

Mr. Speaker and Hon'ble Members,

It gives me immense pleasure to welcome all of you to the Twelfth Session of 15th Odisha Legislative Assembly. Let me take this opportunity to extend my heartiest Greetings to all the Hon'ble Members of this August House as well as to the people of Odisha.

1. This August House has expressed its deep condolence on the sad demise of Late Subal Sahu, Sitting Member of this August House, Late Rabi Ray, former Speaker, Lok Sabha, Late Durga Shankar Pattanaik, Sayed Mustafiz Ahmed, former Ministers, Late Muralidhar Guru, former Minister of State, Late Arjun Naik, Satya Bhama Jena, Sura Sethi, Samaya Kisku, all former Members of this August House, Late Jagarao Gomparay, Ex-Grama Rakhi, Late Laxmikanta Jani, Ex-Constable, Odisha Police. I request Hon'ble Members to join me in paying tribute to Late Benudhar Baliarsingh, former Minister, Frida Topno, former Minister of State, Late Nityananda Samantaray, Akhila Saunta, Krushna Chandra Swain, former Members of this August House and Late Paradip Kumar Panda and Manoranjan Lenka, Ex-Defence Personnel of CRPF. The

House may convey our heartfelt condolence to the bereaved families of the departed souls.

2. We are commemorating the completion of 200 years of Buxi Jagabandhu led Paika Rebellion of Khordha. It was a valiant uprising of soldiers prior to independence which occurred in 1817. Historical evidence suggests that it was the first War of Indian Independence. My Government with ample historical justification has moved the Government of India to declare the Paika Rebellion as the first War of Indian Independence. Simultaneously, we are celebrating the completion of its 200 years by organising events befitting the heroic history of the land and its people and are proposing to bring out commemorative coins and postage stamp on Paika Rebellion.

3. Now that the Union Cabinet has already constituted a tribunal under the Inter-State River Disputes Act, 1956, the people of Odisha are assured of their due share of water from Mahanadi river. Let me tell it in unequivocal terms that my Government has always stood firmly with the people of Odisha on this issue. My Government has urged the Hon'ble Prime Minister to issue necessary administrative directions under Article 256 of the Constitution to the State of

Chhattisgarh to immediately stop construction of the ongoing projects, particularly the ongoing six barrages across Mahanadi. My Government will leave no stone unturned to protect the interest of the people of Odisha on river Mahanadi. Similarly, my Government is pursuing the Pollavaram issue in the right direction to protect the interest of our State and people.

4. Technology is the driving force of our growth engine. Our ways of governance should be transparent and corruption free. For delivering good governance the Government needs to work as a team for the benefit of poor people. The three touch stones, Teamwork, Technology & Transparency (3 'Ts') have now become the moving spirit of governance of my Government for transforming the lives of the people of Odisha. The 3 'I's, Irrigation, Infrastructure and Inclusion to emphasize enhanced irrigation facilities for agriculture, development of infrastructure for holistic growth of both the rural and urban Odisha and inclusion of the STs and SCs, women and the marginalized communities in the process of governance has resulted in the achievement of sustainable growth.

5. From Orissa to Odisha and from Oriya to Odia, my Government has taken a lot of efforts to preserve, protect

and promote Odia language. I take pride in saying this before this August House that it was only due to the sincere efforts of my Government 4 years ago that Odia language was recognised as the sixth Indian classical language of the country. To align with the challenges that our language is facing now and the needs of our times to promote Odia language and to give a new focus and direction to its use as a official language, my Government created a new Department of Odia Language, Literature and Culture, constituted a separate 'Heritage Cabinet' for conservation of the rich cultural heritage, language, and literature of Odisha, established two chairs at Jawaharlal Nehru University and Banaras Hindu University named after Adikabi Sarala Das and Kabisamrat Upendra Bhanja respectively to promote study, analysis and research on Odia language and literature outside Odisha. Alongwith a Commission to look into the protection, propagation and promotion of Odia language, my Government has proposed amendments in the Odisha Official Language Act, 1954 and the Odisha Shops and Commercial Establishments Act, 1956 for making use of Odia language compulsory in official correspondence and on signboards in shops and commercial establishments with provisions of reward for compliance and punishment for deviation.

6. Coinciding with 100th year of formation of Odisha as a separate State, my Government is preparing “Vision : 2036” Document for the State which will reflect United Nation’s declared Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as well as needs and aspirations of the people of Odisha by 2036.

7. My Government has taken a historic decision to provide land rights to the poor slum dwellers in Municipal Councils and Notified Area Councils by the enactment of ‘Odisha Land Rights to Slum Dwellers Act, 2017’ and property rights to the poor slum dwellers in Municipal Corporations of the State under ‘Odisha Municipal Corporation (Amendment) Act, 2017’, ‘The Odisha Land Rights to Slum Dwellers Rules, 2017’ have also been notified. Odisha is the first State in the country to have come out with such legislation for the urban slum dwellers.

8. The State of Odisha is unique and blessed to have 62 tribes including 13 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups each with its own way of life represented in artefacts, painting, totem, house and culture. The development of tribal areas and the welfare of the tribal people, preservation and promotion of their cultural heritage has always been a goal

held very close to our heart, and now my Government seeks to fulfill this through the unique Special Development Councils in the nine tribal dominated districts of Sundargarh, Gajapati, Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Rayagada, Koraput, Nawarangpur, Malkangiri and Kandhamal. The Councils are empowered to take decisions to preserve and promote their culture and sports and other development needs. This is a historic step towards empowerment of about 23 % of the State's total population and recognition of their cultural identity and celebration of their splendour.

9. 'Mo School' initiative, a unique citizen-connect programme has been started by my Government to provide a platform for the alumni associations, individuals and organisations to give back to the schools to which they are emotionally attached. The Campaign was started to honour the philanthropic desire of individuals who wish to contribute to the purpose of education and volunteer for giving back to their schools. Mo School is a first of its kind programme which enables the donor to contribute in funds, kind or service, where for every contribution the State matches a contribution twice of it. This will be directly transferred to the Schools to be utilised for varied purposes.

10. My Government launched a new initiative, 'Ama Gaon, Ama Bikash' on 5th of March during the celebration of Panchayati Raj Diwas. The scheme is primarily meant to bridge critical gaps in the development of infrastructure in the villages. The general public and their representatives along with other stakeholders directly interact at the Gram Panchayat level and deliberate about their much needed projects, which cannot be covered under any other scheme but are essential for the villagers. The Scheme envisages direct video interaction with the Chief Minister of the State. The projects within the cost estimate of Rs.1 to 10 lakhs are accorded approval through consultation and immediately communicated to people.

11. Odisha, the 'Best Kept Secret of India', is now gradually unleashing its potential in sports and youth services. With its ambitious plans for nurturing young talents in different sports disciplines and the establishment of High Performance Athletics Academy in collaboration with International Association of Athletic Federations, the capital city of Bhubaneswar is gradually emerging as the sports capital of the country. World class infrastructure was created in 90 days

which resulted in the stupendous and successful hosting of the 22nd Asian Athletics Championships.

12. The crowning glory was the final edition of Hockey World League final at Bhubaneswar and now the State has come forward to sponsor both the men and women national hockey team for five years. While the Kalinga Stadium is getting prepared to host the Men's Hockey World Cup 2018 during November-December this year, the State has now become the only State in the country to have successfully organised tribal sports with an objective to identify and spot the hidden potential in the tribal youths and provide them a platform for participation in the State/National level competitions.

13. My Government now intends to prioritise and scale up youth led social action and community engagement activities by reaching out to both rural and urban youth with its new initiative 'Biju Yuva Vahini'.

14. My Government has been taking a number of initiatives to enhance the income of farmers and promote development of agriculture in the State. The foodgrains production is estimated to reach 107 lakh MT during 2017-18 and it has been programmed to produce about 122 lakh MT of foodgrains during 2018-19.

15. Crop loans @ 1% interest alongwith 50% to 75% subsidy to install Shallow Tube Wells, Bore Wells, Dug Wells and River/Surface lift are among the prime encouragements to boost agriculture in the State.

16. A special programme for promotion of cultivation of millets in seven tribal districts is being implemented in the State from 2017-18 to improve the nutritional security of the people. This effort has won SKOTCH Award for the State during 2017-18. The coverage under cotton is also constantly on the rise and has reached an all time high of 1.45 lakh hectares during 2017-18.

17. My Government is collaborating with international institutions for quality seed production of Pulses & Oilseeds. This is a new dimension to the process of development of our agriculture and will contribute to accelerate the pace of growth in the sector. In a bid to conserve the indigenous crop varieties, a Gene Bank has been established and 1,050 (1,000 paddy and 50 non-paddy) varieties have been collected and preserved for future use.

18. Substantial progress has been made under Farm Mechanisation as a result of which the farm power input has increased to an all-time high of 1.60 kW/ha.

19. Organic farming is being promoted in about 10,000 hectares for sustainable crop production. Integrated Farming is also being popularised through extending subsidy to farm entrepreneurs. Special emphasis is being given to popularise these practices in tribal dominated pockets of the State.

20. Capital Investment subsidy to the unemployed youth is being extended to increase the pace of establishment of Commercial Agri-enterprises with the objective of making agriculture more profitable through in-house utilisation of all agri-produce, facilitate value addition and processing, reduce post-harvest losses and glut in the market during peak periods of harvest.

21. The State has gone ahead with use of ICT in many areas such as on-line registration of beneficiaries and subsidy administration of seeds, farm equipment, on-line registration of Input dealers and e-monitoring of flagship programmes. Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) has been implemented in the entire State, which is unique in the country. For this, my Government had been conferred twice with Bronze Award under National e-Governance programme. Further, the State has won CSI- Nihilent Best e-Governance Award 2017 during the current year. Mobile apps are also being developed to monitor all programmes on a real-time basis. Farm

Information Advisory Centres have been established in every block to enhance the outreach of extension network.

22. The potential of Cooperatives for rendering a wide range of services like crop insurance, paddy procurement, efficient management of warehouses, agricultural market reforms and developing the PACS as one-stop destination for all agricultural inputs at Gram Panchayat level for the farmers in general and weaker sections of the State in particular has always been recognized by my Government. Computerization of all PACS in the State will be a unique and first ever example in the country. The process is expected to be completed by the end of March, 2018. My Government has also taken initiative to construct godowns at PACS level.

23. My Government has been providing crop loans to farmers at 1% rate of interest. This has empowered the landless, oral lessees, share croppers, tenant farmers and rural women to avail hassle-free credit from the Banks without any collateral security. My Government is taking initiatives to bring more farmers under crop insurance. The registration of non-loanee farmers under crop Insurance has increased more than 4 times from 30,000 during 2016-17 to 1.39 lakh during 2017-18. My Government has taken steps for

conversion of all the Kisan Credit Cards to Ru-Pay Kisan Cards in 2017-18 to enable the farmer members to access their sanctioned loans through all types of ATMs and PoS networks in the PACS/LAMPCS functioning in the State.

24. In order to minimize the post harvest loss and to encourage the producers to get higher returns, community drying platform-cum-threshing floors are being constructed at Gram Panchayat level. To access market information, proper crop planning and better prices for their produce, about 60,000 mobile phones have been distributed to the farmers across all districts. As part of the Agricultural Marketing Reforms, my Government has decided to set up more e-platforms for facilitating e-trading in selected markets under Regulated Market Committee in the State.

25. My Government is committed to increase area under irrigation in the State in the shortest possible time. During 2017-18, projects for creation of 2.95 lakh hectares of additional irrigation potential have been taken up. It has been planned to take up some new medium irrigation projects, diversion weirs without major submergence and forest diversion, which can be completed within three to five years. In the first phase, during 2018-19, construction of two new

projects at Kusumi & Bankatira will be taken up. To sustain the impact of climate change, my Government is giving emphasis on conservation of water resources. 12,375 Check Dams have already been constructed. During 2018-19, there is a target to construct 2,000 more Check Dams.

26. It is programmed to educate at least 10,000 farmers during 2018-19 on modern irrigation techniques, crop-diversification and rotational irrigation water supply. Deep Bore Wells & Mega Lift Irrigation Programmes have got overwhelming response from our farmers. My Government has started Drainage Improvement Programme (DIP) and has set a target to renovate 250 kilometers of drainage channels during 2018-19.

27. Odisha Fisheries Policy envisages doubling of the fish production in the State over a period of five years. Comprehensive Action Plans for development of fisheries in all districts of the State have been formulated. Sea Food export during 2016-17 was about Rs. 2,205 crores .

28. Under Group Accident Insurance, 11.50 lakh fishermen have been covered in the State. As a tool for weather warning, market rate & technical advice, 3.75 lakh SIM cards have been distributed to the fishermen & fish farmers of the State.

Under Lokaseba Adhikar Portal online services are provided to the fish farmers and fishermen.

29. The State has become self sufficient and surplus in milk production. During 2018-19, the average milk procurement per day is expected to reach 6.53 lakh litres. During 2017-18, my Government had taken effective measures for control of major livestock diseases under different disease control programmes. For the first time in our State, two animal ambulances under the State plan scheme “Animal Helpline with Veterinary Ambulance Services” were introduced in the urban areas of Ganjam & Cuttack districts on a pilot basis to provide emergency health care services to the injured and sick stray animals.

30. Provisions of National Food Security Act have been successfully implemented in the State since November 2015. Food security coverage is being provided to 86.53 lakh families consisting of 323.91 lakh individuals under Priority Household and Antyodaya Anna Yojana categories. Subsidized Rice or Wheat or combination of both are being supplied to the most vulnerable sections of the society at the rate of 5 Kgs per person per month for Priority Household category and 35 Kgs of rice to Antodaya Anna Yojana

household per month at the rate of Rs.1 per Kg of Rice or Wheat. My Government has automated all 12,601 Fair Price Shops (FPS) in the State through e-Point of Sale devices since July, 2017 which has ensured complete transparency in Public Distribution System.

31. In Kharif Marketing Season 2016-17, the State Government has procured a record 54.27 Lakh MT of paddy. An amount of Rs. 7,978 crores was transferred online direct to the bank accounts of more than 8.47 lakh farmers towards the value of paddy procured.

32. Our State has achieved significant reduction in infant mortality rate which had been a cause of concern for long time by reducing it from 65 in 2005-06 to 40 in 2015-16. This has been possible due to the commitment of my Government to provide affordable, accessible, equitable and quality health care services to the people of Odisha with special focus on underserved and hard-to-reach areas of the State. To address the issue of declining female child sex ratio in the State, my Government has started “Biju Kanya Ratna” initiative in Angul, Dhenkanal and Ganjam districts in a mission mode.

33. To improve the health and nutritional status of children in the age group of 6 months to 6 years and pregnant women

and lactating mothers, my Government has revised the ration cost per beneficiary per day for Take Home Ration and Hot Cooked Meal from December, 2017. My Government has also increased the monthly additional honorarium of Anganwadi workers, helpers and mini Anganwadi workers out of its own funds.

34. A separate Directorate of Mission Shakti was created to specifically focus on the capacity building and skill development of the existing groups and to involve more women into the Mission Shakti movement. The overall aim of Mission Shakti is to empower women socially, economically and politically. Over a period of time, nearly 60 lakh women have been organised into 6 lakh SHGs across Odisha. It is envisaged to create strong sustainable groups who contribute to the social environment in which they live, while empowering each individual belonging to the group. Simultaneously, groups and federations that have moved ahead will also be strengthened with location and need specific economic activities, resulting in the growth of rural and urban micro enterprise network.

35. My Government is providing loans of upto Rs. 3 lakh @ 1 % interest to the viable groups pursuing sustainable

income generating activities. Exposure visits, bank linkages, skill development, capacity building and enterprise development will be the key activities of the Directorate of Mission Shakti. Thus, a 360 degree approach to womens' empowerment will be attempted with the SHG groups as the basic unit.

36. MAMATA is operational in all the rural and urban areas with an objective of providing partial wage compensation to pregnant and nursing mothers so that they are able to rest adequately during their pregnancy and after delivery. A total incentive of Rs.5,000/- is transferred directly to the accounts of the beneficiaries. Since inception, 30.83 lakh mothers have been covered under the scheme.

37. My Government is committed to implement laws meant to protect women, prevent any form of violence against them and provide a prompt redressal mechanism. To this end, a 24X7 toll free Women Helpline 181 has been operationalised in all the districts. The Helpline facilitates quick response of various services including lodging police complaints; to provide medical, legal assistance and counselling to women victims.

38. Two new Medical Colleges Pandit Raghunath Murmu Medical College & Hospital, Baripada and Saheed Laxman Nayak Medical College & Hospital, Koraput have been made operational from the current academic session with 100 seats each at Graduation level. My Government has taken steps for establishment of two new Medical College and Hospitals at Balasore and Bolangir from the next education session and five more new Government Medical Colleges will come up in different districts of the State thereafter.

39. Seven Community Health Centres have been up-graded to Sub-Divisional Hospitals and 5 Primary Health Centres to Community Health Centres. 13 new Primary Health Centres have been sanctioned in different districts of the State. Sub-Divisional Hospital, Jeypore has been up-graded to a District Headquarter Hospital. Chemotherapy Centres in all the District Headquarter Hospitals of the State are being established for providing free treatment of cancer. Bold steps have been taken for establishment of nine Trauma Care Centres on the National Highways and State Highways to provide proper treatment during critical hours.

40. Keeping in tune with the commitment of my Government to our pro-women initiatives a new initiative “Khusi” has been

launched in which about 17 lakh girl students in Government and Government aided schools from Class-VI to Class-XII will be provided with free sanitary napkins. In addition to this, my Government will also expand social marketing of sanitary napkins for women and girls in the community at subsidized rates.

41. To further strengthen and supplement the healthcare services, my Government has recently launched several new initiatives such as NIDAAN, the free diagnostics service; SAHAYA, the free dialysis service; district level free chemotherapy and daycare for cancer patients; universal free eye care services; AMA Clinic for providing specialist services in urban clinics; free blood services and transportation allowances for blood disorder patients; Rs 1,000 as transport assistance to mothers from difficult areas coming for institutional delivery and digital dispensaries providing telemedicine services in hard to reach, tribal dominated areas. It is expected that with these initiatives, the State will move closer towards its target of achieving universal health coverage for the people of Odisha.

42. My Government has created a separate Department of Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with

Disabilities to specifically focus on social security measures. At present my Government is providing pensions to 43.45 lakh beneficiaries every month. Reservation for persons with disabilities in Government and Public Sector jobs has been enhanced from 3% to 4% during 2017-18.

43. My Government has sanctioned Banishree Education Scholarship to more than 44,000 students with disabilities during 2017-18. Institutions undertaking Therapeutic and Rehabilitative works for Persons with Intellectual Disability have been identified and 46 institutions are now provided financial assistance to carry out socio-psychological and vocational development activities for persons with intellectual disabilities.

44. As envisaged in the Odisha State Senior Citizens Policy, a comprehensive scheme “ABADANA” was launched for Senior Citizens during 2017-18. State Awards were presented for the first time to 9 Senior Citizens for their excellence in different fields on the occasion of World Senior Citizens’ Day.

45. My Government has been giving emphasis on bringing the transgenders into the mainstream by extending the benefits of different schemes to them. A new scheme

“SWEEKRUTI” has been introduced for the transgenders by my Government.

46. My Government has revised the minimum wages payable to the Unskilled, Semi-skilled, Skilled and Highly Skilled category of employees. Similarly, the minimum piece rate of wages in 15 scheduled employments have also been revised.

47. To combat child labour issue, my Government is sincerely implementing the State Action Plan (SAP) for elimination of child labour in Odisha. My Government has also approved a State Action Plan for the Safety and Welfare of Inter-State Migrant Workmen which is under implementation. A Shramik Sahayata Helpline for migrant workmen has been set up at Labour Directorate to provide support, information and assistance on migration issues.

48. To reduce distressed migration, an MoU has been signed with Tata Trusts for developing livelihood model in Bolangir and Nuapada districts of Odisha. 189 Seasonal Hostels have been opened in Baragarh, Nuapada, Kalahandi and Bolangir districts for the children of migrant workers for their stay during the migration period while their parents migrate to other states.

49. For the benefit of construction workers, my Government is providing housing assistance through, 'Nirman Shramik Pucca Ghar Yojana' and social security assistance to people with disability, old age and widows through, 'Nirman Shramik Pension Yojana' in addition to the ongoing social security measures for health, education, marriage etc. for their family members and accidental insurance, bicycles and safety measures at the work place for the construction workers. A new Scheme 'ASHRAYA' for construction of rental housing complex in urban areas has been undertaken for providing temporary accommodation with basic facilities at affordable rent to the urban construction workers.

50. My Government is committed for all-round economic development and social justice for the people living in the rural areas. The relentless efforts of my Government to convert all Kachha Houses in the rural areas to Pucca Houses has already resulted in the completion of more than 15.50 lakh Pucca Houses for the rural poor. My Government will work on a mission mode to ensure Pucca Houses to all poor rural households by 2019. My Government has taken several measures to ensure transparency in the process of selection of beneficiaries and has also introduced incentives to expedite construction of the houses.

51. A number of community assets in the rural areas have been created out of the State Finance Commission grant to meet the basic feltneeds of the locality. Additional development grants are made available for providing Bijli (electrification), Sadak (road infrastructure) and Pani (irrigation and drinking water) in a planned manner to cover all the Districts, Blocks and Gram Panchayats. For decentralization of economic development and social justice, 595 new Gram Panchayats have been created by my Government for ensuring administrative efficiency at the grassroots level.

52. Providing potable drinking water to the people has been among the top priorities of my Government. Under “BASUDHA” (Buxi Jagabandhu Assured Water Supply Scheme for Rural Areas), my Government has undertaken rural drinking water supply programme on a mission mode. 1051 pipe water supply projects to Gram Panchayat headquarters villages as well as villages other than Gram Panchayat headquarters, where drinking water sources have been located, have been taken up. Seven mega pipe water schemes in the districts of Koraput, Kandhamal, Jharsuguda, Ganjam, Puri, Cuttack and Jagatsinghpur have been taken up. 391 overhead tanks are also being constructed at different

places. For Nuapada district including the fluoride affected areas, 66 projects for Rs.597crores have been taken up with RIDF assistance.

53. My Government has developed the poverty eradication strategy in an innovative manner to pave the way for wage employment generation, self employment, houses for poor, development of rural infrastructure, provision of household water connection and other essential infrastructure. Sustainable efforts have also been made at multiple levels to improve the delivery mechanism and grievance redressal system.

54. My Government has taken several initiatives for achieving the goal of planned and inclusive urbanization in the State in a balanced and equitable manner. Efforts are on to develop and upgrade the urban infrastructure to make our cities liveable and sustainable. An ambitious programme to convert the conventional street lighting to energy efficient street lighting is also being implemented in all the Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) of the State.

55. To achieve universal coverage of safe drinking water to all through pipe water supply, my Government has taken an

ambitious programme under the 'BASUDHA' scheme in which 546 urban water supply projects with an investment of Rs. 589.27 crores are being implemented. 'Jal Jogan Melas' are being held in all wards in all the ULBs of the State to ensure hassle free household connections. Water Monitors from the local community are being identified to facilitate community participation in the Water & Sanitation Management at the ward level.

56. A new initiative, 'UNNATI', an Urban Transformation Initiative has been launched to ensure convergence of all the schemes and programmes implemented in the urban areas and to fill the critical gaps in funding. Under this, 10,316 Projects with an investment of Rs. 386 crores are under implementation.

57. My Government is a pioneer State in the country for the establishment of decentralized septage management facilities. By the end of this financial year, it is expected that faecal sludge treatment facility will be made functional in at least 5 AMRUT towns.

58. My Government is implementing different schemes for providing better road connectivity and building infrastructure

in rural areas. During 2017-18, about 8,000 kilometers of rural roads & 145 bridges on rural roads are targeted to be completed under different schemes such as Biju Setu Yojana, Rural Infrastructure Development Fund, Pradhan Mantri Grama Sadak Yojana & Mukhya Mantri Sadak Yojana. In the Buildings Sector under Rural Development Department, 17 Odisha Adarsha Vidyalayas, 93 hundred-seated Girls Hostels, 658 buildings of Health & Family Welfare Department and 122 buildings of Revenue & Disaster Management Department are programmed to be completed in 2017-18. In 2018-19 it has been targeted to complete another 150 bridges & 14,230 kilometers of rural roads and 540 buildings of different Departments.

59. My Government has achieved many milestones on road connectivity. On an average, Works Department has improved about 2.1 kilometers of road every day and has completed 20 major bridges every year. 343 Bridges, 9 Road Over Bridges, 3 Fly Overs have been completed and 13,090 kilometers of roads have been improved since 2000. The construction of Bridge over Gurupriya in EPC Mode is in progress with the revised project cost of Rs.187.25 crores. It is expected to be completed soon.

60. My Government has contemplated to develop a four-lane road of about 650 kilometers length, BIJU EXPRESSWAY, connecting Jagdalpur to Rourkela through Western Odisha and KBK districts of the State. Out of total length of 650 kilometers of this Expressway, 183.20 kilometers of National Highways are being improved and 160 kilometers of Sambalpur-Rourkela road has already been completed and dedicated to the people of Odisha.

61. To provide 24x7 quality and uninterrupted power at an affordable rate to the people, my Government has developed a comprehensive strategy to augment generation, transmission capacity and the distribution infrastructure within the State through different programmes. Our focus is to provide electricity to all houses of the State by December, 2018.

62. Odisha Hydro Power Corporation has taken up a massive renovation, modernization and uprating programme to upgrade the existing Hydro Power Stations at Hirakud, Chiplima and Balimela in order to ensure increased availability of hydro power.

63. My Government is keen on development of green energy. Renewable Energy Policy has been formulated to accelerate

the momentum. 20 MW solar project at Manmunda has been commissioned successfully and 4 MW rooftop solar project is nearing completion on the rooftops of Government buildings in twin cities of Cuttack and Bhubaneswar. My Government has also taken initiative for rooftop solar projects on Government buildings in 15 towns of Odisha. Effective steps are being taken for Energy Conservation and Demand Side Management in the State. Odisha Energy Conservation Building Code(OECBC) was notified to implement the energy conservation initiatives in building sector.

64. Odisha Power Transmission Corporation Limited is undertaking massive addition, up-gradation and modernization of transmission lines and Grid Sub-Stations for smooth flow of power from generating stations to the load centers, which will go a long way in mitigating the transmission constraints. It has achieved a record system availability of 99.98% with reduction in transmission loss from 3.58% to 3.40%. Further, 473 Primary Sub-stations are under construction. With the strengthening of the transmission network coupled with these 33/11 KV substations, we will be able to supply un-interrupted quality power to all consumers of the State.

65. For making 24x7 Power available in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack State Capital Region Improvement of Power System (SCRIPS) is being implemented in two phases in which a network of HT & EHT underground cables will be laid. The first phase of the work is scheduled to be completed by 2019-20.

66. My Government is keen to establish one Odisha Adarsha Vidyalaya in each Block in the State to provide the opportunity of quality English medium education to the students in rural areas. So far, 160 Odisha Adarsha Vidyalayas have been opened in 21 districts and 40,409 students are availing quality education in these schools. State Institute of Open Schooling has been started in 344 centres covering all 30 districts of Odisha to encourage school dropouts to pass secondary level and earn livelihood opportunities. So far, 49,165 students have taken admission and HSC pass certificates have been issued to 28,687 students.

67. My Government has provided bicycles to 5,67,423 students of Class-IX worth Rs.147.53 crores and free uniforms to 44,04,541 students of Class I to VIII in the year 2017-18. To encourage enrolment, retention and reading habit in children “Educational kits” to Class I-III students are

also being provided. Text Books have been provided with 50% discount to the students reading in Private and Public Schools. Besides, free Text Books have also been provided to the Odia students of Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu.

68. In 2018-19, to encourage students to learn Odia language, my Government has decided to award “Odia Bhasa Bruti” to 10 successful students of each Block, 5 students from each Notified Area Council, 10 students from each Municipality and 20 students from each Municipal Corporation securing highest marks in Odia Subject in 10th examination with one time scholarship of Rs. 5,000. Similarly, Mukhyamantri Medha Bruti will be awarded to about 40,000 successful students @100 per Block and Municipal Corporation, 50 per Municipality and 20 per Notified Area Council in the State securing highest marks in the 10th examination with one time scholarship of Rs. 5,000.

69. My Government has undertaken major administrative and educational reforms to make Odisha a knowledge hub of the country including passing of Odia University Bill and formation of the Odisha State Higher Education Council to

ensure quality education in the State. Odisha Higher Education Programme for Excellence and Equity Project has been implemented to improve access to quality higher education for students from all backgrounds, particularly from the disadvantaged groups. Subsequent to the introduction of Choice Based Credit System at the Undergraduate level, remote tutorial assistance will be provided to students in colleges located in remote and in tribal areas.

70. My Government has established 108 Language-cum-Communication Laboratories in Government as well as Non-Government Colleges to enhance the soft skills of students. Under Biju Yuva Shasaktikaran Yojana, more than 70,000 laptops to poor meritorious +2 pass out students have been distributed. My Government has started massive self-defence training programme for college girl students under Odisha State Youth Policy, 2013.

71. My Government has taken a number of steps to promote and preserve Odia Language in higher educational institutions, such as full waiver of fees for Degree and Post-Graduation Studies in Odia, Vyasakabi Fakir Mohan Scholarship in Odia, U.G.C. Model promotion of research in Odia Language & Literature, increase in Ph.D. seats and

regular Workshops on Odia language & literature in Colleges and Universities and publication of Journals. The State NSS Cell of Higher Education Department has received 3 prestigious awards from Hon'ble President of India for 2016-17 for their outstanding contribution in the field of Social Service.

72. My Government attaches utmost priority to the development and expansion of Technical Education and Skill Training sector for creating employment opportunities for the youth in the emerging industrial scenario of the State. A Central Placement Cell has been created for providing placement to the Diploma and ITI students. Students' Welfare Schemes, i.e. scholarship for children of Building and Other Construction workers at the enhanced rate, 'Sudakshya' for improving girls' enrolment in Government ITIs, tuition fee waiver for ST&SC students, free training for PwD candidates at special ITI for PwD, have been launched for improving inclusiveness of the disadvantaged groups.

73. Odisha Skill Development Authority has been formed since 2016 under the Odisha Skill Development Mission to advise, coordinate and supervise the Skill Development Policy and activities to make Skilled-in-Odisha a reality.

My Government has launched an inclusive skill development strategy to synergize the skill development programmes of various Departments of the State under the Chief Minister's Employment Generation Programme, which aims to cover 150 youth from each Gram Panchayat for skill training and to place most of them in gainful employment. It aims to train 10.10 lakh youth over 5 years.

74. In order to accelerate promotion of MSMEs, my Government has embarked upon the Startup Odisha Initiative with the launch of Startup Odisha Policy and Startup Odisha Portal. 162 startups have already been registered under the initiative and 23 of them have been extended assistance under the Policy. Besides, 5 registered and 20 other incubators are working under the initiative. In order to resolve issues faced by MSMEs on the spot my Government has started Udyog Samasya Samadhan Sibirs at the district level.

75. My Government has partnered with National Institute of Technology, Rourkela; Berhampur University; Indian Institute of Technology , Bhubaneswar and Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology, Burla for establishment of Innovation-cum-Incubation Centres in the State. Under an innovative partnership with Facebook, total 3,300 micro

entrepreneurs and SHG members have been provided 'Digital Marketing Training' under "She Means Business" and "Boost Your Business" programmes.

76. The export turnover of the State has more than doubled to Rs. 40,870 crore in 2016-17 against Rs. 19,082 crore in 2015-16. Thus, Odisha has registered the highest growth rate of 114% amongst all the States in India, for which the Government of India has recognised Odisha as the 'Champion State' for the growth of exports during 2016-17.

77. Our State has been registering robust industrial growth over the years. It has emerged as a 'Leader' in Ease of Doing Business in India and is consistently ranked amongst the top 3 States in terms of attracting live manufacturing investments in the country. The State also has one of the highest rates of implementation of industrial projects in the country.

78. My Government has taken significant steps in terms of introducing industry-friendly policy and regulatory framework to facilitate inclusiveness, encourage innovation and achieve sustainable industrial development in the State. The State

has introduced progressive policies including the Industrial Policy Resolution 2015, MSME Policy 2016, Startup Policy 2016 and many other sector-specific policies which have been welcomed by the investor and entrepreneur community.

79. The State is also a leader in leveraging IT to make it easy for companies to set up and operate in the State. The State has recently introduced GO SWIFT (Government of Odisha Single Window Investor Facilitation and Tracking) portal for industries. This revolutionary and first-of-its-kind initiative shall provide all required services and support to an investor during the entire investment life-cycle of a project in a time-bound, hassle-free, paper-less and transparent manner.

80. My Government has laid down 'Vision 2025' for industrial development in the State with a target to attract Rs. 2.5 lakh crores of new investments and generate 30 lakh new jobs in six identified focus sectors. Towards realizing this Vision, the State Government will be organizing next edition of its flagship initiative, the 'Make in Odisha' conclave during November 2018. The forthcoming edition of the conclave would not just be another investors' meet but would also be

a platform for the global minds to exchange ideas on future outlook of industrial growth and showcase the investment opportunities in the State. It shall also be an apt occasion for us to present the rich culture and heritage of the State to the delegates from across the world.

81. Public Sector Enterprises provide a huge leverage to the Government to intervene in the economy directly or indirectly to achieve the desired socio-economic objectives. In the past, various initiatives have been taken by my Government for the growth of Public Sector Enterprises in the State. Capacity building programmes have been provided for the Senior Executives of the State PSUs to improve their managerial effectiveness and operational efficiency. Besides, steps have also been taken to fill up the existing sanctioned vacant posts in different State PSUs for their smooth and effective functioning.

82. My Government is implementing a number of innovative programmes to popularize science education, research and communication in the State. The State Government has decided to establish Science Centres and Parks in all districts of the State. It has also been decided to establish planetariums at Rayagada, Baripada and Gopalpur.

83. To improve the telecom connectivity in the State by way of operator friendly eco-system, my Government has brought out a new Policy, “Odisha Mobile Towers, Optical Fibre Cable and related Telecom Infrastructure Policy 2017”. To expeditiously redress the grievances received through Social Media, a dedicated Social Media Cell has been set up.

84. Electronics & Information Technology Department as Nodal Department for Aadhaar enrollment in the State has enrolled 424.07 lakh citizens against the projected total population of 449.41 lakhs, which is about 94.50%.

85. Through various fiscal reform measures, the State has achieved the much needed fiscal turn-around and there has been a significant improvement in the State finances. The effort of my Government in achieving debt sustainability from a position of debt stress is significant. Prudent level of debt stock has now given the State an opportunity to go for higher capital investment through borrowing for accelerating the growth process. To continue increasing capital investment both in economic and social sectors, the State has started borrowing from the Open Market from 2014-15 after a gap of eight years within the overall borrowing ceiling fixed by the Government of India. The State has been generating

revenue surplus continuously from 2005-06. Thus, the entire borrowed fund has been fully utilized for creation of income generating capital assets during these years.

86. Implementation of Goods & Services Tax (GST) in the State simultaneously with Central Government required a host of legislative and administrative measures and massive sensitization programmes. Through sustained efforts, the State has been successfully able to implement the Goods & Services Tax in Odisha from 1st July, 2017.

87. My Government has been holding pre-budget consultations with various stakeholders for the last six years in order to make the budget making process more consultative. Suggestions received are carefully analysed and useful inputs taken up for consideration in preparing the Budget. A sustainable and inclusive higher rate of economic growth, reduction of regional, social and gender disparities, faster rate of poverty reduction, allocation of higher resources for planned development and accelerated overall development of the State are our top priorities. My Government is consistently striving to achieve these objectives.

88. In order to improve the quality and efficiency of public spending, the State has been taking a number of reform measures in budgetary & expenditure management, project formulation and accountability. Some of the recent initiatives are: Integrated Financial Management System (IFMS), Integration of SBI e-pay with IFMS, Public Financial Management System (PFMS) and Electronic Processing of Pension Sanction and prompt settlement of Terminal Benefits for employees of Non-Government Aided Educational Institutions.

89. To increase the participation of local people and their representatives in the planning process and implement essential projects and works based on felt-needs of the local people, the Members of Legislative Assembly Local Area Development Fund (MLALAD) and “Special Development Programme” (SDP) are being implemented in the State. PPPs are being increasingly promoted by line Departments for infrastructure development and efficient delivery of services for the public. In order to encourage and facilitate Departments to take up more and more projects in PPP route, necessary budgetary support has been made under Odisha Infrastructure Development Fund and Odisha Viability Gap Fund.

90. My Government has rolled out Odisha Right to Public Services Act to provide all the notified services to the citizens within the stipulated time. So far, 333 public services have been notified relating to 24 Departments. For proper and effective monitoring of all the public services, my Government has implemented web-based Central Monitoring System. My Government has rolled out the adoption of self-certification in place of attestation by the Gazetted Officers. My Government has introduced “Chief Minister’s Award for Excellence and Innovation in Governance and Public Service Delivery” to recognize the extraordinary and innovative work done by State Civil Servants.

91. I am glad that the overall law and order situation in the State during 2017 remained peaceful, free from any communal violence. Activities of the Left Wing Extremists(LWE) remained under control with no significant activities being noticed in the districts of Gajapati, Jajpur, Dhenkanal, Mayurbhanj and Nabarangpur. It was contained to a large extent in Nuapada, Boudh, Nayagarh, Keonjhar, Sambalpur, Deogarh and Sundergarh districts, though it was challenging in parts of Malkangiri, Koraput, Kalahandi, Rayagada, Kandhamal, Angul, Bolangir and Bargarh districts.

92. A new Scheme namely “Medical Assistance Funds for Security Personnel” has been introduced for security personnel getting critical injuries during LWE operation. Ex-gratia has been enhanced from Rs.1 lakh to 3 lakh per civilian victim. Compassionate grant for security personnel who are victims of LWE violence has been enhanced from Rs. 2 lakh to 4 lakh. The amount of World War-II Veteran Pension has also been increased.

93. My Government has set up 29 Investigative Units for Crime Against Women (IUCAW) declared as District Investigation Units for handling sensitive cases especially relating to women and children. Revised Victim Compensation Scheme has been notified. In order to rescue the missing children, a dedicated campaign titled as “Operation Muskan-III” was launched in the State in two phases in 2017 during which 3,131 boys and 617 girls were rescued from different places inside and outside the State. 30 Additional District and Session Judge Courts covering 30 Revenue Districts have been declared as Children’s Courts.

94. A Cyber Forensic Division has been set up in the State Forensic Science Laboratory for investigation of Cyber Crime cases effectively. Similarly, for the purpose of registration, investigation and prosecution of offences under Information

Technology Act 2000, my Government has created three more Cyber Police Stations at Sambalpur, Rourkela and Berhampur.

95. The District Jail at Puri has been shifted to a new place at Bangora in Gop Tahasil, Puri. Construction of two new Model Convict Jails with capacity of 500 each in Sundergarh and Athgarh has been taken up. The Odisha Fire Prevention and Fire Safety Rules have been enacted by my Government for enforcement of fire safety measures in high-rise buildings, clinical establishments and other buildings like Cinema Halls, Shopping Malls etc. During 2017-18, 6 new Fire Stations have been made functional.

96. My Government has always been endeavouring for overall development of world famous Shri Jagannath Temple, Puri. For providing better facilities in and around the Temple and its overall infrastructural development, my Government has started the 'ABADHA'(Augmentation of Basic Amenities & Development of Heritage and Architecture)Yojana. The repair and conservation work of Jagmohan (Dancing Hall) of Shri Jagannath Temple has already been completed. Besides the above, the cracks developed in Beheran Dwar are under repair, which would be completed soon. The Law

Department has implemented various schemes for the welfare of the Sebayats to provide social security, health, housing and education.

97. For quick and speedy disposal of litigation, my Government has issued notification for establishment of 48 Courts of different categories during 2017. Government has appointed 71 Civil Judges in Odisha Judicial Service during 2017 and is taking steps for appointment of another 110 Civil Judges in Odisha Judicial Service during 2018. As many as 834 Lok Adalats have been organized during which 2,97,975 numbers of cases have been disposed off. To provide access to justice to people, my Government has decided to establish Legal assistance Cells in each Gram Panchayat of the State named as “Madhubabu Aain Sahayat Sibir”.

98. My Government has implemented Integrated Mines and Minerals Management System Project as a part of the e-Governance Process to bring transparency in mineral administration. It includes e-permit, e-pass, e-filing & e-payment system to capture the production, despatch and sale value of the minerals on real time basis. This IT intervention has been recognized and appreciated by the

Central Government who, in turn, has even requested the State Government to share the details with other mineral rich States for similar implementation. The State Government has also decided to go for DGPS survey of all Sairat sources of minor minerals which will ensure proper demarcation in the field to rule out any illegal extraction.

99. Odisha became the first State in the country to make fitting of GPS units in all the mineral carrying vehicles compulsory to further strengthen the protection measures to check illegal mining and transportation. Consequently, only those vehicles which are fitted with GPS units are allowed to transport minerals and the movement of these vehicles is being monitored online on real time basis. The State Government had raised the demand for compensation on account of mining of iron and manganese ore mineral in violation of the relevant laws as per the judgement of the Hon'ble Supreme Court. The amount so realized would be utilized for socio-economic development in the mining affected districts.

100. Odisha Mining Corporation Limited has undertaken a number of activities under Corporate Social Responsibility in the fields of environment protection, energy conservation,

clean water & sanitation, skill development & training, education & promotion of talent, livelihood & infrastructure development, eradication of hunger and to meet the other community requirements. Similarly, a unique pro-poor student programme, 'OMC Super-100' has been initiated for the underprivileged and economically backward students.

101. One of the most important responsibilities that my Government has shouldered is the proper management of land allotted to homesteadless and landless families in rural areas of the State. Modern Record Rooms have been made functional in 279 Tahasils out of total 317 Tahasils of the State. Major civil construction works like construction of new Record Rooms, new Tahasil office buildings etc. have been undertaken. Out of total 51,675 villages appearing in Bhulekh, map digitization and integration with textual RoR data in respect of 51,612 villages have been completed.

102. My Government is implementing 'Banayan', Odisha Forestry Sector Development Project, Phase-II (OFSDP-II) in 10 Districts of the State for restoration of degraded forests and improving the livelihood of the forest dependent villagers. The project will be carried out in Joint Forest Management mode and will be implemented through Vana Surakshya

Samitis constituted in 1,200 villages of 12 Forest Divisions. Further, Biodiversity Conservation interventions under OFSDP-II will be implemented in 2 Wildlife Divisions of the State. Ama Jungle Yojana, covering 7,000 Vana Surakshya Samitis in 17 districts of the State will be implemented phase-wise under this initiative over a period of six years starting from 2016-17.

103. Through Green Odisha Mission about 42 crores of seedlings have been planted. It has been targeted to plant 10.87 crores of seedlings during 2018-19. Under Urban Tree Plantation scheme, 11.05 lakh saplings have been planted during the current year. 3.60 lakh saplings will be planted in 2018-19. Similarly, for restoring green cover in bald hills, 2,000 hectares of bald hill plantations will be taken up during 2018-19. Bamboo plantation over 15,810 hectares has been taken up during the last 4 years. In order to encourage the conservation and protection of environment, 'Jagannath Bana Prakalpa' is being implemented to plant distinct species of trees for augmenting the supply of timber required for the Chariots during RathaYatra at Puri. 181 institutions have been awarded "Prakruti Mitra" and 195 individuals as "Prakruti Bandhu" by the State Government on the occasion of World Environment Day, 2017.

104. My Government is launching “Green Mahanadi Mission” spread over 5 years at a total project cost of Rs. 75.33 crores to protect and conserve river Mahanadi ensuring her perennial flow for the benefit of the people of the State. Under the Mission, a Green Belt is to be created in 1 kilometer width on both sides of the rivers Mahanadi, Tel & Ib with new plantations over 16,500 hectares, avenue plantations over 500 running kilometers and distribution of 63 lakh seedlings to the farmers during 2018-19

105. My Government has taken proactive steps for implementation of RCS-UDAN Scheme in Utkela and Jeypore Airstrips. Efforts are being made with Airport Authority of India for full fledged operation of Jharsuguda Airport for which State funds to the tune of Rs. 30 crores have been released towards development of Jharsuguda Airport during 2017-18.

106. My Government is committed to improve railway density in the State. MoUs with Ministry of Railways for two new projects namely 130 kilometers Jeypore-Malkangiri and 38 kilometers Nabarangpur–Jeypore to bring Rail connectivity for the first time to Malkangiri and Nabarangpur districts have been signed. My Government has also offered sharing of 50% of land and construction cost for 32 kilometers of

Puri-Konark Railway project keeping in tune with its commitment for the growth of railways in Odisha.

107. “Biju Gaon Gadi Yojana” meant to provide transport service to the remote and unconnected Gram Panchayats of the State has made substantial contribution by plying 560 vehicles on road.

108. Fourteen potential port sites in the State have been identified for development of ports. My Government has signed one Concession Agreement with the Creative Port Development Pvt. Ltd, Chennai for development of port at Subarnarekha Mouth at Kirtania in Balasore District and another with the Navayuga Engineering Company Limited, Hyderabad for development of port at Astaranga in Puri District. Formation of Odisha Maritime Board is in process; its enactment will provide single window facilitation for development of maritime activities of the ports in the State. For safety of boat passengers a safety scheme namely, “Sahid Baji Rout Naujatra Suraksha Yojna” has been implemented to provide boat passengers with safety equipment with 95% subsidy to boat operators. These equipments include life jackets, lifebuoys, fire extinguisher etc.

109. The Bihar & Odisha Excise Act, 1915, the Act enacted for the then province of Bihar & Odisha, has been replaced by the Odisha Excise Act, 2008 and Rules, which were enforced in the State from 1st April, 2017. In the new law, provisions have been made for establishment of Excise Stations, trial by Special Courts and forfeiture of property of the bootleggers and liquor mafias.

110. My Government has adopted a holistic and integrated approach for development of Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes, Backward Classes and Minorities of our State with priorities being social, economic, educational, health and livelihood sectors. Considering the role of education in social development, my Government has established a good number of educational institutions including 766 Ashram Schools, 505 Sevashrams, 337 Boys and Girls High Schools, 19 Educational Complexes for Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups, 5 Residential Sevashrams and 13 Ekalavya Model Residential Schools for quality education, wherein more than 4.61 lakh ST/SC students are continuing their studies including more than 2.73 lakh girls.

111. With the objective of providing best educational opportunities to ST and SC students, my Government has

initiated a new scheme “Anwasha”, a pioneering initiative to facilitate quality education in the best public schools for the disadvantaged ST & SC students. 13,437 students have already been admitted in such schools with free hostel, food and other facilities. My Government is providing Placement Linked Employment Training, Pre-recruitment Training and Skill Development Training in Government and Government approved ITIs under various trades to the ST and SC youth to make them self employed.

112. My Government has been implementing the provision of Forest Rights Act in a mission mode. Odisha is the number one State of the country in distributing the Forest Rights titles. More than 4.11 lakh ST individual titles and 5,964 community right titles have been distributed including 18,480 individual titles to Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group families alongwith convergence of various Government schemes.

113. My Government is conscious of the rich tradition of Handloom fabrics in the State and has accordingly initiated programmes for comprehensive development of the Sector. During the year 2017-18, my Government has provided Rs. 478.80 lakhs for construction of 684 work-sheds for weavers. Similarly, an amount of Rs.389.80 lakhs has been

provided for skill up-gradation training of 1,540 beneficiaries. Three Block Printing Units have been set up at Gopalpur, Makidia and Fakirpur to produce diversified range of high quality and exquisite printed hand-woven tasar and silk products. 24 organizations have been registered under “India Handloom Brand”. “Barishtha Bunakara Sahayata Yojana” has been implemented to provide monthly assistance to the old aged weavers as a social security measure. 16,990 sericulture farmers have been covered under “Aam Admi Bima Yojana” .

114. During the current financial year, 4,424 artisans are undergoing training under different training programmes and 750 artisans have been provided with marketing assistance. Other assistance like Margin Money Assistance to set up own unit, providing Workshed-cum-Housing, Design Support, Exposure Visit etc. are also provided to handicraft artisans. My Government is in the process of formation of a Council for development of the handicrafts and handlooms sector and empowerment of the artisans.

115. My Government has ambitious plans on the anvil for nurturing young talents in different sports disciplines by way of establishing Sports Academies. An agreement has been

entered with Athletics Federation of India and International Association of Athletics Federations for establishment of Hi-Performance Athletics Academy. To promote sports and sports infrastructure facilities at the Block and ULB Levels, all the 314 Blocks and 112 ULBs have been covered under the 'Mini-Stadium' Scheme. Biju Patnaik Himalayan Expedition has been introduced as an annual programme in collaboration with Tata Steel Adventure Foundation headed by Ms. Bachendri Pal from 2016 to commemorate the Birth Centenary Celebration of Late Biju Patnaik.

116. Our State occupies a unique position in the Indian tourism scenario. My Government has brought out the new Tourism Policy, 2016 to strengthen tourism potential by developing Odisha as the most alluring tourist destination and to place it prominently on the domestic and global tourism map. "Light & Sound Shows" at Dhauli and Konark are already in operation. Multi Media Show at Narendra Pokhari has been completed and at Bindusagar, it is under process. Light & Sound Shows at Khandagiri & Udayagiri are underway.

117. Pilgrimage holds a special significance in Indian culture and is considered as a spiritual and divine experience.

Keeping this in view, the Tourism Department has been successfully organizing “Baristha Nagarika Tirtha Yatra Yojana” and 3,000 senior citizens are getting the benefit of this scheme during 2017-18.

118. My Government is constantly striving for promotion, preservation and propagation of the State’s unique cultural legacy. Odisha is the first State to provide livelihood support to artists through Artist Federations. I am happy that my Government has established Odia Virtual Academy for development, promotion and popularization of Odia language. It will be a virtual repository of documents, books, manuscripts, materials and all related artefacts pertaining to Odia Culture and Literature. Public Libraries will be established in each District to make available all Odia classics and all translated and award winning books. Already existing libraries at the district level would be upgraded to e-Library & Smart Library.

119. An informed society is crucial to the functioning of democracy. Hence in a bid to inform and educate the public on the plans and programmes, my Government in Information and Public Relations Department has adopted multi-pronged strategy for active participation of the public in the process

of development. The implementation of Right to Information Act has been leveraged through user-friendly Information Technology for which the State has won the prestigious National Award on e-governance in the best Government Portal category. My Government has recently formulated the State Web Media Policy to render much needed support to the new social media platform.

120. Two monthly Journals 'Utkal Prasang' in Odia and 'Odisha Review' in English along with its e-version featuring art, culture and tradition of Odisha and Odisha Reference Annual, a ready reference biennial Manual on social, economic, political, cultural and literary aspects of the State are published to enrich, empower and enlighten the citizens.

121. The commemorative postage stamp in honour of Late Biju Patnaik, the legendary leader and ex-Chief Minister of Odisha, was released on the occasion of his 102nd Birth Anniversary on 5th March in a State level function.

122. Odisha today is on the path of equitable and inclusive growth with quest for accelerated socio-economic development. Anti-poverty programmes of my Government, its pro-tribal and pro-women programmes, spirit of fighting

against corruption and its attempt to empower all segments of population has resulted in setting national benchmarks in several sectors. From a rice deficit State, the State has now become rice surplus and the third highest contributor to the country's Public Distribution System. Agricultural production and farmers income have doubled and more than eight million people have been brought above the poverty line. My Government now leads the country in rural housing programme and in according land/ property rights to the urban slum dwellers. Infant Mortality Rate has been drastically reduced and brought below the national average. The disaster management model of my Government has set global standards and has received International acclaim. We are firmly on the path of stability and good governance with our pro-poor approach. The Present Odisha is working hard and is striving for excellence to make the Odisha of tomorrow more bright and more beautiful.

I now leave it you to your deliberations and wish you all success.

Bande Utkal Janani.