

Budget 2019-20

Speech of

Manpreet Singh Badal

Finance Minister

18 February, 2019

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

1. Today, I rise to render the account of the Finances of the Punjab, under the able stewardship of Hon'ble Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh Ji, for the year that is about to close (2018-19) and to submit our financial proposals for the next year (2019-20). I trust that the one will be found in order, and the other will prove acceptable. In conducting the year's finances, strictest adherence has been observed to established principles of financial procedure. It has been repeatedly asserted by the highest authorities that finance "has a way of taking terrible revenge upon nations or individuals who neglect or despise it". I have taken care, in obedience to this salutary warning, that all possible attention and respect is shown to the minutest requirements and that there be no occasion of our being visited with any of finance's dire revenges or punishment.

2. Two years ago, we asked the people of Punjab to give us a mandate. Akin to what Winston Churchill said in 1941 during the Second World War; "Give us the tools, and we will finish the job" we had asked the Punjabis to give us a chance. In 2017, they reposed their trust in Captain Amarinder Singh Ji and the Congress party and equipped us with those tools. We pray that we may be worthy of the unlimited opportunities that God and the People of Punjab have given us.

3. The main direction of our policy is now fully recognized. It consists in the steady consolidation of our finances; hand holding to the trade and commerce; increase in inclusive growth and in the expansion of what is called nation building effort. To this, have to be added programmes of, infrastructure building and more

direct relief to the farmers and poorer sections of society. Their wide reaching effect in ameliorating the conditions of the masses cannot be exaggerated.

4. Our Budget today, as last year, furnishes an unquestionable record of Commendable policy based on stern facts. Our feet are firmly on the path of progress. In the India of tomorrow, the contributions of the Punjab, should exercise a very considerable, if not an all determining influence.

5. I am reminded of the hauntingly beautiful words of the great poet of the Punjab, Allama Iqbal, I quote in original :-

YEHI AIN-E-QUDRAT HAI,
YEHI ASLOOBE FITRAT HAI,
JO HAI RAHE AMAL MEIN GAAMZAN,
MEHBOOB-E-FITRAT HAI.

(This the law of Nature, the way by her prescribed.

He who treads the path of action is the nature's favoured child.)

6. I can invite attention here only to the leading facts of our state finances. Details have been set forth with elaborate care in the lucid Explanatory Memorandum circulated separately. I must attempt a survey un-encumbered by details to help Hon'ble members to form a definite and sure picture of our finances.

7. Mr. Speaker Sir, I am optimistic and I draw strength and hope in the inherent ability of Punjab to rise and regain its rightful place at the high table of States of the Union.

8. I would like to inform the august House that a Memorandum has been submitted by the Government of Punjab to the Fifteenth Finance Commission containing the state's views and suggestions on the various aspects of the fiscal relations between the Centre and the states. The formidable spatial, social and fiscal constraints faced by the state in the attainment of desirable outcomes have

also been extensively documented in the Memorandum which has been very well received by the Commission. The Commission has appreciated the efforts made by the State Government to restore the state's economy and fiscal health and I am happy to inform the House that the Commission has notified a Committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Ramesh Chand, Member, Fifteenth Finance Commission, with representatives from the Ministry of Food and Public distribution and Ministry of Finance, Government of India and Chief Secretary, Government of Punjab to recommend a time bound resolution to the festering CCL issue that is plaguing the State's Finances

Mr. Speaker Sir,

9. While the previous Government inflicted several wounds on the state's fiscal, the unkindest cut of them all was the conversion of ₹30584.11 crore of CCL gap into long-term loan on the last day of the previous Government.

Sir,

10. We now have documentary evidence that proves that the Government of India was willing to apportion the burden between itself and the Banks, but the then Government for reasons best known to them, put this onerous burden on the people of Punjab. Nothing can be more unkind to the Punjabi taxpayer than this.

11. Nonetheless, faced with a burden of servicing the long term debt @ ₹ 3,240 crore per annum for 17 years on account of the legacy gap in CCL, the State Government is actively engaged in making all possible efforts to reduce the recurring gap arising on account of food procurement every year. As an outcome of the concerted efforts taken by the State Government, the CCL gap has reduced by 11.87% from 2016-17 to 2017-18. It is noteworthy that with respect to Wheat procurement, the gap has reduced by a remarkable 43.36% over the same period.

12. Boosted by the persistent efforts of the present Government, the state is on

a fiscal recovery path. As is evident from Punjab's performance across various economic and financial indicators published by Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the state has posted a primary surplus to the extent of 0.60% of GSDP in 2017-18. This is indicative of the state's efforts towards fiscal responsibility, in spite of the onerous imposition of additional debt servicing liability. The present Government, however, remains focused in its aim to gradually reduce the crushing burden of debt, to restore the fiscal health of the state and revitalize the economy of Punjab.

13. I would like to bring to the notice of this august House that my Government is not only determined to incur development and productive expenditure, but also plans effective monitoring of the same by defining the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). We are preparing a 4 Year Strategic Action Plan 2019-23 (4 SAP) for each Department. The plan will be operationalized in the current year and enable the Government in evaluating the progress towards the attainment of pre-defined goals.

14. Mr. Speaker Sir, during 2018-19, the GSDP of the state has increased from ₹470137 crore in 2017-18 to ₹518291 crore at current prices. I am hopeful that as a result of the progressive policies of this Government, the state's GSDP during the year 2019-20 would further rise to ₹577829 crore. The per capita income of the state has also increased from ₹141552 in 2017-18 to ₹153061 in 2018-19, and is 22.06% higher than the national average of ₹125397.

FISCAL ROADMAP

Mr. Speaker Sir,

15. In this year's proposals, the state's Total Revenue Receipts are estimated to rise from ₹70399 crore in 2018-19 (RE) to ₹78510 crore in 2019-20 (BE), an increase of 11.52%. During the same period, the Own Tax Revenue (OTR) is pegged to grow at 15.06% from ₹32742 crore in 2018-19 (RE) to ₹37674 crore in 2019-20 (BE). Here, I would like to draw the attention of the House to the fact

that in the budget estimates of 2018-19, the receipts of GST were taken entirely as a component of Own Tax Revenue. However, as per the accounting procedure followed by the CAG of India, since the GST Compensation to the state is accounted as 'Grants-in-Aid' from Centre rather than the state's OTR, therefore, GST receipts for 2018-19 (RE) have been apportioned in the ratio of 65:35 between OTR and Grants-in-Aid. Similarly for 2019-20, in wake of the buoyancy of our GST revenues, emanating from the expected improvement in tax efficiency of the state, GST receipts have been apportioned in the ratio of 70:30 between OTR and Grants-in-Aid.

16. The state's Total Expenditure is projected to be at ₹158493 crore in 2019-20 (BE), i.e., 24.39% more than ₹127415 crore in 2018-19 (RE). A breakdown of the Total Expenditure shows that the state's Revenue Expenditure is expected to grow from ₹82318 crore in 2018-19 (RE) to ₹90197 crore in 2019-20 (BE), an increase of 9.57%. During the same period, Expenditure on Salaries, Wages and Grant-in-Aid (salary) is likely to increase from ₹25378 crore to ₹26979 crore, and on Pensions from ₹10254 crore to ₹10875 crore, posting an increase of 6.31% and 6.06%, respectively. Therefore, the expenditure on account of Salaries & Wages, and Grant-in Aid (salary) and Pensions to the employees/retirees will alone rise by 6.24%. The total revenue expenditure on these committed liabilities will itself be 50.61% and 48.22% of Total Revenue Receipts of the state during 2018-19 (RE) and 2019-20 (BE), respectively.

17. On account of the drastic imposition of additional interest payment liabilities by the previous government on the state, the ratio of Interest Payment to Total Revenue Receipts ballooned from 24.26% in 2016-17 to 28.93% in 2017-18, which happens to be one of the highest amongst all states. Further, for 2018-19 (RE) and 2019-20 (BE), this ratio is expected to be 23.17% and 22.51%, respectively. This exorbitantly high interest burden of Punjab is a continuous drag on the state's resources.

18. Mr. Speaker Sir, the Capital Expenditure of the state is estimated to be at ₹22842 crore in 2019-20 (BE). It may be noted that on account of one-time conversion of the UDAY loan into Equity & Capital Grant, our capital expenditure has risen by 368.88% in 2019-20 (BE) over 2018-19 (RE). However, the net capital expenditure, after excluding the UDAY effect, is projected at ₹7214 crore in 2019-20 (BE), i.e. an increase of 206.72% over 2017-18 and 48.07% over 2018-19 (RE).

19. Taking a holistic view of the given circumstances of trends in receipts, expenditures and committed liabilities, I have been able to peg the revenue deficit only at 2.02% of GSDP in the year 2019-20. Nonetheless, we remain steadfast in our resolve to reduce the revenue deficit and to foster the state into an era of revenue surplus just as the primary surplus secured by our Government in 2017-18.

20. I am happy to state that we have been able to contain the fiscal deficit at a much lower level of 2.65% for 2017-18 as against 12.30% in 2016-17 and 4.36% (2017-18 RE). Taking a holistic view, as of now, I have been able to restrict the fiscal deficit at 3.40% during the current financial year 2019-20.

DEBT POSITION

Mr. Speaker Sir,

21. The House is fully aware that our Government was welcomed with a heavy debt burden, yet, we are firm in our commitment of instilling fiscal discipline, even in the face of this major challenge of legacy debt accumulation.

22. The total outstanding debt of the state as on 31.03.2019 is projected at ₹212276 crore which is 40.96% of GSDP for 2018-19 (RE) and the Outstanding Debt is likely to be ₹229612 crore in 2019-20 (BE) which is 39.74% of GSDP. We have, thus, been able to continuously reduce the Debt/GSDP ratio from what we inherited. I would like to inform the august House that due to the irresponsible

fiscal actions of the previous Government, in the year 2016-17, our debt accumulated to 42.61% of GSDP, much higher than other General Category States (GCS) like Andhra Pradesh (36.4%), West Bengal (31.9%), Kerala (31.1%), Tamil Nadu (21.8%) and Maharashtra (17.5%). As against the allowed net borrowing limit of ₹17335 crore for financial year 2019-20, the debt servicing (Principal + Interest) for 2019-20 is a whopping ₹30309 crore. The servicing of the state's huge debt pre-empts its major revenue receipts, leaving it with little resources for credible developmental efforts. In essence, on account of the reckless fiscal management for ten years, the state is in worse than a Debt Trap scenario.

23. Notwithstanding, our Government has undertaken several reform measures in the last two years to not only augment its revenue, but also to bring in fiscal discipline by rationalizing its expenditure and by ensuring better debt and cash management. In a break from the past, the growth of 9.42% in the Nominal GSDP from 2016-17 to 2017-18 has outpaced the growth of 6.92% in Outstanding Debt over the same period. The same is projected at 11.49% and 8.17%, respectively for the period 2018-19 (RE) to 2019-20 (BE). The percentage of Outstanding Debt to Total Revenue Receipts has declined from 380.38% in 2016-17 to 368.15% in 2017-18 and is projected at 292.46% in 2019-20. Our Government has also achieved commendable progress as Total Revenue Receipts as a percentage of GSDP clocked a figure of 11.28% in 2017-18, which is the highest since 2010-11.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

24. Before I give a synopsis of the steps that we are taking in different sectors, I would like to give you an overall picture. Our Government, in pursuance of its commitment towards the welfare and development of agriculture and allied activities has hiked the budget allocation of the agriculture and allied sector to ₹13643 crore in 2019-20. Excluding the effect of debt relief, the allocation to this sector has been increased by ₹159 crore. Similarly, the allocations for Education and Health sectors has been raised by 9.75% and 10.87%, respectively. The

allocation to develop our rural and urban infrastructure has been hiked by 36.08% and 19.94%, respectively, whereas 21.32% hike in the allocation has been given for improving accessibility and connectivity.

FARMERS WELFARE

AGRICULTURE

DEBT RELIEF

Mr. Speaker Sir,

25. No other Government, in recent history has dedicated itself to the farmer's welfare than this Government of Captain Amarinder Singh Ji. Our Government, in line with the philosophy of "Khushhal Kissan, Pragatisheel Naujawan" has taken a concrete step for the welfare of our indebted farmer under the flagship "Farm Loan Waiver Scheme" by offering succour to the farmer. Under this scheme, crop loans up to ₹2 lakh of marginal and small farmers have been waived off by the Government. So far, 5.83 lakh marginal and small farmers across the state have been provided a total relief amounting to ₹4736 crore as part of implementation of this scheme. Our Government, in the next phase of implementation of this scheme, will waive off the loans of landless farm labourers and the families of farmers who have been forced to commit suicides. I propose a total allocation of ₹3000 crore during 2019-20 for these sections of the society. Let me assure the House, that this Government will take all necessary steps to relieve the farmer of its debt stress.

FREE POWER TO FARMERS

Mr. Speaker Sir,

26. In furtherance of our commitment to our farmers, our policy of supplying free power to agriculture sector shall continue. I propose an increased allocation of ₹8969 crore in 2019-20 in this regard.

RASHTRIYA KRISHI VIKAS YOJNA (RKVY)

27. The revival of agriculture requires an integrated and inclusive development of agriculture and allied sectors through a comprehensive agriculture development plan. I propose an allocation of ₹200 crore during 2019-20 for RKVY to achieve this goal. Similarly, suitable allocation has been provided for the extension services (ATMA).

SOIL HEALTH CARDS AND LABS

28. To assist the farmers in maintaining soil fertility through balanced application of fertilizers, 17.02 lac soil health cards have been prepared and distributed to the farmers after testing their soils. The State Government proposes to allocate ₹5.50 crore for upgradation of soil health labs this year.

DEVELOPMENT OF MANDI INFRASTRUCTURE

29. Providing marketing infrastructure to our farmers is of the utmost importance. My Government has decided to provide basic minimum facilities in all the Mandis of the state, whether it is a mandi yard or a sub-yard. As per our commitment, we have decided to invest ₹750.00 crore in Mandi development in the first two years of our Government. Requisite funds have already been earmarked to ensure a continuous delivery of this ambitious programme.

SAVE WATER, SAVE PUNJAB

Mr. Speaker Sir,

30. Though our farmers in Punjab have achieved one of the highest land and water productivities in India, the productivity levels in recent years have been plateauing off. Resultantly, Punjab is amongst the states with the highest discharge of ground water through irrigation (34.05 bcm), 76% of the assessed blocks are over-exploited and the estimated ground water availability for future irrigation use is negative. It perturbs me that we are at the risk of desertification and an impending ecological disaster in the face of groundwater depletion.

31. Hence, we are resolute in our endeavour to address the problem of desertification of land due to groundwater depletion through development, conservation, utilisation and management of our water resources both groundwater and surface in a judicious, equitable, sustainable and economic manner. We are also in dialogue with the World Bank to help the state in its twin objectives of improving the management of its scarce resources and promotion of agriculture through reforms and diversification with the ultimate aim of enhancing resource efficiency in the water-energy-agriculture nexus.

AGRICULTURAL DIVERSIFICATION

HORTICULTURE

32. We are all aware that the paddy-wheat cycle has adversely impacted the State's natural resources - Soil and Water. Agriculture experts recommend that the State, therefore, needs to give a special emphasis to improve the sustainability of its agriculture and to diversify the cropping pattern. It needs to shift about ten lakh hectare from paddy cultivation so as to maintain its water level. I, thus, propose an allocation of ₹60.49 crore under the National Horticulture Mission during 2019-20.

HORTICULTURE ESTATES

33. Further, with an objective to optimize the utilization of resources and infrastructure already created, the Government intends to convert the 5 Citrus Estates to Horticulture Estates by covering more crops which are normally cultivated in that area in the same notified areas. For establishment of Horticulture Estates, an allocation of ₹10.00 crore is proposed in 2019-20 for providing additional machineries and facilities.

POTATO SEED VILLAGE SCHEME

34. With an objective to realize the potential of Punjab as a hub for seed potato in the country and to improve the quality of seed potato and expand the area under seed production, a new scheme called Potato Seed Village Scheme is proposed this year with an initial allocation of ₹2.00 crore. A dedicated state agency with a mandate to develop, maintain and operate a potato seed traceability system will also be notified to support our potato seed farmers.

INTEGRATED FACILITY FOR FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

35. An integrated facility for fruits and vegetables is being set up by Punjab Agri Export Corporation Limited (PAGREXCO) at Abohar for the benefit of the fruits and vegetables farmers. This facility shall make available Washing-Grading-Packing Line for carrot, Individual Quick Freezing (IQF) unit, Dehydration of fresh Fruits & Vegetables unit and carrot harvester and pneumatic planter etc. and enhance the shelf life, conserve the quality of perishable commodities, balance the harvest cycle with the marketing cycle and enable agriculture diversification. My Government is pioneering to allocate ₹19.67 crore for this project within 2019-20.

CANE GROWERS

36. We are all aware of the need to support our sugarcane farmers. I, thus, propose an amount of ₹355.00 crore to provide support to the sugarcane growers in the state during 2019-20.

CROP RESIDUE MANAGEMENT

37. The state of Punjab is fully conscious of the problem of disposal of crop residue and in particular, the burning of ਨਾੜ (naad). The State Government has launched a massive Paddy Straw Management Campaign under which ₹269.00 crore has been spent for subsidizing the agriculture machinery in Punjab. Under the In-situ Crop Residue Management, 28,500 residue management machines have been provided to farmers at a subsidy of 50% to individual farmers and up to 80% to custom hiring centres.

38. A massive awareness campaign against Paddy residue burning was undertaken to ensure minimum straw burning incidences and I am happy to share that zero burning incidents have been reported in 1341 villages across the State. The number of crop fire incidents have also been reduced by 12.4% compared to the incidents in 2017, with an overall reduction of 10% in the area under such burning incidents.

39. The state has designed a practical and achievable action plan for Crop Residue Management and ₹375.00 crore has been assured in 2019-20 for distribution of required machinery.

40. In order to curb the problem of burning of paddy straw, we are planning to set up new demonstrating units for utilization of paddy straw for manufacturing briquettes in Punjab.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY, FISHERIES AND DAIRY DEVELOPMENT

41. Livestock sector holds the requisite potential that needs to be harnessed for doubling farm incomes and reviving our stagnating rural economy. This Government is thus, providing the much deserved impetus to this sector.

DAIRY DEVELOPMENT

42. Growth of milk production will be raised by 7% during 2019-20 which will mean daily production of 368 lakh litres with a marketable surplus of about 220 lakh litres milk. Mr. Speaker Sir, I propose a new scheme - “Setting up of New Dairy Units in the State for Sustainable Livestock and Employment Generation” in the year 2019-20 to supplement the efforts of the state to achieve the goals of ending poverty and hunger. I propose an initial allocation of ₹20.00 crore for this purpose this year.

FISHERIES

43. In 2019-20, the State Government intends to bring new area to the extent of 200 hectares and 1500 hectares under shrimp and fish culture, respectively. One fish seed farm in Mansa district is being established and six re-circulatory aqua culture systems for high density fish production and 15 solar power support systems at government seed farms are also proposed to be established during 2019-20.

SEX SORTING SEMEN TECHNOLOGY PROJECT

44. A special project to increase the female cattle population and to check the stray cattle menace through semen sorting technology will be undertaken during 2019-20. The Frozen semen station, Nabha will be equipped with International technology at the total cost of ₹50.00 crore for this project.

COOPERATION

45. It is the earnest endeavour of the Government to create a socially and economically sustainable cooperative system through the promotion of autonomous and democratically managed cooperative societies. The Government would, thus, continue to provide necessary support to this sector.

DAIRY COOPERATIVES

46. The foundation stone for Verka Mega Dairy project at Bassi Pathana, to be completed in three phases, was laid on 17th November 2018 by Captain Amarinder Singh Ji. The work for processing and packaging of UHT milk has been started and an allocation of ₹62.13 crore is proposed in this regard for this project.

DRUG DEADDICTION

Mr. Speaker Sir,

47. The problem of drug abuse had heightened to an alarming level in our state in the past. The firm resolve of our Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh Ji, has turned the tide. While continuing to hunt down the anti-socials involved in the trade, our Government remains committed to wean the youth away from drugs through a multipronged strategy directed towards drug de-addiction, rehabilitation, employment generation and popularization of sports among the children and youth of our state.

DRUG DEADDICTION CENTRES

48. A new approach of providing OPD based treatment for drug de-addiction through “Outpatient Opioid Assisted Treatment (OOAT)” project was launched in all the districts. Presently, 168 OOAT clinics are functional in all the districts up to CHC level where medicines are being provided free of cost to the patients. A total

of 62,943 patients have been registered in these clinics and another 65,000 patients are taking treatment from registered Private De-addiction Centres.

BUDDY'S PROGRAMME

49. In a bid to combat the drug menace through social participation, we have launched the country's biggest addiction prevention programme for all schools and college students to educate and motivate them about ill-effects of drugs. It aims to cover 40 lakh students in the state and till now 5.5 lakh buddy groups have been formed who are continuously being taught about the ill effects of drugs by Senior Buddies.

DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION OFFICERS' (DAPO)

50. Our Government has also launched a programme to create a mass anti-drug abuse movement and I am happy to share that more than 5 lakh DAPOs self-volunteers have been enrolled for this purpose who are continuously spreading awareness and supporting those in need.

EMPLOYMENT GENERATION AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

51. Creating jobs is a key stepping stone of any economic recovery programme. Hence, in order to resolve the problem of unemployment we are committed to improve the scope of employability through skill training, counselling and guidance. The Government had decided to provide employment to poor youth under Punjab Ghar Ghar Rozgar and Karobar Mission (PGRKAM). The Portal namely Ghar Ghar Rozgar was made live in February 2018 and more than 3 lakh jobseekers and 9000+ employers have registered themselves on the Portal till date.

52. Mr. Speaker Sir, I am happy to announce that more than 1,13,000 youth have already been offered employment under this mission. I assure you that requisite budgetary support shall be made available continuously for this mission.

53. Under the umbrella scheme “Shaheed Bhagat Singh Rozgar Sirjan Yojna”, schemes like Apni Gaddi Apna Rozgar have been envisaged. Under this scheme, 24,294 candidates have been provided employment till 31-01-2019. Our Government has organized 856 Rozgar melas through which 46,659 residents have been gainfully employed till 31-01-2019.

54. It fills me with pride to share that from the Maharaja Ranjit Singh Armed Forces Preparatory Institutes, 109 cadets have joined the armed forces through NDA, OTA & IMA etc.

URBAN EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME

Mr. Speaker Sir,

55. While the UPA Government started MGNREGS in 2005 to enhance livelihood security and wage employment in rural areas, our Government is conscious of the problem of urban unemployment in Punjab. As a step to mitigate this, we propose to launch the “Mera Kamm, Mera Maan” scheme in which urban unemployed youth between the age group of 18 to 35 years will be assisted by the District Bureaus of Employment & Enterprise for both skilling and wage employment for a specified minimum days in the year. We propose to initially allocate ₹90.00 crore for this in the current year on a pilot basis. Suitable additional funds will be provided for the scheme later in the year upon stabilization of the pilot.

SPORTS, YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRIES

SPORTS AND YOUTH SERVICES

56. Sports play a critical role in positively channelizing the energy of youth. Punjab’s youth has always excelled in sports but for the last few years, we have fallen behind. Therefore, in order to instil the spirit of sportsmanship and competitiveness and to build a bottoms up hierarchy of sports events and

infrastructure to identify and nurture talent from the grassroots, our Government is making consistent efforts to revive and promote the sports culture in the State by providing quality sports infrastructure to the children and youth of Punjab right from the school level upwards. The state has already notified a new Sports Policy 2018 to encourage sports through larger participation and emulation of best practices across the country. Medal winners of Asian Games, Commonwealth Games, National Games and State Level Games have been honored with cash awards of ₹18.00 crore.

BLOCK LEVEL MULTIPURPOSE STADIUMS

57. With an objective to promote the sports in every nook and corner of the state and to wean/keep away our youth from drugs, the Government intends to provide Block Level Multipurpose Stadiums in Ludhiana, Rajpura, Amargarh, Dhuri, Nawanshahr, Khadoor Sahib and Pathankot blocks. I propose an allocation of ₹43.00 crore during 2019-20 for the scheme and we shall continue to strengthen this infrastructure in the coming years.

ICONIC SPORTS COMPLEX AT JALANDHAR

Mr. Speaker Sir,

58. As is known to the esteemed members of this House, Jalandhar has not only been a proud home to many great players like the erstwhile Captain of the Indian Hockey Team, who also happens to be a privileged member of this august House, but also has long been the hub of sports excellence and sports industry. Therefore, in furtherance to our commitment to create and enhance the sports infrastructure in the state, I propose to set up an Iconic Sports Complex at Jalandhar.

INDUSTRIES & COMMERCE

INDUSTRIAL & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT POLICY 2017

59. Our Government had notified the Industrial & Business Development Policy in 2017 to attract industrial investment which has generated immense interest among prospective investors. Under this policy, provision for wood based industrial parks has been made. The process of licensing is being amended/simplified to promote the wood based industries in the state. The transit rules for wood are also being amended to simplify the process of transportation of wood in the state for the benefit of both the farmers and industries.

SUBSIDISED POWER

60. The State Government, in an effort to counter the issue of flight of industry from Punjab to its neighboring hill states due to the lopsided policies of the Government of India, remains committed to provide subsidised power to industry. I propose to allocate ₹1513 crore on account of providing subsidized power to industry during 2019-20.

REVIVING MANDI GOBINDGARH

61. Our Government is committed to reviving one of our major industrial towns, i.e., Mandi Gobindgarh. Our policies for the last two years have borne fruit and 10 units, that had remained closed for about 5 years, have been revived in Gobindgarh. Further, NOC has been granted to about 60 new units and 38 expansion units. Nearly 63 load extension and 71 new power connection requests have been processed and 52 MoUs with an investment potential of ₹887 crore have been signed. This has certainly given a new lease of life to an industrial town that was on the downslide.

MAKE IN PUNJAB

62. A new policy, titled “Make in Punjab” is being drafted to promote goods manufactured and produced in Punjab. As per this policy, in a public procurement order, purchase preference shall be given to the local suppliers up to 50% of the total quantity, provided that their goods have a minimum local content of 40% and their bids come under 15% margin of purchase preference above the lowest bid.

TOURISM AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

63. The vision of the State Government is to establish Punjab as a world class tourist destination, promote its culture and connect the Punjabi to his cultural roots.

AMRITSAR - AN ICONIC CITY

64. The city of Amritsar occupies a unique status, not only in Punjab but internationally. Our Government proposes to prepare a comprehensive City Redevelopment Plan for Amritsar. We would invite a consortium of top architects and town planners at the global level for this purpose. I am happy to announce that we propose to allocate a sum of ₹10.00 crore in the budget for the planning of the Iconic City.

550TH PRAKASH PURAB OF SRI GURU NANAK DEV JI

65. The Government of Punjab as a humble tribute has endeavoured to celebrate “550th Prakash Purab of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji”. It is a momentous occasion to celebrate and dedicate ourselves to the message of universal brotherhood given by the Great Guru.

66. As a part of the ongoing celebrations, the State Government has already launched a series of infrastructure development programmes in the historic areas of Sultanpur Lodhi, Dera Baba Nanak and Batala, associated with the life of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

PIND BABE NANAK DA- HERITAGE MUSEUM

67. We shall set up a Heritage Museum, named “Pind Babe Nanak Da”, at Sultanpur Lodhi, depicting the life and times of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. The Museum would help to connect with Punjabis who have been away from Punjab for a long time.

SRI GURU NANAK DEV NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF INTER-FAITH STUDIES AT AMRITSAR

68. As a part of the celebrations, the Government shall establish the Sri Guru Nanak Dev National Institute of Inter-faith Studies in Guru Nanak Dev University at Amritsar. This Institute will provide a forum for study and research on Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and on comparative religions. It will also provide a platform for inter-faith studies and dialogue by fostering better understanding of the contemporary in the 21st century.

KARTARPUR SAHIB CORRIDOR

69. It is a matter of great pride and satisfaction for all of us, that we have been able to successfully prevail upon the Government of India and Pakistan to agree to open the Kartarpur Sahib Corridor to mark the historic 550th Prakash Purab celebrations. This corridor would go a long way in fostering a sense of goodwill, brotherhood and friendship amongst both the countries. Our Government will make every effort to make the corridor to Kartarpur Sahib (in Pakistan) operational before the momentous day.

DERA BABA NANAK DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

70. The State Government has decided to establish the “Dera Baba Nanak Development Authority” for the planned and holistic development of Dera Baba Nanak town as a mark of tribute on the “550th Parkash Purab of Sri Guru Naka Dev

Ji". I propose an initial allocation of ₹25.00 crore to undertake infrastructure development and other projects in the town in 2019-20.

71. I also propose a humble allocation of ₹300.00 crore in 2019-20 for celebration of 550th Prakash Purab of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. I assure the House that suitable additional support, whatever and whenever required, would also be provided during the year to mark these celebrations.

CENTENARY COMMEMORATION OF JALIANWALA BAGH MASSACRE

72. Amritsar has been the unofficial Capital of the freedom movement of our country, glorified by the great sacrifices of our brave freedom fighters. As a mark of respect, our Government is commemorating the centenary of Jallianwala Bagh Massacre on 13th April, 2019. The landmark incident shaped India's freedom struggle against the oppressive colonial regime. To mark this occasion, the State Government has planned a number of literary & cultural activities and public functions including a Shaheed Samman rally in Amritsar. An allocation of ₹5.00 crore has been earmarked for this purpose in 2019-20 and suitable additional support would be provided during the course of the year.

CELEBRATIONS OF THE 150TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FATHER OF THE NATION

73. The State Government is also celebrating the 150th birth anniversary of the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi and shall organize literary and cultural activities across the universities, colleges and schools of Punjab in the honour of the 'Father of the Nation'.

SRI ANANDPUR SAHIB - NAINA DEVI ROPEWAY

74. The Government of Punjab has signed a historic MoU with the Government of Himachal Pradesh for construction of a ropeway between Sri Anandpur Sahib and Mata Naina Devi Ji. This ropeway shall connect not only the two holy places but also the two States and most importantly two faiths. The project is envisaged under PPP mode through a special purpose vehicle (SPV) formed by both the Governments. The Government of Punjab is committed to provide adequate financial support as required by SPV for the successful completion of this project.

PROMOTING PUNJABI ZAIKA – FOOD STREET AT HOSHIARPUR, PATIALA AND BATHINDA

Mr. Speaker Sir,

75. Punjabi cuisine, the heart of our culture, is known around the world for its delicacies and flavours. Thus, with the aim of living up to this honour and enhancing the culinary experience of the visiting guests as well as the natives of Punjab. I propose to set up food streets at Hoshiarpur, Patiala and Bathinda. The same will be replicated in other cities of the state as well.

CITIZENS WELFARE

SOCIAL JUSTICE, EMPOWERMENT & MINORITIES

Mr. Speaker Sir,

76. Punjab has the highest proportion of Scheduled Caste population in the country and hence, the State Government accords top priority to safeguard the interests of these vulnerable section of the society. My Government proposes a sum of ₹1228.00 crore for various welfare schemes including Educational, Socio-Economic & other Development Programmes during the year 2019-20.

SCHOLARSHIP SCHEMES

77. Based on the online proposals of SC and OBC students for Post-Matric and Pre-Matric Scholarship, the payments are made directly in the bank accounts of students/institutions. I take this opportunity to inform the house that we have completed the post-matric scholarship audit of all 2026 private and 2081 Government educational institutions. However, in line with our commitment that the innocent student should not suffer, a sum of ₹938.71 crore is being allocated under the various scholarship schemes for the educational development of SC/BC.

ASHIRWAD

78. During 2019-20, an outlay of ₹100.00 crore has been earmarked for SC/BC/Christian/Widows/Divorcee & Daughters of Widows of any caste at the time of their marriage.

PRADHAN MANTRI ADARSH GRAM YOJNA

79. Under the scheme, a sum of ₹30.00 crore has been earmarked for providing basic minimum services like education, health, water supply, sanitation and disposal of sludge water and upgradation of infrastructure facilities in SC concentrated villages.

PSCFC & BACKFINCO

80. Punjab Scheduled Castes Land Development & Finance Corporation and Punjab Backward Classes Land Development & Finance Corporation have waived off loans of 14,260 and 1630 beneficiaries belonging to the SC & BC communities, last year.

SOCIAL SECURITY & WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

81. Mr. Speaker Sir, we are committed to ensure regular payment of social security pensions directly into the accounts of nearly 20 lakh beneficiaries during the year 2019-20. The allocation for Social Security and Women & Child Development

has, thus, been increased from ₹2545.62 crore for 2018-19 to ₹2835.82 crore, which includes the provision for monthly pension @ ₹750 per beneficiary to Old Age persons, Widows, Dependent children and persons with disabilities.

INTEGRATED CHILD DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

82. My Government has also allotted ₹736.99 crore for “Integrated Child Development Scheme” to provide supplementary nutrition to cover about 12 lakh children and pregnant women & lactating mothers during 2019-20. In addition, ₹106.61 crore has been earmarked under *Poshan Abhiyan* to improve the nutritional status of new born babies, children up to 0-6 years, adolescent girls, pregnant women & lactating mothers and reduce malnourishment in a time-bound manner. This scheme earlier implemented in 7 districts has now been extended to all districts of the state. In order to improve service delivery and real-time monitoring, Common Application Software (CAS) and other IT assistance will be provided to the field functionaries.

SETTING UP OF OLD AGE HOMES

83. The Government has taken a new initiative to set up old age homes in the State. A sum of ₹31.14 crore is proposed for the construction of old age home buildings, among others, in the districts of Barnala and Mansa in 2019-20.

SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN HAVING SPEECH AND HEARING DISABILITIES

84. Punjab has 6.54 lakh Persons with Disabilities of which 171245 have hearing or speech disabilities, and 66995 have intellectual disabilities. The Government of Punjab wishes to establish a residential school in Ludhiana up to 12th standard for children having disabilities. The State Government shall be providing funds to the tune of ₹15.00 crore for building and infrastructure during the course of the year as and when requested.

TRAINING COLLEGE FOR SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATORS

85. We intend to establish a Training College for Special Needs Educators to create a resource pool of competent teachers to teach children with special needs. This will give a boost to inclusive education at all levels and help create job and self-employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. We shall be allocating ₹15 crore for this project during the year as and when requested.

DEFENCE SERVICES

86. The State Government has always accorded top priority to the welfare of ex-servicemen, war-widows, world war veterans, disabled soldiers & their dependents. We remain fully committed to the resettlement and redressal of grievances of our soldiers & their families. An allocation of ₹98.31 crore has been set aside to ensure efficacious execution of various welfare schemes & other citizen centric services for their welfare.

87. I also propose an allocation of ₹8 crore for the completion of War Memorial at Amritsar, and ₹5 crore as grant-in-aid to Sainik School, Kapurthala. A special grant of ₹15 lakh is also proposed for the band of Sainik School, Kapurthala.

INCENTIVE TO CADETS

88. With an aim to motivate the youth of the state to become officers, ₹1 lakh is paid as an incentive to each cadet undergoing training at IMA/NDA. I propose an allocation of ₹4.30 crore during 2019-20 for paying incentives to IMA/NDA Cadets.

LABOUR WELFARE

89. It gives me immense pleasure to announce that the e-labour Punjab portal has achieved recognition as an innovative e-governance initiative. This portal which facilitates online paperless interaction between the Government and Industries and the citizens, was adjudged the best in the entire country because of its reliability.

NRI AFFAIRS

90. Majority of the NRIs of Punjab origin have successfully built up their lives abroad and while making immense contribution in the development of their adopted countries, many of them feel the urge to connect with their roots in Punjab. My Government is committed to contributing 50% for any infrastructure related work to be undertaken in Punjab by NRIs in their native villages.

FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES

91. The Government in order to ensure the adequate nutrition of its economically weaker sections has implemented "Smart Ration Card Scheme". 36,34,000 families have been covered under the scheme till date. To increase transparency, we intend to distribute the ration through ePOS machines with Aadhar authentication during 2019-20.

92. The pilot project for computerization of supply chain management has been successfully implemented in SAS Nagar in the year and will be rolled out in the entire state during 2019-20. An allocation of ₹5.75 crore has been earmarked for this purpose in 2019-20.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

93. The Government led by Captain Amarinder Singh Ji has an enviable record of ensuring hassle-free procurement. This Government has continued to ensure a smooth and hassle-free procurement of food grains produced by our farmers during the Rabi and Kharif seasons 2018-19 and is committed to provide a hassle-free experience of procurement to its farmers in the ensuing year.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND PANCHAYATS

94. The State Government is committed to provide a responsive administration for improvement of quality of life and economic well-being of the rural population

through creation of rural employment and rural livelihood. For 2019-20, an outlay of ₹4109.17 crore has, thus, been earmarked for Rural Development & Panchayats, which is an increase of ₹1089.54 crore, i.e. 36.08% over the previous year's allocation.

SMART VILLAGE CAMPAIGN

95. The quality of life and living standards of the people residing in villages lags behind those in the cities and the rural-urban divide is increasing with every passing year. We intend to reduce this gap by providing better facilities and strengthening the infrastructure in the rural areas. For this purpose, a new scheme "Smart Village Campaign" to be implemented through convergence of the efforts, with an outlay of ₹2600 crore is proposed this year.

96. A reward/incentive will also be provided to the village panchayats which excel in Smart Village Campaign. An allocation of ₹5 crore is specially provided for this purpose in 2019-20.

MAHATAMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME (MGNREGS)

97. Under MGNREGS, employment has been provided to 5,70,779 households during the current year. I propose an allocation of ₹500.00 crore for the implementation of this scheme, an increase of 92.31% from the previous year's allocation of ₹260.00 crore.

98. Under Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana (Gramin), 8000 houses have been constructed against the target of 14,000 houses during current financial year and the rest are near completion.

MAHATAMA GANDHI SARBAT VIKAS YOJANA (MGSVY)

99. The Government has launched the Mahatama Gandhi Sarbat Vikas Yojana (MGSVY) to converge its efforts, otherwise scattered in various schemes, into an umbrella scheme aimed at the welfare of the down trodden and the under privileged sections of the society and reaching out to those at the bottom of the pyramid. The scheme aims at ensuring inclusive growth of the distressed sections of the society. Suitable allocation has been provided for the said scheme other than the sectoral allocations made under the respective individual schemes

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT (SWM)

100. Proper disposal of solid waste is a major issue in our villages and demands attention of the Government. It is proposed to implement the project on a 'pilot' basis in villages where sufficient funds are available in the form of Own Sources of Revenue (OSR). The project will be started during the year 2019-20 with an initial outlay of ₹3.00 crore.

LIQUID WASTE MANAGEMENT

101. A pilot project for restoration of ecology of 79 village ponds of Bhawanigarh block, District Sangrur, was successfully undertaken, covering all the gram panchayats of this block. A primary treatment unit based on Seechewal Model is being provided at the inlet of the pond which will help in reducing BOD to a considerable level. Further, the ponds are being divided into 2-3 parts so as to make it fit for irrigation. Similarly, we propose a project to provide for scientific treatment of sullage water for ponds situated in villages. The project will be started in villages having sufficient funds available in the form of Own Sources of Revenue (OSR). We have proposed an outlay of ₹50.00 crore in the year 2019-20.

PUNJAB PENDU AWAS YOJNA (PPAY)

102. Shelter is the basic need of a human. Unfortunately, even after 70 years of our independence many of our brethren are deprived of this basic need. We have resolved to provide the roof to all the poor and houseless families with an annual income of less than ₹3.00 lakh and houseless freedom fighters living in the rural areas in the first phase under the new scheme – Punjab Pendu Awas Yojna (PPAY). I propose an initial allocation of ₹20.00 crore for this scheme, and assure suitable additions as the scheme progresses.

SOCIAL SERVICES

SCHOOL EDUCATION

103. The real development of the society lies in the realization of the innate potential of its inhabitants and the same can only be realised through education. Our government is fully committed towards fulfilling its responsibilities towards millions of students by providing good educational environment and better teaching techniques for their bright and successful future. At present, there are 12,921 primary schools, 2,672 middle school, 1,744 high schools and 189 senior secondary schools in the government sector. There are 2,387 English medium schools and to equip our youth to compete for jobs at the national and international level, we will ensure that their language skills are no barrier. We, therefore, propose to make 2010 more schools English medium in the coming session in the state.

SAFETY AND HYGIENE FOR GIRLS IN SCHOOLS

104. Self-defence training is being imparted to girls and 1155 physical education teachers have already been trained in residential workshops. Besides, sanitary napkins are being provided to the school girls in government schools.

LEARNING ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME

105. 'Padho Punjab Padhao Punjab' programme, entirely based on child centred target approach, is being implemented in all primary and upper primary schools of Punjab. Teachers have been trained to use activities-based teaching learning techniques. The substantial improvement in the learning levels of the targeted students in the initial results has encouraged us to extend the scope of this programme to the senior secondary classes also. To support the activities undertaken in the programme, a suitable provision has been made during 2019-20.

SMART SCHOOLS AND DIGITAL EDUCATION

106. 261 smart schools have been set up in the state with a special focus on the rural areas by providing modern teaching aids. An amount of ₹25.00 crore is proposed in the budget 2019-20 for setting up of more smart schools.

107. 21000 smart class rooms are also being set up in different schools of the state where education will be provided with the help of modern ICT tools such as projectors etc. While E-content for all subjects of classes I-X has been prepared, the development of e-content for pre-primary classes is under progress.

108. To spread awareness against Drug Abuse amongst the students, relevant content matter has also been included in the text-books of Health and Physical Education for class VIII and Environment Education for class X.

SAMAGRAHA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN

109. We propose two new schemes, namely, "Samagraha Shiksha Abhiyan (Elementary)" and "Samagraha Shiksha Abhiyan (Secondary)" with an outlay of ₹750 crore and ₹323 crore, respectively in 2019-20. These schemes will subsume other schemes, namely, Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan, Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, Vocational Education, Inclusive education for disabled and the scheme relating to DIETs.

110. I also propose an allocation of ₹5.00 crore in this year for the construction of a new building for Government Senior Secondary School for girls at Malerkotla.

HIGHER EDUCATION

111. The Government of Punjab is committed to ensuring accessibility, equitability & quality of higher education. I feel proud to share that as a result of the efforts of our Government, the Gross Enrolment ratio has improved from 28.6 in 2016-17 to 30.3 in 2017-18, while the National Average stands at 25.8. We remain focussed towards achieving a Gross Enrolment ratio of 32 much before the target year of 2022.

RASHTRIYA UCHCHTAR SHIKSHA ABHIYAN

112. To enhance the accessibility of higher education, a new Model Degree College is being opened in the aspirational district of Moga under the Rashtriya Uchchtar Shiksha Abhiyan in the current financial year. My Government has also decided to provide a budgetary allocation of ₹10.00 crore to Bebe Nanki Girls College at Sultanpur Lodhi as a part of the celebrations of 550 years of Prakash Purab of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

113. With an objective to improve the accessibility and equitability of higher education in educationally backward blocks of the state, I propose an initial allocation of ₹50.00 crore for the construction of new colleges at Bhucho, Baluana, Dharamkot, Chabbewal, Dasuya, Samrala, Nabha, S.A.S Nagar, Malout and Khem Karan.

114. ₹7 crore has also been sanctioned for faculty improvement programmes to be undertaken by Guru Nanak Dev University (GNDU), Amritsar under the aegis of the Rashtriya Uchchtar Shiksha Abhiyan.

DR. B.R. AMBEDKAR CHAIR, SATGURU RAM SINGH CHAIR AND SANT BABA PREM SINGH JI MURALE WALE CHAIR AT GNDU, AMRITSAR

115. This year, we propose to set up Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Chair, Satguru Ram Singh Chair and Sant Baba Prem Singh Ji Murale Wale Chair at GNDU, Amritsar and funds will be provided during the year to establish the chairs effectively.

ESTABLISHMENT OF AN OPEN UNIVERISTY AT PATIALA

116. Mr. Speaker Sir, with an aim to give shape to the vision of my Government to provide higher education to the working class population, people living in distant regions and residents who could not access higher education due to the restriction of the age limit, I would like to propose an allocation of ₹5.00 crore for the establishment of an Open University at Patiala.

GRANTS TO UNIVERSITIES

117. In the previous budget, I had promised an increase of 6% in grants-in-aid to the Universities in the state – viz; GNDU, Punjabi University, PAU, GADVASU, Guru Ravidas Ayurved University and Rajiv Gandhi National Law University and also to Punjab University, Chandigarh. I continue to honour that promise and have increased annual allocation to these Universities by 6%.

118. A special assistance of ₹50 crore has been provisioned for Punjabi University, Patiala this year as well to promote research, innovation and quality improvement. The University will undertake research in phytopharmaceuticals, functional foods, nanotechnology, bio-resource utilization, agro waste management, new drug development and toxicity testing.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION

119. In order to enable overseas placement and improve the communication skills of the youth of Punjab, my Government with technical assistance from the British

Council is proposing to set up 4 laboratories in Patiala, Ludhiana, Bathinda & Jalandhar with an annual capacity of 100 candidates at each lab.

120. I am also happy to share with the august House that the “Chief Minister Scholarship Scheme” is being successfully implemented in Government Polytechnic Colleges wherein based on the performance of the meritorious students, a rebate in tuition fee ranging from 70% to 100% is being provided. This scheme has received great response and admissions in our polytechnics have increased from 3002 to 4173, i.e. by 39%.

121. A centre of excellence will be established in the state for the training of trainers while laying emphasis on imparting training to SC/ST, women and people with disabilities under the scheme “Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion” (SANKLAP). I propose an allocation of ₹11.87 crore for this scheme.

122. I would like to announce that the Government will establish 15 new Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) with an initial outlay of ₹15.00 crore including those at Rampuraphul, Raikot, Fatehgarh Sahib, Bassi Pathana, Fazilka, Ferozepur, Shuttrana, Amargarh, Tarn Taran in the various districts of the state. We will also upgrade Government Industrial Training Institute, Ropar into Model ITI and Government Polytechnics into Centres of Excellence. Further, my Government plans to establish new Government Polytechnics in districts where no Government Polytechnics exist and an allocation of ₹7.00 crore is provided during 2019-20 for the purpose.

HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE

123. Our government is committed to provide, accessible and affordable quality health services to its entire population particularly the poor sections of the society. An outlay of ₹3465.06 crore has been provided for primary and secondary health care services in budget 2019-20, which is an increase of 10.87% over 2018-19.

NATIONAL HEALTH MISSION (NHM)

124. The National Health Mission is aimed at improving mother and child healthcare services like institutional deliveries, free treatment to the new born children and free vaccination to all the children. The mission also provides free services such as medicines, hepatitis C treatment, dialysis programme, blood and blood components for all the patients. I propose an outlay of ₹978.12 crore for NHM during 2019-20.

SARBAT SEHAT BIMA YOJNA

125. “Sarbat Sehat Bima Yojana” (SSBY) is a flagship State Health Insurance Programme to provide annual health cover of ₹5 lakh per family to 70% population of Punjab i.e., 42 lakh families, which is nearly three times the 14.96 lakh families covered under Ayushman Bharat, a GoI Scheme (AB-PMJAY).

126. Further, SSBY provides both secondary and tertiary care treatment unlike its predecessor Bhagat Puran Singh Sehat Bima Yojana that provided an annual health cover of ₹50,000 per family for secondary care treatments only. I propose an outlay of ₹250.00 crore for Sarbat Sehat Bima Yojna within 2019-20.

MISSION TANDRUST PUNJAB

127. The Punjabi has always been known for his physical strength and jovialness. My Government intends to restore not only the fiscal health of Punjab but also the physical health of the Punjabi. We have, with this aim, started a Mission Tandrust Punjabi which converges the efforts of various departments to restore the quality of air, water, soil, food and overall living in the State.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTRES

128. It is a matter of great satisfaction that our Government is providing a comprehensive range of services closer to the community by strengthening and

upgrading 239 Primary Health Centres and 190 Subsidiary Health Centres as Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs). Apart from this, another 258 centres would be set up and 800 HWCs would be strengthened and operationalized in 2019-20. I propose an allocation of ₹22.50 crore for this purpose during the year.

CANCER INSTITUTE

129. With an aim to strengthen and provide the cancer treatment to our suffering populace, I propose an allocation of ₹60.00 crore this year for the works of Tertiary Care Cancer Centres at Hoshiarpur, Fazilka and Amritsar.

AYUSH

130. I propose an allocation of ₹14.00 crore under the National AYUSH Mission for strengthening of Ayurvedic and Homoeopathic dispensaries. We will also set up two integrated AYUSH hospitals at S.A.S. Nagar and Moga.

MEDICAL HEALTH AND EDUCATION

NEW MEDICAL COLLEGES

131. As promised in the previous budget, stimulated by the rigorous efforts of the Government of Punjab, a new Government Medical College is being established at SAS Nagar, Mohali. For this purpose, the State Government has released ₹50 crore for initial works. I propose an allocation of ₹60 crore for this upcoming medical college in the state. Similarly, new medical colleges would be set up in the districts of Gurdaspur, Pathankot and Sangrur under the PPP mode.

132. I also propose an allocation of ₹189.15 crore for the upgradation of Government Medical Colleges in Patiala and Amritsar.

INFRASTRUCTURE

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

SWACHH BHARAT MISSION

133. I will like to inform this august House that in adherence to the Swachh Bharat Mission, the flagship sanitation programme, all the 167 Municipal Towns/areas of the state have been declared Open Defecation Free on 2nd October, 2018. It is a matter of pride for all of us that Punjab ranked 1st in North Zone in Swachh Survekshan 2017-18 and 42 ULBs ranked in top 100 ULBs in North Zone category of Swachh Survekshan 2018. The ULBs, are now focused on attaining of ODF+ and ODF++ status. I propose ₹86.33 crore for Swachh Bharat Mission in 2019-20.

AMRUT

134. Under the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT), aimed at upgrading urban infrastructure such as water supply, sewerage, septage, urban transport and green parks in the 16 cities of Punjab with population of more than 1 Lakh, a provision of ₹700 crore has been made during 2019-20.

SURFACE WATER SUPPLY SCHEMES

135. Further, converging this scheme, I propose to start work on canal based water supply schemes in Amritsar, Ludhiana, Jalandhar and Patiala with World Bank and ADB support this year. While the total cost for this would be ₹4800 crore, this year as a part of initial mobilisation advance, I propose additional ₹200 crore during 2019-20 for these projects.

SMART CITIES

136. With an objective to promote cities that provide core infrastructure and offer a decent quality of life to its citizens through a clean and sustainable environment

and application of 'Smart' Solutions, the Government of India has announced the Smart Cities Mission (SCM) covering 100 cities.

137. I propose a provision of ₹296.00 crore in 2019-20 for the development of Ludhiana, Amritsar and Jalandhar as Smart Cities.

PUNJAB URBAN ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME (UEIP)

138. Under this programme aimed at the development and improvement in the quality of environment of all 167 ULBs of the State, funds amounting to nearly ₹300.00 crore would be disbursed to urban local bodies for undertaking works ranging from construction and maintenance of roads, streets and drains, street lights to garbage disposal and construction and maintenance of parks.

PROJECT ON SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY - AMRITSAR

139. Amritsar Smart City Limited's Project "Development of Sustainable and Green Public Transportation" costing ₹168.87 crore has been selected from Punjab in the Cities Investments to Innovate Integrate and Sustain (CITIIS) Challenge. This project aims at providing experience of Sustainable and Green Public Transportation to the citizens through a fleet of E-mini buses, E-three wheelers and E-rickshaws. Adequate charging infrastructure for the E-vehicles shall also be created. The state has recently committed its share of ₹40 crore to implement the project during 2019-20.

MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT FUND (MDF)

140. The State Government is providing assistance to the urban local bodies through the Municipal Development Fund (MDF) for infrastructure development related to provisioning of roads, streets, drains etc. in urban towns and for this ₹12.07 crore is proposed in 2019-20.

PRADHAN MANTRI AWAS YOJNA (URBAN)

141. To address the housing requirement of urban poor including slum dwellers, needy and homeless, the Government of Punjab has resolved to provide assistance for 1 lakh houses under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Housing for All (Urban). I propose a provision of ₹234 crore for this programme in 2019-20.

HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

142. Under Affordable Housing component (PMAY), the Government of India has approved 2 projects to be implemented through the Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode. Subsequently, construction of 176 EWS Dwelling Units at Patiala at a cost of ₹9.26 crore by Patiala Development Authority and 394 EWS Dwelling Units at Ludhiana at a cost of ₹26.67 crore is being undertaken.

DIGITIZATION OF MASTER PLANS

143. Punjab has pioneered in digitization of revenue based Master Plans. In order to bring uniformity in the zoning regulations and development controls of Master Plans of various cities/towns of the State, unified zoning regulations and development controls have been notified.

POWER

144. Power is an important prerequisite for growth and development of any State and my Government is committed to provide 24x7 quality power to all categories of consumers in the State. The State Government is conscious of building up advanced power infrastructure, reducing leakages resulting in electricity losses and bringing in transparency in billing procedure by adopting modern technology.

FREE POWER TO DOMESTIC CONSUMERS

145. Our Government would continue to provide subsidised power to SC, BC, Non-SC BPL and domestic category consumers. We have also removed the condition of upper annual limit of 3000 units for availing free power facility of 200 units per month earlier applicable to SC, BC, Non-SC BPL and domestic category consumers. Further, free electricity of 300 units per month is being provided to freedom fighters and domestic consumers having sanctioned load up to 1 KW. The Government is committed to this policy for which a total allocation of ₹1916 crore is being proposed during 2019-20.

DISTRIBUTION

146. The State Government has invested substantially in strengthening the Distribution network by way of setting up new Grid Sub-Stations and augmenting the lines. After significant improvements and due to strict vigilance, PSPCL has managed to bring down Transmission & Distribution (T&D) losses to 13.68%. Distribution system of 102 towns having population more than 5,000 is being strengthened with an expenditure of ₹330 crore under IPDS and ₹252.06 crore under DDUGJY in rural areas/suburban areas.

147. My Government has also taken initiatives for introducing digital payments through Paytm, BBPS, BHIM App, RTGS, NEFT etc. to reduce physical interface with the consumer. PSPCL has clocked in 75 lakh digital transactions amounting to around ₹10,300 crore, i.e. 50% of the total bill collections till 31-01-2019.

CIVIL AVIATION

148. The airport runway at Mohali is being upgraded and its length is being extended to 10,500 ft to handle wide bodied aircraft. CAT III B ILS system is being installed to handle aircrafts during low visibility conditions, post which long haul

international flights can commence their operations. We are hopeful that the airport will be 24X7 operational w.e.f. 1st April 2019.

INTERNATIONAL AIR AND CARGO TERMINAL, HALWARA

Mr. Speaker Sir,

149. It is heartening for me to inform that Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India and Indian Air Force have given in principle approval for the construction of International Civil and Cargo Terminal at Indian Air Force Station, Halwara. The draft MoU to be signed between Government of Punjab through Greater Ludhiana Area Development Authority and Airports Authority of India for setting up a Joint Venture company has been approved. It is expected that work on the terminal will commence very soon.

REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY SCHEME-UDAN

150. We have signed an MoU, with respect to the UDAN scheme, with the Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India & Airports Authority of India, agreeing to fund the viability gap RCS Flights in the ratio 20:80. I am delighted to announce that flights have started operations from small airports like Ludhiana, Jalandhar, and Pathankot. Suitable allocations for funding the viability gap have already been made in the Budget.

ROADS & BRIDGES

151. Our Government is committed to provide world-class physical infrastructure in the form of safe and sustainable roads and bridges & more importantly to maintain the existing ones. The allocation for construction of new roads and bridges for this year has been raised from ₹1095.69 crore to ₹1312.32 crore. Apart from some other projects, Rail under Bridges (RUBs) in Morinda Town, Tarn Taran, Sirhind and Mandi Gobindgarh; High Level bridges such as over Gaddi nallah near Dinanagar, Nalwa Nallah at Pathankot, Road Over Bridges (ROBs) at Lehli (S.A.S. Nagar),

Ratangarh and on Jalandhar-Hoshiarpur Line will be undertaken this year. Further, ₹198.00 crore alone is being provided only for the repairs of existing roads and bridges.

152. I am also happy to propose ₹48.00 crore for upgradation of rural roads with the assistance of NABARD. With respect to the 5 state roads declared as National Highways, upgradation will be undertaken during the year.

LINK ROADS AND CULVERTS

153. Rural Connectivity has been the mainstay of prosperous Punjab. To restore, maintain and upgrade the rural connectivity, a comprehensive repair plan comprising the road and its culverts/pulleys has been undertaken by my Government. The previous Government in its ten years repaired around 42,000 kms of link roads whereas my Government has undertaken to repair 62,000 kms of Link roads in its first two years. Around 31,000 kms of Link roads is already under repair and the remaining 50% will be repaired in 2019-20. Adequate funds to the extent of around ₹2000 crore have already been earmarked for the comprehensive repair of Link roads.

MAINTAINING INFRASTRUCTURE

154. Though, the state is concentrating its efforts on creating new infrastructure, somehow, maintenance of the existing infrastructure has been neglected over the years and it yearns for immediate attention. We have thus, decided to provide dedicated resources to rejuvenate the existing infrastructure.

155. I have allocated ₹75.00 crore during 2019-20 for the rejuvenation of existing school infrastructure in the state. Thus, every existing primary, middle, high and senior secondary school shall be provided funds for maintenance of its buildings.

156. I also propose an allocation of ₹4.00 crore for the maintenance of all police stations/chowkis/posts in the state.

157. It has been felt that though government residences and buildings have been constructed, there is no focus on their repair and maintenance. Keeping this aspect in view, I propose an allocation of ₹44.00 crore for repair of government residences and buildings, which includes a special allocation for maintenance works of residences of Group C & D employees.

158. Further, an amount of ₹58.00 crore is being allocated for the construction and upgradation of Judicial Court Complexes.

TRANSPORT

159. To provide better facility and availability of public transport to the residents of Punjab, 100 new ordinary buses are proposed to be operated in 2019-20. Further, to digitize the consumer interface, we propose to transact most of the transport services through the Sewa Kendras.

160. We have started the construction of a bus stand at Sirhind and propose the construction of same at Patiala and Bathinda to be undertaken during 2019-20. PIDB has already initiated the process of building 13 new bus stands under the PPP mode.

BORDER AND KANDI AREA DEVELOPMENT BOARD

161. Punjab has a unique topographical location abutting the unpredictable International Border on its West and hill states on its North-East. 6 major districts comprising 2107 villages, i.e., 16.75% of the total villages of the state with a lie on the International Border. Also, in 1414 villages in 5 districts live in the Kandi area of the state. Both the areas have their own specific set of issues but are characterized by one unique feature – backwardness. The Border and Kandi areas, therefore, require a special attention and effort of the Government to bring them at par with the rest of the state. I, therefore, propose the setting up of a separate Border and Kandi Development Board for addressing the issues of Border area and Kandi area. The Board will, to begin with, provide connectivity to the villages on the other side of

River Ravi through the construction of a permanent bridge at Makora Pattan, Dinanagar, provide tube wells for drinking water in Kandi Areas and also address specific problems of these areas. An allocation of ₹100 crore is being proposed this year. Mr. Speaker Sir, I assure you that funds shall never stand in the way for development of these areas.

WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION

HAR GHAR SAFAI, HAR GHAR PANI

Mr. Speaker Sir,

162. It is a matter of delight for all of us that 100% Households in the rural areas have been provided access to IHHL, thus, making the rural Punjab ODF in March, 2018 itself, much ahead of the National Target of October, 2019.

163. I am also happy to share that as against our promise to ensure 100% coverage of rural households with individual household connections from piped potable water supply schemes by 2021, we have already provided supply of potable drinking water to 99.9% of the population and 60% of the rural households have been provided with individual household water connections. An allocation of ₹1584.18 crore is proposed for this purpose, which is an increase of 6.37% over 2018-19.

164. We also intend to cover a total of 600 habitations for augmentation of existing water supply schemes with an estimated expenditure of ₹750 crore. In addition, another 1000 villages will be provided improved access to water through household connections.

165. A number of habitations in rural areas are affected with the presence of Arsenic, fluoride, uranium and other heavy metals in the drinking water. In order to provide a solution to this problem, 2311 Reverse Osmosis (RO) systems have been installed in rural areas and work is in progress for another 193 RO Plants with an estimated cost of ₹20.00 crore.

DESALINATION PLANTS

166. Pockets in Southern Punjab have a shortage of potable drinking water due to non-perennial canal water sources and salinity of underground water. The Government, therefore, proposes to set up groundwater based desalination plants of 5 Million Litres per Day (MLD) to augment drinking water supply in these pockets. A 5 MLD desalination plant at a cost of ₹25 crore to serve a population of 50,000 is being proposed to be set up during 2019-20.

WATER RESOURCES

167. The work on Shahpurkandi Dam Project, long halted due to the intervention of Government of Jammu and Kashmir has now resumed from December 2018. The Government of India has also approved the revised cost of the project to the extent of ₹2716 crore. This project has been included in the list of 99 important projects under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY). On the back of the laborious efforts undertaken by our Government, the sharing pattern of this project has been revised from 60:40 to 86:14, benefitting the state to the extent of ₹145 crore. A budgetary provision of ₹207.00 crore for 2019-20 has been made for this project expected to be completed before December 2022 which will also generate around 207 MW of clean power.

168. Further, boosted by the sincere attempts of my Government, the Government of India has also cleared the projects for relining of Rajasthan feeder and Sirhind Feeder canal, having a project cost of ₹1305.27 crore and ₹671.48 crore, respectively. We have made a provision of ₹80.00 crore and ₹120 crore, respectively to execute these projects during 2019-20.

169. A provision of ₹18.12 crore has been made for installation of 36 alternate Deep Tubewells to bring 1800 hectares of barren land of Kandi Area under tube well irrigation.

170. Besides, another project to tackle water logging and floods in the state is being undertaken with an outlay of ₹100 crore.

171. Under the Incentivisation Scheme for Bridging Irrigation Gap (ISBIG) of the Government of India, work of correction of system deficiencies of canals of 12 projects having total area of 12,49,257 hectare will be taken up during 2019-20.

CLEANING THE BUDDHA NALLAH

172. My Government would continue to accord top priority to the cleaning of Buddha Nallah, a source of pollution in river Sutlej. We have set up a district level task force under 'Satguru Udhay Singh Ji Namdhari Sampardha' and have also made a comprehensive action plan to bar the flow of untreated water or any other source of pollution into Budha Nallah directly or indirectly. An allocation of ₹4.38 crore is proposed for the cleaning and upkeep of Buddha Nallah.

173. We have also made suitable allocation for the other projects like relining of Bist Doab Canal, channelization/lining of Sukhna Choe and the ongoing project of extension of Kandi Canal stage-II.

174. The Kandi Areas of the state suffer from peculiar problem of water availability due to topographical reasons. A special lift irrigation scheme to boost agriculture and availability of water in Sri Anandpur Sahib etc. has been envisaged for which an allocation of ₹19.00 crore has been provided during 2019-20.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

175. I am happy to inform that under the guidance of the Hon'ble Speaker, we have initiated the process for making this Vidhan Sabha paperless. In adherence to the Green Initiative, presentation of the Budget documents as a softcopy has saved 200 trees from being cut. Under this project, screens will be installed at the seats of the legislators and a repository of data related to the business of the legislature will be created.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

176. The United Nations has adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with 169 targets and 243 Global Indicators. As a way forward, the State Government is preparing a Four Year Strategic Action Plan (4SAP)-2019-23 and Annual Action Plan 2019-20 based on the Sustainable Development Goals to provide a defined, quantified and measurable set of goals, targets and indicators amenable to monitoring and evaluation for all the implementing departments of the Government. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) would be involved for Capacity building, Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities and Monitoring and Evaluation etc.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

177. To make technological advancements available to the industry, our Government in association with Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) has launched a first of its kind “Secondary Agriculture/Food Processing Entrepreneurial Network” in Punjab in June 2018. The network would assess the unmet needs of the agri-food industry and develop technological solutions to address the same.

178. A Rural Biotechnology Innovation Application Centre is being set up in Kandi area of Punjab with support of Government of India. Innovative technologies for air pollution control and energy efficiency are being replicated in about 500 MSME units such as foundries, re-rolling mills, induction furnaces and brick kilns.

FORESTRY & WILDLIFE

179. Under the “Ghar Ghar Haryali”, scheme launched in the previous year, it is my proud pleasure to share that 63 lakh tree saplings have been through public and various institutions. During 2019-20, 100 lakh plants under Green Punjab Mission

and 50 lakh plants under other schemes shall be supplied free of cost to various farmers, schools, religious and charitable institutions.

180. Further, on the auspicious occasion of 550th Parkash Utsav of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, 550 saplings will be planted in each village of the state, in furtherance to the inauguration done by Captain Amarinder Singh Ji on 20 November 2018 by planting plants at Sultanpur Lodhi.

NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES

181. We have already initiated the process of setting up of solar power projects with a capacity of 650 MW through transparent competitive bidding. Also, for the utilization of paddy straw in the state, a process for use of rice straw based biomass power projects with a capacity of 150 MW capacity shall be initiated. Two projects for production of Bio-CNG by utilizing paddy straw are being set up in district Sangrur & SAS Nagar (Mohali).

182. An SPV water pumping programme under Jawaharlal Nehru Solar Mission for the installation of 5,000 solar water pumping sets with an outlay of ₹105 crore will be carried out during 2019-20. We will also undertake installation of 15,000 solar street lights, 5,000 family size biogas plants and 25 MW capacity of rooftop solar power plants during 2019-20. We are also planning to set up rooftop PV solar projects in Punjab Vidhan Sabha, Punjab Main Secretariat and District Administrative Complexes.

HOME AFFAIRS & JUSTICE

EMERGENCY RESPONSE SUPPORT SYSTEM (ERSS) DIAL-112

183. The State Government has initiated an Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) "Dial 112" which is at an advanced stage and will "Go-Live" shortly. It will cater for ambulance services, fire-services, calamities in addition to Police, through a single emergency number.

WOMEN SAFETY

184. Women safety is amongst the most debated issues worldwide and is intrinsically linked to the crime against women. Our Government remains committed to ensuring safety of women in the State by provision of CCTV surveillance systems in all Government schools, colleges and other public places.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS GROUP

185. Use of non-conventional means of warfare by terrorists had necessitated the transformation of the state's Counter-terror apparatus. To boost the State's preparedness in countering terror critical engine, Special Operation Group has been set up and we have made the requisite budgetary allocations to ensure their smooth working.

REVENUE

186. The State Government has achieved its ambitious target to provide transparent and efficient governance through online registration in all the Sub Registrar Offices and more than 4 lakh documents have been registered through this system during 2018-19. We have also initiated a pilot project for digitization of all the revenue courts of the district of Fatehgarh Sahib. My Government intends to cover the remaining districts during 2019-20.

187. An amount of ₹19.47 crore is being allocated during 2019-20 for compensation @ ₹10,000/- per acre to the farmers of the six border districts of Amritsar, Fazilka, Ferozepur, Tarn Taran, Gurdaspur and Pathankot whose land is situated between the border fence and international border and suffer several restrictions, ranging from accessibility to mechanization of their farmlands.

CONSTRUCTION OF SUB-DIVISION CUM TEHSIL COMPLEXES

188. During the course of the year, 3 new Sub-Division cum Tehsil Complexes shall be built at Morinda, Dinanagar and Guru Har Sahai.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

189. Goods and Services Tax (GST), India's biggest indirect tax reform, has completed one and half years and has evolved significantly from the time of its inception. However, before GST was implemented, it was presumed that GST will bring in increased compliance which will yield a significantly higher revenue and in turn would compensate the short fall in revenue in all the states. But, during the first year of the implementation of GST, the revenue receipts have been far lower than the expectations. State's revenue from the major commodities like automobiles and auto parts, cycle and cycle parts, hosiery/readymade garments, soft drinks and cement has decreased in comparison to the corresponding period in the previous year. GST revenues have, thus, not shown the kind of buoyancy that was expected.

190. Although, the business community of Punjab has adopted GST wholeheartedly and Punjab has been ranked amongst top three states in return filing, we have been representing the problems of the stakeholders in the GST Council meetings held from time to time. Considering the problems of local business community, Punjab has increased the limit of generation of e-way bill from ₹50,000/- to ₹1,00,000/- for intrastate supplies. We are also organizing refresher workshops and seminars for the staff and stakeholders on a continuous basis in the hope that GST will evolve as Good and Simple Tax in the times to come due to Government's pro-active measures and industry's active participation.

BUDGET AT A GLANCE

Mr. Speaker Sir,

191. The total Budget size for the year 2019-20 is ₹158493 crore. However, the effective Budget size, after providing for a budget provision of ₹32000 crore towards Ways and Means transactions for the current year, is ₹126493. The total Receipts are expected to be ₹154170 crore. The details are as follows:

Sr. No.	Item	Revised Estimates 2018-19 (₹crore)	Budget Estimates 2019-20 (₹crore)
1	Revenue Receipts (2+3+4+5)	70399	78510
2	State's Own Tax Revenue	32742	37674
3	State's Own Non-Tax Revenue	9930	9477
4	Share of Central Taxes	12009	13319
5	Grants-in-Aid from Centre	15718	18039
6	Capital Receipts (7+8+9)	54691	75660
7	Public Debt excluding Ways and Means Advances	23947	27975
8	Ways & Means Advances	30000	32000
9	Non-Debt Receipts	743	15685
10	Total Receipts (1+6)	125090	154170
11	Revenue Expenditure (12+13+14+15)	82318	90197
12	Salaries and Wages (including Grant-in-Aid Salary)	25378	26979
13	Pension and retirement benefits	10254	10875
14	Interest Payments	16312	17669
15	Other Revenue Expenditure	30374	34674
16	Capital Expenditure	4872	22842
17	Repayment of Public Debt excluding Ways and Means Advances	8623	12640
18	Repayment of Ways & Means Advances	30000	32000
19	Advances of Loans	1603	814
20	Total Expenditure (11+16+17+18+19)	127415	158493
21	Revenue Deficit (11-1)	11919	11687
22	Fiscal Deficit (21+19+16-9)	17650	19658
23	Primary Deficit (22-14)	1338	1989
24	Outstanding Debt	212276	229612
25	GSDP at Current Prices	518291	577829

* Figures have been rounded off

192. When I presented the first budget of this Government in 2017-18, there was an unfunded gap of ₹10273 crore, which was brought down to ₹4175 crore in 2018-19 (BE). While we see a small carry forward of our liabilities to the next year, for 2019-20 (BE) there is now a much reduced unfunded gap of ₹2323 crore. I could have submitted proposals for some additional taxes to this august House to cover this gap. However, I sincerely hope that with improved efficiency in tax compliance and administration and efficient delivery of public services, we would be able to economize on the expenditure and thus close this gap which is visible as of now.

193. Our Government has taken proactive steps to manage the debt profile of the state by forming a dedicated "Debt Management Unit" in the Department of Finance. It fills me with immense contentment to note that propelled by the proactive management of cash flows, our Government has been able to reduce the days of Ways and Means Advances and Overdraft. We have successfully reduced the number of days for which the treasury remained in overdraft from 179 days in 2016-17 to 100 days in 2017-18, to 50 days in 2018-19 (till 31-01-2019) thereby, locking in interest savings of nearly ₹11.54 crore. While the state had remained in Double Overdraft for 16 days in 2016-17, it did not go into Double Overdraft for even a single day during the last two financial years of my Government.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

194. At present, the rates of VAT on petroleum products are on higher side in the State of Punjab as compared to those prevalent in the neighbouring States. Encouraged by the buoyancy of our Revenue Receipts and better cash flow management practices adopted by our Government, we will take measures to rationalize the rates of VAT on petroleum products in line with the neighbouring States. It is expected that parity in rates of VAT on petroleum products in the State of Punjab and the neighbouring States will result in relief to the end consumers in the form of reduced prices of petroleum products in the State.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

195. As the financial figures and estimates have shown, I can assure all Punjabis that we are gradually moving away from our difficult years that were brought upon us due to extravagance and wastefulness.

196. As the famous economist Thomas Piketty has remarked:

“Refusing to deal with numbers rarely serves the interests of the least well-off.”

197. If we need to serve the interests of the least well-off, we need to be able to deal with numbers. For the past two years, this has been our mantra. But we need to be watchful that the years of sloth and inaction do not reoccur and relapse.

198. Strict economy is to be the watch word in all our departments. We regard public money to be a trust to be administered with utmost care, but we are fully determined within the funds this House allows us, to build up the highest measure of beneficent service for the People of Punjab, for therein, we believe, lies not only the prosperity of the State, but also the welfare and happiness of its people.

199. I assure you Mr. Speaker Sir, Punjabis will be able to hold their heads high, very high and under the guidance of our Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh Ji, we refuse to be swept away by the current of history. We are the generation which will turn the tide and will shape our own destiny. We will leave a precious heritage to those that come after us. Thereby, we will raise the flag of proud Punjab. Therefore, I wish to record my gratitude to Hon'ble Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh Ji, a friend and a leader of men, without his unstinted support & guidance, I would not be able to discharge my duties effectively and efficiently.

200. I am reminded of the beautiful lines of another famous son of the Punjab, Janab Jagannath Aazad. I quote in original:-

ਨਜ਼ਰ ਜਮਤੀ ਤੋ ਕਯਾ ਜਮਤੀ,
ਕਦਮ ਰੁਕਤੇ ਤੋ ਕਯਾ ਰੁਕਤੇ,
ਕੀ ਹਮਨੇ ਅਪਨੀ ਮੰਜ਼ਲ ਕੋ ਭੀਂ
ਅਪਨੀ ਰਹਗੁਜ਼ਰ ਸਮਝਾ
(ਨਜ਼ਰ ਜਮਤੀ ਤੋਂ ਕਿਆ ਜਮਤੀ,
ਕਦਮ ਰੁਕਤੇ ਤੋਂ ਕਿਆ ਰੁਕਤੇ,
ਕਿ ਹਮਨੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਮੰਜ਼ਲ ਕੋ ਵੀ,
ਆਪਣੀ ਰਹਿ ਗੁਜ਼ਰ ਜਾਨਾ।)

(How could my gaze fix, How could my feet rest,
For I treated even my destination, as my path)

201. I thank you, Mr. Speaker Sir, and all the Hon'ble members of this august House, for your past support. I ask you to join us tomorrow. And most of all, I ask you to join us in all the tomorrows yet to come, in building Punjab, moving Punjab, and picking-up this State of ours and sending it into the next decades.

202. Sir, before I resume my seat, I must perform one very necessary and pleasant duty - that is to express my appreciation of the responsible and heavy work zealously performed by the Officers and the staff of the Finance and Planning Department. I refer to them because Hon'ble members do not see anything of these Officers, because they are completely screened behind official doors and Secretariat literature but I have not allowed them to observe the same seclusion from me, and I am personally able to testify to their great merits.

203. We have continued to receive throughout the year all possible valuable help from the Accountant General Punjab. His keen interest in our financial rectitude and welfare has been of the outmost advantage to the State, and I would like to take this opportunity of recording the Government's gratitude towards him.

Sir, I beg to present to the Assembly the budget for the year 2019-20.

JAI HIND