

Alappuzha: Development packag To Be Revived

CM makes slew of promises for flood-ravaged Kuttanad

Development Package To Be Revived

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Alappuzha: The government would approach the Centre for reviving the schemes under the Kuttanad wetland ecosystem development package to reduce the impact of flooding in the region, chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan said on Sunday.

Speaking at a meeting held at the Alappuzha Medical College auditorium to review flood relief operations in Alappuzha and Kottayam, he promised a slew of measures to mitigate the damages caused by the floods and to prevent such calamities in future.

A flood alert system will be set up in the region, Vijayan said. "Moreover, we will introduce construction technologies which can survive floods. Solar power projects will be considered to avoid power dis-



Chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan speaks at a review meeting held at the golden jubilee auditorium of Alappuzha Medical College on Sunday

ruption during floods," he said.

"Panchayat and taluk-level 'adalats' will be held to help people who have lost their legal documents in the flood. The collector should help flood-affected people avail hassle-free loans. Cooperative banks should provide special loans to small-scale traders who have been hit by the floods. The next cabinet meeting will decide on declaring moratorium to agriculture loans. It will also decide on announcing some relaxation on payment of electricity and water bills. An action plan

will be prepared to provide compensation to farmers who lost their livestock," he said.

"To prevent floods, we should ensure that the water flows free. So, lagoons and lakes need to be cleared. We will provide more water ambulances to water-locked areas. The health department will take concrete steps to tackle epidemics," Vijayan said. The chief minister also stressed upon the need to initiate cleaning drives under the Suchitwa Mission.

"Road repairing works will be executed in a time-bound

manner," he added. While concluding the speech, he said the worst was over for Kuttanad. "The initiative being taken for mitigation of damages caused by the floods are commendable. In future, it should be referred to as 'Kuttanadan model', he said.

PWD minister G Sudhakaran, who spoke on the occasion, said Alappuzha has suffered a loss of Rs 1,000 crore in the floods. The loss on account of the destruction of roads has been estimated at Rs 300 crore, he said.

Vijayan leaves in a huff: As Pinarayi Vijayan was about to leave after chairing the two-hour-long meeting, TV media personnel crowded around him for his comments about the outcome of the meeting. As he started to speak, the mike of one of the TV channels brushed against him. An upset CM abruptly stopped speaking, walked towards his car and left the venue. However, after about three hours, he posted the details of the review meeting on his Facebook page.