

Goa Tourism Department Reinforces Safety Protocols for Hotels and Guests



Goa's tourism sector is taking decisive action to bolster safety and ensure a respectful environment for all, as the state's Tourism Department recently issued a stern warning to hotels, guesthouses, and homestay operators. This directive emphasizes the critical importance of upholding women's rights and ensuring child safety within their premises. The move comes in response to a concerning uptick in reported child abuse incidents occurring in lodging establishments across the region.

The clear message from the department underscores that creating a secure and inclusive atmosphere is a shared and non-negotiable obligation for every entity within the tourism industry. Tourism Director Kedar Naik has been vocal in asserting this responsibility, highlighting the need for vigilance and adherence to established legal frameworks.

A key aspect of the new directive involves stricter entry protocols for children. Hotels are now mandated to permit children into rooms only when they are formally registered as guests, accompanied by their family or blood relatives. This measure aims to introduce a necessary layer of scrutiny and accountability, directly addressing the vulnerabilities that have recently come to light.

Furthermore, the department has reminded all lodging establishments of their legal obligations under Section 8 (10) of the Goa Children's Act, 2003. This vital legislation is designed to protect children from abuse and exploitation. Non-compliance with this act carries significant penalties,

including potential imprisonment for up to three years or a fine reaching up to 1 lakh Indian Rupees for hotel owners and managers found in violation.

Beyond child safety, the directive also reinforces the mandate for establishments to comply with the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition & Redressal) Act, 2013, commonly known as the POSH Act. This ensures that a safe and equitable working environment is maintained for all female employees within the tourism industry.

This latest move by the Goa Tourism Department signals a proactive stance on guest and staff welfare, aiming to uphold the state's reputation as a safe and welcoming destination. Operators are now expected to review and reinforce their internal policies, ensuring full compliance with these critical safety and rights provisions. The industry will be closely watched to ensure these guidelines translate into tangible improvements in safety and respect across all accommodation types.