



ADDRESS

Delivered by

Hon'ble Shri Bhagat Singh Koshyari

GOVERNOR OF MAHARASHTRA

JOINT SESSION OF THE MAHARASHTRA LEGISLATURE AT MUMBAI

01st March 2021

**HON'BLE CHAIRMAN, HON'BLE SPEAKER AND
HON'BLE MEMBERS OF THE STATE LEGISLATURE**

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to this first session of the State Legislature in the year 2021.

2. As you all know, we have been battling Covid pandemic since last one year. Hence, I begin by conveying my condolences to all those who lost near and dear ones to the Covid-19 disease. I also salute the brave and selfless duty performed by all the health workers as well as the frontline warriors who helped us to combat this deadly virus.

3. We could not celebrate the Diamond Jubilee Year of formation of the State of Maharashtra due to the Covid situation. My Government intends to celebrate it during this year.

4. My Government will continue to follow the high ideals of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, Mahatma Jyotirao Phule, Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj, Bharatratna Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, and many other great visionaries and social reformers.

5. My Government has strongly presented the case of Maharashtra in the original suit filed in the Supreme Court on Maharashtra Karnataka Border Dispute and henceforth will continue to present the same. My Government expresses

its commitment to the Marathi speaking people of the border areas and is committed to get them justice. My Government has recently published a volume titled "*Maharashtra Karnataka Seemavaad : Sangharsh aaani Sankalp*" to comprehensively present the issue. Copies of this book will be made available to the Members of the State Legislature in this Session.

6. My Government took several measures for control and management of the COVID-19 pandemic which have become a model for the rest of States and even in other countries. Maharashtra has most effectively managed the epidemic by bringing down the number of active cases and successfully dealing with difficult settlements like *Dharavi*.

7. My Government established a State Task Force of senior doctors to provide technical assistance to the Government for Corona Control. Effective and rigorous detection and tracing of infected persons' contacts were undertaken. The health facilities also have been increased. Sufficient laboratories were set up for testing infected persons. Maharashtra was the first State to erect temporary jumbo corona hospitals in record times. Required number of fever clinics in Districts and Municipal Areas and a three-tier hospital structure for treatment of corona patients were established. Adequate supply of essential medicines and equipment was provided.

8. '*The Mahatma Phule Jeevandaayi Yojana*' ensured that the hospitals should not charge unreasonable rates for treatment. Apart from the capacity in government hospitals, sufficient beds in private hospitals were reserved for Corona

patients at reasonable rates. The cost of treatment in private hospitals, cost of laboratory tests, CT scan, masks etc., were regulated to safeguard people's interest.

9. The '*Majhe Kutumb, Majhi Jababdari*' an innovative health checkup mission in the country was implemented in the State. Under the said mission, all families in the State were surveyed in two rounds. The special survey of high-risk individuals and senior citizens was also done. Due to which, several patients affected by Covid infection could be detected. This mission helped in preparing the State health map. By participation of citizens in the management of Covid-19 pandemic our State ensured successful control of this epidemic. But the battle against the Covid is still on and now "*Me Jababdar*" mission has been launched.

10. My Government is implementing the vaccination programme regarding Covid-19 disease. My Government is also pursuing the Central Government for increasing the quota of vaccines for the people of the State.

11. We have to be constantly vigilant about health and safety measures regarding Covid. There is a serious need to follow the physical distancing norms, use of face mask and regularly wash hands, as the possibility of a second wave is imminent.

12. My Government has strengthened the medical infrastructure and started the Nandurbar Medical College by admitting the first batch of 100 students in the academic year 2020-21.

13. Having recognized the need for investing in the public health infrastructure, my Government has approved the setting up of new Medical Colleges at Osmanabad, Sindhudurg and Nashik and is committed to set up more Medical Colleges. A new 100-bed ICU facility at St. George Hospital, Mumbai was also added during the year. Eighteen new RTPCR testing laboratories were started in Government Medical Colleges during the Pandemic, presently approximately 500 laboratories are functioning.

14. By the end of February 2021, out of the Rs 46,950 crore due to my Government as Goods and Services Tax Compensation, the Central Government has paid just Rs 6140 crore and Rs 11,520 crore as loan for Goods and Services Tax compensation. Goods and Services Tax Compensation to the tune of Rs 29,290 crore is overdue from the Central Government.

15. The Covid lockdown has slowed down the State economy in addition to a medical emergency and natural calamities. Out of the revenue collection target of Rs 3,47,456 crore, the State has collected just Rs 1,88,542 crore at the end of January 2021. This is 35 per cent less than the budgetary estimate and 21 per cent lower than the collection in the same period in the previous year.

16. Despite significant reduction in revenue, the State has provided priority funding to the Departments of Public Health, Medical Education and Drugs, Relief and Rehabilitation, Food and Civil Supplies and Home during the pandemic. To stimulate the economy, my Government has provided for 75 per cent of the budgetary provision for capital

expenditure and released 100 per cent money to the Local Development Fund, DPC schemes and *Dongri Vikas Karyakram*.

17. My Government is pursuing with the Government of India for increasing the grant in aid receivable to my State in accordance with the recommendations of the Central Finance Commission.

18. Considering the Covid situation and economic condition, my Government is pursuing with the Central Government for increasing the contribution of the Central Government in the Central schemes.

19. Last year was not only a year of medical emergency but also presented several economic challenges. As jobs and livelihoods were affected, my Government undertook a massive humanitarian aid programmes.

Under the National Food Security Act, wheat, rice and coarse grains were distributed to about 7 crore people at just Rs 1 to 3 per kg. My Government also provided food grains to about 40 lakh farmers from 14 suicide-prone districts at the cost of nearly Rs 750 crore. Besides about 17,000 tons of rice and 762 tons of *Chana dal* was distributed to 35 lakhs stranded and migrant labourers, workers and students without ration cards.

20. My Government launched "*Shiv Bhojan Yojana*" on 26th January, 2020. Under the scheme more than 3.15 crore *thalis* have been served at just Rs five per *thali* and expenditure of Rs 125 crore has been incurred by State Government for the same. This scheme's success can be gauged from the fact that daily consumption of *thalis* has increased from the original 18,000 to 1,38,000.

21. In order to provide relief to the farmers 1.15 lakh tons maize was purchased and 17.50 lakh tons of paddy at the cost of Rs. 3,500 crore in 2019-20. Rs 860 crore was directly deposited in the accounts of paddy farmers as incentive by my Government.

22. My Government made all time high cotton procurement under Minimum Support Price Operation of 222 lakh quintals of cotton and paid Rs 11,988 crore to 8.78 lakh farmers. Similarly, 20.44 lakh quintals of *Tur* was procured from 2.16 lakh farmers with payment of Rs 1185 crore and 38.71 lakh quintals of *Chana* was purchased from 2.37 lakh farmers at a cost of Rs 1887 crore.

Overall, my Government paid more than Rs 15,000 crore to 13.32 lakh farmers in the State. Financial assistance of Rs 462 crore to 9.25 lakh construction workers was also paid.

23. My Government, even during the outbreak of the Corona, ensured that all children between the age group of 3-6 years who could not come to *anganwadis* received take home rations. Pregnant women and lactating mothers got uninterrupted supply of take home rations. The number of ICDS beneficiaries increased by over 78 lakhs during the year.

24. My Government started an initiative to help students for self-study by launching a course called “school closed but education continues” during the Corona lockdown.

Even in this challenging situation, textbooks have been home delivered to all the beneficiary students in the State.

Maharashtra is number one in the use of DIKSHA App in the country, due to various initiatives implemented with the help of DIKSHA App.

With the changing times, Maharashtra is the first State to make Google Classroom facility available to all teachers, students and schools.

25. My Government arranged special trains and buses for transport of migrant labourers and stranded students in other States during the lockdown period. We provided temporary accommodation, food, clothing and medical treatment and medicines at a cost of Rs. 816 crore.

26. My Government not only tackled the medical crisis but also successfully handled multiple natural disasters. The *Nisarg* cyclone devastated certain areas of the coastal region of Konkan. Rs 609 crore of relief was paid to the persons affected by this cyclone, at enhanced rates. Rs 179 crore were distributed for flood relief in Nagpur.

27. Heavy rainfall and floods from June to October, 2020 caused widespread damage to life, cattle, agricultural crops, houses and public properties. A package of Rs 10,000 crore for the damages caused due to this calamity has been announced. Rs 5,500 crore was earmarked to farmers for crop damages. The rate of relief for damages to agricultural crops was enhanced to Rs 10,000 per hectare and Rs 25,000 for perennial crops which are more than NDRF rates and relief of Rs 4,500 crore was released.

28. The names of villages, hamlets and roads in urban and rural areas which are based on discrimination of caste will be renamed after Legends and democratic principles of constitution in a bid to rid the bane of caste system.

29. My Government provided 1.33 lakh tribal women and 6.63 lakh children with food items under *Amrut Ahar Yojana*. We actively implemented the Forest Rights Act, 2006. So far individual rights have been distributed to 1,74,481 beneficiaries over 1,65,992 hectares and community forest rights have been distributed to 7559 communities over 11,67,861 hectares.

30. To increase the percentage of minorities in Government services, my Government has started a training scheme. This year the stipend to candidates was doubled from Rs 2,000 to Rs 4,000 per month.

31. To increase the proportion of women in start-ups and entrepreneurship a “Woman Entrepreneurship Cell” has been set up at Maharashtra State Innovation Society.

32. In order to kick start the economy, stamp duty on instruments of conveyance or agreements to sell and lease of any immovable property was reduced. This concession significantly increased the number of registrations in the State and in the urban local bodies, 50% concession in the various types of premium levied by the Government has been announced. My Government also directed all Planning Authorities and Local Authorities to take a decision regarding 50% concession in the premium levied at their level. This has boosted sale and purchase of properties.

33. Despite the industrial slowdown, Maharashtra attracted more than Rs 1 lakh crore in domestic and foreign direct investments. During the lockdown 66,000 permissions were issued online to start various industries. My Government also launched the *Maha Job Portal* to facilitate employment.

Schemes like plug and play and *Mahaparwana* have stimulated the industrial sector. There has been enthusiastic response from new startups too.

34. Despite the financial crunch, the “*Mahatma Jotirao Phule Shetkari Karjmukti Yojana*” was completed by my Government by paying off the debt of 30.85 lakh farmers amounting to Rs 19,684 crore. In this difficult year, a sum of Rs 7,000 crore was provided for this.

35. In view of the centrality of climate change in environment, my Government changed the name of Environment Department to “Environment and Climate Change Department.”

36. My Government has taken up “*Majhi Vasundhara Abhiyan*” as an innovative initiative for environmental conservation and protection from 2nd October, 2020. This mission focuses on all the five elements of nature i.e., Earth, Water, Air, Energy and Sky.

37. To facilitate establishment of new industries in COVID-19 situation, my Government reduced the time limit for issuing consent to industries under the Water and Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Acts.

38. My Government has notified over 800 acres of land in Aarey area, which is in the heart of Mumbai city, as reserved forest. It is a unique feature to have such a large forest in the center of a metropolis.

39. My Government has issued a preliminary notification to declare 1500 Hectares of Mangrove area and finally notified 8500 Hectares of Mangrove area as reserved forests.

40. In order to strengthen and long term conservation of wildlife corridors, my Government has declared 8 Conservation Reserves in *Sahyadri* ranges and 2 Conservation Reserves in *Vidarbha*.

41. For Tiger conservation, my Government has declared 269.40 sq. km of reserve forest in Kanhargaon located in Chandrapur district of Vidarbha, as the 50th Wildlife Sanctuary of the State.

The Indian safari component of *Balasaheb Thakeray Gorewada* International Zoological Park, Nagpur has been dedicated to the people on the Republic Day, 2021.

42. Bestowing industry status to hospitality sector and reduction of the number of licenses from 70 to 10 for starting a new business in hospitality sector will boost tourism in the State.

43. In the “*Vikel Te Pikel*” mission crops, cluster and district-wise 1345 value chain development projects are being implemented by converging existing schemes. This will give a fresh fillip to the rural economy. Rs 2100 crore “Hon’ble Balasaheb Thackeray Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project” was started to expand the market access for agricultural commodities.

44. MAHA-DBT portal has been developed to provide benefits of all agricultural schemes to farmers on a single application. 11.33 lakhs farmers have been registered and applications for 25.23 lakhs components received.

45. Food Technology and Agricultural Business Management College at Kashti in Malegaon Taluka of Nashik District has been sanctioned.

46. To implement the concept of “*Mi Samruddha tar Gaon Samruddha - Ani - Gaon Samruddha tar Maza Maharashtra Samruddha*” effectively, my Government has framed necessary guidelines. Under the MGNREGA Scheme, during the year 2020-21, my Government has paid Rs 1267 crore as wages to labourers.

47. My Government has launched the *Prachin Mandir Samvardhan Yojana* for conservation and preservation of ancient temples in Maharashtra.

48. A scheme for procurement of 10 lakh litres of excess milk per day and its conversion into skimmed milk powder was undertaken from 3rd April, 2020 to 31st October, 2020. Under this scheme, Rs 245 crore has been distributed to dairy farmers in the State.

49. Free distribution of this high protein milk powder to malnourished tribal children and pregnant women and lactating mothers is being undertaken in 85 ITDP Blocks of 16 Districts under the *A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Amrut Aahar Yojana*.

50. Agricultural pump connection policy has been approved under which paid-pending pump applicants, whose pumps are at distances below 600 meters from the three-phase line will be given conventional electricity connections.

Those applicants whose agricultural pump are at distances more than 600 meters from line will be given off-grid solar powered pumps. One lakh off-grid solar agricultural pumps per year for next five year will be installed. This will make electricity available for agricultural pumps during the day time.

51. For helping the farmers of the State, my Government has taken a decision to implement PM KUSUM Scheme in which one lakh of off-grid Solar Pump will be provided to the farmers. This will benefit environment in long run.

52. My Government has declared the renewable energy policy, 2020 thereby 17,360 Mega Watt of renewable energy will be generated in five years.

53. My Government has established the District and Additional Sessions Court and Civil Court (Senior Division) at Ambad, Taluka Ambad, District Jalana and Additional Family Court at Thane.

54. My Government has also sanctioned the functioning of Family Court at Yavatmal, Beed, Bhandara and Parbhani for a period of five years under the Fourteenth Finance Commission.

55. I am sure that, you all will take precaution to safeguard your own health as well as that of others and continue to take all the necessary safety measures for combating the Covid pandemic.

Hon'ble Members, in this session the Budget proposals for the new financial year, appropriation Bills and other legislations will be put for your consideration. I am confident that, Hon'ble Members will participate and give their well considered inputs on those proposals.

Once again, I extend my warm greetings.

JAI HIND ! JAI MAHARASHTRA !