



GOVERNMENT OF PUDUCHERRY

Address by

Thiru C.P. RADHAKRISHNAN

Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor

to

The Puducherry Legislative Assembly



BEST - PUDUCHERRY

(**B**usiness, **E**ducation, **S**piritual and **T**ourism Hub - Puducherry)



31st July, 2024



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C.P. RADHAKRISHNAN

Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor

to

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF PUDUCHERRY

குடி ஓம்பல், வன்கண்மை, நூல் வன்மை, கூடம்,
மடி ஓம்பும், ஆற்றல் உடைமை, முடி ஓம்பி,
நாற்றம் சுவை கேள்வி நல்லார் இனம் சேர்தல்
தேற்றானேல், தேறும் அமைச்சு.

- கணிமேதாவியார் இயற்றிய ஏலாதி
(பதினெண் கீழ்க்கணக்கு நூல்)

“குடிகளைப் பாதுகாத்தலும், நல்லறமும், கலங்காத
அறிவும், சோம்பல் இல்லாமையும், அரசாட்சியைப்
பாதுகாத்து, மணம், சுவை, கேள்வி இவற்றைப்
பெற்று, நல்லவர்களுடன் சேர்தலும் இவை நன்மை
தருவனவென்று துணிவானாயின் அவன்
அமைச்சனாகத் தேர்ந்தெடுக்கப்படுவான்”.

**Hon'ble Speaker and distinguished Members of
this august House,**

Vanakkam !

Let me first extend my warm greetings and best
wishes to the Hon'ble Members of the House and the
People of Puducherry on this memorable occasion.

2. It gives me great pleasure to deliver my address in the Puducherry Legislative Assembly for the year 2024-25. I feel it as a great honour to commence the fifth session of the Fifteenth Legislative Assembly. Incidentally, it is my maiden address in this august House.

3. I am extremely pleased to note that the General Elections to the Lok Sabha 2024 were conducted in a very cordial and peaceful atmosphere. I take this opportunity to convey my appreciation to all the political parties, the election machinery, the police and the general public, for the smooth conduct of elections. The Police, particularly, deserve compliments for maintaining strict vigil, which ensured conduct of elections in a peaceful manner without any untoward incidents. I would like to convey my wishes to Shri Narendra Modiji for being sworn as the Prime Minister for the 3rd consecutive time. India has made a remarkable achievement particularly in the field of economic reforms, infrastructure, investments, etc., in the last 10 years under the able leadership of our Hon'ble Prime Minister.

4. This Union Territory Administration is very thankful to the Government of India for providing additional funds to the tune of ₹271 crore in RE 2023-24 towards settlement of arrears of pension to pre-2016 pensioners/family pensioners and payment of VII CPC arrears to the teaching faculty of Government run educational institutions and educational institutions run by Societies/Autonomous bodies of Government of Puducherry thereby benefitting around 16,000 pensioners/family pensioners and 1,500 teaching/non-teaching staff.

5. This Government has a focused approach to ensure growth in important sectors such as roads, water supply and sanitation, power, health, education, Information Technology, Industries, SC/ST Welfare, Children and Women's Welfare, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries etc., giving the highest priority to the welfare of the poorer and underprivileged sections of the society. To ensure speedy delivery of welfare schemes to the downtrodden people and to provide employment to the youths, this Government has been

filling up the vacant posts in the Government by direct recruitment. Thereby, during the last financial year 1,119 posts have been filled up in various departments through direct recruitment.

6. Further, I wish to share my gratitude to this Union Territory Administration which organized the recent visit of Department related Parliamentary Standing Committee of Home Affairs. The Chairman of the Committee has appreciated the activities of the departments and expressed full satisfaction on the functioning of the Union Territory Administration.

7. Hon'ble Members are well aware that the financial resources of Union Territory of Puducherry are very limited and this Government is constrained to govern within the available resources. However, this Government has represented its commitment to ensure adequate provision of funds for the welfare of the deserving people. On the financial implication, this Government has incurred expenditure to the tune of ₹ 11,464 crore

as against the total outlay of ₹ 12,250 crore during the last financial year 2023-24 which works out to 93.58%. The expenditure incurred is comparatively 6.55% higher than the previous year's (2022-23) achievement.

8. Hon'ble Members are aware that the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) is the most crucial fiscal indicator to measure the economic development of a State. The GSDP of the Union Territory has been estimated at ₹ 48,052 crore (current price) for 2023-24 which is 7.54% higher than the previous year (2022-23). The per capita income of Puducherry has increased from ₹ 2,44,469 (current price) for the year 2022-23 to ₹ 2,63,068 (current price) for the year 2023-24, showing a growth rate of 7.61%.

9. While concluding my preamble, I would like to apprise some of the major programmes and achievements made by this Government under various sectors during the previous financial year.

AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

10. Hon'ble Members are aware that agriculture plays a vital role in the economic development of our country. To enhance the agricultural productivity, this Government has provided production incentives, back ended subsidy, agricultural and technological inputs at subsidized cost to the farmers. Further, the cultivation of horticulture crops are also encouraged through implementation of appropriate schemes such as National Horticulture Mission, Integrated Horticulture Development Programme, etc.

11. I am happy to share in this august House that the Union Territory of Puducherry was ranked first by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare under category A3 States for effective implementation of Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana. It is appropriate here to disclose the fact that the farmer's share of premium towards the crop insurance scheme under Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana has been completely borne by the Government of Puducherry in addition to

the State share of premium. Further, under this scheme, the insurance claims to the tune of ₹ 13.22 crore towards Rabi 2021 were settled to 9,140 farmers. In Karaikal region, 4,641 paddy farmers were extended financial assistance of ₹ 2.81 crore for the crops affected due to unseasonal rainfall during 2023 and in Yanam region, 50 farmers were given relief to the tune of ₹ 1.79 lakh for the paddy crop affected due to floods. Under the PM-KISSAN scheme, an amount of ₹ 4.97 crore was disbursed benefitting 8,279 land holding farmers' families.

12. Under the scheme Crop Production Technology, an amount of ₹ 7.85 crore was extended to 9,889 farmers for cultivating paddy crops during sornavari, samba and navarai 2023-24 season in Puducherry region as production incentive. During samba season, for cultivation of traditional paddy, production incentive to the tune of ₹ 9.72 lakh was released to 96 farmers. For cultivation of sugarcane, an amount of ₹ 1.60 crore has also been released to 709 farmers as production

incentive. In addition, incentive to the tune of ₹ 1.03 crore was also released to 2,631 farmers for production of crops like groundnut, pulses, millets, cotton and gingelly.

13. In Karaikal region, production incentive of ₹ 5.92 crore was extended to 5,838 farmers towards cultivation of paddy, pulses, gingelly and cotton during samba, thalady, and navarai season. In Yanam region, for cultivation of paddy production incentive of ₹ 21.65 lakh has been released to 282 farmers. During samba season, for seed growers, seed production subsidy to the tune of ₹ 8.10 lakh has been extended to 41 farmers. An amount of ₹ 17.37 crore was incurred towards the disbursement of subsidy for extension of free electricity to the motor pumps used by farmers for irrigation purpose.

14. Under the scheme of "Integrated Horticulture Development programme", an amount of ₹ 63.35 lakh has been extended as back ended subsidy benefitting

1,396 horticulture farmers of Puducherry, Karaikal and Yanam region. In order to motivate the cultivation of horticulture crops under "National Horticulture Mission", financial assistance of ₹ 94.03 lakh was extended to 1,829 beneficiaries. During 2023-24, 3,592 vegetable seed mini-kits worth of ₹ 9.90 lakh were distributed free of cost to horticulture growers of Puducherry, Karaikal and Yanam region. Under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), an amount of ₹ 29.55 lakh has been spent towards extending incentive for millet cultivation, integrated farming system, development of marketing infrastructure and rejuvenation initiatives towards increasing the productivity of horticulture crops.

15. Subsidy to the tune of ₹ 1.56 crore has been extended to farmers towards purchase of 37 tractors, 33 power tillers, 3 paddy transplanters and power weeder, rotavator, baler and drone 6 each in Puducherry region under the Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM) scheme. Further, ₹ 70.38 lakh has also been extended to 45 farmers towards the purchase of Agricultural Machineries in Karaikal region.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND ANIMAL WELFARE

16. Hon'ble Members may be aware that this Government has been providing free and quality veterinary services to the livestock and poultry. Further, various schemes are being implemented to improve the livelihood of the cattle farmers.

17. Free treatment was given to 3,41,289 cases of livestock, poultry, pet animals and 72,800 cattles were also vaccinated for Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) in all the veterinary dispensaries during 2023-24. Apart from this, 64 health camps were conducted periodically throughout the Union Territory of Puducherry. To produce desirable future stock, 45,669 artificial inseminations were done and 14,939 calves of desirable superior germ plasm were born. To encourage the cattle farmers, 34 'Cattle Shows' were conducted in all the four regions of Puducherry and prizes were distributed to the cattle farmers. Under the scheme National Livestock Health and Disease Control Programme, three more mobile veterinary units were purchased for treatment of cattle at the doorstep of the cattle farmers.

18. To attain self sustainability in milk production in the Union Territory of Puducherry, farmers were distributed 4,149 single milch animals at 50% subsidy cost of ₹ 10.37 crore. To enhance clean milk production, 294 milking machines were distributed to cattle farmers at 100% subsidy to the tune of ₹ 1.23 crore for the first time in the Union Territory of Puducherry.

19. Under the scheme Rural Backyard Development of poultry birds, 4,400 dual purpose six weeks old Giriraja chicks and 11,800 turkey birds have been distributed to the farmers at 50% subsidy rate. Under the Special Livestock Breeding Programme, 789 tons of feed was distributed to 5,266 milch cattle/calf for an amount of ₹ 1.64 crore. Under National Livestock Mission - Risk Management and Insurance scheme, 347 cattles were insured with subsidy. An amount of ₹ 17.79 lakh was distributed to cattle farmers towards the death compensation of 297 uninsured cattles. Grant-in-Aid to an extent of ₹ 33.99 crore was released to

Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Veterinary Education and Research (RIVER), Puducherry which includes a provision of ₹ 1.17 crore for establishment of Regional Extension Centre of RIVER at Karaikal.

ART AND CULTURE

20. Art and Culture are the identity of a nation and it brings people together and provides opportunity to learn from each other.

21. In commemoration of Sri Aurobindo's 150th Birth Anniversary, Aurobindo's book corner has been established in Romain Rolland Library and in other 77 Government Branch Libraries of all regions where the books exclusively related to Aurobindo has been placed. With an estimated cost of ₹ 13.45 lakh the Government Branch Library at Pakkamudayanpet in Puducherry has been transformed into Digital Library and it is the first Digital Library in the Union Territory of Puducherry.

22. I am happy to announce that the Post Graduate courses in Master of Performing Arts in Dance and Music and Master of Fine Arts have been started in the Bharathiar Palkalaikoodam during the academic year 2023-24.

23. "Pudhuvai Kalaimamani" Award has been conferred with cash prize of ₹ 50,000 amounting to ₹ 1.08 crore to 216 eligible artists/scholars in the field of Literature, Music, Drama, Dance, Folk Arts and Fine Arts/Sculpture for the years 2013 to 2021. "Kamban Pugazh Literary Award, Nehru Children Literary Award and Tholkappiar Award" have also been conferred to 93 eligible scholars with cash prize of ₹ 10,000 in the field of Literature upto the year 2022. The monthly financial assistance amounting to ₹ 97 lakh has been granted to 177 Indigent Artists, 4 Tamil scholars and 135 Awardees of Kalaimamani / Tamilmamani / Telugu Ratna / Malayala Ratna.

24. With participation of around 1,250 artists across the nation, "Fête-de-Poudouchéry", a Mega Cultural Festival was conducted in a grand manner during 2023

in Puducherry and Karaikal region. Under "Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav", the Mahe Cultural Festival/Painter's Camp 2023 and Rural Cultural Festival in the SC populated areas were conducted with participation of more than 750 artists and 32 SC cultural troupes respectively to perform their cultural values and talents.

CIVIL SUPPLIES AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

25. Under the Targeted Public Distribution System, this Government is implementing Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) for food grains in all the four regions of the Union Territory of Puducherry and cash equivalent is being directly credited to the beneficiaries Aadhaar linked bank account. During the financial year 2023-24, Government of India has spent an amount of ₹ 15 crore on monthly basis to benefit 1.91 lakh of "Antyodaya Anna Yojana" (AAY) and Priority House Hold (PHH) card holders.

26. Under State free rice scheme, an amount of ₹ 219 crore was spent to benefit 3.37 lakh family ration card holders. During Deepawali Festival 2023, cash

assistance of ₹ 490 in lieu of free rice and sugar was disbursed benefitting 3.37 lakh ration card holders amounting to ₹ 16.51 crore. Further, for Pongal Festival 2024, an amount of ₹ 25.27 crore was given to benefit 3.37 lakh ration card holders towards distribution of ₹ 750 in lieu of Pongal gift hamper.

27. The Chief Minister's LPG subsidy scheme, a novel scheme, has been successfully launched from July 2023 in the Union Territory of Puducherry. Through this scheme, an amount of ₹ 300 per cylinder was credited to the bank account of the beneficiaries' of all BPL/AAY ration card holders and ₹ 150 per cylinder for all APL card holders through DBT mode. Under this scheme, an amount of ₹ 21.50 crore was spent benefitting 1.75 lakh ration card holders.

CO-OPERATION

28. In order to cater the housing need of residents, this Government through Housefed has disbursed an amount of ₹ 71.78 lakh as interest rebate and

₹ 25 lakh as interest subsidy to 389 Backward and General category housing members and 72 SC housing members respectively. As this Government is committed in the welfare of downtrodden people, the penal interest and final instalment amounting to ₹ 1.68 crore were waived to 555 members under Housing Sector. A sum of ₹ 49.59 lakh has been released as Grants-in-Aid under Handloom Development Scheme to PONTEX, PONFAB and Primary Weavers Co-operative Societies functioning in the Union Territory of Puducherry and 184 weavers were benefited during 2023-24.

29. For the welfare of farmers, this Government has reimbursed the tractor hire charges of ₹ 1.16 crore and ₹ 13.80 lakh in respect of 9,082 Backward and General farmers and 1,097 SC farmers respectively. Further, the last instalment of agricultural loan amounting to ₹ 97 lakh were also waived to 7,940 farmers. Cattle feed subsidy of ₹ 5.29 crore has been disbursed to 8,612 members including 1,504 SC milk pouring members of the Milk Co-operative Societies on DBT Mode.

30. All the Primary Agricultural Co-operative Credit Societies (PACS) were digitized and brought within the national digital framework of PACS to make those bodies work in a professional e-environment, during 2023-24. Apart from this, all the PACS are converted into Multipurpose PACS by adopting major initiatives taken by the Government of India such as adoption of uniform model bye-laws, operation of Common Service Centers, opening of Pradhan Mantri Jan Aushadhi Kendra (PMJAK), opening of Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samridhi Kendra (PMKSK), enrolment of membership by Co-operatives in National Co-operative Seeds Distribution Society, National Co-operative Organics Agricultural Society, National Co-operative Exports Society etc., for availing benefits from them.

ELECTRICITY

31. I am happy to share that the Government of Puducherry has signed an agreement with M/s. Power Trading Corporation for selling surplus power available with Government and the trading already commenced

from 27.04.2023. During 2023-24, 550 million units have been sold realizing ₹ 261.20 crore through the sale of surplus power.

32. The residents of Puducherry can set up a small grid connected to solar power plants on the rooftop of their residential building for capacities ranging from 1KW to 500 KW to generate electricity for their own use and for sale of the excess generated power to the Electricity Department. Last year, 443 residences with 2.27MW, 39 Government buildings with 5.47MW and 178 various categories of consumers with 41.11MW with overall total installed capacity of 48.85MW roof top solar installations have been installed and synchronized with the grid. Under Power System Development Fund (PSDF-I), the renovation and modernization of Villianur and Bahour 230/110KV Auto Sub Stations have been completed in all aspects.

33. During 2023-24, 76 new distribution transformers of various capacities were energized and enhanced to higher capacities. 101 Km of HT lines and LT lines

were energized. 8 new HT industrial services and 30 LT industrial services were energized. Further, 9,289 domestic services, 1,808 commercial services, 169 agricultural services and 5,222 LED street lights were effected. 2,579 defective / stuck up Electro Mechanical Meters were converted into Electro Static Meters. Under Cable Conversion Scheme, 361 LT overhead services were converted into underground cable system.

FISHERIES AND FISHERMEN WELFARE

34. Hon'ble Members know that fisheries sector is considered as a sunrise sector and plays a crucial role in the development of economy by providing employment and livelihood to fishers, fish farmers and fish vendors.

35. Ban relief assistance was provided to the tune of ₹ 12.06 crore for the ban period of 61 days at ₹ 6,500 for 18,562 families in Puducherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam region. Likewise, lean assistance at ₹ 3,000 per family amounting to ₹ 5.59 crore was also

extended to 18,636 families. An amount of ₹ 50 lakh was disbursed as financial assistance to 504 fishermen of Puducherry, Karaikal and Yanam regions for the sustained loss of nets, damages to boats, loss of life, etc. Monthly Old Age Pension was granted to the tune of ₹ 29.77 crore to 9,202 aged fisherfolk. Funeral assistance at ₹ 15,000 was disbursed to each of 82 heirs of the deceased old age pensioners.

36. Last year, diesel subsidy at ₹ 12 per litre was provided to the registered mechanized fishing boat owners of Union Territory of Puducherry. Accordingly, an amount of ₹ 11.51 crore was released as diesel subsidy to 507 registered mechanized fishing boat owners. Reactivation charges for the registered steel/ FRP wooden mechanized fishing boat has been enhanced from ₹ 20,000 to ₹ 30,000 and ₹ 10,000 to ₹ 20,000 for FRP fishing boat. Accordingly, ₹ 1.18 crore was released as reactivation charges to 412 registered mechanized fishing boat owners.

37. Under the scheme "Supply of fishery requisites" an amount of ₹2.03 crore was reimbursed at 60% subsidy to 2,738 members of Fishermen Co-operative Society. During 2023-24, 90% subsidy to the tune of ₹11.65 lakh towards annual insurance premium was paid to 212 registered mechanized boat owners for insuring their boats. For procurement of non-motorized FRP catamaran with nets at 50% subsidized cost to the tune of ₹18.38 lakh was granted to 44 fisherfolk. Under the scheme "Development of freshwater aquaculture" and "Development of brackish water aquaculture" input subsidy amounting to ₹27.98 lakh and ₹5.31 lakh were released to 244 and 21 fish farmers respectively.

38. I am happy to share that 7 students were selected to take up the training in Vessel Navigation Course (VNC) and Marine Fitter Course (MFC) and joined 2 years diploma course in the Central Institute of Fisheries, Nautical and Engineering Training (CIFNET) at Cochin and Chennai.

39. Under Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) scheme, fish ban/lean period relief assistance amounting to ₹ 7.44 crore was released to 24,786 fishermen. Further, for the PMMSY scheme component namely viz., Group accident insurance scheme, Supply of motor cycle with ice box, Supply of insulated vehicle an amount totaling to ₹ 1.02 crore was utilized benefitting 18 fishers. To meet the working capital requirement for fishing, fish vending and fish allied activities 2,862 Kissan Credit Cards amounting to ₹ 39.80 crore were released to fishers. Foundation stone were laid for construction/expansion of fishing harbor at Thengaithittu and Development of fish landing centres at Periyakalapet and Nallavadu with a total project cost of ₹ 92.47 crore.

HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE

40. I am happy to share with the Hon'ble Members that the Intermediate Reference Laboratory at the Government Hospital for Chest Diseases has been selected as "Ranking No.1 with the only TB laboratory

receiving the highest 5 star status" in infrastructure and quality services among the 34 State Reference Laboratory and 56 Culture and Drug Susceptibility Testing Laboratories, available in the country. Further, it has been also, identified as one of the ICMR-TB diagnostics "Validation Centers" for the validation of newer TB diagnostic kits and technologies by the Indian Council of Medical Research, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare Service, Government of India.

41. In Puducherry region, new buildings were constructed for the sub-centres at Thengaithittu and Andiyarpalayam. In order to ensure transparency in working of PHCs, CCTV cameras were installed in all the 28 PHCs at a cost of ₹16.11 Lakh. Further, Ariyankuppam Primary Health Center was fully renovated and 5 new ambulances were provided to Primary Health Centres of Muthirapalayam, Mannadipet, Thirukkanur, Bahour and Ariyankuppam.

42. "Harmonic Next Generation" instrument for bloodless surgery, 3 more dialysis machines, Instruments/Machines to set up Molecular

Virology Laboratory, Automated ELISA processing system to perform Dengue and Chikungunya test simultaneously at one shot and Dental Radiovisiography (RVG) were procured in Indira Gandhi Government General Hospital and Post Graduate Institute.

43. The Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory in Indira Gandhi Government General Hospital and Post Graduate Institute was upgraded to most modern state of the Art Cathlab. During 2023-24, 67 Open Heart Bypass Surgeries and 12 Valve Replacement Surgeries have been successfully done on cashless medical treatment basis.

44. Around 1,565 endoscopic procedures including colonoscopic services, 90 Spine injury surgical cases, 60 eye ball retrieving cases, 3 corneal transplantations have been performed for poor patients at Indira Gandhi Government General Hospital and Post Graduate Institute.

45. During 2023-24, 23,550 cataract surgeries were done in all Government Regional Hospitals, Medical College and NGO Hospital in the Union Territory of Puducherry. Under Comprehensive Vision Testing Programme, 2,731 free spectacles were provided to the school children. Under the ENT Reconstruction of Hearing Mechanism, 2,003 Major ENT and 6,721 Minor ENT Surgeries were carried out.

46. The Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK), an innovative and ambitious initiative, envisages child health screening (from birth to 18 years) and early intervention services, a systemic approach of early identification and link to high end tertiary care. Last year, 2,40,000 children were screened in which 218 children with Congenital Heart Disease were identified and out of these, 51 children requiring high end cardiac surgery were performed. Further, all babies delivered in Rajiv Gandhi Government Women and Children Hospital were screened for hearing defects. Three children with congenital deafness were identified

and implanted with Cochlear Implant Device. Apart from this, children from 855 Anganwadis and students from 456 Government and Government aided schools were also covered under this programme.

47. Like COWIN portal for COVID vaccination, U-WIN portal for routine immunization was launched during August 2023 in the Union Territory of Puducherry. The eligible beneficiaries can get pre-registered and they can get their vaccination in any part of the country using their mobile number. The e-certificate is generated for the vaccinated beneficiaries in U-WIN portal.

AYUSH

48. Hon'ble Members may be aware that Siddha medicine, a traditional system of healing that originated in South India is considered to be one of India's oldest systems of medicine. To create awareness among the public on medicinal plants, National Conference on Medicinal Plants was conducted at Mahe. At Kamarajar Manimandapam, Puducherry three days Mega

Health Camp on Homeopathy screening was organized. Outpatient Department (OPD) for Homeopathy treatment was opened in Villianur Ayush Integrated Hospital. Likewise, Yoga unit was also started in the Indira Gandhi Medial College and Research Institute.

HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

49. Hon'ble Members will agree that Higher and Technical Education plays a significant role not only in national development but also in fostering the ability of individuals to face challenges.

50. Under Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) programme, ₹ 8 crore was released to construct one Academic Block building in Puducherry Technological University, Kalapet and ₹ 1.44 crore was released to Kanchi Mamunivar Centre for Post Graduate Studies, Puducherry to carry out development and research activities.

51. In order to encourage the students to pursue Higher and Technical Education, this Government is continuously extending the financial assistance to the

students getting admission through CENTAC under Perunthalaivar Kamarajar Financial Assistance scheme. Accordingly, an amount of ₹ 26.42 crore was disbursed to 6,176 students in total comprising of 600 medical students, 4,980 engineering students and 596 nursing students.

HINDU RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS & WAKF

52. In order to perform 'Oru Kala Pooja' an amount of ₹ 42 lakh was provided to 210 temples in the Puducherry and Karaikal regions. To support the temples for renovation/repair works Grant-in-aid amounting to ₹ 2.41 crore was disbursed to 12 purview and 37 non-purview temples including the performance of Kumbabishekam in 22 temples of Puducherry region. Annadhanam scheme is being continued in 8 temples at Puducherry District and 2 temples in Karaikal District. Online e-services like e-booking, e-seva was successfully implemented in Arulmigu Manakula Vinayagar Temple, Puducherry and Sri Dharbaranyeswara Swamy Devasthanam,

Thirunallar, Karaikal. An amount of ₹ 15 lakh has been granted as educational scholarship to 571 minority muslim students during 2023-24.

53. This Government has been taking stringent action against the encroachers of the temple lands besides recovering the temple lands from the encroachers.

INDUSTRIES

54. Hon'ble Members may be aware that the Industrial Sector has extended an important contribution in employment and also plays a powerful role in the organized sector. This Government is continuously working to make Puducherry as an Industrial Hub.

55. Under the "Training" scheme, 51 educated unemployed youths were imparted 'In-plant Training' and 'Advanced/High Skilled Training' with stipend. Further, new batch of Inplant Training and Advanced/ High Skilled Training are ongoing with 200 candidates. An amount of ₹ 49.90 lakh was incurred towards payment of stipend at an enhanced rate of ₹ 4,500, ₹ 7,500 and ₹ 9,000 per month to the trainees.

56. Under "Development of Handicrafts" scheme, 291 unemployed rural persons were imparted "Handicrafts Training" with enhanced stipend rate of ₹4,500 and also new batch of training is ongoing with 100 candidates. An amount of ₹1.12 crore was incurred as expenditure for this programme. Further, under the scheme of "Development of Coir Industries", 182 persons were given coir rope and coir mat making training with stipend to the tune of ₹36.58 lakh.

57. Under the scheme of "Motivation of Unemployed Persons to Start Self-employed Enterprises (MUPSES)", 238 entrepreneurs were sanctioned bank loan for an amount of ₹1.50 crore through various banks and provided subsidy for ₹61.68 lakh to start self-employment ventures. Under the Scheme of "Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP)", 26 entrepreneurs were sanctioned bank loan of ₹2.38 crore with subsidy of ₹80.55 lakh, so as to enable them to become an entrepreneur.

58. Under Prime Minister's Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) scheme an amount of ₹ 3.53 crore has been released to 901 SHG members involved in food processing activities as seed capital assistance for purchase of small equipments/tools. Last year, bank loans have been arranged to develop 54 micro-enterprises with 35% subsidy. Further, 120 beneficiaries were also imparted training for commencing micro-enterprises.

59. Under "Industrial Guidance Bureau (IGB)", 80 Single Window Applications received from various entrepreneurs for establishing Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in this Union Territory of Puducherry were forwarded to various line departments for the issue of necessary licenses/permissions. Out of which, 16 applications were cleared by line departments creating employment to 4,627 youths with an investment of ₹ 766.45 crore.

60. The capital investment subsidy to the tune of ₹ 7.13 crore for 21 industrial units in Puducherry region and ₹ 1.65 crore for 4 industries in Karaikal were

approved by the State Level Committee under the subsidy scheme "Motivation of Entrepreneurs to Start Industries and Fiscal Assistance to Industries". The Puducherry City Gas Distribution Policy, 2023 was notified and implementation will start in Karaikal region as a first phase. Similarly, "Puducherry Integrated Logistics Infrastructure, Multimodal Logistics Park and Warehouse Policy 2023" has been launched to create a cost competitive and quality multimodal logistic park, warehousing and retail oriented infrastructure and aims to integrate Puducherry logistics eco-system with the Global Supply Chain.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

61. Information Technology not only contributed to the economic development of the State but has also made governance more responsive and efficient. I am happy to share that e-Office has been successfully implemented in the Union Territory of Puducherry with a project cost of ₹ 5.12 crore. Hon'ble Members may be aware that many of the Government services are available in electronic mode for easy access and

convenience of the citizens. In order to ensure high security, transparency, traceability and authenticity of the certificates issued by the Government department, the "Block Chain Technology" was introduced on pilot basis for issuance of Marriage Certificate, Patta and Family Ration Card services. Further, integration of "Block Chain Technology" for another 23 services were also identified.

62. As an initiative, this Government has successfully implemented the Unified Data Hub (UDH) project in the Union Territory of Puducherry for the effective and targeted delivery of public services with automatic identification of eligible beneficiaries of all Government welfare schemes. Under this project, 22 departments with 147 welfare schemes have been covered during 2023-24. Further, the UDH ensures that the various Government welfare services reach the beneficiaries in time.

LABOUR WELFARE

63. Hon'ble Members will admit that labour welfare, refers to improving their working conditions, providing social security and raising their standard of living.

In order to ascertain this, financial assistance has been continuously being provided by this Government to improve the labour welfare.

64. Deepavali cash gift for a sum of ₹ 2.58 crore was extended as financial assistance to 25,828 workers registered under "The Puducherry Un-organised Labourers' Welfare Society". Likewise, various welfare benefits like marriage assistance, maternity assistance, medical assistance, funeral assistance and death benefit were also extended to the tune of ₹ 35.20 crore to 41,427 members of "The Pondicherry Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board". Further, Deepavali cash gift has been enhanced from ₹ 3,500 to ₹ 4,000 and were disbursed to 44,558 beneficiaries amounting to ₹ 17.89 crore.

65. Online admission to the Government and Private ITIs have been conducted during 2023-24 and 1,107 trainees have been admitted. Further, in order to encourage the trainees to get enrolled in the

Government ITIs, this Government has enhanced the monthly stipend and merit scholarship from ₹ 150 to ₹ 1,000 and ₹ 300 to ₹ 1,000.

66. Career Guidance Exhibition was conducted last year, wherein 22 colleges had participated from Puducherry and Tamilnadu region, 4,376 students visited the exhibition and 45 students got spot admission in various colleges.

67. Coaching classes have been conducted for 3 months for the UDC aspirants by the Government. Out of 200 aspirants, 42 of them got selected for Government posts through various Government competitive examinations.

LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

68. This Government has always given due importance in strengthening the urban infrastructure in the Union Territory of Puducherry by providing basic services to the public viz., water supply, sanitation, solid waste management, etc.

69. Under Solid Waste Management Works, Disposal of legacy waste was carried out in Kurumbapet, Puducherry and in Paravipet, Karaikal with an estimated cost of ₹ 42.60 crore and ₹ 4.28 crore respectively in compliance with Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016.

70. Improvements to Veerankulam at Kombakkam and Pillaiyar Koil Kulam at Karuvadikuppam and revitalization of Aayikulam at Muthirapalayam were carried out at an estimated cost of ₹ 2.63 crore. In order to strengthen the formation of Self Help Group (SHG) under National Urban Livelihood Mission programme, 115 SHGs were assisted with revolving fund at ₹ 10,000 to each group.

71. Under the Smart City Project, the work of Tertiary Drain in Puducherry areas, restoration of heritage V.O.C. school building, installation of street lights with LED lights, construction of railway culvert, construction of RCC precast box culvert for Mettu vaaikal at Anna nagar, construction of PCC drain for Mettu Vaaikal at

Sivagami nagar, construction of RCC drain along Olandai surplus, construction of RCC box drain linking Mettu Vaaikal and Palla Vaaikal, reconstruction of U drain in Muthialpet and Thengaihittu were completed at a cost of ₹42.87 crore.

72. Under PM Street Vendor's Atma Nirbhar Nidhi Scheme, working capital amounting to ₹6.48 crore was disbursed to 3,461 beneficiaries at ₹10,000 each, 943 beneficiaries at ₹20,000 each and 228 beneficiaries at ₹50,000 each through various banks.

POLICE

73. To further strengthen the Police force and to maintain law and order in the Union Territory of Puducherry, 250 Police Constables were recruited and 85 Home Guards have been absorbed as Police Constables. Further, promotions to 121 police officials were given in various cadres during the last financial year. In order to maintain transparency in police

stations, all the 60 Police Stations/Outpost and 4 control rooms were installed with CCTV cameras. For more effective functioning of Police Department an amount of ₹ 2.27 crore was utilized for purchase of office/information and communication equipments. To further improve the security of Union Territory of Puducherry, anti-riot/security equipments were purchased at a cost of ₹ 1.43 crore. Towards repairs and maintenance of Police buildings an amount of ₹ 3.47 crore was spent.

PORT

74. During 2023-24, the Karaikal Port has handled 12.28 million tons of cargo and earned ₹ 16.81 crore as revenue. Likewise, a Captive Marine Terminal Facility functioning at Karaikal has handled 24,255 tons of liquid cargo and earned revenue of ₹ 29.60 lakh. Further, Cargo handling operations between Puducherry Port and Chennai Port has commenced during 2023-24 and Coastal Container Ship has made 9 voyages and handled 242 containers. An amount of ₹ 9.23 crore

has been incurred towards Dredging and De-silting activities for unhindered movement of Fishing/Cargo vessels.

PUBLIC WORKS

75. Hon'ble Members will admit that investments in infrastructure will stimulate economic growth. Efficient infrastructure is essential for market development and growth output. Hence, this Government has always given considerable priority for infrastructure.

76. During the last financial year, construction of 50 bedded Integrated AYUSH Hospital at Villianur was completed at an estimated cost of ₹ 9 crore. Strengthening of 16 roads projects in Puducherry region and 7 projects in Mahe region were carried out successfully at an estimated cost of ₹ 50.62 crore and ₹ 5.48 crore respectively. Likewise, under Negotiated Loan, 3 projects on improvements to roads and one road restoration project were completed in Karaikal region at a cost of ₹ 23.63 crore.

77. Under comprehensive and augmentation of water supply scheme, construction of OHT, sump, distribution grid, pumping main, road restoration and allied works have been completed in 8 places of Puducherry with an estimated cost of ₹70.79 crore.

REVENUE

78. A sum of ₹11.44 crore was disbursed to 3,530 poor families as financial assistance under Rajiv Gandhi Social Security Scheme. Free house site pattas to 94 eligible landless poor were issued in the Union Territory of Puducherry under the Land Grant Rules, 1975.

79. Under the scheme Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY), Village Development plan at Manapet village is being implemented in phased manner, initially the tasks like giving demonstration/training to farmers for azola cultivation with silpaulin, replacement of street lights by REAP, renovation of library, collection of solid waste have been completed.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

80. As a major initiative to eradicate poverty by providing employment opportunity particularly to the rural population, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), is being implemented in the Union Territory of Puducherry. Under this programme, 21.89 lakh mandays were generated benefitting 90,412 rural households and 466 works were completed in the last financial year incurring an expenditure of ₹58.49 crore.

81. During 2023-24, 765 SHGs were formed and 4,296 members were brought under NRLM folders. Revolving Fund assistance of ₹65.42 crore has been provided to 3,717 SHGs. Vulnerable Reduction Fund of ₹1.64 crore was released to 109 Panchayat Level Federations (PLFs) and 7,563 members were benefited. 30 Joint Livelihood Groups were formed to initiate millet's based products and hand holding millet based training was given to them for 3 days at National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship and

Management (NIFTEM), Thanjavur, Tamilnadu. Under Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) scheme, skill development training were given to 2,424 poor rural youths. Out of this, 1,434 candidates were placed in various private companies in Puducherry, Karaikal, Chennai, Thiruppur, Bangalore, etc.

82. Under Shyama Prasad Mukherji RURBAN Mission Scheme, in Bahour 2 works namely provision of renovation of 7 fish ponds and development of Kirumampakkam lake with restaurant were completed for an amount of ₹ 8.05 crore. In Thirunallar, 6 works viz., Construction of water tank with 1.5 lakh litre and 3 lakh litre capacity, construction of Athipadukai bridge, development of Nallambal lake, Establishing mini food processing unit and 7 bus shelters were completed with an amount of ₹ 11.29 crore. Under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY-II), 31 road works of 63.44 Km were completed with an expenditure of ₹ 35.37 crore.

SCHOOL EDUCATION

83. Education is the incubator for the next generation of leaders, innovators, and thinkers. The future of our Union Territory depends on the children of today. Hence, this Government has been providing quality and free education to every child of this Union Territory.

84. Under Right to Education entitlement, an amount of ₹ 1.89 crore was spent for supply of free uniform and textbooks to the school students. At an estimated cost of ₹ 3.48 crore, 290 smart classrooms have been established in 145 schools of this Union Territory.

85. During the last academic year, all the 126 Government High and Higher Secondary Schools changed their curriculum from State Board to Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) for the classes 6th standard to 12th standard. On that basis, necessary training have been imparted to 1,800 teachers and school heads of Middle, High and Higher Secondary level.

86. To promote arts in education by nurturing and showcasing the artistic talent of school students, competitions were conducted in the name of Kala Utsav, an initiative of Ministry of Education at District, State and National Levels.

87. NIPUN Bharat Mission has been extensively implemented in all government schools across the Union Territory. The major objective of the initiative is to ensure that all students passing out from 5th grade should be able to have Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) by 2027. It also focuses on providing competency-based learning for all students between LKG to 5th grade. Further, a historic initiative called the "NIPUN Bharat Pudhuvai Day" was conducted in all primary schools as a measure to make parents more acquainted with the idea of Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN). All schools across the 4 regions of the Union Territory received tremendous support from over 40,000 parents of primary school students, where they partnered with the school to improve Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN).

88. An amount of ₹ 81.50 lakh was disbursed to 13,219 students under the state scholarship schemes viz., Pre-matric and Post-matric scholarship to Other Economically Backward Class (OEBC) students.

89. Under Midday Meal Scheme Sweet Pongal and Variety Rice concentrating highly on healthy and nutritional parameters, prepared under a well maintained hygienic condition are being provided to the students of all the Government and Government aided schools. Accordingly, under this scheme, 88,000 students from Pre-primary to Higher Secondary Schools have been covered with funding by both the Central and State Governments. Further, boiled eggs were also provided thrice in a week to the students under State Fund.

90. As assured by this Government in the Floor of Assembly, a separate Directorate for Sports and Youth Affairs in the Union Territory of Puducherry was formed bifurcating from the Directorate of School Education in August 2023.

91. I am happy to announce that Selvi. Harshika has won the Bronze Medal in 64kg category weight lifting in the 66th National School games Championship organised by School Games Federation of India at Delhi, Bhopal and Gwalior during June 2023.

92. I am proud to inform that due to implementation of earmarking 10% reservation for MBBS/BDS/BAMS courses to the students who have studied in the Government schools of Puducherry from 1st Standard to 12 Standard and have passed in the NEET, nearly 20 Government school students got admission for pursuing their MBBS course in both Government and self financing medical colleges under Government quota during last year. Apart from this, Government school students have also secured admission in various medical colleges through the NEET coaching classes organized by the Government.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT

93. Science, Technology and Environment play a key role in real economic growth and transformation in any society. Climate change presents a major threat to the

environment and has a direct impact on the well being of people. Knowing the importance of saving the environment, this Government in collaboration with Finance Department and research support from The Energy Research Institute (TERI), New Delhi had prepared the Union Territory of Puducherry Green Budget Report for 2023-24. I am proud to share that the Union Territory of Puducherry is the first federal entity in India to table a Green Budget in the Budget Session held in March 2023. Braille book on Mission LiFE (Lifestyle For Environment) was released during World Environment Day, 2023. In the Union Territory of Puducherry, 526 Schools and 47 Colleges have been declared as Single Use Plastic (SUP) Free Campus.

94. The "Marine Spatial Planning" (MSP) was developed by National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR), Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) for Union Territory of Puducherry for effective planning of the coastal area, including the water area and to avoid

conflicts between different sectors. A virtual portal viz., SAHAV was developed by NCCR for effective implementation of MSP. Mega beach cleaning activity was conducted at Puducherry and Karaikal beach under "Jan Bhagidari" Beach cleaning drive to promote and create awareness on the coastal pollution.

TOURISM

95. The major aim of this Government is to promote sustainable tourism as a means of economic growth and social integration and to create the image of Puducherry as a destination with a glorious past, a vibrant present and a bright future.

96. I am glad to announce that Thirunallar village has been selected as "Best Tourism Village - 2023" Award by Ministry of Tourism, Government of India and Puducherry Tourism has got the award for Preparation of Best Tourism Promotional material among the other States in "Hyderabad Domestic Tourism Fair".

97. In Puducherry District, 29th International Yoga Festival was celebrated in a grand manner with 1,320 participants from various States. Similarly, Karaikal Carnival Festival-2024 was also conducted with witnessing of around 2 lakh tourists/public from neighbouring districts of Tamilnadu. Heritage Car Rally was organized at Beach Road, Puducherry and around 5,000 tourists/public witnessed the programme. The Tourism Industry Stakeholders' Meet was conducted with 700 participants including stakeholders of Tourism Industry.

98. Hon'ble Members may admit that Puducherry is famous for spiritual tourism and number of siddhas had lived here. In order to illustrate this, Siddha Temple/Jeeva Samadhis have been documented to the public/tourists through a siddha circuit tour package.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING

99. Hon'ble Members may be well aware that one of the main aim of this Government is to make this Union Territory hutless. Towards achieving this goal, 15

tenements block at Mottaitoppu near Rainbow Nagar, Puducherry have been completed with a cost of ₹ 62.70 lakh. Likewise, construction of Power Room for metering Panel Board for tenements at Chinnapoigai Nagar, Arunthathipuram was carried out with an estimated cost of ₹ 7.82 lakhs. Cement Concrete Pavement have been constructed to the link road between Nagooranthottam road and Beach road at south street, Periyaveerampattinam, Puducherry with an expenditure of ₹ 16.05 lakh.

100. Under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana schemes, an amount of ₹ 65.20 crore was disbursed to PMAY beneficiaries and 963 houses have been completed during last year. Further, 1,810 new beneficiaries have been got approved from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and they have already commenced the work. The Town and Country Planning Act was amended for providing the provision for land use conversion and regularization of unauthorized developments. A portal was also launched for this purpose.

ADI DRAVIDAR WELFARE AND SCHEDULED TRIBE WELFARE

101. This Government is committed to improve the socio-economic conditions and educational status of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes people in the Union Territory of Puducherry.

102. Under the scheme Educational Developments, Training and Self-employments to SC and ST students, financial assistance to the tune of ₹ 52.21 crore was disbursed to 13,012 SC and ST students including Grant of Full Fee.

103. As a measure to support the poor SC and ST families to meet out the marriage expenses of daughters, financial assistance to the tune of ₹ 6.79 crore was released to 732 SC and ST poor families. Further, a sum of ₹ 2.16 crore was granted as financial assistance to 1,468 poor SC and ST pregnant and lactating mothers.

104. For the poor SC and ST people suffering from various chronic ailments, financial assistance of ₹ 3,000 per month was disbursed to 2,800 SC and ST beneficiaries

amounting to ₹ 10 crore. An amount of ₹ 25.47 crore was disbursed to 2,54,795 beneficiaries as cash of ₹ 1000 to each in lieu of free garments during Deepavali and Pongal festivals. An incentive amount of ₹ 2.50 lakh each was given to inter caste marriage couples totaling to ₹ 10.65 crore benefitting 426 married couples. A sum of ₹ 3.90 crore was disbursed as financial assistance at the rate of ₹ 25,000 to 1,562 families to perform the last funeral rites of the deceased persons.

105. Under the Prathan Mantri Awas Yojana Subsidy Scheme, an amount of ₹ 9.70 crore was released to benefit 544 families towards construction of pucca own house. Similarly, under the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi House Construction Subsidy Scheme, a sum of ₹ 1.42 crore was sanctioned to 126 beneficiaries for construction of concrete house.

SOCIAL WELFARE

106. Hon'ble Members are aware that this Government has been implementing broad and wide range of schemes to improve the quality of differently abled persons, aged people and other weaker sections of the society.

107. Last year, the monthly financial assistance amounting to ₹ 63.63 crore were given to 20,640 differently abled persons including 360 new beneficiaries. Cash dole instead of free rice for an amount of ₹ 9.23 crore and cash dole instead of supply of free clothes for a sum of ₹ 81.85 lakh have been disbursed benefitting 20,640 and 16,409 differently abled persons respectively. Besides, various welfare programmes viz., marriage assistance, fuel subsidy, transport allowance, scholarship, supply of hearing aid machine and sports wheel chair, were implemented benefitting 3,428 differently abled persons for a sum of ₹ 1.38 crore.

108. The Unique Disability ID (UDID) Project of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has already been rolled out in this Union Territory and 21,001 UDID cards have been issued till last year. Exgratia has been disbursed to the kith and kin of 288 differently abled persons for an amount of ₹ 43.20 lakh to carry out funeral rites of differently abled persons under the Perunthalaivar Karma Veerar Kamaraj Scheme.

109. Chief Ministers' Insurance Scheme for payment of premium under Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY) an accident insurance scheme covers the individuals in the age of 18 to 70 on payment of premium of ₹ 20 per annum per member. The sum insured is ₹ 2 lakh for death and total disability and Rupees one lakh for partial disability caused due to accident. The Government bears the annual premium amount to all the individuals of red card holders in the Union Territory of Puducherry. Under this scheme, 4,85,680 individuals of red card holders were covered, for which an amount of ₹ 92.28 lakh was incurred.

110. World Elders Day was celebrated in Puducherry and Karaikal region through PONCARE. Various sports and recreation events were conducted and spectacles were distributed at free of cost to the Senior Citizens. Various awareness programmes on "National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction" were conducted among the school and college students in the Union Territory of Puducherry during last year.

WELFARE OF BACKWARD CLASSES AND MINORITIES

111. This Government is very keen in improving the quality of life of Backward Classes and Minority people and working to enhance the capability of the people belonging to these communities, so that they can be very much part and parcel of the mainstream of the society.

112. Under "Makkal Thalaivar Thiyagi V.Subbiah Memorial Award" cash prize was awarded to 17 backward class meritorious students for securing more marks in the school final examination. Under Pre-Matric Scholarship and under Post-Matric Scholarship, 249 students and 4,148 students of backward classes were benefitted respectively. Similarly, under Pre-Matric Scholarship and under Post-Matric Scholarship to minority communities 1,054 students and 990 students were benefitted respectively. Further, 48 students from minority communities were also benefitted under Merit-*cum*-Means based scholarship scheme.

113. Under the scheme of free distribution of tools and kits to uplift the poor artisans, 380 press boxes, 220 barber chairs and kits, 62 thavil amounting to ₹ 84.97 lakh have been distributed as backlog benefits. Free distribution of bicycles worth of ₹ 4.88 crore and raincoats worth of ₹ 57.96 lakh have been distributed to 11,925 students studying 9th standard. in various schools in the Union Territory of Puducherry.

WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

114. Women not only constitute a vital human resource of the country but also a significant resource for overall human development. Therefore, my Government is committed to "Empowerment of Women". The process of women empowerment will be persuaded to accomplish both social and economic empowerment with special thrust on gender justice.

115. Under "Old Age Pension" scheme, 1,81,616 persons, namely old aged, widows, destitutes, unmarried women and transgenders avail monthly financial assistance totaling an amount of ₹ 535.93 crore. Financial

Assistance to the tune of ₹ 3.30 crore was granted to 2,200 deceased pensioners for performing funeral rites. During the last financial year, under the scheme "Grant of monthly financial assistance of ₹ 1,000 to women who are heads of families living below poverty line", an amount of ₹ 36.32 crore was spent benefitting 36,000 women heads of BPL families.

116. During Pongal festival, cash dole amounting to ₹ 12.29 crore was released through DBT in lieu of clothing items benefitting 1,15,043 BPL family with at least two family members and 15,748 single member BPL card holders.

117. For development of women this Government has provided financial assistance amounting to ₹ 5.50 crore towards implementation of various welfare schemes like performance of marriage of poor brides/ daughter of destitute widows, issue of NSC certificate for the only girl child studying between 8th to 10th standard in the family of poor parents and issue of Fixed Deposit to the daughters of the parents having one girl/two girl children covering 2,119 beneficiaries.

118. As an initiative by this Government "CM cares scheme for empowerment of new born girl child in the Union Territory of Puducherry" was launched during the last financial year and an amount of ₹50,000 was deposited under Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana to the girl children. During last year, 2,100 girl children were benefitted for which a sum of ₹10.50 crore was utilized.

119. Under Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS), supplementary nutrition was supplied benefitting 29,172 children and 6,473 pregnant/lactating mother. Further, Holiday feeding in the form of Take Home Ration is also being distributed to all Anganwadi beneficiaries for 65 days per year. During 2023-24, an amount of ₹7.41 crore was spent in this regard.

120. Under the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) scheme, 6,614 Pregnant and lactating mother were benefitted belonging to socially and economically disadvantaged women of the society. Under the Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana and Pradhan Mantri

Suraksha Bima Yojana, insurance premium has been paid to 807 Anganwadi Workers and 260 Anganwadi Helpers.

121. This Government is fully committed for the welfare and development of farmers, agricultural labourers, fishermen and workers engaged in other activities, empowering of women and providing equal opportunity for people belonging to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes, Backward Classes, Minorities, Disabled and other weaker sections of the society so as to uplift them on par with the rest of the society.

122. I hope the Hon'ble members of this House will make use of this session for constructive and useful deliberations on various programmes, schemes and contribute towards the welfare, development and growth of this peace loving territory and its people.

123. My sincere good wishes for the success of your deliberations.

JAI HIND.....

VAZHGA BHARATHAM !

VALARGA PUDUCHERRY !!



Gandhi Squar, Beach Road, Puducherry.