

SPEECH OF HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF GOA, ON REPUBLIC DAY- JANUARY 26, 2022

My dear fellow citizens,

On this joyous occasion of 73rd Republic day, I convey my heartiest greetings and warm wishes to all of you.

2. This is the momentous day on which the Constitution of India came into force in 1950. Our Constitution represents the idea of India as a grand continuity – tracing its routes from its spiritual heritage and traditions that date back several millennia and binding it with the idea of a modern nation based on democratic principles. We remember with deep gratitude all those illustrious leaders who contributed to the making of this great document, particularly, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar who is renowned as the Architect of the Indian Constitution. The preamble of our Constitution begins with the resolve of “we the people” demonstrating that the people are supreme in our country and everyone else is subordinate to them. The preamble guarantees justice, liberty, equality and fraternity which are the basic needs of any human being to live a free and meaningful life. **As Dr. Ambedkar said “political democracy cannot last unless there lies at the base social democracy. What does social democracy mean? It means a way of life which recognizes liberty, equality and fraternity as the principles of life.....”.** Over the years, though our Constitution has undergone several changes yet its integrity has been preserved. Our Constitution is a very strong and versatile document that binds the diverse cultures of our country and preserves its unity.

3. This year the Republic Day celebrations have been marked by a very significant development which is the declaration of 23rd January, the 125th Birth Anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, who is renowned as a valiant freedom fighter and iconic patriot of our country as **Parakram Divas**. I am sure that the observance of this day will instill the young generation with courage and pride and inspire them to work for the greater glory of our nation. On this historic occasion I would like to also hail our Armed forces who have been admirably

protecting the independence and territorial integrity of the nation marked by highest traditions of devotion, dedication and valor.

4. Our nation has progressed remarkably during the last 75 years. Presently the 75th year of India's Independence is being celebrated as Azadi ka Amrut Mahotsav. Nation-wide various programs and activities connected to the five themes – Freedom Struggle, Ideas at 75, Achievements at 75, Actions at 75 and Resolves at 75 are being conducted with Jan Bhagidaari. I am happy that India International Science Festival was recently hosted in Goa to showcase Science & Technology through these 5 pillars. Last year Goa celebrated the completion of 60 years of liberation in a grand manner and we look forward to a long fruitful journey in the future.

Friends,

5. The past one year has been dominated by the prevalence of Covid-19 pandemic. In April last year we witnessed the devastating second wave and now the third wave has arrived as a highly infectious variant. However, there is a significant silver lining this time which is the successful vaccination programme being carried out. It is indeed commendable that we have been able to administer over 1.6 billion doses and have been able to successfully keep the Covid 19 pandemic at bay. These vaccines have been indigenously researched, developed and manufactured by our brilliant scientists and are a demonstration of fulfilling the call of Atmanirbhar Bharat. We have been able to show to the rest of the world that we are second to none in producing medicines and vaccines that met the highest world standards. The Covid pandemic has helped us to emerge as a stronger and resilient nation in the face of adversity. We stand tall in the comity of nations today. This vaccination programme has also helped the economy of our country to quickly recover. Today once again we look forward to a robust economic revival.

6. I am happy to state that over 98% of the eligible population in Goa has now been fully vaccinated including people in the age group 15-18 and booster dose for people above 60 years. On this occasion I would like to salute all the doctors, frontline and health care workers for their remarkable service towards protecting people against the pandemic.

7. Goa has many impressive achievements to its credit such as highest per Capita income, third place in the country for the Human Development Index, best performing State for the third time in Food Safety Index and best-placed State by the Finance Commission for its infrastructure. In SDG (Sustainable Development Goals), Goa has stood 4th rank in the country by securing score of 72 as against 75. Further, Goa is the only State to become achiever of two SDGs i.e. No.6: Clean Water and Sanitation and No. 7 Alternative Clean Energy.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

8. Goa is renowned for its communal harmony. People across religions have been living in unity, fraternity and solidarity. All festivals are equally respected and celebrated by all communities. The people of Goa have a tradition of peace and friendship. On this occasion, let us resolve to preserve this unique cultural heritage of Goa.

9. The extra ordinary beauty and tranquility of the State, vibrant culture, hospitality of the people, rich and diverse flora and fauna have contributed to the growth of tourism in the State. Though the tourism industry has been badly hit by the Covid 19 pandemic, it is hoped that there will be a healthy revival in the days to come.

10. The State has successfully implemented several Central and State Schemes for the welfare and betterment of the people. The State has made impressive strides in infrastructure development over the last one year in the form of roads, bridges, water supply, power, sewerage and IT projects.

11. We are now in the midst of Assembly Elections and the poll day for Goa is 14th February, 2022. There is a total electorate of 11.44 lakh voters. This includes 17250 new voters enrolled this year. I would like to urge all voters of Goa to enthusiastically participate in the voting process and at the same time strictly follow all the Covid protocols. I am sure that the Assembly Elections in Goa will be free, fair, peaceful and safe.

Friends,

12. In September last, Raj Bhavan decided to use the Governors Fund to extend a helping hand to the weak, vulnerable and under privileged sections of society by providing financial assistance to 71 NGOs involved in sheltering and caring for the children and elderly persons including disabled and HIV affected and also to 71 dialysis patients. During the last three months I have travelled extensively disbursing financial aid at the doorsteps of more than 50 institutions, interacting with the caretakers and inmates and have also handed over financial assistance to more than 100 dialysis patients. I have also decided to undertake 'Sampurna Goa Yatra'. Within one year I hope to cover all the villages in the State to gain a deeper insight into the history and culture of Goa and understanding of people's problems and issues.

13. In conclusion on this memorable occasion, let us pledge to work ardently and steadfastly towards realising "Self Sufficient New India" and transform the dream of India playing a pivotal role in every field of life in the global arena in the 21st century into a reality. I appeal to all the people to pledge to remain faithful to our Constitution in letter and spirit.

Wishing you all a very Happy Republic Day.

JAI HIND.