

The future planner: Ana Paula Laborinho speaks about Goa's role in shaping Portuguese

# Goa: The new old Portuguese hub

*Ana Paula Laborinho, President of Camões – Instituto da Cooperação e da Língua feels that Goa can be a hub for growth of the Portuguese language in India, thanks to its legendary ties with Portugal*

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With the emergence of worldwide markets and globalisation on the whole, interest in linguistics is a growing trend. In this light, the Portuguese language around the world is growing too, for not only is Portuguese used in its native country, Portugal, but also in Brazil as well as parts of Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe. A recent visitor to the state, Ana Paula Laborinho, President of the Lisbon-based Camões – Instituto da Cooperação e da Língua, feels that Goa can contribute greatly in this growth, through its historic links with Portugal.

"There can be a sort of linkage created wherein the rest of India turns to Goa just as Beijing turns to Macau, when it comes to learning of the Portuguese language. As such, we can work towards ensuring that Goa can act as a hub for the teaching of the Portuguese language for the rest of the country, as the state has shown high interest in the language," she says.

The institute that forms a part of the manifesto of Portugal's Ministry of External Affairs, grants aid and support to 1,50,000 students and 1,000 teachers in 72 countries across the world, and according to Laborinho, it is still a work in progress. "We have been on campus visits to three colleges on this trip. These include VM Salgaocar College of Law in Panjim, St Xavier's College in Mapusa, and Parvatibai Chowgule College in Margao. Over the course of these visits, we have realised that while language in itself plays a huge role, there are also other things that matter even more than language. There are cultural traces when it comes to the bond between Portugal and Goa, and we could fortify these traces. Furthermore, law plays an important role. The Civil Code followed here in Goa is based on Portuguese law. As such, it is a

great aspect of learning that needs to be touched upon. Furthermore, the institute will extend support in the training of Portuguese language teachers," she says.

Camões – Instituto da Cooperação e da Língua also supports the Indo-Portuguese Friendship Society. The latter group has trained more than 6,000 students in the Portuguese language since its inception eight years ago.

This marks Laborinho's first visit to Goa, and she leaves pleased with the level of interest garnered by the Portuguese language in Goa. Marking an end to her trip, she says, "I am happy with the level of enthusiasm indicated by Goa University, which conducts Portuguese language courses at various levels across BA, MA and doctoral level. We have great plans for development in the future too."

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