

A GOLDEN STEP TO EMBELLISH THE GOLDEN STATE

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The Government of Kerala is moving ahead with a clear vision and definite agenda of developments. The people from all walks of life disliked the former government and dethroned it with an endorsement of historic mandate to the present government. The Government is aware of its duties and responsibilities. As soon as the government assumed power, it began healing measures for the wounded sections like farmers, labourers, students, employees and the destitute. The process is going on.

As far as my portfolios are concerned, I am of the view that these are the most neglected departments in the past. The problems in

these departments are very serious and need care of both the people and government at large. I am going to appoint a Law Reforms Commission to codify and reform the laws and another Commission to study the problems of sports fields.

I am proud to list some of the salient achievements of my departments:

Law

It may be noted that the contributions made by the first Government in Kerala in the arena of law are praise worthy. Though 50 years have elapsed since then, no earnest efforts have been made from any part to codify the numerous laws or make them transparent. This Government has set up a Law Reforms Committee to revamping and unify the laws. It has attached momentous attention to maintaining law and order, which is the indicator of good governance.

Steps to break and open up nexus between some dangerous mafia and some sections of the society and departments have also been successfully initiated. Government is committed to set up a corruption free judiciary either. In a short span Government have done many things.

Provided rupees two crore from Legal Benefit Fund for the social security of the Advocates and Advocates' clerks.

Decided to set up Litigant Bench for the clients in every court.

The Human Rights Commission is legally and properly re-organised by including Justice Dinakaran, Rtd. Chief Justice of the High Court.

Launched permanent Lok Adalat in Thiruvananthapuram for the first time for speedy disposal of the service sector cases

such as Post And Telegraph, Power, Transport, Water Supply and Railways.

Allotted Rs. one crore for the construction of the Court Complex at Thiruvananthapuram. The Chief Minister laid its foundation stone.

Introduced an online system linking the office of the Minister with the offices of the Advocate General, District Government Pleaders, Kerala House and Supreme Court to monitor the disposal of the cases.

Sports

The scenario of sports is lamentable. The former government has shattered the basic structure of the sports council and the sports department to meet the selfish motives. Kerala is the breeding ground for sports talents. But the state lacks adequate infrastructure facilities. We require spacious playgrounds, synthetic tracks, floodlit

stadiums, swimming pools and well-equipped training centres. Talents are to be identified in the budding stage and to be motivated, trained so as to enable them to compete with the persons of national and international standards. The programmes and preparations for the same are afoot. The Government is considering seriously for the appointment of a Sports Commission to prepare a detailed report in the matter. Also, the Government is proposing to locate funds to the Tune of Rs.500 crores in State budgets during the 11th Plan period. Rapid attempts have also been made to set apart a certain percentage of plan funds of L.S.G's entirely for Sports development.

“Sports to all and health to all” is the slogan of the Government. To construct a playground in a ward and a stadium/swimming pool in a Panchayat is the corner stone of the sports policy of the

Government. The following activities have been implemented in the sports sector.

- Kerala State Sports Council, misled and corrupted by the former Government, has been reconstituted democratically.
- Steps to decentralise the Sports Council up to Panchayat level.
- Renovation and Reconstruction of High Altitude Training Centre at Munnar, District Sports Complex at Attingal, International Swimming Pool at Pirappancode, which were discontinued, have been re-started.
- Allotted funds for the modification of Jimmy George Stadium.

- Agreement with Kerala Water Authority to revamp the swimming pool at Vellayambalam.
- Launched Sports Lottery, to mobilise resources for the comprehensive development of sports, which collected Rs.15 crore.
- Reconstructed the professional football teams of Kerala Police, KSRTC, KSEB and Titanium which were lying neglected.
- Decided to set up major sports projects /schemes such as Sports Complexes, Indoor Stadiums, Football Academy, Swimming pool etc. at district level.
- Government is striving for making Kerala as the Sports Capital of India.

Youth Welfare Board

- Re-organised Youth Welfare Board democratically.
- Conducted Keralolsavam massively and popularly with the support and cooperation of sports and youth clubs, voluntary organizations, local bodies etc.
- Introduced a new scheme 'Yuvasakthi' combining the schemes 'Yuvakarma' and Employment Training.

Ports

Kerala is poised for a giant leap in development. The Vizhinjam International Transshipment Terminal, which is the long cherished dream of the State will be materialised soon.

- Renovations of some other ports are already under way.
- Decided to set up a Mareena- cum- Cargo port having facilities of motorboats, yachts, water sports, water-park, health club and cottages at Alappuzha with public-private participations.
- Requested the Central Government to declare Kollam Port, neglected for a long time, as a major port.
- The Prime Minister has consented in principle to include Azheekkal port under National Maritime Development Programme. Quick actions have been taken for its realization.
- Efforts are being taken to make the dredger, TSD Sindhuraj, operative.

- To generate employment opportunities in the Coastal area, Maritime Institute will be set up at Valiyathura in Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam and Manjeswaram in Kasaragod.

Railway

As far as Kerala is concerned, the Railway Budget for 2007-2008 is a reflection of the combined efforts taken by the Chief Minister, the Minister for Railways in Kerala and MPs from the State. The Chief Minister had convened a meeting of Ministers, MPs and the officials of the Southern Railway to discuss Railway development in Kerala. Recently, they also met the Prime Minister and Minister for Railways and submitted detailed memorandum. Consequently, in 2007-2008 Rail Budget, we have derived more benefits and allocation compared to previous years. Doubling of eight lines, electrification of

two lines, extension of some existing routes, frequency enhancement of three trains, new survey for Thalassery- Mysore, Nilambur Nanjangode rails, possibility study for Kumali - Dindigal route, introduction of Gareebi Rath are major achievements.

The coach factory at Cherthala will certainly boost industrialisation in the State. Yet, we have not got the due. The long pending demand for a separate Railway Zone has not been realised. Kerala, being a consumer State needs more passenger Trains and Goods Trains

Metro Rail

The Government is actively planning for the implementation of the proposed Kochi Metro Rail Project. It is a prestigious project of the State. Every body knows that Kochi is a city of narrow roads, which are choked with vehicles. Adequate flyovers and over bridges are to be constructed to meet

transporting needs of the growing population and to lessen the traffic congestion in the city. The proposal for Metro Rail Project in the city will relieve the traffic problems. No doubt, the development of infrastructure will boost trade and industry. A special officer has been appointed for its implementation. It is targeted to be completed by 2011.

Parliamentary Affairs

- Steps taken to shift the Parliamentary Affairs Institute from the rental building to the old Legislative Assembly Hall, which is preserved as a historical monument.
- A 'Chair' has been set up for study and research on Parliamentary Affairs in the University of Kerala.

Other Items

- Action taken to establish a hanger unit and International Terminal in Thiruvananthapuram Airport. The Chief Minister has laid the foundation stone, the cost of which is estimated to be Rs. 245 crore.
- Actions for Kannur Airport are in full swing.
- Government is committed to elevate Rajeev Gandhi Aviation Academy to a Pilot Training Institute of International Level. Two flights have been procured for giving Pilot training to youths.
- Eventually, it may be mentioned that the Government has performed only a small number of its committed agenda. We have a long way to go. This

government will fulfil all of its promises during its tenure itself.