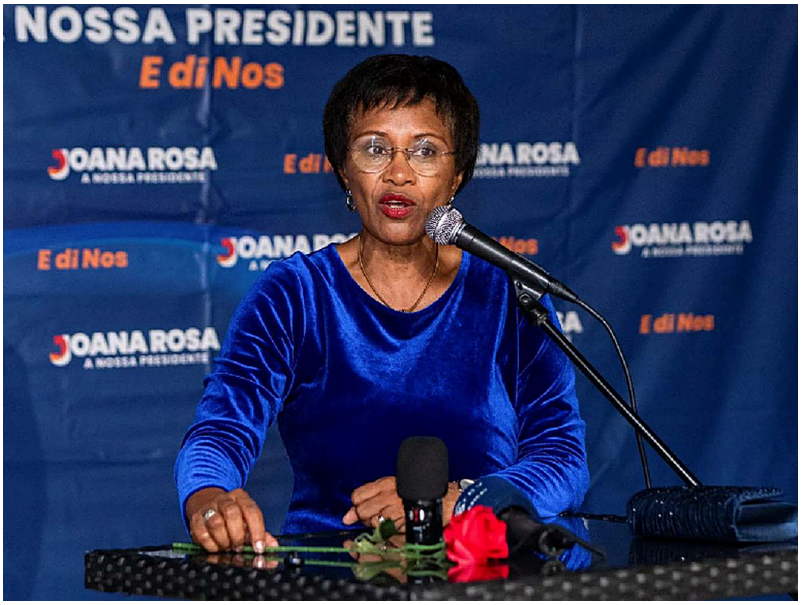
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Polls open in Cape Verde in race with first female presidential candidate



CHENNAI – 16 Nov, 2026 Voters have begun casting their ballots in Cape Verde, where President Jose Maria Neves is facing off against the West African island nation's first female presidential candidate, Joana Rosa, in a vote hinging on slowing down persistent emigration.

More than 300,000 people are eligible to vote on Sunday from 8am to 6pm (09:00 GMT to 19:00 GMT) and will choose from six presidential candidates in a country known for its stability in the politically volatile region.

Neves, a member of the country's oldest political party, the African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV), is tipped to be the favourite but faces his strongest challenger in Rosa of the Movement for Democracy party.

The 66-year-old served as prime minister for 15 years and became president in 2021. His party won 37 of 72 parliamentary seats in May, allowing Neves to appoint Francisco Carvalho, then mayor of the capital, Praia, as prime minister.

Rosa, an opposition candidate and former justice minister, is the first woman to run for president since independence in 1975. Her party governed for 10 years before the May vote.