



Government of West Bengal

Budget Statement

by

Dr. Amit Mitra

Minister-in-Charge, Finance Department

2018-2019

31st January, 2018

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Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

With your permission I lay the 2018-19 Annual Financial Statement before this August House.

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Hon'ble Members, this Government, led by Hon'ble Chief Minister, Mamata Banerjee, with the blessings of more than crores of people of the State, continues its journey with the motto “Bangla Hobey Bishwa Sera”. Truly so, the State under her dynamic leadership, foresight, compassion for the poor and deprived and tolerance for all, irrespective of any caste, region and religion or sex, is conquering New Heights in every sphere of governance with each passing day. The House would be happy to know that we now boast of being the 4th largest State economy in the country.

On 23rd June, 2017, Hon'ble Chief Minister was awarded for “Kanyashree” the highest UN Public Services Award at Netherlands. She has dedicated this award to the people of the state. This award is not only pride for the people of the state but of the entire country.

The State has got the highest Best Performance Award for e-Tendering by the Government of India on 4th January, 2018. The State Government is now an epitome of transparency.

We have witnessed concerted efforts by the Centre to harm the interest of the State and the common man. We have always opposed such policies tooth and nail. Very recently the Centre wanted to introduce the Financial Resolution and Deposit Insurance (FRDI) Bill which would have robbed the lakhs and lakhs of depositors of the life-earned savings deposited in banks. Our Hon'ble Chief Minister wrote strongly worded letter cautioning the Centre to desist from enacting such a draconian anti-people legislation.

Financial Achievement

Honorable members, the economy of our country is passing through the worst ever crisis witnessed in the recent times. The twin impact of demonetisation and hasty and unplanned introduction of Good & Services Tax (GST) has completely destroyed the informal sector which constitute almost 45% of the economy. The country's Gross Capital Formation has declined from 6·11 per cent to 0·57 per cent. As a result, the country has witnessed huge unemployment and loss of jobs unheard of in the recent decades.

Two major developments during the financial year have had a far reaching impact on the State finance. Firstly, the introduction of GST which has resulted in overall reduction in both Central and State revenues.

Secondly, the Centre has unilaterally altered the date of the devolution of Central share of taxes to the State from 1st day of every month to the 15th day of every month. This has resulted in problems of cash management.

In the midst of such a gloom in the macro-economic environment, West Bengal under the exemplary and inspiring leadership of our Hon'ble Chief Minister, is standing out. We have been able to give a fresh fillip to socio-economic development of our State and surpassed the national growth rate. In the last 6 years, the State Plan Expenditure has increased more than 3 times. We have created a record in increasing plan and capital expenditure. Hon'ble Chief Minister, in order to provide further fillip to the creation of infrastructure in the form of roads, bridges, flyovers, drinking water, power, etc., has recently announced a large number of projects of more than Rs.12,000 crore.

I am also happy to inform that whereas the earlier Government used to spend entire borrowings for debt-servicing of the debt, this Government is utilizing 30-40% of the total borrowings for increasing the Capital Expenditure of the State. This has positively impacted the growth of GDP through Multiplier Effect.

Hon'ble Members, revenue collection has seen a remarkable growth. As on 31st December, 2017, the Stamp Duty and Registration Fee collection has gone up by 17%, Excise Duty collection has almost doubled, Motor Vehicle Tax collection has increased by 26% and Electricity Duty collection has increased by 139%. After favourable judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India on Entry Tax, through a special drive for settlement of entry tax disputes, we collected more than Rs.1,100 crore of arrear Entry Tax. With this trend persisting till 31st March, 2018,

I am hopeful that our own revenue collection despite of loss of revenue due to GST, will show a robust growth.

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Developmental Initiatives

The State Government is firmly committed to the task of building a bright future for West Bengal. In its constant endeavour for the upliftment of the people of West Bengal, despite all hurdles presented by factors beyond our control, the Maa, Mati, Manush Government is moving ahead with a positive approach with a large number of people-friendly schemes like Kanyashree, Sabujshree, Sabuj Sathi, Khadya Sathi, Maavoi, Swasthya Sathi, Nijo Griho Nijo Bhumi Scheme, Gitanjali, Jal Dharo Jal Bharo, Lok Prasar Prakalpa, Baitarani, Samabyathi, Samarthan, Gatidhara, Mission Nirmal Bangla, Banglar Bari, Sufal Bangla, Swami Vivekananda Scholarship, Shikhashree Prakalpa for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe students, Scholarship for Minority students, loans and different developmental schemes, etc.

Kanyashree Prakalpa, the State's flagship scheme for empowerment of adolescent girls has benefitted more than 45 lakh girls. The scheme has won the United Nations Public Service Award 2017 at The Hague, Netherlands.

Under 'Sabujshree' Scheme, which envisages distribution of economical high value seedlings to all the newborns in the State with the twin objectives of preventing infanticide and creating awareness for the

environment, so far seedlings have been distributed to nearly 15 lakh mothers of newly born children.

The ‘Sikshashree’ Scheme for Class-V-VIII students has been made fully online and has covered nearly 57 lakh students till date. The rate of scholarship has been revised and all the students of Class-V, VI and VII are now getting annual scholarship of Rs. 750/-.

Under ‘Sabooj Sathi’ Scheme, close to 70 lakh bicycles have been distributed to school students.

For ensuring food security in the State, over 90% of the residents of the State are being provided subsidized foodgrains under Khadya Sathi Scheme. All the ration cards have been digitized and the entire supply chain management of foodgrains is fully automated.

Nearly 40 Lakh families have been benefitted under Swasthya Sathi Scheme. Regular non-teaching staff and employees, Govt. approved contractual non-teaching staff, Part Time Teachers and Contractual Whole Time Teachers of colleges and universities have been covered under the Scheme.

In another unprecedented initiative for empowerment of rural & folk artists, during 2017-18, the artists enrolled under Lok Prasar Prakalpa has gone up from 84 thousand to 1.94 lakh.

The Government’s support to youth in the Transport Sector for creation of self-employment under the ‘Gatidhara’ Scheme continues. Over 16,000 vehicles have been sanctioned so far under the Scheme. ‘Jaladhara’

Scheme has also been launched to revive water-transport through Government subsidy for mechanized vessels.

411 new buses have been added to the fleet of the State Transport Undertakings (STUs) during 2017-18. Initiatives have been taken for launching 40 electric buses for the first time in the city of Kolkata. A new passenger-friendly Mobile App, Pathodisha, has been introduced.

Nearly 3 lakh homestead category Nijo Griho Nijo Bhumi (NGNB) pattas have been distributed till date. During this year, 1274.89 acres of agricultural land have been distributed among landless people. In over 21 thousand NGNB lands, convergence with other schemes has been taken up for improvement in livelihood.

Since inception of Gitanjali Housing scheme, over 3.5 lakh beneficiaries belonging to Economically Weaker Sections have been provided funds for construction of their dwelling units. This Year, unit assistance under Gitanjali has been increased to Rs. 1.2 lakh for plain areas and 1.3 lakh for hilly & difficult areas. The Scheme has been extended to urban areas as well with certain modifications.

A new Scheme, ‘Banglar Bari’ has been introduced to provide new Dwelling Units to the Urban Poor based on cluster approach. Construction of 20000 flats within the next four financial years will be taken up.

Under ‘Grameen Awaas Yojana’, over 3.68 lakh houses have been sanctioned in the current Year.

Cremation grounds are being extensively renovated and new ones created in the State under ‘Baitarni’ Scheme. Boundary walls of nearly 3500 graveyards are being constructed all over the State. To help poor people to perform last rites of deceased family members, assistance of Rs. 2000 is being provided under the ‘Somobyathi’ Scheme.

The State has been successfully ensuring 24×7 power supply across the State. Electrification has reached 100% villages through grid connectivity and 100 riverine islands are being connected through Solar Photo Voltaic Plants. Close to 6 lakh service connections have been effected in 2017-18 and work under ‘Sabar Ghare Alo’ for providing reliable quality power to 179 lakh consumers is near complete.

West Bengal is No. 1 in the country in terms of providing scholarships to minority students. Under different scholarship schemes, more than 1·71 crore students of minority communities have been provided scholarships worth more than Rs. 4,900 crores.

The road sector has witnessed unprecedented growth and development over the tenure of this Government. More than 13,417 km of rural roads and 14,600 km of highways and other roads have been added and upgraded in the State since 2011.

During this year, till December 2017, over 1,145 kilometres have been added to rural roads and nearly

2,200 kilometres of other roads have been constructed, upgraded and strengthened.

3100 km of roads that have been taken over from different Zilla Parishads and Municipalities this year will be upgraded and improved within the next Financial Year.

20 bridges over different rivers and canals have been completed in this year.

More than 2 lakh water bodies have been created and renovated under the ‘Jal Dharo Jal Bharo’ Scheme till date.

Under Mission Nirmal Bangla, Malda and Howrah districts will soon be declared ODF districts. Earlier, Nadia became the first ODF District in the country and North 24 Parganas, Purba Medinipur, South 24 Parganas, Coochbehar, Purba Bardhaman, Paschim Bardhaman and Hooghly have already been declared ODF Districts.

In the Health Sector, the rate of Institutional Delivery has increased to 95% and the Infant Mortality Rate has dropped to 25 per 1000 live births. 94% of the children in the State are now fully immunized.

The Budget has been increased for “free treatment for all” from Rs. 296·16 Crore in 2011-12 to Rs. 857·83 Crore in 2017-18.

The West Bengal Clinical Establishment (Registration, Regulation and Transparency) Act, 2017 has been enacted and the West Bengal Clinical Establishment Regulatory Commission setup up to regulate the functioning of private healthcare service providers.

The State has become one of the top performing States in providing institutional credit linkage to Self Help Groups (SHGs) in the last 6 years. Loans to SHGs have gone up more than seven times, rising from Rs. 553.35 crore in 2011-12 to over Rs. 4,000 crores in 2017-18 so far.

Bengal's robust MSME Sector has witnessed the highest rise in credit flow in the country reaching over Rs 1.2 lakh crore during the last five years.

The average annual income of a farmer in the State has increased from Rs. 91,000 per annum in 2011 to Rs. 2,39,000 per annum in 2016-17.

Under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, we are on track to achieve 134% of our annual labour budget with 30.84 crore persondays employment expected to be created by March 2018. This is the highest performance across all States in the country. The State Government has received the award for excellence in Mahatma Gandhi NREGS implementation from the Centre.

West Bengal has bagged the top position in the All India Skill Competition, for 2 years in succession and is now No. 1 in the country in Skill Development.

The State now has 152 Polytechnics with 37,943 seats compared to 17,185 before 2011 and 248 ITIs with 69,025 seats compared to 17,636 before 2011.

The State Aided Universities and private universities have increased in number to 20 and 9 respectively with the

addition of St. Xavier's University in 2017. New campuses of Calcutta University and Jadavpur University will soon come up in New Town, Kolkata. As a result of this huge expansion, the State's higher education institutions have added over 4·5 lakh new seats since 2011 at the UG and PG levels.

Hon'ble Members, I am happy to inform that West Bengal was recently conferred with the Best Performance Award for e-Procurement by the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, Government of India with nearly Rs. 36,000 crores worth of projects awarded through 53,000 e-tenders in the State in the last Fiscal Year.

In January 2018, the Computer Society of India (CSI) bestowed upon our Hon'ble Chief Minister the prestigious 'e-Ratna' Award and the State Government was awarded 'Best State in e-Governance' Award for 2017.

To increase the Ease of Doing Business, smoothen and streamline investment in the State, the Single Window 'Silpa Sathi' Portal has been launched to expedite statutory clearances for setting up businesses. At this stage West Bengal is leading all other States in the country in EoDB reforms this year.

The FIFA Under-17 World Cup was lauded by FIFA and the global football fraternity. Its seamless organization made an indelible impression of Kolkata and Bengal on the World football stage.

The State's Official Emblem was unveiled by the Hon'ble Chief Minister on 5th January 2018.

India's largest destination for National and International Conferences, the state-of-the-art Biswa Bangla Convention Center was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Chief Minister in New Town, Kolkata. The Venue hosted the Bengal Global Business Summit, 2018 where delegates from all across India and 32 foreign countries participated and investment proposals worth over Rs. 2·19 lakh crores in the State were negotiated. These investments would generate employment prospects for more than 20 lakh people in the State.

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Achievements of Major Departments and Budget Allocation for 2018-19

3.1 Agriculture and Agricultural Marketing Departments

The annual income of farmers in the State has increased from Rs. 91,000 per annum in 2011 to Rs. 2,39,000 per annum in 2016-17.

The State has been awarded 'Krishi Karman Award' in 2017 for the 5th year in a row.

The State Government has implemented 'Bangla Fasal Bima Yojana' in Kharif 2017 and borne farmers' share of premium in full in addition to its own share.

Even though there was no assistance from Government of India, an amount of Rs. 1181·39 crores from the State's

own resources was distributed among 32·00 lakh farmers to compensate the losses caused by hailstorm/flood/excessive rains.

Under 'Universalization of Soil Health Card' scheme for the farmers of West Bengal, 13 lakh soil samples were collected and analyzed and 41·6 lakh Soil Health Card (SHC) were distributed across the State during 1st cycle (2015-17).

During 2016-17, there was a record production of 180.35 lakh MT of foodgrains. A bumper harvest of potato to the tune of 129·32 lakh MT was recorded. There has been an increase in the area of Pulses by more than 3·44 lakh ha. and Oilseeds by 0·86 lakh ha. due to adoption of alternate crop plan.

Rice Research Station, Chinsurah has been declared by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) as the best All India Coordinated Research Project (AICRP) Centre for its overall performance in the year 2016. Bidhan Chandra Krishi Viswavidyalaya (BCKV) and Uttar Banga Krishi Viswavidyalaya (UBKV) have been recognized as the most successful State Agricultural Universities in India.

171 Kishan Mandis have been made operational and another 17 are coming up.

In Sufal Bangla, both procurement price and retail price for the next day are notified on the website and Sufal Bangla App. Across 67 outlets, Rs. 4-5 lakh worth of

15-16 MT agricultural produce are transacted daily. To keep potato prices stable, Rs. 50 per Quintal of transport subsidy for movement through roads and Rs. 100 per Quintal for movement through Railway rake as well as through Ships (For export only) was granted by the State Government.

I propose to allocate Rs. 2,766·50 crores to Agriculture Department and Rs. 339·12 crores to Agricultural Marketing Department for the next Financial Year.

3.2 Animal Resources Development Department

The Department by spending Rs. 16 crore has taken up the scheme to distribute 75,000 numbers of Goat/Sheep with the objective to provide additional income generation to farmers. 60 lakh ducklings and chicks have been distributed among the farmers to promote backyard poultry farming which is a new record for animal husbandry in the country.

West Bengal Incentive Scheme 2017 for Commercial Layer Poultry Farm and Poultry Breeding Farm has been introduced. The subsidy involved under the scheme is Rs. 205·60 crores over a period of five years.

The process of merger of West Bengal Dairy & Poultry Development Corporation Ltd.(WBDPDCL) with the West Bengal Livestock Development Corporation Ltd.(WBLDCL) is near completion.

Haringhata Pork Processing Plant has been strengthened and 4 nos. of ‘Meat-On-Wheelz’ have been implemented with a total project cost of Rs. 3·00 crores.

I propose to allocate Rs. 1,106·69 crores to Animal Resource Development Department for the next Financial Year.

3.3 Food and Supplies Department

Under the inspiration of the Hon’ble Chief Minister, for ensuring food security in the State, 8·42 crore residents of the State are being provided subsidized rice and wheat at Rs. 2 per kg and other necessary cereals at subsidized rates under Khadya Sathi Scheme. All the ration cards have been digitized and the entire supply chain management of food grain starting from allocation upto issue of foodgrains from godowns is fully automated.

The Special Package run by the State covers beneficiaries in Jangal Mahal areas, unwilling farmers of Singur, Aila affected families, sick and closed tea gardens and hill areas. In addition, 63,079 primitive tribes, 1602 homeless, and 139 Toto families are getting food grains free of cost. The State Government is also providing subsidized food grains to all the 9·38 lakh workers and non-workers of all tea gardens and all families of three hill sub divisions of Darjeeling district.

Engagement of Self Help Groups and introduction of e-Procurement enabled procurement of a record

39.53 Lakh Metric Tonnes of paddy during 2016-17. The procurement of paddy was intensified by setting up of 325 centralized procurement centres in each paddy producing block and engaging 1284 primary agricultural cooperative societies.

During the last six years, the State's food storage capacity has been increased 10 times from 62 thousand MT to 6·10 lakh MT and work is under progress to increase it further by 3·50 LMT in 2017-18. Another 5 lakh MT additional storage capacity is likely to be added within the next three years.

I propose to allocate Rs. 8,036·83 crores to the Food & Supplies Department for the next Financial Year.

3.4 Food Processing Industries & Horticulture Department

A special project has been taken up in convergence with other Departments for development of horticulture & food processing in Paschimanchal & North Bengal districts.

The State has participated in 'World Food India' held at New Delhi as Focus State. A large number of investors have shown interest to invest in the food processing & horticulture sector in the State.

Registration of farmers in West Bengal for the export of fresh horticultural produce to the European Union countries as per the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Export Inspection and Phytosanitary Certification has been started.

Investment of around Rs. 64 crore has been declared by investors in the ‘Agro Business Synergy’ held at Siliguri. During the Bengal Global Business Summit 2018, investment of another Rs. 367·71 crore has been promised.

An initiative has been taken to issue Identity cards to the beekeepers.

Centre of Excellence for vegetables at Horticultural Research and Development farm at Hooghly is being established.

GI registration of ‘Banglar Rosogolla’ has been granted by Geographical Indicator Registry of India.

I propose to allocate Rs. 183·19 crore to the Food Processing Industries & Horticulture Department for the next Financial Year.

3.5 Backward Classes Welfare and Tribal Development Departments

Under the inspiration of the Hon’ble Chief Minister, ‘Sikshashree’ Scheme for Class-V-VIII students has been made fully online. The rates of scholarship for the SC students have also been revised and all the students of Class-V, VI and VII are now getting an annual scholarship of Rs. 750/-.

Under Sabooj Sathi Scheme, in 2015-16 and 2016-17, 35·00 Lakh students of Class IX to XII were distributed bicycles at the cost of Rs. 1,127·00 crore. In 2017-18,

another 35 Lakh students are being covered for which Rs. 830 Crore has been allotted.

A Special Recruitment Drive to remove shortfall in the percentage of SC/ST employees in Govt. jobs was taken up. In the first phase, 4,142 SC vacancies and 943 ST vacancies were filled up in 16 major Departments. Another 6,099 SC backlog vacancies and 1,736 ST backlog vacancies are being taken up for special recruitment.

Creation of employment opportunities for 22,000 SC & 5,500 ST youths in 32 occupations through skill development has been planned. Skill training covering 13,283 trainees has already started.

Joint Entrance Examination coaching and training is being provided to SC and ST students at 26 centres across the State.

17 Development and Cultural Boards have been set up for SC & ST population. Another two are in the process of formation. These Boards have constructed 12,520 houses, set up 323 Night Schools and improved 48 Jhoras to ensure better supply of drinking water. Construction of 2 Youth hostels in Mirik and Kalimpong has also been taken up.

As a part of reform process, the West Bengal Backward Classes Development & Finance Corporation (WBBCD&FC) has been merged with West Bengal SC&ST Development & Finance Corporation (WBSC&ST&D&FC) to create a new Corporation, namely West Bengal SC & ST & OBC Development & Finance Corporation.

During 2017-18, through e-Governance, the annual distribution of caste certificates has gone up to 12 lakh as compared to 4-5 lakh in erstwhile manual processing. A new facility for issuing Duplicate Caste Certificate, online, has been introduced. Caste Certificate database is being shared with Scholarship Disbursement Software to enhance efficiency in service delivery.

Special initiatives have been taken in convergence with activities and sharing of resources in Healthcare, Nutrition, Mother & Childcare for the target group to enhance coverage. During the financial year, Rs. 54.86 crore has been released for construction of building of 1080 ICDS centres has been given in convergence with MGNREGA and Social Welfare Department. This is in addition to 688 AWCs of the previous year.

A new Social Security Scheme for Kendu Leaves' Collectors was introduced in 2015. More than 34,000 collectors have so far been registered in the scheme. In 2017-18, 65 beneficiaries were provided with relief of Rs.13.83 lakh which includes accidental/natural death and maternity benefits. Further, 380 registered beneficiaries under the Scheme who have completed 60 years of age will receive one-time assistance of Rs. 50,000 each.

For focused execution of development programmes for Scheduled Castes, a 'Scheduled Caste Advisory Council' has been created with Hon'ble Chief Minister as the chairperson. The Council is sui generis of its kind in the whole country.

ST Old Age Pension Coverage has been enhanced to 1,59,327 with beneficiaries being chosen on the basis of ‘Socio-Economic Caste Census(SEC)’. Efforts are afoot to port all the accounts held in Post-Offices to banks.

I propose to allocate Rs. 905·23 crores to the Backward Classes Welfare Department and Rs. 878·06 crore to the Tribal Development Department for the next Financial Year.

3.6 Fisheries, Aquaculture and Aquatic Resources & Fishing Harbours Department

Fisheries Sector continues to play a vital role in the livelihood of rural population of the State.

Department has put all out efforts for fish culture in ponds excavated under ‘Jal Dharo Jal Bharo’ Scheme.

To encourage big fish production, 115 units in different Cooperative Societies /SHGs /FPGs have been selected for culture with an estimated fund of Rs. 9·97 crore during 2017-18. ‘Moina Model’, a flagship project for production of Indian Major Carp @12MT per Hectare per Year has been started.

Financial assistance to the tune of Rs. 183·76 lakh as loans and subsidies has been provided besides distribution of mechanized boats to sea-going marine fishermen. Besides, re-excavation of 6 (six) big water bodies is being undertaken in 5 districts at a total project cost of Rs. 103.18 crores.

Special measure has been taken for fruitful utilization of all Govt. water bodies for enhancement of productivity and revenue thereof. Efforts were also taken for imparting training to 15,500 Fishermen from the Panchayat level to State level.

Steps are being taken for accreditation of all hatcheries in the State. 212 hatcheries have already been accredited.

Construction of two Ice plants at Namkhana and Siliguri and one Cold Storage at Kakdwip have been taken up.

Under Social Fishery Scheme about Rs. 35 crore has been earmarked for liberation of fish fingerlings along with nutritionally balanced floating feed in different types of water bodies including small and big water bodies.

I propose to allocate Rs. 414·24 crores to the Fisheries, Aquaculture and Aquatic Resources & Fishing Harbours Department for the next Financial Year.

3.7 Disaster Management and Civil Defence Department

225 Multi-Purpose Cyclone Shelters (MPCS) at a cost of Rs. 1039·04 crore are being constructed at strategic locations along the coastline of three districts, namely, North 24 Parganas, South 24 Parganas & Purba Medinipur of West Bengal to reduce the destructive impact of cyclone and related disasters on human life. 173 of these MPCSs are under construction.

Rs. 1597·3 crores has been released by way of disaster assistance during 2017-18. Allotment of Relief Materials during flood is Rs. 91·64 Crores.

I propose to allocate Rs. 1,160·71 crores to the Disaster Management and Civil Defence Department for the next Financial Year.

3.8 Forest Department

Inspired by the vision of Hon'ble Chief Minister, a new scheme 'Sabujshree' was launched. The scheme envisages distribution of economical high value seedlings to all the newborns in the State at the time of birth with the twin objectives of preventing infanticide and creating awareness for the environment. Under the Scheme, so far nearly 15 lakh mothers of newly born children have been distributed seedlings.

Afforestation, covering 10,653 Ha of Forest Areas and non-Forest Areas was done during 2017-18.

The West Bengal Forest Development Corporation (WBFDC) has started e-auction for disposal of forest produce. During 2017-18, more than 200 e-auction have been conducted in which approx. 18000 lots were sold for a sale value of Rs. 132·00 crores.

To achieve the objectives of soil and moisture conservation, 36 projects under 'Jalatirtha' were completed in the arid areas of Bankura and Purulia District.

Under the West Bengal Forest and Biodiversity Conservation Project (WBFBCP), Community Infrastructure Development (CID) activities over 600 Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) and income generation activities involving 1200 SHGs have also been undertaken.

Major achievement of West Bengal Zoo Authority has been the establishment of the tiger and black bear safaris within the Bengal Safari, which has become a major attraction for tourists. A major portion of the Master Layout Plan of Sundarban Wild Animals Park, Jharkhali is also expected to be completed during 2017-18.

I propose to allocate Rs. 795.17 crores to the Forest Department for the next Financial Year.

3.9 Health & Family Welfare Department

The budget for ‘free treatment for all’ has been increased from Rs. 296.16 crores in 2011-12 to Rs. 857.83 crores in 2017-18.

The West Bengal Clinical Establishment (Registration, Regulation and Transparency) Act, 2017 has been enacted and the West Bengal Clinical Establishment Regulatory Commission set-up to regulate the functioning of private healthcare service providers.

During the year, Out Patient Departments (OPDs) have been made functional in 39 Multi/Super Specialty Hospitals and IPD services have commenced in 36 Multi/Super Specialty Hospitals.

The rate of Institutional Delivery has increased to 95%. The Infant Mortality Rate of West Bengal has reduced to 25 per 1000 live births.

94% of the children in the State are fully immunized.

68 SNCUs (Sick Newborn Care Unit) are functional in the State with 2098 functional beds. 11 PICUs (Paediatric

Intensive Care Units) are being augmented and 4 new Paediatric Intensive Care Unit are being set up at 13 Medical Colleges, Dr. B.C. Roy Post Graduate Institute of Paediatric Sciences and Chittaranjan Seva Sadan. Dedicated Neonatal Ward for sick neonates has been planned for 30 facilities with 780 beds. 7 out of 16 proposed ‘Mother & Child Hubs’ are now functional.

Two new Medical Colleges at Jalpaiguri and Arambag are in process of being set up in addition to the 5 (five) earlier which are upcoming.

State of the art Linear Accelerator (LINAC) machines for external beam radiation treatments for patients with cancer has been planned in 5 Medical Colleges, namely, R.G. Kar Medical College, NRS Medical College, Calcutta Medical College, Burdwan Medical College and Murshidabad Medical College.

Under the Public Private Partnership mode, the number of Fair Price Medicine Shops has increased to 112 with the inclusion of South Howrah State General Hospital.

The Department has taken an initiative for comprehensive upgradation of Labour Room, Operation Theatres, Toilets, Power backups and Drinking Water at Primary Healthcare Centre (PHC), Community Health Centre (CHC), Sub-Divisional Hospitals (SDH), State General Hospital (SGH) and Rural Hospitals (RH) at an estimated cost of Rs.133 crores.

More than 62 lakh families have been covered under RSBY Scheme and over 2.86 lakh beneficiaries have availed health care using their RSBY Smart Card. More than 40 Lakh families are availing benefit under the Swasthya Sathi Scheme.

I propose to allocate Rs. 8,770.16 crores to the Health & Family Welfare Department for the next Financial Year.

3.10. Higher Education, Science & Technology and Bio-technology Department

The total number of the state aided universities and private universities in the State have become 20 and 9 respectively with the addition of St. Xavier's University in 2017.

As a result of the huge expansion in higher education, the State's enrolment in higher education institutions has risen from 14,97,019 in 2011 to 19,52,696 in April 2017 which means an addition of over 4.5 lakh new seats at the UG and PG levels in the State during the last six years.

The UG and PG students are given financial assistance under Swami Vivekananda Merit-Cum-Means Scholarship Scheme. This has been extended to full-time Non-NET scholars pursuing M.Phil and Ph.D and the Kanyashree girls pursuing Post Graduations. Regular non-teaching staff and employees, contractual non-teaching staff and Part Time Teachers (PTTs) and Contractual Whole Time Teachers (CWTTs) of colleges and universities have been covered under Swasthya Sathi Scheme.

All regular teachers of Govt. aided colleges and universities have been brought under 'West Bengal Health Scheme (WBHS) for Grant-in-Aid College and University Teachers, 2017'. Child Care Leave (female teachers) and Paternity Leave (male teachers) have also been introduced.

732 virtual classrooms in the Govt. and Govt. aided colleges and universities have been established.

5931 Assistant Professors and other faculty staff have been appointed since 2013.

From next year, both the teaching & non-teaching staff of Govt. aided colleges will get e-Pension. e-Billing and e-Salary through Human Resource Management System (HRMS) has already been introduced in all Govt. and Govt. aided colleges.

I propose to allocate Rs. 3,551.25 crores to the Higher Education, Science & Technology and Bio-technology Department for the next Financial Year.

3.11 Housing Department

The State is committed to provide affordable housing to the people specially belonging to Economically Weaker Sections (EWS).

In 2017-18, the target of construction of 90000 dwelling units under Gitanjali Housing Scheme has already been surpassed. Since the beginning of the Scheme, funds have been released for construction of over 3.5 lakh dwelling units and more than 2.6 lakh units have already been completed.

The construction of ‘Pathasathis’ in each 50 k.m. stretch of National Highways, State Highways and other important roads has been taken up for the benefit of travellers. The construction of 67 out of 71 Pathasathis has been completed and construction of 4 Pathasathis is in progress. The construction of 2 Night Shelters, one at Diamond Harbour District Hospital and another at Baruipur Sub Divisional Hospital for Patient Parties and three working women Hostels at Banamali Naskar Road, Kolkata, Malbazar, Jalpaiguri and Becharam Chatterjee Road RHE Campus have been completed.

I propose to allocate Rs. 1,244·09 crores to the Housing Department for the next Financial Year.

3.12 Information and Cultural Affairs Department

During 2017-18, the number of folk artists enrolled under Lok Prasar Prakalpa Scheme has gone up from 84447 to 194447.

17 Conservation and Restoration projects throughout the State, including, Kanakeswar Shiva Temple, Sribati Shiva Temple, Ragabeswar Shiva Temple, Rajrajeswar Shiva Temple, Harirampur Shiva Temple and Shyamchand Temple apart from Old Governor’s House at Barrackpur, Duff College in Kolkata etc. have been undertaken.

Major infrastructure development projects including construction of Tele Academy Complex at Baruipur, South 24 Parganas, construction of Open Air Theatre and other buildings at West Bengal State Music Academy Complex at

Prince Anwar Shah Road, Construction of one Multi-storied/ Multipurpose Building at Cinema Centenary Building campus have been taken up.

The Kalimpong Festival and Teesta Terai Utsav were held successfully and witnessed active participation from the local people. More recently, the Uttar Banga Utsav was held and its immense success was a fitting reply to the disruptive forces that tried to usurp Rule of Law in the region earlier.

The 23rd Kolkata International Film Festival and Pujo Carnival were held with great fanfare and created a worldwide impression of the city in the fields of cinema, art & culture.

Maavoi-West Bengal Health Scheme for the Journalists, 2016, Mediclaim for Cine Artists & Technicians, Financial Assistance to Distressed Film Technicians and Artistes, Literary & Cultural Pension for Eminent Cultural Personalities and Financial Assistance to Natya/Jatra/Folk & other Artistes are the major health insurance/financial assistance schemes are being implemented satisfactorily.

I propose to allocate Rs. 536·60 crores to the Information and Cultural Affairs Department for the next Financial Year.

3.13 Industry, Commerce & Enterprises Department

The State successfully hosted the Bengal Global Business Summit, 2018 where delegates from India and

32 countries participated and Rs. 2·19 lakh crores worth of investment proposals were negotiated.

Online registration of Societies and Partnership Firm has been introduced on 15th October, 2017.

The West Bengal Single Window System (Management, Control and Misc. Provisions) Act, 2017 has been enacted to promote Ease of Doing Business and the Single Window Portal ‘Silpa Sathi’ for various G2B Services and applications has been launched.

Rs. 123 crores has been extended to develop and modernize the Industrial Parks and Growth Centres to attract entrepreneurs.

The process for setting up a Deep Sea Port at Tajpur has been initiated.

Long Term Settlement has been executed for 56·03 acres of land for Titagarh Marine Ltd. for setting up of Shipyard for manufacturing and repairing of various offshore vehicles of Kulpi, South 24 Parganas.

98.32 acres of land for M/s Shree Cement Ltd. for setting up of 5 MTPA Cement Grinding Plant and 20 MW Captive Power Plant at Raghunathpur, Purulia, and 89 acres of land for M/s GAGAN Ferrotech Ltd. for their expansion project of ISP from existing 0·26 MTPA to 0·33 MTPA with 8 MW Captive power plant over existing 12 MW Captive Power Plant (CPP) in the district of Burdwan has been allotted.

I propose to allocate Rs. 986·57 crores to the Industry, Commerce & Enterprises Department for the next Financial Year.

3.14 Irrigation & Waterways Department

In continuation of the sustained effort for improving irrigation and flood management network in the State, 69,500 acres have additionally brought under irrigation by completion of a cluster of surface irrigation projects including 10 check dams during 2017-18.

With efficient reservoir management during 2017 monsoon, record 5,25,600 acres of agricultural land was irrigated during the Rabi and Boro season 2017-18. Also, nearly 21 lakh acres were cultivated with the help of minor & major irrigation schemes in the Kharif Season.

Improvement of flood embankments and protection of eroding riverbanks have been completed for a length of 393 Km during this period. In addition, 206 Km of drainage channels have been re-excavated.

Emphasis is also being laid on using latest state-of-the-art technologies in various sectors, e.g. automated gate control and operations using SCADA-PLC system for major barrages, pre-fabricated segmental superstructure for rural bridges, rubber dams for regulating drainage channels and geo-synthetic reinforced walls for embankments etc.

In conformity with the objective of promoting Ease of Doing Business in the State, online application system for

drawal of surface water by industries and discharge of treated industrial effluents into canals, channels and rivers, has been introduced and dashboard for online processing of these cases has been developed. Apart from this, in order to increase accountability and transparency in the delivery of services, evidence-based online plan fund monitoring system, advance planning of work cycle, setting up of Departmental teams for Technical Examination of projects, creation of a new quality control setup and introduction of Biometric Attendance System, etc. have been introduced.

I propose to allocate Rs. 3,164.20 crores to the Irrigation & Waterways Department for the next Financial Year.

3.15 Information Technology & Electronics Department

The Department has laid thrust in providing an enabling environment for IT companies and generating more employment in IT sector. Total export from IT sector of the State is estimated to have crossed Rs. 15,000 crores in 2016-17 from Rs. 8,335 crores in 2010-11.

The operational IT Parks have increased from 8 to 12 during 2017-18. Out of the 12 new IT Parks which are operational, 4 at Durgapur (Ph-II), Siliguri (Ph-II), Kalyani and Rajarhat are having almost 100% occupancy.

One of the premier IT companies, M/S Infosys Ltd., has renewed its initiative to establish a campus in Rajarhat.

Sonarpur Hardware Park is fully commissioned and is ready for allocation in a business-friendly manner based on online process. NIELIT Training Centre has been established at Bolpur IT Park on Pilot basis which is to promote and impart Computer literacy and professional education at Cost effective price.

A Cyber Security Cell-Centre of Excellence has been set up and has started operating with Webel as the Nodal Agency.

I propose to allocate Rs. 181.68 crores to the Information Technology & Electronics Department for the next Financial Year.

3.16. Labour Department

Five different Social Security Schemes for unorganized labour were integrated and converged in a common single comprehensive scheme Samajik Suraksha Yojana with effect from 1st April 2017. Uniform higher scale of benefit was extended to all workers. This is a first of its kind Scheme in the country moving towards providing a comprehensive package of social security benefits like provident fund, health cover, death and disability cover etc. universally to the unorganized workers of the State.

Disability insurance was introduced for the first time, both for full disability and partial disability. The medical benefits have been enhanced from Rs. 10,000 per year to Rs. 20,000 per year and medical benefits for surgery at Rs. 60,000 per year made uniform for all unorganized workers.

As a first in the country, different databases of workers have been merged & de-duplicated to create a single database with a single Social Security Identification Number (SSIN) to each beneficiary and registration, collection, claim and disbursement will be totally online.

Employment Bank was launched on 26th July, 2012 by the Hon'ble Chief Minister to set an online bridge among the employers and the job-seekers. It is a State-owned internet based Job-portal and a unique e-Governance initiative to promote various Government to citizen, Government to Business and Government to Government services. More than 10 Lakh Jobseekers enrolled in the Employment Bank have been able to find employment since inception. Yuvashree beneficiaries are selected by the System sequentially from the Employment Bank.

As a part of Ease of Doing Business, 106 out of 108 items were successfully implemented making it the best performing Labour Department in the country.

A policy on risk profiling, inspection norms and self-certification for Shops/Establishments/Units/Owners under 18 different labour laws has been initiated which would greatly reduce the regulatory burden of the System. A self-certification scheme for Boilers and Economizers along with scheme of third party inspections has been initiated. The grant of license for factories was enhanced from 1 year to up to 10 years greatly reducing the administrative and regulatory burden of the Department and factories.

‘Samarthan’ Scheme was introduced by the Government of West Bengal in March 2017 to provide financial assistance amounting to Rs. 50,000/- as one-time grant to labourers/workers who were forced to migrate to the State following demonetization by the Union Government in November 2016. The worker can take up any scheme with this fund that can give him sustainable income. Up to November 2017, a sum of Rs. 78.09 crore has been released for distribution of financial benefit to 15,618 registrants enrolled under the scheme.

The workers of locked-out industrial units of the State will be provided skill development training to enhance their employability. Up to Rs. 12,000/- will be provided per worker towards cost of training and the incumbent will not have to bear any course fees.

I propose to allocate Rs. 938.95 crores to the Labour Department for the next Financial Year.

3.17 Land & Land Reforms and Refugee Relief & Rehabilitation Department

During 2017-18 till October, 2017, a total of 1274.89 acres of agricultural land have been distributed among landless people and 504 nos. of Nijo Griho Nijo Bhumi (NGNB) pattas have been distributed. In respect of 21,120 cases of NGNB, convergence with other schemes has been taken up for improvement in livelihood. With this, the number of pattas under homestead category distributed since 2011 has touched nearly 3 lakhs.

Construction of 39 new Block Land & Land Reforms Officer (BL&LRO) Offices and 53 new Revenue Inspector (R.I.) Offices is in progress. 23 Modern Record Rooms are also being developed.

98% out of the total 68348 cadastral maps/sheets have been digitized and made available to the citizen during 2017-18. Data of land records of 344 BL&LRO offices out of 346 has been migrated to the central database. Citizens can track their mutation cases online.

Integration of land records and property registration has been done in 344 blocks. Services have been linked with the e-District Portal.

Long-Term Settlements of vested land have been sanctioned for 39 cases involving an area of 120.11 acres up to December, 2017 for which the salami and annual rent for the first year amounts to more than Rs. 13.8 crores.

181 cases of Inter Departmental Transfer of land have been sanctioned involving an area of 637.47 acres up to December, 2017. The Bon Hooghly Housing Project at Baranagar Municipality, North 24-Parganas, has been completed under PPP Model to rehabilitate 540 families who were living in an old dilapidated structure on the site.

Amendments in the West Bengal Land Reforms Act, 1955 have been notified during FY 2017-18 and changes in WBLR Rules, 1965 made to unlock the land lying

unutilized in closed mills/factories/workshops for investment and business opportunities, regularize land conversions other than water bodies and provide for exemption from payment of land revenue and cess on agricultural land.

I propose to allocate Rs. 1,206.23 crores to the Land & Land Reforms and Refugee Relief & Rehabilitation Department for the next Financial Year.

3.18 Minority Affairs & Madrasah Education Department

The major thrust of the Department has been on the core areas of infrastructure development, education and employment.

The annual budget allocation of the Department has seen a near eight-fold increase in the last six years. In this period scholarships worth Rs. 4,900 crores have been given out to over 1.7 crore students, the highest in the country.

A new scheme of ‘computer aided learning ICT @ Madrasah’ has been introduced for implementation in 169 Madrasahs this Year.

For educational upliftment, 445 Hostels for Minority Students are being setup. Out of this 249 have been operationalised. Another 150 will be made operational by next fiscal year.

Another Scheme of remedial coaching on the pattern of Utkarsha Scheme of School Education Department has been introduced for Madrasah students who are weak in

studies with a target to cover 10,000 students during the current Year.

Up till now, 303 Karmatirthas have been sanctioned of which 109 have already been operationalized and the remaining will be made operational soon.

Loans of nearly Rs. 1,300 crores have been provided to over 7·5 lakh minority beneficiaries for self-employment in the last six years. In 2017-18, soft loans have so far been provided to 5132 youths under Term Loan Scheme and to 66,255 members of Self Help Group under Direct Lending Scheme.

The Government has also taken up construction of boundary walls around Graveyards, Mazars, Idgahs. Over 2,000 burial grounds have been fenced in the State, an unparalleled achievement in the country.

Other schemes for the benefit of minorities include Destitute Minority Womens' Rehabilitation Programme, meeting critical infrastructural gaps in Minority Concentrated Areas under MSDP and IMDP Programmes, and schemes for promotion of Urdu language.

The scope of coverage under Destitute Minority Womens' Rehabilitation Programme has been widened by including single, divorcee and separated underprivileged women. So far Rs.126 cr. has been released for construction of boundary walls around graveyard etc. in the current Year.

I propose to allocate Rs. 3,716·22 crores to the Minority Affairs & Madrasah Education Department for the next Financial Year.

3.19 Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises and Textiles Department

During the current Year, till December 2017, more than 27,700 MSME units filed Udyog Aadhaar Memorandum employing nearly 1,70,000 persons.

82 new clusters have been taken up for development taking the total number of clusters to 425.

13 Common Facility Centres (CFC)/Dye Houses have been established.

Rs. 17,418 crores of credit flow from Banks to MSMEs has been recorded.

16,940 handloom weavers and allied workers have been imparted skill development training. 60 lakh additional man-days have been created in the Handloom Sector. More than 6,500 statutory clearances have been facilitated by MSME Facilitation Centres (MFC) under single window service in Districts.

Business turnover of TANTUJA has increased Year-on-Year from Rs. 104 crores to Rs. 151 crores up to December 2017. Business turnover of MANJUSHA stood at Rs. 54 crores up to December 2017.

Calcutta Leather Complex is being rejuvenated as Mega Leather Cluster.

3 Mega Carpet Clusters have been launched at Moyna in Purba Medinipur, Sattari in Malda and Malgaon in Uttar Dinajpur involving 4500 weavers.

Mega Powerloom Cluster has been launched in North 24 Parganas to promote Powerloom Sector in the State.

Siliguri Urban Haat having Cane Furniture, Wooden Furniture and Terracotta Hubs has been set up.

Infrastructure development has been started in Khasjungle Industrial Estate and Dabgram Industrial Estate (Phase-II).

2 Synergy events (one each at Bankura and Medinipur) and one Agri-Business Synergy at Siliguri have been held.

Special projects taken up on Saal leaf, Muslin and Madur have seen good reception. A Centre of Excellence on Saal leaf at Jhargram has been established.

I propose to allocate Rs. 949·81 crores to the Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises and Textiles Department for the next Financial Year.

3.20 North Bengal Development Department

394 new projects have been taken up in the 8 North Bengal Districts in the current Year covering sectors like rural and urban infrastructure, health, education, power, minor irrigation, flood protection, women and child development, sports, tourism, etc. The total number of projects executed since 2012-13 has gone up to 1903.

Schemes have been taken up for the upliftment of the Gorkhas and Tribal-Regions including Dwelling Houses, Community Halls, Water Supply Schemes etc.

Construction of 41 Model Fair Price shops run by Self Help Groups spread over Tea-gardens in Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar Districts has been undertaken.

Construction of 427 Anganwadi Centres in the districts of Jalpaiguri, Malda, Alipurduar and Darjeeling is underway apart from other Anganwadi Centres being constructed in convergence with MGNREGS in 6 Districts of North Bengal.

Other major projects of the Department include construction of Electric Crematoriums at Alipurduar and Islampur, LED Street lighting in Jalpaiguri, Alipurduar Town, Balurghat, Malda Town, Mahadipur, Raiganj and Karnajhora; construction of auditoriums at Coochbehar, Alipurduar and Darjeeling; construction of Agriculture College at Majihan, Dakshin Dinajpur; Budhsing and Kilaram Water Supply Scheme under Khoribari Block and Naxalbari Block; upgradation of major rural roads and bridges in the 8 Districts, Bank protection works, construction of buildings, market hubs, etc.

I propose to allocate Rs. 640·48 crores to the North Bengal Development Department for the next Financial Year.

3.21 Paschimanchal Unnayan Affairs Department

The Department is currently in the process of preparing a comprehensive integrated plan for the Paschimanchal region with the participation of 14 other Departments. The objectives are to articulate and document the vision of 5 years and to execute a set of activities year-wise and district-wise.

A major project is being undertaken with the assistance of the Indian Institute of Natural Resins and Gums for revitalizing Lac cultivation in Purulia.

Three technology intensive projects, viz., (i) Digitally Inclusive Smart Sericulture (DISS); (ii) Development of an e-Commerce web-portal for Bankura district for locally produced handicrafts and artefacts; and (iii) Digitally Inclusive Smart Agriculture (DISA) have been taken up at a cost of Rs 1.85 crore as pilots for scaling up in due course.

In the current year, 3984 Schemes/Projects spread over the sectors of construction of roads, bridges & culverts, education, health, drinking water & ICDS centres, irrigation, re-excavation of bundhs, water and land conservation & agriculture, construction of boundary walls, community halls, building, etc. were taken up. Of these Schemes/Projects, 1630 have already been completed.

The Jangal Mahal Utsav was celebrated with active participation of the locals in the area. The Hul Divas and Santhal Rebellion were commemorated in all Jangal Mahal districts with the main event held in Jhargram. The Jangal Mahal Cup witnessed unprecedented participation and for the first time it was also streamed live through the official Government Portal.

I propose to allocate Rs. 562.52 crores to the Paschimanchal Unnayan Affairs Department for the next Financial Year.

3.22 Public Health Engineering Department

During 2017-18, 98 Piped Water Supply Schemes (PWSS) have been commissioned at an estimated cost of over Rs. 1,000 crores.

Presently 858 PWSS (ongoing/augmentation/rejuvenation) are ongoing throughout the State with an estimated cost of nearly Rs. 11,521.73 crores.

During the year, 872 source-less Schools & Anganwadis have been covered by drinking water facilities.

Surface Water based Piped Water Supply Scheme are under implementation in South 24 Parganas covering 10 Blocks at an estimated cost of Rs. 1,332.41 crores, in Bally-Jagachha areas and Domjur of Howrah District at an estimated cost of Rs. 196.56 crores, in Panskura-II Block at a cost of Rs. 241.72 crores and in Habra and Gaighata at a cost of Rs. 578.94 crores.

3 Project Proposals, namely, Piped Water Supply Schemes for Bankura district (Phase-II) covering 8 blocks, Haroa, Rajarhat & Bhangar I & II, Barassat-I Blocks of North & South 24 Parganas Districts and Nandakumar, Chandipur, Nandigram I & II Block of Purba Midnapore District have been sanctioned amounting to Rs. 2,232.12 crores.

I propose to allocate Rs. 2,866.04 crores to the Public Health Engineering Department for the next Financial Year.

3.23 Power & NES Department

The State has been successfully ensuring 24×7 power supply across the State. The average hours of supply have been 23·57 hours in the last FY across the State.

With a view to provide reliable quality power to 179 lakh consumers, work under ‘Sabar Ghare Alo’ is completed in 11 Districts and nearly complete in one remaining District. Close to 6 lakh service connections have been effected in 2017-18. Electrification has reached 100% villages through grid connectivity, however, in case of 100 char villages process is on for providing electricity through Solar PV plants.

During FY 2017-18, as part of the reforms in Distribution, a total of 30 new 33/11 KV substations have been commissioned and 14 new 33/11 KV substations are at various stages of completion. A total of 303.10 MVA capacity has been added so far in the current FY.

In 2017-18, New Chanditala 400 KV Substation at District Hooghly, New PPSP 400 KV GIS at District Purulia & Sadaipur 220/132/33 KV Substation at Birbhum District went into operation. Consumers of the entire State, especially in Howrah, Hooghly & Birbhum District will be benefited from these Substations.

Total 1771 MVA Transformation Capacity including augmentation and 389 CKM Transmission Line has been added during this period.

An action plan for mitigation of low voltage in certain pockets of the State has also been prepared. This involves

setting up of around 125 new 33/11 KV substations, capacity upgradation of 182 existing 33/11 KV substations and installation of around 26,000 new DTR across the State. As part of Ease of Doing Business, applications for service connections are being received and disposed online by Distribution Utilities. All the 28 services of the Directorate of Electricity is being made available online under e-District Platform. Work for bifurcation of overloaded feeders, reorientation of lengthy feeders, augmentation of conductor size, installation of capacitors for reduction in loss and improving the quality of power under the Scheme ‘Strengthening and Extending of Electricity Distribution Network (Phase-II)’ has been taken up. Conversion of old 6.6 KV and 6 KV systems to 11 KV and use of LTAB cables in congested areas to reduce the quantum and possibility of theft of energy, interruptions and accidents have been taken up.

1 Ground Mounted Solar Photo Voltaic Projects (SPV) of installed capacity of 10 MW at Mejia in Bankura District and Charrah in Purulia District have been commissioned while one 10 MW SPV Project at Santhalidih in Purulia is expected to be commissioned by June 2018. Till December, 2017 the cumulative generation from SPV Projects at Teesta Canal Bank at Uttar Dinajpur is about 19 MU.

21.4 MW Grid Connected Roof Top Solar PV Power Plant (GRTSPV) under Aloshree Programme is being installed on the roofs of the buildings of WBSEDCL, WBSETCL and other Government Office buildings at a total cost of Rs. 150 crores. Moreover, GRTSPV Plants of 10 KWp in

230 educational institutes have been installed till December 2017.

The second pumped storage project of 1000 MW capacity at Turga at a total outlay of Rs. 4800·69 crores in the District of Purulia is being set up to meet peak power requirements and increase the renewable mix.

I propose to allocate Rs. 2,448·07 crores to the Power & NES Department for the next Financial Year.

3.24 Panchayat & Rural Development Department

Employment generation through Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme has already surpassed the annual labour budget of 23 crore person-days with 23·65 crore person-days having already been achieved till December 2017. The State's performance in achieving convergence with different development programmes has been appreciated nationally and the State Government has received the award for excellence in Mahatma Gandhi NREGS implementation from the Centre.

In the current year, under Grameen Awaas Yojana, 3,67,769 houses have been sanctioned and Rs. 5633·05 crores have been released till December 2017.

During this year, under PMGSY 1,145 KM road length has been constructed and Rs. 627 crores have been released till December 2017. With this, a total of 2762 new road construction works have been completed covering 13,417 km of road length by this Government.

In Mission Nirmal Bangla, Malda and Howrah districts are going to be declared ODF districts and Dakshin Dinajpur, Birbhum and Murshidabad Districts are lined up next to join the wagon. Earlier, Nadia became the first ODF District in the country and North 24 Parganas, Purba Medinipur, South 24 Parganas, Coochbehar, Purba Bardhaman, Paschim Bardhaman and Hooghly have already been declared ODF Districts. In this Year, over 9 lakh Individual House Hold Latrines (IHHLs) have been constructed and Rs. 821·27 crores has been released till January 2018.

Under National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP), social security in various forms to individuals belonging to BPL/poor category through Old Age Pension, Widow Pension, Disability Pension, etc. has been provided to 22·28 lakh beneficiaries through institutional accounts and Rs. 1129·72 crores have been spent till December 2017.

I propose to allocate Rs. 19,063·22 crores to the Panchayat & Rural Development Department for the next Financial Year.

3.25 Public Works Department

The Department has been entrusted to take over important roads being maintained by different Zilla Parishads and Municipalities for upgradation and improvement and to improve communication system of the State. 345 roads of length around 3100 km from different Zilla Parishads and Municipalities have already been taken over. All these roads will be upgraded and improved within 2018 - 19.

Projects to further improve inter & intra district road connectivity with at least 2 lane roads connecting important district towns have already been taken up and wherever possible inter district connectivity would be ensured by 2 lane roads with paved shoulder or 4 lane roads. With a target of 820 km road length in 45 different projects, this objective will be completed within the next 2 years.

Construction of Road Over Bridge (ROB) at all Railway Level Crossings on State Highways and Major District Roads is being taken up. The Projects for ROBs over National Highways have already started.

2 laning/2 laning with paved shoulder of road length of 500 km is likely to be completed during this Year. 781 km road length as intermediate length (5·50 m carriageway width) has already been constructed and another 1200 km is likely to be completed within a year. Strengthening of 1000 km of road length is likely to be achieved during this year. 20 bridges over different rivers and canals have been completed in this year.

Several major prestigious and flagship projects including critical infrastructure projects are being taken up subject to feasibility. These include 4 laning of road stretch of Barajaguli Kapa Mogra (22 km) via Iswar Gupta Setu (WBHDCL), 4 laning of Kalyani Expressway (42 km) & Belghoria Expressway connectivity (4 km), 4 laning of Kolkata Basanti Road upto Ghatakpukur (25 km), 4 laning of Arambagh Champadanga Road (22 km), construction of

Bridge over river Bhagirathi at Kalna, Vehicle Under Pass (VUP) between Tala Bridge and Dunlop on B.T. Road at Chiria More, Sinti More, Tobin Road crossing, Flyover at Manicktala crossing along AJC Bose Road (1.80 km), Ajoy Bridge at Birbhum 700 m length including viaduct (Shibpur - Kendulia), Flyover from Ganesh Avenue New Market towards M.G. Road crossing, Flyover/ROBs from Taratala to Tollygunj to Anwar Shah Road to Jadavpur Phanri, (G+10) Nabanna Annexe Building, (G+2) Nabanna Guest House and construction of Kolkata House for the Government.

I propose to allocate Rs. 5,007.83 crores to the Public Works Department for the next Financial Year.

3.26 School Education Department

More than 6,000 new schools have been added since 2011. The recruitment process of 41,488 primary teachers was completed in 2017. This has improved the Pupil Teacher ratio from 29 to 22 for primary schools and from nearly 49 to 42 at upper primary level.

More than 9 crore free text books from Pre-Primary to Class XII were distributed in all schools.

School uniform was provided free of cost to students of Primary and Upper Primary level.

Under Mid Day Meal Programme, 71.88 lakh Primary school students and 45.70 lakh Upper Primary school students were covered in the State.

The construction of building of 162 New Setup schools was completed. Swings, Slides & Seesaws were provided in 990 Primary Schools. The number of functional Model Schools increased to 51.

37 new Integrated Government Schools were made functional from Class I to Class XII.

133 Junior High Schools were upgraded to High Schools and 107 High Schools were upgraded to Higher Secondary Schools.

Nearly 1038 additional classrooms were constructed adding more learning space to schools.

1563 Kitchen-cum-Stores were constructed for Mid Day Meal. Rs. 12·27 crores were spent on repair of old school building, and Rs. 21·75 crores were spent on repair of flood affected primary schools.

8 Science projects were selected from Bengal at National Level Science Exhibition & Projects Competition, 2017. 4 school students from Bengal were selected as Best Scientist in the National Children Science Congress in December, 2017. Teams in Volleyball (Girls), Table Tennis (Girls) and Gymnastics (Girls) from Bengal won National Championship in National School Games. Bengal teams in Yoga (Girls) and Gymnastics (Boys) were Runner Up at these Games.

I propose to allocate Rs. 24,721·90 crores to the School Education Department for the next Financial Year.

3.27 Self Help Group & Self Employment Department

The Self Help Group Movement has made rapid strides under this Government. Over Rs. 4,000 crores of bank credit has been mobilized for more than 2·35 lakh SHGs so far.

This Year, assistance of Rs. 243·75 crores was provided to 27588 entrepreneurs under the Swami Vivekananda Swanirbhar Karmasansthan Prakalpa (SVSKP) up to December, 2017.

Interest subsidy of Rs. 58.81 crores was provided to 278746 Self Help Groups (SHGs) under West Bengal Swanirbhar Sahayak Prakalpa (WBSSP).

20 Training-cum-Marketing Complexes (Karmatirthas) at the District & Sub-Divisional Head Quarters have been set up to facilitate training of SHGs for skill development & for marketing of their products. Construction of another 24 Karmatirthas has been taken up.

Skill Development and Vocational Training for creating employment opportunities has been taken up on tailoring, mushroom cultivation, embroidery, computer training, electric repairing, food processing, mobile repairing, jute products manufacturing, vermi compost, terracotta, fast food & glass painting, etc.

‘Samajsathi’, a Personal Accident Insurance Scheme for SHG members of the State has been running successfully.

I propose to allocate Rs. 604·30 crores to the Self Help Group and Self Employment Department for the next Financial Year.

3.28 Sundarban Affairs Department

As part of the initiatives of the Department to provide infrastructure connectivity in remote areas of Sundarbans, 287·086 km of roads and 10 RCC Jetties have been completed. 2 Bridges have been completed, 18 Bridges are ongoing and work of another 5 Bridges has been taken up.

57,500 beneficiaries are expected to be provided with agricultural inputs and small implements.

Indian Major Carp (IMC) Fingerlings, Air Breathing Fish Fingerlings and fish feed for composite fish cultures have been distributed to 20,000 beneficiaries. Creation of mangroves, strip & jhaw plantation have been completed in 430 Hectares.

I propose to allocate Rs. 496·22 crores to the Department of Sundarban Affairs for the next Financial Year.

3.29 Technical Education & Training and Skill Development Department

Under 'Utkarsh Bangla' 29 new Govt. polytechnics have already been operationalised during the last 6 years. The approved intake capacity of polytechnics has gone up to 37,943 in 2017-18 compared to of 17,185 before 2011. Womens' Hostels in 25 Govt. polytechnics have been setup. 66 Govt. polytechnics now have Wi-Fi in their campus.

Construction of another 20 new ITIs has been completed and construction of 9 new ITIs has been started.

The approved intake capacity of trainees of ITIs has gone up to 69,025 in 2017-18 compared to intake capacity of trainees of 17,636 before 2011. Wi-fi facilities have been provided at 36 existing Government ITIs and remaining ITIs will be covered shortly.

Initiative has been taken to develop Smart Class Room in all Government polytechnics and Government ITIs, so that teachers and students can get help through the latest teaching-learning techniques.

Upgrading of existing Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) into advanced VTCs in phases is being taken up. 495 VTCs have been identified for upgradation of existing short term vocational courses as Advanced VTCs. Advanced VTCs in 63 sub-divisions on ‘Pranisebee Programme’ has been started.

CSS -VHSE Scheme has been implemented in 289 schools from Class IX through NSDC’s Training Partners. The Scheme has been rolled out in additional 311 new schools.

One CoE-SDC in Garment Sector is being constructed at Ankurhati, Howrah.

I propose to allocate Rs. 1,010·15 crores to the Technical Education & Training and Skill Development Department for the next Financial Year.

3.30 Tourism Department

Several ongoing major projects that were provided funds are Construction of MusafirKhana in FurfuraSharif,

Hooghly, Beautification of Hanseswari Temple and development & illumination of Gazi Zafar Khan Darga in Bansberia, Hooghly, Piped water supply scheme for Jharkhali Tourism Hub, Renovation, refurbishment and improvement of Sarbamangala Temple. Steps have been taken to develop Tourist Centres like MICE Tourism at Bagdogra, Closing Retreat Ceremony at Fulbari, Chalsa Tourist Centre, Baul Bitan, Baul Academy, Khowai in Birbhum, Chandernagar Tourist Lodge at Chandernagar, etc.

West Bengal Home Stay Tourism Policy, 2017 outlines the assistance to be given to the Home stay owners.

'The Red Road Carnival' was attended by more than 1500 foreign dignitaries including FIFA representatives along with more than 3000 visitors from outside the State.

Further, works for renovation and repair have been taken up for Raiganj Tourist Lodge, Malancha Tourist Lodge at Barrackpore, Udayachal Tourist Lodge, Mainak Tourist Lodge, Rupnarayan Tourist Lodge at Gadiara, Howrah, Santiniketan Tourist Lodge, Rangabitan Tourist Lodge at Santiniketan, Darjeeling Tourist Lodge, Batabari and Tilabari Tourist Lodge, Kalimpong Tourist Lodge, Jaldapara Tourist Lodge, Murti Tourist Lodge, Kalighat Pilgrimage Facilitation centre and Bakkhali Tourist Lodge.

The Gajoldoba Eco Tourism Hub (Bhorer Alo), a mega-project, located between the Teesta Barrage and the Baikunthapur Forest is envisaged as a new destination for the tourism prospects in North Bengal. Similarly, as a part

of Sundarban Delta, the project site of Jharkhali Eco Tourism Project at Basanti, South 24 Parganas situated on the banks of river Herobhanga is being designed as the Gateway to Sundarban.

I propose to allocate Rs. 370·21 to the Tourism Department for the next Financial Year.

3.31 Transport Department

As a part of e-Governance and Intelligent Transport System initiatives, a prepaid West Bengal Transport Card in the buses run by WBTC has been introduced.

A new passenger-friendly Mobile App, called PATHODISHA, for ease of movements, has been introduced.

Process of retrofitting Speed Limiting Devices (SLD) in existing transport vehicles has been initiated. Funds have been provided for taking various types of road safety measures like Integrated Traffic Management System and Surveillance System, laser based speed radar gun and enforcer camera, CCTV surveillance etc. Funds have been sanctioned in 2017-18 for construction of large number of Bus Terminuses which includes new depot at Jhargram, Bolpur, Bishnupur, Karunamoyee, etc. Kolkata Central Bus Terminus at Santragachi, Howrah has been set up.

Construction of right turn flyover at Santragachi has been started by HRBC to reduce vehicular traffic congestion.

411 new buses have been rolled out by the State Transport Undertakings (STUs) during 2017-18. Initiatives have been taken for launching 40 (forty) electric buses for the first time in the city of Kolkata.

Gatidhara scheme for unemployed youth enrolled with the Employment Bank has been continuing. So far, over 16,000 youth have been sanctioned vehicles and 13,000 of them have already started plying on the road. In 2017-18, attempts have been made to cover 10,000 unemployed youths under the Scheme.

Transport Department has worked out a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and introduced it in 429 jetties/ferry-ghats of the State for the safer river transport.

‘Jaladhara’ scheme has been launched for replacement of existing unsafe semi-mechanised boats/‘Bhutbhutis’ in water transport sector. World Bank assisted mega project ‘Development of Inland Water Transportation on National Waterways-1 (Phase-I)’ from Haldia to Tribeni has been targeted. The project envisages for the construction of 56 normal jetties, 8 LCT jetties for RO-RO and introduction of modern vessels, capacity building and infrastructural strengthening.

Funds have been sanctioned for construction of large no. of jetties. Besides, 18 Jetties of Sundarban area have been taken up. Also, construction of LCT jetties for RO-RO services at Kukrahati & Raichak has also been taken up.

Transport Department has also constructed 12 Steel and 12 Wooden Vessels. Steps have also been taken for construction of another 6 Wooden & 6 Steel vessels within 2017-18.

Low cost, passenger-friendly helicopter connectivity between Kolkata and other destinations like Malda, Balurghat, Digha and Gangasagar have been continuing. For introduction of aircraft service from Kolkata to Coochbehar, Balurghat & Malda, work of runway construction at Balurghat has been completed and work for runway construction at Malda has been started. Steps have been taken for hiring of small fixed wing aircrafts to introduce the air service. Steps have been taken to hire Air Ambulance for emergency trauma care.

I propose to allocate Rs. 1,455·15 crores to the Transport Department for the next Financial Year.

3.32 Water Resources Investigation & Development Department

During 2017-18, Irrigation Potential of about 65,000 Hectare is planned to be created through various minor irrigation projects under different programmes.

Under ‘Jal Dharo Jal Bharo’ during 2017-18, 31,165 water bodies/water retention structures have been created out of which 5,937 equivalent standard tanks and 25,228 water bodies have been created/renovated in convergence with P&RD Department up to December, 2017.

Under ‘Jalatirtha’ for increasing irrigation coverage and rain water conservation in the arid districts of Birbhum, Bankura, Purulia, Jhargram and Paschim Medinipur, minor irrigation schemes are being implemented harnessing surface water. During this year, up to December 2017, 76 schemes have been completed creating irrigation potential of 2,775 Ha. ‘Jalatirtha’ is proposed to be expanded for areas like Sundarban for rainwater harvesting to address salinity and in hilly areas in Darjeeling and Kalimpong District.

Under the World Bank assisted West Bengal Accelerated Development of Minor Irrigation Project (WBADMIP), 139 schemes have been completed in this Year up to December 2017 creating an additional irrigation potential of 6,400 Ha.

Water use efficiency is being enhanced by promoting micro-irrigation schemes like drip & sprinkler irrigation by WRID Department. The effort is also towards using renewable energy sources for operating minor irrigation installation. 99 solar operated minor irrigation schemes such as sprinklers, Light capacity tubewells, pump dug wells etc. have been commissioned during this year up to December 2017 creating irrigation potential of 1,108 Ha.

I propose to allocate Rs. 1,273·46 crores to the Water Resources Investigation & Development Department for the next Financial Year.

3.33 Women and Child Development & Social Welfare Department

Kanyashree Prakalpa, the State's flagship scheme for empowerment of adolescent girls is surging ahead strongly. More than 45 lakh girls have benefitted from the Scheme. The scheme has won the United Nations Public Service Award 2017 at The Hague, Netherlands.

54 projects under 'Swawlamban' Scheme are being implemented during 2017-18 involving 2325 numbers of women trainees with a goal to make them economically independent.

Under 'Muktir Alo' Scheme, 25 trainees underwent 9 months residential training on Manufacturing of accessories from recycled tyres and Management of cafeteria. The beneficiaries were Commercial Sex workers of Munsigunj in Khidirpur, Kolkata. After successful completion of the course, some trainees were engaged in 'Mukti Cafeteria' at Munshiganj & Alipore Zoo. Another similar cafeteria is placed at Bikash Bhavan, Salt Lake.

Under 'Swawlamban Bharosa - Geriatric Care' vocational training is imparted to distressed women by promoting knowledge in geriatric care, dealing with emergencies, understanding of various geriatric health issues - both physical and psychological, skill of handling aspects of geriatric problems etc. 60 women were trained during 2017-18.

Within the core package of services of the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme, several measures have been introduced to enhance services and to give impetus to the special nutritional and developmental needs of mothers and children in the state. Currently, 12555 AWCs are providing revised ECE curriculum as ‘Sishu Aloy’ in the State, adding 10151 AWCs over the 2404 AWCs of FY 2016-17.

I propose to allocate Rs. 5,182.78 crores to the Women & Child Development and Social Welfare Department for the next Financial Year.

3.34 Urban Development & Municipal Affairs Department

Amendment of West Bengal Municipal Act, 1993 has been made to empower Executive Officers and Finance Officers of Municipalities for strengthening municipal administration.

Restructuring of parastatals like merger of State Urban Development Agency, (SUDA) & Change Management Unit (CMU) has been done for making this organization more vibrant & to support the Urban Local Bodies in a coordinated manner.

Similarly, KMDA has been reorganised with merger of erstwhile KMWSA & KIT and their engineers & other manpower redeployed.

For upgradation of existing infrastructure and creation of new tourism attraction in planned manner, three new Development Authorities have been constituted recently, namely, Mukutmanipur Development Authority (MDA),

Changrabanda Development Authority (CBDA) and Tarakeswar Development Authority (TKDA).

For Ease of Doing Business, online system for payment of the property tax on the land and building in Municipal cities has been launched on pilot basis in ten municipalities & gradually it will be extended to other ULBs.

This Department has taken due initiative to introduce the various online services for the Citizens/entrepreneurs in Urban Local Bodies through e-District portal, online approval of Industrial Building Plan, Renewal of Trade License and Conversion of Trade License, etc.

Another thrust area of the Department is to make the cities investment oriented by adopting sustainable, resilient, environment friendly, liveable, energy positive, IT friendly & safe. Under the Green City Mission, 364 schemes at an estimated cost of Rs. 459·52 crores have already started across the State in 2016-17. Another 1,896 schemes at an estimated cost Rs. 720·66 crores have begun in 2017-18. The schemes cover Green Space Development, LED lights, High Mast/Illumination lights, conservation and beautification of water bodies, development of road median, landscaping, beautification of hospitals, tree plantation and CCTV etc.

In addition, Projects under Utsadhara, Heritage Towns development, Alosree are also being taken up under Green City Mission. The town Coochbehar and Nadabwip are declared as Heritage Towns for rejuvenation and beautification of these towns.

Under Green Space Development programme, 127 projects have been completed in 47 Urban Local Bodies.

By way of implementation of Mission Nirmal Bangla (Urban), 70 cities in 6 Districts out of 125 cities of West Bengal have achieved Open Defecation Free (ODF) status and another 49 cities of 13 Districts are likely to be declared as ODF within March 2018 by way of constructing Individual Household Latrine, Community Toilet and Public Toilet. Under this Mission, Integrated Solid Waste Management Project (ISWMP) has been planned and rolled out in 15 major cities of West Bengal at an approved cost of Rs. 425 crore.

The Department has taken up 108 major water-supply projects so far to ensure pipe-water supply in all the ULBs across the State. Also, to boost major infrastructure initiatives have been taken including Construction of Convention Centres at Newtown and Digha, Logistic Hub at Garden Reach, Flyovers & Elevated Corridors, Storm Water Drainage projects, Inland Container Depot (ICD) & Private Freight Terminal (PFT) in Siliguri, Ropeway Service from Digha to Sankarpur & Cruise Service at Digha, etc.

As part of development initiatives, beautification of Tarapith Temple Area, the Skywalk Project at Dakshineshwar to ease the traffic congestion between Dakshineshwar Railway Station to the Kali Temple Gate and to provide safe & separate passage for pedestrians/pilgrims to the Temple and comprehensive development of 3 Ghats in Dakshineshwar Temple Area and Tourism Infrastructure Development in Belur Math Area have been undertaken.

The new scheme, ‘Banglar Bari’ has been introduced to provide new Dwelling Units to the Urban Poor not on individual basis but on cluster approach considering the limitation of availability of land by constructing multi-storied Flats. Initially, construction of 20000 flats within next four financial years will be taken up.

Under the scheme ‘Somobyathi’, one-time financial assistance of Rs. 2000 to the bereaved family members of a deceased person for performing last rites is being provided. Till date, nearly 27,984 no. of beneficiaries have received the benefit in 125 ULBs of West Bengal.

I propose to allocate Rs. 10,012.84 crores to the Urban Development & Municipal Affairs Department for the next Financial Year.

3.35 Youth Services & Sports Department

The most significant achievement in 2017-18 was the smooth & successful organization of the FIFA U-17 World Cup for which the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan was upgraded into one of the best stadiums in the World.

Construction of Jhargram Archery Academy has been completed and will be operational soon. Bengal Football Academy is being run successfully at Khardah, North 24 Parganas.

Modernisation/Upgradation work has been taken up at Rabindra Sarobar Stadium & Kishore Bharati Stadium at Kolkata to take them to international standards. Construction of Swimming Academy at Subhas Sarobar Swimming Pool and Tennis Academy within the State is also under process.

19 old Youth Hostels have been renovated and operationalized all over the State. Further 9 new Youth Hostels are under construction and likely to be operational soon and construction work of 12 new Youth Hostels is also in progress.

To encourage students and youths for playing football, Schools, Colleges, Universities and Clubs were given footballs keeping in view FIFA U-17 World Cup, 2017. Also, work has been initiated to set up 509 Multigyms. For setting up of Mini Indoor Games facilities at various Bodies, Schools, Colleges, Clubs and Organizations Rs. 14.43 Crore has been spent for 147 units.

I propose to allocate Rs. 558.47 crores to the Youth Services & Sports Department for the next Financial Year.

3.36 P & AR and e-Governance Department

3 (three) new Districts namely Kalimpong, Jhargram and Paschim Bardhaman and 3 (three) new Sub-Divisions namely Mirik, Jhalda and Manbazar were created and made functional during the year as a part of administrative reforms. All the district level offices have been made operational immediately after creation of the new districts.

e-District which was initially launched with 3 online services in all the districts of the State on 6th November, 2015, is currently having 76 online services available to the citizens under different categories and more than 20 lacs online service transactions have already taken place through this portal.

The entire Secretariat of the State Govt. has introduced e-Office in a centralized architecture. The introduction of

e-Office will enhance the efficiency of the government and reduce the service delivery time for the citizen centric services.

Under the Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) initiative, an interactive web-based citizen interface has been developed with common dynamic application form for all businesses. The web application has also been integrated with a payment gateway with the facility of single debit multiple credit. It also provides a single window for multiple status tracking.

Based on DIPP and World Bank's dynamic assessment of EoDB reforms under Business Reforms Action Plan 2017, at this stage West Bengal is leading all other States in the country.

West Bengal State Wide Area Network (WBSWAN) has horizontally connected more than 1300 government offices providing a robust network backbone upto Block level with links upto Sub-division level upgraded to Optical Fibre Cable (OFC). Implementation of the multi-protocol labelled switching (MPLS) architecture in the WBSWAN backbone has been completed for the 750 circuits out of the total 895 circuits. This has enhanced the reliability and availability of the WBSWAN to its users.

Construction of Integrated Administrative Building at Alipurduar named 'Dooars Kanya' which will accommodate 40 Departments has been completed at an estimated cost of Rs. 49·83 crores and construction of the integrated Administrative Complex and residential complex for Purba Medinipur Collectorate at Nimtouri is nearing completion with a project cost of Rs. 105 crores.

Due to the continuous thrust of this Government on increasing transparency, accountability and efficiency through various e-Governance initiatives, the performance of the State has been acknowledged and awarded at various fora. Recently, West Bengal has been conferred with the Best Performance Award for e-Procurement by the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, Government of India with nearly Rs. 36,000 crores worth of projects awarded through 53,000 e-tenders in the State in the FY 2016-17. Our Hon'ble Chief Minister was conferred the prestigious 'e-Ratna' Award by the Computer Society of India in January 2018.

I propose to allocate Rs. 212.08 crores to the Personnel & Administrative Reforms and e-Governance Department for the next Financial Year.

3.37 Cooperation Department

In the agricultural credit sector, cooperative's share was more than 50% of total agricultural lending. Through a clientele of more than 77 lakh members in more than 28000 cooperative societies, this sector is playing a commendable role in the area of agriculture, marketing, consumers, housing, service sector, etc.

19,389 numbers of new Kisan Credit Cards (KCC) have been issued raising the progressive number of KCC-holders to 23,70,281 and Crop Loan to the tune of Rs. 2085.32 crores has been disbursed to 9,75,999 numbers of farmer-members during this Financial Year till December 2017.

1721 numbers of new Self Help Groups (SHG) have been formed and 18029 numbers of new SHGs have been credit linked. Loan to the tune of Rs. 411.25 crores has been issued to the SHGs during the current year till December 2017.

Construction of 4 numbers of Storage Godown having total capacity of 5462 MT involving Rs. 2.73 crores has been completed during current Year. Another 11 numbers of Storage Godown having capacity of 15752 MT involving Rs. 6.92 crores are under construction and are likely to be completed during the current financial year.

Construction of 25 Rural Godowns with a capacity of 2500 MT at the grass-root level cooperatives has been taken up involving Rs. 4.37 crores which is expected to be completed during the current year. Agricultural Inputs have been distributed to the tune of Rs. 143.38 crores by BENFED.

During Kharif 2016-17, out of total procurement of 39.00 lakh MT, 28 lakh MT paddy was procured through cooperative societies of which BENFED and CONFED procured 10.90 lakh MT.

Under the new initiative ‘Sufala’, introduced last year, so far, 30 ‘Sufala’ outlets have been opened by 16 Cooperative Societies across 6 Districts and 70 ‘Mobile Sufala’ units have been introduced across 7 Districts to ensure wider outreach.

I propose to allocate Rs. 406.61 crores to the Cooperation Department for the next Financial Year.

3.38 Home & Hill Affairs Department

The law and order situation in the State continues to remain calm and stable. A separate Chandannagore Police Commissionerate has been created in the Hooghly District and the new Police Districts carved out for Sunderbans, Diamond Harbour and Baruipur in South 24 Parganas District.

The e-General Diary service has been successfully launched by the Kolkata Police and is being emulated in other Commissionerates also.

Aerial Surveillance through use of drones is being resorted to for events involving high crowd turnout where ground surveillance is a challenge.

Emphasis has been laid on the adoption of new-age technology and acclimatisation of existing personnel in matters related to cybercrime and related criminal activities.

The ‘Safe Drive, Save Life’ awareness campaign undertaken by my Government has yielded significant results. The numbers of accidents, fatalities and injuries have gone down by 16 percent, 14 percent and 13 percent respectively during 2017 as compared to 2016.

I propose to allocate Rs. 7,956·42 crores to the Home & Hill Affairs Department for the next Financial Year.

4.1 Reforms in tax administration

Hon'ble Speaker Sir, this Government has made the tax administration more transparent, taxpayer friendly and revenue enhancing. As a result there has been unprecedented growth in revenue collection since 2011-12.

4.2 Goods and Services Tax (GST)

We have all along supported GST in principle. However, we had serious differences with the Government of India on the overall structure of GST and its possible harmful effects on small businesses, micro and small enterprises and economy. As we have only one vote in the 31 strong GST Council, despite our reservations we could not postpone the introduction of GST from 1st July 2017.

Hon'ble Members, despite the fact we have a lone voice in the GST Council under the leadership of Hon'ble Chief Minister we could extract a large number of benefits to protect the State's fiscal autonomy and the interest of small businesses, MSME and the common man. For example, we could fully exempt foodgrains, pulses, dry fish, human hair, musical instrument, raw jute, *misti doi* etc. whereas tax has been reduced on sweetmeats, tea, government works contract, restaurant service, etc. We have been able to ensure that threshold is raised from Rs.10 lakh to Rs. 20 lakh so that such businesses remain outside the GST. We got the simple scheme of composition extended to tax payers with turnover from Rs. 50 lakhs to Rs. 1 crore. We were able to keep the Central Tax

authorities out of the administration of all small businesses with turnover upto Rs. 1·5 crores.

I want to assure that we will continue in our endeavour to protect the small businesses, MSME, common man and the State's interest.

4.3 Settlement of Dispute of Entry Tax

Speaker Sir, you are kindly aware that the Supreme Court gave verdict in favour of the Entry Tax imposed by the State. As the matter was sub-judice, a large number of tax payers stopped paying Entry Tax and were burdened with huge interest and penalty on the arrears. We introduce a scheme for settlement of waiving the interest and penalty on the defaulted payment of Entry Tax.

I am happy to inform that through this effort we are able to collect around Rs. 1100 crore which is a record in the country.

4.4 Creation of a new West Bengal Revenue Service

Speaker Sir, the introduction on one pan-India tax structure like GST requires the revenue authorities to develop a comprehensive understanding of the complexities of tax relating to different goods and services and be aware of its specific rules and regulations. The present compartmentalisation of tax authorities in the State in different Directorates, each dealing with taxation of particular goods/services, is ill-suited for any modern indirect tax structure. With a view to develop capacities of the officials and to bring transparency and efficiency in functioning of the tax administration, a new West Bengal

Revenue Service has been constituted by merging the four different Group A State Services earlier dealing with Commercial Tax, Excise, Agricultural Income Tax and Registration and Stamp Revenue.

4.5 Electricity Duty Exemption - business process reengineering

Currently, electricity duty refund is given to industries under different Incentive Schemes of the State Government. There is often delay in processing of these refund cases.

In order to streamline the process, I propose that the exemption of electricity duty will automatically be available to an eligible industrial entity from the date of commencement of commercial operation. For this no separate exemption certificate from Director of Electricity Duty will be required. I am sure this will have a very positive impact on the Ease of Doing Business in the State.

5

Tax Relief

1. Relief in the payment of Stamp Duty

Hon'ble Members, in order to provide relief to the housing construction sector and lower and middle class sections of the society, I propose to reduce the Stamp Duty by 1% in rural and urban areas on all properties of the value upto Rs.1 crore. As a result, the Stamp Duty on all properties of the value between Rs.40 lakhs to Rs.1 crore in rural areas will come down from present 6 per cent to 5 per cent and urban areas from 7 per cent to 6 per cent.

I am certain that this measure will greatly help the middle class and the housing construction sector.

2. Exemption of Agricultural Income Tax

Hon'ble Members, the tea industry in the State is in a dire state for past many years. The smaller tea gardens, had recently been hit hard for various factors and they are yet to recover from the shock.

To extend help to the tea industry of the State in their hour of distress, I propose to fully exempt the tea gardens from payment of agricultural income tax for the next two financial years 2018-19 and 2019-20.

This full tax exemption will benefit lakhs of tea garden workers.

3. Exemption of Cess on Tea

Under the existing law, there is an Education Cess and Rural Employment Cess levied on green tea leaves.

I also propose to give full exemption to the tea gardens from payment of Education Cess and the Rural Employment Cess for the next financial year 2018-19.

6

New Initiatives

1. Exemption of Mutation Fees for farmers

Hon'ble Members, due to virtual absence of banking services in the rural areas, the rural economy is mostly cash dependent. Due to demonetization, the rural economy was ruined and our farmers had to face severe economic distress.

Our Hon'ble Chief Minister, in order to relieve them of the financial distress, has already announced exemption of Khajna and Cess.

Now with the objective of further extending financial assistance to the distressed farmers, Hon'ble Chief Minister has decided to exempt payment of Mutation Fee for agriculture land sold for agriculture purposes.

I am hopeful that this will help lakhs of farmers in the State.

2. Creation of corpus for assistance to farmers

Hon'ble Members, during the last 6 years we have made rapid strides in agriculture. There has been a record production of foodgrains. We are now the largest producer of vegetables in the country and the second largest producer of potatoes.

However, we have seen that during bumper production of foodgrains and vegetables, many times there is a crash in the prices and the farmers have to make distress sale.

In order to ensure that the farmers get due price of their produce and do not have to make distress sale, the Hon'ble Chief Minister has decided to create a special corpus to assist farmers in the event of such contingency.

I propose to provide Rs. 100 crore for such purpose.

3. Farmers Old age Pension

Hon'ble Speaker Sir, the State provides old age pension to old farmers. At present, on an average 66,000 farmers have been provided a monthly pension of Rs.750.

With the objective of increasing the social security of old farmers, I propose to increase the monthly pension from Rs.750 to Rs.1,000. I also propose to increase the number of beneficiaries of this pension annually from 66,000 to 1,00,000. As a result 34 thousand more farmers will be provided with old age pension.

4. Increase in Scholarship under “Kanyashree”

Hon’ble Members, taking forward the path shown by Raja Ram Mohan Roy & Vidyasagar for girls’ education, Kanyashree Prakalpa, the brainchild of our Hon’ble Chief Minister, has benefitted lakhs and lakhs of girls of the State and has gone a long way in empowering the girl child with annual expenditure of Rs.1200 crore. This is a historical step for social reforms and development.

In order to further take forward the cause of education of the girls of the State and their all round development, I propose to increase the annual scholarship from Rs.750 to Rs.1000. This will benefit lakhs and lakhs of girls of the state.

5. Introduction of marriage assistance

Hon’ble Members, we are aware that many poor families find it extremely difficult to bear the expenditure of marriage of the daughters and have to borrow at a very high rate of interest to bear the marriage expenses. Many of these poor families are ruined because of this.

My Government wants to stand by these families and partly relieve them of this financial burden. I propose to extend a one-time assistance of Rs.25,000 to the family of

the girl with an annual income upto Rs.1·5 lakh at the time of marriage after attaining the age of 18 years. This dream scheme of Hon'ble Chief Minister has been named 'Rupashree'. This will benefit annually around 6 lakh families.

I propose to provide Rs.1500 crore in the budget for 'Rupashree' scheme.

6. Financial Assistance to Physically Challenged

Hon'ble Speaker Sir, people with physical disability have to undergo severe mental and financial stress in their life. Our Government at present extends a monthly pension of Rs. 750 to 44,000 person with disability more than 40%.

Keeping their interest in mind, I propose to introduce a monthly pension of Rs.1,000 to 2,00,000 persons with disability. This scheme has been cherished as 'Manabik' by our Hon'ble Chief Minister who has been instrumental behind the scheme. Persons who have 50% or more disability, are covered under the existing scheme, will also be extended the benefit of additional pension.

I propose to provide Rs. 250 crore for such purpose.

Conclusion

Honorable Speaker Sir, I am happy to inform this August House that, in spite of adverse macro-economic climate as outlined in the earlier part of my speech, the State has made rapid strides in social, physical and economic development under the foresight, guidance and

strong leadership of the Hon'ble Chief Minister. I propose to provide Rs. 2,14,958·75 crore in the budget of the Financial Year 2018-19.

Sir, the central focus of all development activities of this Ma Mati Manush Government has been to generate more and more employment. Despite the unplanned and hasty introduction of GST and the adverse impact of demonetization on the people, till now during this financial year 2017-18, we have been able to create employment of 8 lakh 92 thousand.

Sir, I want to conclude my speech with a famous verse of Kabi Guru Rabindranath :

নিশ্চিদিন ভরসা রাখিস, ওরে মন, হবেই হবে।
যদি পণ করে থাকিস সে পণ তোমার রবেই রবে।
ওরে মন, হবেই হবে।

FINANCIAL STATEMENT, 2018-2019

WEST BENGAL ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT, 2018–2019

(In crores of Rupees)

	Actuals, 2016–2017	Budget, 2017–2018	Revised, 2017–2018	Budget, 2018–2019
Receipts				
1. Opening Balance	205.84	(–)2.00	15.79	(–)3.00
2. Revenue Receipts	117832.45	142644.44	133034.08	146747.76
3. Capital Receipts	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4. Receipts from Debt Heads—				
(i) Public Debt	37523.71	78916.63	55937.45	67991.29
(ii) Loans	3233.33	804.49	3588.83	2822.74
5. Receipt from Contingency Fund and Public Account	620400.05	484018.25	530126.43	561774.95
Total	779195.38	706381.81	722702.58	779333.74
 Expenditure				
6. Revenue Expenditure	133917.56	142644.44	144039.69	146747.76
7. Capital Expenditure	11336.43	19183.90	21561.81	25755.55
8. Expenditure on Debt Heads—				
(i) Public Debt	12304.03	49496.86	33676.95	41582.81
(ii) Loans	1197.20	971.71	719.80	872.63
9. Expenditure on Contingency Fund and Public Account	620424.37	494091.90	522707.33	564380.99
10. Closing Balance	15.79	(–)7.00	(–)3.00	(–)6.00
Total	779195.38	706381.81	722702.58	779333.74

(In crores of Rupees)

	Actuals, 2016-2017	Budget, 2017-2018	Revised, 2017-2018	Budget, 2018-2019
Net Results—				
Surplus (+)				
Deficit (-)				
(a) On Revenue Account	(-)16085.11	0.00	(-)11005.61	0.00
(b) Outside Revenue Account	15895.06	(-)5.00	10986.82	(-)3.00
(c) Net, excluding Opening Balance	(-)190.05	(-)5.00	(-)18.79	(-)3.00
(d) Net, including Opening Balance	15.79	(-)7.00	(-)3.00	(-)6.00
(e) Expenditure for New Programmes				
(i) On Revenue Account	(-)1870.00
(ii) Outside Revenue Account
(f) Expenditure for Additional Outlays				
(i) On Revenue Account
(ii) Outside Revenue Account
(g) Additional Resource Mobilisation under Tax Revenue	(+)1870.00
(h) Net Revenue Deficit	(-)16085.11	0.00	(-)11005.61	0.00
(i) Net Surplus/Deficit	15.79	(-)7.00	(-)3.00	(-)6.00

