



ADDRESS
TO
THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
KERALA

20TH FEBRUARY, 2008

BY

SHRI R. L. BHATIA
GOVERNOR OF KERALA

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members,

1. It gives me immense pleasure in warmly welcoming each one of you to the first session of the 12th Kerala Legislative Assembly for the year 2008.
2. Twenty-one months have passed since my Government came into power. The promises made to the people during the election campaign are being fulfilled one by one by my Government. I am very much proud to announce that my Government could make a quantum jump in the history of the development of the State within such a short time. The purpose oriented functioning of my Government for the twenty-one months have earned the State of Kerala the reputation of being an investor-friendly State. My Government could make a head start in basic infrastructure development, starting of large and medium scale industries and in attracting investors from within and outside the country. My Government could implement several schemes for the welfare of the distressed sections of society. In this context, I place on record the support and co-operation extended by you. I expect your continued and earnest support for the various schemes implemented by my Government for the upliftment of the people of the State.
3. Globalization and liberalization policies being implemented by the Central Government, crisis owing to fall in the exchange rate of dollar, frequent price hike of petroleum products, the neglect

shown by the Central Government towards the State and above all the debt-stressed situation caused by the anti-people policies and mismanagement of the former UDF Government have created several hurdles in the functioning of my Government. My Government is moving ahead by overcoming these difficulties and trying to obtain the due share to the State by exerting strong pressure on the Central Government.

4. Sanction has been accorded for the enhancement of Annual Plan Outlay for the year 2008-2009 to Rs. 7700 crores from Rs. 6950 crores for the financial year 2007-2008. An additional central assistance of Rs. 100 crores could also be obtained this year. This will help in undertaking more development activities this year.
5. The suicide of farmers owing to debt and fall in price pursuant to the policies of the Central Government had been a regular phenomenon when my Government came to power. Crop failure and other natural calamities had haunted the farmers. It was the prime consideration of my Government to help and protect those farmers who were on the verge of mass suicide due to desperation as a result of total collapse. My Government could provide the farming community, rays of hope by undertaking commendable activities to save the farmers from collapse and desperation and thereby totally preventing the farmers' suicide within a short span of time. Steps have been taken not only to provide an amount of half a lakh rupees as financial assistance to each of the families of

more than 1000 farmers who committed suicide and to write off their debts but also declare moratorium on the debt of the living farmers and bring in a legislation to save them from their debts. My Government has set a model for the protection of farmers by writing off the debts up to Rs. 25,000 taken from the co-operative societies by all the farmers of Wayanad district having less than one acre of land as recommended by the Debt Relief Commission. Since the LDF Government stands as a shield to the farmers, the suicide of farmers has come to an end in Kerala while in other States suicides are still continuing due to agrarian crisis. Kerala sets a model to the whole country in this matter also as it has done earlier by enacting laws including that of land reforms. My Government has requested the Central Government one year before for enacting a legislation on similar lines of the Kerala Debt Relief Commission Act. But till today it is not introduced. It would be helpful for the Peasant community nation wide to survive from the crises which compel them to commit suicide.

6. Another important duty of my Government is to find out a solution to the severe problem of unemployment among the educated. My Government is pursuing a planned move to put an end to unemployment by generating new job opportunities in the sectors of IT, science and technology and traditional industry. New foundation for development has been laid by setting up institutions for study and research in areas such as Biotechnology, Nanotechnology and Space Technology and by establishing Smart City Project and new IT parks. Many

entrepreneurs are now coming to the State for setting up new ventures with the starting of new projects like Smart City. My Government is following the policy of encouraging all such genuine investors. My Government has undertaken an intensive effort in the days passed by to revive the Public Sector Undertakings that were facing closure during the tenure of the previous Government, thereby creating more employment opportunities and increasing productivity. When the policy of the UDF Government was to close down and sell off Public Sector Industries, my Government could make them profitable by reviving them one by one. 22 Public Sector Undertakings under the Industries Department could be made profitable during this short period. My Government is going ahead with efforts for ensuring investments amounting to tens of thousands of crores in Public and Private sectors.

7. Until the LDF Government came to power, a handful of land grabbers, with the support of the authorities used to encroach the Government lands and hold large extents of land that are to be vested in Government, subverting Land Reforms Laws, and to earn huge undue profit by transferring them. The policy of the LDF Government, on the contrary, is to recover all the land held unauthorisedly and unlawfully by the big guns for the purpose of distributing them among the landless or for utilizing them for public purposes.
8. Farmers in our State are the only group not getting the privileges of the Pension Schemes. Hence it is proposed to implement a special Pension scheme for the farmers. Labour shortage is one of the major problems of agriculture

development in our State. It is high time that the new younger generation should have awareness in handling modern agricultural machines and tools. For this purpose an Agri Polytechnic will be established under Agricultural University.

9. "Haritha Sree" programme implemented in Idukki district for the development of vegetable cultivation has been a grand success. During the coming year also one thousand "Vegetable Villages" will be established under the Krishibhavan throughout the State, by setting up one or more Haritha Sangham. New sales counters will be set up for the procurement and marketing of the vegetables produced in these villages. A new scheme for promotion of vegetable cultivation in schools will also be launched.
10. At present there is a wide gap between the requirement and the production of milk, egg and meat. The sharp decline in pasture/agricultural lands along with the drastic drop in livestock population has worsened the internal production. The present need is to stabilize the population and increase the production and productivity. The galloping demand necessitates building up of a strong internal production in the minimum possible period of time.
11. Cattle feed subsidy will be provided through co-operative societies to promote livestock farming and to increase the internal production of milk. High Tech Dairy Farms will be established in the districts of Idukki, Wayanad etc. with the

involvement of NRIs. A High Tech export oriented Meat Plant will be established in Chalakudy with Public Private Participation. A new Cattle Feed Plant with 300 tons per day capacity will be established at Karunagappally. Conservation and propagation of local breeds of cattle like Vechur cows, Attapadi Black and Malabari goat, Angamaly pig, Kasaragod dwarf cattle etc. will be undertaken. Assistance will be given to Kerala Dairy Farmers Welfare Fund Board to motivate the cattle farmers for improving production of milk.

12. Considering the necessity and importance of energizing the agricultural sector, a series of relief measures were declared by my Government. Benefits to the tune of Rs.175 crores have been made available to the farmers of the State. By implementing special packages in Wayanad, Kasaragod and Palakkad and by writing off agricultural loans in the name of farmers who committed suicide, relief amounting to Rs. 564.38 crores have been provided.
13. Now, timely credit is made available to the paddy and vegetable cultivators at 4%. A further reduction of 2% in the agricultural loans to SC/ST farmers has also been declared. A monetary benefit of more than Rs.3000 crores is thus provided to the farmers and the general public. With a view to strengthen the financial base of the credit co-operatives, a new scheme "Sahakarana Nikshepam Keralaeyam" has been introduced by which the co-operatives have been able to mobilize sufficient funds and they have become more or less self-supporting. Appointing Co-operative Banking Ombudsman, establishing

ATM network connecting KSCB, DCBs and PACS, distribution of agricultural loans of Rs. 5000 crores etc. are planned during the current year.

14. In Kerala, Local Governments have become the key institutions of public service delivery. I am happy to announce that it is the policy of my Government to create unified, distinct and common cadres of ministerial staff and executive staff for all the Local Governments, just as a common engineering cadre has recently been set up. This would enhance professional competence and attract talent to Local Governments. Further, my Government intends to impart special managerial training to the staff of Local Governments to improve their efficiency. Local Economic Development has been given special priority in the XIth Five Year Plan of Local Governments. Kudumbashree would take this idea further and launch special big projects, initially one per district, under the umbrella of "Samagra", to develop rural business hubs to provide sustainable job opportunities for the poor, focusing on niche areas in agriculture and animal husbandry and value addition to agricultural produce. The preparation of Anti-Poverty Sub Plans would be taken up in all the Urban Local Governments for which Urban Poverty Mapping would be the initial step; the first time such an exercise is carried out on a Statewide scale in the country. This will be followed by an action plan to make the cities and towns of Kerala slum-free. "Malinya Muktha Keralam" is on its track and the different initiatives launched by Her Excellency the President of India would be carried to their logical conclusion as per the time schedule, so that within three years Kerala becomes a totally clean State.

15. Now that participatory planning in Kerala has become a national model, it is intended to enrich it through infusion of spatial planning techniques. With this objective a new Town and Country Planning Bill would be introduced in the Assembly during the current year. The Master Plan of Kochi would be fully revised and revision of Master Plans in four other Cities would be initiated.
16. My Government is committed to the well being of four lakh coir workers in the State. The recommendations of the Coir Commission will be implemented shortly. My Government proposes to establish a People's Coir Marketing Company under co-operative sector with the participation of all stakeholders. The Rebate Scheme will be re-introduced and 10% rebate will be allowed to Coir PSUs and Apex Society to market coir products procured from Coir Co-operatives. A comprehensive Medical Insurance Scheme for unorganised coir workers will be introduced. A design development center in association with National Institute of Design to develop innovative products and designs for coir products will be established at Alappuzha.
17. It is the policy of my Government to give equal importance to the development process of the State and to protect the legitimate rights and welfare of the working class. My Government is in the process of bringing in legislations to extend welfare measures to all sections of workers. A bill for the welfare of small plantation workers has already been introduced in the Legislature. In the plantation sector persistent

efforts by my Government has yielded positive results. Out of the major plantations that were remaining closed, nine have since been reopened. Efforts are under way to take over and entrust the management of the remaining plantations by the Tea Board. My Government is committed to continue all the concessions granted by the State Government to tea gardens. Measures will be taken to enforce minimum wage for all categories of workers left uncovered under the Minimum Wages Act. A survey of migrant labour and child labour is proposed to be conducted and enforcement of the relevant laws will be strengthened. The computerization of Employment Exchanges will be completed on a priority basis so as to make available the data of jobseekers to prospective employers through a web-enabled service.

18. My Government is fully committed to implement Government of India assisted "Rastriya Swasthya Bhima Yojana" to provide health insurance coverage up to Rs. 30,000 per annum per family to all BPL workers in the unorganized sector in Kollam and Alappuzha districts during the current year. The scheme will be extended to all other districts of the State within the next four years. A life insurance cum scholarship scheme for rural landless agricultural workers viz., "Am Admi Bhima Yojana" covering about three lakh families will be launched during this year.
19. Out of the 34 ITIs in the State, 14 are in the process of upgradation as Centres of Excellence. Seven Grade-II ITIs in the State will be upgraded to Grade-I. My Government

proposes to start new ITIs wherever land and building are provided by local bodies or the community free of cost. In order to promote cashew industry, large-scale cashew cultivation will be undertaken through the "Kerala State Agency for Cashew Cultivation". The gratuity amount overdue to retired employees and workers of Cashew Development Corporation and CAPEX will be paid.

20. My Government has given major thrust for the development of National Highways. The State Support Agreement has been signed with National Highway Authority of India. A project for four/six laning of NH-47 and NH-17 will be undertaken on a war footing. A special project for development of all important roads leading to Sabarimala will be implemented this year. Phase I of Kerala State Transport Project will be completed within two years. Thiruvananthapuram City Road Improvement Project will be completed in next 18 months. Special priority will be given to complete the construction of Railway Overbridges and approach roads. An integrated road network and transport system for easing congestion in Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi, Kozhikode and Kottayam Cities will be undertaken. My Government will give special importance to the successful implementation of the Highway Protection Act.
21. The first step that the LDF Government has taken, after its assuming power, is to bring out a comprehensive Industrial and Commercial Policy to encourage investments in the industrial

sector. The State is now receiving adequate response from industrial entrepreneurs for investments in the industrial sector including promotion of infrastructure facilities. Rather than Large Scale Industries, the State is suitable for investments in the SSI sector considering the facilities available in the State. As a prelude, my Government has conducted Face-to-Face programmes involving all those in the SSI sector, which was welcomed by one and all. Mining of mineral sand along the coast has been decided to be only in the Public Sector as a policy.

22. Rather than closing down the lossmaking PSUs, the present attempt is to convert these PSUs into profitmaking ones. Contract has been signed to combine Angamaly TELK and NTPC as a Joint Venture. KELTEC has been taken over by BRAHMOS a Corporation under the Defence Ministry. SILK units at Cherthala are taking action for Joint Venture for starting a Bogie manufacturing unit with Railways.
23. The feasibility report for producing 10,000 Tons of Titanium Sponge in collaboration with a Russian firm has been prepared and discussions are well under progress in this direction. National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) at Kannur which will give substantial boost to the textile industries will be started shortly. Under the auspices of KINFRA, an Integrated Textile Park is being established at Kanjikode in Palakkad. MoU has been signed to establish a Spices Park as a Joint

Venture of KINFRA and Spices Board. Steps have been initiated to establish a Rubber Park at Ranni as a Joint Venture of KINFRA and Rubber Board. Efforts are in progress to start a Petrochemical Complex encompassing Kasaragod and Kannur Districts. A local processing unit in the Bamboo sector is being put on wheel at Wayanad. Efforts in traditional sector are catching momentum so that this sector will be made more professional.

24. My Government recognizes the potential of Information Technology in providing employment and spurring the economic growth in the State. The Smart City Project, which is expected to provide employment to 90,000 people, was formally launched in November 2007. My Government is proposing to develop other IT Cities/Knowledge Cities across the State. My Government will also give focus to equip students to make them more employable in IT and ITES sector. The project called "Insight" to train physically challenged and differently abled persons will be extended across the State through "Akshaya Centres".
25. IT also provides opportunities for providing better services to citizens through e-governance. My Government is taking several initiatives in this regard. "Akshaya" network is increasingly becoming a core infrastructure for providing Government to Citizens services, to the citizens at their doorsteps. Several services including utility bill payment, on-line applications,

e-learning courses etc. are already being provided. New B2C and G2C services will also be provided using “Akshaya” network. My Government is also planning to set up a new State Data Center at Technopark to provide further impetus to e-governance activities. Moreover, the Kerala State Wide Area Network, which is near completion, will provide connectivity to Government offices.

26. My Government will also roll out total e-governance solutions for Commercial Taxes Department and the Public Distribution System. The initial work in this regard will begin during the coming financial year. Some of the other e-governance initiatives include promotion of Malayalam computing, development of e-waste policy, upgrading websites to a content management frame-work, implementation of digital workflow, setting up of Wi-Fi hot spots in tourist areas and inventory management system. My Government will also give awards to departments and organizations with exemplary performance in e-governance activities.
27. Citizen’s Charter will be prepared for all departments. With the aim of improving performance standards, induction training will be given to all newly recruited employees.
28. For a transparent and effective mechanism for purchase and distribution of medicines to Government hospitals, the Kerala Medical Services Corporation has been set up. To streamline and improve the public health care system in the State, a State Health Policy will be formulated. In the coming year, steps will

be taken to initiate co-ordinated programmes under Allopathic, Ayurvedic and Homoeopathic Systems, to control life style diseases. An Institute for Non-Communicable Diseases will be set up. Emergency Management System with 24 hour ambulance service will be set up in all districts to provide immediate care to accident victims and trauma patients. New Women & Children Hospitals will be started in 9 districts by upgrading the District Hospitals in a phased manner. Steps will be taken to open new Primary Health Centres in 31 Panchayats where there is no PHC at present. New Ayurveda/Homoeo Dispensaries will be started in a phased manner, where such facilities do not exist now. An autonomous Society will be set up for promoting Nursing and Paramedical Education in the State and three Nursing Colleges will be started in Kasargod, Palakkad and Ernakulam districts in the coming academic year under the aegis of this Society. A Regional Institute of Paramedical Education and Research will be started in Kozhikode. Waste Management Systems will be established in all major hospitals, conforming to the relevant Pollution Control Acts.

29. Finishing school programme for the inmates in 14 women's institutions run by Social Welfare Department and for women graduates is being organized to equip them with skills for employment. Child lines have been started in Palakkad, Malappuram, Kannur and Kasargode districts.
30. A new scheme for starting Care Homes for elderly persons, destitutes and disabled by converging various resources from LSGIs, State Government, NGOs and GOI will be introduced in order to address the growing requirement of services to this

category. "Elders Park" will be started in all districts in association with Local Self Government Institutions and NGOs. Manufacturing units for aids and appliances will be started in Kannur and Alappuzha Districts under the auspices of Kerala State Handicapped Persons' Welfare Corporation. Working Women's Hostels will be started in major cities under the auspices of Kerala State Women's Development Corporation. Child line services will be extended to the districts of Kottayam, Idukki, Pathanamthitta, Alappuzha and Kollam, next year. Medical assistance for the poor patients for treatment of major ailments like cancer will be provided.

31. The Public Distribution System in the State is an effective instrument in checking the price of food grains and other essential items viz., sugar, kerosene etc. It may be noted that Kerala is more than 85% deficit in the production of food grains and the requirements are met by PDS food grains from outside the State. 70 Lakh families in Kerala depend upon the public distribution system for the essential commodities. Due to the drastic reduction in allotment of food grains by the Central Government during the last one and a half years the PDS in the State was badly affected. This along with frequent hike in fuel prices and liberalized policies of Government of India and futures trading in agriculture commodities led to price hike of all essential commodities.
32. However, in order to check the price hike of rice in open market, the Supplyco is distributing good quality boiled rice at Rs. 14 and raw rice at Rs.13.50 per kg., for the last three months through "Arikkadas". 470 new Supplyco outlets are

proposed to be started during 2008-09. The Corporation is establishing Peoples' Bazaar in all Districts. It is proposed to start Hyper markets at Thalasserry, Kottayam, Kochi and Thiruvananthapuram. Seven Mobile Maveli Stores have been put into operation benefiting the remote and tribal areas. Supplyco is producing 5000 MTs of fortified atta and distributing through ration shops. Supplyco has not increased any price of essential commodities since September 2006, but reduced the prices by an average 15% against the national trend of increase in prices. Medicines are sold at 30% discount.

33. Issuance of new laminated ration cards will be started immediately on finalisation of APL/BPL survey. A proposal is under the consideration of the Government to modernize the ration shops, with the financial assistance of the Central Government, with a view to attract the entire ration cardholders to the ration shops. The Supplyco has procured 2,26,719 MT of paddy during 2006-07. During the ongoing season the procurement is estimated at three lakh MT of paddy @ Rs. 9 per kg.
34. Action is being taken to construct own buildings for the Consumer Disputes Redressal Forums in the State. During the year 2008-09, it is proposed to upgrade the Gold Purity Testing Laboratory at Ernakulam to BIS Hallmark centre.

35. The integrated project for the development of inland fisheries and aquaculture by name "Matsyakeralam" will be implemented all over the State for a period of three years from 2008-2009 to 2010-2011. Seven hundred Grama Panchayats will actively participate in the programme and about 10,000 hectares of inland water areas will be brought under fish/prawns/shrimp culture. My Government is going to establish a Marine Biological Research Institute and Oceanarium complex at Kochi for facilitating and strengthening the advanced research and study on ocean life at an estimated cost of Rs. 300 crores. The construction of on-going Fishery Harbour projects at Vizhinjam, Kayamkulam, Thottappally, Muthalapozhi and Ponnani are expected to be completed during the year 2008-2009. Modernization of Beypore Fishery Harbour will also be completed during the current year.
36. In Aralam farm 1,717 Adivasi families were allotted land. Apart from this, 2,086 families were issued Record of Rights and 302 families were given pattas. A new scheme for providing subsidy to agricultural workers for the purchase of land for agricultural purposes has been launched. A new scheme for the development of Tribals living in Forest areas was introduced. The Kerala State Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Act was passed and the Commission constituted. This year norms for admission of ST students for MBBS and BDS courses were changed helping more students to secure admission. A comprehensive Health Care Scheme

was introduced which will ensure free medical treatment for all Tribals in the State. This is a unique scheme by which all costly treatments are provided free.

37. Top priority will be given to provide at least one acre of land to every landless Adivasi family. The Central Act viz., Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 has come into force and my Government proposes to implement the Act in a time bound manner. Revenue land and excess land will also be utilized for this purpose. My Government is committed to provide houses for all the houseless families within the next five years. All the rehabilitated Tribal families will be provided with basic facilities like houses, drinking water, electricity etc. Our aim is to electrify all ST habitats within the next three years.
38. My Government considers it absolutely necessary to enhance the existing generation capacity to meet the increasing demand for electricity. Within next ten years Projects generating 2000 MW will be completed. Non-Conventional energy source will be harnessed to a greater extent. My Government aims to set up more wind energy projects in power sector with private participation. KSEB proposes to commence 12 numbers of new hydel projects having a total capacity of 295.9 MW. Special provision for electrifying 50,000 households of Socially and Economically Backward Section has been included. In order to improve the quality and reliability of supply, KSEB proposes to strengthen the transmission network and thereby improving the voltage level, reducing overloading and T&D losses.

39. My Government proposes to start Hydel Tourism Centres at Kakkayam, Edamalar and Kallar. ANERT has obtained from the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, preliminary sanction for central assistance to take up solar electrification of 72 remote Backward Class colonies in the State. My Government will give top priority for non-conventional energy sources. My Government proposes to give top priority to energy conservation DSM activities. Waste disposal schemes of Local Self Government Institutions will be linked with Bio-Mass Energy Projects by providing sufficient infrastructure support. Total Energy Security Mission will co-ordinate these activities. Activities of ANERT and EMC will be integrated with TESM.
40. Department of Tourism has embarked on various developmental and promotion endeavours for the upgradation of tourism industry for maintaining the high position earned in the world. KTDC has achieved the largest profit and turnover in the last 40 years.
41. In 2007, the foreign tourists arrival of Kerala upto November 2007 is 4,43,594, which shows an increase of 19.43% over the same period of previous year. The total revenue generated from tourism during 2006 is 9,126 crores, showing an increase of 17.94% over the last year's figure. As tourism is on the growth path, the major initiatives for the coming year are to focus on developing/improving tourism infrastructure and products with emphasis on conserving and preserving the environment.

42. The Department will come out with a “White Paper on Responsible Tourism” that will guide future policy initiatives of my Government. The Department will introduce policy guidelines for development of Adventure Tourism in Kerala. A Hospitality Management Institute will be set up in Kozhikode. A Board of Tourism Studies will be created to regulate and improve academic performance in Tourism and Hospitality studies.
43. The Science and Technology Department and the autonomous institutions under its umbrella had many major achievements during 2007-2008. The National Transportation Planning and Research Centre (NATPAC) has identified the most feasible route for development of hill highway between Kasaragod and Thriuvananthapuram districts. The Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology (RGCB) has developed herbal products to reduce the effect of radiation on normal tissue in the case of oral cancer. Several new lead molecules have been discovered using computer based molecular modeling. RGCB was able to develop and demonstrate molecular methods to diagnose and confirm Chikungunya. The Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute (TBGRI) continued its Plant Biodiversity conservation activities and has introduced 150 new species in the garden. The Malabar Botanical Garden (MBGS) has introduced 200 rare varieties of aquatic plants into its collection.

44. The process of formulation of Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) in five selected Panchayats in the State has been completed. Work for finalising the preparation of the People's Biodiversity Register has been initiated. Draft policies of both Environment and Organic farming have been finalised. A census of the waterfowls visiting the wetlands of Kerala was done through the Kerala State Biodiversity Board.
45. The common facility for treatment, storage and disposal of hazardous waste is being set up at Ambalamugal in Ernakulam. Action is being taken through the Kerala State Pollution Control Board for the rejuvenation of Kuzhikandom Thodu in Ernakulam which has been identified as dumpsite of hazardous wastes by the Supreme Court Monitoring Committee. Banning of plastic carry bags of less than 30 microns is being strictly implemented. A special cell will be created with the help of Pollution Control Board for monitoring and the management of e-waste generated in the State. Awareness programmes regarding pollution, garbage disposal and Biodiversity conservation will be undertaken. The activities regarding Biodiversity Management Committees and People's Biodiversity Register will be further strengthened.
46. My Government has decided to institute a permanent set up viz., Malayalam Mission for the institution, supervision and co-ordination of Malayalam Study Centres in various parts of India and abroad and for the overall development of Malayalam Language with the co-operation of Non Resident Malayalees throughout the world.

47. The publication of the Kerala Gazette on the website in www.egazette.kerala.gov.in has gone a long way in enhancing timely and easy access to the Gazette. Further it is proposed to make the previous issues also available in a digital archive. With the proposed increase in production capacity and upgradation of technological capability of Government Presses, the Government Presses will be able to cater to all sophisticated printing needs of Government Departments including printing of Lottery Tickets. My Government is also proposing a High Security Printing Division that can undertake jobs which entail a high order of secrecy like printing question papers for various examinations. The Stationery Department proposes to build a computerised inventory management system for cost effective purchases of stock and timely services to various Government departments and users including e-procurement.
48. The State appointed a Commission to suggest revision of Kerala Education Acts and Rules and the report has already been submitted. It is under the consideration of my Government. A special programme will be launched for the quality education of mentally challenged children and children with learning difficulties. Syllabus and course materials for mentally challenged will be prepared for each category after classifying them based on the extent of retardation. Although SCERT was established in 1994, it is yet to be developed into a premier institution undertaking serious research in Curriculum and Pedagogy and related issues of Kerala. Hence

programmes will be planned to develop SCERT. The Central Government has decided to extend the programme "Sarva Siksha Abhiyan" up to Standard X.

49. My Government has decided to set apart an area of 200 acres for establishing an Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) at Vithura in Thiruvananthapuram. The Ministry of Human Resources Development, Government of India has completed the process of site selection and a formal announcement is expected shortly. It is a matter of great pride for the State that Government of India has selected Cochin University of Science and Technology (CUSAT) for upgradation into an Indian Institute of Engineering, Science and Technology. With this upgradation, CUSAT will join the galaxy of premier centres of Science and Technology in the country. My Government has been vigorously pursuing the State's long-standing demand for an Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) and Central University in Kerala. The Central University proposal has been agreed to and the Government of India is now actively considering our request regarding IIT. My Government will be setting up an International Institute for Arabic Studies and Research in the context of the Sachar Committee recommendations which have thrown considerable light on the demographic pattern of Muslims in India.
50. One of the key initiatives that my Government has taken in the area of Higher Education has been to establish the State Higher Education Council under an Act of the State Legislature. It has

also formulated the draft of a State policy on higher education, which is currently being discussed by the stakeholders. My Government is considering the implementation of these reforms designed to play a major constructive role in enhancing the quality of higher education and improving the equity dimension of higher education for people of our State. The Council would set up a Higher Education Scholarship Fund for facilitating greater access to higher education. My Government proposes to upgrade the Government Engineering Colleges in the State as Centres of Excellence.

51. A novel scheme—the Visiting Academicians Programme—to afford opportunities for faculty and students in Engineering Colleges to interact with eminent technologists from premier technological institutions in India will be launched in April, 2008. My Government will be setting up a Centre for Engineering Research in Kerala, which would co-ordinate the research in various Engineering Colleges in Kerala. Seven new polytechnics will be established during the XI plan. My Government intends to reorganize the Kerala State Central Library into a library of international stature. The Library will be fully equipped with a state-of-the-art RFID system with facilities for self check-in and check-out. My Government proposes to set up the Raja Ravi Varma Centre for Visual Art and Design and the Swadesabhimani School of Journalism as Centres of Excellence in the field of fine arts and journalism respectively.

52. My Government is fully committed to eradicate the menace of illicit liquor. So also it is the objective of my Government to protect the toddy industry, which is a traditional industry and job oriented one. The Department will be strengthened by way of required equipments and vehicles. Similarly, more excise personnel will be recruited and trained in the Excise Academy. Ernakulam and Kozhikode will have integrated surveillance posts in Railway Stations to track down transportation of illicit liquor, ganja etc. Integrated check post will be commissioned wherever necessary. My Government is committed to revive the Chittoor Co-operative Sugar Mills (CHICOPS) and Travancore Sugars and Chemicals (TSCL).
53. My Government has decided to eradicate corruption in the Commercial Taxes Department and to give satisfactory service to the dealers. All the check posts in Palakkad District have been renovated including improvement of roads. My Government proposes to establish an integrated check post in Walayar to facilitate effective vehicle checking and providing more facilities. Weighbridges would be installed in major check posts.
54. The Kerala State Lotteries Department stands as a major source of collection of non-tax revenue to the State through the sale of Kerala Lottery tickets. 5 more weekly lotteries and one monthly lottery will also be conducted during the current financial year.

55. My Government proposes to continue their relentless fight against forest offenders and illicit ganja cultivators. Raids and seizures could be successfully organized resulting in seizure of huge quantities of sandal wood and sandal wood oil. Wildlife offenders also could be kept in check by seizing snake venom, tiger skins and other wildlife articles.
56. The project namely "My Own Tree" ("Ente Maram") by which school children planted about 25 lakh trees on the World Environment Day, would be continued as a regular annual feature. The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 would be implemented in such a way that the benefits for tribals and forests would be maximized by improving their symbiotic relations. My Government is aware of the fact that the demands for medicinal plants and industrial raw material are on the increase. Therefore growing of medicinal plants in the forest plantations of the Forest Department and Kerala Forest Development Corporation would be intensified availing technical and financial assistance from institutions like Medicinal Plant Board, National Afforestation and Eco-development Board etc. In order to improve the availability of raw materials to wood based industries, a scheme would be formulated and implemented to improve the productivity of forest plantations of the Forest Department and Kerala Forest Development Corporation. My Government would also come out with a comprehensive Forest Policy with a view to conserve biodiversity within and outside the forest areas to optimize benefits to mankind.

57. Archaeology Department proposes to conduct an archaeological survey at Grama-District Panchayat level for the conservation and preservation of monuments and antiquities. Special project for preservation, translation and publication of palm leaf records will be undertaken by the Archives Department. For the management and preservation of records of permanent value, district-level repositories will be established. A film appreciation course at Secondary and Higher Secondary School level will be conducted by the Kerala State Chalachitra Academy with the help of the Education Department. The work on Film Festival Complex would be expedited.
58. The Kerala Police (Amendment) Act, 2007 has been brought into force by my Government. As per this Act, crime investigation has been separated from law and order in Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi and Kozhikode. The Kerala Anti Social Activities (Prevention) Bill was unanimously passed by the Kerala Legislative Assembly. This enactment is to provide for the effective prevention and control of anti social activities in the State. My Government has created a specialized internal security wing under the Additional Director General of Police (Intelligence) for safeguarding internal security of the State. A Cyber Crime Forensic Workstation, High-Tech Crime Enquiry Cell, Kerala Police Complaints Authority and State Security Commission have been set up.
59. The work relating to the introduction of video conferencing in jails in Thiruvananthapuram district has been completed and the work is progressing for the implementation of the scheme in

Thrissur, Ernakulam and Kottayam districts. Three new jails (Open prison Cheemeni, Sub jails at Hosdurg and Chittoor) have started functioning during the current year. Fire Service Academy at Viyyur, Thrissur was inaugurated and has started functioning. A new building for Fire and Rescue Station, Chamakkada (Kollam district) was inaugurated.

60. On the basis of the recommendation of Justice K.T. Thomas Committee, my Government has decided to implement Community Policing Scheme called "Janamythri Sureksha Project" in the Municipalities of Paravur, Adoor, Vaikom, Cherthala, Thodupuzha, Irinjalakuda, Ottappalam, Perinthalmanna, Kalpetta, Payyannur and Kasaragod and the Corporations of Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi and Kozhikode which have been selected for the implementation of the scheme in the first phase. The approach of my Government is to make the policing effective with the co-operation of all sections of people. The programme will be progressively implemented in all parts of the State after suitably supplementing available resources with the Police stations.
61. Considering the increasing responsibilities of Police and need for Policemen to develop expertise in diverse matters of an increasingly complex nature, it is proposed that the minimum qualifications for recruitment to the Police be raised to Higher Secondary or equivalent. The representation of women at the level of Sub Inspectors, Inspectors and Dy.SP's in local police is now grossly inadequate. Therefore women candidates will be made eligible to apply for selection by Kerala Public Service Commission in the cadre of Sub Inspectors of Police

in the Local Police. The existing Kollam and Thrissur Police districts will be bifurcated into City and Rural Police districts. The scheme of special recruitment of sports persons in Kerala Police will be revived and Kerala Police will recruit teams for Cricket/Football/Volleyball during the course of the coming year to encourage young sporting talents in these disciplines in the State.

62. Vocational Training will be given to prison inmates to enable them to earn their livelihood after release from Jail. Computerization of jail institutions will be taken up in a phased manner. Action will be taken to improve the existing infrastructure facilities in jail. High-tech surveillance systems will be set up in central jails. Modern wireless communication systems will be provided in jail and digital cameras will be purchased.
63. The Chief Chemical Examiner's Laboratory proposes to strengthen the analytical facilities of the three laboratories (Thiruvananthapuram, Ernakulam, Kozhikode) by purchasing modern scientific equipments. It also proposes to minimize the time spent in the preparation of Chemical Analysis Report by extending computer network to the Technical division by developing a new Report Generation and Laboratory Information Software. Fire and Rescue Department will be modernized with the latest fire fighting equipments and vehicles.

64. Motor Vehicles Department has computerised all its service functions. The Thiruvananthapuram Regional Transport Office has been selected as a “model office” by implementing the “Any Service Any Counter” system through which the public receives various services through a single window. A Road Safety Authority has been set up to co-ordinate the activities of various departments and a ‘Road Safety Fund’ has been set up by collecting a one-time cess from the vehicle owners for meeting expenditure for road safety measures. The authority has come into force on 1-1-2008. The Department will modernise the check posts by networking them to meet the increasing vehicle traffic. A radar surveillance system for monitoring the traffic at important stretches of the highways is also proposed to be set up during this year.
65. Kerala Road Transport Corporation proposes to introduce 1000 new buses in the coming financial year by utilising facilities of KSRTC workshops. Thirty Super Deluxe services will also be introduced and bus terminal complexes constructed in thirty identified depots to generate more non-operating revenues. KSRTC will modernize its offices through total computerization. Online reservation facility will be provided. More services will be introduced in Malabar area. To avoid any pilferage, ETMS will be introduced in all depots. The workshops at Central Works, Pappanamcode will be made a “Model Workshop”. Training will be given to all categories of staff. The State Water Transport Department has launched two newly constructed steel boats during the year and a ‘Kayal Service’ has already started during November 2007 for providing traffic facilities to the agricultural workers of Kuttanadu.

66. My Government will take all necessary steps to acquire 137 acres of land required for the expansion of Calicut International Airport and 2000 acres for the Kannur International Airport for which, in principle, approval has been accorded by Government of India recently. The work on Kochi Metro Rail Project under DMRC pattern will be started this year. Major projects including an IT Park will be started in the land available with the Cochin International Airport.
67. The JBIC aided Kerala Water Supply Project is progressing well. My Government is hopeful of commissioning the project within the time limit. My Government will go ahead with the construction of a new dam at Mullaperiyar as a permanent solution for addressing the problem of the fragile dam. My Government will undertake a major revamping programme of lift irrigation schemes in the State, with a view to making them more effective and participatory. The draft Water Policy for integrated and sustainable management of Water Resources and reconciling the diverse demands of developments and ecology will be finalised. With a view to bringing in greater accountability in the utilization of drinking water, Kerala Water Supply and Sewerages Act has been amended by an Ordinance. These amendments have strengthened the Kerala Water Authority to take stringent measures against illegal tapping of water and other types of misuse. It is proposed to take up a major awareness campaign named 'Sujala' to spread the message of water quality and to take up measures for improving the quality of drinking water. A chain of water testing laboratories will be set up under KWA and Ground

Water Department to test water quality. My Government has decided to expand the 'Jalanidhi' project across the State covering 400 Panchayaths with a project outlay of Rs.1200 crores.

68. The flagship programme of the LDF Government viz., E.M.S. Housing Scheme will be implemented by my Government in a phased manner through Local Self Government Institutions. My Government proposes to undertake the renovation of all one lakh houses in the State in a phased manner in the coming years. During the next year 14,000 houses under the one lakh housing scheme will be repaired or reconstructed.
69. In view of the escalating cost of land and building materials, people from all walks of life especially those with limited income, find it quite difficult to build their own houses. For mitigating this problem my Government proposes to set up a Housing Finance Development Corporation for advancing personal and institutional finance. A housing relief fund for providing financial assistance to BPL families with the contribution of Central/State Government, Government owned companies, Local Authorities, NRIs, M.Ps, MLAs etc. is being constituted. Five working women's hostels in the State will be constructed. The Habitat Centre at Thiruvananthapuram will be completed in a phased manner.
70. My Government has always been a frontrunner in executing various social welfare legislations. One such measure that was adopted during the current year is the constitution of the

Farmers' Debt Relief Commission, which is the first of its kind in the country. Another innovative step was the introduction of a Bill to protect the remaining paddy fields of the State that face severe threat from conversion. Four major Ordinances, which were being re-promulgated for the last 15 years or more, have been replaced by Acts of the State Legislature. My Government is determined to get the entire public property free from encroachment. A detailed enquiry revealed large-scale encroachment of Government lands. My Government has taken stock of the entire position and decided to take stringent action against such encroachments. As a result, my Government could resume about 18,000 acres of land so far. Similarly, the lease lands will be taken back from those persons and institutions who violate the conditions of lease.

71. My Government gave 60,044 Pattas (title document) and Record of Right to landless poor, weaker sections of society and agricultural labourers. Earnest and time bound efforts are under way to take over the remaining excess lands by clearing the cases that are pending with the Land Tribunals and various Courts of Law. It is expected that about 50,000 acres of land can be taken over during the tenure of this Government. So far, 3,300 tribal families have been distributed land since the present Government came into power. A project for the computerisation of Land Records has been completed in Kottayam District and nearing completion in other districts. Various certificates issued from the revenue offices for specific purposes have been combined and a simplified procedure evolved so that the public need not approach revenue

authorities every time for each certificate. The Tsunami Rehabilitation Programmes undertaken in all the nine coastal districts of Kerala amounting to Rs. 1441.75 crores are in full swing.

72. My Government has published a draft land policy. It is also envisaged to make necessary legislation in accordance with the policy. The Revenue Department initiated a new concept known as Kerala State Land Bank for the professional management of Government lands and to make rational use of Government-owned lands with a perspective vision on the future development of the State. All lands owned by my Government such as Poramboke land, revenue land, lease land, bought-in-land, surplus land etc. will be brought under the Land Bank. It will also provide land for distribution among landless poor. The Land Bank will initiate new projects to generate optimum income from the Government-owned land especially from the land available in the major cities and towns.
73. Kerala will be the first State in the country to implement the provisions of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forests Rights) Act, 2006 and Rules, for which action is in progress. A suitable package will be evolved to adopt an appropriate relief and rehabilitation programme to those who are displaced when the Government acquires land for public purposes.
74. In order to improve the functioning of the temples in Malabar area and to fulfill the aspirations of the devotees there, my Government has already promulgated an Ordinance to

constitute Malabar Devaswom Board as promised in the last year. Steps are being taken to constitute the Malabar Devaswom Board. The Travancore-Cochin Hindu Religious Institutions (Amendment) Ordinance, 2007 was replaced by an Act of Legislature. For recovering the lands belonging to temples, provisions of the Kerala Land Conservancy Act shall be incorporated in the Devaswom Acts where such provisions are absent. All lands belonging to the temples in Kerala will be recovered. A Super Speciality Hospital will be established by the Guruvayoor Devaswom. Steps will be taken to amend the Guruvayoor Devaswom Act to make all appointments of employees of the Devaswom through KPSC. The Travancore Devaswom Board will establish a Medical College Hospital in Pathanamthitta District. Steps will be taken to construct a Convention Centre with the capacity of 10,000 pilgrims near Pamba for Sabarimala pilgrims. My Government is proposing to appoint an Ombudsman for enquiry and investigation of corruption cases in all Devaswoms in the State.

75. My Government has implemented the online filing of annual property returns of the employees from this year onwards. This is an important document for checking corruption among them.
76. NORKA Department has conducted Pre-departure Orientation Programmes to equip prospective emigrants with better understanding of emerging opportunities in the foreign countries, to make them aware of laws and etiquettes of the countries in the Gulf region. NORKA Department effectively intervened and assisted Keralites affected by the hurricane in the Sultanate of

Oman and actively prompted illegal migrants to make use of the amnesty announced by the UAE Government. My Government is considering issuing of identity cards to NRKs as a means for reducing the hardship faced by them in establishing their identity. A Global Meet will be conducted in this year with the participation of NRKs, including those who are abroad, within India, and the returnees.

77. Kerala State Remote Sensing and Environment Centre (KSREC), the nodal centre for Geospatial Technology in the State proposes to finalise and implement a comprehensive project document entitled "Vision 2012" in collaboration with Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) for the utilisation of the limited natural resources of the State using Remote Sensing and GIS.
78. Kerala has become the first State in the country to publish the official gazette online. The Department with the co-operation of Chief Minister's Public Grievance Redressal Cell has evolved an e-governance mechanism for the grievance redressal of the public namely "*Sutharya Keralam*", being telecast by Doordarshan through its Malayalam channel. In 2008-09 the I and PR Department intends to instal the Digital Electronic News Gathering system to cater the needs of electronic media. This will facilitate the district offices to cover Government programmes in digital video format and send live footage to all the TV channels directly even from remote places.

79. Law Department has successfully introduced File Flow Management System and Document Management System. All the activities of the Law Department have been fully automated, including the critical knowledge based functions of Legislation, Legal Opinion and Conveyancing. Online Monitoring System has been introduced at the office of the Advocate General. With this, the office of the fourteen District Government Pleaders in Kerala, Law office, New Delhi and the office of the Advocate General at Ernakulam have come under the Online Monitoring Mechanism. Evening Courts (Munsiff- Magistrate) will be established in consultation with High Court. Draft Intellectual Property Rights Policy will be finalized during the year and Intellectual Property Rights Academy will be constituted. My Government has constituted an eight member Law Reforms Commission headed by Justice Shri V. R. Krishna Iyer.
80. A "Chair for Parliamentary Affairs" will be instituted in Kannur University by name E. K. Nayanar University Chair on Parliamentary Affairs. The Institute of Parliamentary Affairs will be developed into an institution of international standard for education, research and training. A Centre for Legal Drafting will be established. For the proper follow up, co-ordination and time bound disposal of the assurances given by the Ministers on the floor of the House an "Assurance Implementation Desk" will be established. Student Parliament will be conducted for school and college students in association with the Education Department.

81. The Vigilance and Anti-corruption Bureau has registered 90 vigilance cases during the year 2007. CBI enquiry into the financial irregularities in Kerala State Civil Supplies Corporation has been initiated. Based on the Bhaskaran Nambiar Commission Report, action has been taken against those responsible in the Brahmapuram Diesel Plant case and charge sheet filed. My Government will continue its relentless fight against corruption vigorously. The investigation of cases will be expedited. My Government will provide all the necessary support for the modernization of the Bureau.
82. It is proposed to establish Centres of Excellence of international standards in Athletics, Swimming, Volleyball, Basketball and Handball. It is proposed to introduce a scheme for insuring sports persons. Operation Olympia Scheme, an International Swimming Pool at Thiruvananthapuram, upgradation of Jimmy George Indoor Stadium, Thiruvananthapuram to international level, establishment of Squash Complexes at Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi and Kozhikode, establishment of Shooting Range at Thiruvananthapuram are new schemes proposed for implementation. For creating awareness in Sports Science, Physical Education will be included in the school curriculum. During 2006-07 the Kerala State Youth Welfare Board organized a mega event 'Kerala Youth Forum-2007'. The Board proposes to establish an International Youth

Convention Centre in the premises of Youth Hostel at Veli, Thiruvananthapuram. The Board proposes to conduct Job Fair which will provide a great relief to thousands of jobless youth to seek employment. The Board proposes to evolve a mechanism whereby the employability of youth could be enhanced through training in Soft Skills, Stress Management, Aptitude Development, Leadership Training, Spoken English etc. As diseases like Diabetics, Heart attack, Blood pressure etc. are increasing in the youth population, my Government intends to implement a total Physical Fitness Programme for the entire population of the State.

83. The Vizhinjam Port is being developed as a Deepwater International Container Transshipment Terminal. The development of Kollam, Alappuzha, Ponnani, Beypore and Azhikkal ports will be taken up. My Government has accorded in principle sanction to establish a Maritime Institute at Meencha Panchayat at Kasargode District. Considering the potential of the 600Km coastal area and cargo movements of Kerala, a Port Policy will be formulated. A Maritime Development Board will be constituted this year.
84. I am sure, the vision of my Government for the all round development of this beautiful State will become a reality with the co-operation of all the members of this august House. Let

me end my address with an appeal to all of you and the people of this State to be partners in the development process charted out by my Government so that the true potential of Kerala and its people blossom without any hindrance.

JAI HIND