



**SPEECH  
OF  
HIS EXCELLENCY  
LT GENERAL NIRBHAY SHARMA,  
PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, VSM (RETD),  
GOVERNOR,  
ARUNACHAL PRADESH  
ON THE OCCASION OF  
28<sup>TH</sup> STATEHOOD DAY  
OF  
ARUNACHAL PRADESH  
AT  
INDIRA GANDHI PARK  
ITANAGAR  
ON  
20<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2014**

On the joyous occasion of the 28<sup>th</sup> Statehood day of our beloved State, I extend warm greetings to all of you. I also convey special wishes and greetings to all the people who have gathered here today at Indira Gandhi Park to be a part of these celebrations.

I feel that Statehood Day celebration brings out the best in our society, depicting various cultural and traditional aspects of our heritage. Food village displays exotic cuisines and exhibition stalls reflect the art and crafts of different tribes of the State. Each one is unique and distinct from each other. **It is truly the festival of Arunachal Pradesh and I am pleased to note the festive mood of the State, reflected in this function today.**

**On this historical occasion, I join the people of the State in paying rich tributes to former Prime Minister of India, Late Shri Rajiv Gandhi, who was instrumental in granting Statehood to Arunachal Pradesh on this day in 1987.** It was due to his personal initiative and blessings that a full-fledged Statehood was granted, fulfilling a long cherished dream of the people of this Frontier State. It is also a happy coincidence that I was serving in the State at that time, deployed at Sela Pass in Tawang Sector and witnessed the history being made.

The people of this tribal state still cherish the fond memories of visits by our former Prime Ministers Pandit Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi. They all loved this State deeply and the tradition continues with the visit of our Hon'ble Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh. Recent visit of the President of India Shri Pranab Mukherjee has further cemented the warm relationship with the people of this Frontier State of our great Nation.

**The State of Arunachal Pradesh has traversed a long path to attain the present day progress and advancement.** Many important milestones have been accomplished and number of developmental projects have been taken up. In the last five years, Prime Minister's special economic package has given huge thrust to infrastructural development, in terms of road, air and rail communications, power projects, health and rural development.

The work on Trans Arunachal Highway, Legislative Assembly Building, Hydropower Projects, Secretariat Building, Water Supply Projects along with other several infrastructure and socio-economic projects are progressing satisfactorily. The implementation process has immensely benefited the indigenous tribal communities of the State.

The State is now getting ready to board the first train at Naharlagun, which will be a big boost to our connectivity. A Greenfield Airport is coming up and the ALGs are being upgraded. **To salute our martyrs of 1962 war and thereafter, a State Memorial is going to be constructed near this Park.** A Mountaineering Institute (NIMAS) is also being established.

**As committed with 'People First' approach, the State Government is determined to exploit its resources and make Arunachal Pradesh one of the leading States of the country.** Its focus is also on empowering women and youth, so as to inculcate the spirit of entrepreneurship in many areas of socio-economic advancement. The State aims to free itself from social injustice, ill-health, inequality and promote education amongst all, especially the girl child. **It will continue to give priority to eradicate poverty and checking corruption, while carrying forward the development agenda of providing maximum employment opportunities to the youth of the State.** And at the same time, it has been striving forward to ensure maintenance of peace and tranquility in the State.

**With its commitment and zeal, the State Government under the dynamic leadership of Chief Minister Shri Nabam Tuki has taken up many initiatives and launched programmes,** including Chief Minister's Award for Excellence in quality education, Saakshar Bharat Mission, National Food Security Ordinance 2013, Mukhyamantri Paryatan Vikas Yojana, Chief Minister's Disability Pension Scheme, Chief Minister's Universal Health Insurance Scheme and many more.

In the last one year, many first ever initiatives have been taken. It includes maiden visit of the President of India and his address to Legislative Assembly, Job Mela cum skill Development Rally, Arunachal Film Festival, Meen Mahotsava, Municipality elections, North East Expedition to Mount Everest, the International Tourism Mart at Tawang and so on.

**The State Government will continue to address the challenges of underdevelopment in interior and remote areas.** In particular, development of the border belt is one of the main planks of development in my State. In the recently concluded Governors' Conference, I have taken up this matter strongly and a renewed thrust in this regard is on the agenda.

**The youth of any country is the crucial backbone for its future development and progress.** India is fortunate to have a large young population to take forward her aspirational agenda of change. The 13-35 years' age group in our country accounts for more than 40 per cent of the population. The proportion of working age population between 15 and 59 years is increasing, with 63.5 million being likely added to this group between 2011 and 2016. **Within a decade, India will have the world's largest workforce, which will account for two-third of her population. Arunachal has a large share in this.**

Therefore, my dear energetic youth of the State, prepare yourself to meet challenges of the future. **Arunachal Pradesh can forge ahead faster, if each one of you actively cooperates and participates in constructive development related activities.** We can become one of the leading States in the country, if all of us contribute to the best of our ability and capacity towards the achievement of this aim.

**Remember, you have to be part of the 'solution' and not be part of the 'problem'. The rich youth dividend cannot allowed to be wasted. The elders in the society too have a role in this and have the responsibility to groom the "generation next".**

Recent cases of violence in the State's boundary and in the National Capital have immensely pained all of us. No body gains from violence, except anti social elements and their mentors, who are instigating it.

**Let us maintain age-old tradition of being good neighbours, display mutual tolerance and shun racial discrimination.**

You must be aware that a number of initiatives are being taken to instil a sense of security amongst our children in the National Capital. The issue was even discussed by me in the Governors' conference in presence of the President of India, Vice President and the Prime Minister. I am sanguine that concrete actions will be taken very soon.

**Let me congratulate all the exemplary individuals who have been honoured with State Medals** today, in recognition of the meritorious services put in by them in the discharge of their duties.

I am also particularly happy that the **theme of today's celebration** is '**Decentralisation**'. To strengthen the grassroots governance, State Government has decided to transfer more powers to Local Self Governments and I appreciate this. The details of power devolution to PRI and Municipalities will be announced by the Hon'ble Chief Minister.

**As I conclude, I express my appreciation to all the officials of the State Govt. and the Central Govt., military and para-military forces and other organizations working in the State in a spirit of dedicated and selfless service.**

I also commend the public representatives, our Panchayati Raj representatives, Gaon Burahs, youth, students, NGOs, friends from the media and all the people of Arunachal Pradesh for their unstinted contribution in development of the State.

On this momentous occasion I urge each one of you to renew the pledge of realizing our vision of a self-reliant, vibrant, and developed Arunachal Pradesh. **Let us make collective efforts as a proud member of 'Team Arunachal' to achieve greater progress and lasting peace in the State.**

**My compliments to the organizers of this historic event.**

**Well done and keep it up !**

Jai Hind.