

**CONFERENCE OF PRESIDING OFFICERS
OF
LEGISLATIVE BODIES IN INDIA
ON
SUNDAY, 20TH JUNE, 2010
(10.00 A.M TO 1.00 P.M AND 2.30 P.M TO 4.00 P.M)
AND
MONDAY, 21ST JUNE, 2010
(9.000 A.M TO 12.30 P.M AND 3.30 P.M TO 4.30 P.M)
AT
SRINAGAR**

AGENDA

**{The Points included in this Agenda may be taken up in such order
as the Chairman may decide}**

1. Welcome Address by the Speaker, Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly.
2. Chairman's Address.
3. Significance of the Committee System in Parliament and the need to strengthen it.

(Andhra Pradesh Legislative Council)

4. Growing tendency to disrupt the Question Hour and the need to check it.

(Chhattisgarh Vidhan Sabha)

Hon'ble Speaker,

Lok Sabha.

Hon'ble Deputy Chairman,

Rajya Sabha,

Hon'ble Chairmen,

Legislative Councils,

Hon'ble Speakers of various State Legislative Assemblies, Distinguished
Guests, Ladies and Gentle men.

Madam,

I feel delighted to welcome all of you on behalf of the people of
Jammu and Kashmir and State Legislature..

Kashmir- “ the Heaven on Earth” – has lakes, green fields and
high altitude mountains, which attract tourists from all over the world.
Distinguished Guests- besides this, Jammu and Kashmir, having a
glittering history is a land of famous Sufi, Saints, Peers and Mahants and
is blessed with many shrines, needless to mention the Hazratbal, Mata
Vaisno Devi, Shri Amarnath Ji, and famous Budhist Monastries. Besides
its colourful social fabric, the State is famous for its delicious apple,
Kagzi Badams, Walnuts and Saffron, also its silk carpet and paper –
mache industry. This State is a perfect example of “ Unity in Diversity”,
being comprised of three separate regions- Jammu, Kashmir and
Ladakh, which have altogether contrast cultures and civilizations.
Despite this, the state has always been symbol of human values,
universal brotherhood and hospitality.

Because of these virtues, we have again been given the
opprtunity to host this prestigious Conference for the forth time, the first
held way back in 1954, 1970 and the last one in 1987. We have been

able to maintain the all time dignity of the Legislature and are thankful to the Government of India for always extending full support in day-to-day matters. Especially, this beautiful Legislature complex, which was the dream of Sher-i-Kashmir Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, for which the foundation stone was laid in the year 1983, could be completed only recently during the tenure of Jenab Ghulam Nabi Azad.

This could happen only with the support of the Government of India. Due to shortage of space, the Legislative Council complex- (the Upper House), has been carved out of the Assembly complex. As a result, the Upper House is beneath the Lower House which should have been otherwise. But our dynamic Chief Minister, Jenab Omar Abdullah is very concerned about this and due to his efforts only that we have been able to acquire the adjacent land and very shortly we will be able to construct a separate Council Complex and Hon'ble Madam, we hope to get your support for that too.

Our State has passed through 25 years of turmoil, thousands of innocent people were killed, even our Legislature Complex was not spared, 9 of our own employees sacrificed their precious lives to keep up the sanctity of this institution.

Regarding the performance of the Legislators in the House to ensure accountability to the people, I would like to say that the political thinkers have always advocated for healthy relationship between the ruled and the rulers. The issue has become more significant with the practical development of the idea of representative government. So far as the citizens of the State are concerned, they elect the representative bodies or the Legislatures in a democratic system of government. The citizens, who constitute the social fabric, always hope for a safe and prosperous future through the electoral process. In such a democratic system, it becomes a duty for an elected representative to develop a sense of dedication and accountability in him to bring out a healthy, positive, people friendly and result oriented programme for the welfare of the society, as most of the state or the centrally sponsored development schemes are monitored by the elected representatives, like the NREGA, launched by the Government of India in 2005, for the upliftment of poor and weaker sections of society in rural areas in a positive step to ensure the basic right- "the right to live with dignity" to such sections of the society. The evils like, corruption, misappropriation

and mis-management can well be addressed if legislators understand their responsibilities towards the society.

A sense of accountability, is nowhere recorded in any Constitution, but can be extracted by the inner consciousness and not by legal means.

During post-Independence period, eradicating social evils like wide gap between the rich and the poor class, ignorance, illiteracy, and caste based society, were the uphill task. The parliamentarians and legislators whole heartedly worked to overcome such issues. The country that time had an ideal leadership. The Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi led the nation by addressing the root causes of disparity and poverty. The example of his self sacrifice was equally followed by the political leaders, like Pandit Nehru, Sardar Patel, Moulana Azad, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and our Ex-Chief Minister- Syed Mir Qasim who resigned from his post for the interest of the state and now, the present UPA Chairperson, Madam Sonia Gandhi did for the country.

Their exemplary role is a torch bearer for the entire nation and thus continue to appeal to our conscious even today. But right now we have many tough challenges and as a sincere representative, we have to be open eyed and equally open minded to identify and meet these challenges.

A legislator, in order to enhance his accountability, has to develop in him many qualities and standard of life and set an example for the people.

The first and the foremost of such qualities is transparency and with the Right to Information Act being implemented, this task has become easier.

“Work Culture” is the need of the time, the Legislature should enact such strict laws so as to organize the working of the government in such a way that the tax-payers hard earned money do not go wasted or misused.

Our state, 2 years under leadership of Jenab Ghulam Nabi Azad, has proved on this score too. This legislature building is a witness to that which has been completed within a mere 9 months time with continuous construction in 3 shifts.

Presently, under our CM Jenab Omar Abdullah's guidance all our school and Hospital buildings are being constructed on this pattern.

But being transparent won't do alone, one has to be innovative to cope up with the fast changing society. And with the latest technology, the modern world has turned into a global village. So, a modern Legislator has to be trained with the modern day technology, be it computers or other. Our State government has already provided the Legislators with laptops, which is a very appreciable step. Also, the Legislature needs to be equipped with all modern technology, including the internet facility, networking etc. with an internet site of its own. Which would in turn add to transparency and would boost up the work culture too.

To strengthen the national democratic setup, another pillar, "the Media" has been added to the three pillars of democracy, which should be encouraged to play more positive role to add to the process of socio-legal development and to give wide coverage to the proceedings of the House in day to day working.

To make the Legislature more accountable, educated, intellectual people having sound background, need to be encouraged to enter the political arena, as education is one of the most essential qualities which a legislator must have, to differentiate between right and wrong. A Legislator should be nicely paid, as one cannot serve the society with an empty stomach.

It is also a duty of a legislator to keep a check on the violation of civil and Human Rights to maintain a peaceful atmosphere in the society. People should be regularly informed by action-taken-reports to make them aware and boost confidence among the masses. Our government has brought the Human Rights violations to zero percent by adopting the Zero Tolerance Policy.

Being a leader in a welfare state, a legislator is duty bound to provide for the best education health care facilities to the people through welfare schemes. We, in this state are trying our best to provide the best education and health care facilities at the very grass-root level and achieved a lot with the financial assistance of the central Government.

Today, besides existing challenges, the biggest challenge has emerged in terms of the environmental degradation which has posed an utmost threat to our very existence. The continuous de-forestation has

changed our climate. Not our water resources are shrinking day by day, glaciers are melting very quickly as well. Similarly, air and noise pollution are the challenges which cannot be left unattended.

The increasing use of narcotics which has alarmingly penetrated into our young generation is now a national concern. More and more strict laws need to be enacted and strictly implemented so as to curb such termites from the society.

Distinguished guests_____ ours is the biggest democratic setup in the world . we, the legislators should therefore not only be the proud followers of our constitutional responsibilities, but, should leave no stone unturned to make our country a symbol of prosperity, where every citizen, irrespective of his religion, caste, creed, colour or ethnic identity, can live in peace. But, the present government conducting the National census on caste basis which will certainly create a division within the masses. Personally, I am against this, this will create division in the society and will drag us way back to the 16th century.

What we need is the training courses relating to moral, ethical and human values should regularly be organized in and outside the floor of the House for the legislators, so they can address the burning issues of the society more effectively and can bridge the gap between the people and their elected representatives. An exemplary legislator can not only change the fortunes of his people but that of the whole nation.

Though our State is the only one to have its own constitution, but Motto is the same, “ To serve the people in a better way”.

With these words I thank all of you for giving me an opportunity to speak, expecting you to convey to your people that the natural beauty of this “Heaven” on earth is still worth visiting.

Having the most hospitable and peace loving people, this Heaven is the safest tourist destination to explore.

We hope your stay here is comfortable. We look forward to see you again.

THANKING YOU VERY MUCH.