

Amrut



**IN THE HIGH COURT OF BOMBAY AT GOA
PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATION (SUO MOTU) NO. 1 OF
2026**

HIGH COURT ON ITS OWN MOTION
(TRAGEDY TAKEN PLACE AT ARPORA
IN A TRAGIC FIRE INCIDENT)

...Petitioner

Versus

STATE OF GOA THROUGH
THE CHIEF SECRETARY AND ORS.

...Respondents

**WITH
PIL WRIT PETITION NO.3223 OF 2025 (FILING NO.)**

AISHWARYA ARJUN SALGAONKAR

...Petitioner

Versus

THE STATE OF GOA THR
ITS CHIEF SECRETARY AND 12 ORS.

...Respondents

Mr Rohit Bras De Sa, Advocate – Amicus Curiae.

Mr Devidas Pangam, Advocate General with Mr Deep Shirodkar,
Additional Government Advocate for Respondent Nos.1, 2, 4 to 13,
49 and 50.

Mr Manish Salkar (Through V.C.), Advocate for Respondent No.6.

Mr Vinoj K. Daniel, Advocate for Respondent No.18.

Mr Parikshit Sawant, Advocate for Respondent No.7.

Mr H. D. Naik, Advocate for Respondent No.14.

Mr Anand Shirodkar and Ms S. Vaigankar, Advocates for
Respondent No.17.

Ms Pritika Shirodkar (Through V.C.), Advocate for Respondent
No.19.

Mr Omkar Kulkarni (Through V.C.), Advocate for Respondent
No.29-V. P. Nerul.

Mr Prayash Shirodkar, Advocate for Respondent No.20-Mapusa

Municipal Council.

Mr B. Fatarpekar, Advocate for Respondent No.28.

Mr P. A. Kamat, Advocate for Respondent Nos.26, 27, 30, 31, 44, 45, 46 and 47.

Mr Gaurish Agni, Mr Ankur Kumar and Mr Yash Naik, Advocates for the Petitioner in PILWP No.3223 of 2025 (F).

Mr Devidas Pangam, Advocate General with Ms Maria Correia, Additional Government Advocate for Respondent Nos.1 to 5 and 8 to 11 in PILWP No.3223 of 2025 (F).

Mr Ganesh Naik, Advocate for Respondent Nos.22, 24 and 25.

Mr Shane Coutinho, Advocate for Respondent No.33.

Mr Sahil Sardesai, Advocate for Respondent No.37.

Mr B. Oliveira, Advocate for Respondent No.38.

Mr Rushikesh Sahakari, Advocate for Respondent No.43.

Mr A. F. Diniz, Senior Advocate with Mr A. Ghatwal, Advocate for Respondent No.51.

Mr Parag Rao, Mr S. Singbal and Ms V. Mahato, Advocates for Respondent Nos.53 and 54.

**CORAM: SUMAN SHYAM &
AMIT S. JAMSANDEKAR, JJ**

DATED : 16th FEBRUARY 2026

P.C.:

1. Mr Diniz, learned Senior Counsel assisted by Mr A. Ghatwal has appeared for Respondent No.51 and Mr Rao, learned counsel has appeared for Respondent Nos.53 and 54. The learned counsel appearing for Respondent Nos.51, 53 and 54 have submitted that their respective clients are in jail and therefore, in

view of the projection made in the petition, at least four weeks' time be permitted to seek instructions and file affidavits on their behalf.

2. The learned Advocate General for the State of Goa Mr Devidas Pangam has submitted that the Government, at the appropriate level, is considering various proposal including the need to pay adequate compensation to the victims of the tragedy, as well as the need to carry out amendments in the Building Law/Rules etc. However, the learned Advocate General submits that since the construction licences, occupancy certificates and trade licences are granted by the respective Village Panchayats, hence the State Government has no role to play in these matters even where, such construction licences, occupancy certificates and trade licences are granted without following the due process of law. As a matter of fact, Mr Pangam submits that as on date, there is no actionable data available with the State Government to show as to how many licences have been granted by the respective Panchayats, in contravention of the requisite norms.

3. Mr De Sa, learned *Amicus Curiae* appearing in this case, has submitted that he has no objection to prayer for grant time made on behalf of the Respondent Nos.51, 53 and 54, but the other issues, such as attachment and auction sale of the properties of defaulters

by public auction and payment of compensation to the victims should be taken up for consideration expeditiously.

4. In response to the above, the learned Advocate General has submitted that the Secretaries and Sarpanchas of the concerned Panchayats have already been taken into custody but some time is required to address arguments on the issue of attachment and auction sale of the properties of the erring public functionaries.

5. After hearing the submissions of the learned counsel appearing for the parties, we grant four weeks' time to Respondent Nos.51, 53, and 54 to file their respective replies. However, this PIL be posted again on 24.02.2026 for the limited purpose for hearing arguments on the point of grant of ex-gratia compensation to the victims and also on the issue of attachment and auction sale of properties of the erring public servants who may be found to be liable under the law. Meanwhile, considering the stand taken by the Government, we also direct the respective Panchayats to file affidavits indicating the number of construction licences, occupancy certificates, and trade licences for commercial structures that have been issued by the respective Village Panchayats. The affidavits, furnishing the above data, shall be sworn by the Secretary of the respective Village Panchayats. The affidavits be filed within two weeks by serving advance copy upon the learned *Amicus Curiae* as

well as the learned Additional Government Advocate assisting the learned Advocate General for the State of Goa.

6. List the matters accordingly.

AMIT S. JAMSANDEKAR, J

SUMAN SHYAM, J