

**MARCH 10, 1989**

*Honourable Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly,*

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to this Session of the Eighth Kerala Legislative Assembly. This Session coincides with the second anniversary of the Left Democratic Front Government in the State. I extend my warm and sincere greetings to you all and seek your whole-hearted co-operation.

2. During the last two years my Government has been faced with several daunting challenges. My Government has responded to these challenges with well-defined policies, marked by farsightedness and courage of conviction. The commitment of my Government to secular ideals and to a corruption-free and responsive administration has been total. At a time when disruptive and communal forces are attempting to undermine the unity and integrity of the country, it is a matter of great satisfaction for us that Kerala has a remarkable record in maintaining communal peace and harmony. The Government has successfully thwarted communal forces.

3. My Government has been facing an extremely difficult financial situation, particularly with regard to ways and means management. My Government has tried its best to tackle the financial problems; there are however two problems: firstly, the financial position of the whole country (Centre and all the States) is going from bad to worse; secondly, the Centre has not been helpful to the States in general and to a non-Congress (I) governed State like Kerala in particular. Care has been taken to ensure that the thrust of development activities is maintained to the maximum extent possible.

4. To tide over the acute financial problem faced by the State, Government has launched special tax collection drives. Legislation has been enacted for regulating inter-state movement of goods by the exit-entry pass system. The Intelligence Wing of the Sales-tax Department has been strengthened and evasion of tax controlled to a considerable extent. Legislation proposals relating to entry tax and consignment tax are still pending with Government of India.

5. I would also like to draw your attention to the first set of recommendations of the Ninth Finance Commission which has completely ignored the just needs of the State. The grant and tax share of Kerala has come down to 3.01 per cent against 3.27 per cent in the report of the Eighth Commission. This will mean a loss of Rs. 37 crores to the State. Another adverse decision has been the exclusion of Kerala from the list of States with non-plan revenue deficit. In granting assistance for special projects, the special problems of the State such as mounting unemployment, rehabilitation of Keralites returning from Gulf countries, loss to cash crops due to drought, shortage in food production, crises in the traditional industries, etc. have been ignored.

6. My Government has endorsed several recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission on Centre-State Relations. The recommendations concerning the resort to Article 356 of the Constitution of India, the need for constituting an Inter-State Council and a National Economic and Development Council, the mode of selection of Governor, the constitutional relationship between the Governor and the Council of Ministers; etc., are of particular significance. My Government earnestly hopes that the Central Government will seriously consider accepting these recommendations and act upon them.

7. My Government fully endorses the concept of "co-operative federalism" which according to the Commission should inform the relations between the Centre and the States. It is regrettable that the measures adopted by the Centre are violative of this wholesome principle enunciated by the Commission.

8. My Government fully supports the idea that, once correct relationship is established between the Centre and the States on what the Sarkaria Commission calls "Co-operative federalism", there should be maximum possible decentralisation of powers from the State to the lower levels of administration. It is with this view that my Government has been rendering maximum assistance to the Panchayats, Municipalities and Corporations to which elections were held fourteen months ago. Steps are now being taken to implement the District Councils Act for which elections will be held this year.

9. It is regrettable that, instead of decentralisation of powers all along the line—from the Centre to the States and from the latter to the Panchayati Raj institutions—the Central Government not only refuses to

establish relations of "Co-operative federalism" with the States but goes behind the back of the States to deal with the Panchayati Raj institutions and with the District Collectors. This in the view of my Government amounts to further centralisation, while the need is for decentralisation all along the line.

10. This year my Government has taken an important step towards the fulfilment of the long cherished goal of decentralised planning. Preparatory steps have been taken for the formulation of District Plans as part of the State's VIII Five Year Plan. Detailed guidelines have been prepared and circulated to all concerned. Accordingly, the District Development Council, with the help of its three sub-committees constituted for the purpose, the Block Development Councils and the Panchayats, will prepare the District Plan. The exercise is scheduled for completion by the end of March, 1989.

11. Rural Development Programmes as IRDP, TRYSEM and the rural employment programmes will continue to be implemented vigorously with a greater degree of popular participation.

12. Government have approved the Janardhanan Nair Commission Report suggesting measures and assistance for improving paddy cultivation in the State. The Government is implementing stage by stage the recommendations of the Commission.

The Krishi Bhavans established at the Panchayat level have recorded considerable achievements in the implementation of agricultural development schemes with public participation. For ensuring public participation Agricultural Advisory Committees have been constituted at Panchayat level, District level and State level. The Krishi Bhavans are identifying location-specific schemes and implementing them. Assistance from financial institutions has also been made available to cultivators for implementing these schemes. It is proposed to utilize such loan facilities to the tune of Rs. 50 crores from financial institutions for implementing location-specific schemes during the current year.

13. My Government proposes to implement 'Group Farming' for paddy cultivation from this year onwards. Group farming aims at minimising operational expenses and increasing the yield, thus making paddy cultivation profitable.

14. A comprehensive scheme for production, procurement, processing and marketing of vegetables is being formulated. It is proposed to constitute a Federation for vegetable development with the participation of the co-operative sector.

15. Livestock Development is a crucial strategy in the economic development of the State. As a result of various measures taken by Government, substantial progress has been achieved in livestock development. The achievements in the production and distribution of milk, meat and eggs have been remarkable.

16. It is proposed to substantially increase the production of milk. About 500 new primary milk producers societies will be established. More processing facilities and cattle feed production capacity will be established. In order to make milk production cost effective, fodder development will be taken up on a large scale. Health coverage will be further expanded and improved. The basic infrastructure for livestock development will be further strengthened and improved through modernisation. Efforts will also be made to set up institutional arrangements at the grass root level to take up livestock development programmes covering production, processing and marketing in a co-ordinated manner.

17. Development of the fisheries sector is given special emphasis in the overall plan effort of the State. The programmes taken up in this sector for the provision of basic economic and social infrastructure, augmentation of fish production and for the welfare of fishermen achieved considerable progress during 1988-89. Three new fishing harbours are proposed to be established at Puthiyappa, Munambam and Thankassery. The ongoing schemes at Neendakara and Vizhinjam will be expedited. The emphasis in the coming years will be for the establishment of landing centres in the traditional sector.

18. In view of the stagnation in the landings of fish from the sea, greater emphasis is now being given to the development of aquaculture for which the State possesses immense potential. The inland water bodies in the State are mainly suited for prawn farming. In the light of the steady decline in the marine landings of prawn, it is felt necessary to make intensive use of these water bodies for prawn farming. A project formulated by the State for large scale prawn farm development has been approved for assistance by the Kuwait Fund. Implementation will commence in the next financial year.

19. Under the NCDC assisted Integrated Fisheries Development Project implemented by Matsyafed for the benefit of traditional fishermen, more villages will be covered during the coming year. The welfare schemes now under implementation for traditional fishermen will continue.

20. For strengthening conservation efforts and stepping up the efficiency of the Forest Department, the Government formulated a scheme in 1988 for restructuring the basic administrative units by forming Forest Stations. A beginning has been made in one district during this year. This is a unique venture in the history of Indian forestry. A draft Bill to amend the Kerala Forest Act for making the provisions of the Act more purposeful and stringent is getting ready and will be finalised soon. Afforestation and farm forestry programmes were strengthened during 1988-89 with people's participation. In six northern districts a project with assistance from the World Food Programme has been started to provide employment opportunities to tribals through forestry work.

21. In 1988-89 Integrated Co-operative Development Projects have been started in the districts of Wayanad, Palghat and Kottayam and they made good progress. The co-operatives have been used as a social instrument to implement the progressive policies of the State Government for farmers and labourers by adopting programmes such as monopoly procurement of cashew, procurement of copra through KERAFED and vegetables during Onam season. Efforts will be made to rehabilitate weak co-operative primaries and to strengthen co-operative marketing. New co-operative ventures such as hotels, restaurants and hospitals are proposed to be started.

22. During the year Government has taken a number of measures to accelerate the industrial growth of the State. Utmost importance was given to the rehabilitation and revival of sick and closed units. The reopening of the Gwalior Rayons factory at Mavoor was a major achievement in this field. Several closed public and private sector units were also reopened during the year. As a result of the efforts made by Government, there has been significant improvement in the performance of many public sector units. Government has drawn up a time bound programme for commissioning the projects for jelly-filled cables at Thiruvalla and brushless alternators at Kasaragod in the Public Sector. A new public Sector Unit namely the 'Hi-tech Aerospace Engineering Unit' is to commence operation in the coming year at Trivandrum. Government has also decided to establish a new Mineral Separation Plant costing Rs. 54 crores at Chavara.

23. The progress in the small scale sector has been impressive. The emphasis on small scale industries will be continued in the coming year also. Government has taken steps to revive about 2065 sick units in the small industries sector with the help of banks and other financial institutions.

24. Another area in which the Government took considerable interest was the development of industries and industrial co-operatives run by women. 189 Industrial units run by women including women industrial co-operatives have been established as a result of special drive made in this regard.

25. Government has identified the rubber, electronics, leather and agro-based industries as thrust areas. In order to promote the rubber industry special concessions were extended to new units using rubber as a raw material.

26. The traditional sectors of coir and handloom have been facing several problems. In the coir sector a three point levy system was introduced to ensure better availability of husks to coir co-operatives. Two model coir factories are in the final stages of implementation. The coir sector in Kerala has been facing a threat from brown fibre from other States and the attitude of the Coir Board has not been helpful in the matter.

27. In the handloom sector more yarn banks are being set up to make yarn available at reasonable rates to weavers. The decision of the Central Government to withdraw rebate to handloom co-operatives and Handloom Development Corporation has created crisis in the handloom sector. Government has enacted a legislation for a Khadi Welfare Fund Board to give pension to Khadi workers.

28. The schemes for monopoly procurement of raw cashewnuts was implemented during the year. The Government took over the management of 36 factories in the private sector. The scheme is being continued during this season also and all measures are being taken to implement it successfully. Re-opening of closed factories, revival of sick units and starting of new units in small scale industries and Khadi and Village Industries and establishment of women industrial units have led to employment of about two lakhs people.

29. There has been long delay in completion of almost all irrigation projects taken up in Kerala leading to several fold increases in the cost of projects. Government have prepared an action plan in order to complete quickly the projects which can be completed within the least possible time so that the benefits from the investment made in these projects can be derived as quickly as possible. Accordingly, the work on Kallada, Periyar Valley, Chimony and Chitturpuzha projects has been expedited providing adequate funds for the completion of these projects within the targetted dates. Substantial progress has been achieved in the field of minor irrigation and anti-sea erosion work. Ten completed projects in the State were brought under the Command Area Development Authority for the development of the areas benefited by these projects. An irrigation management and training institute has been established under the auspices of CWRDM, Calicut to train irrigation engineers, agricultural officers and farmers. To co-ordinate the works of different agencies involved in water resources development and to give policy directions regarding the optimum use of water resources for various purposes, Government has decided to set up a high powered body named as 'Water Resources Council' under the Chairmanship of the Chief Minister.

30. In order to ensure maximum benefit from available funds, the Public Works Department has been working from 1987-88 on the basis of an Action Plan. Though the proposal of the State Government was to declare the Trivandrum-Muvattupuzha-Madurai road (linking Cochin and Angamaly) as a National Highway, Government of India have decided to declare only the Cochin-Madurai Road as a National Highway.

As a departure from the practice hitherto followed, the Government undertook a crash programme for the maintenance of roads before the monsoon and completed the repair of all important roads before 31st May, 1988.

31. With the increasing demand for power and frequent failure of monsoon and the reduction in the Central quota, the power situation in the State continues to be bad. This would adversely affect the industrial development and agricultural production. 40% power cut on industry has been reintroduced from 1st of February, 1989. There are no large projects under execution which can yield quick results. New schemes submitted to the Centre have not received Central clearance. Hence, the Government has asked the Government of India to increase the allocation of power from Central sector power Stations. The Government of India have also been requested for fuel linkage for a 90 MW gas-turbine plant at Brahmapuram and a 600 MW plant at Vypeen. The Government of India have agreed to set up a thermal power station at Kayamkulam with a capacity of 420 MW in the first phase, in the central sector through NTPC. My Government had decided to implement schemes for increasing the generation of energy from non-conventional sources such as wind, sun and wave. An experimental wave energy project is under construction at Vizhinjam with assistance from IIT, Madras and Department of Ocean Development, Government of India.

32. During 1988-89 the Kerala State Road Transport Corporation made an earnest attempt with the co-operation of all concerned to improve its operations by way of increase in fleet strength, renewal of old buses, operation of more schedules, reduction in overhead expenditure and increase in earnings per kilometer. As a result of sustained co-operation from all quarters the Corporation was able to stabilize day to day operations on a profitable basis, though old liabilities continued to be a heavy drag on its resources.

33. During 1988-89 several proposals for strengthening inland navigation prospects in Kerala were taken up in right earnest by Government both on their own and in collaboration with the Inland Waterways Authority of India. The Government of India have been requested to declare the entire west coast canal from Kovalam to Manjeshwar as a National Waterway. It is expected that the Cochin-Quilon stretch will soon be declared as a National Waterway.

34. During 1988-89 all the intermediate ports in the State viz., Neendakara, Alleppey, Beypore and Calicut were active in handling export and import of cargo. A major achievement was the revival of Alleppey and Calicut ports which had been dormant for the last many years. The development of Cochin Port has become stunted owing to the inadequate allocation of funds for its modernisation and expansion. The construction of three bridges connecting Ernakulam-Mulavucad, Mulavucad-Vallarpadam and Vallarpadam-Vypeen which are absolutely essential for the development of the Port and the area around, estimated to cost about Rs. 24 crores, should be taken up by the Government of India since it is beyond the financial capabilities of the State. In fact the Union Minister for Surface Transport had given an assurance to this effect at a public function in Cochin a few months back. But positive action is yet to come.

35. During the last year my Government took anticipatory action for facing the drought situation by constructing new wells, deepening of existing wells, provision of pumpsets, etc. However, the south-west monsoon was normal. But the north-east monsoon was 63% below normal and it is feared that the State may have to face a drought situation until the south-west monsoon arrives in June this year. Action has already been initiated to provide sources of drinking water in problem areas.

36. During the last year the State has made substantial progress in the matter of assignment of land to the landless. Pattas have also been given to the occupants of housing units constructed under the One Lakh Housing Scheme. My Government's steady efforts to obtain concurrence of the Government of India for grant of title deeds to pre-1977 occupants of forest lands has not met with final success. The Government is, however, committed to giving pattas to the occupants of forest lands who are in possession from before 1977 and it will continue its intensive efforts to obtain the necessary clearance to give pattas. A proposal to bring a legislation for issue of Pattayam Pass Books to all landholders in the State is awaiting clearance of the Central Government.

37. My Government will continue efforts for implementation of land reforms. During the year Government have passed a legislation to afford considerable benefits to tenants holding below one hectare of land who have purchased their rights and also to 'Kudikidappukars'. Vigorous efforts have been made in the last one year for distribution of the available surplus lands. As Government found that one of the major stumbling blocks in distributing surplus land was the pendency of court cases, the Government have drafted a legislation to constitute a tribunal under Article 323 B of the Constitution of India and the Bill is awaiting final clearance of the Central Government. Another Bill on land reforms passed by this Legislature on April 2, 1980 and still awaiting clearance by the Centre is the Kerala Land Reforms (Amendment) Bill, 1980. This Bill is meant to omit section 6C which was inserted in the Kerala Land Reforms Act, 1963 by an amendment in 1979 to give protection to certain persons who had obtained leases after April 1, 1964 inspite of the prohibition on the creation of tenancies after that date.

38. My Government has nearly completed the second phase of the Rehabilitation Housing Scheme by constructing 50,000 houses. The third phase of the Rehabilitation scheme has been sanctioned for constructing 55,000 houses with a higher financial assistance per unit. The scheme involves active participation of local bodies and will be implemented from the next financial year. The Government has given substantial emphasis on low cost construction techniques in the housing sector. Government has registered Nirmithi Kendras in all the districts. They have already commenced functioning and they will be further developed in the coming year.

39. The activities for tourism development in the State during the last year were mainly directed towards the provision of infrastructural facilities such as wayside amenities and yatrivases. The emphasis in 1989-90 will be on the completion of schemes launched during the previous years. To promote the development of human resources for tourism an Institute of Tourism and Travel Studies has been set up in Trivandrum. Tourism Promotion Councils have been set up in almost all districts to have a decentralized and co-ordinated approach for tourism development with people's involvement.

40. My Government attaches top priority to the implementation of development programmes for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Besides liberal educational concessions being extended to students belonging to Scheduled Castes and Tribes increased emphasis is being laid on the economic development of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. During the year 1988-89 as a result of close and very effective monitoring, the achievements under the Special Component Plan and Tribal Sub Plan have been remarkable. The Government is committed to construct 22,000 houses for landless and houseless Scheduled Castes over a period of 4 years, commencing 1988-89. Based on a detailed study, a time bound programme will be chalked out and implemented so as to eradicate the educational backwardness of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

41. It is really unfortunate that the Government of India have reduced the allotment of rice and palmolein to the State. The Government of India have also enhanced the price of ration rice with effect from January 25, 1989. The increase in the price of ration rice and the reduction in the allotment of rice by the Centre will have its adverse impact in the open market. In order to meet this situation, the Civil Supplies Corporation proposes to increase the distribution of other essential commodities through a larger net work of co-operatives and Maveli Stores. Government has taken all possible steps to improve the distribution of essential commodities through a net work of ARDS to all people, especially the weaker sections.

42. My Government has been able to register significant achievements in the implementation of Operation Black Board, establishing District Institutes of Education and Training, upgradation of Teachers' Training Colleges, improvement of Science Education in Schools and supply of science kits and library books. Though Kerala is in the forefront so far as literacy and General Education are concerned and this has been achieved at the cost of development in other areas, the Central Government has failed to take note of this effort, in stabilizing and strengthening this position in the State,

43. My Government is of the opinion that noon feeding should become a mass activity with people's participation.

44. Under the Adult Education Programme Government has embarked upon a massive innovative programme with a target of 100% literacy in Ernakulam District.

45. The University Grants Commission has accorded approval to the Mahatma Gandhi University at Kottayam. Programmes for development of the University are under preparation. My Government will continue its thrust for expansion of technical and scientific education. The Cochin University of Science and Technology is starting a number of new courses. During 1988-89 three new Polytechnics were started in Kasaragod, Calicut and Alleppey districts.

46. For the first time in the history of Kerala, the State has obtained the first prize of Rs. 2.5 crores for the best performance in Family Welfare activities during 1987-88. The State will strive to retain its first place among the States of India during 1989-90 also. The India Population Programme III will continue during 1989-90 also. Indian systems of medicine and Homoeopathy will continue to be encouraged.

47. My Government is committed to the democratic functioning of Panchayats. The Government has taken timely steps to strengthen their efforts to promote the development of rural areas by bringing out necessary legislation for augmenting and improving their financial resources. The 11 point programme has been taken up for implementation and substantial achievements have already been made in the current year.

48. A World Bank aided Urban Development Project for Calicut, Cochin and Trivandrum at an estimated cost of Rs. 330 crores is to be finalised during 1989-90 to be implemented during the VIII Five Year Plan. Legislation has also been enacted to improve the financial resources of urban local bodies.

49. In the key sector of water supply large funds are required for the maintenance and operation of existing water supply schemes and completion of pending schemes which are very large in number. This burden increases from year to year with the commissioning of new schemes. In view of the financial difficulties, it is proposed to give priority for completion of schemes with reference to number of people benefited by them.

50. The State Government has presented a memorandum to Government of India in 1987 seeking financial assistance to the tune of Rs. 240 crores as loan and grant for taking up short term and long term measures for tackling the drinking water problems in the State. But only Rs. 15 crores was received as part of drought relief assistance. This year, again scarcity of drinking water is beginning to be experienced in many parts of the State. It is unfortunate that response from Government of India is tardy in this vital area.

51. My Government is committed to protecting the legitimate interests of labour. The labour scene in Kerala in the last two years has been peaceful. This is conducive to industrialisation which is the only solution to the massive unemployment problem.

52. A large number of long-term settlements benefiting thousands of workers covering a period of three to five years and based on increased production and productivity, have been brought into effect through the conciliation machinery and directly by the Government, while fully safeguarding the legitimate demands of the workers.

53. Steps have already been taken by my Government to implement the welfare schemes for coir and cashew workers. A welfare fund Act for Handloom workers has been passed and the scheme based on the Act is being prepared. Another Welfare Fund Bill for workers engaged in the production and sale of arrack and foreign liquor has been drawn up. Steps are underway for enacting this Bill as well as Bills for the Welfare Funds of Beedi Workers, Bamboo workers and Construction workers. Government ha

initiated steps for bringing in a legislation for the Welfare of Tailors. A welfare fund for agricultural workers is also proposed to be constituted and draft legislation in this regard is under way. Welfare Funds for workers in Plantations and Lorry and Parcel Services are also under consideration. The operation of the Headload Workers Welfare Fund Act is being thoroughly streamlined and will be extended to new areas.

54. A State Level Industrial Relations Board with representatives of labour, industry and Government is being constituted and the Government proposes to constitute industrial relations boards at District levels also.

55. Government has approved a major World Bank aided Project for modernisation of Industrial Training Institutes covering a period of six years.

56. My Government has taken vigorous steps for improving the working of the E.S.I. Dispensaries and Hospitals and has also decided to do away with the system of Part-time E.S.I. Dispensaries.

57. Effective measures have been taken by my Government to improve the service through the Employment Exchanges.

58. My Government is making all efforts to promote the use of Malayalam as official language. The Official language (Legislative) Commission has translated several Central Acts and Rules and published them in the Government of India Gazette under the authority of the President.

59. Law and order situation in the State has been generally peaceful. The police policy declared by my Government is being implemented successfully. A number of very old undetected cases have been detected. Steps are being taken to conduct the first re-orientation course for policemen.

60. Government intends to establish a "Police Housing and Construction Corporation" to attend to all construction and maintenance work of quarters and buildings of the Police Department.

61. Government had sanctioned the introduction of a group personal accident insurance scheme among the police personnel as an optional scheme to be implemented through the State Insurance Department. The annual premium to be levied under the scheme is only Rs. 20 for an insured sum of Rs. 35,000.

62. It is proposed to install Audio-Visual equipments in all Central Prisons and Open Prison as part of treatment programme and to expand library facilities in the Jails as part of educational programmes of the prisoners under the scheme "Welfare of Prisoners". The Committee constituted to report on Jail reforms has submitted its report and it is under consideration of Government. Steps have been taken to renovate unsafe jail buildings.

63. Government proposes to establish a modern training centre with an aquatic centre for Fire Force personnel.

64. Steps are being taken to establish three Family Courts one each in the three Corporation areas of the State.

65. Government has submitted a comprehensive Project Report on the development of sports to the Prime Minister. The Project Report conceives the idea of making sports a mass movement and uplifting our sports talents to compete successfully in the International Sports Field. District level Yuva Jana Melas and the State level Yuva Jana Mela organised by Government through the Kerala State Youth Welfare Board this year has provided an opportunity to the rural youth to exhibit their sporting and artistic talent. My Government proposes to organise such Meals at the Panchayat and Block level also.

66. Government proposes to streamline the various cultural institutions in the State. Kerala State Film Development Corporation had a lot of intractable problems and crippling liabilities. Though the crisis and debt position is not yet overcome, careful planning and hard work is yielding results.

67. My Government will take speedy steps for the implementation of the historic Kerala Public Libraries (Grandasla Sanghom) Bill, 1989.

68. An honest, contented and efficient civil service is the aim of Government and Government have taken adequate steps in this direction. Government will implement the recommendations of the Pay Commission as and when it is received without delay. Instalments of D.A. at Central rates will continued to be paid to Government employees and teachers.

69. In order to provide for the care and rehabilitation of neglected and delinquent juveniles, Government have made rules under the Juvenile Justice Act, 1986. Steps are being taken by the newly formed Women's Development Corporation for introducing various schemes to help the needy women in Society. Government is setting up a home at Trichur for rehabilitation of cured mental patients. Special steps have been taken during the year to streamline the functioning of the various institutions for the aged, disabled, mentally retarded etc., involving the local community. Action has been taken to implement the Dowry Prohibition Act more effectively.

70. The State Planning Board has been engaged, in the past one and a half year since its reconstitution in September, 1987 in the preparation and co-ordination of the annual plans of the last two years of the Seventh Five Year Plan, formulation of the Eighth Five Year Plan, undertaking policy oriented studies of the States economy and advising the Government on resource mobilisation and other aspects of budgetary policy. In these, employment generation and decentralisation of Planning have been the major focus.

71. The present Government has been constrained as regards the annual plans for the final years of the Seventh Plan, both by the overall framework and sectoral demarcation already fixed at the beginning of the plan itself, and financial stringency. The Government has been hard pressed to find resources for the plan on account of the huge repayment obligation to the Central Government bequeathed by the previous administration. Nevertheless, a new orientation has been sought to be given to the plan, as exemplified, for instance, by the special employment programme in the annual plan of 1989-90. This seeks to generate 125 lakh man-days of additional employment in the primary sector using the organising capacity of the Panchayats and resources from the financial institutions.

72. Thirteen Steering Committees and 49 task forces have been constituted to prepare proposals at the sectoral and sub-sectoral level for the VIII Plan and their work is in progress. A large number of non-officials-experts and representatives of people's organisations—are members of these working groups. Popular participation in plan formulation is being sought to be ensured through more direct methods as well.

73. The Planning Board was actively associated in the preparation of the State's memorandum to the Ninth Finance Commission. A seminar was organised by the Board on the terms of reference of the Commission and its deliberations were helpful in the preparation of the State's memorandum. Subsequently, after the Ninth Finance Commission submitted its first report, the Board organised another seminar which too drew the participation of experts on the subject from across the country. It is now proposed to submit a supplementary memorandum to the Ninth Finance Commission and point out the glaring injustices and omissions done to the State so that in the Commission's final award the State gets a better deal.

74. My Government is committed to eradication of corruption from public life. Steps are underway to implement the Kerala Public Men's Corruption (Investigation and Inquiries) Act, 1987.

75. Honourable Members, in the days ahead it must be our collective endeavour to find constructive solutions to the various problems. I wish the deliberations of this Session all success.

JAI HIND