



JOINT SESSION OF THE MAHARASHTRA LEGISLATURE AT BOMBAY

ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY

Dr. P. V. CHERIAN

GOVERNOR OF MAHARASHTRA

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Mr. Chairman, Mr. Speaker and Honourable Members,

Since I addressed you last, momentous events have befallen us. In September 1965, we were faced with a challenge to our sovereignty and national integrity. We are all proud of the national response to this challenge in general and the gallant actions of our armed forces in particular. Maharashtra, as expected contributed with whole-hearted co-operation and unstinted selflessness, its mite towards the national endeavour at this critical juncture. We were all happy that this self-destroying and unnecessary strife imposed on us has now become a thing of the past with the signing of the Tashkent Declaration. Cruel death, however, snatched away from us the late Prime Minister Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri in his hour of success and the nation's triumph. In the short period of 18 months during which he held office as Prime Minister, our nation found a new sense of purposefulness which helped us to achieve the objectives that the nation has set before itself.

2. We are now faced with unprecedented scarcity conditions and food shortage almost throughout the country. In Maharashtra, scarcity has hit vast tracts. So far, the existence of scarcity conditions has been declared in 14,565 villages of 21 districts. Conditions in Osmanabad and Thana districts as also in the Rabi areas are under observation. Government has taken steps to put in motion the required measures to render all relief to the scarcity affected areas. Rs. 3 crores have been placed at the disposal of Zilla Parishads to enable them to undertake relief works. Works have been provided for the needy and more works will be started as may be necessary in order to ensure that no affected person suffers for want of work. Prescribed suspensions of revenue and other recoveries have been granted. Inter-State ban on certain varieties of fodder has been imposed. 125 boring machines and 150 air compressors have been

sanctioned for augmenting drinking water supplies in the affected areas. About 7,000 oil engines and electric motors have also been supplied for irrigation purposes.

3. These acute scarcity conditions have highlighted the shortage of food-grains already existing in the State. Wherever possible Government has shaped its scarcity relief programmes to serve not only the immediate need of providing employment but also of building up our food production potential. To tide over the difficulties Government has resorted to monopoly procurement in addition to monopoly purchases and has so far procured 100,000 tonnes of paddy and an equal amount of Jowar. Government is also continuing its efforts to obtain as much foodgrains as can be made available by the Government of India. In order to secure equitable distribution of available foodgrains Government has decided to introduce Statutory Rationing in Bombay, Nagpur, Poona and Sholapur.

4. As a step towards attainment of self-sufficiency in food, Government has launched a three-pronged attack—by assuring to the grower definite prices throughout the year, by increasing the area under double cropping and by introducing hybridisation. The Kisans, the Zilla Parishads, Panchayat Samitis, Social Workers and the public servants have all contributed magnificently to the success of the scheme.

5. By helping fishermen to take to modern fishing methods like mechanisation of boats the State was able to reach catches of nearly 2.20 lakhs tonnes in production of fish last year. Government has now decided to establish a State Fisheries Development Corporation. Initially, the Corporation would concern itself with deep sea fishing and work connected with it, such as preservation, transport and marketing of the catch.

6. This emphasis on increased agricultural and subsidiary food production and accelerated development in vital fields such as industrial production and technical man-power, has necessitated a re-arrangement of priorities in the Third Five-Year Plan. Far from affecting the performance of the State during the Plan, this re-arrangement is expected to speed the State towards its goal of economic self-sufficiency.

7. As in the past, the performance of the State in Small Savings has been more than satisfactory. The target of Rs. 22.27 crores fixed for 1965-66 is expected to be exceeded in spite of an unfavourable agricultural season and introduction of other attractive scrips outside the field of Small Savings. A special feature of this year has been the defence orientation of the Small Savings Movement. As a result of this, 1.05 lakh new Cumulative Time Deposit accounts have been opened, bringing the total to 4.25 lakhs. In the Post Office Savings Bank 13 lakhs individual accounts have been opened of which 2.86 lakhs have been opened during the current year.

8. Under irrigation, out of the 76 major and medium schemes included in the three Plans, 38 Projects have started giving benefits. Most of the other projects are at an advanced stage. The irrigation potential created in the First Plan was 52,000 acres. Progressive totals of the same are 1.69 lakhs up to the end of Second Plan and 6.15 lakh acres up to the end of the Third Plan. All the new Projects taken in the Third Plan are being pursued vigorously. Work on Pawna Dam, part of Bheema Project has already started. Preliminary work has been initiated on the Lower Godavari Scheme. Though the distribution of the Krishna-Godavari waters remains to be settled Government of India have cleared the Krishna and Warna Projects. They have also taken up the examination of other Projects already submitted for early clearance in respect of upper Wardha, upper Tapi, upper Godavari, Kukadi, upper Painganga, Dudhganga and certain medium projects.

9. In the field of generation of electricity, the installed capacity in the two sections of the State Grid viz., the Tata-Koyna-Railway Grid and the Paras-Khaparkheda Grid will increase from 761 mw. at the end of the Second Plan to 1268 mw. by the end of the Third Plan. The major additions have been the commissioning of four sets at Koyna, an additional set of 150 mw. at the Trombay Thermal Station and two sets of 30 mw. each at Khaparkheda. The capacity will be further increased by 123 mw. when the Bhusawal Thermal Station and the extension to the Paras Thermal Station are commissioned.

10. Good progress has been made in rural electrification. During the Third Plan 3,550 additional villages will be electrified and 37,300 pumps connected.

11. It is proposed to complete the second stage of the Koyna Project and to commission new stations of 60 mw. at Parli, of 280 mw. at Nasik, and of 500 mw. at Nagpur. The State will also receive 190 mw. of electricity generated by the Tarapore Atomic Power Station. Additional 10,000 villages will be electrified and connections given to one lakh pumps. The work on the Vaitarna Hydro Project is going apace as it is vital for the water supply of Bombay City and also as a peaking Station.

12. The foreign export potential of the State is proposed to be increased from the present estimate of Rs. 70 crores per year to Rs. 140 crores per year during the Fourth Plan period. For this purpose, a State Board for Export Promotion under the Chairmanship of the Chief Minister has been constituted.

13. Government has appointed tripartite Committees to study the service and working conditions of employees engaged in the Power-loom Industry, in the production sector of the Film Industry, and of unprotected labour like hamals, Mathadis, fishermen etc., with a view to devising measures for ameliorating their service and working conditions.

14. Government is conscious of the rapid rise in the population and its adverse effects on the socio-economic development of the State. The Family Planning Programme has, therefore, been given higher priority. All methods of Family Planning are being vigorously propagated.

15. In the rural development sector, a scheme to eradicate Palemud was started in the Thana District last year. Under this scheme, Government gave taccavi loans to all Adivasis and economically backward cultivators in that District. Because of its good results it is proposed to extend this scheme to the areas covered by the Tribal Blocks started in the last two plans.

16. The Rural Water Supply programme is being carried on by the Zilla Parishads. Under rural piped water supply scheme

113 schemes covering 430 villages are under implementation, in addition to two, already completed.

17. Fifty-two Municipal Water Supply Schemes have been sanctioned and are being vigorously pursued.

18. The Housing Board continues to make steady progress. In Poona 1200 tenements have been completed for flood affected persons. 117 acres of land is being reclaimed in Mahim. This will enable the Board to construct about 10,000 tenements for the low and middle income group families.

19. With a view to regulating secondary education throughout the State, a State Board of Secondary Education has been established. To improve the quality of teaching of English in Primary and Secondary Schools, a State Institute of English has been set up with the help of the British Council. To co-ordinate, consolidate and to further Art education, a Directorate of Art has been set up which is the first Institution of its kind in the country. The 'Gram Shikshan Mohim' has made spectacular progress and in addition to 'Gram Gaurav', we have reached the stage of celebrating Taluka and District 'Gaurav'. Government of India have recommended the Maharashtra pattern for adoption by all other States in the country. Compulsory primary education has been introduced in Vidarbha and Marathwada.

20. New degree courses in Town Planning and Geological Engineering will be started in the College of Engineering, Poona. In order that the students in this State get specialised training in aircraft factories, it is proposed to institute special scholarships for training in such factories outside the State.

21. I would now like to mention the issues on which the people of this State are very greatly exercised, I mean the Mysore-Maharashtra border issue, the Goa and Nagar Haveli merger issue and the Krishna-Godavari Waters dispute. My Government has kept you informed from time to time regarding the developments. We did not press these issues during the armed conflict with Pakistan. I am, however, sure that I am voicing your feelings when I say that the Central Government should apply themselves immediately to these issues and find solutions before the end of the year.

22. This Session will be devoted mainly to financial matters and only urgent and amending Bills are likely to be taken up for Legislation.

23. We have many limitations and difficulties. These should not, however, dishearten us. On the contrary, they should spur us to greater and more determined efforts to achieve our objectives. We have reason to be proud of our past performance achieved inspite of numerous handicaps. Nature has not been kind to us during the last two years and this year we have a very severe scarcity to face. The recent conflict with our neighbour has also imposed a severe strain on our economy. I have no doubt in my mind that you will, even in these adverse circumstances, carry on the difficult task of moulding the fortunes of this State with the same fortitude and sagacity with which you have laboured in the past to this end. I wish you every success in this noble endeavour.

—JAI HIND
