



सत्यमेव जयते

**SPEECH
OF
HIS EXCELLENCY**

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**GOVERNOR,
ARUNACHAL PRADESH**

**ON THE OCCASION
OF
ASSEMBLY DAY**

**AT
NOKMEY NAMATI HALL
NAHARLAGUN**

**ON
WEDNESDAY, 07 AUGUST, 2013**

- Good morning
- Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Nabam Tuki
- Speaker Shri Wanglin Lowangdong,
- Cabinet Ministers,
- Members of this esteemed Assembly,
- Distinguished guests and invitees,
- Officials of the State Legislative Assembly,
- Friends from the media
- Ladies and gentlemen.

At the very outset, I extend warm greetings to the people of Arunachal Pradesh, Hon'ble Members of the esteemed Assembly and pioneers amongst the political leadership of the State on this very special occasion.

Indeed, this day commemorates the commencement of democratic process to enable the people of Arunachal Pradesh to chart their own destiny. This date i.e. August 7, is historic because in 1975 on this date i.e. exactly 38 years ago, the actual process of giving effect to the Legislative Assembly began and the Union Government agreed to demands of the people converting the Pradesh Council into the Provisional Legislative Assembly. Some of you may recall that Shri K.A.A. Raja was the first Lieutenant

Governor of this Union Territory and Shri P.K. Thungon was the Chief Minister. I must compliment the Hon'ble Speaker, officials of the Legislative Assembly and the State Government for giving this date its due by holding this commemorative function. It is yet another first by the State of Arunachal Pradesh. Well done!

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, North Eastern Frontier Tracts (NEFT) became a part of Assam State of the Indian Union. Later in 1951 North Eastern Frontier Agency (NEFA) was created, but Assam Legislative jurisdiction was not extended to this area. NEFA was then administered by the Ministry of External Affairs, with the Governor of Assam acting as Agent to the President of India.

In 1954, the NEFA (Administration) Regulation transformed it into six Frontier Divisions viz. Kameng, Subansiri, Siang, Lohit, Tirap and Tuensang. (Three years

later Tuensang Frontier Division was transferred to Nagaland). A full-scale and integrated administration was ushered in. Subsequently in 1965, based on the recommendations of Daying Ering Commission, NEFA administration was transferred to the Ministry of Home Affairs. Consequently five divisions of NEFA became its five districts. The same Commission is instrumental in the introduction of the Panchayati Raj system in 1965.

It was followed by the enactment of NEFA (Administration) Supplementary Regulation, 1971. It provided for replacement of Agency Council by Pradesh Council, a precursor of the Legislative Assembly. A new name and a new political status, i.e. Arunachal Pradesh a Union Territory of the Republic India, was given by North East Areas (Reorganisation) Act of 1971.

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).

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.

In the economic field, we are yet to harness our full potential and reap the harvest of nature's bounty. The hydro-power potential of the State by itself can make the State financially self-sufficient and even more. Add to this, the fields of agriculture, horticulture, tourism and so on, the State is waiting to become Switzerland of the East. In fact, rather than looking at the Central Government to give the financial aid, we will be a donor State and contribute to the National basket.

Socially, the State prides itself in maintaining communal harmony and brotherhood of exceptional order. However, we are yet to cross some of the tribal barriers fully. Historically, Arunachalees are broadly of the same stock and have a common thread running through. The emergence of different tribes and differences in their customs and culture have essentially come up due to geographic isolation and should now be a model of unity in diversity and nothing less.

Strategically, Arunachal Pradesh is very significant, sharing a border of 160 km. with Bhutan, 1,080 km. with China and 440 km. with Myanmar. Considering the border dispute with China, we need to develop the infrastructure and ensure that the State is secure. The development of border region is therefore important from this perspective as well. All this boils down to good governance i.e. meeting

basic needs of the people in terms of food, shelter, health, education and security. This has to be on the plank of self-governance starting with Gram Panchayat, which must retain a healthy blend of tribal traditions and institutions, with the modern system of administration.

It is very relevant here to mention that Panchayat Raj Regulation Act was passed during the NEFA period i.e. in 1967 and a three tier Panchayat Raj system was adopted. The traditional Village Councils, which were already recognised under North East Frontier Administration of Justice Regulation 1945, were accorded the status of Gram Panchayats. Though there are no written rules, the spirit of customs and traditions of the Village Councils is in tune with the modern concept of jurisprudence and parliamentary democracy. Hence, we need to preserve and promote and integrate traditional wisdom of these councils in the context of the 73rd Amendment Act.

I strongly feel the requirement of training the newly elected Municipal Councillors and the members of Panchayat Raj Institutions. A thorough understanding of provisions of the 73rd and 74th Amendment Act and other rules and regulations would enable them to deal with local issues with more confidence. Even the Hon'ble Legislators, if I may suggest, will benefit from a refresher on vital issues of constitutional wisdom.

I am pleased to note that this august body led by the Hon'ble Chief Minister and his Council of Ministers is particularly addressing the youth. The endeavour to generate employment with a target of 1 lac in a year though ambitious but is doable and indeed laudable, and so is the constant fight against drug menace. The State Government has also very forcefully raised its voice to Delhi to enhance the connectivity and provide resources to harness the economic potential of the State. However, the efforts to instil a sense of security in the masses and creating of a conducive environment for development are yet to fructify fully. This has to be not only sustained, but given further momentum. We owe it to the people of this magnificent State and in particular to the "Generation next."

Hon'ble members, seeing your enthusiastic participation, I am confident that you all will continue the excellent tradition of the State Legislative Assembly, which is one of best in the country. The decorum maintained in our Assembly is exemplary. In this regard, I must acknowledge that under the able guidance of former Speakers Late Nokmey Namati, Shri Padi Yube, Shri T.L. Rajkumar, Shri Lijum Ronya, Shri Tako Dabi, Shri Chowna Mein, Shri Tamiyo Taga, Shri Setong Sena and the present Speaker Shri Wanglin Lowangdong, this Assembly has been the guiding institution on the path of democratic

development. I convey my sincere admiration to the past and present members of the esteemed Assembly. However, I must remind the members of this august Assembly that it is incumbent upon you to work towards meeting the economic, social and strategic challenges faced by the State. Inculcating the best practices of democracy in terms of healthy and well informed debates make for a good legislative body.

I am also very impressed by the photo gallery, which I had the privilege to inaugurate. I would like to advise officials to keep it open for the next one week or so, for the people, especially the students, so that they get to know the political development in the State through the richly illustrated photographs.

Once again, I extend my warm greetings and good wishes to all of you. I hope that the occasion will always act as a reminder for us to renew our commitment to secularism, pluralism, dignity of every citizen and eliminate social discriminations. The best interests of the people of Arunachal Pradesh will get adequate voice for all time to come.

The need of hour is to grasp the opportunity, harness the nature's bounty and develop the human resource to place the "Land of Rising Sun" on a pedestal of peace and prosperity. Let us all share the optimism that we will rise above differences and challenges to realize our dreams and give shape to our aspirations. With new strength and renewed commitments, let us reinforce the bonds of our composite society.

I am certain that we all will rise to the occasion and live up to the trust reposed by the Arunachalees in us. Finally, I can do no better than to quote Gurudev Tagore. Today, as we know is his death anniversary.

Where the mind is without fear and the head
is held high;

Where knowledge is free;

Where the world has not been broken up into
fragments by narrow domestic walls;

Where words come out from the depth of truth;

Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards
perfection:

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way
into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;

Where the mind is lead forward by thee into ever-
widening thought and action –

Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country
awake.

From Gitanjali, Rabindranath Tagore

My best wishes for the grand success of the
celebrations.

JAI HIND

JAI ARUNACHAL