

WOMEN HAVE POTENTIAL TO LEAD MARKETS AND CREATE OPPORTUNITIES: CM

Panaji: June 04, 2026

Recognising the contribution of women towards social development, community leadership, and empowerment, the Punyashlok Ahilyadevi Holkar Naari Shakti Samman 2026 was held at Rajiv Kala Mandir, Ponda. Organised by the Rural Development Authority, Government of Goa, in collaboration with Samruddhi Foundation Goa, the programme brought together women leaders, Self-Help Groups, community organisations, and stakeholders associated with rural development and livelihood promotion.

Dedicated to the legacy of Punyashlok Ahilyadevi Holkar, the event celebrated the values of leadership, public service, self-reliance, and social responsibility. The occasion highlighted the role of women in driving positive change across communities and acknowledged their contribution towards building a more inclusive and progressive society. As part of the programme, the Naari Shakti Samman 2026 was presented to Mrs. Asha Sawardekar, Mrs. Pallavi Salgaonkar, and Mrs. Deepali Naik in recognition of their contributions towards social welfare, community service, leadership, and women's empowerment.

Addressing the gathering, Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant congratulated Samruddhi Foundation and the organisers for conceptualising a meaningful initiative focused on women's empowerment and community development. Recalling the life and contributions of Ahilyabai Holkar, he described her as an enduring symbol of courage, visionary leadership, good governance, and commitment to public welfare.

Drawing a parallel with Goa's successful revival of the Kunbi Saree, CM Dr. Sawant observed that preserving traditional heritage while creating sustainable economic opportunities can empower women and strengthen local communities. Emphasising the need for greater economic participation, he stated that women must move beyond being job seekers and become entrepreneurs and wealth creators.

Capacity building and enterprise development also formed an important component of the programme. A workshop on digital marketing, market-oriented business opportunities, entrepreneurship development, and livelihood creation provided participants with exposure to emerging avenues for business growth, innovation, and income generation. The initiative encouraged women and Self-Help Groups to explore new opportunities for economic advancement and self-reliance.

The programme was attended by Shri Sadanand Shet Tanavade, Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha); Shri Arjun Mohan, IAS, Secretary, Rural Development Authority; Shri Amey M. Amshekar, President, Samruddhi Foundation Goa; Shri

Sangam Patil from the Rural Development Department; Smt. Deepali Naik, Project Director, DRDA South Goa; women entrepreneurs, Self-Help Group members, social workers, community leaders, and other distinguished guests from across the State.

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