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LANDMARKS IN THE HISTORY OF O HERALDO

Freddy Fernandes

O Heraldo has been the Voice of Goa since 1900. Over the 125 years, O Heraldo has been fighting for every cause and event dear to our freedom struggle in the pre-Liberation phase. Since freedom dawned on Goa, O Heraldo has been there with every battle of the democratic voice of the people. Here are glimpses of O Heraldo standing with the people in the Post Liberation History.

Upto 1961 - O Heraldo supported the Freedom Movement and Freedom Fighters

19th December 1961 - O Heraldo captured the rapturous joy of Goans at Liberation of Goa from Portuguese Rule

1963 to 1967 - O Heraldo supported the Opposition and the people in the fight for Konkani and Separate Union Territory of Goa

16th-17th January 1967 - O Heraldo supported the Opinion Poll and celebrated the ecstasy of the people after people rejected Merger and voted to keep Goa, Daman and Diu as a separate political and geographical entity

1973 - O Heraldo stood with the Environmentalists and activists who fought against Zuari Agro Chemicals Limited and the pollution caused by it of the ground and sea water

1977 -79 - O Heraldo made common cause with people fighting corruption in government

1979 - O Heraldo supported the Ramponkars in winning the battle against the trawler owners fishing in shallow water and supported the implementation of the 5 fathom rule

1986-87 - O Heraldo played a stellar role along with Konkaniwadis and leaders of the Konkani Movement and stood solidly behind every rally that went on to make the Konkani the Official Language of Goa

30th May 1987 - O Heraldo rejoiced with the people when the verdict of the Opinion Poll climaxed into Statehood for Goa, which was conferred by then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi

1991 - O Heraldo stood behind the demand of the people for Re-alignment of the Konkani Railway Route

22nd August 1992 - O Heraldo rejoiced with the people when Konkani was included in Eight Schedule of Indian Constitution

1993-94 - O Heraldo supported the leaders and people's movement against the setting up of Nylon 6,6 plant of Thapar DuPont on Kerim Plateau

O Heraldo was behind the people in the agitation against the polluting Meta Strips plant which was later scrapped

In between, O Heraldo supported the movement against Golf Courses, corruption in Governance.

2011 to 2012 -O Heraldo exposed the mining scam that rocked Goa by being the voice of the Environmentalists and finally the Supreme Court judgement led to closure of mining.

O Heraldo has supported the causes of Special Status for Goa and retaining the Dabolim Airport

O Heraldo also backed the people in their fight against the three major projects of double tracking, the Major Highway and the Tamnar lines being brought to Goa through the destruction of Mollem forests

O Heraldo has firmly stood behind the people's demand to Save Mhadei and prevent it from being diverted to the Malaprabha basin.

O Heraldo also exposed the shortcomings of the establishment and the scams during the Covid Pandemic

Recent Past -O Heraldo supported the movements against hill cutting, land grabbing, and the sustainable development cause with regard to people's issues in the Borim Bridge, Bhoma, the Bhutani issue

O Heraldo led a vociferous campaign against coal pollution, the job scam, the noise pollution and Smart City disaster.

In short, O Heraldo has truly been the voice of the people and supported causes related to the culture, identity, language and land of Goa. It has also fought for the right of the people to equitable welfare, good governance, education, health, and protection of the environment for intergenerational equity.

Above all, O Heraldo has championed the cause of the poor, the weak, the marginalised and those struggling to make ends meet even in a prosperous State such as Goa with a high per capita income. It has truly been a voice of the people, since its inception.

The people of Goa own Herald

They wield the power; they have the right to criticise and rap us; we bow to them in humility and gratitude; and we have served them for 125 years. THEY ARE 'HERALD'

Sujay Gupta

He wakes up in the morning, his left foot on the ground and walks out of the bedroom. His muscle memory makes him unlock the front door. As he does that, his reflexes make him bend down, without even looking, to touch the daily familiar feel of soft paper. **O Heraldo** in hand, his day begins, and life resets for another day. He breathes, he lives, he reads, and he feels.... His Herald.

For 125 years, the responsibility to fulfil this infinite act, of Goan hands meeting and embracing their paper, as a fresh breath of air and lease for a new day, makes so many of us at Herald get to work. Many of us do different things. Some report, many edit, still others rewrite, others take photographs and videos, some update websites and social media, others work on columns and letters written to us, and yes, a team also fields calls, weathering criticism or accepting praise, as the due may be. From midnight to the next midnight, there is someone in Herald or its support system doing his or her job at any given minute. As the reporters finish their task, the desk takes over and then the larger production team. The entire universe of printing takes over, followed by the logistics of dispatching your Herald to your town, village, and newsagent and then to your door.

Beyond ordinary, simply 'mission'-ary

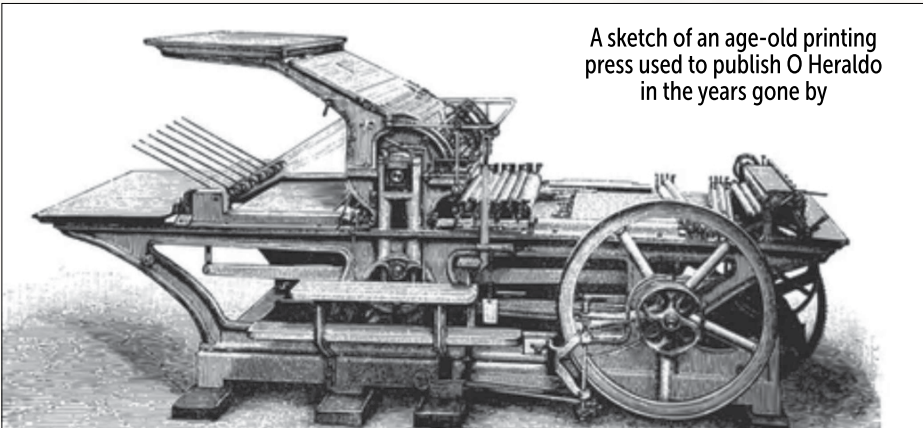
This isn't a job just done by so many hands and hearts and by ordinary people doing something extraordinary. It is done by dreamers on a mission that looks simple – being the Voice of Goa, every morning.

Those of us in Herald are obsessed with what does look like a simple mission. But 125 winters have taught the legion of Herald's editors, reporters, writers and readers that being a Voice is a function beyond exercising one's vocal cords.

For Mãe, & asmitai

As it turns 125, O Heraldo enters the legion of publications that have walked this path. Of being a people's paper – of, by and for the people, chosen by them to carry their dreams, aspirations and pleas for justice. It has indeed done its duty of being a newspaper, the harbinger of news, but generations of families, across Goa – each new generation, echoing the previous – will vouch across eras, regimes, languages, and scripts, that their O Heraldo has dutifully performed its everyday task of being a responsible vehicle, and a spirit that acts as a shelter, a rock and protective arm as well as a clenched fist and a pen- wielded as a mighty sword, for its people, and beyond them, for its land, it's Mãi Mãe (mother in Konkani and Portuguese) and its asmitai (identity)

With each dawn, each of us at Herald wakes up to see if we have passed this twin litmus test – of fighting for our motherland and preserving Goa's identity.



A sketch of an age-old printing press used to publish O Heraldo in the years gone by



An impression of the first edition of O Heraldo, published on January 22, 1900

Herald's story is of passing a people's litmus test for 45,625 mornings

The story of Herald is that of waiting for the people of Goa to make us pass this twin litmus test in the morning of each of these 45,625 days across 125 years.

The sheer longevity of this exercise gives us the belief that on most of these occasions we have passed and when we haven't, we've had the humility to go back to the people, our family, to atone, to listen, to be reprimanded, to be told off, to be screamed and shouted at, to be angrily told that this is the last time they will read the paper.

But come next dawn and if there is a fight to be fought, a voice to be raised, a point to be made, a legal battle to be waged, they call, write, get to the offices of their paper, to tell us – get up and get to work because Goa is at stake. In conversations, at gatherings, at weddings

and funerals, at marches of solidarity or during voting for identity, O Heraldo is in the room, in the conversation, a part of the narrative, a gentle wave assisting the tide, the wind beneath their wings and the erect lighthouse – ravaged by the storm, but resolute in its glow.

Yes, we have heard this before but no Goan will ever tire of hearing and recounting this again: What is common among the language agitation, the opinion poll, the people's agitations against unfriendly projects, the draconian anti-people regional plan, the fight to preserve our land, our rivers and forests, the fight to save our fish and our fisher-folk, our Mhadei, Mandovi, our Zuari and our Sal, our original airport, our language and also our neglected and orphaned script, and across every village and town and courts, where justice is given a platform?

There is one common thread – O Heraldo.

Each issue is a goal worth fighting for. More than a story, or a feature or an article, but a campaign. And it is led by the people.

They own Herald. They ARE Herald

Across Goa and India where Goan hearts beat for their motherland, across the sea, in countries where those of Goan blood live, from Australia to America, from England to the Middle East, from Canada to Portugal.

Each of the missions is boosted by the courage of Herald's editors, reporters and its owners, a courage that naturally comes from the people's trust.

For 125 years, your paper has shown truth to power. And in doing so, it has asked those who are elected to do the right thing.

One is reminded at this stage of one of the biggest heroes of world journalism. In her latest book, 'How to Stand up to a Dictator', last year's Nobel Peace Prize winner Maria Ressa, who faces criminal charges that could make her end up in jail for standing up to dictatorial rule in the Philippines, introduced two Filipino terms, delicadeza, and utang na loob.

Delicadeza is doing the right thing when you wield power. O Heraldo strives to tell those who

The year-long celebrations of O Heraldo's 125th year begin today

The celebrations have begun. As O Heraldo turns 125, the celebrations cannot be for a day, but will continue through this landmark year.

This is the time we will connect and reconnect with our readers, advertisers, and countless Goans – essentially those who love Goa, as well as honest journalism.

The year will also witness a summit of thoughts, ideas and vision planning towards the end of 2025, where O Heraldo will yet again commit to being in the leadership role of heralding betterment, positivity and change for the people. The summit, with thought leaders from across India and the world, hopes to discuss key issues that challenge India and mankind as well as those that give us immense hope. We will be collaborators in this project for and with the people of Goa.

We shall also reach out to the vast diaspora of Goans across the world, meet them, celebrate with them and make them a part of this future. The Goan blood of unity flows across the world and across different coloured passports. At heart, we are one.

We humbly and deeply thank the family of O Heraldo, which is all of you, for keeping this 125-year journey going. This is our greatest blessing.

are elected servants of the people just that. Do the right thing.

Utang na loob, literally means the debt within, where you look at the sacrifices made for you and you in turn ensure that the system you elect doesn't become one of patronage and corruption.

Here, and in the last 125 years, we have bowed in humility to recognise the debt we owe to the people of this land, for giving us this opportunity to serve you, of the sacrifices made by countless Goans for their land to ensure that system they have elected doesn't become one of patronage and corruption.

Today, despite surmounting odds, that come in the way of doing that, we pledge to the owners of O Heraldo – the people of Goa – that we will continue to do that for the next 125 years and beyond.

Irrespective of how dark the tunnel is, there will be light, there will be light, there will be light.

A 125-year journey of milestones and memories

Personal reflections on O Heraldo's enduring impact as it traversed time, but remained rooted to the land and the ideals of its founding fathers

Alexandre Moniz Barbosa

O Heraldo is more than a newspaper that comes to your doorstep in the morning or you pick from the newsstands. It comes with a long history, a proud one even, of being the only newspaper published from Goa to have followed events in this land for 125 years. It is, in that sense, a repository of history, an institution by itself, a piece of heritage.

My earliest memory of O Heraldo is of the newspaper being delivered to my grandparents' home in Guiridolim, Salcete. It was delivered, not by the newspaper boy in the early morning, but around noon by the mailman. It arrived a day later, sometimes two days later, even two editions simultaneously, but come it did, most regularly, until the paper made the switch From Portuguese to English.

It was the 1970s and it didn't bother my grandmother and uncles that the news they were reading was a day old, what mattered was that the newspaper arrived, and even we, who in Panjim got the daily news at the breakfast table at home, on holidays in Guiridolim, the newspaper delivered at lunch time and 24 hours late didn't seem odd. Of course, at that time, still a child, I couldn't read Portuguese, but it was a thrill to grab it from the postman and take it indoors.

But then when O Heraldo transitioned to English, it stopped getting delivered. Sadly, at that time, nobody in the family thought of retaining a copy of that last Portuguese edition of O Heraldo as a souvenir. It would today have been a treasured keepsake rather than just a memory.

If that was the recollection of the paper in Guiridolim, then Panjim brings an altogether different recollection. As children, we regularly played in the garden Garcia de Horta or the Municipal Garden. The office of the O Heraldo was just across the road, and I recall standing on the pavement outside and watching the staff of the newspaper at work. One image that remains vividly fresh in mind is that of Dr Carmo Azevedo, the Editor at that time, listening to the news on the radio and jotting down notes. Years later, when I interacted with Azevedo and told him this, he revealed that it was how they obtained the national and international news that was printed on the newspaper in snippets and that not only did they listen to All India Radio, but to the hourly news bulletins

of the British Broadcasting Corporation too. The news bulletins, were their sources for news.

Today, memories is what the Portuguese edition of O Heraldo is all about. In a chat, relating the above to the current Managing Director of the newspaper, Mr Raul Fernandes, it triggered his memory and he related an incident of the time when Mr Amadeu Prazeres da Costa was Editor. There had appeared an article on O Heraldo that the then Chief Minister Mr Dayanand Bandodkar wasn't happy with. Fernandes recalls that the editor received a



phone call from the chief minister asking for a meeting in the chief minister's office. Prazeres da Costa refused and instead asked the chief minister to come to the offices of the O Heraldo. When Prazeres da Costa did not show up at the meeting, there was a second phone call and this time a neutral place for the meeting was suggested, which the editor agreed to. That meeting took place at the Panjim Gymkhana, the outcome of that meeting is, however, not exactly known today.

That was O Heraldo, steady even as it struggled with dwindling readership in Portuguese. By the 1970s, all the other Portuguese periodicals in Goa had downed shutters, but O Heraldo still persevered, almost rowing against the tide. It was only a matter of time before O Heraldo would have to wind up its Portuguese edi-

tion, and in 1983, it transitioned to an English daily. At around the same time, I went from school to college, becoming more politically aware and being kept informed of events and influenced by, well Herald, as it's English edition came to be popularly known, despite the 'O' at the beginning and end of the O Heraldo being prominently retained on the masthead.

A few years later, and working as a journalist, Herald was more than a daily paper, as the old editions also turned into a rich source for nuggets of the past that could be woven into reports, making the content more interesting and adding value to the articles. Years later, when I joined Herald, I, the fourth generation of my family to read the newspaper became the first generation to write for it. And, when I took charge as Editor, the enormity of the position was not lost, and was rekindled when marking 120 years of the newspaper in 2020.

Five years ago, leafing at past issues of O Heraldo, I was struck by how much had changed and how much had remained the same. Revealing O Heraldo's aim, a piece on the front page of the first edition, presumably written by its founder Mr Aleixo Messias Gomes, had said: "...our political programme will consist of suggesting to the government all the clarifications needed to improve public administration." Fifty years later on the golden jubilee of the newspaper, in an interview, Messias Gomes had said, "...O Heraldo simultaneously became, a platform and a school: a platform where anyone who had an opinion to express or an idea to suggest had free access; school, where the generation that, in the near future, would take over the reins of the land's press came to be trained."

Today, O Heraldo still does all this – highlighting the flaws in governance and suggesting amendments, allowing anybody with an opinion to express themselves through its columns and becoming the nursery of journalists in Goa. Readers will vouch for the first, columnists and letter writers for the second, and a number of English language journalists for the last. O Heraldo at 125, may have meandered along the way, but it surely has not changed the course chartered for it in 1900 by that group of idealistic Goans who wanted to have their opinion heard and went on to establish the first daily in all of the Portuguese colonies.

The writer is a former editor of O Heraldo