

Salcete's birth, death records in shreds

Most Documents Housed At The Margao Sub-Registrar's Office In Mutilated Condition

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Margao: If you were born in Margao prior to 1970 and are in need of procuring a copy of your birth certificate from the Margao sub-registrar's office, hardour no hope of finding the document in a usable form. Reason: Almost all the birth and death documents housed in the sub registrar's office are in a mutilated condition and on the verge of tearing into shreds upon the slightest touch.

Shifting the birth and death records of Salcete from the directorate of archives to the sub-registrar's office in Margao was one of the very first things the chief minister Digambar Kamat-led government did soon after assuming the reins of the state. The move, ostensibly aimed to help the public, has however failed to serve any pur-

pose.

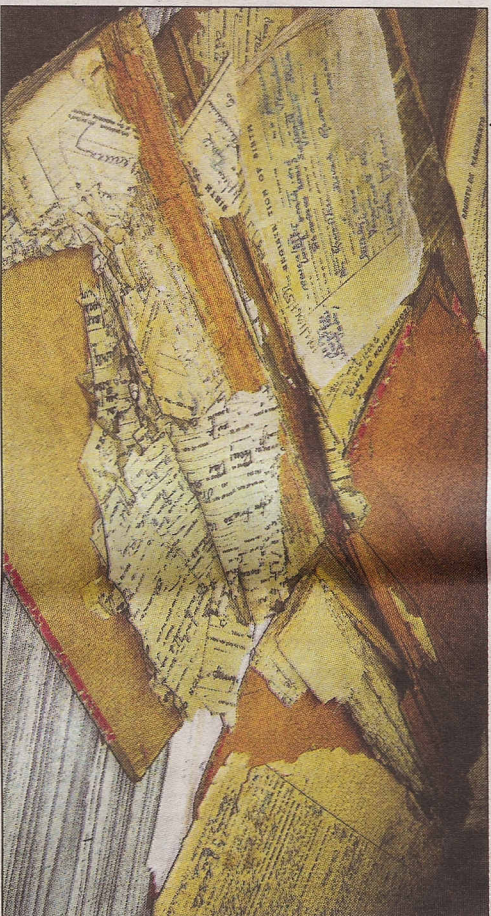
Says Amita Naik (name changed) from Margao, "I was in need of procuring my mother's birth certificate from the Margao sub-registrar's office. Despite providing all necessary details to the clerk manning the section at the office, they were unable to track the document. The re-

CRYING SHAME

levant page containing the entry of my mother's birth in 1965 was found missing from the register," she said.

Sources from the sub-registrar's office revealed that the lack of adequate space to house the documents only compounds matters.

"Owing to the scarcity of space, the already mutilated documents are found scattered all over in the record room, even on the floors. A



Arvind Tengse

TORN AND TATTERED: Records lie in a shambles at the sub-registrar office in Margao

few months ago, officials of the PWD inspected the premises with a view to creating more room to store birth and death records. However, there

has been no development ever since," a senior official told TOI. Though microfilming of birth and death documents was initiated some six years

ago with a view to preserving the documents in the e-format, the process is yet to be completed, sources in the district registrar's office said.

"Following the microfilming exercise, the task of transferring the records onto magnetic optical disks has been completed. Digitisation of the records is presently under way," a senior officer from the district registrar's office said. Nevertheless, plans are in the offing to computerise all sub-registrar's offices in the state. The Mapusa sub-registrar's office was selected to be the pilot project for the purpose. Following the successful implementation of the pilot project, the roll-out project is likely to be executed soon.

A proposal in this regard has already been forwarded to the government and is awaiting the nod of the law department, highly placed sources told TOI. "The project is likely to be financed through the Central funds of the rural development ministry," the source added.