

Respected Speaker Sir,

1. With your permission, I rise to present the budget estimates for the year 2009-2010.  
Our Government has completed more than one year in office and the results attained by us are clearly visible to all the people of Himachal Pradesh. In a short span of one year itself, we have achieved many milestones in the progress and development of our State. Our Government's vision is that just like its geographical location, Himachal Pradesh should be the top-most in the country in terms of social and economic development.
2. When I presented the last budget on 7<sup>th</sup> March, 2008 I had promised that along with fiscal consolidation we would accelerate the pace of development. By applying high standards of fiscal rectitude and avoiding unproductive expenditure, we have been able to apportion budgets in ample measure for all vital sectors such as Education, Health, Roads & Bridges, Drinking Water Supply, Irrigation, Hydro Power Development and others. While increasing such infrastructure investment, we have also taken care of the special needs of women, and the poor and disadvantaged sections of society.

In the short time since we took over the reins of Government we have produced the fiscal space to raise old-age, widow and disability pensions by 65% from Rs. 200 per month to Rs. 330 per month. The minimum daily wage rate has also been raised by 47% from Rs. 75 to Rs. 110.

**Financial  
Scenario**

3. All Hon'ble members are aware that the world economy has been in a great state of turbulence since the last quarter of 2008. At the national level also we have witnessed very high levels of inflation, followed by a credit crisis for investment and subsequent recessionary trends. Export oriented industrial units in Himachal Pradesh have also been adversely affected. I am happy that despite all such turbulences, our Government has steered the State's economy on a high growth path and for the year 2008-2009, the State's growth rate is expected to be 7.7% as against the national growth rate of 7.1%. The Gross State Domestic Product at current prices is expected to increase from Rs. 32,220 crore in 2007-08 to Rs. 36,940 crore in 2008-09. Through the strong measures of our fiscal governance, the gross domestic product of Himachal Pradesh in the next year shall be more than Rs. 45,000 crore. The per capita income for 2008-09 is estimated at

Rs. 44,803 and for the year 2009-10 this will be more than Rs. 50,000. This would mean that in the next year the average household income in Himachal Pradesh shall be more than Rs. 20,000 per month. This is a good index of the prosperity that is being ushered in by our government, all over Himachal Pradesh.

4. I am especially happy to inform this august House that due to the special efforts taken by our Government to promote greater transparency in allotment of hydro projects through competitive bidding, we shall be successful in additional resource mobilisation of more than Rs. 600 crore. This extraordinary measure shall greatly help us in keeping the fiscal deficit for 2008-09 much below our original budgetary projections. The year 2008-09 has thus been a year of good fiscal consolidation and in this year we have ensured that the State Government is within the authorised borrowing ceilings of the Government of India, with no recourse to any off-budget borrowing. We have met all Dearness Allowance liabilities of State Government employees and pensioners and also made interim relief payments in anticipation of the coming pay revisions. Despite this, through good

financial planning we have ensured that there has been no overdraft for even a single day with the Reserve Bank of India.

5. However, I would like to caution all members of this august House that the next financial year poses severe financial challenges because of the large pay and pension revision liabilities. Being the last year of the Twelfth Finance Commission award, the year 2009-10 shall see a decline of more than Rs. 300 crore in Central Govt. grant as compared to fiscal year 2007-08. Moreover, due to the recession trends and slowdown of growth at the national level, receipts from our share in Central taxes shall also not be as buoyant as in the past years.
6. Through a process of fiscal consolidation, our Government is determined to fully face the financial challenges of 2009-10. We have already started internal measures to explore areas for additional resource mobilisation and buoyancy in tax and non-tax receipts. This shall include a switchover to ad-valorem rates for electricity duty. With the computerisation of our Excise and Taxation Department, in the coming year we intend to stop all leakages in revenue collection. Tax rates for registration of private and commercial vehicles shall

also be aligned with comparable rates of the neighbouring states. Since protection of environment is an important policy objective of our Government, we shall also explore all possible options to impose suitable environment levies for checking vehicular congestion and for financing greater environment protection measures.

Annual Plan  
2009-10.

7. Speaker Sir, during my last year's budget speech I had specifically stated that our Government would not allow the weak financial position inherited from the previous Government to obstruct our vision for faster development. The fast pace of work going on today in different sectors such as Roads, Drinking Water and Irrigation Projects, Education, Health, Power sector development etc. is a testimony to the fact that our Government does what it says.
8. With the coming pay revision impact, the situation in 2009-10 has to be handled through strong fiscal management. By effecting every possible economy we have provisioned for an Annual Plan outlay of Rs. 2700 crore for the next financial year, which shall be an increase of 12.5% over the current year's approved outlay.
9. Sector-wise priorities have been fixed for the coming year based upon consultations which were held with

all stake holders, including the extensive consultations held on 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> January 2009 with the Hon'ble members of this august House.

10. The thrust of our 2009-10 Annual Plan shall be to consolidate the progress already made during the current financial year. While laying emphasis on quicker completion of ongoing capital works, concerned departments shall also be encouraged to lay equal emphasis on maintenance of existing assets. Departments shall be given greater flexibility to determine their asset maintenance requirements within the overall budgetary ceilings. Departments will also prepare maintenance plans for their capital assets.
11. Speaker Sir, I would now like to outline our achievements and strategies for important sectors.
12. For the people of Himachal Pradesh, Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries form the backbone of livelihood activities and provide employment to almost 70% of the working population. It is for this reason that our Government accords the highest priority to the economic uplift of the State's farmers. Towards this end, through NABARD financing we have already introduced the Rs. 353 crore "Pandit Deen Dayal Kisan Bagwaan

**Agriculture,  
Horticulture  
and Allied  
Activities**

Samridhi Yojana”. This scheme shall help in greater production of cash crops by our farmers, under controlled climatic conditions of about 29,000 poly-houses and micro irrigation facilities. We are confident that the launching of this scheme shall boost farm incomes and create greater self employment opportunities.

13. Irrigation constraints affect farm productivity. To remove these constraints, our Government is committed to fast-track the completion of the ongoing Shahnehar, Sidhatha, Balh Valley and Changer irrigation projects. As per the absorptive capacity of the executing agencies, full funding provision of Rs. 85 crore has been made for these irrigation projects. For minor irrigation and soil and water conservation activities, I have provisioned a total outlay of Rs. 182 crore for the next financial year. Thus, a total plan provision of Rs. 267 crore has been made for irrigation which shall be about 10% of the total plan outlay.
14. To increase farm productivity, a special budgetary provision of Rs. 30 crore has been made in the coming year for procurement of high yielding quality seeds by the Agriculture Department for distribution to our farmers. The Agriculture Department shall

also continue with our Government's initiative for soil testing and issue of soil health cards for optimizing farm productivity. In addition to one lakh soil health cards provided in this year, in the coming year our Government shall provide 1.25 lakh additional soil health cards. The soil testing labs shall also be strengthened by providing latest equipment. Organic farming and vermi compost manure shall also be accorded high priority by the Agriculture and Horticulture Departments. In the coming year 1.50 lakh vermi compost units shall be set up and our Government shall ensure setting up of vermicompost pits in every farm house over the next two years.

15. Total milk production in Himachal Pradesh is estimated at about nine lakh tonnes. The Animal Husbandry Department aims to increase the milk yields through artificial insemination, cross breeding and supply of better animal feed. For better price incentives for milk producers, in my last budget speech I had raised the procurement rates of milk by Rs. 2 per litre. We have now further raised these rates by Rs. 2 per litre from March, 2009. Milkfed shall get a special budgetary support of Rs. 9.50 crore in the coming year and it will also ensure that

payment to the milk producers shall be made within each fortnight. Milkfed and Animal Husbandry Department shall also work to improve the quality of procured milk through appropriate mobile chilled transport units. Milkfed shall continue to work with the Social Justice, Rural Development and Cooperation Departments to promote more and more women self help groups and Cooperative milk societies. The Animal Husbandry Department shall ensure provision of quality animal feed for the milk producers and for this purpose in the coming year a feed processing plant shall be set up at Hamirpur at a cost of Rs. 75 lakh. Through a process of rationalisation, our Government has also decided to upgrade 25 existing veterinary institutions to the level of 21 veterinary hospitals and 4 Central veterinary dispensaries. Through the same process of reorganisation 19 new veterinary institutions have also been opened.

16. In the coming year, the Fisheries Department shall vigorously work for increasing livelihood activities through modern fish farming and marketing initiatives. The Department shall train unemployed youth in various activities of aqua-culture such as fish farming, pearl culture and commercial trout

farming. Fish seed production shall also be enhanced by the expansion of existing seed farms and construction of new ones.

17. Our Government is committed to introduce insurance schemes for cash crops such as tomato, potato, apple, mango etc. During the course of 2009-10 such insurance schemes shall be introduced on a pilot basis. We have already decided to introduce weather based insurance schemes for tomato in Solan district and for rabi potato in Kangra and Una district.
18. Speaker Sir, through all our actions I am sure that all members of this august House would be convinced of the sincerity of our Government to increase farm incomes and provide better employment opportunities for our farmers. Towards this objective, in the coming year, I propose to make a total plan provision of Rs. 521 crore for the agriculture and allied sector, including the provision for irrigation services. This shall constitute almost one fifth of the total plan provision for 2009-10.
19. I propose a further sum of Rs. 143 crore for rural development activities in the coming year. Our Rural Development Department has been fully geared up to potentially generate more than 12 crore man-days

of employment under NREGA programme in the next financial year. The Panchayati Raj institutions are thus in a position to not only provide employment for every household, but to also make vast improvements in the rural area infrastructure.

20. As an incentive for Panchayat Sahayaks, I am happy to announce that on satisfactory completion of eight years service by them, they shall be designated as Panchayat Secretaries. Our Government has also decided to ensure that all Gram Rozgar Sewaks and Technical Sahayaks shall earn a minimum service fee of Rs. 1500 and Rs. 2500 per month respectively.
21. Our Government had raised the minimum wages by 33% from Rs. 75 to Rs. 100 per day. This translated into potential wages to be earned by the rural unemployed from Rs. 7,500 per year to Rs. 10,000 per year. I am happy to announce that during the course of the next financial year, our Government shall raise the agricultural minimum wages by another 10%. This will enable our rural households to earn Rs. 11,000 per annum.
22. Our Government has the highest concern for the housing needs of the poor. By making special budgetary provisions under the “Indira Awas Yojana”

and “Atal Awas Yojana”, I am happy to state that in the next year, the Rural Development and Social Justice Departments shall provide for assistance of construction of about 9,000 new houses and repair of about 900 old houses. This shall enormously benefit the rural poor and scheduled caste families.

23. Under the “Total Sanitation Campaign”, by March 2010 we are aiming to target that all Panchayats would attain open defecation free status. In addition, the Rural Development and Education Departments shall also work towards the goal of 100% coverage of all schools for girls’ toilets.

Power

24. Speaker Sir, all of us are aware that our State’s financial future is linked to the speedy exploitation of its 20,564 MW hydro power potential. During the course of the current financial year our Government has innovatively changed the bidding parameters for allotment of hydro power projects in such a manner that instead of getting 12%, 18% and 30% free power royalty, the power producers shall pay additional free power royalty ranging from 12% to 26%. This means that on a competitive bidding basis many of the private sector producers shall be giving free power to the State Government in the first 12 years in the range of 24% to 38% of the

power produced, for the next 18 years the free power share of the State Government shall range between 30% and 44% and for the last 10 year of the projects the free power share of the Government shall be between 42% and 56%. In addition, the State Government has also taken an upfront premium of Rs. 20 lakh per MW and the total income accruing to the State on this account is expected to be more than Rs. 600 crore in the current financial year. Thus, we have not only mobilised additional resources in the current financial year but also effectively safeguarded the financial interests of Himachal Pradesh for the next more than fifty years. Speaker Sir, this transparent competitive bidding model evolved by our Government is testimony to our commitment for good governance and financial prudence.

25. As a measure of our commitment towards environmental issues and to save energy and strengthen the financial position of the State Electricity Board, our Government launched the “Atal Bijli Bachat Yojana” in this financial year itself. We have distributed four Compact Fluorescent Lamps free of cost to each and every household in the State at a cost of about Rs. 80 crore.

26. During the current financial year, our Government has also successfully negotiated a financial package of about Rs. 4000 crore with the Asian Development Bank for setting up of more than 800 MW power projects by the Himachal Pradesh Power Corporation. 90% of the financial assistance received from ADB shall be as an out-right grant to the Government of Himachal Pradesh. This has been one of the most significant measures to power the future financial prosperity of our State. Seven hydro power projects of about 1000 MW capacity have been assigned to the HP Power Corporation Ltd. Work on the main components in five of these projects shall start in the next year. These projects are expected to be completed by 2013 and the State Government would earn an annual revenue of about Rs. 1800 crore.
27. To help strengthen the evacuation and transmission of generated power, our Government has also established a separate Transmission Corporation which came into existence on 27<sup>th</sup> August, 2008. The Corporation is preparing a comprehensive master plan of about Rs. 4,500 crore for evacuation of power and upgradation of transmission systems.

Our aim is to obtain external funding and loans from REC and NABARD for these transmission projects.

28. We have accelerated the ongoing work by HPSEB on the 100 MW Uhl Hydro Power Project which is expected to be completed by the end of 2010. To strengthen the financial position of HIMURJA, our Government has also taken the initiative to reserve some small hydro projects of less than 5 MW capacity for this organisation. HIMURJA will thus own about 100 MW of power projects through this process, which shall help it to generate internal resources of more than Rs. 150 crore per year.
29. To support the entire range of initiatives outlined by me for the power sector, I propose a total provision of Rs. 355 crore for the coming year which shall be 13% of the next year's plan outlay.
30. Speaker Sir, during the course of Annual Plan consultations with all Hon'ble Members, one recurrent theme was the necessity to accelerate the pace of our rural connectivity efforts and also undertake urgent repair and maintenance of our road network damaged extensively in this financial year by unprecedented rains and land-slides.
31. In the absence of railways, roads are the lifelines of our economy. We had been repeatedly requesting

Roads &  
Road  
Transport

the Central Government for a special package to undertake repair and restoration work. Sadly, the Central Government has not fully understood the urgent necessity of our requests.

32. Keeping in view the above factors, after careful consideration our Government decided to give high priority for roads in the coming year. Accordingly, I am happy to inform this august House that against the provision of Rs. 304 crore for the current financial year, I have raised the outlay by Rs. 176 crore to a total provision of Rs. 480 crore for 2009-10. This shall constitute a total increase of 58% for roads and bridges in the next financial year and the total outlay for transport sector shall be more than 20% of total plan size. The increase in this outlay has been provisioned for our ongoing World Bank road project, RIDF scheme priorities of Hon'ble MLAs and also for the maintenance requirements of our existing road network.
33. In terms of National parameters, road density in Himachal Pradesh is almost half the national average. Almost 50% of our total villages still remain to be connected by road link. I am sure that all Hon'ble members would agree that construction and maintenance of our road network shall continue

to require high priority not only in the next Annual Plan but for many more years. In the coming year, all efforts shall be made to provide road connectivity to all villages having population more than 500. Under the “Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna”, we have also sent 221 projects of 822 kms of roads of estimated cost of Rs. 310 crore for connecting villages with population of more than 250. By the year 2012, our Government aims to provide road connectivity to all villages with more than 250 population.

34. Along with the expansion of our road network there is constant public demand for expansion in public transport services. Our Government has already introduced a new scheme to further encourage the entry of private sector in the provision of public transport services. We have allowed the unemployed youth to run buses and small Maxi-cab vehicles on rural roads without payment of any road tax. Our Government intends to further liberalise allotment of route permits linking villages with the nearest block headquarters/notified area committees. We thus want to encourage a ‘hub and spoke’ transportation model where there is synergy of public private partnership for adequate transport

service between all villages and towns. To give a boost to public transport systems, our Government has decided to exempt road tax for all bus routes on the rural roads.

35. I am happy to announce a plan support of Rs. 43 crore for the next financial year for HRTC. This shall be an increase of 30% over the current year financial provision and through this, HRTC will replace 300 old buses. For further purposes of road safety, a driving school at Jassur shall also be made functional next year. ISBT bus-stand of Shimla shall be made functional by August, 2009 and bus-stands of Arki, Anni, Sundernagar and Jubbal will also be completed in the coming year.

36. HRTC shall face liabilities of pay revisions in the next financial year. For this, I have provisioned a Non-Plan support of Rs. 60 crore as against the current year provision of Rs. 48 crore. Including past loans repayment liabilities, total budgetary support for HRTC in the next financial year shall be almost Rs. 120 crore.

**Water supply**

37. Speaker Sir, provision of safe drinking water to all households has always been a very high priority of our BJP Government. I had increased the rural water supply outlay by 40% in my last budget.

This has helped us to accelerate the drinking water supply schemes and to complete many water supply schemes which had remained incomplete for a long time. Our initiative to install 2000 hand pumps, especially in the drought prone areas of the State has been appreciated by the people and their public representatives. To continue with all these initiatives, for the coming year our Government has made a total provision of Rs. 182 crore for drinking water supply.

38. As per our Annual Plan discussions, the IPH Department shall concentrate next year to complete ongoing schemes. For new expenditures, our Government shall continue its emphasis on gravity flow drinking water supply schemes, tube-wells and hand-pumps. By the end of this year the IPH Department would have installed 17,463 hand-pumps. By the close of the next year, our objective is that total hand-pumps installed in the State should be about 20,000. In the coming year we shall also start three major rural drinking water projects aggregating Rs. 172 crore and benefiting 1171 habitations in the water scarce areas of Bilaspur and Kangra districts.

39. For the Shimla Capital region, the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Urban Development have recommended the Pabbar River Gravity Water Supply Scheme for external funding. Our Government is vigorously pursuing this matter.
40. All members would recall that in the last budget, we had raised the Scheduled Caste Sub Plan from Rs. 231 crore to Rs. 594 crore. I am happy to state that for the 2009-10 plan this amount is being further raised by Rs. 74 crore to a total of Rs. 668 crore. This plan provision shall significantly benefit all scheduled caste families of the State and many ongoing capital works in the scheduled caste reserved assembly constituencies shall witness accelerated fund flow.
41. Speaker Sir, all members are aware that our Government is totally committed to the uplift of the poorer sections of our society. With this objective, immediately after assumption of office we had increased the pensions for the aged, widows and disabled by 50% from Rs. 200 per month to Rs. 300 per month. With effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2009 we have further increased this pension amount by 10% to Rs. 330 per month. As per my previous year budget assurance we have brought all eligible

persons below the poverty line into the social pension network with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2008. We have thus added about 15,000 households to the social pension network. About 2.52 lakh families now receive social security pensions, which is almost one of each five households in the State. In a staggered fashion, our Government is committed to raise social security pensions to Rs. 400 per month over the next few years.

42. I had last year doubled the insurance benefits under the “Matri Shakti Bima Yojana” to Rs. 50,000 in case of accidental death and Rs. 25,000 in case of loss of one limb. Furthering this commitment to the poorest sections of our society, these insurance benefits have now been further doubled to Rs. 1 lakh in case of accidental death and Rs. 50,000 in case of loss of one limb.

**Tribal  
Development**

43. The people of the Tribal areas have reposed the highest faith in our Government. The Central Government under the initiative of the then Prime Minister, respected Sh. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, had sanctioned the project of the Rohtang Tunnel which shall be the lifeline for the Lahaul and Pangi regions. This initiative was not seriously followed up with the Central Government by the previous Congress

Government and precious five years have been lost in starting the construction of this important project. Our Government is continuously following up this matter with the Union Ministry of Defence and the Border Roads Organisation for speedy start of the construction. Due to our continuous efforts, the tender for construction of this tunnel has been finalised. For the next financial year, a total sum of Rs. 243 crore has been earmarked under the Tribal Sub Plan for the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes.

Education &  
Technical  
Education

44. In the Education Sector, the focus of our Government shall be to consolidate our existing educational structure and to further improve the quality of education imparted at all levels. Towards this end, we have decided to reintroduce our Government's earlier "Grameen Vidya Upasak Scheme". Panchayats shall be given suitable grants to appoint new primary school teachers. All eligible and professionally qualified Grameen Vidya Upasak appointed in the earlier tenure of our Government shall be made contractual JBT teachers with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2009.
45. All Government and private schools in the State shall be encouraged to follow the nation wide pattern of NCERT curriculum and text books.

This shall bring uniformity in standards and also help all employees to have their children adjust quickly, upon transfers to new schools.

46. English language skills, IT literacy and enhanced personality development are the keys to better employment prospects for the educated youth. Accordingly, the Education Department shall work out specific strategies for such skill enhancement at both the school and college levels.
47. Our Government is also encouraging the setting up of private universities and three private universities have already been established in the State. The process is on for the setting up of at least six-seven more such universities. For this purpose, our Government has developed a public-private partnership “Atal Shiksha Kunj” education hub in Baddi. This is a land bank of 554 Bighas and the total project cost is Rs. 62 crore. Within the next financial year, our Government shall further identify land banks in each district, which can be offered for the setting up of reputed private universities. Through this process, we intend to increase the employment potential of our college graduates. Existing B. Ed. Colleges shall also be encouraged to

provide better employment prospects by converting towards more technical courses.

48. Our Government has been successful in partnering with the Central Government for the setting up of an IIT at Mandi, a Central University and a National Institute of Fashion Technology in Kangra District. We shall also pursue the matter with the Central Government to sanction one Indian Institute of Management (IIM) and an Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) in Himachal Pradesh. Government of India shall also be approached for special funds to create a 'college of excellence' in each district of Himachal Pradesh. Five Polytechnics shall be started in a phased manner in the districts of Sirmaur, Kinnaur, Bilaspur, Kullu and Lahaul Spiti.
49. Our Government has persuaded the Ministry of Power to partner Himachal Pradesh in setting up of a new Engineering College in Bilaspur, with special emphasis on engineering aspects related to hydro power projects. Public-private partnerships are also being worked out to set up medical colleges in Mandi, Una, Solan and Hamirpur Districts. No Objection Certificates have also been issued for private nursing colleges and institutions.

50. Himachal Pradesh already has the highest enrolment rate of more than 20% for higher education against the national average of about 10%. The long term vision of the State Government is to progressively increase this enrolment rate to about 50% and to position Himachal Pradesh as a leading education hub in the country, through more and more public-private partnerships
51. Speaker Sir, during the course of the next financial year our Government shall take all possible measures to improve the quality of health services for the people of Himachal Pradesh. We are taking all possible measure to overcome shortage of doctors and para-medical staff in our health institutions. During the course of the current year, the number of “Rogi Kalyan Samitis” has been more than doubled from 235 to 485, accounting for more than 80% of the total health institutions in the State. Recruitments have also been done on institution specific basis through the “Rogi Kalyan Samitis” and 225 doctors have been appointed to date in this year. In addition, 175 posts of Ayurvedic Medical Officers are also being filled. 262 posts of nurses have been filled up and the process is on to fill up balance vacant posts of paramedical staff.

The process is also on for a one year training course for 300 Ayurvedic Pharmacists.

52. Keeping in view the problem of shortages of doctors and para medical staff, our Government has decided to take necessary steps to raise the MBBS seats at IGMC, Shimla from 65 to 100. In order to meet the shortage of specialists the post graduate seats at IGMC Shimla and Tanda Medical College are being got enhanced by 20. By 2010 the post graduate seats in these two medical colleges shall be 83.
53. To meet the shortage of doctors, private medical colleges are being established at Solan and at Palampur. A medical college and a multi-speciality hospital is also being established at Mandi through Employees State Insurance Corporation which shall provide health facilities to the general public. Our Government has also appointed consultants for preparing bid documents for a public-private partnership for opening more medical colleges in Una, Mandi and Hamirpur.
54. For meeting the shortage of nurses, by the next financial year we hope to open 12 more B.Sc nursing colleges and 28 nursing schools in the private sector. A B.Sc nursing college has been

established this year in the private sector at Baru Sahib, District Sirmour.

55. On the basis of all these initiatives we shall meet all the current trained manpower shortages in our Government health institutions. These initiatives shall also open avenues of high quality employment for our educated youth in both national and international markets.
56. In the next financial year our Government shall roll out a comprehensive health insurance scheme for below poverty line families, in all the districts. We shall also explore a public-private partnership to introduce comprehensive emergency medical response and ambulance services.
57. Speaker Sir, our health care requires to be also oriented for the special needs of the senior citizens. The Ayurveda Department has already started special OPD services for senior citizens on every Tuesday. All other health institutions shall also meet the special health needs of the senior citizens.
58. We shall start a special scheme to upgrade facilities of medical college Tanda to the level of AIIMS. For this purpose, this month itself we have got Government of India to sanction Rs. 125 crore . For better delivery of health services, in the coming year

the possibility shall also be explored of shifting maternity and child services from Kamla Nehru Hospital to IGMC.

**Tourism**

59. Tourism continues to be a significant source for economic growth and employment generation. For the year 2009-10 our target would be to attract more than ten million tourists. For this purpose, the State Tourism Department shall work with our IT Department to ensure that at least 70% of private hotels follow the HPTDC pattern of internet website information and online reservation facilities.
60. The rural home stay tourism scheme has already been launched by our Government. As a part of this initiative the 'hub and spoke' business model shall be encouraged whereby tourists visiting popular destinations such as Shimla, Manali, Dharamshala, Dalhousie etc. would be encouraged to extend their stay in nearby heritage villages. Tourism Department shall formulate plans to facilitate such clusters under the home stay scheme. The Tourism Department shall also collaborate with the Ayurveda Department for providing tourism related health services of "Panchkarma" therapy. Special innovative tourism packages shall also be designed

by HPTDC for senior citizens, with good off-season discounts.

61. Hon'ble members of this august House had highlighted various scenic and beautiful areas of the state with high tourism potential. During the next year, the Tourism Department shall shortlist five of these best possible sites which can be developed and marketed as new tourist destinations.
62. During my budget speech last year I had informed this august House that our Government is working towards an external funding project for boosting tourism activities in Himachal Pradesh. I am happy to report that there has been substantial progress on this front and Asian Development Bank has in principle agreed to provide funds for tourism development in Himachal Pradesh. Our Government has posed tourism infrastructure projects of more than Rs. 350 crore for ADB assistance, which shall come on a 90% grant basis. A new Indian Institute of Hotel Management at Hamirpur and Food Craft Institute at Dharamshala is being established. The Central Government sanctioned about Rs. 17 crore for these institutes which shall train 400 youth every year for gainful employment in the hospitality sector.

63. Since pilgrimage tourism is popular for many temples in Himachal Pradesh, a special strategy shall also be worked out along with concerned temple management committees to upgrade facilities for pilgrim tourists and attract them to adjoining areas of tourist interest. The Transport and Tourism Departments shall also jointly work towards extending transparent and user-friendly metered and radio taxis in more and more tourist towns of Himachal Pradesh.
64. Our Government is also taking all possible measures to boost eco-tourism through greater coordination between the Forest and Tourism Departments. This year, our Government has also given the task of eco-tourism development to the State Forest Corporation as an additional developmental and commercial activity. In the current year itself, five eco-tourism circuits have been developed and the Forest Department/State Forest Corporation shall also work towards identifying many more properties and sites for eco-tourism. About 100 easy and difficult trek routes shall be identified, publicised and marketed through tour operators, as well as websites of Tourism

Department, HPTDC, Forest Department and Youth Services and Sports Department.

65. Protection of our environment has a natural synergy with the development of our tourism potential. The Department of Environment has engaged a consultant for preparing a comprehensive environment master plan for our State. This plan is expected to be ready by September, 2009 and thereafter we shall take policy steps to implement an action plan of environment friendly measures.
66. Our Government is fully committed towards environment protection and sustainable development. The Department of Environment has already initiated steps to make Himachal Pradesh the first carbon neutral State of the country. With the belief that participation of the common public in any project is of utmost importance, the Department of Environment will implement the “Community led Environment Assessment, Awareness, Advocacy and Action Programme for Environment Protection and Carbon Neutrality” in the state. This programme will be implemented at various levels in the state through a network of NGOs, schools, Eco clubs, Mahila Mandals, Panchayat level community centres and other stakeholders. This whole endeavour

would be completely voluntary in spirit. I am happy to state that, after Costa Rica, Himachal Pradesh is the second Government in the world which is making continuous efforts for environment conservation and carbon neutrality. These efforts of Himachal have also been applauded by the world community at the recent Summit Conference organized by TERI (The Energy and Resources Institute). Our Government is addressing important environmental issues relating to air and water pollution, solid waste and sewage management, debris disposal in road and hydro power construction, waste recycling, biomedical waste etc.

67. Based upon World Bank development policy support, a special budgetary provision of Rs. 40 crore has also been made in the coming year for accelerated catchment area treatment of four hydro power projects in the Satluj river basin. At present 21 CAT plans are under implementation of the Forest Department, and for comprehensive plantation and soil conservation activities a total budgetary provision of more than Rs. 200 crore has been made for the next year.
68. In the coming year, the Forest Department shall also partner NGO's and other non-profit organisations to

take up greater and greater social forestry activities in our more than 6000 sq. km. of forest land, which does not have adequate forest cover. Such partnership schemes could earn carbon credits.

Industries

69. Speaker Sir, industrial development of Himachal Pradesh accelerated due to the efforts of our Government in its previous tenure, by having a special package of incentives declared in January, 2003. The present UPA Government curtailed the incentive date till March, 2007 and subsequently extended it up to March, 2010. In this period of widespread recession, the Central Government is announcing economic packages for various sectors. The extension of our package to its original date of 2013 has now become unavoidable. On that basis, we have already requested the Central Government to reconsider its earlier decision.
70. Along with the concession package it is very important to have proper industrial infrastructure. Our Government has this year ensured that there has been no shortage of power for any industry, even in the winter months. Even the normal peak hour restrictions on industries were not imposed and this assured power supply is a huge advantage for industries located in Himachal Pradesh as

compared to other states which are facing massive power shortages.

71. Best efforts have also been made to improve the industrial area infrastructure. A special provision of Rs. 5 crore was given to PWD in the present year for upgradation of roads of industrial importance. In the coming year also our Government shall pursue this programme with greater emphasis. In the current year a special grant of Rs. 5 crore has also been made for the Baddi-Barotiwala-Nalagarh Development Authority to improve industrial infrastructure. To ease housing shortage for workers HIMUDA will complete 1,116 flats this year itself in Baddi, Nalagarh and Parwanoo. To improve the institutional infrastructure, this year we created a separate police district and PWD sub-division in Baddi. We also opened separate Tehsil, Labour and Drug Controller offices at Baddi. For improving the industrial infrastructure, an MOU has been signed with the Gas Authority of India Ltd. for laying of gas pipelines especially to the industrial areas for the supply of CNG as transportation fuel and use of natural gas for domestic as well as industrial consumption.

72. Our Government is actively cooperating with the Punjab and Haryana Governments for better road connectivity for our industrial areas. The Baddi-Siswan-Chandigarh road will be commissioned in 2009. We have also approved a joint venture with the Government of Punjab for construction of a Greater Mohali expressway linking Baddi with the upcoming international airport at Mohali. Our Government shall also impress upon the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways to speedily complete Chandigarh-Pinjore four laning and initiate the four lane construction of the Pinjore-Baddi-Nalagarh National Highway. Similarly, the Railways Ministry is being impressed upon to expedite work on the Chandigarh-Baddi, Bhanupalli-Bilaspur-Beri and Nangal-Talwara broad gauge railway lines. Feasibility studies have also been initiated by our Government for a Railway line up to Manali and Leh.
73. In the coming year, our Industries Department shall progress the cases of construction of workers' hostels for men and women at Baddi, trade centre at Baddi, inland container depot through Container Corporation of India, municipal waste treatment plant for Baddi-Nalagarh area, sewage and common effluent treatment plant for Baddi-Barotiwala area

and a transport nagar at Baddi for creating adequate parking space for trucks and other vehicles. These projects would be commissioned through public-private partnerships at an aggregate investment of about Rs. 200 crore.

74. For accelerating the pace of development, our Government has also created a land bank and identified about 6000 bighas of government and private land for setting up of industries. We have also liberalised the conditions for transfer of industrial plots so that such idle land is put to productive use. Our Government has also decided to declare the new emerging areas of biotechnology and solar energy as industry, with the same incentive structures as for other industries.

75. The Industries Department is also working on the best prevalent practices for procurement of goods and services by all departments. Based upon this review of the procurement system and to bring about greater transparency and efficiency in such procurement, our Government intends to shortly bring forth suitable enactment.

Home

76. The people of Himachal Pradesh are well known all over the country as peace loving, honest and hardworking. This has blessed the State with an

environment which concentrates the energies of the Government on developmental activities. However, with increasing industrialization and influx of migrant labour, security issues of neighbouring states and our international borders, the Government cannot afford to be lax in its preparedness to deal with any emergent situation. Our Government has therefore decided to constitute 'quick reaction teams' in the State Police Force both at State and District levels. The Intelligence Wing is also being restructured to make it more effective. To meet the residential housing needs of the police force, a sum of Rs. 11 crore has been earmarked for the next year.

77. Fire services play a crucial role for rescue operations in any disaster management. In the coming year, I have also earmarked a special outlay of Rs. 3 crore for the purchase of modern fire tenders and fire fighting equipment.
78. Keeping in view the need of our Judiciary, a capital budget provision of Rs. 19 crore has been earmarked for ongoing judicial infrastructure works. As a part of good governance, special directions have also been given to our Vigilance Department to adopt a policy of zero tolerance in cases of corruption and to investigate all such cases without

fear or favour. Better training inputs are also being provided by the Prosecution Department to improve the conviction rates.

**Revenue  
Department**

79. Proper land records are of vital importance for good administration. The Revenue Department is engaged in a special programme for computerisation of all land records. Data entry work of all villages has been completed and by June, 2009 the general public shall have access to computerised copies of their land records through all 113 functional Tehsils and sub Tehsils.

80. Our Government has issued instructions for non touring by Patwaries on Monday, Wednesday and Friday so as to increase their accessibility for the general public. The scheduled non touring days have also been directed to be publicly displayed at the respective Patwarkhanas. To increase housing amenities for land revenue staff, I am earmarking an outlay of Rs. 5.24 crore for the next year.

**Urban  
Development**

81. In the coming year, the Urban Development Department shall lay special emphasis on implementing urban infrastructure projects under the National Urban Renewal Mission. This shall include housing projects for Shimla, Hamirpur, Dharamshala, Solan and also other urban

infrastructure projects in Hamirpur, Shimla and Mandi. The Urban Development department would work with the Tourism Department for accessing funds under the ADB financed tourism projects for urban improvement schemes, including construction of commercial parking. For the coming year a provision of Rs. 37 crore has been made for completion of ongoing sewerage schemes which are being executed in 31 towns through the IPH Department. More funds could be considered in the next year depending upon the pace of progress towards completion of these ongoing schemes. Total Plan outlay provisioned for Urban Development in the next year is Rs. 52 crore.

**Information  
Technology**

82. The IT Department and Education Department will progressively cover the Senior Secondary schools with computer labs and broadband connectivity. To improve financial management of commercial government organisations and temples under government administration, their accounting system will be computerised. The public distribution system shall be similarly computerised up to fair-price shop level.

**Youth  
Services,  
Sports.**

83. Speaker Sir, members of this august House would recall that in my last budget speech I had promised

that synthetic athletic tracks would be built at Dharamshala and Hamirpur. Work is progressing well on these projects and they would be completed in the coming year at a cost of about Rs. 8 crore. Funds are also being arranged from different sources to ensure that good playground facilities come up in all Panchayats and various schools and colleges of the Education department. Cricket stadium facilities shall also be built in the districts in partnership with the Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association. Our Government has increased the diet money for sportspersons from Rs.60/- to Rs.80/- per day within the state and Rs.125/- per day for outside the state. I am happy to state that I have provisioned for a 45% increase in the plan budget of Youth Services & Sports from Rs. 7.18 crore in the current year to Rs. 10.41 crore for the next year.

Language Art  
and Culture

84. Our Government attaches high importance to the promotion of the art and culture of Himachal Pradesh which has very unique and distinct identity in the country. The Department of Language Art and Culture shall oversee programmes to give greater visibility to Himachal art as manifested in Kangra paintings, Chamba Rumal, wood carving and sculpture. Our Government shall make all

efforts to promote items of Himachal art and craft as souvenirs in the coming Commonwealth games in 2010 at New Delhi. This shall boost future marketing efforts for our handicrafts in both domestic and foreign markets.

85. The rock cut temple of Masroor in District Kangra is one of the only four rock cut temples in the country. This temple shall be developed into a major tourist attraction through joint efforts of our Government and Archaeological Survey of India.
86. In the coming year, the renovation of Gaiety Theatre at Shimla shall be completed and it will be developed into an important cultural centre. A suitable sound and light show shall be developed as a major tourist attraction, depicting the rich heritage of Shimla including its legacies of British Raj period, Freedom Struggle and the negotiations and signing of the 1972 Indo-Pakistan Treaty.
87. The soldiers belonging to Himachal Pradesh have always shown the highest degree of bravery in every operation conducted by the Armed Forces. To effectively look after the interests of our serving soldiers and our Ex-servicemen our Government has created a separate Sainik Welfare Department. We have also decided to increase by 65% the

**Sainik  
Welfare  
Department**

pension of Ex-servicemen and their widows who are not getting pension from any other source and are above 60 years of age, from Rs. 200 per month to Rs. 330 per month. Our Government had in 1998, raised the annual War Jagir from Rs. 600 to Rs. 900. I am happy to state that our Government has again decided to raise this War Jagir by 122% from Rs. 900 to Rs. 2000. To provide for special maintenance requirements of the War Memorial at Dharamshala I am happy to announce a special grant of Rs. 2 lakh. A Sainik Rest House shall also be constructed at Nalagarh.

88. Our Government remains committed to increasing employment avenues for Ex-servicemen. We have taken an in-principle decision to out source various kinds of security service needs of the government offices to the HP Ex-servicemen Corporation. Likewise, some transport service requirements shall also be sourced through the Ex-servicemen Corporation. The Corporation shall also be encouraged to provide other technical services such as computer data entry, survey work and preparation of project reports so as to provide employment for the technically qualified ex-servicemen. To provide greater employment

opportunity for our youth, our Government shall pursue the case with Government of India to increase the recruitment quota in the Armed Forces for Himachal Pradesh.

89. Our Government believes in making its best efforts to meet all the genuine aspirations of the State Government employees and pensioners. With this objective, without even waiting for the demands from the employees' and pensioners' side we have been speedily releasing Interim Relief instalments and Dearness Allowances. Regularisation of long term contractual and daily wage workers has also been done in accordance with a fair and transparent policy. Daily wage rates were also increased by our Government by more than 33% from Rs. 75 to Rs. 100 and they have now been further increased by 10% to Rs. 110. All these measures have benefited about four lakh employees and pensioners, including the workers of semi government and autonomous institutions. Our Government has also taken special care to ensure speedy reimbursement of medical claim bills of pensioners.

90. To provide better promotion avenues for the regular Class-IV employees, I am happy to announce that the promotion quota for these employees to Class-III posts shall be increased from 10% to 30%. This extra 20% quota shall be filled through a system of limited direct recruitment exam by the Subordinate Services Selection Board from the eligible Class-IV employees who have minimum 10+2 education qualification.
91. Ever since our Government has assumed office we have extended total additional benefits of more than Rs. 2000 crore to our employees and pensioners. I am sure that all members of this august House would agree that keeping in view the overall financial position, our Government has exhibited full sensitivity towards the legitimate aspirations of all State Government employees. The Government in turn expects the employees to work with dedication and devotion for the speedy development of Himachal Pradesh. All employees need to understand their full responsibility towards the “Aam aadmi”.
92. Speaker Sir, I now come to the macro budget estimates. As required under the FRBM Act, I am separately presenting the Medium Term Fiscal Plan

**Budget  
Estimates**

of the State Government for 2008-09 to 2011-12. This Medium Term Fiscal Plan does not fully account for the next Pay Commission liabilities since these liabilities cannot be accurately assessed at this stage. The recommendations of the Thirteenth Finance Commission are also not expected before October, 2009. We have projected our revenue expenditure as submitted to the Thirteenth Finance Commission at Rs. 14,556 crore in 2010-11 and Rs.14,144 crore in 2011-12. Against this expenditure the State's own receipts have been estimated at Rs. 4357 core in 2010-11 and Rs. 4849 crore in 2011-12. The emerging revenue gaps are required to be filled through the award of the Thirteenth Finance Commission. By the close of the current year, net additional borrowing is estimated at about Rs. 1500 crore and will be under the authorised limits of the Government of India. Thus, the outstanding borrowing stock shall be restricted at about Rs. 23,000 crore. In addition, outstanding guarantees as per details of Form 3 of the Medium Term Fiscal Plan for 2008-09 to 2011-12 are Rs. 2593 crore.

93. As per budget estimates for 2009-10, the total revenue receipts are estimated at Rs. 10,478 crore

and the total revenue expenditure is estimated at Rs. 10,222 crore, leaving a surplus of Rs. 256 crore on the revenue account. On the capital account the total expected receipts shall be Rs. 2439 crore and total capital expenditure including loan repayments is Rs. 2854 crore. The fiscal deficit for 2009-10 is expected to be 3.54% of the Gross State Domestic Product.

94. Total expenditure estimate for 2009-10 is Rs. 13,075 crore. The estimated expenditure on salaries is Rs. 3748 crore, estimated interest payments are Rs. 2053 crore, loan repayments are expected to be Rs. 981 crore and pension expenditure is estimated at Rs. 1299 crore.
95. As per the budget estimates, against an expenditure of every 100 rupees, the State will have 80 rupees as total revenue receipts including transfers from the Centre. The gap of Rs. 20 will have to be met by borrowings. Out of every 100 rupees of State revenue receipts 26 rupees will accrue from own tax revenues, 15 rupees from non-tax revenues, 10 rupees from share in Central taxes and 49 rupees from Central grants. Out of every 100 rupees spent, salaries will account for Rs. 29, interest payments Rs. 16, loan repayments Rs. 8, pensions Rs. 10,

maintenance Rs. 8 and the remaining Rs. 29 will be spent on all other activities including major developmental works.

96. On the resource mobilisation front, I have already outlined how our Government has taken extraordinary measures to increase income. Our non tax collections have been very good and this has helped us to control the fiscal deficit. On the tax side too we are shaping strategies to increase our revenue.
97. I am happy to announce that our Government has decided to reduce the VAT rates on CFL bulbs, unbranded washing soaps and Ghee from 12.5% to 4%. We had earlier raised the daily wage rates of Home Guards from Rs.130 to Rs.150. I am happy to announce that these rates shall now be further increased to Rs.170. Remuneration of Panchayat Chowkidars shall also be increased by 25% from Rs. 800 per month to Rs. 1000 per month. Our Government has also decided that entry toll in the border areas of the state shall be reduced by 50% for all residents in a 5 Km radius. Gallantry award winners shall be exempted from this toll. To benefit the common man, I am happy to announce that bus transport fares are being reduced by 10%.

Conclusion. 98. The full details of our next year's budget are available in the comprehensive budgetary documents being tabled in this august House.

I would now like to summarise the main highlights of this Budget and our Government's achievements and initiatives:-

- **Growth rate of 7.7% estimated in 2008-09 for Himachal Pradesh against the national average of 7.1 %.**
- **State's per capita income to increase from Rs. 44,803 to more than Rs. 50,000 in the next year.**
- **Average household income shall be more than Rs. 20,000 per month.**
- **Total Budget outlay for next year Rs. 13,075 crore.**
- **Annual Plan 2009-10 Rs. 2700 crore.**
- **Farmer friendly budget. Rs. 353 crore "Pandit Deen Dayal Kisan Bagwaan Samridhi Yojana" launched.**
- **Rs. 267 crore outlay for irrigation in next year.**
- **Insurance schemes for cash crops such as tomato, potato, apple and mango to be introduced.**

- **Organic farming and vermi compost will be high priority. 1.50 lakh vermi compost units to be set up.**
- **1.25 lakh additional soil health cards to be issued and total will be 2.25 lakh.**
- **Milk procurement rates raised by Rs. 4 per litre within one year.**
- **25 veterinary institutions upgraded and 19 new ones opened.**
- **Unemployed youth to be trained in fish farming, pearl culture and commercial trout breeding.**
- **Rural unemployed empowered to earn Rs. 11,000 per year under NREGA. Budget provisioning of more than Rs. 500 crore for this.**
- **“Grameen Vidya Upasak Scheme” reintroduced. Earlier eligible Grameen Vidya Upasaks to become contractual JBT teachers.**
- **Panchayat Sahayaks designated as Panchayat Secretaries, after completing eight years of service.**

- **Minimum Service fees for Gram Rozgar Sewaks to be Rs. 1500 per month and for Technical Sahayaks Rs. 2500 per month.**
- **Remuneration of Panchayat Chowkidars increased by 25% from Rs. 800 to Rs. 1000 p.m.**
- **Daily wage rate increased to Rs. 110. Daily wage rate for Home Guards increased from Rs. 150 to Rs. 170.**
- **9000 new houses to be constructed for rural poor and SC families under “Indira Awas Yojana” and “Atal Awas Yojana.” Provision also for repair of 900 old houses.**
- **Rs. 4000 crore financial aid agreement signed with Asian Development Bank for hydropower projects. Rs. 3600 crore to be received as grant.**
- **New competitive bidding for power projects - 24% to 56% free power to be received.**
- **Four CFL’s distributed free to all households under “Atal Bijli Bachat Yojana.” Total cost Rs. 80 crore.**
- **Plan outlay for roads raised by 58% from Rs. 304 crore to Rs. 480 crore.**

- **Plan support to HRTC of Rs. 43 crore, for purchase of more than 300 buses. Non-Plan support also raised to Rs. 77 crore. Total budget support of almost Rs. 120 crore.**
- **Liberal permits to be given for public transport services. Will increase self-employment opportunities and reduce losses of HRTC.**
- **Entry toll at borders for local residents reduced by 50%. Exemption for Gallantry Award winners.**
- **Rs. 182 crore provided for drinking water supply schemes.**
- **Three major rural drinking water projects for 1171 habitations in Bilaspur and Kangra districts – total cost Rs. 172 crore.**
- **Total 20,000 hand-pumps in the state within next year including 2500 new ones this year.**
- **Scheduled Caste Sub Plan increased last year from Rs. 231 crore to Rs. 594 crore. Further raised now to Rs. 668 crore for next year.**
- **Pensions increased by 65% from Rs. 200 to Rs. 330 per month.**

- **15,000 new families added to social security pension from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2008. 2.52 lakh households now benefited.**
- **“Matri Shakti Bima Yojana” insurance benefits quadrupled within one year. Rs. one lakh now for accidental death and Rs. 50,000 for loss of one limb.**
- **Rs. 243 crore earmarked under Tribal Sub Plan.**
- **Union Govt. impressed upon to expedite Rohtang tunnel construction.**
- **Central University, NIFT, SAIL plant, BSF battalion, Disaster management battalion, Food Craft institute got sanctioned from Central Govt for Kangra.**
- **Medical college Tanda upgraded to AIIMS level and Rs. 125 crore got sanctioned from Union Government.**
- **Medical colleges in private sector being facilitated in Palampur, Solan, Hamirpur and Una.**
- **IIT and Medical College in Mandi got sanctioned from Central Government.**

- **Five Polytechnics got sanctioned for five districts of Kinnaur, Sirmaur, Bilaspur, Kullu and Lahaul Spiti.**
- **New engineering college to be opened in Bilaspur.**
- **12 B.Sc. nursing colleges and 28 nursing schools being set up in public private partnership.**
- **Ten private universities to function in Himachal Pradesh.**
- **Himachal Pradesh to become education hub.**
- **Comprehensive health insurance scheme in all districts for below poverty line families.**
- **Recruitment of doctors and other health personnel through Rogi Kalyan Samitis.**
- **225 posts of doctors and 262 posts of nurses filled. 175 posts of Ayurvedic doctors and 300 posts of Ayurvedic Pharmacists being filled up.**
- **Tourism infrastructure projects of more than Rs. 350 crore posed to Asian Development Bank. Projects to be sanctioned on 90% grant.**
- **New Tourism sites to be developed, especially for eco-tourism.**

- **Home stay scheme to be given emphasis around popular tourist destinations of the state.**
- **Gaiety Theatre to become a vibrant cultural centre.**
- **Indian Institute of Hotel Management at Hamirpur and Food Craft Institute at Dharamshala started with Central Government assistance of Rs. 17 crore. 400 youth to be trained each year for employment in hospitality sector.**
- **Synthetic athletic tracks at Dharamshala and Hamirpur to be completed next year.**
- **Environment master plan to be completed next year. Government to tackle all emerging environmental issues.**
- **Forest Department to maximise forest plantation activities for its 6000 sq. km available land.**
- **Industrial infrastructure being improved.**
- **Pensions of eligible ex-servicemen/widows increased from Rs. 200 to Rs. 330 per month.**
- **War Jagir raised by 122% from Rs. 900 to Rs. 2000.**

- **Additional benefits of more than Rs. 2000 crore to state government employees and pensioners.**
- **Promotion quota of Class-IV employees raised from 10% to 30%.**
- **Tax rates reduced on CFL, unbranded soaps and ghee.**
- **Road tax completely exempted for plying of buses on rural roads. To benefit both HRTC and private bus operators.**
- **Bus fares reduced by 10%.**

99. Speaker Sir, in conclusion I would like to state that through my budget speech I have given an outline of our developmental priorities and our vision to strengthen the economic progress and development of Himachal Pradesh. The progress made in the first year of our Government is visible to all sections of society. The 2009-10 budget shall further consolidate this rapid progress.

100. The next financial year will be difficult due to the liabilities that shall need to be managed on account of pay and pension revisions. With advance planning in the current year we are taking every possible measure to meet our expected liabilities of the next year. To tide over the problems of the

2010-2015 time period, our Government has cogently and forcefully presented its full financial case before the Thirteenth Finance Commission. We shall be vigorously following up our case with the Finance Commission and we are confident that the Commission shall help us to the maximum extent possible.

101. The strong future fiscal foundation laid by our Government is immediately visible to the financial experts. Initiatives taken this year in the power sector alone shall fetch additional revenue of more than Rs. 7000 crore per year from 2017 onwards. With such additional revenue streams the people of Himachal Pradesh can optimistically look forward to an extremely prosperous future. Himachal Pradesh is poised to soar.
102. The coming year's budget is a continuation of our Government's effort to provide a vibrant future for the people of Himachal Pradesh. I dedicate this budget to their prosperous future.
103. With these words Mr. Speaker Sir, I commend this budget to this august House.

**Jai Hind**  
**Jai Himachal**