



ADDRESS
TO
THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
KERALA

13TH FEBRUARY, 2009

BY

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GOVERNOR OF KERALA

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members,

I warmly welcome each one of you to the First Session of the 12th Kerala Legislative Assembly for the year 2009.

2. I have immense pleasure to greet you to this Session of the Assembly that has initiated several ideal and people's welfare oriented legislations, and emerged as a model to the entire nation, quite different from all other States in India.

3. The year that has passed by caused grave concern to the peace lovers and democrats around the world, on account of terrorism and communal riots. The brutal attack by Israel, continuing against the people of Palestine, with the support of imperialism, evoked strong protest. Thousands of innocent people including women and children were killed there. Strong intervention of international community is necessary to stop the inhuman attacks against the people of Palestine. My Government declares solidarity with the struggle of the people of Palestine, for a peaceful living.

4. A series of massive bomb blasts occurred last year in the major cities of Bangaluru, Ahmedabad, Delhi, Malegaon and Guwahati. Hundreds of innocent people were killed in these explosions. While the anti-national communal organisations working within the country were behind these blasts, it is evident that some terrorist groups from a foreign country were behind the terrorist attack on 26th November 2008 in Mumbai. Several security personnel including Malayalees were killed while fighting back these terrorist attacks which shocked the whole nation. I pay homage to the memory of the brave warriors who laid their lives to save the nation from the terrorists. The Government expresses its condolence to the families of the hundreds of innocent victims who were killed in the terrorist attacks and bomb explosions. My Government assures that relentless fight will be continued against all sorts of communalism and terrorism which tend to disintegrate the nation.

5. The severe recession which affected the global economy have affected seriously our country also. But the financial condition of our nation is comparatively better than that of the developed capitalist nations. The reason behind this are the influence of public sector and the strict restrictions by the Government in the financial sector. But, the attempt of the Central Government to open up freely the financial sector to private sector and for removing the restriction may be dropped. What we have

witnessed is the inevitable collapse of the capitalist economy built up with inflated statistics in speculation and share market. It is high time the Central Government took urgent corrective measures.

6. Economic recession has adversely affected the agriculture sector and export. Various sectors including tourism has already been adversely affected. The income of Non-Resident Keralites and their remittance to the State has decreased. The steep fall in the price of cash crops including rubber has affected adversely the farmers. Uncontrolled import and subsidy of palm oil caused the fall in price of coconut oil. All this will cause loss of employment opportunities in large scale. The fiscal-packages declared by the Central Government to overcome economic recession, appear to be insufficient. The State Government is hampered by lack of resources for creating new employment opportunities, implementation of welfare schemes and improvement of infrastructure facilities due to the decrease in the revenue of the State caused by economic recession. Special packages have to be granted by the Central Government to help the States for this. The Centre may provide more resources to the States and waive the interest on the loans availed by the State.

7. It is imperative to formulate welfare schemes facilitating the increase of income and the consumption standards of working class which forms the major population of the country. Public

investment for agriculture and basic infrastructure development shall considerably be increased. Additional amount shall be earmarked for health education. Public Distribution System shall be strengthened. New fiscal-packages ensuring the creation of new employment opportunities without curtailing employment and wages shall be implemented. The common man can be saved from the impact of economic recession only by this. My Government is going ahead with activities in this direction. The Government have entrusted the Centre for Development Studies to study as to how the economic recession affects the State economy and they have submitted a study report to Government. Based on its assessment and practical suggestions, the Government will adopt corrective steps to redeem the people from the impact of economic recession with the assistance of the Central Government. The State's package to counter the economic recession will be declared in the Budget. The fundamental feature of this package is the large scale investment enabling the workers in the unorganised sector to have social security, employment and enhanced income.

8. Although the economic recession continues and the rate of inflation has decreased there has been no corresponding decline in the prices of food products and essential commodities. People are dismayed at the onslaught of price hike. Though the price of the crude oil which stood at 147 dollars has been reduced to 40 dollars in the International Market corresponding decrease has not

been made for petroleum products. Only marginal decrease in price has been made. People would get relief from the miseries of price hike, if the Central Government is prepared further to reduce the price of petroleum products considerably.

9. My Government feels that neglect is being shown by the Central Government towards Kerala which is facing severe food scarcity. The monthly quota of 1,13,000 tons of rice required for supplying among APL cardholders which will come around fifty lakhs were curtailed. This has affected the entire Public Distribution System of the State. Considerable decrease in the availability of rice has caused food scarcity and hike in price of rice in the open market. The Central Government have not hitherto approved the repeated demand of the State to correct this step. The situation of procuring rice at higher price from the open market of other States and distributing the same have caused huge financial liability. Eventhough the buffer stock of Rice and Wheat with the Central Government is double than what is required, the quota of rice allotted to the distribution among the ration card holders of the State have been considerably cut short. The Central Government is reluctant to restore the quota of ration entitled to Kerala, where Statutory Rationing System has been adopted. My Government records its unhappiness in this matter.

10. My Government could implement several schemes for the integrated development of Kerala and for the uplift of the people by facing existing adverse circumstances in national-international level. Kerala has become the second investment-friendly State in the country by taking measures with determination for the developmental activities. It has also become the front runner for good governance and a prime centre of IT enabled Industries. As a result of this there has been encouraging approach on the part of investors from inside and outside the country during this period. This Government could launch various joint ventures with the co-operation of Central Government and schemes in collaboration with foreign countries. Welfare pension schemes, steps to strengthen the PDS, Healthcare schemes - all these resulted in raising the living standard of the common people. I hope there would be whole hearted support of all of you for the success of the schemes being implemented by my Government for the creation of a 'Nava Kerala'.

11. The priority given by State Government in the matter of basic infrastructure facilities resulted in remarkable progress in the developmental activities of the State. The statistics available so far reveals that the State would achieve its goal by implementation of the 11th Five Year Plan. The Plan for Rs. 8660 crores, which is 12% more than that of the current year has been envisaged for 2009-2010.

12. Land for the landless and home for the homeless is the declared policy of my Government. E.M.S. Total Housing Scheme is being formulated and implemented for this. This massive project with an estimated outlay of Rs. 5000 crores is being implemented by co-ordinating the activities of Local Self Government Institutions, Scheduled Caste-Scheduled Tribe Development Departments, Co-operative Institutions, Housing Board etc. Kerala, which has set a model in Land Reforms, Total literacy, Health care, Panchayat Raj System etc. is emerging as a model for the Nation in the housing sector as well.

13. The Left Democratic Government came into power at the time when the Agricultural sector in the State was facing severe challenges. At that time, due to the fall in price and debt trap the suicide of farmers had been a regular event. My Government has given top priority to restructure the agricultural sector and put an end to this trend by enacting the Kerala Farmers' Debt Relief Commission Act, 2006 for the first time in the country. The debt relief activities of the Central Government also were helpful to the farmers to a certain extent. The interest free loan, insurance coverage, increase in support price of paddy from Rupees 7 to 11 per k.g. to the farmers have generated self confidence and expectation in farmers. The schemes implemented for food security were also helpful for making remarkable progress in the agricultural sector.

14. 'Suvamakeralam' Project has been launched with a view to cultivate paddy on 10,000 hectares of 'padasekharam' afresh per year and thereby doubling the production. The project is being implemented jointly by the Local Self Government Institutions and Agriculture Department. A comprehensive programme to produce vegetables, tuber crops and fruits on a large scale has also been envisaged. 1000 vegetable villages have already been started and 500 are on the anvil. The functioning of the HORTICORP will be strengthened so as to procure and distribute the vegetable and fruits ensuring fair price to the farmers and low price to the consumers. My Government has been a model to the country by launching the payment of pension to the farmers at Rs. 300 per month.

15. Agriculture occupies prime consideration in the State plan for the year 2009-2010. Action will be taken to make available interest free loan to the paddy cultivators in all districts. The Kuttanadu Package framed by the famous Agriculture Scientist Dr. Swaminathan aimed at the comprehensive development of Kuttanadu, has got the approval of Central Government in principle. The Idukki Package helpful to revitalize the cash crop plantations in Idukki District is also under the consideration of Central Government. The Kuttanadu Package approved as a result of the sustained efforts of my Government has been sanctioned by including the same in the existing Centrally Sponsored Schemes.

It is a hurdle in materialising the project. Production of paddy could be increased considerably if it is possible to cultivate twice or thrice a year by constructing concrete bund so as to find a permanent solution to the breach in bund of 'Kayalnilam'. At present there is no provision in the scheme. Therefore, Special Plan Assistance has to be granted for the implementation of the Kuttanadu Package. The global economic recession has adversely affected the export of our cash crops. The fall in price of rubber more adversely affected the economy of our State. The Central Government has been requested to make available immediate assistance to implement the price security measures to protect the farmers from its impact.

16. While considering the requirements of the people of the State, domestic production of milk, egg and meat was decreasing up to 2005-2006. Though there is continuous increase of production from 2006-2007 onwards, our increasing needs cannot be satisfied by depending on other States. Remedy to the present situation can only be sorted out by increasing the cattle wealth considerably and by attaining high productivity. It aims at achieving self sufficiency of milk within the next three years by implementing projects which form part of Vidharbha Model Package also, in addition to the State Projects like *Ksheeradhara, Pasugramam, Milk Shed, Gosamridhi, Gosuraksha* etc. Action is being taken to start High-Tech farms in Government

sector, co-operative and private sectors. First High-Tech farm has already been started at Kulathupuzha. Steps have already been taken to start functioning of a project at Kulathupuzha for producing heart valve of high quality from male calves in co-operation with Sree Chithra Institute with the assistance of Central Bio-Technology Department. 100 Milk co-operative societies will start functioning in 2009-2010. A new farm will be started at Mattupetti for rearing 1000 cows. Two new poultry meat processing plants will be started in Muvattupuzha and Kozhikode. Activities of the Kerala State Poultry Corporation have been expanded for strengthening the production and distribution of egg and poultry meat. More Veterinary Hospitals with modern equipments will be started in the State. The scheme for the supply of three chicks each to 50,000 children and the scheme for the supply of lambs through selected schools will be implemented. Insemination will be made free on the basis of new Breeding Policy. A fodder plant with new modern facilities will be started at Karunagappally.

17. The Public Sector Undertakings in Kerala has achieved historic success during this year, even when the world economy has been facing severe recession and industrial sector facing severe crisis. 15 Public Sector Undertakings which were in loss are also functioning profitably by performing prestigious activities. My Government has demonstrated that Public Sector Undertakings are

not to be sold but can be made profitable by revival and modernisation. The launching of collaborative venture of Autocast, Cherthala in collaboration with Indian Railways paved the way for joint ventures of Central and State Public Sector Undertakings in the State. Taking over of KELTEK, Thiruvananthapuram by BrahMos Aero Space in collaboration with Central Defence Department, opening of new strategic electronic unit of HAL at Kasaragod, opening of BEL production support centre in Kalamassery, National Institute of Fashion Technology at Mangattuparambu in Kannur, the signing of agreement for joint venture with Steel complex, Kozhikode and SAIL and the starting of BEML factory at Palakkad would lead to surge in growth in the Industrial Sector.

18. Government will promote the starting of small and medium scale industrial undertakings in the modern industrial sector, agricultural products processing sector and traditional sector by utilizing modern scientific technology also. Activities shall be undertaken to revitalise the traditional industries and to attract more foreign markets by product diversification. Price preference will be introduced to accelerate the promotion of production and marketing in the traditional industrial sector. The functioning of Bamboo Corporation will be strengthened. Increase in production and generation of more employment opportunities will be made through diversification in the sectors of handloom, coir, cashew, beedi, khadi etc.

19. The financial status of the State could be improved by proper management by enhancing the income considerably through the efficient collection of tax etc. without additional burden to the Public and by effective control on expenditure. My Government have taken steps to provide welfare pensions to the poor by enhancing it substantially within the financial constraints. The minimum pension has been enhanced to Rs. 200. The introduction of e-filing system to dealers and the modernisation of checkposts have resulted in considerable hike in income from commercial taxes. Arrears of Dearness Allowance due to Government Employees and Pensioners have been paid off completely.

20. The functioning of treasuries has been made transparent and strong by publishing citizen charter and introducing social audit in all treasuries. The treasuries have not been closed even for a day due to financial crisis during this period. Nor any restrictions imposed. The Lottery Department is in the path of remarkable growth, registering an increase of 60% this year. Welfare fund for the Lottery sellers and agents has already come in to force.

21. The Kerala State Financial Enterprises has recorded remarkable growth during the year. K.S.F.E. Chitty Sala of Rs. 157 crores in 2005-2006 will be enhanced to 500 crores during 2009-2010. The Kerala Financial Corporation will be recapitalized enabling to disburse loan to the tune of Rs. 500 crores in the coming year.

22. My Government proposes to complete the computerisation of all Local Self Government Institutions this year. Online distribution of Social Welfare Pension has been initiated at five Corporations, 53 Municipalities and 159 Grama Panchayaths. The remaining institutions will also be brought under this shortly. My Government proposes to prepare General Town Planning Schemes for all the major towns in the State in a phased manner taking into account the developmental potential for the coming years. Solid waste treatment facilities in all Corporations and Municipalities will be completed by the next year.

23. The implementation of NREG Scheme in the State through the Grama Panchayats has since been identified as a model for good governance. Each and every worker is paid his wages through individual bank accounts which is also a unique feature in the implementation of the NREG Scheme in the State.

24. My Government is committed to ensure the welfare of the working class by enforcing Labour laws. Minimum wages committees have been constituted in six sectors where the revision of minimum wages is overdue. Regarding the remaining sectors my Government intends to revise the minimum wages in a time bound manner. To ensure the health of the workers and other sections of the society, two health insurance schemes viz., Rashtriya Swasthya Bhima Yojana (RSBY) for BPL workers and Comprehensive

Health Insurance Scheme (CHIS) for the remaining BPL, fishermen, SC/ST and Aasraya families has already been launched. Kerala is the first State in the country to implement a massive Health Insurance Scheme throughout the State covering all sections of society.

25. My Government is committed to provide maximum working days to the cashew workers of Kerala State Cashew Development Corporation and CAPEX by increasing productivity through modernization of factories. The KSCDC will introduce its fifth value added product namely 'Cashew noodle' in the market and recruit 10,000 workers for its factories.

26. In order to overcome the shortage of Doctors and Para Medical Staff in ESI sector, my Government is starting a Medical College, Dental College and Nursing Colleges under the auspices of the ESI Corporation. I am proud to announce that my Government is the first in the country to bring in a legislation aiming at the welfare of Non-Resident Keralites who support the economy of the State by making huge remittances. In order to promote the employability of youth, new ITIs and ITCs in modern trades will be started to cater to the demand of the world labour market. The existing ITIs will be upgraded into Centres of Excellence with the support of Government of India.

27. My Government is committed to the introduction of innovative methods in the fields of handicrafts and construction sectors. It is proposed to eradicate Child Labour within the next two years. My Government is well aware of the problems arising out of large scale migration of labour force to the State and is committed to implement the Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1979 and protect the workers.

28. In order to assuage the problems faced by the people of Kerala owing to the fast-increasing traffic density and to boost State's infrastructural capability, a Kerala Road Development Policy which envisions bolstering-up of the quality of existing roads will be brought in.

29. Under Vision 2010, a path breaking initiative by my Government, development schemes for Rupees Two Crores in every Legislative Assembly constituency have been formulated and implemented. Impetus would be given to four/six laning of NH 47 and NH 17 and two-lane status enhancement to NH 208, 212, 213, 220, 49 and 49A. The second phase of KSTP Development Scheme will be started this year. Arrangements will be made for the heavy maintenance of major roads with the cutting-edge Road Maintenance Management System (RMMS). Conforming to IRC Standards, this will be implemented on Sabarimala roads. To bring

down rate of accidents and ensure safe and hassle-free travel to the public, speed breakers, zebra lines, reflectors, road markings, speed cameras and signboards will be positioned in all roads under PWD.

30. Under *Kudisika Nivaranam Sathasathamanam Keraleeyam* an amount of Rs. 98.59 crores was provided as relief. Under Kerala Agricultural Debt Relief Scheme an amount of Rs. 20.00 crores was sanctioned to the farmers as interest relief for one year from 23-1-2004 for the agricultural loans up to Rs. 50,000. Under Wayanad Relief Package an amount of Rs. 14.11 crores was disbursed to the marginal farmers who availed agricultural loans up to Rs. 25,000. A new programme for the promotion of tourism will be launched by the existing co-operatives in major tourist destinations. More professional colleges will be established under CAPE to check the exploitation existing in the sector of Private Self Financing Colleges. A comprehensive amendment to the Co-operative Societies Act will be passed and implemented. 10,000 retail outlets under the auspices of Consumerfed will be started and essential commodities will be distributed at subsidized rates during festivals of Onam, Vishu, Ramzan, Bakrid, Christmas etc. To tide over shortage of labour force during harvest season, Co-operatives will be allowed to purchase harvesting machines in the regions predominantly occupied by Paddy Cultivation.

31. My Government has published Citizen's Charter for Registration Department setting deadlines for delivery of services from the offices under its control. As part of improving the quality of basic governance, telephone connectivity will be provided in all the 309 Sub Registry Offices in the State. My Government will implement integrated workflow and document management system in the Registration Department to ensure smooth, effective and transparent administration at all levels thereby enabling the concerned offices to provide services on-line. This project will be completed within two year period.

32. As part of the modernization of the Excise Department, additional vehicles, weapons and modern equipments will be provided. Steps will be taken to computerise 135 Range Offices and for issuing Revolver and Mobile phones to Excise Officials. Campaign against alcoholism will be strengthened with the help and co-operation of the students, youth and women's organizations, Kudumbasree and agencies working in the field of anti-alcoholism. As per the Abkari Policy for the year 2008-2009, Government introduced Amnesty Scheme for the speedy recovery of the Abkari arrears. The Amnesty Scheme has been extended up to 31-1-2009. Enforcement activities against illicit liquor and smuggling of spirit will be strengthened further. Abkari Act and Rules will be amended as recommended by the Expert Committee constituted for the purpose.

33. Sustained efforts to eradicate ganja and to arrest and prosecute smugglers and poachers were made during the year resulting in substantial improvement in protection of forests. Special efforts are made for the protection of sandal forests through the erection of chain-link fence, timely prosecution of the accused etc. All private elephants are fitted with a micro-chip to facilitate their identification and management. The system of retail sales of timber is extended to all timber depots in the State. The procedure for timber sales was modified to make it user friendly and transparent. An extensive tree planting programme (outside forest area) by name 'Haritha Keralam' will be implemented by planting one crore seedlings on 5th June, 2009 with the participation of the Local Self Government Institutions. A State level society by name 'Vanasree' will be established at Thiruvananthapuram as a confederation of Vana Samrakshana Samithies and Eco-development Committees in the State to help them in scientific extraction, value addition and marketing of NTEPs (Non Timber Forest Produce). A new Wildlife Sanctuary by name Malabar Sanctuary will be established by including the forest areas in Peruvannamuzhy in Kozhikode District. A Tiger Safari Park will be established in Kozhikode District. The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 will be implemented in letter and spirit to recognize the rights of tribals in the State and to

improve their living conditions. The Kerala Forest (Vesting and Management of Ecologically Fragile Lands) Act, 2003 will be amended suitably to safeguard the interests of small farmers.

34. Government with the support of Local Self Government Institutions will reconstruct all the one lakh houses, which needs repair under the 'M. N. One Lakh Housing Reconstruction Scheme' in a phased manner. A restructuring package for the revival of Kerala State Housing Board will be worked out and implemented, for bailing it out from the present financial crisis. The possibility of reserving 20% houses of all Housing Schemes to economically weaker sections of the society will be explored, as suggested in the National Housing Policy. My Government proposes to open up "Kalavara" Fair Price Outlets for building materials in all the Districts in Kerala.

35. There has been declines in marine exports from the State to the order of 25-30%. A study by CDS indicates that the decline was almost across all the major destinations except South East Asia. My Government proposes to mitigate the sufferings by improving marketing facilities, setting up of value addition units and providing livelihood programmes. My Government proposes to implement a comprehensive 'matsyakeralam' project aimed at overall development of inland fishery sector and to establish Kerala State Coastal Development Corporation Limited for the

preparation of projects, monitoring and financing infrastructural developments in the coastal sector.

36. My Government could complete 2,060 houses for the tribals including 760 houses for the primitive tribal groups settled in the deep forests and 16,353 houses for the SC families. The rates of educational assistance such as lump sum grant, stipend, pocket money etc. for SC, ST and OEC students were increased by 50% at the beginning of this year. For the first time in the history of the State it has been ensured that the quota for all ST students for admission to the MBBS and allied courses was completely filled up by ST students. It is proposed to extend 'e-grantz' to the whole of the State this year so as to benefit the entire student population.

37. My Government has raised the annual income criteria for determining the creamy layer among other backward castes from Rs. 2.50 lakhs to Rs. 4.50 lakhs this year. This benefit has also been extended to students competing for admission to professional courses. By completing the construction of the Ayyankali Bhavan, the offices of all important Commissions and the Scheduled Caste Development Department could be brought under a single roof.

38. The Coir Sector of the State is the major traditional industry and provides livelihood for about 4 lakh workers. As a prime initiative towards the comprehensive development of the sector, a Census of Coir Industry was organised and a commission was appointed with Sri Anathalavattom Anandan as Chairman. The wages of major segment of workers in coir spinning and product manufacturing sector were enhanced considerably. As recommended by Coir Commission 10,500 automatic/semi-automatic spinning machines and 2,400 looms will be established over a period of four years. A factory will be setup at Alappuzha for the designing, development and manufacturing of all types of machinery required in the Coir Sector with a total outlay of Rs. 30 crores. All efforts would be taken for mobilising resources for the implementation of Coir Commission recommendations. The R&D activities in the sector will be prioritised for eliminating drudgery, enhancing productivity, identification of new application areas for coir, and to improve the standard of coir workers etc. The major task of my Government will be to take effective steps to develop domestic markets and export segments unexplored hitherto.

39. My Government recognizes that the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in Government is an important tool to improve performance, efficiency, quality of service and reduce costs, thereby enabling better utilization of resources.

By establishing a State Spatial Data Infrastructure, Kerala will be made the first State to have such facility. Steps are also being taken to setup an e-procurement system which will help to improve transparency in Government contracts and save costs for Government through intense competition and reduce delays. A Government e-mail system is being introduced according to which official communication sent by e-mail would obviate the need to send paper correspondence thereby increasing speed and reducing costs on stationery. Dr. SMS has enabled citizens in Kozhikode District to get information about the health facilities through mobile phones. This facility is being extended to other districts. This is a part of a larger mobile governance strategy being developed to provide services from Government Departments through mobile telephones. A Finishing School for Free and Open Source Software will start functioning in Kochi this year.

40. My Government is making earnest attempts to ensure that the benefits of ICTs reach every citizen in the State and digital divide in the State is bridged. As a part of this, steps are being taken to make every village in Kerala connected on broadband this year itself. Kerala would become the first State in the country to achieve this distinction. As part of the Malayalam computing drive, awareness to use computers in Malayalam and increasing the content on the web in Malayalam have been initiated.

41. The economic recession worldwide has its impact on Kerala IT Industry as well. My Government has constituted a committee comprising of IT industry representatives, Labour Commissioner and CEOs of Technopark and Infopark to study the issues facing the IT industry and its employees. My Government will take steps to provide support to the IT industry, which generates employment in these difficult times. A package will be announced shortly in this regard.

42. My Government recognizes that the present economic recession provides an opportunity to develop greater IT infrastructure in the State so that Kerala will be able to attract IT industry when the next phase of growth takes place. In this direction, the Government has already initiated development of ten new IT Parks involving total investment of about Rs. 10,000 crores at Thiruvananthapuram (Technocity and Technopark Phase III), Kollam, Alappuzha (Ambalappuzha and Cherthala), Kochi (Infopark Phase II), Thrissur, Kozhikode, Kannur and Kasaragod. This will scale up the existing IT infrastructure five times of the present levels, providing a supply side boost to IT industry. Cyber park, with its headquarters in Kozhikode will usher the advent of IT Parks in Malabar region of the State. While part of the investment will come from private industry and infrastructure developers, Government will invest about Rs. 2000 crores through its agencies.

43. Special Task Force, with representatives of Revenue, Survey and Port Departments, will be formed for the demarcation of Port land and identification of encroachment in Port lands. For the safety and welfare of the Port Workers engaged in the landing and shipping operations, my Government will implement the Dock Workers Safety and Welfare Act. It is proposed to establish 'Kerala Maritime Society' to train youth and make them competent to job opportunities in Maritime fields. Two institutes under the society are planned at Kasaragod and Kollam. My Government have recently declared Kottayam as a Minor Port. Active steps are taken at Government level to strengthen the Coastal Security. As a first step, my Government will implement ISPS Code at Beypore, Vizhinjam, Kollam and Azheekkal Ports. My Government will setup a ship repairing unit at Poovar with the participation of Government of India. With the aim of developing the maritime sector in the State, a Maritime Development Board will be setup. The export import activities from Kollam Port will be started during this year.

44. My Government has been implementing various schemes and projects for the NRKs and returnees through NORKA-ROOTS like Attestation of educational certificates, Pre-departure Orientation Programme, NRK Identity Card Project and *Santhwana*- a relief fund for NRKs in distress for rendering immediate assistance to poor NRK returnees. My Government

will setup NORKA Cell in all District Headquarters to provide necessary guidance to Non-Resident Keralites.

45. My Government will establish a fund for the welfare of NRKs. The Legislative Assembly enacted the Non-Resident Keralites' Welfare Act, 2008, which is the first of its kind in India. My Government will set up an International School with global standards for the children of NRKs. Global Meet and Youth Festival for the children of NRKs would be conducted during 2009.

46. 'Kerala Social Security Mission' was launched by my Government this year with the objective of providing succor to the destitute, poor, chronic ill patients, elderly and other sections of the population needing support from the society. A corpus fund with Rs. 65.00 crores has been created and Cancer Suraksha Programme for giving free medical care to children afflicted with cancer has started. New 'One day homes' for providing accommodation to women coming to city for attending interviews etc. have been set up in Thiruvananthapuram, Ernakulam and Kozhikode. My Government will start 'Adolescent Health Care Programme' in selected Higher Secondary Schools with the objective of providing regular health check-up, counselling and other services, especially to girls. The Finishing Schools Programme for Women will be continued next year also.

In continuation of the decision of my Government last year to entrust Kerala Public Service Commission with the recruitment of physically challenged persons against 3% posts reserved for them, about 250 more posts will be added to the category of posts reserved for their appointment. Identity Cards will be issued to all physically challenged persons to enable them easy access to the various schemes for their welfare. Child Helpline Services will be extended to 5 more districts.

47. My Government has instituted 'E. K. Nayanar Chair on Parliamentary Affairs' in Kannur University. Short term courses on Constitution, Fundamental Rights and Parliamentary Proceedings will be launched by the Institute of Parliamentary Affairs to the elected representatives of Local Bodies. The old Assembly building will be renovated and protected as a historic museum.

48. The University Grants Commission has granted Kerala Kalamandalam the Status of a Deemed University. First phase of the Administrative Block, Library and Research Centre of the Kerala Folklore Akademi has been completed and second phase has begun.

49. The State Institute of Encyclopedia has brought out new volumes, which were pending due to many reasons. Kerala State Chalachithra Akademi has initiated steps to build an International Film Festival Complex and an International Film Institute in

Thiruvananthapuram. Work on digitalization of palm leaf records, paper records, microfilm rolls and rare books will be completed during 2009-2010. Institution of Heritage Award to 3 best heritage clubs and establishment of District Level Record Repositories are proposed to be done this year. My Government will institute a welfare fund to Artistes, cultural activists and those connected with Cinema and Television. Department of State Lotteries, on behalf of Department of Culture, has brought out a Bumper Lottery in favour of the Welfare Fund. A scientifically designed art gallery is proposed to be constructed to exhibit very rare and unique works of legends including Raja Ravi Varma.

50. Department of Archeology during 2008-2009 commemorated the 203rd Anniversary of martyrdom of brave Patriot Pazhassi Raja and a memorial and a museum building in his honour was dedicated to the Nation in November, 2008. The conservation work at Chandragirikotta at Kasaragod is completed and the fort declared open to the public. My Government proposes to scientifically conserve all Forts in North Kerala from Thrissur to Kasaragod.

51. Now all the offices of the Motor Vehicles Department have been computerized and all the services to the public are rendered in the most efficient manner. The Regional Transport Office, Thiruvananthapuram has been selected as a "Model Office"

by implementing "Any Service Any Counter" system through which the public receives a variety of services through a single window. Speed post delivery system has been introduced in all the offices of the Department through which most of the services to the public viz., Registration Certificate, Driving Licence, Permit etc. could be sent to the applicants through speed post. The prestigious CSI-Nihilent Award for the best e-governed Department in India has been awarded to Motor Vehicles Department. In order to conduct the driving test scientifically, driver testing yards with modern gadgets like driving simulators and test tracks will be setup in all districts. My Government proposes to open Sub RTO Offices in all Taluks where such offices do not function presently. To bring about transparency and to avoid subjectivity, my Government proposes to setup Vehicles Testing Station using electronic gadgets in 13 districts at a total cost of Rs. 16.25 crores. My Government is in the process of setting up Radar Surveillance System in 11 districts at a total cost of Rs.10 crores for monitoring the traffic at important stretches of the Highways and detect offenders.

52. KSRTC is taking every step to solve the financial crisis by expansion of fleet strength and recasting uneconomic services. 503 new schedules were introduced within two years thereby operating a total of 13.40 lakhs kms. average per day. 1150 new buses including 3 Volvo, 20 A.C. buses and 30 Super Deluxe

buses were already put on road by availing loan. New services were also operated as per inter-state agreement with Karnataka and Tamilnadu. The newly introduced Malabar services have become people friendly. In the coming year also, 1000 new buses will be launched by availing loan from LIC and other financial institutions on Government guarantee. 12,345 new appointments were made through K.P.S.C. As part of computerization, Electronic Ticketing Machines will be introduced in all depots. KSRTC has taken steps to construct Modern Shopping Complex-cum-Bus Stations in major towns in Kerala. The work has already started in Angamali, Kasaragod and Kottarakkara. The work will be started in Thiruvananthapuram Central, Kozhikode, Pathanamthitta, Thiruvalla and Karunagappally. All bus station yards will be repaired and renovated with permanent structures within 6 months. KSRTC is planning to operate Low Floor A.C. Volvo buses in Kochi City and Thiruvananthapuram City with the financial assistance from Government.

53. My Government has launched ten steel boats and four new modern steel boats into service in water transport sector. Two cargo boats will be purchased, all boats which are more than 25 years will be replaced, spillway at Ponjikkara will be completed, the workshop at Alappuzha will be modernised and construction work of Muhamma Station and concrete jetties in Payyannur region will be started. Kerala Transport Development

Finance Corporation Limited (KTDFC) will start Education Loan Schemes during this year. KTDFC will construct shopping complexes with modern facilities on BOT basis in land owned by Kerala State Road Transport Corporation at Angamali, Kozhikode, Malappuram, Thampanoor, Peroorkada and Fort in Thiruvananthapuram, during the year 2009-2010.

54. My Government has started Malayalam Mission for facilitating the study of Malayalam Language and Cultural heritage of Kerala for the Children of Non-Resident Keralites. Steps will also be taken to provide service of the Mission to the Children of Non-Resident Keralites residing abroad.

55. Tourism is now the largest industry in the world by virtually any economic measures including gross output, value added, employment, capital investment and tax contribution. My Government has created amenities Marina in Kochi Bolgatty, Sarovaram Project at Kozhikode, Kerala House and Hotel Projects at Chennai, Mumbai Kerala House, Information Centres at Kolkatta, International Convention Centre at Akkulam in Thiruvananthapuram and International Hospitality Management Institute at Kozhikode. In 2008, the foreign tourist arrival of Kerala up to October, 2008 was 4,66,034, which shows an increase of 20.13% over the same period of previous year. In 2008 the domestic tourist arrival of Kerala up to October, 2008

was 61,45,717, which shows an increase of 14.55% over the same period of previous year. The total revenue generated from Tourism during 2007 is Rs.11,433 crores, showing an increase of 25.28% over the last year's figures. Under the initiation of my Government a stopover was offered to Volvo Ocean Race 2008-2009, which has earned international attention through Press and Visual Media. Two-year travel and MBA Course has been started at KITTS. In addition, one year Travel and Hospitality Management Diploma in Air Hostess Course has also been newly started. My Government is focusing to make Kerala Tourism Development Corporation a profitable institution through various modern activities. As a result of these the State has been rated as number one position in India and the tenth position at International level. In order to make the State a hub of commercial tourism within a period of 5 years, the Government launched Grand Kerala Shopping Festival.

56. My Government is pursuing a massive training programme to be conducted by the Institute of Management in Government and wishes to develop IMG into one of the best Training Institutes in the country. IMG will introduce mandatory induction training for Secretariat Assistants thereby equipping them with necessary skill sets to deal with policy related issues and to make them familiar with the rules and procedures to be observed in dealing with files. My Government has released the Intellectual Property Rights Policy for Kerala, 2008 on 3-6-2008.

57. My Government has declared Law Department as the first fully computerized Government Department of the State of Kerala. The on-line monitoring system has been successfully installed at the Office of the Advocate General besides in all the fourteen Offices of District Government Pleaders in Kerala and in the Office of the Law Officer, at New Delhi.

58. The Law Reforms Commission headed by Justice V. R. Krishna Iyer, former Judge of Supreme Court of India, has furnished 104 Draft Bills. The Official Language (Legislative) Commission, Kerala, the only institution of its kind, has so far published 224 Central Acts as Authoritative Texts and the Diglot edition of the Constitution of India. The welfare amount payable to a member of the Kerala Advocates' Welfare Fund has been enhanced to Rupees 5 lakhs. So also, the amount admissible to a member of Kerala Advocate Clerks' Welfare Fund has been enhanced from Rs. 1,00,000 to Rs. 2,00,000 which is a cent per cent increase with in a very short period of five years.

59. My Government has launched several programmes to achieve access, equity and excellence in Higher Education. My Government will frame a new policy on Higher Education. The setting up of the Higher Education Scholarship Fund is a landmark achievement of my Government. My Government will be launching 'The Erudite'—Scholars in Residence Programme, which

will provide opportunity to the faculty and students of our Universities to interact with Nobel Laureates and eminent Scholars in India and abroad. 'Aspire' is a scholarship scheme for students who aspire to carry out short term research programmes in any discipline with eminent faculty and institutions within the country. A new science propagation programme 'Inculcate' will be introduced to inculcate scientific temper among the young students in Kerala. A Space gallery with the support of ISRO as well as the School of Aesthetics and Culture will start functioning this year itself.

60. A new Institute for the Study of the differently abled will be started which will focus on research in the connected issues and develop educational technologies for them. For the upgradation of technical education in the State, my Government proposes to implement Technical Education Quality Improvement Programme, Phase-II in 16 Engineering Colleges. Modernisation of classrooms and development of educational content will be the major initiatives in engineering education. Finishing schools to enhance the employability of polytechnic students will be started. The Tribal Engineering College at Attappady is a new venture for the marginalised. Career Development Centres will be started at Malappuram and Palakkad to benefit the backward sections of society. My Government proposes a new project of Library Computerisation with internet facility in all the A and B grade

libraries in a phased manner. My Government proposes to develop the Kerala State Audio Visual and Reprographic Centre into an institution capable of undertaking quality and specialised printing and a Braille Press will be established in the Centre. Scheduled Tribe candidates have been exempted from payment of application fees for the common entrance examination conducted by the Commissionerate of Entrance Examinations to encourage more candidates to appear in the examinations.

61. The Public Distribution System (PDS) in the State is functioning very effectively. The monthly allotment of food grains (which is heavily reduced during the last 2 years) is being distributed effectively to the APL, BPL, AAY and Annapoorna cardholders. Frequent inspections and raids are being conducted in PDS and open market business centres to prevent price hike, hoarding and black marketing. Effective steps have been taken to control price hike especially during festival seasons and to strengthen the PDS so as to ensure that good quality food grains are distributed to cardholders. Modernization of ration shops is planned to improve the quality of service being given to the general public under PDS. The issue of new ration cards will be completed by March, 2009.

62. "State Consumer Helpline" which is an effective alternate Consumer Disputes Redressal Mechanism will be commissioned

shortly, so that citizen can call from any part of the State over telephone (toll free) and seek information, advice or guidance to their day to day consumer problems. Upgradation of the existing Gold Purity Testing Lab at Legal Metrology Bhavan, Kakkanad, Ernakulam into a BIS Hallmarking Referral Centre will be completed by the end of this financial year. Compounding fee collected during last four financial years shows a three fold increase in its realization. A new Tanker Lorry Calibration Unit will be set up at Kollam. The aggressive intervention of Kerala State Civil Supplies Corporation Limited in the market by distributing essential items at price 30% less than that of the open market rate resulted in controlling the undue price hike in the open market and increased market share of Supplyco from 16 to 25% in the last 2 years.

63. My Government has distributed 17.54 lakhs free Onam kits containing essential items to the BPL cardholders in the State during this Onam season. The number of customers visiting the Supplyco outlets, which was 52 lakhs in 2006 has gone up to 80 lakhs per month during 2008. All medicines including life saving drugs are distributed through 87 medical stores at a discount of 10%-25% on MRP. 25 new Maveli Medical Stores and 50 Maveli Stores will be opened this year. For extending the price benefit to more people, 250 super markets will be opened by converting existing Maveli Stores.

64. Government of Kerala has given top most priority to enhance the existing generation capacity to meet the day-to-day increasing demand for electricity. Large and small hydel projects are being identified and developed utilizing the available rich natural water resources. Non-Conventional energy source will be harnessed to a greater extent. By commissioning Neriamangalam Extension and two units of Kuttiady Tailrace Scheme, 27.5 MW has been added to the system during the current year. My Government plans to add 103.75 MW through the completion of two projects namely Kuttiadi Additional Extension and Ramakkalmedu Wind Farm during 2009-2010. It is also proposed to commence 7 Nos. of new Hydel Projects having capacity 223.55 MW. My Government aims to set up more wind energy projects in power sector with private participation. The wind potential identified in Kerala is 600 MW. Wind farms in Agali and Ramakkalmedu were commissioned in private sector during the last two years. KSEB has received allocation of coal from Baitarni West Coal Block in Orissa to generate 1000 MW power for a period of 25-30 years. A joint venture company namely Baitarni West Coal Company Ltd. (BWCCL) is incorporated by KSEB, OHPC and GPCL for developing the mine and exploiting the coal.

65. In order to improve the quality and reliability of supply my Government proposes to strengthen the transmission network and thereby improving the voltage level, reducing overloading and T&D losses. Target for 2009-2010 is for constructing 2 Nos. 220 KV substations, 19 Nos. 110 KV substations, 3 Nos. 66 KV substations, 25 Nos. 33 KV substations and the connected lines. The major achievements in distribution wing are the simplification of application procedure for service connection and action taken for waiving the minimum demand charges/fixed charges of electricity for the period of closure in respect of all closed plantation and industrial units which restarted their operations on or before 31-12-2008. LT billing computerization in all sections including consumer registration is completed. As on 31-12-2008, 3,14,384 service connections are effected, 1810.4 km. 11 KV line and 4633.51 km. of LT line were constructed and 2,433 transformers were installed during the current year. My Government will effect 5,00,000 service connections and electrify 50,000 households of socially and economically backward sections of society. The scheme for replacing the incandescent lamps of domestic consumers will be implemented by giving 10,00,000 CF lamps free of cost to the consumers.

66. As stipulated in the Electricity Act, 2003, my Government has decided to restructure KSEB as a company under Indian Companies Act, 1956. Accordingly, on 25-9-2008 the

functions, properties and all interests, rights in properties, all rights and liabilities of the Board stand vested in the State Government. The policy of State Government is to retain KSEB as a single entity under public sector. Industries and other organisations participated in the State Energy Conservation Awards 2008, saved 5 MW electricity and 37,000 MT Oil. My Government is planning to set-up an energy information bureau with a toll free telephone number. Collection of all fees related to the Electrical Inspectorate Department will be extended to all districts through 'FRIENDS' during the fiscal year. Investments in the renewable energy sector will be mobilized by establishing a Technology Entrepreneurship Promotion Cell (TEPIC) in 'ANERT'. My Government proposes to provide financial assistance for the non-conventional energy projects like solar, bio-mass etc., which are financially viable, which have been identified by agencies like ANERT, EMC etc.

67. My Government has launched a major water quality monitoring programme for 13 river basins in the State. The State Biotechnology Commission and Biotechnology Board were revitalized and a new centre for DNA barcoding was opened in Thiruvananthapuram. The Kerala School of Mathematics (KSoM) is opened. The Malabar Botanic Garden Society is expanded with many additional facilities and opened to the public. My Government has prepared district-wise multi hazard maps required for preparing disaster management plan of the State, completed

water quality monitoring for major rivers of the State and prepared the Road Safety Action Plan for the Kerala Road Safety Authority. Integrated traffic and transportation development plan for major cities of the State will be taken up in a time bound manner. S&T Management Action Plan for major wetlands and the Periyar river basin will be taken up. A new research institute namely 'Centre for Advanced Research in Environmental Science and Engineering' will be established. A new centre for studies on minerals and nano technology will be established.

68. A new Court of Enquiry Commissioner and Special Judge has started functioning at Kottayam from 27-9-2008. This will help in reducing the pendency of Vigilance Cases.

69. The Construction of on-going Fishery Harbour Projects at Vizhinjam, Muthalappozhy and Thottappally will be completed in the year 2009-2010. Hygienic improvement to the Fishery Harbour at Neendakara, Chombal, Puthiappa, Munambam and Mopla Bay will be completed in the next year. Modernisation of Beypore Fishery Harbour will be completed during the budget year. It is proposed to take up the modernisation of Thangassery and Kayamkulam Fishery Harbours during the next year. Kasaragod Fishery Harbour work will be started. For the development of new fishery harbours the investigation and feasibility studies at

Parappanangadi, Tanur, Manjeswaram, Valiathura, Poonthura and Vellayil will be completed in 2009-2010. The TRP works will be completed by March, 2009.

70. Higher Secondary School curriculum was revised consequent on the revision of curriculum of classes up to 10th Std. Grading system of evaluation was also introduced at this level. As part of the social welfare measure, State Government have introduced a Comprehensive Scholarship Scheme for the students of BPL category at Higher Secondary School Level.

71. The State Government introduced single window admission in all Government and Aided Higher Secondary Schools to ensure transparency, social justice, equal opportunity and merit in the admission process. A project for Remedial Coaching Classes was started in 62 VHSE schools of the State having score below 50% of result. Career Guidance and Counselling Units have started functioning in all 389 schools. My Government has introduced Scholarship for BPL Students. It was Kerala which showed the country the real possibilities of activity based pedagogy by developing alternative type of Child Friendly Text Books. My Government intends to develop SCERT as a Centre of Excellence in the field of Educational Research.

72. Public Health Bill, 2009 and Para Medical Bill, 2009 will be presented before the Kerala Legislative Assembly. Accreditation of Hospitals and Labs under the Quality Council of India (QCI) will be implemented through NRHM. The working of the State Level Disease Control and Monitoring Cell will be strengthened further. The number of ASHA women volunteers for disease surveillance will be increased. The web based Health Information System will be connected to all PH Centres and CH Centres using GPS based software. Residential quarters will be constructed in Medical College, Alappuzha. Community out reach centres of ICCONS will be started for research and development on the genetic basis of Otism, Mental retardation and disability of mentally challenged children. Regional Cancer Centre and Malabar Cancer Centre will be strengthened further. MRI Scanners will be installed in Medical College, Kottayam, Alappuzha and Thrissur on public-public participation between Government of Kerala and M/s Hindustan Latex Limited. Cath labs will be started in the Medical College, Thrissur. Bed strength of Ayurveda Hospitals will be increased. For strengthening the enforcement mechanism, Regional Drug Testing Lab will be started at Emakulam.

73. The law and order situation in Kerala remained totally under control without any major incidents of terrorism or communal violence. Several anti-social elements have been identified and action was taken against them under Kerala

Anti-social Activities (Prevention) Act, 2007. A sophisticated DNA Analysis Laboratory was established inside the State Forensic Science Laboratory. For handling cyber crimes effectively Cyber Forensic and Digital Analysis Lab was also established in the State Forensic Science Laboratory. Kerala Police became the first Police force in the country to have used Terrestrial Radio Tracking Service (TETRA) as in advanced countries. A new specialised agency styled as Kerala Anti-Narcotic Special Action Force (KANSAF) was constituted to handle Narcotics and Drug cases. Community policing initiatives like Janamaithri introduced in 20 Police Stations in the State during this year brought in quality improvement in service delivery by Police, reduction of crimes and the enthusiastic participation of the people in policing.

74. CCTV Security Surveillance System was installed in Central Prison, Kannur. Mobile phone jammers have been installed in Central Prison, Kannur as a security measure. My Government has sanctioned new Fire & Rescue Stations at Kuttikol, Kodungalloor and Nadapuram. New Fire & Rescue Stations at Poovar and Vadakkancherry will be opened soon.

75. During the next year one India Reserve Battalion will be raised in the State with the financial assistance of Government of India. Two Commando Companies will also be raised which will be provided with modern equipments and weapons for handling

terrorist attacks and such cases and to ensure internal security in our State. A Quick Reaction Team (QRT) will be formed in the four ranges in view of the present security scenario. Intelligence Wing of police will be strengthened to tone up with the intelligence machinery for effectively handling the insurgent/terrorist activities. Community policing initiatives in Janamaithri Scheme will be extended to 20 more police stations. Traffic enforcement wing styled as Traffic Trooper will be specially formed for traffic enforcement with a view to reduce accidents and to render emergency help to the accident victims.

76. My Government proposes to construct a new building for Prisons Headquarters and new Central Prison in Central Travancore Area. During the year 2009-2010, it is proposed to open 9 new Fire & Rescue Stations in the State. It is also proposed to examine the Home Guards System obtaining in the other States with a view to see if Home Guards could be revived in the State.

77. My Government is determined to get the entire public property free from encroachment. Fruitful and stringent actions were taken by my Government against the encroachers of public land. As a part of my Government's policy to give land to the landless, action is in progress to distribute 1,664 acres of land in Idukki District.

78. The Government has formulated a comprehensive plan for the completion of resurvey in the State, known as *Bhoomi Keralam* which will be completed within three years. In order to make Kerala the first State in our Country that implement the provisions of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 the survey of Forest Land in Wayanad and Palakkad Districts has been undertaken under this project which is nearing completion. 3,937 beneficiaries have been distributed surplus land through *Bhoo Vitharana Mela* held from October to December 2008. 29,066 landless poor have also been given land since the present Government came into power in 2006 in addition to 26,898 Records of Rights. My Government is implementing Tsunami Rehabilitation Project at a total cost of Rs.1441.75 crores. My Government formed the State Disaster Management and District Disaster Management Authorities with a view to implement effective Disaster Management activities.

79. With a view to protect rivers of the State and river banks, Government aims to take up new programmes amounting to a minimum of Rs.150 crore utilising the funds available under the River Management Fund. It is also proposed to institute an 'Environment Protection Force' with a view to curb illegal sand mining from the rivers in the first instance.

80. My Government has launched a total sanitation drive in the habitations in the three major wetland catchments viz., Sasthamkotta, Ashtamudi and Vembanad with an aim of minimising the pollution load on these resources. Work on a comprehensive conservation project formulation for Periyar river basin will be taken up. Action will be taken up by the Kerala State Pollution Control Board for setting up a model waste water treatment plant for treating waste water from Kottayam Medical College.

81. My Government is committed to the wellbeing of minorities in the State. The Committee headed by Sri Paloli Muhammed Kutty (Minister for Local Self Government Department) submitted its recommendations based on the Sachar Commission Report to uplift the Muslim Community in the State. As per the recommendation a Minority Cell has been constituted under the General Administration Department in Government Secretariat. My Government proposes to constitute a Welfare Fund to Madrasa teachers.

82. The number of Scholarships given to Muslim girl students for Graduate, Postgraduate and Professional Courses will be enhanced. More Muslim girl students will be selected for granting Hostel stipend. My Government proposes to extend pensionary benefits under the Welfare Fund and Pension Scheme to all Madrasa teachers. New educational Institutions will be

started in minority areas where there are no sufficient Educational Institutions. My Government proposes to constitute a Minority Commission and a Financial Development Corporation in the State as per the recommendations of the Government of India.

83. My Government has taken a decision to enhance the sports quota appointment from 20 to 50 per year. My Government has taken steps to fill up all vacancies through KPSC.

84. The Kerala Water Authority has taken up five water supply schemes under JBIC aided Kerala Water Supply Project, and they are progressing in full swing and expected to complete major portion this year itself. TRP works amounting to Rs.70.87 crores benefiting a population of about 8 lakhs will be completed before March, 2009. 50 major water supply schemes will be commissioned during 2009-2010 benefiting a population of about 15 lakhs. In addition, three JBIC aided water supply schemes will be completed during 2009-2010 by which about 23 lakhs will be additionally benefited. 'Jalanayam' was declared on July 2008. A comprehensive project for the completion of the Hydro-Electric Projects which stand stalled for years is being implemented with the assistance of Rs. 750 crores from NABARD.

85. The proposal for Jalanidhi Phase I with an expected outlay of Rs.1200 crores on Rural Water Supply and Sanitation area is expected to be cleared by World Bank shortly. Also the

Centrally Aided Programme "Jalmani" will be implemented during the next financial year in the State to ensure free water supply to schools. The resumption of works in Attappady Valley Irrigation Project is also proposed during the next financial year. My Government had strongly presented our stand before the concerned authorities against the raising of water level in the Mullaperiyar Reservoir above 136 feet and insisted on the construction of a new Dam, down stream of the existing Dam. Muvattupuzha Irrigation Project is targeted for completion by the year 2010. Sanction has been given for the investigation of a new Dam at Mullaperiyar, Chaliyar Irrigation Project, Meenachil River Valley Project and Projects in Pamba Basin Schemes. Schemes for promoting rain water harvesting and conservation of ground water will be implemented.

86. As part of the modernisation in I & PRD, an electronic media division was formed in the Department during the financial year. Comprehensive websites were created and hosted for each Minister in the State. A service portal for the citizens in matters related with the Right to Information Act was also created and hosted. '*Sutharya Keralam*' a novel venture for the public grievance redressal has made remarkable achievements by solving the problems of thousands of common men. A new weekly programme called *Navakeralam* was started in Doordarshan under the initiative of my Government for the live interaction

between Ministers and the public. Service Gateway facilities will be made available in the official web portal www.kerala.gov.in. The portal's Malayalam version will also be created and hosted.

87. I am quite convinced that under the able and dynamic leadership of the Chief Minister my Government has the necessary political will and commitment to transform Kerala into one of the most developed States of India. Initiatives taken by the Government in the field of industrial development, creation of physical and social infrastructure facilities, agriculture and traditional sectors of the economy, poverty alleviation and employment generation programmes, including welfare measures for the downtrodden, have placed Kerala on a steady path of development and growth. In fact, Kerala is now favourably poised to realize its true potential as never before. Let us take a pledge that political differences will not come in the way of development.

JAI HIND