

Grand curtain raiser at Porvorim marks the enthusiastic beginning of Goa Carnival 2026

The much-anticipated Goa Carnival 2026 commenced on a vibrant note this evening with a colourful Curtain Raiser at Porvorim, setting the stage for five days of music, tradition and celebration across the state.

The parade was flagged off by Hon'ble Minister for Tourism Rohan A. Khaunte, in the presence of Hon'ble Chairman, Goa Tourism Development Corporation (GTDC), Shri Kedar J. Naik; Director of Tourism Shri Kedar Naik; MD, GTDC Shri Kuldeep Arolkar; Assistant Director of Tourism Shri Jayesh Kankonkar; and Assistant Tourist Officer Smt. Chitra Vengurlekar, among others.

The highlight of the evening was the ceremonial proclamation by King Momo, Shri Cedric Da Costa, who led the procession in traditional style atop a bullock cart—calling upon all to celebrate with joy, unity and responsibility, in keeping with this year's theme of togetherness.

Revival of Tradition, Celebration with Responsibility

Addressing the gathering, Tourism Minister Shri Rohan A. Khaunte reflected on the festival's roots. He noted that although Carnival was introduced in the 18th century, it found renewed energy in 1965 through musician Timoteo Fernandes, during whose time King Momo first arrived on a traditional bullock cart.

“Today in Porvorim, those nostalgic memories came alive once again,” he said. “King Momo led the parade on a traditional bullock cart, reminiscent of earlier celebrations, instead of the large elaborate floats seen in recent years. This revival allows people to reconnect with their cultural roots while enabling the younger generation to appreciate and carry forward Carnival in its original spirit.”

The Minister also emphasised that this year's celebrations were consciously organised with certain restrictions due to flyover construction and traffic regulations along the route.

“These measures respect commuters and residents, ensuring celebrations are responsible and orderly. There is singing, dancing and music—but no large vehicles, no fuel-driven processions. This Carnival has been initiated in a sustainable and environmentally conscious manner,” he added.

A Celebration of Goa’s Cultural Identity

Chairman, GTDC, Shri Kedar J. Naik described Carnival as a reflection of Goa’s unique cultural evolution.

“Carnaval represents centuries of rich traditions and global influences seamlessly blended into our local way of life. It brings communities together in joy, creativity and colour. Through performances and participation across cities and villages, it showcases the many shades of Goa’s cultural heritage.”

Director of Tourism, Shri Kedar Naik, added that the Curtain Raiser marked the beginning of several days of coordinated celebration.

“Goa Carnival 2026 reflects a collaborative effort between the government, local committees, artists and communities to deliver a joyful and well-managed festival,” he said.

Sustainable and Community-Driven

Organised by the Department of Tourism, Government of Goa, in collaboration with the Porvorim Carnival Committee, the opening evening witnessed enthusiastic participation from residents, performers and visitors.

Designed as an environmentally responsible celebration, the event consciously excluded fuel-driven vehicles and large mechanised floats. Instead, it focused on tradition, music, cultural expression and active community involvement.