

CHANDIGARH ADMINISTRATION



**SPEECH
OF
HIS EXCELLENCY
GENERAL(RETD.) S.F. RODRIGUES, PVSM, VSM**

**Governor of Punjab
& Administrator, Union Territory, Chandigarh**

**at the
51ST MEETING
OF THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**

ON

27TH JUNE 2005

NEW DELHI

**Hon'ble Prime Minister, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission and,
Distinguished Members of the National Development Council.**

Though it is a matter of concern that GDP growth averaged 6.5% in the first 3 years, in view of the recent upbeat mood of industry, particularly in the service sector and our focus on ensuring that the investible surplus is channelized in the right areas, we are moving in the right direction.

The Union Territory of Chandigarh has a total area of 114 sq. kms 78 Sq. km Urban area and 36 Sq. km Rural area. There are 18 villages at the periphery of Chandigarh City. The Union Territory witnessed decennial population growth (1991-2001) of 44.33% and had a population of 9,00,914 in the last census. Chandigarh is unique, because it is the capital of two state governments, Punjab & Haryana. Chandigarh is a planned city, with a high standard of civic amenities. Chandigarh's infrastructure was originally planned for a population of 5 lakh, but the city has expanded rapidly over the last three decades and faces problems common to other growing cities in India, including the proliferation of slums and squatter settlements. Despite these problems, Chandigarh ranks first in India in the Human Development Index, quality of life and e-readiness.

Keeping in view the need for the investment of investible surplus, we have taken a number of major initiatives to upgrade the infrastructure in Chandigarh, to boost economic growth in the region. Chandigarh is emerging as a regional hub in the areas of service industry, education, health, information technology, food and vegetable processing etc.

Chandigarh's plan priorities clearly focus on the target and objectives contained in the National Common Minimum Programme. We are aiming at three areas i.e. Human Development, Infrastructure, and Environment Upgradation and Protection. Our endeavors include:

Employment and Infrastructure

Generation of employment opportunities, for unemployed youths, to the tune of 25,000 jobs, in the IT city and Technology habitat, in the coming 3 years. Our twin projects of Information Technology Park, which has been approved as an SEZ for IT, and Technology Habitat, over an area of about 600 acres, would lead to private sector investment and FDI, attract investible surplus capital to this region, encourage

Public Private Partnership in infrastructure and industry, boost exports and the growth of ancillary units providing support services. It would lead to an investment of at least 1 000 crore by the private sector in next 3 years, and thus help in increasing the growth rate in the region in the remaining period of the 10th five year plan.

Chandigarh is a regional hub and therefore we need to upgrade our supporting infrastructure in all important areas, like residential, healthcare, sports and community, thereby, creating integrated habitats, by harnessing investible surpluses. We are also exploring other areas, like the processing of fruits and vegetables, to boost the economy, and the setting up of a film city, to give our youth avenues to grow.

Chandigarh Administration is looking forward to the upgradation of the Chandigarh Airport. We are extremely thankful to the Prime Minister for including the Chandigarh Airport among the 8 Airports which are being taken up for such upgradation in the country.

Out of the total approved outlay of Rs 1000 crore for the 10th Five Year Plan, Human Development and Infrastructure Development and Environment Protection account for over 94% of the allocation. A sum of Rs.570 crore, is earmarked for infrastructure & environmental protection and Rs.376 crore is devoted to human development sectors. The financial performance during first three years of the 10th Plan period is close to 100%. Since Chandigarh is a Union Territory without a legislature, its funding is a part of the Union Budget. Chandigarh is not putting an extra burden on Union Govt.'s Budget. In the recent years the budget of the Chandigarh Administration has shown a healthy surplus on the non plan side, which grew from Rs.103.88 Crores in 2001-02 to Rs.288.74 Crores in 2004-05, and is expected to be more, in the current financial year.

e-Governance : 1. T. for Society

India will reach the technology levels of the developed world only if the benefits of technology reach the common man In the real sense and the people of the lower sections of society start using information technology in their day-to-day lives. Our effort is to ensure that the poor sections of the society benefit from the e-Governance Programme of the Administration. Our aim is to provide integrated, transparent, single window online services in all areas of the Administration, round

the clock. A special project, known as e-Jan Sampark, envisages the setting up of 50 manned Jan- Sampark Kiosks in the city, providing information related to health care, Government functioning, tourism, economy, transport, help-lines, education emergency services etc. in the process enabling the common man to become Tech-savvy. The project, which would be a shining example of Private/ Public Partnership in this region, would usher in transparency, efficiency and accountability in providing G to C services in addition to enhance the confidence of the common man, in government functioning. I am pleased to inform you that the Government of India has awarded the Chandigarh Administration the Golden Icon Award, for our e-Governance project named e-Sampark. This project has been widely applauded, as it provides citizens with single window services in the areas of Governmental services, disabled and senior citizens bus passes, electricity and water bills, traffic challans, Sales Tax dues, tenant registration etc. through 6 ultra modern e-sampark centres through out the city.

Rehabilitation of Slum Dwellers

Rehabilitation of about 80,000 persons living in slums, by creating 25,000 dwelling units, on rental basis, with modern facilities, so that they can live with dignity and self-respect, by providing support services to the city residents. This project would be one of its kinds in the country and we seek the Planning Commission's support, in launching this project very soon.

Power

Chandigarh has one of the best electricity distribution systems in India. We have made efforts towards the further rationalization of power tariff and energy reforms, in line with the views of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India. The new tariff policy will ensure that consumers pay for the actual cost of the electricity, in the next 3 years. Our new tariff policy aims at reaching break-even stage in the next 3 years, without putting any extra burden on the poor and middle class of the society and aims at transparency, supply of 24 hours quality power and our commitment to bring down transmission and distribution losses to 16%, from the existing 24%.

Water Supply

Water scarcity is likely to be a major problem for all urban areas in the country in the near future. While revitalizing and restoring the original capacity of Sukhna Lake, we

have planned to establish new water bodies, in the Union Territory of Chandigarh, which would integrate drinking water supply with recreational facilities. Our emphasis is on re-cycled treated water. Conservation of water is also being given top priority and amendment of local byelaws to increase solar energy use and state harvesting, is being carried out, for this purpose.

Municipal Corporation

The Municipal Corporation, Chandigarh, is responsible for all the major services in the urban area, including, roads, water supply, sewerage, fire services and street lighting. In addition to the devolution of non-plan funds through grant-in-aid, sufficient funds have been earmarked in the Tenth Five Year Plan for all the important schemes of the Municipal Corporation, Chandigarh including roads, water supply, new sewerage treatment plant, water recycling and fire fighting equipment and garbage disposal.

Municipal Corporation Chandigarh is the first Municipal Corporation in the Country which has been allotted a demonstration project, by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), for the implementation of Municipal Solid Waste Management and Handling Rules 2000, framed by the Govt. of India. The project envisages the disposal of garbage from the point of collection to its conversion into fuel pellets. 13 Sahaj Safai Kendras, out of 80 proposed, have been established. Participation of Resident Welfare Associations is an important component of the project. Restoring the degradation of the existing dumping ground is the 13th component, cleared for setting up of solid waste process unit based on pellet technology, in association with Jai Parkash Associates Limited. This unit will convert garbage into pellets, which would be used by M/S Jai Parkash Associates Limited in their plant in Himachal Pradesh. The project is funded by the CPCB, Municipal Corporation Chandigarh & Chandigarh Administration, in the ratio of 50%, 30% and 20% respectively. The total project cost is approximately 12 crores.

Revitalization of Villages

The Administration has initiated a project for the revitalization of the 18 Gram Panchayats at the periphery of Chandigarh so that these villages become model villages, which could set an example for the whole country. Each village will have its own micro-planning, to integrate the existing architectural and other features, to

modernize the development of each village. Our approach towards this project is that of synthesizing modern technology with the rural character of the villages, in line with the objective of the Panchayati Raj Institutions, as per the 73rd and 74th amendments of the Constitution of India.

Transport

Chandigarh Administration has created integrated modern transport services, to take care of the transport needs of Chandigarh and adjoining satellite towns of Panchkula and Mohali. A low-loading bus system is being introduced from next month and a Mono Rail project is under way, to provide technology enabled transport services.

Ecology and Environment

Sustainability of environment for healthy living and the creation of conducive environment for flourishing flora and fauna are important. Chandigarh Administration has launched a project for de-silting/ wet dredging of Sukhna Lake, in collaboration with NSDRC Visakhapatnam, which would be completed in the next six years. Along Sukhna lake, an Aquatic Park has been planned, which will be a source of recreation and education about our Aquatic Fauna. The work of setting up another lake on the periphery of Chandigarh has been taken in hand, which would help in strengthening the ecological balance and augment the drinking water supply also. 108 Eco Clubs in Schools, and more than 20 environmental societies in Colleges and Universities have been revitalized, to carry forward environmental education and awareness. The park will comprise an aquarium, awareness centres, museum, enclosures for aquatic life fauna, shallow water bodies, small Island, and bushes and trees of small size, to develop as a sanctuary for aquatic birds. Creation of a sizeable belt along periphery of Chandigarh is envisaged, which would enhance not only the green coverage but would also serve as a habitat for diminishing faunal species and also be a deterrent to land encroachers. Projects to handle bio-medical waste, in major hospitals and Nursing Homes, have been undertaken.

Core - Issues

I would also like to draw the attention of the Govt. of India to certain core-issues. One such issue is Decentralization. There is a need for further delegation of powers to the Union Territory Administration, so that repeated clearances, for

relatively small matters, are not required from Central Govt. Clearances of certain types of projects which are upto certain limits and which involve the welfare of the public, may be accorded at the Administration level. At our level, also, we have initiated decentralization through the revision of byelaws and rules, wherever possible. The Administrator's Advisory Council has been revitalized and reconstituted. We have set up subgroups of the Council to focus on slum rehabilitation, periphery planning and control, garbage collection, development of villages, upgradation of Municipal laws and issues relating to building byelaws and Architectural innovations for the growth of the Union Territory. Citizen's participation is being emphasized in all such endeavours. As a result it has been possible, to a large extent, to make Chandigarh's development a mass - movement and to reduce - though not eliminate - populist motivated interference. All key stake holders are being involved in the planning and implementation process, as part of our participative-Governance project.

We also need to concentrate on the issue of the creation of Satellite Nodes. Centers of Excellence and Technology Centers, where training can be provided to young people, may be established in Chandigarh. These can be self-sufficient and State of the Art. Technical Education, at the highest level, can be provided in Chandigarh and certification can be done here itself, so that AICTE's involvement could be minimized and the centres to be set up here would be independent.

Automation of the redressal mechanism is also necessary and this can be done by enabling departments to receive, process, and redress grievances by being automated. These grievances can be received through any method i.e. through e-mail, through FAX, through the post, or by hand, but they would be processed electronically and dealt with, in a time-bound manner. Administrative reforms and modernization of our archaic laws is also necessary and the State and Central Administrative reforms Departments need to be given time-bound focused objectives for this purpose.

The burning issue of tackling corruption needs our concentration. There needs to be a wide spread campaign, at the National and State levels with important functionaries of the Government at all levels introducing citizens charters and the Right to Information, which should be widely publicized to increase awareness amongst the public so that the general public is not forced to succumb to corrupt officials. Concrete steps, like deterrent, punishment, as also incentives for honest

officials, would also be effective. The issue needs to be taken up at the national level, so that there is a concerted effort among all levels of Government to rid the system of corrupt officials in particular and corruption as a whole. The Chandigarh Administration has incorporated all these measures to ensure a transparent, responsive and completely accountable Government.

Delivery mechanisms need to be public friendly and simple enough, for the common man to understand and make use of. Credit for farmers should be available freely and without many procedures involved. The emphasis should be on openness and public service and not on regulation and control.

I assure you, sir, that despite facing many challenges, the Chandigarh Administration is constantly working towards improving the quality of life of the residents and preserving the unique character of the city of Chandigarh. Our endeavor is to continue to make Chandigarh a premier city in the world in terms of its infrastructure, urban amenities, education and health facilities, welfare measures and the quality of its human resources.
