

FEBRUARY 20, 1981

ബഹുമാനപ്പെട്ട മിസ്റ്റർ സ്പീക്കർ, ബഹുമാന്യരായ നിയമസഭാംഗങ്ങളേ,

യഥാർത്ഥത്തിൽ നിങ്ങൾ ഒരു വർഷം മുമ്പ് തുടങ്ങിവച്ചതിന്റെ തുടർച്ച മാത്രമായ പുതിയ ഉദ്യമത്തിലേക്ക് വീണ്ടും നിങ്ങളെ സ്വാഗതം ചെയ്യുവാൻ എനിക്ക് അതിയായ സന്തോഷമുണ്ട്. കേരള ഗവർണ്ണർ എന്ന നിലയിൽ തുടർച്ചയായി നാലാമത്തെ പ്രാവശ്യമാണ് ഈ മഹനീയ സഭയെ ഞാൻ അഭിസംബോധന ചെയ്യുന്നത് എന്നതിൽ ഞാൻ അഭിമാനിക്കുന്നു. ഞാൻ നിങ്ങൾക്ക് എല്ലാവർക്കും, നിങ്ങളിൽക്കൂടി കേരള ജനതയ്ക്കും എന്റെ ഭാവുകാശംസകൾ അർപ്പിച്ചുകൊള്ളുന്നു.

In my address last year, I had referred to the new situation that arose in the country as a whole after the Lok Sabha election of January last year. A very important development that took place since then was the mid-term elections to 9 State Legislatures in May last. As a result we have now five State Governments different in political complexion, from the Government at the Centre. This is a true reflection of a multi-party federal system. Hence my appeal for more harmonious relations between the Centre and the States and for devolution of more economic and administrative powers to the States is even more relevant than it was an year ago.

It is however unfortunate that instead of a more harmonious relationship being established, there have been many acts of encroachment on the States' powers and of discrimination against State Governments led by parties other than the ruling party at the Centre. For example, the Central Government has initiated a move for reducing the powers of the State Governments to levy sales-tax in respect of certain commodities, substituting them with additional excise duties to be levied by the Central Government. At the same time they are asking the States to raise more and more finances for the plans. Recently a circular has been issued by the Central Government discriminating against applicants for jobs from our State as also from two other States which have Governments with a different complexion from that at the Centre. You may also know that my Chief Minister was not allowed to broadcast over A.I.R. on the eve of the first anniversary of the present ministry. It is unfortunate that these acts of discrimination are coming at a time when the Prime Minister herself is obviously aware of the extremely serious situation in the country and makes public appeals to the Opposition Parties for co-operation in meeting this critical situation. I hope that the Prime Minister will ensure that everybody under the Central administration makes utmost endeavours to create a sense of confidence in all Opposition Parties as well as State Governments led by parties other than the ruling party at the Centre that their legitimate rights will be fully protected.

I had referred in my last address to the reconstitution of the State Planning Board. I am happy that the service of an eminent economist have been made available as the Vice-Chairman of the Board and that he has taken charge. My Government is also considering the question of securing the services of more experts in various fields, either whole time or part-time. I hope that, with such an accretion of strength to the Board and with the co-operation of the various sections of the people concerned, our planning process will become more purposeful.

After the new Government took charge at the Centre last year, the Government of India decided to prepare a revised Five Year Plan for the period 1980-85 instead of finalising the draft 1978-83 plan. My Government submitted a needbased plan of Rs. 2,175 crores for 1980-81 for the consideration of the Planning Commission. This included a provision of Rs. 175 crores for the two schemes of agricultural workers' pension and unemployment assistance. Although the Finance Commission had recommended that the unemployment assistance scheme should appropriately be included in the plan programme, the Planning Commission did not agree to include the schemes in the plan. The size of the Five Year Plan was fixed at Rs. 1,550 crores. Over and above this, my Government will continue to treat the schemes of agricultural workers' pension and unemployment assistance as part of our developmental activities.

The Central assistance indicated for a plan of Rs. 1,550 crores is only Rs. 430 crores which is the same promised for the 1978-83 plan, the total investment on which was only Rs. 1,200 crores. This denial of adequate Central assistance is on the ground that the per capita income of our State is marginally above the national average, which affects it adversely under the modified Gadgil formula. My Government have made strong representations to Government of India against the reduction in the proportion of Central assistance to the State.

The draft Sixth Five Year Plan was adopted by the National Development Council. My Government had expressed their serious differences of opinion on the objectives, policy framework and strategy detailed in the Plan document. Thirty years of planned development has not reduced the inequalities of income and wealth and the number of unemployed in the country is going up year by year. Increasing regional imbalances are threatening the very existence of the nation. Even so, however, my Government have decided to implement the various programmes detailed in the plan document.

I shall now present to you a brief record of my Government's performance in various sectors during the year and indicate the broad plans for the coming year.

Unprecedented rain-fall, floods and sea erosion during 1980 caused extensive damage throughout the State. My Government took immediate steps to distribute assistance to the affected persons both in cash and kind, including free ration.

The State of Kerala has always been in the forefront in the implementation of land reforms. The kudikidappu and tenancy applications, have almost been disposed of. The disposal of ceiling cases, taking over of surplus lands and their distribution have been made with vigour. It will be the endeavour of my Government to see that this work is completed.

Most of the legislative measures meant for the abolition of feudal relationships have already been enacted. Those yet required are ready and will come up for consideration of the House during this year.

The system of Rajabhogam to Thekkemadom Swamiar has already been abolished. Legislations for the abolition of the tenures "viruthi" and other "service inams" for the extinguishment of the system of payment of Arthapalisa, Karathilchilavu and Jenmi Bhogam, and for amending some provisions of the Kerala Land Reforms Act, 1963, for removal of difficulties in the implementation of the Act and for the benefit of the small holders are already before this House. A Bill for the abolition of Oodupali tenure will be introduced in this House during this session.

The process of distribution and assignment of land to the landless poor, adviasis, harijans and fishermen was accelerated and intensified during last year and more than one lakh of pattas have been issued. My Government will continue the process with great vigour to see that during the Silver Jubilee year of the State all the eligible poor families including the Malayora Karshakar are issued titles over their lands.

In this connection, special mention has to be made of the quick and effective action of my Government in expelling the rich land grabbers who had thousands of acres of fertile forest land in Mankulam area of the K.D.H. Village during the last year. These forest lands have been taken over by the Government for being maintained as plantations in the public sector. Side by side with this, the encroachers in the assignable areas have been evicted and the assignable area distributed to landless poor for cultivation, forming themselves into a co-operative society.

My Government are conscious of the difficulties that have to be experienced by some small holders, by the implementation of the Land Reforms Legislation. A scheme will be implemented for rehabilitating them.

The outlay on agriculture has been gradually stepped up over the past few years. Some notable achievements have also been recorded. Nevertheless, the full impact of State's programmes has not been felt, mainly because of certain constraints like unremunerative prices and the high incidence of pest and disease for which no final solution has been developed by scientists.

My Government's strategy in the agricultural sector has been reoriented with due regard to this disturbing trend. A massive programme of plant protection for both paddy and important garden crops has been launched. The scheme to tackle root-wilt and leaf rot which have affected the coconut, envisages removing unremunerative trees and planting healthy hybrids in their place. Subsidy for seedlings and fertilizer is also being provided. Simultaneously, a scheme for intensive spraying of coconut trees twice during the year is also under way.

A widespread complaint is that paddy cultivation has become unremunerative to the farmer. Realising the importance of paddy to the economy, Government have appointed a One-man Commission to study the problems involved and suggest remedies.

Two World Bank-assisted programmes are under implementation for improving the productivity of important cash crops of our State like coconut, pepper and cashew. We propose to step up the tempo of activities under these projects.

The agricultural extension services are also being reorganised to ensure that the latest agricultural technology is transferred smoothly and effectively from the laboratory to the farm. Hence the Training and Visit Programme sponsored by the World Bank has been introduced in 3 districts to begin with; and will be extended to the entire State in the beginning of the coming year.

Despite benefiting from two monsoons, the lack of irrigation facilities has severely handicapped our agriculture. However, since our flow irrigation projects are not sufficient to meet the irrigation needs of garden crops it has become necessary to fully exploit the State's ground water potential. Hence ground water investigation and exploration will be stepped up in the coming year. A Tube Well corporation is proposed to be set up to eliminate procedural constraints and attain maximum efficiency and speed in these operations.

Even with the extension organisation reorganised under the Training and Visit System, to achieve optimum results, it will be necessary to have involvement of farmers at the grass root level. My Government will take action to encourage associations of farmers and to get them involved in agricultural development.

Purposeful and firm steps have been taken to improve the working of various public sector undertakings in the agriculture sector.

To maximise the family income of the farmer and to diversify the production base, vigorous steps are being taken to popularise animal husbandry. Although farmers of Kerala have been extensively raising cross bred animals, they have not derived maximum benefit due to the fact that such animals are more prone to disease and sufficient quantity of quality cattle-feed is not available. My Government proposes to remedy both these difficulties. A scheme of insurance of animals against fatalities has been introduced. A programme for extensive distribution of poultry and broiler chicks is proposed to be undertaken.

In the field of dairying a beginning has been made in the implementation of the Operation Flood II Programme. The Kerala Co-operative Milk Marketing Federation will be the agency for implementing the scheme in seven southern districts. My Government have plans to take up a similar programme in the northern districts with Swiss assistance.

The main thrust of the action plan in the fisheries sector enunciated in my last address to this Assembly was to bunch schemes for the amelioration of the socio-economic conditions of the fishermen community in the State, by organising village societies. The legislation for this purpose has already been enacted and speedy steps are being pursued by my Government to organise the eight lakhs of marine and inland fishermen in 400 village societies.

In the marine fishing sector, my Government have realised the need to avert the frequent clashes between the traditional fishermen and mechanised boat operators in the sea by safeguarding the interests of the traditional fishermen and to conserve the fisheries resources in the territorial waters. Legislation to regulate fishing in the territorial waters of the State has been enacted and implemented. A comprehensive legislation for the regulation of inland fisheries and another for the setting up of regulated markets in fish trade to ensure a fair price to the fishermen for their catches will be brought before this House for consideration shortly.

The activities of the Kerala Fisheries Corporation will be strengthened by engaging in deep-sea fishing. A network of retail distribution booths will be set up throughout the State for making available fish to the public at reasonable cost.

The Kerala Inland Fisheries Development Corporation will commence its activities in the field of inland and brackish water pisciculture shortly. Harbour and landing facilities are being improved for helping fishing operations. The third stage of construction of the Vizhinjam Fishing harbour will be taken up during 1981-82.

The activities of the Kerala Fishermen Welfare Corporation in providing amenities to the traditional fishermen will be expanded to benefit more families. Infrastructure facilities in the fisheries villages will be provided wherever necessary.

In the field of forestry, the objective is to promote scientific conservation together with the organised sale and utilisation of forest produce. While steps will continue to be taken to protect existing forest wealth,

efforts are also being made to bring additional areas under plantation and [to popularise social forestry. The forest protection wing will be expanded and better equipped. The activities of the Kerala Forest Development Corporation will be enlarged and an Integrated Wood Complex will be started.

The Research and Training Wing of the Department will be strengthened and the activities of the Kerala Forest Research Institute will be intensified.

To promote Tribal Welfare, Tribals are being increasingly associated in forestry operations and Girijan Co-operatives are also being formed. Necessary steps are also being taken to gradually eliminate the private contract system. The working of the Vested Forests Development Authority will also be enlarged in the years to come.

The prices of essential articles rose sharply throughout the country during 1980 and a national debate took place on the question of how best to control this phenomenon. Measures like the Preventive Detention Act and the National Security Act were held to be the best remedy by a large section of the country's leaders. My Government, however, believe that the real solution to this problem lies in the effective intervention of the Public Distribution System, apart from enforcement of the existing legal provisions. My Government's policy resulted in an increase of nearly 40% in the quantity of essential articles like rice and wheat distributed through ration shops. While the food position has improved, my Government are still impressing upon Government of India the need to create the necessary buffer stocks and to ensure the supply of the allotted quantity of rationed articles.

In addition to improving the ration system, my Government have attempted to strengthen the Civil Supplies Corporation so as to control 25% of the wholesale trade in all essential commodities in the State. By building up stocks and intervening effectively in critical situations, the Government was able to control the prices of essential commodities like sugar, rice and edible oils. Moreover, by organising "Onam bazaars" in the festive season, prices were brought down by 15% compared to pre-festival prices.

Spiralling prices are however likely to be inevitable in view of the recent hike in the price of petroleum products and the inflationary nature of our economy. While our state cannot on its own control these basic problems, my Government plan to further strengthen the Public Distribution System so that the prices of essential commodities within the State can be controlled. My Government had sought assistance from Government of India both in terms of finances and organizational support to streamline the Public Distribution System. Unfortunately there has been no favourable response from the Centre.

The price support scheme for paddy was effectively implemented this year through organizational changes and an increase in the support price of paddy. Price support for tapioca which had been discontinued earlier was also reintroduced this year.

Co-operatives in the State continue to make steady progress. Various concessions were given to weaker sections and measures are being taken to simplify procedures. From 1-4-1980 interest-free loans are being given to Harijans and Girijans. My Government have given concessions amounting to Rs. 445.085 lakhs to assist small and marginal farmers to wipe out their arrears of interest to co-operative societies during the current year.

The re-organisation of Primary Agricultural Credit Co-operative Societies will be completed.

In addition to improving the efficiency of the existing 15 Farmers' Co-operative Societies, 50-100 Agricultural Co-operative Societies will be organised as Farmers' Co-operative Banks. Short-term, medium-term and long-term loans will be made available to members directly from the Farmers' Banks.

Action will be taken promptly on receipt of the recommendations of the Committee created for improving the functioning of Harijan and Girijan Co-operative Societies. Steps will be taken to make loans at concessional rates of interest available to these societies.

Suitable amendments will be made in the Co-operative Act and Rules in order to facilitate the growth of the Co-operative movement. The matter of giving reservation to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the composition of executive committees of the Societies and other appointments will be considered.

My Government will give top priority to rapid industrialisation of the State with a view to tackling the problem of mounting unemployment. Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation will continue to play its promotional role with vigour and determination. Electronics Industries will be given due emphasis and efforts will be made to start employment-oriented units. The Kerala State Industrial Enterprises group of companies proposes to take up several expansion and diversification projects. Apart from the on-going units, the Steel Industries Kerala Ltd., will be commencing work on an integrated casting unit at Shertallai. The Kerala State Textile Corporation will be setting up five new Spinning Mills during next year. The Cement Factory at Walayar will be commissioned during 1981-82. The Traco-Cable Company will be starting a new project for telephone cables.

I may point out with modest pride that the performance of most of the public sector industrial undertakings during 1980-81 showed marked improvement over the previous year.

I am happy to inform the House that my Government could persuade the Government of India to set up a Caprolactum Project and a Phenol Project in the Central Sector in Kerala and my Government expect to get their approval for the location of an Aromatic Complex in the State. Taking into account the meagre share of Central investment so far made in the State, my Government will continue to insist on getting a fair share of future investments.

A comprehensive programme for entrepreneur training, financial assistance, supply of raw materials and marketing assistance to small scale industries will be implemented. The District Industries Centres will be strengthened and streamlined.

A time-bound programme for the revival and rehabilitation of all potentially viable sick units including those in major and mini-industrial estates will be undertaken.

An Infrastructural Development Corporation will be formed with a view to develop and make available suitable industrial development plots to the entrepreneurs and to take advance action to provide land and other infrastructural facilities for public sector projects.

A comprehensive survey of mineral resources in the State will be undertaken with the help of UNDP and the Geological Survey of India. Efforts will be made to establish mineral based industrial units utilising large deposits, particularly of clay and silica. Arrangements will be made for effective exploitation, finishing, and export of costly gem stones.

Traditional industries such as Coir, Handloom, Cashew and Beedi are facing a crisis. The policies pursued by Government of India have contributed in no small measure to the sickness of these industries. My Government have been trying to impress upon the Government of India the need for larger Central assistance for rehabilitating these industries. In order to relieve distress conditions prevailing among small scale producers and Coir Co-operatives, my Government had implemented a scheme for distress purchase of coir and coir goods. Government propose to introduce a system of levy procurement of husk and have sought the necessary delegation of powers from Government of India for successful implementation of the scheme. It is unfortunate that Government of India have not granted any assistance to the Coir Industry in the recent years and so far there has not been any positive response from Government of India to the scheme of coir development submitted by the State Government. In the handloom sector, organisation of more factory-type industrial co-operatives, including organisation of defunct private factories into co-operatives, will be given priority. Marketing facilities will be augmented. An Institute of Handloom Textile Technology will be established.

My Government had promulgated an Ordinance to overcome difficulties created by the Supreme Court's judgement striking down the Government's order for monopoly procurement and distribution of raw cashewnut. Steps are being taken to ensure maximum procurement of raw nuts during the current year. It is proposed to constitute a welfare fund for cashew workers.

An Artisans' Development Corporation for the benefit of indigent artisans will start functioning from next year onwards. The activities of the State Khadi and Village Industries Board will be accelerated and the Special Employment Programme will be continued.

In the field of Labour, my Government will continue to provide pensions to agricultural workers and relief to the unemployed, besides extending the benefits of welfare measures to other categories of workers like construction and quarry workers. Government are taking up a survey of coir workers in the coastal areas with a view to finalising welfare measures for them. Motor Transport Workers who are not covered by the Motor Transport Fair Wages Act are also to be protected by a Welfare scheme.

The Provisions of the Factories and Boilers Act relating to the protection of the health of the workers will be effectively enforced by the Directorate of Factories and Boilers.

The Training and Employment Department proposes to strengthen instructional facilities in the Industrial Training Institutes by providing adequate buildings for them. Students will also be provided boarding facilities. New Industrial Training Institutes including one for women and one for the handicapped will be opened during 1981-82.

In the field of irrigation the outlay for major irrigation projects has been raised to Rs. 4,500 lakhs, with which it is planned to create an additional irrigation potential of 34,700 gross hectares.

Side by side, the completed irrigation projects in Palghat and Trichur Districts, as also the Neyyar Project in Trivandrum District, have been brought under the Command Area Development Programme. The works under this programme will be got done through co-operatives of beneficiaries. Suitable legislation is also proposed to be introduced for the smooth implementation of the programme.

Sea erosion continues to cause concern; my Government hope that the Government of India will appreciate the gravity of what is indeed a national problem, and render the necessary assistance to this State. This year we have exceeded the target for construction of protective works along the coastline.

Flood control requires the formulation of a master plan to achieve the best results. Government expect to place the necessary field organization to prepare this master plan during 1981-82.

The Hon'ble Members will be glad to hear that the Kerala State Electricity Board has exceeded both the financial and the physical target for 1980-81. A record number of two lakh connections were made during the financial year. Work on the Idamalayar Project, Idukki Stage III, Sabarigiri Augmentation, Kuttiadi Augmentation, Kakkad Hydro-Electric Project and Idukki Stage II will continue and all these schemes will be completed during the VI plan period. At the same time preliminary works on the Lower Periyar and Kuriakutty-Karappara Projects are also in progress.

My Government notes with satisfaction that the Prime Minister has given sympathetic consideration to our request for the giant Pooyankutty Hydro-Electric Project, one of the biggest in the country, as an additionality to the plan. The installed capacity of this project, which will cost Rs. 550 crores, is 750 M.W.

A Master Plan for improving distribution in major towns has been sanctioned. The Board will satisfy all pending demands for power connections and line extensions this year.

The Kerala State Road Transport Corporation expects to replace a substantial number of old vehicles during the course of the next year. Efforts will be made to solve the problems faced by the travelling public, especially in the nationalised sector, with the co-operation of the workers and the public. Greater attention will be paid to improvement of bus stations and workshops. The performance of Kerala Inland Navigation Corporation would be further improved and Water Transport services presently run by the Kerala State Road Transport Corporation will be transferred to the Inland Navigation Corporation.

As part of the programme for Community Development, the food for work scheme has been replaced by the new National Rural Employment Programme. This aims at assisting the rapid growth of the rural economy and generating additional employment opportunities in rural areas. Under the new scheme, payment will be in both cash and kind and a uniform wage-pattern has been prescribed.

The Integrated Rural Development Programme has been extended to all the 144 blocks in the State and it has also been decided to set up District Rural Development Agencies in all districts. A new programme of Area Development has been initiated with UNICEF assistance. This envisages providing all social inputs by way of health services, drinking water and so on in specific areas, especially for women and children. This programme has been started in the backward coastal blocks in five districts and will be gradually extended to other vulnerable areas of the State.

In keeping with the aim of the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (1981-90) to provide water supply to all urban and rural areas, my Government have posed two water supply projects for external assistance. These are the Kerala Water Supply Project for which we expect World Bank Aid and three Comprehensive Rural Water Supply Schemes for which we expect Dutch assistance.

Special attention will be paid to improvement of communication facilities in hill areas, coastal areas and other underdeveloped areas. Larger amounts would be earmarked for construction of roads connecting Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes Colonies and Settlements.

Government will complete the task of revising the existing procedures and manuals of the Public Works Department.

In the field of Harijan and Tribal Welfare, the emphasis so far has been on educational activities. My Government feel that the economic development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes should be given more weight and intend to place more emphasis on the economic uplift of these sections.

My Government will try to streamline the working of the special component plan so as to attract substantial Central assistance from Government of India. The State has also formulated schemes for major occupational groups like agricultural labourers and those engaged in traditional occupations, and to promote their economic welfare.

The House will be glad to hear that although Tribals constitute less than 1% of the State's population, my Government have earmarked 2% of Plan funds for their welfare. Projects specifically aimed to cater to the needs of Tribals in areas of Tribal concentration are being finalised. Government have also approved a scheme for re-settling cave-dwellers—the most primitive tribe—in a colony to be set up in the Reserve Forest of Nilambur. Four new Tribal Hostels will be started during 1981-82.

The newly formed Corporation for the benefit of Christian converts from Scheduled Castes and for communities recommended for inclusion in the list of Scheduled Castes has commenced its functions.

In the field of higher education, a Committee has been appointed to ascertain whether there was any serious irregularity in the setting of question papers and conduct of examinations by the Universities of Kerala and Calicut. The Committee will also suggest measures to prevent the recurrence of such irregularities and to improve the working of the examination system. A three-member committee has been constituted to advise Government on how best to improve the functioning of the Universities of Kerala, Cochin and Calicut.

My Government will continue to give the utmost encouragement to Science and Technological development. It will also continue to nurture the institutions of excellence already established in the State.

A Special Officer has been appointed in pursuance of Government Order for establishing a Science and Technology Museum. Government have also sanctioned the formation of an Examination Wing in the Technical Education Department for the conduct of Technical Examinations.

To meet the demand for increasing the intake in Engineering Colleges, Government have, during 1980, sanctioned 174 additional seats for the Degree Course. Government have also accepted in principle the need for a Technological University in the State and the various aspects of the question are being studied.

My Government will ensure that during this year every panchayat in Kerala will have a high school. Programmes will also be devised to integrate the schools with the community.

My Government will continue to give all encouragement to the development of sports. I take this opportunity to congratulate all the young sportsmen and women of Kerala who have recorded outstanding success in various fields of sports during the year.

My Government will also encourage arts, literature and all cultural activities. The welfare of youth will be its constant concern.

It redounds to the credit of my Government that we have achieved the objective of establishing at least one dispensary (Ayurvedic, Allopathic or Homoeopathic) in every panchayat in this State. Action on the major recommendations of the Pai Committee has been completed and orders have been issued on many of them. The Trivandrum Medical College Hospital will become an exclusively referral hospital with effect from 23-2-1981. Side by side, all the peripheral hospitals in Trivandrum district will be improved to ensure the effectiveness of the referral system. It is proposed to start a Dental College in Kozhikode.

As regards Health Services, the necessary infrastructure having already been built up, my Government will now concentrate on improving the quality of services. Among other things, a programme of deworming children in the age group of 1—5 years will be taken up in vulnerable areas, along with the Nutrition Programme.

Government also propose to establish a Regional Research Centre for Siddha System with assistance from the Government of India.

In the field of social welfare, 1981 is being observed as the International Year of the Disabled. My Government have set up a State Committee to draw up a programme for assisting the handicapped this year. An Expert Committee to draw up a project report for establishing an Institute for Research Education and Rehabilitation of the mentally retarded has also been set up. Among other things, Government also intend to start a home for rehabilitating discharged mental patients, and to encourage handicapped persons to form Industrial co-operatives with financial assistance from the Government. The Handicapped Persons' Welfare Corporation has already set up a Limb Fitting Centre attached to Kottayam Medical College and similar centres at Alleppey and Cannanore will be opened during the year. The Corporation will also encourage self-employment among the handicapped.

In addition to the 18 Integrated Child Development Projects started in the previous year, five new projects will be started in the Central Sector this year. Food charges in the Anganawadi centres have been enhanced for children upto the age of six to ensure better nutritional standards.

My Government are fully aware of the tremendous potential of tourism and have prepared a tourism plan to be implemented during the VI Plan period. This envisages development of specific areas of tourist interest and preparing travel circuits to link up places with varied tourist attractions. Henceforth Tourism Week will be celebrated every year during the Onam Festival. My Government are actively considering the question of setting up hotel projects in the joint sector. There is also a programme to construct a convention complex to attract convention tourism.

My Government will continue to give priority to the modernisation of the Police Force. The Police communication system will be improved. The Central Laboratory at Trivandrum will be equipped with sophisticated instruments. The strength of the police force will be augmented so that the police-population ratio will approximate to that in other States.

The welfare of Police personnel will also receive my Government's close attention. The Police Co-operative Housing Society which will disburse loans to assist Police personnel to construct their own houses, has been registered. Better medical facilities will also be provided.

The law and order situation continues to be normal and this is a notable achievement as my Government has not resorted to measures like the National Security Act. My Government will also scrupulously adhere to the policy assurances made by my Home Minister at the last session of this Assembly.

It is proposed to start a Borstal School for adolescent boys, two Observation Homes for girls and Children's Homes for boys and girls in the State. It is also proposed to start a few more Vocational Training Units in prisons to enable prisoners to gain experience in trades, which could enable them to earn their livelihood on their release. Recreational Centres are also to be started in the Central Prison and the Open Prison, Nettukaltheri.

There is a serious housing shortage in the State. The problem has assumed acute proportions among the weaker sections of society. My Government, therefore, are resolved to step up house construction activities giving adequate weightage to the housing problem of the rural poor. A scheme, which is a continuation of the One Lakh Housing Scheme, aims at constructing 40,000 houses for rural workers. This will be implemented with the help of Panchayats and Blocks, with the Panchayat providing a free house site to the allottee. A massive scheme of loans to the needy at low rates of interest is also being implemented, the target for the current year being Rs. 4.74 crores. Government have also entrusted the rental housing scheme to the Housing Board to enable mobilisation of institutional finance. In the co-operative sector, nearly 6,100 houses worth Rs. 11 crores will be constructed.

My Government's programme of developing ports will include expansion of Neendakara Cargo Harbour and Beypore Harbour. The project report for the establishment of Marine Development Corporation is also under serious consideration.

The views of Service Associations on the report of the Rules Revision Committee will be sought before a decision is taken on the recommendations. Their views on a draft Bill governing the set up and functioning of the Civil Services Tribunal will also be obtained.

My Government are aware of the need for a redelimitation of the boundaries of the present revenue units to facilitate an effective and efficient administration. As a first step, Wynad district has been newly created.

The abolition of the Board of Revenue has been a declared objective of my Government and necessary, legislation will be brought before this House shortly.

My Government have felt that some of the existing legislations relating to land assignment, land acquisition, revenue recovery, etc., require changes to suit present day conditions and steps will be taken to bring in legislations wherever necessary.

A number of important Bills are likely to be considered by the Assembly this year. They include the Kerala Slum Areas (Improvement and Clearance) Bill, the Kerala Town and Country Planning Bill, the Kerala State Co-operative Agricultural Development Banks Bill and the Kerala Raw Cashewnuts (Procurement and Distribution) Bill, etc.

Urban Development activities in Trivandrum, Kozhikode and Idukki are expected to increase with the constitution of Development Authorities there. In Idukki township a co-ordinated programme of development is already under way. Development Authorities are also being constituted for other district towns including Trichur, Quilon and Kottayam in a phased manner.

Two major urban development programmes are the development of small and medium towns, and slum clearance and slum improvement. More towns will be brought within the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for development of small and medium towns. Town Development plans are being prepared and some have been sent to Government of India also. Those plans envisage development of infrastructural facilities like link-roads and transport. A project report for the UNICEF assisted Social Inputs Programme is also under preparation for Kayamkulam, Alleppey and Shertallai.

Government have also launched a Rs. 20 crores scheme to eradicate major slums in all Municipal Towns and Corporations within 10 years. A five year perspective plan for developing all Municipalities and Corporations will be drawn up.

Traffic problems are being tackled through a traffic and transportation plan being prepared. Government also propose to end house scavenging and the practice of manual removal of night soil from October 2nd of this year.

The Maternity and Child Welfare Programme will be made more comprehensive in all Municipal Towns, this year.

During 1980-81 a seven-point programme for integrated development of basic infrastructural facilities in Panchayats and a scheme for environmental improvement of Harijan and Girijan Colonies and the One Lakh Housing Colonies have been started. Panchayats have taken up several developmental works under these programmes, and implementation will continue during 1981-82.

Government also propose to reorganise the Kerala State Rural Development Board so as to make it a purely financing agency. Implementation of schemes will therefore be left solely to the Panchayats.

Committed as they are to the principles of democratic decentralisation, my Government hope to implement the provisions of the District Administration Act in the coming year. A Special Officer has been appointed to help set up the District Councils. The Councils are expected to come into operation upon completion of the 1981 Census.

With a view to streamlining the activities of the Public Relations Department it is proposed to utilise the medium of films more effectively and on a regular basis. With this end in view the Public Relations Department started producing a series of news-reels entitled Drisya Kerala this year. This programme will be continued in 1981-82 also. The activities of the Kerala State Film Development Corporation will be expanded with a view to utilising films as a medium for education and communication.

My Government is fully aware of the difficulties experienced by Haj Pilgrims from our State, and propose to take constructive steps for improving facilities for undertaking the pilgrimage.

Mindful of the problems confronting the State, my Government have formulated a variety of programmes covering every important sector. I earnestly request all members of this august House to co-operate wholeheartedly with the Government to ensure that the beneficial results of our enlightened socio-economic measures do indeed reach the people. I am confident that success will attend your efforts.

“JAI HIND”