



Government of West Bengal

Budget Statement

by

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Minister of State (Independent Charge)
Finance Department

2023-2024

15th February, 2023

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

With your permission, I rise to present the Annual Financial Statement for the financial year 2023-24 to this August House.

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Under the visionary leadership of our Hon'ble Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, our government has consistently provided a sensitive, responsive and inclusive system of governance for its people.

We have reached out to millions of our people through 'Duare Sarkar', an IT based citizen outreach programme which is a paradigm shift in governance and is being acknowledged globally and replicated elsewhere. So far in 5 rounds of 'Duare Sarkar' held in 3.71 lakh camps more than 9.06 crore people have visited at the camps. The conferment of Digital India Platinum Award received by our State from Her Excellency President of India is a testimony of the success of the programme.

In spite of severe impact of COVID -19 pandemic and various natural calamities in the last two years, our state has maintained a steady growth. While the Indian economy is expected to grow at 6.95% in the current financial year, i.e. 2022-23 (1st AE), West Bengal economy is expected to grow at a higher rate of 8.41% in the same period.

When all India Index of Industrial Production (Manufacturing) growth during 2022-23 (April to November) is 5.0%, West Bengal's growth has been 7.8% during the same period. This is attributed to the farsighted and prudent administration of our Hon'ble Chief Minister touching all spheres of development with consistent positive growth in government's spending on social service sector, physical infrastructure and agriculture & agri-allied Services and demand side stimulation by putting cash in the hands of common people through digital platform.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

This August house will be happy to know that our state continues to be the top ranker in SHG credit linkages, MSME sector, skill development, construction of rural roads, rural housing, minority scholarships, e-governance etc. to name a few. While we are back with hope and optimism in our state, unfortunately the country is passing through multiple hardships due to shortsighted and erroneous policies of the central government. Common people are under severe distress due to massive unemployment and rising inflation with ballooning price rise in diesel, petrol, kerosene, food products and other essential commodities. The adverse impact of wrong economic policies of the central government including demonetization and sudden implementation of GST are not only still looming large and have put the common

people into severe hardships but have broken the frame of our federal structure.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

We have streamlined our governance through IT based process engineering. Besides administrative efficiencies in various sectors, we have evolved a robust and efficient resource mobilization system.

States own revenue is showing a steady growth over the last few years. This August House is aware that our own tax revenue comes from GST, Sales Tax, Stamp Duty, Excise, Land Revenue and Motor Vehicles Tax.

With regard to GST, the State's policy of zero-tolerance towards return default has resulted in increasing the return filing percentage of the State from 70% to 95% during the financial year, much higher than the National average. Our intelligence-based data analysis has plugged revenue leakages. As a result of this unique effort of our State, our GST revenue grew at 23% in last financial year and this year our cumulative growth, up to January 2023 is at 24.46% — much higher than the National average.

Hon'ble Members, in my Budget Speech last year, we urged the Union Government through this August House that the GST compensation period must be extended for at least another three to five years beyond June, 2022, but this has fallen on deaf ears.

Hon'ble Members are aware that in view of the impact of pandemic, the housing sector suffered a huge setback and then in consultation with the Hon'ble Chief Minister we reduced the Stamp Duty by 2% and circle rate by 10%. As a result, the total number of registrations, particularly by small flat holders has reached 34,44,070 between July 2021 and December 2022. This is a record in the country. This has brought significant revenues to the Government besides stimulating the entire real estate sector.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

Our Hon'ble Chief Minister has always laid priority for the welfare of the common people. Our schemes and programme are always framed with compassion targeting towards the welfare of the youth, women and children, the vulnerable and those at the grassroots level.

Our innovative welfare schemes like Lakshmir Bhandar, Kanyashree, Rupashree, Swasthya Sathi, Sabooj Sathi, Sikshashree, Saboojshree, Aikyashree, Student Credit Card etc. have grown significantly and have received a huge response and acclaimed nationally and globally. In the wake of withdrawal of scholarship schemes for OBC students of class V-VIII by Central Government, State government has recently introduced 'Medhashree' to provide scholarship to OBC students @ Rs. 800 per year per student.

Economic empowerment of women has been our priority since financial year 2010-11. While in 2010-11, the total number of functional credit linked SHGs in the State were 93,425 only, today we have 6.77 lakh credit linked SHGs- as on date, being the maximum number of credit linked SHGs in the country- Bengal is number 1, in credit linked SHGs today. Credit to SHGs has risen remarkably from a mere Rs. 553 crore in 2011-12 to Rs. 13,660 crore in the current fiscal year thereby recording 25 times increase in providing credit to SHGs during this period- a record of sorts in the country.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

Agriculture registered significant growth in our state with holistic development in the farm sector and allied activities which is unparalleled in the country. An additional area of 33,904 acres of cultivable land has been brought under irrigation during 2022-23 by completing renovation of medium and minor irrigation schemes.

With adoption of modern farming techniques and pro-farmer policies supported by social security initiatives like Krishak Bandhu (New), Krishak Bandhu (Death Benefit), timely disbursement of assistance to farmers affected by natural calamity and yield loss under Bangla Sashya Bima Yojna, remarkable growth could be achieved in crop production.

West Bengal is the largest producer of Paddy, Jute and Mesta and the second largest producer of Potato in India. Area under Maize cultivation has risen from 2.45 lakh Ha to 3.64 lakh Ha, Pulses from 4.43 lakh Ha to 4.81 lakh Ha and oilseeds from 9.26 lakh Ha to 9.53 lakh Ha during last few years.

We are extending financial assistance to small and marginal fishermen, artisans and weavers under our new schemes viz Matsyajeebi Credit Card, Artisan Credit Card, Weaver Credit Card and the work is in progress. As per our commitment to food security we have brought nearly 9 crore people under the Khadya Sathi with a strong network of 20,400 Fair Price Shops reaching food grains free of cost at the door steps of the people through Duare Ration.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

Contrast this, with the Central Government's budget 2023-24, which Hon'ble Chief Minister aptly called an anti-poor budget.

For the agricultural sector, the central Government has ruthlessly cutback allocations in almost every scheme denying the rural population its rightful place in the Nation, where 65% of the population live in rural areas.

Central Government has cut allocations to PM Kisan, PM Fasal Bima Yojana, PM Krishi Sichai Yojana, Market Price support, National Rural Development Budget etc.

The worst cut of all is that in the case of Rural Job Guarantee scheme, MGNREGA, from Rs. 89,400 crore to Rs. 60,000 crore. This scheme has 9 crore active workers. Also central government made online attendance mandatory, where in many rural areas network connectivity is poor, resulting in harassment of workers. It is a shame, that Government of India has withheld West Bengal's MGNREGA allocations punishing the poor who are seeking a livelihood as the last fallback for survival.

You will also be shocked to know that the Central Budget 2023-24 has cut the resources for Midday meal despite the fact that due to the pandemic Government's school enrollment has risen from 65.6% in 2018 to 72.9% in 2022. This cruel cut is bound to lead to greater drop-outs, aside from fall in nutrition among the children. It is shocking that Central Government's spending on Health as a percentage of GDP has fallen in the year 2023-2024, and spending on education as a percentage of GDP has remained stagnant. You are aware that the Central Budget 2023-24 is surprisingly silent about the severe unemployment and inflation in the country which is directly impacting the common people.

Now you can see, why the Hon'ble Chief minister justifiably called the Budget anti-poor.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

May I now turn to the effort of our government in enabling an ecosystem for investment opportunities in

the manufacturing sector, while I bring as a case in point what our State has achieved, with MSMEs, which are the most labour intensive and job providing sector in the country.

We have facilitated in setting up of 90 lakh MSME units in West Bengal- record of sorts, providing employment to a large number of people. You will be happy to know that deployment of credit in MSME segment has grown to Rs. 1.02 lakh crore in the financial year 2021-22 from Rs. 7,236 crore in financial year 2010-11, thereby recording an impressive 14 times increase. It gives me pleasure to announce that in the current financial year 2022-23, the disbursement of fresh credit to MSME is poised to achieve Rs. 1.15 lakh crore, which will open up huge employment opportunities in the near future.

I would like to also draw your attention to one of our Industrial hubs in West Bengal which is today Asia's largest. The Bantala leather hub alone, today employs more than 3 lakh people and another 2.5 lakh people will be employed in the next 2 years. It also boasts of the world's largest producer of industrial gloves aside from leather goods produced for the world's most coveted Brands for exports. To bring in a completely eco-friendly Hub the Government has invested in 8 Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETP) which probably does not exist anywhere in the world in one single hub.

The upcoming West Bengal Logistics Policy, 2023 will streamline the logistics sector and help West Bengal to secure a strategic position in the global supply chain and transform our State as Logistics Hub of the nation. Our unique location connecting the eight North Eastern states, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh and the ASEAN nations, make us an ideal location for large scale logistics hubs.

The development of an Industrial and Economic Corridor with three branches viz Dankuni-Haldia, Dankuni-Raghunathpur, and Dankuni-Kalyani will provide better connectivity with surrounding industrial zones and complimentary infrastructure like logistic parks, townships along with other urban amenities. This industrial and economic corridor will have huge contribution on the overall economic and social development of the region and employment opportunity for about one lakh people.

Coal mining related activities in Deocha Pachami coal block is progressing well. Exploratory drilling has been completed and commercial mining will commence soon. This will have an investment of Rs. 35,000 crore and help create employment opportunity for more than 1 lakh youth. Jangal Sundari Industrial Township in Raghunathpur over 2,500 acres of land has an investment potential of more than Rs. 72,000 crore and employment potential of more than 1.5 lakh.

In pursuit of encouraging green fuel and renewable energy, City Gas Distribution (CGD) project is an important intervention to develop natural gas infrastructure to supply cleaner and greener fuel connections in households, industrial and commercial units. The project envisages an investment of over Rs. 16,271 crore while generating huge employment in the state.

You are already aware that many decades ago Howrah was considered to be the Sheffield of the East, which had withered away during the period of the earlier regime. To restart that great heritage, a Foundry Park has been set up with active participation of Private Entrepreneurs. Similarly, the Hosierey Park supported by the government has attracted back some of the private investments which had gone to other States.

Hon'ble Members will be happy to know that IT sector is thriving in Bengal and of late has attracted investments in creating a number of state-of-the-art Data-centers and would also include investments in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Internet of Things (IoT) and other such cutting-edge technologies.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

Under the able and pragmatic leadership and guidance of our Chief Minister, a large number of projects and

programmes have been undertaken for development of physical infrastructure and human capital which in the coming days will have a multiplier effect on the overall growth and development of the state.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir, I would now like to place the proposed allocation of the major departments and Part 2 & 3 of the Speech may kindly be considered as read. With your permission, I will now directly go to Part-4 of my Speech at Page No. 143.

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Budget Allocation (Net) in the Financial year 2023-24.

1. Agriculture Marketing

I propose to allocate Rs. 413.43 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

2. Agriculture

I propose to allocate Rs. 9,595.32 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

3. Animal Resources Development

I propose to allocate Rs. 1,217.76 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

4. Backward Classes Welfare

I propose to allocate Rs. 2,242.58 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

5. Consumer Affairs

I propose to allocate Rs. 124.74 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

6. Co-operation

I propose to allocate Rs. 630.97 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

7. Correctional Administration

I propose to allocate Rs. 364.95 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

8. Disaster Management & Civil Defence

I propose to allocate Rs. 2,134.84 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

9. Environment

I propose to allocate Rs. 101.30 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

10. Fire and Emergency Services

I propose to allocate Rs. 455.15 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

11. Fisheries

I propose to allocate Rs. 507.73 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

12. Food and Supplies

I propose to allocate Rs. 9,564.27 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

13. Food Processing Industries and Horticulture

I propose to allocate Rs. 237.45 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

14. Forests

I propose to allocate Rs. 976.21 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

15. Health & Family Welfare

I propose to allocate Rs. 18,264.62 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

16. Higher Education

I propose to allocate Rs. 6,050.50 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

17. Home & Hill Affairs

I propose to allocate Rs. 13,686.07 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

18. Housing

I propose to allocate Rs. 271.58 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

19. Industry, Commerce & Enterprises

I propose to allocate Rs. 1,397.14 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

20. Information & Cultural Affairs

I propose to allocate Rs. 915.08 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

21. Information Technology & Electronics

I propose to allocate Rs. 202.43 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

22. Irrigation and Waterways

I propose to allocate Rs. 3,937.72 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

23. Judicial

I propose to allocate Rs. 1,242.24 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

24. Labour

I propose to allocate Rs. 1,147.13 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

25. Land & Land Reforms and Refugee Relief & Rehabilitation

I propose to allocate Rs. 1,488.00 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

26. Mass Education Extension and Library Services

I propose to allocate Rs. 396.40 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

27. Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises and Textiles

I propose to allocate Rs. 1,218.21 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

28. Minority Affairs and Madrasah Education

I propose to allocate Rs. 5,166.99 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

29. Non-conventional & Renewable Energy Sources

I propose to allocate Rs. 78.34 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

30. North Bengal Development

I propose to allocate Rs. 823.29 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

31. Panchayats & Rural Development

I propose to allocate Rs. 26,603.51 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

32. Paschimanchal Unnayan Affairs

I propose to allocate Rs. 722.79 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

33. Personnel & Administrative Reforms

I propose to allocate Rs. 387.76 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

34. Planning and Statistics

I propose to allocate Rs. 518.48 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

35. Power

I propose to allocate Rs. 3,378.80 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

36. Public Enterprises & Industrial Reconstruction

I propose to allocate Rs. 73.02 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

37. Public Health Engineering (PHE)

I propose to allocate Rs. 4,075.59 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

38. Public Works (PWD)

I propose to allocate Rs. 6,433.31 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

39. School Education

I propose to allocate Rs. 37,075.05 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

40 .Science and Technology and Biotechnology

I propose to allocate Rs. 75.31 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

41. Self Help Group & Self Employment

I propose to allocate Rs. 754.11 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

42. Sunderban Affairs

I propose to allocate Rs. 609.15 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

43. Technical Education, Training and Skill Development

I propose to allocate Rs. 1,330.89 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

44. Tourism

I propose to allocate Rs. 491.66 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

45. Transport

I propose to allocate Rs. 2,030.56 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

46. Tribal Development

I propose to allocate Rs. 1,138.91 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

47. Urban Development and Municipal Affairs

I propose to allocate Rs. 12,831.40 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

48. Water Resources Investigation & Development

I propose to allocate Rs. 1,546.71 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

49. Women and Child Development & Social Welfare

I propose to allocate Rs. 22,225.67 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

50. Youth Services and Sports

I propose to allocate Rs. 788.30 crore to this department in the year 2023-24.

3

Achievements of Major Departments

Agriculture and Rural Economy

3.1 Agriculture

Under the scheme “Krishak Bandhu (Natun)” assistance has been disbursed to 88.79 lakh farmers in Kharif Season in 2022-23 amounting to Rs. 2477.51 crore and for Rabi season, disbursement has been made to 91.57 lakh farmers amounting to Rs. 2554.90 crore. More than 30 lakh new farmer beneficiaries have been added under Krishak Bandhu (Natun) through five rounds of Duare Sarkar. Since inception of the scheme in 2019, more than Rs.12,500 crore has been disbursed.

Under “Krishak Bandhu (Death Benefit)” scheme one time financial assistance is given @ Rs. 2 lakh to the family members of the deceased farmers in the age between 18 to 60 years. Since inception, Rs. 1352.24 crore has been disbursed to 67,612 numbers of bereaved families, and Rs. 481.44 crore has been disbursed to the family members of 24,072 deceased farmers during 2022-23.

Under Farmers’ Old Age Pension Scheme, 79,301 farmers are being benefited with pension amounting Rs. 1,000 per month for each pension under “Jay Bangla” Scheme.

From Kharif 2020 season the state is implementing Technology based Bangla Shasya Bima (BSB) Scheme wherein Remote Sensing, Satellite Imagery, Weather data and Ground Truthing (GT) are used to monitor crop health and claim assessment. In the last Kharif Season (Kharif-2022), 59.67 lakh farmers were enrolled under this scheme and a total claim of Rs. 177.29 crore has been disbursed benefitting 2.37 lakh farmers. Since inception, a total claim amount of Rs. 2286.11 crore has been settled under BSB.

The State Government is laying emphasis on promotion of Micro Irrigation for optimum use and is providing additional top-up subsidy under “Bangla Krishi Sech Yojana” (BKSY) from 2018-19. So far 1,13,851 number of beneficiaries have been covered with coverage of 43,455 Ha under BKSY.

To meet the demand for quality potato seeds for the farmers of our state, a project on hi-tech potato seed production, involving tissue culture and aeroponics system has been started in the Potato and Maize Research Station, Anandapur, Paschim Medinipur and another tissue culture laboratory has started functioning in ZARS (Zonal Adaptive Research Station), Krishnanagar, Nadia. About 300 MT hi-tech potato seeds have been distributed to our farmers this year under the brand name BANGASHREE. During 2022-23 a target of production of 1770 MT of Seed Potato has been taken.

Paddy production during Kharif season 2022 as per preliminary estimate is expected to touch 173 lakh MT. This is despite reduced area of cultivation by 3 lakh Ha this year, due to deficit in rainfall, which is at parity with annual average production in previous years.

To enhance the area, production and productivity of Maize, Pulses and Oilseeds in different districts, the Government has taken several initiatives like distribution of HYV/Hybrid varieties of seeds, seed treating chemicals, distribution of other critical inputs like Plant protection Chemicals, Micronutrients etc as well as imparting training to the farmers under different schemes.

Due to such efforts, it has been possible to raise the area of Maize from 2.45 lakh Ha to 3.64 lakh Ha, Pulses from 4.43 lakh Ha to 4.81 lakh Ha and oilseeds from 9.26 lakh Ha to 9.53 lakh Ha during last five years. Total food grain production has gone up by about 57 lakh million tonnes during the last eleven years. West Bengal is currently the largest producer of Paddy, Jute and Mesta and the second largest producer of Potato in India.

The State Government has given thrust on farm mechanization since 2012-13. During 2021-22, Rs. 49.56 crore was utilized towards subsidized distribution of farm machinery among 7,282 numbers of beneficiaries for purchase of farm machinery of which Rs. 26.84 crore has been utilized through establishment of 176 numbers of

Custom Hiring Centres (CHC). The Centre of Excellence at 'Mati Tirtha Krishi Katha', Purba Burdwan district was established for imparting training on modern Farm Machinery/Implements.

Under 'Matir Shristhi' initiative, steps have been taken for creation of irrigation facilities, formation of farmers' groups in the form of CBOs, natural resource management, soil conservation and effective utilization of water and improving vegetation cover etc. in rural areas of six districts. A total of 73.66 lakh mandays have been generated under the scheme in Phase-I. A total area of 34,800 acres in 5,455 sites has been taken up involving 48,000 farmers in Phase-I and Phase-II.

To promote the collective effort of the farmers, the State Government has approved 608 numbers of registered FPO/FPCL which are engaged with different activities related to production and marketing in agriculture and allied sector. Credit linkage has already been completed for few of the FPOs which are tied up successfully with different marketing organization like Sufal Bangla and others.

A comprehensive programme with production target of 2,500 MT raw silk including 40 MT of Bivoltine silk under Mulberry sector and about 40.25 MT silk in Non-Mulberry sector is under implementation.

3.2 Agricultural Marketing

For creation of agriculture marketing infrastructure such as auction platform, stalls, shop-cum-godown, market link road etc., Rs. 25.36 crore have been released till date for this purpose from State Budget core plan as well as RKVY-RAFTAR in financial year 2022-23.

The State Government has taken up development of Commodity based markets such as ‘Organic Haat’ at Rajarhat, ‘Chilli Market’ at Paniparul, Purba Medinipur etc. In this year, 236 numbers of such schemes are going to be completed and 29 market areas are going to be developed with marketing infrastructure.

The State Government introduced ‘SUFAL BANGLA’ project in 2014 to ensure remunerative price to farmers and reasonable price to consumers by way of eliminating middlemen from agricultural marketing system. It presently operates with 69 mobile vans, 2 Hubs and 360 retail outlets across the state. Daily about 90-95 MT of agricultural produces amounting to Rs. 17.50 lakh are sold through Sufal Bangla outlets to serve about 55,000 Consumer Families, i.e. 2.80-3.00 lakh consumers daily. 17 new stores have been opened during financial year 2022-23 till date.

To minimize post harvest loss, One Time Assistance is provided through ‘AMAR FASAL AMAR GOLLA’ for construction of Community Storage Structure and Onion

Storage Structures @ 50% of the cost limited to Rs. 39,133 and Rs. 71,838 respectively. 520 number of farmers would be benefited under this scheme with a total allotment of Rs. 3 crore during the financial year 2022- 2023.

‘Agriculture Export Policy 2022’ for West Bengal has been notified by the State Government. The vision of the policy is to double the export quantity by 2030 by way of promoting the exports of fresh as well as processed agricultural, horticultural and animal based produce originating in the state of West Bengal.

West Bengal State Agricultural Marketing Board has introduced online integrated electronic single platform permit (e-Permit) and Unified License System for fast and hassle-free transactions of agricultural produce in West Bengal. Total 2,35,676 e-permits have been generated till date during 2022-23. Market fees are being collected through online system and 4,696 new unified licenses have been generated online till date.

18 markets from 15 districts have already been integrated with Electronic National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) and 61,128 numbers of stakeholders including farmers and traders have been registered till date. Volume of e-trading in West Bengal stands at 35,155 Metric Ton with value of Rs. 65.84 crore till date since inception.

The Agricultural Marketing department has been declared as the nodal department for scheme 'Formation and Promotion of FPOs'. 232 numbers of Farmers' Producers' Organisations (FPOs) are being developed throughout the State for implementation of the scheme in collaboration with district administration.

522 numbers of licensed functional cold storages with the collective capacity of 71.23 lakh MT are operational for storing potato and multipurpose items and ensuring remunerative price to the farmers as well as price stabilization throughout the year.

3.3 Food Security : Food & Supplies

Food & Supplies Department has taken all possible measures to ensure food security through availability of good quality foodgrains to the citizens of the State.

Under Khadyasathi, free of cost foodgrains are being provided to about 9 crore beneficiaries of the State covered under National Food Security Act (AAY & PHH or SPHH) and Rajya Khadya Suraksha Yojana (RKSY- I & RKSY-II) through the network of about 20,400 Fair Price Shops and 500 distributors.

Under Special Packages Scheme of the State Government, about 54 lakh beneficiaries living in remote and difficult areas are being provided additional foodgrains over and above the existing entitlements.

On an average, every month about 6.6 crore beneficiaries of about 1.52 crore families are being provided foodgrains at their doorsteps through the 'Duare Ration' Scheme.

Government has already introduced fortified rice to provide additional nutritional support to the beneficiaries of Mid-day Meal scheme and ICDS. From 1st January, 2023, all beneficiaries of PDS in four high burden districts of Purulia, Birbhum, Murshidabad and Uttar Dinajpur are being provided fortified rice. From 1st April, 2023 fortified rice will be provided to all the beneficiaries of PDS across the State.

For providing more convenience and flexibility, any eligible Ration card holder can lift his entitled ration from any Ration Shop throughout the State. Under One Nation One Ration Card scheme, AAY & PHH beneficiaries of West Bengal can lift foodgrains from any Ration Shop across the country and AAY & PHH beneficiaries of other States can also lift their entitled foodgrains from any ration shop of West Bengal free of cost through Aadhaar based authentication.

During Kharif Marketing Season (KMS) 2021-22, the Food & Supplies Department has procured a record 53.55 lakh MT paddy. 19.83 lakh small and marginal farmers have been benefitted. The paddy was procured

through a network of 469 Government operated Centralised Procurement Centres (CPCs), 1,286 Co-Operative Societies, 156 Farmer Producer's Organisation / Farmer Producer's Companies and 700 Women Self-Help Groups. Payments were made to the farmers directly in their bank accounts within 3 (three) working days.

During KMS 2022-23, the MSP has been enhanced from Rs. 1,940 to Rs. 2,040 per quintal. For the farmers who sell their paddy at CPC, an additional incentive is being provided at the rate of Rs. 20 per quintal. To provide opportunity to the farmers of sparsely located villages to sell the paddy, Mobile Paddy Purchase centers have been introduced.

This Department now has adequate storage facility for storing rice for at least 3 months requirement of PDS at any time. The State Government in last 11 years have created about 10.84 lakh MT storage capacity of foodgrains.

Towards simplification of citizen centric services to avail various services related with ration card, registration of farmer and scheduling date for selling paddy, inquiry, lodging of grievances, etc. people may use the Departmental Portal or 'Khadya Sathi Amar Ration' mobile app or Whatsapp Chatbot or they may also choose to visit any of the CPCs, Office of the Food Inspectors as well as Bangla Sahayata Kendras (BSK) to avail these services.

3.4 Food Processing Industries & Horticulture

West Bengal is one of the major producers of vegetables, fruits, spices, medicinal plants and flowers.

During the year, more than Rs. 26.91 crore have been spent to expand area of fruit orchards by an estimated 20,142 Ha of land. Major fruits like Mango, Guava, Lime, Sweet Orange, Mandarin Orange, Banana, litchi etc. have been planted on an estimated 13,718 Ha of land. Minor fruits like Pomegranate, Ber, Custard apple, Sapota etc. have been planted on 1,946 Ha of land, in addition, more than 1,014 Ha of cashew nut and more than 642 Ha of exotic fruits have been planted in farmers' fields all over the State.

In the same year, a sum total of Rs. 1.50 crore have been spent to expand the area of off-season onion cultivation specially during the kharif and late kharif season. This effort aims to ease the supply of onion during off-season. At the same time, farmers have been given assistance for the storage of 1,275 MT of onion at field level by incentivizing cost of construction of onion storage.

During the crop year, a total of 3,47,479 square meter of protected cultivation structures have been constructed including poly house for protected cultivation of high value flowers, vegetables to cope up with climate change.

Towards the diversification of horticulture, farmers have been given assistance for area expansion of 471 Ha of seed & rhizomatic spices and 202 Ha of perennial spices.

Front line transfer of technologies for conservation of soil moisture through mulching has been introduced in 2,905 Ha of land.

Under the capacity expansion programme of cold storage, Rs. 1.34 crore have been given as assistance to increase the capacity by 4,774 MT in existing multi-chamber storages.

For augmentation of the cultivation of the horticulture crops under the farm mechanisation programme, farmers have been given assistance for purchase of 206 power tillers and 457 other power-operated machines.

Expansion of Medicinal plants viz. Artemisia annua-80 acres; Coffee-33 acres; Chirata-16 acres and Aromatic plants in 44.75 acres within the Directorate of Cinchona and Other Medicinal Plants under diversification activities have been made.

‘West Bengal Food Processing Incentive Scheme (WBFPIIS)’ especially for micro Food Processing Industries has been operationalised.

During the financial year-2022-23, HDCL & WBSFP have supplied about 90 lakh (approx) of different fruit

plants and saplings to the different Districts under MIDH/ SDS from which 22 lakh (approx) of plants have been supplied by Barjora Farm, Mohitnagar Farm and Ayeshpur Farm of this Corporation.

In the financial year-2022-23, 736 'Do-it-Yourself' kit have been supplied for protected cultivation in the Districts of Darjeeling & Kalimpong under MIDH and RKVY Scheme. Additional requirement of 236 kits have been received and supply is under process.

3.5 Animal Resources Development

West Bengal is witnessing steady growth in both production and demand for animal products. The State has the largest cattle population in India, second largest goat population and fourth largest pig population, as per the latest Livestock Census. The State is the largest producer of goat-meat in the country and third largest producer of all meats. During the period 2010 to 2021, annual egg production in the State has increased by 186%. The annual egg production is set to increase from 1,145 crore in 2021-22 to over 1,356 crore in 2022-23, an 18.43% increase, attributable primarily to enhanced distribution of chicks and ducklings to over 10.62 lakh beneficiaries.

'The West Bengal Incentive Scheme 2017 for Commercial Layer Poultry and Poultry Breeding Farms', has been extended for one year w.e.f. 01.09.2022.

84 Projects have been completed, leading to production of an additional 111.11 crore eggs annually. Another 44 projects are nearing completion. Projects undertaken under this Scheme will result in a total of 171.39 crore additional eggs being brought to the market annually.

In order to promote the dairy sector as a viable livelihood option and to boost incomes in the rural economy, the State Government has set up 'Banglar Dairy' which is producing & marketing approximately 1,40,000 litres of milk daily along with processed milk products, through its 563 retail outlets.

A novel tele-medicine service for animals has been started by the ARD Department from September 2022 through a Call Centre to provide 'Tele-veterinary Services' across the State and coordinate the movement of the Mobile Veterinary Clinics in their respective areas. The same Call Centre is also being used for attending to animals in distress needing rescue or other assistance.

The ARD Department is promoting 20 new farmer producer companies (FPC) and 400 clusters in the goatery sector, involving 26,000 small and marginal goat farmers through support in training, animal-health, nutrition, breeding, incentives for fodder cultivation and marketing. Meat and milk production in the State have increased by 89% and 45% respectively, between 2010 to 2021.

In Piggery, a new cluster approach has been taken up with 2,700 pigs to be distributed to 270 clusters. Piggery Integration Programme is being implemented in Coochbehar, Jalpaiguri, Alipurduar and Darjeeling.

A State-wide network of more than 13,000 self-employed Artificial Insemination Workers and Pranimitras provide AI and vaccination services at the residence of livestock farmers. They are being provided a monthly performance incentive of Rs. 5,000 by the Department.

Over 4.80 crore livestock and poultry have been vaccinated so far, during 2022-23.

Artificial insemination has been completed for 35.69 lakh Cattle & Buffalo, and 10.33 lakh calves were born through artificial insemination.

The State Government is providing financial incentive to procure raw milk directly from primary dairy farmers through milk unions. In 2022-23, Banglar Dairy has disbursed an additional amount of Rs. 15.24 crore directly into the farmer's bank account, as Special Incentive @ Rs. 7 per litre of milk up to November, 2022.

West Bengal Livestock Development Corporation Ltd. has produced 33,260 MT livestock feed upto December, 2022. 9,026.58 MT fodder has been produced in various Government fodder farms upto December, 2022.

In order to help more animal husbandry farmers access bank credit and working capital, Kisan Credit Card for Animal Husbandry (KCC-AH) scheme is under implementation. A dedicated KCC-IMS-ARD portal has been made operational, for effective monitoring. During last financial year 2021-22, 19,826 applications were sanctioned and the same have been sponsored to Banks upto December, 2022.

The ARD Department is facilitating 'Skill Development Training' of unemployed youths to develop their potential for gainful employment in dairy farming, goat husbandry, poultry farming and pig farming under 'Utkarsh Bangla' Programme of the State Government. 4,834 trainees have been trained upto December, 2022.

3.6 Fisheries

During 2022-23, 12.23 lakh MT of fish and 2,22,65 million fish seeds have been produced in West Bengal upto 31.12.2022. Fish production has registered an increase of almost 10% over the production during the corresponding period in 2021-22, primarily because all water bodies excavated under 'Jal Dharo Jal Bharo' scheme have been brought under pisciculture.

For boosting production in the Brackish water species sector, which account for more than 70% of export of fish from West Bengal, 'Monoculture of Shrimp' in 47 units (Rs. 18.91 lakh), 'Polyculture of Shrimp' in

160 units (Rs. 53.28 lakh), 'Monoculture of Vennamei Shrimp' in 140 units (Rs. 49.59 lakh) and Fattening of Mud Crab in 12 units (Rs. 5.22 lakh) are being undertaken.

Pisciculture in 3921 small water bodies (522.00 ha.) has been taken up. As part of air-breathing fish culture, scheme for nurturing of 'Deshi Magur/Singhi' in 580 numbers of ponds is being implemented.

The scheme, 'Sewage-fed Fishery' is being implemented in three districts viz. North 24 Parganas, South 24 Parganas and Hooghly.

A flagship programme, 'Banga Matsya Yojona' has been introduced during 2022-23 for augmentation of production and fisheries infrastructure development for raising of standard of living of the fisher folk. In this programme, seven different types of schemes/projects have been approved covering 94 units with total fund involvement of Rs. 416.35 lakh.

For exploring untapped potential of unutilized beels, baors etc. and increasing productivity of big water bodies, another flagship programme namely, Fish culture in cage at Kansabati Reservoir is being implemented on pilot basis with the technical help of ICAR-CIFRI and fund involvement of Rs. 107.12 lakh.

To develop 'Nayachar Fishery Hub' in Purba Medinipur, efforts have been made for undertaking different infrastructural works in association with district

administration. 92 numbers of PFCS Ltd. with water area of 8,323 acres have been formed with 2,957 fishermen for bringing available water bodies in the area under scientific pisciculture.

Quota of 'Old Age Pension' beneficiaries in fisheries sector has been enhanced to 20,000 and pension @ Rs. 1,000 per month is being disbursed to the pensioners every month.

4.5 crore Guppy fishes have been released in the water bodies across the State for arresting spread of dengue.

3.7 Panchayat and Rural Development

In the financial year 2022-2023, total numbers of beneficiaries are 4.05 lakhs under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY-G) Scheme. During this financial year, total numbers of 1.99 lakh houses have been completed till date. Most of the houses have received 3rd installment. A fund amounting to Rs. 1019.74 crore is involved for this purpose as on 31st December, 22.

Further, allocation for 11,36,488 of houses have been approved by the MoRD, GoI during the financial year 2022-23, out of which a total numbers of 10,54,498 houses have been sanctioned so far. A fund of Rs. 13637.86 crore is involved in the present allocation with 60 : 40 ratio of central & State Share. (Rs. 8182.71 crore & 5455.14 crore). Sanction of houses as well as release of fund will start soon.

Under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), 36,786 km of road & 55 numbers of Long Span Bridges have been sanctioned in Phase-I & II involving an amount of Rs. 18403.60 crore; out of this 36,786 km of road length, sanction for 22,584.97 km of road length was obtained from the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India during 2011-12 to 2018-19 which in turn completes the allocation of Phase-I & II of Gramin Sadak Yojana (PMGSY-I & II). In addition, under this programme 38 numbers of long span bridges are completed in the State in last financial year and further 17 numbers of bridges are in the various stages of progress and expected to be completed by May, 2023.

In the financial year of 2022-23, the total expenditure under PMGSY stands at Rs. 432.27 crore as on 31.12.2022 & 115 km length of new roads have been completed. Now only 69 km is left to be completed under Phase-I & II of the programme.

On 17th November, 2022, State has received clearance for 144 road projects having length of 857.25 km amounting to Rs.584.88 crore under PMGSY-III, Batch-I, out of which Central share is Rs. 343.16 crore & State share is Rs. 241.72 crore.

Under 'Mission Nirmal Bangla', all the gram Panchayats of West Bengal have been declared as Open Defection Free (ODF) in the year of 2021. During the current financial

year, 2,89,464 numbers of Individual Household Toilets have been constructed and 1,348 numbers of Community Sanitary Complexes have been constructed. Upto December 2022, 990 Gram Panchayats have undertaken Solid Liquid Waste Management (SLWM) Project. Out of these SLWM projects in 282 Gram Panchayats, construction of Central Processing Unit (CPU) has been completed and 166 CPU are functional. Solid waste is collected from 7,30,688 numbers of households. 1,49,145 platforms and 72,231 soak pits in public tubewell have been constructed. During this financial year (Upto December' 22) Rs. 367.81 crore has been spent.

National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) provides social security in various forms to individuals belonging to BPL/Poor category.

In case of NFBS, one time assistance of Rs. 40,000 is given to the eligible family of deceased bread earner within age group 18-60 years belonging to BPL family.

Under the schemes of NSAP (Jai Bangla), a total numbers of 20,48,190 beneficiaries have been benefited and expenditure on this account is Rs. 1883.64 crore up to December, 2022.

The beneficiaries of all schemes are getting their pension within 10th day of every month. Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mode of payment has been adopted since November, 2021.

Under West Bengal State Rural Livelihood Mission (WBSRLM), 1.07 crore women have been mobilized in 10,34,917 Self-Help Groups. 3,341 Sanghas have been promoted and 3,337 Sanghas are now registered as Multipurpose Primary Co-operative Societies under the West Bengal Co-operative Societies Act, 1961.

WBSRLM extended financial supports as Revolving Fund (RF) of Rs. 1,134.85 crore to 7,56,891 SHGs till December 2021. Under Community Investment Fund (CIF), 3,335 Sanghas have been given Rs. 923.35 crore, which was extended as combined loans amounting to Rs. 1,928.41 crore till 31st December 2021.

During the current financial year 2022-23, 6,34,647 SHGs were credit linked and they accessed Rs. 13,122.79 crore. As per the NRLM bank linkage portal, 5,82,835 SHGs have loans outstanding to the tune of Rs. 15,960.76 crore as on 31st December 2022, there by, West Bengal being the second largest among all States in the country.

For promotion and marketing of SHG products in the state, 'Srishtishree', a unique shopping mall is operational at Dhakuria (Kolkata). Srishtishree outlets have also been operational at Kolkata Airport, Bagdogra Airport, different Railway Stations of the State and 3 Shopping Malls in Kolkata. 'Saras Mela' is organized every year in Kolkata and Siliguri to facilitate the women artisans of SHG for marketing their products.

‘Anandadhara’ is constantly collaborating with the various line departments of the government and in convergence with School Education, SHGs have provided schools uniform to 1,18,94,504 numbers of students of 82,504 schools and done business to the tune of Rs. 288.24 crore in 2022-23. In convergence with Women & Child Development and Social Welfare Department, 67 ‘Ready To Eat (RTE)’ food production units have been identified in 21 districts for providing RTE Food to ICDS beneficiaries and another 93 SHG Institutions have been tagged with 93 ICDS projects for supplying food materials. The expected volume of business is Rs. 18 crore per year for these units.

In 2022-23, Rs. 200.29 crore have been released from State exchequer under WBSRLM programme as State share and Rs. 300.41 crore as Central share till December, 2022.

3.8 Irrigation & Waterways

To increase area under irrigation and to give relief to the people of critically flood prone areas, 132 schemes, have been completed in 2022-23 (till December-2022) and another 306 ongoing schemes are under implementation.

An additional area of 33,904 acre of cultivable land has been brought under irrigation during 2022-23 by completing renovation of medium and minor irrigation schemes in South Bengal and partially completing the

renovation of Canal system of three major irrigation projects, namely Kangsabati Reservoir Project, Mayurakshi Reservoir Project and Midnapore Main Canal.

Cyclones ‘Amphan’ in May, 2020 and ‘Yaas’ in May 2021, damaged many parts of the Sundarban embankments. However, in 2022, major damage was averted through emergent restoration of 424 km of damaged embankments and 297 structures. As a result, further inundation during subsequent high tides could be avoided.

During 2022-23, 105 km of flood and river eroding embankments have been improved and 225 km of drainage channels have been excavated. Like previous year, up-keep and maintenance of around 1,105 km of drainage channels and one time clearance of 445 km of drainage channels were carried out during the monsoon of 2022 which also helped in controlling vector borne diseases. Anti erosion work along Ganga-Padma river, for a length of 14 km in Malda and Murshidabad districts, have been taken up in 2022.

As a result of dredging of Muriganga River in between Kakdwip and Sagar Island, planned through scientific model study with the help of renowned experts, uninterrupted water transshipment could be achieved for almost 24 hours during the Ganga Sagar Mela.

To modernize the decades old DVC Canal network, maximize the irrigation coverage in the five districts of South Bengal and to address the flood management infrastructure in the Lower Damodar areas in Howrah and Hooghly district, the State Government has taken up 'West Bengal Major Irrigation and Flood Management Project' with assistance from World Bank and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank at an estimated cost of Rs. 3,015 crore. Works of 7 packages (17 contracts) in flood management sector and 2 packages (2 contracts) in irrigation sector have been completed so far which involve raising and strengthening of 33 km of embankment, dredging of river & drainage channel for a total length of 70 km and improvement of irrigation canal for 112 km. At present, flood management works of 4 packages (comprising of total 4 contracts at a cost of Rs. 761.79 crore) and irrigation infrastructure improvement of 12 packages (comprising of 32 contracts, at a cost of Rs. 1308.92 crore) are ongoing. The projects will be completed by December-2025.

A special endeavor has been taken up consequent upon the prolonged water logging in the monsoon 2021 to improve the drainage infrastructure in Kolkata and its adjoining areas including Howrah Municipality. After completion of Survey work using latest technology, dredging of 147 km of drainage channel, have been taken

up with a target of completion before the monsoon 2023. Automatic Water level sensors are being installed at 45 critical locations of Kolkata Drainage System to provide water levels of the canal system in real time basis.

3.9 Water Resources Investigation & Development

Under 'Jal Dharo-Jal Bharo' 13,105 water bodies/water detention structures have been created/renovated, upto 31.12.2022.

Since 2011-12, till 31.12.2022, 3,92,926 water bodies/water detention structures have been created/renovated.

'Matir Shristi' was launched in May-2020 to make productive use of fallow land in 6 western Districts viz. Birbhum, Bankura, Purulia, Paschim Medinipur, Jhargram & Paschim Bardhaman. Till last year 2021-22, 4,650 Ha of fallow land was brought under horticulture. During 2022-23, in convergence with other Departments, under 'Matir Shristi', by micro planning for 141 clusters covering more than 4,200 Ha and 126 Community Based Organizations (CBOs) have been formed alongwith 20 Farmers Producer Organizations (FPOs). 30,875 numbers of Chicks/ Ducklings/Goat/Pig/Heifer have been distributed. Composite fish culture, spawn to fingerlings, air breathing fish culture, big fish cultures etc. have been practiced. 447 different types of soil conservation structures have been completed.

During the financial year 2022-23, up to 31.12.2022, 108 irrigation infrastructure schemes have been completed creating irrigation potential of 1,136 Ha under Matir Shristi Programme.

Under 'Jalatirtha' Programme for increasing irrigation coverage and rain water conservation in the arid Districts of Birbhum, Bankura, Purulia, Jhargram, Paschim Burdwan & Paschim Medinipur, in saline riverine area of North & South 24 Parganas District and in hilly region of Darjeeling & Kalimpong District, Minor Irrigation schemes are being implemented. During this year, up to 31.12.2022, 202 schemes have been completed creating irrigation potential of 5,278 Ha.

Since inception, till 31.12.2022; 1,570 Minor Irrigation schemes based on surface water have been constructed having irrigation potential of about 60,530 Ha.

Under the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) with financial assistance from NABARD, 631 Minor Irrigation schemes have been completed in this year up to 31.12.2022 creating irrigation potential of 15,342 Ha.

Under West Bengal Accelerated Development of Minor Irrigation Project (WBADMIP), 779 schemes have been completed in this year up to 31.12.2022 creating an additional irrigation potential of 4,186 Ha.

Capacity building has been done involving 38,246 trainees through 2,723 training of farmer programmes. Further 7,927 demonstration programmes involving 14,850 beneficiary families on Agriculture, Horticulture and Fisheries to introduce modern practices for improving productivity, production and income of the farmers have also been conducted.

In the quest for utilization of renewable resources, 771 Minor Irrigation schemes having Irrigation Potential of 7,387 Ha have been completed with solar power as the motive force. Additionally, water use efficiency is being enhanced by promoting micro-irrigation schemes like Drip/Sprinkler irrigation. During this financial year, 116 Sprinkler Irrigation and 13 Drip Irrigation Schemes have been completed till 31.12.2022 creating Irrigation Potential of 453.7 Ha & 66.4 Ha respectively, all of which are solar operated.

For conservation of sweet surface water, old, silted creeks were re-excavated in saline riverine area for creation of Irrigation Potential (IP) under WBADMIP, Jalatirtha and other Programmes resulting in incredible opportunity for winter crops & pisciculture leading to socio-economic development of the area. In this financial year up to 31.12.2022, about 132 km old, silted creek was reexcavated having Irrigation Potential (IP) of about 3,000

Ha. This unique initiative has helped the society adopt climate-resilient practices. Recharge of ground water has been facilitated, ingress of saline water has been reduced, stream bank erosion has also been reduced due to plantation activities, storm surge inundation problem also got reduced.

3.10 Co-operation

The Co-operative Movement in West Bengal is founded on effective framework of legislation and strong organizational network. Through a clientele of more than 85 lakh members in more than 29,000 cooperative societies, this sector is playing a commendable role in the area of agriculture, marketing, consumers, housing and service sector.

During last few years, the Co-operation Department has laid emphasis on membership coverage, agricultural development, creation of rural infrastructure, financial services in the unbanked areas and women empowerment through Self Help Groups.

Crop Loan of Rs. 3085.78 crore has been sanctioned to 11.15 lakh farmer members. Total 12,54,682 numbers of RuPay Kisan Cards have been issued till 30.11.2022. Crop Loan to the farmers has also been arranged from the Micro-ATMs situated at the Primary Agricultural Credit Cooperative Societies (PACS).

During KMS 2021-22, total 21.03 lakh MT paddy was procured through cooperative societies, of which BENFED procured 5.08 lakh MT through 543 cooperative societies from 2.57 lakh farmers and CONFED procured 74,769 MT through 38 cooperative societies from 41,349 farmers.

9,163 new SHGs have been formed raising the cumulative number of SHGs to 2,38,526. Loan of Rs. 1121.98 crore has been sanctioned to SHG Members.

Further, 2,853 students have been sanctioned loan under Student Credit Card scheme.

Mobile banking facility has been introduced by the West Bengal State Cooperative Bank Ltd. and Burdwan District Central Cooperative Bank Ltd. for their customers.

Under Rastriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), construction of 14 Rural Storage Godown having total capacity of 1,400 MT involving Rs. 2.46 crore has been completed during current financial year. Construction of another 33 Rural Storage Godown having total capacity of 3,300 MT is going on and they are expected to be completed in the next financial year.

Work for 3 number of Farm Machinery Hubs, 1 Multipurpose Mini Cold Storage, 1 Workshed-cum-Sales counter are going on and these are expected to be completed soon.

Under Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF)/ Warehouse Infrastructure Fund (WIF), construction of three Godowns, each having capacity of 10,000 MT & two Godowns each having capacity of 2000 MT involving Rs. 10.44 crore & 7.10 crore respectively have been completed during the current financial year.

Further 10 Godowns, each having capacity of 1,000 MT involving Rs. 16.86 crore and 3 Paddy Seed Processing Units involving Rs. 4.47 crore have been completed during the current financial year.

Construction of another eight 10,000 MT Godown, seventeen 1,000 MT Godown, ten 2,000 MT Godown, five 5,000 MT Godown and sixteen Paddy Seed Processing Units is going on.

3.11 Forests

In line with the National Forest Policy and National Action Plan on Climate Change, 4,488 Ha have been afforested and 91.20 lakh saplings have been distributed among the public as steps to conserve forests and wildlife, increase green cover and ensure provision of a healthy environment to the people. Forest Department has won the Platinum award for “Joint Forest Management— A People’s Movement” at SKOCH Awards 2022.

In Management Effectiveness Evaluation by Central Zoo Authority, Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park,

Darjeeling has been ranked the Number 1 Zoo in India. Among medium/small zoo category, Zoological Garden, Alipore has ranked Number 2 in India.

Under 'Sabujshree' scheme, since inception a total of 53,01,635 seedlings have been distributed to the mothers of newly born children.

West Bengal Forest Development Corporation Ltd. (WBFDC) has shifted from physical auction to e-auction making the work flow transparent, easy and accountable. More than 1200 e-auctions have been conducted this year, whereby a total amount of Rs. 228 crore has been collected as sale revenue during this year.

Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) promotes afforestation and regeneration activities to compensate for forest land diverted to non-forest uses. 397.54 Ha of compensatory plantations has been raised. 874.01 Ha of older compensatory afforestation plantations is being maintained.

To promote Ease of Doing Business (EoDB), online National Transit Pass System, online Non-Forest Area certification and online 'Distance from Forest Certification' has been inducted.

Conservation Breeding Programme of resident Gyps species of vultures (one of its kind in Asia) in

Rajabhatkhawa has been successfully implemented. 146 Vultures of three critically endangered species are presently housed at the centre. 10 White-Backed Vultures and 3 Himalayan Griffons were released with Platform Transmitter Terminals (satellite tag) in the wild in July.

Since 2008, *Batagurbaska* (Northern River Terrapin) Recovery Programme has been in place in Sundarban Tiger Reserve with the assistance of 'Turtle Survival Alliance (TSA)-India'. 33 hatchlings emerged in 2012, whose population has now increased to 389.

After successful conservation breeding programme, Red Panda, Red Jungle Fowl and Himalayan Goral have been reintroduced into the wild. India's only successful Conservation Breeding Programme of Snow Leopard is running in Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park, Darjeeling.

Consequent to the success of the Phase-I of JICA assisted West Bengal Forest and Biodiversity Conservation Project, in Phase-II, Project for Forest and Biodiversity Conservation for Climate Resilience Enhancement with an outlay of Rs. 650 crore has been approved.

Since 2017, annual 'Buxa Bird Festival' is held wherein 246 avian species have been documented. Population estimation of Rhinoceros was conducted in 2022, showing an increase in its numbers from 289 to 347 over the last three years.

Field Exercise of All India Tiger Estimation 2021-22 has been completed. Conservation Action Plan for Gharial and Gangetic Dolphin for West Bengal (2021-31) has been approved by MoEF & CC. Project work has begun along the river Ganga and Rupnarayan. Awareness generation and capacity building programmes have been initiated.

‘Gaja-Mitra’ scheme has been introduced as early warning system for management of Human-Elephant Conflict.

34 Eco-Tourism Centers are being run in West Bengal. Approx 16.06 MT of crude honey was collected through Eco-development Committees in Sundarbans.

Social Infrastructure

3.12 Health & Family Welfare

Expansion of Health infrastructure and improvement of health services has always been a top priority for the State Government. There has been significant improvement in basic health parameters in the last ten years. The Budget of the Department has substantially increased over the years to Rs. 19471.94 crore in 2022-2023 from Rs. 3,584 crore in 2010-11.

Institutional Delivery has increased to 99% in 2022 from 68.10% in 2011. Maternal Mortality Rate has come down to 109 in 2022 from 117 per 1 lakh live birth in 2011 which is much below the national average of 113.

Infant Mortality Rate stands at 19 per 1000 live births from 32 in 2011, which is much below the national average of 32 in 2021.

Against the estimated target, 99.60% of the children have been fully immunized in 2022 which was 65% in 2011.

‘MATRI MA’ portal tracks 1.25 crore eligible couples, for parenting ante-natal checkups for 7.4 lakh pregnant women and immunization services for 10.18 lakh children.

Covid-19 pandemic has posed one of the greatest challenges to the health infrastructure & health services. Altogether, the State Government has spent Rs. 2,992 crore for prevention and management of Covid-19 since onset of the pandemic. Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) plants have been made functional in 28 Hospitals and PSA (Pressure Swing Adsorption) plants numbering 76 have been installed.

Health & Family Welfare Department has started 24×7 Tele-Mental Health Services considering it to be a continuous service with the help of Tele-consultation, Telemedicine, and Psychological Tele-consultation after Covid upsurge.

The pioneering flagship project of the State Health & Family Welfare Department, ‘Swasthya Sathi Scheme’ is running very successfully by enrolling more than 2.41 crore families as on 31st December, 2022. Since

inception, around 45.48 lakh beneficiaries have availed the treatment services under this flagship scheme amounting to Rs. 6,199.94 crore.

A unique initiative 'Chokher Alo' project, has started since 4th January' 2021, for ensuring universal 'Eye Health for All'. As of now 49.94 lakh persons have been screened and 7.4 lakh cataract surgeries performed till date. To ensure improved eye vision particularly for people of lower income groups, 12.1 lakh spectacles have been distributed to old persons and 63,463 spectacles to school children till date.

Under 'Swasthya Ingit', an innovative Tele-medicine service has been launched successfully and has been nationally acclaimed by winning the SKOCH Award. 94.48 lakh tele-consultations till date have been availed so far. This has improved the access to health care in the remote areas. Tele-medicine infrastructure comprises of 37 HUBS (All districts, all MCHs and 1 State Tele-medicine center at SSKM), 5 super specialist HUBS (Neurology, Oncology, Nephrology, Gastroenterology and Pediatrics). At present, telemedicine services can be availed at 5,936 places.

There are 10,357 sub centers, 273 RHs and 75 BPHCs in the State. In order to provide comprehensive primary health care services 8,101 sub-centers, 915 Primary Health Centers, 459 Urban Primary Health Centers, 344 Urban

Health Wellness centers and 271 AYUSH sub-centers have been up-graded as 'Su-Swasthya Kendra' till date. At present, 8,101 community health officers (CHOs) are providing health care in Su-Swasthya Kendras throughout the state. State government has also started 2203 new sub-centers in rented premises/government building during 2022-23.

Fair Price Medicine Shops (FPMS) have been set up in PPP mode. Since December, 2012, presently 117 FPMS are functional. Discount of 48%-80% are allowed on MRP. Since inception, discount of Rs. 2,435.41 crore have been availed by patients under 8.1 crore prescriptions.

Among the major initiative Fair Price Diagnostic Centers (FPDC) and Dialysis Centres have been established from Medical Colleges to secondary tier hospitals. 156 such units (18 MRI, 46 CT scan, 33 Digital X-rays, 13 Audio Vestibular Clinic and 01 PET Scan and 45 Dialysis Units) are functional in the State. Since inception, 1.97 crore patients have availed free services worth Rs. 1,186.14 crore.

The number of Medical Colleges in the state has increased to 33 in 2022 from 10 in 2011 which includes 24 Government Medical Colleges. Number of MBBS seats has increased from 1,355 in 2011 to 4,850 in 2022.

The number of Nursing Training Schools (NTS) increased to 499 in 2022, from 45 in 2011, thereby increasing Nursing Students' strength from 2,265 in 2011 to 30,242 as of now.

14,000 beds have been created in 42 Super Specialty Hospitals (SSH) and 41 SSHs are already operational. Belda SSH will be operational very soon.

Blood Bank facilities increased to 87 units in 2022-23 from 58 in 2011. Further, 36 BCSUs (Blood Component Separation Units) & 73 BSUs (Blood storage units) are functioning round the clock. The number of BCSU has increased four times in comparison to only 9 in 2011.

47 Trauma Care Facilities (Level II & III) are functional in the State. SSKM hospital has functional Level-I Trauma Care Facility.

MoU has been signed with Tata Memorial Hospital, Mumbai for setting 'State of the Art' Cancer Hubs at IPGMER, Kolkata and North Bengal Medical College & Hospital, Siliguri.

AYUSH system of medication, being cost effective and beneficial for all age groups, has also become popular in delivering health care. Much emphasis has been given for promotion of its different branches namely Ayurveda, Homoeopathy, Unani and Yoga. A new 'Yoga & Naturopathy Degree College & Hospital' at Belur, Howrah

has been established for offering BNYS (Bachelor of Naturopathy & Yogic Sciences) degree to 60 students per year. 271 “AYUSH Su-Swasthya Kendra” with herbal garden and Yoga facility have been established.

There are Six State-run Mental Hospitals in the State with total bed capacity of 1,080. Psychiatrists have been posted at District Hospitals to provide day care and IPD services to mentally ill persons. Two ‘Centre of Excellence’ at Institute of Psychiatry, Kolkata and Calcutta National Medical College & Hospital are already operational.

3.13 School Education

There has been sustained and consistent improvement of infrastructure and human resources in the school education sector since 2011, with the objective of providing quality education and retention of students. 762 schools from Jr. High to High School level and 2,114 schools from High to Higher Secondary level have been upgraded. 7,251 new school buildings and 2,21,849 additional class rooms have been constructed to accommodate the growing number of students. 9,305 schools have been brought under ICT programme so far.

In addition, 40,802 girls toilets, 24,115 boys toilets and 7,304 toilets for Children With Special Need (CWSN), have been constructed. The State Government has provided free school uniforms to more than 10.93 crore

school children and Text Books to students from pre-primary to class-XII students. During the year 2022-23, more than 21,700 Braille Books (for blind students) and large font books (for low vision students) have been distributed among the CWSN students. 61,212 CWSN girl students and 28,323 CWSN students at the Secondary and Higher Secondary levels, have been provided with Books and Stationery allowances.

An one-time grant of Rs. 10,000 is given to each student of class XII of the Government/Government Aided/Sponsored schools and Madrasahs for purchasing tabs/smartphones to access the e-learning mode under 'Taruner Swapna' scheme. Till date 26,97,377 students have received the benefit under the scheme, including 9,81,324 students for the year 2022-23.

Marksheets & Certificates of Madhyamik and Uchcha-Madhyamik examinations for the period between 2015 to 2021 have been uploaded & integrated with the Digilocker platform, to provide easy access to the students/stakeholders. Besides, an online portal has been launched since 3rd November, 2022 to provide NOC to the private schools seeking affiliation to the CBSE & CISCE Board/Council.

Under the Mid-day-Meal (PM Poshan) program, 100% Government/Government Aided/Government Sponsored schools in the State have been covered. Currently more

than 1.18 crore students are under its coverage. 100% schools are having LPG connection for cooking Mid-day-Meal.

West Bengal has substantially improved its rank to 7th in National Achievement Survey, 2021. The State has topped the ranking at national level among major States on Foundational Numeracy Index, 2022 published by the Government of India.

3.14 Higher Education

Fund allocation in Plan Budget for Higher Education has increased almost more than ten-folds in last 11 years. Total Budget allocation in State Plan during 2010-2011 was Rs. 120 crore which increased to Rs. 1,244.40 crore during 2022-23. The same would clearly be visible from the fact that the number of Universities in the State has been increased from 12 to 42 in last eleven years out of which 31 are State Aided Universities and 11 are Private Universities. There are 509 Government and Government aided colleges out of which 52 new Colleges have been established in the last 11 years resulting in increase of Enrolment in Higher Education from 13.24 lakh during 2010-2011 to 22.29 lakh during 2021-22 academic session.

For the year 2022-23, the portal of Swami Vivekananda Merit cum Means Scholarship Scheme was opened on 03.11.2022 for submission of applications by students.

Target of SVMCM beneficiaries is about 10 lakh students for 2022-23 as State Government has brought down the qualifying marks to 60% from 75% at Madhyamik and HS level for the poor but meritorious students whose income limit is Rs. 2.50 lakh per annum. 8,39,922 students have already applied online under the Scheme, as on 27.12.2022.

The State Government has extended Scholarship benefits to the girl students for pursuing post graduation regular courses in Kanyanshree-3. Last year 33,512 Students got Kanyanshree-3 Scheme and this year up to 27.12.2022, 33,848 Students applied for Kanyanshree-3.

West Bengal Student Credit Card Scheme has been introduced since 30th June, 2021 for the students belonging to the state of West Bengal and studying within the country or abroad. As on 31.12.2022, out of total numbers of 1,50,337 applications, 1,43,217 have been forwarded to the banks. Till date 39,490 applications have been sanctioned by the banks. The aggregate amount of loan sanctioned is Rs. 1,170.85 crore.

3.15 Technical Education, Training and Skill Development

The Department has been constantly striving towards upgradation of infrastructure, enhanced industry interface and enhancing skills and employability and employment opportunities for our youths.

Industry Resource Cell was constituted in the department to take initiatives for expanding involvement of industry for jointly offering training and also to co-ordinate with industry for all verticals.

Infrastructure Development Cell has been constituted to plan the infrastructure and resource development for creating model institutions (for NBA accreditation or any other such benchmark) and get the Institute development plans prepared for all the institutions. This cell also examines the infrastructure development proposals vis-à-vis the plans prepared.

Till date, since inception, more than 23.5 lakh candidates have been trained under the Utkarsh Bangla short term interventions. Approximately, 1.16 lakh candidates have registered through Karmadisha, the application for career counselling.

District Skill Development Plans for the 23 districts have been updated as per current demand and sensitization of districts regarding the action plan has been scheduled.

The Directorate is working towards establishment of at least one Polytechnic in each of the State's sub divisions. Currently there is at least one Polytechnics in each of 61 Sub-Divisions out of 69 Sub-Divisions. 2 new

Government Polytechnics, one at Alipurduar and the other at Dasnagar have started academic activities during the year 2022 with approval of AICTE. There has been a significant upsurge in the total intake capacity in Polytechnics, being 41,162 in the year 2022 in sharp contrast to the total intake of 17,185 as recorded before 1st June, 2011.

Several courses in the emerging technical areas have been started in new Polytechnics viz., Mechatronics, Travel & Tourism, Renewable Energy, Cyber Forensics and Information Security, Interior Decoration etc. One dedicated Training & Placement Cell has been developed in the Directorate to facilitate the institutes in organising campus interviews by different industries.

As on date, total 298 ITIs (53 Government ITIs, 97 Government ITIs operated in PPP model, 148 Private ITIs) are operating with total intake capacity of 95,214. Another 19 numbers of newly constructed ITIs are ready to be operationalized under PPP mode from next academic session.

Apprenticeship Mela is being organised in 8 ITIs every month on regular basis rotationally to promote Apprenticeship Scheme and more exposure to the industry for the ITI pass outs.

Remarkable performance are shown by the ITI Students in All India Trade Test (AITT)-2022. ITI trainees of this State topped (4 girls) in the year 2022 and West Bengal is declared best State in terms of overall performance.

Government of West Bengal signed a MoU with M/S Siemens in 2019 to start Dual VET program aiming to provide exposure of on job training (OJT) to the ITI trainees of 12 Government ITIs which have now extended up to 38 ITIs in 11 trades. As a result, around 6500 trainees will get opportunity for On Job Training at various industries during their course.

M/s L & T Construction has set up center for short-term training courses in construction skill under PBSSD at ITI Berhampore & ITI Suri and will start another centre at ITI Jhargram. As on date, M/s L & T has trained 176 nos of trainees and all the 176 trainees (100% placement) have been placed.

M/s Mahindra & Mahindra has set up center for short-term training courses in Automobile sector at Women ITI Burdwan. M/s TATA Metaliks will start new short-term training, on pilot basis, in the construction trade under PBSSD.

NSDC international has selected 10 ITIs as Skill India International centre (SII) based on their national grading parameters for setting up centres for promotion of international placement of ITI pass-out trainees.

3.16 Youth Services and Sports

To find out budding talents in the sphere of science and culture, Student Youth Science Fair and Student-Youth Festival have been organised with participants from all over the State besides holding of Rakhi Bandhan Utsav, Vivek Chetana Utsav, Subhas Utsav and Mountaineering activities.

Spectator's gallery at Santipur Stadium & Kharingdungri Sports Complex in Nadia & Bankura district respectively have been handed over to concerned District authority. Asansol Youth Hostel, Haldia Youth Hostel & Kishore Bharati Stadium Youth Hostel have been inaugurated and operational. Durand Cup 2022 was completed successfully in collaboration with Indian Army.

Upgradation work of Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan, Netaji Indoor Stadium, Rabindra Sarovar Stadium and Kishore Bharati Stadium has been taken up. Bengal Table Tennis Academy has been operationalised for holistic development of the youth of the state. Various grants have been provided to individuals and organizations for improvement of sports. The Annual Club Grant, Khel Samman as well as Grant to Coaching Camps are being given under the 'Khelashree Scheme'.

3.17 Information & Cultural Affairs

Durga Puja of Kolkata has been included in UNESCO's 2021 list of 'Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity'. To commemorate this achievement on 1st September, 2022, a mega rally was organized followed by a cultural programme at Red Road attended by UNESCO representatives, diplomats, captains of industries, culture, art and people in general.

28th edition of Kolkata International Film Festival (KIFF) was inaugurated on December 15, 2022 with a colourful inauguration in star studded Netaji Indoor Stadium and continued till December 22. 28th KIFF witnessed participation of 183 films including 82 foreign films in 10 Government cinema halls.

'Banga Bibhushan' & 'Banga Bhushan' were conferred to 39 eminent personalities for their outstanding contributions in various fields. These awards were conferred on July 25, 2022 by the Hon'ble Chief Minister followed by 2 awards of 'Mahanayak Samman'.

Under Lok Prasar Prakalpa (LPP) more than 1.87 lakh folk artistes between the age of 18-60 are receiving Rs. 1,000 per month as Retainer fee. Senior folk artistes, who are above 60 years are also receiving Rs. 1,000 per month as Pension. Apart from this, for folk performances, the registered artists receive Rs. 1,000 as Performance

fee. Retainer fee, Performance fee and Pension are credited to the bank accounts of the folk artistes directly under Direct Benefit Transfer Mode. The State Government has released more than Rs. 180 crore for this purpose during this financial year.

Monthly Financial Assistance to financially weak Purohits and Priests at the rate of Rs. 1,000 per month are being provided by the State Government. The present number of beneficiaries is 27,972 and so far Rs. 27.94 crore has been released to their bank accounts directly.

The State Government has introduced a pension scheme for Journalists. Presently, 118 retired Journalists are being provided monthly pension @ Rs. 2,500 under “West Bengal Pension Scheme for the Journalists, 2018” through Direct Benefit Transfer Mode.

The State Government organised ‘Bangla Sangeet Mela’ and ‘Biswa Bangla Lok Sanskriti Utsav’ from December 25 to January 1, 2023. More than 3,000 artistes & musicians have participated in the programme.

‘Jatra’ is a popular folk-theatre form of Bengali theatre. To make this form of Folk theatre more vibrant, the State Government provides one time financial assistance of Rs. 25,000 each to distressed and aged Jatra Artistes and Rs. 50,000 (one time assistance) to each of theatre groups.

The State Government provides Financial Assistance to aged and financially weaker artists. So far 115 aged artists have been provided monthly financial assistance under the Literary and Culture Pension Scheme.

Under the Group Health Insurance and Personal Accident Insurance Schemes for Cine & Television Artistes/Technicians/Workers, the State Government has spent Rs. 2.10 crore for 7,355 numbers of beneficiaries.

3.18 Mass Education Extension & Library Services

More than Rs. 5 crore has been released in favour of 4,534 number of students with disabilities (class IX onwards) towards Scholarship scheme 'SAHANUBHUTI' who have scored at least 40% marks in the last annual examination in the year 2021.

Maintenance Grant for the inmates of Welfare Homes has been increased from Rs. 1,600 per month to Rs. 2,200 per month per inmate. Contingency grant for the students of Sponsored Special Schools has been increased from Rs. 700 per annum to Rs. 1,200 per annum per student.

For providing opportunities of higher studies to Specially Abled students (VI & HI), initiatives have been taken for setting up a Degree College at Banipur, North 24 Parganas.

In collaboration with Department of Technical Education, Training & Skill Development, inmates of

Educational Welfare Homes are getting admissions in Govt. Polytechnic Colleges and considered on priority in job oriented residential skill development schemes like DDUGKY.

The girl inmates of Educational Welfare Homes have been included in the 2% quota for Social Welfare Homes towards admission in ANM/GNM nursing courses.

Fund @ Rs. 10,000 has been allotted to students of class XII for purchase of Tablet Computer/Smartphone for betterment of their studies.

In 2022-2023 steps are being taken to provide ad-hoc grant to around 1,600 number of Non Government, Non sponsored Libraries @ Rs. 25,000 per library.

Bangla Sahayata Kendra (BSK) have been opened in 748 Government Sponsored Public Libraries in State for providing various types of online services to the people.

A calendar has been prepared for the year 2022-2023 for holding District Book Fairs in different districts. District Book Fairs of Uttar Dinajpur, Purba Bardhaman, Nadia, Dakshin Dinajpur, Howrah, Jalpaiguri and South 24 Parganas have been successfully completed by 31.12.2022.

The State Government has created Career Guidance Centres in State Central Library, 26 Government and

Government Sponsored District Libraries, and 232 Town/ Sub divisional Libraries. The Career Guidance Centres are becoming very popular among the unemployed youths and helpful to get them both State level and central level Government employment.

Physical Infrastructure

3.19 Public Health Engineering

‘Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)’ with 50:50 funding pattern between the Centre and State is under implementation with the vision that every rural household shall have assured drinking water supply in adequate quantity of prescribed quality on regular and long-term basis leading to improvement in living standards of rural communities by 2024 through Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTC).

In the current financial year, under Jal Jeevan Mission, 10,147 schemes have been approved involving 171 lakh FHTCs at a cost of nearly Rs. 52,000 crore, of which work for 7,367 Schemes involving 130 lakh FHTCs have been grounded.

53.19 lakh rural households out of total 182.26 lakh rural households have been provided with a tap connection. 13.44 lakh FHTCs have been provided during financial year 2022-23.

All households in 27 Gram Panchayats have been provided with Functional Household Tap Connections through Piped Water Supply. Total, 3,525 villages have been transformed to 'Swajal Gram' (Har Ghar Nal Yogana) by covering all households with tap connection.

58,543 Schools and 41,391 Anganwadi Centers have been provided with running water supply.

219 water testing laboratories are functioning in the State to monitor the quality of water being supplied to the rural population which is the highest amongst all states in the country. 204 laboratories have been accredited/recognised by National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) putting our state again at the 1st position.

5,147 youths have been trained as plumbers and fitters under the skill development programme of Utkarsha Bangla for their engagement for implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission as well as O & M of the created assets.

42,018 ASHA workers have been trained for testing of water quality using Field Test Kits (FTK). 2,56,707 water samples from Functional Household tap Connections (FHTCs), Schools, Anganwadis and other Public Institutions have been tested through FTK by ASHAs.

Water Supply Project for Purulia, at a sanctioned cost of Rs. 1,296.25 crore, is under implementation with the

assistance of Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA) which will benefit a population of 6.32 lakh on completion of project in December 2023. Another, Asian Development Bank (ADB) assisted project is under implementation in districts of North and South 24 Parganas, Bankura and Purba Medinipur at a sanctioned cost of Rs. 2,496.24 crore which will benefit a population of 24.11 lakh on completion of project in March 2024.

36.5 lakh drinking water bottles, 3.02 crore drinking water pouches and 41.7 million litres of potable water through water tankers were distributed to the affected people in the aftermath of draught, flood like situation, melas, festivals, government meetings etc.

During Ganga Sagar Mela, infrastructural arrangements like temporary accommodation, safe drinking water supply, sanitation facilities, waste water and solid waste management and fire fighting arrangements have been made for the pilgrims.

3.20 Transport

In spite of pandemic situation due to Covid-19, major emphasis has been laid to enhance the collection of Motor Vehicle Revenue during this year. Upto December, 2022 collection of revenue was Rs. 2,453.47 crore.

In 2022, Infrastructure development work of Khatra, Krishnanagar & Jhargram bus terminus have been

completely made functional by SBSTC. Nandigram bus terminus has been completed by WBTIDCL. Rs. 12.71 crore has been released in 2022-23, upto December, for infrastructural works as Transportation Operation Improvement Programme (TOIP) and other infrastructure projects.

In Inland Water Transport sector for up-gradation and modernization of ferry-ghats and other projects, Rs. 65.88 crore has been released in 2022-23 till 31st December, 2022. Construction/modernisation of gangway cum pontoon jetty at Gosaba ferryghat, Rangabelia ferryghat, Dayapur ferryghat, etc. have been completed by WBTIDCL & semi-permanent jetty at Lot-8, Kachuberia have been constructed by WBTC for Gangasagar Mela.

Out of 29 jetties, 9 jetties have been completed under West Bengal Inland Water Transport Logistics and Special Development Project assisted by World Bank.

Further, out of 22 vessels, 3 vessels have already been launched. Smart gates have been installed at 15 jetty-ghats out of 40 jetty-ghats.

Management of integrated checkpoints with truck parking places/terminals at some international border checkpoints viz. at Joygaon, Changrabandha, Panitanki, Hilli, Fulbari, Mahadipur, Petrapole and Haldia have been started for smooth transportation of goods vehicles over the international borders.

‘Road Safety’ has become of paramount importance in the transport sector. Fund of Rs. 5.16 crore has been released in 2022-23, upto December, for road safety purpose to police and other authorities for procurement of road safety equipment like CCTV camera, speed retarder etc.

Traffic study and trainer’s training program on road safety related issues as per the directions of Hon’ble Supreme Court Committee on Road Safety (SCCoRS) has been organized in technical collaboration with IIT, Kharagpur and under the supervision of Transport Directorate. Under the ‘Safe Drive Save Life’ campaign, host of infrastructure and facilities have been created and practices have been improved leading to reduction of road accidents by 32% from 2015 to 2021.

To improve the ambient air quality, 57,464 electric vehicles have been registered so far (11,072 in 2022) in West Bengal. Presently 81 electric buses are plying in Kolkata under West Bengal Transport Corporation (WBTC) and 5 electric buses are plying in Digha under South Bengal State Transport Corporation (SBSTC). LOA has been awarded to JBM Eco-Life Mobility Pvt. Ltd. on 17th November 2022 for another 1,180 electric buses and it is expected to start receiving those buses by middle of 2023.

Total 1,140 CNG fuelled vehicles have been registered so far (284 in 2022) in West Bengal. Presently, 60 CNG

buses in Asansol-Durgapur area are plying under SBSTC and also diesel buses are being converted to CNG on feasibility basis.

Further, registration fees and motor vehicle taxes for battery operated vehicles (BoV) and Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) operated vehicles have been exempted for financial years 2022-23 and 2023-24 by the State to encourage and facilitate green fuelled vehicles. Cleansing of data in VAHAN portal and phasing out of 15 years old vehicles have been started.

Towards transparency and faceless services as EoDB initiatives, online services have been introduced which include issuance of all types of permits and driving licenses, AADHAAR based learner's license, online registration of new vehicles along with others.

Under the Weigh in Motion for checking overloading projects, two machines have been hired on Buy Own Operation mode with monthly hire charge of Rs. 9.79 lakh. The State Government is planning to upgrade all motor vehicle checkpoints for smart enforcement by introducing ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) camera, computerisation and upgrading weighbridges in a phased manner.

e-Challan has been introduced with the purpose to issue digital challan through POS machines while random checking of vehicles on road.

To enhance safety of the passengers, installation of Vehicle Location Tracking Device has been made mandatory for all commercial registration from December, 2022.

3.21 Public Works

To increase the road connectivity as well as to give more comfort to the commuters and vehicular traffic and to reduce the fuel consumption, during the current financial year up to 31st December, 2022, PWD has widened & strengthened 41 km of roads to 2 lane with paved shoulder (i.e. 10 meter carriageway width), 218 km of roads to 2 lane (i.e. 7 meter carriageway width), 110 km of road to Intermediate lane of carriageway width of 5.50 meter and strengthened 561 km of roads in different districts. Also 19 bridges, 1 ROB and 1 underpass have been constructed and 105 old bridges have been rehabilitated.

During the current financial year, PWD has completed Construction of 743 meter long 4-Lane Tallah ROB (Hemanta Setu) along with 296 meter long one ramp at Chitpur side adjacent to Tallah Railway Station on B.T. Road within a remarkable period of 2 years 1 month to facilitate uninterrupted traffic flow in North Kolkata.

Other important infrastructure projects which have been completed are : construction of a 2,400 seating capacity Indoor Auditorium under 'Dhanadhanya' Project

at Alipore, Kolkata. Construction of 3 Bridges and approach roads at Nayakhali, at Jalda and at Saulat of Saikat Sarani Project in Purba Midnapur district to promote tourism. Widening upto 4 lane configuration and strengthening of Bongaon-Chakdaha Road from 00 km to 6.717 km and from 10.568 km to 31.328 km in North 24 Parganas and Nadia district, widening and strengthening of Pataspur-Banguchak Road from 00 km to 28.80 km including construction of 3 nos. new Bridges in replacement of existing narrow Bridges in Purba and Paschim Medinipur districts and construction of Multiple Layer Car Parking with office space and food court at Alipore, Kolkata.

Other important projects completed by the Public Works department are : Construction of Bridges over river Buri Torsha, Kumai-I and Kumai-II on Sonapur-Hasimara Road (via Chilapota Forest) in Alipurduar district, construction of Pedestrian Underpass by Box Jack Push Technique at Dumdum Park Crossing of Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue in North 24 Parganas, all weather Helipad at Sagar Island in South 24 Parganas district.

PWD has completed replacement of old Expansion Joints of Santragachi ROB on NH-117 before the scheduled completion period to facilitate smooth vehicular traffic movement to ingress and egress of Kolkata via Kona Expressway.

3.22 Land & Land Reforms and Refugee Relief & Rehabilitation

With an intent to harmonize and consolidate citizen services, the Government has put a special emphasis on disposal of mutation and conversion cases. 90,94,528 numbers of mutation cases have been disposed and 1,85,001 numbers of conversion cases have been cleared, till 31st December 2022.

The Government has decided to regularize all refugee establishments & colonies and provide Free Hold Title Deeds to the legitimate persons and to ensure the sustainable development of infrastructural facilities at the RR colonies. Beside this, a large number of poor families have been staying in State Government land for decades. The Government has taken initiative to regularize their occupancy by issuing LR patta, NGNB patta and LTS on as-is-where-is basis.

The Government has been consistently following the principle of “No forceful acquisition of land and no forceful eviction of people from their land”. Land is being made available for Government projects by following the Land Purchase Policy which is based on consent of the land owner and mutually agreed compensation and a transparent process.

Complete exemption of khajna (land revenue and cess) from all agricultural lands has been introduced since 2017.

In the current year, the State Government has distributed 6,841 pattas which included Agri-Patta, Forest Patta and also FHTD in refugee colonies.

An e-Khajna module was launched on 11th April, 2022. This module allows people to deposit land revenue online from their homes. Raiyats have responded immensely to this facility. More than 9.40 lakh raiyats of non-agricultural lands have availed the online services and voluntarily paid more than Rs. 38.09 crore till 1st January, 2023 without any need to visit any office.

The e-Bhuchitra application has found immense utility amongst the user groups and is one of the most popular and accessed application which is evident from document published by MeitY, GOI, where number of e-Transactions under land revenue of West Bengal is 100,06,53,063 (Source : <http://etaal.gov.in>) out of total 115,24,78,795 documents searched during financial year 2022-23 (upto 31st December, 2022).

During the current financial year, the Department has collected Rs. 2,361.29 crore upto December 2022.

3.23 Power

During the current financial year 5.43 lakh new connection were provided in the State. Eight 33/11 KV Sub-Stations with capacity of around 113.95 MVA have been commissioned. Further, capacity addition for seven

existing 33/11 KV Sub-Stations with additional capacity of 35.35 MVA have been completed. Installation of 2.46 lakh Smart Meters covering Commercial, Industrial and Government consumers having connected loads from 5 KVA to 50 KVA have also been initiated.

To make payment of bills and quotations easier and convenient, e-payment solution with inclusion of mobile wallet/BBPS/UPI/Bharat-QR etc. have been strengthened. Need-based HT and LT Mobile Van services have been introduced during summer and rainy season for quick restoration of power supply.

Grid Modernization Project (WBEDGMP), an External Aided Project (EAP) partly funded by World Bank (IBRD) and AIIB loan have been taken up with project cost of Rs. 2,800.54 crore.

Renewable energies have been a focus of the department with 960.63 MU of electricity generated from Purulia Pumped Storage Projects. From other Hydel Projects 474.26 MU have been generated. Along with this a Solar Dome at New Town, Kolkata under deposit scheme of WBHIDCO has been commissioned. With the mission of improving solar power generation in the State, a 13.8 MW Ground Mounted Grid Connected Solar PV Power Plants have been installed at Sankrail, Jhargram and Kotaldih (Phase-I), Asansol, Paschim Bardhaman.

To improve the voltage profile and to ensure uninterrupted supply of power the Transmission Sector (WBSETCL) has completed the work 7 substations with total transformational capacity of 1474.30 MVA. 483.642 CKM of Transmission Line have also been added during this period. WBSETCL is maintaining its Transmission System availability consistently around 99.95% and transmission system loss to around 2.14 %, which is one of the best in the country.

WBSETCL has also taken up schemes for Reactive Power Management in order to improve the voltage profile and the voltage stability by (i) installation of total 670 MVAR of 33 KV Capacitor Bank at different EHV Substations of WBSETCL and (ii) installation of five 125 MVAR switchable bus reactor. In order to enhance power transfer capacity of existing transmission lines, WBSETCL has already completed change of 198.45 CKM ACSR conductor of seven EHV lines by HTLS (High Temperature Low Sag) conductor.

The West Bengal Power Development Corporation Limited (WBPDC) generated it's highest yearly generation of 30.1BU (billion units) in financial year 2021-22, which is 26% higher than the previous financial year. In 2022-23, the generation is expected to reach 32 BU. In financial year 2022-23, the Plant Load Factor (PLF) has touched 82% till date, well above NTPC with 74.5% PLF and Indian

average PLF of 62.98%. WBPDCCL achieved a generation of 4,380 MW against the installed capacity of 4,265MW, i.e. 102.7% on 1st October. On 30th September, WBPDCCL generated 100.68 MU (PLF 98.36%) against capacity 102.36MU it's ever highest generation during Durga puja.

WBPDCCL Plants received three-star rating certificate from CII in the field of safety, environment and health for the Year 2021-22. The WBPDCCL plants rank amongst the top in the country in terms of PLF with Bakreswar ranked 5th position, Santaldih ranked 12th position and Sagardighi ranked 16th in the ranking by Ministry of Power, Government of India in the financial year 2022-23 up-to November.

After operationalization of all the coal blocks, the dependence of the Company on Coal India Supplies has reduced considerably from 63% in 2020-21 to 25% in 2022-23 (during April to October). The Daily production from WBPDCCL captive mines is around 40,000MT.

WBPDCCL obtained the Stage-II Forest Clearance (FC) of Pachhwara (North) coal mine from MOEF and CC, Government of India (GoI). The loading of coal from Dumka Railway Siding has been started for Pachhwara (North) coal mine and Resettlement and Rehabilitation (R & R) Colony at Bishunpur Village for Pachhwara (North) Coal Mine has been established.

The peak production capacity of Gangaramchak & Gangaramchak-Bhadulia coal mine has been enhanced from 1 MTPA to 3 MTPA in the mining plan. Expansion of Gangaramchak & Gangaramchak-Bhadulia coal mine from production capacity of 1 MTPA to 1.2 MTPA within total project area of 186.42 Ha has been approved by the 37th EAC (Coal Mining Sector) of MOEF & CC, Government of India. The Letter of Award (LOA) for selection of new MDO for Tara (East & West) coal mine has been issued.

At Deocha Pachami, the largest coal block in the country, WBPDCCL has completed all preparatory activities like, SIA survey, land plotting and now completed exploratory drilling of the entire area through CMPDI. The State Government has so far released Rs. 100 crore as 1st installment under the R & R package for the families affected.

Trans Damodar Coal Mine of DPL has produced 2,83,260 MT coal in 2022 till November 2022. The State Government has so far released Rs. 102.58 crore as operational financial support to DPL for mining in Trans Damodar Coal Mine.

3.24 Urban Development & Municipal Affairs

Urban Development & Municipal Affairs Department is responsible for development of urban as well as Semi-urban areas included in the jurisdiction of development authorities.

Under 'Mission Nirmal Bangla-Urban' the State Government has taken effective steps for elimination of open defecation, eradication of manual scavenging, scientific management of solid and liquid waste, effective behavioral changes regarding healthy sanitation practices. The State has also come up with Solid Waste Management Policy and Construction & Demolition Waste Management Policy for creating and enabling environment friendly waste management.

The process of bio-mining and bio-remediation of legacy waste has already been initiated in 123 dump sites of 112 ULBs, out of which the work has been completed in 26 dump sites of 21 ULBs. As a result, out of total 443.88 acre of land, 183.70 acre land has already been reclaimed. Door to door collection of fresh waste is already in place in 126 ULBs. Out of 128 ULBs, the processing of fresh waste of 47 ULBs will be done by the Self Help Groups. Already in 23 ULBs, processing is being done in low cost method engaging SHGs.

19 major projects of liquid waste management with a project cost of Rs. 2,619 crore for 26 lakh people of 29 Municipal areas are running.

As a part of liquid waste management, for abatement of water pollution a long term action plan along with short term measures for cleaning, dredging and treating the

flow of Tolly Nullah has been taken up by Kolkata Municipal Corporation at a cost of Rs. 32.16 crore.

Used Water Management is another challenge which the State is facing and it comprises of installation of Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) and Faecal Sludge Treatment Plant (FSTP) with interception and diversion of drains. State Government has earmarked Rs. 3,500 crore for waste management of urban areas.

The 'Swayamsiddha' institution of the urban poor has partnered with the Local Self Governments, Public Service Providers, Banks, Private Sector and the main stream institutions to facilitate the delivery of the social and economic services to the poor. To showcase and market products made by urban SHGs, the SULM has come up with an idea of permanent product outlets under brand name 'Swayamsiddha' in every Municipality. As of now 22 such outlets have been made functional. Moreover, MoUs have been executed with e-commerce giants like Flipkart and Amazon to portray and sell products online and to reach the remotest populace.

The State Government has a large number of SHGs in the urban areas. During the year 2022-23, 5,112 SHGs have been formed adding to a total numbers of 79,725 groups since inception.

During the Covid-19 period a large number of people had lost their livelihood. To cater to their basic need the Government initiated MAA programme in the urban areas to provide a square mid-day meal at an extremely subsidized cost. Since inception more than two and half crore beneficiaries have been provided with meals through 291 operational canteens.

The State Government has given utmost importance to promote religious and cultural tourism during last couple of years. Along with the existing schemes, HIDCO has undertaken a dream project of 'Jagannathdham Cultural Complex' at Digha, Purba Medinipur with the project cost of Rs. 142 crore which will add a feather to our pride of rich cultural heritage and will be a milestone of tourism in our state. This huge project is likely to be completed by first quarter of 2024. Apart from this, 'Development of Kalighat Temple Complex' and 'Kalighat Skywalk' are on the way of completion.

Sustainable development at Gangasagar with befitting infrastructure for the pilgrims and beautification of areas around 'Kapilmuni Temple' are also a major initiative of this department. 'Gangasagar Bakkhali Development Authority' is also playing a supportive role to organize 'Green Gangasagar Mela'. During this financial year Rs. 28.16 crore has been released for implementation of various tourism infrastructure schemes in favour of different local bodies.

This department has planned to develop a futuristic model city at Sector-VI Industrial township which will be environmentally sustainable with most modern civic amenities and employment opportunities. It is needless to state that 'Newtown Kolkata Township' has also been developed by this department as a modern sustainable city of international standard. During the current financial year Rs. 220 crore have been utilized for New Town for the construction of community centres, Real Time Passenger Information Display System, Construction of Smart Bus Shelters, Construction of Pedestrian Underpass, Cycle Infrastructure, solid waste management etc. to improve the quality of life of the citizens.

A major intervention in storm water drainage has been taken up by 'Kolkata Municipal Corporation'. The major schemes are Nawab Ali Park Sewerage Pumping Station, Palmer Bridge Pumping Station, installation of high powered capacity pump at Ballygunge Pumping Station, desilting of open drain at B.T. Road and construction of new drainage pumping station at Hrishikesh Park.

This department has developed huge water supply network across the urban areas of the state and it is committed to cover hundred percent house holds with pipe water supply by 2023. A comprehensive plan for 100% coverage of urban household at a cost of around Rs. 7,172 crore has been made.

3.25 Housing

Under the 'CHAA SUNDARI' Housing Scheme, aimed at providing housing facilities to the permanent tea garden workers who do not possess pucca houses of their own, construction of 4,022 single storied dwelling units in 17 sites covering 7 Tea Gardens in Alipurduar and Jalpaiguri have been approved. 1,171 dwelling units in 6 sites in Dheklapara, Toorsa, and Manabari have been completed and will be handed over soon.

Under the 'Nijashree Housing Scheme', aimed at providing housing among the families belonging to Lower Income Group (LIG) and Middle-Income Group (MIG) categories, construction works are nearly on the verge of completion at 2 sites namely at Basudevpur, Purba Medinipur and at Ailakandi, Bankura. Moreover, Construction works are going on at 6 other sites namely at (i) Ashokenagar-North 24 Parganas (ii) Durgapur-Fuljhore (iii) Asansol-Gobindapur (iv) Kalyani-Nadia (v) Dabgram-Jalpaiguri (vi) Bishnupur-Bankura.

For the benefit of patient parties, construction works of Night Shelters have been completed at 4 sites during 2022 with construction works ongoing at 4 other sites.

Under Karmanjali, the Working Women's Hostel Scheme accommodation is provided on low rent basis to the working women who are single and have no residence

in the city. Construction of four-storied Working Women's Hostel with 48 single occupancy unit have been completed at Haldia, Purba Medinipur. Further more, construction of 70 single occupancy Units is going on at Contai, Purba Medinipur.

Construction works for Rental Housing Estates (RHE) for State Government Employees have been completed at Diamond Harbour (16 RHE flats). Construction works are nearly on completion at another 4 sites at (i) Bachurdoba (72 flats); (ii) Ranchi Road (32 flats); (iii) Milanpally-Siliguri (8 flats) and (iv) Roadside amenities (44 additional rooms & toilets). Construction works are going on at another 6 sites at (i) Nimtouri (96 flats); (ii) Contai (48 flats); (iii) Arambagh (08 flats) (iv) Alipurduar Town (Court Rice Mill A & D type 32 flats); (v) Toofanganj (8 flats), and (vi) Kalimpong (8 RHE flats).

West Bengal Real Estate Regulatory Authority and West Bengal Real Estate Administrative Tribunal have been established.

3.26 Non-conventional & Renewable Energy Sources

The NRES Department has allotted schematic fund amounting to Rs. 27.75 crore to WBREDA for installation of Rooftop Grid connected Solar PV power generation systems in Government/Government Aided/ Government sponsored Secondary/Higher Secondary Schools and Madrasahs.

This Department took initiative to implement the 'Paray Samadhan' Scheme initiated by the Government of West Bengal to address elementary level works. Under the said scheme, Rs. 1.14 crore approximately was spent by this Department for Installation of 49 numbers of solar lights, solar towers, solar light mast in different districts.

WBREDA has taken up for installation of Grid-connected Rooftop Solar Photovoltaic System each of array capacity of 10 kWp at 900 Government/Government aided/Government sponsored Secondary/H.S. schools and each of array capacity of 20 kWp at 50 Government sponsored or aided colleges in West Bengal.

24.760 MU (Million Unit) of solar energy have been generated from Bhajanghat 10MW ground mounted Solar PV Power Plant. In 2022, WBREDA & WBGEDCL have installed Rooftop Grid-Connected Solar PV Power Plant in 208 schools. Rooftop Solar Plants have been installed in 11 institutions with cumulative capacity of 1,365 kWp.

An amount of Rs. 23,88,100 was allotted to DM Purulia for installation of Solar Pumps for irrigation purpose under Community Livelihood Interventions in respect of 22 Self Help Groups in Manbazar I Block of Purulia district. The work for 14 SHGs has been completed and the rest are nearing completion.

Social Empowerment

3.27 Women and Child Development and Social Welfare

‘Lakshmir Bhandar’, the scheme aimed at financial empowerment of women between the age of 25-60 years, covering 1.86 crore women, with total disbursements amounting to Rs. 8,817 crore upto 31.12.2022 in financial year 2022-23 has been made.

‘Rupashree Prakalpa’ which provides a cash transfer of Rs. 25,000 to indigent women for their marriage, was availed by 2.01 lakh beneficiaries, with more than Rs. 503 Crore being disbursed upto 31.12.2022 in financial year 2022-23.

‘Kanyashree Prakalpa’ has, since its inception in 2013, covered over 81 lakh girls. In 2022-23, 21.57 lakh girls were enrolled in the Annual Scholarship of the scheme, and 5.06 lakh girls in the One-Time Grant of the scheme.

The State Government provided monthly pension of Rs. 1,000 to 16,89,657 senior citizens under the Old Age Pension Scheme, with total disbursements amounting to more than Rs. 1,444 crore upto 31.12.2022 in financial year 2022-23. 15,00,564 beneficiaries were covered under the Widow Pension Scheme, with total disbursements amounting to more than Rs. 1,263 crore. 6.41 lakh beneficiaries were covered under the ‘Manabik’ Pension Scheme for persons with disability of 40% or more, with total disbursements amounting to more than Rs. 535.64 crore.

Under the Anganwadi Services Scheme, 69.44 lakh children below 6 years of age and 13.28 lakh pregnant and lactating mothers received hot cooked meals for 26 days of each month from 1,19,481 Anganwadi Centres upto November, 2022 in financial year 2022-23. Approximately 34.82 lakh children in the age group of 3-6 years attended Pre-school education regularly upto November, 2022.

Under Mission 'Vatsalya', which operationalizes the provisions of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Amendment Act, 2021, the Department sheltered 4,875 children at 55 Government run and 75 NGO run Homes, 10 Government-run and 28 NGO-run Specialized Adoption Agencies. Further, 38 Open Shelters and 6 Places of Safety, are also operating and they have placed 103 children for adoption within the country, and 19 children with families living outside the country and has also provided 558 Preventive and 125 Rehabilitative Sponsorships of Rs. 2,000 monthly. Additionally, 509 sponsorships were given to children who became orphans due to COVID-19.

Apart from the institutional care provided to children as mentioned above, the Department runs 33 homes under the 'Swadhar' scheme and 1 shelter home under the 'Ujjawala' scheme for women in difficult circumstances, 32 Old Age homes for senior citizens who have no family

support, 10 homes for vagrants and 38 shelter homes specifically for the urban homeless in Kolkata, Howrah and Asansol municipal areas.

In 2022-23, the State Government has launched a new institutional care initiative named 'Pratyay', under which two Half-Way-Homes have been operationalized, one in Kolkata and the other in Behrampore, Murshidabad. These homes cater to persons who have recovered from mental illnesses at the State's mental health hospitals, and in the absence of family support, need a safe space and rehabilitative services to be able to transition to independent living. Both homes have separate wards for men and women; the home in Kolkata has a capacity of 100 beds, and the home in Behrampore has a capacity of 110 beds.

3.28 Minority Affairs & Madrasah Education

The 'Aikyashree Scholarship Scheme' was launched in the year 2019-20. In 2022-23 more than 45 lakh applications have been received and more than 66,000 scholarships have already been disbursed this year. Education loans are given to meritorious students of Minority Communities for pursuing Professional/Technical/Vocational courses in India and abroad. This year 1,552 numbers of Education Loans amounting to Rs. 20.74 crore have been approved.

To promote entrepreneurship and create opportunities for self employment, Term Loan and DLS (Micro Finance) are provided to individual entrepreneurs and Self Help Groups. This year already Term loans have been provided to 5,246 beneficiaries and micro finance has been extended to 58,839 members of SHGs, total loan amount being Rs. 168.15 crore.

Apart from the infrastructure creation and upgradation in Madrasahs and modernisation of Madrasah Education, the syllabus has been reviewed and 7 new text books and 84 revised Text Books have been published by the West Bengal Board of Madrasah Education.

A six-weeks online certificate course on ‘Constructive Learning/Teaching with Technology’ in collaboration with Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) has been started. Around 300 teachers from different Madrasahs have already been trained under this course.

‘Comprehensive Digital Training Package’— a pilot project with UNICEF and Vikramshila Education Resource Society has been started in 40 Madrasahs in Malda.

There are 3 major schemes/projects viz. Sankhyalaghu Unnayan Prakash (SUP), Integrated Minorities Development Programme (IMDP) and Migrant Domestic Workers (MDW) under which infrastructure development

projects in Minority Concentrated Areas are taken up. Under Multisectoral Development Programme (MSDP), Rs. 295.47 crore has been released in the current financial year. Rs. 30.30 crore has been released till date during 2022-23 under IMDP scheme to 32 blocks in 14 Districts whereas, under MDW scheme, more than Rs. 90.78 crore has been released for various schemes in different blocks across all the 23 Districts of West Bengal.

To enable better access to education for students of minority communities, 604 hostels attached to schools and colleges are being set up. Of this, 424 have already been operationalised.

In Minority concentrated areas, construction of 305 Karmatirthas (Marketing Hub) has been taken up to provide marketing facilities for artisans, cultivators and also for improving self-employment opportunity for minority youths and SHG members.

Parastatals under the Department like, the West Bengal Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (WBMDFC), the Directorate of Madrasah Education (DME), the West Bengal State Haj Committee (WBSHC) and the West Bengal Urdu Academy (WBUA) through various interventions have provided coaching, counselling and career guidance to thousands of students.

The Aliah University— a State University under this Department has grown in the past few years with 23 academic departments offering 49 academic programmes. This year 122 students have qualified in NET/SET/GATE in various disciplines and 20 scholars have been awarded a Ph.D degree by the University. 211 graduates of various disciplines of Aliah University have received job offers in various sectors through Campus Placement drive.

3.29 Backward Classes Welfare

All Sub-divisions are now using online facility for issuing caste certificates. During 2022-23 (as on 31.12.2022), 17,69,516 (SC-11,28,842, ST-2,55,693 and OBC-3,84,981) caste certificates have been issued. Out of which 3,83,159 Caste Certificates have been issued under the 'Duare Sarkar' initiative during 2022-23 fiscal (as on 31.12.2022). Since May 2011, 1,54,11,612 Caste Certificates have been issued. During this year, two communities namely, 'Bairagi/Baishnab' and 'Chowdhury/Chowdhuri (Muslim)' have been included in State list of OBCs.

'Taposili Bandhu' a noble social pension scheme targeting all the 60 or 60 above persons of SC community, was initiated in April, 2020 where all the eligible persons of 60 and 60+ age group receive a monthly pension @ Rs. 1,000 through their Bank Account. During the current

fiscal, 10,26,982 persons are getting monthly pension with a total financial involvement of Rs. 853.61 crore (as on 31.12.2022).

‘Sikshashree’—a fully State funded Scholarship scheme, was initiated during 2014-15 fiscal. Under this scheme, an amount of Rs. 800 is disbursed in the DBT mode to SC students of Class-V-VIII. During 2022-23, 3,29,699 SC students of Class V-VIII have been provided ‘Sikshashree’ Scholarship with an expenditure of around Rs. 26.38 crore (as on 31.12.2022).

During 2022-23, Rs. 5.88 crore & Rs. 90.00 lakh have been released for giving Pre-Matric (IX-X) Scholarship to SC Students and Others and Post-Matric Scholarship (XI-Ph.D level) for SC students respectively. Likewise, Rs. 13.88 crore and Rs. 7.30 crore have been released for Pre-Matric & Post-Matric Scholarship for OBCs, EBCs & DNTs students respectively. Fund amounting to Rs. 8.40 lakh and Rs. 36.38 lakh have also been allotted for giving Merit Scholarship to SC students of class V-X & XI-XII respectively.

This apart, an amount of Rs. 60.00 lakh has been released for giving Hostel Grants to SC students (as on 31.12.2022). To ensure speedy and seamless disbursement of scholarship to the students of the Minority Communities included in the OBC, from single

window, it is being disbursed through the Minority Affairs and Madrasah Education Department.

Construction of 2 Numbers of 'Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Residential School' in Jalpaiguri and North 24 Parganas Districts with an estimated cost of Rs. 23 crore each has been completed. Construction of building for Ambedkar Centre for Excellence (ACE) at Bongaon in North 24 Parganas is almost complete.

Total 46 (Girls : 34, Boys : 12) central hostels under Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatra Awas Yojana (BJRCAY) for SC students, 35 Central Hostels [SC : 28 and Combined (SC & ST) : 7], 12 Central Hostels for OBC Boys & Girls and 97 Ashram Hostels for SCs are functional in the State of West Bengal as on 31.12.2022.

'Sabooj Sathi', one of the flagship schemes of the State Government under which bicycles are provided free of cost to students of Class-IX in 8,828 Government run and aided schools and Madrashas with an objective to increase access to high school education. Since 2015-16, around 1.04 crore students were benefited under the scheme. During 2022-2023, the total number of beneficiaries to be covered under the 'Sabooj Sathi' scheme (Phase-VIII) is estimated to be 12.27 lakh with a financial involvement of Rs. 495.78 crore.

For focused development of specific communities 17 (Seventeen) Welfare, Cultural, Development and Development and Cultural Boards have been constituted.

Services of the Dhakis (Traditional Drummers) are being taken for popularizing and dissemination of the efforts and initiatives of the department. 400 Dhakis have been engaged in 400 Blocks and Municipalities to disseminate the activities of this department. During 2022-23 (as on 31.12.22), an amount of Rs. 2.45 crore has been released in connection with payment of wages to the Dhakis.

The State Government has started a special pre-examination training programme for SC & ST students to prepare them for JEE/NEET/WBJEE entrance exam through 36 centres across the State. Out of 1,440 students enrolled for 2022 entrance exam, 1,020 students ranked for different disciplines; two students qualified for IIT Mumbai and IIT Kharagpur, Seven qualified for MBBS. During the current financial year 2022-23, an amount of Rs. 2,20,93,764 is released for the said purpose.

Under 'Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PMAJAY)', Rs. 195 crore has been released by the department.

During 2022-23 Rs. 2.87 crore has been released by the Department under 'Prevention of Atrocities Act (PoA) and Protection of Civil Rights Act (PCR)'.

WB SC, ST & OBC Development & Finance Corporation under the aegis of the B.C.W. Department has generated self-employment for around 42,230 youths belonging to targeted communities and has created employment linkage for another 15,400 youths through Skill Training. During 2022-23, it is targeted to cover around 45,000 target group beneficiaries under Self-employment schemes and another 11,000 youths under Skill development programme with financial involvement of Rs. 64.00 crore.

The Department has revamped the Grievances Cell. A portal has been set up in the departmental website ‘www.anagrasarkalyan.gov.in’ to receive grievances, complaints, and suggestions on-line. Disposal of 703 such cases is also done on-line.

3.30 Tribal Development

‘Sikshashree’ Scholarship has been provided to 1,58,207 ST students of Class V-VIII till date. It is anticipated that more than 1,88,606 students will be covered under the scheme during 2022-23 for which an amount of Rs. 15.09 crore will be utilized.

1,52,540 ST students have already applied for Pre-Matric (Class-IX & X) and Post-Matric Scholarship (Class XI onwards).

6 Development and Cultural Boards are functioning in the State for ensuring sustainable Development including preservation and promotion of traditional culture for Hill tribes and other STs of the State requiring special intervention. During 2022-23, Rs. 72.48 crore have been earmarked for the purpose for various schemes like construction of houses, community halls, youth hostels, drinking water sources, holding of cultural festival, etc.

To ensure holistic and sustainable development of 'Lodha Sabar' Communities in Jungle Mahal areas, the 'West Bengal Lodha Sabar Development Board' has been set up in 2022 with headquarters at Medinipur.

Rs. 1,000 per month is provided to the poor ST persons with age of 60 years or above through 'Jai Johar' Old Age Pension Scheme rolled out from 01.04.2020. It is a universal scheme. In 2022-23, nearly 2,91,000 beneficiaries are getting pension for which Rs. 250.50 crore has been utilized till date. It is anticipated that 2,95,000 beneficiaries will be covered at the end of the current fiscal.

Around 34,498 ST candidates have been registered under the Scheme 'Kendu Leaves Collectors Social Security Scheme 2015'. One-time financial assistance on attaining 60 years of age, financial support on accidental death, injury, maternity benefit, medical purposes etc. are

provided to these registered collectors. During 2022-23, 164 beneficiaries have received financial support to the tune of Rs. 78 lakh under this scheme.

Minimum Support Price for Kendu Leaves has been increased from Rs. 75 per chatta (2.5 Kgs) to Rs. 170 per chatta benefitting poor ST Kendu Leaves Collectors in the Jangal Mahal areas.

49 Jaher Thans (Place of Worship) have been fenced at a cost of Rs. 60 lakh.

Coaching is provided for JEE (Main), NEET, WBJEE exam through 36 centres across the State to the poor ST students. Out of 308 students enrolled in the programme, 211 students had been qualified in JEE/NEET/WBJEE-2022 exam.

Initiative has been taken to set up 3 Santali Medium Schools at Keshpur, Debra and Ghatal in Paschim Medinipur District. Construction work at Keshpur, Ghatal have already started and expected to be completed in 2023.

3.31 Labour

About 93% of the working population of the State fall under the category of the unorganised workers. The scheme 'Bina Mulya Samajik Suraksha Yojana' provides any enrolled unorganised worker to avail all the available benefits of the scheme without spending a single rupee.

The State Government contributes Rs. 55 per month towards the Provident Fund . Since inception Rs. 2,152.39 crore is disbursed to 32,64,968 number of beneficiaries and Rs. 83.05 crore was disbursed to 26,117 number of Pensioners under this scheme.

The State Government had introduced a scheme called ‘Financial Assistance to the Workers of Locked Out Industrial Units (FAWLOI)’ to provide financial assistance to the industrial workmen who are rendered out of employment due to prolonged lockout/suspension of work/closure of industrial units. Under this scheme Rs. 1,500 per month, per beneficiary as financial assistance along with an annual amount of Rs. 1,500 as Puja/Eid ex-gratia payment is provided. Financial benefit of Rs. 29.16 crore has been provided to 23,591 workers from 171 industrial units during 2022-23 (up-to 31.12.2022).

The Employment Bank is a state-owned job portal where job seekers, employer, placement agencies, educational institutions and training providers, service providers and service seekers can interact online. Presently 39,77,889 job seekers and 1,221 employers have been enrolled in this portal as on 31.12.2022. Under ‘Yuvashree’, the State Government is providing unemployment assistance to one lakh job seekers

registered in Employment Bank to enable job seekers to increase their employability or become suitable to set up self-employment ventures by up-grading their skills. Each of the selected job-seekers is paid a stipend of Rs. 1,500 per month under this scheme. 1,93,930 numbers of job-seekers have been given benefit of 'Yuvashree' till now. Jute training, motor driving training and domestic workers trainings have been arranged for Skill Development Scheme for the registered job seekers.

State Government has taken multiple development activities and relief measures to alleviate the different problems of the tea garden workers with special focus on closed/abandoned/stressed tea gardens.

Labour Department through the Directorate of Factories has introduced the scope of renewal of licenses for a period up-to 15 years for the benefit of registered factories. Online transfer of ownership of Boilers and Economisers has been introduced. New Labour Welfare Centres have been opened at Digha, Jamuria and Mirik.

In the ESI Hospitals, the number of Insured Persons (IP) in West Bengal has increased to 20,38,666 up-to 31.12.2022. 20 bedded HDU (High Dependency Unit) have been made operationalised in this year in 10 State ESI Hospitals. 10 bedded ICU (Intensive Care Unit) have been constructed and made operationalised in six State ESI

Hospitals. A Liquid Medical Oxygen Plant (LMO Plant) has been constructed at Gourhati ESI Hospital.

3.32 Self Help Group & Self Employment

27 SHGs were provided with livelihood generation by taking up total 22 Micro Projects in convergence with other departmental funds with the total outlay of Rs. 47 lakh.

Small Canteens at the Government/PRI Office premises have been funded for promotion of women SHGs running the canteen. Total 19 Canteens have been funded, where cost of construction is Rs. 54 lakh and cost of utensils and equipment is Rs. 27 lakh.

Rs. 9.97 crore have been provided to 25,264 SHGs as interest subvention under the West Bengal Swarojgar Sahayak Prakalpo (WBSSP).

For the project Swami Vivekananda Swanirbhar Karmasansthan Prakalpa (SVSKP) spill-over cases from the previous years with the total outlay of Rs. 14.38 crore involving 1,777 beneficiaries has been sanctioned.

To provide market linkage to the SHGs and Entrepreneurs, 22 District/Sub District level, Sabala Melas and a State Sabala Mela have been taken up. In financial year 2022-23 the total outlay of Rs. 2.64 crore has been released for District/Sub District level Sabala Melas.

Under Skill Development Training for self-employment and livelihood generation program 15,040 SHG members and unemployed youths have been assisted with an outlay of Rs. 9.94 crore.

3.33 North Bengal Development

The North Bengal Development Department has completed 2,502 number of major schemes up to 31st December 2022 in the 8 districts of North Bengal region since its inception in the year 2012-13, viz. construction of internal road, construction of bridges, construction of auditoriums, development of truck terminals, construction of bazar, construction of community halls, construction of boys hostel and development of school and college buildings.

Some of the notable projects implemented in such areas are Infrastructure development at Panchanan Barma University, Joygaon college, Saheed Khudiram college, construction of boys hostel at Cooch Behar Government Engineering College, construction of Jaihind Community Hall at Darjeeling, Kurseong, Mirik and Kalimpong, construction of Chalsa Mangalbari Bazar, development of school building at Malbazar Subhasini Girls' High School and Jalpeswar Mandir in Jalpaiguri District, construction of Bridge over river Bhagirathi at Joth Priti in Malda District, construction of Bore Pile Bridge at

Singhanath Ghat in Uttar Dinajpur District and construction of RSJ bridge at Paschim Nimpur Khari with approach road at Tapan and construction of RSJ bridge over Kashikhari at Pulinda under Gangarampur Block in Dakshin Dinajpur District.

3.34 Sundarban Affairs

To strengthen the development of infrastructure in remote and inaccessible regions of Sunderbans, the Department has completed major infrastructure works during 2022-23.

RCC Bridges over river Bidyadhari at Boalghata in Haroa Block, North 24 Parganas and over Kurulia Khal connecting Kamarhat at Mouza Shibkalinagar in GP Madhusudanpur, Block Kakdwip, South 24 Parganas have been completed. Works of another 13 bridges are going on.

RCC Jetties at Hamilton Abad over river Dutta at Mouza-Hamilton Abad, Gram Panchayat Lahiripur, Block Gosaba, South 24 Parganas and at Durgapur Kheya Ghat over river Chenail alongwith approach road, Gram Panchayat Shibrampur, Block Namkhana, South 24 Parganas, have been completed.

During 2022-2023, construction of 86.85 km road [27.18 km Brick paved road, 50.62 km Concrete road, 9.05 km Bituminous road] has been completed (up to 31.12.2022).

Distribution of IMC Fingerlings and Fish Feed to 60,000 numbers beneficiaries has been completed in Sundarban region.

Sundarban Divas was observed on 11th December, 2022 in all the 19 blocks under Sundarban region for creation of awareness among the people of the region regarding conservation of the bio-diversity and environment of the region.

Financial assistance has been provided to 10 numbers of different Educational and Panchayati Raj institutions in Sundarban region.

3.35 Paschimanchal Unnayan

Paschimanchal Unnayan Affairs Department is engaged with the task of filling up critical gaps for facilitating integrated development of the red laterite zone in the western part of the State, predominantly inhabited by SC & ST population by way of implementing infrastructure development projects, livelihood projects as well as organising cultural events like Jangal Mahal Utsav.

Till date, the Department has disposed more than 205 major legacy schemes involving mainly construction of concrete Road, Bridges, Culverts, Community centre, School Buildings, installation of solar light, micro irrigation, re-excavation of Pond, Storage of Water and supply of drinking water. Musical Instruments were

distributed among the Cultural groups during the 8th 'Jangal Mahal Utsab' etc.

Water Management and livelihood projects are being taken up in convergence with primary line departments like Department of Agriculture, P & RD, ARD, PHE and Forests.

Governance

3.36 Home & Hill Affairs

Since 2011, law and order situation in the State has improved considerably. The State Government has been continuously focusing its attention on equipping the police force with necessary provision for proper accommodation, vehicles, equipment and other related support. To serve people better, 12 new Police Stations including one Women Police Station and 3 Police Out posts have recently been set up.

District Police Line at Alipurduar has been set up with an estimated cost of Rs. 42.28 crore. Moreover, construction of model Semi-Urban Police Station at Nadanghat, Purba Bardhaman, model Rural Police Station at Rangli-Rangliat, Darjeeling, ladies barrack at Cooch Behar and male barrack at Bishnupur Emergency Force line have also been completed. Construction of two Police Lines at Jhargram and at Nimtouri (Purba Medinipur) are going on. Among other important ongoing projects are

the construction of the offices of the Commissioners of Police at Siliguri, Bidhannagar, Barrackpore and Asansol-Durgapur Police Commissionerates.

The State Government is particularly sensitive on the question of security of women and children. There are now 49 Women Police Stations in the State. Prior to 2011 there was no Women Police Station in the State. Women Help Desks in most of the police stations (550 numbers), manned by female police officers, have been established. 'Winners Squad' have been formed both under West Bengal Police and Kolkata Police to prevent crime against women, eve-teasing and ensuring safe environment for women.

Criminal Investigation Department (CID), West Bengal has introduced a new type of detection by use of Way Back Machine which is highly useful for identification of crime. CID, West Bengal has been running programmes like 'Cyber Crime Pathshala' and generate mass awareness on cyber security, using flexes /banners.

To ensure road safety, since 2011, traffic management system in Kolkata and districts has been revamped through large scale installation of CCTV cameras and other modern devices. With the launch of 'Safe Drive Save Life', the incidents of road accidents and consequent loss of precious human lives have come down significantly. For Traffic Prosecution, e-Challans have been introduced with the use of PoS Terminals.

Forensic Science Laboratory at Kolkata has been further equipped with new sophisticated instruments at Chemistry Section. Another Regional Forensic Science Laboratory with Toxicology at Durgapur is in near completion stage. The Regional Forensic Science Laboratory, Jalpaiguri has been upgraded with newly opened Serology Section.

A Uniform Allowance has been introduced for the police personnel upto the rank of Inspectors, discontinuing the 'Uniform Kit'. Almost every member of Home Guard Organization of this State has been brought under the tailor made 'Sahayak Mediclaim Policy', which financially takes care of the Home Guard Volunteer and his/her family members in medical exigency.

3.37 Personnel & Administrative Reforms

With a view to providing citizen centric Government services at grass root level the State Government has decided to set up additional 1,461 BSKs in Gram Panchayats and other unserved areas besides already functional 3,561 Bangla Sahayata Kendras (BSKs). More than 4.5 crore services have been delivered so far through BSKs. Process has also been initiated to designate 1600 existing BSKs to function as AADHAAR Enrolment and Updation Centres.

Introduction of e-Wallet in the account of each BSK has made possible for transaction of Rs. 45 crore towards payment of a large number of utility bills such as electricity bill, faster land mutation, conversion and plot information & khajna payment, driving licenses fees etc.

West Bengal e-District is a Mission Mode Project (MMP) undertaken by this Department with the objective of making the State's services available to the citizens through a computerized system launched; more than 160 online services are in different stages making 23 districts and 16 departments gone online.

e-Office, a Mission Mode Project (MMP) under the National e-Governance Programme aims to provide user a more efficient, effective and transparent inter-government and intra-government transactions and processes. 53 departments, 211 directorates/parastatals/districts are on-boarded and all the Sub-divisional Offices will come under e-Office platform by March 2023.

The State Government has taken an initiative to create a Digital Depository where the Government Departments as well as Institutions/Organisations are able to keep digitally signed documents of the citizens like School Leaving Certificate, Medical Certificate, College Degree, Mark Sheets, Licenses and other documents.

‘Satyendranath Tagore Civil Services Study Centre’ under Centre for Excellence in Public Management (CEPM), a noble initiative of the GoWB, provides quality coaching-cum-guidance to the young aspirants of West Bengal appearing in Civil Services Examination conducted by the UPSC. Apart from that, 26 numbers ‘Satyendranath Tagore District Civil Services Study Centres’ in 22 districts have recently been started in on-line mode.

3.38 Disaster Management & Civil Defence

Actively combating natural calamities in the State is the main responsibility of the Department of Disaster Management and Civil Defence.

The Ganga Sagar Mela was successfully conducted. From Civil Defence motorised boats, Ambulances, subordinate personnel and Civil Defence Volunteers were deployed at Sagar Island, Kachuberia, Lot Number 8 and Babughat.

State EOC has been functioning 24×7 for 365 days, District EOC are also operational round the clock. Awareness campaign has been conducted relating to lightning, cyclone, flood, and other disasters.

24×7 Control Room was operational to respond any calamity during festivals. To combat few flood like situation in North Bengal districts and heavy rain all over the State in different phases, the following relief articles were

allocated to different districts— Tarpaulin-9.36 lakh, Dhuti-1 lakh, Saree-2.92 lakh, Lungi-1.17 lakh, Bed sheet-3.05 lakh and Blanket-3.4 lakh. An amount of Rs. 328.07 crore (as on 31.12.2022) has been released as disaster assistance during the current financial year 2022-23.

At present, the State has 425 flood shelters and 270 Relief Godowns and 221 Multi-Purpose Cyclone Shelters (MPCS). Construction of 24 numbers of Multi Purpose Rescue Shelter is under progress.

An amount of Rs. 42 crore has been released from SDRF in favour of Power Department for restoration works against the damages caused by AMPHAN, YAAS and heavy rainfall-flood and landslide during the financial year 2022-23.

The State Government has been providing compensation of ex-gratia assistance to the next kin of the deceased due to Covid-19 @ Rs. 50,000 for each case and has launched a website through which the claimants may submit their applications through online system. Till 31st December, 2022 Rs. 167.01 crore has been disbursed to 33,402 beneficiaries.

3.39 Fire and Emergency Services

During 2022-23, the Department has taken several steps for development of Fire Fighting arrangements

throughout the state by means of setting up new Fire stations at different vulnerable places by floating appropriate fire tender and procuring fire equipments etc.

Construction of new Fire station at Purbasthali in Purba Bardhaman Division has been completed and commissioned. Construction of new building of existing Manicktala Fire Station in North Kolkata Division has also been completed and commissioned. At present, construction of total 8 new fire stations namely (1) Panskura (2) Birpara (3) Sonamukhi (4) Garbeta (5) Sabang (6) North Dum Dum (Birati) (7) Dubrajpur (8) Lake Town and new building of Howrah Fire Station are going on.

More over 14 numbers of existing Fire stations has been renovated and upgraded. Fire stations has been raised from 109 in 2011-12 to 155 as on date. Many other establishments of proposed Fire stations are also in active consideration of the Government.

Up-gradation of fire fighting appliances have been made by procuring various special ultra-modern equipments like Drone Camera, Demolition Hammer, LED Search Light, Trolley Mounted Water and Foam Mist System during financial year 2022-23.

1,632 numbers of Fire Safety Awareness Programmes were conducted at Schools, Colleges, Hospitals, Nursing Homes, Shopping Malls, Office Buildings, Clubs, Puja

Pandels etc. throughout the State by several units of West Bengal Fire & Emergency Services. The department has organized a month long awareness programme captioned 'Learn Fire Safety', Increase Productivity' in the month of May, 2022.

The department has already promulgated the system of online issuance of Fire Safety Recommendation/Fire Safety Certificate (NOC)/Revised FSR/Fire License and their renewals. During 2022-23, the department has issued 772 numbers of Fire Safety Certificate, 2068 numbers of Fire Safety Recommendations, 222 numbers of Revised Fire Safety Recommendation and renewed 1460 numbers of Fire Safety Certificates, 1721 numbers of fire audit have been conducted in the Vulnerable Buildings.

3.40 Correctional Administration

The Department has undertaken various institutions for upgradation of infrastructure and various new correctional homes are under different stages of construction. Baruipur Central Correctional Home at Baruipur, South 24 Parganas with an Administrative approval of more than Rs. 178 crore is under progress and another new correctional home for shifting inmates of Presidency correctional home is to be completed in the financial year 2023-24.

Construction of new District Correctional Home at Nimtouri in Purba Medinipur (Phase-I) has been completed during this current financial year, and construction of Sub Correctional Home at Chanchal, Malda with an Administrative Approval of Rs. 35.49 crore is under progress.

Other important infrastructure development activities include construction of 20 Headed Sweeper's Barrack and allied works with an Administrative Approval of Rs. 4.13 crore, which is under progress and will be completed during the financial year 2023-24.

Construction of new Officers' Mess in the campus of RICA, Dum Dum with an administrative Approval of Rs. 2.81 crore is under progress.

Construction of a Safe Home for accommodation of all released foreign national inmates has been started at Bongaon, North 24 Parganas.

Construction of a new double storied building inside Ranaghat Sub Correctional Home for accommodation of 200 numbers of inmates has been taken up.

13 numbers of schemes for creation of separate ward for mentally ill inmates have been taken up.

4,98,601 people have registered in Visitors Management System (VMS) module to avail the facility of interacting with their family members lodged in the Correctional Homes.

Facility of virtual communication between the inmates and their family members have been provided through 'e-Mulakat' module and 7,245 numbers of inmates have already been benefited with the above system till 31st December, 2022.

61,916 numbers of inmates have been virtually produced before the courts through e-Court module from April, 2022 to 31st December, 2022.

3.41 Planning and Statistics

Government of West Bengal has launched a massive outreach programme namely, 'Duare Sarkar' (Government at your doorstep) with the objective of bringing government services to the people at their doorsteps. Till Phase-IV of Duare Sarkar, 2,89,520 number of camps have been organized which have witnessed footprints of 8,09,19,845 visitors and 6,44,38,225 applications have been received, out of which 5,59,34,594 services have already been delivered. In Phase-V of Duare Sarkar till 31.12.2022, 82,345 camps have been organized which have witnessed footprints of more than 97 lakh visitors.

Paray Samadhan, which is held simultaneously with the Duare Sarkar campaign, has been initiated by our Government to bridge critical gaps in infrastructure and public services.

During the 17th Assembly (2021-26) total budget allocation under 'Bidhayak Elaka Unnayan Prakalpa' (BEUP) scheme is Rs. 354.02 crore (during 2021-22 and 2022-23), out of which Rs. 185.70 crore was released to districts and KMC.

Under Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS), during the period of 17th Lok Sabha (2019-24), till date funds to the tune of Rs. 298.50 crore has been received and Rs. 116.50 crore has been received for the sitting Rajya Sabha MPs.

State Public Policy and Planning Board (SPPPB) is in the process of preparing State Indicator Framework (SIF) aligned with UNSDGs based on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). SPPPB also coordinates on matters related to NITI Aayog in the State. SPPPB provide guidance for preparation of district plan. Preparation of State Human Development Report (SHDR) for the State is in progress.

The State Spatial Data Centre (SSDC) under this department is functioning smoothly in the State Head Quarters and started to integrate the maps/data/layers available with the District Spatial Data Centres (DSDCs). The Department has participated in collaboration with Industry, Commerce & Enterprises (IC & E) department for uploading several GIS based layers under Gati Shakti Programme. The Department has also prepared GIS maps for Samannay Portal and State Election Commission.

The regular works of the Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics (BAE & S) are determination of yield rate and production of 19 crops, preparation of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP), District Domestic Product (DDP), Index of Industrial Production (IIP), Consumer Price Index (CPI) etc. Publication of State and District Statistical Handbook, Statistical Abstract, Economic Review etc. continue to remain in prime responsibility.

3.42 Science and Technology and Biotechnology

The Department is currently supporting 384 ongoing Research & Development (R & D) projects in various Government aided institutions across the State to promote scientific research.

For enhancing ease of access, procedural transparency and better management of scientific schemes, the Department has revamped the portal named 'Vigyansathi' for all schemes being currently funded by the Department.

'Kolkata Biotech Park (KBP)' has been set up to promote industrial biotechnology ventures, support startup for incubation and creation of employment with a total investment of Rs. 46.43 crore over a period of five years. 'West Bengal Society for Biotechnology' will run the Kolkata Biotech Park as a Special Purpose Vehicle.

The Department is providing spatial data support to newly initiated GoWB projects, namely (a) 'Preparation of Inventory of Waterbodies in Kolkata Municipal Corporation Area' (b) Digital Forest Database of West Bengal (c) Flood Plain and Catchment Demarcation for Major Wetlands in West Bengal (d) Generation of Digital Database for Directorate of Registration and Stamp Revenue.

Under the 'Jagadis Bose National Science Talent Search' (JBNSTS) programme, fellowship amounting to Rs. 2.93 crore is being provided to 50 students each for the 'Senior Talent Search Scholarships' and 'Senior Bigyani Kanya Medha Britti'. Further, an amount of Rs. 1.78 crore is being provided to 200 students under the Junior Talent Search & 50 students under 'Junior Bigyani Kanya Medha Britti' scholarships for 2022-2023.

5th Regional Science Congress 2022-23 is being organized at seven different Institutes of the State, following which the 30th West Bengal State Science & Technology Congress will be organized at Science City Auditorium, Kolkata.

Till date the 'Patent Information Centre' (PIC) has supported assessment of novelty for Filing Patent (900 Numbers), facilitate filing for Patent (200 Numbers), filing of copyright (30 Numbers) and Trademark (30 Numbers).

This Centre has facilitated filing of 40 GI items of the State and registration of 700 authorized GI stakeholders.

‘Technology Development and Adaptation Centre’ (TDAC) has launched two Technology Hunt Programmes to provide the opportunity to pitch the ideas of the outcome of the research and development projects funded by this Department and facilitated 22 projects. 36 grassroot innovators have been mentored in Idea Clinic.

Advanced Geo-informatics course, 14th Batch of PG Diploma in Geo-informatics and second batch of M. Tech in Geo-informatics have been completed. Initiated third batch of three new courses on Intellectual Property Rights and Technology Business Management. The fourth batch is to be initiated shortly.

The Department has developed a Geo portal with open source technologies as a central repository of all Geo spatial data generated by different Government Departments using public funds which can be effectively utilised in developmental planning and informed decision making avoiding duplication of works, wastage of time and resources.

3.43 Environment

The State Environment Plan (SEP) and District Environment Plans (DEPs) for all 23 districts of West

Bengal has been completed and required updation as per direction of the NGT (National Green Tribunal) is expected to be completed soon.

The Environment Department with South 24 Parganas District Administration and Gangasagar Bakkhali Development Authority has organized an eco-friendly and plastic free 'Green Gangasagar Mela'.

The preparation of 'Comprehensive Action Plan' (CAP) for six cities namely Kolkata, Howrah, Barrackpur, Asansol, Durgapur and Haldia, identified as NACs (Non-Attainment Cities) has been completed and implementation is being done.

Installation of 150 Sensor based CAAQMS and 150 messages on 100 LED display boards has been completed by the WBPCB.

Due to significant improvement of air quality, and reduction of noise levels in this State during Diwali, 2022, Kolkata city and West Bengal has been declared the cleanest Diwali-2022. This is due to persistent awareness campaigning, vigilance from the WBPCB's 'Integrated Command & Control Centre' (ICCC) and 20 mobile teams around the State.

Implementation of the work component of Integrated Management Plan of East Kolkata Wetlands 2022-2027 has been started with an amount Rs. 66 crore, where, Centre & State share 60 : 40, respectively.

Necessary procedure for declaration of 3 new Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHS) [(a) Namthin Pokhari and surrounding areas for Himalayan Salamander Habitat, Darjeeling (b) Charbalidanga, Nadia and (c) Campus of State Horticulture Research Station, Krishnangar, Nadia] have been completed.

Works for construction of 31 numbers of Bio-Diversity Parks are going on and 8 of these has already been completed.

WBPCB has taken up one marine water quality monitor from 140 different locations of West Bengal. The surface water quality monitoring include river Ganga, Damodar, Mahananda, Rupnarayan, Tista, Torsha and other rivers and lakes.

123 numbers of Legacy Dumpsites has been identified from 128 Urban Local Bodies for management of Legacy Solid Waste through bio-mining in West Bengal. Special thrust has been given on 100% source segregation and disposal of solid waste adopting low cost hybrid model etc.

Vegetation management of Santragachi Jheel for winter migratory visitors (birds) is being conducted.

Industry : Small, Medium and Large

3.44 Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and Textiles

West Bengal is a leading state in development of micro, small and medium enterprises. State Government's thrust on MSME and Textile sector is reflected by its numerous endeavours taken up for the promotion and growth of these sectors. These interventions aim at enabling business environment, facilitating capacity development and providing backward and forward linkages to the existing industries and the upcoming ones simultaneously.

During the current financial year 2022-23 up to the month of December 2022, more than 1,84,649 enterprises have come under registration fold with an employment potential of more than 19,75,000. Up to the end of 2nd quarter of financial year 2022-23, credit-flow amounting to Rs. 70,657 crore from Banks to MSMEs has been recorded, which is 54.3% higher than the figure recorded during the corresponding period in 2021-22. Under 'West Bengal Incentive Scheme' (Banglashree etc.), an amount of Rs. 26.21 crore has been disbursed to 327 enterprises, generating employment to 8,332 people. In Bantala Mega Leather Cluster, additional road network for added area, civil construction of CFC and Sewerage Treatment Plant (STP) for leather goods manufacturing units have been completed. The highlight of this year has been the

initiation of development of Footwear Park within the leather complex. A total of 119 applicants have been allotted plots ranging from 500 sq. m. to 3,000 sq. m. area for developing footwear units.

Work for 4 'Integrated Textile Parks' have started. State MSMEs in powerloom sector are playing an important role in providing fabrics for school uniforms. So far, the state's powerloom units have produced nearly 45 lakh meter fabric that created over 50,000 additional man-days. Under the 'Textile Incentive Policy', 108 looms has already been setup and started functioning. For overall development of the entire value chain of the textile sector, the State Government has launched 'West Bengal Textile Incentive Scheme 2022' for extending fiscal incentives to the textile sector industries starting from fibre to stitched garments, to set up and/or expand such units in the State. This policy is intended to revitalize and draw more investment in the textile sector across the entire spectrum including spinning, weaving, knitting, processing, texturizing, technical textiles, polymerizing, and finally garment production.

As a result of successful implementation of the School Uniform Project, the State owned Spinning Mills have so far produced 1,158 MT Polyester Viscose yarn for use in the fabric required for school uniforms. MSME & Textiles Department through Tantuja has supplied 23.4 lakh

pieces of relief materials worth Rs. 58.67 crore to Disaster Management Department that ensured sustained employment of 10,000 weavers & allied workers. The Department has also procured gauge-bandage worth Rs. 18 crore through Tantuja from the gauge-bandage cluster of North 24 Parganas and supplied to the Health & Family Welfare Department. To ensure supply of hank yarn to weavers, two 'Yarn Banks' have been set up, one at Purbasthali in Purba Bardhaman and another at Shantipur in Nadia.

A Mobile App for Yarn Bank has also been developed & launched, using which the weavers may check yarn prices regularly and book customized quantity of good yarn at a convenient and at prevalent rate. Under a special initiative, MSME & Textiles Department, through Tantuja has revived & reproduced two hundred years old *Farasdanga Dhuti* and launched the product. Interventions in handloom sector have resulted in creation of additional man-days of 25 lakh up to December 2022.

As a part of providing marketing support to artisans and weavers, Tantuja and Manjusha have achieved a turnover of Rs. 252 crore and Rs. 104.65 crore (unaudited) respectively till December 2022 in 2022-23. Apart from this, MSME & T Department has organized 23 plus Fairs/ Expos wherein more than 7,400 artisans and weavers participated and altogether they achieved a business

turnover of around Rs. 221.37 crore including Rs. 73.79 crore in sales. To promote local crafts and souvenirs, 15 Tourist Kiosks named 'Experience Bengal' have been set up. As a result of direct support to Khadi societies through the various production centres and society-oriented procurement practices, Khadi production in the State has grown @ 16% CAGR during the last ten & half years.

To provide much needed industrial infrastructure across the state for establishing new enterprises, WBSIDC under MSME & Textiles Department has allotted over 150 plots to MSMEs. WBSIDC has also taken up and started development of five new industrial parks.

Under the Scheme of Approved Industrial Park (SAIP), so far 14 proposals have been accorded final approval which involves 793 acres of land. To boost up the exports from MSME sector, two cluster-specific 'Export Facilitation Centres' (EFC) have been set up—one at 'Paridhan Garment Park' and the other at 'Ankurhati Gem & Jewellery Park'. One state level EFC has also been established at the premises of MSME Facilitation Centre of Kolkata at Silpa Sadan (Ground Floor).

To address the issues and grievances of MSMEs, 'Synergy & Business Facilitation Conclaves' have been organized at district level in coordination with other Departments and Banks. So far six such events have

been organized where more than 3,950 entrepreneurs participated.

In a significant initiative toward ease of doing business in the State, revamped Silpasathi portal has been launched and made functional through a single sign-on for 61 business-related services involving multiple departments.

To reduce cost of regulation for business, the State Government has reduced 534 burdensome compliances, introduced over 100 online services and single window clearance with defined timelines under RTPS Act.

3.45 Industry, Commerce & Enterprises

Department has taken various policy initiatives for infrastructure development for promotion & facilitation of industrial development in the state.

In 2022, WBIDC has allotted 1882.29 acres of land to 35 units involving investments of Rs. 9,597.74 crore approximatly and expected employment to 27,538 persons. Built up space of 83087.98 sq.ft. has been allotted in modular based industrial parks to 17 industrial units involving investment of Rs. 131.08 crore and employment of 2,614 persons. 19.662 acres of land to 13 industrial units in different Industrial Parks have been allotted with projected investment of Rs. 1,514.87 crore and employment of 854 persons. Some of the major allottees in the industrial parks are M/s Jubilant Food Works

Limited, M/s Essar Oil and Gas Exploration & Production Limited, Grasim Industries Limited, Airways Logistics Pvt. Ltd., Emami Agrotech and M/s Calforge Steel Pvt. Ltd.

6.6 trillion cubic feet Shale Gas has been found in the Raniganj region of the State. A policy has been made to grant Shale Gas Exploration Licence to the existing CBM Mining grant holders in the State and leases have been signed with 'Great Eastern Energy and Essar Group'. The total investment would be Rs. 22,000 crore for this project.

The State Government would be constructing an Industrial and economic Corridor connecting Tajpur with Raghunathpur. It would have three branches namely Dankuni-Haldia, Dankuni-Raghunathpur, and Dankuni-Kalyani. It would have multiple economic regions, better connectivity with surrounding industrial zones and complementary infrastructure like logistic parks, townships along with other urban amenities. This entire zone would lead to the overall economic and social development of surrounding areas and would also lead to faster growth for the industries. The project would generate an employment for about one lakh people.

2,483 acres of industrial lands of WBIDC at Raghunathpur in Purulia District have been approved for development under the name of Jungal Sundari Karmanagari. 600 acres of land in the area has been

allotted to Shyam Steel Works Ltd., and letter of possession is also issued. The proposed investment would be about Rs. 2,000 crore with an employment of about 5,000 persons.

A new logistics & industrial parks is being developed over 69.225 acres of land at Belur in Howrah.

Jangal Sundari Karmanagari industrial township over 4,000 acres is coming up in Purulia. The township along with the industrial area and connected corridors from Dankuni to Amritsar is likely to attract investment of Rs. 72,000 crore and provide lakhs of employment.

The Biswa Bangla Mela Prangan inaugurated in February has emerged as an iconic facility for holding exhibitions and business events in the city. Built with over Rs. 360 crore, this facility has already hosted five big exhibitions and multiple conferences, including the National Defence Expo., International Exhibition on Plastics Indplas'22.

Held between 20th and 21st April 2022, the The Bengal Global Business Summit-2022 organized seminar on business partnership opportunities between Italy and West Bengal with the Embassy of Italy, Italian Trade Commission, Indo-Italian Chamber of Commerce (IICCI), Italian Export Credit Agency-SACE, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI).

‘Confederation of West Bengal Trade Association’ (CWBTA) and Government of West Bengal organized a first of its kind landmark event ‘Bengal Global Trade Expo 2022’ (BGTE) at the Science City Grounds, Kolkata from 20th to 24th April, 2022 to promote and showcase the potential of the State as a trading hub. The second edition of this landmark Expo was organised in January 2023 at Biswa Bangla Mela Prangan.

As the Designated Agency of the GoWB, WBMDTCL was successful in smooth implementation of the Sand Mining Policy, 2021. Tenders have been floated in 4 different phases for selection of Mine Developer & Operator (MDO) from the empanelled MDOs for an area admeasuring 864.162 Ha. Corporation could collect 50% of annual sand premium for the 1st year amounting Rs. 78.34 crore from the selected MDOs on behalf of the State Government.

Being the designated Nodal Agency of the GoWB to carry out dredging de-silting operations for up-keeping the health of the river, especially in the rainy season, WBMDTCL has developed and adopted a unique volume sharing model where no cost is borne on the Government’s exchequer for dredging/de-silting operations carried out and GoWB stands to only gain for Government’s share of dredged/de-silted materials.

Hatgacha-Jethia Black Stone Mine & Mokdamnagar & Tentulberia China Clay & Fire Clay mine in Birbhum district have also been operationalized.

The Jagdishpur-Haldia-Bokaro-Dhamra Pipeline Project covering 10 South Bengal districts of the State and Barauni-Guwahati Pipeline Project covering 5 North Bengal districts, traversing 835 km in the State with an expected investment of Rs. 4,185 crore has been undertaken. The City Gas Distribution (CGD) Project is undertaken utilizing the Gas Pipeline of GAIL for distribution of CNG/PNG for domestic, commercial and industrial gas. The proposed total CNG stations : 530, PNG Connections : 32,50,469, with coverage of population of 4,37,53,815 and an estimated revenue of Rs. 208 crore per annum through Sales Tax, are expected.

Based on exploration exercises in the onshore part of Bengal Basin, Petroleum Exploration Licence (PEL) has been granted to ONGC by the state government. Test production is going on. The state has already received investment to the tune of Rs. 3,700 crore from ONGC and another Rs. 900 crore of committed investment is on the anvil during the period 2021-24.

Three Coal Bed Methane (CBM) blocks have been allocated to three different operators by Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, GoI. The projected revenue from this mine will be Rs. 200 crore per annum as royalty.

3.46 Public Enterprises & Industrial Reconstruction

The PE & IR Department is, tasked with the objective of resurrecting industrial units that have turned sick or

weak. The department plays a nodal role in restructuring State PSEs.

Saraswaty Press Ltd. (SPL), a Government of West Bengal Enterprise, is under the Administrative control of PE & IR Department. Its subsidiary company is West Bengal Text Book Corporation Ltd. (WBTBCL) and SPL is one of the largest printing company in India. This is an ISO 9001 : 2015 company and empanelled with Indian Bank Associations security printer. SPL is also the leader in Eastern India for security & confidential printing, school text book, printing of hologram making, etc. It directly employs 266 employee and SPL also creates sustainable and gainful employment for another approx. 1,500 workers from among the most needy segments.

West Bengal Text Book Corporation Limited (WBTBCL) printed approx. 14 crore school text books & 4.5 crore khata, using approx. 45000 MT paper for Academic Session-2022. There are approx. 450 different types of text books. These are being distributed to approx. 726 Circle and to 1,130 different Madrasah Point in West Bengal.

WBTBCL Ltd. has created enormous integrated infrastructure for preparations of manuscript to final books. Customized software has been developed starting from requisition and ending with distribution of books throughout West Bengal within the shortest possible time.

SPL has been entrusted this year with the responsibility of publication of Kolkata Gazette Part-II notification, which includes change of name, surname, religion, gender including notification from the PSUs. Further, SPL from this year is also entrusted with the publication of official Calendar for Government of West Bengal which is an essential document at all Government offices in West Bengal.

Services

3.47 Tourism

Tourism Department, Government of West Bengal had introduced the 'West Bengal Home Stay Tourism Policy, 2017'. Since introduction of the policy, a total of 2035 homestays as on 31.12.2022 have been registered and Tourism Department has released Rs. 7.14 crore as incentive till date.

The amended 'West Bengal Homestay Tourism Policy, 2022' was duly notified in 2022. As per this policy, the homestay incentive amount has been fixed at Rs. 1 lakh per unit.

In view of the State's tourism potential, Tourism Department has started 'Tourist Guides Certification Scheme'. The scheme provides certification, recognition and training for the New Tourist Guides and Veteran (existing) Tourist Guide. The Scheme supports the Tourist

Guides to strengthen their capacity and has opened avenues for new livelihood opportunities across the state. 2,923 applications have been received under the scheme till 31st December, 2022, out of which 670 applicants have successfully completed their training and another 1,240 applicants going under training .

West Bengal Incentive Scheme, 2021 has been notified on 19.02.2021. The policy provides different types of subsidies to eligible tourism units like state capital investment subsidy, interest subsidy etc.

In collaboration with MSME & T Department, operationalization of 22 kiosks in 12 districts (namely Alipurduar, Darjeeling, Murshidabad, South 24 Parganas, Jalpaiguri, Birbhum, Coochbehar, Purba Medinipur, Nadia, Kolkata, Kalimpong, Bankura) have been taken up for display/sale of souvenirs at different identified tourist locations. The marketing staff for manning the kiosks and uniforms for the staff are being provided by WBSRLM and Biswa Bangla Marketing Corporation, respectively.

An MoU has been signed between the Tourism Department and Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism and Hospitality (FAITH) during BGBS, 2022 with the aim to unlock tourism potential in the State and development of a roadmap for the tourism and travel sector in West Bengal.

Various online services have been introduced by the Department of Tourism. They include-online Registration of Homestays and disbursement of incentive through online application, integration of Online Service of West Bengal Incentive Scheme, 2021 with the revamped Silpasathi website under Business Reforms Action Plan, 2022, integration of Booking Engine for booking of WBTDCL properties with the Department website under the E-Booking menu as 'Online Properties Booking' and 'Online Package Booking', application, registration and certification under West Bengal Tourist Guide Certification Scheme, 2021 and voluntary Recognition of Tour Operators and renewal of Voluntary Recognition of Tour Operators.

A State Tourism Promotion Task Force has been constituted in April, 2022. The North Bengal Tourism Promotion Task Force has been constituted on 16.11.2022 for an effective co-ordination and better development of the tourism sector in the North Bengal region.

The Tourism Department in association with the Transport Department proposes to introduce the 'Hop-on Hop-off' bus services in Kolkata shortly for the tourists. The proposed bus services would be available from 9 am to 6 pm on daily basis covering major tourist attractions along the identified routes.

A 'QR based integrated city Pass' for the tourists who wish to visit different tourist attractions in and around Kolkata has been introduced. 'The Integrated City Pass' is an integrated and limited-validity pass. As of now, 24 ticketed and non-ticketed destinations/attractions in and around Kolkata have been included in this initiative.

SIHM, Durgapur is a Government-run Institute of Hotel Management under the Tourism Department, Government of West Bengal. The Institute is situated in the industrial city of Durgapur in the district of Paschim Bardhaman. It was established in the year 2018. Another centre is being planned for North Bengal with North Bengal University campus.

'The Purulia Tourism Development Council' (PTDC) was formed to promote Purulia as one of the major tourism destinations in West Bengal and to develop overall tourism infrastructures and facilities within the district of Purulia.

In order to facilitate smooth movement of Tourists across different Tourist attraction in Kolkata, 'Tourist Pick-up and Drop' points across the metropolitan area have already been identified and notified. Suitable signages have already been installed at some of these notified tourist places including Kalighat Temple, Victoria Memorial, the Kenilworth Hotel, the Park Hotel, Indian Museum, Nakhoda Mosque and Coffee House.

In a first of its kind, a three-day 'Bengal Himalayan Carnival' was held in Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Gajoldoba in Jalpaiguri from 25th to 27th March, 2022.

The North Bengal Birding Festival was organised from 15th to 20th March, 2022 at Siliguri, Gorumara Region and Lava respectively.

3.48 Information Technology and Electronics

'West Bengal Data Centre Policy, 2021' has been approved by the State Government with the vision of making West Bengal the most preferred destination for Data Centre Industry in the country. For implementation of West Bengal Data Centre Policy, 2021 an online single window portal is being developed for providing various incentives to the entrepreneurs for setting up new Data Centers in West Bengal.

West Bengal Electronics Industry Development Corporation Limited (Webel) has implemented some major projects during 2022 which include operationalization of Webel Tower-I Project, Webel IT Park (Phase-I) Project at New Town, Webel Tower-II Project and Webel IT Park (Phase-II) Project at Kalyani.

WBSWAN has continued to provide seamless internet services to the users from multiple service providers. Public Wi-Fi Implementation at the Diamond Harbour Municipal

area has been completed successfully. About 50 Govt. offices/departments have been connected to WBSWAN backbone additionally during 2022.

Till October 2022 WBSDC has already provided additional 281 new Virtual machines for 46 new Applications for various Departments/Directorate and other government bodies. At present 35 Departments/Directorate and other government bodies have already hosted their Application and Database at WBSDC, Monibhandar. In 2022 WBSDC has already provided additional IT infrastructure for new version of e-Office Application.

During 2022, 'Cyber Security Centre of Excellence' (CS-COE) has provided training to officials of different departments on cyber hygiene, cyber security, First Responder Training (FRT) & Detail Responder Training (DRT) on cyber crime management and miscellaneous IT practices.

CS-CoE launched Second version of Cyber Sammohon, a Comic Book on Cyber Crime awareness and Cyber Hygiene Handbook in Bengali, English and Hindi language.

Society for Natural Language Technology Research (SNLTR) has implemented some major projects during 2022 viz. Karmo Bhumi-A State Skill Registry for IT/ITeS

Sectors is a Government of West Bengal initiative to bridge the gaps between job seekers and the employers in IT/ ITeS sectors and to increase employability in the said sectors driving in the state. Till date total of 50,000 applicants have been registered with this portal.

Self Scan-Safest App for document Scanning, Saving, Sharing makes it easier to digitize, convert, retrieve, edit, protect, share, and collaborate on all kinds of documents in the digital workplace. Till now, this application has been downloaded 1,50,000 times from various sources like the Google Play store and others.

The online Queue Management System namely Suvidha Vehicle Facilitation System (<https://suvidha.wb.gov.in>) for seamless movement of vehicles/trucks through various ICPs of West Bengal is being implemented from July, 2022 as till now 95,000 Vehicles have covered the system.

West Bengal Cyber Yoddha Team, a digital task force under West Bengal Cyber Security Incident Response Team (WB-CSIRT) was formed. State's Cyber Crisis Management Plan (CCMP) is in place.

'Unique Document Identification Number' (UDIN) is a platform-based 22-digit system generated unique number for the documents attested by users/applicants in various domains. UDIN platform (<https://udin.wb.gov.in/>) has been developed by the Department of Information

Technology and Electronics, Government of West Bengal where SNLTR, a society under the Administrative control of IT & E Department is the SI/IA of the same. The documents of the user(s), would be kept through the blockchain technology. The UDIN web application has been launched on 30.12.2022.

3.49 Consumer Affairs

Consumer Awareness Programmes have been executed via Camp, Seminars, Street Drama, Talking Doll Show, Magic Show etc. During 2022-23 (from April, 2022 up to December, 2022) a total of 17,799 numbers of such Programmes have been organized by 30 Regional Offices in this State.

Two prestigious SKOCH Awards, both in Gold Category, in Governance and e-Governance were awarded to this Department for extraordinary performance relating to Pre-Litigation mediation for consumers an alternative consumer mechanism for redressal of grievance and e-Parimap.

The Directorate along with 30 Regional Offices are participating in different fairs, exhibitions, social gatherings to disseminate consumer awareness and WBRTPS Messages.

Messages on consumer awareness, especially themed around *Bangla Unnayaner Pathe* were propagated by way of displaying mobile LED Tableau and through Upbhokta Samachar.

840 Consumer Clubs have been set up to strengthen the movement on Consumer Rights in the State. Each of these clubs have received Rs. 10,000 only for educating school students about the rights of consumers.

The Grievance Redressal Cell and 30 Regional offices have received 5,628 numbers of consumer complaint in all (upto 29th December, 2022) out of which 5,277 cases have been disposed.

Under Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) initiatives, implementation of Phase-I and Phase-II of e-Parimap project for issuance/renewal of licences and verification of weights & measures have been rolled out. Amendment in W.B.L.M rules 2011 has been brought about to make provisions for auto renewal of licences of all categories. New feature in the e-Parimap portal has been developed to facilitate auto renewal of licences on payment of prescribed fees in compliances with the EoDB norms.

At present 5 Benches of 'West Bengal State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission' are functioning, 3 in Kolkata and 2 Circuit Benches at Siliguri and at Asansol.

The CONFONET Scheme has been going on in full swing through all Districts Commissions and 5 Benches of West Bengal State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission.

Regular Lok Adalat are being organized by the WBSCDRC and all the District Commission every year. In 2022, 317 matters have been settled with an amount of Rs. 9.04 crore.

Since inception, the total numbers of cases filed in the SCDRC and the DCDRCs are 2,00,617, out of which 1,78,591 numbers of cases have been disposed. To facilitate smooth filing of complaints by public in general, 'e-Dakhil' filing of complaints has started which is getting momentum day by day in different consumer commissions.

The RTPS Commission has published and distributed "*Paschimbango Janapariseba Ayiner Khutinati*" upto Panchayat Level in Bengali language. The Commission has disposed 27 numbers of complaints and conducted 10 numbers of visits/inspections.

Integrated Office Buildings at Rajarhat, Paschim Medinipur, Uttar Dinajpur, Murshidabad and Bankura have been completed.

4

Honb'le Speaker Sir,

Now I place few proposals for the coming financial year—

1. Hon'ble Members will be happy to know that as part of our commitment for social protection for our people we have provided support to 1.88 crore women under Lakshmir Bhandar. In order to ensure continuity of financial support beyond 60 years of age, I am happy to announce that the recipients of Lakshmir Bhandar shall receive Rs. 1,000 per month after attaining 60 years by way of automatic transition to Old Age Pension Scheme.

2. I propose to introduce 'Matsyajeebi Bandhu (Death Benefit) Scheme' to support the dependent family members of our fisherman on account of their untimely demise. Under this Scheme, on the death of a registered fisherman of the age group 18-60 years, either due to natural reasons or by accident, the dependent family members shall receive a onetime grant of Rs. 2 lakh.

Rs. 30 crore is allocated for this purpose.

3. I am happy to announce a new scheme 'Bhavishyat Credit Card' for our youth. Under this Scheme 2 lakh youth of the age group 18-45 years will be provided financial assistance as loan upto Rs. 5 lakh through Banks for

setting up micro-enterprises and create employment opportunities. State Government shall provide subsidy in the form of margin money contribution upto 10% of project cost with a maximum cap of Rs. 25,000 and a guarantee coverage of 15%.

Rs. 350 crore is earmarked for this scheme.

4. Hon'ble Members, You are aware that we give special priority for development of rural roads. We are taking up a special project named 'Rastashree' for strengthening the existing roads and also for improving connectivity of these roads with other places. A total of 11,500 km rural roads have been taken up under this project. Under this scheme new roads will be constructed and simultaneously existing roads will also be revamped.

I propose to allocate Rs. 3,000 crore for this project.

5. In consideration of the long-standing demand of the tea garden workers for legitimate land documents, I am happy to announce that my government will bring out a policy for issuance of homestead patta to the eligible tea garden workers.

6. I am happy to announce that for local area development works under Bidhayak Elaka Unnayan Prakalp (BEUP), the annual allocation for each Hon'ble Member will be increased from Rs. 60 lakh to Rs. 70 lakh from the next financial year.

I propose to earmark Rs. 30 crore for this additional allocation.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

Under the tax exemption proposal, I wish to propose the following :

1. As in the previous year State Government would like to continue its support for our Tea Industry. In order to provide relief to Tea Industry and lakhs of tea workers, I propose to exempt payment of Rural Employment Cess under the West Bengal Rural Employment and Production Act 1976; and Education Cess under West Bengal Primary Education Act 1973 for the next two years i.e. financial year 23-24 and financial year 24-25. Also, I propose to waive the Agricultural Income Tax on Tea Gardens for the next two financial years i.e. financial year 23-24 and financial year 24-25.

2. Hon'ble Members are aware that Khajna on agriculture land and mutation fee for agricultural land is already waived by our government. Now, in order to give some additional relief to our farmers, I am happy to propose full waiver of water rate on irrigation water as was being charged on the farmers under West Bengal Irrigation (Imposition of Water Rate for Damodar Valley Corporation Water) Act, 1958 and The West Bengal Irrigation (Imposition of Water Rate) Act, 1974.

3. Hon'ble Members are aware that in order to give relief to home buyers, our government has allowed exemption of 2% rebate on Stamp Duty and 10% rebate on circle rate of land/property which is valid till 31st March 2023. In the interest of the home buyers, I propose to extend the 2% rebate on Stamp Duty and 10% rebate on circle rate of land/property for another 6 months upto 30th September, 2023.

4. Hon'ble Members, will be happy to note that to provide relief to tax payers from the pending litigations under the West Bengal Sales Tax Act, 1994, West Bengal Value Added Tax Act, 2003, Central Sales Tax Act, 1956, etc, I am happy to announce a very liberal and comprehensive scheme for settlement of disputes. Hon'ble Members are aware that earlier in the year 2020 we had brought out a scheme for Settlement of Dispute (SoD) which resulted in settlement of 28,697 cases. More than 25,000 cases are still lying pending for settlement in Tribunals and Courts. Under the new Scheme all the disputed tax like arrear tax, interest, penalty or late fee pending before any authority on the 10th day of February, 2023 will be settled if application is made on or before the 31st day of May, 2023.

5

Conclusion

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

Hon'ble Members will be happy to know that we are the front runners in providing citizen centric services to our people. Our e-governance model and IT based process engineering in management of different programmes and projects has won many laurels and accolades both nationally and globally.

In view of our predictable policies, proactive governance and unique geographical location, we are one of the most preferred destinations for industry, business and employment. The multitude of interventions made by our government will open up opportunities for huge employment in different sectors. We shall continue to grow with hope and optimism.

Sir, I propose to provide Rs. 3,39,162 crore (Net) in the Budget of Financial Year 2023-24.

Hon'ble Members are aware that our schemes and programmes are inspired and envisioned by our Hon'ble Chief minister keeping the interest of the common people. As such, I wish to conclude my speech by quoting a few lines of a poem written by our Hon'ble Chief minister where her commitment towards common people is evident:

“মানুষ তো আমার গণদেবতা
আমার হৃদয়ের সবুজ বন।
তাই যত্নে রাখি সাজিয়ে রাখি
তারাই তো আমার মানিক রতন।”

FINANCIAL STATEMENT, 2023-2024

WEST BENGAL ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT, 2023-2024*(Rupees in Crore)*

	Actuals, 2021–2022	Budget, 2022–2023	Revised, 2022–2023	Budget, 2023–2024
Receipts				
1. Opening Balance	(–)20.32	(–)7.00	7.04	(–)2.00
2. Revenue Receipts	178159.35	198047.01	194612.34	212637.03
3. Raising of Public Debt	77580.84	114958.52	114428.50	120040.12
4. Repayment of loans by PSUs and Government employees	58.05	185.41	129.46	145.63
5. Receipts from Contingency Fund and Public Account	966539.95	821938.58	999069.03	1042193.99
Total	1222317.87	1135122.52	1308246.37	1375014.77
Expenditure				
6. Revenue Expenditure	210159.64	226326.68	234275.60	243561.12
7. Capital Expenditure	17484.09	33144.37	21468.37	34026.23
8. Repayment of Public Debt	31539.88	60400.52	59857.82	60540.80
9. Disbursement of loans to PSUs and Government employees	1102.09	1158.37	719.10	1034.23
10. Transfer to Contingency Fund	0.00	0.00	180.00	0.00
11. Expenditure on Contingency Fund and Public Account	962025.13	814094.58	991749.48	1035859.39
12. Closing Balance	7.04	(–)2.00	(–)4.00	(–)7.00
Total	1222317.87	1135122.52	1308246.37	1375014.77

(Rupees in Crore)

	Actuals, 2021–2022	Budget, 2022–2023	Revised, 2022–2023	Budget, 2023–2024
Net Results—				
Surplus (+) /				
Deficit (–)				
(a) On Revenue Account	(–)32000.29	(–)28279.67	(–)39663.26	(–)30924.09
(b) Outside Revenue Account	32027.65	28284.67	39652.22	30919.09
(c) Net, excluding Opening Balance	27.36	5.00	(–)11.04	(–)5.00
(d) Net, including Opening Balance	7.04	(–)2.00	(–)4.00	(–)7.00
(e) Expenditure for New Programmes/Additional Outlays				
(i) On Revenue Account	..	..	..	(–)1337.50
(ii) Outside Revenue Account	..	..	..	..
(f) Additional Resource Mobilisation under Tax Revenue	..	..	..	1337.50
(g) Net Revenue Deficit	(–)32000.29	(–)28279.67	(–)39663.26	(–)30924.09
(h) Net Surplus/Deficit	7.04	(–)2.00	(–)4.00	(–)7.00