



KERALA CALLING



പ്രിയദർശിനി സ്ട്രീം സൗജന്യമാത്രം

WAYOUT

Off to a
Stellar Start



PADDLE UP AT THE MALABAR RIVER FESTIVAL!

July 30-Aug 2
2026
Kozhikode

Kicking Off Good Governance



Kerala has boarded on a new journey driven by sustainable infrastructure development, innovation, and social progress. The revised budget serves as a catalyst for this transformation, empowering the state to achieve significant milestones in economic development and public welfare. By positioning Kerala as a key player in the maritime sector, fostering the emergence of the Knowledge Valley, and strengthening social security initiatives, the state is charting a progressive path towards a more resilient future.

As Kerala moves forward with its revised budget, a new chapter of inclusive development is unfolding through the launch of Priyadarshini. More than a welfare programme, the scheme represents a transformative

step towards expanding women's economic participation, and financial independence. Together, the revised budget and the Priyadarshini initiative signal the beginning of a new era; one in which women's empowerment is placed at the heart of Kerala's development agenda.

This issue of Kerala Calling provides in-depth insights into Kerala's progressive development roadmap, highlighting the visionary initiatives and people-centric interventions. We hope this edition offers an engaging perspective on Kerala's remarkable journey. Happy reading!

Sabin Sameed IAS
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"Will harness the potential of Kerala"

Chief Minister's Roadmap for A Future-Ready State





As Kerala stands at a fiscal crossroads, the new government has presented a budget that aims to reconcile an ambitious welfare agenda with the urgent need to reboot the state's economy. In this interview with Kerala Calling, Chief Minister V. D. Satheesan outlines his five year roadmap designed to attract investment, retain youth and ensure inclusive growth. He explains how the budget balances fiscal discipline with transformative projects that seek to reshape Kerala into a modern, equitable and investment ready state.

Kerala Calling (KC): You have presented your government's first financial budget, described as capable of ushering in a radical

economic transformation. What is your broad vision for the development of the state?

Chief Minister V. D. Satheesan: Our vision is to create a Kerala fit for the demands of the modern era. The budget I presented is intended to be the roadmap for the state's development over the next five years. Kerala's social and development indicators have shown worrying trends, and youth unemployment is rising. My government is committed to revitalising the economy, strengthening health and education, expanding job opportunities, improving the state's finances, and ensuring equitable distribution of wealth that includes the marginalised and poor. Despite a total debt burden of 5.07 Lakh Crore, we are taking up ambitious projects to make Kerala an attractive destination for investment and to usher in a *Puthu Yuga Kerala*. I am proud to



have presented a budget that upholds this vision.

KC: The White Paper prepared before the budget noted that Kerala's capital expenditure is among the lowest in the country. How do you plan to increase capital investment?

CM: The White Paper revealed the true state of Kerala's finances. We face an unprecedented fiscal crisis: for every ₹100 the government earns, ₹77 goes to committed expenses such as salaries, pensions and interest payments. Only a small remainder is available for welfare and basic infrastructure. Even so, we have not increased a single rupee in tax payment.

We need better financial management to stop leakage from the exchequer. Project delays cause large losses and waste public funds. We will set specific protocols for project implementation and hold officials accountable. The Planning Board will be transformed into a think tank to

advise on fiscal management.

At the same time, our policy welcomes private investment. What new project can a government, saddled with immediate liabilities of ₹87,000 crore and a total debt of ₹5.07 lakh crore start in the public sector? Other states are competing among themselves to get investors. But there is resistance when private investors come here. That is not our policy. Private investment will be encouraged. It is the only way to rejuvenate the economy. The government will act as a facilitator for all investment opportunities. It does not mean we will privatise public sector institutions.

KC: Attracting private investment is a central plank of the budget. What specific projects and measures have you proposed?

CM: It is imperative to introduce certain structural changes in our system and more importantly a cardinal change in our thinking



to woo private investors to the state. We will set up a Single-Window Invest Kerala Cell to expedite industrial development. A Land Management policy will be formulated to use large tracts of unused land for new investments. Special Investment Zones will be established to encourage industrial development. Kerala will be promoted as an Investment Economy rather than a remittance-dependent one. This budget has allocated ₹400 crore to Mission Samudra, a flagship initiative to integrate Kerala's 600-km coastline into a cohesive Port City. We have also allocated ₹200 crore to leverage the state's four international airports and position Kerala as South India's premier logistics hub. This government will tap opportunities in the Space Economy. The Southern Kerala Economic Corridor connecting Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam and Alappuzha will be created for job creation. We will establish Kerala Health and Life Science City integrating multi-specialty hospitals, medical college, research

and diagnostic laboratories, rehabilitation centres, and training facilities. Brand Keralam will be promoted and marketing avenues will be expanded for local products. Recognising tourism as an industry will attract investment and formal support.

KC: Could you elaborate on Mission Samudra and the vision of a Port City?

CM: We will formulate a maritime policy to build Kerala into a port-based economy and maritime hub. The budget outlines an ambitious plan to make Kerala one of India's leading maritime and logistics centres by leveraging Vizhinjam International Seaport and integrating the State's 600-km coastline, 17 non-major ports, two major ports, and road, rail, sea and inland-waterway networks. The idea is to transform Kerala's coastal and transport assets into a single, integrated port-city hub. We are confident in our ability to execute this vision.

Kerala's Industrial Future

P.K. Kunhalikutty

Minister for Industries & Commerce, Information Technology, Artificial Intelligence, Startups, Mining and Geology, Handlooms & Textiles



A comprehensive vision for transforming Kerala into an investment-friendly, innovation-driven, and sustainable industrial hub while creating meaningful opportunities for its youth

For decades, discussions surrounding Kerala's development have largely revolved around its remarkable achievements in education, healthcare, and social progress. These accomplishments have placed the state among the most socially advanced regions in India. However, Kerala possesses far greater potential beyond these conventional strengths. With its rich reserves of knowledge, skilled human resources, and intellectual capital, Kerala has the capability to emerge as one of India's most modern, sustainable, and globally competitive industrial destinations.

At a time when the global economy is changing faster than anticipated—driven by technological innovation, digital transformation, and international capital flows—it is imperative for Kerala to redefine its economic future. Growth today is increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence, automation, innovation ecosystems, and future-ready industries. Kerala must adapt to this rapidly evolving industrial landscape



The government's vision is to transform Kerala into a state where young people can find opportunities that align with their skills and aspirations.

in the present era, it is essential to create a truly investor-friendly ecosystem. Administrative approvals must be provided within fixed timelines, procedures should be simplified, unnecessary delays must be eliminated, and services should be delivered efficiently. These are not optional reforms but essential foundations for industrial expansion.

While large-scale investments often dominate public attention, micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) remain the backbone of Kerala's industrial economy. Their contribution to employment generation and local economic activity is immense. Strengthening this sector through targeted interventions can create substantial employment opportunities with relatively lower investment.

For MSMEs to succeed in a competitive market, improvements in product quality, technological adoption, and marketing capabilities are essential. Recognising this, the government has formulated the Kerala MSME Growth Scheme, a comprehensive initiative aimed at launching ten thousand micro and small enterprises. This programme seeks to empower entrepreneurs by helping them access global markets through digital technologies, e-commerce platforms, artificial intelligence, and automation.

The government will provide support, incentives, and tax benefits for enterprises based on advanced technologies. In addition, entrepreneurs facing financial challenges will have access to revolving funds, technology funds, and challenge funds. Expert assistance in technology and

to secure its place in the new global order.

The most pressing challenge before Kerala today is not merely economic growth, but the creation of meaningful employment opportunities for its youth. The state is home to one of India's most educated and diverse young populations. Yet, despite their qualifications and capabilities, many continue to seek employment outside Kerala and even abroad. This migration of talent is a challenge that demands urgent intervention.

The government's vision is to transform Kerala into a state where young people can find opportunities that align with their skills and aspirations. Kerala has several untapped advantages that can be strategically leveraged for this purpose. These include world-class human development indicators, an

excellent quality of life, favourable climatic conditions, robust digital connectivity, and an extensive global diaspora network. These strengths must now be converted into engines of economic growth.

Kerala's industrial journey has its own unique historical foundation. The state's industrial sector was built upon public sector enterprises, micro, small and medium industries, and traditional sectors such as handloom, khadi, coir, and cashew. Cooperative movements have also played a major role in shaping the industrial base. These sectors were given priority in earlier phases of development and continue to remain relevant. However, the changing realities of global competition, technological advancements, and evolving investment patterns present new challenges that cannot be ignored.

To achieve industrial growth



To further encourage entrepreneurship among young people, the government will provide interest-free loans up to ₹5 lakh under the Indira Guarantee scheme.

faces structural challenges that often discourage investors. Compared to other states, limited land availability, high land costs, higher wage structures, and procedural delays have contributed to the perception that Kerala is not fully investment-friendly.

To overcome these barriers, the government will establish a data-driven Invest Kerala special cell. This mechanism will function as a single-window system to facilitate land acquisition, expedite legal clearances, and provide post-investment support at every stage. By reducing uncertainty and improving transparency, this cell aims to build greater investor confidence.

In addition, an Investment Advisory Council will be formed under the chairmanship of the Chief Minister, with the Minister for Industries and IT serving as Vice-Chairman. The council will include domain experts from relevant sectors and will provide guidance for monitoring and expediting projects on a priority basis. This marks an important step towards bringing greater professionalism and strategic oversight into the state's investment promotion mechanisms.

The government also plans to establish a Global Watch Tower to monitor employment trends both within India and internationally. This institution will identify emerging skill demands, recommend curriculum reforms, and strengthen industry-academia partnerships. Budgetary allocations have already been made for this initiative, reflecting the government's commitment to preparing Kerala's workforce for

management will also be made available to ensure sustainability and efficiency. An allocation of ₹100 crore has been earmarked for this initiative.

To further encourage entrepreneurship among young people, the government will provide interest-free loans up to ₹5 lakh under the Indira Guarantee scheme. This initiative is expected to attract and motivate many aspiring entrepreneurs to start their own ventures.

Kerala's unique and traditional products deserve stronger recognition and wider market access, both nationally and internationally. For this purpose, the government will launch the "Brand Kerala" initiative. This programme will aim to establish Kerala's indigenous products as trusted and premium brands in global markets.

Traditional sectors such as handloom, handicrafts, cashew, and coir will receive additional support and new development programmes to strengthen their relevance in the modern economy. At the same

time, incubation centres will be established to help next-generation entrepreneurs transform innovative ideas into viable business enterprises.

To attract investments in sectors such as manufacturing, logistics, technology, and renewable energy, the government plans to establish Special Investment Zones. These zones will be designed to enhance Kerala's competitiveness with other leading investment destinations in India. Through agencies such as KINFRA and INKEL, new industrial areas will also be developed near ports and airports, thereby improving logistical efficiency and industrial accessibility.

Recognising the importance of supply chain infrastructure, the government will formulate policy guidelines to strengthen logistics infrastructure across the state. Furthermore, to attract investments from Non-Resident Keralites engaged in business abroad, the NORKA Private Industrial Estate Scheme will be introduced.

Despite its strengths, Kerala

The government has formulated the Kerala MSME Growth Scheme, a comprehensive initiative aimed at launching ten thousand micro and small enterprises.

future economic realities.

At the same time, the government remains committed to preserving the social responsibility and developmental role of the public sector while simultaneously encouraging private investment and global capital participation. The approach is not one of replacement, but balance and partnership.

Kerala's next phase of development will be built upon focused policy-making, swift project execution, large-scale investments, and a strong startup ecosystem. Beyond the traditional IT sector, the government is now targeting future technologies as the foundation of the state's next growth cycle.

Sectors such as artificial intelligence, biotechnology, semiconductors, robotics, quantum computing, and digital public infrastructure are redefining the global economy. Kerala intends to position itself as a major centre for these emerging industries. To achieve this, the government plans strategic partnerships with global technology companies and innovation ecosystems to attract technology investments, global capability centres, startups, and future industries into the state.

A "Future Corporation" will also be established with the objective of promoting technology investments, providing startup funding, and creating employment opportunities in next-generation industries.

Kerala's IT parks will be transformed into hubs for future technologies. While Technopark in Thiruvananthapuram and Infopark in Kochi continue to lead the state's



digital economy, the government now aims to develop Cyberpark in Kozhikode as Kerala's next major IT destination.

In addition, a Private Technology Park Promotion Scheme will be launched to encourage the establishment of privately managed technology parks, thereby expanding Kerala's innovation ecosystem.

Finally, Kerala's youth must be prepared not only for the jobs of today, but for the industries of tomorrow. To bridge the gap between corporate requirements and youth capabilities, the government will introduce a comprehensive Talent Dashboard. This system will help map industry needs with available skills, creating a more efficient employment ecosystem.

Technical college syllabi will be continuously updated in

collaboration with industry leaders to ensure students remain aligned with changing global technological trends. Special emphasis will be placed on emerging fields such as artificial intelligence, semiconductors, cybersecurity, robotics, and data science.

In partnership with leading institutions both within India and abroad, the government will also organise specialised skill development programmes and reskilling courses. These initiatives will ensure that Kerala's youth remain competitive, adaptable, and prepared to lead in the industries of the future.

The vision for Kerala is clear: a state that remains socially progressive while becoming economically dynamic; a state that balances tradition with innovation; and a state that offers its young people not only hope, but opportunity.

Through strategic investments, policy reforms, and a future-oriented industrial ecosystem, Kerala stands poised to redefine itself as an investment-friendly and sustainable economic powerhouse. ●

"Brand Kerala" initiative will aim to establish Kerala's indigenous products as trusted and premium brands in global markets.

Culture Shapes Tomorrow

P. C. Vishnunadh

Minister for Tourism, Culture & Cinema



Kerala's integrated vision of tourism, culture, and cinema aims to transform heritage, creativity, and sustainability into engines of economic growth and employment.

In earlier times, nations were marked on the world map by their ports, trade routes, and palaces. But in the twenty-first century, the identity of a land is determined by its culture, art, cinema, heritage, and the experiences it offers its people. Cannes gains global attention through its international film festival, Edinburgh through its world-renowned art festivals, Kyoto through its centuries-old heritage, and Barcelona through its lifestyle and vibrant urban culture. Along with its rare natural beauty, Kerala too possesses a rich cultural tradition and creative strength, and it must now emerge as a global destination of unique experiences.

Kerala is one of the most beautiful regions in the world. But Kerala should not be remembered by the world merely for its natural beauty; it should also be known for its history, heritage, language, literature, music, dance, cinema, lifestyle, food culture, and human



The government's goal is to transform tourism from merely a count of visitors into an economy of experiences.

destinations.

Kerala's water culture is another major strength of its tourism sector. Upgrading tourism infrastructure in Alappuzha, making houseboat terminals functional, and establishing waste treatment plants are measures to make tourism more environmentally sustainable. The comprehensive development of Pathiramanal Island and the ropeway project from Muhamma will open new opportunities for Alappuzha tourism.

The decision to further expand the Muziris Heritage Project will connect Kerala's history with the world. Efforts to elevate Muziris into India's most important heritage tourism destination—through preservation of ancient monuments, live museums, heritage museums, and boat journeys along traditional waterways—will become a model of historical conservation and sustainable tourism.

The Green Marshals project reflects the vision that environmental protection and tourism must move forward together. By training and deploying both women and men at major tourist destinations, the project will strengthen cleanliness, responsible visitor behaviour, and environmental awareness.

The future of tourism will move forward in close connection with technology. That is why the government has decided to develop artificial intelligence-based digital tourism platforms and smart tourism systems. Following the Chooralmala

values that together form a rich cultural legacy. Therefore, tourism, culture, and cinema are not isolated sectors; they are the three faces of Kerala's development. The State Government's first budget presents a development vision that integrates these three sectors.

Today, the growth of a region is determined not only by natural resources, but also by cultural capital and creative human resources. The world is now seeking experiences. Tourists travel to experience history, stories, music, food, festivals, and ways of life. Understanding this shift, Kerala is treating tourism, culture, and cinema as part of an integrated development strategy.

One of the most historic announcements in this budget is the decision to grant industry

status to tourism. This is the government's recognition of a demand that the sector has raised for years. Once tourism becomes eligible for the benefits available to industries, it can attract new investments, encourage entrepreneurship, and generate more employment opportunities. This decision will become a milestone in strengthening tourism's role in Kerala's economy.

The government's goal is to transform tourism from merely a count of visitors into an economy of experiences. As part of this, legal amendments are being introduced to facilitate tourism development in plantation areas. This will create opportunities to preserve the plantations, nature, and heritage of the high ranges while transforming them into world-class experiential



landslide disaster, Wayanad witnessed a decline in visitor inflow. Branding initiatives, including “Brand Wayanad,” are expected to restore the district’s tourism potential. The inclusion of Brand Wayanad in the government’s hundred-day programme itself reflects this priority.

The development of water tourism, including Ashtamudi Lake, will enhance Kerala’s global competitiveness in tourism. Through eco-tourism, rural tourism, agricultural tourism, mangrove tourism, community-based tourism, and cultural tourism hubs, the benefits of development will also reach local communities.

Alongside tourism, this budget

Cinema today is not merely an art form; it is a major component of the creative economy that generates employment and income for thousands.

also gives new energy to the cultural sector. The announcement to establish the M.T. Vasudevan Nair Cultural Park is not merely the construction of a memorial, but a major initiative to carry Kerala’s cultural diversity forward to future generations. It will become a cultural centre where Kerala’s traditional art forms—including Kathakali, Koothu, Thullal, Oppana, Mappilappattu, Margamkali, Theyyam, and tribal arts—can be presented, studied, and appreciated. With a library,

art gallery, history museum, literature and language museum, sound museum, cinema exhibition spaces, and performance venues, it will become a new model of cultural tourism.

The announcements of the Johnson Master Music Academy in Thrissur, a music academy in the name of Umbayi, a memorial for Salim Kumar, the renovation of Thekkinkadu Maidanam, and support for the platinum jubilee convention centre of Sivagiri are investments that both honour Kerala’s artistic and cultural heritage and inspire future generations.

Cinema today is not merely an art form; it is a major component of the creative economy that generates employment and income



for thousands. That is why the decision to grant industry status to Malayalam cinema is historic. It is the government's recognition of a decades-long demand from the film sector. This decision will open new possibilities in financial support, investment, infrastructure, employment, and technology.

The announcement of the J.C. Daniel International Film City, "Chitranagaram," in Kochi is part of a long-term vision to transform Kerala into a major national and international centre for film production. It will develop as a hub that combines world-class filming facilities, technical excellence, training, research, and film tourism. The announcement of a permanent venue in the

The announcement of a permanent venue in the capital city for the International Film Festival will also open a new chapter in Kerala's cinematic tradition.

capital city for the International Film Festival will also open a new chapter in Kerala's cinematic tradition.

When tourism, culture, and cinema come together, they will undoubtedly pave the way for a new creative economy. Around the world, cities are achieving economic progress through cultural strength. Kerala too has every possibility to achieve this. This is the time to present our arts, heritage, nature, cinema,

literature, and music to the world in a new language.

Our villages must become cultural destinations on the world map. Our arts must transform into livelihoods and professions for the next generation. Our cinema must become part of the world's creative industrial network. Our tourism must become a global model that protects the environment, heritage, and people's lives. The government's initial steps are becoming the driving force towards that vision.

Our goal is development that creates employment, increases women's participation, provides opportunities for the creativity of youth, and builds the future while preserving heritage.

Towards Universal Healthcare

K. Muraleedharan

Minister for Health & Family Welfare, Devaswoms



Marking a major milestone in Kerala's journey towards universal healthcare, the proposed Oommen Chandy Health Insurance Scheme is designed to provide comprehensive financial protection against healthcare expenses, ensuring that quality medical care remains accessible while enhancing the security and well-being of families.

The state has consistently prioritised equitable access to affordable, quality medical care, reinforcing its commitment to inclusive and people-centric development. A major step towards universal healthcare, Kerala's proposed Oommen Chandy Health Insurance Scheme aims to ease medical burdens and strengthen family security.

Healthcare remains one of the most critical pillars of social welfare, and ensuring access

to affordable treatment has always been central to Kerala's development model. Continuing this commitment, the Government of Kerala has proposed the Oommen Chandy Health Insurance Scheme, a landmark initiative envisioned to provide extensive medical insurance coverage to families across the state.

Announced as part of the welfare commitments outlined ahead of the 2026 Kerala Assembly Elections, the scheme reflects the government's emphasis on strengthening public healthcare and reducing the financial stress caused by rising treatment costs. Named in honour of former Chief Minister Oommen Chandy, the programme seeks to recognise his contributions to public welfare, healthcare accessibility, and inclusive governance.

For many families, unexpected medical emergencies often result in significant financial hardship. Hospitalisation, surgeries, long-term treatments, and critical care can place enormous pressure on household incomes. The proposed Oommen Chandy Health Insurance Scheme aims to address this challenge by offering health insurance coverage up to ₹25 lakh per family annually, making it one of the most ambitious healthcare protection programmes proposed in Kerala.

The Health Department



Minister K. Muraleedharan inaugurating the state-level Pulse Polio immunisation campaign

and Finance Department have jointly been entrusted with the preliminary implementation of the project. In the revised Budget for 2026–27, an initial allocation of ₹10 crore has been earmarked to support the preparatory phase, including feasibility studies, administrative planning, and framework development. Government officials have clarified that this allocation is intended as an initial step toward designing

The scheme is expected to cover a broad spectrum of medical needs, including hospital admissions, surgeries, cancer care, cardiac treatment, dialysis, critical illness management, and pre- and post-hospitalisation expenses.

and operationalising the larger programme.

The scheme is expected to cover a broad spectrum of medical needs, including hospital admissions, surgeries, cancer care, cardiac treatment, dialysis, critical illness management, and pre- and post-hospitalisation expenses. One of its most significant features will likely be the provision for cashless treatment at government hospitals and empanelled private healthcare institutions, ensuring easier access for beneficiaries.

Unlike many existing targeted insurance programmes, which are often restricted to economically vulnerable groups, this initiative is being envisioned as a wider coverage model. Both Above Poverty Line (APL) and Below Poverty Line (BPL) families may be brought under its ambit, making

The proposed Oommen Chandy Health Insurance Scheme aims to offer health insurance coverage up to ₹25 lakh per family annually, making it one of the most ambitious healthcare protection programmes proposed in Kerala.

healthcare security more inclusive and universal.

The government has also reiterated its broader commitment to improving healthcare delivery by strengthening hospital infrastructure, ensuring medicine availability, and streamlining existing health protection schemes. Efforts are underway to address pending liabilities in current healthcare support systems, including those related to the State Health Agency and the Kerala Medical Services Corporation Limited (KMSCL). The State Health Agency, which implements the Karunya Health Security Scheme, had an arrears of Rs 2017 crore and the drug procurement agency KMSCL had an arrears of Rs 300 crore in the procurement of drugs.

Once final approvals are completed, detailed operational guidelines—including beneficiary eligibility, documentation requirements, hospital empanelment, and claim settlement procedures—are expected to be released. With its focus on affordability, accessibility, and financial protection, the Oommen Chandy Health Insurance Scheme has the potential to become a transformative milestone in Kerala's healthcare journey, reinforcing the state's long-standing vision of equitable and people-centric development.

Taking a New Turn

Bindhu Krishna

Minister for Labour, Dairy Development, Women and Child Development



The revised budget presented by Chief Minister V. D. Satheesan strengthens the vision of a Women and Child friendly Keralam.

The revised 2026 state budget has translated the principle that a society's progress is measured in terms of the safety, opportunities and dignity accorded to its women and children into concrete development policy. The budget contains milestone announcements in Kerala's development history. Its foundation is a comprehensive development perspective that not only seeks economic growth but also improves people's living standards and ensures social justice. The budget is designed with education, health, social security, women and child welfare, gender equality, employment and skill development as core development criteria.

Rather than treating women only as beneficiaries of welfare schemes, the budget consistently adopts an approach that elevates them as partners and leaders in development, and regards children as the cornerstones of tomorrow's Keralam.

Social justice and social security are central to the government's development policy: ensuring that the benefits of economic growth reach all sections of society equally. The government proposes an inclusive development model that raises the living standards of women, children, senior citizens, persons with disabilities and marginalised



communities. The One Kerala Care Mission is being launched as part of this goal. This important programme will ensure timely and effective government support to people facing serious health issues and to children in need of educational assistance.

Nurturing Economic Leadership

The government views women's empowerment not merely as a welfare domain but as a strategy for economic independence and social progress. The budget accords special emphasis to women's entrepreneurship, labour participation and skill development.

While the Kerala MSME Growth Scheme will support new enterprises, technology based ventures, especially women led businesses, will be given more opportunities. The Priyadarshini scheme, announced under the Indira Guarantee initiative, will give new strength to women's economic empowerment. ASHA workers and Anganwadi staff play a pivotal role in the welfare of women and children; they are the backbone of public health and child

The budget clearly reflects the vision of developing the care economy into a major employment sector for women.

welfare systems. The government is committed to recognising their services appropriately and improving their living standards. The measures taken for them, consistent with government assurances, demonstrate the government's sincere approach to the welfare of women workers.

Kudumbashree: Catalyst for Progress

Kudumbashree is one of the most successful models in Kerala's history of women's empowerment. Through economic self-reliance, collective entrepreneurship and social participation, Kudumbashree has transformed the lives of hundreds of thousands of women.

The entrepreneurship development schemes in the revised budget will further strengthen Kudumbashree activities. The budget injects new energy into the development model that transforms women from job seekers into job creators.

Child friendly Kerala

The future of a society is dependent upon the growth and education of its children. Accordingly, the budget gives special attention to children's health, nutrition, safety and early education.

Through strengthening the Anganwadi system, early childhood care, improved nutrition programmes and raising standards in public

The Kerala MSME Growth Scheme will support new enterprises, especially women led businesses.

education, the government aims to ensure the best possible start for every child.

Towards Knowledge driven Kerala

The announcement to establish the Kerala Knowledge Valley marks a new chapter in the state's education and research landscape. With an allocation of ₹100 crore, the aim is to create a world-class education and research environment. The Wayanad Tribal University will open new opportunities for the educational advancement of Adivasi and other marginalised communities.

Building Care Economy

Taking demographic changes into account, the government is promoting a new development idea called the Silver Economy. It includes elderly care, health services, the care economy and new employment opportunities. The internationally acknowledged caregiver training programmes that will be started as part of this initiative will create job opportunities for thousands of young women. The budget clearly reflects the vision of developing the care economy into a major employment sector for women.

"A truly developed society is one that guarantees women's progress and secure growth for children." This vision is the soul of the revised state budget. The budget is a cohesive development document that links women's empowerment, child welfare, education, health, employment, social security and the care economy.

The 2026 state budget is a firm declaration of the government's determination to create a New Age Kerala that secures greater opportunities for women and a better future for children through a development model where economic growth and social justice go hand in hand.

Building a Global Maritime Hub



Dr. Jayakumar

Former MD and CEO, Vizhinjam International Seaport Limited.
Member-Kerala Maritime Board



The vision of the Chief Minister to convert Kerala into a global maritime hub is indeed commendable. In line with this vision, it is recognised that this objective can be effectively achieved through the adoption of innovative concepts besides planned interventions along the coastline.

Kerala today possesses a unique advantage with two international ports (Vizhinjam deep water multipurpose port and container transshipment terminal at Vallarpadam, Cochin), and a network of shallow (small and intermediate) ports along its coastline. However, ports alone do not create prosperity and socio - economic growth of the region. Around the world, successful port regions such as Shanghai, Singapore, Rotterdam, and Dubai have demonstrated that the real value of ports lies in the ecosystems they support – logistics, manufacturing, tourism, trade, innovation, and services.

The emergence of Vizhinjam Port presents Kerala with a historic opportunity. Combined with Cochin Port and the state's wider maritime network, it can catalyse investments, create employment, strengthen global connectivity, and support the growth of the blue economy.

To realise this potential, Kerala needs an integrated approach that connects port infrastructure with industrial development, tourism, transportation, fisheries, urban planning, environmental stewardship, and skill development. A plausible approach would be to effectively integrate our entire maritime ecosystem into a coherent development strategy.

The emergence of Vizhinjam Port presents Kerala with a historic opportunity. Combined with Cochin Port and the state's wider maritime network, it can catalyse investments, create employment, strengthen global connectivity, and support the growth of the blue economy.

With the natural resources available and the immense maritime potential, Kerala can emerge as India's leading port-driven economy while maintaining its commitment to sustainability and quality of life. In this context, it is vital to select the ports based on the potential, type of development, their feasibility and how coastal shipping, which plays an important role in Kerala, can be incorporated.

Instead of looking at Kerala as a coastal state with ports, it would be more appropriate to see as a potential port - state economy. Kerala's opportunity is different — it lies in corridor logic (proximity to the world's busiest east-west shipping lane), ecosystem differentiation (a biodiversity-rich coastline, an existing blue economy), and nodal completeness (connecting a tiered port network with waterways, roads, rail, and inland logistics).

In this context, a structured strategic framework for an integrated maritime hub in Kerala can be as follows:

Three-Tier Port Architecture

The fundamental design principle should be that each port in the state serves a distinct and complementary role. Rather than treating all ports as variations of the same facility, Kerala needs a differentiated hierarchy — anchor ports of international significance, regional ports serving specific industrial and geographic needs, and coastal (nodes) ports that form the connective tissue of an integrated maritime transport network.

Tier 1: The Two Anchor (International) Ports

Vizhinjam's singular advantage

Kerala needs a differentiated hierarchy — anchor ports of international significance, regional ports and coastal ports that form the connective tissue of an integrated maritime transport network.

is geographic and geological. Located approximately 10 nautical miles from the main east-west international shipping lane, it possesses a natural draft of over 20 metres — which means ultra-large container vessels (18,000–24,000 TEU class) can call without expensive and ecologically damaging continuous dredging. The port is being developed mainly as a container transshipment terminal, and this is the right primary function — but the surrounding development ecosystem needs to be built in parallel to realise its full potential.



One of the largest container vessels at Vizhinjam Deepwater International Seaport

Around Vizhinjam, the priority developments should be a Free Trade and Warehousing Zone and a Multi – Modal Logistics Park to attract value-added logistics, a ship repair and green bunkering cluster besides the outer area growth corridor and related project on the anvil.

Kochi's development story is ongoing: the multipurpose cargo port, international container

terminal at Vallarpadam, Cochin Shipyard, and an emerging cosmopolitan knowledge economy. The strategic direction for Kochi is to become a 'maritime knowledge economy hub' — a city whose prosperity derives not only from physical cargo movement but from ship design, cruise tourism, and maritime services.

Tier 2: Regional Ports

Beypore (Kozhikode) requires careful thinking because the temptation will be to transform it into a modern container terminal. Shallow water depths and dredging constraints limit its scalability for deep-draft vessels. However, Beypore's true strategic value lies in two things: its dhow-building heritage (the construction of traditional wooden vessels), and its role as a regional cargo hub for northern Kerala. Construction materials, consumer goods, and agricultural inputs for the Malabar region should move through Beypore rather than by road. A heritage maritime cultural zone built around the traditional

shipbuilding yards, combined with a maritime museum, fishing harbour modernisation, and tourism economy would create something genuinely distinctive.

Azhikkal (Kannur) plays an entirely different role: it is the industrial entry point for the Kannur-Kasaragod corridor. Fertilisers, petrochemicals, minerals, construction aggregates currently move by road from south and north, adding both cost and congestion. The depth available at Azhikkal riverine port is not sufficient for large bulk carriers, but medium-sized vessels and barges are feasible. Developing Azhikkal as a dedicated multi-purpose port along with an SEZ and emerging industrial estates in this corridor, would meaningfully reduce logistics costs for northern Kerala's manufacturing and agricultural sectors developing an outer harbour to serve as the maritime gateway to the Malabar region needs top priority.

Thankasseri Port (Kollam) functions as an all-weather lighterage port that blends historical maritime

significance with modernised coastal infrastructure. Maintaining an operational water depth of 6.5 meters, the port allows direct berthing access for medium-sized cargo vessels. Neendakara port in Kollam is a major fishing harbour, which lies very close to Thankasseri port. A dedicated fisheries and seafood processing SEZ at Neendakara, built around the existing fishing harbour, with cold chain infrastructure, would transform the economics of Kerala's fishing communities and create substantial export value.

Tier 3: Coastal (Ports) Nodes

Alappuzha, Ponnani and Kasaragod minor ports may be developed with minimum infrastructure facilities to facilitate coastal shipping activities in Kerala. Development of a marina at Alappuzha Port is promising due to its strategic location on the coast, existing backwater network, and strong tourism base. It can anchor Kerala's coastal tourism circuit by offering safe berthing, maintenance, and hospitality services for leisure



1. LOADING SMALL CONTAINER ON FLAT-TOP BARGE AT BERTH USING SHORE CRANE



2. LOADING SMALL CONTAINER ON MOTHER VESSEL AT DEEP WATER ANCHORAGE USING SHIP'S GEAR FROM FLAT-TOP BARGE ALONGSIDE



craft and cruise yachts.

A Novel Concept in Coastal Shipping

An innovative concept employing Green Small Container (GSC) units can augment coastal shipping and revitalise the minor ports. More than a container, the GSC represents an integrated logistics ecosystem designed to connect the hinterland directly to coastal shipping networks through modular containerisation, shallow port operations and smart logistics management.

Each container is of approximate dimensions 6.5 ft x 8.0 ft x 8.5 ft. These containers allow transportation through narrow roads, village routes, plantation regions, hilly terrains

and urban environments using light commercial vehicles. Unlike conventional 20-foot containers, GSC units can be independently transported, loaded and unloaded close to the cargo source.

Three GSC units can be securely interconnected to form a composite cargo unit having dimensions equivalent to a conventional 20-foot rectangular container (TEU) compatible to gantry cranes at deep ports and conventional container vessels.

Cargo can be moved through small trucks, light commercial vehicles via roads and by small vessels / barges via rivers and inland waterways to the shallow ports. The shallow ports function as cargo consolidation centres from where the

GSC units are loaded on to barges or shallow-draft vessels for integration with the main coastal shipping network at deep-water anchorages of ports.

Institutional Governance

Public-Private Partnership model offers the most effective path for Kerala's maritime sector. It combines the state's land, policy support, and oversight with private investment and global operational expertise to build and operate a globally competitive maritime hub. This must be pursued with strict environmental safeguards, including impact assessments, continuous monitoring, and site-specific mitigation measures to protect coastal ecosystems and fishing livelihoods during project implementation.

Bold Vision, New Reforms



Prof. Achuthsankar

Vice-Chairman
Kerala State Higher Education Council

The revised budget proposed by the Chief Minister VD Satheeshan is giving thrust to higher education by indorsing student centric projects and visions. By embracing structural, social, and technological advancements, the Government of Kerala is modelling a higher education ecosystem that prepares the youth for the future initiatives



SUSTAINABLE CAMPUS



SMART INFRASTRUCTURE



ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM



GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS



RESEARCH FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

The Government of Kerala is embarking on a transformative journey to rebuild, revitalise, and modernise its higher education sector. Moving away from conventional ad-hoc methods, the new administration is championing an era of evidence-based policymaking, student-centric welfare, and global academic integration. This comprehensive blueprint outlines the strategic initiatives designed to elevate Kerala's campuses into world-class centers of learning, innovation, and inclusivity.

A Data-Driven Paradigm

The higher education ecosystem stands as a pillar of priority for this government. While acknowledging that systemic challenges persist, the administration refuses to rely on preconceived notions or outdated prejudices to address them. Instead, Kerala is pioneering a scientific, Data-Driven Governance framework. By substituting intuition with empirical evidence, the government will conduct four landmark macro-surveys to gain a granular understanding of campus realities:

- **Kerala Annual Students Survey (KASS):** To capture comprehensive data on student demographics, academic preferences, and learning outcomes.
- **Kerala Graduate Employment Tracking Survey (KGETS):** To meticulously monitor the professional trajectories of graduates, bridging the gap between industry demands and academic curricula.
- **Kerala Students Wellness Survey (KSWs):** A pioneering study dedicated to understanding the

psychological, emotional, and social well-being of the student community.

- **Kerala Student Migration Survey (KSMS):** To analyse student mobility patterns, letting policymakers address the “brain drain” and create localised opportunities.

The insights gleaned from these rigorous surveys will form the bedrock of a meticulous masterplan focusing heavily on enhancing Student Diversity and Student Mobility, ensuring our institutions reflect a vibrant, multicultural student body.

Academic Tourism and Global Integration

In an era of globalised education, Kerala is set to position itself as a premier international study destination. The government is proudly reviving and scaling

up the “Semester in India” initiative—a highly successful experimental program originally introduced during the tenure of the Oommen Chandy administration.

Through robust global credit-transfer mechanisms, the program will invite university students from the United States, Europe, and beyond to spend a fully accredited semester studying in Kerala. By beautifully merging the state's rich cultural heritage with its academic

The government is proudly reviving and scaling up the “Semester in India” initiative—a highly successful experimental program originally introduced during the tenure of the Oommen Chandy administration.





infrastructure, this initiative will be promoted as a unique model of Academic Tourism.

To drive this global push, the state will organise international education fairs and establish stringent, fair regulatory frameworks to monitor foreign education recruiting agencies, ensuring complete transparency and protecting the interests of aspiring scholars.

Another highlight of the new initiatives is the Kerala Knowledge Valley which will model itself after Technoparks, but aimed at educational industries including edTechs. This is expected to provide quality education in cutting edge areas and also trigger economic activity.

Student Welfare, Security, and Campus Democracy

A truly world-class institution

To systematically combat caste discrimination, financial strain, academic stress, and the psychological impact of body shaming, the government will launch the state-of-the-art Sidharthan Student Distress App, offering an instant lifeline to students in need.

must look beyond textbooks; it must foster an environment where students can fearlessly, happily, and securely enjoy their intellectual freedom. The government is adopting a zero-tolerance policy against campus malpractices and discrimination.

To systematically combat caste discrimination, financial strain, academic stress, and the

psychological impact of body shaming, the government will launch the state-of-the-art Sidharthan Student Distress App, offering an instant lifeline to students in need. Concurrently, the landmark Sidharthan Anti-Ragging and Student Welfare Act will be stringently enforced across all campuses, backed by absolute data privacy protections for every user.

Furthermore, the administration is deeply committed to revitalising democratic ideals within student politics. To ensure flawless, unbiased campus elections, an independent Student Academic Election Commission will be established. In an unprecedented move to foster healthy political discourse, a formal position for the Leader of the Opposition will be

integrated into all campus student unions.

Technology, Employment, and Future-Ready Skillsets

To keep pace with the rapidly evolving global job market, the government is executing a sweeping technological upgrade across its traditional educational institutions:

- **AI Departments in Every College:** Advanced Artificial Intelligence (AI) departments will be established across all Arts and Science colleges in the state, democratising tech education and preparing students for the digital economy.
- **The Job Watch Tower:** A dedicated, state-of-the-art market intelligence cell tasked with continuously monitoring global employment trends, ensuring that Kerala's academic institutions can pivot their training programs in real time.

Administrative and Academic Reforms

Administrative stagnation is being replaced by agile, transparent, and merit-based institutional frameworks. Key structural reforms include:

- **Decentralised Academic Governance:** The administrative control over academic matters will be transferred to a specialised Academic Syndicate at the university leadership level, allowing for faster decision-making free from bureaucratic delays.
- **Modernisation of University Acts:** Outdated legislative frameworks will be thoroughly reviewed, updated, and unified to meet 21st-century educational standards.



- **Independent Teacher Recruitment Commission:** To guarantee absolute meritocracy and eliminate the shadow of corruption, a dedicated, autonomous body will handle all contract faculty appointments.
- **Transparency Dashboards & Open Access:** The Kerala State Higher Education Council will launch a centralised Higher Education Dashboard for real-time monitoring of institutional performance, alongside the creation of the Kerala Open Access Journal

To ensure flawless, unbiased campus elections, an independent Student Academic Election Commission will be established.

Platform to freely share native scientific research with the world.

In a bold move to expedite academic timelines, the government will leverage the expertise of retired educators alongside cutting-edge AI tools for streamlined, error-free exam evaluations. Finally, to foster a healthier work-life balance for our educators, faculty workloads will be redefined from a modern pedagogical perspective, alongside a comprehensive review of Post-Graduate (PG) weightage metrics.

Through these structural, social, and technological transformations, the Government of Kerala is not merely reforming higher education—it is future-proofing the generation of tomorrow.

Beyond Welfare: Kerala's Silver Economy Revolution



Dr. Anishia Jayadev

Nodal Officer, Centre for Disability Studies and Gender Justice,
Professor, Institute of Management in Government



In the 2026–27 Budget, the Government of Kerala gave unprecedented prominence to the Silver Economy by establishing India's first dedicated Department of Elderly Welfare. This marks a significant paradigm shift that reflects Kerala's progressive governance and forward-looking social planning.

Driven by a rising senior demographic of 18.7%, Kerala is currently outpacing the rest of India in demographic transition. By 2031, the elderly population is projected to reach 22 percentage of the state. Old age dependency ratio of the state jumped from 19.6 percentage in 2011 to 26.1 percentage in 2021 and is projected to reach 34.3 percentage by 2031.

In four Central and Southern districts of Kerala, Pathanamthitta, Alappuzha, Kottayam and Ernakulam, older adults outnumber children.

In such situation, welfare of the elderly is not a social obligation but a strategic/critical indicator of development. This context makes the concept of silver economy relevant. The social economic structure based on the needs of the elderly, their competency, purchasing power, Care services, et cetera is silver economy.

As population ageing redefines Kerala's demographics, the state has transitioned its approach to senior citizens from a basic welfare

model to a strategic socio-economic framework. In the 2026–27 budget, the government elevated the “Silver Economy” by launching India's first dedicated Department of Elderly Welfare to manage both the developmental and care needs of older adults. Far from a routine administrative update, this landmark initiative underscores Kerala's long-standing tradition of

social farsightedness and proactive governance.

In his budget speech, Chief Minister VD Satheeshan announced that for setting up a new department for the welfare of the elderly an amount of Rs. 10,000,00 was earmarked. It was further explained that silver economic policy would be charted and basic support system for retired people in terms of geriatric, healthcare and development of entrepreneurial skills of the elderly would be developed.

For this yeoman effort, the new ministry deserves applause. For Kerala, development is more than investment in infrastructure, but incorporation of human needs as well.

Till now, the welfare activities of the elderly were taken by the department of Social Justice. But special needs of the old, especially long-term healthcare, psychosocial, support, social security, care economy et cetera entails a centralised approach towards the care of the agent. In this context, a separate elderly Welfare Department came up as a solution for these concerns.

In the past, also in the area of elderly welfare, Kerala had left its imprint. In 2013, the government of Kerala act, the State Old-age Policy was enacted and in March 2026, the Kerala State Policy for Elderly Person got materialised. Along with this establishment of Kerala State Elderly Commission gave significant impact for the rights of the elderly.

Yet, silver economy is much broader than welfare projects and activities. The elderly are a treasure of experience, human resource and knowledge. Health tech, assistive technology, home based care, geriatric tourism, insurance and digital services etc opens up large economic possibilities in Silver Economy. The present Elderly Budget by the ministry has painted investment in this sector not as expenditure, but as investment in social capital. This is a novel way of looking at the elderly. ●

Way forward

1. Establishment of integrated Elder Care Centres in all panchayats
2. Creation of a geriatric work force by extending training in Caregiver Certificate Course,
3. Creation of age friendly infrastructure- common transportation facilities, parks, digital services etc.,
4. Promote and encourage Silver Entrepreneurship and convert the experience and expertise of the elderly into economic possibilities.
5. Create intergenerational platform connecting the elderly with the youth and children

The state of Kerala is always in the forefront of education, health, social justice and on all human development fronts. The state has continued its legacy for being a forerunner in elderly welfare by creating a separate department for Elderly welfare. This should not be viewed only as a declaration of a department, but as a proclamation that the state of Kerala does not see the old age as a liability but as a possibility and so it is a civilisational declaration. The decision of focusing on Silver Economy is not only visionary but it is a bold step in projecting Kerala as a model for renaissance.

Old Age Dependency Ratio of Kerala

2011 – 19.6%

2021 – 26.1%

2031 – 34.3%
(Projected)

A Roadmap for Kerala's Economic Revival



B.A. Prakash

Former Chairman of the State Finance Commission, Kerala



The new government, under the leadership of V.D. Satheesan, has put forward an alternative vision for economic revival focused on restoring fiscal stability and promoting rapid economic growth and development.

Kerala's Acute Fiscal Crisis

The White Paper on state finances titled 'Kerala's Fiscal Health: A Status Report', presented in the Kerala Legislative Assembly, gives a clear picture of the nature and magnitude of the fiscal crisis prevailing in Kerala. The major findings of the White Paper are the following.

- (1) The State's aggregate debt burden is Rs 5.07 lakh crore at present.
- (2) The committed expenditure comprising salaries, pensions and interest payments accounts for 77% of total receipts.
- (3) The state's capital expenditure reached a very low rate of 1.3 percent of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP), one of the lowest in the entire country.
- (4) The budget presented in January 2026 wrongly proposed an inflated surplus of Rs 20,500 crore under the head of revenue deficit grant.

- (5) The arbitrarily fixed state plan outlay of Rs 35,750 crore didn't consider resource availability.
- (6) A massive backlog of unsettled liabilities as on March 31, 2020 (Rs 21,670 crore, Dearness Allowance (DA) arrears; Rs 14,387 crore in Dearness Relief (DR) arrears; Rs 3,431 crore owed to banks and contractors; Rs 9,245 in other deferred obligations. Besides this, the state has a huge debt repayment obligation (Rs 21,000 crore) to Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board (KIIFB) and Kerala Social Security Pension Limited (KSSPL) (Rs 17,279 crore).

Thus, the state has to settle an aggregate accumulated liability of Rs 87,012 crore at present. The above figures give a picture of the nature and magnitude of the fiscal crisis prevailing in Kerala. A number of steps are proposed in the budget to improve the state finances through better fiscal management and other measures.

The New Vision to Boost Kerala's Economy

The government under the leadership of V. D. Satheesan has prepared a new vision for economic revival and achieving rapid economic growth and development. The features of the vision which are incorporated in the revised budget 2026-27 are the following.

The government is committed to ushering in a 'New Age Kerala'—an era that harmonises economic growth driven by social justice backed by modern, environmentally responsible infrastructure development. To realise this vision, the state is formulating a progressive strategy that maximises the potential of modern technology to revitalise our healthcare and education sectors, generate robust employment opportunities, ensure the welfare of our senior citizens, and bring

the marginalised and backward communities squarely into the mainstream. In order to address the huge accumulated liability created, the state government proposes to constitute an Expert Committee to initiate comprehensive structural reforms. The practice of publishing the inflated plan expenditure for publicity should be stopped.

This Government has already implemented two of the six Indira Guarantees promised: free travel for women and transgenders in KSRTC buses and the formation of a dedicated Department for the Welfare of the elderly. The Government is committed to stimulating the economy through modern and innovative strategies— attracting large-scale private investments across various sectors, mobilising resources into the exchequer, and thereby ensuring equitable distribution of this generated wealth.

The Government proposes to launch Mission Samudra—a visionary project aimed at elevating the State into a formidable power on the global maritime map within the next five years. To provide rail and road connectivity to Vizhinjam Port, immediate steps will be taken for the construction of the Balaramapuram-Vizhinjam underground railway, the Vizhinjam-Navaikulam Outer Ring Road project etc. The Government will formulate a comprehensive Kerala Maritime Policy to catalyse the development of the State's four primary non-major ports: Vizhinjam-Kovalam, Kollam, Beypore, and Azhikkal. A comprehensive water transport system interconnecting both major and minor ports will be developed in

The new vision proposals in the budget rely on public and private investment in key infrastructural areas.

The government is committed to ushering in a 'New Age Kerala'—an era that harmonises economic growth driven by social justice backed by modern, environmentally responsible infrastructure development.

phases. An amount of Rs. 400 Crore is allotted for Mission Samudra Projects, which includes the Port City.

The other major projects proposed in the budget are: Southern Kerala Economic Corridor; various infrastructure development projects; Invest Keralam project; Kerala MSME Growth Scheme; the Kerala Knowledge Valley, a world-class higher education hub etc.

Better Fiscal Management

In the revised budget, a number of measures are proposed to improve state finances through better fiscal management and other measures, making more public funds available for capital investment. The new vision proposals in the budget rely on public and private investment in key infrastructural areas. These measures will give a big push to the development of infrastructure items such as major and minor ports, coastal shipping, shift of goods transport from road to coastal shipping, establishment of economic corridors, large investment in major development projects, development of MSMEs, establishment of a world-class higher education hub etc. The vision proposals also harmonise economic growth driven by social justice, backed by modern, environment-friendly development. On the whole, the new vision proposals in the revised budget will stimulate the economic development of the state economy, which has been experiencing economic stagnation due to retrogressive policies and persistent fiscal crises over the last decade.

Towards a *Puthuyuga Kerala*



Prof. (Dr.) Santhosh Kumar P.K.

Professor & Director,
Centre for Budget Studies, CUSAT



The 2026–27 Revised Budget marks Kerala’s transition from a remittance-dependent model to an investment-driven, port-led production economy—proving that high-tech industrial modernisation and fiscal discipline can seamlessly coexist with our historic commitment to social welfare and human dignity

The presentation of the Revised Budget for 2026–27 marks a definitive paradigm shift in Kerala’s economic history, introducing a bold blueprint for a *Puthuyuga Kerala* (New-Age Kerala) against a backdrop of complex fiscal adjustments, structural liabilities, and shifting global dynamics. For decades, Kerala’s economic engine has run on a unique, globally recognised model—high human development indicators sustained heavily by a vibrant remittance economy. However, as global labour markets evolve and internal fiscal pressures mount, the state stands at a vital crossroads where the current

financial roadmap must transcend mere management of the status quo to fundamentally reimagine Kerala as an investment-driven, high-tech, and port-led production economy, while keeping its core values of social compassion fully intact.

The Paradigm Shift: From Remittance to Investment-Led Growth

The defining philosophy of the new economic framework is the conscious, structured transition from a consumption-and-remittance-reliant ecosystem to an investment-driven growth model. While the state's overseas community remains an integral pillar of its social fabric, relying solely on inbound money transfers leaves the domestic market highly vulnerable to external geopolitical shocks and macroeconomic volatility. To mitigate this vulnerability, the newly established Invest Kerala Cell serves as a centralised single-window platform designed to eliminate bureaucratic inertia by simplifying statutory approvals, streamlining land acquisition, and providing dedicated post-investment support. By transforming from a consumer state to an investment haven, Kerala is positioning itself to capture international capital, effectively turning its high human capital into a thriving hub for domestic wealth creation.

Mission Samudra: Unlocking the Blue Economy

With a sprawling 600-kilometre coastline, two international seaports, a major container trans-shipment terminal, and 17 non-major ports, Kerala's maritime geography represents its most significant unexploited macroeconomic asset. The marquee Mission Samudra project, backed by an initial allocation



of ₹400 crore, is designed to tap into this potential by building an integrated 'Port City' model that seamlessly links roads, railways, sea routes, and inland waterways. Within this structural framework, Vizhinjam is slated to become a leading green bunkering port capable of capturing major international shipping lanes, thereby positioning the state at the centre of global maritime logistics. Simultaneously, the budget outlines the development of the Southern Kerala Economic Corridor to connect Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, and Alappuzha, a geographical alignment intended to foster manufacturing zones, dry ports, and specialised cargo stuffing centres near port areas. Furthermore, comprehensive development packages for intermediate ports like Kollam,

Beypore, and Azhikkal ensure that the cascading benefits of the maritime economy are distributed equitably across the state's entire coastline rather than being clustered in a single urban centre.

Retaining Talent: The Knowledge Valley and Future-Readiness

One of the most pressing socio-economic challenges Kerala faces is 'brain drain', the migration of its educated youth to overseas markets due to a lack of high-value domestic employment opportunities. The budget directly confronts this structural leak through an aggressive push in higher education, research, and future-ready technologies, spearheaded by the proposed Kerala Knowledge Valley which aims to attract premier national and international universities to



The Kerala MSME Growth Scheme targets the creation of 10,000 micro, small and medium enterprises across the state.

Agrarian Resilience and the Grassroots Economy

An industrial and technological revolution cannot succeed if it leaves the agricultural sector behind, and the rural economy receives a vital stabilizing injection led by the decision to raise the minimum support price for rubber from ₹200 to ₹250 per kilogram. For millions of farmers across districts like Kottayam, Idukki, and Pathanamthitta, this buffer provides crucial financial security against volatile global commodity prices, proving that market-oriented reforms can coexist with agrarian protections. Overall, the agricultural sector has been earmarked ₹1,535 crore, a fund that includes the launch of the Krishi Sakhi – Women Farmers Development Programme designed to empower women agriculturalists with modern agronomic training and financial tools. Special geographic development packages have also been tailor-made for ecologically and economically sensitive tribal districts, including Wayanad, Idukki, and Kasaragod, ensuring that regional disparities are systematically dissolved in the pursuit of state wide growth.

The Balance of Compassion: Social Welfare and Health Security

Even as the budget pivots aggressively toward fiscal consolidation and capital growth, it consciously protects the “Kerala Model” of social welfare, treating economic growth not as an end in

the state. Complementing this educational ecosystem is a new Research Park designed to bring together industrial bodies and academic institutions under a collaborative, innovation-driven umbrella. To systematically track and align the domestic workforce with evolving international demand, the government is establishing a Global Job Watch Tower alongside a specialised Future Readiness Think Tank focused explicitly on pioneering fields such as Artificial Intelligence, Quantum Computing, and space technology, which is further symbolised by a dedicated ₹5 Cr allocation for private space startups. Through these initiatives, Kerala is building an intellectual infrastructure where cutting-edge research directly translates into high-paying local jobs, transforming the state from a supplier of labor to a laboratory of ideas.

Strengthening the Foundations: Aviation Logistics and MSMEs

To support an investment-led economy, physical infrastructure must match intellectual capital, a reality the budget addresses by allocating ₹200 Cr to lay the groundwork for transforming Kerala into South India’s premier Aviation Logistics Hub by leveraging its unique advantage of operating four international airports. Simultaneously, the domestic manufacturing landscape is receiving a massive boost via the Kerala MSME Growth Scheme, which targets the creation of 10,000 micro, small, and medium enterprises across the state. This scheme pairs financial assistance with expert mentoring, ensuring that while the state courts massive multi-national investments at its ports and airports, the grassroots economy remains resilient, entrepreneurial, and self-sustaining against macroeconomic shifts.

itself, but as a mechanism to fund public welfare and human dignity. This philosophy is structurally anchored by the Oommen Chandy Health Insurance Scheme, which provides universal health coverage up to ₹25 lakh per family to shield citizens from catastrophic out-of-pocket medical expenditures and prevent vulnerable households from falling into generational debt cycles.

Simultaneously, the state is introducing a phased welfare pension hike that gradually scales social security payouts from ₹2,000 to ₹3,000, reinforcing a robust financial safety net for the elderly, disabled, and economically marginalised demographics. Recognising its unique demographic transition, the government is also pioneering investments in the Silver Economy and senior care by establishing specialised geriatric healthcare innovations and caregiving networks under a dedicated Department for senior citizens, effectively turning an aging population challenge into an organised, dignified, and employment-generating care economy. Finally, this framework of social equity is completed by the One Kerala Care Mission, an initiative designed to provide targeted financial and medical support to eligible, highly marginalised patients, thereby solidifying equity in healthcare delivery across both urban and rural divides.

Fiscal Discipline: Navigating Mounting Pressures

Reinventing an economy requires resources, and the budget does not shy away from addressing the fiscal constraints outlined in the state's financial White Paper. Acknowledging a revenue shortfall, the financial



roadmap introduces measured fiscal corrections to rein in the revenue deficit to 1.9% of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) and target a fiscal deficit of 3.2%. To clean up the balance sheet, the government has instituted an expert committee to review the functioning of the Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board (KIIFB), ensuring that off-budget borrowings are structured transparently without over-leveraging the state's future.

Revenue mobilisation is balanced carefully through rationalised adjustments, such as updating basic land revenue tax rates and standardising taxes on older vehicles, alongside

pioneering a progressive tax slab for low-alcohol beverages to formalise and diversify state revenues without stifling economic activity.

A Vision Written for the Future

The Revised Budget is more than a statement of accounts; it is a structural course correction that acknowledges the limitations of past growth paradigms. By shifting the economic engine toward port-led industrialisation, creating high-tech knowledge corridors, backing grassroots MSMEs, and raising agricultural benchmarks, the state is actively building a highly competitive, self-reliant, and future-proof economy. This is the ultimate promise of Puthuyuga Kerala—a state that honors its historic commitments to healthcare, education, and social safety nets, while bravely unlocking the doors to global enterprise, industrial innovation, and sustainable wealth creation. ●

The agricultural sector has been earmarked ₹1,535 crore, a fund that includes the launch of the Krishi Sakhi – Women Farmers Development Programme

Wiping Off the 'Dirty Business'

Ramesh Chennithala

Minister for Home, Vigilance, Prisons,
Fire & Rescue Services, and Coir

OPERATION

TOOFAN

The Narco Hunt



“I assure Keralam that Operation Toofan is not a temporary drive and would continue with greater strength and reach until the drug mafia is entirely uprooted.”

Operation Toofan: The Narco Hunt is an unprecedented anti-narcotics campaign that is uprooting the chains of the drug mafia away from Kerala’s soil. Beyond the usual drug raids, Operation Toofan is becoming one of the largest missions in India’s law-and-order history because of its extraordinary speed, fool proof comprehensiveness, accuracy, and active public participation. This

joint offensive — which shares maximum capacity and intelligence across diverse government systems including Home, Excise, Revenue, Health, Education, and Local Self-Government — is emerging as a new model in governance.

What made this massive mission effective in its initial phase was a holistic approach that ensured strong enforcement, sustained awareness, and rehabilitation support in equal measure. When the Toofan Strikes carry out relentless incursions into the sources of drugs, the Toofan Warriors mobilise citizens as guardians of the nation, and Toofan Care lifts children trapped in the clutches of drugs, what once seemed impossible becomes possible. Toofan Janasabha led by MLAs continue to be actively

organised across all Assembly constituencies in Kerala.

The Storm That Had Been Brewing

Past data from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) placed Kerala among the states with the highest recorded rates of drug cases in the country. That was shocking evidence of how deeply the drug mafia had woven their nets around our youth. We shaped this historic mission not out of fear of that reality, but to confront it with utmost determination. After Operation Toofan began, official indicators of both drug supply and consumption in the state started falling sharply within a short period.

Unlike conventional large single seizures at shorelines, airports, or during isolated checks, Operation Toofan is making history as a realtime, on-ground anti-narcotic mission that concentrates on residential areas and records the most cases and arrests in the shortest time. The mission has even succeeded in cornering international drug-mafia leaders who had been hiding in cities such as Delhi and Bengaluru. Police recovered drugs concealed in pressure cookers and chocolates. The trade’s dealers have now reached a point where they are considering taking a temporary break — a silence we recognise as only temporary. For that reason, the operation is being intensified and moving into its next phase. We are expanding the mission to central security agencies that focus on airports and seaports and to central forces such as the CRPF. Through this tight centre-state coordination, the Home Department aims to completely shut all major drug entry points and uproot the narco-trafficking networks and their financial sources.



Minister Ramesh Chennithala with Toofan Warrior Mohanlal

The Mass Public Movement

In this campaign against drugs, tens of thousands of ordinary citizens have stood alongside Kerala Police as Toofan Warriors, united across ages and sizes with unwavering commitment. Malayalam cinema superstar Mohanlal was followed by many others from the arts, literature, sports, politics, and media as Toofan Warriors. The next phase is Toofan Care, run in cooperation with selected hospitals in the state. This component is entirely humanitarian: it treats people addicted to drugs with compassion rather than treating them solely as criminals, rehabilitates them, and brings them back into the social mainstream through extensive

Toofan Janasabha refers to public awareness conventions and district-level assemblies organised across Kerala to increase awareness about drug abuse. Toofan Janasabhas are held in all assembly constituencies under the leadership of MLAs.

reintegration work.

Public vigilance is power for law enforcers. When the authority of government combines with this active, non-partisan public participation, Operation Toofan: The Narco Hunt becomes the biggest mass movement against drugs India has seen. Where ordinary raids only temporarily disrupt the drug market, Operation

Toofan is cutting at the roots of distribution networks and their financial sources. I extend my heartfelt thanks to the enlightened people of Kerala who have joined this grand struggle. For the safety of future generations, we will continue this fight with greater strength until a drug-free new Kerala becomes fully real.

Student Police Cadets are working as Toofan Warriors in schools across Kerala. Activities related to Operation Toofan are currently underway in nearly 17,000 schools. The aim is to bring children together by organising various programmes and to unite them in the fight against drugs.

OPERATION TOOFAN

Three pronged strategy

- Toofan Strikes is the aggressive, state-wide anti-drug and enforcement crackdown. Across Kerala, state and central enforcement agencies conduct coordinated raids targeting drug traffickers and supply chains.
- Toofan Warriors are student volunteers, youth, and prominent public figures appointed as anti-drug ambassadors. The initiative encourages the public to wear the Toofan Warrior badge and commit to keeping their campuses and local communities drug-free.
- Toofan Care is a clinical rehabilitation and counselling initiative launched by the Home Department. It provides confidential treatment, clinical counselling, and support for individuals suffering from substance abuse and withdrawal symptoms

Operational Highlights

Figures up to
28 June 2026

Total cases registered
5,133

Total arrests
5,502

Seizures
3.483 kg of MDMA
357.56 kg of cannabis

Highest number of cases
recorded in Kozhikode city

Most arrests recorded in
Malappuram district (553)



Kerala Police is conducting extensive raids as part of Operation Toofan

Priyadarshini: A New Chapter in Women's Mobility

C.P. John

Minister for Transport



Chief Minister V.D. Satheesan sharing happiness with VP Sheela, the driver of inaugural Priyadarshini bus, who is also KSRTC's first woman bus driver

A transformative welfare initiative redefining mobility for women in Kerala, Priyadarshini combines economic relief, social empowerment, and inclusive public transport accessibility.

June 15, 2026, marked a new chapter in the history of freedom of mobility and dignity for women in Kerala. As part of the Indira Guarantee, the State Government launched the Priyadarshini scheme, enabling free travel for women and transgender persons in KSRTC ordinary bus services. This decision stands as clear proof that the government is fulfilling, word for word, the promises it made to the people.

Simple, Transparent, Universal

In the first phase of the scheme all women and transgender persons, irrespective of age, income or social status are entitled to travel free of cost on all KSRTC ordinary services. There is no requirement for special documentation or prior registration. Passengers only need to obtain a zero-value Priyadarshini ticket through the Electronic Ticket Machine (ETM) from the conductor during travel.

Through this ticketing system, accurate details of every journey will be recorded, ensuring transparency and enabling precise accounting. At

The government is ensuring this right for women not by weakening KSRTC, but by strengthening it.

present, the Corporation operates 3,125 ordinary buses, ensuring that the benefits of this scheme reach every corner of the State.

Strengthening KSRTC While Delivering Welfare

The entire financial burden of the scheme will be borne by the State Government. To ensure KSRTC's financial commitments and daily operational expenses remain unaffected, a smooth cash transfer and financial management system has been put in place.

The Corporation will also take steps to identify non-fare revenue streams to offset any additional financial liabilities arising from the scheme. The fundamental principle of this initiative is that KSRTC's revenue will remain fully protected. The government is ensuring this right for women not by weakening KSRTC, but by strengthening it.

Direct Benefits to Women

The most significant socio-economic advantage of the scheme is that the money saved on travel expenses will directly translate into additional income in the hands of families. For lakhs of women who travel daily for work, education, healthcare, and market visits, this will mean substantial monthly savings in household budgets.

With the barrier of travel costs removed, women's participation in the workforce is expected to rise. More women will be encouraged to pursue education, skill development, and entrepreneurial ventures. Beyond economic benefits, the

KSRTC will take steps to identify non-fare revenue streams to offset any additional financial liabilities arising from this scheme.



Chief Minister V.D. Satheesan hands over the first zero-value ticket; He is flanked by Ministers C.P. John and K.A. Thulasi among others

scheme guarantees the freedom for women to step into public spaces with confidence and dignity, without being confined within the four walls of their homes. Given that nearly half of KSRTC's passengers are women, the impact of this scheme will be felt directly in households across Kerala.

Economic Momentum for Society at Large

As the money saved by women on travel begins flowing into local markets and small businesses, it will generate significant momentum for the local economy. Increased female participation in the workforce will strengthen family incomes and, in turn, contribute to the State's overall economic growth.

At the same time, a shift from private vehicles to public transport will substantially reduce fuel consumption, carbon emissions, and traffic congestion. In this sense, the Priyadarshini scheme is also a crucial step towards Kerala's green development goals.

From Village Services to Night Services: The Road Ahead

The government is also envisioning further measures rooted in the belief that public transport is a right of the people. Gramavandi services, which are highly beneficial to people in village areas, will be expanded. In collaboration with local self-government institutions, steps will be taken to implement this

project in more regions.

Facilities will also be introduced for individuals and institutions willing to donate buses to KSRTC. This will be an innovative initiative that ensures greater community participation in strengthening the public transport network. The feasibility of new routes will be scientifically studied with the assistance of experts and the support of modern technologies. Based on recent urbanisation and developmental changes, the real travel needs of the public will be identified, and new routes will be designed in the most beneficial way for commuters.

Simultaneously, the possibility of introducing new night services will also be examined. Safe travel facilities during night hours, especially for women returning late after work, will provide immense relief and reassurance.

A New Chapter

The government has made it clear that further steps will be designed after evaluating the outcomes of the scheme and the efficiency of its implementation. Priyadarshini opens a new chapter in the history of women's freedom of mobility and dignity in Kerala.

The government's vision is to ensure the participation of lakhs of women in this landmark initiative, which is set to become a historic milestone in Kerala's journey of social progress.

Evolving Society, Growing Freedom



Niranjana R.S.

Second year M.A. JMC
SRM University, Chennai

Kerala's Priyadarshini Scheme is transforming everyday travel into economic relief, mobility, and empowerment for women statewide.



From students travelling to college to employees commuting to work, KSRTC buses connect thousands of women across Kerala to opportunities and essential services every day. For many of them, the journey no longer comes with the daily worry of setting aside money for bus fare. The State government's Priyadarshini Scheme, which provides free travel on KSRTC ordinary services, has emerged as a significant step towards economic relief, social inclusion, and women's empowerment.

Unlike many welfare programmes that target specific income groups, the Priyadarshini Scheme is available to women of all ages regardless of their financial background. It also extends benefits to members of the transgender community travelling in ordinary KSRTC buses

throughout the state. The initiative covers daily commuter routes, intra-district and inter-district services, as well as rural and semi-urban routes, ensuring that people from different regions can benefit from the programme.

The significance of the scheme becomes evident when viewed through the daily operations of KSRTC depots. Take for instance the case of Neyyattinkara depot in Thiruvananthapuram, which operates a large number of ordinary bus services and records a high volume of passengers on these routes. Around 48 to 55 ordinary services are frequently availed by commuters. A majority of the passengers travelling on these buses are women, including students, employees, and homemakers.

KSRTC employee Renjith, says "If you observe the passenger flow in ordinary services, especially

in depots like Neyyattinkara and Kattakada, you can clearly see that a large number of the commuters are women. These buses are an essential part of their daily lives. The Priyadarshini Scheme has reduced the financial burden on many of them and has made public transport more accessible".

The benefits of the scheme are not just statistical but deeply personal. The reduction in transportation expenses allows women to allocate money towards education, household needs, savings, and other essential expenses. Estimates suggest that daily commuters can save between ₹800 and ₹1,000 per month, resulting in annual savings of up to ₹12,000. Such savings can make a significant difference in the financial stability of households.

The benefits of the Priyadarshini Scheme are already being felt by regular commuters.

By reducing transportation expenses, the government helps create greater opportunities and mobility for women from different economic and social backgrounds.

Anamika, a daily passenger travelling from Kattakada to Kazhakootam, shared how the initiative has eased her financial burden- "For someone travelling such a long distance regularly, the expenses added up quickly, and therefore the scheme has helped me save a considerable amount every month."

The impact of the scheme is equally evident among students pursuing higher education. Amritha, a college student who travels daily from Neyyattinkara to Karamana, spoke about the difference the initiative has made in her life. The distance between her home and college is nearly 30 kilometres, making transportation a major recurring expense.

"Before the scheme was introduced, travelling to college every day was expensive. Now I don't have to worry about spending money on bus fares. This scheme has helped me a lot."

For students like Amritha, the initiative is not merely a concession; it is a support system that makes education more accessible and affordable.

Another student, Ananya, who travels daily from Balaramapuram to S.N. College, Chempazhanthy, also highlighted the benefits of the programme.

"The travel expense was a regular burden for me; with the help of this scheme, I am able to save money, and travelling has become much easier." Ananya also believes that the benefits extend beyond students. "This scheme



is equally beneficial for working women who depend on public transport every day," she added.

The scheme has also made a difference in the lives of homemakers who depend on public transport for their daily activities. Saritha, a homemaker, shared her views -

"As a homemaker, the Priyadarshini Scheme has been extremely beneficial for me. Free bus travel has reduced my transportation expenses and allows me to travel more independently and confidently. This scheme is a great support, especially for homemakers like me who do not have a regular source of income," she said.

There is an often-overlooked aspect of public transportation. For women who do not earn a regular income, even small travel expenses can become a burden. The scheme enables them to visit hospitals,

markets, government offices, and family members without worrying about transportation costs. In doing so, it enhances both their mobility and independence.

Despite all these benefits, the scheme faces financial challenges. Government estimates that its implementation could result in additional annual burden for KSRTC. However, the government has maintained that the social benefits of the initiative outweigh the costs.

The Priyadarshini Scheme represents more than free bus travel. It reflects a commitment to creating a more inclusive and accessible public transport system for women. As KSRTC buses continue to carry women across cities, towns, and villages, the Priyadarshini Scheme stands as a reminder that access to affordable transportation can open doors to education, employment, independence, and opportunity. For many women across Kerala, every free bus journey is not just a ride, it is a step towards empowerment.

The government has maintained that the social benefits of the initiative outweigh the costs.

Resolve that Moves Mountains

Staff Reporter



Minister Roji M. John meeting members of seven families

Five Decades of Discord. Five Decisive Deliberations. Finally, a Resolution at Midnight

The clock inside the Ernakulam District Collectorate chamber ticked steadily towards 12:00 AM. The night air was heavy with the quiet anxiety of seven families who had known no peace for over fifty years. Alongside them stood a weary but resolute contingent of journalists, lenses aimed at the closed doors, waiting with bated breath.

Inside that room, history was being rewritten. For five decades, the Pariyathukavu land dispute at Malayidamthuruth near Kizhakkambalam had been a festering

wound—a saga of bitter legal battles, fifteen eviction attempts, and scenes of heartbreaking conflict.

Yet, as June 15th bled into midnight, a definitive pen stroked across paper. The deadlock was broken.

What 58 years of litigation could not achieve, five rounds of decisive, human-centric deliberations accomplished in a matter of weeks.

From the Brink of Despair

For generations, seven Scheduled Caste families had called the 2.69-acre settlement at Pariyathukavu their home. However, a prolonged legal battle over the land's ownership with the heirs of the late Kannatt Sankaran Nair eventually culminated in an unyielding eviction order.

Fourteen times, court commissioners and police details had marched toward the colony, only to

be met by a wall of desperate, human resistance. The fifteenth attempt, occurring just as the new government took charge, escalated into a standoff.

Flashpoints of violence, police intervention, and subsequent criminal cases left the residents staring down the barrel of homelessness.

"We will not allow these families to be thrown onto the streets," declared Higher Education Minister Roji M. John, who is also in charge of the district, during an early emergency intervention. It was a promise that marked a profound shift in the government's approach—moving away from mechanical law enforcement towards empathetic, people-centric diplomacy.

The Satheesan Strategy: Deliberation over Force

When Kunnathunad MLA V.P. Sajeendran brought the escalating crisis



Parties involved in the Pariyathukavu land dispute sign a settlement agreement in the presence of Minister Roji M. John, MLA V.P. Sajeendran and Collector G. Priyanka

Photo credit: M.A. Jayan, IPRD.

to the floor of the Assembly via a Calling Attention Motion, Chief Minister V.D. Satheesan took a definitive stance. The Chief Minister explicitly instructed district Minister Roji M. John, MLA Sajeendran, and District Collector G. Priyanka to take the legal and emotional weight off the families' shoulders.

The strategy was simple: hear everyone. Compromise everywhere possible. Do not leave the room until it is settled.

The final marathon session was the culmination of five exhaustive high-level sittings.

Landowners, residents, revenue officials, and law enforcement personnel sat face-to-face. Hours blurred into one another as every grievance was aired, every boundary negotiated, and every anxiety pacified.

The Midnight Accord

When the doors finally opened at midnight, the exhaustion on the faces of the officials dissolved into triumphant smiles. An amicable settlement had been signed by both parties.

"We listened to every single side for hours," a visibly relieved Minister Roji M. John stated as the media swarmed the district collector's chamber at midnight. "The government has

adopted this case as its own. We secured a stay from the High Court and prepared a meticulous plan to hold peace in Pariyathukavu"

Terms of the Settlement Land Allocation

The heirs of the Kannatt family will formally part with 5 cents of land to each of the seven resident families right within the disputed property.

Panchayat Access Road

A 3-meter wide access road will be carved out and handed over to the local Panchayat to ensure permanent connectivity.

Dignified Housing

The government will oversee the construction of modern houses measuring no less than 1,000 sq. ft. funded through corporate/private sponsorship, to be completed within one year.

Interim Protection

Families are legally permitted to remain in their existing homes completely undisturbed until the new structures are ready.

Total Amnesty

The state government will initiate legal procedures to completely

withdraw all criminal cases registered against the residents during past eviction protests.

A New Blueprint for Governance

By June 29, the formal survey sketches were ready for distribution to the residents and subsequent submission to the High Court by Advocate General. To ensure that the ink on the contract translates into brick and mortar on the ground, Muvattupuzha RDO and Perumbavoor DySP have been tasked with monitoring the progress weekly and reporting directly to the District Collector. The resolution of the Pariyathukavu crisis stands as a watershed moment for the new government. It proves that even the most deeply entrenched, fifty-year-old discords can yield to peaceful resolution when governance prioritises dignity over disruption and midnight deliberations over morning evictions.

For seven families who walked into the collectorate fearing displacement, the midnight hour did not bring darkness—it brought the dawn of a secure future.

Building Resilient Leaders for Tomorrow

Staff Reporter



Who plans evacuations, develops early warning systems, coordinates relief operations, and leads rehabilitation and reconstruction after disasters? The answer lies in a new generation of professionally trained disaster management professionals

The 2018 Kerala floods, Wayanad landslides, COVID-19 pandemic, cyclones, coastal erosion, heat waves, and extreme rainfall have shown that disasters are no longer isolated events but a constant reality in our rapidly changing world. Whenever

disaster strikes, we witness the extraordinary efforts of rescue teams, healthcare professionals, police personnel, firefighters, volunteers, and local communities. Yet, behind every successful disaster response lies months, often years of meticulous planning, risk assessment, coordination, logistics, communication, and leadership.

Recognising the growing need for such experts, the Institute of Land and Disaster Management (ILDM), established in 1995, an autonomous institution under the Department of Revenue, Government of Kerala, has emerged as one of the country's premier centres for disaster management education, research, training, and capacity building. As a key training partner

of the National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM), Government of India, ILDM has significantly contributed to strengthening disaster resilience and institutional capacity across the State and beyond. Understanding that disaster management today demands not only technical expertise but also managerial competence, leadership, and innovation, ILDM introduced the MBA in Disaster Management, affiliated with the University of Kerala and approved by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).

Learning Beyond the Classroom

What truly distinguishes the MBA in Disaster Management at ILDM is its emphasis on experiential learning. The programme firmly believes that disasters cannot be fully understood through textbooks alone, they must be studied in the field, where students witness real-life challenges, interact with communities, and learn directly from practitioners and policymakers.

The students have undertaken extensive field studies on the Wayanad landslides, analysing disaster impacts, rehabilitation measures, and long-term mitigation strategies. In Lakshadweep, students examined island-specific disaster vulnerabilities and reviewed Disaster Management Plans to

understand coastal and island resilience. Educational tours across South India enabled students to study diverse disaster preparedness systems, governance models, and best practices adopted by different States. Students have also gained valuable insights into crowd management and emergency planning through field studies conducted during the Maha Kumbh Mela at Prayagraj.

The International Academic Exposure Programme to Sri Lanka was graciously hosted by the World Health Organisation (WHO) Country Office, Colombo, which facilitated an exceptional platform for academic engagement with leading United Nations agencies and National Disaster Management Institutions. Throughout the programme, students interacted with experts from WHO, FAO, WFP, UNV, IOM, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, and UNICEF, gaining valuable insights into global best practices in disaster risk reduction, emergency preparedness, public health, humanitarian response, and resilience building.

Learning does not end with field visits. Students critically analyse their observations and prepare comprehensive field reports under faculty guidance. These reports have been officially published with ISBN numbers and submitted to government departments, thereby contributing

For graduates seeking a meaningful career that combines management, technology, public service, research, sustainability, and social impact, the MBA in Disaster Management at ILDM offers an exceptional opportunity to become part of a profession that truly makes a difference.

to policy discussions and future planning in disaster management. This unique practice enables students to experience the complete cycle of field research from data collection and analysis to publication and knowledge dissemination.

A Curriculum Designed for the Future

The MBA in Disaster Management integrates management education with disaster science to address emerging global challenges. The curriculum includes disaster risk reduction, climate change and sustainability, humanitarian logistics and supply chain management, GIS and geospatial technologies, public health emergencies, emergency planning, data analytics, disaster policies and governance, business continuity, leadership, and professional communication.

An Environment that Inspires Learning

ILDM provides a vibrant academic environment supported by experienced faculty members and distinguished experts from government, academia, research institutions, industry, and international organisations. Students benefit from smart classrooms, advanced GIS and computer laboratories, a well-equipped digital library, high-speed Wi-Fi, hostel facilities, conference halls, wellness and counselling support, meditation and yoga facilities, and multimedia incubation facilities. These resources foster academic excellence while promoting holistic personal and professional development.

Career Opportunities

Graduates of the MBA in Disaster Management are well positioned for careers in

disaster management authorities, government departments, national and international organisations, United Nations agencies, NGOs, research institutions, climate and sustainability organisations, infrastructure and urban planning projects, humanitarian organisations, corporate sustainability and ESG divisions, insurance and risk management companies, development consultancies, and academic and research institutions.

Designed for Tomorrow

Disaster management is no longer confined to responding after a crisis. It is about anticipating risks, strengthening preparedness, protecting development gains, and building resilient communities capable of withstanding future challenges. For graduates seeking a meaningful career that combines management, technology, public service, research, sustainability, and social impact, the MBA in Disaster Management at ILDM offers an exceptional opportunity to become part of a profession that truly makes a difference.

Because the leaders who save lives during a disaster are often the ones who prepared long before it began.

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INDUSTRY HIT

“

Mammootty

“Gratitude to the new government for all the benefits promised to the Malayalam film industry. May everything be implemented swiftly.”



“

Mohanlal

“I wholeheartedly welcome the government's decision in the new budget to announce projects, including the Cultural Park, aimed at uplifting and strengthening the cinema sector. There is no doubt that these initiatives will bring renewed energy and growth to the film industry. The announcement of steps to recognize cinema as an industry will offer new hope to thousands of film workers. My heartfelt thanks to Chief Minister Shri V. D. Satheesan and Cultural Affairs Minister Shri P. C. Vishnunath.”



“

Prithviraj Sukumaran

“The government's assurance that a Film City will be established in Kochi in the name of Shri J. C. Daniel, who can truly be called the creator of Malayalam cinema, and that cinema will be recognized as an industry, fills me with happiness, pride, and confidence as someone deeply connected to celluloid. Another noteworthy announcement is the formation of an anti-piracy cell. We can hope that this will become a protective shield for the film industry. My gratitude to the government, Chief Minister Shri V. D. Satheesan, and Cinema Minister Shri P. C. Vishnunath.”



“

Tovino Thomas

“I extend my gratitude to the government and Chief Minister Shri V. D. Satheesan for declaring cinema as an industry. The decision to sympathetically consider a long-standing demand raised by film workers is, in my view, a recognition of the thousands of people working in this field. It is also a matter of great happiness that Kerala will be marked on the country's cinematic map through the J. C. Daniel Film City. The Anti-Piracy Cell was also a much-needed initiative. Once again, my greetings and appreciation.”



“

Manju Warrier

“The budget announcement of establishing a Film City in Kochi under the name 'Chitranagaram' brings immense happiness. It becomes even more meaningful as it stands as a tribute to Shri J. C. Daniel, the founding figure of Malayalam cinema. At the same time, the decision to grant industry status to cinema is a recognition of an entire workforce. As a film artist, I extend my gratitude to the government for taking decisions that will expand our film world and lead it towards limitless possibilities. I also hope that the introduction of an Anti-Piracy Cell will put an end to a menace that has long harmed the film industry.”







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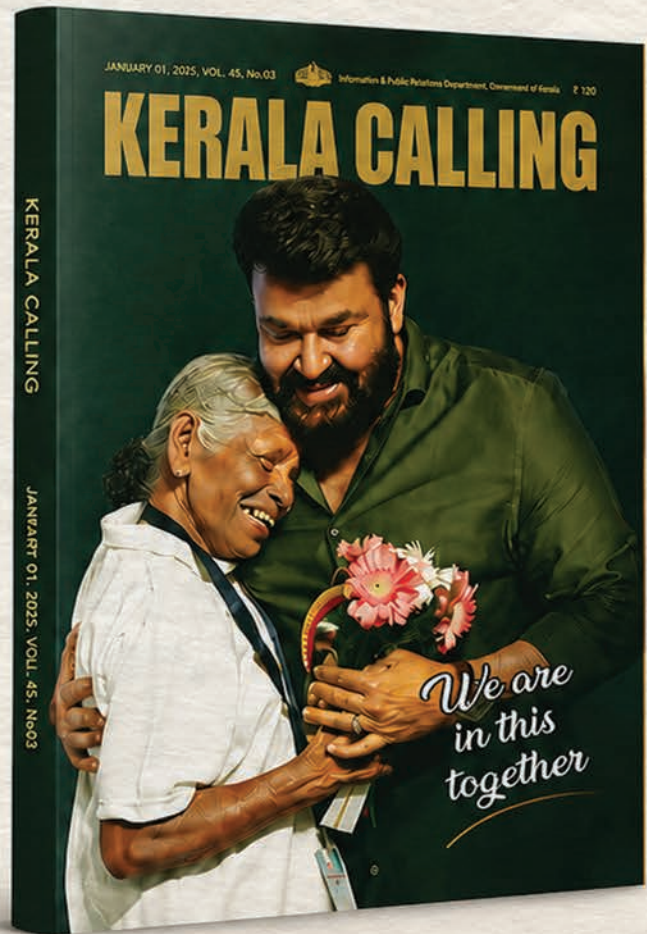
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