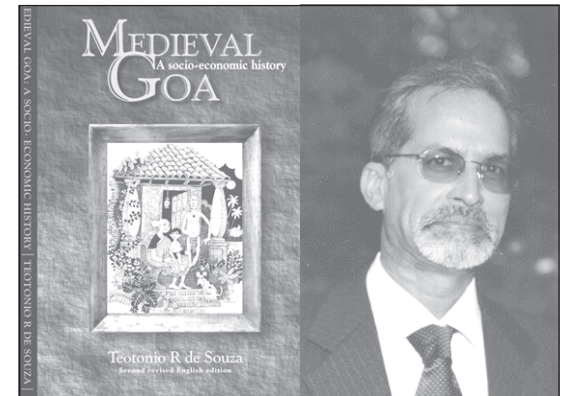


OPinionatED

“Golden Goa Is Really A Romanticised Myth”

“History is the witness that testifies to the passing of time; it illumines reality, vitalizes memory, provides guidance in daily life and brings us tidings of antiquity.” – Cicero (106 BC 43 BC), Pro Publio Sestio



From the 16th century, Goa was ruled by the seafaring Portuguese. Their political, religious and socio-economic policies had far-reaching effects that seem to have led ultimately to their downfall and ouster from Goa after 451 years. Noted Goan historian-author and an authority on Indo-Portuguese history DR TEOTONIO R DE SOUZA, presently Head of the Department of History at the Universidade Lusofona in Lisbon, Portugal, spoke to MARIA DELIMA PEREIRA on the subject and about the soon-to-be-released second edition of his book *Medieval Goa*.

**Q:** Do you think your book is still relevant today, after three decades? Have the issues and concerns changed since the 1970s when it was first published?

**A:** When *Medieval Goa: A Socio Economic History* first appeared three decades ago, it represented the first major break in the tradition of Indo-Portuguese historiography, until then markedly Luso-Indian, even when Goan native historians were the authors. The colonial culture and the political climate were not helpful for the promotion of a critical approach. Mine was a call for serious attention to the native sources, to balance the colonial documentation. Now the scenario has changed tremendously and quite positively for the historians of Goa. The book remains relevant today as a sourcebook. Or else there would be no reason to publish such a book.

The second edition of the book has taken into account all the significant research and publications of the past three decades. This can be seen in the bibliographical essay and the final bibliography, besides additions in the footnotes of individual chapters.

**Q:** You brought out the Portuguese edition of the book in 1994. What has been the response to the book in the ‘mother country’?

**A:** The response was very positive from the younger generation of post-1974 historians in Portugal. Actually, it was by insistence and assistance of one of them – A Teodoro de Matos, now retired professor of the New Lisbon University, and one of my co-promoters of the Indo-Portuguese history seminars – that the Portuguese edition saw the light of the day.

**Q:** What would you see as your main concerns in Indo-Portuguese history? Why did you feel the socio-economic aspect was important in the 1970s? Is it as important?

**A:** *Medieval Goa* sought to correct one of the colonial biases in historiography, by giving special attention to the living conditions of the rural folk. It sought to understand what was the impact of urban development upon their lives. Till this time, the focus of colonial historiography had been upon the Portuguese navigation and their military-missionary achievements during the most part of the 16th century, until the Portuguese lost their national autonomy in 1580, and North European rivals of the Iberians decided to enter the Asian markets. It was these factors which made the Portuguese sustenance upon the sea trade ever more precarious, leading them to invest increasingly in the rural economy. In this way, the lay Whites joined the existing White religious in subverting the traditions of the Goan villages. This is what led me to analyse the impact of this change upon the lives of our village communities from the beginning of the 17th century.

**Q:** In what way would reading this book help readers in Goa (or elsewhere) better understand the reality of the past?

**A:** It is hoped after reading this book with an open mind, people should accept and understand the socio-economic realities that were shaped by the prevailing politics and its impact. It is always true that present-day politics make it always somewhat difficult for the average citizen to accept critically what historians present. One common belief defended by some political trends in Goa is to suggest that the Christian community benefited from the Portuguese colonial era. The documentation in *Medieval Goa* does not sustain this opinion. Had it not been for the collaboration of the Hindu and other communities to run the Portuguese fiscal system, tax-collections, local and regional trade and diplomacy with the native rulers, the Portuguese rule would have been short-circuited much before 1961.

**Q:** Your book contests the ‘Golden Goa’ myth. But isn’t it possible that Goa was ‘golden’ for some (the urban dwellers, those who benefited from colonialism) while a very tough and difficult place for others?

**A:** Here we have to make a distinction between the expression ‘Golden Goa’ as referred to by art historians in their studies of the majestic church structures of the 16th and early 17th centuries, and ‘Golden Goa’ as an expression to convey the impression that the majority of the natives had an enviable standard of living. It must be understood that whatever the semblance of modernity the Portuguese colonial regime brought to India, Goa itself had to wait for it until the 18th century or almost the 19th century. That too was largely due to the English intervention in the economy of Portuguese India through the Anglo-Portuguese treaty, the setting up of the railway link, and forcing the end of the Inquisition. During the Inquisition people were made highly vulnerable. Had it been a ‘Golden Goa’ for most natives, we would have not seen waves of Goan emigrants seeking their future away from colonial domination since the earliest times.

**Q:** What qualities are required to become a good historian?

**A:** Those really interested must keep an open and unbiased mind, must be inquisitive, multilingual, personally and professionally disciplined. They must be extremely adept in interacting with people as not all information required can be obtained from archives and libraries alone.

*Medieval Goa* by Dr Teotonio de Souza will be released on Friday, Aug 21, 2009 at 5.15 pm at the Goa Chambers of Commerce and Industry hall in Panjim. Published by Broadway and Goa, 1556, it is priced at Rs 395 (pb) and Rs 495 (hb).

Do you have a strong opinion about something? Then write it down in around 1,100 words and send it to ‘editor@herald-goa.com’ with the word ‘OPinionatED’ in the subject line. Or send it to: OPinionatED, Herald, Rua San Tome, Panjim, Goa-403001. If we find it suitable, it will appear in this column. Please note all contributions will be edited to correct the English and improve readability. Personal attacks or any matter that is potentially libellous will also be edited out.

‘Mobile phone, conversion flared up Kandhamal riots’

PTI BHUBANESWAR, AUG 19 Mobile phones played a big role in flaring up communal riots in Orissa’s Kandhamal district a year ago while religious conversion was one of the major reasons of disharmony among the people living peacefully for generations, senior government officials have said.

“I will like to blame use of new technology like mobile phones for flaring up the riots in Kandhamal”, Orissa’s Director General of Police, Manmohan Praharaj, said while speaking at a national seminar on the “Role of Police in promotion of communal harmony and national integration” here yesterday.

Admitting that the state police faced a lot of difficulty in tackling the communal situation in Kandhamal that broke out in the aftermath of the killing of VHP leader Laxmanananda Saraswati, the DGP said mischief mongers had easy access to mobile phones to engineer and

organise riots across the communal sensitive district.

“While controlling riots earlier was comparatively easy for police, it had become difficult now because of the advent of new technology”, Praharaj said adding that security personnel had to act in an impartial manner in order to bring back normalcy in the affected areas.

Madhusudan Padhi, Special Administrator for Kandhamal, however, said that religious conversion was a major factor behind the disturbances. “When we talk of communal harmony, one must see the reasons behind disharmony”, Padhi pointed out adding that the nature of communal violence varied from place to place.

The reasons behind riots in Gujarat a few years ago were totally different from that in Kandhamal. “Therefore, one must try to go to the roots in order to solve the problem”, he said.

Besides conversion, alleged issue

of fake certificate and disputes over land between tribals and scheduled castes contributed to the clash that claimed over 40 lives following the killing of the VHP leader on August 23 last year, Padhi said.

Officers deployed in the hilly Kandhamal district were invited to speak at the seminar. Praveen Kumar, Kandhamal’s Superintendent of Police, who handled the situation from the beginning stressed on intelligence gathering as a major tool to control riots.

“Dedicated police officers need to be deployed to tackle such situations”, Kumar said.

Kandhamal district magistrate Krishan Kumar stressed on multi-department approach to tackle a riot situation.

Though police had a major role in combating riots, other departments like health, education and revenue needed to work in tandem to bring peace to the affected areas, he felt.

Pawar rules out merger with Cong

NEW DELHI, AUG 19 (PTI) Ahead of assembly polls in Maharashtra, NCP chief Sharad Pawar today ruled out the possibility of merger with Congress, terming as “cheap publicity” statements in this regard made by that party.

“I can’t understand why these days they are raising these questions, why they are not appealing to other parties to merge? Should I say that the Congress should merge with my party?” he asked.

He was reacting to recent statements of AICC General Secretary Digvijay Singh, who is in charge of Maharashtra, and Union Minister and Congress leader Vilasrao Deshmukh that NCP should consider merging with that party.

Pawar said, “These are all cheap public statements” and he did not want to say anything beyond that. On the issue of seat-sharing in the Maharashtra polls, Pawar said, “When the state is facing drought, (then), in such a situation, we had to work together and we will be happy if we go together, if we don’t go together.

MLAs rally around Raje after suspension of two loyalists

PTI JAIPUR, AUG 19 The suspension of two MLAs loyal to Vasundhara Raje appears to have further stoked the flames of dissension in Rajasthan BJP, with its 54 legislators today expressing solidarity with the Leader of Opposition and urging her to intervene and get the action revoked.

“All the 54 party MLAs have submitted a signed memorandum to Raje last evening,” a member of the group of MLAs loyal to Raje told PTI. The memorandum has authorised Raje to take up the revocation of suspension of two MLAs Rajendra Rathod and Gyandev Ahuja, the lawmaker, who did not wish to be named, said.

“The memorandum also said that all the signatory to it are with her in any decision she takes,” he said.

In an apparent message to Raje to fall in line and quit as Leader of the Opposition, BJP had yesterday cracked the whip suspending the

two MLAs on the charge of anti-party activities ahead of the party’s ‘chintan baithak’ which began today in Shimla.

Rathod and Ahuja, who were spearheading Raje’s campaign against high command’s decision asking her to quit as Leader of Opposition following the BJP’s poll debacle, today rejected the charge saying they have not indulged in any indiscipline or done anything against the party.

“We have not indulged in any indiscipline. We have not done anything against the party. Neither have we spoken against the central leaders, nor (have we done so) against the state leaders or the parliamentary board,” Ahuja said.

In a similar vein, Rathore said “We have not done any crime. We stick to our decision. We have not done anything which can be termed as indiscipline. Even after that, if they want to suspend us, it’s their choice.”



School children wear face masks at school where doctors are performing examinations in Ahmedabad on Wednesday as the death toll due to swine flu in Gujarat state rose to three.

Improvement of industrial infrastructure sought in Belgaum

HERALD CORRESPONDENT BELGAUM, AUG 19

The Belgaum Chamber of Commerce and Industries has presented various demands pertaining to the upgradation and improvement of industrial infrastructure at Belgaum. The delegation, headed by the newly elected president Shrinath Deshpande, during their meeting with Minister for Large & Medium Scale Industries Murugesh Nirani on Monday discussed in detail the problems faced by the Belgaum industries.

Deshpande told reporters that Minister Nirani after hearing the grievances presented by the delegation assured that he would personally pursue power crisis faced by the Belgaum industries.

He would also focus his efforts in supplying 24 hours of power supply to the industries in Belgaum by first week of September, he assured.

The minister also informed the

delegation that additional land of 3000 acres around Belgaum would be soon acquired for Industries. He also assured that implementation of industrial policy will come into force immediately.

Replying to Shreemath Deshpande’s request for setting up large-scale industries in Belgaum, Nirani said his ministry is already in discussion with various MNC’s. “Discussions with the tyre manufacturing giant J K Tyres are in progress and we have already offered them a good package to start an industry in Belgaum.” Nirani informed the delegation.

Giving details about the infrastructural development of the industries in Belgaum the minister assured that he has issued instructions to the Joint Director to have a joint meeting with all associations of Belgaum and make a budgetary report for onetime developmental work, which he will get sanctioned from the government.

Siachen has receded 800 m in 20 years: UN official

PTI JAMMU, AUG 19

Siachen Glacier in Ladakh has receded by about 800 m in the last 20 years and is facing threat of climate change caused by military activities in the region, claims a UN official.

Considered most strategic in terms of defence needs of the country and manned round-the-clock at temperatures of minus 50 to 60 degrees during winters, the meltdown is a “warning bell to the health and security of Siachen,” writes Bansil Lal Kaul of the UNDP India’s Solutions Exchange wing in his book, “Biodiversity Conservation in Himalayas”.

“It is unfortunate that Siachen Glacier nowadays has receded more than 800 m during 20-year period from 1988 to 2008,” the 326-page book says.

With over 3,000 troops living and operating there, hundreds of machines and scores of choppers flying daily over the region, the whole of its environment and eco-system have deteriorated, former chief sci-

entist at the Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agriculture R D Gupta writes in one of the chapters titled “Global Warming and Melting of Himalayan Glaciers”.

The book blames military activities for depositing tones of chemicals on the surface of the glacier, thereby not only polluting the headwaters of Indus river but also raising the temperatures in the area.

Referring to an in-house study by the army, the book states that 75 per cent of waste generated are biodegradable, including human waste.

“Claims made by the army to preserve the snow-white colour of the glacier while holding this highest battlefield of the world seem to be mere words of promise,” the book says.

With pieces written by experts in the field on different subjects connected with Himalayas, the volume covers wide range of topics having direct bearing on the health and security of the most outstanding yet fragile Himalayan eco-system.

Former UP dacoit builds own statue

PTI BHADRAJI (UP), AUG 19

Once a dreaded dacoit in this small town of Uttar Pradesh, Jagannath Bind, who has left his lawless ways and turned over new leaf has built a statue of himself and plans to unveil it in front of his house.

Bind, who once had almost 32 cases registered against him says, “I have decided to erect a statue of myself outside my home, so that people may remember me after my death. The statue is made of cement and stands nearly six feet tall.”

On the need to erect a statue when he is still lives Bind says, “If people can erect statues of themselves, why not me?”

He also says he is impressed by Maharshi Valmiki who give up the life of dacoity to become a saint. “When the heart of Valmiki, once a dreaded dacoit can change, then why not that of Jagannath Bind.”

The ex-dacoit is also not unduly worried about the reaction of the local administration over his proposed venture. “I am erecting my statue at my home. It is my place and no one should have any sort of objection to this idea. I will approach the court, if I am not granted permission to erect my statue,” he says.

Hrithik’s life changing experience with ‘Guzaarish’

MUMBAI, AUG 19 (PTI)

Suave actor Hrithik Roshan had a life changing experience while preparing for his role in Sanjay Leela Bhansali’s “Guzaarish”.

Hrithik plays a paraplegic in the film and in order to get into the character, he has been doing thorough research on the disorder to make sure he looks absolutely convincing.

The first schedule of the film is already in progress. It stars Hrithik and Aishwarya Rai in the lead roles. Says a source close to the actor, Hrithik is taking his role very seriously and has been reading up on paraplegia and watching videos to understand and study their mannerisms and behaviour. In fact, he even visited several people affected by the disease to get a first hand account of their experiences.

But while the process helped him hone his acting skills, it has also left a deep impact on his mind. So much so, that Hrithik is now actively taking part in helping people affected with paraplegia.

Shahid goes Ga-Ga over hot Rani Mukerjee!

AGENCIES NEW DELHI, AUG 19

Shahid Kapoor and Rani Mukerjee are the hot topic these days in B town with their on screen chemistry, and hot sizzling bodies getting wet in the rain, in the remix version of their film Dil Bole Had-dipa.

Recently while chatting with an entertainment channel Shahid did praise Rani on her new looks by stating, “Rani has never looked so good in the near past.”

The two gel well with each other and the sizzling chemistry can be seen in the new promos of the film. “She is fun to work with, and I had a great experience with Rani.”

I remember, in the song where she dressed like a Punjabi munda and had to dance on her own choreography. During this, she did some step of naagin and it was amazing,” he adds.



Well the promos have just started and their jodi is already being the talk of the town. Hope Adi’s picture too becomes the talk of the town like his controversies.

‘Combined effort needed to prevent spread of H1N1’

HERALD CORRESPONDENT BELGAUM, AUG 19

Claiming that preventing the spread of H1N1 is a challenging job, District Health Officer, Belgaum, Dr Dilip Kumar Munoli has stated that it is very important for voluntary organisations to work hand-in-hand.

He was addressing at the H1N1

training workshop recently organised for non-government organisations in association with Zilla Panchayat, District Health and Family Welfare Department and District AIDS Prevention and Control Unit (DAPCU) in Belgaum.


“H1N1 virus spreads quickly among those who have low immu-

nity like young children, pregnant women, people with chronic medical conditions and old people over 65 years,” said Dr Munoli.

District Surveillance Officer Dr Jagadish Nuchin said that H1N1 virus spreads in the same way as the seasonal flu through coughing or sneezing by people with influenza.

**GOA ENERGY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**  
(Government of Goa)  
Saligao

Cordially invite you for the function to lay the foundation stone for



**STATE LEVEL RAJIV GANDHI RENEWABLE ENERGY EDUCATION PARK (RGREP)**  
and  
Prize Distribution Ceremony on the occasion of

**RAJIV GANDHI AKSHAY URJA DIWAS**  
On 20th August 2009 at the hands of  
**Shri Digambar V. Kamat**  
Hon’ble Chief Minister of Goa  
In the distinguished presence of  
**Shri Damodar (Damu) Naik**  
Hon’ble Member of Legislative Assembly  
**Shri S. K. Srivastava**  
Chief Secretary  
**Shri Diwan Chand**  
Secretary (NCES)  
and  
**Shri Savio H. Coutinho**  
Chairperson, Margao Municipal Council

Venue for: Foundation Stone Laying Near Session Court, Margao	Time: 11.45 Hrs	Venue for: Akshay Urja Diwas Observation Ravindra Bhavan, Margao	Time: 12.15 Hrs
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RSVP  
**DR. N. P. S. VARDE**  
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