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JOINT SESSION OF THE MAHARASHTRA LEGISLATURE AT BOMBAY

# ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY

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GOVERNOR OF MAHARASHTRA

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**Mr. Chairman, Mr. Speaker and Honourable Members,**

1. It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this first session of the new State Legislature. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate those of you who have been re-elected or newly elected in the recent general elections.

2. On this occasion it is but proper that we should all join in paying a tribute to the people of this State for the exemplary manner in which they have conducted themselves in exercising their franchise. This has not only brought credit to the people and Government of this State, but has also once again demonstrated to the world our staunch adherence to democratic ideals and practices. It also reflects credit on the election machinery of the State for conducting the elections so smoothly and efficiently.

3. My new Government, returned with a renewed assurance of confidence from the people of this State, is determined to carry on its development programme which it has already set before itself in the past. It has also declared its determination to make the State self-sufficient in food in two harvesting seasons. To achieve this end, my Government has already taken steps to develop land, to increase irrigation facilities and to popularise the growth and use of hybrid seed. This programme is being constantly expanded and this year 54 lakhs of acres of land will come under high yielding and hybrid varieties of paddy, jowar, wheat and maize. To increase well irrigation, use is being made of 191 boring machines and 400 air compressors. To boost agricultural production, the concession of free water was given in the rabi season of 1965-66 and it became so popular that rabi cultivation rose from 2.25 lakh acres to 4.72 lakh acres, an increase of 110 per cent. To make more water available for growing food crops water given to sugarcane from Government canals was cut by 25 per cent. A sum of Rs. 2.6 crores was given to Zilla Parishads for effecting

repairs to Malgajari tanks and to take up fresh schemes of minor irrigation and lift irrigation. To quicken the pace of land development, Government proposes to increase the number of tractors from 120 to 250 and the number of bulldozers from 98 to 350.

4. Government is equally aware of the importance of increasing the supply of subsidiary foods. Thus, to increase the supply of milk during the next year, the schemes for granting loans to Co-operatives for the purchase of milch cattle and for purchasing new machinery and vehicles are being intensified. The work on the milk supply project at Dapchari in Thana district has already started. It has provision for the maintenance of 7,000 to 8,000 milch cattle and, when the project is completed, it would not only supply more milk to Bombay, but would also be a laboratory for studying dairy problems.

5. In the field of fisheries, efforts have already been started to make the State self-sufficient in fish seed. The State had depended so far on West Bengal for this purpose. A scheme for starting a fisheries project in the co-operative field on the same line as that in South Canara is also under consideration.

6. The project started at Chiplun under the cattle improvement scheme will be completed next year and it will then cover 1 lakh of cows and buffaloes. Forty new artificial insemination centres will also be opened during the year for upgrading the quality of cattle in the State.

7. My Government has also decided to establish an Agricultural University to unify and spread agricultural education and to help agricultural production. This University will have all the Agricultural Colleges in the State affiliated to it, and my Government will bring a Bill to establish it in the next Session. In the meanwhile, a Committee has been appointed to take preliminary steps and a small office of the University has been opened at Poona for the same purpose.

8. The adverse agricultural situation caused by the failure of monsoon in 1965-66 continued to some extent during this year also. About 5,000 villages in 14 out of the 26 districts are likely to be affected by scarcity conditions. This has entailed additional

expenditure on relief and relief works. A programme for scarcity areas costing about Rs. 14 crores for the revenue year of 1965-66 was prepared and sent to the Central Government for assistance. So far that Government has given only Rs. 4 crores as loans and Rs. 3.5 crores as grants. The relief distributed by the State in the shape of Tagai and other expenditure is much more than the assistance given by the Central Government. All this imposed a severe strain on the State's financial resources and consequently Government had to impose strict economy measures in 1965-66 and 1966-67.

9. In addition to the scarcity conditions, serious damage was caused in parts of the Ratnagiri district because of cyclone in November 1966. The damage was estimated at Rs. 6.17 crores. A relief and rehabilitation programme of Rs. 2.25 crores was immediately taken up. The Government of India have so far sanctioned a loan of Rs. 50 lakhs only for this purpose.

10. Being conscious of rising spiral of prices my Government is determined to bring down the prices of essential commodities especially by way of supply through Consumers' Co-operatives. Government would also open more Consumers' Co-operative Stores throughout the State to sell consumer goods at fair prices.

11. Faced though it is with all these difficulties, my Government is sparing no efforts for implementing the Plan schemes. The irrigation programme for the Fourth Plan consists of Rs. 175 crores for both major and medium schemes. As a result of this, it is estimated that an additional irrigation potential of about 11.33 lakh acres would be created. Surveys of different river valleys are also being carried out with a view to preparing project reports.

12. In the field of generation of electricity, the work under the 3rd stage of the Koyna Hydro-Electric Project has already started. This would generate an additional 320 MW of power at 20 per cent. load factor. The State Electricity Board has an ambitious programme of which the three projects at Nasik, Parali (in Bhir district), and Koradi (near Nagpur) form a substantial part. It is expected that the projects at Nasik and Parali, as also setting up of two sets of 140 MW each at Koradi, would be completed in the Fourth Plan period.

13. Looking to the importance of increased food production, the pace of rural electrification has already been intensified. By the end of December 1966, 6,012 villages have been electrified and 60,050 electric pumps installed. With the momentum now gathered it should not be difficult to electrify 10,000 villages and to install 1,00,000 electric pumps which are the targets aimed at in the Fourth Plan.

14. The State is rich in iron, coal, manganese, bauxite and lime-stone. These minerals are vital for industrialisation and hence their surveys assume great importance. Steps have been taken to get more machinery as also increased man-power for this purpose. The survey for lime-stone for manufacture of cement has been already completed.

15. Minimum wages have been newly fixed for cinema exhibition houses. Committees have also been constituted to fix minimum wages for the plastic industry and revise minimum wages of bidi and tobacco workers.

16. In the field of Co-operation, the State maintained its lead in various activities. In particular, I would like to mention that construction work of two co-operative sugar factories is in progress in Osmanabad and Nanded districts, while licences have been obtained to set up four more factories in Poona, Sangli, Dhulia and Ahmednagar districts. Permits for increase in the crushing capacity have also been received by 11 co-operative sugar factories. My Government feels that the Central Government should give more importance to the sugar industry in Maharashtra where it is possible to produce more sugarcane per acre with a larger sugar-content.

17. For improvement of communication, a provision of Rs. 55 crores is made in the Fourth Plan. Out of this, Government proposes to spend Rs. 10 crores for roads in hilly, inaccessible and backward areas and Rs. 6 crores for improvement of communication in Bombay City based on the recommendations of the Wilber Smith Report. Good progress has been made in the construction of Bhagawati Bunder at Ratnagiri. Similarly the work of construction of jetties at Mandva, Jaigad and Dabhol has made satisfactory progress.

18. My Government has liberalised its policy of financial assistance to Zilla Parishads for rural drinking water supply schemes. The response to the liberalisation was encouraging and as a result 14,406 wells, tanks, bore or tube wells were undertaken in 7,000 villages. Of these, 7,287 works have been completed and 7,119 works are in progress. In addition, 155 piped water supply schemes covering 475 villages were undertaken. Out of these, two schemes covering 116 villages have been completed, two more schemes covering 24 villages are nearing completion and the rest are in progress. During the current year, 13 additional rural piped water supply schemes covering 50 villages have been sanctioned and will be started soon.

19. Government has sanctioned 33 Municipal water supply and four drainage schemes. In addition the Satara, Ahmednagar and Yeotmal Water Supply Schemes have been sanctioned as Government schemes.

20. The Maharashtra Regional and Town Planning Act has now been made applicable throughout the State. Before this Act was passed, a development plan could be drawn up only for the area included in the limits of a municipality and the development of its neighbouring areas could not be co-ordinated with it. A unique feature of this Act is that it enables Regional Boards to be set up by Government to draw up regional development plans embracing the municipal as well as the surrounding areas. Another feature of the Act is the provision for the creation of new townships. This provision will help to have an effective check over unplanned expansion of urban areas.

21. The development plans for Greater Bombay and Poona have been scrutinised and sanctioned. The work on the regional plans for the metropolitan areas of Bombay and Poona is in progress.

22. For slum clearance, Bombay has been selected as one of the important cities in the country for giving special attention.

23. Government has taken vigorous steps to implement the Family Planning Programme. This will be seen from the fact that



this State has thrice won the National Prize for the best work in this field.

24. In the field of Education, the pace of expansion at the primary, secondary and higher levels has been maintained and steps already initiated for improving the quality of education continued to be pursued vigorously. Two Public Schools were established at Koynanagar and Aurangabad to enable promising students from the rural areas to get quality secondary education with residential facilities. It is proposed to establish two more such schools at Nasik and Chikalda. Government has also set up the State Bureau of Text Book Production and Curriculum Research to make available better quality text books at a fair price and to provide a permanent machinery for research and development of school curricula. The State Institute of Education which was established in 1962 has now grown to its full stature and has been recognised as a Post-graduate Research Institute. As a part of the Institute's work to promote systematic teacher-training programmes, the State Board of Teacher Education has also been recently established. Under the supervision and guidance of the Institute, a Second Educational Survey of primary and secondary education in the State has been completed. The Gram Shikshan Mohim which is a unique achievement of this State has gain further momentum in the districts of Jalgaon, Poona, Kolhapur and Nagpur.

25. Steps have also been taken to consolidate and strengthen the technical institutions by providing additional equipment, teachers and other physical facilities. The main building for the Regional College of Engineering at Nagpur has been completed and the college has now started functioning in its new campus.

26. Government continued its efforts to spread the Small Savings movement even to the lowest stratum of the society and the target for the last year was exceeded with the result that the State secured the first place in the country.

27. In the field of forestry development, the programme of afforestation and plantation has been given further impetus during this year. Steps have been taken to modernise the work of exploitation in forests. Investment on road construction programme for

opening out inaccessible forest areas will be about Rs. 38 lakhs during the current year.

The settlers in the forest villages did not enjoy full occupancy rights of the land they were cultivating. My Government has now decided to grant them occupancy rights on a new tenure basis so that they would be able to get the benefits for the development of their land.

28. District Resettlement Advisory Committees have been set up to facilitate the work of rehabilitation of persons displaced by Irrigation, Power and other projects and they are working satisfactorily. My Government has also decided to give land for land to such displaced persons.

29. My Government is glad that the Central Government has now appointed the Mahajan Commission to report on the border dispute between this State and Mysore. The Commission was appointed last October and it has already started its work, which it is expected to finish during the next few months. My Government sincerely hopes that the Commission will give due weight not only to the merits of its case but also to the wishes expressed during the recent General Elections by the people affected by the dispute.

30. The present Session has been summoned mainly to pass a Vote on Account for authorising the Government to incur expenditure for the next four months. The Session will, therefore, be a short one and will have no legislative programme of major importance. I have, however, no doubt that even during this short Session, you will give the benefit of your advice and guidance to Government to help it in its work.

