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# KERALA CALLING

JANUARY 01, 2024\_VOL\_44\_No\_03

## RISING VENTURES RAISING PEOPLE

Progress & inclusive growth  
under the Pinarayi Vijayan government





Starting from Kasaragod, the NavaKerala Sadas culminated in Thiruvananthapuram on December 23, 2023, scripting a landmark chapter in the history of democratic governance.

## SNAPS FORM THE HISTORIC JOURNEY





EDITOR

**T.V. Subhash IAS**

ADDITIONAL EDITOR

**Salin Mankuzhy**

DEPUTY EDITOR

**K.P. Saritha**

EDITOR IN CHARGE

**C. Rajesh**

ASSISTANT EDITOR

**A. Anchitha**

CIRCULATION OFFICER

**J.N. Merlin**

COVER DESIGN &amp; LAYOUT

**Deepak Mouthatil**

PRINTING

**Akshara Offset Thiruvananthapuram**

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# FOSTERING INNOVATION AND INCLUSIVITY

**A**s the calendar turns a new leaf, Kerala stands as a symbol of resilience and visionary governance. The bygone year has been one of epochal significance for the state, marked by groundbreaking achievements and an unwavering commitment to progress. The 'Nava Kerala Sadas', led by the Chief Minister and the cabinet, has been a cornerstone of this journey. This extensive outreach across the state's assembly constituencies has been a remarkable exercise in participatory governance, drawing an unprecedented level of public engagement.

The constellation of Kerala's achievements in the preceding year is nothing short of stellar. The launch of India's inaugural water metro and the establishment of a pioneering digital science park have set new benchmarks in infrastructural innovation. The Vizhinjam Port, on its course to becoming India's foremost international shipping hub, underscores Kerala's infrastructural metamorphosis. Economically, the state has reached new zeniths with record-breaking Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) and per capita income rates.

In the social arena, Kerala's strides have been equally significant. Initiatives aimed at eradicating poverty, historic accomplishments in land and housing distributions, and welfare pensions reflect a deep-rooted commitment to equitable growth. The state's accolades in education, healthcare, and public services, framed by a societal fabric of robust law enforcement, communal harmony, and transparency, have set an exemplar for the nation.

Employment in Kerala has undergone a significant transformation, with the state emerging as a magnet for the nation's youth seeking fulfilling careers. Initiatives such as Taluk-level Adalats for grievance redressal and sectoral deliberations for development underscore Kerala's dedication to inclusive and sustainable progress. Events like the 'Keraleeyam' and the 'Navakerala Sadas' have been instrumental in propelling Kerala's achievements onto the global stage.

Despite these milestones, Kerala's journey has been interspersed with formidable challenges, from natural disasters to pandemics. Yet, in each instance, Kerala's resilience and unity have shone through, earning international acclaim. Upholding constitutional principles and democratic tenets, Kerala's journey towards a 'New Kerala', driven by knowledge and innovation, paints a future replete with promise and potential.

**T.V. Subhash IAS**

Editor

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## PINARAYI VIJAYAN

Chief Minister

# REINVIGORATING THE VISION OF NAVA KERALAM

**As we usher in a new year, it serves as a pivotal moment for reflection and foresight, especially for Kerala and its people. This New Year beckons us to fervently commit to propelling the 'Nava Keralam' vision with renewed vigour.**

**R**eflecting upon the past year, Kerala has undeniably etched several milestones. We witnessed the inauguration of the nation's first water metro and the inception of a cutting-edge digital science park. Additionally, the operationalisation of the Vizhinjam Port, poised to be India's premier international shipping hub, marked a significant stride. Economically, the state scaled unprecedented heights, recording the pinnacle of GSDP and per capita income rates.

Remarkably, Kerala's socio-economic landscape was further enriched by the triumphant culmination of the inaugural phase of a specialized initiative aimed at eradicating dire poverty. Concurrently, the state





- **Nation's First Water Metro Inauguration:** Revolutionising the nation's urban transport.
- **Digital Science Park Launch:** Boosting Kerala's role in technological innovation.
- **Vizhinjam Port Operationalisation:** Elevating Kerala in international trade.
- **Record GSDP and Income Growth:** Marking economic strength and stability.
- **Poverty Eradication Initiative Success:** Reducing poverty significantly in Kerala.
- **Land, Housing, and Welfare Milestones:** Enhancing living standards and rights.
- **Leadership in Education and Healthcare:** Contributing to societal well-being.
- **Rise as Premier Employment Destination:** Attracting India's youth for quality jobs.
- **Grassroots Governance Initiatives:** Strengthening inclusive governance.
- **'Keralaeyam Mahotsav' Hosting:** Showcasing Kerala's culture globally.
- **NavakeralaSadas Outreach:** Engaging widely with the public.
- **Overcoming Natural and Health Disasters:** Building resilience against crises.
- **Expansion of Digital Science Hubs:** Encouraging technological growth.
- **Kochi-Bengaluru Corridor Progress:** Driving regional economic development.
- **GIFT City Project in Ernakulam:** Pioneering urban and economic growth.
- **Virology Institute's Global Recognition:** Leading in virus research and identification.
- **Road Infrastructure and Connectivity Enhancement:** Including major highway projects.
- **Sabarimala Airport Development:** Boosting tourism and regional connectivity.
- **Global Recognition for Maritime Projects:** Enhancing Kerala's maritime trade.
- **KFON Project Implementation:** Advancing communication infrastructure.
- **Academic System Overhaul:** Improving educational facilities and standards.
- **Adherence to Constitutional Principles:** Maintaining legal integrity and democratic values.
- **Transparent and Participatory Governance:** Focusing on accountability and citizen engagement.
- **Vision for Knowledge-Driven Economy:** Aiming to lead in education and innovation.



celebrated historic peaks in the distribution of land titles, residences, and welfare pensions. Garnering accolades as the leading state in education, healthcare, and public services, Kerala's harmonious societal fabric, marked by robust law enforcement, communal harmony, and transparency, has set a national benchmark.

Last year also spotlighted Kerala's burgeoning reputation as an employment hub. The state was lauded for offering unparalleled work environments and emerged as the top choice for India's youth seeking gainful employment. Pioneering grassroots initiatives like Taluk-level Adalats to redress citizen grievances and sectoral deliberations to expedite developmental endeavours underscored Kerala's commitment to inclusive growth. The 'Keraleeyam Mahotsav' epitomised our aspiration to showcase Kerala's accomplishments to the global community while imbibing international best practices. The NavakeralaSadas, a reach-out initiative by the state government, emerged as a vital initiative for our region, resonating deeply with the populace, evident from its overwhelming attendance. Over the last seven

years, Kerala grappled with numerous adversities: the devastating Ockhi cyclone, Nipah virus outbreak, the colossal floods of 2018, subsequent rain-induced damages, and the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Unfortunately, anticipated support from external quarters often fell short. Instead, some seemed to obstruct Kerala's progress. Yet, Kerala's resilience shone brightly as its people unitedly tackled these trials, garnering international acclaim in the process. Since 2016, Kerala has embarked on several developmental endeavours. Beyond inaugurating the nation's pioneering digital science park, the state is poised to unveil three more such hubs. The ambitious Kochi-Bengaluru industrial corridor, projected to usher in investments worth Rs. 10,000 crores in Palakkad alone, is progressing well. With 1,142 acres already secured of the 2,182 acres required, this initiative promises to elevate Kerala's economic trajectory.

Moreover, Kerala envisions launching India's premier GIFT city in Ernakulam, necessitating Rs. 850 crore land acquisition. The Virology Institute in Thiruvananthapuram, rapidly ascending as a top-tier institution, has achieved the distinction of identifying 88 virus strains, drawing global accolades. Infrastructure-wise, a comprehensive road network, including the Hill Valley highway, is under construction with a budget of Rs. 10,000 cr. Furthermore, plans for 8 km twin-tunnel project in Wayanad, budgeted at Rs. 2,134 cr, aim to mitigate the region's monsoon-related isolation. The transformative Sabarimala greenfield airport, envisioned at Rs. 3,411 cr, is poised to redefine Central Kerala's connectivity.

Notably, the Kochi Water Metro and Vizhinjam International port have earned international acclaim, with the latter poised to be a pivotal gateway to global trade. A ring road initiative aims to streamline port operations, while the KFON project venture marked a significant technological stride.

In terms of education, a comprehensive academic overhaul is underway. This encompasses the development of student-centric facilities like hostels, labs, and libraries, coupled with faculty enhancement initiatives. Kerala is strategically recalibrating its academic framework, envisioning a future as a knowledge-centric economy.

Despite these commendable strides, the journey was interspersed with challenges. However, amidst these challenges, Kerala remained resolute in upholding constitutional principles, exemplified by its proactive stance in the Supreme Court under Article 131.

As we navigate these complexities, the state machinery is unwaveringly committed to fortifying democratic tenets, ensuring governance remains transparent, participative, and beholden to the electorate. Envisioning a 'New Kerala' characterized by a knowledge-driven economy and society, we remain steadfast in our pursuit. ■

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## CM INAUGURATES 'NIAGARA' AT TECHNOPARK, BOOSTING IT GROWTH

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated the 'Niagara' building, the first office edifice in the special economic zone of the Taurus TechZone, part of Thiruvananthapuram Technopark, has added strength to Kerala's IT sector.

With 'Niagara' becoming operational in Technopark, spanning 1.5 million square feet, it opens new opportunities for top-tier IT companies to operate there, contributing to the growth of the state as an IT hub. The Taurus Downtown Trivandrum, encompassing 5 million square feet, will feature the Zentrum Shopping Mall, a non-SEZ office building, Taurus Yosemite, Asset Identity, and a business hotel, providing cutting-edge facilities.

This marks a significant transformation of Technopark's third phase into a mixed-use development project in Thiruvananthapuram. The 'Niagara' represents a major step in positioning Kerala as a knowledge society, showcasing the region's substantial progress in the field. ■





K. RAJAN

Minister for Revenue and Housing

# ENSURING 'LAND FOR ALL'

## ACTION PLANS AND SMART APPROACHES

**Over the last 7 years, an alternative growth model has been developed by the State for the world. At its core, this model includes welfare and development policies that reflect the people's needs. This approach helped us overcome natural calamities and epidemics.**

**B**asic human needs like house, land, and food are prioritized. Through land reform laws, Left Democratic Front governments have enabled marginalized communities to own land and build homes. These are some of the most radical measures in the country's history. Revenue Ministers of these governments have always cherished this policy.

The governments led by Pinarayi Vijayan since 2016 played a key role in converting the landless into landowners. Post-2021, efforts to make the revenue department more populist have accelerated. In two years, we distributed 121,604 title deeds, a significant achievement.

To achieve 'land for all and documents for all land', we've expedited land title distribution. We surpassed our first hundred-day target of 12,000 title deeds, distributing 13,534. The second hundred-day plan aimed for 15,000 but achieved 41,001. In total, 54,535 title deeds were issued in the first year.

In the 3rd Hundred Day Action Plan, we aimed for 40,000 title deeds but distributed 121,604, marking a historical achievement with 67,069 title deeds in two years.

**Dedicated Dashboard for Distributing Title Deeds** We made significant progress by setting up a dashboard. It helped record the number of landless people in each village, land availability, and obstacles to land title distribution, overcoming legal challenges.

**Land Tribunal Pattaya Adalat** Adalats expedited the disposal of transaction certificates from land tribunals. We implemented standard procedures for timely title application disposal and trained employees.

**Title Deeds to Become Smart** E-pattayas will replace printed title deeds. This digital system, stored in the state data center, includes QR codes and digital signatures to verify authenticity and prevent forgery.

**Constitution of the Pattaya Mission** The Pattaya Mission, prioritizes distributing pattaya in tribal areas. It comprises officials from various levels and aims to resolve title deed distribution issues identified in Pattaya Assemblies.

Order to Allot Land Titles to Beneficiaries of the Rajiv Dasha Laksham



Housing Scheme allows District Collectors to distribute title deeds to 1,800 families under the Kerala Land Disposal Act, 1958.

**Pravasi Mitram Portal and Pravasi Cell** Responding to non-resident Keralites' demands, the PravasiMitram project and Pravasi Cell were established to manage applications related to Revenue-Survey Housing Departments.

**Implementation of the Unique Thandaper System** The Unique Thandaper system, signifies a major shift in Kerala's land management.

**Launching MBA Programs from ILDM** ILDM will offer MBA programs in river and water management, disaster management, and land management, approved by Kerala University.

**Village-Level People's Committees** Established on 13.01.2022, these committees ensure public participation in land conservation and public welfare activities.

**Disposal of Land Category Conversion Applications** Three lakh applications under the Paddy and Wetlands Conservation Act were processed, with additional posts created for timely disposal.

**Digitalisation of Revenue Department Services** All services, including e-office, land tax mobile application, online location sketch and Thandaper account, and digital Thandaper Register, have gone digital.

**Smart Village Offices** 450 village offices have been upgraded to smart office standards, with websites created for each office to provide comprehensive information and services. ■

## DIGITAL DAWN IN REVENUE

The digitalisation process within the department represents a transformative leap towards efficiency and accessibility. By transitioning to a fully digital system, the department has significantly streamlined operations, reducing paperwork and enhancing data accuracy. Key initiatives include the implementation of the e-office system in all revenue offices, ensuring a seamless, paperless environment. The introduction of a mobile application for land tax payments marks a user-friendly approach, enabling citizens to complete transactions from their smartphones. The digitization of the Thandaper Register and B.T.R across numerous villages exemplifies the department's commitment to making vital records readily accessible in digital format. Furthermore, the online modules for various services like the submission of land type conversion applications and the application for location sketches and Thandaper accounts have revolutionized how citizens interact with the department. This comprehensive digital overhaul not only enhances operational efficiency but also significantly improves the citizen's experience, making governmental services more transparent, accessible, and reliable.



ROSHY AUGUSTINE

Minister for Water Resources

# MAKING WATER ACCESSIBLE TO ALL

**Kerala, often extolled in poetry, boasts 44 rivers and countless streams, standing out as an exceptionally water-rich state in India. Conversely, the world grapples with acute water scarcity, a reality highlighted by World Water Day surveys.**

The World Health Organisation reports that 2.7 billion people globally are experiencing drought. UNICEF further emphasizes that about 4 billion people endure water scarcity for at least a month annually. Projections indicate that by 2025, half the global population might confront a freshwater shortage, with the demand-supply gap expected to widen by up to 40% by 2030. Pollution compounds these challenges, transforming clean water from a natural bounty into a commodity necessitating purification and careful distribution. This situation calls for a thoughtful approach to sustain and manage water resources effectively.

## Jal Jeevan Mission

For the 60 years from the state's birth till 2016, when the first Pinarayi government came to power, the total number of drinking water connections provided across rural and urban areas together were only 18.12 lakh. To be exact, there were 18,12,528 connections.

During the last leg of the first Pinarayi government, when the government took up the Jal Jeevan Mission, the government had a big challenge ahead of it to execute. However, it decided to move ahead courageously. The Jal Jeevan Mission, jointly implemented by the central and state governments to ensure access to drinking water through taps to all rural households, was inaugurated by the Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on October 8, 2020.

Upon assuming the water resources portfolio in the second Pinarayi government, significant challenges were encountered by me with the Jal Jeevan Mission. However, the government committed to overcoming these obstacles and advancing the project. It's noteworthy that there has been consistent and proactive financial support from the state government for this initiative.

## Amount Spent, Connections Provided

The total cost of establishing the Jal Jeevan Mission project, being implemented as a central-state partnership program, is Rs 45,000 crore. While the Centre will contribute half the amount, the state will bear the remaining cost.

Under the scheme, projects worth Rs 44,714.79 crore have been sanctioned for 54.45 lakh drinking water connections. So far, Rs 8,831.19 crore has been spent on the project, and the central-state scheme share is in the ratio of 50:50.

Through the Jal Jeevan Mission project, drinking water connection has been expanded to 52 percent of rural households – a historic achievement

- Launch:** Initiated on October 8, 2020, by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.
- Objective:** Provide tap water to all rural households in Kerala.
- Current Reach:** 52% of rural homes connected.
- Budget:** Rs 45,000 crore, shared equally by the Centre and State.
- Progress:** 95% connections sanctioned; 71 panchayats at 100% connectivity.
- Infrastructure Focus:** Long-term water supply schemes, including treatment plants.
- Water Provision:** Targeting 100 liters per person per day.
- Quality Assurance:** 84 NABL accredited labs; community-based testing.
- Community Involvement:** NGOs support and education.
- Extended Deadline:** Completion shifted to August 2025 due to early delays.



in itself. At present, nearly half of the total 69.92 lakh rural households in the state have been provided tap water through the Jal Jeevan Mission. In actual terms, this works out to 36.26 lakh. As many as 71 panchayats covering 117 villages have also achieved 100% drinking water connectivity and accomplished the target of 'Har Ghar Jal'.

It goes without saying that the hard work of the project implementing agencies and officials in accomplishing this target is highly commendable. However, there is still more work left to be done with care to achieve the project target within the stipulated time.

## Systematic Action

The substantive reviews, conducted by the Chief Minister and the minister concerned at regular intervals by including the priority projects, were crucial in addressing the problems in implementation and expediting the project. An Additional Private Secretary has been assigned to assess the day-to-day progress of the project and make necessary interventions.

In order to complete the Jal Jeevan Mission, which envisages bringing drinking water to all households by 2024, about 33 lakh more connections need to be provided. That the state could raise the overall number of water connections from 17.49 lakh (24.76% of total households) to 36.50 lakhs (52%) within just three years is indeed a remarkable achievement.

Kerala Water Authority, Jalanidhi, and Ground Water Department are the implementing agencies of the project in Kerala. While the central guidelines stipulate that 55 liters of water should be given to one person per day, we are implementing this project with a vision to provide 100 liters in consideration of Kerala's water usage pattern.

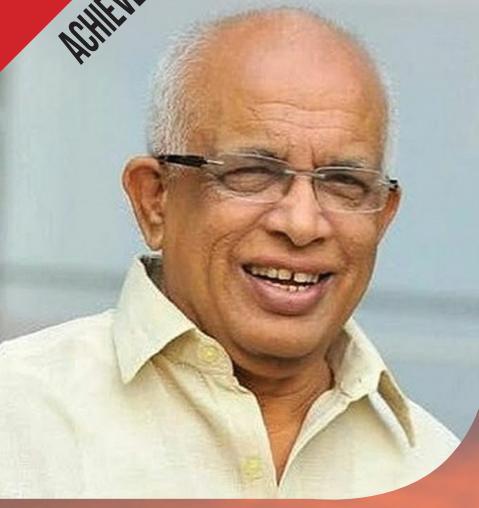
The Jal Jeevan Mission in Kerala focuses on constructing sustainable, long-term clean water supply schemes, including water treatment plants, aiming for

a lifespan of 40-50 years. Despite delays due to land availability and approval processes, which extend project completion to 12-18 months, the state prioritises these over quicker, short-lived tube well projects. The mission ensures clean water in rural schools and Anganwadis, and involves extensive water quality monitoring. 84 Kerala Water Authority labs are NABL accredited, and domestic water testing rates have been reduced. Training has been provided to about 5,000 Kudumbashree members for field water testing. NGOs, through KRWSA, are engaged in awareness, education, and support for panchayat-level project activities.

Originally set for completion by March 2024, the Jal Jeevan Mission in Kerala experienced a two-year delay at the outset. Despite this, 95% of the connections have received administrative sanction, with the remainder close to completion. Challenges specific to Kerala, such as dense population and environmental factors, caused delays in securing land, impacting project pace. Consequently, the project's deadline has been extended to August 2025 after the Center approved Kerala's request. The current LDF government aims to complete the project within its tenure, viewing it as a historic achievement for Kerala. The call is for collective effort towards realizing this significant milestone.

## A Paradigm Shift in Water Accessibility

The Jal Jeevan Mission, inaugurated by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on October 8, 2020, represents a significant shift in addressing water scarcity in Kerala. Jointly implemented by the central and state governments, this mission aims to ensure that all rural households have access to tap water. This ambitious project was initiated during the last term of the first Pinarayi government and continued into the second term, overcoming various challenges. ■



K.KRISHNANKUTTY

Minister for Electricity

# FLAGSHIP PROJECTS IN THE POWER SECTOR

**Provisions are made to meet 50 per cent of Kerala's overall needs in electricity through renewable energy sources by 2027 and is an exemplar for the whole country. In addition to this, the government aims to electrify the marginalized households of the state, tribal communities and farmers. This government, since assuming the power, has achieved an additional 593.5 MW generation capacity. Of this, 549 MW was generated from solar power and 44.5 MW from hydropower projects.**

## Electrification in the tribal areas

Remote tribal settlements which lack power supply will be electrified soon. The grid system is feasible in 42 cases and solar panels in 40 cases. Out of 42 colonies feasible with the grid system, KSEBL has provided provisions for the electrification in 27 colonies. The power supply will be provided to the remaining 15 colonies by March 2024.

A solar-wind hybrid microgrid with a capacity of 50 KW has been installed in the Thazhethudukki tribal village located in the Silent Valley Reserve Forest. ANERT has installed 10 solar-wind hybrid power plants of 1.5 KW capacity each in the houses of the Velappankandy tribal colony in Wayanad.

The Green Energy Income Scheme has democratised rooftop solar power, previously a privilege of the elite, by providing it free to marginalised communities. Under this scheme, 700 houses under the LIFE Mission initiative have installed 2 KW solar plants, and another 300 houses by the Scheduled Caste Development Department have 3 KW plants, enabling steady income for these households.

The Angan Jyothi Scheme aims to modernise 33,115 Anganwadis with smart kitchens that operate solely on electricity, eliminating the use of wood and gas. So far, 198 Anganwadis at Kazhakottam and 226 at Chittoor have been equipped under this project.

The TransGrid Scheme, with an estimated cost of Rs 10,000 crore, is designed in two phases to enhance the state's power line capacity, ensure smooth statewide power distribution, and bolster the transmission network, addressing the increasing power consumption needs without interruptions.

Through the implementation of the said project, 521 million units per annum i.e., the objective is to reduce power losses equivalent to

## Solar City

Thiruvananthapuram, the capital city has been selected as the Solar City. A project has been initiated to install solar power plants in all possible government buildings within Thiruvananthapuram city limits in collaboration with the Smart City project. Permission has also been given to set up solar power plants with a total capacity of 100 MW at houses in city limits with the funding of the central government.

### **Renewable Energy Goal:**

Achieve 50% electricity from renewable sources by 2027.

### **Electrification in Tribal Areas:**

Provide electricity to tribal settlements using grid and solar systems.

### **Green Energy Income Scheme:**

Offer rooftop solar power to marginalized communities for free.

### **Angan Jyothi Scheme:**

Equip Anganwadis with electricity-powered smart kitchens.

### **TransGrid Scheme:**

Enhance power line capacity for stable, efficient electricity distribution.

### **Green Hydrogen Hubs:**

Establish hubs in Kochi and Thiruvananthapuram for carbon neutrality.

### **Hydroelectric Projects:**

Develop multiple projects to increase hydroelectric power generation.

### **Electric Vehicle Charging Stations:**

Install charging stations statewide for electric vehicles.

### **Solar City Project:**

Convert Thiruvananthapuram into a solar-powered city.

### **Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS):**

Modernize the power distribution sector.

### **PM Kusum Scheme:**

Facilitate solar energy conversion for agricultural pumps

Rs.250 crores, to meet the transmission requirement of the next 25 years, to avoid power interruptions, and to provide quality power to the consumers with stability.

### **Green Hydrogen Hubs**

Green Hydrogen Hubs will be set up in Kochi and Thiruvananthapuram which is expected to help make Kerala carbon neutral and an investment of 200 Crores is expected for the same.

## **Hydroelectric projects**

The 60 MW Pallivasal expansion project and 40 MW Thottiyar hydropower projects will be completed this year. The construction of 9 hydropower projects Including these projects, with a capacity of 211 MW is in progress. Idukki Phase II Project with 800 MW capacity, Lakshmi Project with 240 MW capacity, Idukki Pumped Storage Scheme with 700 MW capacity, Pallivasal Pumped Storage Scheme with 600 MW capacity and Idamalayar Pumped Storage Hydroelectric Projects have been initiated.

## **Electric vehicle charging stations**

As part of the implementation of the government's policy of expanding the use of electric vehicles, 63 fast charging stations have been installed by KSEBL and 15 by ANERT (with state government funds) in all districts of the state. Apart from this, 1169 pole-mounted charging stations have been set up in all assembly constituencies under the initiative of KSEBL to charge two-wheelers and three-wheelers. A subsidy scheme is also being implemented for private entrepreneurs for charging machines and solar energy systems used in charging stations. Through this, the state government provides a subsidy of Rs 20,000 per kilowatt for solar energy systems and 25 per cent of the machine cost for DC fast charging machines.

## **Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS)**

The Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) aimed at the modernization and empowerment of the power distribution sector is being implemented with aid from the central government. 1973.27 crore has been sanctioned for activities aiming at the reduction of energy loss under the RDSS scheme. Also, an amount of Rs. 252.86 Crore project for setting up of SCADA DMS and control centres in three towns Kollam, Kannur, and Thrissur as part of modernization and speedy restoration of supply has been sanctioned. A project worth Rs 8205.61 crore to install smart meters has also been approved.

## **PM Kusum**

The Kusum scheme will be implemented for farmers who have less than five acres of agricultural land. the beneficiaries can enjoy the scheme free of cost and free of investment. Out of the 230,000 farmers in Kerala, one Lakh farmers got permission from the central government. In the first phase of this, steps are being taken to convert 9348 pumps to solar energy with the help of NABARD. ■



A. K. SASEENDRAN

Minister for Forest and Wildlife,

# KERALA'S FOREST CONSERVATION POLICIES GAIN NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT

**The government has formulated and implemented many schemes that have paved a new direction for forest and wildlife conservation.**

**T**he State Forest Department has implemented various projects and schemes, in addition to what was mentioned in the manifesto of this Government during the past two and a half years. The policy of this Government is to solve the issues of the people by traveling and interacting with them. Vana Sauhrudha Sadas and Theera Sadas are examples of this new people-centric approach. The government was able to solve many complaints of the common man through these platforms. Taking a leaf from the success of the above initiatives, the Government conducted NavaKerala Sadas and found ways to solve the issues of the people.

Even during the escalating reports of human-wildlife conflicts, the Government took prompt action in matters regarding eco-sensitive zones (buffer zones) as per the court directives, in keeping with public sentiment. It is a matter of immense pride that this Government was able to succeed in solving the major issue and addressing the concerns of the people.

During this period, 406.57 km of solar fencing, 59.1 km of solar hanging fence, 36.18 km of elephant-proof ditches, and other preventive measures were implemented to mitigate human-wildlife conflict. The Government's decision to empower local government chairpersons and secretaries to authorize the killing of wild boars that cause widespread crop damage has largely resolved the issue of the wild boar menace. However, further steps are being taken to completely resolve the issue. Meanwhile, three wild elephants, which were destroying crops and threatening human lives, have been tranquilized and captured after following the proper procedure. A tiger that killed a man in Mananthavadi was also tranquilized and captured.

The Central Wildlife Protection Act and the restrictions imposed by the central government are hindrances to the measures to mitigate human-wildlife conflict. This Central Act has now been amended again by the Central Government and made the provisions more stringent. The Government approached the Central Government for the implementation of a Rs 620-crore 5-year project with solutions to mitigate human-wildlife conflict but was declined and directed the State to find funds for the project.

Kerala has become the first state in India to formulate

## NEW PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED

- ▶ Appointment of 500 Beat Forest Officers from the Scheduled Tribes category.
- ▶ To ensure public participation in forest conservation activities, 261 Jana Jagratha Samitis (People's Vigilance Committees) comprising local people, people's representatives, and forest officials have been formed.
- ▶ Constituted eight permanent Rapid Response Teams and seven ad-hoc Rapid Response Teams to mitigate and prevent wildlife conflict.
- ▶ The state's first wildlife care and conservation center started functioning in Wayanad to treat and protect injured and diseased wild animals.
- ▶ Animals were brought to the zoological park starting at Puthur in Thrissur district. It will be opened to visitors in early 2024.
- ▶ In FY 2022-23, 1379 juntas were constructed covering 274,070 km. In FY 2023-24, it is proposed to construct 6000 juntas extending 1284.434 km.
- ▶ It is expected to receive visitors at Kottoor Elephant Rehabilitation Centre in Thiruvananthapuram by early 2024.
- ▶ Steps have been taken to sell sandalwood chips as fire briquettes.
- ▶ A Forest Museum started functioning at Kulathupuzha in Kollam district.
- ▶ 14 Integrated Check posts built in the state with the help of NABARD have started functioning.
- ▶ A scheme was devised to modernize six timber depots in the state and increase their efficiency.
- ▶ The time to apply for a license for old sawmills has been extended.
- ▶ The government has amended the conditions for the mandatory requirement of a doctor's certificate to get compensation due to a wildlife attack.
- ▶ Steps have been initiated to form a Forest Eco-Tourism Authority and Eco-Tourism Directorate.
- ▶ Legal provisions have been relaxed for starting sandalwood cultivation and felling of sandalwood trees.
- ▶ In-principle approval has been given for opening the Kozhikode Tiger Safari Park.

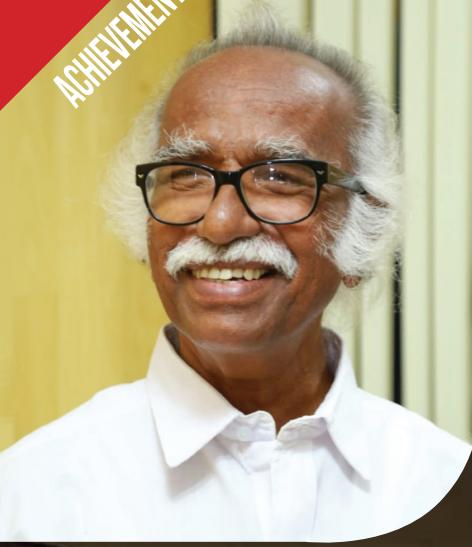
a policy document for the restoration of natural forests with the idea of getting out of the precarious situation due to climate change. To increase green cover, the Forest Department and the Local Self-Government Department are jointly implementing the 'Vrikshasamridhi' scheme under the employment guarantee scheme. Several schemes like Nagaravanam, Vidhyavanam, Theeravanam, Sthapanavalkaranam, etc., are being formulated and implemented as part of social forestry activities of the Forest Department. Funding is also given for the conservation activities of Kavus. As a part of social forestry, many projects such as urban forestry, education, coastal forestry, and institutional forestry are being developed and implemented. Funding is also given to those who are doing the conservation work of the Kavus (groves).

This Government has paid Rs. 30.89 crores as compensation to the victims of wild animal attacks. It has also been ordered to grant compensation to the victims who lost life in the attack on honeybees and wasps. The government has allotted Rs. 92.25 crores for the rehabilitation of 771 families belonging to non-tribal communities living inside forest enclosure areas through the Rebuild Kerala-KIFBI Voluntary Rehabilitation Scheme (Navakiranam). ■

## KERALA'S GROUNDBREAKING FOREST RESTORATION POLICY

Kerala has set a remarkable precedent as the first state in India to develop a policy document specifically for the restoration of natural forests. This initiative is a strategic response to the challenges posed by climate change. The state's Forest Department, in collaboration with the Local Self-Government Department, is spearheading the 'Vrikshasamridhi' scheme. This scheme is a significant component of the employment guarantee program, aiming to augment the state's green cover substantially.





## RAMACHANDRAN KADANNAPPALLI

Minister for Registration,  
Museums, Archaeology, Archives

# EMBRACING A NEW ERA IN DIGITISATION

**The Registration Department, through its digital transformation, exemplifies the state's commitment to enhancing governance with technology, meeting the evolving needs of its diverse population. This shift towards e-governance marks a significant step in ensuring accessible, efficient, and transparent services, aligning with the dynamic demands of society.**

## Programmes planned to be implemented during the year 2024

### Digitisation of Old Registered Deeds

Established in 1865, the main objective of the Department of Registration is the preservation of land records. The filing sheets produced along with the documents registered on a daily basis are bound and archived in racks in the Sub Registry Offices. The present facility is inadequate to preserve these permanently.

Considering the above-mentioned facts, the scheme for digitisation of old registered deeds in the Department was launched. The project, which started in the year 2018-19, has been completed in 7 southern districts and is in progress in the rest of Kerala. C-DIT is entrusted with the implementation of this project. The project was initiated with digitisation of deeds from 2005 onwards in the first phase and in the reverse order from 2004 and back. Apart from this, the conservation process for restoring partially damaged documents due to the efflux of time was also made part of the project.

Once the project is completed, the citizen can avail of the services for certified copies from the Sub Registry Offices without any physical touchpoints. Once rolled out, this will be a historical change as far as the Registration Department is concerned.

### Single Portal for Land-Related Transactions ('Entebhoomi')

The concept of centralisation of the Registration database was initiated in 2009 with the well-defined objectives to make the

- ▶ **Enhanced Digital Governance:** Registration Department's technology-driven governance shift.
- ▶ **E-Governance Focus:** Aiming for accessible, efficient, transparent services.
- ▶ **Land Records Digitisation:** Ongoing statewide project in Kerala.
- ▶ **Historical Documents Conservation:** Restoring time-damaged deeds.
- ▶ **Streamlined Citizen Services:** Easier access to certified copies post-digitization.
- ▶ **Entebhoomi Portal:** Centralised land transaction database since 2009.
- ▶ **Registration Process Innovation:** Electronic stamps, automated deeds, biometric ID.
- ▶ **Palm Leaf Manuscript Museum:** Unique showcase of ancient manuscripts in Thiruvananthapuram.
- ▶ **Raja Ravi Varma Gallery:** Specialized gallery for the legendary artist's works.
- ▶ **Kunkichira Museum Opening:** Cultural heritage display in Wayanad

system an exceptional land information system. OPEN PEARL, an online platform, has been operational since 01.09.2011. The system was also made capable of comprehensive integration between the Registration, Survey, and Revenue departments to expand the area of operation and to make the system more citizen-friendly and efficient.

The present system of document registration is characterised by a detailed write-up involving complex sentences, physical pasting of photographs, signing, and endorsement by the Sub Registrars. These processes also delay the document registration, and it takes approximately one week to return the registered documents. To make an immediate impact on citizens' lives, it is critical to identify and simplify important processes and services, which are currently cumbersome, prone to unnecessary delays, and long waiting times. Thus, it is proposed to replace the existing registration process with newer and easier ways for improving service deliveries from the Sub Registry offices with minimum physical touchpoints. To achieve this, the Registration Department proposes to replace the physical stamp papers with electronic stamps, to facilitate auto-generation of completed deeds and endorsements directly from the system, biometric identification of parties, unique registration ID, etc., and the ultimate objective is the delivery of registered deeds on the day of presentation/registration. This template-based registration not only simplifies the registration but also reduces the total turnaround time.

### **Palm Leaf Manuscript Museum**

A Palm Leaf Manuscript Museum has been set up in Thiruvananthapuram to display the rare and very ancient palm manuscripts in possession of the State Archaeology Department. Established at a cost of around ten crore rupees, the manuscript museum set up in the Central Archives building inside Thiruvananthapuram fort is the first of its kind in the country. Facilities have been made here to preserve the ancient palm leaf manuscripts and display them with transcriptions.

### **Kunkichira Museum in Wayanad**

A heritage museum showcasing the heritage and culture of Wayanad district has been set up at Kunkichira, Wayanad at a cost of Rs 10 crore. The heritage museum, which marks the unique culture of the Western Ghats, has been opened to the public with 11 galleries spread over 2 floors and a complete exhibition system.

### **Raja Ravi Varma Art Gallery**

An innovative art gallery has been set up in the Thiruvananthapuram Museum premises with an investment of Rs 5 crore to preserve and display 60 priceless paintings of world-class painter Raja Ravi Varma. Established in 1857, the Kerala Museum complex now has a unique gallery to display the paintings of one of the most eminent artists Kerala has ever produced. Apart from portraits drawn by Raja Ravi Varma, the museum also houses sketches by his uncle and sister as well. A decision has been made to include some of the famous Bengali paintings in this gallery. Further, a conservation lab too has been set up at Thiruvananthapuram to preserve world-class paintings. ■

**V. ABDURAHIMAN**

Minister for Sports, Wakf and  
Haj Pilgrimage, Minority welfare

# REMARKABLE STRIDES

**Kerala's sports sector is undergoing a remarkable metamorphosis, highlighting the government's steadfast commitment to sports promotion, talent cultivation, and inclusive athletic opportunities.**

**K**erala's comprehensive strategy for sports development stands as a paradigm for fostering a healthy, inclusive, and vibrant sports culture. With robust investments in infrastructure, innovative policies, and grassroots initiatives, the state has laid the groundwork for a promising future in sports. Kerala emerges as a beacon of inspiration for sports enthusiasts and policymakers alike, promising a dynamic and flourishing sporting landscape.

Kerala's resolute commitment to sports development is underscored by its substantial investment in the sector, earmarking a monumental 1700 crores sourced from the KIIFB fund and the sports department's fund. This financial infusion, including 1000 crores of KIIFB and 700 crores from various plans encompassing MLA funds and others, signifies the government's robust approach towards fostering a dynamic sports ecosystem within the state.

## Expansion of Sports Complexes

The completion of sports complexes across Kodumon, Nileswaram, Mattannur, Parali, and several other regions signifies Kerala's proactive stance in providing modern sports facilities accessible to all. These facilities, supported by the ongoing construction of district sports complexes using KIIFB funds in key regions like Kasaragod, Wayanad, Thrissur, and others, highlight the state's unwavering commitment to bolstering sports infrastructure.

## One Playground in each Panchayat

Kerala's visionary project of establishing playgrounds in every panchayat is rapidly progressing. This initiative, aimed at enhancing grassroots sports infrastructure, brings together coordinated funding from the sports department, MLA funds, Panchayat fund and CSR. It is anticipated that around 450 local bodies in the state will witness the creation of these vital recreational spaces, fostering not just physical fitness but also community bonding and social interaction. A sports fitness center will be established to promote physical activities and wellness of the public, catering to all age groups. Along with this, the department will come forward with a footpath, open gym, toilet, and light facilities for the public.

## Local Body-level Sports Councils

Kerala stands as a trailblazer in establishing sports councils at various administrative tiers, including corporations, municipalities, and panchayats. These councils, operating democratically under the amended Sports Act of 2000, play a pivotal role in planning and

executing grassroots sports programs and projects. More athletes have been appointed and given key roles in the sports council.

## Integration of Physical Education in School Curriculum

Setting a precedent in India, Kerala's initiative to integrate physical education from the Lower Primary level in collaboration with the Education Department signifies a holistic approach to education. This move emphasizes the importance of physical fitness and overall well-being in a student's educational journey.

## Football Training for Youngsters

The 'Goal' project exemplifies Kerala's commitment to nurturing football talent among youngsters. This ambitious initiative aims to impart football training to 5 lakh children over five years. The initial phase has seen the training of 1 lakh children across 1000 centers in 140 constituencies, providing expert coaching and essential sports equipment.

## Innovative Sports E-Certificate Distribution

Kerala has pioneered an entirely online system for distributing sports certificates, a first of its kind in India. These e-certificates, considered valid for government job applications and approved course admissions, serve as a crucial step towards eradicating certificate-related fraudulent practices.

## Record Appointments in Sports Quota

Over the past seven years, Kerala has appointed an unprecedented 703 athletes under the sports quota. This record-breaking initiative showcases the state government's unwavering commitment to recognizing and supporting sporting talent across various disciplines. The recent appointments of athletes who won Silver and Bronze medals at the National Games held in Kerala in 2015 underscore Kerala's dedication to fulfilling past commitments and nurturing the state's sporting talent pool. They were appointed by creating Supernumerary posts in

the sports youth directorate. Kerala's commitment to providing opportunities to deserving sportspersons is evident in the record appointments made under the sports quota. The significant increase in appointments during the current administration stands as a testament to the state's proactive approach to recognizing and harnessing sports talent.

## Ensuring the Welfare of Minorities

55 religious minority candidates preparing for civil services received Rs 10.46 lakhs in scholarships for fee reimbursements in 2022-23. A total of Rs 24.66 lakhs was granted to 411 minority students pursuing three-year diploma courses in recognized polytechnics during 2022-23, with each student receiving Rs 6,000 annually. In 2022-23, Rs 58.30 lakhs in scholarships were awarded to 388 minority students enrolled in Nursing and Paramedical Diploma courses at Government Nursing Colleges in Kerala, each receiving Rs 15,000 annually. 73 students pursuing education in foreign universities received a total scholarship of Rs 53.44 lakhs in the form of loan interest aid in 2022-23 under the scholarship scheme.

Financial support totaling Rs 355.28 lakh was expended in 2022-23 for the construction and rehabilitation of homes for widows and divorcees from religious minorities. A specialized building with an area of 2888.70 sq. meters, accommodating over 300 pilgrims concurrently, was established alongside the Hajj House, facilitated by State Government assistance, to cater to women's needs.

## A Holistic Sports Policy

A defining milestone for Kerala's sports landscape is the formulation of a comprehensive sports policy. This groundbreaking policy, centered on 'Sports for All' and 'Health for All,' underscores the state's commitment to promoting physical activities and sports for individuals of all ages. The idea of community sports aims for the wellness of the general public. With a focus on physical literacy and inclusive sports activities, this policy sets the stage for a vibrant sports culture. ■

- **1700 Crore Investment:** Substantial funding allocated for sports development.
- **Sports Complexes Expansion:** Modern facilities being built in multiple regions.
- **Playground in Each Panchayat:** Grassroots initiative for local sports infrastructure.
- **Sports Councils at Local Levels:** Facilitating grassroots sports programs.
- **Physical Education Integration:** Implemented from the lower primary level.
- **'Goal' Football Initiative:** Aiming to train 5 lakh children in football.
- **Online Sports Certificates:** Innovative e-certificate distribution system.
- **Record Athlete Appointments:** 703 athletes appointed under sports quota.
- **Minority Scholarships:** Financial aid for education in various fields.
- **Support for Widows and Divorcees:** Construction of homes for minority women.
- **Inclusive Sports Policy:** Emphasizes 'Sports for All', 'Health for All'

**G.R. ANIL**

Minister for Food and Civil Supplies

# MOVING FROM FOOD SECURITY TO NUTRITIONAL WELL BEING

**Kerala, a region distinguished by its unique blend of geography and demographics, has carved out a niche for itself on the global stage, setting benchmarks in various spheres. While its geographical landscape wasn't conducive for large-scale industries, it capitalised on its resources by pivoting from food crops to lucrative cash crops, bolstering its foreign exchange reserves.**

**W**hat sets Kerala apart is its remarkable focus on human development indices, transcending traditional economic metrics. The state boasts commendable strides in areas such as public education, healthcare, gender equality, and social justice. And this stellar performance has never gone unnoticed; global scholars are still seen delving into the 'Kerala model' as a case study. Further bolstering its reputation, a recent study by NITI Aayog crowned Kerala as the nation's top state in sustainable development.

Interestingly, Kerala's success story has not been devoid of challenges. Historically, the state grappled with food scarcity, with Malayalis bearing the brunt during global upheavals like World War II. However, what's commendable is Kerala's steadfast commitment to achieving food security. The state's resilience in ensuring no citizen goes hungry is emblematic of its governance's proactive stance. A critical moment in this journey was the unified push by Malayalis, irrespective of political affiliations, advocating for universal statutory rationing—a goal they achieved through collective constitutional advocacy.

The subsequent public distribution system (PDS), tailored to Kerala's needs, laid the groundwork for this food security paradigm. While initial iterations aimed for universal rationing, evolving policies that focussed on targeted rationing narrowed the scope, excluding about 57 per cent of Keralites from the programme's ambit. Yet, the state remains steadfast, extending benefits beyond the purview of the central NFSA Act to marginalized groups.

In a bid to universalise the rationing system, Kerala has introduced ration cards based solely on Aadhaar identification, by including even its homeless population. The administration has been proactive, issuing as many as 4, 04,195 lakh cards, including 28250 specialized cards for welfare institutions including those catered for differently-abled students. Interstate guest workers, meanwhile, have been enabled to collect their ration due from their place of stay under the ration rights card programme. Notably, the 134 mobile ration shops in the state now cater to remote regions, ensuring even tribal communities have access.

Initiatives like the 'Oppam' scheme, which facilitates ration delivery to bedridden patients, and the 'Subhiksha' hotels offering subsidized meals under the Hunger Free Kerala initiative, further exemplify Kerala's innovative approach to food security. Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic's



challenges, Kerala's swift action in delivering free food kits epitomized its unwavering commitment to its citizens' welfare.

The State Civil Supplies Corporation's expansive network—operating under Supplyco—stands as a testament to Kerala's commitment to affordable essentials. With over 1600 outlets, including retail and medical stores, Supplyco ensures essentials are accessible at prices considerably lower than the market average. The government's steadfast decision to subsidize essential commodities since May 2016 underscores its dedication to public welfare.

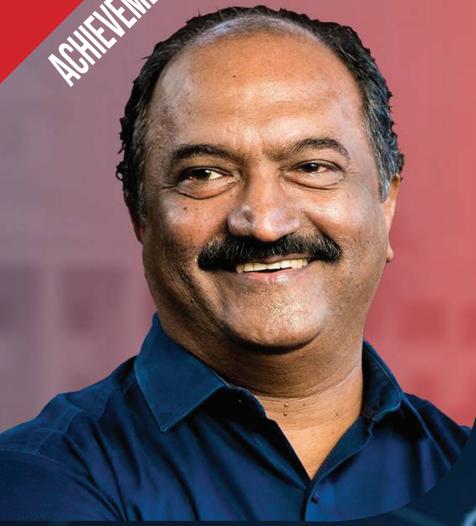
As many as 300 ration shops have so far been converted into K-stores while works are on to upgrade 1000 more shops are slated to be completed by the end of this financial year. Plans are also underway to revamp food storage facilities, ensuring scientific storage across all state taluks. Additionally, the integration of Enterprise Resource Planning into the Civil Supplies Corporation is poised to streamline operations further.

A seminar held in connection with the Keraleeyam event on November 2023 underscored Kerala's evolving priorities on nutritional security. As the state progresses towards a developed society, the emphasis is shifting from mere food security to holistic nutritional security. Experts at the seminar stressed the importance of transitioning from mere sustenance to ensuring nutritious diets for all. With these transformative steps, Kerala is poised to redefine its narrative, transitioning from a beacon of food security to a global exemplar in nutritional well-being.

## **Marching forward with a clear vision**

Looking ahead, Kerala's vision is clear: refine its model to be more resilient and sustainable. The ongoing transition from traditional ration shops to modernized 'K-stores' encapsulates this ambition. These upgraded stores, equipped with enhanced infrastructure and services like mini-banking Chottu gas, utility payments, and marketing hubs, signify a new era in Kerala's food security narrative. ■

- ➡ **Geographical Strategy:** Kerala pivoted from food to cash crops, enhancing foreign exchange.
- ➡ **Human Development Focus:** Exceptional achievements in education, healthcare, gender equality, and social justice.
- ➡ **Global Recognition:** Known for the 'Kerala model,' topping NITI Aayog's sustainable development rankings.
- ➡ **Food Security Commitment:** Overcame historical food scarcity through proactive governance and universal statutory rationing advocacy.
- ➡ **Public Distribution System (PDS):** Evolved from universal to targeted rationing, extending benefits to marginalized groups.
- ➡ **Innovative Rationing:** Introduced Aadhaar-based ration cards, including for the homeless and differently-abled, with 4,04,195 cards issued.
- ➡ **Ration for All:** Mobile ration shops and schemes like 'Oppam' for bedridden patients, ensuring food access even in remote areas.
- ➡ **Supplyco Network:** Over 1600 outlets providing essentials at subsidized prices since May 2016.
- ➡ **K-stores Transformation:** Modernizing 300 ration shops into K-stores, with plans for 1000 more, integrating technology and expanding services.
- ➡ **Nutritional Security Focus:** Transitioning from food security to ensuring nutritious diets, highlighted in the Keraleeyam event seminar



K. N. BALAGOPAL

Minister for Finance

# PIONEERING IN SOCIAL AND SCIENTIFIC ADVANCEMENT

**Kerala, initially an underdeveloped region in the 1950s, has undergone a remarkable transformation to become a state known for its impressive achievements in social sectors such as universal education, primary healthcare, and social security. In recent years, the state has also witnessed substantial economic growth. It has evolved from a region characterized by high human development and low per capita income to one boasting both high human development and relatively high per capita income.**

The second Pinarayi government is actively engaged in initiatives aimed at inspiring the new generation towards the creation of 'Navakeralam'. The government is consistently working to bolster the knowledge economy. This is being achieved through the promotion of entrepreneurship, the protection and modernization of industries, and by seizing early opportunities in emerging technologies.

Union Minister Nirmala Sitharaman herself, speaking at the graduation ceremony of Fatima Mata National College in Kollam, said India has the third largest startup ecosystem in the world and Kerala has immensely contributed to the number of startups in it. She added that Kerala has also contributed immensely to India's fintech industry. Along with promoting a knowledge economy and modern industries, the Pinarayi Vijayan government's focus on welfare measures continues.

## Ensuring Well-Being through Social Security Pensions

The government continues to ensure the welfare of the needy and the marginalized people by providing universal welfare pensions. Keeping this policy as a prime concern, more than 60 lakh people are receiving pension benefits. The State government declares its commitment and care for the people of all sections through these measures. The monthly pension amount is ₹1600. The State government grants social welfare pensions to the helpless and the needy. The government allocates

around Rs 900 crore per month only for welfare pensions, amounting to around 10,000 crores annually.

## MEDISEP

A comprehensive health insurance scheme for government employees and pensioners of the state service of Kerala. It has a basic package and an additional package for 'catastrophic' illnesses, both together for a premium of Rs 500 a month. The total beneficiaries of the scheme are around 11.26 lakhs and their dependents. A total of 32 lakh people enjoy the benefit of the scheme.

## Universal Health Insurance

Kerala is advancing as a model to the world in the field of health. Kerala's health sector has come up with the developed nations globally in terms of health indices and public health. The government ensures the best treatment for all sections of people by providing Universal health insurance.

Karunya Health Care Scheme or Karunya Aarogya Suraksha Padhathi (KASP) was launched by the government to provide a solution to avert the financial burden faced by ordinary families due to heavy medical expenses and ensure comprehensive health care. The scheme was implemented in Kerala from 1 April 2019. More than 42 lakh families in the State are beneficiaries of the scheme. Treatment services are also provided through the Karunya Benevolent Fund for families with an annual income of less than three lakhs and who are not covered under the KASP scheme.

## Pioneering Excellence in Advanced Science and Technology

Kerala stands at the forefront of harnessing the immense potential of modern information technology. The state government is leaving an indelible mark on the landscape of digital education by

establishing Kerala Digital University, a hub of innovative academic disciplines aimed at shaping a skilled and forward-thinking generation. It holds the distinction of being India's first digital university.

## Kerala Space Park: A Vision for the Future

Kerala Space Park (KSPACE) represents a pivotal initiative by the state government to establish a formidable presence in the space sector, with a pronounced emphasis on education, research, and industry. KSPACE stands as a landmark project, propelled by the audacious objective of positioning Kerala as a prominent hub for the development of products and services crucial to the space sector, as well as ancillary sectors related to aeronautics and defence.

## DWMS for Job Seekers and Employers

A One-Stop Solution for Job Seekers and Employers in a monumental stride, the government is dedicated to working to transform academic aspirations into reality. Focused interventions are underway to provide tailor-made employment opportunities aligning with individual aptitudes. Launched in February 2021, the Kerala Knowledge Economy Mission, under the oversight of the Kerala Development and Innovation Strategic Council (K-DISC), is geared towards establishing a knowledge-centric economy within the state.

## Work Near Home

A 'Work Near Home' initiative has been conceived to fortify existing infrastructure in local self-governing bodies, transforming them into potential centres for employment. The Kerala Knowledge Economy Mission is actively implementing employment schemes

such as Pride, Samagra, Unnathi, Thozhiltheeram, Thozhilarangathekku, and Back to Work, contributing to the holistic enhancement of the employment sector.

## Genome Data Centre for Health and Scientific Advancements

Kerala is pioneering the establishment of India's first Genome Data centre, solidifying its position as a model nation in the realm of health. The forthcoming Genome Datacentre, dedicated to sequencing genetic information, will be situated within the Digital Science Park. This progressive initiative aims to harness the opportunities prevalent in the fields of biotechnology and genetics for industrial and research advancements. Spearheaded by K-DISC in collaboration with Digital University, the state-of-the-art data center integrates cutting-edge GPU systems equipped with NVIDIA chips.

## KIIFB: Transforming Kerala's Infrastructure Landscape

Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board (KIIFB) stands as a dynamic catalyst for sustainable development. KIIFB's portfolio encompasses a range of projects in various stages of development across all 140 constituencies within the state. These endeavours represent a pioneering stride in developmental history. KIIFB has sanctioned a total of 1073 projects, amounting to Rs 82,342 crore. As of November 2023, an estimated expenditure of Rs 27,051 crore has been allocated for these initiatives. Kerala is poised to experience a surge in infrastructure development in the coming years as more projects reach completion.

## GST Department Restructuring and Resource Mobilisation

Kerala is the first state in the country to undertake a comprehensive restructuring of the GST department. Through the process of restructuring and consistent efforts, we could increase the tax collection by 23,000 crores in 2022-23 compared to 2020-21. The Central Finance Minister herself lauded the fiscal management efforts of Kerala in parliament. In various socio-economic fields, Kerala stands apart. ■

- ➡ **Social and Economic Transformation:** Remarkable progress in education, healthcare, and social security, coupled with a leap in economic growth and per capita income.
- ➡ **Knowledge Economy Focus:** Strong emphasis on entrepreneurship, tech innovation, and a significant contribution to India's startup and fintech sectors.
- ➡ **Universal Welfare and Health Programs:** Over 60 lakh recipients of welfare pensions and comprehensive health insurance schemes like MEDISEP and Karunya Health Care.
- ➡ **Digital and Space Technology Leadership:** Home to India's first digital university and the pioneering Kerala Space Park, driving advancements in science and technology.
- ➡ **Innovative Genome Data Center:** India's first center dedicated to genetic sequencing and biotechnological research, solidifying Kerala's role in health and scientific innovation.
- ➡ **Infrastructure and Fiscal Milestones:** Dynamic development through KIIFB's infrastructure projects and effective fiscal management marked by GST department restructuring and increased tax collection.



R.BINDU

Minister for Higher Education &amp; Social Justice

# A JOURNEY OF REFORMS AND EXCELLENCE

**Kerala is carving a niche for itself in the realm of higher education with a series of innovative reforms. These reforms not only align with global benchmarks but also resonate with the state's unique socio-economic fabric.**

**S**etting a precedent in India, Kerala has initiated the formation of three pivotal committees: the Higher Education Reform Commission, the University Act Reform Commission, and the Examination Reform Commission. These bodies have been entrusted with the task of devising strategies to mould higher education, fostering a knowledge-centric society while preserving the state's socio-economic ethos. Building on their recommendations, Kerala's universities are embarking on a transition to four-year degree programs. Notably, this revamped curriculum empowers students with a research-oriented approach during their final year, paving the way for seamless transitions into postgraduate studies.

In a bid to benchmark its academic prowess, the Kerala Institutional Ranking Framework (KIRF) mirrors the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF). Additionally, initiatives like TrEST Park in Thiruvananthapuram aim to ignite the research passion among engineering scholars.

## Fostering Centers of Excellence

Kerala's commitment to academic excellence is further underscored by the establishment of numerous centers of excellence across its universities. From the Center of Excellence in Ayurvedic Research to the Center of Excellence in Nano Science & Nano Technology, these centers signify Kerala's ambition to be a global hub for specialized education and research. A Nava Kerala Post Doctoral Fellowship Scheme has been launched for researchers who have presented their research interests in integration with the Rebuild Kerala project to encourage research conducive to overall progress and modernization of the state.



## Milestone Achievements in NIRF Rankings

Kerala's educational prowess has been duly recognized on the national stage. Impressively, nearly a quarter of India's top 200 higher education institutions hail from Kerala. This accolade includes 14 colleges securing ranks in the top 100 nationwide. Furthermore, Kerala's academic institutions, such as Kerala University, have made significant strides in the NIRF rankings, exemplifying the state's commitment to excellence. Various departments under six government polytechnic colleges in Kerala have been awarded NBA Accreditation (National Board of Accreditation), a national-level quality inspection system in the field of higher education.

Kerala is bridging the academic-employment gap with innovative initiatives. The Sri Narayananagar Open University in Kollam centralizes distance education, while programs like 'EARN WHILE LEARN' and 'Connect Career to Campus' equip students with practical skills and financial literacy. Embracing technology, the state has established technology incubation centres and international-standard skill training complexes under 'ASAP Kerala', preparing a future-ready workforce. The 'Let's go digital' project digitizes education across higher institutions, complemented by the Kerala Resources for Education Administration & Planning Project (K-REAP) for IT-driven university operations.

With a substantial budgetary allocation of Rs 4508.48 crore for higher education, including Rs 92 crore under the Roosa scheme for infrastructural development in universities and colleges, Kerala underscores its commitment to academic excellence. These visionary reforms, emphasizing quality and technological integration, position Kerala as a leader in higher education, setting a benchmark for other states to follow.

## Commitment to Social Justice

Kerala's commitment to social justice and accessibility in education is evident in its adoption of the Higher Education Commission's recommendations. To promote inclusivity, dedicated seats for differently-abled students, including those with autism, learning disabilities, and mental health issues, have been allocated in undergraduate and postgraduate courses across government and aided colleges. Additionally, a 4% reservation for differently-abled individuals in aided college teacher recruitment fosters a diverse academic environment.

The Chief Minister's Student Talent Award acknowledges talented students from economically

- ▶ **Higher Education Reforms:** Three commissions - Higher Education, University Act, and Examination Reform - to overhaul higher education.
- ▶ **Four-Year Degrees:** New four-year degree programs focusing on research in the final year.
- ▶ **KIRF Standardization:** Implementation of Kerala Institutional Ranking Framework to benchmark academic excellence.
- ▶ **Centers of Excellence:** Establishment of specialized centers in Ayurveda and Nano Science & Technology.
- ▶ **Digital Education Initiatives:** Launch of 'Let's go digital' for education digitization and 'ASAP Kerala' for skill training.
- ▶ **NIRF Rankings:** Strong representation in National Institutional Ranking Framework with top 200 institutions.
- ▶ **Inclusive Education:** Reserved seats for differently-abled students in higher education.
- ▶ **Diverse Academia:** 4% reservation for differently-abled in college teacher recruitment.
- ▶ **Student Talent Award:** Acknowledgment of academically talented students from low-income families.
- ▶ **Fee Waivers:** Special fee exemption for financially disadvantaged students in select fields

disadvantaged backgrounds, celebrating their academic achievements. In a compassionate move, the state has waived special fees for 1178 economically challenged students in architecture and self-financing engineering institutions, ensuring that financial barriers don't impede access to education.

These initiatives reflect Kerala's dedication to breaking down educational barriers and supporting students with diverse needs. By fostering an inclusive environment, the state not only opens doors to education for all but also nurtures a society where every student can excel and contribute meaningfully. ■



J. CHINCHURANI

Minister for Animal Husbandry and Dairy Development

# VISIONARY INITIATIVES IN ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRY DEVELOPMENT

**The Animal Husbandry and Dairy Development Departments in Kerala have not only completed various ongoing schemes initiated by the previous government but have also introduced pioneering initiatives to strengthen the sector. These interventions have been pivotal in safeguarding the interests of the populace and the state during challenging times.**

## Mobile Veterinary Service: Reaching Farmers at their Doorsteps

One of the flagship initiatives under the central government's Livestock health and disease control project is the Mobile Veterinary Service, a game-changer in ensuring the well-being of livestock and empowering farmers in remote areas. Under this pioneering project, 29 blocks were strategically chosen to implement mobile veterinary units, bringing emergency animal treatment directly to the doorsteps of farmers. By providing mobile services, the veterinary department aims to bridge this accessibility gap and ensure that every farmer can avail essential healthcare for their livestock.

Each mobile veterinary unit is a comprehensive healthcare system on wheels. It typically comprises a veterinarian, a para vet, and a driver cum assistant, all operating on a contract basis. The presence of veterinary professionals ensures the delivery of expert care, while the support staff facilitates the smooth functioning of the mobile unit. Recognizing the success and importance of mobile veterinary services, measures are being taken to scale up the initiative. The goal is to enlarge the coverage of these mobile units to include all blocks in the state. Additionally, two tele-



veterinary units have been established in Kannur and Ernakulam, leveraging the Rebuild Kerala initiative. This expansion not only broadens the geographical reach but also incorporates digital connectivity for enhanced services.

One notable feature of these mobile veterinary services is the establishment of tele-veterinary units. All mobile units are connected to a centralized call centre located in Trivandrum, reachable through the toll-free number "1962." This centralized control mechanism ensures effective coordination, monitoring, and resource management. Farmers can seek advice, report emergencies, and access information related to livestock health through this centralized system.

## Realizing the Vision: E-Samruddha Project

This innovative initiative aims to digitally coordinate farmers and their livestock, incorporating advanced technologies for streamlined information management. The project comprises three crucial phases:

► Radio Frequency Identification Device (RFID): Livestock are tagged with RFID devices, enabling digital tracking of their health and productivity. This information is stored under the E-Samruddha Project, providing a comprehensive overview for efficient management.

► Digital Health Management System: All veterinary hospitals in the state are integrated into a digital health management system. This centralized approach ensures seamless communication and data-sharing among different healthcare facilities.

► Mobile Apps for Farmers: A mobile application has been launched as part of the E-Samruddha Project, allowing farmers to access veterinary services online. This includes online appointments, lab reports, and other essential services, bringing convenience and efficiency to the farmers' fingertips.

## Junior Resident Veterinary Doctors: Nurturing Talent and Services

In this novel initiative, veterinary doctors who have recently graduated were appointed as junior residents in selected veterinary hospitals. This initiative not only provides employment opportunities but also ensures practical training for these graduates, benefiting both aspiring veterinarians and farmers. Notably, 101 junior resident doctors were employed during 2021-22 and 2022-23.

## Ksheera Shree Portal: Facilitating Dairy Services Digitally

The Dairy Development Board's Ksheera Shree Portal serves as a digital platform, providing streamlined access to various dairy services and schemes. The portal's effectiveness has earned recognition at both state and national levels including the E-Governance award.

► **Mobile Veterinary Service:** Delivers emergency animal treatment and healthcare directly to farmers' doorsteps in Kerala.

► **E-Samruddha Project:** Integrates RFID tagging of livestock, a digital health management system, and a mobile app for efficient livestock management.

► **Junior Resident Veterinary Doctors:** Employs recent veterinary graduates in hospitals for practical training and enhanced veterinary services.

► **Ksheera Shree Portal:** A digital platform providing easy access to various dairy services and schemes, recognized for its effectiveness in e-governance.

► **Special Scheme for the Extremely Poor:** Offers a 90% subsidized cow to 140 women from impoverished families, aiding in their livelihood.

► **Climate Control Research Complex:** Focuses on climate-adaptive livestock farming, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and preparing for future climatic challenges.

## Special Scheme for the Extremely Poor: Empowering Vulnerable Families

As part of the State government's identification of 63,000 extremely poor families in Kerala, the Dairy Development Board introduced a scheme offering a free cow with a substantial 90% subsidy to 140 women from these families. This scheme aimed to provide a stable income source to uplift their livelihoods.

## Climate Control Research Complex: Addressing Climate Change Challenges

Kerala faces the brunt of extreme climate changes, posing challenges to increasing milk productivity. To tackle this, the RKVY-RAFTAAR project allocated 170 lakhs for a Climate Control Research Complex at the Mannuthy Veterinary Campus. This facility conducts experiments to understand, mitigate, and adapt production methods to future climatic conditions. Apart from this, the research complex helps to select genetically specific livestock suitable to future climate. The research and experiments aim to minimize the production of methane and other greenhouse gases in livestock, and pioneer innovative farming practices for the future.

Kerala's Animal Husbandry and Dairy Development Departments demonstrate a commitment to livestock welfare and innovation. These initiatives highlight the state's proactive approach and investment in cutting-edge research, setting a benchmark in the field for other regions to emulate ■

**M.B RAJESH**

Minister for Local Self Governments,  
Rural Development and Excise

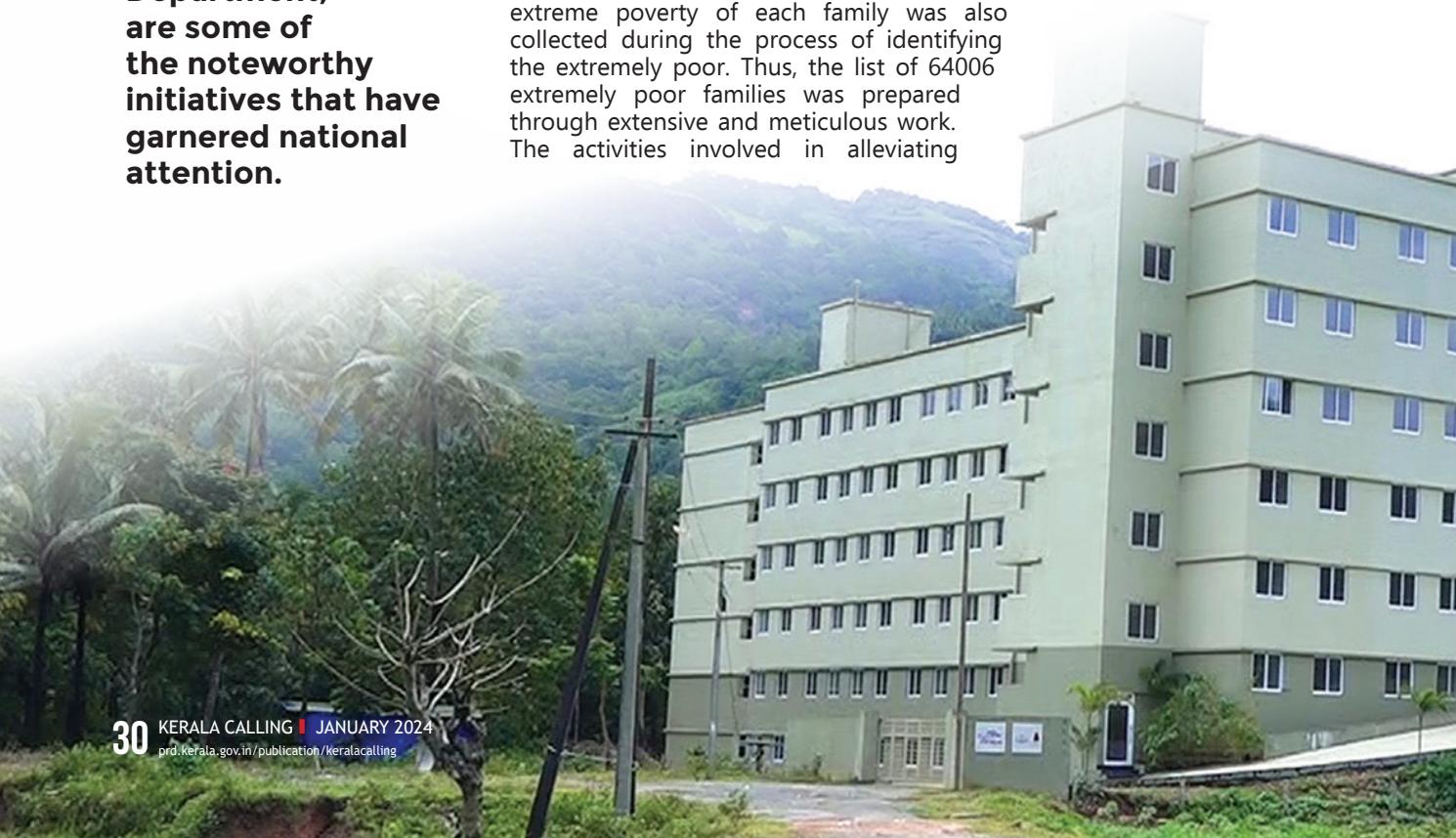
# SETTING BENCHMARK IN DEVELOPMENT AND WELFARE

**The LIFE Mission project, Extreme Poverty Eradication programme and - K-Smart, introduced by the Pinarayi Vijayan government and implemented under the Local Self Government Department, are some of the noteworthy initiatives that have garnered national attention.**

## Extreme Poverty Eradication

Kerala, the state with the lowest poverty rate in India, has embarked on a mission to completely eradicate extreme poverty. It was a proud moment for Kerala when Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan made the historic announcement that 30658 out of 64006 (47.89) families identified as extremely poor were successfully liberated from the shackles of poverty. As per the latest data on December 18, 2023, Kerala has made history by freeing 30897 families (48.27%) from extreme poverty. The state is all set to declare itself free of extreme poverty on November 1, 2025, the state's formation day.

The lack of availability of basic essentials like food, safe shelter, basic income and health formed the basis for determining extreme poverty. Information on the extent to which various factors contributed to the extreme poverty of each family was also collected during the process of identifying the extremely poor. Thus, the list of 64006 extremely poor families was prepared through extensive and meticulous work. The activities involved in alleviating



extreme poverty have been broadly classified into three categories, immediate, short term and long-term.

As part of immediate assistance to be provided to those identified as extremely poor, various possession documents were distributed among the families under the 'Avakasham Athivegam' scheme. Under the scheme, 5132 families got ration cards, 3539 individuals received Aadhaar cards and 3836 individuals received voter's ID card. While social security pensions were

granted to 1378 people, 3615 people have been provided with health insurance, 1043 people with bank accounts and employment guarantee cards with 1455 people. As many as 584 individuals were enrolled under Kudumbashri. 345 people were provided with identity cards for differently abled. Steps were also initiated to build new homes for 15667 extremely poor families. Out of this, construction of 1558 has already commenced and 578 were completed. Nine individuals were provided with Transgender ID cards as well. A total of 671 families were provided with new cooking gas connections. New electricity connection was provided to 118 families whereas electrical wiring works were carried out for another 216 families. Further, property ownership certificates were also provided to 97 families.

## LIFE Mission

Since the inception of the LIFE mission in 2016 under the first Pinarayi Vijayan-led government, it has completed the construction of 364808 houses, providing housing for beneficiaries. Construction of 122299 more houses is currently underway. Additionally, 469 families were provided with flats in housing complexes constructed at various locations, including Adimali, Angamali, Venganoor, Mannanthala, Keezhmad and Perinthalmanna. The project also includes the construction of 29 multi-storied building complexes at Kadambur, Vijayapuram, Karimanoor, and Punalur to provide housing for landless, homeless families. Kerala has achieved an exceptional feat by constructing so many houses for the poor within such a relatively short time.

Cooked food is being provided through Kudumbashri Janakeeya Hotels to 5,336 extremely poor families who do not have the means to cook their food. Food kits are also being provided to an additional 15276 families. The health department was also able to ensure prompt medical care and follow-up treatments for those in need by conducting house visits and special medical camps.

The education department, meanwhile, has initiated steps to provide education to the uneducated among the extremely poor. As many as 1362 students were provided with textbooks, study materials and uniforms through various local self-government institutions. 1340 students have also been provided with free travel passes in KSRTC buses.

By freeing these 64,006 families from extreme poverty, Kerala aims to set a global benchmark in sustainable development by achieving crucial sustainable development goals such as poverty eradication, hunger-free society, good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, and affordable and clean energy.■





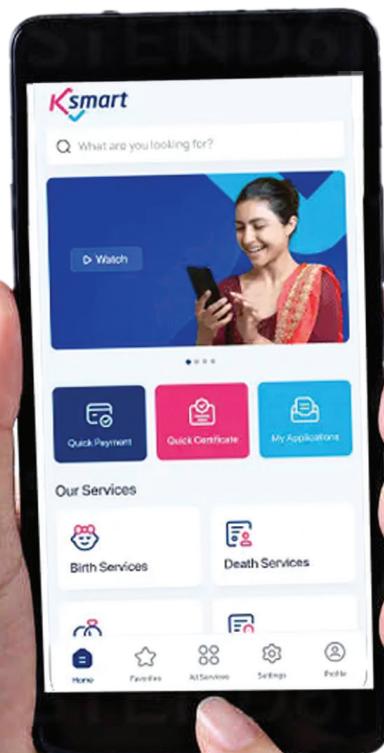
## K - SMART

The Kerala government launched the Kerala Solution for Managing Administrative Reformation and Transformation (K - SMART) project, which quickly garnered the nation's attention. With the implementation of this project, the government aims to connect the general public with e-governance and facilitate hassle-free access to free services.

All services offered by Corporations and Municipalities are now made available online with the help of the integrated software of K-SMART, which commenced its operations in January 2024. This is a first-of-its-kind initiative in the country and an online system has been introduced for all public services offered by local body institutions. The system will facilitate enhanced efficiency and transparency of local body institutions, eliminate corruption and provide services to citizens quickly.

With the full-fledged implementation of K-SMART at all local self-governing bodies by April, all services will be streamlined under a single platform.

One of the key features of K-SMART is that it facilitates hassle-free provision of services by ensuring transparency. Aspiring entrepreneurs can submit relevant documents online to receive licences and start business ventures. K-SMART will also facilitate obtaining building numbers, permits, payment of building taxes, service of certificates etc. A system is in place to take measures to address the grievances. The mobile app version of K-SMART has also been developed. Initially, K-SMART will be introduced in urban areas and will extend to rural areas from April 2024.



# THE K SMART SYSTEMS IN 34 MODULES UNDER FIVE CATEGORIES

## Citizens Services and Regulations Modules

- Civil Registration
- Business Regulation
- Building Regulation
- Animal, Livestock & Meat Regulation
- Welfare Module(Social Security Pensions and Financial Assistances)
- Public Grievance, Complaints & Suggestions
- Civic Amenities & Public Utilities
- Rentals & Leases
- Property Tax
- Entertainment & Other Taxes
- RTI
- Citizen Service Portal, Universal Service interface and Citizen Master Database



## Office Management Modules

- Front Office
- General Administration
- Digital File Management
- HR Management
- Financial Management
- Meeting Management
- Asset & Stores Management
- Inspections & Audits
- Suit Management



## Task Modules

- Elections Management
- Census/Surveys/ Data Collections

## Special Modules

- Doorstep delivery of Services
- Volunteer Management
- Knowledge Management





ADV. P. A. MOHAMED RIYAS

Minister for Public Works and Tourism

# A GREAT LEAP IN INFRASTRUCTURE AND TOURISM

**I**nfrastructural development projects have now drastically changed the face of Kerala. National highway development, hill highway, coastal highway, Kerala without level crossings, development of junctions, etc., are comprehensive transformations.

The government initiated this transformation by implementing national highway development. The Pinariyi Vijayan government has been able to implement the long-standing demand to develop our national highway from Kasargod to Thiruvananthapuram into a six-lane road. Now, the development of National Highway 66 is progressing at full speed. For the first time in the country, Kerala has given 25 percent of the amount for land acquisition to establish the national highway development which was thought to never be implemented in Kerala. Kerala has already handed over Rs 5580 crore to the National Highways Authority of India.

Completion of the Kuthiran tunnel on the interstate highway was also a long-standing demand of the people. This too was made a reality.

Another dream project of Kerala is the Hill Highway. The project is progressing at a fast pace, which will revive the commercial and tourism sectors of the hilly region. 133.68 km of the Hill Highway has already become a reality.

The Coastal Highway project is also in progress. The development

## TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

- **Post-COVID Tourism Boost:** Significant rise in domestic tourists in 2022.
- **Investor Meet-Up for Tourism:** Encouraging innovative tourism projects.
- **Beach Tourism Expansion:** Floating bridges in coastal districts.
- **Adventure Tourism Projects:** Surfing and kayaking academies established.
- **New Tourist Attractions:** Largest cantilever glass bridge and adventure centers.
- **Caravan Tourism Initiative:** New caravan parks under development.
- **Responsible Tourism Projects:** Multiple community-oriented initiatives.
- **Destination Wedding Promotion:** Kerala positioned as a wedding destination.
- **Cinema Tourism:** Turning film locations into tourist spots.
- **Cultural Heritage Enhancement:** Projects like Literary Circuit and Muziris Heritage.
- **Festival Expansion:** Larger celebrations of Onam, Christmas, and more.
- **Champions Boat League:** Revival and expansion of boat racing events.

of Kerala's coastal zone will give rise to the commercial and tourism sectors. 623 km of coastal road in 52 stretches is being developed as part of the project. Kerala's first coastal highway has become a reality from Muhyiddeen Mosque to Kettungal in the Malappuram district.

The government launched a project to eradicate level crossings in Kerala to avoid wasting time at railway crossings. More than 100 railway flyovers are being constructed as part of the project all over Kerala. For the first time in the history of Kerala, the work of 13 railway flyovers is progressing together. Construction of Guruvayur, Kanhangad, and Feroke flyovers has been completed. 72 flyovers are being constructed by RBDCK and 27 flyovers by KRDCL.

The government has launched a project to renovate junctions with the objective of decongesting traffic and beautifying roads and junctions. 200 crores have been sanctioned for the development of 20 junctions in the state. Follow-up is in progress.

It is the dream of the government to upgrade all the public works roads in the state to BM and BC standards, the highest road construction methods prevailing in the country today. It was the promise of this government when came to power in 2021, more than 50 percent of public works roads in Kerala will be upgraded to BM-BC standards. It has been followed. 55 percent of public works roads have been upgraded to BM and BC standards.

Road maintenance is as important as the renovation of roads. Road maintenance projects were implemented with the participation of the public. The DLP board, which was installed to inform the people about the defect liability of the road, has created a big change. Running Contract and OPBRC systems were implemented for the first time in the country for road maintenance.

Three automated mobile quality control testing labs have been set up to conduct real-time on-site inspections of road construction to ensure quality.

This government has completed 50 bridges in the state within two years. Now the goal is to complete 100 bridges in the state by the end of three years.

Making bridges attractive is as important a project as building them. Most bridges are a tourist attraction in foreign countries. The project of beautifying bridges in Feroke and Aluva is in progress. A project to make the bridges attractive by setting up entertainment centers under the bridges near Kollam SN College and Nedumbassery is also in progress.

Kerala is transforming its tourism sector with innovative initiatives. The "People's Rest House" scheme offers affordable, quality accommodation, widely accepted for its cost-effectiveness. Infrastructure development, crucial for economic growth, aligns with the burgeoning tourism sector. Post-COVID, Kerala's tourism has flourished, gaining global attention. This success stems from safe tourism projects, novel offerings like caravans, and enhancing destination appeal, attracting 1.88 crore domestic tourists in 2022, a trend expected to continue.

A tourism investor meet-up has been organised to foster comprehensive sector development, with a special focus on beach tourism. Kerala, with beaches across nine coastal districts, is enhancing this appeal with floating bridges, already operational in seven districts. Adventure

## INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT



tourism is also gaining momentum, with the establishment of a Surfing Academy and a Kayaking Academy at the Malabar River Festival venue.

Key attractions include the Vagamon Adventure Park's cantilever glass bridge, Aakkulam Park's adventure center, and the Caravan Tourism project. Nightlife tourism is being introduced, complementing responsible tourism initiatives like the Women Friendly Tourism and Agri Tourism Network. Kerala is becoming a popular wedding destination, with a dedicated center in Thiruvananthapuram.

The Cinema Tourism Project, starting with Kireedam Bridge, transforms film locations into tourist spots. Additional projects like the Literary Circuit and Muziris Heritage Tourism further enrich Kerala's diverse tourism landscape. Traditional celebrations like Onam and modern events like the Champions Boat League continue to attract tourists, including international visitors. ■



## K. RADHAKRISHNAN

Minister for Welfare of Scheduled Castes,  
Scheduled Tribes, Backward Classes, and Devaswoms

**Kerala continues its steadfast march towards comprehensive social upliftment and empowerment, particularly for marginalized communities, with several key initiatives witnessing significant progress and success.**

# COMPREHENSIVE SOCIAL UPLIFTMENT AND EMPOWERMENT

## Housing for Scheduled Tribes: A Path to Dignified Living

The ambitious plan to provide land and homes to landless homeless Scheduled Tribes by 2026 is swiftly advancing. Under the SAFE scheme, 13,000 houses have been allocated, each receiving Rs. 2 lakh for safe housing, promising a brighter future for those in need of shelter.





## Educational Opportunities for Marginalised Youth

Kerala's commitment to education shines through scholarships provided to 425 Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Backward students, enabling them to pursue studies in foreign universities. The state is set to award scholarships to an additional 310 individuals this year, fostering academic excellence and global exposure.

## Empowerment Through Skill Development

Efforts to bridge the gap in aviation with the Wings scheme are noteworthy, offering opportunities for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe candidates to pursue a commercial pilot license with an annual scholarship of Rs. 33 lakh. Additionally, the TRACE initiative seeks to equip youth from Scheduled Tribes with professional education qualifications by providing job training with honoraria, enhancing their career prospects.

## Digital Access and Connectivity for All

The state's commitment to digital inclusion is evident as 1,083 out of 1,284 villages now have internet facilities. A substantial investment of 4.31 crore in Idamalakudi alone exemplifies the government's drive to ensure internet access in remote areas, aiming for comprehensive coverage by March 31.

## Economic Empowerment and Entrepreneurship

The formation of the Kerala Empowerment Society signifies a concerted effort to empower youth, fostering entrepreneurship and employment opportunities. The society spearheads initiatives ranging from startups to manufacturing service projects, nurturing a vibrant ecosystem for aspiring entrepreneurs.

Kerala's dedication to social inclusivity, educational empowerment, digital accessibility, and economic development remains unwavering,

promising a brighter, more equitable future for all its residents.

## Enhancing Infrastructure at Pilgrim Centres

The Sabarimala Pilgrimage has undergone significant improvements, ensuring safe and comfortable facilities for pilgrims. Moreover, the utilization of temple income for Athura Seva and community welfare stands as a testament to optimising resources for public benefit. Initiatives like establishing a dialysis center in Kadampuzha

and nearing completion of preparations for a super-specialty hospital in Guruvayur underscore the state's commitment to enhancing healthcare services. ■

→ **SAFE Scheme:** 13,000 houses for landless Scheduled Tribes with Rs. 2 lakh each for housing.

→ **Educational Scholarships:** 425 scholarships for overseas study for Scheduled Caste and Tribe students, expanding to 310 more.

→ **Wings Scheme:** Annual scholarships of Rs. 33 lakh for Scheduled Caste and Tribe candidates for pilot training.

→ **TRACE Skill Development:** Professional training and job opportunities for Scheduled Tribe youth.

→ **Digital Village Connectivity:** Internet access in 1,083 out of 1,284 villages, focusing on remote areas.

→ **Kerala Empowerment Society:** Fostering youth entrepreneurship and employment opportunities.

→ **Sabarimala Infrastructure Upgrade:** Improved facilities and safety for pilgrims.

→ **Temple Income for Community Welfare:** Funds allocated for public services like healthcare.

→ **Healthcare at Pilgrim Centers:** New dialysis center and super-specialty hospital developments.

→ **Overall Social Upliftment Focus:** Emphasis on inclusivity, education, and economic empowerment for marginalized communities.

**P. RAJEEVE**

Minister for Law, Industries and Coir

# THE SURGING INVESTMENT HAVEN

**Kerala's strategic position as an investment-friendly state is reinforced by its remarkable advancement in the all-India ranking of investment-friendly environments, according to the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT). The state's ascent from 28th to 15th position underscores its commitment to creating a conducive business climate.**

**K**erala's strategic position as an investment-friendly state is reinforced by its remarkable advancement in the all-India ranking of investment-friendly environments, according to the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT). The state's ascent from 28th to 15th position underscores its commitment to creating a conducive business climate.

The government has implemented several key initiatives to enhance its investment-friendly environment, as evidenced by its notable rise in the DPIIT's all-India investment-friendly ranking. These initiatives include streamlined land transfer processes in industrial estates, a grievance redressal mechanism for MSMEs promising timely resolution of issues, expedited licensing for large investments with a consolidated approach, and license exemptions for smaller investments to encourage entrepreneurial ventures. Additionally, a centralised and computer-based inspection system has been introduced to ensure transparency and efficiency in industrial establishments. Furthermore, the government has focused on digitization and policy reform in industrial estates, preparing for a comprehensive and unified policy announcement. These strategic measures, under the leadership of the Pinarayi Vijayan government, are set to position Kerala as a leading destination for global investors and companies.

The last two and a half years have been a period of achievements and growth for the industry sector. We have been recognised nationally and have received accolades. There was a jump in industry friendliness ranking; more than twenty PSUs became profitable; Kerala Paper Products Limited (KPPL)—taken over by the state government from the central government—became the pride of Kerala. Additionally, the launch of a new entity named Kerala Rubber Limited aimed to establish Kerala as a hub for rubber-based industries, attracting numerous national and international companies to the state. Accompanying these accomplishments was the introduction of the Industrial Policy 2023. While the list of achievements is extensive, highlighting some key milestones on this occasion underscores the radical



changes taking place in Kerala.

Kerala has surged from the 28th to the 15th position in the Ease of Doing Business ranking. In just one year, 1,39,817 enterprises were initiated under the Entrepreneurial Year scheme, attracting Rs 8416.88 Crore in investments and generating 2,99,934 jobs. The Entrepreneurial Year project in Kerala has been acknowledged as the country's best practice in the MSME sector. Notably, 5 KINFRA Parks in the state have gained national recognition as the top 5 industrial parks in South India.

Efforts to reduce bureaucratic red tape were evident when Tata Elxsi received a nine-storey building of 2.17 lakh square feet within 10 months of signing an MoU with the state government. Within a year and a half, Kerala secured an investment offer of Rs 11,000 crores through the Meet the Investor project, attracting 29 companies to invest in the state. Demonstrating our developmental strides, the industrial growth rate has risen to 17.3%, and the manufacturing sector growth rate stands at 18.9% this financial year.

The state government's success in reviving Kerala Paper Products Limited is underscored by Dainik Bhaskar's order for 10,000 tonnes of newsprint, preventing the potential demise of a Central Public Sector Undertaking. Another noteworthy achievement is the KSIDC megafood park, anticipating an investment of Rs 1,000 crore. Under the state government, KINFRA has attracted a record-breaking investment of Rs 2000 crore to Kerala in the last two and a half years.

Furthermore, Kerala soaps have found international markets, and the Keltron-Nippon consortium secured a contract for the Tirupati Smart City project. Safran, a global leader in the aerospace/defense sector, has established its first unit in Kerala. Synthite Industries initiated an Agro Processing Cluster and Science and Technology Research Center in Ernakulam District, with plans to set up an innovation lab at Kochi University costing 20 crores. In 2022, Vensure invested Rs 1500 crore, and the Craze Biscuits manufacturing unit, launched with an investment of Rs 200 crore, has become operational.

Renowned industrialist Kochouseph Chittilappilly inaugurated projects worth Rs 145 crore in the state and Nesto Group's Rs 650 crore developments across districts. The state government's flagship project, private industrial parks, is catalyzing a new wave in Kerala, with 16 parks receiving construction permission within six months. Palakkad, Kerala's first industrial park, is now operational. For the first time in India, a directorate and bureaucratic system were established for the plantation sector, accompanied by the organisation of a dedicated expo. KEL-EML Kasargod, now state-run, secured international orders quickly. Hindustan Newsprint Limited, revamped as Kerala Paper Products Limited, supplies paper to over 25 major Indian media outlets.

The government is undertaking significant industrial and economic developments. Key projects include Kerala Rubber Limited, a Rs 1,050 crore initiative

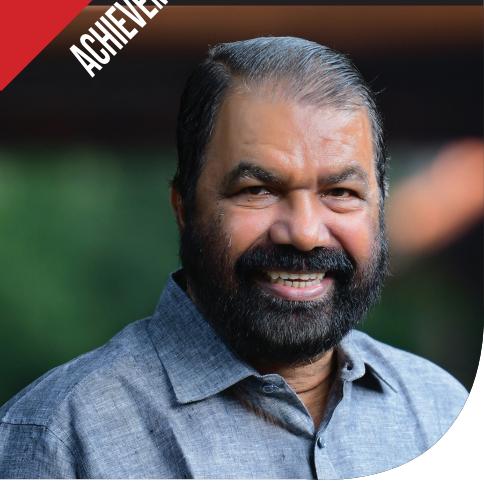
- **DPIIT Ranking Rise:** Elevated from 28th to 15th for investment-friendliness.
- **16 Industrial Parks:** Fast-tracked launch, including operational Palakkad Park.
- **Kerala Rubber Limited:** Rs 1,050 crore project for rubber industry.
- **Kochi-Bangalore Corridor:** Over one lakh job opportunities from 2220 acre development.
- **Alappuzha Mega Food Park:** Operational with Rs 1,000 crore investment potential.
- **Graphene Innovation Center:** Pioneering graphene production and development.
- **Public Sector Turnaround:** Around 25 organisations transitioned to profitability.
- **Significant Wage and Gratuity Reforms:** In coir and cashew sectors.
- **Handloom and Khadi Expansion:** Kerala handloom brand and global Khadi promotion.
- **Entrepreneurial Year Impact:** 1,90,000 enterprises launched, attracting Rs 11,000 crore investment

for rubber-based products, and the acquisition of 2220 acres for the Kochi-Bangalore Industrial Corridor, expected to create over one lakh jobs. The Gift City project, a major financial hub, is nearing land acquisition completion. The Alappuzha Mega Food Park, with an expected Rs 1,000 crore investment and 3,000 jobs, is operational. The Thonnakkal Life Science Park has a new administrative and biotech lab, and the India Innovation Center for Graphene, a groundbreaking facility for graphene production, has commenced in Kerala.

Additionally, twenty-five public sector organisations have become profitable. Notable wage reforms have been introduced in the coir sector. 'Kerala Khadi' has been launched globally with a partnership with Flipkart. Gratuity dues in the cashew nut industry have been settled. The Kerala handloom brand and Chendamangalam handloom village are significant steps towards a knowledge-based economy and industrial growth.

## The Entrepreneurial Year

The Entrepreneurial Year, a proof to this government's commitment to industrial growth, gained national recognition during a meeting attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, acknowledged as a best practice in the MSME sector. Under this scheme, 1,90,000 enterprises have been initiated, attracting over Rs 11,000 crores in investment to Kerala and generating approximately 4 lakh jobs. Notably, the project has empowered 60,000 women entrepreneurs in the state. ■

**V. SIVANKUTTY**

Minister for General Education and Labour

# EXCEEDING EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

**The general education and labour departments are marching ahead with various vibrant activities, adapting to timely changes in policies and practices to address any new and emerging scenarios.**

**T**he education sector in Kerala is cruising ahead setting new and innovative models. The state government's policy ensures free education for all. As a result, every student who enrolls to pre-primary school continues studies until the 12th grade. This is not the case in the rest of the country. Kerala has the lowest dropout rate at the national level.

Even the COVID pandemic could not hinder educational activities in Kerala. The state was quick to adapt to the new circumstances by adopting digital and online classes, which led to Kerala getting a special mention by UNICEF in its international report on educational activities in the pandemic era.

In seven years, Kerala invested over Rs 5000 crore in the education sector for developing basic facilities and infrastructure, a testament to the state's commitment to improving general education. Substantial funds, ranging from Rs 1 crore to Rs 5 crore, were allocated for infrastructure



development of schools, which eventually contributed to academic excellence.

The education curriculum in the state is undergoing comprehensive reforms, which is happening after over a decade. The revised textbooks for classes 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9 will reach the students in 2024. Similarly, the revised textbooks for classes 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10 will be available to the students in 2025. The state's education department even published additional textbooks carrying crucial chapters that were omitted by the NCERT in the name of reforms. This even attained national attention.

Furthermore, Kerala allocates significant funds for school infrastructure development, exemplifying its commitment to education. The state has undertaken substantial efforts to enhance the quality of education, as seen in the implementation of the Free Primary Education Program and various projects focusing on curriculum improvement over the last decade.

The state could provide free uniforms and distribute textbooks before the commencement of each academic year, ensuring students have the necessary resources. Kerala has also successfully implemented a very good mid-day meal scheme for school students. During the last seven years, a total of 33,377 vacancies were filled by the education department through PSC. Out of this, a major share belongs to the post of teachers. The 'Varnakoodaram' scheme launched with an aim to provide world-class environment in preschools with modern facilities was implemented in 608 schools, ushering in revolutionary changes in the pre-primary education sector.

In terms of employment and skill development, Kerala has been at the forefront, implementing various schemes and initiatives backed by effective policies. Kerala stands out as the only state in the country that gives away awards to the best workplaces and skilled workforce. A call centre, 'Sahaja', was established to address the issues faced by women in workplaces, allowing them to reach the authorities through a single phone call. Calling the toll-free number (180042555215) will ensure prompt intervention from the authorities concerned.

The state has also excelled in launching various schemes to provide social security to migrant labourers. This includes Aawas health insurance scheme, district-level Shramik Bandhu facilitation centres, various housing schemes and strict registration to ensure that migrant labourers receive various benefits they deserve.

Kerala offers the highest daily wage for rural labourers. The average earnings of labourers in agricultural, non-agricultural and construction sectors in Kerala is more than double the national average. Kerala also shows the way in declaring minimum wages in the most number of sectors, with minimum wages being declared in as many as 84 employment sectors. The state has allocated Rs 106.40 crore for the Income Support Scheme to ensure minimum wages in traditional labour sectors.

- ◆ **Universal Education:** Ensured uninterrupted education from pre-primary to 12th grade; lowest dropout rate in India.
- ◆ **Digital Adaptation During COVID:** Shifted to online classes promptly, recognized by UNICEF.
- ◆ **Investment in Education:** Rs 5000 crore spent on educational infrastructure over seven years.
- ◆ **Curriculum Overhaul:** Comprehensive update in educational curriculum with new textbooks.
- ◆ **Enhanced School Facilities:** Significant funding allocated for school infrastructure improvements.
- ◆ **Resource Accessibility:** Provision of free uniforms, textbooks, and effective mid-day meal scheme.
- ◆ **Large-Scale Teacher Recruitment:** Filled 33,377 education department vacancies, primarily teaching positions.
- ◆ **Pre-primary Education Reform:** 'Varnakoodaram' scheme revolutionized pre-primary education in 608 schools.
- ◆ **Employment and Skill Initiatives:** Awards for best workplaces, 'Sahaja' call centre for women's workplace issues, migrant labourer social security schemes.
- ◆ **Progressive Labour Policies:** Highest rural labour wages, reformed labour laws, and substantial welfare benefits totalling Rs 2764.37 crores.

Kerala's leadership in the country's labour sector is reflected in its continuous efforts to adapt to changing times, implementing reforms and amending laws, and prioritising the well-being of labourers. For example, the maximum weight of load that a male labourer can carry was reduced from 75 kilograms to 55 kilograms. Similarly, the maximum weight a female or an adolescent labourer can carry was fixed at 35 kilograms. Raising the pension age of plantation workers from 58 to 60 and introducing special housing schemes for them are some other notable interventions of the state's labour department.

Benefits totalling Rs 2764.37 crores were provided to labourers and their families through various welfare boards. During the second term of the Pinarayi Vijayan-led government, a total of 27,404 people were recruited through the Employment Exchange. This includes 5,544 permanent jobs and 21,860 casual jobs. Since coming to power, this government has provided loans and financial assistance to the tune of Rs 49,20,50,040 to 11,448 beneficiaries of various self-employment schemes as well as 107 joint ventures. ■



### V. N. VASAVAN

Minister for Ports and Co-operation.

# GIVING A NEW FACELIFT

The state of Kerala is on the brink of a transformative era as the government diligently works on restructuring and modernizing the Co-operation and Ports departments.



## Vizhinjam port

One of the biggest achievements of the second Pinarayi Vijayan government is the completion of the Vizhinjam International Port, which holds the potential to become the gateway to the international cargo movement of the country. This project, which entails an investment of Rs. 7600 crores will be operational by May next year.

Vizhinjam is characterized by its proximity to the international shipping channel of the Indian Ocean, which is the world's busiest shipping channel, and the natural depth of the sea. The first ship made a call to the port on completion of the first of its 400 meter-long berths. With the completion of the first phase, the project is expected to be able to handle 10 lakh TEU containers per annum.

Realizing that other small ports in the state need to be made operational to make Vizhinjam a part of Kerala's general growth plan, we have obtained ISPS approval for the small ports of Beypore, Vizhinjam, Kollam and Azhikal as well. With this, vessels carrying foreign flags can call at these 4 ports.

The establishment of the Vizhinjam port, in turn, will trigger various port-based industrial initiatives that have the capacity to change the face of Kerala in its entirety. The Outer Ring Road, to be constructed at a cost of Rs 6,000 crore in this connection, will make the connectivity of this project more streamlined and will give a major shot in the arm to the industrial development boom in India in general and Kerala in particular. The process of land acquisition for setting up a multi-purpose industrial park on both sides of this road is in progress under the Industries Department.

The contracting company has expressed its willingness to start a logistics park project in the area,

which can provide direct employment to 2000 people. The people, especially the youth, who reside in the vicinity of the project area will be given priority in these projects. Construction of a building by ASAP at a cost of Rs 50 crore has already been completed and as stipulated in the contract, it has been handed over to the port construction company and will be converted into a port-based vocational training centre.

The demand for launching a shipping service between Kerala and UAE to address the travel problem of expatriates was raised with the Union Minister of Shipping Sarbananda Sonowal. Based on this, the Shipping Corporation of India has been tasked to coordinate the activities in this regard.

Accordingly, the Shipping Corporation has directed the agencies Kerala Maritime Board and Norka Roots for further action. Discussions and actions related to this direction are now being initiated at various levels. Letters of Interest will soon be invited to find suitable companies to operate the vessel service.

## Financial Security for Investors

In a bid to boost investor confidence, the Government of Kerala has raised the deposit guarantee scheme amount to an impressive 5 lakhs and constituted a new scheme named 'Punarudharana Nidhi'. This measure aims to provide a safety net for investors, fostering a conducive environment for economic growth and development.

## Digital Innovations in Co-op Banks

The introduction of the e-office system and centralized software in Co-op banks stands out as a major milestone for the Co-operation department. These innovations are expected to streamline processes and enhance the overall functionality of Co-op banks, ensuring better services for the public.

## Empowering the Common Man

The Co-operation department is committed to the well-being of the common man, rolling out various projects and schemes to provide extensive support. Initiatives such as the Risk Fund, 'Angathwa



- ➡ **Vizhinjam Port Completion:** Key project of the second Pinarayi Vijayan government, enhancing India's cargo capabilities with an annual handling capacity of 10 lakh TEU containers.
- ➡ **Small Ports Upgrade & International Shipping Initiative:** ISPS approval for Beypore, Vizhinjam, Kollam, and Azhikal ports; proposal for Kerala-UAE shipping service to aid expatriates.
- ➡ **Co-operative Sector Boost:** Increased 'Punarudharana Nidhi' fund to 5 lakhs and digitalization of Co-op banks to improve customer service and investor confidence.
- ➡ **Cultural Preservation & Job Creation:** Establishing the 'Aksharam Museum' and cooperative societies for artists; numerous employment opportunities in Co-operation department.
- ➡ **Support for Farmers and Entrepreneurs:** Advanced rice mill project in Kidangoor and collaborations with women's Co-operative societies; various community support schemes.
- ➡ **Education, Healthcare, and Pandemic Relief:** Nursing college establishment, 'Shuchithwam Sahakaranam' scheme, and 'Kshema Nidhi' financial aid during COVID-19 for education and healthcare support

'Samaswasa Nidhi,' and 'Sahakari Santhwanam' aim to assist Co-operators facing physical challenges or unfortunate circumstances. Furthermore, farmers, peasants, and tenants benefit from substantial monetary aid through one-time settlements.

## Job Opportunities and Cultural Enrichment

The Co-operation department has not only introduced numerous job opportunities but has also championed cultural preservation. The 'Aksharam Museum' by SPCS delves into the literary and cultural traditions of Kerala, shedding light on the roots of the Malayalam language. Additionally, cooperative societies for artists have been established, fostering creativity and collaboration.



## INCLUSIVE YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

Youth Cooperative societies have been established to uplift the younger generation, with a focus on inclusivity. The incorporation of youth from scheduled castes and scheduled tribes reflects the government's commitment to inclusive policies.



## Co-operative Expo and Online Marketing

The Co-operative Expo has become a platform to showcase various Co-operative products, initiating a significant move towards online marketing and the branding of 'Co-op mart.' This strategic approach is set to expand the reach of Cooperative products, benefiting both producers and consumers.

## Inclusive Youth Empowerment

Youth Cooperative societies have been established to uplift the younger generation, with a focus on inclusivity. The incorporation of youth from scheduled castes and scheduled tribes reflects the government's commitment to inclusive policies. Support for Farmers and Entrepreneurs

The acquisition of 10 acres of land for an advanced rice mill in Kidangoor, Kottayam, demonstrates the government's dedication

to supporting paddy farmers. Collaboration with the Uralunkal Labour Co-operative Society for the construction of the KAPCOS mill is a testament to the cooperative spirit. Women Co-operative societies are working hand-in-hand with the Department of Industries to promote entrepreneurship among women.

## Holistic Support for Various Communities

The Co-operation department extends its support to diverse communities through schemes such as 'Snehatheeram Vaipa' for fishermen, 'Muttathe Mulla' by Kudumbashree for women, and 'Sahakaranam Souhridam Vaipa' to generate employment opportunities for the differently-abled.

## Focus on Education and Healthcare

The establishment of a nursing college and the successful execution of the 'Shuchithwam Sahakaranam' scheme highlight the government's commitment to mainstream education and healthcare. ■



VEENA GEORGE

Minister for Health and Woman and Child Development

# LEADING THE NATION

**Kerala stands as a paragon of healthcare excellence, transforming its medical landscape with a strong focus on accessibility, quality, and inclusivity. The state's achievements in healthcare have propelled it to the forefront of national rankings, establishing it as a leader in innovative health initiatives. Kerala's holistic and forward-thinking approach to health and wellness has earned widespread acclaim and recognition, setting a benchmark in healthcare standards nationally and internationally.**

**K**erala's ascendancy in health indices is indisputable. Topping the National Food Security Index and securing the pinnacle in the National Neethi Aayog Index, the state emerges as a beacon of health governance.

Remarkably, Kerala claims the lowest maternal and child mortality rates, a testament to its unwavering commitment to safeguarding the most vulnerable members of society. The SAT Hospital, designated a Center of Excellence, stands tall among the nation's top ten hospitals, reflecting rare achievements in healthcare.

## Groundbreaking Initiatives

In the realm of healthcare initiatives, Kerala is a trailblazer. The initiation of the Anti-Biogram, the first-of-its-kind Mother-Child friendly hospital, and the implementation of the Hub and Spoke Model Lab Networks are testaments to the state's commitment to pioneering health solutions.

The monumental 'Viva' campaign, combating anaemia for a growth-oriented Kerala, reflects the state's proactive stance towards public health.

## Pioneering Medical Procedures

Kerala's healthcare saga includes groundbreaking medical procedures. Ernakulam General Hospital achieved a historic milestone by performing heart surgery and valve replacement without opening the heart – a feat previously unseen at the district level. The hospital also proudly pioneered kidney transplant surgeries.

The initiation of liver transplant surgeries in government hospitals and Kerala's distinction in ensuring oxygen supply, as highlighted by the WHO, further solidify the state's reputation as a healthcare model.

## Governmental Commitment

The commitment of the Kerala government to healthcare is reflected in its robust budget allocations. From a modest 665 crores in 2016, the health sector's budget has quadrupled to an impressive Rs 2,828 crore.

The accolades, 20 national awards and honors bestowed upon the Department of Health, Women, and Child Development, underscore Kerala's exceptional contributions to healthcare. Notable among them is the Central Government's Arogya Manthan 2023 award for providing the most free treatment and the India Today Award 2022 for the best-performing state in health.

## Innovative Healthcare Systems

Kerala's healthcare triumph extends to innovative systems. The introduction of the Clinical Establishment, Medical Practitioners, and Epidemic Prevention Bills showcase a forward-thinking legislative approach. The formation of the Allied and Healthcare Council for paramedical courses further exemplifies the state's commitment to comprehensive healthcare.

A comprehensive stroke unit with a neuro cath lab at Trivandrum Medical College, the first disability-friendly membership card, and the establishment of the Kerala Center for Disease Control and Prevention mirror the state's proactive measures in healthcare infrastructure.

## Education and Progress in Medical Colleges

Thiruvananthapuram Medical College, for the first time, gained recognition in the national ranking list. Its innovative strides include the establishment of a pediatric cardiac surgery unit and the inauguration of a comprehensive stroke center, encompassing the first-ever neuro cath lab in the government sector. This institution also introduced advanced radiation treatment with LINAC, setting a new standard in cancer care.

Kollam Medical College commenced PG courses and equipped itself with cath lab facilities, while Konni Medical College underwent a monumental 250 crore development, launching MBBS courses, and constructing state-of-the-art infrastructure. Alappuzha Medical College's initiatives in super speciality blocks and maternal and baby healthcare have significantly enhanced medical services.

Kottayam Medical College achieved numerous breakthroughs, performing Kerala's first liver transplant and pioneering valve replacements without open-heart surgery. The college also initiated specialized courses in Infectious Diseases and secured grants for further development, including a College of Pharmacy.

Idukki Medical College commenced its operations, while Ernakulam Medical College undertook a substantial 285 crore Maternal Child Super Specialty Block, significantly augmenting healthcare provisions in the state.

## Thrissur, Mancheri, and Kozhikode: Innovating for a Healthier Tomorrow

Thrissur Medical College's investments in MRI technology and trauma care exemplify its commitment to cutting-edge medical services. Mancheri Medical College initiated PG courses and upgraded its facilities, while Kozhikode Medical College ventured into surgical super speciality blocks and advanced neonatal care.

Kannur Medical College introduced a new Plastic Surgery department and commenced extensive renovations. Kasaragod Medical College's phased implementation of specialized services underscores its commitment to comprehensive healthcare. Wayanad Medical College's strides in multi-specialty buildings and specialized clinics further enhance regional healthcare.

Kerala's healthcare system exemplifies advancement in infrastructure and technology. Key developments include establishing Family Health Centres, increasing ICU beds and ventilators during

- ◆ **National Leadership in Healthcare:** Kerala tops national healthcare rankings, excelling in accessibility, quality, and inclusivity.
- ◆ **Lowest Maternal and Child Mortality:** Notable for the lowest rates in India, reflecting strong healthcare commitment.
- ◆ **Innovative Health Initiatives:** Introduction of unique projects like Anti-Biogram, Mother-Child friendly hospitals, and Hub and Spoke Model Lab Networks.
- ◆ **Pioneering Medical Procedures:** Achievements in non-invasive heart surgeries and liver transplants in government hospitals.
- ◆ **Significant Budget Increase for Healthcare:** Health sector budget growth from 665 crores to 2,828 crores since 2016.
- ◆ **Numerous National Healthcare Awards:** Over 20 national awards including Arogya Manthan 2023 and India Today Award 2022.
- ◆ **Advanced Healthcare Systems and Infrastructure:** Development of specialized medical facilities, legislation, and councils for comprehensive healthcare.
- ◆ **Progress in Medical Education:** Medical colleges advancing in specialties like paediatric cardiac surgery and cancer treatment.
- ◆ **Technological Advancements in Healthcare:** Digital transformation in health services, including eHealth and online OP ticketing.
- ◆ **Viva Campaign Against Anaemia:** Proactive public health initiative for a healthier state population.

COVID, and digitizing health services. Technological integration is evident in the implementation of e-office, eHealth across 600 institutions, and online OP ticketing. This progress reflects Kerala's exceptional governance, medical innovation, and commitment to public health, positioning it as a national leader in healthcare and a model of visionary policy and strategic planning.

## Awards and Recognitions Galore

The multitude of awards received by Kerala, including the National Digital Transformation Award for the State Ashadhra Project and the National Healthcare Award for the Health and Safety Scheme, cements its status as a pioneer in healthcare initiatives.

The state's achievements in the Eat Right Challenge and its recognition in the National Food Security Index reaffirm Kerala's holistic approach to health, intertwining nutrition, and public affairs. ■



SAJI CHERIAN

Minister for Fisheries and Cultural Affairs

# SEA CHANGES IN COASTAL DEVELOPMENT

**Marked by significant advancements and sustainable practices, Kerala's coastal development is undergoing a transformative sea change**

Over the past seven years, both the current and previous administrations have prioritised coastal social development and the welfare of impoverished fishermen. An impressive sum of 11,000 crore rupees has been allocated by the fisheries department exclusively for coastal development.

Kerala's fisheries sector has seen notable growth, marked by the increase in fish production from 6.15 lakh tonnes in 2020-21 to 9.2 lakh tonnes in 2022-23. Sustainable fishing policies, coupled with advanced technology, have played a pivotal role. Marine fish production surged from 3.91 lakh tonnes to 6.9 lakh tonnes, while inland fish production rose from 1.89 lakh tonnes to 2.29 lakh tonnes during the same period. Notably, Kerala's seafood exports account for 13.69 lakh tonnes valued at Rs. 6971.56 crore.

## Infrastructure and Rehabilitation

The Punargeham project, being implemented with Rs. 2450 crore, aims to rehabilitate those residing within 50 meters of the high tide line. The



successive governments led by Pinarayi Vijayan have overseen the construction of 12,590 houses in various rehabilitation projects for fishermen. Construction initiatives are underway in multiple locations, including Mannumpura and Valiyathura, with plans for 944 flats across various districts.

'Theera Sadass' programmes have been instrumental in addressing coastal concerns. These initiatives have effectively resolved numerous grievances, ensuring tangible benefits reach the intended recipients.

Empowering traditional fishermen remains a cornerstone of our intervention in the fishing sector. Plans are in place to distribute deep-sea fishing boats to groups, providing them with modern vessels and equipment. Financial assistance, amounting to Rs. 180 crore, has been disbursed to fishermen's families affected by adverse weather conditions and the COVID-19 pandemic.

To promote sustainable fishing practices, incentives are being provided for transitioning to more efficient fuel sources. The government supports the shift from kerosene to petrol, diesel, and LPG, allocating Rs. 8 crore for this transition.

## Engaging with Coastal Communities

Ensuring the safety of fishermen, measures such as life jackets, GPS devices, marine ambulances, and training squads have been implemented. The state has witnessed a significant boost in marine fish production,

Investment: Over ₹11,000 crore allocated for Kerala's coastal development and fishermen welfare.

Fisheries Growth: Increase in fish production from 6.15 to 9.2 lakh tonnes (2020-21 to 2022-23); significant rise in seafood exports.

Housing Projects: Construction of 12,590 houses for fishermen; emphasis on rehabilitation near coastlines.

Fishermen Empowerment: Distribution of modern fishing vessels, financial aid, and safety measures including life jackets and GPS devices.

Sustainable Practices: Shift to efficient fuel sources in fishing; upgrading of fish markets and storage facilities.

Education & Coastal Protection: Focus on educational initiatives for fishermen's children; efforts to combat coastal erosion and integrate tourism

earning Kerala the second position nationally. The introduction of the Fish Procurement, Marketing, and Quality Management Act aims to protect fishermen from exploitation.

Harbour Management Societies, established across 21 major harbours, focus on the efficient maintenance and management of fishing harbours. Infrastructure upgrades, including accident insurance enhancements, have been prioritised, ensuring coverage for all fishermen and allied workers.

## Infrastructure and Technological Advancements

Through initiatives like the KIIFBI scheme, markets and fish marts are being upgraded, enhancing storage facilities and ensuring quality assurance. Green vehicles facilitate the direct collection and distribution of fresh fish, bolstering the state's marketing network.

## Coastal Protection and Tourism

The protection of the State's long coastline remains paramount to this government. Collaborative efforts with the World Bank are underway to address coastal erosion, with a focus on ten hotspots. Innovative solutions, such as the tetrapod technology in Chellanam, serve as models, merging coastal protection with tourism development.

Kerala's holistic approach to fisheries and coastal development encapsulates sustainable growth, community welfare, and environmental conservation. The concerted efforts of both the government and local communities promise a brighter, more resilient future for Kerala's coastal regions. ■

## EDUCATIONAL AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Education remains a focal point of the schemes to ensure the welfare of coastal communities. Schemes like the E-Grants aim to support fishermen's children, ensuring uninterrupted educational benefits. The Vidyatheeram scheme offers specialised training for competitive exams, producing notable professionals like doctors. KUFOS, India's pioneering fisheries university, has seen significant developments, including the construction of academic blocks and the initiation of Fisheries and Ocean Knowledge Centers across districts.

The Kerala School Kalolsavam culminated in a magnificent spectacle, with participation exceeding all expectations. Each contestant's extraordinary talent shone brightly, embodying the event's spirit. Kannur emerged victorious, clinching the prestigious Golden Trophy.

Here is a glimpse of the largest school festival in Asia.







To walk the ancient streets that run  
across cultures, beliefs and ideas,  
to open wide the mind and watch  
the colours seep into each other and  
let the courtyard of the world  
make us human, all over again.

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