"Viksit Goem 2037 Vision": Goa Budget Unveils Strong Push For IT Sector And Digital Economy

₹189 Crore Allocated To Technology, Startups And Digital Infrastructure.

New Delhi: Chief Minister Pramod Sawant presented the 2026 to 27 state budget in the Goa Legislative Assembly Complex in Porvorim, announcing a series of initiatives aimed at expanding Goa's Information Technology sector and strengthening its digital economy.

The budget allocates ₹189 crore to the Information Technology, Electronics and Communications sector, reflecting the government's focus on innovation, digital governance and technology driven growth.

Commenting on the announcements, IT Minister Rohan Khaunte said the budget places strong emphasis on entrepreneurship, job creation, startups and digital connectivity. He added that the investment in technology will help accelerate the state's digital transformation and support the broader vision of building a developed Goa by 2037.As part of efforts to improve digital governance, the government will launch a citizen focused Goa Mobile App with an allocation of ₹1 crore. The platform is expected to serve as a single digital interface through which residents can access various government services, helping departments move towards a more paperless and efficient system.The state has also earmarked ₹4 crore to upgrade the Goa Online Portal, with the aim of improving the delivery of digital public services.

An artificial intelligence powered chatbot has already been introduced on the platform to assist users with information and service requests.

To strengthen the startup ecosystem under the Goa Startup Policy 2025, the government has launched four new initiatives. These include the Campus Innovation Scheme, Promotion and Marketing Assistance Scheme, Skill Enhancement Scheme and the Women Entrepreneur Vitality Scheme. A total of ₹10 crore has been allocated for these programmes.

The budget also proposes the development of co working spaces in coastal areas to attract remote workers and digital professionals.

Additionally, the Goa Broadband Network 2.0 project will be launched to improve digital infrastructure. The initiative aims to connect 400 Points of Presence and strengthen broadband connectivity across 165 locations while linking government offices with secure digital networks.

To further support the IT industry, the government will offer annual financial support of ₹5 lakh to twenty IT companies that employ local talent, with ₹1 crore set aside for the scheme.

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No Rivers Handed Over to Centre, CZMP 2019 Yet to Be Opened for Public Consultation: CM

handling in Goa will not increase either now or in the future. He clarified that inland waterways jetties will not be used for coal transportation, adding that currently only two jetties in the state handle coal.

During the discussion, Leader of Opposition Yuri Alemao questioned the government over the alleged expansion of jetties and ports and sought clarity on the issue of river control. He urged the Chief Minister to specify when the rivers would be fully returned to the state's control.MLA Altone D'Costa raised concerns regarding Betul Port, stating that it was earlier excluded from the Sagarmala project but has now been included and connected to the national highway. He sought clarification from the government on whether the port would be used for transporting bauxite or coal and asked for details about its status under the project.MLA Cruz Silva criticised the government's decision to nationalise six rivers, urging it to reverse the move to safeguard the livelihoods of riverside fishermen. He specifically demanded that the Sal River be denationalised. MLA Carlos Ferreira also raised concerns over the port limits reflected in the CZMP 2019, stating that they could adversely affect local communities and fishermen. He argued that such limits should not be included in the CZMP as they fall under existing statutory provisions.

Khaunte Warns Against Misconduct by Tourists on Goa Beaches

inappropriate behaviour on Goa's beaches, amid growing concerns over incidents involving young visitors troubling foreign tourists.The minister said that due to the growing influence of social media, a perception has developed among some young tourists that they can behave irresponsibly while visiting the state. However, he made it clear that such behaviour will not be tolerated and authorities will take firm action against those who violate norms."There is a growing perception among some young tourists that they can do anything in Goa because of the influence of social media. However, such behaviour will not be tolerated and strict action will be taken," Khaunte said.

He pointed out that there have been instances where young tourists visiting beaches approach foreign visitors, take selfies with them and create inconvenience or discomfort.

Govt To Frame Eco-Tourism Policy After Consulting MLAs: Khaunte; Slams Opposition's 'Double Stand'

the Forest Department and other stakeholders before initiating eco-tourism projects in the State.

Speaking in the Legislative Assembly, Khaunte said a clear policy framework is necessary to regulate and promote eco-tourism in a sustainable manner.

He added that the government intends to seek suggestions from all 40 MLAs while preparing the policy.

"Unless we draft an eco-tourism policy, we cannot move ahead with eco-tourism initiatives. The policy will be prepared in coordination with the Forest Department and other concerned agencies, and we will take inputs from all 40 MLAs," the minister said.During the discussion, Khaunte also criticised the Opposition, accusing them of adopting a "double stand" on the issue.

"Boost To Defence Ties": Indonesia Signs Deal To Buy BrahMos Missiles From India

Agreement Seen As Part Of Jakarta's Military Modernisation, Focused On Maritime Security

New Delhi: Indonesia has signed an agreement with India to procure the BrahMos missile system, marking another significant step in India's growing defence export programme. The deal, estimated to be worth between $200 million and $350 million, is part of Indonesia's broader effort to strengthen its military capabilities.

Officials in Jakarta said the procurement forms part of the country's plan to modernise defence equipment, particularly in the maritime sector. The missile system is expected to enhance Indonesia's ability to safeguard its extensive coastline and strategic sea routes.

The BrahMos missile is widely regarded as one of the most advanced supersonic cruise missiles currently in operation. Developed through a joint venture between India's Defence Research and Development Organisation and Russia's NPO Mashinostroyeniya, the programme operates under BrahMos Aerospace. The name combines the rivers Brahmaputra River in India and Moskva River in Russia.The missile travels at speeds between Mach 2.8 and Mach 3, nearly three times the speed of sound, making it extremely difficult for existing air defence systems to intercept.

It can be launched from multiple platforms including land based mobile launchers, naval ships, submarines and aircraft such as the Sukhoi Su-30MKI fighter jet. The system follows a "fire and forget" guidance principle and is capable of striking targets with very high accuracy.Earlier versions of the missile had a range of around 290 kilometres, while extended range variants can strike targets between 450 and 800 kilometres away. The missile can also fly at extremely low altitudes to avoid radar detection or operate at higher altitudes depending on mission requirements.

Future versions are also under development. These include the smaller and lighter BrahMos NG variant designed for deployment on additional aircraft such as the HAL Tejas fighter jet. Another planned version, BrahMos II, aims to achieve hypersonic speeds exceeding Mach 7.India secured its first overseas BrahMos export deal with the Philippines in 2022.

The agreement with Indonesia further reflects India's transition from being a major importer of defence equipment to an emerging exporter of advanced military technology.