ADDRESS

to the
Tripura Legislative Assembly

by
DEVANAND KONWAR
H. E. the Governor of Tripura

Tuesday, February 18, 2014
Hon’ble Speaker and Hon’ble Members,

It gives me great pleasure to address the 5th Session of the 11th Tripura Legislative Assembly. I convey New Year greetings and best wishes to the Hon’ble Members of the House.

2. I request all the Hon’ble Members of the House to join me in paying tribute to the men in uniform who made the supreme sacrifice in the call of duty as well as the civilians who lost their lives in the mindless violence unleashed by the terrorists, extremists and other divisive forces.

3. I pay tribute to Nelson Mandela, the iconic freedom fighter of South Africa, who passed away on 5th December 2013. Mandela is a symbol of long and tough struggle for freedom against one of the most oppressive regimes in the world. In Mandela’s demise, the world has lost one of its finest sons who fought lifelong against apartheid.

4. I congratulate the new Government of People’s Republic of Bangladesh formed in January, 2014 after the general elections in that country. I hope that the newly formed Government of Bangladesh will further strengthen the bonds of friendship between India and Bangladesh leading to early resolution of the unsettled issues for the benefit of both the countries.

5. Hon’ble Members are aware of the economic condition the country has been going through. The global economic crisis which began in December, 2007 due to the inherent flaws of the Capitalist System has not abated. The United States and Euro Zone countries have been registering low growth rates. Due to the pressure on their finances caused by the economic crisis, these countries have resorted to cutting down expenditure on social sector in the name of reducing
the fiscal deficit adversely affecting poorer sections of the society further aggravating their deprivation. The reduced public expenditure have led to large scale unemployment leading to the declining purchasing power of the people. The economic crisis and its ill effects have only further widened the already prevailing economic inequalities in income and wealth in United States and other Capitalist countries. There has been widespread unrest manifested by the protest movements in Europe and other countries due to the inequitable and unfair system resulting in concentration of income and wealth in few hands.

6. India has been badly affected by the economic crisis and growth rate of the Indian economy at 4.5 % during 2012-13 as per provisional estimates, is much below the targeted growth rate. The mounting fiscal deficit and the efforts of the Government to reduce public expenditure by axing programmes meant for common people have only increased their burden. The year 2013-14 has seen unusual inflationary pressures in the economy. The policy of the Government of India to increase the POL prices regularly had aggravated the inflationary pressures in the economy.

7. The policies of the Government of India continued to be against the common people. The rise in the prices of unsubsidized gas cylinders and ceiling on the subsidized gas cylinders of 9 per year had put a heavy burden on the people. The protests of common people in various parts of the country have compelled the Central Government to increase the Cap to 12 cylinders per year per family.

8. Hon'ble Members are aware of the series of corruption scandals that have rocked the country during the last five years. There have been spontaneous protests against corruption from 2011 onwards.
The relentless struggles have finally led to the passage of the Lokpal Bill in Parliament. Hon’ble Members are aware that a Lokayukta is already in place in Tripura much before the passage of the Bill in the Parliament. I reiterate my Government’s continued commitment to highest forms of transparency.

9. India with people inhabited by different faiths had always been known to be a society with tolerance and fraternity. However, there have been disturbing developments in some parts of the country with fundamentalist forces raising their ugly heads. With elections round the corner, these divisive forces are expected to abet and aggravate the communal strife in the country. The mixing of political interests with the religion is one of the root causes of communal disturbances which disturb the very foundations of our democratic and secular fabric. It is in this context that the various States and the Central Governments should deal firmly with communal disturbances. Hon’ble Members are aware that there have been no communal disturbances in our State due to vibrant democratic atmosphere, effective law and order enforcement and appropriate development strategy.

10. Tripura has been recording a healthy economic growth. The Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) at current prices has gone up from Rs. 20,981.74 Crore in 2011-12 to Rs. 23,854.70 Crore during 2012-13. The economy of the State has grown by 8.40% both in 2011-12 and 2012-13 which is higher than the growth of national economy. The per capita income at current prices has risen from Rs. 54,077 in 2011-12 to Rs. 60,963 in 2012-13.

11. My Government has been endeavouring for realizing the goal of complete financial inclusion. As against 107 Centres identified for opening of branches of the Banks, the Banks have selected 82 new
Centres of which 43 branches including 38 ultra small branches have so far been opened. The State has also identified 170 Centres for opening new ATMs in rural areas. My Government has been laying special emphasis for improving Credit Deposit Ratio (CD Ratio) in the State. With the constant pursuasion of my Government, the Credit Deposit Ratio upto December, 2013 has gone upto 39% from 33% last year. My Government will continue to persuade Banks to improve the Credit Deposit Ratio to at least 50% so that adequate credit would be available to the needy sectors like Agriculture and allied activities, Industries, Medium, Small and Micro Enterprises (MSME) and various self-employment programmes.

12. My Government has taken several measures for improving the efficiency, ensuring transparency in the collection of taxes through implementation of Mission Mode Project for computerization of Tax Administration with an outlay of Rs. 730.41 lakhs under the project, e-registration, e-return, e-permits were introduced during 2012-13. It is proposed to implement other modules like e-CST, e-Refund to render more citizen centric e-Services.

13. Hon’ble Members are aware that the State has faced unprecedented financial difficulties due to unfavourable award of the 13th Finance Commission on account of under estimation of Salary and Pension liabilities of the State. The 14th Finance Commission which was constituted by the Government of India for recommending devolution of funds for the five year period from 2015-16, visited the State in November, 2013. The State Government had submitted its Memorandum highlighting the concerns of the State including provision of adequate funds on account of salary, pension and other liabilities, besides sharing of Tax Revenues of the Centre and grant of deficit gap
grant. The State had urged the 14th Finance Commission to follow State specific or regional norms for estimation of the expenditure instead of following a uniform normative approach. The State had also identified State specifics needs for covering gaps in infrastructure.

14. Maintenance of law and order is an essential pre-requisite for the continued development of the State. The law and order situation in the State has been well under control and the activities of the insurgents have been further restricted. The crimes committed by the militants have shown a significant decline during the year. General crimes have also declined over the previous year. The State has opened two new police stations besides approving creation of two Police Sub-divisions at Amtali and New Capital Complex for further streamlining the work of the police. The State is also taking steps for further recruitment of Police constables and raising three more India Reserve Battalions. In order to effectively control and reduce motor vehicle accidents, patrolling on the Highways have been started for surveillance. Steps have been taken to control traffic accidents including improvement of the traffic system in the State gradually by using modern gadgets, vehicle recovery van, motor-cycle patrol, etc. The State Government has taken several measures for modernization of police force by provision of Highway Patrol Vehicles, communication equipment, investigation kits, surveillance system equipment and computerization of data base management, etc. These measures are strengthening the police force for investigation of criminal cases and for ensuring safety and security of the people.

15. During the year, construction of new police station buildings have been taken up at Chowmanu, Raishyabari, Silachari, Sepahijhala, Sonamura, Kailasahar, P.R.Bari and Khedacherra. During the year, the
Central Training Institute (Home Guards and CD) was declared as a nodal institute for imparting practical training on disaster management. Adequate security coverage to the various central agencies, PSUs, etc. have ensured that the developmental work went unhindered.

16. The State has taken special measures for dealing with crime against women. Besides improving investigation, filing charge-sheets on time, special meetings in each and every Gram Panchayats and Village Committees were held to discuss about crime against women and motivate people to tackle crime against women. The role PRAYAAS has been rightly recognized and efforts have been taken to further expand both in terms of quality and the number.

17. Despite a lull in the extremist activity, there is no cause for complacency as the insurgents are still having their camps across the border with assistance from the ISI and other fundamentalist forces. I assure this House that my Government is alive to the problem and will continue its struggle to negate the evil designs of the insurgents and maintain law and order.

18. There are 35 Fire Service Stations in Tripura with three shift duty system. The Government has plans to open nine new Fire Service Stations besides taking up construction of Fire Station Buildings in a phased way.

19. The new Kendriya Sansodhanagar was opened at Bishalgarh from 1st November, 2013 with provision to accommodate 963 prisoners. The newly built Kendriya Sansodhanagar spread over 32.62 acres is double that of the existing Central Jail at Agartala with all the facilities. The newly constructed Sub-Jails at Gandacherra and Chaillengta are completed and likely to be operational by March, 2014. Construction
work on Sonamura Sub-Jail has started. Steps have been taken for construction of new District Jail at Jarultali, Kailasahar. The Government has also decided for shifting of Dharmanagar Sub-Jail and construction of a Jail at Ambassa. The Government has decided for construction of Sub-Jail at Santirbazar for which land has been identified while the work on identification of land for construction of Sub-Jail at Teliamura is in progress.

20. My Government had always given special emphasis to develop an improved road network in the State. All efforts have been made to extend all weather road connectivity up to Panchayat level. Under New Connectivity, out of the total sanctioned length of 2,997 kms, the work was completed on 2,464 kms. Besides, 500 kms of roads have been improved under renewal proramme of Bharat Nirman. During this year, sanction has been accorded for new connectivity of 643 kms of roads besides improvement of 463 kms under up-gradation. Replacement of timber bridges with RCC, steel bridges or RCC culverts has been continued under which 70 timber bridges were replaced by permanent bridges or culverts during the year. Under State Plan, metalling and carpeting of 125 kms, construction of 8 RCC bridges and 11 Box/Slab culverts were completed during the year 2013-14 while work is in progress for construction of 85 bridges. There have been constant efforts by the State Government for improving the existing National Highway. It has been decided that the National Highway-44 would immediately be converted to 2-lane which will subsequently be made as a 4-lane road. The partial responsibility for improvement of National Highway will be taken over by the State PWD from April, 2014. My Government has taken up with Government of India for development of an alternative National Highway from
Kukital to Sabroom and for expeditious completion of the work on Manu-Simlung road (NH-44A).

21. Transport sector in Tripura has witnessed tremendous growth. The persistent efforts of my Government have resulted in construction of huge network of roads connecting remote villages of the State. A good connectivity is essential pre-requisite for economic development. Tripura had long suffered on account of poor connectivity and my Government had made continuous efforts for improving connectivity.

22. Construction of Agartala-Udaipur sector of new railway line is in full swing and is expected to be completed by March, 2015. The work on the Udaipur-Sabroom sector is also in progress and the revised target for completion is December, 2015. The work of broad gauging the railway line at Lumding-Silchar section has to be speeded up by the Railways. My Government has been taking up in various forums for allocation of adequate funds by the Railway Board to complete the ongoing railway projects as per target date.

23. As the Hon’ble Members are aware, Agartala is the second busiest airport in the North East next only to Guwahati. My Government has been taking up with the Government of India for up-gradation of Agartala airport as an International Airport. As per the revised Master Plan of the Airports Authority of India, the State Government has provided 71.99 acres of land to Airports Authority of India for up-gradation of Agartala airport. The issue of operationalization of the Kailasahar airport has also been taken up and the Airports Authority of India is working on various alternatives for extension of Kailasahahr airport.
24. I am happy to inform that the modern Inter-State Truck Terminus at Madhavbari is completed and has since become operational. The new Inter-State Bus Terminus at Dharmanagar has also been completed and become operational. Construction of motor stand at Khumulwng and Sonamura are likely to be completed shortly while the construction of Kanchanpur and Kalacherra Motor Stands are in progress. An institute of Driving Training and Research Centre is being set up on Public Private Partnership mode for which land has been identified near NIT at Barjala, Jirania and the works are in progress. For development of inland waterways in Howrah and Gomati rivers, a detailed project report has been prepared by RITES. The project has been posed for funding to the Government of India and awaiting sanction.

25. My Government has taken steps for increasing the generation of power in the State due to which the State has become surplus in power generation during the year. The present peak hour demand of the State is 240 MW. Construction of one unit of 21 MW GT Set at Rukhia has started generation from August, 2013. The first unit of the Palatana Power Project has started commercial operation from 4.1.2014. The share of the State from the first unit of Palatana OTPC Project is 98 MW. As a result of this, the State is surplus with 50 MW in peak hour and 100 MW in off peak hours. However, evacuation of power continued to be a problem due to transmission corridor constraints. The State is pursuing with Government of India for sharing surplus power with Bangladesh. Monarchak Gas Thermal Power Plant of 104 MW is in advanced stage of completion and the new 46 MW NEEPCCO Project at Ramchandranagar has also been taken up. For proper power evacuation, 400 KV High capacity power sub-station at Suryamaninagar is nearing completion. Construction of Double Circuit transmission line from Suryamaninagar to Bodhjungnagar and 79-
Tilla Grid Sub-station, Agartala was taken up, out of which Suryamaninagar to Bodhjungnagar double circuit 132 KV line is completed. A number of major transmission lines and sub-stations have also been taken up. Almost all consumers of Tripura State Electricity Corporation Ltd. are covered under computerized energy billing system. The electrification work of villages in Tripura for providing access to electricity for all households is in progress. Projects for electrification of 569 un-electrified habitations with more than 100+ population have been sanctioned and the works are proposed to be completed over the next two years. The reduction of transmission and distribution losses is engaging the attention and several steps have been taken.

26. The economy of the State is mainly agrarian. My Government has given utmost importance for self-sufficiency in foodgrain production through the perspective plan which was implemented from 2000-01 to 2011-12. The perspective plan implementation has resulted in significant improvements in increase in cropping intensity, use of Hybrid seeds, introduction of Hybrid varieties of paddy, attainment of optimum seed replacement, conjunctive use of chemical fertilizers along with Bio-fertilizers and promotion of Systemic Rice Intensification (SRI) in paddy. The State could maintain foodgrain production at 7.25 lakh tons during 2012-13 despite uneven rainfall during Aush and Aman seasons. Per hectare productivity of Rice has also gone up to 2800 Kg per hectare during 2012-13 compared to 2711 Kg per hectare during earlier year. During the year, the State had embarked on crop diversification in seasonal Rice Fallows through cultivation of pulses, oil seeds, vegetables and other crops.
27. I am happy to share with this august House that the State has been honoured with the Commendation Award for 2012-13 in recognition of its efforts in foodgrain production and productivity. It is for the third year in succession that the State has been bestowed with "Krishi Karman Award" / Commendation Award for its efforts in foodgrains production. The State is endeavouring to bring 73,000 hectares under crop diversification by 2016-17. The Government is aiming to improve the productivity with use of Bio-fertilizers, increasing the use of chemical fertilizers consumption from the current 55 Kg per hectare, application of lime for amelioration of acidic soils and creation of irrigation potential in the years to come.

28. Hon'ble Members are aware that agro-climatic conditions of the State are suitable for growing a variety of horticultural crops. The State had implemented a 10-Year Perspective Plan from 2002-2012 for increasing the production of horticultural crops. The target set in the Perspective Plan has been fully realized with production of horticultural crops rising to 13.58 lakh tons. During the year, an additional area of 6,857 hectares was brought under different fruit crops and 2,714 hectares have been brought under vegetable crops. As part of crop diversification, 360 hectares have been covered under summer vegetables. The State could produce 80 lakhs quality seedlings both in the Government and private sector. Intercropping with remunerative crops in the area allotted to the forest dwellers under RoFR Act was taken up in 717 hectares. The State has taken up cultivation of Potato in non-traditional areas with State support. It is targeted to increase the area under Potato to 9000 hectares and to bring 225 hectares additional area under commercial flower cultivation during 2014-15. In different watershed development projects, 500 hectares of area have been treated for conservation of soil and water.
29. The role of animal resources for increasing the nutritional level of the population needs no emphasis. The production of milk, meat and eggs is 1,18,042 MT, 31,793 MT and 15.65 crores during 2012-13 as against 1.10 lakhs MT of Milk, 25,000 MT of Meat and 16.50 crores of Eggs in 2011-12. The State has achieved self-sufficiency in meat production. However, there has been a negative growth in egg production due to several episodes of Avian Influenza (Bird Flu) causing a reduction in the per capita availability of eggs from 45 eggs during 2011-12 to 42 eggs during 2012-13. It is expected that the production of milk would reach 1,21,259 MT and eggs to 18.63 Crores during 2013-14. The State has intensified its efforts for genetic up-gradation of local cattle by artificial insemination. To further improve the meat production potential, the State is implementing the genetic improvement of local pigs through cross breeding and supply of male piglets to the RoFR beneficiaries. In order to boost the production of eggs, the State is strengthening the rural poultry farming though 9,000 backyard poultry units during the current year. The State would continue to give priority to the development of animal resources so as to attain self-sufficiency.

30. Fish play an important role in ensuring food security of the population of the State as it is a major constituent of the daily diet of 95% of the population. As a result of effective implementation of various programmes related to pisciculture, the total fish production have gone up to 58,655 MT in 2012-13 as against 53,350 MT during 2011-12 registering an increase of 9.94%. The per capita availability of fish from own sources have gone up to 16.33 Kgs in 2012-13 as against 15.06 Kgs during 2011-12. An area of 1219.32 hectares of new water area have been created benefiting 7,800 fish farmers and about 1,254 hectares of water area was brought under scientific
pisciculture during the year 2012-13. Considering the immense potential in the sector, the Government has continued its thrust for implementation of need based developmental activities during 2013-14 to increase the fish productivity for making per capita availability of 17 Kgs at the end of 2013-14 and ultimately 20 Kgs per capita by the end of 12th Plan.

31. My Government has been making sincere efforts for management of natural resources for ecological stability for socio-economic security of the people of the State. Forest cover of Tripura is more than 76% of the total geographical area which is far higher than 21.05% for the country as a whole. So far, 946 Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMC) have been formed to involve the forest dependent communities in the management of natural resources which covers a project area of 2,60,210 hectares. JICA project launched in 2007-08 with project cost of Rs. 366 crores spread over 8 (eight) years is under implementation for rehabilitation of degraded forest and for generating livelihood opportunities for the people. Another externally aided project namely Indo-German Development Cooperation Project is being implemented with Rs.142 crores spread over 6 (six) years covering project areas in Ambassa, Manu and part of the Kanchanpur Forest Divisions. The project targets 48,608 households in 104 villages for development through land based income generation activities through JFMCs.

32. For enrichment of degraded forests, the Government in the Forest Department has implemented afforestation with species having local demand as well as industrial and commercial use. During 2012-13, plantations were raised in 18,757 hectares. During 2013-14, plantations of over 17,900 hectares have been raised as against target
of 17,622 hectares. Flowering in Muli bamboo has posed a serious threat to bamboo resources. It is with this view that the State has taken up bamboo plantations of over 7,231 hectares during 2012-13. Bamboo plantation programme is going on aggressively during the current year. The State has constituted a State Medicinal Plant Board and raised 211 hectares of medicinal plants during last year. So far, during the current year 280 hectares of medicinal plantations have been raised. The State has also taken up the programme of River Bank Plantation and Roadside Plantations in a big way. During last year, the State had created 800 hectares of water area through efforts of the Forest Department and it is targeted to create water area of 673 hectares during 2013-14 for which works are in progress.

33. As Hon’ble Members are aware, Sepahijala and Trishna Wildlife Sanctuaries have their place in the tourist map of the State. Since eco-tourism offers immense scope in the State, Forest Department is developing eco-tourism sites in urban and rural areas.

34. As the State is mainly agrarian, provision of irrigation was given utmost importance by my Government. The State had already brought an area of 1,11,744 hectares of the total cultivable area of 2,55,241 hectares under irrigation upto March, 2013. A Five Year Action Plan has been taken up to bring 31,571 hectares additional area under irrigation. The work on the Khowai Medium Irrigation Project has been completed while the work of Gomati and Manu Medium Irrigation Projects are nearing completion. Water Resources Department of the State has added 1220 hectares of area under irrigation during 2012-13. Emphasis is also being laid to complete remaining works of canals and branch canals of Manu, Gomati Medium Irrigation Projects. It is targeted to bring 5070 hectares under irrigation besides constructing
6 kms of anti-erosion works during 2013-14. My Government would continue efforts to bring more area under irrigation by the concerted efforts of PWD (Water Resource), Agriculture, Forest and R.D. etc. Departments.

35. As a result of implementation of Vaidyanathan package, Credit societies like LAMPS, PACS, Farmers’ Service Societies have now become debt free and are eligible to get loan for starting economic activities. So far 102 LAMPS and PACS have started credit business. The Common Accounting System has already been introduced for bringing transparency and uniformity in the accounting system of the Societies. LAMPS and PACS have started working as Agent of Tripura State Cooperative Bank to attain the status of Independent Credit Disbursing Institutions. Banking counters have been opened by 41 LAMPS/PACS to mobilize deposits and for other credit activities. It is indeed happy to note that the Tripura State Cooperative Bank has wiped out its accumulated losses and obtained the licence from the Reserve Bank of India for banking operations. An Integrated Cooperative Development Project is under implementation in South Tripura District to develop cooperative infrastructure and business activities of the Cooperative Societies.

36. The State has started last year, the Rs. 2/- per Kg rice programme for BPL families. The State scheme for distribution of BPL and AAY rice at Rs. 2/- per Kg introduced from 1st August, 2012 has been continued benefiting 2.95 lakhs BPL and AAY families. My Government has also continued the distribution of APL, rice at BPL issue price of Rs. 6.15 per Kg for 1.61 lakhs adhoc BPL families during the current year with State subsidy of Rs.12.80 crores. My Government has been procuring sugar from open market for distribution under
Public Distribution System (PDS) from September, 2013 with State subsidy at Rs. 3.83 crores pursuant to the decision of the Central Government abolishing levy obligation on the Sugar Mills. During the year 4,250 MT new storage space has been created so far and the construction of 20 new Food Godowns with total storage capacity of 22,500 MT has been going on and is expected to be completed by next year. The Mission Mode Project of computerization of Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is going on with effect from November, 2013. In the first phase, digitization of all 9.65 lakhs Ration Cards data has been started. TPDS Web Portal has also been developed and hosted for placing PDS information in the public domain. During the current year 2013-14, ten new POL agencies and two new LPG agencies have been set up in the State. The State is taking initiative for opening six more new LPG agencies and fourteen new POL agencies by March, 2014.

37. Tripura is known for its effective implementation of rural development programmes. Tripura ranked first again in 2012-13 with 87 days of average mandays generation under MGNREGA against a National average of only 42.43 mandays. The wage rate under MGNREGA was increased from Rs.124/- to Rs.135/- with effect from 1st April, 2013. Under Indira Awas Yojana (IAY), 7,594 houses were constructed during 2012-13. It is targeted to construct 25,446 houses under IAY during 2013-14. Under the Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY), 1,898 new Self-Help Groups (SHGs) have been formed during 2012-13 as against the target of 1850 SHGs. SGSY programme has been phased out by the Government of India during 2013-14 and a new programme namely, National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) and North East Rural Livelihood Project (NERLP) have been introduced. For implementation of NRLM, my Government has formed the Tripura
Rural Livelihood Mission. The programme in its first phase, is going to be implemented in three blocks of Ambassa in Dhalai district, Matabari in Gomti district and Satchand in South Tripura district. The Mission will be extended gradually to other districts. The NERLP is a World Bank funded project and intends to support investment in two districts of erstwhile West Tripura and North Tripura districts in our State. The Project aims to improve rural livelihoods, especially that of women, unemployed youth and the most disadvantaged. The Tripura State Support Project on SHGs, (TSSPS) which is under implementation from 2009-2010, covers provision of micro-finance in the form Startup soft loan and need based training. It is proposed to provide Startup soft loan of Rs.400 lakhs during 2013-14.

38. Potable drinking water for all the people of the State is one of the key objectives of my Government. It is proposed to cover all ‘Not Covered Habitations’ with Drinking Water source during 2014-15. 4576 Schools/Madrassas and 9304 Anganwadi Centres have already been provided with Drinking Water source and the remaining Schools and Anganwadi Centres would also be covered during this year. Efforts are also being made for 100% coverage under Rural Sanitation Programme in a period of three years while all Schools and Anganwadi Centres would be provided toilets by 2014-15 itself.

39. I am happy to inform this august House that my Government has upgraded Agartala Municipal Council into Agartala Municipal Corporation and 10 Nagar Panchayats namely – Mohanpur, Bishalgarh, Melagarh, Khowai, Teliamura, Udaipur, Belonia, Ambassa, Kailasahar and Dharmanagar into Municipal Councils with effect from 21.1.2014. Panisagar and Jirania have also become Nagar Panchayats. The work of Sewerage Project and Water Supply Project in North Zone of Agartala
is under implementation under JNNURM and is expected to be completed by March, 2014. The Road and Storm Water Drain Projects of Belonia, Kamalpur and Covered Drain at Ranirbazar have been completed while that of Kailasahar is in progress. Under Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme, 2180 dwelling units out of 2460 units have been completed and the work is in progress on the remaining. The construction of Town Hall at Sabroom has been completed while that of Kamalpur, Udaipur, Sonamura and Ambassa are making good progress. The work on the construction of Town Hall at Kailasahar has also started. Several measures have been taken for improving Solid Waste Management and Transportation System in the Agartala Municipal Corporation area. The implementation of underground drainage scheme taken up under the Thirteenth Finance Commission Award in Agartala Municipal Corporation is in progress and would be further speeded up.

40. In order to cover all the homeless people in rural and urban areas in the State with housing by 2016-17, the State has started a Tripura State Government Housing Scheme for providing houses for the homeless people belonging to BPL families. Under this scheme, assistance of Rs.75,000/- per house is provided. During the current year, it is proposed to take up 9217 houses in the rural areas to provide housing assistance to the homeless BPL families and an assistance of Rs.75,000/- per house to meet the expenses of construction in urban areas for 2000 houses during 2013-14. The State is proposing to continue with the programme in the years to come.

41. Tripura has a history of vibrant Panchayati Raj system even before coming into force the 74th Constitutional Amendment. The State recently created 13 new Blocks taking the total Blocks to 58. The
districts. The Tripura Bamboo Mission has been working for integrated development of Bamboo sector. The State Food Processing Mission has been set up to implement the scheme under the National Mission on Food Processing. Incentives are also being given for promoting ventures under Pradhan Mantri Employment Guarantee Programme (PMEGP) and Swabalamban which is a State programme for promotion of self-employment. The subsidy entitlement ceiling under Swabalamban have been increased to Rs.50,000/- from Rs.25,000/- from the current year. With the State becoming surplus in power generation, it is expected that several downstream projects would come up. The State had entered into an MoU with ONGC and Chambal Fertilizers & Chemicals to form a Joint Venture for setting up a Urea Fertilizer Plant in Tripura for which preparatory steps are under way. For Skill development of the youth through multi-faceted training in engineering and non-engineering trades, thirteen Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) are functional in the State. In addition, four new ITIs are being set up at Kamalpur (Chulubari), Bishramganj, Teliamura and Longtharai Valley (Nalkata). The existing ITIs are being upgraded into Centres of Excellence in specific trades. An Integrated Check Post at Agartala - the first of its kind in the Indo-Bangladesh Border, has started functioning with modern infrastructure facilities for exports and imports from November, 2013. The work of construction of Bridge over River Feni will also be taken up for which PWD was entrusted with the work. Four Border Haats for which consent of Bangladesh Government has been received will also be operationalized. The border trade with Bangladesh has increased from Rs. 4.12 crores during 1995-96 to Rs.343.00 crores during 2012-13.

48. Handlooms, Handicrafts and Sericulture offer immense potential for generating employment opportunities in the State. Under the
Integrated Handlooms Development Scheme (IHDS) under implementation in 24 Clusters, 800 Weavers have been covered during 2012-13 and 480 weavers would be covered during the current year. Under the Special Handloom Development Project, in operation in 16 different Clusters, 960 weavers would be covered during 2013-14. Cane and bamboo handicrafts of Tripura are considered to be one of the best in the country for their exquisite designs, wide range of products and artistic appeal. Handicrafts artisans have organized into Clusters and so far 19 such Clusters have been formed. My Government is also setting up an Urban Haat in Agartala with the aim of providing a platform for regeneration of local handicrafts products. For expansion of Sericulture, seven Sericulture Clusters and four Mulberry Rearers Cooperative Societies have been formed, taking the total to 18 Clusters and 16 Societies. To develop skill of the beneficiaries with modern technology, a project for setting up State Art Sericulture Training Institute at Champaknagar in West Tripura district with NEC funding is going on. With various measures, it is expected that Tripura Silk will gain prominence in the days to come.

44. My Government proposes to take up a comprehensive Perspective Plan to provide improved health care services to the people of the State by enhancing the capacity of the staff, institutions and better planning and monitoring of services with standards, protocols and quality. As part of the Perspective Plan, my Government will strive to improve the capacity for strategic planning at the State level and will take measures to improve institutional capacity for service delivery in all health care services of Tripura. My Government has also decided to start Tripura Medical Service Corporation to procure, store and distribute medicines and equipment to all the healthcare institutions in the state.
45. Health and Family Welfare Department, delivers preventive, curative and promote health care services. The goal of the Department is 'Health for All'. More than 90% people of the State are taking Health Care Services from the Government Health Institutions. Development of health infrastructure, development of human resources and accountability of service providers is the main approach for 2014-15. The State Government is committed to set up 125 PHCs in the State and one Health Sub-Centre in each ADC Village/Gram Panchayat. At present, 83 PHCs are functioning, 23 PHCs are under construction and 4 more PHCs have already been taken up in the current year. So far, 883 Nos. of Health Sub-Centres were set up and work is in progress in 125 Centres. During the year, 583 Nos. of Blood Donation Camps were organized and a total of 22,680 (99.0%) units of blood were collected through voluntary donations. There is a remarkable achievement in institutional deliveries which now stands at 84% of total deliveries.

46. My Government is planning to start 3 year new Post Graduate Degree courses in Pathology, Anatomy, Physiology and Chest & T.B at Agartala Government Medical College and enhance the number of seats in the existing P.G. Courses. With the addition of these new courses, a total of 43 seats for Post Graduate Degrees will be available in the State.

47. My Government has been attaching utmost priority for development of human resources and it is in this context the State has expanded the network of schools to 4,795 including 382 higher secondary schools. The number of schools with science stream have gone upto 188 with enrolment of 7,91,368 students including 49,348
students at the Higher Secondary (+2) Stage. Sarba Siksha Abhiyan Rajya Mission is under implementation for universalizing elementary education under which all the children in the age group of 6-14 years are being brought under primary schooling and expanding the schooling facility to all the students in inaccessible and un-served habitations. Text Books are being provided free of cost to the students of both primary and upper primary levels. Government is also giving Grant of Rs.400/- for Class IX and X\textsuperscript{th} and Rs.600/- for XI and XII\textsuperscript{th} Class students belonging to BPL families. Out of school children are being brought to the schooling duly identifying such children besides enrolling children with special needs. Rashtriya Madhyamik Siksha Abhiyan (RMSA) is also being implemented under which infrastructure of Higher Secondary Schools is being taken up. The drop out ratio at the primary level has declined to 2.90\% at primary stage and 7.03\% at Elementary stage. Inspection of schools is an essential requirement to maintain quality of education. My Government is envisaging various steps for strengthening the inspection machinery. I am happy to inform this august House that the State has attained 95.16\% literacy rate registering the highest literacy rate for any State in the country due to implementation of State sponsored Special Adult Literacy Programme and Sakshar Bharat Programme. The Continuing Education Programme for the neo literates is being continued. A new scheme of supplying bi-cycles to girl students belonging to low income groups with annual family income not exceeding Rs.1.25 lakhs has been taken up during 2013-14 to distribute 50,000 bi-cycles to girl students studying in class-IX to XII. It is hoped that this scheme will go a long way in improving enrolment and reduction of dropout rate of girl students.

48. As already informed to the Hon’ble Members earlier, a 10-Year Perspective Plan has been finalized for the development of Higher
Education in the State. Infrastructure was strengthened in the existing General Degree Colleges at Dharmanagar, Kailakshahar, Fatikroy and Udaipur by construction of new academic and administrative buildings. Construction of new buildings for government Degree Colleges at Khumulwng, Amarpur, Khowai and Women’s College, Agartala have also been taken up. Construction of College of Teacher’s Education at Kumarghat is nearing completion and it is expected to start the college from next academic session. The Polytechnic at Fulkumari, Udaipur has been operationalized from 2013-14. The work of construction of new building for District Library at Dhalai and Public Library at Chhailengta are in progress. Braile Library was started in the district library at Udaipur and Kailasahar. The State Museum has been set up at Ujjayanta Palace and is evolving into a place of tourist importance in North East India. It is proposed to create more galleries in the State Museum. A Rs.10.00 crores World Bank assisted Technical Education Quality Improvement Programme-II has been sanctioned for skill development of Tripura Institute of Technology. The State is actively considering starting a State University at Agartala for which preliminary steps are under way.

49. The Social Welfare and Social Security Programmes are being given high priority by my Government. The universalization of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) has been operationalized with 9,911 Anganwadi Centres under 56 Nos. ICDS Projects in the State. Of these Anganwadi Centres, 9,244 Anganwadi Centres are having pucca buildings. Steps have been taken for provision of drinking water, sanitation in all the Anganwadi Centres and it is expected that all the Centres will be provided with water and sanitation by June, 2014. Under the Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls being implemented in four districts of West Tripura, Khowai,
Sepahijala and Dhalai 1,60,102 Adolescent Girls are being covered during 2013-14. The Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY) under implementation in Dhalai district 3073 Nos. of pregnant and nursing mothers are benefited during the current year. Under the 23 Nos. Social Security Schemes being implemented in the State, 2,53,256 people are covered with social security pensions. Out of these, 20 schemes are being funded by the State Government. During this year, a new scheme for giving pension to Deserted Women belonging to APL families has been launched. The rate of social security pensions has been enhanced from Rs.400/- to Rs.500/- in 15 Pensions schemes and Rs.500/- to Rs.700/- for pension scheme to persons who lost 100% eye sight belonging to APL families. The Department has operationalized a Toll Free Women Helpline with telephone No.1091.

50. Development of human resources requires the all round development in which the Sports and Games play an important role. My Government is alive to the need for creation and strengthening of sports infrastructure in the State to nurture the budding talents. During the year, the Government has taken up construction of District level Sports Complex at Kailasahar under Unokoti district, Udaipur under Gomati district and Kekmacherra in Dhalai district. The up-gradation of Netaji Subash Regional Coaching Centre (NSRCC) is taken up with the construction of Indoor and Gymnasium Halls. Up-gradation of Regional College of Physical Education at Panisagar was also taken up. The new stadium in Swami Vivekananda Maidan, Agartala was completed and opened. The State has successfully hosted Under-17 National School Football Tournament at Agartala during January this year. Smti Dipa Karmakar was selected for the Indian Gymnastic Team Selection Camp to participate in Asian Games and Commonwealth Games. She again bagged five Gold Medals in individual events during
the year. Shri Debojit Das bagged Gold Medal in the National level Youth Festival, 2014 in Punjab in Manipuri Dance.

51. My Government attaches utmost importance to the welfare of workers. The minimum wages under 21 scheduled employments have been revised during 2013-14. The Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) for unorganized workers under BPL category, has been under implementation throughout the State for providing health insurance upto Rs.30,000/- per annum per family. Under this programme, 5,05,327 families have been covered with issuance of Smart Cards for cashless health care facilities. Under the Asanghatita Shramik Sahayika Prakalpa (ASSP), workers engaged in 19 unorganized employments and 23 Self-employed occupations in the age of 21-55 years have been covered. So far, 71,949 unorganized workers have been enrolled since inception under Asanghatita Shramik Sahayika Prakalpa (ASSP). My Government has enhanced the beneficiary contribution and Government matching share under ASSP from earlier Rs.25/- to Rs.50/- per month.

52. My Government has always been focused for the development of Scheduled Castes and Other Backward Communities. The Government has announced a Special Package for the socio-economic development of the Scheduled Castes and OBCs to be implemented over a period of five years from 2013-14 upto 2017-18 providing for time bound benefits for allotment of land, provision of housing, provision of potable drinking water, electricity, educational development, vocational training for skill development and income generating activities. The Department has been implementing pre-matric scholarship, post-matric scholarship besides offering boarding house stipend. Pre-examination coaching and pre-recruitment coaching for
competitive examinations is also being provided to the SC and OBC students. It is expected that the measures for development of infrastructure and socio-economic benefits will lead to all round development of the disadvantaged sections like SCs and OBCs.

53. Welfare of Scheduled Tribes (ST) has always been uppermost for my Government. Several initiatives have been taken for the socio-economic, cultural and educational development of the tribals during 2013-14. Top priority had been accorded for educational development of the Scheduled Tribe children and to reduce Dropout Ratio from primary to Madhyamik levels. During 2013-14, 62,757 ST students were provided assistance under various schemes like pre-matric and post-matric scholarship, boarding house stipend, supply of free text books, merit awards, etc. Tripura has been in the forefront in implementation of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006. So far, 1,20,686 forest dwellers (individual claims) have been vested with forest rights involving 1,69,615 hectares of land. A Five Year Special Development Package for the infrastructure, socio-economic and educational development of the tribals has been taken up for implementation from 2013-14. Reang community has been recognized as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group in Tripura. Various developmental schemes are being implemented for the welfare and development of this vulnerable tribal group.

54. The development of religious minorities has been a matter of high priority for my Government. My Government has announced a 28-Point Special Package for welfare of minorities for implementation from 2013-14 to 2017-18 covering physical and social infrastructure as well as economic development of the minorities. A Multi-Sectoral
Development Programme for taking up the activities like construction of roads, extension of electrical lines, provision of drinking water, irrigation, housing, construction of market stalls, community halls, Madrassas, and Health Sub-Centres, etc. in 12 Blocks and one Nagar Panchayat have been identified. A number of schemes have been taken up for offering pre-matric scholarship, post-matric scholarship, special incentives for minority girl students and boarding house stipend have been started by the State besides implementing Centrally Sponsored Schemes for pre-matric scholarship, post-matric scholarship, merit cum means scholarship for the minority students during the current year.

55. The Revenue Administration has been strengthened with the administrative restructuring during 2011-12. During the year 2013-14, 3755.39 acres of Government Khas land has been allotted in favour of 3,133 homeless as well as both homeless and landless families. During the current year 2013-14, an amount of Rs.4615.57 lakhs has been sanctioned for implementation of the Border Area Development Projects (BADP) with which infrastructure projects are being taken up in 25 identified border Blocks in the State to fill the critical gaps. The National Land Records and Modernization Programme (NLRMP) is being implemented in the State for digitization of land records. More than eleven lakhs Khatians are uploaded on Website and the copies of the Khatian are being supplied to the citizens through online system from Facilitation Centre and other Computerized Land Record Centres. The infrastructure for setting up State Data Centre has been completed. The process for online registration of deeds has been completed in 15 Sub-Registry Offices.
56. Disaster preparedness and disaster management is an important requirement particularly in view of the fact that Tripura is located in high risk zone. The National School Safety Programme is being implemented in 400 schools in five districts of erstwhile West Tripura and North Tripura districts. A new State Emergency Operation Centre is functioning round the clock in the State. The Disaster Management Plan have been updated upto the village level and 38 types of critical equipments for disaster management have been procured during the year and placed at 15 Sub-divisions, 6 TSR Battalions and Central Training Institute, Gokulpur. As part of the disaster preparedness, a large number of officials, security personnel, volunteers, school and college teachers, medical and para-medical staff have been trained.

57. My Government has been making continuous efforts for strengthening the justice delivery system in the State. The High Court of Tripura started functioning from 25th of March, 2013. The District Court at Ambassa, Belonia and Dharmanagar are expected to start functioning shortly. The infrastructure development of these Courts is nearing completion. The Courts of Judicial Magistrates at Gandacherra and Chailenga are also expected to be started from 2014-15. The State Legal Services Authority has been providing legal aid besides organizing Lok Adalats.

58. My Government is committed for development of scientific temper and also for promotion of non-conventional energy sources. Foundation of the Vigyan Gram was laid and the construction work has started. The portal of the State Spatial Data Infrastructure has been developed. Under Renewable Energy sector - the Remote Village Electrification Programme, 23 villages covering 2,242 families at Silacherri, Karbook, Amarpur, Muungiakami and Mandai Blocks were
provided with solar home lighting system. Capacity building programmes have been taken up for farmers, officials and Self-Help Groups on organic farming, integrated pest management, post harvest management, etc.

59. Tourism has immense potential to emerge as a vibrant sector in the State. The infrastructure and facilities in the tourist destinations have been improved significantly. During the current year, a new Directorate of Tourism had been set up for giving focused attention to the development of tourism. Construction of building for establishment of the Institute of Hotel Management at Anandanagar has been taken up and is on the verge of completion. The new tourist lodges namely – New Sagarmahal Tourist Lodge at Melagarh, Raima Tourist Lodge at Jatanbari have been completed. Work of infrastructure development of Destination Development of Khowai, Old Royal Palace at Kahayerpur, Brahmakunda, Jampui Hill, Belonia (Craft & Culture Centre at Rajnagar) and Chabimura are in progress. The Government has also decided to take up development of Neermahal and Rudrasagar involving renovation and retrofitting of existing Palace, construction of Ring Road along the existing alignment of water reservoir at Rudrsagar and construction of Open Air Theatre, etc. My Government is also promoting eco-tourism and will spare no efforts to convert Tripura into an attractive tourist destination by making use of the potential.

60. Hon’ble Speaker and Hon’ble Members of this august House, I have briefly presented the approach, achievements and future plans of my Government. My Government is committed for the all round development of the State by focusing on the physical and social infrastructure and creation of equal opportunities for all sections of population. My Government has shown exemplary commitment for
honesty and transparency in public affairs. I am confident that my Government will receive fullest cooperation from all sections of the people and from the Hon'ble Members of this august House in its endeavour.

With these words, I seek your leave with the hope that the deliberations will be fruitful for the people of the State.

JAI HIND