

ASPIRATIONS OF THE PEOPLE OF RIBANDAR

By Aires Rodrigues

The population of Ribandar has grown by unprecedented leaps and bounds in recent years. It is no longer a village but a town. Sadly, there has been no parallel increase in the facilities available to the residents. On the contrary, there has been a loss of some key services. Hospital services are a case in point. Ribandar had its own hospital, which was held in high regard. It attracted patients from far and wide. The hospital was closed down. There should, at the very least, be an Emergency Centre for treating casualties round the clock. The ambulance services are poor and lives have been lost in the delay in getting to Bambolim. The Government ought to accept the need for such a Centre and accordingly lay plans for implementing it.

Ribandar lacks a Community Hall. This is an urgent need for such a facility to serve as the focal point for the Community. The people are unable to organise meetings except in the open air and that too for part of the year. The open-air meetings are held in very restricted conditions and can only cater for small numbers. This inhibits not only attendance and participation but also curbs the number of functions that can be held.

It is highly desirable to provide a football ground for the benefit of the Community. The youths need recreational and sporting facilities. The skills of the local people have to be tapped and encouraged. It is only by providing resources at the grassroots level that can lead to the discovery of hidden talents.

A road bypass has been talked about for decades but no action has been forthcoming. The narrow roads are quite unsuited for the heavy goods vehicles that thunder by. The Government should recognise the urgent need to take action and publish a plan within a time frame. The causeway linking the town to the capital is an accident black spot and has witnessed many horrific deaths. The widening of this artery is long overdue.

A Government library/cyber café would be of immense benefit to the local people. It could be a simple reading room with newspapers and personal computers for accessing the Internet. In terms of cost it would bring vast benefits to the local people.

There are some other urgent requirements for Ribandar like a small market place and a gymnasium. However, it is recognized that precedence has to be given to measures that are cost-effective and which bring the benefit to the maximum number of people.

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