

OFFICE OF THE LEADER OF OPPOSITION

Gujarat Vidhansabha, Gandhinagar.

Press Note

Dt. 20-2-2009

Speaking on Governor's address to the House, Leader of Opposition Shaktisinh Gohil said that the address is reflection of the policies of the State Government. But, it is unfortunate that it does not reflect any concern for the problems of people. Government has not shown even an iota of interest in the problem of diamond workers. Government has made tall claims of investment coming to the state through its vibrant summits, but the fact is that the promised investment of MOUs has remained only on paper, he said. No new investments have come to the State, he said. He said that the financial condition of the State was deteriorating very fast. As on December 2008, Gujarat had debt of Rs. 83,212.76 crore. If we look at the figures of last two years, there was an increase of Rs. 5,228.15 crore in debt in 2006-07 and of Rs. 6,716.76 crore in 2007-08 Shaktisinh said. The Value Added Tax in Gujarat is more than other states. Despite this Gujarat has mounting debt and it keeps on increasing. It is evident that Gujarat is not vibrant where up to the development is concerned. Giving figures of actual investment that has come to Gujarat, Shaktisinh said that against an announcement of 76 MOUs with investment promise of Rs. 66,068 crore, there is investment of Rs. 27,799 crore only till December 2008. Same is the case of other Summits, he said. On the other hand government is spending billions on the publicity of these Summits. In 2009 alone, government spent Rs. 7.39 crore on the publicity of the Summit. Gujarat has attracted investment without such mega events in the past. In 1992, Gujarat was number one in investment in the country.

Industrial policy of a State is same for all. But in Gujarat, there are double standards. One set of policy for favourite industrialists and another for others. Tata has been given special favour for his Nano project. He has been given ultra soft loan of Rs. 9,750 crore which is 330 per cent of his investment of Rs. 2,900 crore in the first phase. Tata will repay the loan after 20 years and that too with interest rate of 0.1 per cent. Tata has been extended several other favours and facilities. But he has been exempted from the condition of giving jobs to Gujaratis. Such a policy will prove harmful for the State. If a similar package is given to diamond or any other industry, many people would get jobs. Congress had a common Industrial Policy that attracted big industries like Reliance, Essar, General Motors and Pipavav project, Shaktisinh said.

Corruption is rampant in the administration. The report of Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) exposes many cases of corruption. Sujlam Suflam project is one of the examples, CAG has cited. Ignoring the decision to award one contract to a contractor, 102 contracts involving Rs 396.30 crore were awarded to 16 contractors, observes CAG in his report.

Piyaj – Dharoi pipeline was completed in November 2004 at a cost of Rs. 266.47 crore. But, there is no pumping and as a result the investment is unfruitful. This was part of the controversial Sujlam Suflam project.

Narmada Dam has reached the height of 121.92 meters and people can get Narmada water. But it is not available because government is not completing the work of minor and sub minor branches, he said. It does not require any permission nor there is any obstacle, he pointed out. It is shocking that almost all work on these canal systems was completed before the tenure of the present government. In the case of minor canals, work of length of 13,460 kms are pending and in the case of sub-minor incomplete work is of length of 38,024 kms. One other hand, he said, the government has spent Rs. 76 lakh on helicopter travel in the current year alone, Shaktisinh said.

To,
The Editor,

Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition has requested to publish above Pressnote in your esteemed newspaper.

(J. J. Rasanja)
Personal Assistant