

**SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA ON THE
OCCASION OF DINNER HOSTED FOR GOVERNORS /
LT GOVERNORS
[12.07.2017]**

Hon'ble Governors, during my Presidency, I have had the pleasure of working with you for five years. Many of you have been appointed during my Presidency.

During these years, I had several interactions including four annual conferences of Governors. I thought that the Governors' Conference should be annualized, and therefore, I held it every year from 2013 to 2016. Since the decisions taken in these conferences call for continuity and follow-up action, I thought it will be in the fitness of things if holding of this year's conference is left to the discretion of the new President. In addition to these conferences, I used to have an exchange of views with you all through video conferencing at the beginning of each New Year.

During these years, I have visited your states a number of times and have partaken your gracious hospitality at the Raj Bhavans. These visits gave us ample opportunity for exchange of views on various contemporary issues.

Hon'ble Governors, during the last five years, I had a couple of occasions where the question of constitutional propriety of Governors conduct was raised. Our Constitution is clear that the relationship between Governor and the elected state government should be harmonious.

As per our Constitution, Governors are not entrusted with the responsibility of running the day-to-day administration of the states as that is entrusted to the elected government of the State. Governor, being the eyes and ears of the centre, acts as mandated by the constitution to protect, preserve and defend the Constitution. He is not elected but nominated by the President on the advice of Union Council of Ministers. Our Constitution has been so designed that there cannot be two

functional executive authorities in a state. Therefore, the Governor's role is mainly confined to giving advice to the Chief Minister.

Since the adoption of the constitution, at various times, President's rule has been imposed in states under Article 356 of the Constitution on the advice of the Governor. Over the years, there have been many court judgments which have interpreted the power and authority of the Governor to dissolve the council of ministers before coming to the conclusion that constitutional machinery in the state has broken down and it requires the proclamation of Article 356. Even according to the latest judgment in Arunachal case, the final test of determining whether the government of the State enjoys the confidence of elected House or not, Governor has no discretion but to accept the verdict of the floor test. Various provisions of the Constitution have undergone changes through different amendments as a consequence of Court pronouncements. That is why

‘Constitution as established by law’ defines the boundaries of action by the institutions of our democracy.

Hon’ble Governors, Constitution has also entrusted some special provisions in regard to the implementation of Government policies in Scheduled Tribe areas of the states. Governors and Lt. Governors of those states have been mandated to discharge these special responsibilities as per the Constitution with the advice of the Council of Ministers. This responsibility should be diligently discharged.

As Chancellors of various state universities, you have been and must continue to contribute in enhancing and expanding academic excellence in those institutions.

Hon’ble Governors, on eve of my departure from Rashtrapati Bhavan, I want to express my deep gratitude for your cooperation and warm hospitality whenever I visited your state.

I wish you all success in the years ahead.

Thank you.

Jai Hind.
