



MEGHALAYA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

ADDRESS

BY

SHRI R.S. MOOSHAHARY

GOVERNOR OF MEGHALAYA

MARCH 9, 2012

Mr. Speaker and Hon'ble Members,

1. It is a great privilege for me once again to address the Meghalaya Legislative Assembly. I extend my greetings and best wishes to the Hon'ble Members. In this Session, the Budget estimates for the year 2012-13 will be presented and deliberated upon.

I am confident that the House will function with a deep sense of responsibility and farsightedness, and that the reputation of this House for maintaining its dignity and the high standard of debate continue.

2. The Budget session is a crucial one. The priorities of the Government will be laid down before the House for its consideration and approval. We need to strive for an accelerated growth path for the State through better management based on strategic mission and vision, to reach out benefits to all sections of the society, especially the poor and the weak. My Government is committed to providing good governance and an administration which is clean, responsive, accountable and target oriented. I will now proceed to outline the endeavours of my Government.

Home & Political

3. Internal security and law & order situation has remained stable and important celebrations and festivals passed off peacefully. Although there are no critical issues, but developments on Assam — Meghalaya border need close watch in view of ethnic clashes last year. There has been a spurt in the activities of GNLA in Garo Hills and certain areas of West Khasi Hills bordering East and South Garo Hills. This group poses a serious challenge to peace and development efforts. Demand notes being served, killing of innocent civilians and abduction and kidnapping of citizens is a matter of serious concern. Recently, Government of India has declared the GNLA as a Terrorist Organisation under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 and action would be taken on members of the organization and those who are found to be supporting in raising funds or abetting the organization, as per provisions of the law. Sustained efforts will also be taken by the Government to neutralize activities of other militant outfits. The State Police, with the assistance of Central Agencies, is taking all steps in order to affectively counter anti-national and criminal activities.

The long international border of 443 Kms with Bangladesh poses its own problems in term of influx, smuggling, and easy transit routes to the militant groups of the region. Expeditious completion of the border fencing is therefore a priority for the Government. The State Government has also taken up with the Government of India to intensify patrolling along the border, and where human habitation and settlements are located near the border, to erect the fencing along the Zero line.

To deal with the problem of influx, District Level Task Forces have been constituted and have commenced the work on registration of migrant workers. Guidelines in this respect have been issued. It is expected that further steps which have already been initiated will enable Government to deal effectively with the problem of influx. Differences over the inter-State boundary with Assam are being pursued in the right earnest by the State Government. A complete dossier of documents supporting our claims has been handed over to the Assam Government. The State Legislative Assembly had also passed a resolution urging the Central Government to set up a Boundary Commission to deal with this long standing problem, and the same is being pursued with the

Central Government.

Government has taken a serious view of the problem relating to traffic jams. A total of 483 posts have been created recently for traffic management, and in conjunction with other initiatives taken, major improvements are expected.

Many initiatives have been taken by the Government to improve and enhance the capabilities of the police personnel in combating various crimes in the State. Three Police Stations and six outposts have recently been sanctioned to improve the effectiveness of the police force. Provision of amenities under various Welfare schemes to the families of police personnel is also a high priority for the Government.

The Government realizes the need for bringing the administration closer to the people in order to lend focus to the development efforts as necessary corollary to peace and stability and it would accordingly be taking steps for creating three more districts during the course of the year.

Planning

4. For 2011-12, the Annual Plan allocation for the State is ₹2727.00 crore which is an increase of 18.56% over the earlier year's allocation. Government is committed to implement the newly launched State Flagship Programme, namely the Integrated Basin Development & Livelihood Promotion Programme (IBDLP). Several interventions under Mission Mode are to be taken in Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Aquaculture, Sericulture & Weaving, Apiculture, Energy, Water and Natural Resources Management along with associated measures. The objective of this mission is to facilitate sustainable livelihoods by leveraging upon the strengths of the State and the availability of abundant human and natural resources. Focus is on building of an integrated knowledge management system to meet the requirements of scientific planning and participatory development, for creating infrastructure, capacity building, investment promotion, regulatory frameworks, including promotion of convergence and coordination among Departments, and ensuring Capacity Building and Governance through various interventions. The Integrated Water Resource Management Programme is being given importance through Basin planning, Water Quality Monitoring and Management, establishment of Small Multipurpose Reservoirs and participatory water resource management. Other initiatives include women's empowerment, and setting up of a State Employment Promotion Council and State Innovative Council. Steps have been taken to strengthen collaboration with the Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India, particularly the Geo-Spatial MISSION under it.

Finance

5. State Government has been able to steer to a marked level of financial stability. A number of e-governance initiatives and the Integrated Financial Management System have been made operational for processing all the inputs received from the treasuries. The system of government receipts and payments were simplified by implementation of the Cyber Treasury in July 2011. Now registered dealers can pay their taxes online at any time or place. E-payment of salaries has been implemented in most offices. Steps are under way for creation of an employee database, including pensioners. The Assured Career Progression Scheme adopted earlier has addressed the problem of

stagnation in service

Excise, Registration, Taxation & Stamps (E R T S)

6. The contribution of Tax is around 70% of the total revenue collection in the State. During the year, there has been an increase in tax collection to the tune of ₹49.56 crore despite the reduction of Central Sales Tax from 3% to 2%, and reduction of tax on tea from 12% to 4%. As a means of providing relief to the public and poorer sections, Government had brought down the cost of LP kerosene and diesel, and as a result, there is loss of revenue of about ₹9.52 crore. With the expected introduction of GST in the near future, there is need to re-orient the commercial tax system. The system for electronic filing of applications such as e-registration, e-returns, e-payments, e-refunds and e-waybills has been put in place. The Meghalaya VAT Rules has been amended, and the process of amending the Central Sales Tax (CST) Rules for introduction of e-CST is underway. Workshops on e-services were organized in Shillong, Jowai and Tura to address the problems of tax payers. Steps have been initiated to rationalize the excise fees and duties to generate additional revenue to the State.

Agriculture

7. It is essential that the Agricultural sector becomes the engine for growth and prosperity in the State. Investment strategy has been refocused with many new initiatives. The scientists and experts of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), Philippines, have agreed to guide and assist the state in the endeavour to increase rice productivity and production. An important component of this would be the capacity building on germplasm development, crop breeding and post-harvest technology. Integrated farming would be implemented in micro-watersheds in a convergence mode and the development plans for this would emanate from the farmers' actual needs. The Department will tap the achievements made in the realm of scientific and technological research by suitably adapting and applying such innovations through the extension wings.

Horticulture

8. One of the Missions to be undertaken under the Integrated Basin Development and Livelihood Programme is the Horticultural Mission, which aims at creating employment opportunities in the rural sector. Planting Material Production Centres (PMPC) will be established throughout the State to make quality planting material easily available to the farmers. It is proposed to set up more Horti-hubs in different parts of the State and to adequately maintain the existing ones such that they can continue to evolve as frontline centres of excellence equipped to cater to the growing needs of the sector. Model orchards will be developed to demonstrate the economic viability of selected crops. In order to equip farmers with the necessary skills to successfully adopt new farming techniques and knowledge, a Practical Innovation Training Centre (PITC) will be established in collaboration with the PTC from The Netherlands.

Water Resources:

9. Water Resources are a critical component of the Integrated Basin Development and Livelihood Promotion Programme and it is expected that mission mode intervention will have a major impact

on availability of water for farming and other activities apart from facilitating intensive investment in the water sector. Thrust areas have been identified for special attention, which will pave the way for creation of additional irrigation potential, enhance water use efficiency, better water quality management, rejuvenation of water bodies/springs, more robust water regulatory mechanism, convergence of initiatives of different stakeholders on demand and supply side and integrated water resources management.

The Identified irrigation potential of the State is about 2.18 lakh hectares. The irrigation potential created so far by the schemes completed by the end of 2010-11 is only about 16 % of the ultimate potential. Steps will be taken to increase the coverage. During the present year, 81 ongoing Minor Irrigation Schemes with a total estimated cost of ₹10,523 lakh and covering a total area of 8318 hectares have been taken up. Out of these, 64 schemes are under AIBP for which the total estimated cost is ₹9073 lakhs and the area to be covered is 6843 hectares. Further, proposal for 65 new Minor irrigation projects with a total command area of 6141 Ha and estimated cost ₹8864 lakh have been proposed under AIBP for the year 2011-12.

For ensuring better utilization of the existing irrigated area, Command Area and Water Management Programme is also being implemented in the State. As part of the initiative for promoting Participatory Irrigation Management (PIM), Water Users Associations in 159 irrigation projects have been formed. A comprehensive water Act is also in the process of being formulated.

Meghalaya Water Resources Development Agency (MeWDA) and District Water Resources Councils (DWRCs) have been established to ensure convergence of investment and development initiatives in the water sector. A new scheme for Small Multi-purpose Reservoirs (SMRs) has been proposed with a view to maximize water use efficiency.

Animal Husbandry & Veterinary

10. The Livestock Mission under the IBDLP will focus on all round growth in the AH & Veterinary Sector during the 12th Plan. Infrastructure development has been completed for Pig Breeding Farm to 110 sows unit at Khliehtyrshi in Jaintia Hills. Further, the Additional Central Assistance (ACA) under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) has been also availed for establishment of one Poultry Breeding farm at Nongpiur with 5000 parent- stock. To uplift the economy and generate employment and also to meet the requirement of meat, milk and eggs, 50% subsidy schemes for distribution of Cattle, Pig, Poultry and Goats have been proposed for 2012-13 at an amount of ₹349.24 lakh. Existing Pig farm at Baghmara is proposed to be upgraded from 20 to 50 sows unit for producing 1000 piglets annually for meeting the requirement of breeding stock of pigs. Proposals have been made for assistance from the Centre and National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) for development of infrastructure in Health coverage and maintaining hygienic meat. Steps will be taken to protect and control Livestock & Poultry diseases, providing infrastructure and equipment for Poly-Clinic in Shillong. The programmes proposed for 2012-13 include is the establishment of 2 new Pig Breeding Farms.

Unusual death of poultry in large number was observed at Williamnagar Farm during the end of last year which was confirmed as Bird Flu. All necessary steps as per the standard procedures and under the supervision of the Government of India had been taken to contain the disease.

Fisheries

11. The launching of the Meghalaya State Aquaculture Mission on the 5th March, 2012 as part of the Integrated Basin Development & Livelihood Promotion Programme (IBDLP) has received a huge response from the Stakeholders. The annual requirement of fish is estimated at about 30,000 tons whereas the production is about 6,500 tonnes only, thus there exists a huge gap between the demand-supply & production of fish. To enhance the food and nutritional security of the people, the Government has decided to bring in an additional water area of 10,000 Ha. through the “Meghalaya State Aquaculture Mission” to be implemented during the 12th plan period - 2012 to 2017. The Mission being a holistic one seeks to promote the forward and backward linkages to the fisheries sector by focusing on fish seed and feed production through private participation and create opportunities for the fisheries sector to grow. It will also seek to supplement the gains that have already accrued to the State through the Thousand Ponds Scheme. During the 2010-11, under Area Expansion of Pond Aquaculture, the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (R.K.V.Y) Scheme covering 181 Ha of water area with 905 ponds, amounting to ₹5.00 crore was taken up. State Livelihood Mission and value chain management under Special Plan Assistance ₹1.21 crore has been released to East Garo Hills and West Khasi Hills districts for creation of 262 nos. of Ponds covering 72.75 Ha. for the victims of ethnic riots of Resubelpara in East Garo Hills and Langpih in West Khasi Hills. An additional water area of 555 Ha. will be created through this effort.

Soil & Water Conservation

12. Under Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme, 52 Projects are being implemented in all the Districts in 2011-12 with an outlay of ₹6529 lakhs. 10 Projects under Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF)-XIV and another 9 Projects under RIDF-XV are being implemented in 2011-12 with outlay of ₹1000 lakhs. Government has initiated a programme for Eco Restoration of Sohra and its adjoining areas covering 45 villages, and aims to restore degraded lands and strengthen village level institutions while creating avenues for sustainable livelihood.

Cooperation

13. Efforts are being made to strengthen Cooperative Societies through Convergence with the various Missions under the Integrated Basin Development and Livelihood Promotion Programme. With the release of the Revival Package of Rural Credit Institutions as per recommendations of the Task Force on Revival of Rural Cooperative Credit Institutions (Vaidyanathan Committee Report), the Primary Agriculture Credit Cooperative Societies, are expected to be revitalized and thereby infuse new energy into the agrarian economy, through adequate flow of credit to the farmers of the state. Market linkages are being strengthened and cooperative branding has been initiated for better marketing of the cooperative products. In the last few years, unemployed youth are steadily coming forward to form cooperative societies in new age sectors like Information Technology (IT), Tourism and Energy. During the year 2012-13, warehouses are proposed for construction at Tura and Bagmara.

Community & Rural Development

14. During the current year upto January 2011-12, ₹21197.12 lakhs were utilized for implementing Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act MGNREGA and 113.98 lakh mandays of rural employment were generated. The State Rural Employment Society has been created and a State Employment Guarantee Fund has been set up for better administration of the programme and smooth flow of funds to the districts. Under IAY 3032 nos. of new houses were constructed. The Scheme aims at providing low cost houses to SC/ST and freed bonded labourers living below poverty line free of cost. West Garo Hills, South Garo Hills and Ri-Bhoi districts were identified for implementation of Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana/Backward Region Grant Funds, which is a scheme aimed at addressing problems of high poverty & low growth pockets. Government will continue to implement Social Security Schemes such as Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme, Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme, Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme and National Family Benefit Scheme. National Rural Livelihoods Mission came into being by restructuring SGSY. Taking the Mission forward, the State has formed a Society for taking up the NRLM activities. Pilot projects under this scheme are being taken up in four Community and Rural Development (C&RD) Blocks.

Border Area Development

15. New initiatives for people living in the Border Areas are being undertaken. During the current year, ₹2000 lakh is the approved outlay under Special Central Assistance Border Area Development Programme (BADP) by the Centre for implementation of various developmental schemes. It is also providing scholarship & stipend to the students hailing from the notified border villages of the State out of the State plan fund.

Power

16. Government will extend support to the Meghalaya Energy Corporation Limited (MeECL) for further upscaling their generation capacity and for strengthening the transmission and distribution networks. This will improve the efficiency of the Corporation in its attempt to provide uninterrupted and quality supply of power. The first unit of 42 Mega Watts on the Myntdu Leskha HE project was formally inaugurated on 29th February 2012. The second and third units will also be completed soon. The Renovation and Modernisation of the Umiam Stage II power station was completed recently, and an additional 2 Mega Watts were added to the original project capacity. The New Umtru project of 40 Mega Watts will be commissioned in 2013-14. Works for implementation of the 22.5 Mega Watt Ganol Hydro-project in West Garo Hills have been initiated. Government has also floated Expression of Interest for implementation of power projects on BOOT basis. Electrification of villages and households in rural areas is being pursued by MeECL in all the 7 districts. In addition to the Accelerated Power Development and Reforms Programme launched by Government of India, new distribution schemes will be taken up during 2012-13. These include construction of transmission line from Mawphlang to Air-Force substation, transmission line and substation in Bajengdoba, transmission line from Dakopgre to Praharinagar, and renovation and modernization of five substations in Shillong. The Agia Nangalbibra line will be commissioned during the next financial year. Government will also take steps to exploit renewable sources of energy available locally. Hybrid power plants through wind and solar sources will be implemented in the 12th plan period, in addition to the biogas programme and solar photovoltaic systems which are being taken up currently.

Mining & Geology

17. Serious efforts have been made on regulation of mining in the State by introducing scientific approach to protect ecology, environment and the interest of the people in accordance with the Central Mines and Mining Regulation, taking into account the special features of the State in respect of land tenure system and the local traditional practice of the people. There has been an increase in production of coal and limestone which were recorded at 69.74 lakh tons and 26.6 lakh tons respectively during 2010-11. The total revenue collected during this period from royalty on minerals was ₹21552.59 lakh. Production of coal and limestone from April, 2011 to September, 2011 has been recorded at 24.7 lakh tons and 17.62 lakh tons respectively. ₹9217 lakh was collected as revenue on minerals during this period. In 2011-12, the Department has taken up 6 mineral investigation programmes in different parts of state. The effort of the Government for responsible mining through the Mineral and Mining Policy is expected to bring in necessary regulation in the matter.

Commerce & Industries

18. Government will vigorously pursue its efforts to promote development of Micro, Small, Medium and Large Enterprises for generation of employment and development of skills, thereby increasing the State Domestic Product. Upgradation of two Land Customs Stations at Dalu and Ghasuapara has commenced. Consequent to the MOU between Bangladesh and India for development of two Border Haats in the State, the Haat at Kalaichar was inaugurated in July, 2011 and this has opened up new opportunities, for people living in this area to sell their produce. Another Border Haat at Balat is expected to be inaugurated soon after confirmation of the date by the Bangladesh counterpart. Under Prime Minister's Employment Generation (PMEG) Programme, 234 units have been set up and this in turn has created employment opportunities for 2380 youth. Today's job market demands skilled trained personnel, and the State is therefore sponsoring youth for skill development training in various vocational centres in the country. Under Master Craftsman Scheme, 238 rural artisans were trained in trades like cane and bamboo, wood craft and other artistic works. Awareness and Entrepreneurship Development Programme has been organized for the benefit of local youth.

Sericulture & Weaving

19. Sericulture and Weaving provides enormous job and employment opportunities and is one of the missions under the Integrated Basin Development & Livelihood Promotion Programme (IBDLP). Emphasis would be to bridge the gaps in the value chain from the pre-cocoon to the post-cocoon stages through modernization and up-gradation of the State Seed Farms and infrastructural facilities at the farmers' establishments. Area expansion of plantations shall be stepped up to increase feed source for the silk worms. Introduction of reeling and spinning activities, with appropriate machines, would enable value addition to the cocoons and also provide the yarn for the weavers. Training and capacity building of personnel and farmers would be increased in both quality and intensity. More Handloom Clusters would be formed covering majority of weavers, to facilitate installation of modern looms and intensification of training on silk weaving. Further, the assistance of the National Institute of Fashion Technology Shillong Centre will be sought in fabric designing,

product diversification and garment making for the benefit of weavers. Common Facility Centres would be set up in these clusters where pre-loom, on-loom and post-loom facilities will be provided. Marketing linkages will be expanded so that weavers are able to receive better remuneration for their products.

Public Works Department (P. W. D)

20. Roads are the most important means of communication in our state. Presently the State has a total road length of 9350 Km with the road density of 41.69 Km/100 Sq Km. in the National Highway sector, the important ongoing projects such as 4-Laning of Jorabat-Umiam Section of NH-40 and Shillong Bye-Pass are expected to be completed within March 2014. The 2-Laning work of Shillong-Nongstoin-Tura road has started and targeted to be completed by March 2014. Double laning of 11.40 Kms, Intermediate Laning of 32Km and Construction of 8 bridges on NH 62 is targeted to be completed within March 2012. DPR has been submitted to the Govt. of India for Construction of Jowai Bye-Pass. Besides, DPRs for 4-Laning of Umiam - Shillong including 2-Laning of Western Shillong Bye-Pass with a total length of 57.426 Km at a cost of ₹512 crore have been submitted. Under Inter State Connectivity, Rehabilitation of Pasyih -Garampani Road as been sanctioned by the Govt of India at a cost of ₹20.65 crore and Detailed Project Report (DPR) for improvement and widening of road including Metalling and Blacktopping of Betasing-Ishaguri Mankachar road, has been submitted to the Ministry. In 2010-11, Ministry of DONER have sanctioned roads namely Bandapara-Malangkona-Shallang, NH-40 to Nongthymmai - Umsning, 5 (five) bridges on Damra-Mendipathar-Songsak Williamnagar, major bridge and approach at Tharia on Bholaganj - Nongjri and RCC bridges on Ampati-Mankachar road under Non Lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR) schemes. Upgradation of Garobadha-Dalu road has been approved by the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DONER) under the Asian Development Bank (ADB) Loan Assisted North Eastern State Road Investment Programme for an amount of ₹196.82 Crores. In addition, in principle approval has been accorded for upgradation of parallel road to the existing Dalu-Bagmara road for ₹20 Crores under Social Infrastructure Development Fund. Sanction of ₹94.81 crores has been received under PMGSY Phase - VI for construction of 106 Km road length connecting 34 habitations. Under State Plan, it is targeted to construct 78 Km of New Road and 1338 Running Metre of bridges including Up-gradation of 560 Kms of existing roads during current year. 43- Road projects sanctioned under Special Plan Assistance at a cost of ₹359.82 crores covering a length of 398 Km are in different stages of implementation. As part of the Finance Commission Award towards the conversion of 91 semi-permanent timber bridges into RCC bridges. An amount of ₹20 crores has already been released for the purpose and the construction work will be taken up soon.

Transport

21. Air Services between Shillong (Umroi Airport) and Kolkata with a 50-seater aircraft has been made operational and its continued service will be ensured. The airport shall be upgraded to facilitate operation of larger aircrafts like Boeing and Airbus and for this purpose additional land of 193 acres has been acquired and handed over to Airport Authority of India. Government is also planning to upgrade the small Baljek Airport for operation of medium size aircrafts such as ATR 72 for which Detailed Project Report (DPR) has been prepared. Railway Ministry has sanctioned new BG railway line from Tetelia to Byrnihat and the land acquisition for the project is underway.

Railway line from Byrnihat to Shillong has also been approved and the survey work taken up by the Railways. The Government will assist the Railways in completion of survey work. Detailed Project Report for an Inter-state Bus Terminus at Mawiong in East Khasi Hills District and Inter-state Truck Terminus in Ri-Bhoi District has been prepared and posed to North Eastern Council (NEC) for funding. NEC has accorded 'in principle' approval to these projects. The Department would also continue to provide 25% financial subsidy to educated unemployed youth for running transport services. Besides, the Department would provide grants to three driving schools, one each in Jaintia Hills, East Garo Hills and West Garo Hills District. At the offices of DTO Shillong, Jowai and Nongpoh, the 'Vahan' software for vehicle registration has been operationalized with on-line facilities.

Information Technology

22. The Vision of the State is to make Information technology a tool for attaining all round development in the State with the objective of fulfilling wealth creation, employment generation and economic growth. The Government has tied up with the Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) Guwahati in setting up the first IT Park in the State. During the year 2007-08 the STPI park located at Lumjingshai was made functional marking the beginning of the first step towards bringing Meghalaya as the future IT destination of the Eastern region. During the current year the second phase has been taken up. The State IT department has also taken over the land allotted by the Urban Affairs department for the IT Estate at New Shillong.

The State Wide Area Network (SWAN), the State Data Centre (SDC) and the Common Service centers (CSC) projects have all been functioning now and the department is in the process of horizontal expansion to reap the benefits of e-governance. The State Service Delivery Gateway (SSDG) project is nearing completion and the e-district project will be initiated soon in the State.

The State already has a well equipped GIS laboratory in place and various departments are already using the facilities. During the current year, proposal has been made for further consolidation and augmentation of the same. The department has been providing support to all the departments in installation of hardware and software and we would continue with the same in the next financial year. The department provided desktops, laptops, UPS, printers as hardware support to the Secretariat Officers and Staff. We propose to extend help to the district offices from the current year.

During 2011-12, the department has awarded laptops to all the toppers of the Secondary School Leaving Certificate (SSLC) and Higher Secondary School Leaving Certificate (HSSLC) examination under Meghalaya Board of School Education (MBOSE) as well as the Central Boards and the same was well received by the student community.

For Capacity Building, the department has entered into an agreement with Symantec as well as National Institute of Information Technology (NIIT) to increase the employability potential of the youths in the State. We are looking for more developmental partners for more technical courses which would be taken up shortly. For Government employees the National Institute of Smart Governance has been conducting regular programmes to empower the employees with additional skills.

Forest & Environment

23. The Government in co-operation with the District Councils is undertaking multifarious activities for the conservation, improvement and utilization of the valuable forest resources, both within the Government owned Reserved Forests and Protected Forests as well as in the private and community owned land. Through the Wildlife Wing, Government is undertaking various activities for conservation of wildlife and improvement of wildlife habitat. Besides the State Plan Schemes, some Centrally Sponsored Schemes for Intensification of Forest Management Scheme and Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries, the National Bamboo Mission, National Afforestation Programme, and the Development of Medicinal Plants are also being implemented. The Government has constituted a State Forest Development Agency to receive direct funds from the Centre for some schemes. The protection of critical forest and eco sensitive areas is a matter of concern, and Government is devising suitable initiatives in this matters.

District Council Affairs

24. The State Government would continue to support the Autonomous District Councils in discharging their Constitutional obligation and duties under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India to meet the needs and aspirations of indigenous tribal population. The State Government has been extending grant-in-aid to the Councils from year to year both under Plan and Non-Plan Schemes for the implementation of various development works such as construction of village roads, footpath, playground, water tanks etc. and for Enforcement Machinery under Trading by Non-Tribal Regulations. Many Schemes of the District Councils are now being taken up with funds received under the Finance Commission Awards.

Tourism

25. Meghalaya is a popular Tourist Destination in the North East for varied tourist attractions and unique culture. The State is blessed with picturesque landscape of rolling hills, meandering rivers, cascading waterfalls, lush forests, and diverse flora and fauna. To promote Tourism the Government is implementing several developmental schemes across the State which includes construction of Tourist Lodges, Wayside Amenities, Restaurants and Tourist Resorts. To promote Rural Tourism, ethnic infrastructure is being developed in places like Chandigre, Ialong and Mawlynnong. Training and Capacity Building in the Hospitality sector is being provided by the Institute of Hotel management, Shillong and the Food Craft Institute, Tura. To promote the tourism potential the State, publicity campaigns have been undertaken both in the print and electronic media. Further financial assistance is being provided to cultural festivals throughout the state to project and showcase its rich cultural heritage and tradition. The Shillong Autumn Golf Tournament, 2011 was organized in collaboration with the Shillong Golf Club bringing in golfers from Bangladesh and other parts of the country. The Tourism Policy 2011 has been notified and the Government is committed to help create infrastructure for Tourism Development and act as a facilitator for growth and investment. In line with the policy, the Government has come up with the Meghalaya Tourism Development and Investment Promotion Scheme 2012 to provide financial assistance to local entrepreneurs for setting up Home Stays and Resorts. The preparation of the Tourism Mission is in the final stage and it will be launched shortly. The main focus of the Mission

is on bridging the infrastructure gap and Training, Capacity Building and Skill Development for the youths. A multi- pronged approach is envisaged for capacity building and skill development of the target groups and this in turn would lead to generation of more employment both in the Tourism as well as other sectors. To elicit feedback and inputs from the stakeholders a discussion was held and their views are also taken into consideration for incorporation in the final Document. The Mission would also ensure that development of infrastructure needs is fully met by harnessing funds from different sources available. As part of 'Year of the Youth', the Department will focus on activities in areas like adventure sports, camping, music, etc.

Food and Civil Supplies

26. Government will continue to implement the Targeted PDS, aimed to provide Food Security to the families of all sections of consumers with emphasis on the targeted groups i.e. BPL and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families. To ensure that AAY beneficiaries avail their monthly quota, the State Government have provided a subsidy of ₹50/- per quintal to cover the transport and other incidental charges incurred by the dealers. Under the Annapurna Scheme, Rice is distributed free of cost to 9263 indigent old age persons not covered in the Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme, at the scale of 10 Kgs per head per month. Under the Consumer Protection Act 1986, 1049 nos of cases have been registered out of which 862 have been disposed till 2011. To make the people aware of the Rights of Consumers, awareness campaign are organized including holding of Consumer Awareness Programmes, observation of consumer Rights Day involving NGOs and through Advertisements etc. With a view to streamlining and curbing loopholes to ensure availability of targeted groups with due entitlement, the delivery system under PDS will be totally computerized. The Action Plan for this purpose has been submitted to the Centre, and will be implemented after receiving the approval and financial support from the Centre.

Programme Implementation & Evaluation

27. My government attaches a great deal of importance to the monitoring and evaluation of various schemes and projects being implemented by the different development Departments. This is done with a view to ensuring that the schemes are more effectively implemented and that the fruits of development percolate down to the poorest of the poor whose lot the government is trying its best to improve. This is also in pursuance of the stated policy objective of this government to raise the entire BPL population of the State above the poverty line within the shortest time possible.

The work of monitoring and evaluation is being done both in-house and by outsourcing to reputed organizations / agencies within the State and outside. During the year 2010-11, three evaluation studies, on Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), Indira Awas Yojana (IAY) and Public Distribution System (PDS) have been assigned to reputed agencies and will be completed soon. During the current year, three studies on Assets created under the MGNREGS, Irrigation and RKVY are proposed to be taken up. Committees have also been set up to review and monitor the implementation of various schemes, especially flagship programmes, the 20-Point Programme and the MPLAD Scheme. The arrear accounts of the State PSU's were also reviewed with a view to making them up-to-date.

The State Computer Cell is facilitating the online monitoring of MPLADS and the 20-Point

Programme including Bharat Nirman by making use of the MIS-NERD Portal of the Planning Commission, etc. This Cell is also upgrading and strengthening the ICT infrastructure with an objective of effectively designing, developing and deploying e-governance applications and the incorporation of Geographic Information System (GIS) and other tools for the improvement of delivery of services through various welfare schemes of the State Government.

Legal Metrology

28. For better safeguarding the public in general and the consumers in particular, the Department has implemented the Meghalaya Legal Metrology (Enforcement) Rules, 2011 from 1 April, 2011. In order to maintain accuracy in the weights and measures used by traders etc 2(Two) Working Standard Laboratories in Shillong and at Tura have been constructed. Another 5(five) Working Standard Laboratories in other Districts and Sub Divisions of the State will be set up. Mobile Test Kits have been put into use for verification and testing of the weigh-bridges in the State.

Public Health Engineering

29. Government is committed to provide adequate safe drinking Water & Sanitation facilities to all inhabitants of the State. 380 Habitations, 154 Schools & 35 integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Centres were provided with safe water supply under the Rural Water Supply Programme. Further, 67 Stand Alone Water Purification Systems in Rural Schools having water quality problems were installed. In the current year, 252 Habitations, 305 Rural Schools and 112 ICDS Centres have been provided with adequate safe water supply upto January 2012. Works for the Jowai Water Supply Scheme under NLCPR are at different stages of implementation. Works for implementation of Greater Shillong Water Supply Project Phase III under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) is progressing well. Renovation works of Tura Phase-I & II Water Supply Scheme have been sanctioned with the grants under the 13th Finance Commission. Under Total Sanitation Campaign, 204679 of Individual Household Latrines; 7547 School Latrines; 149 Sanitary Complexes and 1,529 Anganwadi Toilets have been constructed since inception upto February, 2012. It is a matter of pride that 160 Villages were awarded the Nirmal Gram Puraskar Awards 2010, by the Government of India for achievement of full Sanitation Coverage Status. Efforts have been made to accelerate the progress of implementation of Total Sanitation Campaign in all the districts.

Urban Affairs

30. Primary focus of the Urban Affairs department is towards orderly development and proper management of the Urban Areas. During 12th Five Year Plan, the priority areas are creation of infrastructure, improvement of civic amenities with effective management of the Urban Centers for efficient delivery of services and ensuring better living conditions. Steps are taken for early completion of schemes on Storm Water Drainage at Shillong and Augmentation of Water Supply for Greater Shillong Phase - III under JNNURM. Solid Waste Management works at Tura and Nongpoh and the Construction of dwelling units for urban poor at Tura, Nongpoh and Williamnagar are in progress. Construction works of 600 dwelling units for urban poor at Shillong - Phase I&IT are at various stages of completion. Works for Slum Improvement Programme of 5 Slums in Shillong are also under progress. Out of the 120 buses for Shillong city 50 mini buses are

in operation since July, 2011 and the remaining buses are expected to operate shortly. Under 10% Lumpsum Provision for Development of NE States, construction of Parking Lot at Tura and Shopping-cum-Parking Infrastructure for migratory vendors at Nazing Bazar, also in Tura are under progress. Under ADB Funding, short term scientific work on land fill site at Marten has started and is expected to be complete by June 2013. The Environmental Impact Assessment for the long term landfill site is being obtained. The Sewerage project for Shillong is expected to start during the current year. For accelerating the development of the urban areas under the Infrastructure Development Scheme, Special Urban Works Programme (SUWP) and Chief Minister's Special Urban Development Fund are being taken up for which an amount of ₹1070 lakh has been provided. Other welfare schemes taken up are aimed at improving the environment of Slum areas and generation employment for the urban poor.

Education

31. The potential in the Human Resources arena to generate employment will be further explored and tapped. Towards this end, investments will be designed to revive Shillong in particular and Meghalaya in general as a premier educational hub. Identification of private partners to operationalize the three proposed Pine Mount International Schools on a PPP basis has been initiated. Funding has been provided for setting up of residential schools in each block and land is being identified for the purpose. The nine (9) model schools to be started in different areas of Garo Hills have been recently sanctioned by the Government of India.

The Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 is being implemented by the State. The requisite Rules have been notified. Based on the existing GIS Map of Elementary Schools, the lists of neighborhood schools have been drafted. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) programme has now been dovetailed with the implementation of the RTE Act, 2009. Provision of requisite infrastructure, etc. required under the RTE Act, 2009 is being processed through the SSA Project. After the revision of the elementary school cycle, proposals are being finalised to provide one additional class room for stand-alone primary schools. Further, expenditure to be incurred for training of all untrained teachers, provision of uniforms and textbooks to all children at the elementary level and provision of special services to the differently abled children, have been assessed and required assistance will be sought from the Centre.

Under Mid Day Meal Programme, the Centre has approved the deployment of over 17254 cook cum helpers at the rate of ₹1000/- p.m. as remuneration and so far, 14201 cook cum helpers have been appointed, to improve the quality and regular frequency of meals. Funds have been released for the construction of 5768 kitchen sheds, out of which 3719 are completed while 2049 are in progress. This phase is targeted to be completed within the current financial year.

The Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan at the Secondary School level aims at ensuring zero drop-out and sustaining retention of school going youth at the Secondary levels besides bringing qualitative change in the utility and efficacy of the school curriculum and improving the infrastructure. Toward this end, the Rastriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) State Project Office and District Project Offices have been established. 28 Government secondary schools have been provided with grants under different components, while 25 Upper Primary Schools have been selected for upgradation to secondary schools.

In view of the statutory qualifications prescribed under the RTE Act, 2009, imparting qualification to In-Service teachers has become a priority. Untrained teachers have therefore been identified for distance learning and all in-service teachers are expected to attain necessary qualifications by 2015. A new scheme for imparting the Diploma in elementary education to pre-service teachers in the seven (7) District Institute of Educational and Training (DIETs) of the State has been recently launched.

In the field of Higher Education, Government is closely coordinating with NEHU to meet the demand and aspirations of the students. In addition, the State has approved setting up often (10) Private Universities by legislative enactment to cater to the emerging need for professional, technical and vocational education in the State. Steps to regulate their functioning through appropriate legislation have been initiated to ensure quality education. The temporary campus of NIT Meghalaya is expected to be inaugurated in the current year. Construction of the new Polytechnic at Williamnagar has also commenced.

The Government is also committed to the welfare of the teaching and student community. The enhancement of grant to the seven (7) Ad hoc aided colleges has been announced recently. Efforts to improve the quality of education by increasing grant-in-aid for teachers in Government Aided Schools through appropriate investments are also on the anvil. Despite resource constraints, the State Share of 20% to UGC Scale college teachers has been released. The online management system for merit cum means scholarship has been fully operationalized. Provincialisation of four colleges has been expedited to encourage students to enroll in Post Graduate Courses in the smaller Districts, and to improve the current enrolment scenario in higher education. It is to be mentioned that the improvement of educational standards should be viewed as a means of providing high end employment opportunities to the youth.

Health & Family Welfare

32. The State has come a long way in improving the health facilities and health status of the people. However, there are still a number of hurdles which need to be overcome to achieve the desired objective of Health for All. To cope with the prevalence of cancer cases in the State, the Government is constructing the Cancer wing in Civil Hospital, Shillong and the work is in progress. To address the shortage of Nursing Staff, the State, will set up four more Nursing Schools in the State. A new building at Ganesh Das Hospital Shillong, is being constructed to help ease the congestion, and a full-fledged state of the art ICU has been setup under NEC Scheme. Another ICU at Tura Civil Hospital is expected to be functional soon. Steps to improve the Shillong Civil Hospital have been taken and the Casualty department would be made functional. The Government will continue to strengthen and expand the programmes initiated under the National Rural Health Mission so that effective Health care at individual, household and community level is attained. The various Disease Control Programmes are being implemented with renewed vigour. To cater to the health needs of women and children, numerous activities under the Reproductive Child Health & Universal Immunization Programme are undertaken, and improvement of facilities at the institutions being improved.

Setting up Medical College is the priority of this Government, and the process for setting up one Medical College in Shillong on PPP Model and another on the Government Sector, at Tura is in progress. MCH & Family Welfare Programme caters to the health needs of women & children. For

reduction of Maternal Mortality Rate, mechanism has been developed to increase Ante Natal & Post Natal Care coverage. State was categorized as C category State, low prevalence but vulnerable in the field of H.I.V activities. Integrated Counseling and Testing Centre has been set up in all the District Headquarters and in some private Hospitals. Licensed Blood Banks at Pasteur Institute, Nazareth Hospital, K.J.P. Synod Hospital, and Military Hospital in Shillong, Tura Civil Hospital, and NEIGRIHMS caters and provide safe and adequate Blood and Blood products. The Blood Component Separator Unit has been approved and will start functioning soon. With this facility, the Blood Bank will be able to provide different components of blood. To Strengthen Disease Surveillance and Outbreak Response, training of Doctors and Staff is conducted from time to time. National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme is an umbrella programme for prevention and control of Vector Borne Disease and is an integral part of NRHM. To reduce prevalence of common ailments among school going children, School Health check up Programme is being initiated from the CHC level for which activities like training of school health teams, holding of school festivals etc. To reduce expenditure among the poor, essential Medicines are procured in adequate quantity and are available to vulnerable sections of the society such as BPL and APL. In order to improve the health status of urban poor, Urban Health Centres have been set up i.e. 12 in Shillong, 2 in Jowai, 1 in Nongstoin and 3 in Tura. These Centres are fully functional and equipped with manpower, and medicines. Ayurvedic-Wing were set up in all Districts hospitals to promote alternative system of medicines. Proposal for setting up of 10 bedded AYUSH Hospital in Ri-Bhoi District is under consideration by the Centre. Cataract Surgeries are being performed freely by latest technique and for School Children too, treatment is being carried in the school itself and free spectacles given to the student. Intensive enrolment coverage of BPL family under Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana programme is being taken up in all Districts.

Social Welfare

33. Various Social Welfare programmes for women, children, physically handicapped, juvenile delinquents, the aged and infirm are being continued. Under the ICDS, 39 rural and 2 urban ICDS Projects with 5115 Anganwadi Centres have been providing services such as non-formal pre-school education, supplementary nutrition and health check up. Kishori Shakti Yojana for improving nutrition of adolescent girls and their health promotion is being implemented in 4 Districts. The Integrated Child Protection Scheme is being implemented for providing safe and secure environment to children who are in need of care and protection as well as those in conflict with Law. Three Observation Homes, two at Shillong and one at Tura, for keeping children who are in conflict with law and one Shelter Home for girls at Shillong have been set up. A State Resource Centre for Women under the National Mission for Empowerment of Women has been sanctioned by the Centre and it is in the process of implementation. The Indira Gandhi Matritava Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY), a Central scheme, is being implemented in East Garo Hills on a pilot basis. It provides for conditional cash transfer for pregnant and lactating mothers. The Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls - SABLA, is under implementation in East Khasi Hills, West Garo Hills and South Garo Hills. A Scheme under the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities & Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act 1995 provides grants for purchase of uniforms, books and conveyance allowance to 498 disabled students and unemployment allowance to 26 physically handicapped persons. Vocational training to 69 physically handicapped and scholarships to 868 physically handicapped students was extended during the year. Financial Assistance for Medical Treatment of the Aged is being provided to 454

destitute aged persons and is being continued. Financial Assistance to voluntary organizations for the welfare of women and children will continue. The State Government has also framed its own scheme for extending assistance to widows, destitute, infirm and disabled individuals belonging to small and marginal families.

Sports & Youth Affairs

34. The Department of Sports and Youth Affairs has focused on activities for the uplift of sports persons in the State. The Department has also facilitated the process of streamlining all Associations and Federations at the State level as sports promotion is primarily the responsibility of the various State level Sports Federations which are autonomous.

There are 75 ongoing schemes of which 58 have been completed during the current year. Under the Special Plan Assistance, additional infrastructures of Outdoor Stadium at Nagrasket, Bandar Raja, Mini Outdoor stadium at Rabukong, and construction of sitting gallery and playground at Monabari in Garo hills are going on. The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India, has also sanctioned under Urban Infrastructure scheme, laying of Synthetic Athletic Track at INS Complex, Polo. The detailed project reports for a Stadium at the Shillong and Ampati are being formulated and expected to be completed soon. Government is also contemplating to provide artificial turf infrastructure at Tura and Jowai during during 2012-13.

The 2nd North East Youth Festival under the aegis of Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports were successfully organized in Shillong from, 7th – 9th April, 2011 to showcase the rich cultural heritage and display talents of the North East. The State Team participated in the Annual North East Games 2011 at Dirang in Arunachal Pradesh in 10 Game disciplines and secured 32 Gold, 28 Silver and 40 Bronze Medals. On the occasion of National Sports Day on the 29th August, 2011, 151 Sports persons were felicitated with cash incentives as they had brought laurels to the State in the Regional and National Championships.

The year 2012 being the Year of the Youth will be celebrated with year-long programmes on Sports and Youth Development Programmes and State wide programmes would be held to tap hidden talents in the rural areas and give exposure to better training and Capacity Building to empower the local youths. Panchayat Yuva Krida Aur Khel Abhiyan (PYKKA) a Government of India flagship programme with an aim to provide basic sports infrastructure and equipments at the Panchayat Level and encouraging Sports and Games in rural areas through annual Sports Competitions and providing exposure and advance training for talents youths to excel at the National & International events is being implemented in right earnest. Competition, Acquisition and operational grants have been released to all the districts for the purpose.

The Department has focused on the training of its Sports personnel and has sponsored eligible candidates for training in Physical Education and Sports Coaching so that the State does not face a dearth of qualified technical personnel. The Sports and the Youth Policies of the State are in the final stages of formulation and are expected to be approved soon.

Labour

35. Employment & Employability Delivery Systems are being improved through the setting up of new Industrial Training Institutes, Upgradation of existing Industrial Training Institutes and implementation of Skill Development Programmes. During the 12th Five-Year Plan, target is set for training 16,000 people annually through 4 Major Schemes viz, Craftsmen Training Scheme, Apprenticeship Training Scheme, Skill Development Initiative Scheme and Short-Term Job-Oriented Courses. Further, modernization of employment exchanges through the Employment Exchange Mission Mode Project of the Centre will be taken up during the 12th Plan period. The implementation of various Labour Acts and Rules will continue. Two Plan Schemes i.e. strengthening of the Directorate and District Labour Offices and Establishing of Labour Welfare Centres are being implemented in the current year and these will continue in 2012-13. Under PPP mode the Government has taken initiatives to train the educated unemployed youth and generate various crafts and employment.

Housing

36. State Government has been implementing the Rural Housing Scheme under which construction assistance in the form of roofing materials are given to the houseless poor. This scheme will be implemented in a transparent and effective manner.

Arts & Culture

37. The Arts & Culture Department through the Institute of Arts and Culture conducted free training classes to students in the field of traditional music and dance as well as western music and took part in different cultural activities in and outside the State. The extension of Capt. Williamson Sangma Museum at Shillong is expected to be completed shortly and Department will continue to develop and upgrade it with assistance from Victoria Memorial Hall and Indian Museum Kolkata. The Department proposes to construct Amphitheatre in Shillong, Tura and Jowai for promotion of cultural performances in the three Districts. District Arts and Cultural Societies have been set up in various Districts of the State and the Department will promote and encourage cultural activities in all Districts through these societies set up under the respective Deputy Commissioners.

Information & Public Relations:

38. With the implementation of the Right to Information Act, it has become very important to disseminate information on policies and programme of the Government through schemes like Special Interactive Programme, distribution of Government advertisements to newspapers and publication of magazines and journals. With the purpose of improving its reach, Government is in the process of installing Wireless Mass Notification System in some District and Sub-Divisional Headquarters and as well as setting up of an Information Cell. Further, the Government will continue to project and promote a positive image of the State at the National and International level by taking part in the annual India International Trade Fair (IITF) and other such Fairs. The Journalist Welfare Fund has been constituted to provide financial assistance to local working journalists in the State in times of need. To upgrade the professional capacity and provide exposure to the journalists of the State, steps will be taken for assisting them for capacity building programme like workshops, seminars and exposure trips outside the State.

General Administration Department (GAD)

39. Construction of Governor's Guest House at Tura is in progress, works on New Meghalaya Houses at Vasant Vihar, New Delhi, and Commercial-cum-Office and Residential Complex at Russel Street Kolkata is nearing completion. Construction of the State Convention Centre in the premises of Hotel Pinewood is almost completed. This will cater to activities like Conferences, Seminars, Cultural programmes including lodging. On completion, it can be utilized for National and Regional events to carry out Conferences/Seminars and also to attract tourists to the city. To improve facilities in the districts, various projects have been taken up. The Circuit House at Nongstoin has been completed and commissioned in December, 2011. The Construction of Circuit House annexes at Nongpoh, Baghmara are in progress. Extension of Jowai Circuit House will be taken up soon. Rates for occupation of rooms in Meghalaya Houses and Circuit Houses have been revised in keeping with the increased cost of living. Government will continue with the schemes for the welfare of Ex-servicemen, widows and their dependants and destitute Ex-servicemen. For the construction of Directorate's Rest House-cum-Office at Shillong an amount of ₹42.43 lakhs has been sanctioned and another Rest House and Office Complex at Tura for ₹43 lakh is under consideration.

Personnel

40. During last six years since the enforcement of the RTI Act, the public response to the Act was encouraging. It is observed that a wide range of applicants belonging to different backgrounds, have exercised their right to seek information and this trend is increasing. This indicates that the people are aware of their rights and of the existence of the Act, and this is a positive development. The State Information Commission has compiled and prepared the Annual Report every year which is comprehensive and detailed report of the activities undertaken by the public authorities and the State Information Commission thereof. Implementation of the Act has so far been smooth without any threat or interference to the Information seekers and the Whistleblowers.

Meghalaya Administrative Training Institute (MATI) is the focal Institution intended to provide support and to carry out training and capacity building for enhancing the performance of public servants. With the setting up of the Disaster Management Cell within the Institute, training programmes on Disaster Management are regularly conducted for Government Officials, NGOs, traditional heads, and other functionaries. Intensive training programmes under 'Training for All', an initiative of the Government of India, has been initiated in 5 districts in the Education Sector. As an initiative to enhance capacity building of the State Civil Service Officers through in-service training, the Government has deputed a number of officers to Yashwantra Chavan Academy of Development Administration (YASHADA), Pune, and the Management Development Institute, Gurgaon. Exposure Visits were also included where the trainees were exposed to first hand learning from various success stories, implementation of flagship programme, Urban Development, Rural Development, etc.

Revenue and Disaster Management

41. Government has given much stress and galvanised the strategy for Disaster Management through Response and Preparedness. The District and State level Emergency Operation Centres have been

completed and Capacity Building activities on Disaster Management as per Award of the 13th Finance Commission are being implemented. Activities include Training on Disaster Management preparedness, Mock Drills, Preparation of District, Block, Village and City Disaster Management Plan. Various IEC materials on disasters have also been widely distributed. Main Streaming Disaster Resistance aspects into development plan and schemes have been initiated. Scientific analysis on Hazard Risk Vulnerability of the State is being initiated under the GOI-UNDP Disaster Risk Reduction Project. The State Disaster Response Fund for financing relief to the people affected by natural calamity has been constituted.

Election

42. National Voter's Day was celebrated on 25th January along with the rest of the country with an appeal to all citizens who have completed 18 years of age and eligible to vote, for enrolling their names voluntarily in the electoral roll. Since the State will go to the polls during the early part of next year, it is expected that there will be two summary revisions of the electoral rolls during the year. Wide publicity during the revisions would be made to ensure that all the eligible voters will be covered to achieve the goals of the Election Commission of India "Greater Participation for a Stronger Democracy". The State has already achieved 100 % of photo coverage in the electoral rolls with EPIC and the same would be maintained.

Law

43. Separation of Judiciary from Executive is being done in East Khasi Hills by empowering the existing District Judge and Judicial Magistrates First class and Munsiff of Shillong Judiciary as Additional DC and Assistant to DC respectively. Other districts will follow as soon as qualified person are available. Eight persons have already been appointed to Grade III Judicial Service and process for advertisement of existing vacant posts is being taken up with Gauhati High Court. Identification of land for Subordinate Judiciary Building is continuing. The Meghalaya Litigation Policy, 2011 for strengthening Judiciary and reducing pendency and delay of cases has been adopted. As there has been expeditious disposal of the cases by the Fast Track Court at Shillong, Tura, Jowai these have been extended till 31st March, 2015. Special Court for trial of offences against women and children, especially rape cases, will be started at Nongstoin very soon, and such Courts will also be set up in other Districts as required.

Civil Defence & Home Guards

44. The Meghalaya Home Guards & Civil Defence personnel are trained & deployed with the State Police & Civil Administration for law & order duty. They are also deployed with different agencies & Government Departments of the State on security duties Special attention is given in imparting training on Disaster Management and Search & Rescue Teams are raised for relief, rehabilitation & rescue operation in case of emergency. Recently these personnel have been deployed to assist victims affected by the natural calamities in 2011 at Tura, and the job performed by them was exemplary.

Prisons

45. Prisons Department has taken up steps for rehabilitation and reformation of offenders by providing vocational training of the prisoners in carpentry, candle and cane furniture making, knitting, vegetable farming etc. to enable these inmates to earn their livelihood. The Department will continue to enhance the security system in prisons through improvement of the jail infrastructure and installation of various foolproof security devices.

Printing & Stationery

46. In the current year, a Branch Office of Printing and Stationery was set up at Jowai. Plant and Machinery have been upgraded at the Government Presses, located at Shillong and Tura. Further, the Government Press at Shillong was equipped with the four colour offset printing machine which would be able to undertake multi colour printing works.

I have, in my address, attempted to give an overview of the Plans and Programmes of my Government as also specific achievements in certain sectors. My Government would seek the whole-hearted cooperation of the Hon'ble Members of the House, and the society at large, for bringing about faster, equitable and balanced development in the State of Meghalaya. We should emerge as a State that is modern, progressive and inclusive in all the aspects of its functioning.

**JAI HIND
KHUBLEI
MITELA
THANK YOU**