

Offshore casino in Goa to be shifted from river Sal

A leading hotel group in Goa has agreed to shift its second offshore casino from river Sal, which sparked off protest amongst local fishermen.

The second offshore casino had evoked strong protest from local people due to its location. The fishermen had resented the move, alleging that the casino vessel was hindering the movement of fishing trawlers.

The management of Hotel Leela agreed to shift the vessel after a meeting with the chief minister on Wednesday. "They (hotel) had agreed to shift it to a suitable location," Goa Chief Minister Kamat told here.

The high-level meeting was held between Kamat and Vivek Nair, Managing Director, Hotel Leela at the Chief Minister's official residence here.

"The hotel has agreed to shift but has sought little time as they want to complete few formalities," Kamat stated.

The off-shore casino would be now shifted either to river Mandovi or in the seas, the hotel spokesman said.

"We have to make the vessel sea-worthy and take appropriate licences, if we have to shift away," the spokesman said adding the Chief Minister has assured to look out for a suitable location to anchor the vessel.

Goa, the state with off-shore casinos, already has one such ship armed with live gaming facility in river Mandovi. The coastal state has agreed to permit five such off-shore casinos in the state waters.