सत्यमेव जयते

GOVERNMENT OF PUDUCHERRY

Address by

Thiru K. KAILASHNATHAN

Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor

to

THE PUDUCHERRY LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY



10th March, 2025

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இயற்றலும் ஈட்டலும் காத்தலும் காத்த
வகுத்தலும் வல்லது அரசு.

-(குறள்)

(One who creates avenues of growth, earns wealth, safeguards it, and shares it as required, is an ABLE RULER)

Hon'ble Speaker and Distinguished Members of this August House,

VANAKKAM!

With immense pleasure, as I address you for the first time, I extend my heartiest good wishes to the members of this Hon'ble House and the people of Union Territory of Puducherry. It is a privilege to be part of the development journey of a territory which is renowned throughout the country as an exemplar of peaceful harmony, spiritual quest and socio-economic development. I take this opportunity to thank all of you and the people of Puducherry for having extended your valuable cooperation and support to my Government as well as to me in our collective endeavour for further social and economic development of this Union Territory.

2. At the outset, I would like to express deep condolences at the demise of Dr. Manmohan Singh former Prime Minister of India. His contribution to nation-building and dealing with economic challenges during an illustrious public service career was seminal and the loss due to his death will remain irreparable. I am also saddened at the demise of M. D. Ramachandran, former Chief Minister of Puducherry who played an important role in advancing the socio-economic development of the Territory.

3. Since the beginning of my association with you from August 2024 onwards, it has been a period of intensified activities for targeted development on various fronts. I am happy to inform the Hon'ble Members that the action plans of the Government are centred around the one main objective of 'providing substantial and gainful employment opportunities for your skilled, competent and youthful human resource'.

4. Besides, conducting reviews on implementation of various projects and schemes of the Government, I have personally visited different places in

all four regions of the Union Territory, particularly in the outlying regions of Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam. Having examined the progress of important schemes during such visits, I place on record my appreciation for the commendable work done by the Hon'ble Ministers, representatives of this House, Officers and employees of the Government in keeping up an excellent tempo of development activities. In my opinion, Puducherry State has one of the best social welfare schemes covering students, aged, widows, differently abled, weaker sections, *etc.,* thereby every person is covered under the benefit of the Government welfare schemes.

5. The Fengal cyclone is one of the worst disasters and brought heavy rainfall which is highest since last 50 years. The Government has promptly responded and made tremendous rehabilitation efforts in a short span of time. This has restored the normalcy of life of our citizen at the shortest time. The Government had extended the relief of ₹ 5,000 each to the families holding Ration Cards in time with an

amount of ₹ 177.22 crore. Similarly the farmers have been extended immediate relief of ₹ 30,000 per ha. ₹ 24.11 crore was extended to 12,955 farmers. The livestocks are very important backbone of rural economy and their loss also compensated adequately. Together the Government had extended a relief of ₹ 207.18 crore as a relief measure for the Fengal cyclone. I congratulate the HCM for announcing the relief package promptly and the relief measures announced were also extended in the shortest time which is one of the fastest ever such relief extended in the entire country in my knowledge.

6. I express my sincere gratitude to Government of India for providing financial assistance to the tune of ₹ 61 crore as immediate relief for "FENGAL" cyclone to Union Territory of Puducherry, which not only is the first instance of such assistance being given to the Union Territory but together with the ₹ 22 crore released earlier resulted in availability of ₹ 83 crore in the State Disaster Response Fund for immediate relief.

7. My Government is affirming its commitment to meet the development challenges with effective utilization of the available resources for the upliftment and welfare of the people of this Union Territory. On the fiscal front, an amount of ₹ 13,235 crore has been fixed as Revised Estimates for 2024-25 over the Budget Estimate of ₹ 12,700 crore with an additional amount of ₹ 535 crore meant for various committed development expenditure of the Union Territory of Puducherry.

8. It is with great satisfaction that I inform the August House of our Union Territory being ranked second among all Union Territories with a composite score of 74 in the SDG India Index 2023-24, surpassing the previous score of 68 released in 2020-21. Puducherry has been classified as "Achiever" in 'Affordable and Clean Energy' ; "Tops First" in the goal of 'Zero Hunger', 'Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure', and 'Reduced Inequalities' compared with the other Union Territories.

9. Filling up of existing Government vacancies in an objective, fair and transparent manner is a priority of my Government. In the last four years, about 2,444 vacant posts in various Government departments have been filled up through direct and open recruitment. Remaining recruitments are in the pipeline.

10. Further, in the Union Territory of Puducherry, 236 micro, small and medium industries have been established creating new employment opportunities for 10,888 youths. Apart from this, various skill development trainings and 35 mega job fairs were conducted through which 8,460 youths have got employment in various private sector jobs, thus totaling 21,792 employed youths in both Government and private sectors in the Union Territory. As a result, the unemployment growth rate of Union Territory of Puducherry has declined from 6.7% in 2020-21 to 4.3% in 2024-25, a significant drop of 2.4%.

INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

11. The French Development Agency assisted Water Supply Project costing ₹ 534 crore is being implemented by the Government of Puducherry. It is proposed to tap surface water sources from 5 major lakes viz., Ossudu, Bahour, Abishegapakkam, Korkadu and Vadhanur as well as intended to tap ground water from the deep aquifer by installing 40 additional tube wells near Sankaraparani River and within urban areas. It is planned to rehabitate the existing PVC distribution system with metallic pipe and HPPE pipes along with construction of Overhead Tanks in Villianur, Utharavahinipet, Jayaram Nagar, Amaithi Nagar of Kalapet area. So far tender has been invited for the above works for an amount of ₹ 123.25 crore.

12. An Integrated Urban Livability Project for Union Territory of Puducherry has been submitted to Government of India for ₹ 4,750 crore with objective to enhance water availability by constructing 2 nos. of desalination plants each with capacity of 50 MLD,

augmentation of surface water sources and improving existing water supply systems, sewerage & drainage facilities and road connectivity with National Highways in all four regions of Puducherry by availing Asian Development Bank (ADB) loan assistance. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Government of India has recently recommended the proposal for ₹ 3290 crore in respect of water supply, sewerage & drainage components and Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) has also recommended the proposal in respect of road components to Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance.

13. Government of Puducherry has requested the MoRTH in October 2024 for providing financial assistance to the tune of ₹ 1000 crore for construction of single décor elevated corridor from Rajiv Gandhi Square to Indira Gandhi Square and also for widening and improvement of Cuddalore Road for a stretch of 20 km. The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MoRTH) has considered the request and conveyed that the elevated corridor will be taken up in the upcoming financial year.

14. It is proposed to repair, renovate and restore 78 tanks in Puducherry region with the objective to store surface water for drinking and agriculture purposes and also to improve the ground water potential. A Detailed Project Report has been formulated by engaging WAPCOS for ₹ 750 crore and will be submitted to the Ministry of Jal Shakti for availing 90% central grant under centrally sponsored program of Repair, Renovation & Restoration (RRR) scheme.

15. The project for 'Strengthening Coastal Resilience and Economy in the Union Territory of Puducherry (PY-SHORE)' was submitted to Department of Economic Affairs, Government of India in the month of October 2024. The project, envisaged for a total cost of ₹ 1,433 crore with the support of the World Bank, is proposed to address the pressing coastal challenges and coastal livelihood vulnerabilities thereby ensuring a resilient coastal economy for Puducherry. The components of the projects include interception and diversion of sewerage and construction of Sewage Treatment Plant with a 50 MLD capacity

for left out areas of Puducherry, Tertiary treatment of 17 MLD capacity STP at Kanagan Lake and laying pipeline from Kanagan Lake STP to Murungapakkam Lake surplus, Puducherry, Recharging shallow aquifers along coastal zone using monsoon runoff for ₹ 590 crore. The proposal has been cleared by the Ministry of Earth sciences and Ministry of Environment and Forests and it is in consideration of NITI AYOG and Ministry of Home Affairs.

16. During the year 2024-25, NABARD has sanctioned projects worth of ₹ 171.98 crore for works relating to Improvement of roads, Rehabilitation of Muthialpet water supply system, construction of brackish water treatment plants with 1 MLD capacity each at seven locations in Puducherry. The road projects in Karaikal, Mahe and Puducherry has already been tendered for ₹ 99.38 crore and works are grounded. A total of 13 number of projects with a total estimate cost of ₹ 221.17 crore have already been submitted to NABARD.

17. Thus the total investment for the ongoing works is ₹ 659 crore under AFD assisted project and NABARD and the new works for ₹ 8,467 crore will be taken-up in coming years.

18. The Government of India has allocated ₹ 104 crore for establishing the PM-Ekta Mall in the Union Territory of Puducherry. The DPR of this very important project with significant economic and cultural benefits has been submitted to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India. When completed, the PM-Ekta Mall would help in showcasing and marketing handicrafts from all over the country, especially our own handicrafts and GI tagged products and the new works for ₹ 8,467 crore will be taken up in the coming years. We have initated proposals and are already in talks with concerned authorities to extend Puducherry airport runway to 3,000 metres and enhance Rail connectivity to Puducherry.

SMART CITY PROJECTS

19. The Puducherry Smart City Development is implementing various projects to the tune of ₹ 620.00 crore through various agencies like PWD, Pondicherry Municipality, Transport Department, Health Department *etc.* Further, these works were taken up under various sectors like Education, Health, Transport, Storm water drain, Sewerage. In this, works to tune of ₹ 175.00 crore has been completed. These works include has been completed. Furthermore, wosk to the tune of ₹ 445.00 crore are ongoing and these works are scheduled to be completed early.

20. The new smart integrated bus stand built at a cost of ₹ 33.37 crore is going to be dedicated to the public soon. This new infrastructure will provide better facilities and will play a major role in the decongestion of the traffic and better passenger experience. Similarly the Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC) being built at a cost of ₹ 99.63 crore is an advanced public utitlity with features of data management relating to health, sanitation, public transportation, traffic and public safety.

21. Despite the sources and opportunities of augmenting our revenue resources being very limited, the Union Territories own revenue receipts have increased from ₹ 8,418.96 crore in 2020-21 to ₹ 11,311.92 crore in 2023-24 showing a growth rate of 34.36% due to the innovative measures adopted by the Government.

22. Hon'ble Members will also be happy to know that Puducherry has made impressive achievements in terms of economic growth and poverty alleviation. The size of economy, in terms of GSDP, has increased by 44.06% during the last five years, achieving an annual average growth rate of 9.56%. The growth rate in economy which was -2.21% in 2020-21 has reached 8.81% in 2024-25.

23. The Per Capita income at current prices has grown by a significant 5.33 % in 2024-25 (AE) to reach ₹ 3,02,680 from ₹ 2,87,354 in 2023-24, which translates to an additional ₹ 15,000 per person.

24. Before moving on to the major achievements of the Government during the current financial year 2024-25, let me mention some of the major schemes being successfully implemented by the Government displaying its commitment and caring vision toward the welfare of the people, especially the youth: For instance, "CM Cares for the Empowerment of the New Born Girl Child",

- "Grant of Monthly Financial Assistance to women of Head of Families Living Below Poverty Line",
- "Chief Minister's Grant of Subsidy for LPG Cylinder",
- "Evening Millet Snacks to the Students of all Government and Government Aided Schools",
- "Award of Cash Incentive to the Toppers at Regional Level and Students Scoring Centum in the subjects in Public Examinations",

- "Distribution of Free Laptops to 11th Standard Studying in Government and Government Aided Higher Secondary Schools",

- "10% Reservation of seats in MBBS/BDS/ BAMS Courses to the Students who Studied in the Government Schools of Union Territory of Puducherry and who have qualified in the NEET Examination", and

- "Grant of Full Fees to the Eligible SC/ST Students",

25. Under the Perunthalaivar Kamaraj Housing Scheme, the Government has ensured that 5,302 poor families who did not have their own houses now have completed their dream houses since 2021 and 5,252 houses are at various stages of construction. Under the PMAY Scheme, the Government of India is giving ₹ 1.5 lakh for each houseless poor family. The Government of Puducherry has increased the State share from ₹ 2.5 lakh to ₹ 3.5 lakh in the year 2021 and further increased

to ₹ 4 lakh in the year 2024. The other beneficiaries had been receiving ₹ 50,000 as State share before 2022 which has increased to ₹ 2 lakh in 2022. An amount of ₹ 208 crore has been disbursed under the scheme since the year 2021.

26. I will now turn to apprise Hon'ble Member of the major achievements made by this Government under various sectors.

AGRICULTURE AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

27. This Government has been extending production incentives to aid the adoption of improved and modern technologies by the farmers with the objective to increase the area under cultivation, overall production and productivity of field crops. The Government also supports farmers to overcome the financial constraints and undertake essential farm operations at appropriate times through various State and Central schemes.

28. The Minimum Support Price for paddy has increased consistently over the past five years. The MSP for paddy has increased from ₹ 1,868 per quintal in 2020-2021 to ₹ 2,300 per quintal in 2024-2025. The expected margin to farmers over their cost of production are estimated to be highest in case of bajra (77%) followed by tur (59%), maize (54%) and urad (52%). For rest of the crops, margin to farmers over their cost of production is estimated to be at 50%. The net sown area which stood as 15405 hac. in 2020-21 has increased to 16274 hac. in 2023-24. Similarly, the Gross cropped Area has also shown an increase to 26759 hac. in 2020-21 as against 30416 hac. in 2023-24.

29. During the year 2025-26, the Government of India has communicated a tentative allocation of ₹ 15.82 crore under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes as well as under the scheme on "National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF)" has been approved for Puducherry Union Territory.

30. Under the CSS - Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM) from the year 2021-22, an amount of ₹ 7.24 crore, was utilized to benefit 440 farmers through the distribution of various agricultural machineries like tractors, power tillers, transplanters, power weeders, rotavators, baler and drones. This year the interventions at ₹ 4.65 crore are planned under the Scheme.

31. Under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), a flagship scheme of the Hon'ble Prime Minister implemented from Rabi 2016-17 in Puducherry Union Territory. The claim disbursement under PMFBY for Rabi 2021-22, Kharif 2022 and Kharif 2023 to the tune of ₹ 12.30 crore has been successfully disbursed to 20,513 enrolled farmers. The conduct of Crop cutting Experiments in notified crops raised during Samba/Thalady season which has encountered the calamity of heavy rainfall during its growth phase due to Fengel cyclone and subjected to yield loss is under progress. The actual yield data obtained in the Crop cutting Experiments to be

uploaded by 31st March 2025 as per the seasonality discipline shall be subjected to calculation of yield loss in the National Crop Insurance Portal (NCIP) and claims for yield loss shall be paid to the farmers directly through the Digi-claim module of the NCIP.

32. Under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi, 19 instalments amounting to ₹ 33.54 crore have been disbursed under Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme so far.

33. The Government of Puducherry has notified a new scheme "Extension of assistance to farmers for performing post-harvest operations to upgrade the quality of paddy to meet the standards for procurement through Food Corporation of India @ ₹ 2/kg. of Paddy for ensuring Fair and Remunerative Price for their produce".

34. Under the scheme "Crop Production Technology (CPT)", a sum of ₹ 5.87 crore and ₹ 4 crore has been extended as production incentive to 7,934 farmers of Puducherry and 3,497 farmers

of Karaikal region respectively towards production of high yielding varieties of Sugarcane, Groundnut, Pulses, Gingelly, Millets, Cotton, and traditional varieties of Paddy.

35. An amount of ₹ 9.15 crore was released as subsidy towards extension of free electricity to the farmers for irrigation purposes in the Union Territory of Puducherry.

36. During 2024-25, as a preventive measure, 73,000 vaccinations against Foot and Mouth Disease for cattle, sheep and goats, 6,500 against Brucellosis for calves, 72,500 against Lumpy Skin Disease for cattle and 13,500 poultry immunizations against Raniket Disease totaling to 1,65,500 vaccine doses were administered free of cost to the livestock and poultry in the Union Territory of Puducherry.

CIVIL SUPPLIES AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

37. During this year Government of India has spent an amount of ₹ 15 crore on monthly basis to benefit 1.90 lakh "Antyodaya Anna Yojana" (AAY) and

"Priority House Hold" (PHH) card holders. Under the 'State Free Rice Scheme', an amount of ₹ 130.64 crore was spent to benefit 3.37 lakh family ration card holders.

38. During Deepawali Festival 2024, 10 Kg. rice and 2 Kg. sugar have been disbursed at free of cost benefitting 3.37 lakh ration card holders through Fair Price Shops in Union Territory of Puducherry involving an expenditure of ₹ 17.43 crore. Similarly, during Pongal Festival 2025, an amount of ₹ 25.58 crore was distributed to 3.41 lakh ration card holders as cash gift of ₹ 750 *in lieu of* the Pongal gift hamper.

39. Under the Chief Minister's LPG subsidy scheme, an amount of ₹ 13.08 crore has been spent to benefit 1.82 lakh ration card holders.

40. All Fair Price Shops have started functioning in the four regions of the Union Territory of Puducherry and also action is being taken to rejuvenate the Public Distribution System.

COOPERATION

41. The Co-operatives in the Union Territory of Puducherry continues to play a vital role, particularly in providing credit support to agriculture and allied activities in rural areas.

42. The Government implemented the Agricultural loan waiver scheme, under which the Principal, Interest and penal interest amounting to ₹ 11.61 crore has been waived benefitting 1,579 small and marginal farmers who are members of Primary Agricultural Co-operative Credit Societies, Farmers Service Co-operative Societies and Puducherry State Co-operative Banks.

43. Cattle feed subsidy of ₹ 7.23 crore has been disbursed to 8,612 members of the Milk Co-operative Societies on Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) Mode. In order to strength the Handloom Co-operative sector, a sum of ₹ 2.54 crore has been released.

44. All Primary Agricultural Co-operative Credit Societies (PACS) have been converted into Multipurpose PACS by adopting the major initiative taken by

Government of India to expand the scope of activities and increase the income generation potential of the village Co-operatives. Nearly 56 PACS have adopted the uniform model bylaws, 26 PACS have started the operation of Common Service Centers and 15 PACS have been given permission by Government of India for opening of Pradhan Mantri Jan Aushadhi Kendras (PMJAK). The Thavalakuppam Primary Agricultural Co-operative Credit Society has successfully started selling generic medicines due to which quality medicines are now available at nominal prices at the village level. Additionally, 9 PACS are now operating fertilizer distribution centers out of which 6 societies have been upgraded as Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samridhi Kendras. I am happy to inform that the PACS in the Union Territory of Puducherry, have enrolled as members of the National level Multi-State Co-operative Society for certified seeds, exports and organic food products which will enable farmers to sell their products on all India level basis.

POWER

45. The Government has made substantial progress in augmenting the power availability to meet the peak demand from 490 MW to 570 MW since last 4 years. This has made the availability of quality power to the general public which has increased the power consumption from 2782 million units to 3200 million units during the same period.

46. Since Power is a crucial infrastructure input and the performance efficiency in this sector have a bearing on the growth of the overall economy of the Union Territory, Hon'ble Members will be happy to know that the power situation in our Union Territory is stable and satisfactory.

47. Under the scheme "Prime Minister Surya Ghar Mufti Bijili Yojana", residential Roof Top solar programme, Roof Top Solar plants with a net capacity of 1.88 MW was installed for 493 Domestic Consumers and subsidy to the tune of ₹ 3.01 crore released during 2024-25.

48. Under the scheme "Power System Development Fund", all the Power Line Carrier Communications were converted to Optical Fiber Ground Wire cables and Remote Terminal Units were installed in the substations functioning with above 132 KV power in all four regions with a project cost of ₹ 4.11 crore.

49. Under various development schemes, 43 new distribution transformers of various capacities were energized and enhanced to higher capacities and 80 Kms. of HT lines and LT lines were energized. Besides energizing 6 HT and 19 LT new Industrial Services, 6,630 Domestic services, 1,298 commercial services, 182 Agricultural services and 2,366 LED Street lights were provided. Under the Cable conversion scheme, 157 LT Overhead services were converted into Under Ground cable systems.

50. In the Union Territory of Puducherry, Smart metering project, Strengthening of existing distribution infrastructure, Establishment of new Substations at

Lawspet and Thavalakuppam, Augmentation of Power Transformers at Korkadu, Thethampakkam substations and at Thondamanatham Auto Substation, laying of 110 KV UG Cable from Vengatta Nagar Substation to JIPMER Gas Insulated Substation projects have commenced in the current year with a total projected cost of ₹ 689.25 crore.

FISHERIES AND FISHERMEN WELFARE

51. This Government is keen on development of fisheries sector which is one of the growth propellers for providing economic growth.

52. Union Territory of Puducherry has 50 fishing villages having the population of nearly 1.14 lakh who venture into sea for fishing with 1911 non-motorised, 3376 motorised, 730 mechanised fishing crafts and gears contributing a growth of Union Territory of Puducherry immensely. The Government has established various fisheries infrastructure such as fishing harbour, fish landing centre, Net mending shed, Auction Hall, Work shelter, fish drying platform, *etc.*

for the promotion of Fisheries Sector in Puducherry. In addition, the Government is also keen to promote aquaculture and has decided to improve the coverage area of aquaculture through more freshwater and brackish water areas. The Fisheries Sector has strong Co-operative movement and emphasis has been now paid more on formation of fisher women Co-operative Societies to promote "Pen Shakti" in the development. Karaikal has formed three new Fisher Women Societies recently.

53. Under the Central Scheme of PMMSY, the Government of India has sanctioned ₹ 120 crore for establishment of "smart and integrated fishing harbour" in Karaikal. The Central Institute of Coastal Engineering for Fishery (CICEF), Bangalore will play an active role in the establishment smart and green components in the upcoming fishing harbour in Karaikal at World standard. Such World class facility is going to be a big gift to the Karaikal fishers community, by Government of India.

54. Government of India has approved installation of 14 units of Artificial Reefs at an estimated cost of ₹ 4.34 crore for the Union Territory of Puducherry. The Department has identified Ten sites in Puducherry and four sites in Karaikal from the sites identified by CMFRI. The Cement Concrete casting of the Artificial reef component structures is under progress. During the 70th Meeting of the Project Appraisal Committee of the Government of India held on 29.1.2025 at NFDB Hyderabad, has recommended 25 more nos. of the Artificial Reefs at an estimated value of ₹ 7.44 crore as 100% Central Share under PMMSY.

55. The Government is aware of the issues of crossing International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) and wants to permanently provide a solution through deep sea fishing policy. The Government has already selected two deep sea fishing vessels for fisher women at Puducherry and four more vessels at Karaikal at unit cost of ₹ 1.2 crore, with 60% subsidy for women category under PMMSY scheme, besides facilitating bank loan for the remaining 40%.

56. In order to promote the deep sea fishing in a larger scale, the Department of Fisheries and Fishermen Welfare, Puducherry had conducted a Joint Working Group meeting with all Central Fisheries Institutions namely, Fisheries Survey of India (FSI), Mumbai, Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI), Cochin, Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), Hyderabad and Marine Products Exports Development Authority (MPEDA),Cochin. The Joint Work Group is now formulating a policy for deep sea fishing with an aim to encourage the fishermen to venture towards the Andaman Sea and to bring large fish catches in environmentally sustainable manner through identifying the potential fish landing zones using the satellite and recent technology. The fish catches would be value added and through processing and to promote the possible ways of exports.

57. This effort will alleviate the suffering of fishermen arising due to crossing of IMBL and will give a relief to a long standing problem faced by fishermen community.

58. I am happy to inform this august House that the Government of India, Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways, has approved 3 projects towards the establishment of Floating Jetties *(i.e.)* Creation of Berthing facilities at Ariyankuppam River, Vambakeerapalayam in Puducherry and Arasalar River in Karaikal for ₹ 190 crore. Similarly the DPR for fishing harbour at Mahe is being prepared at cost of ₹ 70.00 crore.

59. During the year 2024-25, this Department had spent nearly ₹ 62.00 crore as welfare measures to the fishermen community, which includes State and CSS funds, in the form of infrastructure facilities, diesel subsidy, fishery requisites *etc.,* This will be a great support to fishermen for their professional livelihood.

60. In an effort to augment the marine productivity the CMFRI was requested to identify potential sites for Sea-weed farming. The CMFRI have identified 15 potential sites in Puducherry and 10 in

Karaikal region and have proposed to integrate Sea-Cage farming with Sea-weed culture empowering Fisher Women of Puducherry and Karaikal.

61. Government of India has approved for development of two Climate Resilient Coastal Fishing Villages at an estimated cost of ₹ 2 crores each. The Department has proposed Narambai in Puducherry and Pattinacherry in Karaikal and the DPR has been submitted to Government of India.

62. "Ban relief assistance" to the tune of ₹ 12.36 crore was disbursed to 19,021 fishermen families during the current financial year. Similarly, lean relief assistance to the tune of ₹ 5.74 crore was also provided to 19,129 families. Monthly old age pension amounting to ₹ 21.53 crore was given to 8,812 aged fishers in the Union Territory of Puducherry. Further diesel subsidy amounting to ₹ 10.17 crore was released to 350 registered mechanized fishing boats owners.

HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE

63. This Government has been providing promotive, preventive and curative health care services under various National programmes and State specific schemes.

64. I am happy to share in this august House that Mahatma Gandhi Postgraduate Institute of Dental Sciences has received "PIERRE FAUCHARD Academy Award" for the 'Best Dental College in Scientific Research of the State' for the year 2024. Further, permission has been granted by Government of India to start a New Postgraduate (MDS) Course in the Speciality of Paediatric and Preventive Dentistry.

65. Rajiv Gandhi Government Women and Children Hospital has received the LaQshya National Certification for providing improved quality care in labour room and maternity operation theatres. The Maternal Mortality and Infant Mortality are well below the national targets, testifying to the high-quality medical care being given to the women and children in the Union Territory of Puducherry.

66. During the year 2024-25, an average of 11,64,816 patients from Puducherry and the adjoining States have got treatment as outpatients in the Government Hospitals, including Primary Health Centres and Community Health Centres.

67. Also, the Government Hospitals conducted 28,939 Major and Minor Surgeries, including 94 Open Heart Bypass Surgeries and 6 Valve Replacement Surgeries.

68. During the current year, an advanced Cath-Lab for Cardiology, neuro ICU for Neurology, full-fledged telemedicine hub for supporting the primary health care services at outlying regions and exclusive stroke clinic have been set up at Indira Gandhi Government General Hospital and Postgraduate Institute.

69. Under Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA) Scheme, 8 Ultra Sound Machines were procured at a cost of ₹ 1.06 crore and installed in Ariyankuppam, Bahour, Villianur, Lawspet, Thirubuvanai

primary health centres and Mannadipet, Karikalampakkam, Thirunallar community health centres to identify High Risk pregnancies in order to ensure safe deliveries.

70. Hon'ble Prime Minister of India launched the Ayushman Bharat Vaya Vandana Scheme during October 2024. It is a health insurance program that provides free medical treatment to senior citizens aged 70 years and above. Under this scheme 7,600 beneficiaries have got registered in the Union Territory of Puducherry.

71. Out of the enrolled 56,392 beneficiaries under the Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, 36,207 beneficiaries were benefitted with tertiary healthcare interventions to the tune of ₹ 29.86 crore.

72. The Ministry of Ayush has approved and sanctioned ₹ 10.50 crore for construction of 30 bedded Ayush Hospital at Karaikal.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

73. Technology is this era's bedrock of societal and economic progress and the Government has put in efforts to utilize technologies for enhanced efficiency and transparency in governance.

74. Web application e-Office has been implemented in all the departments of Union Territory of Puducherry to automate the file processing. For this purpose, 10,000 user licenses were procured from NIC. So far, 3,585 e-Office user IDs have been created and 22,425 e-files, 1,11,147 e-receipts have been moved in e-Office. Further, Phase-2 of e-Office has been initiated extending the e-Office implementation to all Public Sector Undertakings.

LABOUR WELFARE

75. The Government is fully aware of the invaluable contribution of our workforce in nation building and has been consistently taking steps to protect their dignity, health and promote their inclusive and holistic welfare.

76. "The Pondicherry Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board" has enrolled 43,161 beneficiaries and extended various welfare assistance to the workers like marriage, maternity, medical, funeral and death benefits to the tune of ₹ 23.90 crore. Further, Deepavali cash gift was enhanced from ₹ 4,000 to ₹ 5,000 and amount of ₹ 21.58 crore was disbursed. Special eye camp was conducted for the enrolled beneficiaries and spectacles were provided at free of cost.

77. In the Puducherry Un-organised Labourers' Welfare Society, 27,394 members are enrolled. During 2024-25, maternity benefit and funeral assistance totaling to ₹ 7.76 lakh were extended to 116 beneficiaries. Similarly, Deepavali cash gift was provided to 26,625 members incurring an expenditure of ₹ 4 crore.

78. I am happy to announce that during this financial year, this Government has notified increased minimum wages for 19 categories of employment.

LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

79. AMRUT 2.0 Mission Launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, (MoHUA) aims to make all towns in India "water secure" by ensuring every household has access to functional water tap connections. Under the scheme, ₹ 150 crore allocated for universal water supply, water body rejuvenation, sewerage and septage management. The construction of new STPs at the cost ₹ 72 crore with capacities of 15 MLD in Puducherry and 11 MLD in Karaikal will enable 20% - 40% wastewater recycling, ensuring sustainable water management. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has sanctioned ₹ 8.4 crore as an incentive for data-driven urban governance, aiming to improve decision-making and service delivery for citizens under AMRUT 2.0 reforms.

80. Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban) 2.0 envisions making all cities 'Garbage Free' and ensuring grey and black water management in cities not covered

under AMRUT. The Government of India has approved taking up projects costing ₹ 105.40 crore in solid waste management, used water management, and sanitation areas focusing on source segregation of solid waste, scientific processing of all types of municipal solid waste utilizing the 3R principle, *i.e.* Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle, and remediation of legacy dumpsites for effective solid waste management.

81. During the current year, the legacy waste totalling 4.55 lakh MT were disposed through Bio-mining and Bioremediation with a total cost of ₹ 45.01 crore in Puducherry, Karaikal and Yanam region. Under Integrated Solid Waste Management, daily generation of an average 200 to 230 MT of Municipal Solid Waste from rural and urban areas of Puducherry, Karaikal and Yanam region were handled at a total cost of ₹ 87 crore.

82. ₹ 31.55 crore has also been allocated for the construction of new STPs with capacities of 6 MLD in Yanam and 0.5 MLD in Mahe to prevent river and coastal pollution.

POLICE

83. In the year 2024-25, the Police department has initiated several measures to enhance the safety and security of women and children. "Women Protection Groups" have been formed in all Police Stations to assist the women and children in reporting crimes. Due to effective beat system, round the clock police patrol and strict preventive action, the crimes have declined by 4% from previous year. A total of 118 cases were registered NDPS Act and 278 accused were arrested during the year. Anti-Narcotics Cell has been constituted in 51 Educational institutions across Puducherry to conduct awareness programmes within the campus. "Mission Ilamai" has been initiated with the objective of channelizing the energies of youth in a constructive and positive directions. The Apps. "Karai Kavalan" and "Mission Veera Mangai" have been launched in Karaikal to ease the lodging of complaints.

84. In 2024-25, the Cyber Crime Police Station have registered 135 cases and an amount of ₹ 4.14 crore was recovered. New traffic signal lighting system have been installed which include Intelligent Traffic Management System (ITMS) and Automatic Traffic Violation Detection System (ATVTS). Further, on the infra side the construction of three storied Reddiyarpalayam Police Station in Puducherry was completed with a cost of ₹ 4.36 crore. An amount of ₹ 2.42 crore was utilized towards repair and maintenance of various other police buildings.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

85. I would like to mention that Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) aims to enhance the livelihood security of households in rural areas by providing needed employment and wages. Under this programme, 9.63 lakh man-days were generated benefitting 46,049 rural households and 222 works completed for which ₹ 34 crore was spent during 2024-25.

86. Under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY NRLM), a total of 4,460 SHGs have been mobilized, covering 55,197 households across all three blocks. Financial assistance and support have been extended in various forms. Bank linkage loan of ₹ 71.30 crore was extended to 1,320 SHGs, to support their economic stability.

87. Under Shyama Prasad Mukherji RURBAN Mission, improvement of four car street, in the Thirunallar cluster was completed at a cost of ₹ 2.48 crore in the current year. Construction of bus stand, water supply and access to village street drains were taken up for an amount of ₹ 9.84 crore in Bahour cluster.

88. Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY-II), is a flagship rural connectivity programme, under which construction, up-gradation and widening of roads are undertaken. During the last 4 years, 66.37 kms. length of roads have been laid by incurring expenditure of ₹ 28.11 crore for connecting habitations

in rural areas in the Union Territory of Puducherry. This year, Government of India has approved the works for ₹ 70.46 crore under PMGSY-III.

SCHOOL EDUCATION

89. My Government has been implementing innovative schemes targeting improvements in learning outcomes and preparing every child for a bright future.

90. Under the scheme "Free distribution of Text Books, Note Books and Uniforms", an amount of ₹ 17.50 crore was utilized benefitting 98,341 students.

91. "Evening Millet Snacks Scheme" has been introduced for the students of all Government and Government Aided Schools in the Union Territory of Puducherry as a part of Celebration of International Year of Millet. Millet Cookies and Millet Chikkies are now being provided twice a week under State fund. Along with Mid day Meal, boiled eggs thrice in a week and Sweet pongal / Anna payasam on bagless

day are being served for the students of all Government and Government Aided Schools in the Union Territory of Puducherry

92. In Government Schools, Interactive Panel Boards have been introduced through Samagra Shiksha for the purpose of making the learning process easier and enjoyable for the students.

93. Free laptops at a total cost of ₹ 60.58 crore have been distributed to all the Government and Government Aided Higher Secondary School students who studied in class 11th Standard in the academic years 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25.

94. NEET Coaching classes were organized for the Government school students studying in class 11th and 12th to help them take the medical entrance examination for getting admission in medical colleges. Out of the enrolled Government school students, 15 students got admission in the various medical colleges during 2024-25 under the Government quota.

TOURISM

95. Puducherry has a global appeal and recall when it comes to Tourism with its attractions like Heritage Buildings, Scenic Beaches, Backwaters, Culinary Delights and Cultural, and Spiritual Heritage.

96. Various projects have been initiated over a period of time to enhance tourism experience in Puducherry. The recent developments in accomplishment of Infrastructure projects such as Development of Beaches, Heritage and Spiritual Circuit under Swadesh Darshan 1.0 Scheme have helped in making our major attractions tourist-friendly.

97. As the Hon'ble Members may be aware, Puducherry has been ranked second, behind Toulouse, France, among the top globally trending must-visit destinations for the year 2025, brought out by the 15th edition of Lonely Planet, a renowned travel guidebook. We also saw the highest rise in weekend hotel bookings in the year 2024 in a national survey.

98. Under Swadesh Darshan 2.0 Scheme, projects like "Development of Boulevard Heritage Town" in Puducherry and "Development of Karaikal Beach and Waterfront experience" in Karaikal have been identified for which an amount of ₹ 45.29 crore has been approved by the Government of India.

99. Under Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD) scheme, an amount of ₹ 25.94 crore has been sanctioned for the project 'Development of Tourist facilities and attractions at Sri Dharbaranyeswarar Swamy Temple and Spiritual Park at Thirunallar.

100. Under PRASHAD Scheme, Project Reports for an estimated cost of ₹ 111.32 crore have been submitted to Ministry of Tourism, Government of India for the development of the following temples *viz.,* Sri Gangai Varaga Natheeswarar Temple, Thirukanchi; Sri Kasi Viswanathar Temple, Odiampet; Sri Sengazhuneer Amman Temple, Veerampattinam; Sri Bala Murugan Temple at Kalapet; Sri Koothandavar

Temple, Pillaiyarkuppam in Puducherry and Karaikal Ammaiyar Temple; Sri Parvatheeswarar Swamy Temple and Thirumeni Azhagar Temple Thiruvettakudy, Karaikal.

101. Hon'ble Members are aware that Puducherry is also known as "Siddhar Bhoomi" or Land of Siddhars because of the many Siddhars and Saints who attained Jeeva Samadhi and Samadhi here and that people regularly visit their Peedams. In respectful commemoration of the many great sages and saints who lived in Puducherry like Sage Agasthya, Sri Kaduveli Siddhar, Arunagirinathar, Vadalur Sri Ramalinga Swamigal and Swamy Vivekananda, the 'Siddha Circuit Tour' package was introduced and information booklet called 'Spiritual Wellness Puducherry' published during the Celebration of World Tourism Day 2024.

TRANSPORT

102. An amount of ₹ 17.30 crore has been utilized for procurement of 38 new buses and new body construction for 15 old buses, which have all been put into operation.

103. An extent of 3.58 acre of land was identified at Thengaithittu for setting up of the Inspection and Certification Centre with a total cost of ₹ 15.75 crore for testing the transport vehicles fitness.

104. An extent of 10.50 acre of land at Thengaithittu has been acquired for setting up of Institute of Driving Training and Research (IDTR) in Puducherry at an estimated cost of ₹ 19.35 crore.

105. Under Smart City Mission, the construction of Smart Bus Shelters in 15 locations at Puducherry region with an allocation of ₹ 3.25 crore has been taken up. To provide pollution free public transport for last mile connectivity, 38 e-rickshaws were procured at a cost of ₹ 96 lakh for being operated in the city through SHGs.

ADI DRAVIDAR WELFARE AND SCHEDULED TRIBE WELFARE

106. As Scheduled caste and Scheduled tribe people constitute significant proportion of the population,

their welfare is one of the top priorities of my Government. The Department of Adi Dravidar and Scheduled tribe welfare not only implements welfare schemes but also is the coordinating Department for the implementation of the Scheduled caste Sub plan. In the current year, ₹ 508 crore was allotted under the Sub plan and as has been seen in the last year more than 95% of the funds will be booked. I am happy to share that around ₹ 75 crore is distributed as Scholarship for students which was ₹ 57 crore in the last year. Under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, ₹ 4.0 lakh per house is given as Union Territories Share which is one of the highest provided by any State /Union Territory in the country and under this Scheme, ₹ 6.64 crore was distributed as subsidy.

107. As you may know the income ceiling limit for availing various socio-economic benefit schemes under the Adi Dravidar Welfare Department, has been increased from 2 lakh to 8 lakh which is a significant step to bring more and more deserving and eligible

people under the net of welfare schemes. In the last year the intercaste marriage assistance has been increased from ₹ 2.5 lakh to ₹ 3.5 lakh and the opportunity cost provided to girl children has been increased from ₹ 3000 to ₹ 6000. The proposal for distribution of house sites to 340 landless people at Manapet and TN Palayam has been approved and pattas will be distributed shortly and it is planned to distribute around 1000 house sites in the coming financial year. Works to the tune of ₹ 50 crore has been sanctioned for providing civic amenities in the SC/ST habitations. My Government will continue to focus and reaffirm our commitment towards the overall upliftment of the SC/ST people.

SOCIAL WELFARE

108. Hon'ble Members may be aware that this Government has been implementing various welfare schemes aiming to uplift the social and economic status of Differently Abled, Aged people and other weaker sections of the society.

109. Under the scheme "Grant of Monthly Financial Assistance to the Differently abled Persons", the enhanced monthly financial assistance of ₹ 1,000 in each category ranging from ₹ 3,000 to ₹ 4,800 was granted to 20,630 differently abled persons including 545 new beneficiaries totaling to ₹ 59.04 crore.

WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

110. Hon'ble Members are aware that the Government has provided continuous support and financial assistance to women and children through implementation of various welfare schemes to improve their economical, health and nutritional status.

111. "Old Age Pension" scheme is being successfully implemented by this Government. Old aged, widows, destitutes, unmarried women and transgenders totaling to 1,81,616 beneficiaries are availing monthly financial assistance with an annual expenditure of ₹ 522.43 crore. An amount of ₹ 31 crore was spent benefitting 56,000 women

heads of BPL families under the scheme grant of monthly financial assistance to women heads of BPL families in the Union Territory of Puducherry. On the occasion of Pongal Festival, cash dole was provided to 1,40,000 BPL card holders amounting to ₹ 14 crore.

112. Under "CM cares scheme for empowerment of new born girl child in the Union Territory of Puducherry", financial assistance to a sum of ₹ 7.10 crore was granted to benefit 1,420 girl children in the mode of "Sukanya Samridhi Account".

113. Under the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) scheme a sum of ₹ 2.66 crore was spent for the cash incentive of ₹ 5,000 for the first living child and ₹ 6,000 for the second child, if it is a girl child which benefitted 3,143 pregnant and lactating mothers. Under Integrated Child Development Service programme, supplementary nutrition was supplied to 26,997 children and 6,432 pregnant /lactating mothers for a sum of ₹ 52.16 crore.

114. Under the State Freedom Fighters Pension scheme, monthly pension ₹ 12,000 was granted to 945 pensioners amounting to ₹ 13.60 crore.

115. "Viksit Bharat-2047" is the vision of our Hon'ble Prime Minister of India to make India a completely developed nation on the centenary years of Independence in 2047. Economic growth, technological upgradation, infrastructure development, social empowerment and sustainability of overall development are the main criteria of this programme. This forward-looking plan of the Viksit Bharat 2047 has been fully brought into implementing the BEST Puducherry vision of our Hon'ble Prime Minister, aimed at transforming the Union Territory into a self-reliant, progressive and inclusive economy.

116. Inspired by the vision of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India to make Puducherry a BEST (Business, Education, Spiritual and Tourist) Hub, the Government is making all possible efforts to boost the socio-economic development of the Union Territory, especially through livelihood generation of our people, especially the youth.

117. Emphasis is being equally placed on the implementation of infrastructure development projects as well as welfare schemes for the overall balanced development of the Union Territory The broad vision and aspiration of 'Faster, Sustainable and More Inclusive Growth' will be the main thrust in the implementation of the schemes and projects taken up by the Government.

118. We realize that the growth of the territory will be primarily driven by the services sector followed by industries and primary sectors, and are working assiduously towards this objective. The agriculture and allied sectors are reorienting their approach towards digital agriculture, diversification of crops, value-added products and increased productivity of animals, fisheries sector is similarly focusing on strengthening the blue economy through advanced mariculture, smart infrastructure and advanced logistics. The industries sector is in advanced stages of developing industrial hubs with comprehensive ecosystem for sectors such

as IT, pharma, automotives, promotion of micro and small enterprises and a conducive start-up environment to create jobs, and enhance the overall export potential.

119. The Government of Puducherry is deeply committed to make Puducherry Best in Business, Education, Spiritual & Tourism sectors or BEST Puducherry - the mantra given by Hon'ble Prime Minister. For instance,

- To make Puducherry a Business Hub, efforts are underway for the development of New Industrial Estate in Sedarapet-Karasur and to optimally utilise the land banks of the closed AFT and SBTML units for developing IT Parks, Textile Park, MICE and Commercial Centres, including the PM-EKTA Mall in consultation with Government of India.

- Puducherry is already an important Education Hub in the region with more than 100 higher Educational Institutions. The focus of the

Government now is to implement the New Education Policy robustly and effectively for building of foundational education, improving the quality of higher education and driving skill development programmes for tapping the demographic dividend of our skilled and youthful population.

- Puducherry Tourism is a tapestry woven with threads of Beach, Heritage, Religious & Spiritual and Wellness tourism, and these have been identified as our focus areas. Tourism is going to be an important driver in our growth with tourist footfalls projected to reach more than 3 million per year by the year 2047 as compared to approximately 19 lakh presently, with average day of stay to increase from current 1.5 days to 7 days in the same period.

120. With this comprehensive vision, the Union Territory Government aspires to work with a growth mindset, beyond the business-as-usual approach

and with a technology-driven, citizen-centric, and climate-sensitive orientation.

121. Hon'ble Members, as I come to the end of my address highlighting the programmes and achievements of my Government, I am confident that this august House will deliberate and fruitfully discuss all pertinent matters related to the growth, prosperity and development of the Union Territory of Puducherry.

NANDRI !

VANAKKAM !

JAI HIND.....

VAZHGA BHARATHAM !

VALARGA PUDUCHERRY !!

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