INDOMITABLE & FIRMLY IN THE SADDLE

From battling one crises after another, he appears to be the lone battle-clad warrior on his indefatigable horse, fending off obstacles with determination and sheer grit. Ever since he took over the reins, he has emerged as a leader in his own right, keeping the determined Opposition at bay, and using his indomitable reflexes to cough up solutions to the immutable problems in his way. Yes, we are talking about the Chief Minister of Goa Dr. Pramod Sawant, who took oath in March 2019 and carried the heavy responsibility of taking forward the legacy of his predecessor late Manohar Parrikar. Since that memorable day, Sawant has come a long way and emerged as a clear winner, a leader in his own right, despite a few blips here and there.

Even though his party --the BJP did not have the numbers, late Manohar Parrikar juggled the numbers by roping in a section of the once vicious opposition and formed a government. But to the credit of Dr. Pramod Sawant he did a fantastic surgery, when he took over, by dropping those pressuring him and taking on board 10 MLAs by puncturing the single largest party status of the Congress and running a stable government with an overwhelming majority since then. Dr. Pramod Sawant, has been credited with achieving good governance with a visionary resourcefulness for the overall development of the state. Dr. Sawant has not only been able to satisfy industry, but also left his mark on the masses. Without many stars in his Cabinet, Dr. Sawant has been able to almost singlehandedly lead the State towards what he and his party think is a developed and prosperous Goa.

Since assuming the post of Chief Minister, he has been able to think out of the box and carried forward governance with the consent of his cabinet colleagues, industry and simple clear thinking. Add to this his ability to study relevant matters in detail, and consulting the right persons is extremely fruitful. Prime News Weekly caught up with Dr Pramod Sawant and quizzed him on the important issues of governance and how he has been able to tide over them.

PRIME: How’s the current financial position of the state?
Dr. Pramod Sawant: “To run any state, Heads of government have a big responsibility. The state has to be run in tune with the saying ‘spread your legs, as per the size of the bed’. The Central Government and the Central Finance Commission have already drawn the financial credit limit (Lakshmanresha) for each state. We are witnessing that the loans taken by the Goa government are limited. Opponents are conveniently turning a blind eye to the fact that now our government is raising funds by selling bonds, we have to repay the debts of previous governments. Government is always a continuous process. Also our debt will have to be repaid by the next government.

If the BJP government wants Rs 300 Crores per month, our borrowing will be Rs. 300 crore, but we are also paying the debt of Rs. 300 crore on a regular basis. If the previous government had not let us the burden to repay their loans, we would not have had to take new loans. In doing all this calculation, we should not fall short anywhere in terms of development, and we should not miss the salaries of government employees. The previous governments used to take loans even when the mining business was in full flow and got billions of rupees from it. Now we are facing ban on mining in the state and also short on other revenue resources. As a result, the state is borrowing, so there is a huge difference between the two.

PRIME: Covid-19 has affected the process of development in every state and the country, how do you think it will affect Goa, as a state?
DR. SAWANT: Corona pandemic has placed an additional burden on the government’s functioning over time, but currently, the state is moving in the right direction. Goa will not go for a lockdown as the decision will disrupt the economic activities. We stressed upon vaccination and COVID-19 appropriate behavior to tackle the spread of Coronavirus. Imposing a lockdown was and is not a solution to bring down COVID-19 related cases. Lockdown is not a solution. We do not want to disturb people. After the last lockdown, we had to start labour camps and the economy had dropped to zero. Revenue collection had dropped. Lockdown will not lead to reduction in Corona. The solution is vaccination, social distancing, wearing of masks and exercising precautions.

Mining ban and restrictions on tourism have affected the state’s revenue. Impact of Corona has also led to an increase in costs. Now we have to spend funds on solid waste management, for which there is a separate account. Although the Central government provides funds for development works, the state government has to put its hands in the coffers for current infrastructure development. At present, tourism is the only working and lucrative sector, so it cannot be neglected. Goa is an important tourist destination on the world map. If we are not serious about the betterment of tourism, other states and other small neighbouring nations will leave us behind.

PRIME: Being a doctor by profession, how do you manage
health sector, especially keeping in mind unimagined crisis of the Covid-19 pandemic?

DR. SAWANT: The government has succeeded in maintaining healthcare facilities in Goa. I am assisted by the constructive approach of the Health Minister Vishwajeet Rane. The healthcare facilities available in Goa are world class and Goa has a respectable position in health care among all states. Due to availability of high tech health facilities, patients from Maharashtra and Karnataka come to Goa Medical College and Hospital. The decision taken by me in consultation with the Health minister and experts in the fields, before the onset of an epidemic like ‘Covid-19’ proved very successful. By tackling the issues that arose during the difficult times, we showed everyone that citizens need not be afraid of the pandemic.

PRIME: As a chief minister, many people, organization or even oppositions are coming to you to express their views or demands. How do you manage to tackle them?

DR. SAWANT: I’ve always kept the doors open for all to discuss with me. Goa’s lifestyle is changing rapidly. In such a situation, everyone needs to come up together as a team to imagine Goa for the next 25 to 50 years. Many of the issues facing Goa that can easily emerge from the discussions, need to be discussed on the table. In case of development works, the present government is proactive, and is paying close attention to the development of rural areas along with the urban areas of Goa and trying to find a solution by going to those areas and discussing with the people there. Humor is the best medicine to any problem. Even to answer the tricky and hard questions asked by journalists, I use friendly nature to respond, however aggressive the other person may be. A smile and humor always help in tackling the situation. I always welcome constructive criticism, not criticize just for the sake of criticism.

PRIME: What are the important development projects which were or are being executed in the state during your tenure as chief minister?

DR. SAWANT: With the Mopa Airport coming up in Goa, the name of the state will be firmly engraved on the global horizon. Due to the 8 lane road from Patnem to Polem, along with the new 8 lane Zuari Bridge, will be a spectacular development for Goa. All in all, Goa is currently in the throes of modern development. Moreover, Goa is currently shining brightly at the national level due to the ‘Self-Reliant India, Self-Sufficient Goa’ (Atma Nirbhar bharat, Swayampurna Goa) mission in Goa. The Manohar Parrikar Indoor Stadium, built at a cost of Rs 40 crore on an area of 13,000 sq m in Navelim, South Goa, has provided quality sports opportunities to the players in South Goa. The state government had to spend around Rs 250 crore for the construction of basic facilities for the national sports game.

PRIME: Education is the one sector which is dear to you, so you kept the portfolio with yourself. Any specific reasons?

DR. SAWANT: After taking over the Chief Ministership in March 2019, nobody was willing to take the Education portfolio. So, I immersed myself in the Education sector of Goa. I am always of view, that students from Goa should get a good education from primary level to higher professional education. My government has been successful in improving the quality of primary schools in rural Goa. With more than 100 primary schools in operation, we have trained teachers through online workshops for teacher recruitment and online education.

PRIME: Center has provided the state with Rs 100 crore, for celebrating with 60th Anniversary of the Liberation of Goa. How do you plan to spend it?

DR. SAWANT: Goa is one of the premier tourist destinations in India. We have also done well in agricultural and food technology. I am paying special attention to these sectors and I determined to take the emphasis of the state beyond the “sun, sand and sea” image. Today, many development works are being carried out in Goa independently by the state, or with the help of the Central Government. On the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Liberation of Goa, the state has decided to celebrate this year with various programs and the concept of Swayampurna or Self Sufficient Goa. My government has the vision to eke out a bright future for Goa by keeping an eye on the present.

The BJP has already decided to ride into the Goa Assembly Elections 2022 under the leadership of Dr Pramod Sawant, which again is a huge challenge. That is ample proof that the Cabinet and the party organisation has full faith in his leadership abilities and his ample resourcefulness. Needless to say Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant is indomitable and yes, he is firmly in the saddle.

You are a remarkable role model for all those seeking to understand how to make an impact on public life. Your governance formula of Swayampurna Goa and reaching out to the poorest of the poor, are truly commendable.

Wishing you a Happy Birthday and many more dedicated years in public life.

Siddesh Naik, ZP Corlim & Young Social worker

Happy Birthday
The taxi strike in the state has brought local taxi operators in direct confrontation with the state government, once again, after almost one year. In the background of the Covid-19 pandemic, every business in the state has been hit badly. Some businesses have already closed, or are on the verge of downing their shutters. The taxi business too has never been so uncertain and volatile. Now, to add fuel to the fire, Mumbai based ‘Uber’ taxi service has applied to the state Government, for permission to start their App based business in Goa.

The private taxi owners are already at loggerheads with the government to scrap the App based taxi service ‘Goa Miles’ with their agitation currently at its peak. Reliable sources reveals that the state is on the verge of welcoming another App based taxi service -- 'Uber' into this tourism centric economy, after dismal failure some years back. Mumbai based ‘Uber India System pvt. Ltd.’ has applied to the Transport Department for permission to start their services in Goa.

The reasons stated in Uber’s proposal appears to be largely perplexing. Uber’s top executives writes in their proposal, ‘Due to rising corona pandemic and lockdown, tourism business in Goa has suffered a tremendous set back. Due to less number of tourists visiting the state, many taxi owners and operators has been facing big crisis. So to strengthen taxi business and to safeguard monetary gains, the state government should give permission to operate’.

Now the ball is in the government’s court, whether to continue with their Goa Tourism Development Corporation initiated App based ‘Goa Miles’, or throw the market open to other App modeled taxi services. Surprisingly, ‘Goa Miles’ has not opposed competitors such as Ola or Uber, from coming into Goa, unlike private taxi operators in the earlier years. Instead they said, that such technology based initiatives would increase the competition and help to provide good service to customers.

Such heightened competition will hit the private taxi operators the most. For months together, maybe for almost a year, the taxis owners are operating at low revenues. After the boom of last few years, many taxis are today without any revenue, and literally gathering dust. Since there is no income source to many taxi drivers, they find it hard to make ends meet. Some claim they are harassed by bankers, to pay loan installments, insurance premium etc. They claim that besides the verbal promises the state government has done nothing concrete to alleviate their situation. Many agitating taxi owners told our reporter, said that they are more afraid of dying of hunger, than that of Covid-19.
Black and yellow taxis:
For first Km.-Rs. 21 , for every additional Km. –Rs18

Tourist taxis:
For 4 hours (upto 50kms , or half day)-Rs. 900/- For 8 hours or Full day – Rs. 1750/-

Goa Miles: (per Km charges)
Small car –Rs. 20.50/- | Medium car-Rs.22/- | Big car- Rs.24/-

‘Goa Miles’ rate is much cheaper than private/tourist taxi services, in the state. There are approximately 18,000 taxi operators, in Goa viz. Tourist taxis, Black and yellow taxis, motor cab and maxi cab, for which rates have been fixed by the Transport Department on 14th January 2021. ‘Goa Miles’ service is cheaper compared to other taxis, in Goa, because other taxis charges both way fare. For eg. Private taxis will charge commuters going from Panjim to Mapusa, 50 % extra for coming back empty. While ‘Goa Miles’ charges only one way fare, from Point A to Point B. We will be provide our taxi with another passenger, to different destination, on his return journey. So the customer is happy, as they are not charged any extra money.”

-Parashar Pai Khot,
CEO, ‘Goa Miles’

If all the taxis are compulsorily fitted with Digital Meters, than ‘Goa Miles’ would not survive in the state. Our government has clearly failed to resolve the taxi crisis. If ‘Goa Miles’ can’t be stopped, at least close down its counter at Dabolim airport, he suggested. The App based service should be run only through an App, and not through a physical counter. If the said counter is closed, ‘Goa Miles’ will automatically cease to exist.

-Michael Lobo
Calangute MLA and Port Minister.

You have exhibited uncommon wisdom, remarkable vision, and exemplary leadership in your stint as Chief Minister. I wish you peace, good health, and happiness.

Congratulations and Happy Birthday!

Dayanand Sopte,
GTDC chairman ,MLA- Mandrem constituency
GOA
MARCHING TOWARDS DEVELOPMENT

- Industry friendly Government.
- Well developed Industrial Estates.
- Improvement in Schemes for Benefit of Farmers, House Wives & Education Sector.
- Development of Roads, Bridges, Stadiums & other Infrastructure.
- Solid Waste Management Plant.
- Friendly Economic Policies.
Six Years ago, we set out on an unchartered but exciting journey and set up Prime TV on April 21, 2015. At that time it was only a thought, a concept, a dream. Like the explorers of old, who set out to discover the new world, there were so many things we did not know. Yet it was our brave decision to set sail. We did not have a guiding compass, or a rule book. We did not know the route. We did not know how exactly it would shape up. We did not know how the public would receive us. This particular journey of Prime TV had not been undertaken by anybody before. It was our journey, we had to row, we had to play by our instincts and there was no getting out of the boat, once we launch into the deep blue ocean of broadcasting.

While there were some uncertainties, some things we were very sure about – our upmost commitment would be to do something special for Goa. We wanted to highlight the heritage, culture and customs of Goa. We wanted to showcase the lifestyle of people of Goa. We wanted to provide an opportunity to the youth of Goa and a provide them with a platform to showcase their talent. We chose a very young staff, brimming with ideas and creativity. And this we chose to do through the medium of television. Even after six years Goa is facing multiple challenges at all levels. The people are concerned about their future, about future of Goa, about the future of the future generation. The people are agitated. People want to contribute. People want a say. People want a voice. Over the six years, this voice has been Prime.

At every stage of this six year journey, we have believed and trusted in the people of this state and their wisdom. We have highlighted issues of concern to Goa and Goan – whether it is governance, corruption, party politics, Civic politics, panchayat politics, crime, infrastructure, or anything to do with the welfare of Goa and Goans. We have held no brief for any government, party, politician or business house. The thought to be ‘pro or anti to anyone’ never occurred to us. We chose to highlight issues on the merit of the case – that merit is – does it benefit Goa and Goans?

Right from the mining issues, to corruption, and nepotism in governance, usurping of land through dubious deals, anti-goan projects thrust on the people – Prime has been one of the outspoken voices in broadcast television speaking the truth and fighting for Goa. We have never been hesitant to highlight issues conveyed to us by the people. We firmly believe that government should not reward its friends but is elected for the welfare of all. Government needs to hear all the voices especially, the feeble voices of the economically poor, the worker, the backward classes and the aam admi.

With the tremendous response we have received, we are doubly sure that people are with us and we will make sure that dissenting voices whether of NGOs or activists, social worker or environmentalist, intellectuals and visionaries will be heard. Thanks to the ardent and unstinted support of our viewers, the people, friends, well wishers and all Goans and our young and dedicated staff, we are able to complete six years of our journey. Prime is doubly grateful to all of you for supporting the issues we highlighted. Through our social media engagement we are available to take Goa to the world, through Facebook, Youtube, Twitter and our webpage.

With such great support and encouragement from the people we promise to work with even more zeal in the next six years and beyond ! Viva Goa Via Goenkar !

**OUR BOUQUET OF PROGRAMMES**

Our programmes have already cut ice with Goa television audiences due to their appeal and relevance. They include:

**Prime News:** your daily dose of round up of the day’s happenings in politics, society, business, local governance, crime etc with clear perspective and authentic reporting. All the newscasts have an underlying emphasis on objectivity, unbiased reporting and above all a firm commitment to the truth. Prime TV bulletins are aired in two languages: English and Konkani.

**Need of the Hour:** showcases prominent newsmakers who are in the rough and tumble of Goa life making waves and impacting the trajectory of Goa.

**Gems of Goa:** brings to you the bright shining star from among Gen Next who has cut ice for themselves at a young age. It features the stars and the potential stars who are making or will make Goa proud in the near future.

**BREAKING NEWS & NEWS UPDATES:** From time to time Prime brings you significant breaking news and updates as major events unfold with implications for politics, business or society to keep you updated on the Goa. They are flashed across Twitter, Whatsapp and Facebook. Most importantly they are cross checked and reliable.

**SPECIAL TELECASTS:** Prime features special telecast of live Proceedings of the Goa Legislative Assembly, including the Minute by Minute proceedings of Goa Budget; Sao Joao, Diwali,
Alcove Resorts—a Paradise on Earth

Milton and Vanessa Marques dreamt of starting their resort business. Milton dreamt of starting a small restaurant that could also host occasional parties. Vanessa an excellent baker, used her pastry and PR skills to get customers. They began to slowly build rooms and today, Alcove Resorts. Nestled in the beautiful west coast of India, Alcove Resort is perched atop a cliff offering a spectacular view of Vagator Beach and the adjoining Arabian Sea. One can experience the scenic beauty of the resort during sunset, a mesmerizing view that is both romantic and soulful. And while one is taken by the view, the extensive Goan menu with Chef Specials of local fish curry rice, prawn peri peri (rechado) and the customer’s favourite baked rock crab are a must try. A good meal often requires a good dessert to seal the deal and what better than Vanessa’s Apple Pie, that definitely has its own fan following. One can also take a dip into our swimming pool or jacuzzi, relax and unwind at the snooker table or the table tennis table. From a bunch of recreational activities to choose from, Alcove Resorts is not just a getaway but simply paradise on earth.
Bollywood actress Alia Bhatt announced that she has tested negative for COVID-19, after almost 12 days after contracting the deadly virus.

The actress had tested positive for COVID-19 on April 2 and was under home quarantine. The 'Student of The Year' actor took to her social media handle and updated her fans about the same. She shared an all-smiles sun-kissed picture to inform about the good news. In the picture, Alia can be seen sporting a blue sweatshirt, and pink pyjamas as she poses in the garden while looking into the lens. The actor looks gorgeous in a no-makeup look with her luscious locks open. The 28-year-old actor took to Instagram and shared a picture of herself, writing, "the only time being negative is a good thing." She also added flex muscle and dancing girl emoticons.

#Alia Bhatt tests negative for COVID-19, shares beautiful sun-kissed picture in Pyjamas

#Arshad Warsi, Boman Irani roped in to host Amazon Prime Video comedy show LOL - Hasse Toh Phasse

The six-episode unscripted reality series will feature 10 comedians, including Cyrus Broacha, Gaurav Gera, Kusha Kapila, Malika Dua and Sunil Grover.

Titled "LOL- Hasse Toh Phasse", the six-episode unscripted reality comedy show will stream from 30 April. The SOL Production-backed series will feature 10 comedians - Aadar Malik, Aakash Gupta, Aditi Mittal, Ankita Shrivastava, Cyrus Broacha, Gaurav Gera, Kusha Kapila, Malika Dua and Sunil Grover.

The show will pit the professional comedians against each other for six consecutive hours, "to make the others in the house laugh and more importantly, ensure that they do not laugh or even smile themselves," a statement from the streamer read. The last contestant to remain straight-faced will be the winner and will take home a grand prize.

The original 2005 Tamil version, starring Vikram as a frustrated everyman developing multiple personality disorder to take on the system, was a massive blockbuster.

Bollywood star Ranveer Singh and director S. Shankar are teaming for the Hindi-language remake of 2005 Tamil blockbuster Anniyan.

Bringing them together is veteran film producer Dr. Jayantilal Gada of Pen Studios.

The yet-untitled project has been announced around the auspicious time of Baisakhi in North India and Puthandu in Tamil Nadu, which marks the New Year celebrations in these respective calendars. The film is slated to go on the floors in mid-2022, and will be co-produced by God Bless Entertainment. The music of the film will be available on Saregama.

#‘Anniyan’ Hindi remake: Shankar, Ranveer Singh join hands

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to the most Dynamic & Visionary Leader of Goa

Dr. Pramod Sawant
Chief Minister Goa

BIG DADDY CASINO
Prime Media - Goa has come a long way over the last six years. You have contributed tremendously to public debate on significant issues and events in Goa. Wish you a very Happy Sixth Anniversary and many more to come!

Rohan Khaunte
Hon’ble MLA of Porvorim constituency
Ex IT and Revenue Minister of Goa
You have always been an inspiration to us and it is our pride and pleasure to be able to work under a Leader like you. Wishing you God’s Choicest Blessings on your Birthday.

Savitri Kavlekar,
Young Social worker
Prime Media has stayed true to its commitment to Goa and Goans. News Channels need to be objective, fearless and factual just like you. Kudos on your achievements, especially your multifaceted programmes and news.

Happy Anniversary

Jit Arolkar,  
MGP leader & Social worker, Mandrem constituency

Prime Media -Goa channel has flagged important issues, provided perspective to events and voiced public opinion with an unbiased mind. Felicitations on your excellent innings over the last Six Years. Have a great journey ahead!

Happy Anniversary

prime MEDIA GOA

aap GOA

AAM AADMI PARTY
It has been 16 years ago, I started working in electronic media, and Six years ago as a 28 years young Enthusiast, I decided to open up a Electronic channel “Prime News TV channel”. It started with lot of problems, hiccups & obstacles, which is common to any new adventure. But with God’s Grace, common people’s blessings and prominent people’s support, we begun to grow. Many young as well as experienced people joined us, and we gradually reach this small but important milestone. I know it’s not big achievement to reach 6th years milestone, we still have much more miles to go, & achieve those ‘impossible’ targets, with more encouraging words from goans. Almost 100% of our staff are local & of goan origin. I Appeal to all our supporters, Advertisers and Viewers to continue your valuable support in the future, too. Hoping to fulfill many more achievements in the near future.

Sandeep Kerkar, Chief Editor, Prime Media Goa.

Prime Media Goa organized World Heritage Week Special – All Goa Drawing Competition in association with Directorate of Archives and Archaeology, Goa.

Prime Media Goa organized Makar Sankranti Utsav 2021 Mapusa.

Prime Media Goa Initiative of Swach Bharat Nitol Goem - Be The Prime Change was a month long campaign commencing from 5th September to 5th October in 6 Constituencies in Goa.

Prime Media Goa in association with Dance Sports Council of India organized “ALL INDIA DANCE SPORTS FESTIVAL 2019” The National Dance Event was held at Ravindra Bhavan Margao - Goa. Present for the Event was Brand Ambassador of Dance Sports Council of India Kamlesh Patel.

Prime Media Goa Launches Website www.primetvgoa.com in the presence of CM Dr. Pramod Sawant, Minister Michael Lobo, MD of Prime Late Milton Marques, Editor Sandeep Kerkar & Television Producer Alisha Fernandes

Prime Media Goa Maar Ghumtaar Hath Inter Higher Secondary, College & ITI - Ghumat Aarti Competition