

**IMPORTANT ISSUES FOR
MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT FROM PUNJAB
MONSOON SESSION - JULY 2006**

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

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For any clarification.

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1. ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCE FOR MEGA PROJECTS

1. Government of India vide its notification dated 17/7/2004 made it mandatory that all projects having investment of more than Rs 50 crore would require environmental clearance from the Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF), Government of India. This clearance is preceded by preparation of environmental assessment report and holding of public hearing by the state government which are quite cumbersome and time consuming.

2. Punjab Government has recently sanctioned a large number of projects in construction, industrial, IT sectors. Work on these projects can not be started for want of environmental clearance. The State Government has already requested the Government of India to withdraw this notification or atleast revise the ceiling from Rs.50 crore to Rs. 250 crore. Therefore there is urgent need to exempt industries having investment less than Rs. 250 crore from the environmental clearance of MOEF, GOI.

(Min of Environment and Forests, GOI)

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2. RURAL INDEBTNESS IN PUNJAB

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

Cooperative institutions	6195 crore
Commercial Banks	7825 crore
Money Lenders & Commission Agents	11300 crore
Total	25400 crore

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. Increased cost of Inputs and Low Minimum Support Price has virtually rendered agricultural an uneconomic activity. As per available estimates, the gross income of Punjab farmers is about Rs.18,000 crore per annum. The cost incurred by farmers on various agricultural inputs including agricultural credit, pesticides, insecticides, seeds etc. is about 50% of the total gross income. The total annual income of the farmers is there in the range of Rs. 8000 to 9000 crores which is nearly 1/3 of the total estimated debt burden of Rs. 25400 crore which is certainly an alarming situation requiring most effective and time bound and long term basis.

RS. 2060 CRORE PACKAGE

4. The State Government prepared a draft bill "The Punjab Relief of Agricultural Indebtness Bill, 2006" which was sent to Hon'ble Prime Minister. The comments of Government of India are yet to be received.

5. **One Time Settlement Scheme** - The Punjab Government has prepared One Time Settlement (OTS) scheme for the short term and long term cooperative agricultural loan. The farmers who did not pay their loans regularly as on 31/3/2004 are eligible for this scheme. The farmers would be entitled to one time settlement (OTS) provided they agreed to pay the principal outstanding amount plus interest with a maximum limit of 100% of the principal amount. They would have to pay 25% of the amount so worked

out, immediately on the orders of settlement and remaining amount 75% would have to be paid in 4 half yearly installments.

6 The OTS policy also envisages relief by way of interest incentive to all those farmers who have been repaying their loans regularly. It is proposed that interest incentive 1 ½% should be allowed to all the farmers, who repay their loans regularly. It should not appear that we are giving relief only to those farmers who have not paid their debt regularly.

7. **Amount Involved** - Relief worked out as per proposed One Time Settlement Scheme and other items demanded by the Punjab Government is –

(1) Relief on account of Cooperative Loans	Rs. 209.36 crore
(2) Rehabilitation grant for primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies	Rs. 170.21 crore
(3) Rehabilitation grant for primary Agricultural Development Banks	Rs. 28.58 crore
(4) Relief on account of Commercial Banks Loans	Rs. 390.00 crore
(5) Moratorium on interest for one year	Rs.1261.80 crore
Total	Rs. 2060 crore

8. **Detailed Explanation Of The Relief Package**

(1) Cooperative loans (Rs 209.36 Cr) - Given, the amount of Rs.6195 crore of the Cooperative loans of which Rs.729.77 crore is in default , the relief as per the proposed one time settlement scheme comes to **Rs. 209.36** crore. It is estimated that nearly 377695 farmers would be eligible for this relief.

(2 & 3) Rehabilitation Grant (Rs 198.79 Cr) - Non Performing Assets (NPAs) of Primary Agricultural Cooperative Society & Primary Agricultural Development Banks have rendered nearly Rs.800 crore cooperative credit institutions bankrupt. These grass roots cooperative institutions need to be revived by providing one time rehabilitation grant as this would largely help the farmers who have been denied the benefit of cooperative credit at village level as a result of closure of these institutions. The total amount involved for the rehabilitation grant is **Rs.198.79 crore**.

(4) Commercial Bank loans (Rs 390 Cr) - Government of India should in consultation with RBI allow Commercial Banks to evolve and implement OTS scheme

similar to the one formulated by Government of Punjab for agricultural loans advanced by commercial banks. Given the estimate figures of agricultural advances of Rs.7825 crore by the Commercial Banks in Punjab, it is estimated that total relief assistance of **Rs.390 crore** would be needed to implement similar OTS scheme by Commercial Banks.

(5) Moratorium on Interest (Rs 1261.80 Cr) : Government of India should allow moratorium on interest payments by farmers for one year to enable them to regularize their loan accounts. This would mean that all the borrowing farmers both of the Commercial Banks and Cooperative Banks should not be required to pay interest for one year though they would pay the principal amount in installments during the period of moratorium, a sum of **Rs. 1261.80 crore** would need to be reimbursed to the banks by the Government of India as one time assistance.

9. Ministry of Finance and Agriculture, Government of India should accept the proposal of the Punjab Government and sanction a package of Rs. 2060 crore as mentioned above. It is relevant to mention that Secretary Finance, Government of India is holding a meeting in this regard with CS Punjab and other officers in New Delhi on 25/7/06.

(Ministry of Finance and Agriculture, GOI)

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3. ROADS

The following three roads are required to be upgraded to 4-lane:

1. **Ludhiana- Chandigarh Road (to 4- lane/6- lane):** The 68 kilometer road from Kharar to Ludhiana is required to be upgraded. The cost of 4-laning is Rs 350 crore and cost of 6-laning would be Rs 425 crore. The matter was taken up with the Government of India but this road has not yet been included in any of the National Highway Development Programme (NHDP).

The matter requires to be taken up with the Ministry of Road Transport for including and sanctioning this project under NHDP or otherwise.

2. **Ambala- Jalandhar Road:** It has been learnt that an expressway is to be constructed from Delhi to Chandigarh. Punjab Government feels that this expressway needs to be extended from Ambala to Jalandhar. This project also needs to be included under one of the NHDPs.

3. **4-Laning of NH-1 from Verka Chowk, Amritsar to Wagha Border:** The cost of 4-laning of 35 Km stretch of NH-1 from Verka Chowk, Amritsar to Wagha Border is Rs.175 crore. The Hon'ble Prime Minister had also announced its construction on 24/3/2006 on his visit to Amritsar.

This road has however not been included in the National Highway and Development Programme. Ministry of Road, Transport, Government of India is requested to grant special assistance of Rs.175 crore and have this road constructed.

4. **Amritsar – Jalandhar, Ambala – Chandigarh :** The work has been allotted to the contractors M/s IVR Co, Hyderabad & GMR Engineering, Bangalore respectively. The work has started but the progress is extremely slow. It is important that work on these two important and busy roads is completed without delay. Ministry of Road Transport should expedite the completion.

5. **Chandigarh – Ropar – Kiratpur, Amritsar – Pathankot :** The work has not yet been allotted to the parties even though these two roads stand included in NHDP-

III. MoRT, Government of India should allot these works and start the work without any further delay.

(Min of Road Transport and Highways, GOI)

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4. SET UP AIIMS LIKE INSTITUTE AT JALANDHAR

1. Punjab Government is constructing Punjab Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) at Jalandhar. The estimated cost of project is Rs.220 crore and it is being constructed over an area of 56 acre of land in the heart of the city. The building is complete to the extent of 80%. The college would admit 100 MBBS students to begin with and will have 500 bedded hospital attached to it. Ultimately 150 MBBS students would be admitted and the bed strength of the hospital would increase to 750 beds.

2. The State Government requires a sum of Rs.100 crore to complete the project and another Rs.45 crore per year to run the institute. The State Government is finding it difficult to complete the project and thereafter run the institute. The Hon'ble CM Punjab vide his DO dated 10/3/06 requested the Hon'ble Prime Minister for completion and operationalisation of the institute on the same pattern as was adopted by the Sant Harchand Singh Longowal Institute of Engineering & Technology in District. Sangrur, Punjab.

3. CM vide his second DO dated 5/6/06 addressed to Hon'ble Prime Minister suggested that the Government of India was in the process of setting up additional 6 AIIMS institutions and one of these institutions could be set up in the campus of Punjab Institute of Medical Sciences, Jalandhar. The state government was willing to transfer the land and building of PIMS for the proposed AIIMS. The proposal needs to be followed up with the Hon'ble Prime Minister and Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India.

(Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, GOI)

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5. ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE UNIVERSITY

1. Government of Punjab wants that Ministry of Defence, Government of India should set up a Defence University at Patiala. The campus of National Institute of Sports(NIS) Patiala could be utilized for this purpose and NIS can be shifted to Martial Art Academy at Anandpur Sahib in Ropar District. The academy has adequate land and infrastructure for the NIS. Any inadequacy of land and infrastructure can be made up by Government of Punjab.

2. The matter was taken up with the Government of India and there was some hesitation on the part of Ministry of Sports and Youth Welfare, Government of India. The Hon'ble CM Punjab vide his DO dated 28/6/06 has requested the Hon'ble Prime Minister to arrange a meeting at the level of Union Defence Minister and Union Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs and CM Punjab to sort out the issue. Earlier CM Punjab had also met the Hon'ble Prime Minister and Defence Minister in this regard on 22/6/06.

3. Unless Ministry of Sports and Youth Welfare agree and grant NOC, there can not be any movement in this regard. Case needs to be pursued with Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs.

(Ministry of Sports and Youth Welfare, GOI)

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6. NEW INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AT HALWARA

1. Government of India has accepted the request of Punjab Government and agreed to set up an International Airport at Halwara by Airport Authority of India. A separate civilian enclave would be created for domestic and international flights/cargo. Government of Punjab would acquire 200 acre of land and make it available free of cost to Airport Authority of India. The Ministry of Defence, Government of India has granted approval.

2. Punjab Government (PSIDC) appointed the Consulting Engineering Services Pvt. Ltd. as consultant, who submitted their report on 19/5/2006. The report was sent to the Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India for comments on 1/6/2006. The Ministry of Civil Aviation is required to finalise its comments/response and expedite the construction of new International Airport at Halwara.

(Min of Civil Aviation, GOI)

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7. PUNJAB DEVELOPMENT PACKAGE 2006-07

1. Discussions between CM Punjab and Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, Government of India were held on 14/2/2006 for finalizing the annual plan 2006-07. The Hon'ble CM requested for a package of Rs. 2040 crore from the Government of India for agriculture, infrastructure in rural and urban areas, power and education. During discussions it was felt that the Punjab package should be re-worked and a revised package should be submitted to the Planning Commission by the Government of Punjab.
2. CS Punjab, thereafter vide his DO dated 13/3/2006 submitted a revised "Special Development Package for Punjab" amounting to Rs. 3800 crores to the Planning Commission. The details of which in brief are reproduced below.
3. The Planning Commission after receipt of the package for Rs. 3800 crores asked all the concerned ministries of Government of India about the assistance being extended by them to Government of Punjab under various centrally sponsored schemes. The reply from most of the ministries has been received by the Planning Commission. The Commission is now required to take a view as to how much additional assistance over and above centrally sponsored schemes is to be extended to the State of Punjab.
4. *The Planning Commission needs to be persuaded to sanction the Special Development Package amounting to Rs 3800 crore for the State.*

Punjab Development Package		
		(Rs. in Crore)
Sr. No.	Department(s)/Component(s)	Amount Proposed
1	2	3
1	Rural Water Supply	
1.1	MNP Water Supply Schemes	11.03
1.2	Rejuvenation/upgradation of existing infrastructure	149.46
1.3	Portable water filtration Plants	20.00
1.4	Reverse Osmosis Plants	20.00
1.5	De-fluoridation Plants	8.00
1.6	Iron Treatment Plants	1.00
1.7	Silver Ionization Plants	10.00
1.8	Replacement of open channels with underground RCC Pipes	10.00
	Sub Total - 1	229.49
2	Health	
2.1	Salary of doctors for 1310 Subsidiaries Health Centres/Rural Dispensaries to be engaged by Zila Parishads on contractual basis	347.89
	Sub Total - 2	347.89
3	Roads	
3.1	Upgradation of Plan Roads to 7m carriageway (2 lane)	400.00
3.2	Construction of By-pass Roads from major Towns	232.00
3.3	4 laning of National Highway Net Work in Punjab	1252.00
	Sub Total - 3	1884.00
4	Irrigation	
4.1	Making deep-bore wells and lift irrigation schemes functional	47.90
4.2	Artificial Re-charge of ground water in Punjab	31.82
4.3	Kandi Canal Stage-II Project	144.50
4.4	Shahpur Kandi Dam Project	50.00
	Sub Total - 4	274.22
5	Power	
5.1	Rural Electrification	120.00
5.2	Accelerated Power Development Reforms Programme (APDRP)	206.00

Sr. No.	Department(s)/Component(s)	Amount Proposed
5.3	Transmission and Distribution System Improvement	365.00
	Sub Total - 5	691.00
6	Animal Husbandry	
6.1	Genetic upgradation of Buffaloes	10.00
6.2	Strengthening of Biological Production Unit/Disease Diagnostic Laboratory	3.96
6.3	Ambulance Services for Animals	1.70
6.4	Animal Shelters(Gaushalas)	34.50
6.5	Birth Control and Immunization of stray Dogs	2.89
6.6	Conversion of Derelict/Polluted/Disease prone village panchayat ponds into employment, income generating hygienic fish farming model units	35.00
6.7	Strengthening of Training Centres	1.25
6.8	Appointment of Vety. Officer/Vety. Staff on Contract Basis	46.67
	Sub Total – 6	135.97
7	Education	
7.1	Primary Education through PRIs/ULBs	114.05
7.2	Computer Education Programme	58.38
7.3	Provision of Laboratories in schools	61.71
	Sub Total – 7	234.14
	Grand Total (1 to 7)	3796.71

(Planning Commission, GOI)

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8 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 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)

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9. ESTABLISHMENT OF IIM & IIT

There is no central institution in technology and management sector in the State of Punjab. Government of India has recently decided to set up 6 new Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) and Indian Institutes of Management (IIM). CM Punjab vide his DO No CMP/2005/CONF1/495, dated 25/8/2005 has already requested the Minister for Human Resources & Development for sanctioning atleast one IIT/IIM in the State. The State Government on its part can give land free of cost to the Government of India for this purpose.

(Min of Human Resources Development, GOI)

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10. WAIVING OUTSTANDING LOAN AND INTEREST SPENT FOR COMBATING INSURGENCY & MILITANCY IN THE STATE

1. Special term loans amounting to Rs. 5799.92 crore were given to Punjab by the Government of India during 1984-85 for combating insurgency and militancy in the State. The Eleventh Finance Commission recommended a moratorium on payment of installments of debt and interest during the period 2000-05 on the outstanding special term loans amounting to Rs. 3772 crore, stating that the expenditure incurred on security be worked out by Ministry of Home Affairs in consultation with the Punjab Government and Ministry of Finance, relief of debt, to the extent the State is entitled to reimbursement on account of security related expenditure, be given after the period of moratorium is over and after taking in to account waiver already given.

2. In its submissions to the Twelfth Finance Commission, the State Government requested that the outstanding special term loan of Rs 3772 crore as on 31st March, 2000 plus the interest thereon may be waived. The State Government has worked out the security related expenditure and forwarded the same to the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

3. Pending finalization of the amount in respect of which debt relief is to be allowed in terms of the EFC, the Twelfth Finance Commission has recommended that the moratorium on repayments and interest payments on these loans may continue for another two year i.e. upto 2006-07 by which time the Central Government must finalize the quantum of debt relief to be allowed. Government of India needs to take an early decision to waive off the entire outstanding amount of loan and interest.

(Min of Home Affairs, GOI)

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11. 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 31/3/2007 shall be eligible for incentives.

3. However, the above decision means that industrial units will continue to find the areas of Himachal adjoining Punjab attractive for investment for another one year. Further, the J&K areas have not been covered in the Sunset clause and therefore, concessions in areas of J&K adjoining Punjab will continue to adversely affect the industrial development in Punjab.

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)

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12. CONVERSION OF NORTHERN INDIA INSTITUTE OF FASHION TECHNOLOGY, MOHALI INTO NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FASHION TECHNOLOGY

1. The Hon'ble Chief Minister has taken up the matter with the Union Minister for Textile, Government of India for conversion of Northern India Institute of Fashion Technology, Mohali into National Institute of Fashion Technology. Originally the plan was to set up a National Institute of Fashion Technology at Mohali. However, subsequently Government of India desired that first the State should go ahead with its own Institute and subsequently the matter be taken up with the Government of India.

2. Punjab is a leading producer & exporter of textile and readymade garments. The industry has got a major boost after abolition of textile quotas by the developed countries in January, 2006. There is a great demand for National Level institutions in fashion technology. The Northern India Institute of Fashion Technology, Mohali has sufficient infrastructure, both physical and academic and the State Government is also willing to provide any additional infrastructure if so required.

3. Ministry of Textiles, Government of India should be requested to upgrade the Northern India Institute of Fashion Technology into National Institute of Fashion Technology.

(Min of Textiles, GOI)

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13. URBAN DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FOR AMRITSAR – RS. 4932 CRORE AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR LUDHIANA CITY – RS. 3995 CRORE UNDER (JNNURM)

1. These two projects envisage comprehensive development of the two cities in terms of roads, cent-percent coverage of water supply and sewerage, elevated roads in Amritsar and ring road around Ludhiana. Funding pattern will be – Government of India – 50%, State Government – 30% and Municipal Corporation – 20%.

2. The State Government has prepared detailed project reports and after prioritization of works by the State Level Steering Committee headed by the CM Punjab, sent the project reports to Ministry of Urban Development approved consultant in Ahmedabad on 9/6/2006. He is now required to forward the proposal to Ministry of Urban Development, Government of India.

3. Ministry of Urban Development is required to include these two projects under JNNURM project and sanction the funds.

(Min of Urban Development, GOI)

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14. DEVELOPMENT OF ON-PORT AND OFF-PORT FACILITIES AT WAGHA

1. There is urgent need for comprehensive development and up-gradation of infrastructure at Wagah in order to facilitate movement of people and goods across border. The State Government feels that the following facilities are required to be provided -

Segregation of goods & passenger traffic, acquisition of land for parking, expansion of immigration, customs and security halls, reduction in waiting time for immigration and custom formalities, animal quarantine station, enlargement of area for witnessing the beating retreat etc.

2. The matter was taken up with the Government of India which have constituted a Core Committee headed by the Secretary, Border Management and comprising of representatives of the concerned departments. MHA has engaged RITES and ILFS as consultants for preparing a detailed project report for the integrated development at Wagah/Attari. These two agencies made their presentation before the Core Committee on 18/4/2006 in New Delhi. Some modifications were suggested.

3. The Core Committee, Ministry of Home Affairs is required to finalise the project proposals and sanction funds for the execution of the projects at the earliest.

(Ministry of Home Affairs, GOI)

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15. UPGRADATION OF FACILITY AT ATTARI RAILWAY STATION

1. There is a need for upgradation of infrastructure at Attari railway station encompassing all facilities for easy and fast immigration and custom clearance and for the convenience and comfort of the passengers.
2. The Ministry of Railways are finalizing a project at an estimated cost of Rs 7 crore. A presentation was made to the Core Committee of the Ministry of Home Affairs on 18/4/2006. Some suggestions were made. Government of Punjab on its part has completed the work of widening and strengthening of 1.8 km Wagha - Attari road at an estimated cost of Rs 1.7 crores.
3. Ministry of Railways are required to finalise the Rs 7 crore development plan for Attari railway station and start the work.

(Min of Railways, GOI)

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

1. The proposed institute will undertake the comparative study of religion i.e. Sikhism, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism and Budhism. 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. The Ministry of Human Resources Development, Government of India is required to grant approval for registration of society. It has been learnt that the proposal of MoHRD for registration & formation of society has to be approved by the Union Cabinet

3. The case is accordingly required to be followed up in the Ministry of Human Resources & Development (MoHRD) for formation and registration of the society.

(Min of Human Resources Development, GOI)

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17. INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH IN PUNJAB (IISER)

1. Government of India has sanctioned Indian Institute of Science, Education & Research for the state of Punjab. Land measuring 200 acres is required for this Rs 500 crore project. Punjab Government has decided to set up this institute & three other National Level Institutions – National Institute of Bio-Technology, Bio-Technology Park & National Institute of Nano- Technology on land measuring 416 acre in Sector 81, Mohali which is under acquisition.

2. As desired by Government of India, Punjab Government on 5/7/2006 gave an undertaking/commitment to Government of India for transfer of 200 acre land free of cost for this purpose.

3. The Department of Higher Education in the Ministry of Human Resources & Development is now required to initiate the process of setting up of this institute by way of registration/formation of society and other formalities.

(Min of Human Resources Development, GOI)

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18. NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF BIO-TECHNOLOGY AND BIO-TECHNOLOGY PARK

1. Government of India has sanctioned these two projects costing about Rs 300 crore for the state of Punjab. State Government is required to contribute 200 acres of land free of cost for these projects. The Institute would be set up and run by Government of India.

2. As explained above, Government of Punjab has decided to locate these two projects and two other projects – National Institute of Nano Technology (NINT) and Indian Institute of Science Education & Research in Sector 81 of Mohali where land measuring 416 acre is under acquisition.

3. Department of Bio Technology, Government of India are required to draw up a project proposal for seeking the approval of Planning Commission and Ministry of Finance. They should finalise the concept paper as early as possible so that case could be sent to Planning Commission and Ministry of Finance for their approval.

(Department of Bio Technology, GOI)

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19. MINIMUM SUPPORT PRICE OF WHEAT & PADDY

1. *Paddy 2006* - The main kharif crop is paddy and the State has demanded a minimum support price of Rs.817/- per quintal for superior grade 'A' variety (all our rice fall in this category). The Agricultural Prices Commission has recommended only Rs.600/- per quintal with an addition of Rs.10/- for rice which was planted after 10th June.

2. *Wheat 2007-* For wheat, the State has demanded a minimum of Rs.797/- per quintal with Rs.906/- per quintal for barley and Rs.3,085 per quintal for gram. These prices are based on the actual cost of production calculated as per guidelines. UP and Haryana have demanded Rs.800/- and Rs.802/-respectively for wheat. The Agricultural Prices Commission has not yet made any recommendation so far. It will be visiting the State on 19th and 20th July in this connection.

On the subject of wheat, the price of Rs.797/- is calculated with 1980-81 as the base year, while with 1970-71 as the base year it comes to Rs.900/-.

3. The Hon'ble MPs should take up the matter with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Hon'ble Prime Minister for fixing MSP of paddy at Rs 817 per quintal and for wheat Rs 797 per quintal.

(**Min of Agriculture, GOI**)

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