

After destroying private forest, owner agrees to replant

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SALIGAO: Following an inspection by forest department officials on Thursday, the owner of a private forest at Bairo Alto in Assagao, who cleared an area of over 1,500sqm without permission and "destroyed evidence of the illegal cutting", has agreed to restore the land. The panchanama stated that an area of approximately 1,500sqm in the private property bearing survey numbers 128/9 and 128/10 has been "cleared with the help of machinery" by the owners of the land, but that "no stumps have been found at the site". On being questioned, the owner of the property said "he had cleared the said land by cutting and uprooting trees with the help of migrant labour" the panchanama stated. "He has agreed to replant the trees he cut and pay the penalty under the Preservation of Trees Act, 1984, for cutting and destroying evidence of illegal cutting of trees," range forest officer, Panaji, John Fernandes said. The inspection was carried out after repeated complaints filed by the Goa Green Brigade, whose coordinator Avertino Miranda was also present along with deputy range forest officer, Panaji, Nitin Kunkalkar, Fernandes, beat guard Sagar Morje, forest guard Kamlaksh Naik, Saha and Kamat. Goa Green Brigade had written to the chief town planner asking that the town and country planning department deny land conversions and permissions or technical clearance or NOCs for construction of structures in the private forest in survey numbers 128/9 and 128/10 in Assagao

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