

## Interesting Facts about Goa - Geography, Climate and Culture GK Notes

Formerly a Portuguese colony, **GOA** today is considered to be the most westernized state of India. The beautiful state of Goa has its own majestic charm, and its roots can be traced back to its culture. The language they speak, the architecture of their buildings, their heritage, and the ethnicity together build up the unique vibe of Goa.

Do you know the eminent Musician **Anthony Gonsalves** belongs to which state? In which state the **first printing press of Asia** was established?

## State Symbols of Goa

Goa is very unique when compared to the rest of the regions in India. Let's explore its uniqueness but before that, have a look at the state symbols –

<b>State Capital</b>	Panaji
<b>Official Language</b>	Konkani
<b>State Animal</b>	Gaur
<b>State Bird</b>	Ruby Throated Yellow Bulbul
<b>State Tree</b>	Matti
<b>State Flower</b>	Red Jasmine
<b>State Dance</b>	Dekhni, Dhangar, etc.
<b>State CM (Present)</b>	Pramod Sawant
<b>State Governor (Present)</b>	P. S. Sreedharan Pillai

Goa, also known as "**Rome of the East**" or "**The Miami of India**" has a distinct Portuguese legacy, perky nightlife, natural beauty and great culinary experience. It has played host to several empires – Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic and Portuguese. Mainly the Portuguese culture has left its impression on its attitude and general lifestyle. So, to understand it better, we'll get on to the very first aspect i.e. –

## Culture and Traditions of Goa

The culture of the Goan people is a blend of Portuguese and Indian culture. Goa's cultural richness is reflected through Goans folk dances, festivals, cuisines, etc.



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### Languages:

1. **Konkani is the major language of the state.**
2. Apart from Konkani, Marathi and Hindi are quite common. Konkani was derived from the ancient language of Indo-Aryan civilization.
3. Those who live in Northern Goa will have a greater accent of Marathi and Hindi, because of the proximity to Mumbai. English is a common language here.

### Food:

The staple diet in Goa is **Rice with fish curry**.

1. The common ingredients used in Goan food are **coconut, coconut oil, chilli pepper, spices** and **vinegar** adding a unique flavour to the food.
2. **Khatkhate** is a very popular dish which is cooked during festivals. It is a vegetable stew that contains at least five vegetables, fresh coconut and special Goan spices.
3. Goa cuisine is a blend of **Portuguese, Muslim** and **Hindu** styles of cooking resulting in great cuisine. They include a lot of sea food which is expertly spiced and herbed. Some of the popular dishes are vindaloo, xacuti, chorisa and sorpotel.
4. **Bebinca** is a sweet dish which is prepared at the time of Christmas. It is an egg-based multi-layered scrumptious dish.
5. **Feni** is a popular alcoholic beverage of Goa which is either cashew feni or coconut feni.



[Image Source: Wikipedia]

### Dance and Music:

The traditional music styles of Goa are Dulpod and Mando. The Hindu population of Goa enjoys kirtan, natak and bhajan styled music too.



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1. **Ghode Modni:** This is a folk-dance form, which is performed as the dance of warriors. The dancers carry a sword and wear armors to show their bravery. Tasha and Dhol are the background music for this dance form.
2. **Mando:** It is a common music version, which is usually in the romantic genre. This folk style starts with a sad tune and ends with a happy rhythm (Duldop). This music style is a mixture of Konkani music and Portuguese style.
3. **Dekhni Dance:** This is a song-dance performance. The dance form is Indian originated and the music is western. This is a feminine dance form, which is famous in cinemas.
4. **Dhangar:** Hangars form a community of shepherds who worship a folk god named as Bira Deva. They believe in rituals and various celebrations. They celebrate with dances on Flute and Dhol. The dances they perform are usually dedicated to Shri Radha and Krishna.
5. **Kunbi Songs and Dances:** Kunbi Songs and Dances are actually played by the primitive settlers in Goa that delineates ancient traditions. The songs belong to the Portuguese era and they are basically for the enjoyment of the dancers.

## Traditional Costume

1. Generally, Catholic women wear dresses/gowns, while Hindu women wear Sari called **Nav-vari**.
2. Another traditional costume of the womenfolk of Goa comprises that of a 9-Yard sari also referred to as the "**Pano Bhaju**".
3. The attire of the tribal people in Goa comprises of a loincloth known as "**Kashti**", with a blanket draped around their shoulders.
4. Men in Goa wear a western-style costume while the fisherman wears bright coloured shirts, half pants and bamboo hats.



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[Image Source: The New York Times]

## Festivals:

Goa is the land where festivals for music, dance and other cultural elements are conducted. The top festivals to enjoy in Goa are –

1. **Shantadurga:** January festival related to Goddess Shantadurga. This festival is famous for the procession, five-day fair and many cultural activities.
2. **Shigmo:** This is a regional Hindu festival celebrated for 15 days with colourful activities, cultural performances and so on.
3. **Goa Carnival:** This three-day carnival takes place in Panjim. You can find processions of live bands floats and much more. This is India's Mardi Gras.
4. **Wine Festival:** Since 2005, Panjim is celebrating the wine festival in January with grape stomping tradition, wine tasting and much more.

As Goa is partly coastal and partly hilly, it exhibits a variety in its geographical aspect.

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# Geography of Goa

Goa is a petite state on the west coast of India in the region of the Konkan. Konkan is an escarpment rising up to the Western Ghats which separated Goa from the Deccan Plateau.

- **Latitudinal Extension:**  $14^{\circ} 53' N$  to  $15^{\circ} 40' N$
- **Longitudinal Extension:**  $73^{\circ} 40' E$  to  $74^{\circ} 20' E$
- **Area:**  $3702 \text{ km}^2$

Rank in India – 28<sup>th</sup>

- **Population (According to the 2011 census):** 14,58,545

Rank in India – 26<sup>th</sup>

- **Boundaries:** It is surrounded by the Indian state of Maharashtra to the north, Karnataka to the east and south and the Arabian Sea forming its western coast.
- The highest point is the **Sonsogor**, with an altitude of 1,167 metres (3,829 ft).
- Goa has a coastline of **160 km**.
- Goa's seven major rivers are the **Zuari, Mandovi, Terekhol, Chapora, Galgibag, Kumbarjua canal, Talpona and the Sal**.
- Goa has more than **40** estuarine, **eight marine** and about **90 riverine islands**.
- The total navigable length of Goa's rivers is **253 km**.
- **Climate:** Goa has a moderate temperature without having many variations. Summers are the hottest in May whereas months of January and February are the coldest during winters. The state, otherwise, experiences tropical weather throughout the year. Goa receives rainfall between the months of June and September. The highest rainfall occurs in the month of July whereas the driest month is February.
- As a region, Goa can be divided into four divisions –

1. The **eastern hill region** comprising areas in the Western Ghats like Sattari, Ponda, Cancona and Sanguem.
2. The **central valley land** comprising Pernem, Bicholim, Ponda, Eastern Sanguem and Quepem.
3. The **flood plains** comprising the coastal plains and uplands.
4. **Coastal Plains** with the areas of Tiswadi, Marmugao, Bardez and Salcete.

- The north to south length of the state is about **100 km** while the east to west width is about **55 km**.
- The state is divided into two districts, namely **North Goa** and **South Goa** district with their headquarters at Panaji and Margao respectively. The North Goa district comprises **six talukas** and South Goa comprises **five talukas**.
- There are 14 statutory towns, 56 census towns and 334 villages in the state.

Now, let's come to the political structure of the state –

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# Polity of Goa

The politics of Goa are a result of the uniqueness of this region due to 450 years of Portuguese rule, in comparison to three centuries of British colonialism experienced by the rest of India.

- Goa has a **Unicameral Legislature**, the Goa Legislative Assembly, of **40** members, headed by a **speaker**.
- The Chief Minister heads the executive, which is made up of the party or coalition elected with a majority in the legislature.
- The Governor, the head of the state, is appointed by the President of India.
- Representation in Parliament –

Lok Sabha – 2

Rajya Sabha – 1

- The High Court of Goa is Bombay High Court, Goa Bench. The honourable Chief Justice is **Nitin Madhukar Jamdar** (acting) since **28 April 2020**.
- The current and 11<sup>th</sup> CM of Goa is **Pramod Pandurang Sawant**. Sawant represents the Sanquelim constituency in the Goa Legislative Assembly and is a member of the BJP. He is an Ayurveda Medical practitioner by profession.



[Image Source: The Times of India]

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- The current and 22<sup>nd</sup> Governor of Goa is **P. S. Sreedharan Pillai**, appointed on 15th July 2021.
- First CM – **Dayanand Bandodkar** (20 December 1963 – 2 December 1966)
- First Governor – Governor General **Francisco de Almeida** in 1505.

Here are **Some of the Interesting Facts** about Goa are –

- **Goa's Naval Aviation Museum** is one of a kind and Asia's first and only one. There are only about six other such museums in the world. This museum in Goa displays India's naval aviation history.
- The **Goa Medical College** was India's first medical school set up to educate prospective doctors and also to impart treatments. One of Asia's oldest medical colleges, the library here is one of the oldest as well, with books dating back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It was established in Panaji, Goa in 1842. However, it was demolished in 2004.



[Image Source: Wikipedia]

- **Neptune Point**, Silent Noise, is a world-famous headphone party, organized weekly at Neptune point near Palolem Beach.
- **St. Cathedral Church** is the largest church in Asia built by Portuguese rulers. The construction commenced in 1562 and was completed 90 years later.

Do you know what the GDP of Goa is? Which state has **Dudhsagar Falls** and what is its relevance? We'll understand the facts related to such topics in the upcoming blog. Click here for '[Interesting Facts about Goa - History, Environment and Economy GK Notes](#)' – Part 2! So, this was all the required important information that will help you in competitive exams such as **CDS, RRB NTPC, SSC CGL**, etc.

**Thank You**