

**IMPORTANT ISSUES FOR  
MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT FROM PUNJAB  
BUDGET SESSION - FEBRUARY, 2008**

(These issues require follow up with the concerned Ministries of Government of India at various forums)

You can contact – for clarifications

Secretary Planning  
Government of Punjab  
(0172 2702186, 98150 74 500)

## CONTENTS

<b>SN</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Ministry, GOI</b>	<b>Page</b>
1.	Irrigation Projects	Water Resources	1
2.	Problem of Water Logging	Water Resources	2
3.	2 <sup>nd</sup> Ravi-Beas Link	Water Resources	3
4.	Power	Power	4
5.	Domoria Bridge, Jalandhar	MoRTH	5
6.	Roads	Road Transport and Highways	6
7.	Payment of Salary to ETT teachers under Sarva Sikhsha Abhiyan	Human Resources Development	7
8.	Establishment of IIM,IIT and Central University	Human Resources Development	8
9.	Establishment of National Institute of Studies in Sri Guru Granth Sahib (NISSGGS)	Human Resources Development	9
10.	Rural Indebtness in Punjab	Agriculture	10
11.	Minimum Support Price of Wheat and Paddy	Agriculture	11
12.	Inclusion of all districts of Punjab under National Food Security Mission – Wheat	Agriculture	12
13.	Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY)	Agriculture	13-14
14.	Development of Border Areas	MHA, MoRD, MoF	15
15.	Concessions to Neighbouring States	Finance	16
16.	Financial Allocations by Centre to States	Finance	17
17.	Development of On-Port and Off-Port facilities at Attari and Upgradation of Railway Station Attari	Home Affairs, Railways	18
18.	Border Trade	Commerce	19
19.	Civil Aviation	Civil Aviation	20
20.	Below Poverty Line (BPL Families)	Planning	21
21.	Opening of VISA Centre at Amritsar	External Affairs	22
22.	Gail Pipeline	Petroleum	23

<b>SN</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Ministry, GOI</b>	<b>Page</b>
23.	Rail Link between Amritsar and Ferozepur	Railways	24
24.	Special Grant for Government Medical College Amritsar under PMSSY	Health & Family Welfare	25
25.	Extension of Rail Freight Corridor to Amritsar/ Attari	Railways	26
26.	Sanction for Manufacturing Investment Region for Punjab	Industries	27
27.	Naming of proposed International Airport at Chandigarh as Shahid Bhagat Singh International Airport – Chandigarh	Civil Aviation	28
28	Construction of Guru Gobind Singh Marg	Cultural Affairs	29
29	Development of Anandpur Sahib and Talwandi Sabo	Cultural Affairs	30

## 1. IRRIGATION PROJECTS

The century old canal Irrigation network of 14500 km in the State has outlived its life and its carrying capacity has been sub-optimized overtime. The State Government has prepared an ambitious programme of Rs. 3243 crore for the upgradation and rehabilitation of canal infrastructure in the State.

The State Government has made three specific requests to Government of India in regard to projects for upgradation of canal infrastructure in the State.

- (1) At present under the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP) of Government of India the State gets 25 % of the amount from Government of India while remaining 75 % the cost of the project is borne by the State Government. For Himachal Pradesh and other Special Category States the ratio is 75 % from GoI and 25 % from the State. We have requested Government of India that in view of the need to maintain the century old canal network in the State, the State projects should be considered under relaxed AIBP norms i.e. 75 % of the cost should be borne by the Government of India and the remaining 25 % by the State Government.
- (2) At present a new AIBP Project is sanctioned in the State only after one of the on-going project is completed. The State Government has requested for removal of one for one (1 for 1) restriction for funding of projects under AIBP. This restriction is a big bottleneck in taking up new project for execution under AIBP.
- (3) Similarly, the State would also like the Commission to consider the enhancement of financial norms under Command Area Development and Water Management (CADWM) Programme from Rs. 10,000/- to Rs. 15,000/- per ha. There is a need to remove one – for – one restriction for funding on these projects also.

**(Ministry of Water Resources, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----

## 2. PROBLEM OF WATER LOGGING

1. The three South-Western districts of the State namely Faridkot, Muktsar and Ferozepur have been badly affected by salination and water logging. Excessive seepage of water from the inter-State canal – Rajasthan Feeder and State canal - Sirhind Feeder is the principle cause of water logging in these districts. These two canals were lined long back and now require re-lining.

2. The State Government has prepared two projects for lining of Rajasthan and Sirhind Feeders at a cost of Rs. 425 crore and Rs. 225 crore. In addition a project for Rs. 300 crore has also been prepared on the recommendation of Central Ground Water Board, comprising of construction of new surface drains, sub-surface drains and installation of lift pumps etc. The total cost for these three projects amounts to Rs. 950 crore and these stand submitted to Ministry of Water Resources, Government of India for approval. The lining of Rajasthan feeder is a inter-State project and therefore should qualify for 90 % of funding from Government of India under the latest guidelines of AIBP. The remaining two projects are also of extreme importance to the State Government and to the nation, should also be considered by Government of India for special funding.

**(Ministry of Water Resources, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----

### 3. 2<sup>ND</sup> RAVI-BEAS LINK

1. It has been learnt through press reports that the Union Cabinet has recently cleared the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ravi-Beas link under the Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Projects (AIBP) Scheme. The project aims at not letting the surplus water in monsoon flow out of India and instead divert it to the needy states. The Union Government has not taken the State of Punjab into confidence before clearing this project. Government of India has not even shared the details of the project with the State Government and it is only through newspapers that the State Government has come to know of approval of this project by Government of India.

2. It is relevant to mention that there is already one Ravi-Beas link at Madhopur and the issues regarding water sharing on this link are yet to be sorted out. The State Government accordingly feels that in view of these circumstances, it is not proper for Government of India to unilaterally go for 2<sup>nd</sup> Ravi-Beas link without taking the State Government into confidence.

**(Ministry of Water Resources, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----

#### 4. POWER

There are two issues pending with Ministry of Power, GoI.

**1. Release of incentive under APDRP** – The State was entitled to a sum of Rs. 251 crore for the year 2003-04 under the Accelerated Power Development Reforms Programme (APDRP). This amount was with-held by Government of India on the ground that the State announced free power to its farmers. Free power was provided with effect from 1/9/2005 and, therefore, it should have no bearing on the incentive due in the year 2003-04. A sum of Rs. 108 crore has been released leaving a balance of Rs. 143 crore. Ministry of Power, Government of India should be requested to release this amount which has been with-held for the last four years, at the earliest.

**2. Sanction of Projects under RGGVY** - Government of India launched Rajiv Gandhi Gramin Vidhyutikaran Yojana (RGGVY) for connecting un-electrified villages with electric power and provide electric connections to rural households. Since the State had already electrified its villages long back, the State Government was not allocated any amount under the village electrification component of the scheme.

However, there are 2.56 lakh non BPL households which do not have any electric connection. Besides there are 1.49 lakh BPL families which need to be provided electric connection as well as a single point CFL connection in their houses. The State Government has submitted 17 projects for Rs. 165 crore for covering 2.56 lakh rural households and 1.49 lakh BPL families. Only one project for Ferozepur district for Rs. 22.97 crore has been sanctioned but no money has been released. Ministry of Power should be requested –

- (i) to release a sum of Rs. 22.97 crore for the Ferozepur district;
- (ii) to sanction the remaining 16 projects amounting to Rs. 142.03 crore.

**(Ministry of Power, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----

## **5. DOMORIA BRIDGE, JALANDHAR**

1. Sh. Inder Kumar Gujral, the then Prime Minister of India at the time of laying of foundation stone in December 1997 had announced that the Centre would bear 100% cost of construction of a Rail Over Bridge in Jalandhar known as Domoria Bridge. Accordingly, the Municipal Corporation, Jalandhar had commenced construction of the Domoria ROB.

2. The total cost of the project is Rs. 26.11 crore of which Ministry of Railways is to provide Rs.5.33 crore and the balance of Rs. 20.78 crore is to be provided by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. While Railways have released a sum of Rs. 2 crore out of their share of Rs. 5.33 crore, MoRTH is yet to release any funds for the purpose despite it being an announcement of the Hon'ble Prime Minister. The commitment of Sh. Gujral was reiterated to MoRTH by Principal Secretary to the then Prime Minister Sh. Atal Bihari Vajpayee. The State Government has taken up the matter with the Union Government at different fora on a number of occasions but to no avail.

3. MoRTH should be requested to honour the commitment of the then Hon'ble Prime Minister and sanction a sum of Rs. 20.78 crore to the State Government.

**(Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----



## 6. ROADS

The 4-laning of some of the National Highways: Chandigarh – Kiratpur, Amritsar – Pathankot and Jalandhar – Amritsar has been sanctioned but the progress of work is very slow. NHAI needs to expedite the completion of 4-laning of these roads. There are 2 other projects – 6-laning of Ludhiana-Chandigarh highway and 4-laning of Ludhiana - Ferozepur highway which have been announced by the Hon'ble Prime Minister and which need to be taken up for expeditious execution.

**(Min of Road Transport and Highways, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----

## **7. PAYMENT OF SALARY TO ETT TEACHERS UNDER SARVA SHIKSA ABHIYAN**

Some of the Primary and Elementary schools were lying closed and defunct for want of teachers in the State. The Government in July 2006 transferred 6037 schools to Zila Parishads and Municipal Bodies. About 13000 new teachers were recruited by these two bodies and these schools were made functional. The request of the State Government for payment of their salary (Rs. 157 crore per year) under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was not accepted by Government of India on the ground that 6037 post of teachers stood sanctioned and these posts were merely transferred to the local bodies and no new post of teachers were created. The request of the State Government is that, no doubt these posts stood created but they were lying vacant resulting in closure of the schools. Had the State Government not recruited these 13000 teachers, it would not have been possible to make these schools functional.

Since these schools have been transferred to Zila Parishads and the Municipal Bodies, it is not possible to transfer the teachers outside the districts/ town. While posting these teachers, efforts have been made to post the local teacher or the teachers from near by villages. The work and the attendance of these teachers is supervised by Sarpanches and the local bodies, as a result of which there is tremendous improvement in attendance of students and teachers. Government of India should incentivise such initiatives of the States. It is therefore requested that Ministry of Human Resources Development (MoRHD), GoI should allow payment of salary to these 13000 newly recruited teachers under SSA, if not to the extent of 100 %, at least to the extent of 50 %. GoI is therefore requested to allow Rs. 78.5 crore every year under SSA for these teachers.

**(Min of Human Resources Development, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----

## **8. ESTABLISHMENT OF IIM, IIT AND A CENTRAL UNIVERSITY**

1. There is no central institution in technology and management sector in the State of Punjab. There is a need to give a major push for imparting good quality technical and higher education in the State. Government of India has recently decided to set up 6 new Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) and Indian Institutes of Management (IIM). The State Government has requested the Ministry for Human Resources & Development for sanctioning atleast one IIT/IIM in the State. The State Government on its part can provide land free of cost to the Government of India for this purpose.

2. Government of India has announced a Central University for the State of Punjab. The State Government has offered land in Bathinda for this purpose. Ministry of Human Resources Development should be requested to clear the project of setting up of a Central University in Punjab without any delay.

**(Min of Human Resources Development, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----

**9. ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF STUDIES IN SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB (NISSGGS)**

1. The proposed institute will undertake the comparative study of religions i.e. Sikhism, Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Jainism and Buddhism. The estimated cost of the project is Rs. 62.53 crore which is to be borne by Government of India. GNDU is to contribute 10 acres of land for this purpose. Separate building is to be constructed within GNDU campus.

2. The Government of India has released a sum of Rs.1.00 crore and the centre has started functioning from GNDU campus. Ministry of Human Resource Development is required to obtain the approval of Union Cabinet for this institute. The Ministry of Human Resources Development, Government of India is requested to expedite its approval for this project.

**(Min of Human Resources Development, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----

## 10. RURAL INDEBTNESS IN PUNJAB

1. **Extent of Problem** - The total debt of farmers from different sources is -

Cooperative institutions	3000 crore
Commercial Banks	11000 crore
Money Lenders & Commission Agents	12000 crore
<b>Total</b>	<b>26000 crore</b>

2. It is gathered that the Cooperative and Banking institutions provide agricultural credit at an average rate of interest of 11 % whereas the commission agents and money lenders charge about 24 %. With this interest rate the total annual interest liability of farmers in Punjab is estimated to be about Rs. 4,000 crore and it is increasing every year.

3. As per Survey conducted by National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) in 2005, Punjab has the highest per farmer household debt of Rs. 41576 against the national average of Rs. 12585. High cost of agricultural inputs and declining incomes have made agriculture a non-profitable activity leading to suicides by the farmers.

4. Government of India should be requested to waive all agricultural loans of the farmers.

**(Min of Agriculture, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----

## 11. MINIMUM SUPPORT PRICE OF WHEAT & PADDY

1. A remunerative market price is a pre-requisite for boosting farm production. While we welcome an increase in the MSP of wheat to Rs. 1000/- for Rabi 2008, it is still short of the import price and does not effectively offset rising input costs. The Commission for Agricultural Cost and Prices (CACP) needs to re-examine the existing methodology of fixation of MSP.

2. The MSP of food crops should be fixed taking into account the cost of production and it should be linked to the consumer price index. The agricultural labourers also need to be treated as skilled labour while factoring their contribution in the farm economy. The other alternative is to accept and implement the recommendations of the committee headed by noted farm economist, Dr. MS Swaminathan, which has recommended that MSP should be equal to the cost of production plus 50%.

**(Min of Agriculture, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----

**12. INCLUSION OF ALL DISTRICTS OF PUNJAB UNDER NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY MISSION – WHEAT (WHEAT ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME)**

1. Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India has launched a National Food Security Mission (NFSM) for increasing the production of rice, wheat and pulses. A sum of Rs. 5000 crore has been earmarked by Government of India for various districts in different states in the country for 5 years.

2. For the wheat component of the National Food Security Mission, 138 districts in the country have been selected. 7 districts of Punjab selected for wheat enhancement programme are Hoshiarpur, Ferozepur, Bathinda, Ropar, Amritsar, Sangrur and Gurdaspur. For pulses, 168 districts have been selected in the country out of which 5 districts are from Punjab. These are Ludhiana, Sangrur, Ferozepur, Gurdaspur and Amritsar. No district of the State has been selected for rice component.

3. Punjab is a major producer of the wheat in the country and contributes more than 60 % of the stocks procured for the Central Pool. Punjab has acquired sufficient expertise and has built a strong technological resource base in wheat production. The sustainability of wheat production in Punjab at the present level has become difficult due to alarming depletion of micro-nutrients in the soil and continuous fall in ground water level. Arresting and reversing the downward trend in wheat yield in Punjab requires financial resources that are beyond the reach of the state on its own.

4. There is, therefore need to include all the 20 districts of the State in the wheat enhancement programme under National Food Security Mission of Government of India. The Ministry of Agriculture should be requested to include the remaining 13 districts under this programme for ensuring food security and to avoid the dependence on wheat imports.

**(Min of Agriculture, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----

### **13. RASHTRIYA KRISHI VIKAS YOJANA (RKVY)**

1. Government of India has launched a 5 year, Rs. 20,000 crore Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana for increasing the annual agricultural growth to 4 % in the country against the present growth rate of 2 % in the country. Government of India would give 100% grants to the States for encouraging the States to increase public investments in agriculture and allied sectors. The States would be required to formulate district level agricultural plans keeping in view the local needs/crops/priorities in view. The proposals of the State Government would be approved by the State Level Committee and thereafter funds would be released by Government of India.

2. Punjab received a sum of Rs. 38 crore under RKVY for the current year 2007-08 and it is likely to receive a sum of Rs. 105 crore for the year 2008-09. Our allocation is meager because criteria fixed for giving grants to the States under RKVY is not favourable to the State of Punjab.

3. The criteria for distribution of funds is as follows-

- (1) 20% of the amount - will be given to the State in proportion to the un - irrigated area in the State to the net unirrigated area of all the eligible States in the country.
- (2) 30% of the funds - will be given in proportion to the projected Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) of Punjab in agriculture sector to the projected GSDP in country as a whole at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan.
- (3) 50% of amount - will be given on the basis of increase in total plan expenditure in agriculture sector in the previous year over the year prior to that year.

4. For the State of Punjab the entire cultivated land is under almost 100 % assured irrigation and there is hardly any unirrigated area. On the basis of criteria - (1) the State does not get even Rs. 1 crore or so every year. The State Government



has requested Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India and Planning Commission to give a due consideration to the irrigation infrastructure put up by the State Government and the need to maintain it. We have suggested that while 50 % of the amount (under criteria 1) may be given on the basis of unirrigated area, remaining 50 % of the amount should be allocated on the basis of requirement of funds to maintain the canal network in the State which is more than 100 years old.

5. The other request of the State Government is that the investments made by the State Government in irrigation sector have played a very important role in increasing the food production in the State. The State Government is required to spend huge funds on irrigation net work every year for its maintenance and rehabilitation. The expenditure incurred by the State Government in irrigation sector should therefore be treated as Plan Expenditure in Agriculture for the purpose of distribution of 50 % of the funds under criteria – (3) of the guidelines.

**(Min of Agriculture, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----

## 14. DEVELOPMENT OF BORDER AREAS

1. Punjab has a 553 km long international border with Pakistan. On account of their geographical location, the four districts of Gurdaspur, Amritsar, Tarn Taran and Ferozepur are not as developed as the other districts of the State. State Government has three specific requests related to the people of these areas.

2. One, there is a need to compensate farmers at Rs. 10,000 per acre annually for the 18,500 acres of cultivable land situated across the border fence on account of various restrictions placed on the farmers due to fence. The annual liability is hardly Rs. 20 crore. The Union Home Minister made a visit to Gurdaspur to have first-hand experience of the plight of these farmers.

3. The second issues relates to sanction of Rs. 200 crore project for upgrading 753 km village roads in border areas by Ministry of Rural Development. These village roads situated in the bordered belt are also used by para military and armed forces resulting in extensive damage. The Hon'ble Prime Minister during his visit to Amritsar in December, 2006 accepted the request of the State Government for upgradation and strengthening of these roads. The roads were identified and a project for their upgradation has been vetted by Ministry of Home Affairs and submitted to Ministry of Rural Development for sanction of Rs. 200 crore under PMGSY.

4. The third request of the State Government for development of border districts is for grant of special fiscal and other incentives to the industry on the pattern of Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir. The State Government feels that incentives to industry granted in the neighbouring states has resulted shifting of industries from Punjab to these states. The border districts are extremely backward having little or no industry and therefore there is a justification for grant of such concessions in the 4 border districts.

**(Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Rural Development,  
Ministry of Finance, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----

## 15. CONCESSIONS TO NEIGHBOURING STATES

1. State Government had brought to the notice of Government of India, the adverse impact of special incentives granted to Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir on industrial units in Punjab. The magnitude of incentives offered in these two states has serious consequences for Punjab because not only new industrial units prefer to be located in the adjoining areas of the neighbouring states but even the expansion of existing units is moving to locations where better incentives are available.

2. Therefore, state government has requested for grant of similar concessions to the entire Punjab State or atleast in the belt of Punjab adjoining the border with HP and J&K areas. However, Government of India has not agreed to this on the plea that they have introduced a sunset clause in the existing exemption for the States of HP and Uttaranchal under which only those units which commence production by 31/3/2010 shall be eligible for incentives.

3. The loss of revenue and jobs can be gauged from the Central Excise figures for the State of Punjab which have declined from Rs. 2800 crores in 2003-04 to Rs. 800 crores or so in 2007-08. The year wise figures are -

<b>Year</b>	<b>Central Excise (Rs. in crores)</b>
2002-03	2654.86
2003-04	2786.46
2004-05	1896.99
2005-06	819.21
2006-07	867.17
2007-08	385.07 (till 30/9/2007)

4. Government of India, therefore, needs to be impressed upon to either withdraw the concessions for the States of Himachal and J&K or offer same concessions to Punjab.

**(Min of Finance, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----

## 16. FINANCIAL ALLOCATIONS BY CENTRE TO STATES

1. The Centre allocates financial resources to the States both under non-plan and plan grants. The State Government requests that in addition to the existing parameters on the basis of which these grants are distributed to various States, two important factors should also be taken into account.

2. **Food Subsidies** – The prices of food-grains have shoot up in recent years. There is an increasing demand for land for growing bio-fuels crops which has put further burden on the prices of food cereals. Food security has therefore become an important issue for the State Governments which are now under increasing pressure to subsidies distribution of wheat/rice and pulses to the poor people. The Public Distribution System of Government of India caters to BPL families as defined by the Planning Commission. As per that definition the number of families in the State works out to about 5.23 lakh which is about 12 % of all families in the State. Since this number is too small, the State Government fixed an annual family income of Rs. 30,000 and has identified about 13.47 lakh families for distribution of wheat and pulses @ Rs. 4 per kg (upto 35 kg per month) and 20 per kg (upto 4 kg per month). The annual subsidy works out to Rs. 450 crore. The State Government requests that while making financial allocations to the States, the Centre should take into consideration such food subsidies given by the States to meet the requirements of food security of poor people.

3. **Scheduled Castes population in the State** – The SC population in the State at 28.85 % is the highest in the country. As per Planning Commission and Government of India guidelines, the States are required to earmark plan funds for SCs in the proportion to their population. This demand for Scheduled Castes Sub Plan puts burden on the resources available for other development works. It is therefore important that Government of India while allocating funds to States, should also take into account the size of SC population in the State.

(Ministry of Finance, GoI)

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----

**17. DEVELOPMENT OF ON-PORT AND OFF-PORT FACILITIES AT ATTARI AND UPGRADATION OF RAILWAY STATION ATTARI**

1. There is urgent need for comprehensive development and up-gradation of infrastructure at Integrated Check Post (ICP Attari) in order to facilitate movement of people and goods across border. Ministry of Home Affairs, GoI sanctioned a Rs. 87 crore project for development of ICP Attari in December 2006. RITES of Railways has been engaged for this work. The work is yet to begin. MHA should be requested to start the works at the earliest.

2. Similarly, Ministry of Railways has also sanctioned a Rs. 19 crore project for upgradation of Infrastructure at Railway Station, Attari encompassing all facilities for easy and fast immigration and custom clearance and for the convenience and comfort of the passengers. The works are yet to be started.

**(Ministry of Home Affairs & Railways, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----

## 18. BORDER TRADE

1. The State Government thanks the Union Government for sanctioning two projects for upgradation of facilities at Railway Station and development of On-Port and Off-Port facilities at Attari at an estimated cost of Rs. 19 crore and Rs. 87 crore respectively. A new Cargo Complex is also planned at Amritsar Airport. The 4-laning of National Highway from Attari to Amritsar is also underway. These projects can give a tremendous boost to trade with Pakistan and help in bringing investments in the backward border areas of the State provided some policy changes are made.

2. More than one thousand items are tradable with Pakistan. However, only a few of these items can move through the land route. Most items are still traded with Pakistan through the sea route via Gujarat and Maharashtra ports which effectively increases the cost of our exports and similarly that of Pakistani imports. This negates the locational advantages the State has with Pakistan. There is a strong case for the GOI to enhance the list of items that can be traded through the land route. This would prove to be economically beneficial to Punjab in particular.

**(Ministry of Commerce, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----

## 19. CIVIL AVIATION

1. We welcome the decision of Ministry of Civil Aviation for approving an International Airport at Chandigarh. Punjab, Haryana and Airport Authority of India are collaborating in this project. There is a need to set up some more domestic airports in the State.

2. The State Government intends to set up Civil Enclaves at the Adampur and Bathinda Air Force Stations. A case has been sent to Ministry of Defence, GoI for its approval for establishment of Civil Enclaves at these two places. Ministry of Defence is requested to expedite its approval.

3. The State Government has requested the Airports Authority of India (AAI) for developing Sahnewal Air strip near Ludhiana as a domestic airport.

**(Ministry of Civil Aviation, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----

## 20. BELOW POVERTY LINE (BPL FAMILIES)

1. At present BPL families are identified on the basis of a definition given in the mid seventies. The requirement of consumption of food items in terms of calories was worked out in urban and rural areas and the income required to meet this requirement was the basis for definition of poor families. At present families having an annual income of Rs. 24011 for urban areas and Rs. 22075 for rural areas are classified as poor in the state of Punjab. The All India averages for urban areas is Rs. 27480 and for rural areas is Rs. 21360. The income level vary from state to state depending upon the living standards in the state.

2. The National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) carried out a survey in the country and on the basis of this survey the Planning Commission fixed a limit of 3.26 lakh BPL families in rural areas. For identifying these families a survey was carried out in 2002 and it was finalized in September, 2006. The number of families identified as BPL in rural areas at present is 3.44 lakh and in urban areas is 1.79 lakh. The total number of BPL families is 5.23 lakh which is about 12.42 % families of the State.

3. The State Government feels that the definition of BPL families is arbitrary and inadequate and requires re-examination. There is no logic in putting an upper limit on BPL families in the State on the basis of a sample survey. The Scheduled Caste population is 29 % in the State where as BPL families are about only 12.42 %. A Committee appointed by the Supreme Court has recently recommended that the families having an annual income less than Rs. 49284 be classified as below poverty line (BPL). The State Government accordingly feels that there is a need to work out a clear definition of poor families and a fresh survey for identification of BPL families be carried out on the basis of new definition.

**(Ministry of Planning, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----



## **21. OPENING OF VISA CENTRE AT AMRITSAR**

1. Bus services from Amritsar to Lahore and Amritsar to Nankana Sahib were launched in January, 2003 & March, 2007 owing to demand from public and religious organizations.

2. The passengers and pilgrimages are required to obtain visa for boarding these buses from the Pakistan embassy in New Delhi. People find it difficult and cumbersome to go to Delhi for visa and come back for boarding the bus from Amritsar. The average occupancy of passengers is already 31 % for Amritsar- Lahore Bus and 7 % for Amritsar-Nankana Sahib mainly on account of visa problem & security clearance. The purpose of introducing these two buses will not be fully met unless a visa centre is opened in Amritsar. Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, should arrange a visa centre in Amritsar.

**(Min of External Affairs, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----

## 22. GAIL PIPELINE

1. The Gas Authority of India Limited is to lay a pipeline from Dadri (in UP) to Nangal (in Punjab) to bring piped gas supply to the State. This 590 km long pipe line would cost Rs. 2700 crore. The gas Supply would be useful to both industrial and domestic consumers. Further, it would enable PSEB to establish a 1000 MW gas based power plant near Doraha. As per the present schedule, the GAIL pipeline is to be laid by 2010 but it is apprehended that there may be delays in its execution.

2. The GOI needs to be requested to ensure that the given timeline of 2010 is adhered to by GAIL, which is under the Ministry of Petroleum.

**(Ministry of Petroleum, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----

### **23. RAIL LINK BETWEEN AMRITSAR AND FEROZEPUR**

1. The State Government has requested the Ministry of Railways to connect Jalandhar-Ferozepur to Amritsar-Khemkaran Railway Line by providing a 37 km Rail Link between Rattoke (Amritsar-Khemkaran) and Mallanwala (Jalandhar-Ferozepur). This link would create an alternate rail route from the strategic Khemkaran sector on the Indo-Pak Border to Jammu & Kashmir besides shortening the rail journey between Punjab and Gujarat and Maharashtra which are to vital business destinations.
2. Ministry of Railways should be persuaded to sanction this Rail Link in the current Budget Session. The State Government would provide all help in acquisition of land for this purpose.

**(Ministry of Railways, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----

**24. SPECIAL GRANT FOR GOVERNMENT MEDICAL COLLEGE, AMRITSAR UNDER PMSSY**

1. Punjab has been a pioneer in medical education, the medical college at Amritsar being one of the six oldest medical institutions in the country. The Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojna (PMSSY), approved in 2006 with the object of correcting imbalances in availability of effective and affordable tertiary healthcare through enhancing quality of medical education in the country, provides for upgradation of medical institutions with an outlay of Rs. 120 crore each of which Rs. 100 crore being central assistance and the remaining Rs. 20 crore to be contributed by the State Government.

2. It is surprising that Government Medical College, Amritsar has not been included under this scheme for upgradation. Hon'ble Chief Minister has taken up this issue with Minister of Health and Family Welfare and also the Hon'ble Prime Minister. They should be requested to include Government Medical College Amritsar under PMSSY and sanction the special grant of Rs. 100 crore.

**(Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----

**25. EXTENSION OF RAIL FREIGHT CORRIDOR UPTO AMRITSAR/ATTARI**

1. Ministry of Railways has decided to construct a dedicated Rail Freight Corridor from Kolkata to Ludhiana. The State Government has requested the Ministry of Railways to extend this corridor to atleast Amritsar, if not upto Attari. The Attari border has been opened for trade with Pakistan. It is expected that in the coming years, trade with Pakistan would be liberalized and more items would be added to the list of Indo-Pak Trade. Government of India is also considering allowing more items to be traded through land route with Pakistan. Ministry of Home Affairs and Railways are also upgrading the Attari Integrated Check Post (ICP) and the Attari railway station at an estimated cost of Rs. 87 crore and Rs. 19 crore respectively.

2. These measures would be of real use only if the Rail Freight Corrdior is extended upto Amritsar/ Attari. It is therefore, important that to promote trade and industries in the State of Punjab and particularly in the backward border belt, the proposed Rail Freight Corridor is extended to Amritsar and Attari. Ministry of Railways should be requested to accept the request of the State Government.

**(Ministry of Railways, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----

## **26. SANCTION FOR MANUFACTURING INVESTMENT REGION FOR PUNJAB**

1. Manufacturing Sector in the Punjab State has been rendered totally un-competitive due to tax concessions offered by the Government of India to the neighbouring States of Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh & Uttrakhand. The State Government has been pleading the Government of India for grant of similar concessions to the State of Punjab. They were also requested that if it was not possible for the entire State, then atleast, the border districts on Indo-Pak border and the districts bordering Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh should be considered for similar concessions.

2. The Government of India is planning to sanction Manufacturing Investment Region in some of the States. The State Government requests that atleast one such region should be sanctioned for the State of Punjab in order to revive its manufacturing sector. Poor industrial growth is the principal cause of our lower rate of growth of GDP. The Ministry of Industries, Government of India should therefore be requested to sanction atleast one Manufacturing Investment Region for the State of Punjab.

**(Ministry of Industries, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----

**27. NAMING OF PROPOSED INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AT CHANDIGARH AS SHAHID BHAGAT SINGH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - CHANDIGARH**

1. The State Government welcomes the decision of the Ministry of Civil Aviation for approving an International Airport at Chandigarh. The Punjab, Haryana and Air Authority of India are collaborating on this project. Memorandum of Understanding has already been signed between these three parties.

2. The country has recently celebrated the centenary of birth of Shahid Bhagat Singh . It would be a befitting tribute to the great martyr, if the proposed International Airport at Chandigarh is named as “Shahid Bhagat Singh International Airport – Chandigarh”. Hon’ble CM has already written a DO letter to the Hon’ble Prime Minister and also the Ministry of Civil Aviation. They should be requested to expedite its decision in regard to naming of Chandigarh Airport and it be named as “Shahid Bhagat Singh International Airport – Chandigarh”.

**(Ministry of Civil Aviation, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----

## **28. CONSTRUCTION OF GURU GOBIND SINGH MARG**

1. The tercentenary of “Gur-ta-Gaddi” of Guru Granth Sahib is being celebrated in October, 2008. The route taken by Guru Gobind Singh from Talwandi Sabo (Punjab) to Nanded in Maharashtra passes through the States of Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Delhi, UP, MP and Maharashtra. A meeting was held under the chairmanship of Union Home Minister in December, 2007 which was attended by the concerned Chief Ministers and Minister of Culture, Government of India. It was agreed in that meeting that the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, GoI would seek the approval of Union Cabinet for naming the historic route from Talwandi Sabo to Nanded as Guru Gobind Singh Marg and for declaring it as National Highway. The total length of the route is 1828 Kms.

2. The Ministry of Culture, Government of India should be requested to expedite the approval of Government of India for naming the historic route as Guru Gobind Singh Marg and for declaring it as a National Highway. Once this is done, the Ministry of Roads, Transport and Highways, Government of India, could be requested to upgrade the roads in a phased manner.

**(Ministry of Cultural Affairs, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----



## **29. DEVELOPMENT OF ANANDPUR SAHIB AND TALWANDI SABO**

1. The country is celebrating the ter-centenary of “Guru-ta-Gaddi” of Guru Granth Sahib in October, 2008. A meeting under the chairmanship of Sh. Shivraj Patil, Minister of Home Affairs, Government of India was held on 23/6/2007 to finalise the arrangements. It was decided in this meeting to include development of Talwandi Sabo and Anandpur Sahib in commemoration of the ter-centenary. The State Government was asked to submit a detailed project report for these two towns.

2. The State Government vide its letter dated 11/10/2007 sent the detailed project reports for Talwandi Sabo (Rs.81.96 crore) and Anandpur Sahib (Rs.102.13 crore) to Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi. The projects relates to water supply, sewerage & sanitation, education, roads, traffic and transportation etc. The Ministry of Cultural Affairs should be requested to sanction these projects and release the amount of Rs.81.96 crore and Rs.102.13 crore to the State of Punjab.

**(Ministry of Cultural Affairs, GoI)**

-----\*\*\*\*\*-----\*\*\*\*\*-----