



**ADDRESS  
TO  
THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
KERALA**

**8<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2021**

**BY**  
**SHRI ARIF MOHAMMED KHAN**  
GOVERNOR OF KERALA

**Honourable Speaker, Chief Minister, Ministers,  
Leader of the Opposition and Members:**

1. It is my honour and privilege to address this august body of representatives of the people of Kerala, marking the beginning of the 22<sup>nd</sup> session of the 14<sup>th</sup> Kerala Legislative Assembly.
2. My Government has been facing a catena of challenges ever since it had assumed office in May 2016. Covid-19 pandemic has considerably impeded the normal social life in the State. All countries in the world are facing the challenges posed by the pandemic in differing degrees. My State has almost 9 per cent of its population living abroad. The impact of the pandemic has been quite severe on the State economy. Kerala receives remittances from abroad to the tune of 12 per cent of its Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP). The coming back of around 6 lakh emigrants will hamper the flow of remittances and this will dampen the robust private consumption expenditure in the State. A direct consequence of this is a downward slide in the economic growth of the State. Expert Committee appointed by my Government has estimated the loss in GSDP for

financial year 2020-21 at a phenomenal figure of Rs. 80,000 crores which is about 10 per cent of the GSDP. At the National level also the economy is expected to record a negative overall economic growth for the first time since 1979-80.

3. The deep dent faced by the economy is bound to adversely affect the revenues of the Governments at various levels. The State Governments including that of Kerala will face the double whammy of lower own tax revenue collections and reduction in devolution of Central taxes due to the economic down turn resulting from the pandemic impact. Along with reduced revenue inflows the expenditure burden of the State has also gone up. This has led to a difficult fiscal scenario in my State.
4. It is highly gratifying to tell the world at large that my Government has taken up this challenge squarely and has lived up to its promise that no one shall go hungry during the lockdown period. This was made possible with the active participation of Local Self Governments and Community Volunteers. Community Kitchens were opened in all parts of the State to provide food to the needy. It was ensured that our Guest Workers got food of their choice.

The treatment for Covid-19 is being provided free of cost in all Government hospitals in the State. Essential commodity kits are being distributed to all ration card holding families free of cost.

5. The lockdown clamped to prevent community spread of Covid-19 undoubtedly disrupted the economic activities like trade, commerce and industry. Kerala was the first State in India to announce a pandemic relief package to the tune of Rs. 20,000 crores. Besides disbursing welfare pensions promptly, my Government ensured that all families in the below poverty category who are not getting any kind of pension got a one time assistance of Rs. 1000. Around 15 lakhs families got this through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).
6. My Government also came up with innovative ideas like the “Subhiksha Keralam” package in agriculture and allied sectors. Besides, being a source of income to thousands of families, this initiative also boosted the morale of the people.
7. My Government announced a 100 day programme on September 1, 2020. This programme encompassed a number of sectors. A major highlight of this programme was the initiative to generate 50,000 job

opportunities within the programme period. I am extremely happy to share with you the fact that we have exceeded the target and generated 1,16,440 job opportunities. We have also declared floor price for 16 items of vegetable produce in the State. This will go a long way in incentivising vegetable production in the State.

8. My Government believes in continuous accountability to the people. Every year the progress in the implementation of promises made in the Election Manifesto is being placed in the public domain. Likewise, the progress in implementation of the 100 day programme has also been made public. My Government is now implementing the second 100 day programme.
9. My Government announced a 12 point programme on January, 2020, and I am happy to inform the august house that excellent progress has been made in its implementation. It was intended to create a Community Volunteer Corps with a strength of 3,43,000 implying 1 volunteer for 10,000 people. The response of the youth has been quite enthusiastic and we now have the strength of more than 3,73,000 volunteers. Their service have

been extremely valuable during the pandemic and also during other emergencies. My Government has initiated steps to give systematic training to Community Volunteers in Disaster Management.

10. As regards containing Covid-19 pandemic, the efforts taken by my Government has won acclaim across the world. But we do not intend to rest on our laurels. My Government is fully aware that we have an arduous task ahead. We have to bring down the Test Positivity Rate to 5 per cent. We have to also bring down the number of new cases reported per day. The case fatality rate in Kerala at 0.4 per cent is the lowest in the country. We are conscious of the fact that with an aging population we are at a greater risk. With active participation of Local Self Governments, public sector health institutions, Community Volunteers and personnel of various Government departments, we are hopeful that Kerala will be able to contain the spread of the pandemic.
11. My Government has been consistent in devolving powers to Local Self Governments. We have conducted elections to local bodies even in the phase of the stiff challenge posed by the pandemic.

We have been able to ensure that campaigns and the voting process was done in accordance with Covid protocol. My Government has been able to get renewed confidence of the people in the recently concluded elections to the Local Self Governments. My Government is committed to ensure that the first position accorded to it by Government of India for effective democratic decentralisation is retained in future also.

12. Our federal polity is facing challenges from various quarters. My Government has been in the forefront of defending the principles of federalism, which is part of the basic structure of our Constitution. We have been taking up with the Government of India all issues involving rights of the States. Kerala has taken the lead in raising genuine demands in the fiscal arena like raising the borrowing limit from 3 to 5 per cent of the GSDP in the wake of the expenditure commitment after the incidence of the pandemic and getting GST compensation due to the States. My Government has also demanded that donations to the Chief Minister's Distress Relief Fund (CMDRF) may be treated as expenditure eligible to be considered for Corporate

Social Responsibility spending under the Companies Act, 2013.

13. My Government is committed to defending the spirit of the Constitution which is the corner stone of Indian democracy. My Government is committed to foster the constitutional values among the citizenry. We have been in the forefront of defending secular values. When apprehensions were raised regarding the consequences of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, we have taken the lead in alleviating the fears among large sections of the society. My Government is fully committed to strengthen the secular traditions of Kerala and shall strive to promote secular and progressive values in the social, cultural and political spheres.
14. My Government has never compromised on the view that co-operative federalism should be meaningful and the Centre and States should be equal partners for a harmonious development process. Anything which runs counter to this does not conform to federal principles. The Centre, States and the Local Governments occupy important positions in a federal polity and their freedom to function effectively in their assigned

policy domains should be respected. Actions of certain Central Government agencies have overstepped the constitutional countours and are impeding the development activities and flagship programmes undertaken by the State. This has had a demoralising effect on honest and hard working officers. In such a situation co-operative federalism will lose its content and remain only in form. My Government has made this position abundantly clear before the public and its communication with the Centre.

15. Presently, we are facing hardships in the economic front due to the severe adverse impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. But my Government has been taking proactive steps to mitigate the rigours of the Covid-19 pandemic and revive the various sectors of the economy, which have been adversely impacted. We are determined to revitalise our economy and make sure that adequate employment opportunities are generated for our people including persons who have been compelled to return from abroad leaving their jobs.
16. My Government which will be completing its 5 year term in May 2021 has all along been

committed to the infrastructure development and inclusive economic growth. We have undertaken infrastructure development projects worth Rs. 56,000 crores through Kerala Infrastructure Investment Board (KIIFB). My Government has hiked social security pensions to Rs.1,500 per month from Rs.600 in 2016. We have also made sure that the pensions are disbursed every month to the beneficiaries. Constraints have not stood in the way of making our promises a reality. Under the Livelihood Inclusion and Financial Empowerment (LIFE) Mission project 2,50,000 families have got secure houses.

17. My Government is committed to create an excellent investment climate in the State so that entrepreneurs will consider Kerala as their investment destination. We have made good strides in providing a legislative frame work for making doing business in the State easy. My Government has also taken steps to motivate officials to process requests for investments speedily and in a transparent manner. My Government believes in strengthening the public sector and our efforts have shown good results. We expect that Kerala, which

occupies a pride of place in human development indicators will become a State which will be the destination for manufacturing sector too.

## **STEPS TO COMBAT COVID-19 AND RELATED WOES**

18. A Control Room was set up on January 24, 2020 at the Directorate of Health Services to supervise and coordinate the activities across the State. 24x7 COVID-19 War Rooms were established to facilitate essential travel and address the doubts of people stranded during lockdown, including 5 lakh Guest Labourers working in Kerala.
19. Kerala was the first State to initiate an exclusive Information, Education & Communication (IEC) campaign to create awareness about the spread of COVID-19 through the 'Break the Chain' campaign. The campaign was initiated as early as February 2020. This campaign went a long way in creating awareness about the steps to be taken to arrest the spread of the disease and earned accolades for the State. Additionally, campaigns to create awareness through posters, videos and presentations were also designed. Training to Health and staff of other line departments and volunteers were conducted.

Training materials have been hosted on 'Kerala Health Online Training' YouTube channel, official websites and are also disseminated through e-mails and social media platforms.

20. The Kerala Epidemic Diseases Ordinance, 2020 was notified on March 27, 2020. The comprehensive management of COVID-19 in the State covered all the three aspects of healthcare – preventive, curative and rehabilitative.
21. A well-established governance structure was put in place by my Government to combat COVID-19. A Core Committee chaired by the Hon'ble Chief Minister, a Crisis Management Group and Core Group chaired by the Chief Secretary, the action group headed by the Principal Secretary, Health and Family Welfare Department to coordinate agencies at State level ensured smooth facilitation of COVID-19 management activities and timely intervention in resolving issues on a day-to-day basis. At the district level, District Collectors spearheaded COVID-19 management activities by co-ordinating Health, Revenue, Police and other departments in conjunction with Local Self Governments. Ward level 'Rapid Response Teams'

were set up under the aegis of the concerned local body, the fulcrum responsible for community participation, general awareness and compliance.

22. The preventive management strategy is relied on the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) protocol of Testing, Isolating and Treating. Adequate testing facilities were ensured in all the districts with the involvement of the private sector. DISHA helpline centres were set up in all the districts. Psychosocial support calls were made to COVID positive patients, persons under quarantine, patients facing psychological and psychiatric challenges, children with special needs, Guest Workers and elderly people living alone.
23. COVID-19 STEP (Screening, Testing, Education and Prevention) Kiosks were established with a view to ensure accessibility of citizens to testing facilities especially at the points of entry such as airports, border areas, railway stations and other transit points, shopping malls etc. STEP Kiosks were also started on the way to major pilgrimage spots like Sabarimala.
24. As part of curative management, treatment support to patients was given at their homes, Covid First

Line and Second Line Treatment Centres and COVID hospitals. To strengthen human resources in CFLTCs, hospitals and public health systems, my Government established Covid Brigade and solicited support from volunteers and enrolled them to boost the existing human resources of the Health Department. These volunteers were given extensive training and they played an active role in aiding the efforts of the Government. Community health volunteers, ASHA and Anganwadi workers ensured care of elderly and persons with Non Communicable Diseases (NCDs) through regular home visits. The volunteer groups at Panchayat level made house visits to extend support to the people under home isolation. Community kitchens were started across the State for distribution of food to patients, those in quarantine and isolation, and other needy people.

25. Attention is also given to Post-COVID care and management. Post-Covid Clinics have been set up for the management of patients with post-Covid symptoms. These clinics are set up at peripheral hospital level and referral clinics are set up at the Taluk, District and General hospitals and Medical

Colleges. DISHA-1056 Helpline and District Mental Health Project teams, supported by a more than 1,200 member fleet of professionals including counsellors, ensured their psychological well being through this phase.

26. While the Health Department led from the forefront, all other departments played strong supportive roles. Revenue, Police, LSG Departments rose to the occasion by taking up appropriate and relevant roles in all the non-treatment areas of COVID-19 such as enforcement, community kitchen, quarantine centres, screening, elderly care and all allied matters.
27. The Revenue Department has been playing an important role in the mitigation of Covid-19 pandemic by way of co-ordinating all the activities necessary for managing and controlling the Covid-19 pandemic at the district level. Tahasildars were appointed as Incident Commanders at Taluk level and they performed all the activities such as setting up of control room, general observation, data collection and follow up action, identification of building for CFLTC, welfare of Guest Workers etc. very effectively.

28. The Local Self Governments have played a critical role in the containment of COVID 19. They have coordinated the field work of community surveillance, supported people in home isolation or quarantine, ensured regular supply of food and medicines, managed community kitchens during the lockdown period, conducted strong IEC campaigns and are now managing the COVID First Line Treatment Centres and the Domiciliary Care Centres. They have made substantial contributions in the overall effort to combat the pandemic.
29. The efforts of the Police Department also have been quite valuable. They played an important role in enforcement of lockdown measures, ensuring social distancing at public places, ensuring that people follow quarantine and isolation. The police ably assisted the district administration in successfully maintaining containment zones.
30. In the wake of the adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economic as well as social sectors of the State, my Government has implemented several economic measures for providing relief to various sectors of the State's economy. A package of Rs. 20,000 crores was

announced which included payment of various types of arrears, front loading of entitlements and interest free consumption loans to the poor through Kudumbashree. From September 2020 onwards the welfare pension amount has been enhanced to Rs. 1,400 per month. It has been further hiked to Rs. 1,500 per month from January, 2021 onwards. The total financial commitment on account of the disbursement of welfare pension during the current financial year will be around Rs. 8,000 crores.

31. My Government also disbursed Rs. 1,000 to each member beneficiary of all Welfare Fund Boards functioning in the State. An amount of Rs. 355.39 crores has been disbursed to 31.68 lakhs beneficiaries under various welfare fund boards through Direct Benefit Transfer. Free ration worth Rs. 300 crores was distributed to all families affected by COVID-19 pandemic.
32. My Government has decided to provide supply of essential article kits to all ration card holders through the Public Distribution System outlets. This is still continuing. The monthly financial commitment for this is around Rs. 400 crores. These kits consist of essential food grains, pulses, cleaning materials

and other necessary items. The Government of Kerala undertook the mammoth exercise of providing food and essentials to 84 lakhs families. This was extremely beneficial during the lockdown period. Special Kits were distributed during the festival seasons. This was an important measure that my Government took to ensure food security to all sections of the population during these difficult times. The contribution of the Food and Civil Supplies Department in successfully undertaking this massive task deserves special mention.

33. The service provided by the staff of Kerala State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) during the pandemic is praiseworthy. The corporation ran a stream of services to all parts of the State, ferrying 'Pravasi' passengers returning to Kerala from abroad to quarantine centres in a seamless operation, that was appreciated by one and all.
34. The implementation of a new scheme 'Chief Minister's Entrepreneurship Development Programme' to encourage entrepreneurship in the State is underway. The scheme has set a target of financing 1,000 units annually with totalling to 5,000 units in the next 5 years. The total fund requirement for

providing loans under the programme is Rs. 1,500 crores, which would be raised by Kerala Financial Corporation. Similar programs have also been launched by other industrial promotion agencies and Kerala Bank.

35. Kudumbashree is also undertaking a Rs. 4,000 crores package to ease the difficulties inflicted by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is providing Rs. 2,000 crores to Kudumbashree Neighbourhood Groups in a scheme named 'Chief Minister's Sahayahastham' (Helping Hand) loan scheme. With the help of Kerala State Financial Enterprises (KSFE), Kudumbashree is currently in the process of providing laptops worth Rs. 2,000 crores to students to make online education more effective in the backdrop of the pandemic.
36. My Government can justifiably be proud of the achievement of the smooth conduct of the elections to the Local Government Institutions, despite the constraints imposed by the pandemic. I congratulate all the personnel involved in this exercise, which has again demonstrated the efficiency and commitment of the administrative machinery of the State.

## **Honours and recognition for Kerala**

37. The work done by my Government has received national and international recognition. Kerala ranks first among all States of the country in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Index prepared by Niti Aayog. The SDG Index intends to provide an aggregate assessment of States and Union Territories, indicating the social, economic and environmental status of States. Kerala has been ranked first in the first and second SDG Index of 2018 and 2019.
38. Kerala has been adjudged the Best Governed State in the country in the Public Affairs Index 2020, prepared by Public Affairs Centre. This is the third time the State has stood first in the country.
39. The Health sector has been acclaimed nationally and internationally in its efforts to improve infrastructure and service delivery. The initiatives of my Government, spearheaded by the Health department, in tackling the COVID 19 pandemic have been recognised globally. Kerala is the only State to have reduced the infant mortality rate, which is now equivalent to many countries of the developed world. The State won the Pradhan

Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan Award 2019 for the State with the least maternal mortality rate. The top 12 family Health centres in the National Quality Assurance standards are from Kerala. 55 Family Health Centres from the State received NQAS accreditation.

40. The State won the National award for the Empowerment of the Differently Abled in the year 2019. The Kerala State Handicapped Welfare Corporation was selected as the best State channelizing agency by National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation (NHFDC).
41. The Responsible Tourism Mission and Tourism department received several international awards such as the World Travel Market and Asia Pacific Travel Association.
42. The 'Smart Bus' initiative, launched as part of the 'Seamless transportation system for Kochi' transport integration project won the Best Urban Bus Service award at the Urban Mobility India Conference organised by the Union Ministry for Housing and Urban Affairs. The State again ranked first in the National School Education Index by Niti Aayog.

## **THE NATIONAL SCENARIO**

43. The Covid pandemic has resulted in serious economic disruption affecting both the supply and demand sides of the economy. The result has been collapsed in the aggregate demand in the economy resulting in severe economic contraction. According to International Monetary Fund (IMF), the economic contraction in the first quarter was severest in India with an economic collapse of - 23 per cent while the global average was only around -10 per cent. There has been a recovery in economic growth during the second quarter, but the contraction persisted at - 7.5 per cent. According to RBI, the overall economic growth in 2020-21 is expected to be negative at around – 7.5 per cent. My Government is of the opinion that the response of the Government of India to economic collapse has been inadequate in terms of the net additional overall budgetary expenditure and particularly the expenditure for relief and healthcare. The reluctance to pay the GST compensation in full created an avoidable controversy during the crisis. Even now for the full compensation, the States have to wait till 2023. The

additional borrowing permitted for the States has been subjected to conditions, which is also unprecedented.

44. The economic decline has impacted unemployment and reduced participation rate to alarming level. As against global average of 66 per cent, India's participation rate is only 40 per cent. The Global Hunger Index has ranked India at 94 amongst 107 countries. In contrast to the growing hunger index, India's 50 richest people grew wealthier by 14 per cent during the current year so far. The inequalities have widened. It has been the endeavour of my Government to swim against the above trends.
45. The Central Government has been systematically increasing the additional/special excise duty of petroleum products so as to harness the entire potential surplus created by declining international oil prices. The additional/special excise duty on diesel has increased by 9 times and petrol by 3.5 times. Now that crude oil prices are firming up, the Central Government is now enhancing the additional/special excise duty so that the oil companies are raising the retail prices for

maintaining their margin. As the result, fuel prices are rising contributing to inflation. Thus we have a situation of rising prices along with severe economic stagnation. Another adverse impact to the State Finances is that additional/special excise duties which are being continuously hiked do not form part of the divisible pool of taxes sharable with the States as per the recommendation of the Finance Commission.

46. There has been also a spate of central legislations whose common denominator, my Government holds, is abridgment of State rights. The latest in the series have been the controversial labour code and agrarian laws. There has been an all India strike of the workers, which is one of the largest of its kind against the new labour bills. These agrarian laws will undermine regulated markets, result in eventual demise of minimum support price and tilt the balance of bargaining power definitively in favour of corporate middle men. Kerala being a consumer State is also going to be adversely affected by the amendment of Essential Commodities Act, 1955 and the resultant hoarding and profiteering.

## **AGRICULTURE AND ALLIED SECTORS**

### **Crops**

47. The withdrawal of import duty and regional trade agreements have proved calamitous for our commercial crops and their relative prices have continued to decline creating severe income loss for the farming community. The Central Government has refused to give any additional support for our commercial crops whose crisis is a direct outcome of the Central Government policies. The strong protest has compelled the Central Government not to join The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership(RCEP) for the time being. My Government feels that Kerala has to be unitedly vigilant against any further regional trade agreements that undermine our agriculture and also persuade the Central Government to provide at least a partial support to our rubber growers.
48. ‘Subhiksha Keralam’ campaign was launched by the Agriculture Department in association with 9 other Departments to ensure food security to mitigate the COVID 19 crisis. It seeks to bring the fallow lands under food cultivation, and achieve

self-sufficiency in vegetables, egg and milk production and enhance fish production. Block-level knowledge centres were started in 152 blocks to provide technical support to farmers under this campaign. The 'Subhiksha Keralam' campaign will be converted to a Scheme, with separate budget provision, to provide permanent support to the farming community.

49. 'Jeevani – our farming our health' campaign was launched on January 1, 2020. 'Jeevani – Kerala farm-fresh fruits and vegetables base price' is a new scheme for procurement of 16 selected vegetables and fruits at a minimum base price, remunerative to farmers. This scheme is the first of its kind in the whole nation and will help protect farmers from price fluctuations. Vegetable cultivation has witnessed a quantum jump with total area under cultivation reaching an all-time record with a total production of 15 lakh tonnes.
50. Credit linked projects taken up by youth and NRI returnees will be provided financial assistance, bearing a portion of the project cost along with an interest subsidy component. Additional interest

subvention is proposed under 'Agriculture Infrastructure Fund' of Government of India. Other components proposed are assistance for credit linked agricultural projects taken up by youth clubs and 'Karshika Sanchaika' programme to develop interest in farming and also develop saving mentality among students.

51. The Rain Shelter Project, which is also part of the 12 Point Projects has exceeded the 1,000 units target with a total of 1,333 shelters constructed across the State.
52. A massive fruit tree planting program of one crore saplings a year has been launched. Agriculture department has estimated a survival rate of nearly 80 per cent survival rate. Local Governments and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme(MGNREGS) play important role in the implementation of this program.
53. A new focal point of intervention in the agricultural sector is the promotion of value added products through Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) units. Besides Agriculture Department,

Co-operatives, Kudumbashree, District Industrial Centres and Local Governments are involved in this ambitious program which would generate rural employment and provide additional income to farmers.

### **Animal Husbandry**

54. Animal Husbandry is an important source of supplementary income for the farming community. Livelihood Support Scheme under Rebuild Kerala Initiative at the cost of Rs. 77 crores for supporting the farmers in the Animal Husbandry sector is being implemented.
55. Mobile tele veterinary units on regional basis for providing 24 hours veterinary service to farmers at their door steps is being extended to 77 taluks. Self sufficiency in milk, meat and eggs is also being strived for.
56. New entrepreneurs and farmers are being encouraged through the animal resource development scheme by providing assistance for undertaking new ventures in the animal husbandry

sector especially in the areas of commercial goatery, male calf fattening units, etc.

57. The veterinary institutions which are providing round the clock service are being enhanced by upgrading them with additional shifts. This will be done as part of comprehensive reorganization of the Animal Husbandry Department in a farmer friendly manner.
58. Measures will be taken to handle the crisis of excess milk in Malabar region and to stabilise the dairy sector in the State.
59. In the interest of farmers and manufacturers, there is a need for appropriate regulations which would protect the interest of the stakeholders against distribution of sub-standard feed and other feed in the State. For this purpose, a new cattle feed Act for the State 'The Kerala State Livestock and Poultry Feed and Mineral Mixture (Regulation of Manufacture and Sales) Act will be enacted.

## **Fisheries**

60. My Government passed the Kerala Fish Auctioning, Marketing and Maintenance of Quality Ordinance,

2020, which aims to ensure availability of good quality fish in the domestic market to provide nutritionally enriched food to the population thereby enhancing per capita consumption of fish and ensuring health security. Strict emphasis will be given for hygienic handling of fish, marketing, storage, value addition and development of the total value chain for assuring quality fish to consumers and ensuring fair price to fishermen. My Government will assist the fishermen for the upgradation of their existing fishing boats incorporating on board slurry ice units and bio toilets for improving the quality of fish for meeting the export quality standards.

61. As a part of my Government's prestigious fishermen rehabilitation project 'Punargaeham' with an outlay of Rs. 2,450 crores, rehabilitation of 18,685 families residing within 50 m of high tide line to safer locations will be completed by 2022. Apart from the individual houses, 772 individual apartments at 92 flat complexes proposed in 7 locations across 5 districts are under various stages of construction.

62. My Government will upgrade four Fisheries Technical High Schools and 46 Schools of the coastal area through the assistance of KIIFB during the year. 60 markets are also going to be renovated.
63. There has been no central aid for sea shore protection for the last one decade. Given the seriousness of the coastal erosion, KIIFB fund is being utilized for a comprehensive shore protection program. While the construction of new fisheries harbour at Parappanangadi and Chethi will commence during the current year, earnest efforts will be made to complete the other ongoing projects.
64. My Government is implementing the 'fish farming in public ponds' project to encourage fish cultivation. The project which is being implemented by the Local Self Government Department and Fisheries Department as part of the 12 Point Programme is progressing well. A total of 8,158 ponds which were found suitable have been stocked by the Fisheries Department. 7,853 ponds were assigned to beneficiary groups by LSGs as on 14<sup>th</sup> November

2020 and the rest are being assigned. This scheme will enhance the inland fish farming in Kerala enhancing the availability of quality fish and providing employment and business opportunities.

### **Co-operation**

65. During the lockdown phase and subsequently, Co-operative Department successfully intervened by providing food kits, medicines, mask, assistance to community kitchens, uninterrupted service through Neethi Medicals and Neethi Store, procurement of paddy and sugar, interest free loans through Co-operative societies.

**66.** The major event in the Co-operative sector has been the formation of Kerala Bank by merging the State Co-operative Bank and the District Co-operative Banks. The emergence of a co-operative scheduled bank, currently the second largest in the State, is of immense importance to the development of the State. While KIIFB finances large scale infrastructure construction, the Kerala Bank will focus on financing the entrepreneurs in agro processing industries and other MSME sectors.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES**

### **Forest and Wildlife**

67. It is estimated that there are 83 plant species in Kerala listed as Critically Endangered as per the red data book published by International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN). Species conservation programs aimed at the recovery of these critically endangered species are being taken up.

68. In order to effectively protect forest land, it is necessary to seamlessly integrate the forest boundaries with that of the private properties, minimizing litigation on boundary disputes. A pilot project in collaboration with the Forest Survey of India (FSI) will be implemented to digitize all the boundaries of the forests in one of the forest divisions of the State.
69. As a part of protecting our forests, check posts have been established along the inter-state road at the entry and exit from sensitive forest areas. While effectively checking the illicit transportation of timber and other forest produce and illegal movement of captive/wild animals and their products, they also provide opportunities for marketing of the Non Timber Forest Products (NTFP) collected by the forest dependent communities and marketed by their Vahasamrakshana Samithi/Eco Development Committees (VSS / EDCs). Sixteen such inter-state check posts will be upgraded as integrated forest check posts that facilitate transparent checking of the forest produce, provide space for Vanasree

outlets and also function as Information Centres for the visitors to the State.

70. Close to 9 per cent of the geographical area of the State is being managed as Protected Areas (National Parks, Tiger Reserve, Wildlife Sanctuaries etc.) which are abodes of a large number of plant and animal species. Expanding the network of Protected Areas is necessary for the conservation of endemic / rare species of the plants and animals and at the same time for providing connectivity between the existing Protected Areas which is an important requirement for reducing the Human-Animal Conflict. Kallar Sanctuary which provides such connectivity with the Shendurney Wildlife Sanctuary on its north, with Kalakkad – Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve on the east and Peppara Wildlife Sanctuary on the south is proposed in Thiruvananthapuram – Kollam districts. The forest areas surrounding the Silent Valley National Park within the Silent Valley Division

provides connectivity with Mukurthi National Park in Tamil Nadu on its north, with Karimpuzha Wildlife Sanctuary on its north-west and with Silent Valley National Park on its south. Both these areas will be declared as Wildlife Sanctuaries after completing the due process of public consultation.

71. The Forest Department has also been actively implementing the one crore tree saplings drive. As on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2020, the Department planted 9.13 lakhs saplings and 7.57 lakhs have survived. A monitoring mechanism to look after their survival is also in place.

### **Water Resources**

72. My Government has resolved to develop a fully-fledged inflow forecasting and flood early warning system under National Hydrology Project (NHP) operational in all river basins in the State. In that perspective, the following projects are planned for 2021: Development of Real - Time Operation of reservoirs integrated with Flood Forecasting and Early Warning system for Periyar river basin and

Real-Time Decision Support System (DSS) for flood and drought management of Bharathappuzha river basin.

73. We have resolved to restructure the Water Resources Department (WRD) by river basin groups and strengthen coordination across key agencies, including the Water Resource Department, Kerala State Electricity Board, Agriculture, Fisheries and other stakeholder departments and local self government institutions. The powers and functions of the River Basin Conservation and Management Authority (RBCMA), constituted for the conservation and management of river basins in the State, will be detailed after consultations and in consonance with existing Acts and Rules.
74. It is paradoxical to note that the total irrigated area in our State is around 4 lakhs hectares against the cultivable command area of 22 lakhs hectares. The time has come for a shift in the orientation of irrigation activities to cash crops without compromising irrigation for paddy. With this objective, the Irrigation Department is focusing on implementation of more Lift Irrigation schemes in

the coming year. Attempts are also being made for the absorption of latest Community Micro Irrigation techniques for improving the efficiency of water use along with achievement of high productivity of the crops.

75. My Government will intensify our efforts to deepen and widen the leading channel of the Thottappally spillway from Veeyapuram to Thottappally in order to ensure the smooth flow of floodwaters from Kuttanad to the sea. Also, construction of flood regulators, construction of groyne fields at Thottappally, completion of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> reach of AC canal are planned for 2021-22 with funds provided under Rebuild Kerala Initiative.
76. Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) is envisioned to provide safe and adequate drinking water through individual household tap connections by 2024 to all households in rural India. JJM is a centrally sponsored scheme with the State incurring 50% of costs. My Government aims to provide 12 lakhs Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTC) through Kerala Water Authority and Kerala Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency during

2021-22. The aim of the Program is to ensure 100% quality tap water connectivity to rural Kerala.

77. In a major step to resolve the drinking water problems in Sabarimala, Kerala Water Authority plans to initiate a new project to convey more than 10 MLD of treated water through pipes from the Seethathodu water treatment plant to Nilakkal during the Mandalapooja-Makaravilakku season. The project will replace the current practice of plying tankers to carry water to Nilakkal.

## **INDUSTRIES AND COMMERCE**

78. My Government has made significant strides in improving the Ease of Doing Business environment in Kerala. My Government has been implementing focused and comprehensive reforms in this regard. The three areas of major reforms being implemented are (i) District level business reform action plan (ii) elimination/ auto renewal of 7 services, and (iii) implementation of central inspection system. The implementation of the reforms is expected to significantly improve the State's business environment, enhance economic activity and generate jobs.

79. The Department of Industries proposes to launch an investor friendly programme to attract investments into the State. It is committed to continue and implement key reforms to further accentuate the Industrial Ecosystem in the State and strive to make it simpler, faster and friendly to realise the vision of building an “Investor Friendly Keralam”.
80. A special package of relief schemes and financial assistance for MSME under the title ‘Vyavasaya Bhadratha’ was formulated and is being implemented under Interest Subvention Scheme.
81. My Government has been undertaking many measures towards the revival of it’s Public Sector Undertakings. Kerala State Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd is now working under full capacity and supplying medicines to the Health Department.
82. Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd, a Public Sector Undertaking in the chemical sector had commissioned a 70 TPD Oxygen plant. Surplus oxygen after the captive use is being supplied to the health sector. Research centre for the production of more value-added products from Mineral Sand will be set up centering Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd.

83. The operation of Travancore Titanium Products Ltd has become smooth after the installation of a neutralisation plant. Travancore Titanium Products Ltd will be implementing a project for mitigating the pollution and for manufacturing of value added products from effluents.
84. A Research and Development Centre for the development of innovative products especially in Health Electronics will be set up with the support of KELTRON.
85. My Government has taken steps for the development of Kochi- Bengaluru Industrial Corridor (KBIC) in Kerala for integrated industrial development of the State. Master planning of Palakkad Integrated Manufacturing Clusters (IMC) in an area of 1,876 acres of land has already started. It is expected to attract a total investment of Rs. 10,000 crores and direct employment of 22,000 along with indirect employment of 80,000 in 5 years from the start of work. The tax revenue to the State is anticipated to the tune of Rs. 585 crores per annum. There would be an investment by MSME for the amount of Rs. 3,000 crores and revenue from MSME will be Rs. 1,400 crores per annum. It has

also been proposed to develop a project namely "Global Industrial Finance and Trade City" (GIFT City) in Ayyampuzha village, Aluva Taluk in Ernakulam District in over 540 acres of land which would provide an integrated ecosystem for development of globally competitive Hi-tech Services and Financial Hub. It is envisaged that this project will put Kochi on the Global map as a destination with state-of-the-art infrastructure and investor friendly governance mechanism.

86. City Gas Distribution project, Kochi is an ambitious project of my Government to distribute PNG to households and CNG to automobiles in Ernakulam District. 2,616 gas connections have been achieved by October 2020.

### **Handloom**

87. Handloom School uniform project which was introduced in 2016-17 will be continued. Around 5,900 weavers and 1,600 allied workers are engaged in this project. During 2021- 22, all students from class 1 to 7 in Government and aided schools will be provided uniforms.
88. A new dyeing centre with modern digital printing facility will be started at Kinfra Park, Nadukani,

Kannur at a cost of Rs.26 crores for dyeing and processing all handloom and textile products, within the State itself. The centre will have an installed capacity of 30,000 metres of fabric processing per day.

89. A marketing centre will be set up under Texfed for marketing of power loom and textile products of manufacturers in the State.
90. Kaithari Mithra Scheme will be implemented in cluster model with the objective of comprehensive development of Handloom sector in the State. Around 50 clusters with 200 weavers under each cluster will be formed. The expected turnover from these clusters will be Rs. 300 crores per annum. Around 10,000 weavers will get direct benefit from this new scheme.
91. In Khadi Village Industries, additional 1500 new units will be started under village industries sector and create 5000 new jobs.

### **Coir, Cashew and others**

92. The target of production for 2021-22 is 50000 tons of coir, which is a seven fold increase from 7000 tons in 2015-16. For this purpose, at least

20 per cent of the coconut husk in Kerala has to be processed into fibre in mechanised mills. Mechanisation of yarn spinning will be also completed. Product manufacturing sector will also be mechanized. Commercial production of coir composites and binder less boards will be launched. The focus of the industry would shift to the domestic market, particularly for geo textiles. In 2021-22, the Second Reorganisation of Coir Industry will be completed.

93. Cashew Board for directly importing raw nuts from Africa has been a successful venture. Cashew Corporation and Capex will continue to be the main agencies for industrial intervention. These factories will be modernized and expanded. A package will be drawn up for rehabilitation of the private sector. We shall continue to explore the possibilities of joint venture with the African countries in Kerala for processing their raw nuts for sale under a common brand.
94. Bamboo Corporation will be expanding the production of bamboo plywood and other composites. Other cottage industries including handicrafts will be supported.

## **Information Technology**

95. The backbone of the State IT infrastructure are the two Data Centres viz. SDC-1 and SDC-2 and the Kerala State Wide Area Network. The entire system is under the process of revamping/ upgradation. In 2021-22, the main focus is for the upgradation of Data Centres.
96. 2,000 Public wifi hotspots will be set up in the State to provide free internet in public places. Implementation of K-FON project with a vision to ensure last mile connectivity to Government offices and educational institutions in the State and to provide free high speed internet connectivity to poor families is progressing well. My Government is committed to the implementation of this project which has become the target of vicious propaganda by vested interest.
97. International Centre for Free and Open Source Software (ICFOSS) is working in collaboration with free software organizations in India and abroad for the promotion, propagation and application of free software. ICFOSS will be tasked with formulating an action plan on open source technology in collaboration with national and international

research institutes to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). ICFOSS, designated as the State Nodal Agency for Malayalam Computing, has developed and released ten software solutions to the public as part of the localisation of technology and aims to set up a research centre to make effective use of Malayalam language technology in the field of e-governance.

98. The Centre for Development of Imaging Technology (C-DIT) has been functioning as a technology solution provider in the Government sector over more than three decades now. In the coming year, C-DIT's focus will be on strengthening Managed Security Services and Augmented Reality, Virtual Reality facilities, Augmentation of Research and Development activities, upgradation of Security Document Forensics Lab, augmentation of Video Production facility for Web Channel, augmentation of Infrastructure facilities of Digital Archiving Centre in C-DIT and the completion of ICT building for C-DIT at Thiruvananthapuram.
99. The Electronics and Information Technology Department along with NIC played an important role in installation of an online portal 'Covid-19 Jagratha'. This portal is a single stop portal for

registration of incoming and outgoing commuters in the State, for monitoring the offences for violations of Covid-19 protocol and also for people to register themselves if tested positive for COVID-19. The portal also has a live dashboard which details the number of hospitals, COVID First Line Treatment Centres, COVID Second Line Treatment Centres, and Domiciliary Care Centres, ventilators, the beds and occupancy on a real time basis.

100. Promotion of start-up shall continue to receive high priority. During 2021-22, we proposed to scale up many of the innovative experiments that have been successfully implemented in this regard.

## **Tourism**

101. The Covid outbreak affected the tourism industry severely, throwing thousands out of work and closing down hotels and service operations. In order to help the stakeholders, COVID 19 relief assistance package was announced by the Tourism Department, through the Chief Minister's Tourism Loan Assistance Scheme with interest subvention providing for need based financial assistance and tourism employee wage support schemes, in

association with State Level Bankers Committee and Kerala Bank.

102. Around 50,000 people are envisaged to be trained under various activities of the Responsible Tourism Mission, and will be connected directly or indirectly with the tourism industry to ensure their income. Currently, 6,000 persons have completed their training. Further 40,000 people are expected to complete their training program in the next one year.
103. In order to tackle the crisis in the Tourism sector, the Government has proposed a loan interest subvention scheme in association with Kerala State Co-operative Bank for the employees in the Tourism Sector.
104. Vigorous marketing efforts will have to be undertaken to ensure that the industry revives to the pre-Covid level at the earliest. The special attention that is paid to heritage tourism will be further strengthened with the inclusion of Thiruvananthapuram Heritage Project along with Muziris, Alappuzha and Thalassery. The focus on Malabar tourism will continue.

## **Labour and Skills**

105. My Government is committed to safeguard the migrant workers in the State. The Department of Labour and Skills played a very active role in managing the requirements of the guest workers in the State during the lockdown. The detailed database of the workers was updated and the field level officials played an active role in ensuring that cooked food and ration was provided to them during the lockdown. The Department also undertook the massive task of facilitating the travel of these workers back to their home States after the railways restarted train services. My Government facilitated the return of guest workers to their home States after health screening at railway stations. Due to the momentous efforts of the Department of Labour and Skills, Kerala did not experience any public unrest or the crisis of guest workers walking on roads to go back to their State of origin.
106. My Government is keen to minimize accidents in workplaces and an Accident Prevention through Safety Surveillance (APSS) study has been conducted in the State. Goal 8 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) aims to

promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for workers in the industrial sector. Based on this, Goal 8.8 accident statistics among factories functioning in the State during the last 10 years has been collected and examined by the specially constituted 'Technical Experts' of the Factories and Boilers Department to minimize the intensity of accidents and to increase the productivity.

107. A Mobile Application named "FABSAFE" to accelerate the "Ease of Doing Business" initiatives of the State Government has been started by the Factories and Boilers Department. A web portal namely Factories and Boilers online system (FABOS) to showcase the important services of Factories and Boilers has been in place since 2015.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **Public Works**

108. My Government restarted the development of NH 66 by upgrading to 4/6 lane across 568 kms in Kerala which was pending for decades. The total project cost is approximately Rs. 45,000 crores

including anticipated land acquisition cost of Rs 21,000 crores. While the work on Kazhakootam to Mukkola stretch has been completed and inaugurated, the work on Thalassery bye-pass and Mukkola to Tamil Nadu border is on-going. My Government is the only State Government which has agreed to bear 25% of land acquisition cost for upgradation of existing National Highways. After signing of the MOU, my Government has transferred Rs. 452 crores to NHAI and CALA units as State share of land acquisition cost incurred till now. The long awaited and delayed projects like Vytilla and Kundanoor flyovers in Kochi and Alappuzha bye-pass have been completed by my Government.

109. An all-weather semi-elevated Alappuzha Changanassery road (AC road) will be ready this year. The survey works have been inaugurated for the Anakkampoyil-Kalladi-Meppadi tunnel road connecting Kozhikode and Wayanad. The 6.8 km bye-pass for the Thamarassery ghat road will be the third longest underpass in the country and is expected to be commissioned within four years.

It will provide a lasting solution to people's long pending demand for an alternative route connecting Anakkampoyil in Kozhikode and Meppadi in Wayanad and ease traffic movement between the two districts.

110. My Government is in the process of implementing the Wayside Amenities Project to provide world class facilities along national and State highways for travellers. The wayside amenities will have fuel stations, rest rooms, repair centres, food courts, convenience stores, etc. for the convenience of travellers.

### **Rebuild Kerala Initiative**

111. Rebuild Kerala Initiative (RKI) which is mandated to develop, coordinate, facilitate and monitor the Rebuild Kerala Development Programme (RKDP) has mobilized funds from various bilateral funding agencies such as the World Bank and KfW (German Bank). The rebuilding process under RKI has now entered into the implementation stage and Administrative Sanctions have been issued for Rs. 6,679.20 crores for projects under 11 Departments,

many of which are now in various stages of implementation.

## **Ports**

112. The development of Vizhinjam International Seaport is proceeding fast and the Port Operation Building has been inaugurated in September 2020. Government intends to revive the Mechanical Engineering workshop at Kollam to equip it to undertake service and maintenance of Port craft and departmental vessels. It is also proposed to develop Azhikkal Port in a phased manner to act as a catalyst for development of the region. The Beypore Port will be expanded with the construction of an additional berth.

## **Power**

113. As part of the 12 Point Projects, my Government is developing a 'Nilaavu' scheme for the replacement of about 6.5 lakh conventional bulb based streetlights across Kerala with energy saving LED streetlights in partnership with Local Self Government Institutions. The change will have a positive impact on the environment, reduce overall demand for electricity and reduce electricity bills of

LSGIs. The recurring saving can be utilised for implementing other schemes.

### **Inland Water Transport**

114. The Department of Water Transport has decided to introduce India's first Solar Electric RORO Service and Kerala's first amphibious water bus during the year 2021-2022. Utilising the potential of National Waterways, the department will gear up to introduce Barge Service for cargo movement. The Department is planning to introduce more solar powered boats.
115. The Department plans to introduce more high speed passenger cum tourist services, to tap into the tourism potential of Alappuzha, Ernakulam, Payyannur and Kollam. As a step to minimize pollution, the Department conducted feasibility studies on electric boat service in Alappuzha region.
116. Kochi Water Metro Project has shown considerable progress, with the construction of 23 boats of 100 person capacity at Cochin Shipyard. Other project activities such as construction of 16 terminals and floating pontoons are progressing

well. The operations of the Integrated Water Transport Project is scheduled to commence in January 2021.

## **Harbour Engineering**

117. Suchitwa Sagaram (clean sea) project, which aims at reducing plastic waste accumulation in the sea and conservation of aquatic life from plastic menace, will be extended to more harbours. Establishing and popularising non-conventional shore protection measures will also be taken up.
118. My Government intends to revive the Mechanical Engineering Workshop at Kollam as the 1<sup>st</sup> phase to enable it to function as a repairing unit to undertake the service and maintenance of port crafts and departmental vessels. In the long run, the Government proposes to develop a ship repairing unit at Kollam Port seeking technical assistance from companies like Cochin Shipyard.
119. We wish to develop infrastructural facilities at Beypore in a phased manner. In the 1<sup>st</sup> phase, it is proposed to undertake capital dredging amounting to Rs.60 crores to increase the depth of the port to 6 meters. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase, my Government proposes to construct a 150 m. long additional berth

- at Beypore for which preliminary studies have been completed by IIT, Chennai.
120. Azhikkal Port is proposed to be developed in a phased manner to act as a catalyst for the development of Malabar region. The geo-technical investigation for preparation of DPR is progressing, and it is expected that the foundation stone for the green field port at Azhikkal can be laid in the second half of 2021.
121. The sand purification plant for purification of manually dredged material started at Ponnani under the PPP model has become a success. My Government proposes to establish a new sand purification plant at Azhikkal under the PPP model, for which the Kerala Maritime Board has entrusted an agency for preparing DPR.

## **Transport**

122. My Government is keen in establishing fast transportation facilities to the public, which is the need of the hour. Silverline, the semi-high speed rail connecting Trivandrum and Kasaragod is a prestigious project of my Government. Detailed Project Report and alignment has been approved by the State Government and State is awaiting approval from the Government of India. Thalassery-

Mysore Broad Gauge project is another ambitious project of my Government and activities such as DPR preparation has been started for the project.

123. Conversion of diesel buses into CNG, LNG and purchasing of new electric buses within the next five years is envisaged by KSRTC. This in turn is expected to reduce the air pollution and to reduce fuel consumption by 30 per cent. As part of my Government's policy for reducing air pollution, it is proposed to operate non-diesel buses in Thiruvananthapuram City. As an initial step, KSRTC buses are being modified to that effect, followed by private buses, which is expected to result in declaring Thiruvananthapuram as the second 'Green City' after New Delhi in the country.
124. The works of Kochi Metro Rail Phase I extension from Petta to Thripunitura has already started and is progressing well with the target to complete the construction of Phase IA (Petta to SN junction) by January 2022 and for Phase IB (SN junction to Thripunitura) by July 2022. The Phase II of Kochi Metro Rail Project from JLN stadium to Infopark via Kakkanad, at a cost of Rs. 1,957.05 crores, has been approved by my Government and final approval is awaited from the Government of India.

125. The Department proposes to establish computerised vehicle testing stations and driver testing tracks at 75 locations within the State through PPP model.
126. As a part of implementation of the electric vehicle policy of the Government, the Motor Vehicles Department has availed 65 electric vehicles for enforcement purposes. The Government is planning to extend the use of electric vehicles for Government purposes as well as to persuade the public and business community for the use of electric vehicles and vehicles with non-polluting fuels.
127. My Government is proud to say that we have established the Kochi Metropolitan Transport Authority which is the first statutory body of its kind in India. It started functioning on the 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2020. The area of the Authority will be extended further and my Government intends to establish Metropolitan Transport Authorities in Thiruvananthapuram and Kozhikode also.
128. Vyttila Mobility Hub has been converted as a company for developing the project into a Multi Model Transport Hub.

## **SERVICE SECTORS**

### **Health**

129. The conversion of primary health centres into family health centres with additional doctors and para-medical staff, lab and pharmacy will be completed in 2021-22. KIIFB funded upgradation of secondary and tertiary sectors will continue. The infrastructure construction of the new medical colleges at Konni, Idukki, Wayanad and Kasargode will be speeded up. A phased programme of upgrading the community health centres will be launched.
130. The proposed International Research Institute for Ayurveda in Kannur district will soon become a reality. An extent of 36 acres of land has already been taken into possession for implementation of the project. Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board (KIIFB) is undertaking a detailed appraisal of the project report for Phase I of the project, which encompasses construction of a 100 bedded hospital and a Manuscript Study Centre besides establishment of common facilities and growth of medicinal plants.
131. It is proposed to start the construction of an Ayurveda Complex consisting of Para-Surgical and Ophthalmology Institute and Geriatric Care Centre at Poojapura in Thiruvananthapuram District and an

academic block building at Government Ayurveda College, Thripunithura.

132. In order to reduce the speciality reference to empanelled hospitals and laboratories, modern equipment will be installed in ESI hospitals to provide more speciality services to insured persons. To ensure sufficient availability of medicine to insured persons, action will be taken to control medicine distribution through integrated drug store management systems, to enhance stock handling to necessary stations and eliminate errors in bulky and costly drugs stock keeping.
133. To ensure the health care of all differently abled persons of the State, it is proposed to launch a complete health insurance scheme named Anamayam Comprehensive Insurance Programme.

### **General Education**

134. The pandemic has forced all educational institutions to be closed. To ensure that academic sessions were not affected, the General Education Department embarked on a massive online classes programme. The Kerala Infrastructure for Technology Education (KITE) and State Council for Education, Research and Training (SCERT) utilised the television channel VICTERS to start

uninterrupted online classes for classes 1-12th in June 2020. The professionalism and commitment with which these sessions are prepared and telecasted has earned widespread appreciation.

135. The Public Education Rejuvenation Campaign has brought in a paradigm shift in the school education sector in Kerala. As part of the campaign, multifarious programmes have been implemented to improve the infrastructure facilities, promote academic excellence, extra curricular activities and to inculcate secular and democratic values among the students.

136. A campaign has been launched to improve the physical infrastructural facilities of schools with the participation of people's representatives, local bodies and the general public. The work of more than 50 percent of the targeted 2,000 schools has been completed. 3,74,274 digital equipment have been distributed to the schools in Kerala. All the classrooms from class 8 to 12 in the Government and aided schools have been converted to smart classrooms. Hi Tech Labs have been set up in the primary and upper primary schools.

137. Biodiversity parks have been established in the schools in Kerala and this has been instrumental in making the 'school campus itself a text book' so that students could feel the diversity aspects of nature. The Academic Master Plan has been prepared in all the schools in the State and unique academic programmes have been launched for achieving academic excellence. Learning enhancement programmes such as Shradha for providing additional educational support for the needy, Sasthrotsavam, Ganitotsavam etc. have helped the students to excel in their academic pursuit.

### **Higher Education**

138. In 2021-22 my Government shall initiate a comprehensive programme, as in the general education to improve the infrastructure and enhance the quality of education. The classrooms will be digitalized and new building constructed in Government Colleges. We shall implement a programme to catapult our universities in the top ranking in the country within a defined time period.

139. Under the 'Sree Narayana Guru Renaissance Scholarship', education assistance will be provided to children of widows or those who have lost both parents, with an annual income ceiling of Rs. 1 lakh, for pursuing medical and medical allied professional courses in self-finance colleges inside the State. Marriage grant assistance will be provided to daughters of widows and girls who lost both parents with an annual family income ceiling of Rs.1 lakh.
140. A new scheme of starting a Production Centre at ITIs named as "Earn While Learn" be initiated. The scheme envisages the production of items, which can be produced by using the infrastructure available in the ITI's and by using the skilled manpower of the ITI trainees.

### **Science and Technology**

141. The Institute of Advanced Virology (IAV) inside the Bio 360 Life Sciences Park, Thonnakkal, Thiruvananthapuram commenced functioning on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2020. The IAV is envisioned as an institute of global standards networking Global Virology Institutes with most modern laboratories

focusing research, diagnosis and management of emerging and re-emerging infectious viral diseases. It will be a centre of excellence to work in collaboration with international institutions for training and education in the context of research covering basic science and translational research, providing sufficient scientific inputs to enable the prevention and control of viral infections. This project which was envisaged before the COVID 19 pandemic, assumes even more significance in light of the pandemic.

### **Studies and Research**

142. Under the auspices of the Centre for Good Governance at Institute of Management in Government (IMG), it is proposed to document and study the various administrative measures taken by my Government and the Kerala Police in the fight against the spread of COVID 19 in the State. Another project which IMG proposes to take up is a study on the enhanced influence of e-governance, associated problems and prospects in a pandemic situation and the possibility of mainstreaming and

sustaining e-governance initiatives in various departments.

143. In 2021-22, IMG will put in place a hybrid approach to training, combining the class room training and the online mode. This integration will provide value addition to the training in its content, trainee participation, retention and application.
144. Kerala Development and Innovation Strategic Council (K-DISC), is proposing to establish State level Institutional Hubs for innovation partnering with academic and research institutions and social enterprises in the State and two District Innovation Hubs partnering with District Panchayats and Corporations.

## **Cultural Affairs**

145. As part of Platinum Jubilee celebration of SPCS a Literary Museum will be constructed at Kottayam and Kerala Culture Museum will be set up in Palakkad.
146. A new scheme to support young artists who have organized co-operative collectives in the seven districts of the State is being considered by the Culture Department. The scheme seeks to support the co-operative societies of the artists with share capital contribution which will help sustain the artists collectives and their sustained livelihood.
147. It is proposed to establish a state-of-the-art conservation laboratory attached to the Sree Chitra Art Gallery to undertake conservation works of the paintings collection of the gallery, and to conserve paintings in other public collections in the State. Raja Ravi Varma Gallery will be opened in 2021.
148. A Handloom Museum will be set up in Kannur to narrate the history, traditions and evolution of weaving and looms of Kannur.

149. A comprehensive conservation plan will be prepared for the Edakkal Caves by the Archaeology Department, giving importance to its ethnic nature. Structural conservation will be undertaken on the exposed excavated structures of Feroke Fort at Kozhikode, Kattilmadom at Palakkad and Pazhassikudeeram at Wayanad.
150. The Department of Archaeology proposes to conduct explorations at Feroke and Purakkad.
151. The State Archives Department will set up the International Archives and Heritage Centre at Karyavattom University Campus, Thiruvananthapuram, on land provided by the University of Kerala. The centre will have modern storage and stacking arrangements and facilities for researchers and students.
152. The Tagore Theatre in Thiruvananthapuram would soon witness a transformation into a Info-Cultural Hub, by incorporating some of the best in multimedia technologies to showcase, learn, share, experience and enjoy the many facets of the State's art, culture and theatre. Electronic installations, open-air cultural programmes aided by laser display, augmented reality, theme-based

galleries and sculpture garden would provide a variety of infotainment for the visitors.

## **Housing**

153. Second phase of Life Mission will commence in 2021-22 focusing on landless families for whom multi storied flats would be constructed. The eligible households in the present list of beneficiaries will be provided with houses. New households that are included in the supplementary list that has been prepared would also be considered in this phase.
154. A separate scheme for housing for plantation workers will be taken up.
155. The Housing Board proposes construction of housing complexes of 36 units each at Karipra, Kollam and Peerumedu, Idukki. The Grihasree Housing Scheme for disbursing subsidy to 1,000 beneficiaries and the construction of two working womens' hostels at Kanhangad, Kasaragod and Ranni, Pathanamthitta are the other two projects of Housing Board.

## **Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs**

156. During the lockdown, market interventions were done by the Food and Civil Supplies Department to

avoid price hike and shortage of food grains and vegetables. The Department has also issued free ration, COVID 19 kits, Onam kits and special kits (September to December 2020) that includes all essential items to all families. Free ration and kits were issued to all migrant labourers as well.

157. As part of implementing main programmes in 2021-22, applications for inclusion in priority list will be processed through online. Doorstep delivery of ration articles will be extended to all tribal settlements. Hotels based on Subhiksha Programme (Hunger Free Kerala) will be started in all districts.

158. My Government has achieved 99.73% seeding of ration cards with Aadhaar.

## **LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT**

159. It is a matter of immense pride that despite the debilitating impact of COVID 19, the LSGD has been able to achieve many of the targets it set out to achieve at the start of the year. These include:

- Obtaining ISO certification by all but one of the grama panchayats of the State

- The amendment of the Kerala Municipal Building Rules to incorporate provisions that address many pressing issues faced by citizens
- Operationalisation of the “Integrated Local Government Management System” for online LSG services
- Online Social Security Pension Disbursement to 49 lakh beneficiaries done through the Sevana pension software
- The attainment of the ‘suchitwa padavi’ status by 559 local governments including 58 ULBs
- The approval for a regional sanitary landfill in Ernakulam along with the removal of 17,062 tonnes of inert legacy waste from many parts of the State
- The fast paced progress of the Chief Minister’s Local Roads Repair Programme (CMLRRP) where 4,939 roads have been sanctioned are at various stages of implementation and completion
- The introduction of fish farming in public ponds, the planting of one crore fruit bearing tree saplings, the widespread identification and conversion of cultivable fallow land under

cultivation under the Subiksha programme and the taking up of animal husbandry and dairying projects on scale.

- The quick and timely distribution of the loans to 2 lakh Neighbourhood groups, reaching over 23 lakh beneficiaries under the “Mukhyamanthri sahayahastham” scheme.
- The setting up of over 774 janakeeya hotels and over 5,000 new livelihood enterprises and employment to 19,073 persons under the aegis of Kudumbashree.
- The taking up of drinking water projects by the gram panchayats of the State under the JalJeevan Mission. What makes these interventions important is not only their quality, but also the level of synergy between multiple Departments and LSGs, a scale of convergence which is possible only in Kerala.
- As an important step towards convergence we have already merged the 5 directorates of LSGD into a single Principal Directorate.

160. My Government is also committed to provide good quality toilet facilities for commuters by constructing/

renovating public toilets across the State including in KSRTC bus stands. A total of 1,235 toilet blocks are being constructed/ renovated in the first phase.

161. In this the 25<sup>th</sup> year of the launch of Peoples Plan Campaign, my Government will be reiterating the principles that have stood us in good stead, and also move to new horizons of outcome based planning, urban planning and resource mobilization. Our focus will be to strengthen the local government disaster management plans into climate action plans including strategic energy saving interventions like the installation of LED streetlights. For this we will be embedding geospatial mapping and spatial planning into the urban planning process.
162. Augmenting the capacity of KILA and the Town Planning Department for climate resilience, urban governance and spatial planning will be a critical intervention that will go a long way in strengthening the inherent capability of local governments to deliver on these fronts. Developing a new growth paradigm for urban agglomerations and streamlining the convergent action of the multiple local governments both urban and rural that form

part of these agglomerations will be an important focus.

163. My Government will vigorously pursue decentralized waste management at source which have already achieved targets set by Haritha Mission in majority of the panchayaths and Municipalities. The efforts will be to maintain and enhance the achievements in solid waste management through enterprise models and interventions for management of animal, construction and demolition waste etc require greater elucidation in policy. There will be investment in developing long term institutional capability for waste management particularly in the emerging area of liquid waste management including sewage and septage. A clear policy on liquid waste management which identifies key stakeholders, their inter se responsibilities, the environment friendly technologies to be adopted and building community consensus and ownership will be developed and executed
164. Land development works of Waste Energy Plant at Kozhikode has been started. DPR is being approved for Waste to Energy plant at Kollam and

Palakkad and construction is expected to start soon.

165. The digitization of the local biodiversity registers, the setting up of an online gramasabha portal, preparation of a digitized local human resource index, will be some of the important digital interventions undertaken going forward. The digitization of the process of issue of building permits, which had to be put on hold on account of the amendment to the building rules will be fast tracked.
166. Quality management of PMGSY roads and bridge works will be a critical priority alongside the execution of the 1,425 phase III projects which will commence in 2021-22.
167. During 2021-22, Kerala State Remote Sensing and Environmental Centre (KSREC) will undertake a flagship project to develop a Spatial Governance Support System for the Local Self Governments with the participation of the Local Self Government Institutions of the State. The centre proposes to upgrade the server infrastructure and data recovery systems and will also provide satellite image based

wetland and paddy land change detection report of survey plots.

168. My Government is in the process of developing State Indicator Framework for the Sustainable Development Goals according to the State's socio-economic environmental dimensions leading to achieve the targets and goals as envisaged by the United Nations and in tune with National Indicator Framework (NIF) of Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
169. With the devolution of about 25% of State Plan funds to the local bodies, they are the primary stakeholders in ensuring the success of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the State. Localisation of SDGs is an agenda of paramount importance. My Government will prepare an 'Action Plan for Localising SDGs in the State' during 2021-22 which is aligned with the policies and programmes of the Local Self Governments and in tune with the Goals set in the United Nations' SDGs.
170. Smart City Thiruvananthapuram Ltd (SCTL) has crossed a major milestone of achieving 100 per cent tendering of all major projects. Cochin Smart

Mission Ltd (CSML), currently ranked 11<sup>th</sup> amongst the 100 Smart Mission cities in the Country has bagged the award for best Smart Health Project. Several major projects such as Integrated Command Control & Communication Centre, One Mega Watt Solar Power Project for 28 public buildings in Cochin has started functioning.

### **Kudumbashree**

171. Kudumbashree has emerged as a national model for women's self-help group network and played a very important role in providing relief during Covid pandemic and the exit strategy. There has been substantial increase in the budget allocation to Kudumbashree which will be further enhanced. We intend to further expand the network drawing in more families. We shall also explore possibility of enhancing the representation of young women in the network. Kudumbashree will implement comprehensive program of crime mapping and prevention of violence against women. The women's work participation rate in Kerala has improved in which Kudumbashree has played an important role. Creation of gainful employment for women in both self-employment and wage

employment will be the most important objective in the coming years.

## **SCHEDULED CASTES, SCHEDULED TRIBES, BACKWARD CLASSES DEVELOPMENT**

172. Kerala State Backward Classes Development Corporation, which provides loans to eligible persons belonging to OBC's and minorities, will disburse Rs.700 crores for 42,000 beneficiaries in the next financial year.
173. Two Regional Offices will be established in Palakkad and Kollam districts under Backward Class Development Department for effective implementation of welfare schemes.
174. My Government intends to mitigate the issue of unemployment among educated tribal youth by providing appropriate skill development programmes, based on the interest and choice of tribal youth. In order to ensure placements in private and public sectors, the Scheduled Tribe Development Department will set up a 'Virtual Tribal Employment Exchange' by bringing potential employers, industry leaders, line departments and unemployed tribal youth on a common platform.

This will bridge the gap between the demand and supply for employment in various sectors.

175. In view of the success achieved by the deployment of 376 Tribal Mentor Teachers in Palakkad and Wayanad Districts, the Department will place an additional 271 mentor teachers in selected primary schools in the remaining districts under the 'Gothrabandhu' (Tribal Mentor Teacher) programme.
176. Under the 'Samuhya Patanamuri' (Community study centre) programme, 500 new community study centres will be established during 2021-22 thereby helping at least 15,000 tribal children in achieving academic excellence. It is further intended to upgrade these centres into Multipurpose Community Resource Centres.
177. The Department has been taking conscious efforts to capture sporting talents from tribal students, nurture and groom them towards sporting excellence. In order to further augment this endeavour, the Department intends to start an exclusive Sports Ekalavya Model Residential School in Kasargod District for promoting sports among tribal children.

178. To promote 'Digital Democracy', 'Platform Cooperatives' will be introduced for helping cooperatives to participate in the digital economy. Platform ownership, high quality services, and fair work are powerful points of differentiation that matter to customers and that are not available to any other type of business in the digital economy.
179. A modern rice mill with a production capacity of 200 metric tons per day will be commissioned at Kannambra in Palakkad by the Palakkad Paddy Procurement Processing and Marketing Co-operative Society Ltd. No. P.1449 (PAPCOS).
180. 'Punarjani' a new project will be implemented for the rejuvenation of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes population through SC/ST Co-operatives.

## **SOCIAL JUSTICE**

181. Senior Citizens are among the most vulnerable in the society and hence they need special care and attention during the outbreak of Covid-19. The Department of Social Justice has taken precautionary measures based on the guidelines issued by my Government. As part of the COVID containment activities of my Government, the Social

Justice Department has introduced a novel initiative "Grand Care Project" for addressing the issues faced by residents of Old age Homes and for those elderly persons with comorbidities who are in reverse quarantine. As part of the Grand Care Project, Anganwadi workers under the Women and Child Development Department established contact with more than 45 lakhs senior citizens over phone and got updates about their health and other needs. The Social Justice Department started a Vayokshema call centre in each district for addressing and resolving the issues faced by senior citizens, providing medicines, telemedicine consultation and counselling to the senior citizens.

182. The Social Justice Department proposes to launch a portal named Karmapadham for the registration of qualified and skilled People with Disabilities (PWDs) through which they can register their details and the employers in the private sector can select the required human resources from among PWDs.
183. It is proposed to develop a web portal solely for senior citizens named Paithrikam in which senior citizens can register and give information about their domain of expertise. Those who want to take

these services can access them and make use of it. It is proposed to launch a programme named IT @ Elderly to achieve complete digital literacy among elderly people.

184. My Government proposed to implement a new scheme named Parivarthanam. This scheme aims to provide psycho-social intervention among ex-prisoners and women offenders. The programme will be implemented with the help of technical agencies like NIMHANS and experienced NGO's.

185. We propose to implement Sukrutham-Housing Project for homeless Transgender persons who own land or avail land through Local Self Governments. It is proposed to launch an online portal named 'Kiranam' for qualified skilled and semi skilled Transgender people.

### **Women and Child Development**

186. The Women and Child Development Department joined hands with online classes based on 30 pre-school themes named 'Kilikkonjal' and ensured that the early education of pre-school children in the Anganwadis is not disrupted even when Anganwadis are closed due to COVID 19.

Posters based on pre-school themes were printed and delivered to the Anganwadi going children.

187. In addition to the food kits and ration, steps were taken to ensure that recognised welfare institutions also received food kits thus taking care of the health of the inmates. 5.2 lakhs children under the age of three years and 4.4 lakhs children aged 3-6 years registered in Anganwadis were provided uninterrupted food take-home ration under the Supplementary Nutrition scheme.
188. Activities of Nirbhaya Programme under Department of Women and Child Development are aimed at implementing the State Nirbhaya Policy for handholding and rehabilitating the survivors of sexual abuse. At present there are 16 women and children homes and 1 SOS home in Kerala. It is necessary to segregate each category of survivors and give proper individual care. Infrastructure is already put in place to start a model home for 200 POCSO survivors in Thrissur and is ready for operationalisation which will be the largest welfare institution under the Department. Educators, skill developers, vocational trainers will support

children through their period of education and rehabilitation.

189. Recognizing the potential of the Gender Park's Projects and vision, UN women has partnered with it to upscale and develop the organization as a Gender Hub on a South Asian-South Indian collaborative basis.

## **REGULATORY DEPARTMENTS**

### **General Administration**

190. My Government has plans to redevelop and revamp the Government of Kerala properties in New Delhi. The National Buildings Construction Corporation (NBCC) has been engaged as the Project Management Company for redeveloping Travancore Palace, New Delhi.
191. My Government has embarked upon a unique project of creating the 'Samoohya Sannadha Sena'. As on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020, 3.66 lakhs volunteers have already been registered. The training of the volunteers is being undertaken and they are being provided e-certification. The project which is part of the 12 Point Projects will provide a major boost to

the preparedness of our State particularly to effectively manage possible disasters.

192. My Government has established the Kerala Youth Leadership Academy and has received over 5,600 registrations.

## **Home**

193. My Government has established 79 child friendly Police Stations in Kerala. Three Women Police Stations were also inaugurated in Pathanamthitta, Idukki and Kasaragod Districts during 2020. Kerala police introduced a Citizen Centric Mobile App (POL-APP) having 27 state-of-the-art services and introduced the digital traffic offence compounding e-challan system. Under Home Guard recruitment of the Fire and Rescue Department, 30 per cent women reservation has been implemented. It is proposed to appoint 100 Fire Women during the next year. For the speedy disposal of rape and POCSO cases, 28 Fast Track Special Courts were sanctioned, out of which 20 have already started functioning.
194. The State was always a pioneer in adopting technology in policing. Artificial Intelligence projects

in the Police Department will be initiated in the year 2021-22. It is proposed to set up a Cyber Security Centre and a Virtual Police Station each at Thiruvananthapuram and Ernakulam. Government has also approved setting up of 15 new Cyber Crime Police Stations and they will be functional at the earliest. Cyber domes in Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi and Kozhikode will be strengthened.

195. Construction of new buildings for District Police Officers at Alappuzha, Ernakulam Rural, Thiruvananthapuram Rural, Malappuram and Kannur Rural is proposed for the year 2021-22.

196. New District Training Centres at Thiruvananthapuram Rural, Kollam Rural, Ernakulam Rural and Thrissur Rural will also be started. New District Control Rooms will be constructed at Kollam City, Idukki, Pathanamthitta, Thrissur City and Kozhikode City.

197. It is proposed to constitute a new Special Task Force to handle any type of major disasters. For providing effective services, it is proposed for new Fire and Rescue stations which will be opened as per priority list under Government consideration.

## Law

198. As part of the e-Governance project, digitization of case records of the Hon'ble High Court of Kerala will be undertaken. Setting up of model digital courtrooms, implementation of e-office in the Administrative sections of the Hon'ble High Court and a file tracking system for judicial files using barcode system is also proposed to be implemented in the next financial year. Digitization of court records of District Court Complexes at Ernakulam, Thiruvananthapuram and Kozhikode will also be initiated in the next financial year.
199. Under Technical Modernization of Judicial System, the Hon'ble High Court has proposed CCTV at 18 court halls in District Court Complex, Ernakulam and 31 court halls in District Court Complex, Thiruvananthapuram as an initial phase. Video conferencing facilities will be provided under the scheme to approximate 60 courts.
200. The 4<sup>th</sup> and last phase of the project of providing infrastructure facilities to the Subordinate Courts is proposed to be implemented during the next financial year. As an initial step of setting up well equipped IT training halls in each District Court

complex, it is proposed to set up an IT training hall in one District Court complex during 2021-22.

## **Revenue**

201. The Chief Minister's Public Adalat scheme has been a big success with active participation from the public. The scheme which is part of the 12 Point Projects has seen regular public adalats being held by all districts with a large number of cases being heard directly by the District Collectors. As on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2020, 140 adalats have been held with 6,659 complaints received, of which 5,299 have been resolved.
202. My Government will set up Devaswom Tribunal to restore the alienated land of Devaswom Boards and proposes to introduce a Bill for the same.
203. My Government implemented a reservation based on economic criteria by earmarking 10% of the post to the economically weaker sections of forward communities in the Devaswom Board appointments.
204. 1.63 lakhs Pattayams have been issued since this Government came into power. My Government

proposes to distribute 20,000 Pattayams to the landless families during 2021-22.

205. Action has already been initiated by Kerala Land Records Modernisation Mission (KLRMM) to install survey equipment having access to Continuous Operating Reference Station (CORS) for survey and demarcation of land. A Project Management Unit, KLRMM, has been constituted for the integration of Revenue, Survey and Registration departments for the delivery of Revenue services online. End to end computerization i.e, digitization of all revenue records in villages including maps, registers, accounts in textual form, village information system is proposed to be implemented in Vanchiyoor in Thiruvananthapuram District and Kaduthuruthy village in Kottayam District to deliver prompt and efficient service to citizens on a pilot basis.
206. A comprehensive Revenue Portal will be implemented by integrating Kerala Building Tax Online, HRMS, Land Lease and Land Assignment Management System, Social Security Pension, Relief (Disaster Management Portal) and Land Acquisition Management System.

207. Fund for 186 smart village offices have been approved through plan allocation upto 2021-22. Another 255 smart villages have been approved through Rebuild Kerala Initiative. Out of which the construction of 117 offices have been completed. Renovation of another 937 village offices are also progressing.
208. Kerala is probably the only State that does not provide adequate housing facilities for the IAS officers in State headquarters. It is thus proposed to construct quarters for IAS officers in Thiruvananthapuram so as to ease the woes of young officers posted at the headquarters.

### **Treasury**

209. The security and functional audit of IFMS will be completed. The treasury modernisation program with respect to additional facilities in treasury offices will be completed. Social audit will be under taken.

### **Insurance**

210. The insurance department is being revamped to comprehensively address the insurance needs of Government departments and all public sector units and Government related organisations. The target

for next year is to double the general insurance and substantially improve the life insurance.

### **Legal Metrology**

211. The department will implement mobile inspection units for calibration and verification of packaged commodities. A laboratory for the verification of clinical Thermometers and Flow meters measuring the transaction of fuels has been proposed to start at the central laboratory, Kuttanad.

### **Planning and Economic Affairs**

212. Kerala State Land Use Board(KSLUB) is providing technical support for the prestigious Jalasamrudhi Project implemented in Kattakkada Legislative Assembly constituency. The Department prepares Natural Resources Management Plans and Eco - restoration Plans aiming at conservation of river basins, in Palakkad and Thrissur Districts, with the collaboration of the Local Self Government Institutions. Land Use Decision Models will be prepared for the selected GramaPanchayats which are severely affected by the recent floods and landslides.

213. KSLUB proposes to strengthen the Geo-informatics lab as a State level digital data repository and provide GIS support for watershed based planning under Haritha Keralam Mission and MGNREGS.

### **Economics and Statistics**

214. The Department of Economics and Statistics proposes to conduct a survey of the Periodic Labour Force intended to capture data about the labour market providing the measurement of labour force indicators in cross classification of age, gender, education, industry, occupation, time disposition, mobility and wages. The volatility in the economy, both in its inter and intra sectoral linkages as well as in the context of economic integration with the rest of the world, is reflected in the domestic labour market.

### **Information and Publicity**

215. The pandemic threw up challenges in accurate and timely dissemination of information regarding the status of disease in the State. The direct media briefing provided by my Government on a daily basis, shown live through television as well as

online news channels, gave up-to-date accurate information to the public. Government orders, circulars and proceedings were uploaded in the official website, daily press releases, short videos and digital posters on COVID-19 awareness were released through official online and social media handles of my Government. Apart from Malayalam and English versions, news and awareness creatives were also released in Hindi, Tamil, Kannada, Odia and Bengali languages, keeping in mind the presence of other State guest workers. Along with the announcement of the first lock-down in March 2020 itself, my Government launched a mobile-app called 'GoK Direct' for hourly notification on COVID-19 situation in Kerala, which could be also used by users without smartphones.

**216.** My Government's attempt to reach out to people at the grassroots level was given a new direction through Public Relations Information Service Management (PRISM) programme as part of the Integrated Newsgrid Project. In 2021-22 it has been planned to provide added impetus to this project by enhancing the penetration of information gathering and dissemination by additional deployment of trained personnel, who would closely work with Local Self Government Institutions. Increasing the penetration rate of mobile journalism is expected to provide more coverage and also aid in on-the-spot reporting.

## **CONCLUSION**

217. My Government has an ambitious agenda for the welfare of all sections of the society and the holistic development of the State. My Government will continue to strive to ensure food, housing, education, justice, gender equality, empowerment and opportunities for all people. My Government is transforming the State for the new age by implementing major projects and schemes to showcase the Best of Economic Growth and Human Development in India.

218. My Government is fully cognizant of the fact that these are ongoing endeavours chasing an ever-changing goal post. The pandemic has adversely impacted the progress of Kerala, as it has the whole world, but my Government is committed to the dream that is Kerala. We strive to overcome and we shall overcome.

JAI HIND