Government of Tripura

ADDRESS

To The
Tripura Legislative Assembly

by.

SHRI P. B. ACHARYA
HON’BLE GOVERNOR OF TRIPURA

Friday, February 6, 2015
Hon’ble Speaker and Hon’ble Members,

I would like to welcome all the Hon’ble Members to this first session of the Tripura Legislative Assembly for the year 2015. I take this opportunity to convey my best wishes to all of you and to the people of Tripura for the New Year. I am sure that this year also will be very fruitful for the State in its continuous march towards peace and prosperity.

2. On this occasion, I would also request all the Hon’ble Members to join me in paying tribute to those brave members of the security forces and civilians who lost their lives in the violence perpetrated by terrorists, extremists and subversive forces.

3. I congratulate Pakistani education activist Malala Yousafzai and Indian child rights campaigner Kailash Satyarthi who have received the Nobel Peace Prize awards. They are the “champions of peace”, who have made our Indian sub-continent proud.

4. Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) made the country proud by creating history on September 24, 2014 and becoming the first country to successfully place a spacecraft
into the Mars orbit on its maiden attempt. My Government congratulates the ISRO scientists once again for their successful missions as well as for receiving 2015 Space Pioneer Award.

5. The year gone by has seen a spurt in terrorist activities throughout world. The dreadful incident of extremist attack on school children in Peshawar, Pakistan, killings of innocent people in Assam and in several places in the world, has shocked the peace loving people of the world. Such dastardly incidents need to be contained with prompt and effective action and the anti-national elements involved need to be isolated and unmasked.

6. The 2014 Indian general elections have been regarded as the most significant political event of the year. It saw the stunning defeat of the ruling Congress party, a spectacular victory for the BJP and a new style of campaigning that largely broke every rule in the political game. The party won on the plank of price rise, unemployment, agrarian crisis, suicides of farmers, rampant corruption and other issues, creating a hope for “Acha Din Ayega”. My Government feels that so far no significant impact was created in addressing the problems of corruption, poverty, unemployment by the Central Government. It also feels that the issues of black money, price rise have not yet been addressed properly.
7. Greatest strength of India is its unity in diversity and tolerance of people towards other religions. However, there have been disturbing developments in some parts of the country with fundamentalist forces raising their ugly heads. There were efforts to instigate communal violence in different parts of the country, including attacks on churches, demanding a law to ban forcible religious conversions, disturbing the very foundations of our democratic and secular fabric. My Government requests all secular democratic forces to make all out efforts to ensure communal harmony, which is the essence of Indian polity and culture.

8. The Government of India has replaced Planning Commission with a new institution named NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India) on 1st January, 2015. My Government feels that this is a regressive step that will only push India towards a market-driven economy and privatization in all spheres. It feels that the abolition of the concept of the Planning Commission was the Central Government’s ideological conviction that public resources should be put at the disposal of the private sector and the market forces.

9. My Government opposes the proposed amendments to the labour laws. It feels that these proposed changes will take the majority of workers out of the purview of the labour laws and may favour monopoly and corporate houses. It feels that
the changes being proposed are not in the interest of the workers but of the employers and the capitalists.

10. My Government strongly opposes the decision of the Government of India to amend the provisions of the Land Acquisition Act through the ordinance route to favour the interests of the big landlords, contractors, corporates and capitalists. The proposed amendment will affect the interests of the peasantry and land owners.

11. My Government also opposes the ordinances passed on coal privatisation and raising the FDI in insurance, again to benefit rich and powerful. By taking recourse to ordinance raj, the present Central Government is undermining the essence of parliamentary democracy.

12. My Government feels that the Central Government is not sincere in implementing the MGNREGA. The drastic reduction in allocation under MGNREGA has put the rural economy of our country including Tripura under severe strain. Large numbers of people are seeking piecemeal, low-paying jobs, as over the past decade and a half, there has been hardly any increase in job opportunities. Overall, the unemployment rate among the working age population in the 15-59 years age group was a shocking 15%, rising to 18% among dalits and 19% among adivasis.
13. The inflation in the country is still high at 5% as of December, 2014 (provisional). The decline in inflation since 2013 is not uniform in the various components of index. The decline in inflation has not brought any succor to the poor, working men and women and other deprived sections of the society. When the inflation was very high last year, the Government of India blamed it on oil prices but now when the international oil prices have cooled, the Government of India has imposed fresh excise duty on oil prices thus not passing on the benefits of low oil prices to the people.

14. Indian railways has often been described as the ‘Lifeline of India’. The railways has been neglected during the last many years depriving it from robust budgetary support. However, the Government of India is very keen to bring in 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in construction, operation and maintenance of Indian railways systems. Indian railways is key to connect people, regions and cultures within the country. PPP and FDI in railways will further contribute to neglect of investment especially in backward regions like Tripura.

15. The Government of India has recently raised FDI to 49% in defence sector. Indian subcontinent is not entirely peaceful. Many global forces are competing for influence in the region. My Government feels that raising of FDI in defense sector is, therefore, a strategic blunder by the Government of India. We
also oppose FDI investments in higher education and health sector. Providing affordable and accessible healthcare to the people is the responsibility of any Government. Similarly, allowing FDI in higher education would make it completely commercial, depriving poor students of opportunities to pursue higher education. My Government strongly opposes the move of raising FDI to 49% in insurance sector, since it is detrimental to the interest of the country.

16. During the year 2014, Tripura witnessed important events like organization of panchayat elections and dedication of second unit of Palatana Power Project of OTPC to the nation on 1st December, 2014 by Shri Narendra Modi, Hon’ble Prime Minister of India. Also recent inauguration of Border Haat at Srinagar by both the Commerce Ministers of India and Bangladesh will encourage local exchange of goods with Bangladesh. A cargo complex has been added in the Integrated Check Post at Agartala in presence of Union Minister of State for Home to promote trade and exports. There is a significant improvement in Government to Government, People to People interactions with neighbouring Bangladesh, which will further promote cultural and social ties, and also trade development, benefitting both the nations.

17. Tripura has got excellent track record in games, sports and youth activities. Smt. Dipa Karmakar and Sri Samir Barman, Sports personalities have kept the name of the State
at National and International level. Smt. Dipa Karmakar has bagged Bronze Medal for the country in Gymnastics in XXth Commonwealth Games at Glasgow, Scotland. Sri Samir Barman, a disabled swimmer has won 4 Gold Medals in National Para Olympic Swimming Competition held in Indore. Moreover, Tripura has bagged Gold Medal in the Folk Dance Competition held recently in National Youth Festival at Guwahati.

18. Tripura has a tradition of vibrant Panchayati Raj System even before the 73rd Amendment of the Constitution of India came in force. General Election of 3-Tier Panchayat Raj Institutions has been completed successfully on 15th July, 2014. In order to empower women, 50% seats of Gram Panchayats, Panchayat Samities and Zilla Parishads and Village Committees along with office bearers have been reserved for women. In order to build leadership capacity among the elected representatives, they are being trained at different Panchayat Raj Training Institutes. One round of training has already been completed.

19. Tripura has been recording a healthy economic growth. The Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) at current prices has gone up from Rs. 19, 973 crores in 2011-12 to Rs. 22,697 crores during 2012-13. It has gone up to Rs. 26, 809 crores in 2013-14. The economic growth of the State was 8.5%, 8.8% & 8.9% per annum during 2011-12, 2012-13 & 2013-14.
respectively. The per capita income at current prices has risen from Rs. 50, 859/- in 2011-12 to Rs. 57, 402/- in 2012-13. It has gone up to Rs. 69, 705/- in the year 2013-14.

20. It has been the constant endeavour of my Government to achieve 100% financial inclusion. Hon'ble Members would be happy to note that Tripura is one of the first few States in the country to achieve 100% coverage under PM Jan Dhan Yojana. More than 2.5 lakhs Bank Accounts have been opened under the scheme so far. Out of 82 centers identified for opening of branches, the Banks have opened 57 branches so far, including 38 ultra small branches. My Government has been laying special emphasis for improving Credit Deposit Ratio (CD Ratio) in the State. With the constant persuasion of my Government, the CD Ratio has gone up to 40% by September, 2014 from 38% in March, 2014. My Government will continue to persuade Banks to improve the CD Ratio to at least 50% so that adequate credit would be available to the needy sectors.

21. Hon'ble Members are aware that the State has faced unprecedented financial difficulties due to unfavourable award of the 13th Finance Commission on account of under estimation of Salary and Pension liabilities of the State. The 14th Finance Commission for recommending devolution of funds for the five year period from 2015-16 has submitted its report to the Union Government. The Report, along with Action Taken on it, is likely to be placed before the next session of Parliament.
22. My Government had taken special initiative for planned development of agriculture in the state since 2000-01 through a long term Perspective Plan. The benefits of the plan have resulted in increase of food grain production from 5.13 Lakhs MT during 1999-2000 to 7.27 lakhs MT during 2013-14 which is 2,000 MT higher than 2012-13. Due to timely supply of agri inputs to the farmers during 2014-15, the anticipated food grain production is expected to reach 7.72 Lakhs MT. The present level of cropping intensity is 186% which is the second highest among all the North Eastern States.

23. The area under “System of Rice Intensification” (SRI) has increased significantly and targeted to touch 1 lakh hectare during 2014-15. Action Programme for crop diversification over 73,000 hectares of seasonal fallow land has been prepared for implementation within a period of 4 years. During 2013-14, 1.42 lakhs Kisan Credit Cards were issued by different banks in the state with a total credit flow of Rs. 872 crores which includes crop loan and term loan, while 54,639 credit cards were issued up to November, 2014, with credit flow of Rs. 169 crores.

24. Hon’ble members are aware that horticulture is a sunrise sector in Tripura. Implementation of 10 years Perspective Plan resulted in increased horticulture crop production from 6.62 lakhs MT in 2001-02 to about 12 lakhs MT during 2011-12 and 16.57 lakhs MT in 2013-14. A Road Map for Horticulture
Development for a period of 2013-17 has been chalked out by my Government. An additional area of 2,910 hectares has been brought under cultivation with different fruit crops and 2,570 hectares vegetable crops. The Department has undertaken staggering of cultivation of pineapple and is introducing “Kino” for augmenting the income of farmers. Besides, 500 hectares area is being cultivated in Tribal areas as “ST Vegetable Pockets” during this year. A target of 9,000 hectares has been set up for cultivation of potato during this year and 1,000 MT Tuberlets are being cultivated for distribution among the farmers. Additional area of 275 hectares has been taken up under commercial flower cultivation during the current financial year.

25. The production of milk, meat and eggs is 1.29 lakhs MT, 33,133 MT and 17.95 crores respectively during 2013-14. The growth rate achieved in these sectors was 9.87% in milk, 4.3% in meat and 14.63% in egg production. It is expected that the per capita production of milk would reach 101 grams milk per capita per day, 9.16 Kgs meat per year and 59 eggs per capita per year during 2014-15.

26. Fishery is one of the key activities under Primary Sector in the State. It plays a crucial role in providing sustainable livelihood and also for meeting nutritional requirement. Hon’ble Members are aware that fish products are major constituent of the daily diet of 95% of the population. Realizing the importance of the sector, my Government has implemented number of
schemes for providing required support and assistance to the fish farmers and progressive entrepreneurs. As a result of effective implementation of various programmes, the total fish production has gone up to 61,259 MT in 2013-14 as against 58,655 MT during 2012-13. The annual per capita availability of fish from local sources has gone up to 16.81 Kg at the end of 2013-14 as against 16.34 Kg during 2012-13. As a part of overall strategy, more fish farmers are being engaged in scientific pisciculture.

27. My Government is making sincere efforts to enhance the forest based rural livelihood for the people living in and around forests especially the tribals who are traditionally depending on forest for meeting their day to day needs. Through Joint Forest Management Programme, forest depending communities are actively involved in greening the de-graded forests and a large number of water bodies, check dams have been created to support the livelihood of the people and regeneration of the forest. So far 2.60 lakhs hectares of forest land is being managed by 1,00,045 families under the Joint Forest Management. Two Externally Aided Projects, namely; Japan International Cooperation Agency and Indo-German Development Project are being implemented in the State. The State is the pioneer in the implementation of forest rights. So far 1.75 lakhs hectares forest land has been vested to more than 1.23 lakhs families under the Scheduled Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006.
28. My Government has accorded high priority to development of road network for providing connectivity with all weather roads for all habitations. Under Pradhan Mantri Gramin Sarak Yojana/Bharat Nirman Programme, so far 6,714 out of total 8,132 targeted habitations have been connected with all weather roads and works are in progress to connect another 888 habitations. My Government is committed to convert all timber bridges to permanent RCC or Steel bridges or RCC culverts. Under this programme, 44 more timber bridges have been replaced during the last one year, bringing the total to 1,849 out of 1,960 timber bridges targeted. The State PWD has also taken over from Border Road Organization 104 kms of NH-44 between Churaibari and Agartala for improvement and up-keep. Two other National Highways have also been declared in the State, NH-208 from Kumarghat to Teliamura via Kailasahar, Kamalpur and Khowai covering 157.7 kms and NH-108A from Jolaibari to Belonia covering 22.9 kms.

29. My Government has targeted 1.40 lakhs hectares out of the total cultivable land area of 2.55 lakhs hectares for coverage under irrigation. Overall present coverage is 1.12 lakhs hectares. In respect of the medium irrigation projects, works of Khowai is near about completed. The works of Gumti project are targeted to be completed by March, 2015. The works of Manu project are also targeted to complete by March, 2015 after constructing canal up to 19 Kms. Surface flow based schemes have been done almost exhaustively. Present emphasis has been given for small storage and tube well projects.
30. My Government acknowledges safe drinking water and sanitation as basic components of providing a decent standard of living for the people. During the current year, 97 deep tube wells and 293 small bore tube wells have been commissioned, apart from creation of 573 spot sources. Out of the total 8,132 habitations targeted for coverage, 4,611 habitations have reached fully-covered status of over 40 Liters Per Capita/Day (LPCD) water supply and 3,507 habitations have reached partially-covered status of up to 40 LPCD water supply. The remaining 14 non-covered habitations will also be covered by March, 2015 leaving no uncovered habitation in the State.

31. The drive for ensuring rural sanitation has been taken up through extensive Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities within as well as outside the Swacch Bharat Mission (Gramin). During the current year, Individual Household Latrines for 8,530 BPL households and 3,275 APL households have already been constructed. For improvement of sanitation at community level, construction of 75 School toilet units and 757 Anganwadi toilet units has also been completed.

32. With the start of second unit, Palatana Project has attained power generation capacity of 726 MW and has become largest gas based power project in the North East Region. Tripura will get about 196 MW power from this project. This generation project along with its associated transmission lines
of North East Transmission Corporation is the single largest investment project in this region. Total investment is expected to be in excess of Rs. 5,000 crores. Monarchak Combined Cycle Gas Turbine Power Plant of NEEPCO with 101 MW generation capacity is now ready for commissioning once gas from ONGC is available.

33. Under Rajiv Gandhi Gramin Vidyutikaran Yojana, projects to extend power lines to 532 un-electrified and 4,782 partially electrified habitations with a cost of Rs. 316 crores has been sanctioned. It will benefit about 75,400 BPL families. In addition, my Government has provided Rs. 26 crores to extend power lines to 225 un-electrified habitations, for which work is going on. For up-gradation and augmentation of transmission systems in Tripura, projects of about Rs. 1,367 crores has been sanctioned with assistance from the World Bank. The project is likely to be completed by 2018-19.

34. My Government has signed an agreement with NEEPCO to create a new Power Generation Company with equity ratio 90:10 (GoT:NEEPCO) to convert existing open cycle turbines at Baramura and Rukhia to combined cycle and also to take up renovation of Gumti Hydel Project. IT enabled distribution system has been implemented in 16 towns to pay electricity bills through electronic payment gateways by consumers. Distribution system in these areas has also been strengthened to ensure reliability of power supply and loss reduction.
35. Hon’ble Members are aware about the Construction of Agartala-Udaipur sector of new railway line, which is in full swing and track linking target is fixed as February, 2015 and commissioning in March, 2016. The work on the Udaipur-Sabroom Sector is also in progress and the track linking is targeted in March, 2017 and commissioning in March, 2018.

36. The Ministry of Railways has imposed Mega Block w.e.f. 1st October, 2014 for gauge conversion of Lumding-Badarpur-Agartala in two phases. In the first phase, the Ministry has targeted Lumding-Badarpur-Silchar section (210 Kms) with tentative date of commissioning by March, 2015. In the second phase, Badarpur-Kumarghat-Agartala section (227 Kms) is to be taken up for gauge conversion from October, 2015 with the date of commissioning by March, 2016. My Government has requested the Ministry of Railways and the Central Government to ensure completion of both the phases in earliest possible time and to ensure running of full meter gauge services – both passengers and goods in this sector up to September, 2015.

37. As the Hon’ble Members are aware, people of Tripura have to depend upon air travel not by choice but out of compulsion because of tenuous road and rail connectivity. In this context, number of flights between Kolkata- Agartala Sector has got suddenly reduced by 40%-50% from October, 2014 although air services have slightly improved since 1st January, 2015. In a recent meeting taken by the Ministry of Civil Aviation
with the State Government and Air Operators, it has been assured that suitable steps would be taken to increase the number of flights to Agartala during the busy season. The Ministry of Civil Aviation has also requested all the Air Operators to rationalize the fare on Agartala-Kolkata Sector. My Government has also recently reduced the VAT on ATF from 22% to 18%. My Government has been taking up with the Government of India for up-gradation of Agartala airport as an International Airport and the State Government has provided 80 acres of land to Airports Authority of India for up-gradation of Agartala airport.

38. I am happy to inform that the modern Inter-State Truck Terminus at Madhavbari and the new Inter-State Bus Terminus at Dharmanagar has been completed and become operational. Construction of motor stands at Kanchanpur and Sonamura are opened for public use, while the construction of Kalacherra and Khumlung motor stand is in progress. An institute of Driving Training and Research Centre is being set up on Public Private Partnership mode near NIT at Jirania and the works are in progress.

39. My Government places strong emphasis on various Social Welfare and Social Security Programmes for the poor, women and vulnerable. Childcare, Pre-primary Education to the children, Welfare Schemes of persons with disabilities, girls and women and various pension schemes are being
implemented by the Education (Social Welfare and Social Education) Department. Out of 23 pension schemes, 20 schemes are funded exclusively by my Government covering 1.07 lakhs beneficiaries. During the year 2014-15, 2.69 lakhs beneficiaries were covered in 23 different pension schemes. Also 15,081 more additional pending beneficiaries under various State schemes were covered. My Government is spending Rs.60.28 crores for implementation of State pension schemes. The State has 56 ICDS projects with 9,911 Anganwadi centres with an enrollment of 3.55 lakhs children and 1.11 lakhs pregnant and lactating women. My Government is able to provide pucca building to 9,320 centres and also chalked out a plan to construct new buildings for the remaining centres during the next year. To ensure immediate response to the women affected by violence, 4 Nirbhaya Centres will be set up in 2015-16 to provide basic first-aid and referral services to hospitals, assistance in lodging FIR, psycho-social support and legal counseling etc.

40. My Government is attaching the highest importance on all round development in education sector, as it helps to develop human resources. The State has attained 96.82% literacy rate registering the highest literacy rate in the country. All efforts are being made to improve quality of education for about 8.00 lakhs children in 4,818 schools. Special steps have been taken to enroll the children with special needs.
41. My Government is providing free text books to all students of elementary level and the students of IX to XII belonging to BPL families. Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) system is being implemented in schools from January, 2015 and all necessary steps have been taken for the purpose. My Government has decided to introduce Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) for recruitment of qualified teachers in all the Government and Government Aided Schools. Special Training Programmes for Head Teachers and Teachers have been organized for development of professional skills. Necessary initiative has also been taken for training of untrained in-service teachers.

42. The drop-out rates have been declining year after year and were 2.42% at primary stage and 2.52% at elementary stage during 2013-14. A number of steps have been taken during the current year for development of Kokborok and other minority languages. Inspection of schools is an essential requirement to maintain quality of education and field officers have conducted more than 9,000 inspections during 2014, to address deficiencies and to initiate actions for improving quality of education.

43. My Government has continuously endeavoured to increase the scope of higher education in the State and planning to set up institutions of higher education of national repute. Semester system has been introduced in the General Degree Colleges from 2014-15 to provide quality education to the students. A
new scheme, namely, ‘Rastriya Uchhatar Siksha Abhiyan’, is being implemented for developing the Government Degree Colleges into Model Degree Colleges. North Tripura District Polytechnic at Bagbassa, Dharmanagar has been operationalized with intake capacity of 180 students. Minority students have been facilitated to take admission in ‘Kamil’ course of their choice under Aliah University, Kolkata. Construction of College for Teachers’ Education at Kumarghat has been completed and will become functional from the next academic session. Institute of Advance Studies in Education and Government Law College have been shifted to newly constructed buildings in order to increase intake capacity.

44. My Government believes that a healthy population is a basic pre-requisite for consistent socio-economic growth. In order to improve the health status of every citizen of the State, my Government has been initiating a number of measures for creation of health infrastructure and improvement of quality of services. Sub-Divisional Hospital, Dharmanagar has been notified as District Hospital, North Tripura and Sub-Divisional Hospital, Khowai has been notified as District Hospital, Khowai. It is also decided to declare the 100 bedded Sub-Divisional Hospital at Santirbazar as District Hospital of South Tripura. Construction of 100 bedded Sub-Divisional Hospital at Teliamura is expected to be completed by March, 2015. The progress of construction work of 100 bedded Hospitals at Amarpur and Kanchanpur are steady. As per decision of the
Government to set up Health Sub-Centres in each Gram Panchayat/ADC Village, 1015 Sub-Centres have been completed and the rest are under construction. During the year, 9 new PHCs will be made functional. Recognizing the vulnerability of poor for serious diseases, my Government has launched a new scheme “Tripura Health Assurance Scheme for Poor” to financially assist families earning less than Rs. 1.50 lakhs per year for referral procedures in 7 identified diseases. Any eligible and referral patient will be assisted up to Rs. 1.25 lakhs including transport cost of Rs. 10,000/-. My Government is also up-grading 5 PHCs to CHCs, out of which Chawmanu CHC is completed. Doctors and health workers with the help of district administration and other stakeholders did a remarkable job to manage the malaria epidemic in Dhalai district and some other parts of the State. The approach of combating the outbreak was appreciated at National level too.

45. My Government has been continuously working for promotion of both participative sports and competitive sports. Adequate focus has been given on broadbasing quality sport infrastructures across the state. District Level Sports Complex construction works at Udaipur, Kailashahar and Ambassa are going on in full swing. Construction works of G+3 building for Yoga, Judo, Weight lifting and table tennis are going on in full swing at the said Regional Coaching Centre. Most of the infrastructure development works at Regional College of Physical Education complex, Panisagar, including sports
infrastructure, academic building etc. for both the Regional College and the Sports School are nearing completion. Moreover, new G+3 building of the Shaheed Bhagat Singh Yuba Awas at Khejurbagan has been completed and opened for use.

46. My Government’s vision is to convert Tripura into the preferred destination for industrial and trade activities. During the current year, investment of over Rs. 75 crores has already been made in small and medium sectors and another Rs. 11 crores is expected to be achieved through self-employment schemes like Prime Minister’s Employment Guarantee Programme and Swavalamban. For skill training within the state, 4 more Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) have been completed at Bishramganj, Kamalpur, Nalkata and Teliamura. Development of infrastructure for international trade is being accorded high priority. A cargo complex has been added in the Integrated Check post at Agartala. The recently inaugurated Border Haat at Srinagar will encourage local exchange of goods with Bangladesh. Another Border Haat at Kamlasagar and the upgraded Srimantapur Land Custom Station are also ready for operationalization.

47. To boost rural employment and household incomes, my Government has promoted activities in the sericulture, handlooms and handicrafts sectors. The upgradation and expansion of the State Grainage/Silk worm Seed Production Centre at Indranagar has helped in meeting up to 75% of the
total requirement of Silkworm layings for over 13,000 sericulturists of the State. The Sericulture Training Institute at Champaknagar is being developed as a centre of excellence in the North-East Region. Presently 20,000 weavers are involved in income generation. An Apparel and Garment Manufacturing Centre with a project cost of Rs. 20 crores has also been sanctioned for income generation for 300 women workers through manufacture of ready-made garments. There are 15,000 active artisans involved in handicraft activities. Urban Haat Project with 21 stalls and the Purbasha Development Complex that are due for operationalization, will provide a boost to the marketing facilities for the rural weavers and artisans.

48. Information technology has become a patent tool towards development. In this field, my Government has implemented various projects under National e-Governance Plan. Tripura State Wide Area Network has been set up to Block Level to provide Internet connectivity for running e-Governance applications across the State. Tripura State Data Center has been developed as the Central Repository for all e-Governance applications and data is being manned on round the clock. 145 Common Service Centers (CSCs), acting as the cutting edge outlets at the village level, are catering to various Government to Citizen and Government to Business services to citizens throughout the State. More CSCs are being planned to be opened in a phased manner. Under State Service Delivery Gateway project, 12 services have been launched with the
facility given to the citizens to submit their applications online or through CSCs. 9 more services will be launched soon. Under e-District project, 21 services have been identified to be delivered online out of which 13 services will be launched in Phase-I soon. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed with Software Technology Park of India (STPI) for setting up of a Software Technology Park in Agartala.

49. Tripura offers vast potential for growth of Tourism and my Government has adopted a comprehensive plan for promotion of Tourism in the State, which includes among other things augmenting accommodation facilities, improving the existing infrastructure and attraction at major tourist destinations, developing the communication network and strengthening the skill of the manpower engaged in this sector.

50. A new Tourist Lodge was recently inaugurated at Jampui Hills. Tripura Tourism is also taking initiative for development and promotion of Ecotourism in the State. Two major projects currently under execution relate to the renovation and retrofitting of Neermahal palace and construction of a ring road along the existing alignment of water reservoir at Rudrasagar.

51. My Government, Consequent upon implementation of Vaidyanathan Package, number of Credit Societies, LAMPS and PACS have now become debt free and eligible for getting loan for starting economic activities. 172 LAMPS and PACS have
started credit business. Out of these, 52 Lamps and PACS have opened banking counters. In view of transparency and uniformity, Common Account System has been introduced for some Cooperative Credit Societies. Responding to the need for a comprehensive development of cooperatives, Integrated Cooperative Development Project in the erstwhile South Tripura District is under implementation with a project outlay of Rs.14.80 crores.

52. My Government continues to distribute rice to BPL and AAY families @ Rs. 2.00 per kg by providing annual subsidy of Rs.36.45 crores per annum from the State exchequer. About 2.95 lakhs families are getting the benefit of the scheme. In addition, Distribution of APL rice at BPL rate @ Rs. 6.15 per kg has been introduced w.e.f. 1st June, 2012. Pursuant to a decision of Government of India to abolish supply of levy sugar, my Government has been procuring sugar from open market for distribution under PDS bearing state subsidy of Rs.7.48 crores in the year 2014-15. Tripura is the only State in North-East Region, which is distributing sugar under PDS. Construction of 5 new Godowns with capacity of 4,750 MT has been completed during 2014-15. Construction works of additional 18 food godowns with storage capacity of 21,000 MT are going on. During Mega block of Railways, Hon’ble Members are aware that 10,000 MT foodgrains have been received through Ashuganj port of Bangladesh. My Government has introduced a new scheme for payment of subsidy of Rs. 35
per month through bank account of card holders, in lieu of supplying 1 ltr. mustard oil and 2 kgs of pulses from October, 2014. Digitization of ration cards and computerization of supply chain of PDS, which have been made a pre-condition for implementation of scheme under National Food Security Act, 2013 are at advance stage.

53. Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation have remained major areas of concern and thrust of my Government. MGNREGA is being earnestly implemented in all the Districts. Tripura ranked first with an average mandays generation of 88 in 2013-14 while national average was 42. Unakoti district was awarded the “District Level Award for High level of Employment Generation” by the Ministry of RD during 2013-14. Ministry of Rural Development had approved labour budget of Rs. 1407 crores for 2014-15 for Tripura. Against this, it has been informed by the Ministry unilaterally that only Rs.652 crores will be made available under MGNREGA in the current year, which is much less than last year’s release of Rs.944 crores. This drastic reduction in allocation under MGNREGA has put the rural economy of Tripura under severe strain. Panchayati Raj Institutions are unable to take up works as per approved labour budget. The Government of India has been requested to release at least Rs.944 crores under MGNREGA in the year 2014-15. Actual availability of fund is Rs.466 crores up to 31st December, 2014 and 232 lakhs mandays have been generated so far, resulting in an average of 40.48 mandays for the State. Wage
rate under MGNREGA has been increased in the State from Rs.135 to Rs.155 per day per head with effect from 1st April, 2014. Hon'ble Members are aware that my Government introduced a new scheme, namely, Tripura State Government Housing Scheme with State funds, in addition to the IAY, with a view to cover 43,617 homeless families up to 2017-18. In the year 2013-14, 4,314 houses have been completed against the target of 9,217 houses under TSGHS. Under IAY, only 9,550 Nos. of houses have been allocated for the year 2014-15 which is substantially less than previous year, as 25,446 houses were constructed in 2013-14.

54. The Government of India has awarded “Panchayat Sashaktikaran Puraskar” to Dhalai Zilla Parishad, Mandwi Block Advisory Committee, Bilashpur Gram Panchayat of Chandipur Block and Mandwinagar Village Committee of Mandwi Block in 2014-15. For holding Gram Sabha effectively for taking decision, performing social audit & transparency and considering the women leadership, Purba Kalabaria Gram Panchayat of Bharat Chandra Nagar Block and Chulubari Gram Panchayat of Durga Chowmuhani Block has been awarded with “Rastriya Gourav Gram Sabha Puraskar”. Model Accounting System for Panchayati Raj Institutes has been introduced for better maintenance of accounts of the Panchayat Raj Institutions/TTAADC Bodies, since 2010-11 along with National Panchayat Portal application.
55. My Government attaches utmost importance to the welfare of working class of the society. The Rastriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY), a health insurance scheme for unorganized workers is being implemented in the State since 2009-10. 5.05 lakhs BPL and MGNREGA families have been enrolled during 2012-13. The Government of India has approved and uploaded 7.71 lakhs of BPL, MGNREGA, Street Vendors, Domestic, Beedi etc. workers families in RSBY website for the 3rd round enrolment to be started for January, 2015. Under the Asanghatita Shramik Sahayika Prakalpa, a State Government scheme, 94,938 workers engaged in 19 unorganised sectors and 23 self employment occupations in the age group of 21-55 years have been enrolled. Employees State Insurance Dispensary is functioning at Shyamalibazar, Agartala to provide cashless treatment to the organized working employees in industrial establishment, shops, restaurants etc. So far 76,200 patients have been treated up to 2014-15. The Tripura Building and other Construction Workers Welfare Board is implementing different welfare schemes for the construction workers from their own source of fund being collected as cess. All categories of construction workers who have worked at least 90 days or who have worked 50 days as MGNREGA worker of age group of 18-60 years are eligible to get the benefit of different schemes of the Board and total 51,517 construction workers were benefited.
56. The policy of my Government is to extend coverage of civic amenities to all the people living in the urban areas of the State. Various steps are being taken to augment the urban infrastructure with regards to water supply, solid waste management, storm water drainage and creation of shopping complexes to address the demand in the services in urban areas. Town halls at Udaipur and Sabroom have been inaugurated. 2,000 houses under Tripura State Government Housing Scheme are targeted for the year 2014-15 out of which 900 have already been completed. Construction of 2,676 dwelling houses will be taken up in 2014-15 under Rajiv Awaas Yojana. Under Tripura Urban Employment Programme (TUEP), a State Government funded programme, average 35 mandays have been generated up to December, 2014. The National Urban Livelihood Mission will be implemented from the year 2015-16 in Tripura.

57. The socio-economic development of Scheduled Tribes has been receiving special attention of my Government. In this regard, various steps are being taken by my Government especially with regards to create educational infrastructure, employment generation, rehabilitation of the surrendered returnees and initiatives for conserving and promoting the cultural and linguistic heritage of the Scheduled Tribes. Hon’ble Members are aware that my Government has launched Special Development Package for Welfare of Scheduled Tribes for a period of 5 years from 2013-14 to 2017-18, for all round development of Scheduled Tribes. The implementation of this
package is continuing during the year 2014-15. Construction of 7 ST Boarding houses with 50 seats capacity for girls and boys attached to various schools had been completed during the year 2014-15. 1.69 lakhs ST students were provided assistance under various schemes like Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarship, Boarding House Stipend, Supply of Free Text Books, Merit Awards etc. up to December, 2014. 292 ST youths have been provided with Short Term educational loan and for self employment by the Tripura Scheduled Tribes Cooperative Development Corporation Ltd. 176 ST boys and girls have been sponsored for GNM, ANM and Para-Medical courses to Institutions located inside and outside the State.

58. My Government has been taking several steps for educational and economic development of the Schedule Castes (SCs). Hon’ble Members are aware that my Government has declared Special Development Package for SCs for 5 year plan from 2013-14 to 2017-18. Various schemes were taken up under the package to create equal opportunity of SCs in education, health, housing, drinking water, power, income generating schemes etc. Various stipends like Pre-Metric Scholarship, Post-Metric Scholarship, Boarding House Stipend and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Memorial Award are being implemented by the State. 10,229 SC students have been benefited under Post-Metric Scholarship till December, 2014 during the current financial year. Besides, 64,388 SC students have been benefited under Pre-Metric scholarship and 1022 SC students covered
under Boarding House Stipend during the period. Term loan to 465 entrepreneurs and educational loan to 80 SC students have been given through Tripura SC Cooperative Development Corporation Ltd. till December, 2014.

59. Several steps have been taken for educational and economic development of the Other Backward Classes (OBCs). Hon’ble Members are aware that my Government has declared Special Development Package for OBCs for 5 year plan from 2013-14 to 2017-18. Various schemes were taken up under the package to create equal opportunity of OBCs in education, health, housing, drinking water, power, income generating schemes etc. Various stipends like Pre-Metric Scholarship, Post-Metric Scholarship, and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Memorial Award are being implemented by the State. 31,390 OBC students have been benefited under Post-Metric Scholarship and, 72,340 OBC students under Pre-Metric Scholarship till December, 2014. Term loan to 911 entrepreneurs and educational loan to 64 OBC students have been given through Tripura OBC Cooperative Development Corporation Ltd. till December, 2014.

60. My Government is working with a mandate to ensure overall development of minorities and has declared Special Development Package. Besides, Rs. 78.31 crores have been sanctioned under Multi-sectoral Development Programme to undertake various facilities. 40,560 minority students have been benefitted under Scholarships, Special Incentives and
Vocational Training during the current year. To encourage the minority students, Moulana Abul Kalam Azad Award for minority students securing minimum of 60% marks in Madhyamik and H/S (+ 2) examination and Begam Rokeya Gold Medal Award for minority girls students securing 1st position among the minority girl students in Madhyamik and H/S (+2) examination, have been introduced. Development of Wakf properties is also primary responsibility of the Department. Construction of 150 seated new G+3 building for Nazrul Chatrabas meant for minority students has already been completed. Term loan to 429 entrepreneurs and educational loan to 48 minority students have been given through Tripura Minorities Co-operative Development Corporation Ltd. till December.

61. Hon'ble Members are aware that my Government has strengthened the administrative structure up to the lowest unit of administration. During the year 2014-15, 325 acres of Government Khas land has been allotted in favour of 3,404 BPL families. An amount of Rs. 38 crores has been sanctioned under Border Area Development Programme for implementing 365 infrastructure projects being taken up in 31 identified bordering Blocks to fill the critical gaps. The National Land Records and Modernization Programme is being implemented successfully in the State for digitization of land records. Computerized Record of Rights, copies of computerized maps and Bhunaksha are being issued through 32 Computerized
Land Records Centres and DLRS Headquarters. Digitization of old Cadastral Survey Maps have also been taken up. Online registration of deeds is being done in 15 Sub-Registry Offices having integration with CLR database. Survey/Re-survey work under modern method of ETS & GPS is ongoing in Gandacherra, Karbook and Khowai Sub-Divisions.

62. Continued presence of about 38,072 Bru (Reang) migrants in 7 relief camps of North Tripura District, who migrated from Mizoram due to ethnic violence, has been giving rise to various socio-economic and law & order problems in the State. After considerable persuasion by my Government, both directly and through Ministry of Home Affairs, 5,294 persons have been repatriated to Mizoram in 6 phases. However, the process is stopped since 2012 due to various issues raised by the Mizoram Government. While my Government is providing all possible relief benefits to existing 31,223 Bru (Reang) migrants on humanitarian grounds, it is urged to the Government of India to ensure their early repatriation to Mizoram.

63. Disaster Management has been given high importance by my Government as Tripura is located in highly earthquake prone zone. Basic awareness generation, preparation of disaster management plans and mock drills are being organized at all levels. A team of National Disaster Response Force has been permanently stationed at Agartala. State Emergency Operation
Centre is functioning round the clock and has dynamic daily situation reporting system. Micro zonation of Agartala city has been started which will help the State in preparing Master Plan of the city. As a part of disaster preparedness, 15 Mega Awareness Programmes have been conducted in the State. A Mega mock drill was conducted simultaneously at 10 places under supervision of National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA). National School Safety Programme (NSSP) is being implemented in 400 schools in the State.

64. My government is committed to promote science & technology and to protect and safeguard the environment. Construction of Vigyan Gram in Agartala and Regional Science Centre in Udaipur have been taken up. Biotechnology tools are being applied for increasing productivity of horticulture and medicinal crops. Pilot projects have been initiated in selected villages to promote integrated organic farming. There is emphasis on renewable energy and solar power plants have been installed in health institutions. Tripura Space Application Centre (T-SAC) is supporting scientific planning and assessment of natural resources through the modern techniques of Geographical Information System and Remote Sensing.

65. Hon’ble Members are aware that the overall law and order situation in the State has been under control. As regard general crime, there has been considerable decline in the incidents as compared to the previous year. Further, security forces are
keeping a close watch on activities of extremist groups. The insurgent groups which are still active with their hideouts across the border have been taking advantage of the hostile terrain along the international border. They have been specifically targeting vulnerable villages along the international border. Though the border fencing has placed a physical barrier to their ingress, it has to be supplemented by sufficient BSF deployment. At the same time, my Government should be assisted by Central Government to raise more India Reserve (IR) battalions which are highly effective in counter insurgency operations.

66. My Government has taken several measures for modernization of police force by provision of highway patrol vehicles, communication equipments, investigation kits, surveillance system equipment and computerization for data base management, etc under Police Modernization Scheme. The State is also implementing Crime and Criminal Tracking Network System (CCTNS) which will facilitate collection, storage, retrieval, analysis, and transfer and sharing of data on crime. These measures are improving the effectiveness of Police in dealing with crime and general law and order.

67. My Government, in order to effectively control and reduce motor vehicle accidents, patrolling on the Highways has been intensified. Steps have been taken to control traffic accidents and also improve traffic system in the State by using modern gadgets.
68. My Government is sensitive to the security needs of women, especially when there has been a general concern amongst people regarding crime against women. As a part of overall strategy to deal with women related crime, the State Police is leveraging the strengths of community participation by utilizing the PRAYAAS platform. A total of 5,845 PRAYAAS meetings were organized during 2014. Besides, Women Help Desks are also being effectively used. A separate women help line 1091 was launched across the state to provide immediate access and relief to women in distress and need. It has yielded good results in reducing the response time with respect to incidents of crime against women. My Government would be shortly opening Women Police Stations at Belonia, Dharmanagar and Bishalgarh.

69. The State Forensic Science Laboratory is being further supported so that different divisions provide valuable inputs in investigating the cases. More and more cases are now being referred for scientific investigation. Closer interface between Police and prosecution has also helped in improving the conviction rate during the current year.

70. My Government has taken steps to strengthen Fire Services in the State by procuring a number of fire fighting equipments and fire tenders this year. 20 Two-wheeler Water Mist Fire Fighter Bikes have been procured to combat fire effectively in narrow lanes/congested places. Recently 5 Dry
Chemical Powder Foam and 15 Foam Tenders have been purchased to combat oil and metal fire. A New Fire Station, 36th for the State, has been opened at New Capital Complex. Two new Fire Station buildings at Kanchanpur and Salema have become operational and construction of 7 more has been sanctioned this year. Project worth Rs.4.70 crore has been taken up to upgrade Fire Service Training Centre at Badharghat with modern machineries, equipments and improved training facilities.

71. My Government has given emphasis on living conditions of the inmates in the Kendriya Sanshodhanagar, District Jails and Sub-jails. Newly constructed sub-jails in Longtharai Valley and Gandachhara sub-divisions have been made functional. Total capacity of inmates in all the Jails in the State is 2,173 at present. The department is maintaining one hospital in Kendriya Sansodhanagar. Besides, meditation and yoga exercises are conducted to improve the physical and mental health of the inmates. Vocational trainings, such as weaving, tailoring, cane and bamboo etc are imparted to improve the skills of the inmates.

72. My Government has been making continuous efforts for strengthening the justice delivery system in the State. New Judicial Districts of South Tripura at Belonia and North Tripura at Dharmanagar have been made functional. A project to set up Video Conferencing facility, connecting the three District &
Sessions Courts of West Tripura, Unokoti and Gomati Districts with the Kendriya Sanshodhanagar, Bishalgarh, District Jail, Udaipur and District Jail, Kailashahar is in rapid progress and likely to be started soon. A new construction project of (G+5) multistoried court building, to accommodate all Courts of Agartala, has been started. The State Legal Services Authority has been providing legal aid besides organizing Lok Adalats.

73. I now seek leave of the Hon’ble Members to conclude and urge you to commence the deliberations. I have no doubt to mention that problems do exist and there are some hurdles and bottle necks on our path but my Government is taking steps to tackle them. I am confident that with all your combined efforts and with the leadership of the members of this august house, the State will continue its march on the road to peace and prosperity. We would continue to seek the help and assistance of the Government of India for properly implementing our pro-poor and people-oriented policies for the all round development of the State. I convey my best wishes to all of you and to the people of the State.

JAI HIND