

# Ruckus at Mormugao port was just waiting to happen: TTAG

Enough mollycoddling of taxi drivers has happened, no action is taken against them, says furious TTAG president



Team Herald

MARGAO: The President of the Travel & Tourism Association of Goa (TTAG) Nilesh Shah said that the incident that took place recently at Mormugao was 'just waiting to happen' given that there have been so many similar types of flashpoints that have been occurring regularly outside hotels and other tourist spots.

While speaking to Herald, Shah said that it is time that the government walks the talk and that it is hopeful that the suggestions TTAG had given the Chief Minister and Tourism Minister with the delegation of tour operators at the Tourism Board meeting, will be implemented immediately at the Mormugao Port's cruise terminal.

He pointed out that this system used to exist in the past but it had been stopped and needs to be restarted so as to streamline operations at the terminal.

"Basically these cruise passengers buy pre-booked tours on the ship or it is part of their pre-paid itinerary. Once they land, the pre-arranged coaches are available for them but for people who want to go on their own, for them, taxis are kept. So, when the passengers started boarding the coach, this was stopped by the taxi operators who said the passengers have to take a taxi. This is unacceptable," said Shah.

"Now this thing was waiting to happen. The reason being whatever is said and done, there is no adequate action taken against the taxi drivers. The Chief Minister had assured that he would resolve the taxi issue within three to five months. We even went to the High Court and directions were issued for fixing meters. It's high time that the government needs to act and punish the people who are not following the rule of law", Shah added.

"There has been enough mollycoddling happening. Now it is high time that the government needs to act and punish the people who are not following the rule of law," the TTAG President asserted

He also responded to the assertion of the local police that the incident that had occurred at Mormugao was due to miscommunication between the tour operators and taxi operators and how in the existing system the taxi drivers are informed in advance.

“This is absolutely incorrect as again the cruise passengers have paid for these pre-booked tours. We want justice for the aggrieved party and the behaviour that affected the customers. Neither the police nor the taxi drivers can wash their hands of what happened. Enough is enough!” Shah added.

“If we do not rectify this now, we will lose tourism big time. The government needs to decide if they want tourism that will give revenue to the government and help with the circular revenue and if so, they have to support the industry,” he added.

“Our request to the government is that it has to be an open market and allow Ola, Uber, etc to enter Goa because competition will only bring in the best of everyone and ultimately the customer, especially the Goans will benefit. As of now, it is the Goans who are also suffering because of this taxi issue and no proper transport options aside,” Shah added.