SDPO, the designated Public Information Officer, with a request for urgent disclosure of records. The family alleged that police had refused to provide them a copy of the post-mortem report.

Through the RTI plea, she has sought CCTV footage from all cameras installed on the ground and first floors of Mapusa Police Station between 3 pm and 11 pm on June 4. She has also requested copies of the FIR and complaint registered in the case.

shattered.

According to De Braganca, her son returned from the police station in a state of shock and became increasingly distressed after discovering the extent of criticism and condemnation directed at him on social media platforms.

She alleged that a video recorded by an unidentified individual had been circulated widely on social media and electronic media channels without verification, resulting in what she described as a public trial and character assassination of her son.

The complaint further accuses police officers PSI Mangesh Palni and PI Navin Desai of invoking legal provisions against her son without conducting a proper investigation or applying due diligence.

Describing her son as a victim of false propaganda, she alleged that the viral campaign against him, coupled with the manner in which he was treated at the police station, created circumstances that ultimately drove him to take the extreme step. "My son was forced to end his life by the compelling circumstances arising out of irresponsible and insensitive treatment from the police officers and also because of a social media viral video causing a social outrage vandalising his character on social media platforms," she stated.

De Braganca has also sought the transfer of the investigation from the Mapusa Police Station to another police station with competent jurisdiction, arguing that an independent probe is necessary to ensure justice and maintain public confidence in the investigation.

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Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive (physical/symbolic) possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of the Bank/Secured Creditor, will be sold on "AS IS WHERE IS", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on the date as mentioned in the table herein below, for recovery of its dues due to the Bank/Secured Creditor from the respective borrower(s) and guarantor(s). The Reserve Price and the earnest money deposit will be as mentioned in the table below against the respective properties.

SCHEDULE OF THE SECURED ASSETS						
Lot No.	Name of the Branch Name of the Account Name & Addresses of the Borrower/Guarantors Account	Dt. Of Demand Notice u/s 13(2) of SARFAESI ACT 2002 Amount as on per Demand Notice	Description of Immovable Properties Mortgaged/ Owner's Name (mortgagors of Property(ies))	Reserve Price EMD (Last date of Deposit of EMD) Bid Increase Amount	Date/ Time of E-Auction	Details of the encumbrances known to the secured creditors Name & Contact No of Authorized Officer
		Possession Date u/s 13(4) of SARFAESI ACT 2002 Nature of Possession Symbolic/Physical/Constructive				
1	BO: Gurudwara Road (012000) M/S LAURENT & BENOK MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS LTD. (BORROWER) ADD: OFFICE M-353, LOWER GROUND FLOOR, DLF PHASE-I, GURGAON HARYANA-122002 ALSO AT: 1 ST FLOOR, JAI SINGH YADAV COMPLEX, GALI NO-03, MAIN KAPASHERA ROAD NEAR POLICE STATION NEW DELHI-110037 ALSO AT: 824 UDHYOG VIHAR PHASE-V, GURGAON- 122016 ALSO AT: PLOT NO. 25, UDHYOG VIHAR GURGAON-122016 ALSO AT: A PROPERTY VOI CONXI OR PEQUEÑO CONXI SITUATED AT MUNDEL, VADDEM, VASCO DA GAMA ENROLLED UNDER MATRIZ NO 321 AND NOT DESCRIBED IN THE CONSERVATORIA DO REGISTO PREDIAL SURVEYED UNDER CHALTA NO 23 OF P.T. SHEET NO. 63 OF VASCO, GOA SH. VINET KUMAR SYAL S/O SH. VIJAY KUMAR SYAL (DIRECTOR) ADD: FLAT NO 17A, (OR 17A) RASINA RESIDENCY, SECTOR-59 GURGAON, HARYANA-122001 ALSO AT: 1 ST FLOOR, JAI SINGH YADAV COMPLEX, GALI NO-03, MAIN KAPASHERA ROAD NEAR POLICE STATION NEW DELHI-110037 ALSO AT: 5110, DLF PHASE IV, GURGAON HARYANA-122015 ALSO AT: A PROPERTY VOI CONXI OR PEQUEÑO CONXI SITUATED AT MUNDEL, VADDEM, VASCO DA GAMA ENROLLED UNDER MATRIZ NO 321 AND NOT DESCRIBED IN THE CONSERVATORIA DO REGISTO PREDIAL SURVEYED UNDER CHALTA NO 23 OF P.T. SHEET NO. 63 OF VASCO, GOA SH. AMIT KUMAR SYAL S/O SH. VIJAY KUMAR SYAL (DIRECTOR) ADD: FLAT NO 17A, (OR 17A) RASINA RESIDENCY, SECTOR-59 GURGAON, HARYANA-122001 ALSO AT: 1 ST FLOOR, JAI SINGH YADAV COMPLEX, GALI NO-03, MAIN KAPASHERA ROAD NEAR POLICE STATION NEW DELHI-110037 ALSO AT: 5110, DLF PHASE IV, GURGAON HARYANA-122015 ADD: 824 UDHYOG VIHAR PHASE-V GURGAON-122016	14.10.2024 (RS. 9,47,45,603.74) FURTHER INTEREST, OTHER CHARGES AND EXPENSES TILL THE DATE OF FULL AND FINAL PAYMENT 22.01.2025 SYMBOLIC	VOI CONXI OR PEQUEÑO CONXI SITUATED AT MUNDEL, VADDEM, VASCO DA GAMA GOA ADMESURING 2167 SQUARE METERS, ENROLLED UNDER MATRIZ NO. 321 AND NOT DESCRIBED IN THE CONSERVATORIA DO REGISTO PREDIAL SURVEYED UNDER CHALTA NO. 23 OF P.T. SHEET NO. 63 OF VASCO, GOA AND BOUNDED AS FOLLOW: ON THE EAST: BY PROPOSED 10.00 METER WIDE ROAD. ON THE WEST: BY HILL OF ALPARQUEIROS NOW BELONGING TO INS GOMANTAK ON THE NORTH: BY PROPERTY BELONGING TO THE HEIRS OF FRANCIS XAVIER ROSARIO BEARING CHALTA NO. 24 OF P.T. SHEET NO. 43 AND ON THE SOUTH: BY PROPERTY BELONGING TO THE HEIRS OF ARAJOU BEARING CHALTA NO. 21 OF P.T. SHEET NO. 63 OWNER NAME: VINET KUMAR SYAL	RS.354.70 LAKH RS. 35.47 LAKH (25.06.2026) RS. 56,000/-	25.06.2026 11.00 AM TO 04.00 PM	NOT KNOWN MR. SUBHASH CHANDRA JATAV (M. NO.9121866087) Authorised Officer ARMB EAST DELHI

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