

MEGHALAYA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

MARCH 19, 2010

**ADDRESS
BY**

SHRI R. S. MOOSHAHARY

GOVERNOR OF MEGHALAYA.

Mr. Speaker and Hon'ble Members,

- 1.** It is a privilege for me to once again address this August House and I extend my warm greetings to you all. In this Session, the Budget estimates for the year 2010-11 will be presented, and in the process, matters of pivotal importance related to the advancement of the State and the well-being of its people will be deliberated upon. We live in times of hope and change. I am confident that you will act with responsibility and farsightedness, and that the reputation of this House for dignity, debate and decorum will be maintained. The people have placed both trust and responsibility on us, and we must not fail them.
- 2.** My Government is deeply conscious of the growing aspirations of the people. Together, we need to strive for a higher path of growth for the State, and ensure that this growth is inclusive with the benefits reaching all sections of society, especially with the poor and the weak. We must guard against the accentuation of inequities amongst our people and between rural and urban areas and ensure that the fruits of development and growth are available to all. The road ahead is still long and hard, but I am confident that with the cooperation of all, we can overcome the challenges and march towards our goal of better and more prosperous State, and a higher standard of living for our people. Towards the task ahead, my Government will provide good

governance and a clean and responsive administration. Our scarce resources will be utilized efficiently, and the emphasis will be on performance and delivery.

Home & Political

3. Even as we look ahead, we need to dwell a little on the achievements of the past year. The State continued to be peaceful, and this is a credit, not only to the authorities entrusted with the maintenance of law and order, but also to the people. The price of liberty and peace is consent vigil, and my Government will continue to monitor the situation, and act firmly, wherever necessary. Recent developments, in the form of reports of the formation of new militant groups in the Garo Hills and the activities of Assam based militant groups along the border with Assam are a cause of concern. On the positive side, developments in our neighbouring country, against militant outfits has also impacted on the morale and capability of the HNLC and other groups. The security establishment of the State has acted swiftly to break up and contain activities of the new outfit Hynniewtrep Liberation Front (HLF) in the Khasi Hills, and Liberation for A'chik Elite Force (LAEF) in the Garo Hills. Activities of the local militant organizations like Hynniewtrep National Liberation Council (HNLC) and A'chik National Volunteer's Council (ANVC) have been substantially controlled. In respect of the ANVC, the continuing suspension of operations' agreement has created an enabling environment for peace, one that now needs to be cemented with a durable settlement that will further the process of political participation and contribute to development and progress.

My Government is concerned at recent incidents on the international border sparked off by elements of the security forces of our neighbouring country. On the one hand, assistance has been rendered to the affected people, and security measures strengthened to dissuade any such further attempts. At the same time, the matter has been taken up at the highest level with the Government of India, and we expect that the matter would be resolved in due course.

There continues to be a divergence of views on the issue of mining of uranium. Keeping in mind the need to ensure the widest possible participation in the decision making process, a Joint Committee has been set up. This Committee, which consists of experts, community representatives and NGOs will study the gamut of relevant issues and submit their conclusions and recommendations to the Government.

There are differences with our neighbouring State on the Inter-State border. The situation requires close monitoring, restraint and timely action to pre-empt any conflict in the border areas. We are heartened by the fact of a sincere desire, expressed and reiterated at the highest level, on the part of both State Governments to arrive at a permanent solution.

Planning

4. The projected outlay during the 11th Plan period for Meghalaya is Rs.9185.00 crores. The overall growth rate for the State during the 11th Plan period was projected at 7.3 percent as against the national target at of 9 percent. The 11th Plan sectoral growth targets for Meghalaya are 4.7 percent in agriculture, 8.0 percent in industry and 7.9 percent in the service sector. The priority accorded by the Government of Meghalaya during the Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012) period are power generation and transmission, rural electrification, improvement of production in agriculture and allied sectors; better connectivity through more roads and bridges, generation of employment to women folk through improvement of sericulture activities; improvement of tourism infrastructure and services; promotion of trade with Bangladesh and creation of infrastructure for the same; improvement of social services like education, health, water supply and nutrition; and poverty alleviation and employment generation in rural areas, through Rural Development Programs. The agreed plan size of Rs.2100.00 Crores for 2009-2010 includes an amount of Rs.545.00 Crores as Advanced Special Plan Assistance and Rs.400.00 Crores as 'State own Resources'. However Rs.400.00 Crores as 'State own Resources' did not materialize along with some release under External aided projects. The annual plan size during 2009-10 has, therefore,

been revised to Rs.1655.26 Crores. For the year 2010-11 a plan size of Rs.2310.00 Crores is being proposed.

Finance

5. With the implementation of the recommendations of the Fourth Meghalaya Pay Commission, the long pending expectations of State Government Employees have been fulfilled by my Government. The revised pay scales have been made effective from 1st January, 2007 by my Government overriding the recommendation of the Pay Commission to make it effective from 1st January, 2008. Orders have been issued for payment of arrears of salaries and pension up to 40% during the current year.

Pension and other retirement benefits have been revised. A new pension scheme is under examination by the Government in line with the contributory pension scheme of the Central Government.

My Government has also decided to introduce the Assured Career Progression Scheme (ACPS) for State Government employees who face stagnation or lack of promotional avenues. Under this scheme, all Government employees are assured of atleast two promotions during their career in the form of financial upgradation.

During the current year my Government has carried out key financial reforms. Henceforth, Government payments including salaries, pensions and contractor's bills will be paid only through cheque and account transfers, and the system of cash payments by disbursing officers has been done away with. Treasury operations have been computerized in all the treasuries except at the newly opened sub-treasuries at Amlarem and Dadengiri. By the end of 2010-2011, all the Treasuries will be computerized and interlinked through an Integrated Financial Management System. The Government is also seeking to operationalise the "On-line system to Tax Receipt" via Cyber Treasury in a time bound manner as a part of its e-Governance Plan. Tax payers will then be able to pay their taxes through the internet using Net Banking facilities.

ERTS

6. Excise revenue earned during the year till January, 2010 is approximately Rs.67 crores. With the successful implementation of VAT (Value Added Tax) there has been significant and continuing increase in revenue collection. Up to January, 2010 Rs.213.23 crores has been collected as revenue. Steps have been taken to computerize the Taxation Department to improve the efficiency of revenue collection. The small savings collection has substantially improved this year from the expected Rs.40 crores to about Rs.63 crores primarily through the promotion of fostering of thrift habits amongst the people.

AGRICULTURE & ALLIED SECTORS:

Agriculture

7. The State Government will continue to make sustained and persistent efforts for establishment of a Central Agriculture University in the State.

The State has been rewarded for its continually increasing allocations for agriculture and allied sectors with significantly enhanced allocations under the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, and from Special Plan Assistance. In the agriculture sector these outlays will be utilized to establish at Upper Shillong, in 2010-11, an integrated training complex, which can also be utilized for capacity building and professional education, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, under the management and operation of the State Government, will be established in the Jaintia Hills, East Khasi Hills and West Khasi Hills.

Horticulture

8. The Thirteenth Finance Commission has provided a special grant for infrastructure for horticulture. This will be utilized to create facilitating infrastructure across the State, to make possible better market access for farmers and their produce. The visible success of the Horti-Hubs, has encouraged the Government to implement

more such facilities in different parts of the State. In addition to the seven established hubs (one in each District), work has commenced on four more hubs (Mynkre, Mairang, Sarangma, Zikzak), which will be commissioned in 2010-11. Another three hubs have been approved for establishment in 2010-11 at Dawagre, Phudkylla and Baljek. By the end of the year, fourteen hubs will be functional in different parts of the State.

Work will begin in 2010-11 on establishment of a Regional Training Centre for Cultivation of Commercial Crops in Ri-Bhoi district with NEC support which will focus on strawberries and roses. At Nokrek, an integrated project for fruit and vegetable cultivation will be taken up, with particular focus on Khasi mandarin orange. Five Farmer Markets, to be managed by local groups of growers, will commence functioning in 2010-11 at Upper Shillong, Wahiajer, Dawki, Williamnagar and Chibinang. With technical support from the National Horticulture Board, a cold chain and crop evacuation axes will be established, one each in the Garo Hills and in the Khasi & Jaintia Hills. The program for technical and professional training of Departmental functionaries and farmers will be continued.

Irrigation

9. The newly created Department of Water Resources will become fully operational in 2010-11, and is expected to provide coordination and direction to matters relating to the conservation and utilization of the water resources of the State, and to implement key programmes to enhance the irrigated area. New projects will also be taken up under the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Program. The concept and practice of Participatory Irrigation Management, involving cultivators in the management, operation and maintenance of water to their fields, through the Water User Associations will be expanded.

Animal Husbandry & Veterinary

10. In the Animal Husbandry & Veterinary sector, the Government will enlarge and intensify animal health coverage and continue to focus on the development of needed infrastructure. Five new

Veterinary Dispensaries will be established and another five existing Veterinary Aid Centers/ Stockman Centers/ Key Village Centers will be upgraded to full fledged Dispensaries. A Scheme for assisting people below the poverty line and physically handicapped person for rural backyard poultry rearing with low-in-put birds will be implemented. The existing pig Farm Baghmara will be upgraded to a 100 sows unit capable of annually producing 2000 piglets. Assistance to Dairy Cooperative Societies for replacement of unproductive milch cows will continue for augmenting milk production. A Vocational Training Centre will be established in the West Khasi Hills District for imparting practical training to farmers.

Fisheries

- 11.** The Department will continue expanding areas under pond culture and for upgrading and modernizing the existing Fish Seed Farms to boost the production of fish seed. Efforts will also be made to access funds from the various schemes under the NFDB (National Fisheries Development Board). Capacity building and extension servicing will be further strengthened for officers as well as pisciculturists of the State.

Soil and Water Conservation

- 12.** Degradation of land and depletion of Natural Resources like water is a major challenge facing the State. For development and eco-restoration of Cherrapunjee and surrounding areas, an Israeli consultancy firm has been engaged to carry out investigations and prepare a Detailed Project Report. Ongoing Schemes and Programs will be given due importance during 2010-11. The Meghalaya Commercial Crops Development Board (MCCDB) will continue to provide assistance to the farmers in the cultivation of Rubber, Coffee, Cashew nut and supply of high yielding Clones of planting materials.

Cooperation

13. Cooperative Sector is playing a major role for the growth, and development of the Cooperative Societies in the State. Their activities have now spread over to diverse fields of economic activities and cover a wide range of activities like Credit, Marketing, to Tourism and income generation activities. Government will continue to provide financial assistance in the form of Share Capital Contribution (Working Capital) and Managerial Subsidy and also facilitate assistance under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes and Central Sector Schemes (NCDC) for ensuring meaningful growth, income and employment generation.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT:

Community & Rural Development

14. During the year 2009-10 (upto January,2010) Rs. 11542.39 lakhs was spent for implementing National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) and 104.90 lakh man days of rural employment generated. 6456 Nos of new Indira Awaaz Yojana (IAY) houses were constructed and 217 Nos of houses were upgraded. 5303 Self Help Groups (SHGs) were formed under Swarnjayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY) till January, 2010. This programme aims at bringing the assisted poor families (Swarozgaris) above the poverty line. West Garo Hills, South Garo Hills and Ri-Bhoi districts were identified for implementation of Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana/Backward Region Grant Fund (RSVY/BRGF), which is a scheme aimed to address the problems of the pockets of high poverty and low growth. The Government will continue to implement Social Security Scheme such as Indira National Old Age Pensions Scheme (IGNOAPS) and the National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS). Identification of beneficiaries and data entry of beneficiary personal information under the two new pension schemes introduced by the Government of India viz, the Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Schemes and the Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS) is in progress. Rural Self Employment Training Institute (RSETI) was set up at

Umran, Ri-Bhoi District, by the State Bank of India to train village level workers to work for rural development. Effort is being taken to facilitate setting up of such institutions in other districts of the State also.

SPECIAL AREA PROGRAMME:

Border Area Development (including Border Trade)

15. My Government is acutely aware of the special problems of the areas along the international border, and of the people who reside there. The key to unlocking the potential of this region would be to provide opportunities for trade and investment, and to restore markets and access. There is an urgent imperative to address the long felt and as yet unfulfilled need to upgrade facilities for trade and export at the border, and road, telecom and related infrastructure across the State. My Government will continue to press the Government of India to support the creation of this needed infrastructure.

ENERGY:

Power

16. The State is still at present wholly dependent on hydro power, and even during ideal conditions, the State can meet barely 30% of its demand. The deficit is aggravated during the lean period, and in the event of failure of the monsoon. The State is compelled to purchase power from the grid and even so, load shedding is unavoidable subjecting customers, consumers and industry to discomfort and inconvenience.

With the commissioning of two hydro projects, Myntdu Leshka HEP (126 MW) and New Umtru HEP (40 MW) the position will be alleviated to some extent. In order to provide the base load, and ensuring stability and security in the power system, the Government is at present negotiating with NEEPCO and Private Power Players to develop coal based thermal power plants in the State. Projects have been initiated, to be located at Rongjeng, East Garo Hills and at Nongalbibra, South Garo Hills by

NEEPCO, and also at Langrin in West Khasi Hills district.

Meghalaya Non Conventional & Rural Energy:-

17. The Government is continuing its efforts to harness non-conventional sources of energy like solar energy, wind energy, biogas and biomass. The Meghalaya Non Conventional & Rural Energy Development Agency (MNREDA) has been distributing solar lanterns and domestic home lighting systems. Biomass and biogas plants have been set up in different areas. Energy saving devices are being popularized. 73 villages are proposed to be electrified through non-conventional sources during 2010-11.

COMMERCE & INDUSTRIES:

Mining & Geology

18. In 2009-2010, the State Government took up six mineral investigation programmes for exploration of limestone, coal and iron ore in the State and geo-technical investigation for one minor irrigation project. Production of coal and limestone from April, 2009 to December, 2009 has been recorded at 35.42 lakhs tones and 30.52 lakh tones respectively, of which 2.41 lakh tones of coal and 55.74 tonnes of limestone were exported during 2009-10 (April to December). As part of its effort to educate local mine owners, the Government has organized training-cum-awareness programme in different areas.

Industries

19. Despite innumerable constraints, the State aspires to come at par with the other progressive States of the country. Today the State can boast of showing significant achievements in raising Micro, Small, Medium industries with considerable employment. This has been possible because of our investment friendly policies and overall support of the Central Government. In this context, vocational training is one of the major components. During the current year, the department has sponsored trainees in the field of fashion Technology (NIFT, Kolkata), Plastic technology (SIPET-Guwahati), and in Cinematography, Film Editing (Mumbai),

Department is also proposing to send a batch of 50(fifty) trainees for “Spa & Beauty culture” with placement assured by the institute. The draft “Meghalaya Industrial Investment Promotion Policy” along with “Policy on Corporate Social Responsibility” is expected to be out shortly.

Sericulture and Weaving

20. Government will continue to make efforts for increasing the plantation areas of Eri, Muga & Mulberry, and provide adequate supply of Saplings/ seedlings to the planters, besides improvement of productivity. Popularization of spinning and reeling operation at the Private Spinners and Reelers level will continue for value addition. Training of Sericultural farmers/ Reelers and Spinners will also be given due importance on the know-how and improved technology for both progressive and new Sericultural farmers for increasing production of Silk. In respect of Handloom, efforts will continue by way of imparting training to weavers on improved looms. Emphasis will be given for skill Upgradation of the progressive weavers. Government will also take advantage of Integrated Handloom Development Scheme and the Catalytic Development Programme. In collaboration with the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), Government will take full advantage on design and product development for improved fabric finishing.

TRANSPORT SECTORS:

PWD

21. A good and efficient roads network is critical for our landlocked State. Out of 6026 villages as per 2001 census, 2991 nos. have been connected so far, National Highways provide linkage to the rest of the country and received priority attention of the Government. And in the coming year, not only will schemes for improvement, widening to two lane and strengthening continue, but we can look forward to commencement of the much awaited Shillong bye-pass and the four laning of NH 40, both of which are at a fairly advanced stage of processing for award of work by the National Highway Authority of India. Apart from National

Highways, road projects under various programmes of the Central Government viz; North Eastern Council (NEC), Non Lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR), Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), Central Road Fund (CRF), Special Plan Assistance (SPA), Ministry of Tribal Affairs and ASIDE, showed substantial progress. A major road connecting Garobadha to Dalu measuring over 93 km has been approved for inclusion in the first tranche of ADB assisted N E State Improvement Programme. Construction of the Intermediary Jowai Bye Pass sanctioned at a cost of Rs.3.53 crore under Special Plan Assistance (SPA) is making good progress and on completion will considerably ease the traffic congestion in Jowai town.

Transport

22. Government is committed to providing reliable transportation to the people of the State by Air and Rail. An air service to Umroi Airport with a 50 seater Aircraft is now operational. The Government of India has sanctioned an additional amount of Rs.30 crores for land acquisition for expansion of the Umroi Airport and the land will be acquired shortly. The Railway Ministry has indicated a new alignment for Byrnihat from Tetelia which has been approved by the State Government. Survey work for the railway route for Dudhnoi to Depa Sarangma is being taken up.

SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT :

Information Technology

23. My Government will continue to facilitate the growth and development of the Information sector. The IT Park set up at Lumjingshai, Shillong will be expanded; the foundation of the second phase has already been laid. 160 Common Services Centres (CSCs) in the PPP mode have been set up, bringing governance and services closer to the people. Another 65

Centres will be set up shortly. Letters of Intent (LOI) for State Wide AREA Network (SWAN) and the State Data Centre have been issued, which will strengthen the e-governance framework and capability of the State. The establishment of the State Service Delivery Gateway (SSDG) will deliver citizen-centric services. In addition; the Government proposes to continue strengthening of capacity building infrastructure, networking, software development and IT education etc.

Forests and Environment

- 24.** My Government has taken adequate measure to protect, conserve and improve the forest and wildlife resources of the State. The forest cover in the State had increased from 16,988 sq. kms. To 17,321 sq. kms. With very dense forest cover increasing from 338 sq. km. to 410 sq. kms.

The Wildlife Wing of the Forest Department manages two national parks and three wildlife sanctuaries. In May 2009 UNESCO included the Nokrek Biosphere Reserve in its World Network of Biosphere Reserves giving international recognition to this protected area, which is known to be the home of Citrus Indica, the wild orange. The work of establishing the State Zoo in Ri-Bhoi District has begun in 2009-10. The notified elephant reserve of 3500 sq.kms.in Garo Hills continued with its work of providing viable habitat for a large part of the elephant population in the State while efforts are on to obtain approval for establishing another elephant reserve in the West Khasi Hills District.

The Government will continue efforts to develop the bamboo and medical plants sector. Under the National Bamboo Mission, the Government has taken steps to create large scale plantations of bamboo and encourage utilization of bamboo to support livelihood of rural tribal populace. The Meghalaya State Medicinal Plants Board has been sanctioned promotional projects with an outlay of Rs.1.01crores.

To facilitate execution of various forestation programme with active cooperation and involvement of rural tribal populace and forest dwellers, the Government has constituted 15 forest

development agencies and 283 joint forest management committees in the State. Components of National Bamboo Mission have been implemented in the State through these agencies, and this has given the people a great sense of participation in the implementation of policies and programmes of the Government. Steps are being taken for the constitution of the State Bamboo Development Agency in order to promote and support integrated development of the bamboo sector in the State.

GENERAL SERVICES (ECONOMIC):

District Council Affairs

25. Government would continue to support the District Councils in the discharge of their assigned responsibilities under the Sixth Schedule, to meet the needs and aspirations of the indigenous tribal population.

Tourism

26. My Government recognizes the inherent potential for tourism in the State, and the contribution that this sector can make to income and employment. Last year, almost 2,500 foreign tourists and over 2.8 lakh domestic tourists visited the State. Availability of quality infrastructure is a very essential component of Tourism. The Government is proposing to build up tourism infrastructure facilities like resorts, wayside amenities and welcome plazas, all of which are vital components of tourism development.

Food & Civil Supplies

27. My Government is committed to the efficient functioning of the public distribution System, and will take steps to Streamline its operations. The monitoring of prices of essential commodities and food grains will be carried out, and action taken against hoarding and other such activities. In order to ensure that PDS food grains reach the target families, Vigilance Committees at various levels have been constituted Targeted BPL Families are also represented in the Vigilance Committees at the Fair Price Shop level. Consumer Courts such as District Fora, and the State Consumer

Disputes Redressal Commission have been set up to protect the interest of consumers. Village Grain Bank has been launched in the 7 Districts of the State where 44 Grain Banks will be established.

Programme Implementation & Evaluation

28. The Programme Implementation & Evaluation Department performs a very useful role in ensuring that developmental schemes and programmes are effectively and properly implemented through the conduct of Evaluation and Research Studies, physical monitoring and review of selected Schemes and programmes. During the year 2008-2009, 5 (five) Evaluation Studies on Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme, Mid Day Meal Programme, Border Areas Development Programme, Rural Employment Generation Schemes and Technology Mission of Horticulture Department were carried out by non- governmental institutions. These studies have since been submitted to Government. 4(four)more Evaluation Studies are in the pipeline. About 30 (thirty) MPLADS schemes have been inspected during the year 2009-10. A proposal for conducting social audit in 3 Districts Viz; West Garo hills, East Khasi hills and Jaintia Hills has been submitted to Planning Commission for approval and sanction. More Field inspections will be conducted during the year 2010-11, and a large number of evaluation studies will be sponsored.

Legal Metrology

29. Under the Department of Legal Metrology, earlier known as the Weights & Measures Department, an amount of Rs.50 Lakhs 2□□□been sanctioned by the Centre as Grant- in-aid for construction of 2 (Two) Working Standard laboratories at Shillong and Tura. To create greater public awareness, installation of Hoardings/ Billboards, etc; is being taken up.

SOCIAL SERVICES:

Public Health Engineering

- 30.** The modified NRDWP (National Rural Drinking Water Programme), With an emphasis on sustainability of source & system and conjunctive use from several sources will be implemented in a mission mode. 278 stand- alone water purification systems will be installed in rural schools under the Jalmani Programme.

The Tura Phase-III WSS under Non- lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR) was inaugurated on 19th August 2009. Mairang WSS and Nongpoh WSS under NLCPR are progressing satisfactorily and are likely to be commissioned during 2009-10. During 2009-10, a total of 52 villages of the State were awarded Nirmal Gram Puraskar by the Government of India for achievement of full sanitation coverage status. Efforts to accelerate the progress of implementation of Total Sanitation Campaign in the State during 2010-11 will be given priority.

Urban Affairs

- 31.** Government is focused on the development and management of urban centres in the State, with an emphasis on improvement of civic amenities and provision of urban infrastructure. Under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM), work on construction of 600 dwellings units for the urban poor at Nongmynsong and the Storm Water Drainage system for Shillong have been accelerated. Construction of housing for urban poor and rehabilitation of slum dwellers at Tura under Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme has been initiated. The Multi-storied Parking Lot at Mawlong Hat has been made operational during the year.

Work on augmentation of water supply for Greater Shillong (Phase –III) at an estimated cost of Rs. 193.5 crores under JNNURM has been initiated. Other work will be taken up on Solid Waste Management at Tura and Nongpoh at an estimated cost of Rs.8.3 crores and Rs.6 crores respectively under the Urban

Infrastructure Development Scheme for Small and Medium Towns (UIDSSMT). A Comprehensive Slum Improvement Programme for 5 Clums in Shillong at an estimated cost of Rs. 21.3 crores will be taken up.

Construction of housing for urban poor and rehabilitation of slum dwellers at Williamnagar and of 240 housing units at Nongpoh at an estimated cost of Rs.10.5 crores and Rs.9.2 crores respectively will also be taken up.

The Central Government has approved procurement of 120 buses for Shillong under JNNURM. Two major projects i.e., Construction of Parking Lot at Polo Bazar an estimated cost of Rs. 18.8 crores and construction of shopping infrastructure at Nazing Bazar, Tura at an estimated cost of Rs. 22.8 crores have been approved.

Under an agreement signed with Asian Development bank for infrastructure development of Shillong, an amount of Rs.22.05 crores will be available in Phase I for Solid Waste Management, Consultancy, Institutional Development and Capacity Building. The State Investment Project Management and Implementation Unit has been set up and project activities have been initiated.

Education

- 32.** Education will continue to receive the highest priority. The State will continue to take advantage of interventions under the ongoing SSA Programme till every child at elementary level can easily access educational facilities. The needs of differently abled children at the elementary school level are being addressed through the Children With Special Needs (CWSN) component of the SSA. Apart from attempting to achieve a zero dropout rate and 100% retention levels, the Government is also addressing quality issues. Training of teachers is progressing satisfactorily with trainees being deputed to the DIETs and TTIs. Distance Learning is being conducted through courses conducted by IGNOU. The distance learning and teaching under the EDUSAT programme is being intensified in collaboration with ISRO. Curriculum

development is an important component in the State's strategy to improve the content and efficacy in school, and work has been initiated to revise the curriculum at all levels.

The monitoring mechanism of the MID Day Meal Programme has been strengthened through the involvement of the machinery of the Supply Department. To improve the quality and frequency of meals being served, a proposal to arrange 100% coverage of Kitchen Sheds has been formulated and will be implemented in 2010-11. A special sanction of Rs.1000/- p.m. as remuneration to cook cum helper for every 25 school children has been sanctioned.

The range of activities of school education will now be looked after by a newly named Directorate of School Education. The restructuring is expected to streamline financial and human resources management and also improve service delivery. A dedicated Scholarship Cell is being constituted; to ensure that all deserving students get their scholarships in time. Details of the application forms and the procedure for application have been placed on the web portal of the State Government. A system will be established through which applications and disbursements will be done online through core banking.

The State Government has recently approved the revision of pay scales of college teachers. A Social Security Scheme for College Teachers under the Deficit aided colleges is being put into place. The State Government will also encourage the setting up of private universities, so as to enhance the availability of post-graduate seats.

In the Vocational and Technical Education Sector, the two World Bank funded Polytechnics at Jowai and Tura are being taken over by the State Government. A Polytechnic at Williamnagar is being set up with resource support from the Government of India. A National Institute of Technology (NIT) is being set up at Sohra and is expected to commence classes from the next academic session.

Health and Family Welfare

33. The National Rural Health Mission will upgrade 24CHCs to Indian Public Health Standards (IPHS). First Referral Units (FRUs) and 24x7 PHCs have been made functional and the numbers of OPDs and IPDs being served by Government institutions has shown an increase. With the support of the Government of India, a Health Insurance programme for BPL families has been initiated as a pilot project in the East Khasi Hills District. For providing Emergency Response Services, 30 Ambulances have been commissioned to serve different parts of the State. In 2010-11, another 24 ambulances will be operationalised, and Critical Care and Casualty units established at Community Health Centre levels and in District Hospitals. New and upgraded facilities will be commissioned at Tura for a 100 bedded Maternity and Children hospital, at Nongstoin for a 100 bedded hospital, and, in Shillong an additional 200 bedded wing at Civil Hospital. Action for establishment of a Cancer Wing at the Shillong Civil Hospital complex have been initiated. With support from the NEC, the ICUs at the Ganesh Das Hospital and at Tura Civil Hospital will be upgraded. The Eye Ward at Civil Hospital, Shillong with capacity of 40 beds has been operationalised. On 11th Feb, 2010 the Government signed an MoU with ROKO Cancer Charitable Trust-India for launching a Mobile Cancer Detection Unit as part of the Public Private Partnership (PPP).

During the year 2009, the menace of Meningococcal Meningitis took a toll of 141 lives. The State Government took immediate and adequate steps to control the outbreak of the disease by ensuring Mass Vaccination amongst the population between 2 (two) years to 50) fifty) years of age. The spread of Swine Flu (H1N1 Influenza) was reported in the State during August, 2009 and immediate steps were taken to control this menace through preventive treatment.

Social Welfare

34. Government continues to implement various welfare schemes for the welfare of women, children, physically handicapped, juvenile delinquents, aged and infirm etc. Integrated Women's Empowerment Programme (IWEP) is implemented with an objective of constituting women's self help groups for creation of confidence and awareness among members. Besides, NORAD a scheme for training of women folks in different income generating trades so as to enable them to earn their livelihood and improve their economic status, the Integrated Child Development Services Scheme, will also continue. For persons with disabilities, Uniform grant, Book grant, Conveyance allowances, Unemployment allowances will continue to be given under the Disabilities (Equal Opportunities Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act 1995. Under the scheme of National Programme for Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities, District Rehabilitation Centres have been set up at Shillong, Tura, Jowai and Williamnagar with a State Resource Centre at Shillong for providing comprehensive rehabilitation services.

Sports and Youth Affairs

35. Besides promotion of Sports and Games and Youth Welfare activities, priority is also given to creation of sports infrastructure from village to the State level. A total of 164 infrastructure projects undertaken by the Department have been completed in the State. During the National Sports Day celebration in August 2009, 131 sportsperson who had brought laurels to the State at the International/National/ Regional level have been felicitated with cash awards and citation. Further, the J.N. Sports Complex Polo ground Shillong has been upgraded with additional Sports management facilities.

Labour

36. The State now has 8 ITI's including one for Women, with a total capacity of 1162 in different trades. It is expected that new ITI's at Sohra and Resubelpara can be made functional shortly. Under the Craftsmen Training Scheme (CTS), training is imparted in 12

(twelve) Engineering Trades and 6 (six) Non-Engineering Trades. The Skill Development Scheme (SDI) based on Modular Employable Skills (MES) is being implemented and 1 (one) ITI in each district has been declared as Nodal ITI for coordinating SDI Scheme in the District. Further, the ITI's at Shillong, Tura and ITI (women) Shillong has been registered as Vocational Training Providers (VTPs) for running MES Course.

Housing

37. In Meghalaya, though the number of shelterless is low, two thirds of the houses especially in the rural areas are of temporary nature and need to be replaced by more durable houses. The scheme for grant-in-aid to the poor rural houseless under the Rural Housing Scheme will continue.

Arts & Culture

38. The Government will continue in its efforts to conserve document, research, promote, and develop the Art and Culture heritage of the State. With the setting up of a branch of Sangeet Natak Akademi in our State, many programmes had been organized in collaboration with the Arts and Culture Department. The extension of Captain Williamson Sangma Museum at Shillong, is in progress. Government will continue to develop and upgrade the existing Museums. The Heritage Conservation Scheme will continue to be implemented. Participation in different National and State level cultural activities will continue, so as to encourage and develop preservation of indigenous culture. The Tribal Research Complex at Mawlai will be upgraded by establishing different cultural centres and creation of infrastructure facilities in the area. The renovation and upgradation works at U Soso Tham Auditorium at the State Central Library have been completed. Steps are being taken for construction of District Libraries, Museum and Multipurpose cultural complex in all District Headquarters of the State. The Archaeological sites at Bhaitbari are being provided fencing works for their protection.

Information & Public Relations

39. Information & Public Relations Sector plays a pivotal role in the promotion of schemes and policies that lead to a greater and better understanding of governance. To create awareness among the people, Special Interactive Programmes (SIP) on different themes have been organized in 30 villages. For providing one time financial assistance to such working journalists and their dependants in times of hardship and other unforeseen circumstances, the Journalist Welfare Fund for working journalists of Meghalaya has been established. With a view to create social awareness and project the image of the State, hoardings will be erected in all the Districts and Sub-Divisional Headquarters of the State. Press Tours for local journalists will also be conducted so as to provide journalists an insight into the activities in different sectors of development.

GENERAL SERVICES:

GAD

40. The existing Meghalaya Houses located in important places such as in Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Vellore and Guwahati is presently catering to the needs of the people by providing suitable accommodation to dignitaries and other visitors from Meghalaya. Important construction works such as the Residential-Cum-Commercial Complex at 9-10 Anandilal Poddar Sarani, Kolkata, the Meghalaya House at Vasant Vihar, New Delhi, and the State Convention Centre at Shillong are nearing completion. Construction of Governor's Guest House at Tura will start very soon. The Welfare of Ex-servicemen, widows & dependents has improved with a number of proposals/ schemes under process.

Personnel & Administrative Reform

41. To facilitate performance and responsiveness by enhancing Capacity Building, Skill, Knowledge & Attitude of Government Official upto the cutting edge level of Government functionaries and generating awareness amongst the public for good governance, MATI has been conducting 177 training programme

during 2009-2010 both at the Institute and also in the District and Sub-Division level.

Revenue and Disaster Management

42. Cadastral Survey and Public Awareness is being taken up to allay the fear of the people and making them aware of the benefits that will accrue. Awareness Seminar was held for traditional Heads and Institutions including the NGOs. The State, District and Village Disaster Management Plans have been prepared and finalized. Trainings and Mock Drills are being organized at the District and at the village level from time to time.

Elections

43. The Parliamentary Elections 2009 in the country was held in five phases. The elections in Meghalaya along with some States of the country were held in Phase I, where the poll was held on 16th April, 2009. The State witnessed a free, fair and peaceful conduct of Elections. The Elections was, for the first time, held on the basis of the newly delimited constituencies.

Law Department

44. The Gauhati High Court, Shillong Bench has started functioning in the new building from 2.3.2010. As the term of the three Fast Track Courts at Shillong, Jowai and Tura will expire on 31.10.2010, the process for its extension is being taken up with the Central Government.

Civil Defence and Home Guards

45. The Civil Defence & Home Guards Department will continue to impart training to volunteers, with a special emphasis on disaster management. Search and Rescue Teams at the State level and in the Districts are being constituted. The Departmental complex of the Home Guards and Civil Defence at Mawdiangdiang will be completed shortly.

Prisons

46. The administration of prisons will be toned up and security and amenities improved. Construction of the Jail Complexes at Nongstoin and Nongpoh are in good progress. Efforts are being made to construct more accommodation to ease the congestion in Shillong Jail.

Printing & Stationery

47. In its endeavor to improve the overall functioning of the Press in terms of quality and speed of print production, state of the art plant and machineries are proposed to be incorporated in the production line both at Government Press, Shillong and Branch Press, Tura. During the current year, construction of an Additional Office Building for Stationery Wing in Garo Hills has been taken up.

I have attempted to indicate, in brief, the achievements of my Government. As Hon'ble Members, you will be getting the opportunity of deliberating further on various issues. I am confident that your deliberations will be constructive and fruitful, bringing success and prosperity to the people of the State as a whole. I wish you all success in your endeavours.

JAI HIND

KHUBLEI

MITELA