

MESSAGE OF HON'BLE GOVERNOR ON THE OCCASION OF GOA LIBERATION DAY – 19TH DECEMBER, 2017.

My dear fellow citizens,

On the joyous occasion of Liberation Day of Goa, I extend my greetings and good wishes to the people of Goa.

2. As we all know that, while India attained independence from the British Raj on 15 August, 1947, Goa was still languishing under four and a half century of Portuguese rule. The Portuguese were among the very first to colonise parts of India, and were the last to leave. Goa was liberated from Portuguese rule on December 19, 1961; this day was a landmark occasion in the glorious history of Goa. Satyagrahis, journalists and even legendary film artists fought for Goa's independence. They suffered and sacrificed their precious lives for the noble cause of Goa's liberation. It is an appropriate occasion to recall all the efforts taken by our great freedom fighters and their struggles and sacrifices and also the hardwork of the Army and express our gratitude to them. Let us all pay our homage to all those who laid down their valuable life for the freedom of Goa.

3. After liberation Goa has seen a huge development. The period of 56 years from 1961 i.e., from Goa's liberation till 2017, has brought about a

visible socio-economic transformation of this small state. Socio-economic indicators place Goa as one of the most prosperous states of the country. Goa's economy has improved during the last 56 years and it has developed in all the major sectors like agriculture, fishing, construction, manufacturing, transport and tourism.

4. Since liberation, the people of Goa have enjoyed the benefits of freedom and they have become the masters of their own destiny. They are living under the constitutional guarantee of justice, liberty and equality now. The administrative machinery is functioning to promote the welfare of all sections of the people including Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The Government of Goa is seriously looking after the economic, social, cultural, physical and intellectual well being of the people. The present administration has given new exciting opportunities to the people of Goa in terms of employment and schemes for betterment of the public as a result of which rapid progress has been made in Goa since liberation. I would like to say while the past achievements have been impressive; we need to carry on with our mission to aim higher growth of economy and to bring improvement in the life of the common man. I would also like to remind my fellow citizens that it is the responsibility of citizens too to help in shaping the future of our state and the nation as a whole.

5. Goa is blessed with scenic beauty and is known as a pristine State on the map of India. It has become a favorite destination for vacations, weddings, National and International events/seminars and also Film Festivals. I think tourism can promote authentic human and social development, thanks to the growing opportunity that it offers for sharing of goods, for rich cultural exchanges, for approaching natural or artistic beauty, and for understanding of different traditions. Especially in our time, tourism appeals to the person who wants to grow in knowledge and to experience how men and women are the bearers of civilization. The Government has been making efforts to promote tourism through various schemes and programmes in Goa as tourism is one of the main sources of income of Goa. We must show the tourists visiting Goa our culture, whether it may be Goan cuisine, dance and music, dress and some special features for which Goa is known in the world. Goan culture is not different from Indian culture. Along with being a land of tourism, Goa also faces problems of waste management. Litter has become a major problem in Goa and we have to build a proper infrastructure to deal with it. It ends up in piles, either left to rot or to be burnt. Goa's economy is being confronted, as an after effect of tourism; by a solid waste management problem and serious efforts

have to be made to address it. Hence, as citizens of Goa we all need to make efforts in order to maintain the cleanliness and tidiness of our State.

6. Here I would like to mention that, being a Brand Ambassador for the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan campaign launched by Hon'ble Prime Minister, I have relentlessly strived to create awareness and tried to educate people of Goa on the topic of cleanliness and its benefits. I have met and held meetings with different sections of Goan Society in order to achieve this objective. I am also glad to share that I have received very positive response from people as various programmes and events were organized all through the year on various occasions to promote Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. I would also like to appeal to the people of Goa to extend their support and contribute to this important mission in order to maintain the cleanliness and beauty of our State. It is my earnest desire to see Goa as number one State in our country as a cleanest State which can be fulfilled only with efforts of Goan people.

7. Goa is known for its peaceful co-existence of the Hindu, Christians, Muslims and other communities. It is a State with social harmony and has maintained it all through these years. Also Goa is the only State in India that has Uniform Civil Code. Regardless of religion, gender, caste, Goa has common family law. Thus it is the only Indian State that follows Goa Civil

Code. When Goa became the part of union territory in 1961 by the virtue of the Goa Daman and Diu administration Act 1962 the parliament authorized the Portuguese Civil Code of 1867 to Goa. On this very topic I held meetings with women of different religions to study the Common Civil Code in Goa and to understand its benefits especially for women. The effects of the Civil Code are reflected in the harmony of Goan society. I have also compiled a book with the title, report on the practice and effects of civil code in Goa. In this report I had recommended the Governments at State and Centre to take steps to make pre-marital counseling a prerequisite for marriages/marriage registration in all communities. I am very happy to inform you that a pre-marital counseling centre was inaugurated by me on 8th December, 2017 at the Goa University campus. The program will be conducted through the Goa State Resource Centre for Women, Goa University. In my opinion Pre-marital counseling has become a necessity for youth. It is essential to educate our youth of their rights and responsibilities in marriage. A healthy and happy family life is a sign of a healthy society. Counseling helps to build a stable society.

8. I would like to once again extend my hearty wishes to the people of Goa, on the occasion of Goa Liberation Day.

Jai Hind!