

## **Goa and Norway strengthen ties to foster collaboration in technology, tourism and creative industries**

Strengthening international cooperation, Goa hosted a high-level delegation from Norway for a roundtable jointly organised by the Department of Information Technology, Electronics & Communications (DITE&C) and the Department of Tourism. The discussions centred on expanding collaboration between the two regions in technology, tourism, creative industries and skill development.

The session was chaired by Rohan A. Khaunte, Hon'ble Minister for Information Technology, Electronics & Communications and Tourism, in the presence of senior officials including Kabir Shirgaonkar, Director, DITE&C; Dr. Milind Sakhardande, Joint Director, DITE&C; Dr. Gavin Dias, General Manager (Marketing), GTDC; and D. S. Prashant, CEO, Startup and IT Promotion Cell.

The Norwegian delegation included senior representatives from the Norwegian Cybersecurity Cluster, Smart Farm AS, Gjovikregionen Utvikling, and NICCI, among others.

### **Key Insights & Statements**

Speaking at the roundtable, Minister Rohan Khaunte highlighted Goa's evolving ecosystem, which blends innovation, sustainability and quality of life. "Goa is building an ecosystem where technology, creativity and sustainable tourism come together. Our initiatives—from the Electronic Manufacturing Cluster to AI skilling programmes and a robust startup policy—create opportunities for global partnerships. We are open to collaboration in all these areas."

He further emphasised that Goans must remain the primary beneficiaries of such partnerships, through employment generation and capacity building, noting the state's strong talent pool and dynamic startup environment.

Christian H. Engh, CEO of the Norwegian Cybersecurity Cluster, described Goa as a promising strategic partner, citing shared priorities in renewable energy, clean mobility and sustainable tourism.

“Goa’s focus on sustainability and technology aligns closely with Norway’s innovation-driven approach. There is strong potential for collaboration in aquaculture, digital technology and green development,” he stated.

During the discussions:

- D. S. Prashant, CEO of the Startup & IT Promotion Cell, presented Goa’s expanding startup landscape and investment opportunities in creative-tech, design-led innovation and entrepreneurship.
- Dr. Gavin Dias, GM (Marketing), GTDC, outlined the state’s tourism strategy, highlighting wellness, medical and adventure tourism as promising domains for bilateral cooperation.

The Norwegian delegation expressed interest in collaborations involving academic exchange, innovation incubation, and skill development. The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to deepen ties across technology, tourism and sustainable development, signalling Goa’s expanding global engagement and international visibility.