

MARCH 28, 1977

ബഹുമാനപ്പെട്ട മിസ്റ്റർ സ്പീക്കർ, നിയമസഭാംഗങ്ങളേ,

പുതുതായി രൂപീകരിച്ച നിയമസഭയുടെ ഈ ആദ്യസമ്മേളനത്തിലേക്ക് നിങ്ങളെല്ലാവരെയും സ്വാഗതം ചെയ്യുന്നതിന് എനിക്ക് അതിയായ സന്തോഷമുണ്ട്. നിങ്ങളെവർക്കും, വിശിഷ്യ, ആദ്യമായി നിയമസഭാംഗങ്ങളായി ഇവിടെ വന്നു ചേർന്നിട്ടുള്ള എല്ലാവർക്കും എന്റെ അഭിനന്ദനങ്ങളും അഭിവാദനങ്ങളും ഞാൻ നേരുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു.

നമ്മുടെ സംസ്ഥാനത്ത് ഈയിടെ നടന്ന തിരഞ്ഞെടുപ്പിൽ തങ്ങളുടെ സമ്മതിതാനാവകാശം വിനിയോഗിക്കുന്നതിലും പെരുമാറുന്നതിലും വളരെയേറെ ക്രമസമാധാനം പുലർത്തിയ കേരളത്തിലെ പ്രബുദ്ധരായ സമ്മതിയേതർക്ക് നന്ദി രേഖപ്പെടുത്തുവാൻകൂടി ഞാൻ ഈ അവസരം വിനിയോഗിക്കുന്നു.

കഴിഞ്ഞ പ്രാവശ്യം നിങ്ങളെ ഞാൻ അഭിസംബോധന ചെയ്തശേഷം, രണ്ടര വർഷക്കാലം സമർത്ഥമായി രാജ്യത്തിന്റെ ഭാഗയേയ്ക്കിന്നു നേതൃത്വം നൽകിയ മുൻപ്രസിഡൻ്റ് ശ്രീ. ഫക്രൂദീൻ അലി അഹമ്മദിന്റെ ആകസ്മികമായ നിര്യാണത്തിൽ രാഷ്ട്രത്തിന് ഭീമമായ നഷ്ടമാണ് ഉണ്ടായത്. പ്രശസ്തരായ പല വ്യക്തികളുടേയും കൂട്ടത്തിൽ ശ്രീ. എ.കെ. ഗോപാലൻ, ശ്രീ. കെ.എം. ജോർജ്ജ്, ശ്രീ. ടി.വി. തോമസ്, ശ്രീ. കളത്തിൽ ബലായുധൻ നായർ എന്നിവരുടെ നിര്യാണമൂലം കേരളത്തിലുള്ള ജനങ്ങളും തീവ്രമായ വേദന അനുഭവിച്ചു. സംസ്ഥാനത്തിലേയും രാഷ്ട്രത്തിലേയും പൊതുജീവിതത്തിൽ അവർക്കുണ്ടായിരുന്ന സ്ഥാനം നികത്തുവാൻ പ്രയാസമാണ്.

കഴിഞ്ഞ ആറുവർഷക്കാലം നമ്മുടെ സംസ്ഥാനത്ത് അധികാരത്തിലിരുന്ന കൂട്ടുകക്ഷി സർക്കാരിന്റെ ഒരു തുടർച്ചമാത്രമാണ് സാരംഗത്തിൽ എന്റെ ഈ പുതിയ സർക്കാരെന്ന് നിങ്ങൾക്കെല്ലാവർക്കും അറിയാവുന്നതാണ്. രേണത്തിലിരുന്ന ഈ കാലത്ത് ശ്രീ. അച്യുതമേനോന്റെ കഴിവുറ്റ നേതൃത്വത്തിൻകീഴിൽ സർക്കാരിലെ ഈ പങ്കാളികൾ ജനങ്ങളുടെ പൊതുവായ നന്മയ്ക്കുവേണ്ടി തങ്ങൾക്ക് ഫലപ്രദമായി ഒന്നിച്ചു ചേരാമെന്നും, കേരളത്തിലെ ജനങ്ങളുടെ ചിരകാലാഭിലാഷമായ കെട്ടുറപ്പുള്ള ഒരു ഭരണം പ്രദാനം ചെയ്യാമെന്നും തെളിയിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഈ വസ്തുതയ്ക്ക് ജനങ്ങൾ അംഗീകാരം നൽകിയതുകൊണ്ടാണ് വർദ്ധിച്ച സഖ്യാബലത്തോടുകൂടി അധികാരത്തിൽ തിരിയെവരാൻ കൂട്ടുകക്ഷികൾക്കു സാധിച്ചത്. എന്റെ സർക്കാർ, ഭാരിച്ച അതിന്റെ ചുമതലകൾ നിർവ്വഹിക്കുന്നതിൽ, അതിന്റെ ഉത്തരവാദിത്വം പ്രാഥമികമായി ജനങ്ങളോടും സംസ്ഥാനത്തോടും ആണെന്നുള്ള വസ്തുത എപ്പോഴും ഓർമ്മിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് ഐക്യത്തോടും സഹകരണത്തോടും ദൃഢചിത്തതയോടുംകൂടി പ്രവർത്തിക്കുമെന്ന് ഐനിക്കു വിശ്വാസമുണ്ട്. എല്ലാ വികസന പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളിലും, എന്റെ സർക്കാർ, ജനങ്ങൾ പങ്കെടുക്കുന്നതിലും അവരെ ഉൾപ്പെടുത്തുന്നതിലും പരമപ്രാധാന്യം നൽകുന്നതാണ്. എന്റെ മുൻസർക്കാരിന്റെ കാലത്തുണ്ടായിരുന്നതുപോലെ ഭാവിയിലും ഇത് വൻതോതിൽ ഉണ്ടായിരിക്കുമെന്ന് എനിക്കുറപ്പുണ്ട്.

The Annual Plan for 1977-78 was finalised recently at Rs. 136.52 crores and there is step up of Rs. 22 crores over the approved Plan of Rs. 114 crores for 1976-77. In the Plan, highest priority has been given to the requirements of on-going irrigation, power and industrial projects. The allotment proposed for the above sectors for 70% of the total outlay.

At the time the State's Budget and Annual Plan for the current year were finalised, it was expected that there would be adequate resources for funding the Plan and that the only problem would be to meet last year's closing deficit. But as the year progressed, deterioration in the financial position was noticed. This was due to shortfall in the resources of the Electricity Board owing to the failure of rains and short fall in sales-tax revenue due to stabilization of prices and the effect of an amendment to the Central Sales Tax Act. Despite this deterioration it has been possible to ensure uninterrupted implementation of all the Plan schemes and to step up investments in some of the sectors like industries, roads and road transport, substantially. Advance Plan assistance of Rs. 2.50 crores was secured in the course of the year for irrigation schemes. Besides this advance Plan assistance of Rs. 1.50 crores was allocated for drought relief.

The past year has been characterized by a dramatic improvement in the food situation and in the field of supply and distribution of all essential commodities. The prices of almost all essential commodities registered a fall during the year 1976-77, the availability of these commodities increased and malpractices such as black-marketing and hoarding on the part of traders and other middle-men declined sharply. With the increase in allotment of rice from the Central Government and better procurement of rice within

the State, the State Government was able to maintain the scale of rice ration at 160 grams per adult per day from September 12, 1976 to January 15, 1977, enhanced it to 200 grams per adult per day from January 16, 1977 to February 5, 1977 and further raised it to 320 grams per adult per day from February 6, 1977. This scale of rice ration is being continued. The Civil Supplies Department has at present three Surprise Squads on Zonal basis and the officers are vigilant to check malpractices in the public distribution system. The activities of the Kerala State Civil Supplies Corporation have also had a stabilizing effect on the prices. My Government propose to further extend the sphere of activities of the Public Distribution System and to include distribution of more and more items of essential commodities within its purview. Incidentally, I would like to make a mention about the recent undesirable trend in certain quarters to increase the prices of certain essential articles. I would take this opportunity to state that my Government would spare no pains to hold the price-line. I would also wish to warn such of those persons who indulge in activities of hoarding and blackmarketeering or otherwise contribute to the spurt in prices of the essential commodities that they would be severely dealt with. My Government appeals to the members of the public to extend their hearty co-operation in this regard.

In order to ameliorate the lot of agriculturists who were hit by drought during 1976, my Government has launched timely drought relief measures such as distribution of paddy seeds at concessional rates, issue of short-term loans to the extent of Rs. 2.75 crores in cash and 25% subsidy on the cost of fertilizers for the cultivators who suffered complete loss of crop due to drought. On account of the drought, the production of rice during the current year is anticipated to be depressed to 12.63 lac tonnes. The target of rice production proposed for 1977-78 is 15.10 lac tonnes. In order to intensify rice production efforts, 200 more Intensive Paddy Development Units will be established. Further, an agency will be set up for the procurement and distribution of quality seeds for bringing a gross area of 4.50 lac hectares under high yielding varieties of paddy.

My Government has taken vigorous steps for plant protection and arrangements for the supply of 15,015 hand operated sprayers and 460 power operated sprayers at 25% subsidy are in progress during the current year. The scheme will be continued during 1977-78 for the supply of 14,500 hand operated sprayers and 1,000 power sprayers.

My Government is well aware that tree crops have an important bearing on the economy of the State. An important Project entitled the Kerala Agricultural Development Project costing Rs. 62.10 crores has just been launched for the development of important tree crops in the State. Credit assistance to the extent of Rs. 27 crores will be available from the International Development Agency (World Bank). The Project has, as its main objective improvement in the productivity of major foreign exchange earning tree crops and pepper with an emphasis on improving the status of the small holder farmer. The project covers new planting and rehabilitation of coconut and pepper, cashew development, establishment of seed gardens and processing of rubber.

My Government has also proposed another scheme for rejuvenation of disease affected coconut trees. This scheme envisages financial assistance to cultivators in the disease affected belt by giving the 50% subsidy on the cost of hybrid seedlings and fertilizers for the replanting of disease affected plants. The scheme is at the final stages of clearance by the Government of India. During 1977-78, 3 lac hybrid seedlings are expected to be distributed.

The Kerala State Coconut Development Corporation, registered in 1975, proposes to establish two coconut processing complexes each capable of crushing 60 tonnes of copra per day. One unit is proposed to be established in Trivandrum District and the other in Calicut. These units are expected to be commissioned in 1977-78

By the end of 1976-77, the scheme for subsidising cashew cultivation in small private holdings will benefit 38,000 hectares and my Government has identified 25,000 hectares for coverage between 1976-77 and 1978-79. My Government has proposed a new scheme for providing assistance to land reforms beneficiaries by way of subsidised sale of inputs.

With the prime objective of liberating agriculturist from exploitation of middlemen and also to enable them to get reasonable price for their produce, my Government intends to enact legislation for the setting up of regulated markets throughout the State. At present, the agriculturists are not the beneficiaries of the additional income accruing on account of the scientific development of the export of the State's agricultural produce. In order to ameliorate this situation, my Government proposes to establish an Agricultural Produce Export Corporation in the State.

During April 1976, Co-operatives in the State launched a massive programme for mobilisation of deposits. As a result of the drive, additional deposits to the tune of Rs. 26.98 crores were mobilized for meeting the credit requirements of the weaker sections of the society. Till September 30, 1976, a sum of Rs. 14.50 crores was distributed by Co-operative Credit Institutions under the scheme. Under a new scheme 20 Farmers' Service Co-operative Banks will be organised in the four SFDA districts in the State. Under another scheme 18 new Girijan Service Co-operative Societies have been organised to provide an integrated range of credit of all types, marketing and service facilities to tribals.

The conservation and protection of our forest wealth is the avowed policy of my Government. Besides raising economic plantations and soft wood plantations it is proposed to plant about 400 hectares with fuel wood species like Eucalyptus. The Kerala Forest Research Institute has already taken up some research project and will be functioning in full swing during the coming year. My Government also proposes to develop Eravikulam-Rajjammally wildlife sanctuary with assistance from the Government of India.

A new scheme of 'Intensive Dairy Production and Marketing Blocks' is proposed to be started in the NES Blocks of Kanhangad, Mala, Karunagappally and Chirayinkil. The object of this scheme is to bring about a coordinated development of milk production in these areas.

During the year 1976-77 my Government decided to implement Minor Irrigation works, enlisting the Cooperation of the beneficiaries. Under this programme the beneficiaries from themselves into Associations and undertake minor irrigation works under the supervision of the BDOs and the Engineers of the Minor Irrigation Wing. Arrangements are being made to advance funds required for this programme to the Committees of beneficiaries. Arrangements have also been made to identify and repair minor irrigation works which have fallen into disuse. My Government proposes to meet 90% of the cost of repair subject to a maximum of Rs. 500 per acre.

For Major Irrigation Projects the plan provision in 1976-77 was Rs. 1,835 lacs. In addition, my Government received an advance Plan assistance of Rs. 250 lacs for Pamba, Pazhassi and Kuttiadi Projects. In 1977-78 my Government proposes to bring an additional ayacut of 42,000 hectares under irrigation with an outlay of 27 crores rupees.

In 1976-77 the State Electricity Board was able to commission all the three units of the first stage of the Idukki Hydro-Electric Project and thereby increase the installed capacity of the Kerala Power System from 621.5 MW to 1011.5 MW. The surplus power from Idukki which is available for a few years has been contracted to be sold to Tamil Nadu. The work of Idamalayar Hydro-Electric Project has gained momentum. Preliminary work on Idukki III Stage is in progress. Ten major sub-stations and their associated transmission lines were commissioned during the year. In addition to substantial progress on the generation schemes, Idamalayar Hydro-Electric Project, Sabarigiri Augmentation Scheme and Idukki Stage III, the Idukki Mysore 220 KV Inter State Transmission line will also be completed in 1977-78. For undertaking rural electrification the Kerala State Electricity Board floated Rural Debentures totalling Rs. 700 lacs during the current year.

In the field of 'Industries' my Government would continue to lay emphasis on the development of the Public Sector, as was being followed by my predecessor Government. During the year 1976-77, there was significant improvement in the Industrial Sector of the State, especially in the field of Rural Industrialisation. As most of the area of the State falls within villages, my Government has proposed to start 10,000 new small scale units within a period of four years from 1975-76. Taking the village panchayats as the basic level for industrial development the programme envisages starting of 1,000 Mini Industrial Estates consisting of 10 Small Scale Industrial Units in each Estate.

Government have formulated a Mineral Exploration Project, aided by the United Nations Development Programme, which envisages exploration and economic exploitation of the known and partially developed mineral deposits. The project as approved by the United Nations Development Programme has a duration of 3 years and 9 months and is of the order of 15,48,000 US Dollars. It is expected that the project when fully implemented will pave way for a rational, regional economic development and hasten industrialisation of the State.

The overall development of traditional industry of Handloom is another sphere where my Government has paid much attention. Government of India have sanctioned one Intensive Development Project with an outlay of Rs. 185 lacs and one Export Production Project with an outlay of Rs. 40 lacs for the development of Handloom Industry in the State outside the Co-operative coverage. The State Government is also trying to get assistance from the World Bank for establishment of another Intensive Development Project in Kerala.

Of late, the Cashew Industry in the State is facing a crisis due to inadequate supply of raw cashew-nuts, consequent on the decline in the import of African nuts. To remedy this, my Government has issued the Kerala Raw Cashewnuts (Marketing and Distribution) Order, 1976 which provides for monopoly purchase of raw nuts by Government. This year the Kerala State Co-operative Marketing Federation, Calicut, has been appointed as the Government agent for procurement of raw cashewnuts for distribution among the cashew factories at reasonable prices.

The programme for self-employment of coir workers in the form of Co-operatives has made great progress. Export of coir recorded appreciable increase unlike in previous years.

As part of the Government's policy of establishing industries with maximum employment potential and technological sophistication Government has taken all necessary steps to support development of electronic industry which, by 1984, is expected to have an annual turn-over of 100 crores and employ 200,000 people. During the current financial year the Keltron Component Complex Ltd., a Rs. 5 crore project for the manufacture of 2.75 million colour television relay lines for 100% export to Europe will be set up in Cannanore District. Keltron Power Devices and Keltron Rectifiers Ltd., with a total capital outlay of Rs. 3.30 crores will be set up in Trichur District. Dielectromagnetics Ltd., for manufacture of 25 million Ceramic Capacitors will be set up in Kuttippuram, Malappuram District, and Keltron Equipment Complex at Karakulam will be further expanded with an additional capital outlay of one crore of Rupees. My Government's aim is to ensure that the electronic industry is established in different districts of Kerala with a view to achieving dispersal of industries in rural areas and for providing equitable employment opportunities for the large number of qualified technicians and others unemployed in the State.

My Government has recently incorporated a public sector company under the name and style "Scooters Kerala Ltd." to take over the assets of Alleppey Scooter Project. My Government has also taken steps to establish a Three Wheeler Project in Trivandrum by taking over the assets of the Auto-Industrial Co-operative Society, Trivandrum.

The Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation has sanctioned during the year 1976-77 financial assistance to the tune of Rs. 93 lacs.

The constitution of a Fishermen's Welfare Fund to help the fishermen during periods of natural calamities and acute unemployment is a scheme that is being considered by my Government. So also for the all-round development of the fisherfolk, a Fishermen Development Corporation on the lines of the Harijan Development Corporation is under the consideration of my Government. Fisheries are another important industry in Kerala which, with its long coastline, has substantial fisheries resources. In collaboration with specialized agencies like CMFRI and NRDC my Government has initiated research project on pearl culture and mussel culture at Vizhinjam and on prawn culture at Narakkal. A Lobster Culture Research Project is also being set up at Vizhinjam.

As part of development of inland fisheries, my Government propose to issue a grant of Rs. 125 per acre of water area to private pisciculturists. The development of Neendakara and Beypore ports is progressing. My Government also proposes to purchase an all weather sea-going tug for rescue operations.

There has been appreciable progress in the implementation of the various measures under the Land Reforms Act since July 1975. An extent of 54,273 acres of surplus land has been taken over by Government, and assigned to 42,606 beneficiaries of which 18,992 were members of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes. My Government has under consideration, schemes for providing loan assistance to assignees of surplus lands and ex-kudikidappukars. A scheme for settlement of agricultural labourers envisaging grant of financial assistance has also been formulated by my Government at an outlay of Rs. 10 lacs. My Government is also examining the question whether the Kerala Land Reforms Act should be further amended to tide over the difficulties experienced in implementing certain provisions of the Act. The House will be moved as soon as a decision is taken. An extent of 1,42,769 hectares of poramboke land has been assigned to 371,954 beneficiaries upto January 31, 1977. Out of the beneficiaries, 73,342 belonged to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes.

My Government has decided to bring in legislation imposing ceiling on the urban land/property with suitable modifications to the Central Act 33 of 1976, taking the peculiar circumstances of the State into consideration.

My Government has promulgated an Ordinance for writing off the debts of artisans, landless labourers and kudikidappukars, namely the Kerala Debt Relief Ordinance, 1977, on January 13, 1977. The Ordinance will be replaced by the Kerala Debt Relief Act.

Under the Community Development Programme, 400 Balwadies will be established during the current year. The Applied Nutrition Programme which is now in operation in 81 Blocks will be extended to 8 more Blocks during 1977-78.

My Government proposes to make tribal communities economically self-sufficient by taking up long term proposals for such groups as a whole. Thus, agricultural activities designed to provide employment for tribal communities simultaneously with the creation of permanent economic assets such as land reclamation, soil conservation, etc., have been taken up at a number of places in Trivandrum and Quilon Districts. My Government has drawn up a final draft of a special sub-plan for tribal areas in this State.

My Government has been giving due importance to Social Welfare Programmes for the betterment of weaker sections of the community. The anticipated commitment for the scheme during 1977-78 is about Rs. 425 lacs and the anticipated number of beneficiaries is about one lac. Provision of more hostel facilities for Harijan students and extension of housing facilities to Harijans are some of the items which my Government would implement with a sense of urgency.

The need for providing housing facilities to the poorer sections and the low-income groups has been emphasized by my Government and various programmes have been implemented. Foremost among them has been the 'One-lac Housing Scheme' under which about 57,000 houses have been provided to the landless rural families. For another 33,000 landless rural families house sites have been given.

The labour policy of the State Government has all along been dynamic and labour welfare oriented. My Government has taken vigorous steps for the implementation of programmes to ensure greater worker participation in industry under the apprenticeship scheme. My Government has also taken steps for the implementation of the Equal Remuneration Act and the Sales Promotion Employees (Conditions of Service) Act which were enacted by the Central Government in 1976. My Government has already passed the Kerala Labour Welfare Fund Bill and it is awaiting the assent of the President. The Kerala Head-load Workers Bill covering the service conditions and welfare of the Head-load Workers had been introduced in the last session of the Legislative Assembly and was referred to a Select Committee. This will be introduced again.

The pace of modernization of the Police Force by equipping them with vehicles, wireless and scientific equipment is being kept up. A new Armed Battalion KAP II was sanctioned to be raised and it is being formed. The installation of a multi-channel micro wave communication network in the State for the Police is under consideration. Over the past few months the law and order situation has improved. The Economic Offences Wing has been engaged in combatings muggling, tax evasions, hoarding and other economic offences.

The Kerala State Road Transport Corporation proposes to introduce 85 new schedules during 1977-78.

In the field of education, my Government has taken several important steps. Selling prices of text books have been considerably reduced from the year 1976-77. All schools in the State have a Book Bank each and text books are supplied to children of deprived sections of the community. A novel scheme under the name "Students' Welfare Fund" has been initiated and more than Rs. 30 lacs have been collected so far. Steps have also been taken to rationalize the system of examinations by introducing the system of "group minimum" with effect from March 1976. The establishment of a Text Book Printing Press at Cochin at an estimated cost of Rs. 5 crores to meet the increased demand for nationalized text books in the State has been taken up.

With a view to improving the standard of sports, my Government has opened a sports school at Trivandrum where pupils of High School classes talented in sports and games are admitted and given special training. Besides this, my Government has started six sports hostels attached to six schools in different educational regions in the State in 1976-77 at a cost of Rs. 5 lacs with a view to giving intensive coaching in different disciplines to pupils of secondary schools. It is proposed to have one such centre in each district in the near future. Further, my Government also contemplates the establishment of a new set up to look after the various aspects concerning youth welfare in the State.

With a view to providing adequate medical facilities for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Dispensaries are being opened in areas with predominant Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes population. A very ambitious programme for Intensive Health Care Package Programme for total coverage of children is proposed to be implemented. During the current year, my Government established the Kerala Ayurvedic Studies and Research Society at Kottakkal and action is being taken for raising the status of Ayurveda Hospitals as District Hospitals. A 25 bed Homoeopathic Hospital was opened at Malappuram.

In the context of the need for streamlining the administration and making it more efficient and responsive to the needs of people, a separate Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms was created in January 1977. This Department will act as a model agency for Personnel Management and Administrative Reforms. The newly set up Department has undertaken the ambitious task of simplifying procedures and exercising a continuous watch over areas where restructuring of administration to reduce delays and improve quality is possible. The Staff Training Centre was formally upgraded in December 1976 as the Kerala Institute of Public Administration and is being developed as a full-fledged Training Institution on modern lines.

My Government is seriously committed to the prevention of corruption in public life. Suitable legislation will be brought forward soon to check corruption whether it be in administration or among public men.

In conclusion, I may state that during the past 6½ years, the coalition Government in Kerala had tried its utmost to uphold the broad principles of Democracy, Secularism and Socialism, which are our declared national objectives. My present Government vows to continue this policy in future also and assures that especially in the matter of safeguarding the interests of the Minorities, this Government would be as much sincere in its action as it is in its profession. In the field of development activities, my predecessor Government has a proud record of achievements and I am sure with the continued co-operation of all sections of the people irrespective of political or other considerations, the Government would be able to make considerable headway in the coming year.

I extend my good wishes to you in your endeavours for the promotion of the welfare of our people. May I wish you all success.

JAI HIND