

Mr. Speaker and Hon'ble Members,

1. I take this opportunity to extend a very warm welcome to you all to the very first session of the year 2009 and the fifth session of the 11th Vidhan Sabha. I also extend my warm wishes through you to the people of Himachal Pradesh for a happy and prosperous 2009. I do hope that the New Year will provide renewed strength, vigour and commitment to enable us to serve the State and its people. It is my proud privilege to address this August House of the Himachal Pradesh Vidhan Sabha for the first time after assuming the office of Governor. I am indeed privileged to hold office in this hill state, renowned as much for its natural beauty as for the praiseworthy characteristics of its people.

2. My Government assumed office on December 30, 2007 i.e almost one year ago and has made spectacular achievements during this small spell. The Election Manifesto of the Bhartiya Janta Party has been adopted as a Policy Document by my Government and about 80% of the promises made in the Election manifesto have been fulfilled.

3. Committed to the upliftment of the underprivileged and weaker sections of the society, my Government has taken several historic policy decisions as an attempt towards their socio-economic development. Special emphasis has been given to the welfare of senior citizens, women, children, disabled, SCs, STs and OBCs. My Government after having been sworn to power last year, had enhanced the Social Security Pension

from Rs. 200 to Rs.300. It is heartening to note that the Social Security Pension has further been enhanced by another 10% from 1st January, 2009.

4. The allocation of funds under Schedule Castes Sub Plan (SCSP) were enhanced by 157% over the previous year's outlay. Rs.10 lakh per constituency has been sanctioned for the construction of Ambedkar Bhavan for the benefit of Scheduled Caste population. A large population of the state belongs to the Other Backward Classes and keeping their development in mind the Government has enhanced the income limit from Rs.2.50 lakh to Rs.4.50 lakh per annum for determining the Creamy Layer criteria.

5. The Socio-economic development of the Scheduled Tribes continues to receive the special attention of the Government. My Government is committed to earmark 9% out of the total State Annual Plan for the Tribal Area Sub Plan. An outlay of Rs. 216.00 crore is being utilized under Tribal Sub Plan for the welfare of Scheduled Tribe communities during current financial year 2008-09. The decentralized planning process with Integrated Tribal Dev. Project as a unit has been adopted for the formulation of Sub Plan on the recommendation of the Project Advisory Committee constituted under the chairmanship of local MLAs and other members from H.P. Tribal Advisory Council and elected representatives of Panchayati Raj institutions An amount of Rs. 45.72 crore under Roads & Bridges, Rs. 17.09 crore for Agriculture & Allied Services, Rs. 29.41 crore under Irrigation & Water Supply

Scheme and Rs. 47.04 crore for Education & Health Services are being utilized under Tribal Sub Plan. The State Government has also taken the decision to implement the Scheduled Tribes & Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006 in the Scheduled Areas of the State.

6. My Government has been making special efforts for the implementation of the Persons with Disabilities (PWD) Act. During the year 1048 Persons with Disabilities have been provided with employment in Government against 3% reservation made for them. Six children with disabilities who have been selected for participation in the Winter Special Olympics in USA have been provided with financial assistance. During the year an **“Integrated Scheme for Persons with Disabilities – “Sahyog”** was launched to address the needs of scholarships, loans for self employment, vocational training and grant for marriage. For the first time assistance for vocational training to children with disabilities has been provided by the Government and 38 such children are being trained in Govt. ITIs in the state.

7. Empowering women has been a conscious effort of my Government. During the previous calendar year 3137 Self Help Groups (SHG) were formed in the state through the ICDS network. The SHGs made a saving of Rs.5.22 crores while availing bank loans amounting to Rs.5.72 crores for economic activities. So far 23072 SHGs have been formed in the State. To identify and prevent anaemia in the state, through ICDS 66559 girls were tested for assessing their Haemoglobin count.

8. To provide better and speedy services to the serving soldiers and Ex-Servicemen, my Government has created a separate department of Sainik Welfare during 2008-09. The total strength of Ex-Servicemen, serving soldiers, war widows, Gallantry Award winners and their dependents in Himachal Pradesh is about 10 lacs. During the current year a sum of Rs.1.5 lac has been paid as financial assistance to 75 widows of deceased soldiers and ex-servicemen out of Flag-Day fund. A sum of Rs.2 crores is being spent on 966 Gallantry Award Winners of the state. Rupees 22 lacs are being paid as War Jagir to 1834 beneficiaries and Rs. 1.18 crore is being spent on 3409 beneficiaries under Old age Pension Scheme. 145 Ex-servicemen and dependents got employment in State/Centre services through HP Ex-servicemen employment cell. The HP Ex-Servicemen Corporation has also provided employment to 1564 Ex-servicemen as Security Guards in various establishments.

9. The Government of Himachal Pradesh is committed to the welfare of freedom fighters. Swatantrata Sainani Kalyan Board has been constituted under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Chief Minister. Samman Rashi @ Rs. 2000/- per month per beneficiary is being granted to 1050 Freedom Fighters and their dependents. On the death of freedom fighters, this Samman Rashi is transferred to their wives and on the death of both, it is transferred to their unmarried daughter(s). Rs. 10,000/- is being given on the marriages of daughters/grand daughters of freedom fighters.

10. Agriculture plays an important role in the economy of the State as 90% of the people still live in the villages. My Govt. has given highest priority to agriculture sector for increasing farm income through crop diversification. During the year, my Government has launched Pt. Din Dayal Kisan-Bagwan Samridhi Yojna of Rs.352.92 crores which will give new dimension to crop diversification, increase in farm income and farm employment. Through this scheme, 28820 poly houses/micro irrigation schemes shall be installed where the farmers shall be provided 80% assistance. Besides, 20,000 hectare area shall be brought under Sprinkler and Drip Irrigation System. Through this scheme, about 24,000 people shall get direct employment and about 40,000 people shall get indirect employment in the next four years.

11. With a view to promote organic farming, 1.25 lac. Vermi Compost Units have been set up in the State during the year. Besides, 4500 farmers have also been registered for organic farming. The State has got first prize for Himachal Organic display in the International Organic Fair held at New Delhi during November, 2008. One lac. Soil Health Cards have also been issued to the farmers enabling them to decide about the nutrient requirement for the crops and crops suitability. For strengthening of Extension Services, the Govt. has sanctioned 100 posts of Agriculture Development Officers and 300 posts of Agriculture Extension Officers in the Department of Agriculture. For providing Insurance Cover to the crops, the

Government has included Ginger crop of Sirmour District under Rashtriya Krishi Bima Yojna. During the year 5 major crops of the state namely: Maize, Wheat, Rice, Barley and Potato have already been covered under this scheme.

12. Horticulture ranks very high in the socio-economic development of Himachal Pradesh. A budget provision of Rs. 94.11 crore under plan and non plan is being spent on horticulture development programmes during the year 2008-09. The area under horticulture has increased to 2 Lakh hectares during the past few years which includes 0.947 Lakh ha. area under Apple alone. Every year around 4000-6000 hectares additional area is being brought under horticulture. Presently, the State has an area of 583.44 ha. under floriculture. The horticulture industry is contributing around Rs. 2000 Crores towards the State economy. The Government has strengthened the State marketing and enhanced the support price of apple, Mango and Citrus fruits being procured under MIS by Rs. 0.50 per Kg. To provide remunerative prices to the horticulture produce of the growers, 45,605MT apple valued at Rs.23.94 Crore have been procured under MIS during 2008-09 and the procurement of Citrus fruits is also in progress during the current season.

13. A centrally sponsored scheme “Horticulture Technology Mission” launched in October, 2003 has been successfully implemented in the State and so far funds amounting to Rs.110.50 Crores have been received from Govt. of India. With the coming up of technology mission, 6,34,476 Sq.m. area has

been brought under protected cultivation of flowers and vegetables . To create popularity for organic farming among the orchardists of the State 4707 vermi compost units have been established. Besides, 13 big nurseries, 44 small nurseries, 3 tissue culture labs. and 19 herbal gardens have been established in the public and private sector. To promote use of improved tools & equipments, 415 power tillers were made available to the growers under the mission. To improve the quality and fruit production, improved varieties of fruit plants and root stocks of apple, cherry, plum, almond, nectarine etc are being multiplied at the departmental orchards for further distribution to orchardists of the State. During year 2008, 14000 clonal root stocks and 25100 Nos. of improved cultivars of fruit plants were imported out of which 16910 imported plants are being distributed to the orchardists.

14. Livestock plays an important role in the economy of the farmers of the State. Animal Health facilities are being provided through a network of 2137 veterinary institutions. Out of these, Artificial Insemination facilities are being provided by 1932 veterinary institutions. During current year 17.00 lakh cases have been treated and target of 37.00 lakh vaccinations has been fixed out of which 80% of the target has been achieved upto December 2008. To improve the livestock and milk yield, the Department of Animal Husbandry is implementing Breed Improvement Programme. Apart from this various activities of the Department such as Veterinary Aid, Vaccination, Fodder Development etc. aims at increasing productivity of Animals.

Milk Procurement prices have been increased by Rs. 2/- per liter with effect from 1-4-08 to benefit the milk producers. To save farmers from damage to crops by stray animals, Department is implementing Registration of Cattle scheme in District Shimla, Chamba, Kangra, Una, Solan and Hamirpur. So far 9.00 lakh cattle have been registered. Under this scheme stray animals have also been transferred to Gosadans.

15. My Government is giving due importance to the Fisheries sector. With an aim to conserve aquatic biodiversity of State riverine resources, release of 15% water downstream weirs/dams of hydroelectric projects has been made mandatory. 5151.33 metric tonnes of fish valued at Rs. 2429.43 lakh and 157.03 lakh Carp seed has been produced in the State up to December, 2008. To mitigate the impact of ecological changes taking place in the riverine systems, the seed stocking operations in riverine waters have been initiated in the State. Commercial Trout farming touched new heights in the State. Downward trend in fish production from State reservoirs has been arrested by enhancing seed stocking and conservation measures. 965 tonnes of fish valued at Rs. 455 lac was harvested from State reservoirs during the year up to December 2008 which is 226.01 tonnes more as compared to the corresponding period of previous year. All fishermen operating in the open waters of Himachal Pradesh have been extended insurance cover of Rs. 50,000.

16. National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) is being implemented in all the districts now in an effective

manner. Chamba and Sirmour districts, were covered initially in Phase -I. Another two districts namely Kangra and Mandi were covered from 1st April, 2007, in Phase-II. In Phase-III, remaining eight Districts have been covered with effect from 1-4-2008. 120.55 lakh mandays have been generated and employment has been provided to 3,63,150 households on which an expenditure of Rs. 193.10 crore has been incurred.

17. With a view to provide housing facility to Rural BPL houseless families a financial assistance of Rs. 38500/- per beneficiary is being provided under the Indira Awas Yojana. Now, with effect from 01.04.2008, the State Government has launched a Rural Housing Scheme named, “Atal Awas Yojana” wherein also a financial assistance of Rs. 38500/- per beneficiary is being given to rural houseless BPL families. This will help to cover the rural houseless families expeditiously.

18. Matri Shakti Bima Yojana covers all women living below the poverty line within the age group of 10-75 years. The scheme also provides relief to family members/insured women in case of their death or disablement arising due to accident, surgical operation, mishap at time of child birth, drowning, Snakebite etc. The scheme also gives benefit to a married woman in case of accidental death of her husband. The compensation amount under the scheme has been doubled from Rs. 25,000/- to Rs. 50,000/- in case of death with effect from 1st April, 2008. Similarly, the compensation amount in case of disability arising out of accident has also been doubled from Rs. 12,500/- to Rs. 25,000/-.

19. With a view to ensure Total Sanitation in the rural areas, the department is implementing Total Sanitation Campaign projects in all the districts of the State. Out of total 3243 Gram Panchayats of the State, 267 Gram Panchayats have been awarded Nirmal Gram Puruskar at the national level for achieving Open Defecation Free Status (ODF). From the year 2008, the State Government has linked the existing Mahila Mandal Protsahan Yojna with Total Sanitation Campaign so that Mahila Mandals could be rewarded in the form of monetary incentive on the basis of their contribution made in achieving the open defecation free status at village, Ward and Gram Panchayat level.

20. Swaranjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana has been launched from the year 1999-2000. The objective of SGSY is to bring the assisted poor families above the poverty line, by providing them income-generating assets. The beneficiaries under this scheme are called "Swarozgaries". This scheme is a credit-cum-subsidy programme. The focus of SGSY is on the vulnerable groups among the rural poor. Accordingly, the SC/STs account for 50% of swarozgaries, women for 40% and the disabled for 3%. Since inception of this scheme 8,418 Self Help Groups have been formed. During the year 2008-09, upto December, 2008, 609 Self Help Groups have been formed and 456 groups consisting of 4,959 BPL families have taken up economic activities. These groups were given Rs.387.44 lakh as subsidy and Rs.1308.56 lakh as credit.

21. My Government is taking effective steps to strengthen Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). The Government has provided 50% reservation to women in Panchayati Raj Institutions. The State Government has provided facility of staying in Government rest houses, to the office bearers of Zila Parishads and Panchayat Samitis, while they are on official tour. The Government has increased the rates of honorarium of the elected representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions with effect from 1 April, 2008. As per the revised rates, the Chairman & Vice- Chairman of the Zila Parishad would be provided Rs.3500/- and Rs. 2500/- respectively per month, Chairman & vice-Chairman of Panchayat Samiti Rs.1800/- and Rs.1500/- respectively per month and Pradhan & Up-Pradhan of Gram Panchayat Rs.1200/- & Rs.1000/- respectively per month. Honorarium for member, Zila Parishad has been fixed at Rs.1500/- per month and Member, Panchayat Samiti at Rs.1200/- per month. In addition to this sitting fee for Members of Gram Panchayat at Rs.150/- subject to a maximum of two sittings in a month has been approved. The rates of monthly remuneration of Panchayat Sahayaks have been increased from Rs.2340/- to Rs.3120/-. With a view to provide promotional avenues to Panchayat Sahayaks, it has been decided to promote senior Panchayat Sahayaks as contractual Panchayat Secretary and during this year 260 Panchayat Sahayaks will be made contractual Panchayat Secretaries at a monthly remuneration of Rs.4680. The monthly remuneration of Kanisht Lekhapal of Panchayat Samiti has been increased from Rs.2500/- to

Rs.4800/- with effect from 1st June, 2008. The monthly remuneration of Assistant Engineer of Zila Parishad has been increased from Rs.8000/- to Rs.11820/- with effect from 1st June, 2008. The monthly remuneration of Tailoring Teachers working in Gram Panchayats has been increased from Rs.900/- to Rs.1100/- with effect from 1st January, 2009.

22. Cooperative movement has been aptly defined as a movement rather than a mere programme, since it envisages economic growth coupled with social justice. Cooperative movement has 100% coverage in the State – both village and family wise. Presently, there are 4426 different types of cooperative institutions functioning in the State with membership of 13.87 lacs, share capital of Rs. 180.26 crore, deposits of Rs. 7663.46 crore and working capital of Rs. 10,392.25 crore. The cooperative societies through their vast network of 2863 fair price shops and 2312 fertilizer distribution outlets are also implementing different programmes of the State Govt. like PDS, fertilizer distribution, Mid-day meal scheme, Food for work programme etc. My Government is providing financial assistance in the shape of capital and subsidy to these cooperative societies. Priority is also being given to the cooperative societies for the execution of Micro-Hydel Projects upto the capacity of 5 MW.

23. My Government has ensured the smooth functioning of the Public Distribution System in the entire State. During the year 2008-09, food grains to the extent of 4, 25,000 MT were distributed under various schemes. The HP State Civil Supplies

Corporation distributed commodities worth Rs. 600 crores in the period from January, 2008 to December, 2008 which was around 66 crores more than the corresponding period in previous year. Besides foodgrains the department is supplying all other essential commodities such as Kerosene Oil, Sugar etc. through a network of 4362 fair price shops out of which around 70% are in cooperative sector. The Government has successfully implemented State Subsidy Scheme of three dals, two edible oils and salt. Under this scheme around Rs. 130 crore subsidy is being provided by the State Government from its own resources. For the first time Government has prepared State Consumer Awareness policy and now it will be implemented upto the Panchayat level to make all the consumers aware about their rights.

24. My Government is committed to provision of quality health care to the people of the State. Our State health indicators are better than the national average but my Government is continually striving to further improve our performance. During the current financial year, 176 doctors have been appointed till now. The Government has created 442 posts of paramedical personnel in the current year and given permission to fill up 1034 posts through direct recruitment. Against this 262 posts of nurses and others have already been filled this year and the process to fill the balance posts is underway. Govt. has formulated a new policy for tenure post doctors in the medical colleges to ensure better availability of doctors in these institutions.

25. Government has appointed a consultant to conduct a survey and invite bids for opening of Medical Colleges at Hamirpur, Una and Sarkaghat in Mandi district. A Medical College and hospital is being set up by the ESIC, a Government of India organization, at Mandi. In addition, private stand alone medical colleges have been permitted to be set up by the Markandeshwar University at Solan and the Vivekanand Medical Research Trust at Palampur. To encourage telemedicine projects with internet facilities 19 Telemedicine centres have been established in H.P. My Government is setting up Nursing colleges and nursing schools in the private sector and has recommended some Private Institutes to Indian Nursing Council. One private B.Sc Nursing college has already been made operational in 2008 at Baru Sahib Distt. Sirmour. The Govt. has launched Health Insurance Scheme for BPL families in Kangra and Shimla districts in 2008-09.

26. The teaching cadres of the two medical colleges IGMC, Shimla and Dr. RPGMC, Tanda have been separated to ensure better provision of health services in the State. Till last financial year there were only 235 Rogi Kalyan Samities registered in different health institutions of the State and in the current financial year the number of Rogi Kalyan Samities have already more than doubled to 485. This year Govt. has given about Rs. 6 crore to Rogi Kalyan Samities to enable better provision of health services. The State Government has formulated another policy to enable decentralized empanelment of private sector health institutions for the purpose of medical

reimbursement to Government employees and pensioners for which powers have been given to the Director Health Services and 36 private hospitals outside the state and 40 private health institutions within the state have been empanelled till now.

27. My Government has taken a decision to raise the number of MBBS seats at IGMC Shimla from 65 to 100. It has also been decided to enhance PG seats by 9 at IGMC Shimla and introduce 11 PG seats at Dr. RPGMC, Tanda.

28. The Department of Ayurveda has been playing a remarkable role in providing basic health care services in rural as well as urban areas through a network of 25 Ayurvedic Hospitals, 1109 Ayurvedic Health Centres, 14 Homeopathy, 3 Unani, 4 Amchis and one Nature Cure unit. My Government has started Geriatric Health Care Campaign in the State. Special OPDs have been started for senior citizens on every Tuesday in all Ayurvedic Hospitals. Anaemia Free Himachal Programme has been launched in the State on 2nd October, 2008 at Paprola and is being implemented in Kangra and Hamirpur Districts in first phase. A new Charak Government Ayurvedic Pharmacy building with a cost of Rs. 80.34 lac and a new 100 bedded Deen Dayal Regional Ayurvedic Hospital with a cost of Rs. 4 crore at Paprola were inaugurated on 2nd October, 2008. Permission to fill up 150 Posts of Ayurvedic Medical Officers (50% direct and 50% on batch-wise basis) and permission for one year training of 300 Ayurvedic Pharmacists has been accorded by my Government. A sum of Rs. 84.07 lac for stipend to Post Graduate students and Rs. 1.18 Crore for

construction of Girls Hostel of Rajiv Gandhi Government Post Graduate Ayurvedic College, Paprola have been got sanctioned from the Government of India.

29. My Government is committed to provide quality education in the State. Universal access to Elementary Education has been strengthened with the opening of Primary/Elementary Schools with in a walking distance of 1 to 1.5 Kms in hilly areas and 1.5 to 3 Kms in other areas. The concept of alternative Schooling has been implemented under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). The drop out rate has declined considerably to less than one percent. The Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) of 111.84% and Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) of 90.91% has been achieved at Primary stage of education and 131.98 (GER) and 92.34(NER) at upper primary stage. The State also achieved gender and social equity in terms of enrolment at primary/ Elementary level. In order to fill up all the vacant posts of teachers, the Government has decided to recruit 18000 posts of various categories in the Education Department. Government is filling up the vacant 1611 JBT posts from the trained pass-out candidates from DIETs. Two year JBT training course for 1737 candidates out of total 1800 seats has been started with effect from November, 2008 in all the 12 DIETs of the State. Government has also regularized the services of teachers who have completed 8-years of service as contract teachers in Primary/Elementary schools. My Government has decided to introduce Punjabi Language in 100 selected schools of the State from classes 6th onwards. Mid-

Day Meal scheme has also been introduced in all govt. and govt. aided middle schools from July, 2008. My Govt. has taken initiative to emphasize Yog Shiksha (Yoga Education) in the School curriculum.

30. My Government gives very high priority to higher education in the state. During the year 2008-09, my Government supplied free text books to the students of Class-IX and X belonging to SC/ST/OBC and IRDP categories and spent an amount of Rs. 8.72 crores covering 1,26,745 students. Budget provision of Rs. 9 crores has been made during the year 2008-09 to award scholarships under various schemes in the State. The process of filling up 634 posts of Lecturers College Cadre, 1404 posts of Lecturers School Cadre and 200 posts of Assistant Librarian has begun. The posts of 16 Principals of College Cadre, 895 Principals of (School cadre), 959 Lecturers School cadre, 702 Headmasters, 12 Superintendents Grade-I, 190 Superintendents Grade-II and 272 Senior Assistants, 41 clerks, 48 Junior Lecturer Assistants have been filled up by promotions. This is for the first time that more than 98% of the educational institutions have Principals or Headmasters as Heads of Institutions. MOU has been signed between Intel Tech Pvt. Ltd. On 02nd June, 2008 for imparting teacher training. 2000 teachers are being trained to use technology in enhancing teaching skills. IT education is being imparted in all the Senior Secondary Schools where enrolment is 50 or above. An ordinance has been issued by the Government of India to set up a central University in HP. The site for Central University

has been selected at Dehra. The central team has inspected the site. Two Universities in the private sector i.e. Eternal University at Baru Sahib and Chitkara University at Barotiwala have been established.

31. The Department of Technical Education, Vocational & Industrial Training continues to play an effective and significant role in the socio-economic and industrial development of the State. There is one engineering college, one B-Pharmacy college, nine polytechnics and 77 ITIs in Government sector and five engineering colleges, nine pharmacy colleges, 4 polytechnics and 51 ITIs in the private sector. Eight ITIs have been converted into centres of excellence with World Bank Assistance in the year 2008-09. In addition, funds to the tune of Rs. 50.00 crore under Public Private Partnership mode for 20 Industrial Training Institutes @ Rs. 2.50 crore per I.T.I have been received from Government of India and action is afoot to upgrade the institutes. Similarly World Bank assisted **“Technical Education Quality Improvement Programme” (TEQIP)** with an amount of Rs. 7.24 crore has been successfully implemented in the state.

32. In its endeavour to promote sports upto grass-root level, my Government has taken in hand various schemes such as construction of play grounds/stadia, cash awards to outstanding sport persons, 3% reservation to outstanding sports-persons in Government jobs and grant-in-aid to State Sport Associations. National Women Sports Festival was held for the first time in Himachal Pradesh at Hamirpur in December,2008 wherein

three women sports persons of Himachal Pradesh won Gold Medals. A State level Sports tournament for handicapped was also held in the State at Una for the first time. The Government is also giving special attention to the youths of this Pradesh by involving them in national building programmes through Nodal Club Yojna, Youth Leadership Training Programme, Youth Festivals and Youth Work Camps etc. NSS Scheme is being implemented in our State involving 71500 students of School, Colleges and Universities.

33. Ministry of Youth & Sports, Government of India has granted recognition to the institute of Mountaineering & Allied Sports, Manali, renamed as “ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE Mountaineering and Allied Sports Institute”. During the Year 2008-09, the institute has trained 3356 persons in different disciplines of Adventure Sports. Keeping in view the potential of adventure tourism and growing demand to provide basic training facilities in various disciplines, scholarship is provided to sports persons who are from IRDP/BPL families for training in Skiing, Mountaineering and water Sports by the Government. The Government provides rescue facilities to Mountaineering Expeditions by establishing rescue posts at Marhi & Khoksar (either side of Rohtang Pass) to help locals crossing Rohtang Pass.

34. My Government is paying utmost importance to the development of the power sector in the Pradesh. It has adopted multi-pronged strategy i.e. development through private sector, state sector, central sector and joint sector. At present 13

hydroelectric projects with aggregate installed capacity of 1123.10 MW are under execution in the State Sector. Loan of 800 million US dollars has been sanctioned for 4 projects i.e. Sawra Kuddu Hydro Electric Project 111 MW, Kashang Hydro Electric Project 195 MW, Sainj Hydro Electric Project 100 MW & Shongtong Karcham Hydro Electric Project 402 MW being executed by the HP Power Corporation Ltd. Five Hydel projects with aggregate installed capacity of 2803 MW i.e. Chamera-III, Kol-Dam, Rampur, Dhaula Sidh, Parbati-II and Parbati-III are under execution in Central/Joint sector. The target capacity addition during the 11th plan is 34 projects aggregating to 5664 MW of power. In order to popularize use of energy efficient devices by consumers across the state an ambitious scheme titled “Atal Bijli Bachat Yojna” has been launched on 23.11.2008. About 16 lakh consumers are being provided 4 CFL bulbs free of cost as replacement to equal number of incandescent bulbs. In order to evacuate power from the projects which will come up for production in the near future, a separate Transmission Power Corporation has been set up by my Government under the State which will plan, execute and strengthen the transmission system in the Pradesh. Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved an amount of 9 lac US dollars in favour of this Corporation as technical assistance for fine tuning the Transmission Master Plan of the State.

35. My Government forcefully pursued the matter regarding declaration of new National Highways with the Government of India and as a result, ‘Nagrota – Ranital – Dehra – Mubarikpur’

and 'Paonta – Rajban – Shillai – Meenus – Hatkoti' State Highways Roads have been declared as National Highways on 2nd December, 2008. Road works for all the habitations with population of 500 or more and for providing connectivity to Panchayat Headquarters, which were feasible at this stage, have been sanctioned. 229 new habitations have been connected up to December, 2008. 29 Major Bridges, 21 Major Buildings have been completed by the State Public Works Department. The expenditure on new works on National Highways up to January, 2009 is Rs. 59.00 Crores and has gone up 25% compared to the last year and is likely to exceed Rs. 70.00 Crores by the end of this year. Up-gradation work of major State Highways in five packages has been awarded at a cost of Rs. 591.00 Crores and the work has commenced on them under the State Road Project. In order to reduce the distance between various locations, the feasibility of construction of 5 tunnel projects is being explored. The Government would like to undertake construction of such tunnels, which are found technically and economically viable and the source of funding shall be explored by way of public-private partnership and external funding.

36. My Government has accorded top priority for the provision of safe drinking water and extending irrigation facilities to the farmers of the State. There is a target to cover 5184 habitations during the current financial year 2008-09. 1152 hand pumps have also been installed in the various parts of the state during the current financial year 2008-09 to

supplement the drinking water demand. My Government is stressing sustainability measures mainly through Rain Water Harvesting Structures in the Pradesh. All the Government buildings, Institutional buildings, Schools, Hotels and Industrial Units are required to construct Roof Top rain water harvesting structures and utilise the collected water for purposes such as flushing of water closets, gardening and cleaning purposes. The State has adopted its own "State Water Policy". The stress is to provide adequate and safe drinking water to all and assured irrigation to maximum cultivated area. The augmentation work of two Water Supply schemes i.e. Chamba and Palampur is under progress. Work to provide sewerage facility in 24 towns is also in progress. There is a target to complete two sewerage schemes during the current financial year namely Narkanda and Bhunter. For Flood Protection sanction for Swan River Channelization (Phase-II) amounting to Rs.235.52 crore for protection of 5000 hectare area has been accorded by the H.P. Government.

37. My Government has focussed on promoting appropriate, environment friendly and sustainable industrialization of the State. By the end of December, 2008, 35427 industrial units, 401 of them in the Medium and Large Sector, were functioning in the State with a cumulative investment of Rs.7737.8 Crore and giving employment to 2,24,310 people. We hope to make the maximum use of the Special Industrial Package granted to the State in January, 2003 for attracting more investment in the State next year also. My Government has signed an MOU with

GAIL (India) Ltd. in November, 2008 to promote the use of environment friendly natural gas for various industrial, commercial and transportation usage. The Government has also signed an MOU with the Container Corporation of India in December, 2008 for setting up of an Inland Container Depot at Baddi which will facilitate the movement of goods and business transactions of exporters from the region. In the Handloom Sector, two clusters to benefit 3100 handloom weavers in Kangra and Mandi Districts were sanctioned during 2008-09 at a cost of Rs.100.90 lakh to provide basic inputs and marketing assistance to the weavers of our State. In the Sericulture Sector, which supplements the income of the poor farmers of the State, the Government is providing assistance in the form of mulberry saplings, silkworm seed and disinfectants to the farmers. In the Mining sector, my Government is giving adequate attention to the preservation of the environment and during the period April-December, 2008, 1236 cases of illegal mining were detected in the State and a fine of Rs.25.54 lakh realized from the violators.

38. My Government has launched a new scheme “Him Gramin Parivahan Swarojgar Yojna” under which new permits will be given primarily on the newly opened roads under “Pradhanmantri Gramin Sadak Yojna” and “Mukhya Mantri Path Yojna” with a seating capacity of not more than 22 passengers to the un-employed youth/co-operative societies of un-employed drivers & conductors. The HRTC acquired its own fleet of eleven Volvo buses. The Corporation has also

introduced 21 A.C. buses on prestigious routes for Delhi, Chandigarh, Haridwar from various destinations of the Pradesh on deluxe fare. The Corporation has introduced E-Tendering System in HRTC for purchase of material. Introduction of this system has brought transparency in procurement system. The HRTC has started Internet on-line booking of Volvo & Deluxe buses on HRTC portal. The Alco Sensors have been provided to Flying Squads as well as to Divisional Managers to check the drunken driving. The offices of Regional Transport Officers & Transport barriers have been computerized. 62 Pollution check centres and 96 driving Training Schools have been opened under private and public partnership.

39. Tourism is a powerful and beneficial agent of social and economic change which in turn stimulates employment and investment. Focus of my government therefore has been to create employment opportunities in the different areas, provide tourist support facilities and infrastructure. My government has been able to get substantial financial assistance under various circuits and destinations to the tune of Rs. 46 crore from Government of India. Keeping in view the Himachali tradition of hospitality and providing a homely atmosphere of stay, culture & cuisine, my government has initiated an innovative scheme of “Home Stay”, which provides incentive to the household owners to run their homes as Hotels in rural areas as supplementary income, without levying commercial charges of electricity and water with no payment of luxury tax for

five years. My government has announced Ropeways at six places in the Budget Assurance 2008-09. The survey for the construction of proposed ropeways has been completed. Out of six ropeways, three sites have been identified, i.e Bhunter to Bijli Mahadev, Marhi to Rohtang in Kullu District and Dharamkot to Triund near Dharamsala in Kangra District. My government through national and international fairs and festivals and exhibitions has showcased Himachal and marketed it as “Unforgettable” destination.

40. My Government is dedicated to the conservation, preservation and promotion of our rich cultural heritage through various activities & schemes. Various seminars, poetic symposia & literary discussions were organized on the occasion of birth celebrations of renowned Himachali writers. Hindi Divas, Sanskrit divas, and Pahari Divas are being celebrated every year to promote Hindi, Sanskrit and Pahari languages. My Government has increased the amount of state awards for literature from Rs. 10,000/- to 50,000/- during the first year of its regime. A cultural troupe of Himachal Pradesh visited the states of Kerela, Uttarakhand & Rajasthan under the inter state exchange of cultural troupes scheme sponsored by the Sangeet Natak, Academy, Delhi & in return the cultural troupe of Tamil Nadu visited our state & performed cultural shows at various places.

41. The towns in the state are growing at a rapid speed. My government is alive to the need of planned development of all

urban areas. A grant of Rs. 41.76 crores has been provided to 49 urban local Bodies in 2008-09 for this purpose. In addition, a special grant of Rs. 6 crore has also been provided for the maintenance of about 1000 Kms of roads, streets, paths and a sum of Rs.1 crore has been provided under Urban Renewal Facility. An amount of Rs. 5013 lac has been approved by the Government for four projects/schemes i.e. Solid Waste Management, Widening and Lowering of existing tunnel near Auckland House School and Ashiana-I & II Housing Schemes under Jawahar Lal Nehru National Urban renewal Mission (JNNURM) for Shimla town. To Improve Environment of Urban Slums, Rs.244.00 lacs has been provided to all the Urban Local Bodies for benefiting 3300 slum dwellers' families by way of providing basic amenities such as community bath, latrines and night shelters. An amount of Rs. 2250.00 lacs has been provided for ongoing sewerage schemes in 31 towns during the current financial year.

42. My Government is aware of ever increasing housing needs of different income groups. During 2008-09, the HIMUDA has completed 608 worker flats at Bhatolikalan near Baddi, 192 worker flats at Nalagarh and 128 worker flats at Parwanoo. Additional 88 worker flats at Parwanoo are likely to be completed shortly. HIMUDA is acquiring more land to establish Housing Colonies in Bhatoli Khurd (Baddi), Una, Daundi (Mandi), Hamirpur and Bhatyat (Bilaspur). Besides, HIMUDA is also acquiring land at Wagnaghat, Mandi &

Dharamshala for setting up Satellite townships in which the land for Educational Hub is also being considered.

43. The efforts of my Government in the areas of environment protection and sustainable development are laudable. It is indeed a matter of pride for all of us that Himachal Pradesh has been awarded with Diamond State Award on Environment. My Government has taken concrete steps for climate change mitigation and for reducing Green House Gas emissions. To help Environment protection, a new initiative has been taken for creating the Himachal Pradesh Environment Fund.

44. Being a part of Western Himalayas, the forests of Himachal Pradesh play a very important role in maintaining the fragile eco-system. 13.6% of total geographical area is under Protected Area network as against the national average of 4.7%. Due to its geo-physical features and locational advantage, Himachal Pradesh is endowed with rich and unique floral and faunal diversity. Hundreds of plant species are having medicinal values, which are used by the local community and many of these species also form important ingredients of various drug formulation. To inculcate more awareness amongst the public about this medicinal wealth, my Government has launched Jan-Jan Van Sanjivani Abhiyan under which 15 lakh medicinal plants were distributed during last rainy season in one day i.e. 3rd August 2008.

45. Himachal Pradesh is one of the top five tourist destinations in the country. As per estimates, around 90 lakh

tourists visit the state every year and enjoy its natural beauty. In view of this my Government is giving thrust to ecotourism. The central theme is to decongest the overflowing city tourist destinations and bring the tourists closer to nature and ensure adequate economic returns to the state and livelihood opportunities to the local communities. An ecotourism project amounting to Rs. 3.68 crores has been approved by Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India, out of which, Rs. 2.94 crores have been released to the State. Ecotourism circuits are being created from the above funds in Kullu, Shimla, Kinnaur and Bilaspur districts.

46. The initiative to declare the knowledge driven Biotechnology sector as an industry in the State, is noteworthy and would give an impetus not only to investments in State but also create further employment opportunities, promote Research & Development and create a pool of skilled manpower in the State.

47. My Government has made concerted efforts to popularize renewable energy through HIMURJA under the integrated Rural Energy Planning Programme (IREP), with the financial support of Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), Govt. of India. Efforts are continuing for propagating the energy efficient and non-conventional area specific energy devices like solar cookers, solar water heating system, solar photovoltaic lights, Hydrams etc. HIMURJA is also assisting the Govt. for rapid exploitation of Small Hydro programme up

to 5 MW in the state. An amount of Rs.494.00 lac is being spent for promotion of renewable energy programmes.

48. In the recent past Himachal Pradesh has progressed towards better Governance through the use of Information Technology and Communication tools which has been recognized at National Level. We have received India-Tech Excellence Award for being one of the most progressive States in the field of Application of IT in State Administration. Himachal Pradesh has been ranked second after Tamil Nadu in an independent survey conducted by Dataquest-IDC. With a view to take IT to the common man, setting up of 3366 Lok Mitra Kendra is in progress in the state. To ensure better delivery of Government services, the State Government is adopting a focused and planned approach to the work of computerization in different departments. Connectivity is being provided to the departments through State Wide Area Network in a phased manner. Centralized databases will be created and hosted on State Data Centre which is coming up in near future. E-samadhan project of the Government has been introduced to facilitate the consumers to approach different authorities right upto the level of Hon'ble Chief Minister, HP and lodge their complaint on line.

49. Speedy redressal of grievances of people is the priority of my Government. With this objective in view the greivance redressal mechanism is being strengthened. Grievance committees have been constituted at State, District and Sub-Division level. Special web-enabled software has been

developed and made operational in most of the government departments for online monitoring of public grievances. One lady officer has been designated in each department to attend to the grievances of the women.

50. My Government is engaged in a special programme of Computerization of all land records. The data entry in all the 109 Tehsils/Sub-Tehsils has been completed with a total expenditure of Rs. 1042 Lakhs. Newly created Sub-Divisions/Tehsils/Sub-Tehsils shall also be computerized for which Rs. 38 Lakhs will be spent. The department shall also undertake the survey of the land through modern techniques on pilot basis in Sirmour district for which Rs. 429 Lakhs will be spent. As a measure to improve the housing infrastructure of the revenue agency, 118 Kanungo offices and Patwarkhanas are being constructed for which Rs. 5.01 crores are being spent in the year 2008-09. In order to strengthen the Patwar Kanungo Agency, the Government has approved the appointment of 100 Patwaris in the districts on contract basis.

51. My Government is committed to protect the interest of labour and ensure 70% employment in both organized and unorganized sector. In Himachal Pradesh about 93% workers are working in un-organized sector. The existing labour laws were not adequate to ensure safety, welfare and health of the workers employed in this sector. The Government has framed Rules under the Building and Other Construction Worker's Act and they have already been notified. To ensure proper identity of labourers, the Government has issued 1.80 Lac Identity cards

to the workers and this process will continue in the future also. During the year 2008-09, two hundred Campus interviews were organized to provide employment to the unemployed. To ensure 70% employment to Himachalis more emphasis will be given to this activity and maximum job fair/campus interviews will be organized during the next year.

52. My Government has framed Guiding Principles for effecting transfers of State Government Employees wherein it has been made mandatory that all employees during their service will serve the Tribal/ Difficult Areas at least for one tenure and a provision to this effect has also been prescribed in the R & P Rules. A special provision for Education and Health Department has also been made that every employee who has served up to 10 years in Urban Area must be sent to work for a minimum tenure of three years in Rural Area. The Government have decided to enter service details of all officers/ officials of all the Departments/ Boards/ Corporations/ Autonomous Bodies on H.P. Government website by generating e-service book for which a web based Personnel Management Information System (PMIS) has been introduced.

53. My Government have issued instructions regarding regularization of such daily waged workers who have completed 8 years of continuous service as on 31-03-2008 and has also decided to regularize the services of contractual appointees in all the Government Departments who have completed 8 years of continuous service as on 31st March, 2008. The Government has started a scheme of incentives for

deserving Government Employees to reward an employee for exceptional performance and setting high standards of service. Under this scheme the maximum number of awards will be five in a year which will be given by the Chief Minister on Civil Services Day i.e., 21st April, every year and Incentives for such excellence will be given in the shape of cash awards of Rs. 51,000/- to an individual and maximum Rs. 2, 50,000/- to a group. My Government is preparing a Job Profile for each category of employees in the light of contemporary changes alongwith introducing Performance Indicators in addition to the existing physical and financial parameters for evaluating the working of Government Departments.

54. We have already initiated stern and strong action against corruption which was the main plank of the Election Manifesto. My Government is committed to root out corruption, punish the corrupt and provide transparent and responsive administration. Right to Information Act is being implemented in its letter and spirit. The people of State have started exercising the right to seek information from the Public Authorities. For effective implementation of all Government policies and programmes it is essential to improve the quality performance of its functionaries. To achieve this objective HP Institute of Public Administration is organizing training programmes to improve and upgrade the knowledge, skills and attitudes of the officers and the officials of different departments.

55. My Government has enhanced the rates of daily wagers from Rs. 75/- to Rs. 100/- per day and those of part time wagers

from Rs.10/- per hour to Rs.13/- per hour from January, 2008 and orders have been issued to further enhance the daily wage from Rs. 100/- to Rs. 110/- with effect from 1st March, 2009.

56. Employees are considered as the backbone of the Government. The Government has taken various steps in the interest of its employees. Two instalments of Interim Relief with effect from 1-11-2006 and 1-10-2008 @ 5% each and one more instalment of Interim Relief @ 10% with effect from 1st February, 2009 has been released to State Government Employees and Pensioners/Family pensioners. Two instalments of D.A. have been released with enhanced rates i.e. 41% to 47% with effect from 1-1-2008 and 47% to 54% with effect from 1-7-2008 respectively to its employees. Two instalments of Dearness Relief have been released to H.P. Government pensioners/ family pensioners @ 6% with effect from 1-1-2008 and 7% with effect from 1-7-2008. Government has restored 5 years extra ordinary leave to its employees and orders to this effect have been issued. The State Government has introduced V.R.S. for the employees of Public Sector Undertakings to bring the establishment expenditure under control as well as take up a restructuring exercise for some of the loss making PSUs. The State Government has renewed Group Personal Accident Insurance Scheme for regular, adhoc, contractual, part time and daily waged employees of State Govt., Boards, Corporations and Universities on compulsory basis for one year. Under this scheme employees will be

benefited for insurance of Rs.2 lakh on a nominal premium of Rs.50 per annum.

57. Small savings plays a vital role in strengthening the economy of any State. State Government receives 100% share as soft term loan from the Central Govt. out of total net collections under Small Savings in the State, which is spent on various developmental activities. During the financial year 2007-08 net amount of Rs.105.71 crores have been collected in small saving schemes.

58. The Excise and Taxation Department is a major revenue earning Department of the State Government. The revenue collections during last year under various Acts have been of the order of Rs. 1674 crores. This year, my Government is expecting a revenue collection of Rs. 1976.78 crores. Government has also effectively enforced the existing laws and wherever required necessary reforms were made in the procedures in the interest of State revenue. For better tax administration and unearthing evasion of VAT, computerization of VAT operations has been accorded top priority.

59. The Mumbai terrorist attacks have shaken the entire country. My Government is fully committed to strengthen internal security. My Government believes that the steps which are presently being taken by the Government of India for enacting stringent laws, training and modernizing the Police force and augmenting the intelligence network, could have been taken much earlier. Maintenance of law & order has been the priority of My Government. My Government had strongly

taken up the matter with the Government of India for raising of two India Reserve Battalions and with vigorous persuasion the same have been got sanctioned. The recruitment process for Women Reserve Battalion has also been initiated. My Government has also taken various other steps for combating the terrorist attacks. My Government is committed to keep the morale of the Police Force high and to improve their service conditions. Police housing has been given due importance.

60. My Government respects the independence of the judiciary and holds it in high esteem. My Government has made special efforts to fully meet the requirements for Judicial Complexes and residences for Judicial Officers. For improvement in service conditions of the members of Subordinate Judiciary, My Government has fully implemented the recommendations of Shetty Commission.

61. The Government has taken special drive to improve the conviction rate in criminal cases and Prosecution Department has played an important role to achieve this goal by effectively conducting the cases in the Courts. The success rate in the civil cases of the Department during the year 2007-08 was 81% and from 01.04.2008 to 11/2008 is 88%. In order to improve the standard of investigation and remove the apparent defects in the investigation, ten Law Officers have been provided for various offices of the Superintendents of Police who are providing assistance during the investigation and are advising the police in the investigation of heinous offences.

62. My Government is providing legal aid to the poor and down trodden persons with the spirit of compassion and service according to the provisions made in Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987. During the year 2008, 268 Lok Adalats were held in which 2074 cases were settled and compensation to the tune of Rs. 99.15 lac in 64 MACT cases was awarded. Besides this 68 legal Literacy Camps were organized during the above period and legal aid was provided to 20 persons belonging to Scheduled Castes, 18 persons, belonging to Scheduled Tribes, 179 women, 2 Children, 4 persons in custody and 106 persons of general category, thus totaling 329 cases.

63. Information and Public Relations Department endeavours to disseminate the policies and programmes of the Government in right earnest through press notes, features, pamphlets, brochures, weekly and monthly magazines. Video shows and street plays are also being organized to cause awareness among people about policies of the government. With a view to disseminate the programmes of the government to the masses more effectively, my government has started a weekly Programme "HIMBEATS" which is being broadcast from All India Radio, Shimla, Hamirpur and Dharamshala as well as from F.M. Channel. A special campaign on prohibition has been undertaken regularly to educate the people about ill effects of drinking, smoking, drug addiction etc.

64. My Government stands for all round development and welfare of the people and has been according the highest priority for the effective implementation of development

programmes. The focus of the Government remained on the reduction of poverty, enhancing the equity among the various sections of the society and balanced regional development. The Government is giving special emphasis on the implementation of developmental schemes for scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, other backward classes and notified backward areas. Against the Plan size of Rs. 2100 crores in the year 2007-08, my Government has raised the Plan size to Rs. 2400 crores during the year 2008-09 and has given highest priority to social services sectors which accounts for 34.09 percent of total Plan size. My Government has raised the budgetary allocation of Vidhayak Kshetra Vikas Nidhi Yojana (VKVNY) by Rs. 5.00 lacs per Hon'ble MLA from the limit of Rs. 25.00 lacs in 2007-08 to Rs. 30.00 lacs for the year 2008-09.

65. With these words I would like to conclude my speech, however, I am sure that all the members of this august house will rise above party lines and participate in the deliberations of this house especially the Budget debate and give their valuable suggestions keeping in view the over all growth of the State and people of this Pradesh.

JAI HIND, JAI HIMACHAL

