

Interesting Facts about Goa - History, Environment and Economy GK Notes

Known for its spritzing beaches and might-boggling nightlife, **Goa** has long rolls of history wrapped in its time-worn monuments and tropical spices of Southern and Portuguese cuisines. The history, environment, and economy of Goa are rich and have resulted in multi-cultural aesthetics. It has gone through continual transformations which have left an imperishable impact on its socio-economic developments.

Do you know which state has **Dudhsagar Falls**? Which state has the highest **GDP** per capita among all Indian states?

Now, let us start with the very first feature i.e. –

History of Goa

Goa has a long history of rulers dating back to the 3rd century B.C. when it was a part of the Mauryan Empire. The Portuguese came in 1498 and were the first Europeans to set foot in India.

Pre-History and Early History:

- The rock art engravings found in Goa exhibit the earliest traces of human life in India.
- Goa was part of the Mauryan Empire in the 3rd century ruled by the Buddhist emperor, Ashoka of Magadha. Buddhist monks laid the foundation of Buddhism in Goa.
- The rule later passed to the Chalukyas of Badami, who controlled it between 578 and 753, and later the Rashtrakutas of Malkhed from 753 to 963.
- The Delhi Sultanate ruled Goa in 1312. The kingdom's grip on the region was so weak that it got compelled by 1370 to surrender it to Harihara I of the Vijaynagar Empire.
- After this, the area fell into the hands of the Adil Shahis of Bijapur, who established as their auxiliary capital the city known under the Portuguese as Velha Goa (or Old Goa).



[Image Source: Wikipedia]

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Portuguese Period:

- The beginning of Portuguese colonial rule in Goa started by defeating Bijapur sultan Yusuf Adil Shah with the help of a local ally, Timayya. This lasted for four and a half centuries, until its annexation in 1961.
- A formal tribunal, The Goa Inquisition was established in 1560 and was finally abolished in 1812.
- The Portuguese moved the capital to Panaji from **Velha Goa** in 1843. Portuguese Goa had expanded by mid-18th century to most of the present-day state limits.

Contemporary World:

- After 1947, India requested that Portuguese territories on the Indian subcontinent be ceded to India. Whereas Portugal refused to negotiate on the sovereignty of its Indian enclaves.
- On 19 December 1961, the Indian Army invaded with Operation Vijay resulting in the annexation of Goa along with Daman and Diu, later it was organised as a centrally administered union territory of India.
- On **30 May 1987**, the union territory was split, and Goa was made **India's twenty-fifth state**, with Daman and Diu remaining a union territory.

Goa is a tiny state in the country of India which is known for silvery beaches, gushing sea waves and natural vegetation.

Environment of Goa

The rugged Western Ghats adds charm to the environment of Goa and makes it an ideal place for many species of birds and animals and also provide a corridor for migration.

- Forest cover in Goa stands at **1424 km²**, most of which is owned by the government. The government-owned forest is estimated at 1224.38 km² whilst private is given as 200 km².
- The magnificent National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries are –

National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries:

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1. **Bhagwan Mahaveer Sanctuary and Mollem National Park:** This is a 240 sq.km protected area lies in the Western Ghats, located 57 km from Panaji. National Highway 4A divides it into two parts and the Mormugao-Londa railway line passes through the area. It was established in 1978.
2. **Cotigao Wildlife Sanctuary:** It was established in 1968 and is located in South Goa district, Goa. There is an eco-tourism complex at the entrance of the sanctuary that houses a nature interpretation centre, cottages, toilets, library, reception area, rescue centre, canteen, children's park and forest ranger office.
3. **Bondla Wildlife Sanctuary:** This may be the smallest of all the wildlife sanctuaries but is definitely one of the finest due to some of the reasons. The total area of the park is 8 sq.km. A wide variety of animal life can be encountered here, including Sambar deer, Indian bison, etc.
4. **Dr Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary:** This is an estuarine mangrove habitat, which is declared as the bird sanctuary and located on the western tip of the Island of Chorao along the Mandovi River, Goa. The sanctuary is named after Salim Ali, the eminent Indian ornithologist.
5. **Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary:** This is a 208.5 km² protected area in Western Ghats. The sanctuary is an area of high biodiversity and is being considered to become a Project Tiger Reserve because of the presence of Bengal Tigers.
6. **Netravali Wildlife Sanctuary:** It is located in south-eastern Goa, India. It constitutes one of the vital corridors of the Western Ghats and covers an area of 211 km². Netravali or Neturli is an important tributary of River Zuari, which originates in the sanctuary.



[Image Source: Wikipedia]

Flora and Fauna of Goa:

- Goa is the home to almost 48 types of mammals, 276 types of birds and 60 types of reptiles. There are almost 50 species of mammals.
- Goa has more than 3000 different species of flowering plants not counting the hundreds of varieties of grasses, ferns and bracken. **Coconut Palm** is the most famous tree, which is in abundance everywhere.

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[Image Source: Britannica]

Goa's economy has witnessed tremendous growth over the last years. This has happened due to the contribution of many sectors.

Economy of Goa

The economy of Goa depends to a very large extent on the tourism sector. The state of Goa gets almost **12%** of all the foreign tourists that visit India.

- The **GSDP (Gross State Domestic Product)** of Goa at current prices increased at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 11.83% between 2015-16 and 2019-20.
- **Goa's NSDP (Net State Domestic Product)** was Rs. 706.83 billion in 2018-19.
- Industrial Sectors such as mining, tourism, pharmaceuticals drive Goa's economic growth by their strong performance.
- Goa has the highest GDP per capita among all Indian states, **two and a half times that of the country.**
- It was ranked the best-placed state by **Eleventh Finance Commission** for its infrastructure and ranked on top for the best quality of life in India by the National Commission on Population based on 12 indicators.
- A second greenfield international airport has been developed in **Mopa**, Goa known as Manohar International Airport with an annual capacity to handle 4.4 million passengers. It was inaugurated on 11th December 2022 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

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[Image Source: Wikipedia]

Education of Goa

Goa is the **4th** most literate state in India. The literacy rate is **88.70%** which is very high than the national average of 74.04% of which the male literacy is 92.65% and the female literacy is 82.16%. The Directorate of Education deals with the organisation, development and regulation of school education in the state of Goa. As per the report of the University Grants Commission, the quality of higher education in Goa has much room for improvement.

Sports of Goa

Goa is an adventure in itself but it is the water sports in Goa that provide the majority of fun. The land of Sun, Sand and Sea offers a range of thrilling water sports such as Windsurfing, Jet skiing, Speed boats, Scuba Diving, Banana tube boat ride, Knee-and-Wake boarding, River Rafting, Dinghy Sailing and many more.

Now, it's time to understand **Some of the Interesting Facts:**

- **Unique Motorcycle Taxi Services** operate in Goa. These taxis are commonly referred to as Pilots.
- The first printing press in India was established in Goa. It was installed at **St. Paul's College** in 1556.
- Enshrined in a Glass case at the World-famous Basilica of Bom Church, rests the non-decaying body of **St. Xavier**. It has been there since 1553-54.

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[Image Source: Wikipedia]

- **Arvalem Caves**, also called **Pandava Caves**, as it is believed that the Pandavas stayed here during their exile.



[Image Source: Wikipedia]

- Goans who were born before 1961 are registered as Portuguese by birth. This makes them eligible for **Portuguese citizenship**.
- A native of Goa is called **Goan** in English, **Goenkar** in Konkani, **Goes or Goesa** in Portuguese and **Govekar** in Marathi.

So, this was all about the state of Goa. This much information is enough to make your preparation strong from this state.