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People reading newspapers in Athaide municipal library based in old Mapusa Municipality building. The 132-year-old library is the only library that has a collection of official gazettes since 1857

Mapusa library gets e-status; books can be reserved using 'Web Opac'

Arpita Srivastava | NT

MAPUSA

The Athaide municipal library well-known as Mapusa Municipal Library based in old municipal building in Mapusa was given e-library status by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) in February. The library is automated with e-granthalaya, a digital agenda for library automation and networking by NIC. The software allows a reader online access to the library catalog.

The software is useful for automation of in-house activities of libraries and to provide various online member services. The software provides built-in Web OPAC interface to publish the library catalog over Internet. The software is UNICODE compliant thus supports data entry in local languages.

The library was started way back on November 12, 1883 during the Portuguese regime by Dr Joaquim B Azavedo and other like-minded people. Later the library was named 'Athaide Bibliotheca' in memory of Fr Francis Louis who was running a school in Guirim to impart education to locals.

On April 9, 1897, the library was given to Camra de Bardez (municipality) and after the liberation of the state, the Mapusa municipal council was formed and the library was handed over to it. Since then, the Mapusa Municipality is running the library.
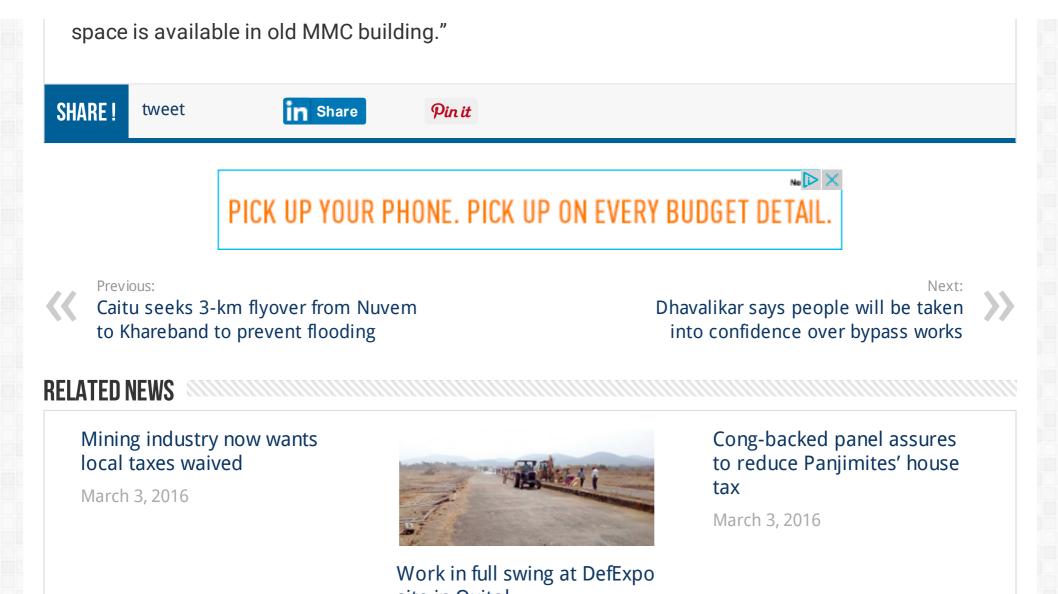
Being the oldest library in North Goa, a large collection of books is available. The library has got around 25,000 books in languages including English, Konkani, Hindi and Marathi as well as foreign languages like Portuguese, French and others. More than 5000 books are available in Portuguese language itself. Besides the library also gets dailies in 24 languages, 56 magazines and journals in various sections and has an overall membership of 6,525. The library is the only library in the state to have a collection of official gazettes published since 1857 till date. The library has digitised documents like official gazettes, newspapers and other important books etc. There is also a children's corner which is set up with the assistance of Raja Ram Mohan Roy Library Foundation, Kolkata, where educational CDs and computers have been kept for the benefit of children.

The librarian Dyaneshwar Parsekar said, "It is a great feeling that our library has been given the status of e-library. With this facility, our members can check the range of books available in library online by typing the author's name."

He further said that the library will also give a message (SMS) alert to members reminding them about the due date to return books well in advance. Besides, a member can also reserve a book that he or she would like to read by visiting 'Web Opac'.

Recently, the Mapusa Municipal Council, in its budgetary allocation, had made a provision of Rs 2.5 lakh for the library and in addition MMC is planning to add new sections for the benefit of people.

MMC chairperson Sandip Falari said, "The council has received a proposal from the librarian for setting up new sections like women's section, senior citizen's section besides increasing the space of reference section and career guidance section which is largely used by students besides the computer section with internet facility. The proposal is under consideration as now adequate

space is available in old MMC building."

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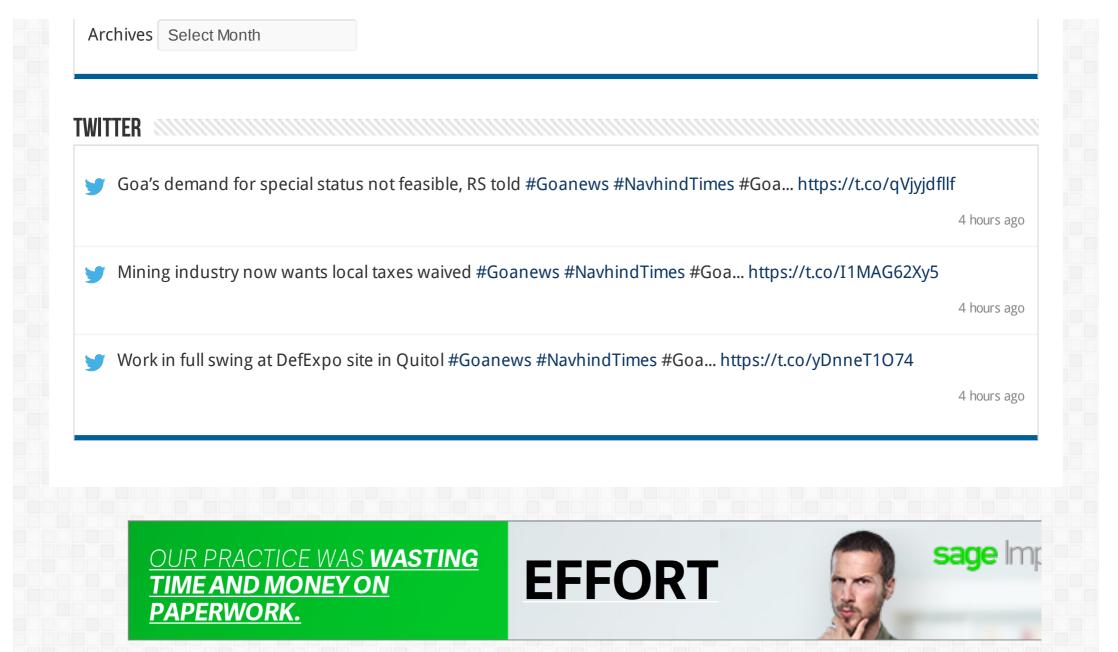### Goa's demand for special status not feasible, RS told

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