



GOVERNMENT OF PUDUCHERRY



Address by

Dr. Tamilisai Soundararajan
Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor

to

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF PUDUCHERRY

26th August, 2021

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ஈதல் இசைபட வாழ்தல் அதுவல்லது
ஊதியம் இல்லை உயிர்க்கு. - குறள்

Give to the poor and live with praise.
There is no greater profit to man than that.
– **Kural**

**Hon'ble Speaker and Hon'ble Members of
Legislature,**

Vanakkam !

At the outset, I wish to congratulate all the Members elected to this august House in the recent elections. It gives me immense pleasure, indeed, to deliver the inaugural address of the first session of the Fifteenth Legislative Assembly. I am confident that each one of you will strive hard for the upliftment of the people and especially for the socio-economic development of the Union Territory of Puducherry.

2. I am happy indeed to share with the Hon'ble Members that the General Election to Puducherry Legislative Assembly, 2021 was conducted in a free and fair manner in the Union Territory of Puducherry. I express my sincere appreciation to all the officers and staff involved in the election work. Similarly, the people of Puducherry and the various political parties also deserve equal appreciation for co-operating with the Government machinery for conducting the elections peacefully.

3. The people of Union Territory of Puducherry have reposed their faith in the National Democratic Alliance under the leadership of the Hon'ble Chief Minister Thiru N. Rangasamy through this verdict which has vindicated the people-friendly policies and programmes implemented earlier by the Government under his leadership. I earnestly hope that the new Government will strive to achieve its stated objective of ensuring peace, prosperity and development of the Union Territory of Puducherry.

4. Hon'ble Members are well aware that the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak has apparently caused large scale loss of lives especially during the second wave from April to June 2021 in India. The Union Territory of Puducherry has also borne the brunt of the pandemic. However, the Government acted swiftly to contain the spread and it is heartening to see that the COVID-19 positive cases has drastically come down now. I express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to all the frontline warriors viz., Medical Officers, Staff Nurses, other Health Officials, Police Personnel, Revenue staff, Municipal Staff and all other officials for their dedicated service. The timely measures initiated by District Administration then and there through various movement restrictions for protecting the people of Union Territory of Puducherry from the COVID-19 pandemic are equally commendable. I take this opportunity to appeal to all citizens to strictly follow the safety norms viz., social distancing, wearing mask, and frequent hand washing besides getting vaccinated immediately so as to ensure the well being of all citizens of Union Territory of Puducherry.

5. On the financial front, the revenue receipts of the Government stood at ₹ 8,419 crore as against the target of ₹ 9,000 crore in 2020-21 which is around 94% of the receipt target. The Government incurred expenditure of ₹ 8,342 crore as against the total outlay of ₹ 9,000 crore which works out to 93% of the estimated expenditure. The realization of higher revenue is significant especially in the context of COVID-19 pandemic situation.

6. The Hon'ble Members are aware that the financial resources of Union Territory of Puducherry are very limited especially after introduction of GST, and the Government is constrained to strike a balance between available resources and committed expenditure. I am sure that the Hon'ble Chief Minister will certainly take into consideration the aspirations of the people of Puducherry Union Territory and present a fair budget to the satisfaction of all the sections of the society.

7. With this brief introduction, I now turn to some of the major programmes and achievements made by the Government under various sectors during the financial year 2020-21.

AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

8. Agriculture continues to be the back bone of rural economy. In order to increase the agricultural production, various schemes/programmes such as providing agricultural inputs at subsidized cost, transfer of technological know-how to the farmers through trainings and field visits are organized. Management of labour shortage in agricultural operations by appropriate farm mechanization, providing technological inputs at subsidized cost, sustaining the area under agricultural and horticultural crops are given greater importance through implementation of appropriate schemes.

9. Under the crop production technology, ₹ 15.73 crore has been disbursed as production incentive to 15,129 farmers who produced Paddy, Sugarcane, Cotton, Groundnut, Pulses, Gingelly and Millets.

In order to promote urban and rural vegetable garden, vegetable seeds kit worth ₹ 250 are distributed at free of cost every year during Aadipattam season. As an incentive for promotion of urban/rural roof top garden, horticulture kit worth ₹ 3,000 containing vegetable seeds, and minor horticulture tools are distributed with 75% subsidy. In Karaikal region, vegetable seed mini-kits were distributed to 710 farmers for an amount of ₹ 7.61 lakh. Urban roof top kits were distributed to 385 beneficiaries for an amount of ₹ 11.13 lakh.

10. Under the National Horticulture Mission, 3,609 farmers were benefitted involving an expenditure of ₹ 3.22 crore. Under the Integrated Horticulture Development Programme through Diversification of Agriculture and Precision farming, back ended subsidy for horticulture crops was provided to 1,048 farmers of Puducherry region to the tune of ₹ 47.92 lakh and ₹ 3.85 lakh to 145 farmers of Karaikal region. Horticultural inputs were distributed at subsidized cost to 14,840 farmers for an amount of ₹ 1.56 crore.

Under the Agricultural Mechanisation scheme, 11 tractors, 9 power tillers, 17 transplanters, 2 conventional implements, 1 improved agricultural implement and 2 power weeders were distributed in Puducherry region at subsidized cost. In Karaikal region, 61 farmers were benefitted with a total expenditure of ₹ 1.87 crore.

11. For construction of 134 tubewells, installation of 109 pumpsets and accessories, laying of underground PVC pipelines and 22 Sprinkler irrigation systems in Puducherry for an amount of ₹ 2.31 crore was provided under the Integrated Scheme for Development, harvesting, recharging and conservation of ground water. Under the PM-KISAN scheme, the landholding farmers' families are provided financial benefit of ₹ 6,000 per annum per family payable in three equal installments of ₹ 2,000 each from the year 2018-19. So far, 10,696 farmers have benefitted for which an amount of ₹ 8.79 crore has been released under Direct Benefit Transfer to farmers' bank account.

12. Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), Crop Insurance Scheme is being implemented with additional support through remittance of farmer's share of premium by the Government of Puducherry, in addition to the State subsidy. During the year 2019-20, 4,149 farmers in Puducherry region covering 3,127 Ha. and 4,305 farmers covering 3,810 Ha. in Karaikal region have been enrolled under the Crop Insurance Scheme. Action is being taken for payment of claims to 8,454 farmers for an amount of ₹ 6.55 crore who suffered yield loss for the samba crop. Subsidy to the tune of ₹ 3.53 crore for extension of free electricity to motor pump sets used by farmers for irrigation purposes in the Union Territory of Puducherry under the Scheme "Crop Production Technology" was sanctioned.

13. The Government has made arrangements for direct procurement of paddy from the farmers of Puducherry and Karaikal regions through Food Corporation of India for the Rabi Crop at Minimum Support Price fixed by the Government of India as market intervention to mitigate the loss suffered by the

farmers due to low price realization of their produce. In Puducherry region, there are four designated procurement centres at Regulated Market Yards at Thattanchavady, Madagadipet, Kanniakoil and Karayamputhur and Modern Rice Mill, Thennangudy, Karaikal. Around 14,207 Kisan Credit Cards have been issued to the farmer to avail credit facilities. I am happy to share the Hon'ble Members that the Pondicherry Market Committee has been awarded the "Silver Skoch Award" for successful implementation of the e-NAM project during 2020-21 by Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND ANIMAL WELFARE

14. Animal Husbandry provides employment to a large number of farmers and thereby improving their living standard. Keeping this in view, Animal Husbandry department implements various welfare schemes/ programmes to protect the livestock, poultry, etc. Besides giving free treatment to 3,70,968 cases of livestock, poultry and pet animals, preventive vaccinations

were given to 1,87,195 cases. Health camps were conducted at periodical intervals throughout the Union Territory of Puducherry. 60,008 artificial inseminations have been done to produce desirable future stock and 18,738 calves of desirable superior germplasm were born.

15. Ear tags showing 12 digit Unique Identification Number (UID) to all cattle including milch animals in Puducherry for monitoring milk production and health status of cattle through Information Network for Animal Productivity and Health (INAPH) by the software developed by National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) was implemented. So far 62,539 cattle have been ear tagged and 59,720 cattle vaccinated for Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD). With a view to encouraging backyard poultry production in the Union Territory of Puducherry, 3,700 dual purpose poultry (Giriraja birds) were reared at Government Poultry Farms and distributed to farmers at fifty per cent subsidy.

16. Grant-in-aid to an extent of ₹ 17.28 crore was released to Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Veterinary Education and Research (RIVER), Puducherry for veterinary

education. Under Special Livestock Breeding Programme (SLBP), cattle feed and calf feed at 75% subsidy to the non-members of milk co-operative societies were distributed. Cattle feed was distributed to 4,221 milch cattle for an amount of ₹ 1.79 crore and calf feed to 1,369 Heifer Calves for an amount of ₹ 51.80 lakh.

ART AND CULTURE

17. Financial Assistance to the tune of ₹ 84.91 lakh was disbursed to 219 aged indigent artistes, 6 Tamil scholars and 72 Awardees of Kalaimamani. Online drama festival was conducted in the month of December 2020 for 5 days in which 27 drama troupes participated.

CIVIL SUPPLIES AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

18. Under National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA), the Government has implemented Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) and the assistance under the Universal Public Distribution System is given through DBT in all the regions of Union Territory of Puducherry. During the last financial year, under the scheme Antyodaya Anna

Yojana (AAY) an amount of ₹ 11.40 crore was provided by Government of India per month and about 6.18 lakh beneficiaries were benefitted. Under the Free Rice Scheme of the Government of Puducherry, an amount of ₹ 235 crore was incurred during the last financial year and around 3.44 lakh family ration card holders got benefitted. The food grains allocated by the Government of India as COVID-19 relief measure under Prime Minister Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) was distributed to the targeted beneficiaries of about 1.78 lakh family ration card holders. Online portal to provide family ration card related services and “One Nation One Ration Card” (ONORC) Scheme have been successfully implemented.

CO-OPERATION

19. Co-operative movement has contributed significantly to the development of rural economy. The Government of Puducherry continues to provide financial assistance to co-operatives despite financial constraints.

The PONLAIT has set up 15 Bulk Milk Coolers and 15 Automatic Milk Collection Units in Primary Co-operative Milk Producers' Societies in Puducherry region at a cost of ₹ 1.85 crore under the Quality Milk Programme. Modern Milk Testing Equipments worth ₹ 85 lakh have been installed with the financial assistance under the National Programme for Dairy Development (NPDD) Scheme.

20. Two Insulated / Refrigerated Transport Vehicles at a cost of ₹ 50 lakh for distribution of milk and milk products were purchased under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) Scheme. Karaikal Milk Producers' Union has strengthened its cold storage facilities and milk processing unit at a cost of ₹ 45 lakh. Through the implementation of the scheme of waiver of penal interest on overdue balance of housing loan availed by members of Primary Co-operative Housing Societies, a sum of ₹ 15.97 crore being the over-dues was collected from 555 members and the penal interest was waived thus reducing their repayment burden.

ELECTRICITY

21. Hon'ble Members are well aware that power supply is adequately available and there is 24 x 7 power supply in the Union Territory of Puducherry. The Government is giving thrust to strengthen the power distribution system and an expenditure of ₹ 58.27 crore was incurred on this score. Sixteen 200 KVA Distribution Transformers were energized at various locations. Further, Under Ground HT Cables of 872 mts. were laid from Marapalam Sub-station.

22. Under Integrated Power Development Scheme (IPDS), 517 mtrs. of 22 KV Under Ground Cable Feeders were laid, seven 315 KVA Distribution Transformers and one 63 KVA Distribution Transformer were energized. Besides, 3.8 kms of 11 KV Under Ground Cables were laid, 2,800 Single Phase energy meters and 841 Three Phase energy meters were installed in Puducherry region. Under Deena Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jothi Yojana (DDUGJY) Scheme,

6 Distribution Transformers were energised in rural areas of Puducherry region. 8,858 Single Phase Meters and 1,773 Three Phase Meters have been installed in Puducherry and Karaikal regions. Further, 887 Distribution Transformer meters were fixed in Puducherry and Karaikal regions.

23. Power Sale Agreement (PSA) with M/s. Solar Energy Corporation of India Limited (SECI) has been signed on 24-05-2020 for purchase of 140.64 MW capacity of Wind Power. Moreover, Power Sale Agreement (PSA) with M/s. NTPC to purchase 100 MW Solar Power from their proposed Solar Power Plant at Nokh, in Rajasthan has also been signed on 05-01-2021. Roof Top Solar Plants of capacity aggregating to 12.98 MWp have been synchronized with the distribution grid in Puducherry. Further, 10 MW Ground mounted Solar Power Plant commissioned by a private entity at Karaikal was successfully synchronized with Grid on 24-03-2021. 8,927 domestic services, 1,389 commercial services, 34 agricultural services and 231 street lights

were also energized. Departmental Website (www.pedservices.py.gov.in) has been developed for the benefit of public applying for new service connections through on-line.

FISHERIES AND FISHERMEN WELFARE

24. Hon'ble Members are aware that fishing has assumed much importance in view of the rapid growing population and depleting land resources. This Government is keen on improving the living standards of fishermen community. Ban Relief Assistance was provided for the ban period of 61 days @ ₹ 5,500 for 17,601 families in Puducherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam regions for an amount of ₹ 9.68 crore during last year. Lean assistance @ ₹ 2,500 per family was also extended to 15,983 families for an amount of ₹ 4 crore last year. 7,805 aged fisherfolk were granted monthly Old Age Pension to the tune of ₹ 18 crore.

25. Reactivation charges were granted to 431 registered steel / FRP Wooden Mechanized Boats and FRP Boats @ ₹ 20,000 and

@ ₹ 10,000 respectively, involving an expenditure of ₹ 64.10 lakh. 75% subsidy on the annual insurance premium paid by the registered mechanized boat operators towards insuring their boats to the tune of ₹ 21.71 lakh was reimbursed to 322 mechanized boat owners. 50% subsidy was granted to 15 fisherfolk for the procurement of non-motorized FRP catamaran with nets amounting to ₹ 2.78 lakh.

26. Cash awards amounting to ₹ 9.63 lakh were awarded to 161 meritorious fishermen students who studied 10th and 12th standards. 12 candidates were sponsored to undergo training in Central Institute of Fisheries, Nautical and Engineering training (CIFNET), Chennai and Vizag units. 5,026 beneficiaries of Puducherry region were given financial assistance @ ₹ 4,500 each which includes beneficiary contribution of ₹ 1,500 and Central Government share of ₹ 3,000 under the scheme "Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana". Under Kissan Credit Card (KCC), 169 fishers were sanctioned a total loan amount of ₹ 1.12 crore through banks.

FOREST AND WILDLIFE

27. Around 65,677 tree saplings have been planted in the Union Territory of Puducherry. Large plantation was taken up at Mannapet Forest. Nursery establishment area in Lawspet has been returned to Oulgaret Municipality for utilization as park. Many life sized models were created to add value to the recently constructed Interpretation Centre in the campus so as to create awareness to students and general public.

HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE

28. As the Hon'ble Members are well aware, the unprecedented health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has been effectively contained by the Government with the active and dedicated service of the front line workers. I take this opportunity to express my gratitude and appreciation for all the health department personnel and other officials for their immense contribution. Though the recent second wave of COVID-19 caused extensive loss of lives unlike the

first wave, we are greatly relieved to note that the severity of the second wave has drastically come down. However, I urge the people of this Union Territory not to be complacent, and appeal through this august House to continue to adopt the safety precautionary measures without let-up.

29. I feel proud to mention that the Union Territory of Puducherry is the first state to post Medical Officers in all 81 Sub-centres level in the country. The Government has transformed 40 Primary Health Centres and 81 Sub-centres into Health Wellness Centres (HWC) in the financial year 2020-21. Computers with Web Camera and Printers have been provided to all the HWCs. Tablet PC for all ANMs and Smart Phones for Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) have been provided. The process of provision of medical / lab equipments in the Health Wellness Centres has already been initiated. Infrastructure facilities such as renovation of building works including Yoga Hall, Herbal Garden construction, Logo Branding have been completed.

30. Ayushman Bharat - Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana Scheme (AB-PMJAY) is being successfully implemented for the second year with effect from 31-12-2020, with a funding pattern of 60 : 40 between the Central and State Government. 1,03,066 families have been covered under this scheme in our Union Territory, consequent on the merger of State scheme of granting financial assistance to the BPL families with Ayushman Bharat Scheme with effect from 13-01-2021, the coverage under AB-PMJAY includes 88,719 additional families also.

31. I am happy to share with the Hon'ble Members that Rajiv Gandhi Government Women and Children Hospital, Puducherry has been awarded Bronze Quality Standard Certificate under AB-PMJAY scheme after onsite inspection by Quality Council of India and the hospital has also been awarded second rank in respect of Sanitation and Cleanliness in Oulgaret Municipality under the category of Swachh Hospitals.

32. Diagnostic facilities of the Indira Gandhi Government General Hospital and Post Graduate Institute, Puducherry have been upgraded with the purchase of 100 mA Portable X-Ray machine, Portable Ultra Sound Scan machine, ECG machine, Fully Automated Bio-Chemistry Analyser and for the Surgery Department, Advanced Bipolar and Ultra sound Energy Generator has been purchased at a cost of ₹ 15 lakh. Ultrasound Colour Doppler for ₹ 15.75 lakh and Ortho implants have been procured for the Government General Hospital, Karaikal. As a new initiative, National Programme for Control of Blindness (NPCB) team in collaboration with Aravind Eye Hospital, conducted Opportunistic Diabetic Retinopathy Screening Camp in all Health and Wellness Centres in all the four regions of Union Territory of Puducherry and treatment for Diabetic Retinopathy were done free of cost.

33. Free Cataract Surgeries are done in all Government Regional Hospitals, Medical College and NGO Hospitals in the Union Territory of Puducherry.

Under Mobile Eye Outreach Camp Services, free IOL surgeries are also done in select surgical facilities in Health and Wellness Centres. About 10,851 cases have been screened for Cataract in the last year of which 4,810 cataract surgeries have been done. Comprehensive Vision Testing of School Children was undertaken and 7,615 students were examined in various schools during 2020-21. Out of 805 students identified with Refraction Errors, 379 students were given free spectacles.

34. After conversion of the Indira Gandhi Medical College and Research Institute (IGMC & RI) as dedicated COVID hospital in Puducherry, the Institute has been upgraded with provision of the crucial facilities like liquid oxygen storage capacity by installing additional 10 KL LMO tank, increase in the oxygen beds from 100 to 235 etc. In addition, ramping up of further 200 oxygen beds is under process.

HINDU RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

35. Grant-in-aid to the tune of ₹ 2.61 crore was disbursed to 42 purview and non-purview temples for

renovation / repairs. ₹ 39.60 lakh was provided to 198 temples in Puducherry region @ ₹ 20,000 each for performing poojas (oru kala pooja). Kumbabishekam was performed in 20 temples including 10 temples in Karaikal region. A total amount of ₹ 2.28 lakh was disbursed as monthly pension @ ₹ 2,000 each to 9 retired Ulemas and ₹ 1,000 to the spouse of one deceased Ulemas of Registered Wakf Institution. For payment of educational scholarship to about 821 minority Muslim students, ₹ 20.61 lakh was granted to Puducherry State Wakf Board.

INDUSTRIES

36. The Government is providing advanced skill training programmes with stipend in various trades. 164 youths were given In-plant Training with stipend in various trades, of which 35 were SC candidates. Further, new batch of training is going on, in which 123 persons are being trained with an estimated expenditure of ₹ 43.28 lakh. Awareness programmes were conducted in rural areas in Puducherry, to publicize

the welfare schemes of Central/State to rural youth / women. Various departments like Labour, DRDA, Social Welfare, Adi Dravidar Welfare, Agriculture, Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Central Government Department viz. MSME of Chennai and Puducherry centres, participated.

37. Under Entrepreneurship Skill Development Programme (ESDP), Training in Advanced Tailoring for Women was given, by which women from economically weaker section got benefitted. Under “Development of Handicrafts” scheme, 108 unemployed rural people particularly rural women were given Handicrafts Training with stipend. Under the scheme “Development of Coir Industries”, 63 persons were given training in Coir Rope and Coir Mat Making with stipend, including 15 SC beneficiaries. An amount of ₹ 46.18 lakh has been spent under this scheme.

38. Under the scheme of Motivation of unemployed person to start self-employed enterprises (MUPSES), 132 entrepreneurs were sanctioned loan for an amount of ₹ 78.78 lakh through various banks and provided

subsidy to the tune of ₹ 28 lakh and accordingly they have started self-employment venture. 44 entrepreneurs were sanctioned bank loan to the tune of ₹ 3.09 crore and subsidy released for an amount of ₹ 1.17 crore under Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme, so as to enable them to become an entrepreneur by starting own venture.

INDIAN SYSTEM OF MEDICINE AND HOMOEOPATHY

39. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Siddha medicines viz., Nilavembu Kudineer and Kabasura Kudineer were distributed to the public in Containment Zones as an immune booster. Public outreach activities and medical camps were also conducted in Siddha and Ayurvedha Medicines. One AYUSH Health and Wellness Centre at Karaikal has been established. Siddha / Ayurvedha Awareness training was conducted for Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) / Auxiliary Nursing Midwifery (ANMs) as per the National AYUSH Mission guidelines. Herbal gardens at CHC Mannadipet,

PHC Thirubuvanai, PHC Abishegapakkam & PHC Ariyur have been started. COVID-19 awareness programme and distribution of AYUSH KWATH medicine in all PHCs were done. An ISM&H Unit at AYUSH Health and Wellness Centre in PHC Villianur has been established. Yoga Session has been started in all the Wellness Centres functioning in the Primary Health Centres under “Ayushman Bharat” Scheme in the Puducherry region.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

40. With a view to strengthen the Information Technology applications in the Union Territory of Puducherry, revamping of official websites in accordance with the Guidelines of Indian Government Websites (GIGW) and making them persons-with-disability friendly has been completed. So far 24 websites have gone live out of 55 Government departments. Necessary technical support will be extended to the remaining 31 departments to host their websites early. Necessary training on web content management was imparted to

Web Information Managers. Under Capacity Building Programme, Government employees were trained in Office Automation three months part time course.

LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

41. Local Bodies provide a large range of services in relation to roads, water supply, housing, community development, etc. Under the Swachh Bharat Mission the Government of India have announced “Swachh Ranking” and the Puducherry Municipality stands at 258th rank and the Oulgaret Municipality at 171st rank on all India basis. In Zonal / regional basis the Karaikal Municipality ranked 35, Mahe Municipality 77 and Yanam Municipality 58.

42. The entire urban area of the Union Territory of Puducherry are covered under National Urban Livelihood Mission (NULM) so as to upgrade the livelihood of urban poor through gainful self-employment and, wages employment opportunities. To implement this scheme in the Union Territory of Puducherry, Government of India

has released ₹ 4.19 crore for the year 2020-21. ₹ 2.12 crore have been released to the five Municipalities to carry out the works under various components of NULM scheme.

43. In order to strengthen the formation of SHGs under NULM, 1,697 SHGs are assisted with the grant of ₹ 1.70 crore and 82 Area Level Federation (ALF) assisted with ₹ 41 lakh. Under Social Mobilization and Institutional Development of NULM, the urban poor households are financially assisted into 3 tier structure with Self Help Groups (SHGs), Area Level Federation (ALF) and City Level Federation (CLF). Under Employment through Skill Training and Placement (EST&P), 1,716 unskilled urban poor were imparted skill training courses involving an expenditure of ₹ 2.57 crore.

44. Bank loan assistance was provided to 1,165 SHGs, individuals and group enterprises during last year to the tune of ₹ 18 crore. Under Self-employment programme 510 persons were trained

to take up commercial ventures for sustainable living. 2,886 Street Vendors were identified and ID card issued to 2,134 street vendors and Certificate of Vending (COV) issued to 2,166 Vendors. 719 Urban Homeless persons were identified under Shelter for Urban Homeless programme and two shelters are functioning each one in Oulgaret Municipality and in Karaikal Municipality. So far, 13 Projects worth ₹ 6 crore have been completed under AMRUT, of which 8 are park development projects and 5 are sewerage and septage management projects.

LABOUR WELFARE

45. The Government is pursuing the labour welfare policy of attaining higher standards of working condition coupled with industrial growth and harmonious relationship as well as to produce multi-skilled work force through improvised training. As such, even in the prevailing COVID-19 pandemic, online job fair was conducted during the year 2020 to widen the employment

opportunities to the youth of Puducherry in which 734 candidates participated and 188 candidates were shortlisted.

46. Services relating to Factory Inspectorate like fresh licencing/Plan, registration/renewal, boiler licencing / renewal and periodical inspections as well as uploading of statutory forms to enable filing of the returns pertaining to Factories Act, 1948 and Allied Acts & Rules have been made online. Online system for approval, registration of new boiler and renewal of boiler certificate have been introduced.

47. So far 26,674 members have enrolled under the Puducherry Un-organised Labourers' Welfare Society. During last year, maternity benefit to the extent ₹ 1.32 lakh, funeral assistance for an amount of ₹ 9.80 lakh @ ₹ 7,000 and death benefits to the tune of ₹ 22 lakh were extended to eligible members.

POLICE

48. As the Hon'ble Members are aware, the police department's contribution during COVID-19 pandemic lockdown period was commendable and they deserve

appreciation of this august House. This Government is paying due attention to the strengthening of police infrastructure so as to ensure a peaceful Puducherry. CCTV cameras have been installed in important places and more cameras will be installed so as to contain criminals/anti-social activities. Cyber Forensic tools were purchased at a cost of ₹ 69.72 lakh to strengthen Cyber Crime prevention against Women & Children. Women Help Desk and Anti-Human Trafficking Units have been setup/strengthened in Police Stations at a cost of ₹ 1.14 crore. The process of police recruitment has been geared up for strengthening the force.

PORT

49. For the development of Puducherry Port under the Central Sector Scheme “Sagarmala”, environment clearance and coastal regulation zone clearance have been obtained from Government of India and work order issued to execute the capital dredging at the

mouth portion, sand trap area and inner channel in Puducherry Port to dredge 7.30 lakh cubic metre of sand at a cost of ₹ 33 crore.

50. The Karaikal Port has handled 7.32 million tons of cargo during the last financial year through which ₹ 7.70 crore revenue was earned. Maintenance dredging of 60,000 cubic metre was carried out at the mouth of the port to ensure livelihood of fishermen. A Captive Marine Terminal Facility functioning at Karaikal under the jurisdiction of Port Department has handled 6,725 tons of liquid cargo through which revenue of ₹ 8.30 lakh was realized.

PUBLIC WORKS

51. Hon'ble Members will obviously agree that infrastructure development is the key to the development of the economy. This Government is keen on creation of adequate infrastructure facilities and maintaining the

existing resources. Under water supply & sewerage sector, 15 major projects have been completed in different residential areas at a cost of ₹ 72.04 crore.

52. The check dam constructed across river Sankarabarani at Chettipet village involving an expenditure of ₹ 8.96 crore will largely be beneficial to the farmers of Chettipet and Manadipet village besides serving as a storage facility of 3 million liters of water. About 1,900 hectare of land in Chettipet village will get benefitted by this check dam. High level bridge across river Sankarabarani at Thirukanchi was completed at a cost of ₹ 29.21 crore benefitting the people of Thirukanchi, Odiampet, Thavalakuppam and surrounding villages by substantially reducing the travel time. Strengthening of certain existing roads was carried out in Puducherry, Karaikal and in Mahe regions with a total cost of ₹ 66.88 crore.

53. Anganwadi Building at Anbu Nagar in Villianur Commune with an estimated cost of ₹ 60 lakh and repair / renovation / improvement works at all school

buildings in Mahe region at a cost of ₹ 50 lakh were completed. The construction of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Vigyan Bhavan at the cost of ₹ 4.75 crore and construction of class rooms in P.K. Government High School with an expenditure of ₹ 1.54 crore were carried out in Yanam.

REVENUE

54. The contribution of Revenue department in disaster management especially in COVID-19 pandemic situation in the Union Territory of Puducherry deserves lot of appreciation. ₹ 12.06 crore was released to various line departments / offices from the Puducherry District Disaster Response Fund (PDDRF) to carry out various Covid-19 related activities during the year 2020-21. Of which, ₹ 7.39 crore was released to the Health Department towards purchase of testing Kits, conducting Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities for COVID vaccination and containment of COVID-19 outbreak, provision of food items to the quarantine staff and patients admitted in IGMCR&RI and Private Medical colleges / hospitals, etc.

55. Various COVID-19 related activities like launching of COVID-19 Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS), barricading of containment areas by Taluk offices in co-ordination with PWD, purchase of megaphones by Police Department, arrangement of night shelters by Municipality, arrangement of transportation for contact tracing and surveillance by NCC/NSS volunteers, setting-up of COVID-19 War room at Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) etc., were also carried out. Under Rajiv Gandhi Social Security Scheme, financial assistance of ₹ 2.64 crore was granted to 794 beneficiaries.

56. The Government is keen on avoiding the delay in sub-division of lands / plots. As a first step, complete survey and sub-division was done in Ashok Nagar of Saram Revenue Village and individual pattas have been issued to 594 beneficiaries so far. Computers, Printers and UPS have been purchased to the tune of ₹ 27 lakh in order to inter-link all the Taluk Offices with the Survey Directorate upto the level of Revenue Inspectors. Free house site pattas to landless labourers

under Land Grant Rules were issued to 461 families in Puducherry, 130 families in Karaikal and 11 families in Mahe region.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

57. I would like to mention that the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) is one of the major initiatives to eradicate poverty by providing employment opportunity particularly for rural population. Under this scheme, 10.58 lakh mandays were generated benefitting 47,854 rural households and 756 works were completed with an expenditure of ₹ 25.32 crore.

58. Swachh Bharath Mission (Gramin)-Phase II was launched to make Puducherry “ODF Plus” and approval for Annual Implementation Plan has been obtained from Government of India. 37,003 households were mobilized into SHGs under National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) and 265 Habitation Level Federation (HLF) formed. 815 SHGs have been provided with Revolving Fund. Community Investment Fund (CIF) was given to 96 PLFs to the tune of ₹ 8.64 crore.

59. Under RURBAN, six works are in progress *i.e.*, three works in Puducherry region viz., Kirumampakkam Lake Project for ₹ 9 crore, Access to Village Street for ₹ 3 crore and Construction of Bus shelter for ₹ 2.15 crore in Bahour and three works in Karaikal region viz., 24 x 7 water supply for ₹ 6 crore, Public Transport for ₹ 63 lakh and cement concrete road with drain for ₹ 2 crore in Thirunallar.

60. The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), has been launched by Government of India to provide connectivity to unconnected habitations as part of a poverty reduction strategy. This Union Territory Administration has taken up PMGSY-II for both new formation and up-gradation of rural roads. Government of India has consented to lay roads in Puducherry and Karaikal Districts to the extent of 110 Kms. To avail this funding, DRDA has prepared necessary District Rural Road Plan (DRRP) and the proposal for ₹ 48.80 crore has been approved by Government of India.

SCHOOL EDUCATION

61. Though the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the regular classes both in schools and colleges, the online classes are in full swing so that the students do not suffer. 1,02,439 students have benefitted under “Free distribution of Text Books, Note Books and Uniforms” scheme. Despite the schools having remained closed due to the pandemic, Food Security Allowance was distributed to 50,838 students under Midday Meals Scheme. 16,192 students got benefitted under the scholarship scheme to Other Economically Backward Class (OEBC) students and 17,443 students were benefitted under various scholarship schemes.

62. A onetime cash incentive of ₹ 5,000 each was distributed to 20 students who were State level winners in the National Talent Search Examination (NTSE) held during last year. Three students have cleared National Talent Search Stage-II examination conducted by Central Government and onetime cash incentive of ₹ 10,000 was disbursed to each student on the Students Day Function. Perunthalaivar Kamarajar Government High

School, Guriempeta has been upgraded as Perunthalaivar Kamarajar Government Junior College in Yanam from the academic year 2020-21.

HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

63. Hon'ble Members will agree that higher education plays a vital role in shaping the career of youths. Union Territory of Puducherry continues to be an educational hub and attracts more students in higher education from various parts of the country. Financial assistance to the tune of ₹ 18.77 crore was disbursed under Perunthalaivar Kamarajar Financial Assistance Scheme under which meritorious students selected through CENTAC gets financial assistance for pursuing higher studies in 2020-21. 438 medical students, 3,384 engineering students and 568 nursing students were benefitted last year through this scheme.

64. Puducherry Technological University Act was notified in the Puducherry Official Gazette after getting the approval of the President of India and it is the first

State University in the Union Territory of Puducherry. Perunthalaivar Kamarajar Institute of Engineering and Technology (PKIET), Karaikal and the Yanam Engineering College will be the constituent colleges of the Puducherry Technological University. All the Government Polytechnic Colleges will also be brought under the purview of the Technological University. Perunthalaivar Kamarajar Institute of Engineering and Technology, Karaikal will be positioned as Non-conventional Multi-Disciplinary Institute by starting courses like (i) Agricultural Engineering (ii) Petrochemical Engineering and (iii) Biomedical Engineering. To establish the new campus for PKIET, 25 Acres of Land have been acquired at Karaikal.

65. An amount of ₹ 5 crore has been sanctioned by Government of India for the development of research activities in Kanchi Mamunivar Centre for Post Graduate Studies, Puducherry. Approval has been obtained for starting a new branch namely B.Tech. (Mechatronics) with a sanctioned intake of 60 students and

MBA Programme in International Business and Innovation Entrepreneur & Venture Development with 60 seats in Pondicherry Engineering College in this academic year. It is an added advantage that the National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT) has approved setting up its centre at Women's Polytechnic College, Puducherry to offer Diploma, Certificate and Training Programme in IT related job oriented courses.

66. In order to support the students to continue their higher education, the application fee has been waived for all who intend to join Government / Society run Arts and Science Colleges, Law College, Polytechnics and Engineering Colleges during 2020-21. This benefitted nearly 10,000 aspiring students. It has also been decided to waive other miscellaneous fees such as Library fees, Sports Day fees, Magazine fees, College Day fees, Laboratory fees and such similar fees for all Below Poverty Line students for the academic year 2020-21.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT

67. I am happy to share with the Hon'ble Members that the Union Territory of Puducherry has ranked first among top performing States in the Country for the Bar Coding System being implemented in hospitals to ensure proper disposal of Bio-medical Waste as per the assessment made by the Central Pollution Control Board. One Real Time Continuous Air Quality Monitoring Station with display system has been installed at Town and Country Planning Department through Puducherry Pollution Control Committee with 100% financial assistance by Central Pollution Control Board to the tune of ₹ 1.10 crore.

68. Under Swachhta Action Plan, massive fruit bearing saplings were distributed to Government schools and cloth bags to the visitors of Dr. Abdul Kalam Science Centre and Planetarium as an alternative to Single Use Plastic bags. 20 automatic hand free sanitizers were supplied to Primary Health Centres as COVID-19 interventions. Puducherry Pollution Control Committee conducted Green Skill Development

Programme (GSDP) in “Pollution Monitors: Air and Water Pollution” for enhancing the skill requirement and providing Job opportunities to the students / job seekers with the financial assistance from the Ministry of Environment Forests and Climate Change, New Delhi in February and March 2021.

SOCIAL WELFARE

69. This Government continues to implement various welfare schemes/programmes for the benefit of differently abled, aged people and other weaker sections of the society in the Union Territory of Puducherry. In the Union Territory of Puducherry, 20,374 differently abled persons are benefitted under various welfare schemes. Monthly financial assistance is extended to 20,374 differently abled persons ranging from ₹ 1,500 to ₹ 3,300 involving an annual expenditure of ₹ 51.39 crore. Besides, other benefits like financial assistance to the differently abled persons for marriage, eye donation, funeral expenses, fuel subsidy, transport allowance, free supply of rice, free bus pass,

pre-matric / post-matric scholarship, Grant-in-aid to various NGOs, cash dole *in lieu* of free gift for Diwali, reimbursement of educational expenses to hearing impaired are also extended.

70. Assistance to maintain PONCARE society and assistance to the Pondicherry State Social Welfare Board are also extended by the Government. So far 13,487 Unique Disability ID (UDID) cards have been issued. Motorized Tricycles were distributed to 104 differently abled persons for which an amount of ₹ 55 lakh was spent.

71. In terms of the provisions under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, 'Equal Opportunity Policy' for the differently abled persons has been notified. State Advisory Board for persons with disabilities has also been constituted. Under the scheme "National Programme for Rehabilitation of Persons with disabilities", Government of India have released an amount of ₹ 100.17 lakh for creation of barrier-free environment in the Women's Polytechnic College,

Lawspet, Puducherry and the retrofitment work was completed. Relief assistance @ ₹ 500 for differently abled persons who are having 80% disability were disbursed to 1,259 beneficiaries during April and September 2020 under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana. To encourage the differently abled persons, Sports day was celebrated in February 2021 in which around 700 persons participated in various sports events.

TRANSPORT

72. Services being provided by the Transport Department like issue of temporary permits to contract carriages, payment of road tax, etc. have been made online in the year 2020. A Permanent Road Safety Cell has been constituted with the officials from Transport, Public Works, Police, Health and Education Departments as members. The Cell reviews the implementation of road safety related activities on fortnightly basis and suggests measures for reduction of road accidents. The 32nd Road Safety Awareness Programme was

observed with the concept of “Road Safety – Life Safety”. This year, it was observed for a period of one month instead of a week in the past. ₹ 80.25 crore was collected as Fees / Taxes in 2020-21 through Transport Department.

TOURISM

73. As the Hon'ble Members are well aware that Puducherry being a much sought after tourist destination not only for the domestic tourists, but also for foreigners. However, last year, the tourist arrivals considerably came down due to the breakout of COVID-19 pandemic. This Government is taking many initiatives to increase tourist arrivals to Puducherry. The operation and maintenance of the beach projects developed at Vambakeerapalayam, Veerampattinam and Pudukuppam have been outsourced. The accommodation facilities developed at Thirunallar in Karaikal have been handed over to Hotel Ashok Puducherry.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING

74. Under Perunthalaivar Kamaraj Centenary Housing Scheme (Phase-VI), financial assistance to the tune of ₹ 3.16 crore has been disbursed towards 2nd & 3rd instalment to 417 beneficiaries to construct their houses in their respective region of the Puducherry Union Territory approval has already been obtained for construction of 93% of the overall demand of 13,700 houses under the Beneficiary Led Construction component of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana scheme. 3,224 houses have been completed upto March 2021 out of the approved 12,706 houses. Under the Credit Linked Subsidy component being implemented through Banks, a target of 1,950 houses has been achieved in the Union Territory of Puducherry.

WELFARE OF BACKWARD CLASSES AND MINORITIES

75. The Government is working for the sustainable development of the persons belonging to Backward Classes and Minorities so as to bring them into the

main stream of the society. 3,898 minority students under Pre-Matric Scholarship and 593 Minority Students under Post-Matric Scholarship were benefitted for which expenditure of ₹ 98.84 lakh and ₹ 32.87 lakh was incurred, respectively. Similarly, 44 students were benefitted under Merit-*cum*-Means based Scholarship to Minority Students. Besides, three Government Boys / Girls Hostel in Puducherry, two Boys/Girls Hostel in Karaikal and one Boys Hostel in Yanam region are functioning with 85 inmates. A loan of ₹ 5 crore was provided by Government to PBC & MDC for repaying part of the loan to National Backward Classes and Finance Development Corporation (NBC & FDC), New Delhi last year.

WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

76. Various welfare schemes are implemented by this Government for the upliftment and empowerment of Women and Children. Financial assistance of ₹ 25,000 towards performance of marriage of poor brides was granted to 222 beneficiaries last year.

Financial assistance of ₹ 25,000 towards Marriage of Daughter of Destitute Widows was granted to 164 beneficiaries. NSC certificates for ₹ 25,000 were issued to 25 single girl children studying 8th to 10th standard. Financial Assistance in the form of Fixed Deposit for a sum of ₹ 30,000 to parents who have undergone sterilization with one or two girl children was sanctioned to 64 beneficiaries. Incentive of ₹ 50,000 for widow's remarriage was granted. In total, a sum of ₹ 1.28 crore was spent for granting the said assistances to women.

77. “Old Age Pension” scheme is continuously implemented by this Government. At present, 1,54,847 persons of old age, widows, destitute, unmarried women and transgender are availing monthly assistance under this scheme for which ₹ 349.87 crore was spent during 2020-21. On the occasion of Diwali festival, cash doles of ₹ 900 per family ration card was directly paid to the bank account of 1,21,899 red family ration card holders with at least two family members, and ₹ 450 was paid to 13,399 single member red family ration card holders. A sum

of ₹ 11.57 crore was spent for this purpose. 25,939 children and 9,458 mothers were benefitted under Integrated Child Development services scheme and a sum of ₹ 13.09 crore was spent for this purpose.

78. Under the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) scheme, cash incentive of ₹ 5,000 was transferred directly to the bank account of Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers (PW & LM) for the first living child. A sum of ₹ 1.84 crore was spent under this scheme benefitting 4,616 beneficiaries. Grant-in-aid to the tune of ₹ 3.40 crore was released to 23 Child Care institutions run by NGOs and ₹ 95.41 lakh was released to five Government-run Children homes functioning under the Social Welfare Department towards maintenance charges of the children residing in the above institutions under the “Integrated Child Protection Scheme”. “Swadhar Greh”, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme being implemented through NGOs aims at providing food, shelter, clothing and security to

women in difficult circumstances. The Government released a sum of ₹ 21.18 lakh towards the reimbursement of expenditure by the NGOs on this score.

ADI DRAVIDAR AND SCHEDULED TRIBE WELFARE

79. This Government is implementing various welfare schemes for the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe people to improve their socio-economic conditions and educational status in the Union Territory of Puducherry. A novel scheme viz., 'Grant of full fees to all SC / ST students irrespective of their family income studying in any private school recognized by Government including Government Aided Schools and to pursue Higher / Professional Courses in Colleges and Universities in the Union Territory of Puducherry has been notified in January 2021 so as to provide education and uplift the downtrodden community in the society. During 2020-21, financial assistance to the tune of ₹ 19.60 crore was disbursed to 20,571 SC students for their education, training, self-employment, etc.

80. Under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Subsidy Scheme, an amount of ₹ 10.90 crore was sanctioned to 1,184 SC beneficiaries. Also, under the Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi House Construction Subsidy scheme of the Union Territory Government, an amount of ₹ 2.31 crore was sanctioned to 194 SC beneficiaries for construction of well designed concrete houses. Financial assistance of ₹ 75,000 was granted to 655 SC families for poor brides' marriage to the tune of ₹ 4.92 crore.

81. With a view to reducing the Infant Mortality Rate, financial assistance at the rate of ₹ 18,000 per beneficiary (₹ 9,000 - Prenatal ; ₹ 9,000 - Postnatal) is being provided to the pregnant and lactating SC women and 1,249 SC women were benefitted through this scheme. Financial assistance of ₹ 3,000 per month was disbursed to help the SC family members who are suffering from various prolonged diseases and an amount of ₹ 7.09 crore was spent last year for this purpose. An incentive of ₹ 2.50 lakh was granted to inter-caste marriage couples and 135 married couples were benefitted involving an expenditure of

₹ 3.37 crore. During the year 2020-21, 1,197 families were granted financial assistance at the rate ₹ 15,000 each to perform the funeral ceremony of the deceased persons for which an amount of ₹ 1.80 crore was disbursed.

82. With a view to completely eliminate open defecation in the Union Territory of Puducherry, ₹ 20,000 is granted for SC families for construction of Latrines. ₹ 12.66 crore was provided as Grants-in-aid to PADCO and Yanam Municipality for carrying out civic amenities works in SC / ST habitation areas. An amount of ₹ 69.22 lakh was granted as relief to 31 victims under SC / ST Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989. Cash assistance @ ₹ 500 each *in lieu* of Sarees and Dhoties to all SC / ST people in the Union Territory of Puducherry, above 18 years of age holding Red / Yellow Family Ration card was disbursed through ECS (DBT) for Diwali and Pongal festival. Accordingly, for Diwali 2020, ₹ 6.18 crore was disbursed to 1,23,583 beneficiaries and for Pongal 2021, ₹ 6.21 crore disbursed to 1,24,172 beneficiaries.

83. Finally, I would like to reiterate that the people of Union Territory of Puducherry have voted this Government with high expectations and I hope that all the Hon'ble Members of this august House under the able guidance of Hon'ble Chief Minister will work hard to fulfill the expectations of the people and make the Union Territory of Puducherry prosperous, free from poverty and unemployment in the course of time. The Government is taking all out efforts to contain the COVID-19 pandemic and has largely succeeded. I am confident that the Union Territory of Puducherry will certainly be free from the COVID-19 pandemic soon with the co-operation of Government machinery and the people of the Union Territory. I conclude this address by seeking your co-operation in this great march to achieve new heights of excellence.

JAI HIND.....

VAZHGA BHARATHAM !

VALARGA PUDUCHERRY !!

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