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Sawant inducts 3 former Cong. MLAs into Cabinet

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THUW
Days after 10 Congress MLAs in Goa joined the ruling BJP, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Saturday reshuffled his Cabinet, dropping three members of the ally Goa Forward Party (GFP) and an Independent MLA as Ministers.

Michael Lobo, who had resigned as Deputy Speaker of the Assembly, and three of the 10 MLAs who joined the BJP on Wednesday – Chandrakant Kavlekar, Jennifer Monserratte, Philip Neri Rodrigues – were sworn in as Ministers.

Goa Governor Mridula Sinha administered the oath of office and secrecy to the new ministers at a ceremony at the Raj Bhavan on Saturday afternoon.

Prior to the swearing-in, the Chief Minister issued a notification, dropping all three Goa Forward Party (GFP) ministers – Deputy Chief Minister Vijai Sardesai, Water Resources Minister Vinod Palyekar, Rural

Development Minister Jayesh Salgaonkar – and Independent MLA and Revenue Minister Rohan Khaunte from the Cabinet to accommodate the new members.

Ten Congress MLAs had on Wednesday joined the BJP, increasing the strength of the party to 27 in the 40-member House.

Strengthened by their support, Mr. Sawant decided to drop the GFP, a regional party that was instrumental in forming the Manohar Parrikar-led government in 2017.

Support withdrawn

Later in the day, Mr Sardesai announced that the GFP was withdrawing support to the Sawant government.

Addressing a gathering at Parrikar's memorial at Miramar, Mr. Sardesai, said the induction of 10 Congress MLAs into the BJP was the "death of the legacy" of late chief minister Manohar Parrikar.