



SPEECH

OF

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*GOVERNOR
ARUNACHAL PRADESH*

*ON THE OCCASION OF
8TH BUDDHA MAHOTSAVA*

*AT
TAWANG*

*ON
NOVEMBER 09, 2008*

**SPEECH OF HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR OF
ARUNACHAL PRADESH ON THE OCCASION OF BUDDHA
MAHOTSAV**

TAWANG, 9TH NOVEMBER 2008

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh Shri Dorjee Khandu, Hon'ble Minister for External Affairs Shri Pranab Mukherjee, Shri Tsewang Dhondup, Hon'ble MLA of Tawang and other dignitaries and my dear brothers and sisters,

On the occasion of 8th Buddha Mahotsava Celebrations, let me convey my Greetings and Best wishes to all present here and pray to God that the teachings and learnings of Lord Buddha continue to guide us in all spheres of life. I am extremely delighted to be in Tawang which has been aptly described as the Shangri La on Earth! Lord Buddha's compassionate wisdom is guiding people and communities, the world over. Tawang, being a leading center of Mahayana Buddhism in the world has a distinct place in the Buddhist Cultural and Spiritual traditions. Tawang Monastery built 300 years ago by His Holiness Merak Lama Lodre Gyatso is one of the biggest and the most important centers of Buddhism in Asia. The thirty feet high statue of Lord Buddha here radiates benevolence and is a living symbol of faith, nonviolence and compassion.

Mother Nature has blessed Arunachal aplenty. Buddha Mahotsava aims to promote Arunachal Pradesh as a special travel destination for those seeking the spiritual and unique cultural experience. It also seeks to explore ways to present the pristine and rich tourism potential of the State. Amidst the grandeur of the mountains peaks, lush green valleys and fast flowing rivers, the festival offers visitors a truly singular experience. It will give succor to the people looking for mystique peace and harmony with the nature. This creates a great potential for us in the field of eco tourism and adventure sports. Adventure Sports enthusiasts will come here to explore possibilities in river-rafting, hiking, trekking, mountaineering, hang gliding, snow skiing etc. Wild Life Sanctuaries, National Parks, Biosphere reserves and lush green tropical forests and wildlife creates possibilities

what Nature Lovers dream of. I am sure all these are requirements for a vibrant tourism industry in the State which will contribute to our economy and create jobs for our youth.

I am a great advocate of eco-tourism and strong believer in preserving our own culture. I have advised the Government to go for eco-friendly structures instead of creating cement concrete jungles and promote village tourism. In one of my recent meeting with Smti Ambika Soni, the Minister Tourism, she sanctioned one institute of hotel management for us and also expressed her desire to support our efforts in promoting tourism in Arunachal Pradesh.

The tribal communities of Arunachal Pradesh with its unique customs and traditions coupled with the variety of dance forms, music, handicrafts and cuisines makes it an amazing melting pot of Nature, Religion and Culture. Along with development in all arenas of public life, the tribes and people of Arunachal Pradesh are in the process of transformation.

Today Arunachal Pradesh is going ahead on the march towards development and I compliment the State Government led by Shri Dorjee Khandu for the same. The Hon'ble Prime Minister's visit to Arunachal Pradesh was an event of historical significance. Various important developmental programmes of over twenty thousand crores have been announced by the Hon'ble Prime Minister. We are confident that within a reasonable span of time, Arunachal Pradesh will catch up with other developed states of our country and even surpass some of them. The Hon'ble Prime Minister's initiatives such as Trans-Arunachal Highway, Border Village Illumination Programme, connection of 513 habitations by roads under PMGSY, new green-field airport at Itanagar and other nine small airports, rail connectivity for Capital region are revolutionary landmark events in vision and would be etched forever in golden letters when the history of development of the vitally important State of Arunachal Pradesh is recorded.

Today, because of presence of Hon'ble Union Minister of External Affairs, I am reminded of Hon'ble Prime Minister's statement during the Combined Commander's Conference in October 2006. Quote '*A critical aspect of our policy must be the **rapid development of infrastructure in our border areas**. This is now recognized to have major implications not only for our internal security but also as a force multiplier when it comes to our external security.*' Hon'ble Prime Minister had said during the Independence Day speech on 15th August 2005 that '*we will ensure that these (border) regions are provided basic infrastructure such as roads, electricity and telephone connectivity in the next 3-4 years*'. I appeal to the Hon'ble Minister to bring out a comprehensive policy backed by adequate resources for the overall development of border areas.

Arunachal Pradesh is a peace loving State and I am sure with these remarkable developments, we will be counted amongst one of the most developed States of the Nation. I am sure that the State Government is making efforts for improving Basic Infrastructure and bringing in Good Governance in order to make this dream a reality.

The thought of integration and the essential oneness of all people are at the core of Buddhist thought and philosophy. With advances in Information Technology and Internet, the world has become one; many people refer to this as a Global Village. With modern transport and urbanization we find meeting of cultures, religions and communities. This requires attributes of integration and not exclusion, of understanding and not intolerance, of appreciation and assimilation and not hatred and fanaticism. Thus following the Universal Principles of love and tolerance, in essence the true Buddhist thought and philosophy will bring in Peace, Harmony and Fulfillment.

I complement all those, especially Shri Dorjee Khandu, Shri Dhondup and Ms Vandana Deori who have been associated directly or indirectly with the celebration of this Mahotsava. I also congratulate the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India and State Government for organizing this festival in the majestic laps of Himalayas. I pray to Lord

Buddha to shower his choicest blessings on all those who are present here today and all the teeming millions of our Great Nation for Peace and Prosperity for the years to come.

Jai Hind ! Jai Arunachal !!