



ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY

Shri Om Prakash Mehra

GOVERNOR OF MAHARASHTRA

JOINT SESSION OF THE MAHARASHTRA LEGISLATURE AT BOMBAY

2nd March 1981

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Speaker and Honourable Members

I am happy to welcome you and to address you for the first time since taking over as Governor in November last. It will be my endeavour to serve Maharashtra as its first public servant and for this I seek your unstinted co-operation.

2. The people of Maharashtra have once more expressed their faith and confidence in the Leadership of Smt. Indira Gandhi and this Government by returning the Chief Minister from his home Constituency of Shrivardhan in the recent bye-election to this august House with a massive mandate which have a few parallels, if any, in the history of democratic world. The mandate puts a seal of approval and authority on the programmes and policies that this Government has hitherto adopted and undertaken and unmistakably signifies a green signal to carry forward with added vigour such programmes for the poor and the down-trodden. Government is indeed fully conscious of the fact that this victory has cast on it a bigger and greater responsibility of bringing about a speedy socio-economic transformation in order to do justice to the weaker sections of the Society.

3. This Government holds as its ideal the same values of secularism, humanism and compassion that Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj cherished and makes an honest effort to practise his principles of 'सर्वे धर्म सम भाव' in running the administration of the State. To propagate these principles and uphold these values, a State Level Committee has been constituted under the Chairmanship of the Chief Minister. Government has also installed a portrait of Shivaji at the main entrance of the Mantralaya to remind itself constantly of his noble example and mould its policies, programmes and actions accordingly. Government is pledged to developing areas around historical Raigad in a manner befitting its national importance. A University for the Konkan region is to be located at the foot of the fort of Raigad, by which name the district of Kulaba is named since this New Year Day. Appropriate memorials too are proposed to be erected at the birth places of Jijamata, the mother and source of inspiration of Chhatrapati and of Shahaji, the father of Chhatrapati at Sindkhedraja and Verul respectively. Towards this, Committees are set up.

4. The Chief Minister has initiated steps for the recovery of the Bhavani Sword (भवानी तलवार) from London. Government also proposes to put up a canopy over the Royal Throne of the Chhatrapati in the Fort of Raigad. The Government has also decided to extend all help and assistance to institutions which portray Shivaji in the correct historical perspective and project his secular and welfare measures. These ideals of humanism illustrated through the lives of Mahatma Phule, Shahu Maharaj and Dr. Ambedkar will continue to guide the policies and programmes of this Government.

5. Our democratic institutions are modelled on the teachings of Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and are given economic content and a socialist mould by our beloved leader, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Tilak inspired this country by his magic declaration "Swaraj is my birth right"; and it was Mahatma Gandhi who forged the unique instrument of truth and non-violence and achieved for us our freedom. It was Jawaharlal Nehru's vision which made democratic evolution of our society a modern silent revolution and his concern for the poor translated through this political democracy into an egalitarian society. He was the architect of modern India and laid the foundation of the processes of planned development. The mantle to carry forward this cherished goal/mission has now again been entrusted by the nation to Shrimati Indira Gandhi. It is her endeavour and that of her Government to convert the wishes of our people, namely, making India a strong and united country and its people a self-reliant and self-respecting Nation through the medium of democratic, secular and socialist apparatus, a reality.

6. One of the numerous measures initiated by our beloved Prime Minister in the interest of the weaker sections, is the 20-point economic programme. Her deep concern for the poor permeates the approaches, the policies and the programmes of the Five-Year Plan. This is designed to achieve a socio-economic transformation of our Society. The approach of Government is in tune with these policies and principles.

7. The State's Five-Year Plan for 1980-85 has been approved by the Planning Commission with an outlay of Rs. 6,175 crores. Out of this outlay, the core and productive sectors such as agriculture, irrigation, power, industry, employment guarantee scheme and

co-operation account for about 73 per cent. Similarly, out of the 1981-82 outlay of Rs. 1,080 crores, these sectors will absorb 73.5 per cent.

8. The Central focus of the Five-Year Plan and the Annual Plan on the weak and the poor is reflected in the series of measures intended specifically to benefit them. Thus, emphasis is laid on the Minimum Needs Programme for which a total outlay of Rs. 464.51 crores has been proposed for the Sixth Plan 1980 to 1985, and this will go towards meeting the minimum needs of the weaker and the poor members of our Society.

9. For programmes directly benefitting the poorer and weaker sections of the Community such as the Unemployed, Village Artisans, small and marginal farmers, landless labourers, the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, the Socially and Physically Handicapped etc., it is proposed to deploy Rs. 2,100 crores.

10. Government has launched the 'Sanjay Gandhi Niradhar Anudan Yojana' an allowance scheme for the old, destitute and disabled; indeed for "Niradhar", the "be Sahara". About 1,99,000 applications have been received and these are at various stages of scrutiny and examination.

11. To promote self-employment among the humblest and the smallest in villages, Government has sanctioned the 'Sanjay Gandhi Swawalamban Yojana', a scheme for loans to small entrepreneurs, whether educated or uneducated, whereunder they will get loans ranging between Rs. 500 and Rs. 2,500 without surety and free of interest repayable in 12 years. This scheme assists the persons needing small loans for self-employment ventures to speedily obtain the same. Nearly 12 lakh applications have been received and are being processed. This scheme supplements other self-employment schemes such as Block Level, Multi-purpose Balutedar Societies, etc. for village artisans. Many an application, indeed under both these schemes, is sanctioned and the benefits reached the hands concerned.

12. The scheme of TRYSEM launched by the Government of India to impart training to the rural youth to set up their own self-employment ventures will be implemented vigorously in the State by providing adequate funds for giving financial assistance speedily to small entrepreneurs.

13. Government has assigned high priority to the implementation of the Employment Guarantee Scheme for which a substantial provision is made in the State's Annual Plan with a target of generating 18 crores of mandays of employment. The Employment Guarantee Scheme is under constant review and is being improved from time to time. One of the measures recently undertaken is to start a pilot project to test feasibility of a comprehensive land development programme which will include constructing, repairing and deepening of wells on private lands along with measures for soil conservation and water harvesting to augment underground water-supply. Similarly, Government will implement the Centrally-assisted programme for National Rural Employment in the State. It will be observed that both these programmes essentially serve small and marginal farmers and landless labour.

14. As promised in the Monsoon Session, the outstanding crop loans of small and marginal farmers have been paid by the Government to the nationalised and co-operative banks. This amount totals approximately Rs. 57 crores as against Rs. 49 crores anticipated earlier. Simultaneously, measures are being taken to make these farmers self-sufficient. One of the measures so taken is a crash programme for wells on the lands of the small, marginal and tribal farmers and loans to the extent of Rs. 6,000 have been agreed to be waived under this scheme in case wells turn out to be unsuccessful.

15. Other measures taken with the objective to improve the lot of the weaker sections of the community include a decision of this Government that lands of poor farmers will not be acquired for public purposes unless there is no other feasible alternative; and where such lands have necessarily to be acquired, special measures will be taken to ensure prompt payment of compensation. Further, higher milk prices have been given to the rural producers. The facilities granted to the small and medium newspapers have also been suitably improved wherever possible. The procedures for grant of pension are also being streamlined with a view to ensuring that the employees and particularly those of the lower categories get pension from the month of retirement. Arising from certain deficiencies noticed during the surprise visit of the Chief Minister to certain offices, measures are being taken to make the Employment

Exchanges more result-oriented and to provide adequate facilities to the members of the public visiting Government offices.

16. Government is deeply concerned about the problem of slums in urban areas and of the reconstruction of dilapidated houses in Bombay. This Government has increased the per capita expenditure norm for basic amenities in slums from Rs. 150 to Rs. 200 and also for structural repairs to cessed houses from Rs. 120 to Rs. 200 per square metre. And yet it is fully appreciated that the measures taken over the past few years have been indeed inadequate and a bolder, a more determined and a practical approach to this acute problem is overdue. Government accordingly is shortly to announce a time-bound scheme to do justice to the legitimate interests of the poorer sections of the community, to utilise properly, for the public good, all valuable urban land resource including the surplus vacant lands and also improve the quality of life in the urban areas. Apart from this scheme, additional 2,000 tenements will be available through reconstruction of old buildings in Bombay during the year.

17. The Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority expects to complete 12,000 tenements and commence construction work of 28,000 new tenements during the current year. Similarly, nearly 2,000 tenements are expected to be available this year, through reconstruction.

18. Government will vigorously pursue the programme of construction of houses for the rural landless and houseless persons. The provision per hut has been increased from Rs. 1,500 to Rs. 2,000 and a scheme for repairs to huts already constructed has been approved. In the financial year 1980-81, 53,800 houses will have been constructed. Another 54,000 houses are proposed to be constructed during 1981-82.

19. During the next year, the Mahatma Phule Backward Class Development Corporation proposes to cover 54,000 additional beneficiaries by way of self-employment under the special programme formulated by the Corporation.

20. The Special Component Plan for the year 1981-82 for the exclusive benefit of Scheduled Castes will be of the order of Rs. 57.00 crores, and is targeted to benefit 2.0 lakh families.

21. Government is also vigorously implementing the Tribal Sub-Plan which is formulated principally with a view to removing the imbalances between the tribal areas and other areas and to promote the economic development of the tribals. The programmes cover such fields as agriculture, irrigation, education, communications, minimum needs, etc.

22. Government is formulating schemes to help tribals to develop their talent in handicrafts, and give them the necessary financial and marketing assistance.

23. Special programmes are being formulated for the economic and social amelioration of three primitive Tribes identified as such by the Government of India, namely, 'Katkaris' of Thane and Raigad Districts, 'Kolams' of Yavatmal and Nanded Districts and 'Madia Gonds' of Bhamragarh area of Chandrapur District and these will be implemented through specially appointed agencies and officials.

24. An integrated fisheries project covering fish seed farms, brackish water fisheries, development of infrastructure facilities and housing for fishermen, estimated to cost between Rs. 10 to Rs. 15 crores is proposed to be undertaken with assistance from the World Bank. This project, when implemented, will benefit the weaker sections of our society namely, the Kolees.

25. The 20-Point economic programme already mentioned is being vigorously pursued and a separate machinery has been set up to monitor its proper implementation.

26. Government is aware of the need of balanced development of the various regions and areas in the State. Government has accordingly initiated an exercise to identify the imbalances. In the meantime, as you are all aware, the Chief Minister has announced a number of projects designed to accelerate the pace of development in the Vidarbha and Marathwada regions.

27. Government has decided to set up a separate University in the Konkan area which will have a new orientation in various faculties. Government has also decided to set up a medical college with a hospital complex in Raigad District in recognition of a long-felt

need for these facilities in this backward region. It is also proposed to start an Engineering College and a Polytechnic for this region.

28. A Cabinet Committee under the Chairmanship of the Chief Minister has been constituted to prepare a programme for Konkan and the hilly, rainshadow and drought-prone areas in Western Maharashtra. The programme for Konkan region will encompass development of horticulture, tourism and fisheries etc., which offer scope for augmenting foreign exchange earnings. The coastal highway has an important bearing on the development of the Konkan region and effort will be made to get it accepted as a national highway. Government will also intensify the Khar Land Development Programme during the Sixth Plan.

29. On the initiative of the Chief Minister, the Planning Commission has set up an expert Committee to study the feasibility of utilising the westward flowing rain water in the Konkan area for irrigation. Another Committee headed by Shri P. M. Belliappa, Chairman, National Hydro-Power Commission is set up by the Union Ministry of Energy to harness this westward flowing rain water in Konkan for generation of power. Five sites have already been chosen by this Committee for detailed investigation which will start within a couple of weeks' time.

30. A High Level Committee of the Chief Ministers of the States concerned with the Western Ghats is scheduled to meet under the Chairmanship of the Chief Minister of Maharashtra on 8th March 1981 to finalise a new strategy for the integrated development of the Western Ghat areas covering programmes of improved forestry, high value plantations, animal husbandry, dairy and horticulture.

31. Since fears were expressed about the possibility of the Petro-Chemical Complex and the fertiliser projects being shifted from Maharashtra, the Chief Minister, on the very day he assumed office on 9th June 1980, personally took up the matter with the Central Government and got its final approval to the retention of these projects in Maharashtra. The fertiliser project located at Thal-Vaishet in Raigad District is being executed by the Rashtriya Fertilisers Corporation and has already made significant progress.

32. The Petro-Chemical Complex with an outlay of about Rs. 635 crores, which is coming up in Raigad District is expected to

generate large scale employment in both the Raigad and Ratnagiri Districts. The Government of India have already cleared phase I of the project and its decision on phase II which is soon expected will enable the early setting up of the gas based industries and the Naphtha based Aromatics Complex in the State. I am happy to mention that the Government of India have agreed to set up the main Gas Cracker and also one or two downstream units at Usar of Raigad District. In order to facilitate the implementation of the project and also to provide a promotional agency, a new State Level Corporation is being set up.

33. I shall now turn to other important features of the programmes which Government intends to pursue and undertake during the year.

34. Government has taken a number of measures to improve the law and order situation in the State and I may mention some of these. The Beat System has been introduced in Bombay, Pune and Nagpur as assured by the Chief Minister during the Monsoon Session. The Central and Western Railway Police Units have been reorganised. The S. R. P. Force has been augmented and a special wing for crime intelligence has been formed under a separate D. I. G. The traffic police have been strengthened.

35. The question of recognition of association of policemen and police officers at various levels had been pending for a long time. To settle this issue, the Chief Minister took the initiative to hold a series of discussions with their representatives, and I am happy to say that the Government has since given recognition to the associations under mutually agreed procedures and conditions and this has resulted in great satisfaction amongst the policemen and officers.

36. There has been a severe shortage of housing accommodation for the policemen, and this must naturally cause hardship to them. Government has, therefore, decided that the entire deficit which is of the order of about 35,000 tenements should be wiped out during the current plan period. By the end of this period, every policeman will be provided with a house.

37. The measures taken have greatly improved the moral of the police force, which deserves to be complimented for and congratulated upon their performance in maintaining the law and order in the City of Bombay and indeed, throughout the State.

38. The importance of agriculture in rural economy hardly needs to be emphasized. The Government is responsive to the several problems faced by the agriculturists. The concern of the Government is reflected in several measures already taken such as writing off of over fifty-five crores worth overdue loans and subsidising the fertiliser price. Government proposes to introduce further measures to strengthen the farm economy of the State.

39. The production of oilseeds in Maharashtra is much below the State's requirements. To make edible oil available to the consumers at reasonable prices, the State Government has undertaken a special drive for increasing the area under summer groundnut cultivation. The Prime Minister has advised the Chief Minister about the need to bring more area under summer groundnut cultivation. As a result of special efforts, the actual area under summer groundnut during the current year is not only expected to achieve the target set by the Prime Minister but to exceed the same. Toward this, the Government for the first time, has undertaken the responsibility to supply good quality groundnut seeds to the cultivators and also to reduce the irrigation water rates.

40. Government has also taken up an intensive programme for increasing the production of pulses and other oilseeds.

41. An important component of agricultural development effort is a properly organised extension net-work. Government has decided to introduce the Training and Visit System of Extension with World Bank assistance from the year 1981-82. An important feature of this extension system is the constant inter-communication between the Extension Agency and the Universities.

42. Since the overdues in respect of crop loans from the small farmers and marginal farmers have been paid by the State Government as indicated earlier, such farmers have now become credit-worthy. In order, however, that they may not fall again into debt especially when a very large percentage of crops in the State is grown under rainfed conditions, it is necessary that farmers are shielded against risks. Government therefore decided to introduce crop insurance scheme on a pilot basis for unirrigated wheat crop during Rabi 1980-81. This Scheme will be enlarged in coverage during the 1981-82 Kharif season.

43. Government considers that it is necessary that farmers get remunerative prices for their produce. The support prices of foodgrains, pulses, oilseeds, cotton, etc., are fixed for the country as a whole by the Government of India after taking into account the recommendations of the Agricultural Prices Commission. Government considers that the methodology of computation of cost of production of agricultural produce adopted by the Commission needs to be rationalised. Government also feels that the actual expenditure incurred by farmers on the various items of agricultural production, which at present are either not taken into consideration or only partially taken, be fully taken into account while working out the cost of production. Government has strongly urged these points before the Commission. On their acceptance of this methodology of computation a cultivator should be able to get higher support prices for his produce.

44. To improve the living standard of agriculturists, it is desirable that he gets not only remunerative prices for his produce, but also gets a share in the profits of the processing units which depend upon his agricultural produce. Government is therefore encouraging the establishment of agrobased industries in the Co-operative Sector in the State and will be making all out efforts for establishing the maximum number of sugar factories and spinning mills during the Sixth Plan period. Thus, it has decided to set up two spinning mills in each cotton growing districts in the State and to set up oil processing units in the State in areas having adequate availability of oilseeds.

45. In October 1980 when the open market prices of foodgrains like jowar and paddy were prevailing at a very low level in several rural areas, the State Government commenced the support price purchases of these commodities at Rs. 105 per quintal. Later in November the State Government raised the support price to Rs. 122 per quintal. It has also decided that if the open market prices of these foodgrains go above the support price level, the State Government would undertake open market purchases of these commodities and such purchases have accordingly been undertaken. These various measures have enabled cultivators to get increased prices for their jowar, paddy and rice. I may also mention that for the first time, the State Government undertook support price purchases as well as open market purchase of bajra during the current year.

46. To ensure that the onion growers get reasonable price for their produce, Government has for the first time undertaken support price purchases of onions during the current year through the agency of the Maharashtra State Co-operative Marketing Federation Ltd. The prevailing support prices range from Rs. 60 to Rs. 75 per quintal, depending upon the quality of onions. The State Government also succeeded in persuading NAFED to make purchases at the aforesaid rates.

47. The Cotton Monopoly Scheme is being continued and the guaranteed prices fixed by the State Government for different varieties of cotton are 14 to 39 per cent higher than the support prices fixed by Government of India. The current year's guaranteed prices are also higher than the last year's guaranteed prices by 18 to 40 per cent.

48. The sugar production in Maharashtra during 1979-80 was 13.65 lakh tonnes and it is estimated at 20 lakh tonnes during 1980-81. As against the rate of cane advance of Rs. 125 per metric tonne paid to the cultivators last year, the State Government has fixed the rate of advance at Rs. 180 for the current year and has recently advised the factories to pay at the rate of Rs. 200 per metric tonne. Government feels that to safeguard the interests of the sugarcane growers, it is necessary that the minimum cane price as well as the price of the levy sugar be increased. It has, accordingly, represented before the Agricultural Prices Commission as well as Government of India. It is the firm view of this Government that the entire expenditure incurred by the sugar factories for harvesting and transport of cane should be taken into account while fixing the minimum cane price; and the entire interest charges too that have to be paid by the factories for holding stocks of levy sugar should also be taken into account while fixing the prices of levy sugar. Government also feels that in the interest of sugar factories which have been established in areas having low recovery of sugar and shorter crushing season, the State should be divided into three zones for the purpose of fixation of levy prices. These matters are being actively pursued with the Government of India.

49. The storage facilities in the rural areas of the State are presently inadequate and a co-operative rural storage project, which

envisages construction of 1428 godowns with a total capacity of 4,73,000 metric tonnes at a total estimated cost of Rs. 30 crores is being undertaken by the Government with the assistance of the World Bank.

50. Operation Flood-II Programme undertaken by the Government of India with the assistance of the International Development Association will be started in 12 more districts of the State forthwith. Financial assistance of the order of Rs. 50 crores is expected from the Indian Dairy Corporation during the current plan period.

51. On account of an early and abrupt withdrawal of the monsoon this year, Kharif crops in 18 districts were adversely affected. Besides, there were no post-monsoon rains in October 1980, which also adversely affected the Rabi crops in sizeable areas involving a total cropped area of 51.11 lakh hectares in 12,479 villages. The total loss to crops is estimated to be of the order of Rs. 294.06 crores. Government is fully conscious of the gravity of the situation and is determined to overcome it by adopting relief measures on a war footing. Among the measures adopted are :—

- (i) Provision of employment on works taken up in the affected areas under the Employment Guarantee Scheme ;
- (ii) Augmentation of supply of drinking water and fodder in areas where shortage of drinking water and fodder is felt or is likely to be felt ; and
- (iii) Distribution of cash allowance to old, infirm and disabled persons.

An expenditure of Rs. 85.94 crores was incurred upto the end of December 1980 on these measures.

52. At the request of the State Government, a Central Team of officers visited the State from the 8th to the 11th of February 1981 to make an on the spot assessment of the scarcity situation and to make recommendations on the Central Assistance to be given to the State by the way of Advance Plan Assistance. The Central Team generally agreed with the State Government's assessment about the gravity of the situation and expressed its satisfaction with the Relief Measures adopted in the affected areas. My Government assures the people of these areas that the Government stands by them and every help will be extended to successfully meet this natural calamity.

53. Government has embarked on a Programme of Reorganisation of the Revenue units with the twin objective of strengthening and streamlining the Revenue Offices at each level and taking the administration nearer to the people. At the lowest level, the Talathi Sazas and the Revenue Circles will be reorganised and strengthened in a phased manner, commencing from the year 1981-82. In response to the long-standing wishes of the people, Government has already decided to reorganise the talukas in the Vidarbha Region so as to make them co-terminus with the Panchayat Samitis. Along with this, the Talukas in Western Maharashtra and Marathwada are also proposed to be suitably reorganised to promote the effective functioning of the Taluka Offices.

54. There has been a long standing demand for having separate districts for South Ratnagiri and Jalna. Government proposes to establish these two new districts with effect from 1st May, 1981.

55. As the House may be aware, at the highest level of the Revenue Field Administration, Government has already reorganised the Revenue Divisions and set up two new Divisions at Amravati and Nashik respectively with a view to ensuring closer co-ordination of the development activities and intensive supervision of the District Administration.

56. In fulfilment of the long standing and legitimate demand of the Marathwada Region, the State Government have decided that a Bench of the Bombay High Court should be established at Aurangabad with the concurrence of the Government of India by the 15th August, 1981.

57. Following the suggestions of the Prime Minister Shrimati Indira Gandhi, Government is implementing the scheme "A Tree for Every Child" from the year 1981-82 through the participation of school children between the age of 8 and 15 years under which approximately 1,500 schools will be covered during the first year of its implementation. A programme of social forestry too is being undertaken on a large scale.

58. Government has decided to step up afforestation of barren forest lands with the help of poor and unemployed persons, who would plant trees in return for a fixed remuneration during the initial years, with a right to have a share in the final yield on the maturity of forest growth.

59. The programme of irrigation has been given a high priority. The completion of some of the Major and Medium Irrigation Projects, would give an additional irrigation potential of 1.00 lakh hectares by June 1982, thus raising the cumulative potential to 14.21 lakh hectares. Similarly, an additional potential of about 0.15 lakh hectares is expected to be available during the same period from minor irrigation schemes.

60. Government has decided to take up the construction of Wainganga river project in Vidarbha and is committed to complete the construction of Jayakwadi Project Stages I and II during the Sixth Five-Year Plan (1980-85) period.

61. To maximise the utilisation of the irrigation potential, Government has set up a Training Institute near Aurangabad to impart training to irrigation management personnel.

62. It is proposed to increase the present derated installed generating capacity of 3316 Megawatt (MW) by 750 MW in the thermal power stations at Koradi and Bhusawal and in the Gas Turbine Power Stations at Uran in addition to 630 MW (Thermal) and 40 MW (Hydel) capacity expected to be available at the end of the current year. In the Sixth Five-Year Plan it is proposed to increase the total generating capacity in the State to 6976 MW which would include Maharashtra's share of 315 MW from Government of India's Super Thermal Power Station at Korba in Madhya Pradesh. To ensure satisfactory coal linkage for the thermal stations of the State, a Committee at our request, has been appointed by the Union Ministry of Energy and an early decision on the report will facilitate clearance for our thermal projects in Chandrapur.

63. Government proposes to accelerate the rural electrification programme, and complete electrification of all the villages in the State including the harijan bastis during the Sixth Plan.

64. On the industrial front, Government has taken a number of measures to promote rapid industrialisation of the State. Among the important measures, besides increased infra-structural facilities, etc. created by the M.I.D.C. and other developmental agencies are the incentives of the revised package scheme of 1979 introduced last year to accelerate industrial growth in backward regions. One of the first such Units, Ashok Leyland Ltd. will set up under the scheme

Rs. 86 crores project for manufacturing 12,500 heavy commercial vehicles per annum in Bhandara District. This project is expected to provide direct employment to about 5,000 persons and indirect employment to over 25,000 persons in ancillary and tertiary sectors. The unit is expected to go into production by 1982-83.

65. Two cement factories with a capacity of 11.9 lakh tonnes and 10 lakh tonnes respectively, are being set up in Rajura Tahsil of Chandrapur District in Private Sector. These units are expected to go into production by the end of 1982.

66. The industrial relations in our State have registered a significant improvement since the present Government has assumed charge. The industrial picture as on 1st July 1980 was the most distressing, with the number of workers involved in work stoppages standing to a figure of 28,940. The new Government in pursuance of the statement made by the Chief Minister on the floor of the House, took effective steps to improve the industrial climate. Discussions were held by him with the leaders of Central Trade Unions Organisations as well as with the association of employers, with a keen resolve to settle these disputes. A very clear positive policy was enunciated that Government will not tolerate any violence in industrial relations at any cost. Care is taken to step up industrial production while the legitimate rights of the industrial workers are to be totally protected and their interests safeguarded. The result of this dynamic approach had a telling effect. As a result of these efforts, the number of workers involved in work stoppages rapidly declined. The State Government will continue its unceasing efforts to maintain industrial peace with a twin objective to achieve uninterrupted production and to give a fair deal to labour.

67. After persistent efforts for new alignments in the Borghat for the last 10-15 years, Government have obtained approval of the Government of India to the construction of a new alternative National Highway route in the Ghat portion and have sanctioned Rs. 3 crores. The new alignment is expected to give considerable relief to the traffic on Bombay-Pune route. The Tamhani Ghat Project on the State Highway from Pune to Dighi harbour joining Bombay-Goa National Highway at Kolad is also being executed on priority basis with the financial assistance of the Government

of India. This can also work as an alternative route between Bombay and Pune, besides being of great help to the backward areas of Pune and Raigad districts.

68. Government has decided to take up an ambitious programme during the Sixth Five-Year Plan to provide approach roads to all the villages having a population of 1000 and above and in case of Tribal areas population of 500 and above. Though the target fixed by the Planning Commission is to provide roads to villages having population of 1,500 by the end of Sixth Five-Year Plan, this Government has assured a road to every village having population of 1000 by the end of Sixth Five-Year Plan.

69. Among other programmes which Government proposes to undertake in the Public Works Department are :

- (a) Construction of road works estimated to cost Rs. 3.51 crores for connecting some of the Vidarbha villages vulnerable to marooning during floods.
- (b) Construction of bridges on Bawanthadi river and Terekhol Creek to facilitate inter-State traffic between this State and the State of Madhya Pradesh and Union Territory of Goa.
- (c) Construction of 5 bridges across Godavari river and 2 bridges across Manjra river to restore the communications system disrupted in Nanded District on account of back water effects of Pochampad Project of Andhra Pradesh Government.
- (d) Construction of administrative and residential buildings for the judiciary.

70. Government gives top priority to the scheme of supplying safe drinking water to villages and intends to cover the maximum number of villages as quickly as possible. On the request of this Government, the Minister for Works and Housing, Government of India, visited our State and discussed the problem regarding supply of drinking water to villages experiencing difficulty in the State. Accordingly, a revised list of such villages has been sent to Government of India for approval.

71. Government has decided to provide primary school buildings at all the villages without one in the State within the next 5 years and

also to strengthen the existing primary schools run by the local bodies by prescribing new norms for determining the number of primary teachers. Though the magnitude of the problem is colossal in that about 46,000 rooms are required to be constructed, my Government is certain that with the public co-operation and contribution, this target will be achieved during the current term of this Government.

72. Government has decided to increase the number of recognised libraries by about 500 during this year.

73. The Maharashtra State Urdu Academy has been provided with a grant of Rs. 6.23 lakhs for its activities with a view to starting an Urdu Department in the University of Bombay from the next academic year.

74. It is often found that persons who devote fully to art, literature, sports, etc. find themselves in penury in the evening of their lives and they are carried to their graves with worries and concern for their dependents. Their kith and kin are left in utter distress. The need to accord to them due recognition for their distinct contribution and extend financial assistance to them cannot be over-emphasised. An institution named Indira Gandhi Pratibha Pratishtan has been set up to give cash awards and extend financial assistance to such deserving persons. Government has promised a grant of Rs. 2 crores out of which 10 lakhs have been given.

75. During the next year, it is proposed to take up several Youth Welfare Schemes, such as financial assistance to voluntary bodies in the field of training, research, documentation etc. These schemes will also be for establishment of State Youth Centre, organising Social Service Camps for Youths, Financial Assistance to Youth Welfare Centres in rural areas and organisation of Youth Festivals at State and Divisional levels. It is a matter of satisfaction that the yachting event of Asian Games, 1982, will be held in Bombay. The State Government has agreed to give all the facilities therefor.

76. Government is vigorously pursuing the Family Planning Programme by educative methods.

77. The scope and content of the existing schemes for the welfare of the physically handicapped are proposed to be expanded to benefit a larger number of such persons and institutions for their welfare.

78. The question of granting further concessions to ex-servicemen to improve their placement in services on the lines of those given by the Government of India is under the active consideration of this Government.

79. Government has submitted for the approval of the Government of India projects for 23 towns under its new scheme for Integrated Development of small and medium towns with a population of less than one lakh. Out of them, projects of 8 towns including Ratnagiri have been approved for which the Government of India has sanctioned a loan of Rs. 70.25 lakhs. Government intends to pursue earnestly the remaining schemes for clearance by the Government of India.

80. Government has started the practice of inviting the concerned Central Ministers and Officers to visit Bombay for discussions with the State Government in order to get its problems solved on the spot. Thus, the Minister of Housing in the Government of India visited the State for discussions with the Chief Minister on the 28th June 1980. Similarly, the Union Minister for Energy visited the State on 29th January 1981. A number of long standing issues were settled during these discussions to the satisfaction of the State. Government would like to acknowledge with gratitude the co-operation and assistance extended to them by the Centre.

81. I regard it as my duty to mention a vital issue which has been a matter of concern from the point of view of my State for the last several years. This issue pertains to the border dispute between Maharashtra and Karnataka. It is hoped that this issue which has been pending for the last 23 years will soon find a solution on the basis of just principles.

82. Lastly, the Bills which are likely to be taken in this year are as follows, namely :—

(1) The Industrial Disputes and the Payment of Unemployment Allowance to Workmen in Factories (For Temporary Period) (Amendment) Bill, 1981.

(2) The Bombay Provincial Municipal Corporations, City of Nagpur Corporation and Maharashtra Municipalities (Amendment) Bill, 1981.

(3) The Maharashtra Vacant Lands (Further Interim Protection to Occupiers from Eviction and Recovery of Arrears of Rent) (Extension of Duration) Bill, 1981.

(4) The Maharashtra Housing and Area Development (Amendment) Bill, 1981.

(5) The Maharashtra Municipalities (Amendment) Bill, 1981.

(6) The Code of Criminal Procedure (Maharashtra Amendment) Bill, 1981.

(7) The Bombay Sales Tax (Amendment) Bill, 1981.

(8) The Prince of Wales Museum Bill, 1981.

(9) The Maharashtra Raw Cotton (Procurement, Processing and Marketing) (Extension of Duration) Bill, 1981.

(10) The Bombay Land Requisition and Bombay Government Premises (Eviction) (Amendment) Bill, 1980—L. A. Bill No. LXVII of 1980.

(11) The Maharashtra (Supplementary) Appropriation Bill, 1981.

(12) The Maharashtra Appropriation (Vote on Account) Bill, 1981.

(13) The Maharashtra Appropriation Bill, 1981.

(14) The Bombay Police (Amendment) Bill, 1981.

83. From what I have said, you would no doubt appreciate that Government has taken and is taking effective and positive steps to give social and economic justice to the weaker sections of the Society and has made considerable progress in the agricultural, economic and cultural development of the State.

84. I am grateful to you all for your patient hearing. I am sure that you will continue to discharge your duties as Legislators in earnest and with sagacity. I extend to you my very best wishes.

Jai Hind!

