



GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

ADDRESS

BY

SHRI N. N. VOHRA

GOVERNOR JAMMU & KASHMIR

TO THE

JOINT SESSION OF THE LEGISLATURE

THURSDAY, 28TH FEBRUARY, 2013

Hon'ble Chairman of the Legislative Council, Hon'ble Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and Hon'ble Members of the State Legislature.

1. I am pleased to address the Joint Session of both the Houses of the State Legislature today, to provide an over-view of my Government's policies and endeavours to promote the development of the State and the welfare of all its people.
2. Looking back at the achievements of the Government in the last four years, it can be said that it has lived up to the promises it made to the people of the State at the time of assuming office. In the context of the worrying situations which prevailed during 2008-2010, the past two years have been marked by hope and development.
3. For introducing efficiency, transparency and accountability in the delivery of public services to the people, the Government has

enacted several landmark legislations, among which are the J&K Right to Information Act, Public Services Guarantee Act and the State Vigilance Commission Act. I believe that the objective of attaining the welfare goals of the State will keep reminding the Government of its responsibilities and obligations towards our people and continuing its devoted endeavours to achieve peace, progress and prosperity for the State.

4. We must thank the people of our State for displaying exemplary courage and maturity which made a major contribution in paving the way towards the restoration of normalcy. Our Police and the Security Forces have exhibited patience and professionalism in discharging their duties in trying circumstances, without any faltering in respecting and protecting the rights of the people.

5. Every segment of our society has benefitted from the restoration of peaceful

environment. Our educational system, which had been adversely affected, has moved back to fruitful functioning. Both the Hon'ble President and the Vice President of India, who visited us last year, had occasion to observe the functioning of our institutions of higher learning and expressed their appreciation of the work being done by our scholars. Our businessmen, traders, artisans and the working class, all of them have reaped the dividends of peace. If we continue to make sustained progress, I believe that the day is not far off when our State will be among the top in the country.

6. The incidence of violence has been progressively declining in the last two years. Terrorist-related incidents decreased from 188 in 2011 to 118 in 2012, thus marking a decline of over 37%. Similarly, 31 deaths of civilians in 2011 came down to 15 in 2012 and against 33 security personnel who lost their lives in 2011 only 14 were killed in 2012. We owe

grateful thanks to the Police and Security Forces whose untiring vigil along the borders has resulted in considerable reduction in the attempts at infiltration.

7. My Government has been seriously concerned about the protection of human rights. By permitting the use of only non-lethal weapons for controlling law and order disturbances, the strict enforcement of the recently devised Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) has been successful in ensuring against collateral damages. The heads of the various Security Forces are regularly briefed about the importance of upholding human rights and this objective has been reinforced by enacting the "Protection of Human Rights Act".

8. Keeping in view progressive improvement in the situation on the ground the foot prints of Security Forces are being gradually reduced. In this context it may be noted that, as of now,

1430 Government and privately owned buildings, including hospitals and school buildings, have been got vacated and restored to their original owners and the process to vacate the remainder buildings is ongoing.

9. My Government has taken various initiatives towards the upgradation of infrastructure at various migrant camps for improving the living conditions of the migrants. The camps are provided with internal roads, schools, community halls, shops, medical centres, banking facilities and cremation sheds. 240 new two-room tenements have been completed at Jagti; cash relief has been enhanced from ₹1250 per head per month to ₹1650, subject to a ceiling of ₹6600. 1554 posts under the Prime Minister's Employment Package have been referred for selection by the recruiting agencies.

10. The State Government is conscious that the creation of employment opportunities in the

Government and private sectors is one of its foremost duties. Steps have been taken to strengthen the selection agencies for fast-tracking recruitment in the Government departments. After constituting the J&K Skill Development Mission, the State Government has laid down a Skill Development Policy for the 12th Five Year Plan and it is planned to train over nine lac persons and hone their skills during the period 2012-13 to 2016-17. Several other initiatives taken towards the creation of jobs and the provision of self-employment avenues have yielded encouraging results. The growing success of the Sher-i-Kashmir Welfare and Employment Programme for the Youth has encouraged the Government to add new features to it. Varied incentives are being provided under other schemes, so that our youth and other sections of society are gainfully employed. Over the next 5 years one lac youth will be trained in the organised sector under the 'Himayat' programme which was launched with the handing over of placement offer letters to 1060 trainees. Side by side, a unique

opportunity has been provided to the youth under the 'UDAAN' programme for developing their skills and, consequently, providing employment. Under 'UDAAN', as of now, 25 corporates from all over the country have conveyed their commitment to upgrade the skills of 25000 youth from J&K.

11. A record arrival of tourists was registered last year and foreign countries have begun to withdraw adverse travel advisories so that their citizens can visit J&K. In 2011, about 9.00 lac tourists visited the State, including 32,000 foreigners. The number of domestic tourists grew to 12.20 lac in 2012, with an increase of 16% in foreign tourist arrivals. In 2012, 6.21 lac persons from different parts of the country undertook the Shri Amarnathji pilgrimage and the number of pilgrims who visited Shri Mata Vaishno Devi crossed the one crore mark.

12. The Government secured the highest ever Plan outlay of ₹7300 crore for the current

financial year. Side by side, providing an allocation of ₹1000 crore for Centrally Sponsored Schemes, the highest ever, the Government would access over ₹4000 crore of central funds. This would provide us the opportunity of delivering a capital expenditure of about ₹12000 crore during the current financial year, which would contribute to a significant increase in economic growth and a qualitative up-gradation of the social and economic infrastructure. As a result of the substantial capital investment made in the State, the State economy grew at 7%, as compared with 6.87% in the previous year. It is planned to take the GSDP growth to 8% as soon as possible.

13. The Government is committed to further improving the revenue collection system in the State. During the current financial year the State has recorded 22.28% increase in revenue realization. It was found that the Lakhanpur Toll Post, which handles more than one lac

vehicles in a month, importing and exporting goods and materials, did not have adequate infrastructure. To resolve this problem the Government established the Toll Plaza, built at an estimated cost of ₹42.02 crore, to facilitate the ever increasing traffic at Lakhanpur. The Toll Plaza was inaugurated recently.

14. 19 Treasuries are under construction in the State and the computerization of all the treasuries, under the Mission Mode project of the Union Ministry of Finance, is being pursued vigorously. Besides, the computerization of General Provident Fund accounts, undertaken in a phased manner, has also resulted in significantly improving the maintenance of these accounts.

15. The switch over to the ways & means regime of the Reserve Bank of India, after the liquidation of a huge overdraft of more than ₹2500 crore, was a landmark step taken by the Government to move towards fiscal

consolidation. This step has borne positive results and during the year 2011-12 the State Government not only saved an interest payment of approximately ₹225 crore to the J&K Bank but, instead, earned an interest of approximately ₹11 crore.

16. In furtherance of its commitment to strengthen the justice delivery system in the State the Government has created 36 Courts of Special and Additional Mobile Magistrates and 1 Court of Additional District and Sessions Judge. The establishment of these 37 courts will make an important contribution towards the provision of easy and accessible justice in the State. The Government has also established a new regime of Institutions, Authorities and Committees to ensure that the marginalized and needy people, particularly women, get access to justice. The Government is contemplating the creation of a number of fast track courts, which would include courts for the disposal of cases pertaining to offences against

women. 426 Lok Adalats were held and 8633 cases were disposed of last year. 7 Alternate Dispute Resolution Centres in the District Courts of Srinagar, Anantnag, Baramulla, Shopian, Jammu, Kathua and Udhampur are under construction. Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme, 'Development of Infrastructural facilities for the Judiciary', an amount of more than ₹30 crore has so far been provided for infrastructure development and work is in progress at 23 places.

17. My Government is concerned about the frequent occurrence of road accidents, particularly in several hilly stretches in the State. A major thrust is being given to implement schemes for improving road connectivity to inaccessible areas for ensuring equitable development. 3174 kms of roads were black topped or macadamized during 2012. In the State Plan, an amount of ₹300 crore was approved for the development of roads in the projectization mode and 117 works are

expected to be completed during 2012-13. Under the 'Special Bridges Programme', 567 ongoing and 81 new bridges have been taken up at a cost of ₹1096.63 crore during the current financial year. 144 works are under execution under the projectized plan of 'Non-functional Buildings'. Similarly, under NABARD and CRF, a number of road connectivity schemes and projects have been completed or are under completion.

18. Under the Prime Minister's Reconstruction Programme, two main projects, i.e. the Mughal road and the Narbal-Tangmarg road are nearing completion. The four laning of 24.5 kms of the Narbal-Tangmarg road has been completed. On the Mughal Road Project, about ₹600.00 crore have been spent so far. Under the PMGSY, 1161 kms of roads, connecting 143 habitations, were completed upto December, 2012, with an expenditure of ₹337.00 crore.

19. Four laning of the National Highway, 1-A, is an important project. So far, out of 400 kms,

114 have been completed and work on the remaining 286 kms is in progress.

20. The Government has established the Jammu and Kashmir State Road Development Corporation with a view to providing a fillip to the construction of roads and allied infrastructure in the State.

21. Provision of access to good healthcare is a high priority of the Government. At the all India level, in recognition of the improvements recorded in the health sector, the State has attained the top rank for the provision of healthcare and an award was presented to the Chief Minister in the States' Conclave in 2012. Most of the health indicators have improved significantly and many of them are better than the national average. Plan investment in the health sector in the current financial year is of the order of ₹232.65 crore. In addition, ₹270.76 crore have been earmarked under the National Rural Health Mission. 12 hospitals have been sanctioned by the Government of India and the

first instalment of central funding has already been released. The construction of a super speciality hospital has been completed at Jammu and the installation of equipment is in progress. Construction on a similar project is under way, in full swing, at Srinagar.

22. The construction of a 200-bedded additional block in the Lal Ded Hospital at Srinagar has been completed to ease the pressure of the very large number of patients who visit this hospital. An OPD block and a 'Sarai' have also been made functional in this hospital. 200-bedded maternity hospitals, one each at Jammu and Srinagar, have been approved by the Government of India with Central funding and the construction work has been taken in hand by the R&B Department. The OPD block of the 50-bedded 'Unani' Hospital at Shalteng has since commenced functioning. The Government of India has released an amount of ₹16.00 crore for the establishment of the 'Unani' College in Kashmir

and the 'Ayurvedic' College in Jammu. An additional support of about ₹269.00 lac has been provided for improving the neo-natal care services at the G.B. Pant Hospital, Srinagar. Various schemes, like the '*Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram*' for providing cashless service to pregnant ladies and neo-nates and "*Tracking of Pregnant Women and Children*" for securing real time data, have been launched. The Government has designated 2013 as the "Save the Girl Child" year and initiatives have been taken to improve the sex ratio in the State. An Advanced Genetic Centre of Clinical Research has been established in the Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences for conducting basic research in genetic diseases. The Institute has procured the required equipments for the specialized treatment of various diseases, for which the patients had earlier to go outside the State.

23. The Government is committed to harness the enormous hydel resources with which the

State is blessed. Our State has the capacity to generate more than 20,000 MWs of power, against which only 2461 MWs have been harnessed so far. Besides fast tracking the completion of ongoing projects in the Central sector, a multi-pronged strategy has been evolved which focuses on new hydro-electric projects being set up under the State sector, under the joint venture mechanism and under the Independent Power Producers Mode. For strengthening the power sector, projects with an additional capacity of more than 6,000 MWs have been identified for being taken up during the 12th Five Year Plan.

24. Under the State sector, the process of executing 7 hydel power projects of Baglihar-II, New Ganderbal, Lower Kalnaie, Parnaie, Kirthaie-I, Dah and Hanu, with a total installed capacity of 1036 MWs, has been initiated by the State Power Development Corporation. The 45 MW Nimoo-Bazgo project in Leh district is being commissioned in the next financial year.

The 240 MW Uri-II HEP is likely to be commissioned by the NHPC during the current financial year. Consequent upon the signing of an MoU by the J&K SPDC with the NHPC and Power Trading Corporation on the formation of a Joint Venture Company (JVC) for the development of three hydroelectric projects in the Chenab basin, with a total capacity of 2,120 MW, the JVC has tendered out the Pakal Dul HEP (1000 MW) under the IPP BOOT. Action has also been initiated for the implementation of the Ratle HEP whose capacity has been revised from 690 MWs to 850 MWs.

25. Under the flagship programme, "Restructured Accelerated Power Development Reforms Programme", the reduction of transmission and distribution losses by 3% per annum, for a period of five years, is envisaged through the adoption of IT-enabled technological interventions. The improvement of the T&D infrastructure is being further extended to 283 towns and other areas of the

State at an estimated cost of ₹1245 crore. Under the PMRP, two grid stations, with an installed capacity of 70 MVA, have been commissioned and two other grid stations have been augmented from 120 to 200 MVA during 2012. A Grid station at Delina, Baramulla, has been completed and is being commissioned shortly. Two more grid stations, one each at Shopian and Batal Manwal, are being completed during the current financial year.

26. Energy needs are also being supplemented by harnessing solar energy. 20,000 households have been provided solar lights under the 'Remote Village Electrification Scheme' in far-flung un-electrified villages. As a backup lighting facility, 20,000 solar home lighting systems have been distributed to the general public. The Government is promoting solar water heater systems with 60% subsidy from the Centre. This will lower the burden of electricity required during peak hours. 32 Solar Power Plants, with capacities ranging from

5 to 20 KWP, have been installed in different health institutions for providing backup facilities for the operation theatres and for running different equipments. The installation of 69 solar plants, with an aggregate capacity of 1090 KWs, is in progress, and by the end of March 2013 all the district and sub-district hospitals will have been covered.

27. The importance of education cannot be over emphasized and the Government has accorded top priority to it. In the last decade (2001-2011) the State registered a remarkable increase in total literacy, from 50.52% to 68.74%, and an equally impressive improvement in female literacy, from 43% to 58.01%. Development of infrastructure in schools has also received special attention. While 99 additional accommodation units have been completed and provided to High and Higher Secondary Schools, 194 are at different stages of construction under the State Plan. Similarly, 122 multi purpose science

laboratories and 179 toilet blocks have been constructed in various High and Higher Secondary Schools. 495 school buildings have been constructed under District Plans. Under the '*Beti Anmol Scheme*', 6242 girl students of class XI have been covered and over ten lac children are benefitting under the '*Mid Day Meal Scheme*'. Free textbooks have been provided to nearly 8 lac students and uniforms have been given to more than 10 lac children at a total cost of ₹58.00 crore. 4710 posts have been created for 526 upgraded schools under the '*Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan*'.

28. During the last financial year, 11 New Degree Colleges had been sanctioned under the State Plan and an equal number of colleges under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme, "*Establishment of Colleges in Educationally Backward Districts*", have been made functional in make shift accommodations.

29. For the establishment of the Central University of Kashmir, at Ganderbal, 3321

kanals of land were transferred to the Higher Education Department and 3000 kanals of land have been transferred for the establishment of the Central University of Jammu. Meanwhile, both the Central Universities have been made functional in make shift premises. An amount of ₹117 crore was sanctioned by the UGC, during the last financial year, for infrastructure development of seven Jammu University campuses at Bhaderwah, Udhampur, Reasi, Kathua, Ram Nagar, Poonch and Kishtwar. An amount of ₹85.00 crore was sanctioned by the UGC during the current financial year for infrastructure development of off-site campuses of the Kashmir University at Anantnag, Baramulla, Leh, Kargil and Kupwara.

30. The Government believes in enabling the youth to acquire technical expertise for enhancing their employability. In this connection, several job-oriented courses have been introduced in the University of Kashmir. In the financial year 2012-13, 18 new

Polytechnics were established in temporary premises. The construction of 6 Polytechnic Colleges has been awarded to JK PCC and 10 will be constructed by the Public Works Department. While construction work is in progress in 6 districts, e-tendering has been initiated for the other works. Additional academic blocks are being constructed at Government Polytechnic, Jammu, and the building for the Food Technology Department is nearing completion at the Government Polytechnic for Women, Srinagar.

31. The construction of Industrial Training Institutes at Banihal, Bani, Nowshera and Gurez has been started under the Prime Minister's Reconstruction Programme, at an estimated cost of ₹9.33 crore. The ITIs at Kangan, Pampore, Ruhama, Lalpora, Kargil, Dharmari, Gool, Surankote, Basohli, Kalakote and Bhalessa have been taken up for upgradation.

32. As nearly 70% of the population in the State gets its livelihood from agriculture, the

Government is devoting high importance to the development of this sector. All possible efforts are being made for achieving higher productivity by tapping land resources, introducing high yielding varieties and maintaining soil fertility. The cultivation of cash and high income generating crops like saffron, honey, mushrooms, fruits, flowers and vegetables and allied activities like dairying, poultry and sericulture is being incentivized and encouraged. Development strategies have been reoriented to meet the needs of the farmers in the State.

33. An ambitious National Mission for the rejuvenation of Saffron in the State, with an investment of ₹372.18 crore, has been launched. It is expected to double the productivity and production of Saffron at the end of four years. The Chakroi Seed Multiplication Farm is being developed and upgraded at a cost of ₹30 crore in Jammu division for the production of hybrid quality '*Basmati*' seeds.

34. In the Horticulture sector, while my Government is committed to supporting a massive programme of rejuvenation of orchards and improving the root stock, thrust is also being given to post-harvest interventions. It is heartening to see the interest being shown by the private sector in establishing warehousing, cold storages and other infrastructure. The production of fruits has increased from 13.31 lac MTs during 2004-05 to 21.61 lac MTs in 2011-12 and significant benefits have started flowing to the farmers.

35. My Government is committed to ensuring irrigation facilities to increase production. During the current financial year, "On Farm Development (OFD)" works have been completed in an area of 19783 and 10512 hectares for constructing field channels and drains, respectively. Urgent steps are being taken to cover every farming family with 'Kissan Credit Card'. Upto the end of January 2013, about 3.30 lac Credit Cards had been issued.

It is expected that by June 2013, every farming family will have 'Kissan Credit Card'. Faculties of Horticulture and Forestry and a Division of Bio-technology were established in SKUAST-Kashmir in 2012-13 and SKUAST-Jammu is shortly going to establish a Faculty of Dairy Technology to boost the dairy industry in the State.

36. The Government is focussed on improving livestock in the State and creating opportunities for income generation. The SKUAST-Kashmir cloned a pashmina goat, '*Noori*', for the first time in the world by a simplified hand guided cloning technique. This success, acknowledged at the State and national levels, will go a long way in opening avenues for advanced research and improving the lot of the people who rear pashmina goats. By this success, India is counted amongst the very few countries in the world which have the expertise to produce live clones. Under the scheme '*Establishment and Strengthening of Veterinary Hospitals and*

Dispensaries', the Government of India has sanctioned 70 hospitals and 159 dispensaries, involving a cost of ₹28.87 crore, with 75% Central assistance, in the current financial year. 71 Mobile Veterinary Centres have been sanctioned, along with the creation of 214 posts. Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme, "Intensive Dairy Development Programme", the Government of India had sanctioned ₹4.74 crore for the districts of Kupwara, Poonch and Rajouri. For giving a boost to milk and mutton production, and reducing dependence on imports, the 'National Mission on Protein Supplements' is being implemented at a cost of ₹9.05 crore during the current financial year. 36,000 BPL families are being covered under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme, "Rural Poultry Backyard", by distributing two month old low input technology '*Vanraja*' birds. Panchayati Raj Institutions have been involved in the implementation of various beneficiary oriented schemes.

37. For strengthening the Cooperative movement and enhancing employment opportunities, the State Government has taken a decision to develop commercial poultry in the Cooperative Sector with funding from the National Cooperative Development Corporation. Under this scheme, 139 poultry projects have been submitted to the Central Government, out of which 36, with a block cost of ₹987.00 lac, have been sanctioned in the first phase. 17 projects have been completed and are rearing 1.10 lac birds per cycle. During the year 2012-13, 48 new poultry projects have been sanctioned. Another scheme, the "Integrated Cooperative Development Project", funded by NCDC, has been started with the objective of securing the holistic development of the Cooperative Movement. Under this scheme, Anantnag and Kathua districts have been taken up in the first phase, at a block cost of over ₹19 crore. Project reports for the erstwhile districts of Baramulla and Doda have been submitted to the NCDC. In tune with the



national policy for the empowerment of women, two Women Credit Cooperatives, at Jammu and Kashmir, operating through 36 branches and having more than 14000 members, have been registered. In the dairy sector, the Jammu and Kashmir Milk Producers' Cooperative Limited processes and markets about 40,000 ltrs of milk per day.

(38. The Government is concerned about the welfare of women, children, aged, destitute, physically challenged persons and other weaker sections of society. Under the Annual Plan 2012-13, upto the end of October-2012, ₹310 crore had been spent on their welfare. About three and a half lac old age persons, women in distress and physically challenged persons were given monthly pensions of ₹65 crore. Nearly one and a half lac such persons, falling below the poverty line, were given pensions, amounting to ₹30 crore.

39. For the empowerment of women, a State Mission Authority, headed by the Chief Minister,

has been set up to review various Central and State Government schemes and monitor progress regarding the social and economic empowerment of women, elimination of violence against them and gender budgeting. A State Resource Centre for Women, comprising experts in the area of women empowerment, is being constituted as an autonomous organization to facilitate the State Mission Authority achieving its objectives. The State Rehabilitation Council provided an amount of about ₹4.5 crore as assistance for the physical, psychological and economic rehabilitation of the victims of militancy, with special focus on widows, orphans and handicapped and aged persons, whose bread winners have been killed or incapacitated as a result of militancy.

40. For promoting education among the students of the weaker sections, which include Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Classes, physically challenged persons and national minorities, various scholarship schemes are



under implementation. ₹1.54 crore have been spent under the pre-matric scholarship scheme on 17,200 OBC students and 79,000 Pahari Speaking students have received scholarships amounting to ₹6.78 crore under this scheme. Over ₹31 crore have been spent on 2 lac students who belong to various national minorities. Under the post-matric scholarship scheme, ₹9.09 crore were disbursed among 12,000 physically handicapped students and those belonging to OBC and SC categories. Nine lac beneficiaries, under the Integrated Child Development Services, comprising children aged six months to six years, pregnant and lactating mothers, and adolescent girls, are given supplementary nutrition through 28,467 centres.

41. 19 Gujjar and Bakerwal Hostels, with an intake capacity of 1575 inmates, are being run by the Advisory Board for the Development of Gujjars and Bakerwals. In the current financial year, one PG Hostel is being established at Jammu.

were spent during 2012-13. Over 10.55 lac job cards have been issued and over 208 lac man-days of work were generated. Out of 80,016 works taken up, 35,890 have been completed.

46. For providing shelter to the homeless, over ₹51.00 crore have been spent and about 30 thousand houses have been taken up under the '*Indira Awas Yojna*'.

47. The Government of India has floated a National Rural Livelihood Mission, which shall replace the present scheme of SGSY, for which the State Mission has been constituted. Four Blocks have been selected in the State, two each in Jammu and Kashmir divisions, namely, Basohli, Chenani, Khansaheb and Wagoora, for piloting this scheme which has the objective of creating Self Help Groups and joining them into large federations, which will have their own capacity of creating capital and providing loans to the needy within the community.

48. The Government of India is now closing the '*Haryali*' project and replacing it with the

Integrated Watershed Management Programme. Under this programme all the watersheds in the State have been identified on the basis of satellite imagery provided by the Survey of India. Based on this imagery, the areas of the watersheds have been demarcated and are proposed to be developed in an integrated fashion. The goal of this scheme is to treat an area of 15.33 lac hectares in the State, involving an expenditure of ₹2500 crore upto the 14th Five Year Plan period.

49. It is the Government's commitment to provide potable drinking water to the people of the State. 532 partially covered/slipped back habitations were provided potable drinking water during 2012-13. Further, 2300 hand pumps have been installed under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme, 'National Rural Drinking Water Programme'. 387 new water supply schemes have also been taken up under this programme during the year. For ensuring quality water to the rural population, 43 Water

and push ahead with reforms in the water sector. During the current year an amount of ₹550.00 crore has so far been received from various users as Water Usage.

54. Forests play an important role in maintaining the ecological balance and environmental stability. Under the "Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA)", 5,123 hectares of degraded forest land have been targeted for treatment during 2012-13. Besides, 143 Forest Nurseries have been established all over the State under the Authority. 801 Sale Depots have been set up across the State for meeting the bona fide timber requirements of the people. To bridge the gap between demand and supply, import of timber is being encouraged by rationalizing the norms for the registration of sale depots. Under the Jammu and Kashmir State Forest Policy, 2011, the various approaches for the protection and management of forests are

clearly defined and documented. It is one of the most forward looking policies in the country.

55. Strengthening of the Public Distribution System has been on the top of the agenda of the Government. This year, for covering 18.02 lac rationed families, the Government of India allocated 63067 MTs of food grains per month to the State. 56,440 MTs of additional/ad hoc food grains were also allocated for uncovered BPL families in the current financial year. The State Government made an allocation of about 3000 MTs of food grains for uncovered BPL families in the most backward districts of Doda, Kishtwar, Ramban, Poonch and Kupwara. Also, 3300 MTs were allocated for nomadic Gujjar and Bakerwal families in the State during the current financial year.

56. In order to ensure the fair distribution of food grains, powers for overall monitoring were delegated to the Panchayati Raj Institutions

redressal of public grievances and the payment of utility bills. For ensuring transparency, e-tendering has been started.

60. Tourism in the State is on the growth trajectory. For giving it a further boost, my Government is focussing on building infrastructure and providing better facilities. During the last 4 years the Government of India has sanctioned 79 Tourist Destinations and Circuit Development Projects, worth ₹366.33 crore, and good progress has been achieved by completing 60 such projects during the said period. The Government has revised the package of Incentive Rules, from April last year, and made them more attractive. This revision is expected to encourage the private parties to invest in the Tourism sector, which is particularly needed in the hotel and tourist transport sectors.

61. For the conservation and management of the Dal-Nigeen lakes, a project, costing

₹298.76 crore, is under execution, against which ₹205.87 crore have so far been spent. The Government of India has also sanctioned ₹356.00 crore for the resettlement and rehabilitation of the dwellers in these lakes. A Wular Conservation Authority has been established to conserve and revive the largest fresh water lake in Asia. This project will be implemented in five phases, commencing from the current financial year. In addition, ₹416.00 crore shall be spent on development of infrastructure at Rakh-i-Arth. The works executed for the creation of tourism infrastructure have given a new look to the areas, surrounding the water bodies of Surinsar and Mansar. The Government has also got two projects, worth ₹9.38 crore, sanctioned from the Government of India, which are under implementation and are expected to create high end tourist infrastructure at these tourist destinations.

62. My Government is committed to providing the best transport facilities to the people. For

the convenience of the citizens, all the offices of the Motor Vehicles Department have been computerized and the department has adopted the e-governance module of '*Vahan and Sarathi*', through which driving licences and the registration of vehicles are being computerized. This will bring transparency and accountability in the system. The Civil Aviation Department has handed over 42 kanals of land to the Airports Authority of India for the expansion of the apron at Jammu airport, which will increase the parking space for six aircrafts, instead of the existing three. The apron is likely to be commissioned shortly.

63. My Government is aware of the importance of industrial growth and trade in the State. As commercial and industrial activities relate directly to the generation of employment opportunities, a cement and grinding-cum-packing unit at Industrial Growth Centre, Samba, with a capacity to manufacture 300 tonnes of cement per day, at an estimated

cost of ₹26.97 crore, is expected to be commissioned shortly. For skill upgradation and entrepreneurship development, persons belonging to different trades have been trained under various schemes. A special fund is being operated for encouraging the revival of the '*Kani Shawl*', Silk Handloom Sarees and recreation of antique '*Pashmina*' Shawls. An effective mechanism has been devised to distinguish the genuine '*pashmina*' products from fake ones, using nano-technology-enabled fusion labels. Revival of the silk factory, Rajbagh, is being undertaken with a plan assistance of ₹2.50 crore during the current financial year. For replacing the traditional carpet weaving looms, 2000 modern carpet looms, developed by the Indian Institute of Carpet Technology, Srinagar, are being distributed among carpet weavers. 10 Handicraft Clusters of different crafts are being set up in and around Srinagar. Micro Credit facilities and other assistance are being provided through various initiatives, taken by the Government. By end November, 2012,

export of handicraft products valuing ₹2281.62 crore had been registered. For housing the Industries and Commerce Department and its allied Corporations a "*Sanat Ghar*" is under construction at Srinagar. For the financial empowerment of artisans, an "Artisan Credit Card Scheme" was formulated and launched in the State with a financial ceiling of ₹1.00 lac and 10% interest subvention. The interest subvention works out to about ₹0.25 lac per artisan, over a period of five years.

64. As a confidence building measure between the two countries, cross-LoC Trade was started on 21st October, 2008. To facilitate LoC Trade, permanent infrastructure has been established on fast track basis at the Trade Facilitation Centres at Salamabad, Uri, and Chakan-Da-Bagh, Poonch, at an estimated cost of ₹8.95 crore and ₹7.95 crore, respectively, under the Security Related Expenditure and the number of trading days have been increased from 2 to 4 in the week.

65. Information Technology has proved an effective tool in the development of society and has become a driving force in economic growth. The Government has taken several important steps to introduce IT initiatives in governance. The State Data Centre, involving a cost of ₹11.00 crore under the National e-Governance Plan, likely to become operational in the current financial year, will be the central repository of databases. E-governance through mobile technology has been introduced recently for implementing the Border Area Development Plan. Many on-line facilities have been provided to the citizens, including a grievance redressal system. Further, the J&K Public Services Guarantee Act is being vigorously implemented. 69 services, in 12 departments, have been covered under this Act to enable the people to secure the required services without facing inconvenience, within a specified time frame.

66. Welfare of the employees remains an important concern of my Government. For

providing accommodation to employees, administrative approval for the construction of 400 flats at Pampore, at an estimated cost of ₹90.65 crore, has been accorded. The Government is also considering all the genuine demands of the employees.

67. The Government and the Legislature have the responsibility of fulfilling the aspirations of the people and for leading the State towards peace, progress and prosperity. They also have a vital role in paving the way for equitable and balanced growth being achieved by the State.

68. Before I conclude, I would like to convey my best wishes to all of you and hope that the deliberations during this Session will be constructive and meaningful.

Jai Hind.