



President of India delivers new year message to Governors and Lt. Governors

Posted On: 05 JAN 2017 5:42PM by PIB Delhi

The President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee delivered New Year Message to the Governors/Lt. Governors through Video Conferencing from Rashtrapati Bhavan today (January 5, 2017).

Addressing the Governors/Lt. Governors, the President said that demonetization, while immobilizing black money and fighting corruption, may lead to temporary slowdown of the economy. We all will have to be extra careful to alleviate the suffering of the poor which might become unavoidable for the expected progress in the long term. The President said while he appreciates the thrust on transition from entitlement approach to an entrepreneurial one for poverty alleviation, he is not too sure that the poor can wait that long. They need to get succour here and now, so that they can also participate actively in the national march towards a future devoid of hunger, unemployment and exploitation.

The President said this year, there will be elections in as many as seven states and the dates for elections in five states have already been announced. The conduct of free and fair elections has made our democracy one of the most vibrant in the world. Elections reflect the attitudes, values and beliefs of the people towards their political environment. They symbolize the sovereignty of the people and provide legitimacy to the authority of the government. They also serve the purpose of regulation of public policies and mobilization of public opinion.

The President said as we have all experienced, elections are usually marked by competitive populism, electoral rhetoric and vote bank politics. Governors and Lt. Governors through their interaction and wise counsel can play an important role in easing the tensions in the society. Goodwill must prevail between different communities. In a pluralistic democracy like ours, tolerance, respect for contrary views and patience are a must. These values have to be preserved. The multiplicity in culture, faith and language is what makes India special. Governors/Lt. Governors can, through their calm influence, inculcate amongst the citizens of their state this fundamental ethos of our civilization.

The President said the Governors/Lt. Governors have a very important role to play in the improvement of higher education in their states. As chancellors and visitors of various universities, they can work with the academic leaders to effect holistic changes for quality up-gradation in the institutions of higher learning. Our interactions at the conferences at Rashtrapati Bhavan have yielded several positives in areas like: faculty sourcing and development; ICT for pedagogic refinement; research and innovation; industry-academia interface; and alumni involvement. Their keen interest can rejuvenate a sector that is best positioned to support an innovation-led knowledge economy.

The President said that Governors/Lt. Governors can have a major role in promoting art and culture in their respective states. With art and culture, we can experience life in its fullest and most meaningful form.

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(Release ID: 1480036) Visitor Counter : 24

