

Goa Struggles with Lack of Hotels



Goa is the smallest Indian state. It is situated on the western coast of India, in the region known as the Konkan. Panjim is the capital, Vasco-da-Gama is the biggest city and Margao is the city with the most historic sites. The state was a Portuguese colony for some 450 years, and this has had a huge impact on local culture and architecture.

Goa is one of the most prosperous states in the country, with excellent banking and financial services and socio-economic indicators. The second most important industry in Goa is mining. Fishing is still important, on a par with agriculture. Another important influx of cash comes to Goa from locals working abroad and sending remittances to their families, but the most important industry here is tourism.

Goa is well known for its beaches and wonderful countryside. Temples, churches and old houses have made Goa a favorite destination for travelers all around the world. A big attraction for example is the "World Heritage" listed monument, the Basilica of Good Jesus (Basílica do Bom Jesus in Portuguese).

Nevertheless, according to the experts Goa is now facing some distinct problems. There is a shortage of hotels in the three to five star category, and this could slow down growth in the tourism industry in years to come. The President of Goa Travel and Tourism Association, Mr Ralph de Souza, claims that Goa is short of 2,000 quality level rooms. Goa's Economic Survey of 2006-07 shows that tourism grew steadily between 2001 and 2004, but has stagnated in the last two years. Arrivals dropped by 6 per cent in 2005. The survey also says that there were 2.34 million arrivals in 2006, 15 per cent of them foreign tourists.

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