

**Welcome Address by H.E. the Governor of
Uttarakhand Smt. Margaret Alva on the Occasion of
8th State Foundation Day Lecture
15TH November, 2010. Dehradun**

The Foundation Day Lecture which brings distinguished personalities from different walks of life, to address us, is a great occasion for us to reflect on some of the critical issues that face the State. This tradition began in 2003 and we have been fortunate in having distinguished speakers who have spoken on subjects of contemporary importance each year.

Last year, we had a thought provoking lecture by Mr. Sam Pitroda, Advisor to the Prime Minister, on "Blueprint for Creating a Knowledge Society". A distinguished, internationally renowned development thinker, Mr. Pitroda advocated that Uttarakhand move towards a knowledge society and called upon the Uttarakhand government to set up a State Knowledge Commission in order to embrace the frontiers of new knowledge, about to unfold in the next couple of years.

We continue with this tradition with Shri Ratan Tata addressing us today on a theme which is very close to my heart : "**Opportunities and Challenges for India in the 21st Century**"- tounfold for us the myriads of possibilities that lay ahead, not just in the context of the next few months or years, but in a holistic perspective of the future. It is indeed a pleasure and an honour for me, to welcome Shri Ratan Naval Tata, one of the leading industrialists of modern India, to our State, and to deliver the eighth State Foundation lecture.

Uttarakhand's quality of life as well as the level of public awareness is at par with any State in the country. But will our people be able to respond to future challenges ? As a public servant myself for over four and a half decades, I see emerging a few challenges that will confront this infant state as it is moves towards adolescence.

The State has been able to achieve a high economic growth rate of above nine percent, in the first decade of its existence. Perhaps the smaller base helped in faster growth. However, as the size of the economy grows, can it sustain its growth rate, say for the next two decades? With globalization, competition for capital and markets would increase. Unless the state is able to innovate and prove its competitive advantage, it may not be able to attract further capital investment.

The benefits of our high growth, have not reached the ones who needed it the most. Hence, the challenge is not only to accelerate or keep the present pace of development going, but also to ensure that its benefits reach the last man. The remote hill regions of the state, face the absence of economic opportunities, basic necessities and infrastructure, and hence, the cause for the youth to migrate. Reports of villages being deserted are increasing each day. How do we reverse this trend ?

The power demand has outstripped its generation in the State. What was expected to be a surplus state for power is today a deficit State. To retain and attract both manufacturing and service sector industries, regular and quality power is essential. Harnessing our resources on a sustainable basis is the only way out. But politics, religion and tradition seem to hamper our efforts.

As the State is the major service provider to its citizens, improvement in the delivery system remains a challenge. The urban rural gap is far from closing. Initiatives like the Unique Identification Number, and other IT enabled Services (ITeS) would become relevant, where the preconditions for a digital society exist. This would mean better communications, infrastructure, and availability of trained personnel. We have schools without teachers, health centres without doctors, fields without labour and villages without roads. How will essential services be delivered ?

A fast growing economy needs a large pool of well trained manpower. Hence, it is not just extending the reach of education to every citizen but providing quality education that would determine employability of our people. The state inherited some of the best educational institutions of the country like the present IIT at Roorkee, Agriculture and Technology University at Pantnagar and some of the well known schools of the Country at Nainital and Dehradun. The challenge is to create more of these institutions, or at least upgrade those that exist. Technical training, computer education, imparting skills for utilizing available local resources and producing marketable surplus must become part of our educational ethos.

108 ambulance services has been a success, but it's for emergency care. The unwillingness of doctors to work in the rural areas is not confined to our state but the whole of the country. How to draw skilled people to the hilly region to improve the health care delivery, still remains a challenge. Compulsory rural service for medical graduates before conferring their degrees and a cadre of barefoot doctors and nurses to meet immediate requirements, could perhaps be a way out.

I am sure that today's lecture will have an important bearing on the foundations for equitable growth in our young state. We are extremely fortunate that Shri Tata has taken time off to visit the state and also to deliver this Foundation Day Lecture. Though this visit is very short, I am sure that it will further strengthen the long and enduring relationship between this state and Shri Tata, who is one of the pioneer industrialist of this State. The Nano and Tata have become synonymous to the '*aam admi*' and Uttarakhand is privileged to be one of its producer states.

Once again, on behalf of the state, and on my own behalf, I welcome Shri Tata and have great pleasure in requesting you Sir, to deliver the eighth State Foundation Day Lecture.

Jai Hind !
