MESSAGE OF HON’BLE GOVERNOR ON THE OCCASION OF GOA’S
STATEHOOD DAY – 30TH MAY, 2020

My dear fellow citizens,

I extend my heartiest greetings and best wishes to the people of Goa on this happy occasion of the Statehood Day - 30th May when Goa ceased to be a Union Territory and became the 25th State of the Union of India on this day.

2. 30th May is the result of the struggle by the Goans, for protecting their separate identity as Goans and therefore this day is of historic importance. In December 1961, Goa was liberated from the colonial rule but major controversy arose as to whether Goa should remain a separate territory or should merge into neighboring States of Karnataka or Maharashtra. And hence, the opinion poll was held in 1967 – the only referendum in Independent India which decided that Goa, Daman & Diu should remain a separate entity with the status of a Union Territory. Thereafter all major political parties sought Statehood for Goa. It was on 30th of May, 1987 that erstwhile Union Territory of Goa was accorded status of State through the Constitution (56th Amendment) Act, 1987. This historic recognition besides raising the image of this erstwhile Union Territory, also brought added responsibility to the people to man the affairs. Today, we look back with great satisfaction at the achievements made by the State in different fields.

3. Goa has achieved remarkable progress over the last few decades, particularly in core sectors. Significant headway has been made in the fields of education, healthcare, agriculture, tourism and development of infrastructure. Goa has successfully faced the challenges in the field of development with courage and determination, with a rational outlook and commitment to a value system anchored on work ethics and quest for excellence. The various developmental projects and programmes that are being initiated and implemented by the State are a clear and real indication that Goa is on the move to achieve great progress.
4. People of Goa are awakened, enlightened and civilized, and have done a great deal of creative work which has elevated the image and economic progress of the State to the level it occupies today. I have no doubt that they know well how to prepare the way for the future sustainable development of their State. Goa has immense potential, both natural and human, which can propel the State on the path of greater development.

5. Currently the entire world is hit by the pandemic, Covid-19. Entire India is also under lockdown to contain its spread and outbreak. The pandemic has not spared the State of Goa too. But I am happy that the State Government is taking utmost care and precautions to contain its spreads, and has been successful in handling this pandemic in the most effective way so far. Also it is commendable how the Government has prevented community transmission in the State, because all the positive cases detected are mainly travelers from other states. I would like to thank Hon’ble Chief Minister, Hon’ble Health Minister, Chief Secretary and the team, and the frontline warriors i.e. the health workers, Police and Paramedic personnels, and all the essential service providers for the outstanding contribution during this crisis. Also I would like to appeal to the people of Goa to cooperate with efforts of the Government, by maintaining social distancing, and follow precautionary measures by using masks/gloves, hand sanitizer etc. Also special care has to be taken of the aged and children and prevent them from venturing out unless really required. I am sure that with courage of conviction, unshakable collective resolve and strong determination, together we will, under the able leadership and guidance of Hon’ble Prime Minister, overcome the crisis and emerge victorious.

6. The current situation of pandemic has given rise to various other challenges, and revival of the State’s economy has become the need of the hour. One of the major crisis that unfolded during the pandemic was availability and supply of food items. The Covid crisis has made us realize that there is a dire need of revival of agricultural sector in Goa. Goa is capable of becoming self sufficient in Agricultural production and the Government should remove all the bottlenecks in resurrecting the sector.
Today Goa depends on neighboring states to meet its requirement of vegetables, dairy products and other essential food items. In order to become self sufficient in agriculture, the first thing that the Government needs to do is Land reforms to ensure clarity in land titles and successions. Research and development in agriculture, soil testing and development of new varieties of crops should be promoted. More and more fallow lands and khazan lands have to be brought under cultivation. Laws relating to contract farming and land leasing should be adopted in the State so that the landlords who leave their lands fallow can lease out their lands to the cultivators without fear of not getting their lands back. More and more Goans should be persuaded to adopt agriculture and for that Government needs to make it more remunerative, as I strongly believe Goa has all the capabilities of being self sufficient. I have also suggested that mining activity should be restarted as early as possible. Mining activities have halted since 2018 after the Supreme Court quashed 88 mining leases. The Government must fast track the proposal before the central Government for resumption of mining. The Government also needs to focus on industries specially IT Industries, Knowledge based industries, Pharma Industries in the State by incentivising them through various schemes, simplifying procedures and providing single window facilities.

I strongly believe that Goa can be transformed into an education hub. Recently Goa Govt. has approved The Goa Private Universities Bill. State can invite big players to Goa to start courses in Hospitality Management, Shipping or Maritime Courses or other professional courses adhering to international standards. Additionally, Goa can also be developed as a place for medical tourism and wellness tourism. Goa has several Ayurveda and Yoga Resorts, which can be promoted and publicised aggressively.

7. The Covid-19 crisis has adversely affected the Tourism industry in the state. We have to revive this sector once the pandemic subsides. Goa needs to reinvent its identity as tourist destination for rich culture, heritage, architecture and culinary aspects. Tourism has to be promoted through proactive marketing and the State should try to attract high end tourists by
developing high end services such as Floatel, Golf course, Yacht, Marina, through private sector participation.

8. Goa has traditionally been a peaceful State with social harmony and spiritual wisdom. The prevailing peace and harmony have helped in the progressive efforts. There has always been an atmosphere of unity and brotherhood among the people belonging to different sections of the Goan society. Goa has produced many outstanding figures in politics, public life, law and administration, social service, medicine, education, art and culture. It is my hope that the State will maintain its great traditions and promote them. Today the State is fully geared up to meet any challenges of the present and future. Future, is definitely going to be brighter provided the people of Goa rededicate themselves to the fulfillment of many of unfinished task. Goa having a high rate of literacy, people are receptive to progressive ideas in the governance system and public life. I would appeal to the people to be careful, vigilant and protect the reputation and image of the State.

9. On the occasion of the Statehood Day, I would like to request to the people of Goa to continue to maintain and foster peace, communal harmony, friendship and co-operation, and strive for progress and development of the State in accordance with our national priorities and objectives.

Jai Hind!