

**JOINT SESSION OF THE MAHARASHTRA LEGISLATURE
AT BOMBAY**



ADDRESS

BY

SHRI SRI PRAKASA

Governor of Maharashtra

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Members of the Legislature,

It is my privilege to welcome the newly elected members of the Legislature of Maharashtra State. You are the chosen representatives of the people. They naturally look to you for effective expression of their hopes and aspirations, and for taking concrete measures for their translation into realities. On this occasion it is but proper that we should pay tribute to the State's vast electorate for the ideal manner in which they conducted themselves in exercising the right which the system of government that we have chosen for ourselves, has conferred upon them. It has, I believe, amply justified our faith in democratic institutions and the way of life that they represent. The efficiency and smoothness with which the elections were completed, speaks well also for the election machinery. Thus this first General Election in Maharashtra State augurs well for the future.

2. No doubt after your fresh contacts with the people during the elections, you have come back with a greater realisation of their new and urgent problems. Some of these obviously are :—
maintaining to spreading rural electrification as soon as possible; need of expanding technical education with a view to rapid industrialisation of the vast countryside taking advantage of availability of electricity and thus meeting rural underdevelopment; intensification of agriculture by accelerating the programme of irrigation; expansion of education and literacy; further strengthening of the co-operative movement, particularly with a view to processing agricultural produce; and problems arising out of rapid urbanisation that is taking place such as of housing and educated unemployment.

3. In his broadcast on the day the new Government took the oaths of office, the Chief Minister promised the people of the State that he and his colleagues would strive their utmost to give the State a clean, impartial and efficient administration. Towards this end, steps are being taken to reform the administrative machinery by simplifying procedural matters and cutting down delays. An efficient administration is indeed fundamental to our development effort, and you, as the elected representatives of the people, can, I know, be depended upon to extend your full co-operation to Government in this endeavour. It shall be the duty of Government to make every effort to ensure that all those who are engaged in the task of administration have a full realisation of popular needs, whether their duties are such as bring them into direct contact with the masses, or such that they have only an indirect connection with the primary unit of the population, namely, the individual citizen. It is in furtherance of this recognition of the need to give the people their due voice in self-government that steps have been taken to transfer substantial power from the headquarters of the State in Bombay and the Divisional headquarters to the districts and blocks, through a Bill which has already received the sanction of the Legislature and has been published as an Act on 13th March 1962 after receiving the President's assent. The Act envisages the constitution of an elected executive body at the district level having functional committees and block committees with the fullest possible devolution of power to them. It is proposed to bring the Act into force with effect from 1st May and to make preparations for holding the elections to the district councils before the monsoon.

4. Government proposes to pursue with continued and increasing vigour its policy of building up the economy of the State in such a way as to secure equal opportunities to all. It follows, therefore, that special measures have to be adopted to lift out of the rut those unfortunate classes of the population who have

remained in an under-developed condition. In this process, however, it is necessary to see that the factors that make for disunity and schisms—like caste, religious, and other narrow or parochial interests—do not hold sway and impede the general progress. It is for this reason that we have broken fresh ground in evolving a new basis for the grant of educational and other concessions by shifting the emphasis from caste to economic status and granting recognition to economically backward classes. I may mention that in this State the Neo-Buddhists continue to enjoy all the concessions, except the Constitutional ones, that were available to them earlier as members of the Scheduled or Backward Classes. Another sector of the economically handicapped classes who will benefit substantially is the landless agricultural labour, who form numerically the largest among the weaker sections of society. Agricultural labour will not only derive substantial advantage from the intensification of agriculture and rural industrialisation in the Third Plan, but will also share in the large programme of construction in rural areas. An even more important programme for the rehabilitation of the landless agricultural labour is their settlement on land by the grant of Government waste land, and of occupied land which will accrue to Government as a result of legislation fixing ceilings on land holdings. Meanwhile, the implementation of the Ceilings on Holdings Act, which came into force on 26th January and whose object is to achieve a more equitable distribution of land and thereby create greater incentive for increased production, is being pursued vigorously in all parts of the State. It is estimated that an area of 90,000 acres of excess land will be available from the various sugar factories in the State, which will eventually be formed into joint farming co-operatives managed by the workers of these factories and the tenants. Meanwhile these farms will be taken over and managed by Government, for which necessary preparations are in hand. Government will run these farms by setting up an autonomous State Corporation which will hold and manage these lands on behalf of Government. Factories

are now required to file statements within a period of six months, showing excess over ceilings in the lands held by them. These returns will be checked by the district revenue staff, and the surplus area for each factory will be settled. The Corporation will take over the farms by a phased programme.

5. One of the sheet anchors of Government policy has been the balanced development of all regions in the State. Consequently, in the less developed regions such as Marathwada, Konkan and Vidarbha, more funds are being expended and amenities provided than was at one time visualised. The newly started Marathwada University is coming up very well while the medical college at Aurangabad and the agriculture college at Parbhani are being expanded. Active steps are being taken to expedite work on the Purna electric project, which will help to industrialise the surrounding rural areas. As regards the Konkan, the entire length of the West Coast road in Kolaba district has been fully concreted. An aluminium plant is in the offing. Government is also devoting special attention to the development of fisheries. Increasing emphasis is being placed on mechanisation of fishing craft, and a sum of Rs. 73 lakhs has so far been granted for the mechanisation of 1300 craft. Four fishing schools are functioning in Ratnagiri. The most recent—and significant—development is the starting of work on the first section of the Diva-Panvel-Uran railway, which promises to change the face of this region. There are also important plans for the development of minor ports on the Konkan coast, including the building of Ratnagiri as an all-weather intermediate port. In Vidarbha a co-operative cotton spinning mill for handloom weavers is to be set up shortly. The State Government has made available 1,000 acres of land at Wardha to the Central Government for setting up a structural fabricating shop and heavy plates and steel vessels plant under the public sector. This project will provide employment to about 10,000 persons in due course. Large coal deposits to the

extent of 370 million tons discovered in the Kamptee-Umrer tract will be exploited by the National Coal Development Corporation. The exploitation of these deposits will overcome the chronic coal shortage of the western region of India.

6. During the financial year that is now coming to a close, which is the first year of the Third Plan, we added considerable gains to those made in the Second Plan, even though it was a period of much stress and strain because of natural calamities. The year saw the finalisation of the State's Third Plan at an outlay of Rs. 390.20 crores, of which a sum of Rs. 55.50 crores is estimated to be spent during 1961-62 and Rs. 65.87 crores next year. The Small Savings Movement, in which our State leads, made further headway, with 70 per cent. of the target of Rs. 20 crores for 1961-62 fulfilled up to the end of January this year. Noteworthy developments took place in the field of education, including an increase in the number of children in primary schools to 42 lakhs from 31 lakhs five years ago, the opening of a sainik school at Satara to prepare boys for a military career, a scheme for the establishment in the near future of the Shri Chhatrapati Shivaji University at Kolhapur, and the setting up of a Gram Sikshan Mohim through which well over 200 villages achieved 100 per cent. literacy. Nearly half the students admitted in the sainik school get freeships from the State. The integrated scheme of rural credit was strengthened by the amalgamation of the State Co-operative and the Vidarbha Co-operative Banks, and the terms and conditions for grant of loans for small scale industries were liberalised. Agricultural processing industries through co-operatives are making quick headway. The Maharashtra Co-operative Societies Act, which came into operation on 26th January 1962, and the rules framed thereunder, form a landmark in the history of the co-operative movement in the State. Our State already occupies a pre-eminent position in the field of Co-operation in the country, and the new enactment will not only enable the State to maintain

this position but to extend the scope and sphere of activities relating to the co-operative movement to the field of industries, marketing, etc. We have already established 14 industrial estates in the districts. Government is also developing large industrial areas under the ægis of the State Industrial Development Board, which is soon to turn into a Corporation. At the same time, an ever-extending area in the suburbs of Bombay is pulsating with industrial activity. Some of the major schemes where there has been happy collaboration between foreign firms and Indian investors in Maharashtra are the tungsten carbide and ball bearings factories at Pimpri-Chinchwad, the basic chemicals and dyestuff factories of the Union Government near Pandal, known as Hindustan Organic Chemicals, and a number of projects for the manufacture of automobiles, plastics, newsprint and other producer and consumer goods. Two hundred and forty villages were electrified during the year under the rural electrification scheme and 250 are due to be electrified during next year. Rural electrification being the key to the dispersal of industries to the countryside, has been given high priority, with an allocation of Rs. 7.5 crores in the Third Plan. As power was confined in the past to a few pockets in the State with high industrial demand, the scope of rural electrification was limited. Now that the basic framework of a State-wide grid will come into being by the end of the Third Plan, faster progress can be expected. During the Third Plan it is estimated that 20,000 additional pumping sets for agriculture will be electrified. Medical benefits under the Employees' State Insurance Scheme have been extended to the families of insured workers in Greater Bombay and in adjoining areas of Thana District, covering 30 lakh persons. The first hospital, exclusively for insured industrial workers, namely, the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Hospital, will start functioning in Bombay towards the end of this month and another one at Worli is nearing completion. The J. J. Group of Hospitals in Bombay was reconstructed to provide 1,000 beds. A new medical college will be opened at Miraj. A large number of urban water

supply and drainage schemes are being taken up during the Third Plan period, of which special mention may be made of the Nagpur water supply and drainage scheme and the Bhima water supply scheme in Sholapur district. A direct link between Poona and Aurangabad, Nagpur and beyond was established by the opening of a bridge across the Godavari at Toka on the Ahmednagar-Aurangabad Road. An area of 3.50 lakh acres has been bunded during the year under the Soil Conservation Scheme. An area of well over 1 lakh acres has been covered by cashewnut, a dollar earner, in Ratnagiri, Kolaba and Kolhapur by granting of loans and free distribution of seeds. The Bombay Milk Scheme continues to make good progress, and the Worli Project costing Rs. 3 crores was put into commission in November 1961. A second milk colony to complete the Government's programme of removing cattle from Bombay City, is being set up in Dahanu Taluka at an estimated capital cost of Rs. 2 crores. Government milk supply schemes have been sanctioned at Miraj, Talegaon, Akola, Amravati, Aurangabad and Dhulia, while those at Nasik, Kolhapur, Sholapur, Karjat, Poona and Nagpur have made further progress.

7. The year will record a notable event when the first unit of the great Koyna hydro-electric project goes into commission within a few weeks, to make Southern and Western Maharashtra buzz with productive activity. The Maharashtra State Irrigation Commission will make its report, leading, it is hoped, to an intensification of development of water resources as a result of the light that it will throw on the problems of irrigation and related matters. Meanwhile, the irrigation programme under the Third Plan provides for an addition of over 21 lakh acres to the irrigation potential of the State, including minor, well and lift irrigation works. The local development works programmes are concentrating on village water supply schemes, with a view that no village in the State should be without an adequate supply of drinking water. A scheme is being

formulated for utilisation of rural manpower during the off season. It is proposed to provide a sum of Rs. 480 lakhs next year for the community development programme, which has by now covered almost the entire rural areas of the State.

8. In accordance with the policy of a gradual change-over to Marathi as the official language of the Administration, a number of schemes are being implemented so that the change-over will be easy and smooth. Several hundreds of typists and stenographers are being imparted training in Marathi typewriting and shorthand while experiments are being carried out in consultation with experts to standardize a key board for the Marathi typewriter. A dictionary of administrative terms is also under compilation.

9. Government intends to appoint a Police Commission presided over by a retired High Court Judge to go into the question of the police administration in the State in view of the growing awareness of the public of its rights and privileges, the changing role of the police in a welfare state, and the addition of new laws on various aspects. Such a review is bound to prove beneficial to the public as well as to the police themselves.

10. This Government has made constant efforts to encourage healthy industrial relations between employers and employees. It will be the policy of the Government to improve the conditions and strive for the welfare of labour and thus create an atmosphere of peace and contentment on industrial front. It is hoped that with the co-operation of all concerned it will be possible for Government to achieve the objectives of its policy in this behalf.

11. While striking the balance-sheet it is my painful duty also to recall some of the sad events during the period. These are fresh in our minds: the ravages of the cyclone in Ratnagiri District, the

loss and suffering in the wake of the Panshet and Khadakwasla disasters, and the damage caused by the floods in Vidarbha and other areas. These are unfortunate happenings, but the courage and intrepidity with which our people have faced them demonstrate beyond doubt that they will not allow such tragedies to undermine their will to go forward. We are most grateful to the generous public of the State who came forward so readily with help to the sufferers. Government for its part has done and will do all in its power to assuage and alleviate their misfortunes.

12. As a result of inadequate or untimely rains in certain areas of the State and heavy rains and floods in some others, scarcity conditions or conditions akin to scarcity have been developed in pockets of about thirteen districts of the State, out of which the situation is likely to be somewhat acute in about seven districts. As relief measures, so far bunding works at an estimated cost of Rs. 24 lakhs have been sanctioned and scarcity works such as roads, tanks, bandharas, etc., estimated to cost Rs. 12,42,024 are also in progress. In areas where conditions are not acute, seasonal unemployment works at an estimated cost of Rs. 8,28,500 have been started. Tagai loans are being advanced liberally. Recovery of land revenue has been suspended in all the districts of Vidarbha area and parts of Ratnagiri and Dhulia Districts to the extent of about Rs. 43,42,000. Scarcity of fodder has not been acute anywhere so far although it is likely to develop in a few districts. Adequate measures to relieve fodder situation are being taken.

13. I have to refer to a problem or two which have to do with our neighbouring States. I have in mind, first, the question of re-adjustment of our boundary with Mysore State. We have not been so far able to obtain a solution to this problem in spite of every effort on the part of the Government of Maharashtra. The recent elections in these border areas have once again vindicated the stand

that Maharashtra has all along taken in this regard. The Government of India will have to resolve this issue on the basis of this verdict as a matter of highest priority.

14. Another subject that is of vital concern to us pertains to this State's share in the waters of the Krishna-Godavari basins. Only five per cent. of the net cropped area was under irrigation in Maharashtra State in 1956-57, as against an all-India average of about 18 per cent. This underlines the importance of irrigation facilities for our people. Since our State's economy is so vitally linked with our water resources, the question of our share of the Krishna-Godavari waters is being pursued vigorously with the Government of India, and the data required by the Krishna-Godavari Commission has been supplied. We hope that this question also will be settled equitably.

15. In common with the rest of India the State of Maharashtra hails the liberation of Goa. We in Maharashtra have special reason to rejoice in this event having regard to our part in the freedom movement for Goa and our historical, geographical and linguistic affiliations with that region.

16. We must remember that while, for the first time, almost all the Marathi-speaking people have been enabled to come together in a single State, this fact enhances rather than decreases their responsibility as partners and participants in the adventure of building the new India. It is from this point of view that our Prime Minister has been emphasizing national integration and the necessity of removing any handicaps from which the minority communities may feel that they suffer. National integration is one of the fundamental tenets of our national policy. We are pledged to give our fullest support to it, and in this State, in fact, we have set up a high-powered committee to exercise vigilance in this respect.

17. It remains for me only to say a few words of farewell to this honourable and distinguished house. You are no doubt aware that I am on the eve of relinquishing my office as Governor of this State, and I shall not have the privilege and pleasure of addressing you again in that capacity. On an occasion of this kind I may perhaps be permitted to strike a personal note. I should like to say how much I have enjoyed my association with you all, and how much I shall miss many old friends and colleagues whom I have known and with whom I have worked for several years. I shall follow with great interest your progress and the work that you will be doing in the service of the State in keeping with the high traditions that this House has laid down and maintained for long years.

18. I thank you for all the consideration and courtesy that you have shown me and, in bidding you good-bye, I wish you every joy and success in the high tasks that await you.

Jai Hind

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