



ADDRESS
OF
LT GENERAL NIRBHAY SHARMA,
PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, VSM (RETD),
HON'BLE GOVERNOR,
ARUNACHAL PRADESH
ON THE OCCASION OF
SPECIAL SESSION
OF
THE FIFTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH
AT
NOKMEY NAMATI HALL
NAHARLAGUN
ON
29 NOVEMBER 2013

It is for the first time that the Hon'ble President of India is addressing the Arunachal Assembly, making it a landmark event in the history of political development and growth of democracy in our State. It is truly a milestone and I deem it my proud privilege to participate in this special Assembly.

I join our Hon'ble Speaker, Hon'ble Chief Minister and other esteemed members in extending our warm greetings to Hon'ble President of India. I also take this opportunity to convey goodwill of the people of Arunachal Pradesh.

Looking at the history of growth of political process in our State, it has to be noted that the North East has been a distinct frontier region and its administrative system was quite different from the rest, even during the British India. Although in 1914, North Eastern Frontier Tracts (as called then) was placed under Assam Province, but most of the administration was left to the local tribal chiefs.

After the Independence in 1947, a series of administrative changes have taken place. To briefly recapitulate, in 1950s, it was administered by the Ministry of External Affairs and 1960s, it was transferred to the Ministry of Home Affairs and a full scale administration was ushered in.

In 1971, we received a new name and a new political status, i.e. Arunachal Pradesh a Union Territory of the Republic India.

Followed by it were series of political events like General Elections to the Parliament, three elections to the Union Territory (including a mid-term poll) and a 77 day President's Rule. In all, presenting the people of Arunachal Pradesh an opportunity to participate in the democratic process of the Nation. Finally, the day came when Arunachal Pradesh was declared as 24th State of the Union of India on 20th February 1987 (and a full-fledged Legislative Assembly).

To increase more involvement of the people in governance, the number of seats in the Assembly was increased from 30 to 60. Hon'ble President, I am pleased to inform you that from 1990 to 2009, the people of this State participated in all the five Assembly Elections enthusiastically.

As I had said in the commemoration function, the State Legislative Assemblies are the Temples of democracy. Viewed from one perspective, it can be said that we are in a nascent stage of political growth since we lack political legacy. However, I hold a different view, because the people of Arunachal had a vibrant system of self-governance and a “bottoms up” democracy for centuries. The tribal culture imbibes the basic tenets of true democracy and good governance by being fair, transparent and accountable in meeting the aspirations of their respective tribe/group. Although there were some aberrations in terms of inter and intra tribal feuds and social evils prevalent at that time, the people of this State lived in harmony with nature and were at peace with themselves. Even today, in the North East region of India, the State of Arunachal Pradesh is an island of peace.

The change from age-old tribal society and the administrative system to the modern democratic set up has taken place. It is to the credit of our visionary national leaders and those present here today and also their predecessors that Arunachal Pradesh is now part of the main stream of India and ranks rather high in economic and social parameters. However, it is still a work in progress. The challenges are in the economic, social and strategic fields.

As embedded in our constitution, the members of the House, past and present are striving to secure to all its citizens justice, liberty, equality and fraternity befitting the sovereign, socialist secular and democratic Republic of India. It is heartening to note that the Assembly is living upto it and has maintained the highest standards of parliamentary democracy. The geostrategic location of the State makes it even more vital that faith of the people is reposed in the Assembly for their security and prosperity.

Amongst the 60 (Sixty) members, although we have three lady members, The House has taken steps in the economic empowerment of women for a humane and compassionate society. I however hope that their number in the Assembly grows.

Hon'ble President, your presence in our State Legislative Assembly will definitely motivate every member to renew his or her commitment towards welfare of the people of Arunachal Pradesh. I am confident that this historical event will mark the new beginning in political and developmental advancement of the State.

As I conclude, once again, I express our gratitude to Hon'ble President for being amidst us in this Assembly.

Hon'ble President, we look forward for your enlightening speech and also for your kind guidance in the future in strengthening the political development of this Frontier State of our great country.

Thank you very much.

Jai Hind.