



ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY

Dr. Shanker Dayal Sharma

GOVERNOR OF MAHARASHTRA

JOINT SESSION OF THE MAHARASHTRA LEGISLATURE AT BOMBAY

24th March 1987

MR. CHAIRMAN, MR. SPEAKER AND HONOURABLE MEMBERS,

I am happy to welcome you to this first Session of the State Legislature in 1987. After assuming the office of the Governor of Maharashtra this is the first opportunity for me to address you. It shall be my constant endeavour to serve the people of Maharashtra. I seek your co-operation in this endeavour.

2. The State of Maharashtra has been facing a very serious drought situation in 1986-87. After the irregular rains during the previous two years, the drought situation prevailed during the year 1986-87 also. The drought situation has affected extensive areas. Relief measures have been undertaken on a very extensive scale to provide succour to the affected people. This has naturally resulted in a heavy financial burden on the State. Even so, the Annual Plan of the State for the year 1987-88 has been formulated with an outlay of Rs. 2,320 crores.

3. In the Plan an amount of Rs. 300 crores is proposed to be spent on schemes for removal of regional backlog in the backward areas. The plan also includes a provision of Rs. 64 crores for the programmes based on the felt-needs of the people in the State.

4. The implementation of the New 20-Point Programme is a major feature of the Plan which embodies the guiding principles of

growth with social justice, generation of productive employment, alleviation of poverty and self-reliance. Every effort is being made to keep up the tempo of implementation of the Programme. Maharashtra has always been in the forefront in this national effort.

5. The third year of the Seventh Five Year Plan is about to commence. My Government has, therefore, decided to take a mid-term review of the Plan to assess the extent to which the Plan priorities are reflected in the sectoral and schemewise Plan allocations and the achievement with reference to physical targets for the Seventh Plan and the Annual Plans. This review will help optimum utilisation of resources and necessary re-orientation in Plan strategy for mid-term correction and improvement in Plan performance.

6. During the 1986 Kharif season, large areas of Maharashtra received very irregular and abnormally poor precipitation. Consequently, the Kharif crops suffered heavy damage. As many as 18,263 villages spread over 219 talukas in 26 districts have been affected by the serious drought situation. The drought situation has affected a population of about 211 lakhs and the cattle population has also been affected to a great extent. The sowing of Rabi crops was also hampered as a result of scanty rains during the period from September to November 1986. As against the normal Rabi area of 65 lakh hectares, the actual area sown was about 55 lakh hectares. The Rabi crops over large areas of the State have suffered damage due to inadequate rains. On the basis of preliminary survey, the Rabi crops have been adversely affected in 5,147 villages. Thus, the total number of villages affected in the State by drought during 1986-87 is 23,410.

7. Taking into consideration the scarcity situation, my Government has issued instructions for providing water from irrigation reservoirs for drinking and production of fodder, on a priority basis. Recovery of Government dues in the scarcity affected areas has been suspended and recovery of land revenue has also been remitted in the areas where paisewari is 50/60 or less. A State level all-party committee has been constituted under the Chairmanship of Chief Minister to review the scarcity situation from time to time. At the District level all-party committees under the Chairmanship of the Minister

in-charge of the District and at the Taluka level all-party Committees under the Chairmanship of local legislators have also been set up.

8. As a result of very poor precipitation, about 16,000 villages and 105 urban areas are likely to experience acute drinking water scarcity during the current summer season. In order to tackle this problem, a Master Plan has been prepared and it is being implemented. In order to make adequate fodder available to the cattle in the drought affected areas, a programme of fodder production and supply has been undertaken on the farms of the Maharashtra State Farming Corporation, Agricultural Universities and Taluka Seed Farms. Foodgrains unfit for human consumption but fit for animal use are also being supplied as fodder. In addition, the Tribal Development Corporation and the Forests Department are making available grass for the cattle in these areas. Irrigation water is provided free of charge to every cultivator for fodder production on an area of land not exceeding 40 ares. Tagai loans are also being given for needy agriculturists upto Rs. 400 per animal subject to a maximum of Rs. 2,000 per farmer. In the case of marginal and small farmers, Government has decided to give 50 per cent. of the tagai loan as subsidy.

9. Cattle camps have been opened in affected areas as and when required. Co-operative Sugar Factories and other voluntary agencies have come forward to open cattle camps in a number of areas. Wherever such cattle camps are opened, subsidy is being provided by the Government for fodder at the rate of Rs. 100 per animal per month.

10. In the year 1985-86, students in scarcity affected areas who belong to economically backward class of society or are children of landless labourers and small farmers were given exemption from payment of examination fees of University or Board of Examinations and the expenditure was met from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund. The total expenditure was about Rs. 96 lakhs benefiting about 1.50 lakh students. This concession has been continued in 1986-87. However, the concession has now been extended also to children of small farmers holding 4 hectares instead of 2 hectares of unirrigated

land. The expenditure on this account is likely to be about Rs. 3 crores during this year.

11. My Government is committed to providing drinking water to the rural population. In the Sixth Plan period, 54 per cent. of the rural population was covered under this scheme. In the Seventh Plan period 20,000 villages are proposed to be covered. In the first two years of the Seventh Plan, an amount of Rs. 250 crores is estimated to have been spent in covering 8,224 villages. About 3,158 villages have been covered during the current financial year upto 31st January 1987. During 1987-88, it is proposed to cover 3,950 villages. In this programme advanced techniques of remote sensing and use of satellite photographs are employed to increase the success of borewells. Government has directed the Zilla Parishads to create a "Maintenance Fund" for operation and maintenance of assets created under the Water Supply Programme. An amount equal to 5 per cent. of the State Plan expenditure under this programme will be contributed by the Government to this Fund. During the current financial year, an amount of Rs. 4 crores has been sanctioned to the Zilla Parishads as Government contribution. A massive programme of installation of power pumps on high yielding 7,000 borewells has been taken in hand. 4,298 power pumps have been installed upto the end of February 1987. This would benefit a large rural population.

12. The Employment Guarantee Scheme is expected to generate during the current year about 17 crore mandays employment at an estimated expenditure of about Rs. 222 crores. Emphasis has been laid on taking up productive works like irrigation, afforestation, nala-bunding, etc. Where such works cannot be undertaken, road construction works are also allowed to be undertaken. At present, 11,250 works having employment potential of about 11 lakh are in progress and the actual labour attendance on these works is about 8.02 lakh. In addition, under the National Rural Employment Programme and Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme, about 4.60 crore mandays of employment were generated during the current year involving an expenditure of Rs. 76.65 crores.

13. My Government accords high priority to development of irrigation in the State. The cumulative irrigation potential in the State through the projects in the State Sector was 23.33 lakh hectares by June 1986. It is expected that this would be further increased by 0.60 lakh hectares by June 1987. In the Local Sector also the cumulative irrigation potential created was 3 lakh hectares by June 1986 and this is also expected to be further increased by 0.12 lakh hectares by June 1987.

14. The problem of scarcity occurring at frequent intervals has to be viewed from the perspective of long term planning and mitigating ill-effects of failure of monsoons. Government has, therefore, decided to adopt 8-monthly crop pattern on all new irrigation projects in the water scarcity areas.

15. The Annual Plan for the year 1987-88 includes the special component plan for the welfare of Scheduled castes and Neo-buddhists. In the Plan, an outlay of about Rs. 64 crores is proposed to assist about 89,000 families.

16. The Tribal Sub-Plan for 1987-88 is of the order of Rs. 145.48 crores and represents an increase of 28 per cent. over the current year's outlay. 55 per cent. of the tribal population in Maharashtra lives outside the Tribal Sub-Plan area. Individual beneficiary schemes are now being extended to these tribals also. In order that the tribals are provided more educational facilities, Government has taken a policy decision to allow voluntary agencies to open Ashram Schools. Moreover, during the current year 13 more Modified Area Development Agency (MADA) pockets and 14 Mini-MADA pockets have been added to the existing 18 MADA pockets. Thus in all 1,254 villages with a population of 3.33 lakh tribals will be covered under this scheme.

17. In the Energy Sector, the overall power position in the State during the current year continues to be satisfactory. The power generation in the State is on a very large scale. When there is surplus power, it is supplied to neighbouring States. The average power generation in the State is 85 million units per day. This is

an all-time record. Energy requirement of the State in 1995 may be of the order of 9,500 M.W. For meeting this requirement, the State Government has submitted proposals for 8 new power projects to the Central Government with a total capacity of 6,614 M.W. These proposals are being pursued.

18. The number of electrified villages in the State in 1960 was 853 which rose to 33,963 by the end of 1986. This year, this number is expected to be over 34,500. The day of achieving the 100 per cent. electrification of villages is not far off. The total number of energised agricultural pumps in 1960 was 6,695. This number grew to over 10 lakh by the end of 1986. Against the target of energisation of 60,000 agricultural pumps, over 85,000 agricultural pumps were energised this year. Thus, about 11 lakh pumps will be energised by the end of the current financial year.

19. The total number of consumers benefited from power supply in the year 1960 was 1,07,836 while the number of consumers today is over 50 lakhs. Upto the year 1980, free domestic electric connections were given to 36 Harijan and Adiwasi families whereas till the end of 1986, free domestic connections have been given to over 4,12,000 such families. During the current year, the number of free domestic connections given to Backward class families has already exceeded 38,000. The total number of backward class families benefited by free domestic connections will be 4,50,000 this year.

20. I am happy to state that Maharashtra has been in the forefront in harnessing wind power for energy generation. The first phase of our Wind Farm at Deogad in Sindhudurg District for generating electricity from wind power, comprising 10 wind turbines of 550 KW capacity went on stream during the current year and its further expansion is in progress. Eight Monitoring Stations have been set up for assessing the wind energy potential for establishing more wind farms.

21. The Maharashtra Energy Development Agency has undertaken a programme of rural energisation through non-conventional and

renewable sources of energy. Under this programme, 20 Urja Grams spread over 12 Districts have been taken up during 1986-87. More villages will be covered during 1987-88.

22. I am happy to state that in the implementation of the National Project for Bio-gas Development, Maharashtra has been leading all other States during the last three years. The State shall achieve the target fixed by the Government of India of setting up of 40,000 bio-gas plants during the current year. From 1982-83 till February 1987 about 1.66 lakh bio-gas plants have been set up in the State through the Zilla Parishads which is the highest number in the country.

23. The year 1987 is being observed as 'International Year of Shelter for Homeless'. The effort of the State Government will be not only to fulfil the targets set out in the Seventh Plan but also to promote the growth of housing through public and co-operative sectors and through various other measures. Special housing schemes are being undertaken for the more vulnerable sections of the community like beedi workers, physically handicapped, handloom weavers and construction workers. A Bill to amend the Bombay Rents, Hotel and Lodging House Rates Control Act, proposing some progressive amendments, which were long under consideration, has already been introduced in the Legislative Assembly during the last Session and it will come up for consideration in this Session. The growth of housing stock had received a set-back due to the litigations in the Court in respect of the schemes under the Urban Land Ceiling Act. Government has reviewed the housing scheme to achieve the object of the Act. According to the revised scheme, 70 per cent. of the surplus land will be used for construction of houses for persons belonging to low income group and weaker sections whose income is below Rs. 15,000 per annum.

24. Sanjay Gandhi Swavalamban Yojana, through which assistance is given to those who are otherwise ineligible for getting assistance from any other source, has been reviewed and keeping the interest of the needy people in view, the procedure in respect thereof has been streamlined.

25. An outlay of Rs. 983 crores is approved for water supply and sanitation schemes during the Seventh Plan. During 1986-87, there were 101 continuing schemes. Subject to the condition of making public contribution of 10 per cent. of the expenditure, major water supply schemes have been sanctioned for Amravati (Rs. 55 crores), Dhule (Rs. 40 crores), Ahmednagar (Rs. 25 crores) and Aurangabad (Rs. 18 crores). The Bombay Municipal Corporation took up Phases II and III of the Bombay Water Supply and Sewerage Project with the help of World Bank assistance. Phase II of the Project estimated to cost Rs. 630 crores is to be completed by the end of 1987. The World Bank has agreed to provide assistance approximately of Rs. 231 crores for Phase III of the project which is estimated to cost Rs. 434 crores. Execution of the Phase III is expected to commence in the year 1987-88. This phase would provide additional 455 million litres of additional water supply per day. The Maharashtra Water Supply and Sewerage Project for improving water supply and sanitation facilities in Phase II of the project has been prepared and will be posed to the World Bank.

26. My Government has agreed to share 67 per cent. of the cost of the Mankhurd-Belapur Railway Project. The cost of the project is Rs. 120 crores. The Railway Ministry have awarded contract for construction of Thane Creek Railway bridge at a cost of Rs. 27 crores and the project is likely to be completed by 1990-91.

27. My Government has been successful in persuading the Government of India to allow the State to continue the Monopoly Cotton Procurement Scheme. Considering the low cotton crop during this year and also the scarcity conditions, 100 per cent. payment towards the guarantee price of cotton is being made to the cotton growers. My Government has also requested the Government of India for adequate export quota. The Government of India has so far granted permission to export 1.20 lakh bales.

28. In the sugar policy recently announced by the Government of India, the long outstanding demand of my Government to subdivide the single levy zone of Maharashtra has been accepted. Because of this, the sugarcane cultivators in the backward areas

of Marathwada, Vidarbha and Khandesh will get proper return. The Government of India has stipulated that the minimum crushing capacity of the new sugar factories should be 2,500 tons per day. This will retard the establishment of new sugar factories in the backward areas of the State because they cannot meet the capital cost. My Government has taken up the matter with the Government of India. To give encouragement to new sugar factories in Marathwada and Vidarbha regions, my Government has decided to revise the ratio of Members' share capital contribution to Government share capital contribution from 1:3 to 1:5. This has enabled five new sugar factories to go into production and the remaining four new sugar factories could also make satisfactory progress.

29. The enhancement of production of edible oil finds an important place in the 20-Point Programme. It has been decided to set up an Oil Mill at Dhule through the Maharashtra State Co-operative Oil-seeds Growers' Federation with the assistance of the National Dairy Development Board. This Oil Mill will have crushing capacity of nearly 250 metric tonnes per day.

30. With a view to improve nutritional health status of children in primary schools, School Feeding Programme implemented by the State Government envisages provision of supplementary nutrition to school going children in 1st standard in multi-teacher schools and 1st to 4th standards in single teacher schools in rural areas of Maharashtra. 150 m.l. milk per beneficiary per school day is supplied at places where primary dairy co-operative societies exist. During 1985-86, about 97 lakh litres milk was distributed to about 5.33 lakh beneficiaries. The same standard would be maintained during 1986-87. Besides, surplus milk wherever available during peak period from December 1986 to February 1987 of the flush season, was also distributed to the 2nd to 4th standard children. About 6.60 lakh more beneficiaries were given 42 lakh litres milk under this programme. Under the existing centrally sponsored supplementary nutrition programme, about 7.50 lakh children and pregnant women are receiving the benefit of supplementary nutrition in the State. Under this programme, Government has now started from

November 1986, the "wheat based supplementary nutrition" which benefits about 6.28 lakh more children and pregnant women.

31. Comprehensive Crop Insurance Scheme was introduced from Kharif season, 1985. It covers paddy, jowar, bajra, groundnut and tur in Kharif season and wheat, jowar, gram and oilseeds (safflower/sesamum linseeds) during Rabi season. Efforts are being made to include in this scheme cotton and fruit crops. The scheme would be continued during 1987-88.

32. Government has been sympathetic to the welfare of the Policemen of all ranks and has already granted several facilities to them as also to the members of their families. Police Officers and men have to face difficult law and order situations. In this background, Government has decided to liberalise the existing Family Pension Scheme for the benefit of the families of Policemen killed in action. Henceforth the widow or nominee of a member of Police personnel killed in action will be paid special family pension at the rate of salary last drawn by the deceased at the time of death. The special family pension will be continued upto the date of superannuation of the deceased Police Officer or Policeman, had he not been killed in action.

33. The Film Industry had urged the Government to provide relief to the Industry for its survival by giving various concessions and reliefs including reduction in the incidence of entertainment duty and abolition of surcharge. It had also urged for introduction of system of compounded levy of entertainment duty on cinemas. After careful consideration of these demands, Government has agreed to levy entertainment duty on the basis of admission rate and to abolish surcharge on entertainment duty. A system of compounded levy of duty on cinemas has been adopted. The Film Industry has thus been provided relief to the extent of about Rs. 18.78 crores. It is expected that the Film Industry would pass on the benefit to the viewers.

34. Industrial relations in Maharashtra have continued to register improvement. As against 85 lakh mandays lost in work stoppages in the year 1985, the number of mandays lost in the year 1986

was 53 lakh which shows a decrease of nearly 38 per cent. over the previous year. Government has covered, under the provisions of the Minimum Wages Act, 69 employments employing nearly 100 lakh workmen in relatively unorganised sectors. In order to protect the interests of the workers and the larger public interest, Government nationalised the Empress Mills, Nagpur. Government has also decided, in principle, to nationalise the Khandesh Mills at Jalgaon and Srinivas Mills at Bombay. A programme for revitalisation of the Texcom is being evolved in consultation with the financing institutions and banks consistent with the policy of the Government of India. My Government has taken various measures for promoting electronic industry in the State. Sales-Tax on electronic goods has been reduced to 4 per cent. and Sales tax on components, parts and accessories manufactured in Maharashtra to 2 per cent. Three electronic industrial estates have been established at Bhosari (Pune), Chikhalthana (Aurangabad) and Hingna (Nagpur). A perspective Plan for development of electronic industry in the State during the Seventh Plan period has also been drawn up. In collaboration with the Department of Electronics, Government of India and Marathwada University, a Centre for Electronic Design and Technology has been established at Aurangabad. This Centre will be imparting advanced training in the field of electronics.

35. The Parliament has recently enacted the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 which provides for establishment of a Consumer Protection Council and for a forum for the redressal of consumer disputes. The State Government has already constituted a Consumer Protection Council at the State level. The said Council will now be re-constituted in terms of provisions in the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 in which will vest the statutory authority to protect the rights of the consumers. The Government proposes to constitute agencies for redressal of consumer disputes at the State and District levels.

36. The Family Courts Act, 1984 provides for the establishment of Family Courts with a view to promote conciliation in, and secure speedy settlement of disputes relating to, marriage and family

affairs. Government has decided to establish two such Courts at Bombay and one each at Pune and Nagpur. The proposal for establishment of a Court at Aurangabad is under consideration of Government. Establishment of Family Court would accelerate the pace of giving quick justice to women.

37. The Central Government has announced the National Policy on Education in May 1986 and has also prepared a programme of action in August 1986 for its effective implementation. Advance action has been taken to implement the new education policy in the State through selected programmes. These programmes are national schemes of in-service training of school teachers, establishment of Navodaya Vidyalayas and a mass programme of Functional Literacy. Under the in-service training programme, about 50,000 school teachers all over Maharashtra State were given orientation training in May 1986. In each district a Navodaya Vidyalaya which will be model school at the secondary stage will be opened by the Central Government by the end of Seventh Plan. Seven Navodaya Vidyalayas have so far been established. A mass programme of Functional Literacy through college students covering about 52,000 illiterate adults is in progress. The new education policy includes "Operation Blackboard" programme for achieving the target of universalisation of elementary education by the year 1995 and according to availability of funds, it will be implemented in the State.

38. Though Government Secondary Schools transferred to Zilla Parishads are eligible for 12 per cent. non-salary grants, Zilla Parishads were not in a position to provide funds for initially incurring expenditure on purchase of equipment and library books, etc. Government has paid total advance grants of Rs. 1.13 crores in the current year to Zilla Parishads for this purpose.

39. The New Education Policy states that in the interest of maintaining standards and for several other valid reasons, the commercialisation of technical and professional education would be curbed. The State Government proposes to bring forward a Bill to prohibit collection of capitation fees at the stage either of

admission or promotion to the higher standard in the educational institutions.

40. The performance of the State in the family welfare programme has been commendable. The State has achieved 52.5 per cent. of eligible couple protection as against the national achievement of 35 per cent. All Districts in the State will be taken up under the Universal Immunisation Programme by stages. Against the requirement of 1,539 primary health centres and 9,650 sub-centres in the State on the basis of 1981 census, the Government has already established 1,539 primary health centres and 8,038 sub-centres. The rest will be set up in a phased programme.

41. With a view to resolving the language problem in the border areas of Maharashtra and Karnataka, the Chief Ministers of Maharashtra and Karnataka held discussions on the 11th June 1986 at Bangalore and on the 29th September 1986 at Bombay. In these meetings the two Chief Ministers agreed that the problems of linguistic minorities on both the sides of the border should be dealt with sympathy and understanding and that the development programmes in the border areas should be tackled through a spirit of cordiality and on reciprocal basis. My Government has adopted the policy of not making teaching of Marathi compulsory upto VIII standard in the Kannada medium primary and upper primary schools situated in the border areas. As the honourable members will recall that this step has been taken by the Government of Maharashtra unilaterally and the Legislature has been kept informed about it. The larger and basic issue of future of border areas was also discussed by both the Chief Ministers and it is felt that the atmosphere and the spirit in which the talks were held will pave the way for mutually acceptable solution.

42. My Government is determined to maintain communal harmony in the State and to take stern action against those who try to sow communal discord or weaken the national unity.

43. I would once again like to refer to the serious drought situation through which the State of Maharashtra is passing at present. It is only through the united and combined efforts of all

sections of society, all political parties and the various agencies in the State that it would be possible to tackle the situation in an effective and satisfactory manner and provide relief and succour to the drought stricken population. I am very happy to state that my Government is receiving and will continue to receive the active assistance and co-operation of all sections of society and political parties in meeting the challenge posed by the drought situation.

44. Honourable members, during the present Session, you have to consider supplementary demands, vote on account, budget, bills to convert certain Ordinances into Acts, pending and new bills of urgent nature and other Government as well as non-official urgent business, which may be brought before you for consideration.

45. I would like to indicate some of the important bills, which are likely to be taken up during this Session :—

- (1) The Bombay Rents, Hotel and Lodging House Rates Control (Amendment) Bill, 1986 (L. A. Bill No. LXXIX of 1986).
- (2) Maharashtra Project Affected Persons Rehabilitation Bill, 1986 (L. C. Bill No. XXXII of 1986).
- (3) The Maharashtra Sales Tax on the Transfer of the Right to use any Goods for any purpose (Amendment) Bill, 1987 (L. A. Bill No. I of 1987).
- (4) The Bombay Motor Vehicles Tax (Amendment) Bill, 1987 (L. A. Bill No. II of 1987).
- (5) The Bombay Entertainments Duty (Amendment) Bill, 1987 (L. A. Bill No. III of 1987).
- (6) The Maharashtra Village Panchayats (Temporary Postponement of certain Elections due to drought conditions in the State) Bill, 1987 (L. A. Bill No. IV of 1987).
- (7) The Maharashtra Agricultural Produce Marketing (Regulation) (Amendment) Bill, 1987.
- (8) The Maharashtra Appropriation (Vote on Account) Bill, 1987.
- (9) The Maharashtra (Supplementary) Appropriation Bill, 1987.
- (10) The Maharashtra Felling of Trees (Amendment) Bill, 1987.

I wish your deliberations every success.

Jai Hind.