GOVERNMENT OF PUNJAB

Speech of

Harpal Singh Cheema

Finance Minister, Punjab

Presenting the

Budget for the Year 2026-27

to the

Punjab Vidhan Sabha

8 March, 2026
Chandigarh

Budget 2026-27

Speech of

Harpal Singh Cheema
Finance Minister

Hon’ble Speaker Sir,

1. I humbly rise today to present the fifth Budget of the Aam Aadmi Party Government, fully conscious of the responsibility that this moment carries. After four complete years of governance, this Budget is presented at a stage where words matter less than work done, and where governance must speak for itself. It is placed before this august House with humility and with confidence drawn from delivery, conscious that the true measure of governance lies in tangible outcomes and the everyday experience of our citizens.

2. Punjab has never accepted injustice quietly. It is the land of Shaheed-e-Azam Sardar Bhagat Singh, who taught us that real freedom is not merely political power, but dignity, equality and justice in everyday life. When the people of Punjab voted for change in March 2022, they did so with that same spirit-rejecting hollow politics and demanding a government that would be honest in intent, firm in resolve and decisive in action. Our vision of a Rangla Punjab emerged from this moral foundation.

3. Before talking on the Budget, Speaker Sir, I would be failing in my duty if I did not acknowledge the courage and resilience shown by the people of Punjab during the devastating floods that tested our State. When homes were submerged and livelihoods were disrupted, the people of

Punjab stood together with remarkable strength and compassion, helping one another and rebuilding their lives with patience and resolve. The Government worked alongside affected families to provide relief, restore essential services and support rehabilitation with urgency and sensitivity. On behalf of this august House, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our citizens, volunteers and officials who rose to the occasion and once again proved that while natural calamities may cause hardship, they can never weaken the spirit of our people.

4. Under the compassionate leadership of Hon'ble Chief Minister Sardar Bhagwant Singh Mann Ji, the Government of Punjab has stood firmly with the people in their time of distress. To provide immediate relief and support, the State Government announced one of the highest compensation packages for losses suffered by citizens, including damage to crops, homes, and livestock. What is even more significant is that this compensation was released in record time, ensuring that affected families received timely assistance when they needed it the most. This reflects the unwavering commitment of our Government to stand shoulder to shoulder with the people of Punjab in every challenge, ensuring that no citizen feels alone in difficult times.

5. Today's Budget is historic in more ways than one. It is being presented on the auspicious occasion of International Women's Day, a day dedicated to celebrating the strength, achievements and aspirations of women. The daughters of Punjab have brought immense pride to the State and the Nation - whether in sports, science, arts or public life. Icons like Harmanpreet Kaur symbolize the courage, determination and excellence that define Punjab's daughters. Every reform undertaken by the

Government under the leadership of Hon'ble Chief Minister Sardar Bhagwant Singh Mann Ji is inspired by their aspirations and aimed at creating opportunities that bring dignity, empowerment and joy to them. This Budget is dedicated to the mothers and daughters of Punjab - a tribute to their strength and a celebration of their invaluable contribution to our society and our future.

6. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, from the very first day of assuming responsibility of the State, the Aam Aadmi Party Government under the able leadership of Sardar Bhagwant Singh Mann Ji has resolved that the guarantees given to the people would not remain mere words on paper. They would guide governance itself - shaping our budgets, defining our priorities and determining our accountability. I stand before this august House with immense pride to state that rarely has a government, in the fifth year of its tenure, been able to say that "every promise made to the people of Punjab has been fulfilled" with confidence and credibility. Our Government has ensured that these guarantees were not rhetorical assurances, but structured policy interventions backed by budgetary support, institutional reforms and measurable outcomes. That is why I am naming this Budget as "Saari Guarantiyan Puri Karan Wala Budget".

7. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, the impact of these guarantees is visible in the daily lives of our people. Zero electricity bills for nearly 90% of domestic consumers have provided sustained financial relief to lakhs of households across the State. For families long deprived of accessible healthcare, Aam Aadmi Clinics have fundamentally reshaped primary medical access by providing free consultations, medicines and diagnostics close to their homes. Further, as assured in the previous Budget, the Government has

launched the Mukhya Mantri Sehat Yojna, extending health insurance coverage of up to ₹10 lakh to every family in Punjab. This commitment ensures that no citizen is compelled to choose between necessary medical treatment and financial stability.

8. In education, the transformation of government schools through Schools of Eminence has sent a clear message - that quality education must be a public guarantee, not a private privilege. At the same time, initiatives such as the Mukh Mantri Tirath Yatra Scheme have reflected a governance philosophy that respects faith, honors senior citizens, and recognizes the emotional and cultural fabric of Punjabi society. This is what a people-centric government looks like in practice.

9. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, it is also necessary to speak plainly about the challenges we inherited. When this Government assumed office, Punjab faced fragile public finances, weakened public trust and a growing menace of drugs that threatened to hollow out an entire generation. We chose not to look away. Through disciplined fiscal management, improved revenue mobilization and rationalization of expenditure, we have worked to restore financial stability while protecting welfare commitments.

10. At the same time, the fight against drugs has been pursued with resolve - by breaking entrenched political-criminal nexuses, strengthening enforcement, expanding de-addiction and rehabilitation efforts, and making it clear that the future of Punjab's youth will not be surrendered. This fight is difficult, but it is non-negotiable.

11. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, this fifth Budget of AAP Government marks a defining moment in our journey of governance. It consolidates the gains of

the past four years and sets the direction for the next phase of Punjab's progress. The focus now is on deepening reforms, strengthening service delivery, and ensuring that the foundations laid over the last four years translate into durable and inclusive growth for the State. It also sets a new benchmark (Nayi Misaal) to the people of Punjab that only Aam Aadmi Party Government fulfills every guarantee that it makes to the public – while other parties have only fooled them for 75 years and looted Punjab. With this conviction and a clear sense of responsibility, I now place before this august House the Budget for the Financial Year 2026–27.

BUDGET FY 2026-27

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

12. Punjab's economy has demonstrated steady resilience and structural stability over the past year. The Gross State Domestic Product of State (GSDP) for FY 2025–26 is estimated at ₹8,91,487 crore. For FY 2026–27, GSDP is projected to reach ₹9,80,635 crore with an anticipated growth rate of 10 percent, supported by improved agricultural productivity, expanding services activity and strengthened industrial momentum.

Speaker Sir,

13. I propose a total Budget Expenditure of ₹2,60,437 crore for FY 2026–27. The Effective Revenue Deficit is estimated at 2.06 percent of GSDP and the Fiscal Deficit at 4.08 percent of GSDP. These estimates reaffirm our resolve to combine responsible fiscal management with sustained support for economic growth and public welfare.

14. As we enter the next phase of Punjab's development journey, I now place before this august House the key sector-specific initiatives and

allocations for FY 2026–27. Each allocation reflects a deliberate effort to deepen reforms, widen access and strengthen the quality of public service delivery.

EDUCATION

15. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, education reforms in Punjab have moved from promise to structural transformation. Over the past four years, we have focused on upgrading infrastructure, strengthening foundational learning and creating centres of excellence within the government school system. In FY 2026–27, this reform journey enters its next phase - consolidation with expansion. I propose a budgetary outlay of ₹19,279 crore in the Education Sector for the Financial Year 2026- 27, which is an increase of 7% over FY 2025-26 (BE).

SCHOOL EDUCATION

16. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, the future of Punjab will be written in classrooms. Every developed nation in the world has risen on one decisive foundation, the quality of education it provides to its children. If Punjab is to compete globally, create jobs, attract investment and secure prosperity for the next generation, then education cannot be treated as just another department. It must be a mission. It must be the centre piece of governance. This Government has taken that call with clarity, conviction and courage.

17. Punjab has always had capable people, entrepreneurial spirit and rich natural resources. What was required was decisive leadership. Under Punjab Sikhiya Kranti, we made a bold and historic choice to place education at the very top of the political agenda and support it with unprecedented reforms and investments. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, the results

of that commitment are visible today. In the Government of India's PARAKH Rashtriya Sarvekshan 2024, Punjab ranked Number One in classroom learning outcomes, surpassing even the State of Kerala, which has consistently remained among the top performing States in education for many years. Punjab's government schools have demonstrated that excellence is not the privilege of a few, but the right of every child.

18. Having secured national leadership, we are now preparing Punjab's education system for global benchmarks. In a defining milestone, the Government of Punjab has decided to launch Sikhiya Kranti 2.0 initiative to transform our education system with an outlay of ₹3,500 crore, over the next 6 years. We have signed a historic collaboration with the World Bank for transforming school education. This represents one of the largest education reform investments in Punjab's history. This Mission will strengthen foundational literacy and numeracy, expand science and commerce streams, empower teachers and school leaders, institutionalize structured career counselling and modernize governance systems. Punjab is not merely reforming schools. We are redesigning the entire education ecosystem for the next generation.

19. Quality education requires dignity, safety and strong infrastructure. Across nearly 20,000 government schools, we have ensured both basic and advanced standards. Today, 99 percent of schools have boundary walls. 10,095 toilets have been constructed. More than one lakh new desks procurement ensures that no child sits on the floor. 8,286 sanitation workers are ensuring daily cleanliness in schools. More than 3,000 security personnel are safeguarding campuses. 1,798 Campus Managers are supporting school administration. Around 6,200 classrooms have been

newly constructed and 4,700 renovated to meet growing needs. This year, ₹690 crore has been allocated to further strengthen school infrastructure. The focus of this year will be a mass scale whitewashing and beautification drive so that every government school reflects pride, cleanliness and aspiration.

20. Speaker Sir, our 118 Schools of Eminence are redefining public education. An allocation of ₹193 crore has already strengthened infrastructure, technology, furniture, uniforms and professional services in these institutions. The outcomes speak for themselves. In 2025, 267 students qualified JEE Mains and 847 qualified NEET from government schools. This is almost 5 times the jump since 2022! We are partnering with experts from reputed coaching institutions to provide structured professional preparation within government schools themselves. Talent in Punjab will now compete nationally and internationally on equal footing, regardless of income or background. We will continue to invest in ensuring our students have a bright future.

21. Education must lead to meaningful futures. We are institutionalizing a statewide Career Counselling Framework covering approximately 7.35 lakh students from Grades IX to XII. We will be launching career counselling support portal for our children to be more informed about jobs and higher education decisions.

22. Alongside academic reforms, we have launched a never before digital transformation in government secondary schools. We have invested almost ₹395 crore in strengthening our government schools' digital infrastructure. As we speak, 38,649 desktop computers are being delivered across government schools. This will ensure every senior secondary and

secondary school has a computer lab. Additionally, 8,268 Interactive Flat Panels are being installed in 3,694 schools. This is one of the largest digital infrastructure upgrades in the history of Punjab's government schools. We are decisively bridging the digital divide and ensuring that every government school child has access to modern 21st century learning tools. Some only talk of Artificial Intelligence (AI), but we invest in bringing technology to our students.

23. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, from national leadership in learning outcomes to global collaboration with the World Bank, from dignity driven infrastructure to digital empowerment, from Schools of Eminence to structured career pathways, Punjab is witnessing not an incremental change but a full-scale education transformation. The true wealth of Punjab lies not in its buildings but in its classrooms, not in its roads but in its children's dreams. We are building that future brick by brick, classroom by classroom, child by child.

HIGHER EDUCATION

24. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, strengthening higher education remains essential for building a knowledge-driven and skilled Punjab. During the current year, infrastructure upgradation, repair and renovation works have been undertaken across Government Colleges to improve academic facilities and student amenities.

25. I am pleased to inform this august House that the Government has accorded in-principal approval for establishment of a World-Class University in the sacred name of Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji at Sri Anandpur Sahib. The Institute is proposed to be established in a mission-mode to

translate the announcement into tangible on-ground asset.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION

26. Our Government continues to accord priority to skill development, recognizing that a competitive economy must be supported by a trained and industry-ready workforce. Over the past year, seating capacity in Government ITIs was expanded significantly from 35,000 to 52,000, thereby widening access to vocational education for thousands of youth across the State.

27. Further, Punjab has operationalized ITIs in 11 jails, integrating skill development with social rehabilitation-a pioneering initiative that provides inmates with certified vocational skills and a pathway to dignified reintegration. Through the Hub-and-Spoke model under PM-SETU, selected ITIs are being developed as Centres of Excellence, while Innovation Labs and industry partnerships - including collaboration with IIT Ropar - are strengthening exposure to emerging technologies such as AI, Internet of Things (IoT) and Cyber-Physical Systems. I propose a budgetary allocation of ₹569 crore for initiatives under Technical Education in FY 2026-27.

GRANT-IN-AID TO UNIVERSITIES & CONSTITUENT COLLEGES

28. Our Government will continue to accord priority to the strengthening and development of State Universities, including GADVASU, PAU, Panjab University, Punjabi University, Guru Nanak Dev University and their constituent colleges. In FY 2026–27, a budgetary provision of ₹1,760 crore has been earmarked to support academic excellence, research advancement and infrastructure augmentation across these institutions.

HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE

29. As mentioned earlier, Hon'ble Speaker Sir, our Government has rolled out one of the most comprehensive health sector reforms in the State's history through the Mukhya Mantri Sehat Yojana by providing universal health insurance coverage to the people of Punjab. Under this scheme, every family in Punjab is entitled to cashless treatment of up to ₹10 lakh per year, across over 900 Government and empaneled private hospitals. With simplified procedures and the issuance of Sehat Cards, access to treatment has been made seamless and transparent. With an allocation of ₹2,000 crore is proposed in FY 2026–27, the scheme is set to benefit nearly 65 lakh families and substantially reduce the financial burden of serious medical treatment on households across the State.

30. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, strengthening primary healthcare remains a cornerstone of this Government's commitment to accessible and affordable health services. Aam Aadmi Clinics have emerged as a transformative model of doorstep healthcare delivery across Punjab. At present, 881 Clinics - 565 in rural areas and 316 in urban areas are providing 107 essential medicines and 47 diagnostic tests free of cost, and have recorded nearly 05 crore OPD visits, including 1.55 crore unique patients. Notably, 55 percent of beneficiaries are women, reflecting enhanced access and growing trust in public healthcare.

31. To further strengthen this network, 100 additional Aam Aadmi Clinics are being operationalized during the current year, and in FY 2026–27 it is proposed to establish 143 more Clinics across the State. In addition, 308 Subsidiary Health Centers will be upgraded into Aam Aadmi Clinics to broaden coverage and enhance service delivery, taking the total

number of Aam Aadmi Clinics setup by the Bhagwant Mann government in five years to 1,432. These steps will consolidate Punjab's community-based primary healthcare network across the State. I propose an allocation of ₹351 crore in FY 2026-27 for this purpose.

32. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, significant efforts have been undertaken to strengthen public health infrastructure across 23 District Hospitals and 42 Sub-Divisional Hospitals, with comprehensive upgrades focused on hygiene, sanitation, patient comfort and service efficiency. Simultaneously, dedicated Maternal and Child Health Wings are being established and operationalized in public hospitals to enhance maternal and newborn care, further improving access to safe and dignified healthcare services across the State.

33. During the current financial year, the State is undertaking large-scale procurement of advanced medical equipment and machinery worth ₹300 crore for Government hospitals to enhance diagnostic, emergency and critical care services. This upgradation is nearing completion and will significantly strengthen healthcare capacity while ensuring timely, affordable and quality treatment for citizens across Punjab.

34. On the sacred occasion of 350th Martyrdom Anniversary of Sahib Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, the Government proposes to establish a modern Trauma Centre along with a dedicated Mother and Child Care Hospital at Sri Anandpur Sahib. This state-of-the-art facility will strengthen emergency and critical care services, significantly enhance maternal and child healthcare infrastructure, and ensure that residents as well as visiting devotees have timely access to quality medical services within the holy city, reducing the need for referrals to distant centres.

35. Our Government has undertaken the largest recruitment drive in Punjab's public health system to strengthen manpower in government hospitals. Since 2022, 934 doctors have been recruited, significantly improving availability across districts, including remote areas, and nearly 400 specialist doctors are being added to further enhance specialized care. Alongside this, around 400 nursing personnel have been recruited, with 500 more in the pipeline, strengthening frontline healthcare delivery and improving patient care across public health institutions. Additionally, the Government has approved an on-call incentive for in-service specialists to provide emergency services during non-working hours, ensuring round-the-clock healthcare services in secondary hospitals.

36. I propose a budgetary outlay of ₹6,879 crore for the Health Sector in FY 2026–27, reaffirming our commitment to strengthening public healthcare infrastructure, expanding universal health coverage and ensuring accessible, affordable and quality medical services for every citizen of Punjab.

MEDICAL EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

37. The Government continues to strengthen medical education infrastructure across the State. At Government Medical Colleges in Patiala and Amritsar, works relating to trauma centres, hostels and residential facilities are progressing, with adequate budgetary support provided in FY 2026–27. I am pleased to inform this august House that the first liver transplant was successfully conducted at the Punjab Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences, Mohali, in November 2025 and the cost for the liver transplant was only ₹10 lakhs. The Institute is also being expanded with the completion of the diagnostic block and development of a 175-bedded

hospital to further strengthen tertiary care capacity in the State.

38. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, Punjab is rapidly emerging as a premier medical education hub in North India, as we fulfill our commitment to a healthcare revolution. Our government has taken decisive steps to establish seven new medical colleges in Hoshiarpur, Kapurthala, Sangrur, SBS Nagar, Lehragaga, Malerkotla, and Ludhiana with a total of 600 new MBBS seats added to our Sate's capacity. This vision is anchored in fiscal responsibility and infrastructure excellence. For example, we have reduced the project cost for the Hoshiarpur Medical College from ₹550 crore to ₹275 crore, saving nearly ₹250 crore of public money while maintaining global standards. This strategic expansion ensures that our bright students no longer need to look towards countries like Ukraine or China for their education; instead, they will find world-class training and a future right here in Punjab.

39. I am pleased to inform this august House that, to strengthen medical education infrastructure in the State, the Government has purchased 38.50 acres of land at a cost of ₹49 crore for the establishment of a new Medical College in Malerkotla.

40. Further, capacity expansion in medical education is being pursued through the establishment of new Government Medical Colleges and phased infrastructure development in identified districts. These initiatives will significantly increase MBBS seats, create modern teaching hospitals and ensure that advanced medical education and specialized healthcare facilities are accessible across regions of the State. A budgetary provision of ₹1,220 crore has been earmarked for Medical Education and Research sector in FY 2026-27.

AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

41. Speaker Sir, though Punjab accounts for nearly 3 percent of the country's total cultivated area but is contributing nearly 40 percent of wheat and 31 percent of rice to the central grain pool. Backed by one of the strongest agricultural marketing networks in the country, Punjab continues to play a pivotal role in ensuring national food stability while sustaining its agrarian economy.

42. To sustain this vital contribution and further strengthen the resilience and prosperity of our farming community, an allocation of ₹15,377 crore has been earmarked for the Agriculture and Allied Sectors in FY 2026–27, supporting targeted interventions in crop diversification, sustainability, market reforms and farmer welfare.

43. During FY 2025–26, a 33 percent subsidy on PAU recommended Bt cotton hybrid seeds was extended to support cotton farmers, benefitting over 52,000 cultivators through direct transfer of ₹11 crore which resulted in an increase in cotton acreage by 19 percent in the current season.

44. To encourage water-efficient cultivation practices, financial assistance of ₹1,500 per acre is being provided to farmers adopting Direct Seeded Rice. During FY 2025–26, assistance amounting to ₹35 crore was disbursed. Recognizing its benefits in addressing labour shortages and conserving groundwater, a provision of ₹40 crore is proposed in FY 2026–27 to further promote this sustainable alternative to conventional paddy transplantation.

45. As part of our continued effort to promote sustainable cropping patterns, a pilot project encouraging a shift from paddy to kharif maize has

been implemented in six districts - Pathankot, Gurdaspur, Bathinda, Sangrur, Jalandhar and Kapurthala with an incentive of ₹17,500 per hectare. An allocation of ₹15 crore has been earmarked for this purpose in FY 2026-27.

46. To address the challenge of crop residue burning, the Government continues to provide 80 percent subsidy to panchayats and 50 percent subsidy to individual farmers for the purchase of stubble management machinery. During FY 2025–26, ₹402 crore has been utilized for subsidizing such equipment. and a budgetary provision of ₹600 crore is proposed in FY 2026-27.

FREE POWER TO FARMERS

47. Continuing our firm commitment to the farming community, provision of free and subsidized power, an allocation of ₹7,715 crore has been made towards power subsidy for Agriculture.

HORTICULTURE

48. To accelerate horticultural transformation, the State with the assistance of JICA would be implementing a focused programme with a total project cost of ₹1,300 crore over the next 10 years to promote climate-resilient and high-value horticulture across Punjab. I am extremely proud to announce the launch of this transformative initiative in Punjab which will target an almost 300% increase in the acreage under fruits, vegetables, flowers, and medicinal crops from 4.59 lakh hectares to 17.34 lakh hectares by 2035, while strengthening sustainable practices such as efficient irrigation, integrated pest management and organic cultivation. The project will bring in much-needed capital into the sector and invest in latest seeds,

nurseries, research, state-of-the-art mandi infrastructure, cold storage and processing infrastructure, and farmer training & extension.

49. Speaker Sir, in my own constituency, the cultivation of Dragon Fruit by progressive farmers is picking pace and more farmers are adopting this high-value crop. Through structured training and strengthened extension services, farmers across Punjab would be supported to adopt climate-smart techniques and improve productivity. This strategic shift towards horticulture will enhance income opportunities, conserve natural resources and contribute to long-term environmental sustainability in the State.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

50. The allied sectors continue to strengthen rural livelihoods and self-employment opportunities across the State. In dairy development, over 2,000 new dairy units have been established and more than 6,500 youth have been trained under dairy entrepreneurship programmes, with additional targets to be achieved by the close of the financial year. Milk producer and consumer awareness camps have been organized across districts, and financial assistance has been extended for establishment of dairy units, mechanization and model cattle sheds to modernize the sector.

51. To ensure remunerative returns and stability in the dairy sector, a provision of ₹100 crore has been made in FY 2026–27 to support fair milk procurement prices for dairy farmers. This intervention is aimed at safeguarding farmers against market fluctuations, strengthening cooperative procurement systems and sustaining regular income for small and marginal dairy producers across the State.

52. In fisheries, sustained efforts have led to expansion of aquaculture and capacity building of farmers. Over 1,500 lakh quality fish seed has been produced through Government farms, nearly 3,000 acres of new area has been brought under fish culture, and fish production has reached substantial levels during the year. Training programmes for fish farmers and aspiring entrepreneurs have been widely conducted, alongside subsidy and bank-linked financial assistance to promote fish farming, shrimp cultivation, bio floc units and allied activities. River ranching initiatives have also been undertaken to ensure sustainability of aquatic resources. Together, these measures are strengthening income diversification, employment generation and resilience in the allied agricultural sectors.

COOPERATION

53. Our Government continues to support our sugarcane farmers in a strong and consistent manner. For the forthcoming crushing season, the State Agreed Price of sugarcane has been increased to ₹416 per quintal, ensuring one of the highest cane prices in the country. I am also pleased to inform this august House that all pending cane dues of previous years are being cleared during the current year, providing much-needed relief to sugarcane growers. Our Government remains committed to timely payment of cane dues and stability of the sugar sector, and a budgetary provision of ₹270 crore has been made in FY 2026–27 to continue this support.

FORESTRY & WILDLIFE

54. To strengthen green cover and ecological resilience, the Government launched the “Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Haryaval Sankalp” campaign across

all districts of the State, under which over 1.11 crore saplings have been planted so far. Under the Green Punjab Mission, Nanak Bagichis, Pavittar Vans and Environment Parks are being developed to expand urban and community green spaces. In FY 2026–27, plantation over 4,150 hectares is proposed under PUNCAMPA scheme, along with afforestation and wildlife protection initiatives under approved schemes, with an allocation of ₹238 crore.

55. Additionally, the State is undertaking a ₹760 crore JICA-supported project, to be implemented over the next eight years, aimed at promoting Trees Outside Forests, biodiversity conservation and climate resilience through community participation, thereby strengthening Punjab's long-term environmental sustainability.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

56. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, strengthening rural link road infrastructure remains a key priority of our Government, given its critical role in supporting agriculture, trade and village connectivity. Punjab has an extensive rural link road network of over 68,000 km. At present, 40,103 km of damaged roads are under repair, modernization and upgradation at a total cost of ₹12,597 crore under various programmes, including NABARD-assisted projects and the Modernization of Link Roads initiatives. Without doubt, this is the largest road upgradation programme taken up in Punjab's history by any government within a single year.

57. During the current year, modernization works covering 8,325 km are being undertaken at an estimated cost of ₹2,393 crore to improve connectivity to mandis and rural markets. I am pleased to inform this

august House that the State has also introduced a five-year maintenance component for all upgraded rural roads, ensuring sustained quality and long-term durability. In addition, 11,901 km of link roads are being upgraded with NABARD assistance at a cost of ₹2,597 crore, and these works are targeted for completion by October, 2026.

58. Building upon this momentum, in FY 2026–27 the Government proposes to complete the remaining 19,876 km of rural roads through the Mandi Board and the Public Works Department at an estimated cost of ₹7,606 crore, inclusive of five-year maintenance. In addition to road infrastructure, strengthening mandi infrastructure is also being undertaken to support farmers and agricultural marketing.

59. During FY 2025–26, 664 covered sheds are being constructed in Mandis at a cost of ₹197 crore, with the majority of work nearing completion. Further, solar panels are being installed in 36 mandis at a cost of ₹24 crore to promote clean energy and reduce operational costs.

60. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) has played a meaningful role in strengthening livelihood security for rural households and in supporting durable asset creation across our villages. While certain changes have been introduced at the national level, we feel that the Scheme should continue in its original spirit and broad framework so that the interests of rural workers remain safeguarded and wage employment support for the most vulnerable is not weakened.

61. In the current year, expenditure of approximately ₹1,100 crore has been incurred under this scheme, generating 223 lac mandays

employment. For FY 2026–27, the overall programme outlay under the Scheme is estimated at ₹1,500 crore. The State Government remains committed to continuing implementation of the Scheme in its original spirit, and adequate budgetary provision has accordingly been made to meet the State's obligations under the Scheme, ensuring continuity of works, timely payment of wages, and sustained support to rural livelihoods across Punjab.

62. From 2017 to March 2022, nearly 39,000 houses were completed under PMAY (Gramin) in Punjab and after our Government assumed office, this pace was decisively accelerated. A total of 76,000 families have been provided housing support during this year including 30,000 flood affected families. Building on this momentum, the Government proposes to cover another one lakh houses under PMAY (Gramin) in FY 2026–27, for which an allocation of ₹800 crore has been earmarked.

RANGLA PUNJAB VIKAS SCHEME

63. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, with the objective of ensuring balanced and equitable development across all regions of the State, our Government launched the Rangla Punjab Vikas Scheme during FY 2025–26, providing a dedicated allocation of ₹585 crore i.e. ₹5 crore per Assembly Constituency annually for the creation and upgradation of local infrastructure and public assets across all 117 constituencies. Building upon its positive response and effective implementation, we are scaling up this initiative in FY 2026–27 by doubling the allocation from ₹585 crore to ₹1,170 crore to accelerate grassroots development. To ensure complete transparency, a dedicated digital portal has been made operational for real-time tracking of funds from the State treasury to the executing agency, with geo-tagged

monitoring and photographic documentation of works.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT

64. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, infrastructure is not merely an expenditure - it is the foundation upon which businesses grow, families prosper and the future of a State is secured. This Budget reflects not just financial allocations, but a clear vision for our cities to emerge as centres of opportunity, competitiveness, innovation and social equity.

65. In this spirit, I am pleased to announce a significant enhancement in support to our Urban Local Bodies. Against an allocation of ₹225 crore under the Municipal Development Fund (MDF) in FY 2025–26, the grant is being increased fourfold to ₹1,000 crore in FY 2026–27. The MDF will be available to all Urban Local Bodies for creation and upgradation of essential civic infrastructure such as roads, street lighting, water supply, sewerage, drainage, solid waste management, sanitation, public utilities, public safety systems and environmentally sustainable infrastructure. Out of this Fund, upto 20 percent may be utilized for Operations and Maintenance of water supply and sewerage projects, ensuring not only asset creation but also sustained service delivery.

66. Under the Punjab Municipal Services Improvement Project (PMSIP), a canal-based surface water supply initiative supported by the Government of Punjab, the World Bank and AIIB, major works are underway in Ludhiana and Amritsar to strengthen long-term urban water security. The project, scheduled for completion by 2028, involves construction of large-capacity Water Treatment Plants, Overhead Service Reservoirs and transmission networks. A budget provision of ₹500 crore is being proposed for

FY 2026–27 to continue implementation of this transformative urban water infrastructure programme.

67. Under AMRUT 2.0, projects are being implemented in two tranches covering construction of new water treatment plants, strengthening and rehabilitation of water supply networks, new household connections, sewerage works, reuse of treated wastewater, development of parks and green spaces, and rejuvenation of water bodies. A total of 214 projects, with an estimated cost of approximately ₹3,504 crore, have been approved and are at various stages of execution. In FY 2026–27, a budget provision of ₹665 crore is being proposed across 149 Urban Local Bodies to accelerate urban infrastructure improvements.

68. In addition, the State has made significant progress in GIS-based urban mapping to improve planning, monitoring and service delivery. Ward and Municipal boundaries have been digitised in 163 Urban Local Bodies, and the One Map Punjab GIS Portal has been operationalised to enable centralized data integration and real-time monitoring.

69. To further strengthen planned urbanization and improve civic infrastructure, an outlay of ₹7,257 crore is proposed for the Housing and Urban Development sector in FY 2026–27.

INDUSTRIES AND COMMERCE

70. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, the reform-oriented approach of our Government has begun to restore confidence in Punjab's economic potential. Since March 2022, the State has received 8,049 investment proposals amounting to ₹1,45,371 crore, with an estimated employment potential of over 5.21 lakh persons. Furthermore, the pace is only

accelerating with ₹55,000 crore of investments received in the year 2025 – the highest in Punjab's history in any single year. This renewed investor confidence is also reflected in the growing foreign investment in the State which has doubled in 2025 compared to 2022 as per Government of India statistics, leading to State jumping to Rank 11th on overall FDI inflows from Rank 15th earlier.

71. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, since March 2022, fiscal incentives amounting to ₹14,734 crore have been sanctioned to nearly 1,198 industrial units under successive policy frameworks. Additionally, ₹9,275 crore has been borne by the State towards subsidized power tariff to sustain industrial competitiveness.

72. The Government has introduced One Time Settlement (OTS) Schemes to resolve long-pending industrial dues and support the revival of industrial units. Around 3,100 industrial units are expected to benefit from this initiative. In addition, a separate One Time Settlement policy has been introduced for clearing pending dues relating to enhanced land cost and principal cost of industrial plots.

73. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, building upon the strong foundation laid over the past four years, and in response to emerging industrial opportunities, our Government has duly approved the Industrial Policy 2026 to further strengthen ease of doing business, expand sector-specific incentives and accelerate investment-led growth. This policy is not a routine revision but the outcome of an extensive participatory process undertaken through the Punjab Udyog Kranti Initiative, under which 24 Sectoral Committees were constituted and statewide consultations were held under "Rising Punjab – Suggestions to Solutions." By placing policy formulation directly in the

hands of industry stakeholders, we have ensured that the new Industrial Policy 2026 reflects real business needs, addresses operational challenges and positions Punjab for the next phase of employment-oriented and sustainable industrial expansion.

74. Complementing the policy ecosystem, a series of structural reforms have been undertaken to further deepen transparency and investor confidence in our industrial framework. The Fast Track Punjab Portal ensures time-bound, single-window clearances with a deemed approval mechanism, while amendments to the Punjab Right to Business Act allow eligible enterprises to commence operations through self-declaration based In-Principle Approvals. Reforms in industrial land management - including one-time settlement provisions, flexible plot utilization policies and streamlined conversion mechanisms - have resolved long-standing bottlenecks. At the same time, strengthened support to MSMEs through dispute resolution systems, cluster development initiatives, logistics enhancement and digital facilitation platforms is ensuring that industrial growth remains broad-based, employment-oriented and regionally balanced.

75. To reinforce Punjab's industrial momentum, ₹2,805 crore has been allocated for the Industries and Commerce sector in FY 2026–27, including continued support for subsidized power to industry and ₹500 crore towards fiscal incentives for various industries to promote investment and employment generation.

EMPLOYMENT GENERATION AND TRAINING

76. Employment generation and youth empowerment remain key priorities of the Government. Since 2022, 63,943 candidates have been recruited in various Punjab Government departments.

77. During FY 2025–26, over 70,000 candidates have been provided job facilitation through more than 1,356 placement camps/job fairs organized across the State. In addition, 261 self-employment camps enabled more than 15,000 candidates to access loan support for entrepreneurial ventures, while extensive career counselling and vocational guidance was provided to over 2.95 lakh candidates.

78. Punjab is also positioning itself as a hub for defense and strategic sector skills. A Defense Skills Summit was organized in January 2026 to align training ecosystems with industry requirements, resulting in key partnerships with leading industrial bodies. Under Punjab Skill Development Mission, thousands of youth have been trained across service and manufacturing trades, with placements underway.

79. C-PYTE centers continue to prepare youth for the armed forces, while Armed Forces Preparatory Institutes have recorded successful officer commissions, including increasing participation of girl cadets. The newly established Sardar Bahadur Amin Chand Soni Armed Forces Preparatory Institute at Bajwara, Hoshiarpur, nearing completion, will commence training in FY 2026–27 with dedicated wings for entrance examinations and SSB preparation, further expanding structured pathways for Punjab’s youth to join the defense services. To undertake various initiatives, a budgetary allocation of ₹287 crore has been provided in FY 2026-27.

YUDH NASHIAN DE VIRUDH

80. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, as assured in the previous Budget, "Yudh Nashian De Virudh" has been pursued not as a temporary drive but as a sustained campaign against the drug menace. Over the past one year, 36,686 number of cases have been registered against 52,331 number of traffickers under the NDPS Act leading to seizure of more than 33,000 kgs of narcotics through intelligence-led operations. Financial investigations have been strengthened to attach properties derived from illicit drug proceeds. Simultaneously, nearly 12,000 Village Defense Committees with over 1.25 lakh members and thousands of "Pinda De Pehredar" volunteers have been mobilized to reinforce enforcement with community vigilance. I'm happy to share that in just the last two months, over 350 FIRs have been registered and 510 persons arrested only on the feedback of Village Defense Committees.

81. The Anti-Gangster Task Force continues to play a pivotal role in restoring public confidence, with 2,762 gangsters and criminals arrested, 34 neutralized, 1,062 modules busted, and 2,203 weapons recovered since its formation. To further dismantle the nexus between organized crime and narcotics, Operation Prahar has been launched as a coordinated statewide crackdown targeting gangster networks, financiers and logistical chains. This synchronized action has weakened the structural roots that sustain drug trafficking and violent crime. In FY 2026–27, we will deepen this institutional approach through enhanced cyber and forensic capabilities, strengthened Anti-Narcotics Task Force operations, digital monitoring systems and greater financial disruption of criminal networks. "Yudh Nashian De Virudh" is thus evolving from enforcement action into a long-

term governance framework - firm in action, precise in intelligence and uncompromising in its resolve to secure the future of Punjab's youth.

82. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, as announced in the previous Budget, the State has moved forward decisively on the Drug and Socio-economic Census initiative. During the current year, the necessary groundwork has been completed, including development of the dedicated software platform and comprehensive training of field functionaries to ensure accuracy, transparency and data integrity. Building upon this preparedness, the Census will be rolled out from April 2026, enabling the Government to generate reliable, evidence-based data to guide targeted welfare interventions and strengthen our fight against drug abuse. An allocation of ₹100 crore has been earmarked in FY 2026–27 for its effective implementation.

KHED-DA PUNJAB, BADALDA PUNJAB

83. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, last year under the historic initiative "Khed-da Punjab, Badalda Punjab", we declared that the battle against drugs would be fought not only through enforcement but by engaging our youth in constructive, disciplined and competitive pursuits. We committed to creating model playgrounds and gyms across villages and to restoring Punjab's sporting culture at the grassroots. During the current financial year, groundwork has been laid across districts – over 3,000 model village playgrounds with laser-leveled fields, jogging tracks, football and volleyball courts, children play area, male and female toilets and high-mast lights are currently under construction at the cost of ₹1,100 crore and will be completed by June 2026. Similarly, 1000 rural indoor gyms are currently under construction and will be completed by April 2026. This is the highest

ever investment into sports by any government in Punjab's history. These efforts have generated renewed enthusiasm among youth and have begun transforming village playgrounds into vibrant community spaces.

84. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, building on the strong momentum generated during the current year, the coming financial year marks a decisive scaling up of our sports infrastructure and athlete support framework. Our government has decided to build 6,000 additional village playgrounds and 5000 additional indoor gyms across the State. In each completed village playground, our government will hand over a sports kit comprising of cricket, volleyball and football equipments to the local youth club. In addition to the rural sports push, Adventure Sports Camps in the sub-mountainous region will be developed under the PPP mode, expanding structured exposure to adventure sports while ensuring professional and sustainable management.

85. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, reflecting this expanded vision and scale of intervention, I am pleased to propose a budgetary allocation of ₹1,791 crore for FY 2026–27. This allocation represents not merely a record increase in sports expenditure, but a clear policy commitment to institutionalizing sports development across Punjab. With this enhanced investment, we are building a structured pathway from grassroots participation to national and international excellence.

TOURISM AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

86. Speaker Sir, this year marked the 350th year of the Martyrdom of Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji. To honour the supreme sacrifice of Guru Sahib Ji, our Government organized a special three-day commemorative event at

Sri Anandpur Sahib with deep reverence and devotion. In addition, a special session of the Punjab Vidhan Sabha was held at Sri Anandpur Sahib in November 2025, paying tribute to Guru Sahib Ji and reaffirming our collective resolve to remain connected with the glorious history and values of Punjab.

87. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, Punjab's spiritual and social fabric has been shaped by the timeless teachings of great saints and reformers. In this spirit, the Government has decided to commemorate the 650th Birth Anniversary of Sri Guru Ravidas Ji during FY 2026–27 as a State-level observance.

ਐਸਾ ਚਾਹੂੰ ਰਾਜ ਮੈ ਜਹਾਂ ਮਿਲੈ ਸਭਨ ਕੋ ਅੰਨ।
ਛੋਟ ਬੜੇ ਸਬ ਸਮ ਬਸੈ ਰਵਿਦਾਸ ਰਹੇ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਨ।।

88. Sri Guru Ravidas Ji's message of equality, devotion to one God and rejection of caste-based discrimination continues to inspire millions, and his vision of Begampura - a society free from sorrow and injustice - remains profoundly relevant today. The primary celebrations are proposed at the Sri Guru Ravidas Ji Memorial Complex at village Khuralgarh, district Hoshiarpur, revered as his Tap Asthan, from where he spread the message of social harmony and human dignity. Also, the Government will carry out commemoration activities round the year covering all parts of Punjab which will not only honor his spiritual legacy but also reaffirm our collective commitment to social justice and inclusive progress. An allocation of ₹100 crore has been earmarked in FY 2026–27 for this purpose.

89. Our Government is resolved to fulfil the spiritual aspirations of the people of Punjab, particularly senior citizens and economically weaker

families for whom our Government has launched the Mukh Mantri Tirath Yatra Scheme this year to provide free and fully supported pilgrimages to major religious destinations spread over two circuits – Sri Amritsar Sahib and Sri Anandpur Sahib. In FY 2026–27, a provision of ₹312 crore has been made to facilitate pilgrimages for nearly 7.15 lakh citizens.

DOORSTEP DELIVERY OF SERVICES AND SEWA KENDRA

90. Punjab has undergone a significant transformation in public service delivery through focused digital reforms that have directly benefited citizens. The State Pendency Dashboard introduced real-time monitoring across departments, reducing pendency from 14% to 0.33% within a year ensuring quicker disposal of applications. Physical forms for 13 key services, including Income, Residence and Caste certificates, were eliminated, enabling fully online applications and reducing office visits.

91. Speaker Sir, the “Bhagwant Mann Sarkar Tuhade Dwar” initiative has emerged as a powerful instrument of citizen-centric governance, bringing government services directly to people’s homes. With its expansion from 43 services to 412 services in 2025, residents across Punjab can now access a wide range of essential services without visiting government offices, significantly reducing time, cost and inconvenience. Complementing this reform, all 56 transport-related services have been streamlined through Sewa Kendras, replacing traditional public counters at RTA/DTO offices and ensuring uniform, transparent and citizen-friendly service delivery across the State. Together, these measures reflect our Government’s commitment to accessibility, efficiency and dignity in public service delivery.

REVENUE AND REHABILITATION

92. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, to commemorate the 350th Martyrdom Anniversary of Sahib Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, the Government proposes to establish a new Administrative Complex at Sri Anandpur Sahib, designed in a heritage architectural style that reflects the spiritual and historical significance of the holy city. This complex will bring key government offices under one roof, streamline administrative functioning, improve public service delivery, and ensure greater convenience for citizens while preserving and enhancing the traditional character and sacred identity of Sri Anandpur Sahib.

93. Our Government has undertaken significant reforms to make land and property services transparent, technology-driven and citizen-centric. Punjab has become the first State in the country to launch the "Easy Jamabandi" initiative, enabling residents to access land records, apply for mutations, request Rapat entries and obtain Fard Badar services through an online portal or even via WhatsApp, with doorstep assistance from Sewa Sahayaks. Complementing this, the "Easy Registry" project has streamlined property registration by simplifying deed formats, enabling district-wide registration choice and providing real-time updates to citizens, thereby enhancing transparency and reducing procedural complexity. A total of 6.17 lac documents have been successfully registered in Punjab under the "Easy Registry" initiative, which is a testament to the wide acceptance of this major reform effort aimed at ending corruption at the sub-registrar's office.

94. Speaker Sir, our resilience was tested this past year by the devastating floods, and I am proud to state that our response was both swift

and systemic. During FY 2025–26, our Government has released ₹1,010 crore toward comprehensive disaster relief and mitigation. This allocation has provided direct compensation for crop loss, damage to houses, and the loss of livestock, alongside critical investments under the State Mitigation Fund. What sets our response apart is the launch of India's first fully digital Flood Relief System. By transitioning from manual processes to a regime of rapid geo-tagged surveys and real-time monitoring, we have eliminated the 'middleman' and greatly expedited the time-consuming process. This platform ensures that every rupee reaches the intended recipient via direct online transfer, providing thousands of flood-affected families with the timely support they deserve—without delays, without intermediaries, and with absolute transparency. Almost all of our beneficiaries received their funds within a few months of the flood, whereas in the past it has taken 06 months to even a year.

95. Administrative efficiency has also been strengthened through the upgradation and creation of sub-divisions and sub-tehsils, and the operationalization of new SDM and Tehsil complexes across districts, reinforcing responsive and accessible governance.

HOME AFFAIRS, JUSTICE & JAILS

96. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, internal security is the foundation upon which every reform stands. Development cannot take root where law and order is uncertain. Over the past four years, this Government has moved from reactive policing to a structured, intelligence-led security architecture aimed at dismantling organized criminal networks rather than merely responding to incidents. In FY 2026–27, I propose an allocation of ₹11,577 crore for the department of Home Affairs, Justice and Jails,

reflecting our continued commitment to strengthening institutional capacity, technological capability and operational readiness.

97. Punjab’s 553 km international border requires constant vigilance. The establishment of a second line of defense through installation of 2,367 CCTV cameras across 636 strategic locations in border districts marks a decisive shift towards technology-backed surveillance. With 1,719 cameras already installed and control rooms operational in respective police stations, round-the-clock monitoring has significantly strengthened efforts to curb narcotics smuggling and anti-national activities.

98. The Emergency Response Support System–Dial 112, has strengthened its role as a vital citizen support platform, having handled over 2.62 crore calls since inception. The Sadak Surakhya Force has further enhanced public safety by reducing emergency response time to 6–7 minutes on designated highway stretches, leading to tangible improvements in road safety and reduction of deaths in road accidents across the State. During the current year, 508 four-wheelers are being purchased to further strengthen the support system under Dial-112.

99. Hon’ble Speaker Sir, the Government is also strengthening prison administration through enhanced security and infrastructure modernization. Advanced V-Kavach 2.0 jammer systems are being installed in major and sensitive jails to curb unauthorized communication, and AI-based CCTV surveillance is being expanded to improve monitoring and internal security.

100. An allocation of ₹535 crore is proposed in FY 2026–27 to undertake various initiatives, including security modernisation, infrastructure strengthening and capacity enhancement.

INFRASTRUCTURE

ROADS AND BRIDGES

101. Our Government remains firmly committed not only to expanding road and bridge infrastructure across the State but also to ensuring systematic maintenance of existing assets. For FY 2026–27, the allocation for construction, upgradation and maintenance of roads, bridges and public buildings has been doubled to ₹5,440 crore over FY 2025–26 (BE), reaffirming our Government's continued priority on durable and well-maintained infrastructure.

102. An initial outlay of ₹1,500 crore is proposed in FY 2026-27 for upgradation and connectivity improvement of 2,570 km of Plan Roads across the State, further strengthening intra-district and inter-district road networks. In addition, ₹130 crore is being earmarked for completion of 31 Ongoing Bridges and undertaking New Bridge works.

103. Under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY-III), about 500 km of rural roads are expected to be completed during FY 2025–26 at an estimated cost of ₹290 crore. Further, in FY 2026–27, it is proposed to upgrade 400 km of roads under the scheme with an estimated expenditure of ₹400 crore. In addition, an amount of ₹300 crore is proposed under the Central Road and Infrastructure Fund (CRIF) for upgradation of 100 km of roads and construction of 06 RUBs/ROBs, thereby strengthening road

connectivity and safety across the State.

WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION

104. Ensuring access to clean drinking water and improved sanitation remains a key priority of our Government. In FY 2026–27, emphasis will be placed on completing and commissioning of 11 major surface water projects to provide safe drinking water to 1,230 quality-affected and water-stressed villages. Drinking water mitigation works will also be undertaken in 125 habitations, along with new projects in 88 uranium-affected areas to address serious water quality challenges. To advance these initiatives, I propose a budgetary outlay of ₹1,487 crore under various water and sanitation programmes, along with the launch of the Nal Jal Mitra initiative to train one person in every Gram Panchayat for strengthening community-level water service delivery.

WATER RESOURCES

105. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, our commitment to the farmer is best reflected in the flowing waters of our revitalized canal network. In just three years, we have achieved a historic milestone: doubling our canal irrigation capacity. From 2.23 million acres in 2022, we will have expanded our reach to 5.3 million acres by April 2026 through the large-scale restoration of canals and watercourses.

106. This is not merely an expansion of area, but an optimization of resources. Driven by systematic cleaning, lining, and modernization, our surface water utilization has surged to 6.6 MAF—a 13 percent jump that secures our agricultural future. Most significantly, we have corrected decades of neglect. Today, canal water has reached 1,365 locations for the

first time, bringing life back to villages that had been left dry for 20 to 50 years. Through concrete lining, new pipelines, and repaired minors, we have ensured that water is no longer a privilege of the few, but a right delivered to the tail-end.

107. Following the floods of 2025, a comprehensive assessment of all major rivers in the State was undertaken and, based on this scientific evaluation, 371 flood protection and mitigation work amounting to over ₹1,500 crore were identified. Of these, 142 works worth ₹489 crore are targeted for completion by 31st March 2026 and the remaining works would be undertaken in FY 2026-27. Drawing lessons from these floods, a structured, transparent and environmentally responsible river desilting programme has also been launched to restore natural carrying capacity and strengthen long-term flood resilience across Punjab.

108. The Government has undertaken flood protection and drain desilting works amounting to ₹65 crore during the current year. Cleaning of approximately 3,000 kilometers of drains across various districts has been completed, significantly improving drainage capacity. Notably, nearly 60 percent savings were achieved by executing these works through departmental machinery, ensuring both efficiency and prudent use of public funds.

109. A comprehensive programme for rehabilitation and lining of canals was initiated during the current financial year. Execution of these works is already underway at multiple sites, with the objective of bringing an additional 04 lac hectares under improved irrigation coverage, and an amount of ₹1,153 crore has been spent so far on undertaking these works.

110. Further, the Government has undertaken the strengthening of the Ferozepur Feeder, a major canal system constructed in 1952–53 that serves the districts of Ferozepur, Fazilka, Sri Muktsar Sahib and Faridkot and benefits over 1,000 villages. To improve water availability, the project aims to enhance the carrying capacity of the feeder by 2,600 cusecs to 13,845 cusecs. During FY 2025–26, 17 km of canal lining has been executed at a cost of ₹195 crore, which will help ensure better water supply to tail-end areas such as Abohar and Fazilka and enable the State to utilize its full share of canal water.

111. In addition, the Kathgarh Lift Scheme Stage-II is being implemented to bring canal water for the first time to a semi-hilly and water-stressed region of SBS Nagar district. With an estimated cost of ₹107 crore, the project will lift water from the Bist Doab Canal to provide assured irrigation to about 5,500 acres of command area across 24 villages. The initiative will reduce dependence on groundwater and is also expected to generate power savings.

112. To ensure equitable irrigation and address the long-pending demand of farmers in the Malerkotla region, the Government has undertaken the remodeling of the Mahorana Distributary and construction of the Malerkotla Minor at a cost of ₹288 crore. This project will provide canal water for the first time to 55 villages, covering nearly 44,000 acres of command area. A provision of ₹190 crore has been made in FY 2026–27 for this purpose.

113. In FY 2026–27, the Government has planned to further expand the command area under canal irrigation, with the twin objectives of enhancing surface water utilization and conserving groundwater. Emphasis is being

laid on strengthening last-mile connectivity through the construction of pipelines and brick-lined watercourses, which is expected to restore irrigation coverage to around 05 lac hectares. A budgetary outlay of ₹2,971 crore is proposed in FY 2026-27 for this sector.

114. With great pride, I can make the commitment to the people of Punjab that as a result of this work, the total area under canal irrigation by the end of the year will be close to 7 million acres; or almost 90% of the designed canal irrigated area.

POWER

115. In the power sector, under the dynamic leadership of Hon'ble Chief Minister Sardar Bhagwant Singh Mann Ji, Punjab is undertaking sweeping and structural reforms while steadfastly honouring every promise made to our people. We have ensured that nearly 90% of domestic consumers in the State do not receive a power bill, reflecting the universal coverage of our domestic power subsidy - a commitment that will remain unchanged. Our support to farmers for agriculture and to industry to boost production, as per policy, will also continue without dilution. However, while our welfare commitments remain firm, our resolve for efficiency has never been stronger. Through focused energy reforms, strengthened power management, and systemic efficiency measures, we will successfully curtail the State's subsidy burden by an impressive 25%. This year, PSPCL has set for itself an ambitious target to further reduce transmission and distribution losses and enhance operational efficiency. From the floor of this August House, I say with pride that even as our power subsidy policy and beneficiary coverage remain intact, we are poised to save nearly ₹5,000 crore through reforms-driven efficiency gains. This stands as a clear

testament that good governance and disciplined reforms can simultaneously protect public welfare and strengthen the State Exchequer.

116. Speaker Sir, we have also launched “Mission Roshan Punjab” – through which we are investing ₹5,000 crore to completely modernize and expand Punjab’s electricity distribution network — one of the largest infrastructure initiatives in the State’s history. The mission is clear: uninterrupted, high-quality power supply to every household, farm, and factory - 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The planned works include construction of 70 new substations to enhance network capacity and reduce technical losses, upgradation and reinforcement of 200 existing substations for improved reliability, 25,000 km of lines being laid or upgraded — extending access even to the remotest habitations, 8,000 new Distribution Transformers (DTs) being installed or upgraded to prevent overloading and voltage fluctuations, and advance procurement of material to ensure timely availability of materials so that on-ground work can progress seamlessly and without interruption.

CIVIL AVIATION

117. Hon’ble Speaker Sir, I am pleased to inform this august House that Adampur Airport has now become operational with a modern terminal facility developed at a cost of about ₹140 crore. The airport, which earlier functioned with a small porta-cabin facility, now has an enhanced passenger handling capacity and improved infrastructure. Flight operations have already commenced from Adampur with connectivity to Hindon (Ghaziabad), Mumbai and other destinations, significantly improving air access for the Doaba region and opening new avenues for economic activity and regional development.

118. Further, the long-awaited Halwara Airport near Ludhiana is now operational, marking another significant milestone in strengthening Punjab's aviation infrastructure. The newly developed civil terminal will serve Ludhiana and the wider Malwa region, one of the State's most important industrial belts. With flight operations expected to commence shortly, the airport will substantially enhance regional connectivity, facilitate ease of travel for industry and businesses, and further reinforce Ludhiana's position as a major economic and industrial hub of Punjab.

MINING

119. Speaker Sir, Punjab has achieved a significant milestone in Mining Sector, by securing the 1st Rank in the State Mining Readiness Index, as announced by the Ministry of Mines, Government of India. Punjab's top ranking reflects the success of sustained reforms aimed at transparent governance, scientific mining and investment facilitation in the sector.

120. The Government has further strengthened the regulatory architecture of the mining sector through key legislative and policy reforms along with their notified Rules, establishing a clear and robust framework for registration and operation of crusher units and mineral dealers, enabling end-to-end digital monitoring of the minor mineral value chain from extraction to consumption. Amendments to the Punjab Minor Mineral Rules have also created a new class of sites – Crusher Mining Sites and Landowner Mining Sites that are enabling transparent and time-bound contracts, especially to landowners who wish to undertake operations on their land.

121. I am delighted to report that as a result of these consistent efforts as well as policy reforms such as establishing check posts on border areas, enhanced enforcement, and a modernized auction process, our revenue from mining has more than doubled in a single year from ₹260 crore to over ₹500 crore this year!

TRANSPORT

122. In addition to the scheme for free travel for women, our Government is also looking to now further increase access to public transport in the State, especially on under-served areas and crowded routes. 2,267 buses are currently in operation and the Government will add 1,279 new buses to the existing fleet through a mix of procurement and leasing. Some of the new buses are already operational and the remaining will be operational by November 2026. This will be the largest and most historic expansion of public transport in the history of Punjab. Overall, PRTC will be strengthened with an addition of 670 buses, while the remaining 609 buses from the overall expansion will become part of PUNBUS. These buses will also be enabled with the latest safety and accessibility standards, improved entry systems for passengers with reduced mobility and wheelchair users, stronger fire detection, and safety features such as night lamps, LED Lighting, GPS and CCTV – ensuring the highest quality of service for our citizens.

FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES

123. Speaker Sir, the AAP Government has decided to launch the "Meri Rasoi" scheme to further strengthen food and nutrition security for vulnerable households across the State. Under this initiative, quarterly

ration kits containing essential items such as 2 kg sugar, 2 kg chana dal, 1 litre mustard oil, 200 gm turmeric and 1 kg salt will be provided free of cost to nearly 40 lakh families covered under the NFSA/Smart Ration Card scheme, in addition to their existing food grain entitlement. This programme reflects our continued commitment to easing household expenditure and supporting economically weaker sections. A budgetary provision of ₹900 crore has been earmarked in FY 2026–27 for its effective implementation.

124. Further, a long standing demand among the people has been to open up enrollment for new ration cards to ensure that in the State that feeds the entire country, no poor family in Punjab should ever worry about having enough food on their plates. Speaker Sir, I am happy to announce that as per the directions of Hon'ble Chief Minister Sardar Bhagwant Singh Mann Ji, we will be opening the doors of food security to 10 lakh new beneficiaries in the coming year, welcoming those who have long waited for their rightful inclusion. This is a triumph of equity, ensuring that the fruits of our State's progress are shared by the most vulnerable among us.

125. Along with ensuring food security for every family in Punjab, our government is also committed to provide employment opportunities to our youth. Our government has started the process of allotment of Fair Price Shops in the State against the available vacancies. Upon the completion of this exercise in the next 1-2 months, nearly 7,500 residents of the State will be issued licenses to operate Fair Price Shops/Ration Depots in the State which will also lead to faster distribution of wheat to beneficiaries registered under Smart Card Ration Scheme in the State.

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT & SOCIAL WELFARE

126. Hon’ble Speaker Sir, this Government has systematically fulfilled its guarantees - in electricity, healthcare, education and social protection. Today, we complete that circle. On the august occasion of the International Women’s Day, it is time now to announce the biggest ever women empowerment scheme in the history of India. Guided by the vision of our Hon’ble Chief Minister Sardar Bhagwant Singh Mann Ji that any country can make progress only if the women progress, I am proud to announce the implementation of a new scheme, “Mukh Mantri Mawan Dhian Satikar Yojna” under which the Bhagwant Mann government will transfer ₹1,000 per month directly to the accounts of all adult women. Moreover, for women belonging to the SC community, the Bhagwant Mann government will transfer ₹1,500 per month directly to their accounts.

127. Speaker Sir, let me emphasize that this will be not just India’s but world’s first universal cash transfer scheme for women. Every woman in Punjab above 18 years of age will be eligible to enroll under this scheme barring only few i.e. existing or past permanent government employees, existing and past MPs/MLAs and income tax payees. Even women enrolled under existing social security pension schemes e.g. old-age pension or widow/destitute women pension or disability pension scheme will be eligible under this scheme. In all, around 97% of all adult women in Punjab will be eligible under this scheme, which is the highest for any State in India. This initiative seeks to promote economic independence, strengthen women’s role in household decision-making, improve health and nutritional outcomes, and encourage continued education and higher aspirations among girls. It affirms our belief that empowerment must

reflect in tangible financial security and greater dignity for women across Punjab.

128. Speaker Sir, many States have started the jumla of announcing similar schemes but they limit it only to a small section of women, ignoring the vast majority of women who are financially dependent on men for their most basic needs. For example, one of our neighboring State announced a similar scheme but limited it only to households with annual income under ₹1 lakh covering only 20% of all adult women. But Punjab will not do such jumlas. Hon'ble Chief Minister Sardar Bhagwant Singh Mann Ji is not a Chief Minister for 20% women of Punjab, but to all the women of Punjab. That is why we have decided to become the first State to ensure all adult women are covered under the scheme. So, whether she is a daughter studying in college needing extra books, a daughter preparing for a Government job needing coaching, or a woman wishing to watch a movie in a cinema hall; or a grandma wishing to buy a new toy for her grand-daughter, now, they won't have to ask for money from anyone for their expenses because their elder brother, their son Sardar Bhagwant Singh Mann will deposit ₹1,000 to ₹1,500 every month into their bank account. A dedicated budgetary outlay of ₹9,300 crore has been earmarked in FY 2026–27 to ensure transparent and timely implementation.

129. In addition to this direct financial support, the Government will continue the free bus travel facility for women across Punjab, which has become a vital instrument of mobility, access and opportunity. In the last year alone, approximately 12 crore free journeys have been undertaken by women under this initiative, reflecting its wide acceptance and social impact. This facility has enabled women to travel for work, education,

healthcare and family responsibilities without financial burden, for which ₹600 crore has been provisioned in FY 2026–27.

130. The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme continues to serve as a cornerstone for holistic child development across 155 ICDS Blocks in Punjab through 27,314 Anganwadi Centres, delivering supplementary nutrition, immunization, health check-ups, referral services and pre-school education to nearly 16.60 lakh beneficiaries. In FY 2026–27, a budgetary outlay of ₹932 crore is earmarked to sustain and strengthen this outreach. These Anganwadi Centres also function as vital community platforms for awareness on health, education, family welfare and reproductive health.

131. In November 2025, the State rolled out the Navi Disha Scheme to advance menstrual health, dignity and hygiene awareness among women and adolescent girls. During FY 2025–26, ₹43 crore is being utilized to provide free sanitary pads to 13.65 lakh needy women, with nearly 1.2 crore sanitary pads being distributed every month across the State. Encouraged by the positive response and expanding outreach of the programme, a budgetary provision of ₹65 crore is proposed in FY 2026–27 to further strengthen this initiative.

132. To continue our support for vulnerable sections of society, ₹6,150 crore has been earmarked in FY 2026–27 to provide monthly financial assistance to 36.52 lakh beneficiaries, including the elderly, widows, destitute women, dependent children and persons with disabilities.

133. I propose a total budgetary outlay of ₹18,304 crore for the Social Welfare and Justice sector in FY 2026–27, representing the highest-ever allocation for welfare measures in this sector. This includes allocations of ₹360 crore for the Ashirwad Scheme, ₹261 crore for the Post Matric Scholarship Scheme and ₹75 crore for the Adarsh Gram Yojana, ensuring sustained support for vulnerable and disadvantaged sections of society.

134. Reaffirming our commitment to the upliftment of Scheduled Castes, Backward Classes, minorities and other disadvantaged sections, an allocation of ₹17,700 crore has been earmarked under the Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan (SCSP) in FY 2026–27, constituting 35.23 percent of the State's total development outlay.

REVENUE AUGMENTATION AND CAPITAL CREATION

135. The Total Revenue Receipts have been projected to be ₹1,26,190 crore in FY 2026-27, of which the Own Tax Revenue accounts for ₹70,851 crore and Non-Tax Revenue has been pegged at ₹15,687 crore.

136. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, I am pleased to inform this august House that the 16th Finance Commission has enhanced Punjab's share in Horizontal Devolution from 1.807 percent to 1.996 percent. As a result, our share of Central Taxes is estimated to rise to ₹30,464 crore in FY 2026–27, as against ₹25,171 crore in FY 2025–26, i.e. an increase of ₹5,293 crore over the previous year. The Government of India has accepted the recommendations of the 16th Finance Commission for the five-year award period. Further, Grant-in-Aid from Centre has been projected at ₹9,188 crore in FY 2026-27.

137. We have achieved impressive revenue growth across each major revenue stream. The Excise sector stands as clear evidence that governance intent makes the difference. With transparent policy, firm enforcement and zero tolerance towards leakage, revenue realization has improved substantially. During the five-year tenure of the Aam Aadmi Party Government, Excise revenue is projected at ₹53,122 crore- a marked increase compared to ₹27,934 crore during the five-year period of the previous Congress Government and ₹20,545 crore during the SAD–BJP regime.

138. Hon’ble Speaker Sir, revenue augmentation has not been limited to the Excise sector alone. Similar improvements are visible in Stamps and Registration as well. During the five-year tenure of the Aam Aadmi Party Government, receipts from Stamps and Registration are projected at ₹30,367 crore, compared to actual collections of ₹12,469 crore during the Congress Government and ₹12,387 crore during the SAD–BJP regime. We have henceforth set an ambitious target of ₹9,000 crore for FY 2026-27.

139. This is not merely a numerical comparison; it reflects a shift in approach. When systems are tightened, modern data systems and analytics are leveraged, discretion is reduced, and accountability is enforced, the State’s rightful revenue flows into the public exchequer instead of being lost to inefficiency or malpractice. The results demonstrate that honest intent, backed by administrative resolve, directly translates into stronger finances for the State and greater capacity to invest in public welfare.

140. Hon’ble Speaker Sir, to resolve long-pending legacy disputes and provide relief to taxpayers, the Government introduced OTS Policy in 2024 wherein 70,311 dealers availed total waiver of ₹866 crore and the State

exchequer has recovered ₹164 crore.

141. In a follow up to the said OTS, the Government has introduced the One Time Settlement Scheme–2025, effective from 1st October 2025. The scheme offers graded tax relief along with full waiver of interest and penalties in eligible cases, thereby enabling businesses to close old matters and move forward with certainty. The response from the trade and industry has been encouraging, with over 7,400 applications received and more than ₹100 crore recovered so far. This initiative reflects our balanced approach-facilitating genuine taxpayers while strengthening revenue realization.

142. Simultaneously, the Government has undertaken consolidated reforms in GST administration by leveraging technology, data analytics and intelligence-based enforcement. An in-house analytical tool has been developed to integrate multi-portal data and automate risk detection, leading to substantial recovery through identification of defaulters and tax evasion. Enforcement has been further strengthened through focused inspections and the proposed establishment of a dedicated Anti-Evasion Wing with specialized intelligence, investigation and legal capabilities. Hon’ble Speaker Sir, strengthened by the steady expansion in compliance and the consolidation of enforcement measures, we have achieved ₹83,739 crore of GST revenue in the last 46 months as against ₹61,286 crore in 5 years of the previous government. This is despite the loss of revenue from the Compensation Cess in our term. Building on this impressive growth, we have set a GST revenue target of ₹32,000 crore for FY 2026–27.

143. Hon’ble Speaker Sir, as a measure of fiscal prudence and long-term financial discipline, the State has contributed ₹1,000 crore to the Consolidated Sinking Fund (CSF), and for the first time, another

₹1,000 crore has been contributed to the Guarantee Redemption Fund (GRF) to safeguard the State against contingent liabilities arising from guarantees extended to Boards and Corporations. With these contributions, the State's funds in CSF and GRF have risen by 287% during our Government from ₹3,027 crore in March 2022 to ₹11,720 crore in December 2025.

144. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, the strengthening of revenues under this Government was never meant to merely improve balance sheets — it was meant to restore Punjab's capacity to build. For years, capital investment had slowed while liabilities mounted. We have reversed that approach. Our overall Capital Expenditure is ₹32,353 crore in the last 4 years, which is more than double that of the previous government. We have further increased it this year as well. Accordingly, in FY 2026–27, our Government proposes Capital Expenditure outlay of ₹18,381 crore. This is a conscious choice: to prioritize asset creation over ad-hoc spending, long-term growth over short-term optics, and infrastructure that will serve the next generation.

145. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, as committed in the previous Budget, our Government has honoured the liquidation plan of ₹14,191 crore and released the pending dues arising from the implementation of the 6th Punjab Pay Commission, which had remained unpaid by the previous Government. During FY 2025–26, these rightful payments have been made in accordance with the schedule to the pensioners, and we remain fully committed to continuing making the payment in FY 2026-27 to the employees and pensioners as per this liquidation plan.

146. Lastly, Speaker Sir, the efforts at fiscal consolidation have also started to reduce the humongous debt burden that previous governments have left the State with. Our Government inherited a Debt-to-GSDP Ratio of 48.25%

as on March 31, 2022 and it is down to 44.47% as on January 31, 2026, which is a significant drop by any measure.

CONCLUSION

147. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, as I conclude, I do so with a deep sense of responsibility and faith in the future of our State. This Budget reflects the journey we have undertaken over the past four years — a journey focused on strengthening Punjab's finances, expanding infrastructure, improving public services and rebuilding trust in governance. Every allocation and every reform placed before this House carries a clear conviction: that Punjab's progress must be durable, inclusive and built on strong institutions.

148. I express my sincere gratitude to our National Convener for continually reminding us that politics must remain rooted in honesty, accountability and service to the common citizen. I also place on record my deep appreciation for the resolute and people-centric leadership of our Hon'ble Chief Minister, Sardar Bhagwant Singh Mann Ji, whose clarity of vision and unwavering commitment to Punjab's progress has guided every major decision of this Government. Their guidance has strengthened our resolve to govern with integrity and dedicate ourselves fully to the advancement of this great State.

149. I also extend my sincere gratitude to the officers and staff of the Departments of Finance and Planning, whose dedication and tireless efforts have shaped this comprehensive Budget.

150. I now commend the Budget proposals for the Financial Year 2026–27 to this august House for approval.

JAI HIND