

Speech of His Excellency Shri M.O.H Farook, The Governor of Jharkhand on the occasion of Foundation Day of Prabhat Khabar on 14th August, 2010.

At the outset I would like to congratulate and convey my best wishes to the Prabhat Khabar family on the occasion of their Foundation Day. Prabhat Khabar has, over the years, built an impressive reputation through its proactive role in highlighting the people's problems related with governance, health, education, environment, etc and it is through this identification with public causes that Prabhat Khabar has become an influential, respected & trusted newspaper which is playing its part to make society a better place to live in. It is hardly surprising; therefore, that the readership base of Prabhat Khabar has consistently been moving up and the newspaper has gone from strength to strength.

Freedom of speech and of the press lies at the foundation of all democratic organizations, for without free & open discussion no public education, so essential for proper functioning of popular government, is possible. The framers of our Constitution clearly recognized this and hence press freedom is now taken as part of basic structure of the Constitution.

Given the fact that the press is a primary instrument for creation of public opinion, journalists should regard their calling as a trust and act as guardians of public interest. In the discharge of their duties, journalists should hold good faith and observe fair play in their news reports and comments as essential professional obligations. Freedom of press goes hand in hand with accountability and social responsibility and emphasis only on one at the cost of the other will be counter productive.

The formation of Jharkhand after protracted political struggle in November 2000 had unleashed a surge of euphoria but unfortunately the hopes & expectations that accompanied the creation of Jharkhand remain largely unfulfilled. The paradox of rich state with poor people is as true

today as it was 10 years ago. The basic problems of poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, malnutrition, insufficient health care, shortage of safe drinking water, poor road connectivity and limited access to electricity continue to remain with us even after 60 years of independence. During President's Rule it is my endeavour to tackle these problems through the effective implementation of the flagship schemes of Government of India such, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, Mid Day Meal Scheme, Integrated Child Development Scheme, Sarva Shiksha Campaign, Pradhan Mantri Gramin Sadak Yojna, Rajiv Gandhi Rural Electrification Programme etc.

Addressing the development deficit in the state is a formidable challenge and we need the support and cooperation of all well meaning public-spirited persons to move forward. Also, we have to be focussed and we have to be strong-minded optimists and keep away from negative orientation and attitudes. Newspapers, particularly, vernacular newspapers, have an important role to play in this regard and they should ensure that the excessive and repeated emphasis on negative news does not eventually breed cynicism, inaction, negativity and contempt for authority because such a state of affairs will in the long run, be to no one's advantage.

On the contrary, I believe that press & media with its intellectual vigor, analytical skills and positive orientation needs to instill love and pride for our country & state and confidence in our ability to confront the challenges of the times. Press has to be a catalyst in the development process by exposing ills of the society on one hand and appreciating good work on the other. I am happy to say Prabhat Khabar has been conforming to this yardstick and I hope it shall continue to do so in future.

Once again I thank the Prabhat Khabar management for inviting me to their foundation day and wish them all success for the future.

Thank you.