

Dear Editors, Reporters and the Goan media community:

We sincerely thank you for attending our press conference in Panaji at 3pm on 09-Feb-2015 (last Monday) and its subsequent coverage in your respective media.

This press conference was arranged to share with you details about accomplishments of the 4-day Goa trip (07-10Feb) by a GITP delegation from Mumbai and Pune along with its Goa team undertaken to create, through an open dialogue, a wider support base involving all relevant stakeholders for prioritized promotion of a locally sustainable IT industry in Goa.

- GITP delegation comprised of the following:
 1. Gurudev Naik – President and GITP-Mumbai Lead
 2. Amogh Desai – GITP-Pune Lead
 3. Gaurish Kambli – GITP-Goa Lead
 4. Yash Ganthe – Technical Director
 5. Sarvesh Alornekar, Abhay Bhamaikar, Anil D'Souza – GITP-Goa team
 6. Vincent Toscano – Mentor and Communications Leads
- GITP delegation could meet a good range of local Goan stakeholders listed below and our efforts are underway to expand this connect to all the rest relevant stakeholders including local startups and educational institutions in Goa:
 1. Chief Minister: Laxmikant Parsekar
 2. Minister for Industries: Mahadev Naik
 3. Goa Assembly Speaker: Rajendra Arlekar
 4. Member of Parliament (South Goa): Narendra Sawaikar
 5. Investment Promotion and Facilitation Board (IPB) team: Atul Pai Kane, Kirit Maganlal, Nana Bandekar, Nitin Kunkolienker, Srinet Kothwale, Tulasidas Pai, Parimal Rai, Martin Ghosh
 6. Officer on Special Duty (OSD) to the Chief Minister: Sadanand Shet Tanawade
 7. Chairman, Info Tech Corporation of Goa: Subhash Phaldesai
 8. Managing Director, Info Tech Corporation of Goa: Nilesh Phaldesai
 9. Independent MLA: Rohan Khaunte (Porvorim)
 10. Goa Bachao Andolan: Sabina Martins
 11. Goa Foundation: Claude Alvares
- From these meetings few top priorities that have emerged needing our immediate collective attention are:

1. Carry out a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis to identify Goa's USP for IT-ITeS industry and create a **strong positive EXTERNAL market perception about Goa as a high potential IT destination through various marketing channels/mediums** viz. round table conferences, conventional as well as social media initiatives, etc. Goa IPB is keen to involve GITP in next few months to reinforce its IT industry connect and articulate Goa's IT readiness and attractiveness in terms of:

Goa government's clarity of vision and policy support for promoting IT in Goa.

- Existing **high-speed fiber-optic broadband network** already connecting all 189 panchayats in Goa.
- **Goan IT-ready workforce availability** within as well as outside Goa **through a Goan Skills Registry**. And Goa's **high English literacy-cum-fluency** atop an overall 85%+ literacy – one of the highest in India.
- **Un-utilized, government-held plots of land** – even smaller ones – to set up **ready-to-lease workspaces** for small-medium sized IT-ITeS companies
- **Local Goan success stories of IT establishments** that have flourished in recent years.
- Goa – with its abundant natural beauty and touristic fun – as an ideal location for creative work like **IT Research and Design**.
- Goa as the **primary driver in corporate green initiatives** through alternative ultra-low carbon-footprint IT models enhancing (rather than hurting) Goa's environmental bio-diversity. For example, IT campuses in hilly and forest areas like the Infosys Mangalore SEZ campus.

2. GITP to **proactively build bridges across relevant LOCAL Goan stakeholders** to ensure that the Goan IT industry development is aligned with our GITP vision of long-term sustainability and direct benefit to Goans to stem our current brain drain:

- Proactive, transparent communications and two-way consultations between the governmental machinery and the Goan people.
- Orientation and mentoring to school and college students for early development of entrepreneurial, analytical and other IT related skills. This would result in significant training cost savings to IT companies besides preparing the upcoming Goan generations for IT entrepreneurship creating a large start-up ecosystem in Goa.
- Village-level connects i.e. roadshows, awareness drives
 - A fundamental truth about IT-ITeS is that it involves no physical movement of goods (i.e. raw material, finished goods). Hence it can be done from any corner of Goa (or India for that matter) as long as electricity, high-speed broadband and trained people are available. And a 3-6 month intensive training is what it takes! Goa needs to exploit this to its advantage.
 - Besides ITeS, the IT industry itself requires significant number of non-technical people in the holistic software creation process. Domain experts (viz. banking, accountancy, insurance, logistics, manufacturing, retail etc.) for functional design,

graphics experts (viz. fine arts) for user interface/experience (UI/UX) design, writers/linguists for product documentation and multi-lingual translations in a global economy, etc. contribute immensely to the success of the Indian IT industry. So it's not all about only engineers!

- Additionally as observed in other IT hubs GITP believes that an IT industry in Goa will create atleast an equal number, if not multiples, of non-IT jobs in the resulting ecosystem required to support the IT industry. This will generate unskilled, semi-skilled and non-professional employment through jobs spanning office administration, security, facilities, maintenance, gardening, catering, transportation, accommodation etc. Basically, unlike most other industries, IT has the power to bring about all round, sustainable, long-term development and growth of Goans in Goa without any adverse impact to its environs.
- GITP sees IT industry as a clean, green and modern blessing for large-scale Goan employment generation in Goa, and will oppose anybody trying to misuse the IT industry for rampant exploitation of Goa and the resultant ills seen in other Indian IT hubs like Bangalore, Pune etc. Hence GITP requests all Goans – especially parents, teachers and students – to fully support IT industry promotion initiatives of any Goan government built around long-term sustainability focused on a Goan workforce.
- GITP has highlighted to the Goan political leadership how IT could effectively contribute towards Goa Chief Minister, Laxmikant Parsekar's vision of generating 50,000 jobs in Goa in the next 5 years. And also the urgency for 1000-2000 net new IT jobs to be created in Goa as a successful proof of concept on government's IT initiative before the next assembly elections.
- Lastly Goa has to seriously fast-track its IT initiatives now – leveraging its inherent and unique advantages – since the central government's revolutionary Digital India initiative will bring to the fore, within 3-5 years, many presently-unattractive destinations for IT-ITeS creating extremely stiff competition for Goa. Death knell of our Goan IT-ITeS dream is now barely 2-3 years away. We are already late on IT-ITeS and cannot blame anybody except ourselves for this situation.....but we certainly cannot afford to be complacent any longer!

In conclusion, the IT-ITeS industry is one of the most Green, Clean and Intellectual industries in the world ideally suited for the highly creative, passionate, literate and, environmentally and identity conscious Goans. And also for Goa given its semi-urban infrastructure across the state with reasonably stable electric power supply and high-speed broadband network. That covers all key essentials for the IT-ITeS industry, which will also generate significant local employment for a wide range of skill sets from highly technical to semi-technical and service oriented tasks. However the traditional Indian IT-ITeS model based on large IT Parks for economies of scale – which has led to widespread urban unsustainable saturation in some places – needs significant adaption leveraging latest Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) advancements for long term relevance and success in a unique place like Goa. All this put together will help reverse the prevalent brain drain of Goan educated workforce and, with the right regulations in place, to arrest the influx of undesired workforce into Goa and preserve the much treasured Goan identity, heritage and environment. Hence it is imperative that all Goans strongly support set up of a well-planned model of IT-ITeS industry in Goa.