



Hola-istic design of infra for Panaji city.

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PANAJI: Turning Panaji into a "world class sustainable city" on the lines of San Sebastian in Spain, is the dream of LKS India private limited, who have been appointed consultants to prepare a "holistic design of infrastructure for Panaji city".

The project is being undertaken through the Goa state infrastructure development corporation (GSIDC). LKS is headquartered in Spain's Basque region and its Asia marketing director, Maria Mendizabal, on Wednesday made a presentation to chief minister Manohar Parrikar and a select gathering, outlining the company's vision of how it intends to address the problem that afflict Panaji-traffic congestion, zoning, creek and river pollution, solid waste management, parking, etc.

In creating the design, Mendizabal promised to "take on board" all concerned, and said that citizens could give suggestions and ideas.

Mendizabal, an architect, and her team will start work from February 1, so that they can finalise their design within six to seven months. The main theme of Mendizabal's presentation remained the **close similarities between San Sebastian and Panaji, and how they can replicate their feat of converting Panaji into another San Sebastian.**

Among other things, both cities are "tourism oriented", she said, stressing that while San Sebastian has 1.86 lakh inhabitants, it gets 4.57 lakh tourists. "Take care of the city, the tourists will follow," she said. Mendizabal's hopes to make Panaji the first city in India to have pedestrian roads.

She also assured attendees that they would be able to "walk from Dona Paula to Ribandar through a green area pedestrian link." Her presentation spoke of a cycle line where people cycled on dedicated lanes and certain areas were totally free of cars and choking fumes. She also spoke of providing an "open shopping mall in the middle of the city". The design and its implementation would "boost citizens' everyday life by creating public spaces for new needs," Mendizabal said.

Assuring consultants "full freedom of thought" to prepare the design, chief minister Manohar Parrikar reminded attendees that nothing had been finalized yet, and that they could give suggestions to the design. He also announced that as a special case, the archaeological area of Old Goa and the Goa University areas have been included in the area of design.