



**SPEECH
OF
HIS EXCELLENCY
LT GENERAL NIRBHAY SHARMA,
PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, VSM (RETD),
GOVERNOR,
ARUNACHAL PRADESH
ON THE OCCASION OF
INAUGURAL CEREMONY OF
ARUNACHAL SPRING CARNIVAL
AT
SILE LEGING, PASIGHAT
ON
17 MARCH 2015**

Agam Pe !

At the very outset, I convey warm greetings to the people of Pasighat. It is my pleasure, to be in this place, which has lots of history, the first educational hub of the State and a place, which offers a lot to the outsiders with its abundant traditions and cultural heritage.

Since early history of the State and the North East region, Pasighat and the Siang belt have a place and record of which we all are proud of. The Poju Mimak reflects the valour, courage and bravery of the great sons of our soil.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it gives me immense happiness to inaugurate this tourism festival, 'Arunachal Spring Carnival'. First of its kind, I am confident that this festival will open the floodgate of tourists coming to Arunachal Pradesh. Our mighty Siang River not only provide livelihood to the people but also a unique playground for water sports. I am told that White Water Rafting in this River is next only to Colorado.

Tourism has been recognised and accepted as one of the fastest growing sector of the global economy. However, one of the reasons for the slow opening of this sector in the State is lack of knowledge amongst the tourists of the potential of the State and investment opportunities in the State by the entrepreneurs. With festivals like this in different parts of the State, we can not only attract large number of tourist in the near future, but bring in investments in infrastructure sector to enhance connectivity, so vital for development.

With great pride I can say that Arunachal Pradesh was chosen as the fourth best region amongst the top ten tourist destinations in the world for the year 2012 by one of the leading travelogues, Lonely Planet. The State has added another feather to its wings after being voted the 'Favourite Upcoming Destination' by a travel magazine 'Outlook Traveller.' Also Government of India has recently launched '777 Days of the Incredible Indian Himalayas' campaign to centre stage the Incredible Indian Himalayas on the World Tourism Map. Arunachal Pradesh is one of the major stakeholders in the campaign. Well done Arunachal !

This mystical land of smiling people, Arunachal Pradesh is one of the twelve mega biodiversity hotspots in the world. Having 80% of its land surface covered with greenery, we have rich flora and fauna, variety of species and large number of rare orchids, pristine beauty and green pastures of dense forest.

Now the state Government has introduced Helicopter service to important tourist destinations. Infrastructural facilities including road communications are being constructed at war footing due to which the inflows of domestic/foreign tourists are increasing day by day.

Stimulating other factors for socio-economic growth it has generated substantial employment avenues and alleviated poverty of the state to some extent. To enhance skilled and standard service, an Institute of Hotel Management and Catering Technology is being commissioned within the state and the service providers are being trained from time to time through Hunar Se Rozgar Yojna and already 200 unemployed youth have completed the course .

To market state tourism products besides state's Fairs & Festivals the Department is participating in various national and international Fairs & Festivals. The International Trade Mart (ITM) was conducted on 18th to 20th October 2013 at Tawang with huge participations from more than 50 countries of the world.

Keeping in mind to develop Arunachal Tourism giving equal economic opportunities to local communities and also to preserve the fragile eco-system and ethnic identity of the people, tourism development paradigm has been formulated to achieve eco as well as culture sustainability.

The tourists coming to Arunachal are not looking at 5 star comforts, but get a feel of the tribal living and soak in the nature's bounty. We need to work more on this by creating eco- friendly and indigenous tribal infrastructure and show case it as our USP.

As ingrained in our Indian Culture, 'Atithi Devo Bhava', we always revered our guests. We make elaborate arrangement for them. The tribal people are always renowned for their hospitality. We must maintain this magnificent tradition. I would like to remind our youth that your ignorance and impolite act with visiting tourist will adversely affect tourism. We need to exhibit the highest level of hospitality and courtesy. For misdeed of few individuals must not destroy the livelihood of many. The tourists coming to our state must feel secure. Reported incidents of extortions and harassment are shameful and must be condemned.

I am also pained to learn about misendeavour of some of the youth. They are into drugs and alcohol. This to my mind is the biggest challenge to us as individuals and collectively as a society. My recent interaction with energetic and committed ladies of Adi Bane Kebang shows the spirit and commitment, the forefathers have sown amongst the people of this area.

I am hopeful that we will rise to this challenge and eradicate this menace. I appeal to peers of these youth, parents, elders of the society, gaon burahs, district administration and police to put a combined effort and ensure that they come back to healthy lifestyle.

I am very happy to learn about the recent initiatives in securing the parks and wildlife. The State is blessed with 82% Forest coverage and has a very fragile eco system. Its preservations has huge impact for the State and Nation. Therefore, it is our duty and as tribal, our obligation to preserve our flora and fauna. Let us concentrate more on this.

Taking this opportunity, I appeal to all of you to actively participate in the Swachchh Bharat Abhiyan. To realize Gandhi's dream of 'Clean India', the Government of India has launched 'Swachchh Bharat Abhiyan'. It is the vision of our beloved Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji to have a five-year programme to make our country clean. The goal is to achieve Swachchh Bharat by 2nd October 2019, as a fitting tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary. The task may appear to be mammoth, but is doable and must be accomplished to see a healthy and vibrant India.

I also appeal to all the people to ensure opening of bank account under Jan Dhan Yojana and be part of economic surge of the nation. At the same time, prepare for bright future through 'Act East' policy as Arunachal Pradesh will be one of the major stakeholders.

As I conclude, I felicitate the State Government, Hon'ble Tourism Minister, officers and officials of Tourism department and East Siang District and people of the District, particularly the people of Pasighat for hosting this festival.

I wish it to be a grand success and pray to Almighty Donyi Polo to shower his choicest blessings. My wife was looking forward to join in the days festivities, but some unforeseen requirements have held her back at Itanagar. She too conveys her greetings to all.

Jai Hind.