

MARCH 2026

TOURISM NEWSLETTER

FAREWELL GIVEN TO OUTGOING SECRETARY TOURISM & ITE&C, SANJEEV AHUJA (IAS)

Shigmotsav 2026 was celebrated across Goa from 5th March to 18th March 2026, showcasing the state's rich culture, tradition, and community spirit across multiple locations.



The festivities began in Ponda on 6th March, followed by Calangute on 7th March, and Panaji on 8th March. Goa's capital city came alive with the traditional drumroll of Romtamel, vibrant thematic tableaux, and captivating folk dance and music performances, drawing large crowds of locals and tourists.



The celebrations continued across the state, covering regions including Mapusa, Curchorem, Bicholim, Sanquelim, Shiroda & Sanguem, Dharbandora & Cuncolim, Margao, Vasco da Gama & Porvorim, Valpoi, Pernem & Quepem, and Mandrem & Canacona. From vibrant parades to traditional performances and colours lighting up every street, Shigmotsav 2026 brought Goa alive in its most festive spirit.



Shigmotsav unfolds over 14 days across various cities, turning the entire state into one continuous celebration of culture, tradition, and community.

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GOA SHOWCASED TOURISM POTENTIAL *At* ITB BERLIN 2026

Goa Tourism marked its presence at ITB Berlin 2026, with the pavilion inaugurated by Gajendra Singh Shekhawat in the presence of Ajit Gupte and Bharti K. Sharma, alongside officials including Deepak Narvekar and Rajendra Tari.



The participation focused on strengthening global partnerships and promoting Goa as a year-round destination beyond beaches, highlighting culture, heritage, and sustainable tourism to the international travel trade.

GOA TOURISM HONOURED *At* PATWA AWARDS 2026

Hon'ble Tourism Minister of Goa, Rohan A. Khaunte, was honored with the "Tourism Minister of the Year – Innovation (Asia)" award by PATWA, while Goa also received "Destination of the Year – Rejuvenation" for its focus on sustainable, experience-driven tourism; the awards were presented by Edmund Bartlett and Yatan Ahluwalia, and accepted on behalf of the Minister and Department of Tourism by Deepak Narvekar and Rajendra Tari.

FAREWELL GIVEN TO OUTGOING SECRETARY TOURISM & ITE&C, SANJEEV AHUJA (IAS)

Outgoing Secretary Tourism & ITE&C, Sanjeev Ahuja (IAS), was given a warm send-off at a farewell function attended by Rohan A. Khaunte, Hon'ble Tourism Minister, and other dignitaries. The occasion recognised his significant contributions to strengthening Goa's tourism and ITE&C sectors and appreciated his dedicated service during his tenure.



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SPIRITUAL GOA: BEYOND BEACHES, INTO THE SOUL OF THE STATE

Spiritual Goa is a journey into Goa's living heritage, guided by Kranti Prakash Jha. It explores the legacy of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, sacred sites like Saptakoteshwar Temple, vibrant festivals such as Shigmo, and the charm of local cuisine, markets, and nature—from Old Goa to Netravali Wildlife Sanctuary.

Watch it on **History TV18** to experience Goa beyond its beaches.



The Basilica of Bom Jesus in Old Goa is a 16th-century UNESCO World Heritage site known for holding the well-preserved body of St. Francis Xavier.

GOA BEYOND BEACHES SHOWCASED *At* ITB BERLIN

BAGS PATWA 'DESTINATION OF
THE YEAR – REJUVENATION'
AWARD

A Gujarat delegation including Kuldeep Arya, Prabhav Joshi, and Kuldipsinh S. Jhala visited the Goa Tourism Pavilion at ITB Berlin, engaging with Goa Tourism officials to explore collaboration and strengthen tourism ties.

The interaction showcased Goa's diverse offerings to the global travel fraternity, while the state was also honoured with the "Destination of the Year – Rejuvenation" award by PATWA for its focus on regenerative tourism beyond beaches.



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SPIRIT OF GOA FESTIVAL 2026 TO TAKE PLACE FROM APRIL 24-26

The Spirit of Goa Festival 2026 will be held from 24th to 26th April at SAG Football Ground, Colva, celebrating Goan cuisine, local spirits, and cultural experiences. The event will feature traditional dishes, locally crafted beverages including Feni, and interactive tasting sessions with distillers.



Alongside food and drinks, the festival will host live entertainment, cultural performances, and immersive visuals, showcasing Goa as a vibrant, year-round destination beyond beaches.

LIVE THE FEELING CAMPAIGN

Discover Goa Beyond the Ordinary

This March, Goa comes alive with a vibrant mix of culture, celebration, flavours, and nature. From festive traditions and serene summer sunsets to lush wildlife escapes, bold local cuisine, and the timeless charm of coastal living, every moment invites travellers to experience the state more deeply.

Live The Feeling captures Goa beyond the familiar—where every trail, every thali, every quiet morning, and every celebration becomes a story worth living. It's not just about visiting Goa, but truly belonging to its rhythm, spirit, and soul.



KARNATAKA TOURISM MINISTER **H.K. PATIL** VISITS GOA PAVILION AT TTF BENGALURU 2026

H. K. Patil, Hon'ble Minister for Tourism, Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Legislation, Government of Karnataka, visited the Goa Tourism Pavilion at TTF Bengaluru 2026.



He was welcomed by Dhiraj Wagle, Deputy Director, Department of Tourism, Government of Goa, along with Vishesh Naik, Senior Marketing Manager, Goa Tourism Development Corporation, and Manoj Parab, Assistant Tourist Officer.

The interaction highlighted Goa's engagement with industry stakeholders and its efforts to strengthen tourism collaborations at the travel trade event.

TRAVEL TRADE DELEGATION FROM ALMATY VISITS GOA *On* **FAMILIARIZATION TOUR**



The Department of Tourism, Government of Goa, hosted a travel trade delegation from Almaty as part of a FAM visit to strengthen collaboration and promote Goa as an international destination. The delegation was received by officials including Kedar Naik, Jayesh Kankonkar, Gavin Dias, Deepak Narvekar, and Ernest Dias.

The visit offered insights into Goa's diverse tourism offerings, helping strengthen international partnerships and reinforcing its positioning beyond beaches.

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YAI ALL INDIA WINDSURFING & KITEBOARDING CHAMPIONSHIP 2026 HELD AT MORJIM



The YAI All India Windsurfing & Kiteboarding Championship 2026 concluded at Morjim, showcasing top level speed and skill. Rohan A. Khaunte attended the final day, interacted with athletes, and felicitated winners.

Powered by Goa Tourism, the event highlighted the growing popularity of water sports and reinforced Goa as a premier adventure destination.



CELEBRATED WITH MUSIC, CULTURE AND COMMUNITY SPIRIT

Saligao Festival 2026 was held on 21st and 22nd March at Namoshi Junction, Guirim, celebrating Goa's cultural heritage and community spirit.

The festival was inaugurated in the presence of Rohan A. Khaunte, along with Kedar J. Naik, Kuldeep Arolkar, and other dignitaries.

The two-day event featured vibrant performances by artists like Abhanga Repost and Jasraj Joshi, bringing together music, local flavours, and tradition while promoting community-driven festivals and cultural tourism in Goa.



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GOA TOURISM SHOWCASED 'BEYOND BEACHES' AT TTF CHENNAI

WON SPECIAL AWARD FOR NEW INITIATIVES

Goa Tourism participated in TTF Chennai, showcasing its 'Goa Beyond Beaches' vision through a pavilion highlighting diverse offerings like culture, heritage, and eco-tourism. The display attracted strong interest and enabled meaningful interactions with industry stakeholders.

Goa Tourism also received the "Special Award for New Initiatives," reinforcing its position as a dynamic, year-round destination beyond beaches.



GOA STRENGTHENS MICE POSITIONING AT ICPB CONFERENCE IN PANAJI

The ICPB Conference in Panaji brought together key stakeholders to discuss India's MICE sector, strengthening Goa's position as a year-round business events destination. Rohan A. Khaunte received the ICPB Lifetime Membership from Arun Srivastava and Neeraj Dhawan in the presence of Shawn Mendes, with sessions and site visits showcasing Goa's venues and infrastructure.



GOA ADVANCES STRUCTURED ECOTOURISM VISION:

MINISTER ROHAN A. KHAUNTE
IN ASSEMBLY



Addressing the Goa Legislative Assembly, Rohan A. Khaunte highlighted Goa's push towards structured ecotourism through initiatives like eco-cottages, nature trails, jeep safaris, monsoon treks, and river-based experiences, while also outlining future projects at Anjunem, Chapoli Dam, and Cotigao—reinforcing the state's vision of sustainable, community-driven tourism.

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