



GOVERNMENT OF PUNJAB



Speech of Harpal Singh Cheema

Finance Minister, Punjab

Presenting the
Budget for the
Year 2024-25
to the

Punjab Vidhan Sabha

5 March, 2024
Chandigarh

Budget 2024-25
Speech of
Harpal Singh Cheema
Finance Minister

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

1. With honor and a profound sense of responsibility, I stand before this august House to reflect on the past two years' journey and to look ahead to opportunities that behold in the third year of the AAP Government, under the dynamic leadership of Hon'ble Chief Minister Sardar Bhagwant Singh Mann Ji .

2. Commitment to progress, resilience in the face of adversity, and dedication to serve the interests of people have been the guiding principles of our collective efforts. Today, as we embark on a pivotal third year with a steadfast determination to build on our vision, address pressing issues, and foster a future that reflects the aspirations of every citizen, I would like to quote Bashir Badr Saab :-

जिस दिन से चला हूँ मिरि मंज़िल पे नज़र है

आँखों ने कभी मील का पत्थर नहीं देखा ।

3. As promised by AAP Government in the past, we have been able to consolidate revenues of the State. The annual growth rate in State's Own Tax Revenue has been much higher i.e. 13% as against compound annual growth rate of 8% during 2012-17 and 6% during 2017-22. This shows that delivery depends upon clarity of thought and determination to convert thought into actions.

4. Our Government promised “Rangla Punjab” and has been focusing on key areas such as Good Governance, Education and Health. AAP Government has implemented a series of measures to streamline administrative processes, enhance transparency, and curb corruption. Initiatives such as “Bhagwant Mann Sarkar Tuhade Dwar”, “Door Step Delivery of Ration” and anti-corruption measures underscore our commitment to create an efficient and effective administration. Similarly “AAP ki Sarkar AAP De Dwar” has been launched, whereby services to more than 8 lakh citizens has been provided through camps organized in villages.

5. Our policies have started to fructify, Schools of Eminence are now a reality and reflect our resolve and commitment to make quality learning accessible to all. The establishment of Aam Aadmi Clinics is no less than a revolution in primary health care. These clinics are providing quality, free and accessible healthcare to the common man. This initiative has been duly recognized and Punjab has been awarded the first prize in Global Health Supply Chain Summit- 2023.

Speaker Sir,

6. The youth of Punjab have witnessed umpteen employment opportunities coming their way through concerted efforts and definitive actions of our Government. We have been proactive in addressing the aspirations and needs of young Punjabis. Our Government has provided 40,437 jobs to the deserving youth during these two years. This translates to more than 55 jobs per day.

7. I feel contended that the dream of our Hon’ble Chief Minister to provide last mile connectivity and ensure the canal water till tail-ends has

become a reality. This would definitely prove to be transformative for our agriculture, our dwindling water-table and would save Punjab from becoming a 'desert'. More needs to be done and more will be done by our Government in this regard.

8. It is a year to consolidate the gains which have been achieved in the last two years. It is a time to nurture the plants of development already sowed by our Government, so that they fructify to benefit our future generations.

9. Here, it is also my responsibility to apprise this august House about the apathy shown by the Union Government towards Punjab. The withholding of the rightful share of the State, totaling ₹8,000 crore approx., on account of National Health Mission (NHM), Rural Development Fund (RDF), Mandi Development Fund (MDF), and Special Assistance to State for Capital Investment has directly affected the developmental works and has put additional burden on the State treasury.

BUDGET FY 2024-25

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

10. As per the Advanced Estimates provided by Directorate of Statistics, Punjab is growing at a rate of 9.41% in the current year and the GSDP stands at ₹7,36,423 crore. The GSDP has been estimated to grow at 9% to ₹8,02,701 crore in FY 2024-25.

11. AAP Governments' sincerity and dedication is once again visible by the notable rise in State's Own Tax Revenues for the second consecutive year. In the current year, upto January, Punjab's Own Tax Revenue has grown by 12%.

12. I propose a total Budget Expenditure of ₹2,04,918 crore for FY 2024-25. The Effective Revenue Deficit and Fiscal Deficit are expected to be 2.77% and 3.80%, respectively and have improved from previous figure of 3.13% and 4.12%, respectively .

13. Now, I would outline the development roadmap along with the proposed sectoral budgetary allocations for various initiatives and programs to be undertaken in FY 2024-25.

AGRICULTURE & FARMERS WELFARE

Speaker Sir,

14. An allocation of ₹13,784 crore has been earmarked for the agriculture and allied sectors in next financial year.

CROP DIVERSIFICATION

15. Speaker Sir, we don't believe in lip service, we believe in action, and I propose an allocation of ₹575 crore in FY 2024-25 for various Crop Diversification Schemes. It is our duty to keep encouraging our hard working farmers to diversify and thus the AAP Government shall keep on focusing on such schemes in future as well. It is our collective responsibility to improve our agriculture, our soil health, our dropping water table.

16. In the current year, a special "Mission Unnat Kisan" has been launched to provide timely technical information to the farmers for proper cultivation of cotton. Our Government has also provided 33% subsidy on cotton seed to approx. 87,000 farmers.

17. We understand that improving agriculture through diversification will not yield the desired result without value addition. For this ₹50 crore has already been provided to initiate projects in the current year itself to PAGREXCO. An MOU has been signed with SIDBI for setting up of Automated beverage unit, Hoshiarpur; Chilli processing center, Abohar; Value added processing facility, Jalandhar; Ready-to-eat food manufacturing unit at Fatehgarh Sahib and other projects amounting to ₹250 crore.

HORTICULTURE

18. In addition to various crop diversification measures stated above, I am pleased to announce new initiative, i.e. Punjab Horticulture Advancement and Sustainable Entrepreneurship (PHASE) to improve product quality and develop horticulture crop clusters in major production zones for which suitable allocation has been made in the Budget. I am happy to announce that allocations have been made for schemes for the development of mushroom cultivation; for flower seed production; for exotic vegetables and fruits orchards.

FREE POWER TO FARMERS

19. Our Government is committed to our “Annadatas” in every way and as a gesture of continued support for them, we have allocated ₹9,330 crore in FY 2024-25 towards power subsidy for agriculture.

SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION

Speaker Sir,

20. We all are aware about our depleting ground water problem, 114 out of 150 blocks have already been declared as in dark zone.

For judicious use and effective management of available surface and groundwater resources, various water conservation techniques such as micro irrigation and underground pipelines on fields are being promoted and an area of 13,016 hectares has benefitted from it during the current year. I propose a budgetary outlay of ₹194 crore for soil and water conservation, including proposals to undertake two new NABARD projects for providing financial assistance to farmers for laying underground pipelines for irrigation.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY, DAIRY & FISHERIES

21. Diversification cannot be imagined without animal husbandry and dairy development as they play a pivotal role in the State's rural economy. With an aim to further strengthen and provide specialized veterinary services at the ground level, our Government has appointed 326 Veterinary Officers and 503 Veterinary Inspectors during FY 2022-23 and FY 2023-24.

22. A new fish seed farm at village Killian Wali district Fazilka has been established. An area of 3,233 acre has been brought under fish culture. A river ranching programme has been initiated under which 3 lakh fish seeds have been stocked in river bodies.

COOPERATION

Speaker Sir,

23. "Mission Phulkari" has been started to train village-level artisans with the latest craftsmanship techniques by the National Institute of Fashion Technology, Delhi and to enable them to sell their products through various e-Commerce platforms.

24. Our Hon'ble Chief Minister has inaugurated a new facility at Verka Ludhiana Dairy, featuring automatic milk reception, processing, and packaging capabilities for fresh milk and fermented products. The plant has a daily milk processing capacity of 9 lakh liters and can handle 10 metric tonnes of butter per day. Additionally, a Liquid Milk Processing and Packaging Unit at Verka Ferozepur Dairy and a new Automatic Unit for processing and packaging of fermented products at Verka Jalandhar Dairy have already been inaugurated.

25. I am pleased to state that the amount of ₹467 crore has been released to Sugarcane farmers during the current year and an allocation of ₹390 crore has been earmarked in FY 2024-25 in this regard.

26. SUGARFED has started its first 14 MW Co-Gen plant operated through Paddy straw at Bhogpur Co-operative Sugar Mill and a new Ethanol project at Gurdaspur Co-operative Sugar Mill is proposed for which an initial budgetary support of ₹24 crore has been made in FY 2024-25.

27. With the aim to modernize operations, streamline processes, and enhance efficiency, I propose an allocation of ₹50 crore in FY 2024-25 for computerization of State Cooperative Agriculture and Rural Development Bank and Primary Agricultural Co-operative Societies (PACS).

FORESTRY & WILDLIFE

28. During the current year approx. 46.20 lac saplings have been planted in an area of 5,735 hectares under PunCAMP, Green Punjab Mission and Green India Mission. With a view to enact wildlife mitigation measures, a new project "Establishment of Human Wildlife Conflict

Mitigation Scheme” for undertaking mitigation activities is proposed to be undertaken in FY 2024-25.

29. An allocation of ₹263 crore has been provided in FY 2024-25 for supporting forestry efforts.

EDUCATION

Hon’ble Speaker Sir,

30. For AAP Government, the aim is not “literate Punjab” but an “educated Punjab”. We don’t want to foster only the ability to read and write in our children, but to instill knowledge, morality and sensibility in them. Regularization of 12,316 teachers, recruitment of 9,518 teachers, skill upgradation of Principals and Headmasters, improvement of security and safety measures in schools, installation of more than 12,000 internet connections, around 4,300 toilets in the schools repaired and timely delivery of books to our students, among others have been our hallmarks.

31. Our Government is committed to elevate education system and to align it with demands of the current economic environment. I propose a budgetary outlay of ₹16,987 crore in FY 2024-25 for the Education sector which is around 11.5% of the Total Expenditure.

SCHOOL EDUCATION

32. A special infrastructure programme was initiated by our Government for construction and repair of boundary walls in schools to ensure safety of children. I am happy to state that boundary walls in 2,563 schools have been constructed and boundary walls have been repaired in 3,055 schools during the current financial year.

SCHOOLS OF EMINENCE

33. Speaker Sir, I am proud to tell that 118 Government schools will be undergoing their transformation into state-of-the-art Schools of Eminence and 14 School of Eminence have already been started. An allocation of ₹100 crore is proposed in FY 2024-25 for this purpose.

SCHOOL OF BRILLIANCE

34. Our Government proposes to transform 100 government senior secondary schools as “Schools of Brilliance”. To start with, an initial allocation of ₹10 crore has been earmarked in FY 2024-25 for this purpose. This scheme aims to elevate education quality and transform these rural schools into centers of learning from class 6 to 12.

SCHOOL OF APPLIED LEARNING

35. Further, with a view of developing skills including technical skills in students, to enable them to earn a livelihood, we propose to establish “School of Applied Learning” with an initial provision of ₹10 crore in FY 2024-25. In the first phase, Hi-tech vocational labs would be constructed in 40 schools.

SCHOOL OF HAPPINESS

36. With the aim of creating a nurturing learning environment for young students aged 3 to 11, we propose to transform 100 primary government schools into “Schools of Happiness”. The focus would be on providing well-ventilated classrooms, dedicated play areas, resource rooms and activity corners. For the inception of this scheme, ₹10 crore has been provisioned in FY 2024-25.

MISSION SAMRATH

37. Our Government proposes to launch “Mission Samrath’ to imbibe essential skills to primary and upper primary students with a proposed allocation of ₹10 crore in FY 2024-25 .

38. In addition to the above initiatives, our Government would continue to support the existing educational schemes. The proposed allocations are outlined below:

- i. Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan: ₹1,593 crore;
- ii. For providing Mid-Day Meal to 16.35 lakh students: ₹467 crore;
- iii. For free books, repair and maintenance of schools: ₹140 crore;
- iv. For upgradation of infrastructure and installation of roof-top solar panels in Government Schools: ₹160 crore;
- v. Financial Support for Upkeep of Government Schools: ₹82 crore;
- vi. For providing uniforms to pre-primary students: ₹35 crore; and
- vii. Punjab Young Entrepreneur Programme: ₹15 crore.

HIGHER EDUCATION

39. AAP Government understands that higher education today is not only about imparting knowledge but also about cultivating critical thinking, fostering innovation, and preparing students for a new age world. Our Government proposes the following allocations in FY 2024-25:

- i. Rashtriya Uchchattar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA): ₹80 crore;
- ii. For improvement of infrastructure; sports facilities; libraries; skill orientation Programmes: ₹ 10 crore;
- iii. CM Scholarship for concession in University Fee: ₹6 crore; and
- iv. For providing Sanitary Napkins: ₹5 crore.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION

40. Government of Punjab recognizes the significance of Technical Education as a catalyst for growth, and concerted efforts have been undertaken on various fronts to ensure that the Technical Education System aligns with the demands and specifications of the industry.

41. I would like to inform that 5 Government Polytechnic colleges for Girls have been converted into co-educational institutes, enhancing admissions and facilitating optimal utilization of infrastructure. Under the Dual System of Training, 180 MOUs are operational, and 2,760 students have been trained. Furthermore, additional courses will be introduced in the existing Polytechnics based on local demand. An allocation of ₹525 crore is proposed in FY 2024-25 to support future efforts of the Technical Education department.

MEDICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH

42. With immense pleasure, I would like to inform this august House that the State Cancer Institute at Government Medical College, Amritsar at a cost of ₹114 crore and Tertiary Cancer Center at Fazilka at a cost of ₹45 crore have been constructed. In addition, “CM Di Yogshala” at Guru Ravidas Ayurveda University, Hoshiarpur has also been established.

43. As promised by our Government, the Punjab Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences at SAS Nagar (Mohali) has been completed and has already started rendering OPD services. It is manned with a strong team of doctors, nurses, paramedics and support staff with the primary objective of providing unmatched healthcare and in this specialized area.

44. Construction of a burn unit; multi-story residences for senior- junior residents and other employees; and a sports complex at a total cost of ₹110 crore is underway at Government Medical College, Patiala. Further, works on the medical college of 100 MBBS seats each at Mastuana Sahib, Sangrur; Kapurthala; Malerkotla and Hoshiarpur are expected to start in FY 2024-25.

45. I propose a budgetary outlay of ₹1,133 crore in FY 2024-25 for undertaking the developmental activities under Medical Education and Research which includes a special provision for developing a girls' hostel at Government Ayurvedic College, Patiala.

GRANT-IN-AID TO UNIVERSITIES & CONSTITUENT COLLEGES

46. AAP Government would continue supporting various State Universities like GADVASU, PAU, Sri Guru Teg Bahadur State University of Law, Punjab University, Punjabi University, GNDU and others; together with their constituent colleges for which a budgetary allocation of ₹1,425 crore is proposed in FY 2024-25.

47. Speaker Sir, our Government understands the importance of Punjab Agricultural University (PAU), but no concrete steps have been taken by previous governments to strengthen and for advancement of technology of PAU. In recognition of the role played by the University, a provision of ₹40 crore has been made for the development of research-related and other infrastructure in the University in FY 2024-25. In addition to this, an initial allocation of ₹40 crore is proposed in FY 2024-25 for the construction of the Hostel at Panjab University, Chandigarh.

SPORTS & YOUTH SERVICES

48. As promised in our previous Budget, we have notified the new Sport Policy, whereby the prize money for national and international medal winners have been increased substantially. “Khedan Watan Punjab Diyan” events were organized to re-discover the sports spirit of Punjab. Further, in the ongoing year, awards amounting to ₹54 crore have been distributed to approx. 14,728 players. Jobs have been provided to eleven (11) sports players, of which four (4) were appointed in Punjab Civil Services (PCS) and seven (7) in Punjab Police Services (PPS).

49. AAP Government has doubled the stipends to ₹16,000/- and ₹12,000/- per month, respectively to 180 each of outstanding sportspersons and budding sportspersons of the State. I propose a budgetary outlay of ₹272 crore for Sports and Youth Services in FY 2024-25 with the hope of creating and nurturing world class talent in sports from Punjab.

SPORTS NURSERIES

50. We propose to establish 1,000 sports nurseries for approx. 60,000 sportspersons aged between 6 to 17 years in all districts of Punjab. In the first phase, 250 sports nurseries are being established with proper coaching and availability of sports equipment to players, for which an initial outlay of ₹50 crore is proposed in FY 2024-25.

MAHARAJA BHUPINDER SINGH PUNJAB SPORTS UNIVERSITY

51. To promote sports education in the areas of Sport Science, Sports Technology, Sports Management and Coaching, etc. I propose an allocation of ₹34 crore for Maharaja Bhupinder Singh Punjab Sports University in FY 2024-25.

HEALTH

Speaker Sir, it is said –

“He who has health has hope and he who has hope has everything”

52. Over the past two years, our Government has been implementing transformative initiatives in the health sector, demonstrating steadfast commitment to the well-being of 3 crore Punjabis. Umpteen measures have been introduced to bolster healthcare infrastructure and enhance service delivery. An allocation of ₹5,264 crore in FY 2024-25 for the Health services has been provisioned.

AAM AADMI CLINICS

53. A total of 829 Aam Aadmi Clinics have already been established in the State and many more are in the pipeline. 80 types of medicines and 38 diagnostic lab tests are being provided free of cost at these clinics. So far, more than 01 crore patients have availed treatment and more than 31 lakh diagnostic lab tests have been conducted. An allocation of ₹249 crore has been earmarked in FY 2024-25 for strengthening this revolutionary initiative further.

FARISHTEY

54. Our Government as promised has launched the FARISHTEY Scheme with the intent of lowering the morbidity rates resulting from injuries sustained in road accidents and to provide immediate, hassle-free treatment in the available Government/ empaneled private hospitals. Additionally, to encourage common people to come forth and help accident victims and save the lives of the victims, such “Farishtey” would be incentivized with cash rewards, given commendation certificates and

would be provided immunity from legal complications and police inquires. An initial budgetary allocation of ₹20 crore is proposed in FY 2024-25 for this purpose.

AYUSHMAN BHARAT- MUKH MANTRI SARBAT SEHAT BIMA YOJANA

55. Under this scheme, out of the total 44.10 lakh families, e-cards have been generated for 35.59 lakh families, and around ₹2,227 crore approx. has been spent on the treatment through 207 public, 570 private and 6 Government of India empaneled hospitals. An allocation of ₹553 crore has been provisioned in FY 2024-25 under this scheme.

DE-ADDICTION

56. The State Government is committed to end the drug menace in the State and also to bring back hapless addicts to normal health. A comprehensive de-addiction plan is deployed through a network of a total of 529 OoAT Clinics and 306 Rehabilitation Centers. Further, a Tele Manas Hub is being established at the Institute of Mental Health (IMH), Amritsar, to provide consultation/counselling on Mental Health by trained counsellors. I propose a provision of ₹70 crore in FY 2024-25 for this scheme.

PUNJAB URBAN HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE

57. Upgradation of 3 District Hospitals- Ludhiana; Sangrur and Jalandhar are being undertaken currently for providing best healthcare facilities to patients. I propose an allocation of ₹150 crore in FY 2024-25 for undertaking different infrastructure upgradation in the remaining 20 District Hospitals in a gradual manner.

58. In addition to the above, upgradation and strengthening of Rural Hospital and Sub Divisional Hospital at Cheema, Kauhrian, Dhuri (Sangrur) and at SAS Nagar (Mohali); MCH in 7 District Hospitals; and purchase of 58 new ambulances, totaling ₹100 crore are proposed to be undertaken during FY 2024-25 through PIDB.

EMPLOYMENT GENERATION & TRAINING

59. Counseling and skill training is very important to improve employability and our Government is taking concrete steps for this. I propose a budgetary outlay of ₹179 crore in FY 2024-25 for the implementation of various schemes of training and skill development. We are initiating Punjab Hunar Vikas Yojna in this regard and also focusing on strengthening of C-PYTE training centers for which ₹46 crore has been earmarked in FY 2024-25.

INDUSTRIES & COMMERCE

60. Before the AAP Government, the State's job-providing industrialists did not have any platform to make necessary suggestions aimed at boosting industrial growth. Our Government understands the importance of the private sector in the economy of the State and appreciates their contribution in growing the economy of Punjab. The launch of "Sarkar Vyapaar Milni" to facilitate direct engagement with traders across Punjab is proof of the commitment of the AAP Government. These Milni' under the visionary leadership of Hon'ble Chief Minister Sardar Bhagwant Singh Maan has provided an opportunity to the entrepreneurs to put forward their concerns and to jointly find their solutions.

61. Our MSMEs are the backbone of our state's economy. To give a boost to MSMEs and to address their challenges, our government has set

up a new MSME wing. This wing will work to enhance the competitiveness of our MSMEs and ensure continuous flow of credit from financial institutions for their expansion and innovation. This move is expected to benefit around 8 lakh MSMEs.

62. To further enhance the Ease of Doing Business (EoDB), the Invest Punjab Business First (IPBF) Portal has been strengthened and integrated with National Single Window Portal. Through this portal, over ten thousand units have been granted Regulatory Clearances, over one lakh units have been provided different services in a time bound manner. Our Government has introduced 'green stamp' paper for registration of sale-deed to ensure faster and smooth issuance of clearances to industrial projects.

63. I propose a budgetary outlay of ₹3,367 crore including subsidized power to our industrial sector in FY 2024-25. Also, ₹50 crore has been initially earmarked for other fiscal incentives to the industries of the State.

GOVERNANCE REFORMS

Speaker Sir,

64. AAP Government under the vision of Sardar Bhagwant Singh Mann Ji has launched Door-Step Delivery (DSD) of Services for providing 43 most used Government to Citizen (G2C) services to Punjab residents at their doorstep. Now Punjabis don't need to visit any government office or face harassment to avail government services like before.

65. In another good governance initiative, a Centralized Admission Portal has been implemented in the colleges through which approx.1.5 lakh students were admitted in around 300 colleges in

2023-24. Our Government has also introduced a single unified platform whereby the citizens can submit their grievances online/ through mobile app/ call center and also through Sewa Kendras. Against the 2.23 lakh grievances received, 2.03 lakh have been resolved as of now.

FOOD, CIVIL SUPPLIES & CONSUMER AFFAIRS

66. Promoting good governance in the food sector is our Government's priority. In order to bring transparency in allotments and optimize expenditure, AAP Government has initiated online linking of mandis with Rice Mills. Integration of Anaaj-Kharid portal has been done with PSPCL portal for monitoring power consumption of rice mills to match with the production of rice, and to curb bogus purchases and recycling of PDS rice. An allocation of ₹1,072 crore is proposed in FY 2024-25 for undertaking various initiatives in the department.

67. Further, installation of Vehicle Tracking System (VTS) in vehicles transporting wheat and paddy/rice has been made mandatory and all gate passes for lifting of wheat/paddy from mandis to storage points/mills are being generated online through the Anaaj Kharid Portal.

68. Our Government is establishing around 800 Model Fair Price Shops (MFPS) through MARKFED, and convert NFSA wheat into Atta, packaging it for doorstep distribution to beneficiaries. This would help our poor to save time, avoid long queues at ration depots and instead work to fend their families. Our Government has also initiated "Ghar Ghar Muft Ration Yojana" i.e. door step delivery of packaged atta an allocation of ₹250 crore has been earmarked in FY 2024-25.

REVENUE REHABILITATION & DISASTER MANAGEMENT

69. Widespread flooding this year necessitated immediate and extensive relief efforts to evacuate affected population, provide shelter, and address the urgent need for food and medical assistance. Our Government has extended compensation of ₹490 crore approx. in the current financial year to cover various losses, including crop damage, loss of human lives, harm to livestock, and damage to residences. Further, to support diverse initiatives of this department. I propose a budgetary outlay of ₹1,573 crore in FY 2024-25.

70. Out of 13,004 villages in the State, cadastral maps of 6,670 villages comprising 39,134 Mussavi Sheets have been digitized. Our Government aims to digitize all Mussavis in the coming year so as to create a digital database. Also, 178 Fard Kendras at Tehsils/ Sub-Tehsils level have been operationalized in the State with revenue record of majority of the villages already digitized.

71. In the current fiscal year, an amount of approx. ₹150 crore has been utilized for the construction and repair of District Administrative Complexes, Tehsils, Sub-Tehsils, and Sub-Divisional Complexes, with an aim to facilitate efficient operations and provide improved services to public.

NRI AFFAIRS

72. AAP Government remains in constant touch with our NRI brothers and sisters, who play a special role in Punjab's economy and society. We have organized 4 NRI Milni' programme in 2023-24 at Pathankot, SBS Nagar, Ferozepur and Sangrur and would continue doing such programmes in the upcoming year as well.

73. Extending good governance initiatives for NRI Affairs, our Government has started working towards enabling Punjabis living abroad to electronically countersign/verify documents required by foreign embassies through e-Sanad portal. Additionally, an online portal has been developed for NRIs, providing them with a platform to submit complaints and offer suggestions, if any.

DEFENCE SERVICES

74. Our Hon'ble Chief Minister always remains worried about the well-being of our ex-servicemen, war-widows, World War veterans, disabled soldiers, and their dependents. As promised in the previous budget of increasing the ex-gratia grant to ₹1 crore, we have released this ex-gratia grant to the families of the martyred soldiers .

75. Further, the pensions for war widows increased from ₹6,000 to ₹10,000 per month and assistance to blue-star affected Dharmi Fauji increased from ₹10,000 to ₹12,000 per month. Also, the pension for war jagirs is being increased from ₹10,000 to ₹20,000 per annum. To continue our Government's efforts to facilitate the defence personnel, I propose ₹77 crore in FY 2024-25 to deliver welfare services.

TOURISM & CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

76. The Punjab Tourism Summit and Travel Mart 2023 was held at SAS Nagar (Mohali) with the aim to showcase the untapped tourism potential of our State. Further, 22 fairs have been organized in various districts showcasing the vibrant culture and rich heritage of Punjab. "Rangla Punjab" Mela in Amritsar also served as a forum promoting our

culture and literature. All these events symbolize the resolve of our Hon'ble Chief Minister to make Punjab a sought after tourist destination.

77. Under PARSHAD Scheme, development works have already started in Sri Chamkaur Sahib. Further, the work to develop Anglo-Sikh war circuit is already under way and would be completed soon. Also, efforts are on to build Turban Museum at Sri Anandpur Sahib showcasing the importance of turban in the Indian culture.

78. Considering the steadfast need to promote Punjab as a tourist hub, I propose a budgetary outlay of ₹166 crore in FY 2024-25, with a special outlay of ₹30 crore for the construction, upkeep, and preservation of various memorials and ₹30 crore for branding of tourism in the State.

79. To promote ecotourism, a project namely "Ecotourism activities in various wildlife areas / Birs of Punjab" at a cost of ₹25 crore has been prepared and will be implemented in the coming 3 years and for this suitable allocation has been made in FY 2024-25. Separately efforts are already on to develop Ranjit Sagar Dam in Pathankot as a world class tourist destination.

HOME AFFAIRS, JUSTICE & JAILS

Speaker Sir,

80. A budgetary outlay of ₹10,635 crore has been provisioned for FY 2024-25 for the department of Home Affairs, Justice and Jails to support their law enforcement initiatives.

81. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our Hon'ble Chief Minister for creating the "Sadak Surakhya Force". Our Police force has got top-of-the-line Toyota Hilux vehicles, a feat unmatched by any other State

in the country. I would also like to inform that out of 1,993 vehicles purchased in the last five years for the police personnel, 1,396 vehicles have been provided in the last two years.

82. I would like to share that Punjab Police is making substantial strides in law enforcement by partnering with IIT Ropar to establish an Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning (AI-ML) Lab. This lab would use artificial intelligence for sophisticated crime analysis and would address evolving challenges being faced in law enforcement.

83. We also endeavor to modernize our correctional facilities and infrastructural facilities related to police administration in the next financial year.

84. I am happy to inform that 827 sub-inspectors, 787 head constables, 144 civilian support staff have already been appointed to strengthen our police force and 4,100 Tabs and 4,300 phones have been procured and distributed to Investigating Officers for optimum implementation of the CCTNS project, facilitating effective investigations and citizen interaction through online services.

SOCIAL WELFARE & SOCIAL JUSTICE

85. AAP Governments' commitment to undertake social welfare initiatives, foster development of an equitable, just, and compassionate society can be seen in its support to various social welfare schemes, for which an allocation of ₹9,388 crore is proposed in FY 2024-25.

86. The Government has provisioned ₹5,925 crore in FY 2024-25 for providing social security pension across different categories. Further, to implement other welfare schemes such as Poshan Abhiyaan;

Ashirwad Scheme; Accessible India Campaign; Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana, an allocation of ₹1,053 crore has been earmarked in the next financial year.

87. Our Government stands beside our SCs/ BCs/ Minority brothers and sisters and all downtrodden sections of society. An allocation of ₹13,844 crore during FY 2024-25 has been provisioned towards the Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan (SCSP) which stands at 35% of the total development Budget of the State.

INFRASTRUCTURE

ROADS & BRIDGES

88. During FY 2023-24, our Government has completed construction of 805 km roads and four bridges under PMGSY-III for which an expenditure of ₹400 crore has been incurred. Further, ₹600 crore has been allocated for PMGSY-III in FY 2024-25. During FY 2023-24 under National Highways (original works) road length of 31 km has been upgraded with an expenditure of ₹177 crore. Under CRIF scheme 22 km road has been upgraded with an expenditure of ₹40 crore. Under the State scheme, upgradation of 176 km of road has been completed with an expenditure of ₹199 crore. I propose further outlay of ₹2,695 crore for the arteries of connectivity i.e. Roads and Bridges.

89. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, it may come as a surprise to you that despite its profound historical and spiritual importance in Sikhism, in Sri Anandpur Sahib, many villages still lack proper connectivity even after 75 years of Independence. For ease of travel and proper connectivity of the residents of these villages, an initial allocation of ₹30 crore has been made for the

construction of bridges between Khera Kalmot and Bhalladi & between Bela Dhyani and Ajauli.

WATER SUPPLY & SANITATION

90. I am happy to say that Punjab has successfully achieved full coverage in providing tap piped water supply facilities to rural households. The State has earned the distinction of being 5th in India to attain the “Har Ghar Jal” status. To tackle the challenges related to water quality and scarcity, 15 large multi-village surface water supply schemes costing approx. ₹2,200 crore covering 1,706 villages are expected to be completed in FY 2024-25.

91. In an effort to ensure safe drinking water, Arsenic and Iron Removal Plants (AIRPs) utilizing adsorption technology from IIT Madras have been installed in 685 villages across various districts. Additionally, household purifiers and community water purification plants have been distributed and installed in 170 border villages, totaling an investment of ₹133 crore.

92. An allocation of ₹1,549 crore has been earmarked in FY 2024-25 for executing projects such as Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen), replacement and rehabilitation of existing infrastructure, and the establishment and augmentation of surface-water based scheme.

WATER RESOURCES

93. AAP Government acted promptly to minimize losses due to floods this year and allocated ₹100 crore for cleaning operations along approx. 3,461 kms of drains and for implementing 68 flood protection projects at ground. Additionally, ₹192 crore were spent to address

breaches in major rivers caused by incessant rains and floodwater. In order to further strengthen our canals, a budgetary outlay of ₹2,107 crore has been made in FY 2024-25.

94. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, guided by the vision of Hon'ble Chief Minister, Sardar Bhagwant Singh Mann Ji, who prioritizes irrigation facilities, we propose a new Malwa canal project. This initiative aims to cover approximately 1,78,000 acres, benefiting the districts of Bathinda, Faridkot, Ferozepur and Muktsar. This project aims to reduce reliance on groundwater and optimize the under-utilized Punjab's share of Beas-Satluj river water during the Rabi period.

95. I am happy to inform that pond filling process has started in the long awaited Shahpur Kandi Dam project. This would create an additional irrigation potential of 37,173 hectares as well as intensive irrigation of 1.18 lakh hectares area under Upper Bari Doab Canal (UBDC) system i.e. in Amritsar, Gurdaspur Taran Tarn and Pathankot. The hydel power generation infrastructure would be soon completed which has an installed capacity of 206 MW.

96. Our Government has prioritized works of lining of water courses and works amounting to ₹80 crore have already been taken up throughout the State. I propose an allocation of ₹143 crore for undertaking new projects- construction/ re-modeling and lining/ re-lining works in FY 2024-25 and ₹150 crore for completion of relining of Rajasthan and Sirhind feeder.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & URBAN DEVELOPMENT

97. I am proud of the fact that in the Swachh Survekshan 2023 conducted by Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Punjab has achieved 1st Rank in the North Zone. During 2023-24, remediation work for legacy waste was completed in 79 out of 148 ULBs, with efforts underway to address the remaining 69 ULBs by March 31, 2026. I propose ₹6,289 crore in FY 2024-25 for the development of local urban areas.

98. With an aim of providing pucca housing to underprivileged families not having their own pucca house; with financial assistance of ₹225 crore, 30,000 houses have been completed in FY 2023-24 and I propose an allocation of ₹510 crore in FY 2024-25 for completing the remaining houses.

99. For undertaking works under the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) related to water supply schemes and environmental rejuvenation, ₹394 crore is hereby proposed in FY 2024-25. Further, for the Swachh Bharat Mission; National Urban Livelihood Mission; Punjab Municipal Development Fund, a total of ₹538 crore has been provisioned in FY 2024-25.

100. Under the new Urban Infrastructure Development Fund (UDIF), we propose to initiate various infrastructure projects related to sewerage treatment plants; urban parks; leisure valley; and for augmentation and rehabilitation of water supply, etc. amounting to ₹322 crore with the assistance of the National Housing Bank.

101. Further, the Government of Punjab is collaborating with Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs to improve urban mobility and E-buses would soon run in the cities of Jalandhar, Amritsar, Ludhiana and Patiala.

102. Besides this, an additional amount of ₹900 crore is proposed for infra-projects to be undertaken by PIDB across various departments- Water Resources; Water Supply and Sanitation; Local Government and Public Works during FY 2024-25.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT & PANCHAYATS

103. Speaker Sir, AAP Government is committed to provide an all-round development for the rural population through the provisioning of basic amenities and creation of rural employment and rural livelihood. I propose an allocation of ₹3,154 crore in FY 2024-25.

104. Our Government's drive to remove illegal encroachments on government land has met tremendous success. As a result, more than 12,000 acres of land were freed from illegal encroachment, which was largely handed over to its rightful owners, the Panchayats.

105. The following allocations are being proposed for different schemes for Rural Development during FY 2024-25:

- i. MGNREGS: ₹655 crore for providing employment;
- ii. Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana: ₹20 crore;
- iii. National Rural Livelihood Mission: ₹120 crore; and
- iv. Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan: ₹20 crore.

MINING

106. Our Government has operationalized a total of 60 Public Mining sites in 3 Phases and total quantity of 14.66 Lakh Metric Tonnes has been sold from these sites at pit head sale price of ₹5.50/- per cft. In the next phase, another 16 sites are expected to be launched soon in the State.

107. "Commercial Mining Sites" are being auctioned involving 40 clusters with 67 mineral-bearing sites. We further intend to auction 100 clusters of Commercial Mining Sites in the State in the upcoming year.

108. In an effort to redress concerns raised by crusher unions, the Government has notified "The Punjab Crusher Policy" and to further reform the Crusher industry, we would soon be launching an initiative called "Public Crusher Units".

TRANSPORT

109. Through "Mukhyamantri Tirath Yatra" we have been able to offer Punjabis an opportunity for free pilgrimage to various religious places of the Nation. An allocation of ₹550 crore for the transport sector with ₹25 crore for this scheme is proposed in FY 2024-25.

110. Our Government has launched the Electric Vehicle policy and earmarked ₹10 crore in FY 2024-25 for providing incentives under it.

111. Vehicle scrapping facility in Ludhiana and Morinda has already started working and an exemption up to 25% in Motor Vehicle Tax is being provided to new non-transport vehicles.

112. I am pleased to say that approx. 11 crore women of the State have availed free bus travel facility during the current year for which

₹450 crore has been provided by the Government and an allocation of ₹450 crore has been provided in FY 2024-25 for continuing this service.

POWER

113. Speaker Sir, I am pleased to announce that our Government has purchased the former GVK Goindwal Sahib Thermal Power plant, now renamed Shri Guru Amardas Thermal Plant, with a capacity of 540 MW. This acquisition has been achieved at a remarkably low cost of ₹1080 crore, equating to ₹2 crore per MW, in contrast to the typical cost of ₹8.5 crore per MW for a new thermal plant.

114. The focus of our Government is to further strengthen the power infrastructure and make our Powercoms more efficient and cost effective. Several key initiatives are underway, including the construction of a new 400 kV substation in Ropar, strengthening of substations at Dhanansu, Behman Jassa Singh and a 220 kV substation at Sherpur (Ludhiana), is set to be commissioned shortly.

115. Presently 90% of domestic consumers are receiving zero electricity bills. An allocation of ₹7,780 crore has been provided in FY 2024-25 for providing free power of 300 units per month to domestic consumers.

116. I am pleased to inform the august House that in order to strengthen the workforce of the Power sector, a total of 4,575 candidates have been recruited.

NEW & RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES

117. Significant strides have been made in Punjab's renewable energy sector, with the installation of 6.17 MW solar rooftop plants, 811 solar water pumping systems, and 10,218 solar street lights.

118. Additionally, the State is actively engaged in solar power generation through various schemes, such as development of a 50 MW canal top project; installation of 10,833 solar street lights; 220 MW solar power plants and 20,000 Agriculture Off-Grid Solar Pumps, etc. The State is also committed to implementing energy efficiency activities across diverse sectors, including domestic, commercial, agriculture, municipal, buildings, and industrial segments.

CIVIL AVIATION

119. I must share that a new air terminal at Adampur with a cost of around ₹150 crore, replacing the previous porta cabin capacity of 75 passengers to a 150 passenger capacity has been completed. Additionally, ₹15 crore was disbursed by the State Government for construction of a road at the airport. Works related to Shaheed Kartar Singh Sarabha Airport at Halwara are completed and the commencement of flights from both of these airports are expected to start soon paving avenues for development.

120. With concerted efforts of our Government, two flights to Kuala Lumpur and one to Milan have been started from Amritsar and flights from Bathinda have also resumed. Further steps are being taken for increasing the air connectivity between Punjab and European countries.

121. Additionally, one multi-engine aircraft and two simulators are being procured for the Patiala Aviation Club and Amritsar Aviation Club. These will be utilized for training the prospective pilots who have applied for licenses.

REVENUE AUGMENTATION

122. The Total Revenue Receipts have been projected to be ₹1,03,936 crore in FY 2024-25, of which the Own Tax Revenue accounts for ₹58,900 crore. Further, the Share of Central Taxes has been pegged at ₹22,041 crore and Grant-in-Aid from Centre at ₹11,748 crore in FY 2024-25.

123. For giving a flip to the major contributor of our Own Tax Revenue i.e. GST, the Taxation Department has collaborated with IIT, Hyderabad to mine data related to taxation, which has resulted in strengthening of our Tax Intelligence Unit and increase in the compliance rate. Further, our innovative scheme "Bill Leyao Inaam Pao" has also delivered results. Almost 60,000 bills have been uploaded and prizes worth ₹60 lakhs have been distributed. Many other revenue augmentation measures are underway across revenue earning departments.

CONCLUSION

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

124. Our Government under the guidance of our National Convener and leadership of our Hon'ble Chief Minister is constantly working for the holistic development of Punjab and Punjabis through good governance initiatives and focus on the fundamental sectors of economy and society.

वतन के जाँ-निसार हैं वतन के काम आएँगे

हम इस ज़मी को एक रोज़ आसमाँ बनाएँगे

125. With unwavering determination and a unified vision, we are on our way to construct a more robust, dynamic, and resilient "Rangla Punjab".

126. As I conclude, I would extend my heartfelt appreciation to officials and staff of Department of Finance and Planning for their dedication, sincerity and diligent work ethics that was pivotal in formulating this Budget.

127. I hereby humbly submit to this august House, the Budget proposals for the Financial Year 2024-25 for approval.

JAI HIND