

MARCH, 4, 1991

Hon'ble Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to the 13th Session of the Eighth Kerala Legislative Assembly. This Session coincides with the Fourth Anniversary of the Left Democratic Front Government in the State. I extend to each one of you my warm and sincere greetings in this my first address to the representatives of the people of this State and seek your whole-hearted co-operation.

2. This Session is commencing at a time when momentous developments are happening all over the world, India and Kerala. A catastrophic war was waged in West Asia resulting in massacre of people and destruction of property raising unprecedented environmental problems and dangerous portents to World economy for decades. The policy of our country has been consistently against war, and for solving problems by peaceful means. Now that ceasefire has been declared, we hope further efforts will be made for lasting peace in the region.

3. The situation in the Gulf caused special concern to us in Kerala as more than half a million odd Indian migrant workers of the region hail from Kerala. In fact, from the day of Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August last year, the people of Kerala have had great concern about the safety of their kith and kin in West Asia. My Government took immediate measures to interact with the Government of India for speedy evacuation of Keralites in that region. My Government also took prompt action to send food and essential commodities to feed the Indian nationals stranded in Amman. My Government deputed two Ministers and four senior officers to Jordan to help evacuation of our people. Out of eight Indian officers on duty in that area, four were from Kerala. My Government was keen on ensuring the safe arrival of these refugees from the Gulf in Delhi and Bombay. My Government wanted the Government of India also to take immediate steps to ensure the safety of the lives and property of our people in the region and arrange for their repatriation. I am happy to note that the Central Government has been more or less co-operative. But I must say that the problem of rehabilitation of the repatriates still remains.

4. The question of rehabilitation of gulf returnees has been engaging the attention of my Government for long past. Our Chief Minister raised the question in the N.D.C. meeting in 1988. My Government at first sought from the Central Government headed by Shri Rajiv Gandhi, the creation of a Migrant Workers' Welfare Fund for the rehabilitation of our people from Gulf countries. My Government repeated the request during the period of Shri V. P. Singh at the Centre. Since the Iraqi action on Kuwait, the V. P. Singh Government undertook the massive evacuation of Indian nationals from the war-prone regions and set up a National Committee consisting of Chief Ministers of States concerned including Kerala for the relief and rehabilitation of the Indian nationals returning from the Gulf. Government of India was also considering the implementation and use of a Gulf Relief and Rehabilitation Fund being set up by the Centre. The Committee was about to hold its first meeting when the V. P. Singh Government was forced to resign. Since then nothing was heard about that Committee. My Government has reminded the present Central Government to immediately convene the meeting of the Committee and expedite action for rehabilitation of the repatriates.

5. An estimated 95,000 Keralites have been repatriated of whom about 70,000 were economically active. Many of them face financial ruin and need to find a fresh source of livelihood. The State is now faced with the task of providing immediate relief to those returnees in need of it and rehabilitating them in the long term. My Government requires substantial financial assistance from the Centre to undertake this task. My Government has formulated a comprehensive rehabilitation project and has sought financial assistance to the tune of Rs. 1215 crores from the Central Government. My Government hopes that the Central Government will expeditiously sanction the project. The National Committee constituted by the previous Government for the rehabilitation of Indian nationals returning from the Gulf should be convened immediately. My Government hopes for positive response from the Centre.

6. To assist Gulf returnees, a Gulf cell has been constituted in the State Government headed by the Chief Secretary. Returnees desirous of seeking self-employment have been given the facility of registration with District Industries Centres.

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7. The year one thousand nine hundred and ninety and the months that followed, witnessed major political developments in the country as a whole. The Government, headed by Shri V. P. Singh at the Centre was forced to resign following acceptance of the recommendations of the Mandal Commission ensuring reservation of jobs for the backward communities and refusal of B. J. P's demands on Babri Masjid—Ramajanma Bhoomi issue. My Government wishes to place on record that my Government has had the best ever Centre-State relations during the 11 month tenure of the V. P. Singh Government which had an open mind in solving the problems facing the nation. It must be noted that it was during this period that Article 263 of the Constitution of India was first invoked and an Inter-State Council constituted.

8. I would not elaborate on the circumstances leading to the assumption of power by Shri Chandra Shekhar as Prime Minister with the support, chiefly of the Congress (I). The new Government at the Centre is flooded with problems old and new. The nation is passing through a series of crises—political, economic and social. In various parts of the country disruptive, divisive, secessionist and communal forces are attempting to undermine the unity and integrity of the nation. In the face of such threat to the very existence of the nation, the people of the country should stand as one man to fight the forces of communalism and fundamentalism and isolate the anti-nationals. My Government is of the view that the Centre must take the States into confidence to achieve this end.

9. You are all aware that like other Third World countries, India is also falling into a debt trap. The war in West Asia has added untold miseries to the common man. In order to solve this problem there must be full co-operation between the Centre and the States, between the Government and the Opposition and other social and political organisations. My Government will make all efforts in developing such relations.

10. The most significant event in Kerala since we met last was the elections to the District Councils. The Administrative Reforms Committee Report, 1958 had envisaged decentralisation of power—power to the people at grass root level. 32 years have elapsed since then. But decentralisation remained a dream. The L.D.F., during the election campaign four years ago, promised the people that elections to the local bodies and District Councils would be held. The promise was fulfilled when the elections were held to the local bodies in January, 1988 and to the District Councils in January 1991. The District Councils have come into being in all the fourteen Districts of Kerala.

11. That the elections to the District Councils were held inspite of the difficulties inherent in the national context and the problems connected with the census operations, is an indication of the determination of my Government to make this experiment a success. The pioneering steps of reservation of as much as 30% of the seats in the District Councils for women will probably be the first in the country. The District Council will be responsible for the administration of 146 items covering 19 subjects which include district activities under Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries, Small Scale Industries, Education and Health etc. It is an experiment with decentralisation and my Government intends to give more powers to those Councils after a stage of practical experience. My Government hopes that the District Councils will infuse a better responsiveness in administration and a new meaning and content in developmental programmes. It will be possible to formulate developmental programmes in a manner that has not been seen before. At the same time, it will be necessary to lay down certain general principles and parameters which have to be followed by the District Councils in deciding on programmes, projects and works so that powers and functions entrusted to them are exercised in a responsible manner. My Government's role will be to guide without interfering to increase the quality and decrease quantity of control in the true spirit of decentralisation.

12. My Government is satisfied over the impressive victory of the L.D.F. in the District Councils, gaining majority in 13 Districts. My Government is taking steps to widen the powers of the Councils and smoothen the work of the Councils for which a three man Committee has been set up. That the L.D.F. had a landslide victory in the District Council elections does not mean that it alone should shoulder the responsibility of developmental activities in the Districts. My Government seeks the full co-operation of the Opposition in enriching the functioning of the District Councils. The developmental activities the Councils should undertake are not confined to improvement of roads, establishment of schools and hospitals, organisation of cultural activities etc. Developmental activities really mean a gradual increase in agricultural and industrial production on a time bound basis. While the District Councils must obtain financial and technological support and advice from the Central and State Governments, it must organise voluntary services and public contributions from the people to implement developmental schemes. The elected representatives in the District Councils can

be the links between the State Government at the top and the working people below. There are tens of thousands of activists working in trade unions and other mass organisations of the working people as well as different political parties. All of them are and should be interested in working together in the developmental activities. We have seen an example of this in the Vikasana Sena organised under the supervision of the Planning Board. I hope in spite of ideological and political differences, the activists of the L.D.F. and the U.D.F., the Muslim League, the B. J. P. and other political movements will fully co-operate for the successful functioning of the District Councils which will bring extensive changes in the State.

13. The phenomenal increase in the price of essential commodities at the All India level has hit the common man hard. My Government has spared no effort to mitigate the hardships of the common man. The effective functioning of the Public Distribution System and the interventions of the Civil Supplies Corporation have helped to control the price rise. The problem of insufficient allotment of rice and palmolein to the Public Distribution System remains to be solved. The cut effected in the supply of diesel in the context of the Gulf crisis has given rise to various difficulties. My Government has taken up all these matters with the Central Government requesting them to sanction allotments to the extent required, taking cognisance of the special circumstances prevailing in the State.

14. A number of schemes are being implemented by the State Civil Supplies Corporation with the twin objectives of making available to consumers essential commodities at reasonable rates and to check the rise in price of such commodities.

15. The State Commission and the District Forums set up under the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, have been functioning effectively and have lent a new dimension to the consumer movement.

16. One of the most significant successes of my Government has been the implementation of the 'Akshara Keralam Project' which aimed at total literacy in the State in the age group of 5-60 years against the National Literacy Mission target age group of 15-35 years. The project which is being implemented under the auspices of the Kerala Saksharatha Samithi was inaugurated by the Prime Minister, on February 2, 1990. I am happy to say that the project will be successfully completed by March 1991. It has assumed the character of a mass movement, with the active involvement of all sections of society, and is expected to bring about far reaching changes in the social and economic life of the people and will prove to be a powerful engine of development. For the tribal population a separate sub-project has been prepared and it will be implemented from April 1991. A project for the continuing education of neoliterates to sustain their learning is also under preparation and it is expected that the Central Government will provide adequate assistance to the Samithi for this purpose.

17. I am happy to say that Kerala has a remarkable record in maintaining communal harmony. It is a matter of gratification that at a time when the rest of the country was torn by communal tensions, Kerala remained generally peaceful. By taking prompt and effective action with the support of all political parties, minor incidents here and there were prevented from spreading and were confined to a few local areas. The communal harmony in Kerala is a tribute to the maturity of its people and the alertness of the administration.

18. The trend of improvement in the law and order situation and the attitude of the police in handling them, initiated since this Government came to power in 1987, has been maintained and consolidated further this last year. This was reflected in the generally peaceful situation in the labour, students and organisational fronts. Allegations of police atrocities and excesses are also fewer. Political clashes decreased considerably last year compared to previous years. The recent District Council Elections were also held in a peaceful atmosphere without any serious law and order incidents.

19. In tune with the declared policy of my Government to give due representation to women in the police upto a level of 10% over 10 years, 256 women constables have been recruited. A number of measures have been initiated towards increasing the welfare and improving the working conditions of policemen. My Government has given a great deal of encouragement to sports in the Police and the performance of Kerala Police teams in various competitions is a matter to be proud of.

20. The State Government has drawn up an ambitious development programme for its Eighth Five Year Plan. The draft Eighth Five Year Plan submitted to the Planning Commission represents a step up of over 103 per cent over the Seventh Five Year Plan in nominal terms. The overall objective of the State's Eighth Five Year Plan is to step up the annual average rate of growth of the State's income to 5.5 per cent and employment to 3.5 per cent. The Eighth Five Year Plan drawn up by the State envisages a clear shift in favour of commodity producing sectors and supporting infrastructural development. While 'Agriculture' including 'Irrigation' will continue to get a substantial share of plan outlay, the share of Power and Industry will be substantially stepped up.

21. The new strategy evolved by my Government on the farm front by opening Krishi Bhavans in every Panchayat, assisted and guided by the functional advisory body headed by the local panchayat president, has proved to be very effective and was continued with more vigour during 1990-91. Under the "Group Farming" scheme for paddy, it is proposed to cover 4.50 lakh hectares during 1991-92. The newly sanctioned "Integrated Rice Production Programme" has given some fillip to rice production in the State. All these programmes put together will lead to a production of 12.50 lakh tonnes of rice. During 1991-92, it is expected that rice production will touch 13 lakh tonnes. Significant increase in productivity has also been achieved. In the current year 1990-91, 606 Kgs. per hectare is the increase in productivity and a further increase of 400 Kgs. per hectare is expected in the coming year.

22. The encouraging experience of the group farming programme in rice has prompted the Government to extend this concept for coconut and pepper. During 1991-92, a massive programme for rehabilitation of coconut in the State is proposed to be implemented with EEC assistance. The concept of group management for pepper, started initially in Idukki and Wayanad Districts will be extended to other pepper dominant areas during 1991-92. Steps have also been taken for increasing cashew production in the State.

23. The 'Special Employment Programme' which is intended to increase rural employment opportunities through measures for increasing the productivity of small holdings will be continued in 1991-92 with the active participation of Panchayats, Co-operatives, Commercial Banks etc.

24. The Integrated Coconut Development Project with an outlay of Rs. 93.4 crores being implemented by the Kera Karshaka Sahakarana Federation with assistance from the European Economic Community has made good progress and will make a substantial contribution to the upliftment of the 29 lakh coconut growers in the State. Under the Copra Procurement Programme being undertaken by Kerafed since May, 1989, 35000 tons of Copra have been procured directly from farmers, through primary credit societies. All the three sub-projects of the project are new functional.

25. Massive programmes were launched during 1990-91 for increasing vegetable production with the participation of students, youth, voluntary agencies, educational institutions, etc. The Kerala State Horticulture Products Development Corporation has started a programme to procure vegetables from within Kerala for distribution to consumers. A comprehensive scheme for fruit processing costing Rs. 52 crores has been posed for EEC assistance.

26. In the recent past it has been possible to improve the working of public sector units under the Agriculture Department, such as Oil Palm India Ltd., Plantation Corporation of Kerala, Agro Machinery Corporation and the Kerala State Warehousing Corporation.

27. The emphasis in the area of animal husbandry and dairying during the previous years by my Government has started yielding dividends, as revealed by the production statistics of major livestock products. The production of milk, meat and eggs has gone up substantially during the period 1986-87 to 1989-90. Assistance from the National Dairy Development Board to the tune of Rs. 265 lakhs and from the Swiss Development Corporation to the tune of Rs. 260 lakhs will become available to strengthen dairy development activities in the State. An integrated approach in the field of Dairy Development with the clear objective of effective and optimum utilisation of resources has been adopted through the Technology Mission on Dairy Development. It is the policy of my Government to exploit the potential of the livestock sector to the optimum level to bring about a faster growth of the economy of the State.

28. Increasing fish production, increasing employment opportunities in the fisheries sector and improving the standard of living of fishermen will be the objectives of development programmes in the fisheries sector during 1990-91. To exploit the potential of inland fish and prawn farming, Fish Farmers' Development Agencies are already functioning in all districts and Brackish Water Fish Farmers' Development Agencies are functioning in Ernakulam, Kollam and Kannur districts, Inland reservoirs will be stocked intensively with good quality fish seed. The Kuwait Fund assisted project for prawn farming is being substituted by a similar project.

29. The NCDC assisted project for integrated fisheries development will be extended to all coastal villages in the third phase. With the assistance of financial institutions a savings-cum-relief scheme is proposed to be implemented for fishermen. A 'Food for Work' programme with FAO assistance and an outlay of Rs. 20 crores will be implemented over a period of 5 years. Matsyafed is modernising its nylon net production centres with Japanese assistance of Rs. 5 crores. More housing for fishermen, better rescue systems, old age pension, insurance of implements and houses are some of the welfare measures for fishermen that will be strengthened.

30. To strengthen the Co-operative movement and to increase membership, a programme called "meet the co-operators" is being launched. New processing units are proposed to be set up in the co-operative sector for the conversion of raw materials like rubber, fruits and vegetables. The Agricultural Development Banks have diversified their activities by giving loans for nonfarm activities as well as for rural housing. During 1991-92, they have programmes to assist the construction of 15,000 houses. The Housing Federation is expected to advance loans for the construction of 5700 houses through primary co-operative societies.

31. The ICDP Projects in the Districts of Palakkad, Wayanad and Kottayam will be strengthened. Besides, new projects will be started in Idukki and Pathanamthitta. During 1991-92, Thrissur district is also proposed to be selected for the ICDP programme.

32. A massive Kerala Co-operative Agricultural and Rural Debt Relief Scheme, 1990-91, is under implementation to afford debt relief to eligible farmers as per the guidelines and scheme of the Government of India. A crop storage programme has also been implemented through the Kerala State Co-operative Bank.

33. The conservation of forest wealth and the careful preservation of the tropical forest ecology of our State have received the solicitous attention of the present Government right from the outset. All clear felling and selection felling of forest trees has been totally prohibited. The protection of forest wealth has been considerably improved (a) by a novel system of forest administration based on 'Forest Stations' on the model of Police Stations; (b) by the clear demarcation of forest boundaries by raising 'Cairns' and extensive stone-walls covering hundreds of Kilometres; (c) by strong and effective steps against encroachment and poaching in forest areas and (d) by setting up an extensive wireless network inside the forest, in order to enable the officers to receive and transmit vital information speedily. These careful measures have already started yielding positive and tangible results.

34. The programme of reorganising Forest administration by establishing 'Forest Stations' which has been introduced recently in two districts will be extended to a few more districts in 1991-92. Elaborate arrangements for fire protection in forests will be introduced from 1991-92 onwards. A comprehensive 'Tropical Forest Action Plan' will also be formulated this year for implementation during the next one or two decades. A special project for the preservation of rare forest trees called 'Project Rosewood' will be implemented from the year 1991-92 onwards. The ongoing social forestry programme will be further strengthened this year with the intention of making fuelwood and green manure easily available to farmers and the rural population in general. The careful attention given to the protection and preservation of wildlife in our State will be further intensified. An elaborate project for a big 'Biological Park' in the Agastyavanam forest is to be launched this year.

35. It is my Government's belief that under the District Councils, rural development programmes will acquire a new qualitative dimension and greater community participation. During 1991-92 the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana will create 185 lakh mandays of employment while building up productive assets and infrastructure in rural areas. The Integrated Rural Development Programme will continue to be implemented with

special attention to women, scheduled castes and tribes and the physically handicapped. The effort will be to obtain maximum per family investment. The programmes for Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DW CRA) will be extended to one more district during 1991-92.

36. During the past four years my Government has followed a far sighted labour policy and has taken many steps to create a favourable investment climate. Utmost importance was given to the revival and rehabilitation of sick units. Thanks to the efforts of my Government, a number of closed public sector units such as Kerala Soap and Oils Ltd., Kerala Ceramics Ltd., Kundara, Sitaram Spinning Mills, Kunnathara Textiles, Metropolitan Engineering Company Ltd., Foam Mattings (India) Ltd., United Electrical Industries Ltd., etc were opened and revived. Similarly, the Government has taken the initiative to reopen a number of units in the private sector such as Gwalior Rayons, Premier Morarjee Co., Pearlite Wire Products and Thiruvepathi Milk. These measures have created substantial employment opportunities. A number of S.S.I. units have also been revived. As a result of various measures taken by my Government on the industrial front it is estimated that more than four lakh job opportunities have been created.

37. My Government has mooted a proposal for setting up a Kerala Growth Fund to Channelise the savings of Non-Resident Indians in the USA and other countries for industrial growth in Kerala. During the recent visit of the Chief Minister, Irrigation Minister and Industries Minister to the USA, a number of non-resident Keralites evinced keen interest in investing in industrial ventures in the State. The proposal is pending with the Ministry of Finance and the Reserve Bank of India. My Government hopes that the Kerala Growth Fund will be sanctioned at the earliest and make a significant contribution to industrial development in the State.

38. The favourable industrial climate in the State is also likely to lead to a spurt in industrial investment in the State. The MOUs signed by K. S. I. D. C., indicate a possible investment of more than a thousand crore of Rupees as against Rs. 180 crores last year. The Tata Oil Mills Company Ltd., has decided to set up a project to make ceramic ware in collaboration with the public sector undertaking, Kerala Ceramics Ltd. Similarly, the Birlas, the Singhanias and the Thapars have signed MOUs with K.S.I.D.C. to set up companies in Kerala. There has been substantial progress in the establishment of small scale industries. In the Export Processing Zone there has been a substantial growth in investment. To encourage new industries, my Government had announced exemption from electricity duty for a period of five years and exemption from power cut for new industries.

39. In order to develop the infrastructure for industries, my Government has initiated steps to set up Growth Centres in two Districts viz., Alappuzha and Kannur and Industrial Development Areas in all other districts. My Government has also taken very active steps to set up the first Electronic Technology Park in Thiruvananthapuram to promote electronic industries. The development of the leather industry is being given a new thrust. An Industrial Extension Bureau has been set up to assist in the setting up of small scale industries.

40. The policy pursued by my Government in the Cashew industry has stabilized the industry leading to the reopening of all closed factories, increased minimum wages to workers, remunerative prices to farmers and increased exports.

41. It is proposed to implement the recommendations of the Task Force on the modernisation of the Coir Industry. The Government has given a thrust to sericulture because of its employment potential. Last year mulberry cultivation was done in 1922 hectares. It is proposed to increase the area this year and develop other facilities like grainages and reeling centres for processing the cocoons produced by the farmers and weaving centres for weaving of silk yarn. There has been substantial improvement in the activities in the Khadi and Village Industries sector.

42. Kerala can be said to have broken away from the past decades of stagnation and shown signs of recovery in the industrial sector. The improvement in the number of factories established, the consumption of power, employment creation, and value-addition reflect the co-ordinated initiatives taken by the Government in recent years. The real test, however, should be the income generation (value added) by industrial activities during the period under review. On an average, value-added from industry has registered a growth rate of 6.8 per cent per annum from 1987-88 to 1989-90 as against a fall of 3.5 per cent per annum during the previous three year period from 1984-85 to 1986-87.

43. My Government inherited a critical power situation. There is ever increasing demand for power. Frequent failure of monsoon and exclusive dependence on hydel projects would have resulted in the situation remaining critical. It is a matter of satisfaction that the Kayamkulam Thermal Power Project, being under-

taken in the central sector by the National Thermal Power Corporation, has been cleared by the Public Investment Board and work on the project has already commenced. My Government has proposed a number of new thermal and hydel projects in the State for improving the power situation. These are pending with the Central Government at various stages. Some of the thermal projects proposed are the Thermal Power Station at Thrikkaripur, the Vypeen Gas Power Plant, the Brahmapuram Combined Cycle Plant and Diesel Power Stations at Kasargod and Vadakara. Some of the important hydel projects pending with the Government of India are the Pooyamkutty Stage I (240 MW), the Adirapally (160 MW), the Pallivasal Rehabilitation (60 MW), Pambar (30MW), Kuttiadi Extension (50 MW) and Kuriarkutty Karappara (84 MW) projects. My Government earnestly hopes that these projects will be cleared early. Schemes for small and mini hydro-electric schemes are also under consideration. My Government has taken a decision to allow private participation in the generation of electricity for captive consumption upto a total of 15 MW.

44. My Government has toned up the functioning of the Kerala State Electricity Board. The transmission loss of KSEB has been reduced from 24% to 22%. It is expected that through judicious management, the State can manage without any power cut if the monsoon sets in before the 15th of June.

45. A number of major works have been completed by the Public Works Department under Plan schemes during 1990-91. During this Ambedkar Centenary Year, 14 hostels selected under the centenary programme have been taken up for construction of which 4 are expected to be completed before April 1991. There is a proposal for the four-laning of N. H. 47 from Cherthala to Aluva with the aid of the Asian Development Bank at an estimated cost of Rs. 48 crores. The road connecting Kochi and Madurai which has been declared as N. H. 49 has been taken over by the National Highway wing and is being improved. 19 major bridges have been completed and the construction of another 28 major bridges started during 1990-91.

46. The policy in respect of Irrigation, which is to give priority to projects which can be commissioned early, is being continued. Kallada, Pamba, Periyar Valley, Chimony and Chitturpuzha projects are being given priority. The Inter-Ministerial Sanction Committee of the Government of India have accepted the proposal of the State Government to include Chitturpuzha, Pamba, PVIP and Kuttiadi projects under the Command Area Development Programme. The relevant project reports are under preparation. Government of India have cleared the detailed project reports of Malampuzha and Neyyar under the World Bank assisted. National Water Management Projects for modernisation of completed irrigation projects. Substantial progress has been achieved in the field of Minor Irrigation, Anti-Sea Erosion and Flood Control works.

47. I am happy to say that as a result of the persistent efforts of my Government during the past few years, Thiruvananthapuram Airport has been declared as an International Airport. This decision when fully implemented will go a long way in helping a large number of Keralites going to the Gulf and other countries and increasing international cargo traffic.

48. My Government looks forward to the timely completion of the Konkan Railway Project. My Government is of the view that the railway line between Shoranur and Mangalore should be doubled as an extension of this project and completed early. There is also an urgent need to take up the doubling of the Kollam-Thiruvananthapuram railway line.

49. My Government hopes that this project will be taken up early and completed. My Government has also been making persistent efforts for the early completion of work on the Guruvayoor-Thrissur and Kayamkulam-Alappuzha lines. The Government of India has been moved for the electrification of the Erode-Thiruvananthapuram section considering the extremely high traffic density.

50. My Government has been making persistent efforts to get the West Coast Canal declared as a National Waterway. The legislation for this purpose, which was passed by the previous Lok Sabha, has lapsed owing to the dissolution of the Lok Sabha and needs to be revived. The activities of the Kerala State Inland Navigation Corporation are being stepped up substantially to give a boost to water transport.

51. My Government recognises the potential for tourism development in the State and has gone a long way in providing infrastructure facilities for tourism. In addition to the schemes in the State and Public Sectors, my Government has taken the initiative to launch new ventures in the Joint Sector also for the speedy

development of tourism as an industry. A conducive atmosphere has been created in the State for a boom in tourism by stepping up publicity, marketing, training and other facilities. The Tourism Awareness Year, 1990 made tourism a people's movement and created an awareness among the people of the economic benefits of tourism. The Great Elephant March, a magnificent annual spectacle conducted in Kerala, attracted a large number of foreign as well as domestic tourists. Various development programmes such as the construction of Yatri Nivases, Wayside Amenities and Beach Resorts launched during the previous years are in progress. We look forward to further progress in this "Visit India Year". My Government has submitted a number of schemes for sanction to the Government of India aimed at augmenting tourism infrastructure with a view to making Kerala the "Destination of the Decade".

52. I am proud to say that the plan of action being implemented by my Government in connection with the Ambedkar Centenary celebrations has attracted national attention. The concept of "Ambedkar Gramams" has brought a new approach to the development programmes for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. To complete the remaining parts of the Action Plan in 1991-92 itself, and in line with the Centre's policy, 1991-92 will also be observed as Dr. Ambedkar Centenary Year.

53. The most backward habitats of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes lying outside "Ambedkar Gramams" and having at least twenty families will be chosen for comprehensive development on the pattern of "Ambedkar Gramams". My Government expects that all such habitats will be covered by the end of the Eighth Plan. My Government proposes to draw up new schemes for the social, economic and educational development of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and implement them with greater effectiveness. My Government also proposes to give debt relief to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes who are living below the poverty line.

54. My Government has been endeavouring to promote mutual understanding and harmonious relations between labour and management so as to create a peaceful industrial climate in the State, while fully safeguarding the legitimate rights of workers. It has been playing a very active and dynamic role in promptly intervening, in industrial disputes and settling them expeditiously. Thanks to the efforts of the State Government over the last four years, there has been a steady decline in the loss of production in all sectors of the economy due to strikes and lock outs. Because of the far sighted and balanced labour policy of the Government a very favourable climate for investment has emerged in the State.

55. For the speedy redressal of the grievances of workers two more Labour Courts/Industrial Tribunals have been sanctioned. The enforcement and conciliation machinery is also being strengthened. The Industrial Relations Board has been revived by the Government. A Standing Committee of the Board constituted during the year is currently engaged in working out a code of conduct for labour and management.

56. My Government has all along been paying special attention to the Welfare of unorganised labour. The Construction Workers' Welfare Fund and the Agricultural Workers' Welfare Fund are significant additions to the 'Welfare Funds' already in existence in the State. Every effort will be made to expand the scope of welfare measures provided by ongoing welfare funds. It has been recognised at the national level that Kerala is a pioneer in the successful formulation and implementation of statutory welfare schemes for unorganised workers.

57. In order to meet the requirements of skilled man power both within the State and outside, my Government proposes to set up more Industrial Training Institutes to provide training in a wide variety of modern job oriented courses. The World Bank projects for upgradation and expansion of technical training will be fully utilised for the above purpose. A significant feature of the perspective plan for technical training is the special emphasis on promoting technical education among women. More Industrial Training Institutes exclusively for women will be set up with this end in view.

58. To extend the coverage of the educational infrastructure, my Government intends to start new schools/upgrade existing ones especially in backward areas. It is the Government's intention that there should be at least one High School in every Panchayat. In those Panchayats where there are no High Schools, existing Upper Primary Schools will be upgraded to High Schools. Comprehensive revision of school curriculum is being undertaken based on the guidelines of the NCERT. The District Institutes of Education are expected to give a fillip to teacher-education.

59. 1990-91 witnessed a major landmark in the field of education when the Higher Secondary course was introduced in the State for the first time. The course has been started in 31 Government schools and it is proposed to start the plus two course in 110 schools in the Government and private sectors during 1991-92. Vocational courses are proposed to be started in 25 High Schools bringing the total number of Vocational Higher Secondary Schools to 165.

60. The 'Kerala School Children Personal Accident Insurance Scheme' which has been implemented with effect from 15th August, 1989 has worked well. 337 children who died in accidents, 26 students who were disabled and 725 students who were hospitalised were covered by insurance payments. The compensation paid in 1989-90 was Rs. 37.49 lakhs against the insurance premium of Rs. 13.5 lakhs. This is a unique scheme not found anywhere else in the country.

61. The implementation of the U.G.C. scheme is a landmark in the field of educational progress in the State. Government College teachers have already commenced to receive the UGC scales of pay fixed for them. Pay scales of private college teachers are being fixed in the UGC scale and they too will commence to receive such scales soon.

62. The Project for the development of Polytechnic Education with World Bank assistance envisages an outlay of Rs. 34.1 crores during the project period of 5 years commencing from 1990. As part of this project, the infrastructure in all the existing 28 polytechnics in the State will be strengthened and 2 new Polytechnics are proposed to be started from the academic year 1991-92. One of them is intended to be a residential Women's Polytechnic. The Lal Bahadur Sastri Centre for Science and Technology has submitted a proposal for a self financing Engineering College in the Public Sector. The Institute of Human Resources Development for Electronics has submitted to Government a proposal for starting an Institute of Engineering and Technology Government are examining these proposals.

63. In accordance with the Kerala Public Libraries Act, a new administrative set up will come into existence during 1991-92 under which there will be a Taluk Library Union at the taluk level, a District Library Council for the district and a State Library Council.

64. In the field of health services, Kerala leads all other States in India as evidenced by the indicators of life expectancy, birth and death rate and the infant mortality rate. Kerala has achieved tremendous progress in child survival activities with special emphasis on vaccine preventable diseases. In the field of family welfare, the ultimate goal of a net reproduction rate of 'one' is not very far off with the couple protection rate of 60%

65. The tremendous progress made by Kerala in field of health care is mainly on account of the basic infrastructure build up in the State particularly in recent years. This has made health care accessible to the common man. During 1991-92, the Government, in addition to the consolidation of the basic infrastructure, will continue to expand the facilities, particularly in rural and backward areas. By the close of 1991-92, all the Panchayats in the State will have one Allopathic medical institution. More and more Ayurvedic and Homoeopathic institutions will also be set up. The Government have sanctioned a postgraduate course for Homoeopathic Medical Education at Kozhikode, which will be the first of its kind in the country. The Regional Cancer Centre at Thiruvananthapuram has already been recognised as a centre of excellence for cancer care and research. The activities of the Pharmaceutical Corporation (IM) Kerala Ltd.—"Oushadhi", have been streamlined. The company which was running at loss is now making profits and production has been more than doubled.

66. The Social Welfare Department is implementing important schemes for the benefit of the weaker sections especially women, children, destitutes, deserted widows, orphans, physically handicapped, mentally deficient, the aged and the infirm. There are 84 ICDS projects in the State including 6 new projects started during 1990-91. The Kerala State Women's Development Corporation has arranged to form Women's Co-operative societies for starting different projects.

67. The Kerala Women's Commission Bill has been introduced in the Assembly and has been referred to the Select Committee. Kerala is the first State in the country to have introduced legislation of this nature to safeguard the rights of women.

68. My Government is determined to achieve the objective of "Shelter for All" by the year 2000 A.D. For this, the State will have to achieve a target of 1.5 lakhs per year, mostly for the economically weaker sections and the lower income groups to wipe off the existing backlog and meet the future demand. The third phase

of the Rehabilitation Housing Scheme, involving the construction of 55,000 houses, is nearing completion, and during the next year the scheme will be continued for 55,000 beneficiaries. The Government has also launched the implementation of the Kairali Housing Scheme which will have a target of 50,000 houses during the next year also. Several ambitious public housing schemes have been launched by the Kerala State Housing Board for the benefit of different sections of the community. The Board has taken up housing schemes for Beedi and Handloom worker and proposes to take up similar scheme for coir workers. Several concessions have been given by the Board to scheduled caste beneficiaries.

69. The 'Nirmithi Kendra' started by the Government to popularise low-cost construction have attracted national attention. Besides the State and District level Nirmithi Kendras already started, the Government now proposes to set up Nirmithi Upakendras at the Panchayat level in order to create an awareness in society about the potential and possibilities of low cost construction.

70. All the problem villages in Kerala have been partially covered with atleast one spot drinking water supply under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme. The thrust of the programme during the coming years will be on ensuring full coverage in a phased manner.

71. 50 new water supply schemes, including 33 exclusively benefitting scheduled castes and two exclusively benefitting scheduled tribes, have been commissioned during this year. 10 more new schemes are expected to be completed before March 31, 1991. The Mini-Mission in Palakkad District under the National Technology Mission for Drinking water is under implementation.

72. There are 370 ongoing rural water supply schemes and 12 ongoing urban water supply schemes at present 8 schemes assisted by World Bank, 8 schemes assisted by the Netherlands Government and 3 schemes assisted by DANIDA are under implementation.

73. The 11 Point Programme for Panchayats will be continued. The scheme for rehabilitation of poramboke dwellers which is a component of the 11 Point Programme is being implemented successfully in the Panchayats. The Kerala Institute of Local Administration has been started at Thrissur for imparting training to the elected representatives of local bodies. In order to utilise fully the services of the rural youth for development activities, Vikasana Senas were constituted and the programme was inaugurated on October 2, 1990. As part of decentralised planning, untied funds were provided to the Panchayats for taking up need based local level programmes.

74. Consequent to the coming into force of the Kerala District Administration Act, the President of a Panchayat has become an executive authority. In line with the above positions the Mayor of a Corporation and the Chairman of a Municipality have also been endowed with the authority of the executive head of the respective institutions.

75. The Nehru Rozgar Yojana is being implemented to provide employment opportunities to the urban poor, especially women and scheduled castes and tribes. The scheme consists of a wage employment component a micro-enterprises component and a housing and shelter upgradation component. Schemes are also on the anvil for providing night shelters for footpath dwellers, for liberation of scavengers and for modernisation of slaughter houses. The Government has formulated a scheme costing Rs. 36.5 crores for the rehabilitation of 11,142 families living in urban porambokes in insanitary and poor environmental conditions.

76. A number of steps have been taken to revitalise research and development activities in the State especially for focussing on research related to the development problems of the State. It has also been decided to utilise the expertise available in research organisations and also the services of voluntary agencies for preparing a data base for decentralised planning. For this a Panchayat-level Resource Mapping Project has been taken up which will cover all Panchayats over a period of two years. District-level Science, Technology and Environment Committees will be set up as advisory bodies to help Government in identifying local developmental issues, requiring S&T inputs and to mobilise more effectively, the S & T potential in the respective regions. My Government has decided to implement schemes for increasing the generation of energy from non-conventional sources such as sun, wind and wave. An experimental wave energy project is under construction at Vizhinjam.

77. The taxation policy of the Government was sought to be rationalised and simplified during 1990-91 so that it may yield the same or higher level of revenue without much harassment to the tax payers. To provide an impetus for industrial growth, a new package of tax-incentives has been worked out for the industrial sector. The same taxation policy is proposed to be continued vigorously during the next year also.

78. Sale of arrack in sealed bottles has been introduced in the Districts of Ernakulam, Thrissur and Palakkad.

79. In order to check the drinking habits in people, a Media Advisory Committee is being constituted to advise the Government in spreading the message of abstinence.

80. My Government has taken initiatives in several directions in revenue administration during the year. A State level training institute for inservice training of Revenue and Survey personnel is being set up. A major scheme for providing modern equipments and support services for a better and efficient revenue administration is being implemented with Central assistance. A major overhaul of the departmental organisation so as to suit present functional needs is proposed to be made. The draft of a legislation for providing debt relief to people of low income groups is ready and is proposed to be brought up very soon.

81. The issue of extracts of the record of joint verification to pre-1977 occupants of forest lands is in good progress. A scheme for organising house construction for kudikidappukars with ownership rights assisted by subsidy from the 'Kudikidappukars' Benefit Fund', has been initiated during the year. A State level Calamity Relief Fund has been constituted during the year with an annual allocation of Rs. 31 crores with which we have developed the capability to reach timely relief in the event of natural calamities.

82. Steps have been taken by my Government to start "Operation Olympia" Pilot Projects in 14 selected centres, one in each district. My Government proposes to expand it to more centres with the active co-operation of the District Councils, private and public undertakings. My Government has initiated steps to make the G. V. Raja Sports School a model one and a Managing Committee has been formed to monitor its progress.

83. The Yuva Jana Melas organised by the Kerala State Youth Welfare Board with the help of the Local Administration Department and other Departments from Panchayat to the State level are unique in the country. 28 new playgrounds have been developed as a part of this programme within the span of three years. This is apart from the playgrounds developed in various Panchayats as a part of the 11 point programme of the Panchayats.

84. The State Youth Welfare Board have played a vital role in organising leadership training camps for the youth and the various adventure programmes for them such as trekking, sailing and wind surfing, etc.

85. During the last four years, my Government has been successful in bringing about a general awakening in the field of art and culture. In order to preserve the cultural heritage of the State, a State level "Cultural Heritage Preservation Society" has been constituted with the Chief Minister as Chairman. As a first step in this direction, it is proposed to establish District Cultural Centres in the Districts. It is also proposed to prepare a cultural map of Kerala. A sincere effort has been made to streamline the various cultural institutions in the State. The Diamond Jubilee Celebrations of the Kerala Kalamandalam which were inaugurated by the then Prime Minister opened a window on Kerala's culture to the rest of the country.

86. The Centre for Development of Imaging Technology (C-DIT) which has been set up as an advanced research cum-training centre has come to be recognised as a pioneer institution in the country. The Kerala State Film Development Corporation has been equipped to meet the challenging demands of the film industry.

87. My Government has a new concept of policies and programmes to be implemented for the welfare of the people of the State, of which I have already given indications. In the implementation of the policies and programmes let us reach at consensus wherever possible; let us try to narrow down differences wherever consensus is not possible. My Government has an open mind to solve the problems facing the State and my Government requests the co-operation of all parties to solve the problems.

88. Honourable Members, our State faces tough challenges in the days ahead. I trust we will be able to face these challenges unitedly and with a sense of purpose. I wish the deliberations of this Session all success