

'Goa can be Asia's hub for Portuguese learning'

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Rajtilak Naik

Panaji: Goa can be a hub for teaching Portuguese language in Asia as the state has shown high interest in the language, said Ana Paula Laborinho, president of the Lisbon-based Camoes institute of cooperation and language (Camoos Instituto da Cooperacao e da Lingua).

Affiliated to Portugal's ministry of external affairs, the institute supports 1,50,000 students and 1,000 teachers in 72 countries across the world, Laborinho said.

Though this is her first visit to Goa, Laborinho is pleased with the kind of interest the Portuguese language commands in Goa. She is happy that Goa University has Portuguese language courses in various grades including BA, MA and doctoral level. She said she met the vice-chancellor of the varsity and submitted a proposal to enhance the university's engagement with the language. "A lot of students from other Indian states, including students from Delhi, come to Goa University to learn Portuguese," Laborinho said.

She also visited three colleges in Goa and signed an MoU with St Xavier's college, Mapusa. Her institute will



Ana Paula Laborinho (right), president of the Lisbon-based Camoes institute of cooperation and language, addresses mediapersons in the presence of the consul general of Portugal in Goa, Rui Carvalho Baceira

extend support to the college in various ways including in the training of Portuguese language teachers. Laborinho visited Chowgule college in Margao and V M Salgaocar college of law, Panaji, which has a tie-up with the University of Lisbon.

The Camoes institute not only gives financial support to Portuguese language students but also extends scholarships for students to study in Portugal, Laborinho said. Her institute also supports the Indo-Portuguese Friendship Society which has trained over 6,000 students in the Portuguese language since its inception eight years ago.

Laborinho said she met with chief minister Laxmikant Parsekar, who is also the education minister, to explore how Portuguese can be promoted better in Goa. The Camoes institute has a Portuguese language centre in Panaji which it wants to expand, she said.

The Camoes institute has e-learning courses in Portuguese with specific modules for different uses such as legal, business, etc.

Laborinho said interest in the Portuguese language around the world is growing. Not only is Portuguese used in Brazil, but in many other countries of Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe, she said.