



GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

ADDRESS

BY

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TO THE

JOINT SESSION OF THE LEGISLATURE

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Hon'ble Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Hon'ble Chairman of the Legislative Council and distinguished members of the Legislature.

1. It gives me great pleasure to welcome all the elected and nominated representatives to the first joint session of the State Legislature. I extend a special welcome to the young first time Legislators who now comprise an impressive majority in the House!
2. This J&K Legislative Assembly, perhaps the most empowered Legislature in the country, has a rich legacy and has seen the political trials and tribulations in the past six decades: agreements, accords and pacts. And history is being made as all of you, Hon'ble Members, sit here this morning to listen to this Address.

3. The state Assembly elections last year did not engender a clear majority for any single party, and this led to a short spell of Governor's Rule. While the elections rendered a fractured mandate, the mature statesmanship of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) utilised it as an opportunity to evolve a situation which could eventually result in harmoniously intermeshing all the regions of the State and binding them together.
4. The Alliance between the PDP and BJP for pursuing an agreed agenda will act as the cohesive force in bringing all the regions closer and for the people of J&K to share and support a common vision of the entire state. If we succeed in welding the regions together, we shall also succeed in securing the desired level of trust to bring Jammu and Kashmir to work more closely with New Delhi. It is this vision which brings

together the PDP-BJP Coalition Government and not mere compulsions of exercising power.

5. Mere numerical strength cannot lay the foundations of a strong government. Jammu and Kashmir requires a strong, stable and capable government and that is exactly what the Coalition Government is and looks forward to serving the people of the State for the next six years.
6. The understandings between the coalition partners are symbolised by the "Agenda of the Alliance" which forms the basis of the decisive and distinctive changes which the government seeks to bring about on a time bound basis and bring together the people of our State and the rest of the country.
7. The effective implementation of the Agenda of Alliance would promote confidence, trust and harmony among

our people. The Alliance is founded in the conviction that such trust and reconciliation will spread beyond the State and also create a conducive environment for securing the all round economic development of the State and bringing prosperity for the people.

8. The Agenda for Alliance recognizes the political and legislative realities and the maintenance of the existing special constitutional provisions and status of J&K. In this context, it is relevant to note that the Coalition Government is comprised by representatives from all the regions, and this gives it the strength to initiate all the required processes for engendering peace and all around development.
9. The very high voter turnout in the Assembly Elections, particularly in the rural, remote and difficult areas, has further strengthened the democratic

system and generated an encouraging environment which, if handled with sensitivity, conviction and sustained commitment, could usher in harmonious and positive understandings amongst the political parties in the State and also engender conditions which would enable the Government to establish self-sustaining economic growth and development across the three regions of J&K.

10. The Coalition Government is devoted to consensus and inclusivity and shall administer the State in a manner which will further strengthen and enlarge democratic politics and bring peace and prosperity for all the people of the State.
11. The objective of the Coalition Government is to politically empower the people of J&K and make the State economically self-reliant,

environmentally safe, socially cohesive and culturally vibrant. To proceed sure footedly towards the attainment of these important objectives the Government shall look to sustained involvement of all the stakeholders within the State and strong support from all the concerned Central authorities. In this context, it is important to recognise that mere economic development would not bring peace and prosperity. Therefore, to achieve sustainable economic development the Government would pursue a political process which is accompanied by all required material, economic and financial initiatives.

12. It is also hoped that striking the right balance between the political process and economic initiatives will engender a virtuous cycle of peace and prosperity which will pave the path for the coming generations to lead normal, peaceful

and productive lives, specially our people who live in areas which have witnessed prolonged tensions and conflicts.

13. To meet these objectives and deliver economic growth with regional balance and social justice, it is important to create an environment of peace, certainty and stability within which development can take place in the State.
14. In the larger context of economic growth, the three pronged agenda of the Coalition Government is to Reconstruct the Economy, Reform the Government and Revive the Civil Society.
15. The reconstruction of the economy has to be driven at the policy level. The macro-economic policy and reforms will be based on extensive import substitution and intensive export

orientation of the state economy. This will give the local entrepreneurs a chance to grow, increase their scale of operations and the size of their investments.

16. The second most important objective of the Government shall be to reform governance and make J&K an ethical and corruption-free state.
17. The Coalition Government has taken over at a time when the public discourse in the country, and in the state, has been marked by widespread outrage against corruption in the governmental system and persistent demand for public representatives to be visibly aligned with the problems and aspirations of the people at large.
18. The situation in J&K has been no different and it is a great challenge for the Coalition Government to restore the integrity of institutions and the people's

faith in their ability to deliver. The Government is determined to show no quarter to corruption and dishonest elements in the administration or those in public life.

19. The Government will, over the next six years, transform the existing administrative apparatus into a Smart Government which will be pro-active, transparent and accountable. It will be reformed and redesigned to be a reliable enabler for the development of trade, industry and business and a strategic partner for long term private sector growth.
20. For achieving these objectives, new governance systems shall be introduced with national and international support and expertise to improve service delivery and provide honest, effective and inclusive governance. The envisaged governance framework will

include institutional capacity building and public-private partnership. This will enable the state to seek national and international financing for its developmental plans and projects, particularly in sectors like power, infrastructure, education, agriculture, horticulture, tourism and medical services.

21. It shall be the Government's priority to simplify "doing business" by reducing regulatory complexities and costs, easing bureaucratic barriers and simplifying registration processes and clearances. This will also contribute towards significantly reducing the scale and spread of corruption in the state.
22. The overall economic policy will align the State's economic structure with its own resources, skills and societal mores. Essentially, the new economic policy will be framed not for the ease

of government's own activities but for promoting private businesses and enterprises. In this context, I am happy to record that J&K, like most other states, has received a major boost from the award of the 14th Finance Commission which has changed the framework of Fiscal Federalism in the country. This is a welcome change as it is a move towards larger and genuine federalism.

23. The Coalition Government intends to use the Finance Commission award as an opportunity to bring about changes which would improve the allocation of resources and the government's spending efficiency.
24. While this is an important change, it can and should trigger much larger changes, particularly in imparting the administrative apparatus with greater responsibility and initiative. The

governmental system will now require to be pro-active and much more responsible.

25. At another level, the enhancement of fiscal devolution has set the stage for decentralization and empowering the third level of governance to discharge its important role.
26. In this context, the Government is committed to hold early elections to Local Bodies. It will also revisit the relevant statutes relating to Panchayats and Local Bodies with a view to removing deficiencies and incongruities, and for empowering them for discharging their statutory functions effectively and efficiently. All three levels of governance will be given optimum functional roles, fiscal responsibilities, and financial authority.

27. As a part of smart governance, the Coalition Government will accord top priority to restoring and reviving the institutions and institutional capabilities which have been eroded over the years. The institutional decay in the past years has compounded the delivery of effective governance. It is regrettable that important institutions like the State Accountability Commission, Public Service Commission and the Human Rights Commission are not only non-functional but have been virtually non-existent for quite some time.
28. The Government will focus on establishing accountability of the administrative system, and of public life, by reviving institutions and providing them with adequate administrative support and the desired

autonomy to enforce the highest standards of probity.

29. Laws like the Public Services Guarantee Act have been in force for quite some time. However, these statutes have been ineffective because of the lack of awareness among the people about these laws.
30. The Coalition Government will ensure that these laws actually translate into a viable instrument of empowerment of the common man and the public services are delivered on time, without hassle and as a basic right of our citizens and not as a favour done by the State.
31. The Coalition Government's major differentiator will be its developmental focus. Regional developmental plans will be formulated to ensure that each region has a specific and focused

economic activity that spurs development in the sphere of crafts and tourism, hydro-power, solar power and wind energy, bio-technology, agriculture, horticulture, food processing, manufacturing and trade.

32. With a view to ensuring that leave aside being actually discriminated no region even has a feeling about being discriminated, the Government will institute a system of criteria-based allocation of financial resources across all the three regions for achieving equitable distribution and balanced development.
33. A key initiative, as agreed in the Agenda of the Alliance, which will go a long way in changing the fortunes of the state, relates to the power sector. The Government will work with the Union Government to explore modalities for the transfer of Dulhasti and Uri

hydro power projects to J&K. The State Government will also seek a share in the profits of NHPC which emanate from J&K waters and, besides, revision of all royalty agreements.

34. We thank the Central Government for announcing the setting up of an All India Institute of Medical Sciences in the Valley and the establishment of an IIT and an IIM for Jammu.
35. As given in the Agenda of the Alliance, there is an agreement to give J&K a dedicated coal mine with coal reserves of not less than 150 MMT for setting up a Pit Head Thermal Plant with equity support from the Centre. Also, the Central Government will ensure that J&K gets a share in one of the six Ultra Mega Thermal Power Projects.
36. For all the power projects being set up in J&K, the Government will, in

partnership with private investors, establish skill development institutes in Chenab and other regions wherever such investments are made.

37. The Government is also committed to taking some key developmental initiatives, which will include creating model business villages, like a Model Basmati Village in Jammu, a Model Apple Village in Kashmir and a Model Apricot Village in Ladakh.
38. The Government will start the process of developing two mega cities: Greater Srinagar and Greater Jammu. Alongside we will develop two satellite cities of New Srinagar and New Jammu. Also, to streamline urbanization in the state, all towns with population size class of 30,000 to 99,999 will be upgraded into cities.

39. Another major initiative, as outlined in the Agenda of Alliance, is to launch a special fully funded Employment package for educated and semi-skilled youth which will be designed in such a manner that it will engender 100% female literacy and 100% Primary Health Care across the state.
40. It shall be the Government's priority to develop Jammu as an independent tourism destination with plans to develop other specific circuits. Water bodies around the Baghlihar, Salal and Ranjit Sagar will be developed for tourism and there are plans afoot to develop Ranjit Sagar, Mansar, Wular and Suruinsar lakes. Special attention will be given to clean and beautify the Jehlum and Tawi rivers on the pattern of River Ganga.
41. Over the last about two decades, the heritage of the state has been badly

damaged. The Government will focus on reviving the heritage by rebuilding Shehr-e-Khaas as a heritage destination by dovetailing craft, heritage and tourism and making Dal Lake a world heritage site. Further, the Government will preserve and promote the Dogra and Ladakhi heritage.

42. Till such time the new development paradigm takes shape and yields the envisaged outcomes, the Coalition Government will take specific measures to ease the day to day lives of people.
43. While the unprecedented floods in 2014 caused untold devastation, the Government believes that the disaster which has taken place provides an excellent opportunity to ensure that all the destroyed assets are reconstructed very much better, to leap frog into the 21st century. The Government is also committed to institutionalize a modern

robust disaster management system in the state by building the required capacities.

44. For the Government, the focus of the post-flood rehabilitation program will be on the restoration of livelihoods and rebuilding of the economy. The floods have not only destroyed assets but severely impaired the process of income generation. It would take the state economy nearly a decade to reach the pre-flood levels of the disposable incomes gained by the State and individuals. The focus shall be to recover the income loss and to meet the liability commitments in agriculture, horticulture, handicrafts, industry, trade and tourism.
45. The ambit of rehabilitation has been expanded to those geographical areas and businesses that are "flood impacted", in addition to being

"flood affected". Towards this end, my government has already speed tracked its engagement with the World Bank.

46. As regards losses, both public assets and private assets have been damaged and/or lost. For reconstructing the public assets, the resources are envisaged to come from the Central Government. This objective is sought to be achieved by developing and implementing a "Public Infrastructure Reconstruction Plan". In the first phase of this Plan the major focus will be on establishing connectivity across the state.
47. While the Government of India is expected to fully fund this rehabilitation and reconstruction plan, for addressing issues of immediate concern it shall also have to take some urgent practical measures in the aforesaid sectors.

48. To strengthen and enhance societal harmony, my Government will ensure the return of Kashmiri Pandits with dignity, based on their rights as state subjects. No effort will be spared to reintegrating and absorbing them in the Kashmiri milieu.
49. The Government will also work out a one-time settlement for refugees from Pakistan Occupied Kashmir of 1947, 1965 & 1971, take measures for the sustenance and livelihood of the West Pakistan refugees and constitute a Delimitation Commission for re-demarcating the Legislative Assembly Constituencies as required by law.
50. In the recent years there has been progressive improvement in the security environment. To build greater and sustained public confidence, the Coalition Government is committed to ensuring that the people of the State

are enabled to fully enjoy the peace and normalcy dividend. The Government will also address the concerns of the people living on the borders and those in the remote and far-flung areas of the State.

51. In this context, the Coalition Government will thoroughly review the security situation in J&K and examine the need and desirability of all the special laws which are being applied in the state. Keeping in mind that the situation is steadily improving, the Government will examine the need for de-notifying 'disturbed areas' and this, in turn, would enable the Central Government to take a final view on the continuation of AFSPA in such areas.
52. A very important step which the Government will implement shall be to ensure that all lands, other than the lands which have been given to the

Security Forces on lease, license or through acquisition under the provision of the Land Acquisition Act, must be returned to the rightful legal owners within a given time frame.

53. To enlarge the constituency of peace and deepen its societal moorings, the Coalition Government will take well considered political initiatives. It would be recalled that the erstwhile NDA Government, led by Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, had initiated a dialogue process with all political groups, including the Hurriyat Conference, in the spirit of "Insaanīyat, Kashmiriyat aur Jamhooriyat".
54. Following a similar approach, the Coalition Government will facilitate and help initiate a sustained and meaningful dialogue with all internal stakeholders, which will include all political groups

irrespective of their ideological views and predilections. This dialogue will seek to build a broad based consensus on the resolution of all outstanding issues of J&K.

55. The Central Government has recently initiated steps for promoting deeper understandings with our neighbours. The Coalition Government will strive to support and strengthen the approaches and initiatives taken by the Centre and building stakes for all in furthering peace and development. This objective will be pursued by initiating suitable confidence building measures which would bring about a positive change in the lives of all our people.
56. I would conclude this Address by expressing hope that all of you would work devotedly for securing the greatest good of the largest number of our

people. I wish each one of you productive and successful tenures ahead and trust that you shall do all that is possible to contribute towards bringing sustained peace and prosperity to J&K.

JAI HIND



