

## MMC library shelves cleared of uniforms and buckets but staffing and infrastructure issues persist

Team Herald

**MARGAO:** Immediately after Herald highlighted the pathetic state of rare books at the Margao Municipal Council's library, the MMC has cleared and cleaned the book shelves and also assured that the 13 suggestions from the Goa University experts will be taken up for discussion during the next council meeting.

Herald's pursuit of the story has now revealed that in the absence of professional staff, a sweeper is handling the counter of the library. Furthermore, the file to purchase a new computer to maintain the records of the books has been pending approval for the past one year.

On Thursday, the MMC managed to clean the book



racks and remove all the tube light fixtures and uniforms of the MMC staff left on them. "We have cleaned the racks and precautions will be taken so that the staff does not repeat this behaviour," said Assistant Librarian Roshini Desai.

She said she also discussed the issue with Chief Officer Rohit Kadam and members of the Library

Committee, urging them to look into the matter seriously. Meanwhile, former MMC Chairperson Savio Coutinho has strongly criticised the civic body for its failure and neglect to maintain the Municipal library and its rare books.

"It is difficult to understand what ails this Council, which enjoys the support of tall leaders such as former

Chief Minister Digambar Kamat and Fatorda MLA Vijay Sardessai, for over a decade. Very little is being done to improve the Council library which is host to such rare and precious books," Coutinho charged. "In the past, during my tenure, we struggled for funds and would somehow make ends meet in order to provide better services through the Council," he said.

Coutinho said that the then Council had with great difficulty launched the 'e-granthalaya' index system on September 5, 2009 at the hands of the former Chief Minister.

"There were several unused computers lying at the Municipal building, which were shifted to the library for the e-granthalaya serv-

ice. It was proposed to digitize all the books, so that one could locate any book in the library at the click of a button," he said.

"Sadly, in spite of completing the pending work of barcoding and data entry, after the end of my tenure and the formation of a new Council, absolutely nothing happened," Coutinho lamented.

"Two Council terms, from 2010 to 15 and 2015 to 20 have passed, and a fresh Council has been formed under the same tall leaders, but hardly anyone seems to be interested in the upkeep of the library. Their priorities seem to have deviated from the improvement of services, and instead they are getting infamous for wrong reasons," said Coutinho.

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