

ANDHRA PRADESH LEGISLATURE

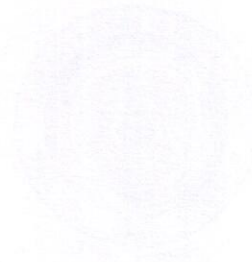
ADDRESS
BY

Shri E.S.L. NARASIMHAN

GOVERNOR OF ANDHRA PRADESH

Phalgun - Shukla 9, 1938

6th March, 2017



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Hon'ble Chairman, Hon'ble Speaker and Hon'ble Members
of the State Legislature

I am delighted to address this fourth joint session of both the Houses of Andhra Pradesh Legislature on the occasion of the Budget Session of 2017-18. This is truly a historic moment as we are meeting for the first time in the new assembly premises built in a record time.

Undaunted by the numerous challenges post bifurcation, my Government converted every crisis into an opportunity, thanks to an astute leadership. The numerous post bifurcation challenges including budgetary constraints, infrastructural deficiencies and unresolved issues arising from the Reorganization act have not deterred my Government. The visionary leadership basing its resolve on turning every adversity into a challenging opportunity has helped the State to gallop towards its avowed objective of all around development over the last 2½ years.

At a juncture when both the Central and State Governments share a common development vision and a deep concern for the wellbeing of our people, I am very happy to tell you that our State is progressing with great clarity in respect of its goals, to be one among the top three performing States in the Country by 2022, the best State in the Country by 2029 and eventually becoming the most preferred global investment destination by 2050. To achieve

these goals, my Government has evolved a holistic monitoring strategy encompassing five themes: Gross Value Added (GVA), Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), Samaja Vikasam, Kutumba Vikasam and Key Performance Indicators (KPI). The broad development strategy under the 7 Missions, 5 Grids and 5 Campaign modes taken up by my Government will be the basis for this overall Vision framework for a total transformation of our society towards 'total Prosperity with Happiness all over'.

A review of our performance during the last two and half years is a clear display of positive achievements. The completion of the prestigious Pattiseema in a record time of a year, moving ahead on Polavaram project to give water by gravity before 2018 and attain fruition by 2019, prioritization of other irrigation projects, transforming the State from a power deficit status to one of surplus power, rapid adoption of energy efficient LED bulbs, drought proofing measures, real time governance, conduct of Krishna Pushkarams, construction of new interim Secretariat and Legislature buildings in a record time effective good and encouraging results at the partnership summits among the many more.

In sync with Union Government's decision to dispense with Plan and Non-Plan categorization and to classify the expenditure under Capital and Revenue heads from 2017-18 onwards, my Government is streamlining the budgeting process. We are optimising allocation of funds to

departments by assessing the performance under key parameters for achieving clear outcomes.

It is pertinent to recall my statement in the last year's address in the budget session, that sustaining double digit growth for next 14 years is imperative for Andhra Pradesh to stand tall among its peers and attain global benchmarks. Despite the fact that the State re-organisation had put tremendous stress on the financial and other resources, my Government's unflinching commitment to withstand the challenges and pursue specific growth strategies has started yielding fruitful results. Our aspiration of double digit inclusive growth, is today a reality.

My State has recorded an impressive economic growth performance of 10.99% in the fiscal year 2015-16, the only State in the Country to record double digit growth. We find encouraging trends in the current year also. Due to untiring efforts and innovative policies, my Government could post a healthy growth rate of 12.23% during the first half of the financial year 2016-17 and expects to maintain double digit growth for the full year.

As a result of strategic planning and innovative practices for productivity improvement and value addition, Agriculture and Allied sectors have shown phenomenal growth of 24.44% during the first half (April-September 2016) of the current financial year. This was achieved despite

28% deficit rainfall in the State. Agriculture with 3.69%, Fisheries with 42.57%, Livestock with 14.91% and Horticulture with 18.33% growth rates have provided support to the agriculture sector. Industries and Service sectors, with sectoral growth rates of 9.98% and 9.57% respectively during the first half year of 2016-17 have also displayed promising results. Service Sector being a major growth driver and employment generator, my Government is planning to give a big push to all the key sub-sectors.

My Government is targeting water security by creating smart water grid for drinking water, irrigation and industrial purposes. Interlinking of rivers Godavari and Krishna through Pattiseema Lift Scheme has helped in stabilizing Krishna Delta resulting in significant gains to the farmers. The scheme has a potential to benefit more than 14 lakh acres. We may recall that one of the first decisions of the Union Government to transfer the seven mandals in Telangana to our State made Polavaram becoming a reality. My Government whole heartedly thank Union Government for treating Polavaram Project as National Project. Assistance extended by the Union Government through NABARD to the Polavaram Project Authority helped in hastening the pace of work with a targeted completion by 2019. Project works like Diaphragm wall, coffer dam, earth-cum-rockfill dam, crest gates, spillway and spill channels are in progress. We have

been monitoring the progress of the project by virtual inspection with the help of drones on a real time basis to complete the project on time.

My Government is committed to complete all prioritized projects in a focused manner within a definite timeframe. Thotapalli, Polavaram Right canal and Gandikota projects have been completed. Polavaram left canal, Telugu Ganga, Veligonda, Handri Neeva and Galeru-Nagari projects are being executed in on a fast-track mode and some of them are in advanced stage of completion. Purshothapatnam and interlinking of Nagavali- Vamsadhara rivers are being accorded priority. Setting up 'smart water grid' through interlinking of rivers is our commitment.

My Government is keen to conserve every drop of water and is working towards sustainable ground and surface water management through programmes like Neeru Chettu, Neeru-Pragathi, Panta Sanjeevini(farm ponds), Panta Raksha (Rainguns) and borewells under the NTR Jala Siri Programme. For optimum utilisation of water resources, my Government plan to extensively deploy micro irrigation facilities. We aim to drought-proof the state and provide irrigation facilities for all the regions.

Hon'ble Members may recall that we had assured to provide clean drinking water to all households under NTR Sujala. We are committed to fulfill this promise in totality.

We are also committed to supply clean drinking water to the fluoride affected and saline affected areas. All problematic villages will be addressed under targetted programmes which will not only have normal budgetary support but EAP assistance as well.

My Government is committed to make Agriculture more profitable, attractive and cost effective through adoption of innovative practices leading to substantial improvements in production and productivity. Programmes like 'Micronutrient deficiency correction', providing Soil Health Cards to all the farmers to reduce fertilizer consumption, extensive use of vermi compost, farm mechanization on subsidy basis, relieving small & marginal farmers from high cost machinery by putting custom hiring centres in place, increasing cropping intensity, encouraging Intercropping and putting in place large scale extension services are some of the important interventions that are helping the farmers to earn additional farm incomes. Demonstration of 'Best Management Practices' in cluster mode through Chandranna Rythu Kshetralu has resulted in improved productivity levels of Paddy, Maize, Redgram and Cotton. My Government is promoting 'zero budget natural farming' in a big way formulating clusters in each mandal of the districts. Subhash Palekar's zero budget natural farming

practices are being adopted. A MoU has been signed with Azim Premji Philanthropy initiative in this regard.

Despite the huge revenue deficit, the implementation of the debt redemption scheme in a transparent manner through Rythu Sadhikara Samstha (Farmers' Empowerment Organization), is truly commendable. It is pertinent to observe that under the scheme, more than Rs.11,000 crores has been paid into 55 lakh farmer's accounts till date towards one time settlement (for farmers having debt less than Rs.50,000) and two installments (for farmers who are having debt of Rs.50,000 and above upto Rs.1,50,000). The outstanding installments to the farmers carry 10% interest payment also. Debt waiver to a tune of Rs. 385 crore has been extended to the horticulture farmers also.

In spite of Government's resolve effectively implement various farmer-friendly programmes adversarial attempts in the garb of fake and spurious seed manufacturers and dealers are have been intent in harming the interests of the farming community. To arrest and curb this menace, my Government is committed to bring in 'Special Seed Act', which would attract severe punishment to offenders. Making quality seed available to farmers is our commitment.

The agrarian State of Andhra Pradesh is heading towards a value addition platform from the conventional production approach. 'Horticulture' sector is an essential

component for food and nutritional security in the State. Efforts of my Government have kept Andhra Pradesh a top in the production of Oilpalm, Papaya, Citrus and Chillies and 2nd in the production of Mango & Tomato in the Country. Micro irrigation through drip and sprinkler mechanisms has proved effective both in terms of cost and output. We are implementing strategies to make Rayalaseema as a Horticulture hub. My Government targets to cover one million farmers in next three years under Farmer Producer Organisations for Agriculture & Allied sectors in order to establish forward and backward linkages and to promote the products of Andhra Pradesh to global standards.

Livestock sector has emerged as an alternative and dependable source of income generation even during the times of severe drought. My Government is providing fodder to livestock at the doorsteps of the farmers below poverty line (BPL) at 50% subsidy ensuring fodder security under Kütumba Vikasam. My Government endeavours to insulate the farmers from the vagaries of agriculture by focus on livestock sector to ensure that every household has a minimum monthly income of Rs.10,000.

Fisheries sector has witnessed a phenomenal growth in the recent past. Andhra Pradesh State is accounting for 70% of the total culture prawn in the country and occupies a share of 45% in total seafood exports in the country.

Fisheries are providing employment to 14.5 lakh persons and contributing significantly to the State's economy. My Government has initiated plans to make Andhra Pradesh the 'Aqua Hub' of the World.

My Government has initiated a people's movement under 'Vanam Manam' program. Under the Mission Harithandhra Pradesh campaign, we target to increase the present green cover from 26% to 50% in the State by the year 2029. The entire process will be monitored with geo-tagging. Sustained efforts are being taken up to ensure that most of the Nagara Vanams are operational by the end of March 2017 and my Government has evolved 'Palle Vanam' theme to improve forestry in rural areas.

After the State re-organisation, Andhra Pradesh is predominantly an agrarian economy. My Government, while strengthening the agriculture sector to make farming a profitable occupation, is also undertaking structural reforms to give impetus to accelerate industrialization. To create a good ecosystem for investments, my Government has come up with an innovative industrial policy coupled with attractive fiscal incentives. Sector specific policies are in place for developing different segments like food processing, textiles, electronics hardware, automobiles, aerospace, defence, tourism and others are creating opportunities for entrepreneurs and generating employment.

The first Investment meet held a year ago in Visakhapatnam attracted 328 investment proposals worth Rs.4.67 lakh crore. With an impressive hit rate of about 48%, these projects are at various stages of implementation and grounding. It is a matter of pride and encouragement that my Government has successfully hosted the two-day AP-CII Partnership Summit for the second time in succession at Visakhapatnam in January, 2017. The Summit, exceeding all expectations, witnessed signing of 665 Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) worth Rs.10.54 lakh crores with a potential to provide employment to 22.34 lakh persons. The response of investors from all across the globe displaying interest to invest in different industries in the State, speaks volumes of the confidence and faith of investors and people in the State leadership.

Andhra Pradesh has occupied the 1st position in Ease of Doing Business Rankings this year as rated by the World Bank and the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion. I am happy to say that our State which was placed second last year, has fulfilled its pledge to be number one this year. In recognition of our outstanding efforts in various sectors, my Government has been the recipient of several national and international awards - Five awards in Energy sector for energy efficiency and conservation, one award in Irrigation sector for better water management, one award in

Industries sector for Ease of Doing Business, one award in Revenue Department for Mee kosam portal- a public grievance redressal forum and three awards to Finance department for e-governance and financial management are to name a few. My State has topped in attracting private sector investments as per latest RBI Bulletin for the year ended 2016. It is indeed a matter of great satisfaction to see Andhra Pradesh being conferred 'State of the Year' award by eminent jury of CNBC-TV18 and bag the India Business Leader Award. My congratulations go to the personnel of the various departments who have made this possible.

Tourism is an effective instrument in terms of generating employment, earning revenue and foreign exchange, enhance environment, preserving culture and tradition thereby resulting in overall development. My Government is committed to develop Heritage spots in Kurnool, Prakasam, Rajamundry, Tirupathi, Vijayawada, Visakhapatnam and other important places. Divine destinations like Tirupathi, Srisailem, Srikalahasthi, Kadapa Darga, Mahanandi, Simhachalam, Annavaram, Vijayawada and other places are being integrated into religious tourism circuits. While ensuring that the bio diversity and socio economic needs of the community are maintained, beach

tourism is being promoted. World class coastal and eco-tourism circuits are being developed.

Keeping the importance of the medium and small enterprises and their potential contribution to the State economy, my Government is contemplating to set up an MSME Authority to step up performance of MSMEs, revive the sick industries and support their credit needs.

Power sector in the State has several success stories to its credit. From a 22.5 million units deficit in June 2014, we have today turned into a power surplus State and are able to provide quality power to all domestic and industrial consumers on a 24x7 basis. The best practices followed by Andhra Pradesh State in the power sector are being emulated by other States. We have prioritized energization of the pending agricultural bore-wells. Our performance on the additional non- conventional capacity generation in terms of solar and wind is very encouraging. We have successfully brought down the Transmission and Distribution (T&D) losses to single digit.

My Government is committed to establish a knowledge society and ensure quality education for all. We are putting necessary reforms in place to achieve 100% literacy by 2019 and prepare youth to serve the needs of industry and society. Establishing digital classrooms, implementing biometric attendance in schools, biometric-based payment

of scholarships and conducting on-line courses through 'AP e-knowledge Exchange' are some of our key interventions. Innovative programmes like supplying the bicycles for reducing the dropout rate at the secondary school level especially among girl students are planned to be implemented.

Our efforts to make Andhra Pradesh a 'Knowledge State and Education Hub of the Country' are on track. My State is reaching new heights with the advent of new premier institutions in various disciplines like engineering, medicine, management, petroleum, logistics, sports and others. Permissions are being accorded on fast track to all proposals to set up such quality institutions in the State through the single window system. Institutions of international repute have already started construction work in our new capital city and other parts of the State. Collaboration is also being sought from the world's top ranking educational institutions to provide access to higher learning to our students. Andhra Pradesh, I am sure, will soon emerge as a major education hub in the country.

My Government had organized the 104th Indian Science Congress in Tirupathi where World renowned scientists including Nobel laureates had participated. Further, conduct of International Fleet Review, Intellectual Property Rights Workshop, Indian Economic Association, National Women's

Parliament have helped in providing the State a brand distinct image and improved the visibility of the State at national and international levels.

My Government is working closely with reputed organizations to devise employable and effective skill development strategies so as to synergize the skilling efforts and deliver a structured, sustainable and scalable framework to impart 'state of the art' skills to the unemployed, underemployed and un-benchmarked youth in the State. Skill development is being accorded adequate focus and we are targeting to train about 5.69 lakh persons under various skill segments during the year 2017-18.

Providing employment to youth continues to be at the top on our priority list. Taking advantage of the huge demographic dividend, we are committed to bring out a comprehensive youth policy to guide them and provide them with necessary life skills. In spite of our efforts to provide necessary skills in various trades and skill development activities being undertaken for making them self-reliant, some of the youth may remain unemployed. My Government has decided to offer assistance to such unemployed youth with a pre-defined educational qualification and channelize their energies in the social service sector.

With due regard to the cultural heritage of our people and respect for their age-old sentiments and worshipping nature, my Government had organized the Krishna Pushkarams in all solemnity and in a festive atmosphere. My Government is passionate about promoting and conserving our traditional arts, crafts and various other cultural forms for posterity. Our encouragement to Kuchipudi dance is a testimony to our commitment in the sphere of culture. We have organized the 5th International Kuchipudi Dance Convention in Vijayawada. 6,117 dancers from all over the World assembled there to take part in the momentous event. This historic event has found place in the 'Guinness Book of World Records'.

The path shown by late Sri N.T.Rama Rao in giving pride of place to Telugu language and culture in our administration and society continues to inspire my Government. We have decided to establish తెలుగు భాషా ప్రాధికార సంస్థ in the place of అధికార భాషా సంఘం. The new body will have more scope and authority to guide and implement measures to develop and promote our language, culture, literature, arts and historical research. The Committee appointed by my Government to advise on the measures to be implemented will soon give a comprehensive report. My Government is committed to take every step to strengthen, develop and promote Telugu language. We will soon establish institutions and Akademies

to implement the recommendations of the Committee. Our endeavour is to make sure that Telugu language truly becomes the language of administration and make governance in all its forms accessible to the common people - in Government offices, in courts of law and in the legislature. We take steps to make it ready for the age of Internet and serve the needs of future generations.

My Government is committed to herald a new era in the sports arena and thus has come up with its 'Sports Policy 2017-22' that seeks to enhance inherent human skills with innovative sports technology. Sports-persons are being provided necessary infrastructural support to enable them to compete and excel at national and international events. In recognition of exemplary performance of Kum P.V.Sindhu at the recent Olympics, my Government has offered her the post of Deputy Collector and the same was accepted by her. To develop and promote Sports culture, increased participation and for excellence in sports, my Government has conducted Khelo India Competitions for under 14 & 17 categories for Boys & Girls.

Health is another key component of Human Development. Improvement of maternal and child health continues to be a top priority area of my Government. Special attention is being paid towards reducing the Infant Mortality Rate and the Maternal Mortality Rate to the

measure up to international benchmarks. Providing free lab investigations to the patients under NTR Vaidya Pariksha, Increased medical services under NTR Vaidya Seva, health services at village level with mobile medical units under Chandranna Sanchara Chikitsa, Arogya Raksha, Basavatarakam mother kits, NTR baby kits, Talli-bidda express for the conveyance of women and their new-born babies from hospital to home, Mukhya Mantri Pattana Vaidya Kendra, are some of the health initiatives being implemented in the State. While we have achieved our target of rearing children up to 6 months exclusively on breastfeed, 99% pregnant women are being provided supplementary nutrition regularly. My Government will provide Rs.6000/- to the pregnant women. Besides registering significant achievements in reducing child malnutrition and improved levels of immunization (0-5 years), my Government is making every effort to address all the health related issues.

My Government has taken steps to identify and control the main communicable disease threats. Under campaign mode 'Domala pai Dandayatra' was taken up to control mosquito menace. By setting standards for communicable disease control, effective coordinated action towards prevention is a priority of my Government.

18 In Amaravati, it is our endeavor to build a world-class capital city and my Government is leaving no stone unturned in achieving that goal. I am quite certain that the new capital city will be a model for the entire country and perhaps even the world at large. My Government has proposed nine theme based cities within the capital city. These sub-cities will be designed as to act as socio-economic fulcrums of the capital city. Each of these sub-cities will be a hub of activities serving a unique function and performing a role within the gamut of the capital city. With a view to providing hands on role in shaping our capital city on those lines, my Government has set up our entire administrative machinery in the vicinity of the new capital in the making. Rapid construction of Transit Secretariat, Assembly and axis road have put the growth of capital city on a fast track mode. Best consultants from across the globe have been requisitioned for designing and building an iconic capital. We will have a distinct flavor of the culture, history and tradition of our people in its design and look while being very modern.

My Government is thankful to the Union Government for exemption of capital gains tax in the recent budget, a big relief to farmers in the State who had given their lands under innovative land-pooling mechanism for development of greenfield capital city of Amaravati. Wealth creation for the

farmers who have pooled their lands for the capital city is of paramount importance to my Government.

My Government has set up various institutions and special purpose vehicles to meet the challenges of urbanization. For boosting the economies of the Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) in the smart cities of Visakhapatnam, Kakinada and Tirupathi, not only my Government is ensuring optimal utilization of the central funding in this regard but also it is providing the required infrastructure facilities. State supported smart cities and AMRUT cities are also being focused. My State has achieved Open Defecation Free (ODF) norm for all urban areas, standing 1st in the Country. Our focus is on providing urban water supply, storm water drains, sewerage facilities, public transport and creation of green spaces in 33 ULBs in the State in Phase – 1. Action plan has been drawn to provide these facilities by 2018 in all the remaining ULBs. To meet the finance needs, a joint venture company with IL & FS– Andhra Pradesh Urban Infrastructure Asset Management Limited has been formed. Soon, 'Metro Rail' in Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam will be in the realms of reality. We are planning to build Visakhapatnam Metro on a PPP model. Steps are also afoot for taking up 110 kms of high speed circular suburban train around Vijayawada.

My Government is committed to provide shelter to the poor and needy under the NTR Rural Housing Scheme. In

urban areas, houses are planned under Affordable Housing Program and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana. Misutilization and siphoning state funds by creation of fictitious assets has been observed in the past. To avoid a repeat of unethical corrupt practices, all the houses are being geo-tagged before commencement of works and at various stages of construction. My Government has undertaken completion of nearly 4 lakh incomplete houses on priority basis. Separate rural and urban housing programmes are being undertaken with a target to complete 10 Lakh houses in the next two years. Of this target, we are planning to construct 4 lakh houses during the year 2017-18. The entire beneficiary data is maintained digitally and monitored in a transparent manner.

In our efforts to make Andhra Pradesh as a logistic hub and gateway to East, my Government is promoting a Port led development model, duly leveraging the 974 km long coast line. My Government has initiated the land pooling and land acquisition works of Machilipatnam and Bhavanapadu ports and on the inland waterways front, we are expediting the land acquisition for the identified land through delineation in the coastal districts of East Godavari, West Godavari and Krishna. As a priority, we are expediting the work relating to identification of the land for the Kakinada to Bhogapuram Beach Corridor Project. Setting up of Coastal Economic and

Employment Zone at Krishnapatnam – Tada - Tirupathi is on fast track. The proposed Petroleum Economic Zone at Kakinada is expected to boost indigenization in the upstream oil & gas sector.

Vijayawada, Tirupathi and Visakhapatnam airports have witnessed high growth rates in the country in terms of passenger traffic. The works of new airports at Bhogapuram, Orvakallu, Dagadarthi and expansion works at Vijayawada, Rajahmundry are progressing.

Recognizing proper road network connectivity as an effective growth enabler, my Government proposes to widen the roads over 372 kms into four lane dual carriageways under the Vizag-Chennai Industrial Corridor Development Program. Assistance of Asian Development Bank (ADB) is being taken for development of this corridor. My Government has also set a target to widen 1000 km single lane roads to two lane roads during 2017-18. We are committed to ensure road connectivity from all the districts to the State headquarters and provide road and rail connectivity to various places. As a part of this project, Amaravati-Ananthapur Express Way connecting Kadapa, Kurnool and Bangalore, ring road to Amaravathi and development of Raipur – Visakhapatnam road will be taken up on priority. Upgradation of all National Highways will be taken up.

My Government is making efforts to soon make Andhra Pradesh a preferred destination for IT companies. Eight IT companies have started operations at the new IT Service Park in Vijayawada. Visakhapatnam is being developed as 'Fintech Hub' of national and international importance. Tirupathi is being developed as electronic cluster. Many leading companies have already set up their plants.

My Government has put in place several technological interfaces such as on-line feeder monitoring system, geo-tagging of agriculture bore wells, smart metering installation, utilization of 'Kaizala app' for seamless interaction among the employees during the implementation of Government programmes and HT Consumers. My Government has implemented the innovative fibre grid providing a package wherein Internet with 15 MBPS speed, Video, TV with all channels, three phone facilities would be provided to all the houses in the State at an affordable cost of Rs. 149/- per month. As a pilot project, Mori village in the East Godavari district has been developed with the assistance of some global companies in becoming fully Internet of Things (IoT) compliant transforming the rural economy. The village stands as an e-example in the Country with the accessibility of WiFi, internet connectivity, cable TV in all its households and moving towards less cash economy. Success of this pilot

project has encouraged us to scale it to five assembly constituencies in the 1st phase.

My Government has been advocating demonetisation of high denomination currency notes. It is indeed, a welcome move by the Union Government to announce the demonetisation of Rs.1000 and Rs.500 notes on 8th November 2016. It will go a long way in flushing out black money from our economy and cleanse our political system of slush money. My Government has taken several initiatives to alleviate the temporary hardships of the people due to the non - availability of cash after the high value notes were no longer legal tender. My Government has turned a difficult situation into an opportunity and encouraged people to switch over to digital transactions by incentivizing digital payment. We plan to achieve significant progress towards less cash economy in coming days. We strongly believe that low transaction costs for digital payments in comparison to cash transactions will give encouragement to digital economy. My Government will take all steps in this regard. My Government believes that in order to achieve the objective of fully weeding out black money and make our electoral process honest and transparent, some more efforts like zero tolerance policy against corruption, effective system of accountability and transparency in governance

My Government is providing LPG connection to women of BPL families to reduce dependence on forest for firewood improve their health status remove drudgery due to conventional cooking and improve the environment of the State. My Government is taking necessary steps to declare AP as "100% LPG connection (Kerosene free) State" by June 2017.

A robust integrated institutional mechanism to deliver services through all Government programs, schemes and activities to eradicate poverty and enhance empowerment is put in place by my Government. My Government is keen to implement Anna NTR Canteen, a scheme aimed at providing subsidized meal to the needy and poor people in the State. The scheme is proposed to be rolled out in all the Municipal Corporations in the State.

My Government has launched "Chandranna Bima Social Security Scheme" to provide relief to the families of unorganized workers in case of death or disability of unorganized worker to mitigate the misery and hardship to their families. Under the scheme, an amount of Rs. 5 lakhs is extended to accident death and total disability; Rs.3,62,500 for partial disability; Rs. 30,000 in case of natural death and scholarship to the children of the worker to continue their education. We intend to cover missing marine fishermen under this insurance scheme.

Welfare of SCs, STs, BCs, Minorities, Kapus and Brahmins is part of our welfare agenda. We are planning to have more coordination of all the welfare activities and have a mechanism for assessment of effectiveness and efficiency of their service delivery. Several programs are being implemented for the welfare of the backward classes. More than 11 lakh students under backward classes are being extended scholarships. Interests of Kapu and Brahmin communities are also being protected through appropriate measures taken up by corporations established for their welfare. My Government has setup Justice K.L. Manjunath Commission for Backward Classes to study the inclusion of Kapu community and other economically backward castes in the Backward Class category. After the submission of Commission's report, my Government will take necessary steps to implement the recommendations without hurting the interests of the Backward Classes.

My Government is supporting SC, ST, BC and Kapu students who are keen in pursuing higher studies abroad. Coaching is offered to 2,250 students for Civil Service examinations under NTR Vidyonnathi Scheme. 10.5 lakh SC households in the State whose monthly power consumptions do not exceed 50 units are benefitted under Free Power Scheme. 2.32 lakh ST households in the State have benefitted from Electricity Reimbursement Scheme. Nearly

20 lakh students from the SC, ST, BC, EBC and Minority communities are under scholarship schemes. All the scholarship schemes are being implemented in online mode and paid in time with transparent monitoring system.

My Government firmly believes that eradication of poverty is paramount for a happy inclusive society. We are committed to fully support the Economically Backward Classes (EBC) and Most Backward Classes (MBC). In addition to the 'Tuition fee reimbursement' scheme being implemented to the EBC students on saturation basis, we are also planning to extend financial support under Economic Support schemes by creating a separate budget head to the Economically Backward Classes.

My Government has come up with several programs for the socio-economic improvement of the Muslim and Christian communities. Improving the classroom performance of their children and extending financial assistance, training and placement, coaching for competitive examinations are being given to the students from these communities. Imams and Mauzams are paid honorarium through Wakf Board.

We feel that traditional craftsmanship is perhaps the most tangible manifestation of intangible cultural heritage. To protect and preserve the skills and knowledge of these communities, financial support will be extended to artisans

and craftsmen. My Government is focused on the interventions for the holistic and sustainable development of the weavers community. Redressal of problems relating to handloom sector have been given top priority. A debt waiver scheme costing Rs. 110 crore has been implemented to give relief to the weaver community from debt burden. Reflecting on the concerns of the Handloom and Power loom weavers in the State, my Government is committed to accelerate job creation and maximize economic value addition from manufacturing by building on the strengths of traditional crafts. Financial assistance is being offered to weavers through several schemes like Yarn Subsidy, Interest Subsidy, Credit card scheme, Marketing promotion and Mudra scheme.

Creating wealth and ensuring greater inclusiveness through harnessing the 'social capital' to eradicate poverty has been the hallmark of my Government. In a paradigm shift, under the programme Pasupu-Kumkuma, an amount of Rs.8,400 Crores has been sanctioned to over 84 lakh Self-Help Group(SHG) Women @ Rs.10,000 per member under investment capital to the SHGs as capital infusion into their corpus, out of which Rs.4,972 crores has been released to 82 lakh SHG members - both rural and urban in the first phase. In addition, an amount of Rs 1,339 Cr. was paid to 6.20 lakh SHGs by GoAP towards "Interest Redemption Grant" for the

period from February 2014 to April 2015, taking the total scale of Capital Infusion to over Rs.10,200 Cr. SHGs are expected to leverage this increase in corpus to avail of loans from banks so that the SHG members can increase the economic activities leading to a rise in income. My Government believes that women are dynamic economic agents, not passive beneficiaries of social services and is committed for the development of SHG's centering around women as primary tool of poverty alleviation and empowerment of women.

I am happy to announce that Andhra Pradesh is one of the few States in the optimal utilization category of MGNREGA funds provided by the Central Government to all the State Governments. This demand-driven program has been useful not only for employment generation, but also for the creation of assets, exemplified by the laying of nearly 9,900 kms of CC roads in our State under the scheme during the year. Equally noteworthy is the fact that 90% of payments have been made to the involved workers within 15 days. To develop rural infrastructure and asset creation by different departments, convergence strategy has been implemented. Under this strategy, Farm ponds, IHHLS, Vermi Compost, Horticulture, Avenue plantation, construction of Anganwadi Centers, Grampanchayat buildings, Mandal buildings, CC roads, play fields, Solid Waste Management

and other necessary rural infrastructure has been developed. It's a matter of pride to know that Andhra Pradesh stands at the foremost position in the asset creation like Farm ponds, Vermi Compost, CC Roads.

My Government has initiated Smart Village - Smart Ward programme for taking the State on accelerated path of inclusive growth and sustainable development. The Smart Andhra Pradesh Foundation is playing an important role of proactive facilitation. The Swacha Andhra Corporation was established for working towards eliminating open defecation, eradication of manual scavenging, solid and liquid waste management, waste to energy, and zero waste villages information, education and communication and capacity building activities to maintain the cleanliness and hygiene in urban and rural areas of Andhra Pradesh. 100% ODF of all Panchayats by 2018 is our target. I am happy to share with you that the perception surveys undertaken during the Janmabhoomi – Maa Vooru programme have been encouraging and to a large extent meeting our endeavour of achieving about 80% people's satisfaction on the governance.

It is heartening to note that a serious discussion is being initiated at the national level on the issue of conducting simultaneous election to the State Assemblies and Lok Sabha. Historically, they all began together but over the

years for varied reasons they were decoupled. Now the situation has come to a stage that we conduct elections in significantly large parts of the country almost every year, if not throughout the year. Political parties, and therefore Governments, continually have to keep an eye on the electoral calculations. This is bound to take its toll on governance, policymaking and administration. My Government is in full agreement with the view that elections to both State Assemblies and the Lok Sabha be held simultaneously so that Governments at the States and the Centre could pay their undivided attention to the issues of policy and governance during their tenures. My Government will go a step further and suggest that elections to the urban and rural local bodies too should be held within one year of the elections to the State and Central Legislative Houses. This will give the Governments a full four years of undistracted time to address issues of governance. In this regard, in order to take a considered view it is desirable to have a National debate involving all sections of people.

My Government is taking short term and long term measures to overcome drought conditions prevailing in some parts of the State. Real time monitoring will be done to address the needs of people. Supply of water and fodder (for livestock) and managing borewells are some of the short term measures. Long term measures include inter linking of

rivers, creating smart water grid and others. Release of input subsidy of Rs.605 crores for 2015-16 and proposals for Rs.1762 crores for current year are being quantified for the relief of farmers. Employment will be generated through convergence of departments under MGNREGS. Funds would not be a constraint for implementation of drought relief measures.

As you are aware, the Union Government has taken some measures to implement the provisions of the Reorganisation Act, especially those pertaining to the establishment of academic, health and R&D institutions. However, the provision relating to Railway Zone for the new State still remains unaddressed. I want to assure the Honourable Members that my Government will leave no stone unturned to bring Railway Zone to our State. My Government is committed to establish the zone in Visakhapatnam. My Government urge the Union Government to develop a new major port at Duggirajupatnam, setting up of integrated steel plant in Kadapa district and metro rail facility in Visakhapatnam and Vijayawada regions. My Government would pursue with the Union Government for implementation of the provision in the Reorganisation Act for delimitation of the constituencies and enhance the number of legislative assembly seats in the state from 175 to 225.

You are all aware that Reorganization Act has not addressed the financial and other imbalances that would befall our State. Special Category Status "for the purposes of central assistance" was not given legal sanction. In the light of the changed circumstances, especially after the 14th Finance Commission's recommendations, which treated all States including special category States for devolution of funds on a same footing suggests that the practice of according Special Category Status is being discontinued. You are all aware that the States which presently have the status will cease to enjoy it from the end of this month. However, our consistent efforts to pressure and persuade the Union Government have resulted in the announcement of Special Assistance to our State in lieu of Special Category Status. The Union Government has given us to understand that all the support, concessions and assistance that would have accrued to the State under the SCS will be part of the Special Assistance. In fact, but for the name, everything that would have accrued to the State under the SCS would be available to the State under the Special Assistance. My Government wants this Special Assistance to be accorded legal sanction. My Government will achieve legal sanction to the special assistance.

The importance of law and order for the development of a society and its prosperity cannot be overemphasized. My Government gives top most priority to maintaining peace and order in the State. Safety of life and property gives confidence to the people. They can go about their economic pursuits without fear. Peaceful atmosphere is an additional and important consideration for investors to prefer our State as their destination. Use of technology not only in detecting crimes but also to preventing them is a priority for my Government. Deployment of high end technologies such as CCTV cameras for surveillance, drones, body worn cameras and advanced forensic techniques are a priority for my Government. The message from my Government is simple and straight. There is no place for elements who break law and try to create disorder and unrest in our State. My Government pays special attention to the safety and security of women in the State.

Corruption is a problem that has serious implications to the economy and causes social instability. Digital technology will be used effectively to fight corruption. My Government while putting in place efficient methods to detect and punish the offenders; wishes to encourage honest people and promote a strong moral and ethical system for transparent governance.

While the achievements are encouraging, I am optimistic that concerted efforts are required from all the stakeholders of the development process to sustain the growth momentum and realize the vision. Let me reiterate that my Government is committed towards fulfilling all its promises. My Government's continuous endeavour is to ensure that fruits of development reach the last person in the last row and make Andhra Pradesh a healthy, inclusive, peaceful, progressive, prosperous, globally competitive and happy State.

-Jai Hind-