

Republic Day-2012 speech

My Dear fellow Citizens,

- 1. On the occasion of 63rd Republic Day of our country, I would like to extend my greetings to all of you. This is a sacred day for each one of us, when we come together to pay tribute to the freedom fighters and martyrs who laid down their lives for the sake of independence and sovereignty of our nation. Today we remember the extraordinary contribution of all those who have toiled to build a free and modern India. Today all of us re-dedicate ourselves, individually and collectively to strengthening the integrity of our country and the creation of a just and prosperous society.**
- 2. In accordance with the Directive Principles of our Constitution, Chandigarh Administration is committed to the objective of enriching the lives of all the citizens of the Union Territory through economic growth, through continuous improvement of the quality and quantity of civic services, through outreach programmes for the deprived and the needy, and through improving the quality of governance.**
- 3. For Chandigarh Administration this year one of the focus areas has been preserving the heritage of the city beautiful and formulating a vision for its development. Our strategy would be to protect the heritage of the city while meeting the needs of the**

future. A report on heritage preservation and conservation has been accepted by the Govt of India. The report emphasizes upon the preservation of original planning concepts that were used by Le Corbusier. These concepts have made Chandigarh a unique and the most livable city of the country. Accordingly the heritage status has been recommended for certain important buildings and zones, and the prominent among them are Capitol Complex, City Centre, Govt Museum, Cultural, Educational and Green Belt zones.

4. The strength of a city lies in the quality of its infrastructure. Keeping in view the requirements of the city, the road infrastructure is being continuously upgraded. Improvements have been made in several Junctions by way of constructing additional lanes, slip roads, widening of weaving section etc. The prominent are Junction 63, Junction 46-47 & Junction 50-52. The construction of slow carriageway on Dakshin Marg towards Sector 20 and on N.H. 21 towards Industrial Area Phase-I & II has been completed. The Ministry of Railway has recently approved the construction of a Railway Under Bridge at the level crossing near Mauli Jagran and Modern Housing Complex. Also work on the construction of rigid concrete Pavement in ISBT, Sector-43 has also been completed at a cost of Rs. 300 lacs.

5. The U.T. Administration remains fully committed to provide the infrastructure required for the higher judiciary. The construction of 16 new Court Rooms, including furnishing and air conditioning, on the 2nd

floor of the Punjab & Haryana High Court has been taken up where 8 rooms have been completed and the work in the remaining 8 court rooms is in progress which is likely to be completed by April 2012. In order to provide fool proof security at the High Court, a surveillance system, visitors' screen and CCTV cameras have been installed.

- 6. The Administration gives high importance to meet the pressure on the Medical facilities available in the city. The U.T.'s health infrastructure will be further strengthened, with the completion in next few months of a new 6-storey OPD Block along with a basement constructed in Govt. Hospital Sector-16 at an estimated cost of 13.75 crores. Further, a new 4-storey building with a basement has been constructed for setting up a Regional Centre for Mentally Challenged to provide for Education, Diagnosis, Medical Care and Research in Sector-31.**
- 7. The Electricity Department is committed to providing an un-interrupted electricity supply to the residents of Chandigarh. In the recent past, 2 power transformers have been energized, one at Sector 17 and another at I.T. park, thereby providing much needed relief to the commercial hub of Sector 17 and the residents of the adjoining areas through a standby power supply system in case of fault in any of the systems.**
- 8. In order to provide reliable power supply to the southern sectors, in particular, and other parts of the city in general, the work of scheduled augmentation at grid sub-station Sector 52, 47, 34 and Sector 12 is to**

be completed before the summer season. Two new 66 kv grid sub stations are proposed for villages of Sarangpur and Raipur Kalan.

9. The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, New Delhi has declared Chandigarh a Model Solar City. A master plan for this purpose submitted by the UT Administration has been recently approved by the Govt of India. Under this project, installation of 1.5 MW solar power plant would be taken up. Paryavarna Bhawan, Sector-19 designed as a Green Building, will be completed shortly. Similarly, state level Energy Park at Botanical Garden, village Sarangpur is nearing completion, which will serve as a platform to spread awareness about energy conservation.

10. The Tourism Department, Chandigarh Administration recognizes the importance of tourism and the vital role played by it in the economic growth and employment generation in U.T. Chandigarh. Mega tourism events, like World Tourism Week, Chandigarh Carnival and New Year Week Extravaganza, have attracted a large number of foreign as well as domestic tourists. Chandigarh has also witnessed a considerable increase in tourist inflow this year with 9 lakh holiday makers from both India and abroad. I am pleased to inform that Chandigarh has been awarded as the 'Best U.T. Pavilion' award in the recently concluded India International Trade Fair-2011 held in New Delhi.

11. Education has always been on the priority list of the Administration. I would like to quote here the famous words of the great scientist Einstein who once

said that with education a common man can become a king and without education a king becomes a common man. To provide education to all, I am glad to inform that 10 new schools are planned to be constructed in Chandigarh and out of which, 4 will be constructed in the southern sectors of the city. The Education Department has created the posts of 7 Principals, 56 Lecturers, 7 Accountants and 7 Librarians for the city schools during the session 2011-12.

12. To ensure the implementation of the RTE Act, 2008, special training centres are being run in 20 clusters covering 5326 out of school children. 72 Government Schools have been covered under the Information & Communication Technology (ICT) Scheme. A 4-storey independent I.T. Block has been added in Govt. College for Girls, Sector-42 at an estimated cost of Rs. 181 lacs. In order to meet the additional schooling needs of Southern Sectors, a new 3-storey building for Govt. High School in Sector 53 has been constructed. Another 4-storey Govt. High School building has been constructed in Mauli Jagran.

13. It is always the endeavour of U.T. administration to promote sports activities throughout the city and in all the educational institutions. The results of this policy are self-evident. At the 57th National School Games, sportspersons of different age groups won several medals including 2 Gold, 3 Silver and 12 Bronze medals in different events, in 2011-12. The Education Department has expanded certain facilities for players by developing a cricket playfield at Govt.

Model Sr. Sec. School Sector-35, which will be inaugurated shortly.

- 14. Apart from organizing 9th Administrator's Challenge Cup-All India Football Tournament and Senior Chandigarh State Weightlifting Tournament, the Department of Sports has been running Sports Wings in various coaching centres, benefiting 611 players of various sports disciplines.**
- 15. Many new and existing social welfare schemes implemented by the Chandigarh administration are benefiting the disadvantaged sections of the society. Under Integrated Child Development Services Scheme, 420 Aanganwari Centres are functional in three ICDS Projects in the city, which have been providing services to 8253 women and 38414 children.**
- 16. Another scheme, named Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls or SABLA, is being implemented using the platform of ICDS. Under this scheme, various services are being provided to adolescent girls relating to Nutrition and Health Education, Counseling/Guidance on Family Welfare, Adolescent Reproductive Sexual Health, Home Management, Life Skills Education. There is also a provision for accessing of Public Services and Vocational Training for girls aged 16 and above under National Skill Development Programme.**
- 17. Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana, a conditional Maternity Benefit Scheme, is being implemented in Chandigarh to improve the health and**

nutritional status of pregnant and lactating women as well as their young infants. A total of 600 women have received assistance worth Rs. 9 lacs under this scheme till date.

18. In the changing economic scenario, vocational education is of great significance. A new skill development and training programme to impart training in trades, such as, electrician, computer hardware, carpentry, domestic cook, mobile repair & networking and masonry work is being started by the Chandigarh Scheduled Castes, Backward Classes and Minorities Financial and Development Corporation. As a welfare measure directed towards the shelterless persons in Chandigarh, night shelters have been provided in this winter free of cost in sector 26, sector 17 and sector 56.

19. The Union Territory of Chandigarh has been implementing the Smart Card based Public Distribution System. The data of 1, 60,198 families of Chandigarh has been digitized. For the issuance of Smart Cards, the beneficiaries are being enrolled in the enrolment camps conducted by the Food & Supplies Department. Till now the department has enrolled 39,344 Above Poverty Line and 6,590 Below Poverty Line beneficiaries. The department has already distributed 10,599 Smart Cards to the enrolled beneficiaries and the distribution of essential commodities to Below Poverty Line families has started at 13 Fair Price Shops, through Smart Cards.

20. A robust collection of taxes enables the administration to translate its policies into concrete programmes. The Excise & Taxation Department has collected Rs. 766.37 crores till November 2011 against Rs. 651.51 crores for the corresponding period of 2010-11, which is 16.91% more than the previous year under the VAT Act. Similarly under the Excise Act, the department's collection has increased from Rs. 111.32 crore to Rs. 174.54 crore upto the month of Nov. 2011, registering a growth of 56.79% over the corresponding period of the previous financial year.

21. In an attempt to strengthen the Public Transport System in the city, Global Positioning System (GPS) and Public Information System (PIS) have been installed in about 100 buses, resulting in enhanced quality services for commuters. These systems help in tracking the movement of buses and enabling the passengers find estimated time of arrival of different buses. Soon, GPS and PIS systems will be installed in more local buses. New routes have been introduced. Consequently, the number of commuters on local routes has increased from 1,40,000 to 1,83,000 per day. Speed governors have also been installed in all buses in the city that will limit the speed of buses to 50 km/hr. 8 more bays have been added to the bus terminus, Sector-43. The planning for procuring over 80 modern low floor buses additionally for public transport is in advanced stage with the support from Govt of India.

22. Forest and Wildlife have always been priority areas for the Chandigarh Administration. The Forest

Department is establishing a Butterfly Park in Sector-26, wherein a large variety of host and nectar plants specific to the local butterflies will be planted. The green area near IT Park; in Sector 26 and Peacock Park, Sector-39 are being developed as city forests. 70 varieties of colored cactus have been brought from Regional Plant Resource Centre, Orissa, to the newly constructed Cactus Dome in Botanical Garden, Sarangpur.

23. During Wildlife Week Celebration-2011, a 'Nature and Wildlife Trek' from Nepli to Kansal Log Hut was organized with the objective of creating awareness among people. Further, the Department of Forests is working for digitization of Sukhna Wildlife Sanctuary boundary, Reserved & Unclassed forest areas in Chandigarh Forest Division and Preparation of scientific database of the Botanical Garden at Sarangpur village for education and research. A new Nature Walking Track inside lake reserve forests behind Sukhna lake shall be opened to public shortly.

24. The Chandigarh Industrial and Tourism Development Corporation Limited (CITCO) has upgraded the facilities in its prestigious hotels. Hotel Mountview played host to many international teams during the World Cup Cricket and IPL matches with the delivery of highest standards of service.

25. Hotel Shivalik View has been upgraded with over Rs. 6 crore renovation expansion plan. Rain Forest Restaurant, two mini banquet halls and a Business Centre were inaugurated by His Excellency Administrator Sh. Shivraj Patil in September last year.

- 26. The administration is continuously engaged in the promotion of e-governance in order to render the Government to Citizens as also Business to Citizens services in a better way. It is implementing a State Service Delivery Gateway (SSDG) which will offer multi-department information and transaction services to the citizens to download forms and submit their applications electronically while sitting in their homes. Further, in the administration, General Financial Accounting System(GFAS) was implemented for integrating the Budget and the Treasury operations. Allocation of budget by Finance Department, preparation of bills by DDO, presentation of bills to treasury, approval/rejection based on funds available etc are some of the activities carried out by using this system. A robust MIS supports variety of reports catering to day-to-day requirements of various offices.**
- 27. An online Grievances system will be in place shortly to enable the citizens file their grievances online and to know the status of the complaint and to get the grievance redressed this way. Similarly, the administration is shortly implementing e-payment services to enable the online payment for services like electricity, water bills and VAT payments for dealers.**
- 28. The administration strives to make City Beautiful a safe and secure city. Chandigarh Police remains committed towards a transparent, people friendly & responsive policing. As a part of road safety awareness campaign, Chandigarh Traffic Police has launched road safety radio campaign and SMS alert**

service for the citizens. It has also launched a special drive against drunken driving. In order to crosscheck the response of police and views of public towards quality of police service, a Public feedback mechanism at PCR spots has been put in place. Chandigarh Police very successfully solved some of the sensational dacoity & kidnapping cases and busted an immigration fraud last year.

29. Chandigarh Police has also taken up several initiatives to modernize itself. A new digital finger print cell is being set up to store the entire data of arrested and convicted persons, 6 special technical cells have been set up to provide technical assistance to the investigating officer, latest weaponry with all modern gadgets is being obtained to counter any kind of situation. To supplement its strength, 1210 constables were recruited, trained and posted in various units during the year 2011.

30. To provide quality civic amenities to the people, the U.T. administration is continuously supporting the policies and programmes of Chandigarh Municipal Corporation. The required support will be provided to the Municipal Corporation for upgrading the solid waste management system in the city, augmenting water supply scheme and improving the quality of road infrastructure which is the responsibility of the Municipal Corporation. I am also happy to inform that Elections to Municipal Corporation, Zila Parishad and Panchayat Samitis have been successfully conducted recently. Efforts were made to hold these elections in

a transparent and peaceful manner. A record voter turnout of 60 % was witnessed for the first time in City Beautiful in the Municipal Corporation election.

31. I conclude with an appeal to all citizens to join me in contributing their very best to serve the nation. India is the world's largest democracy and its people have a commitment to fulfill the promise of being a great nation. India stands on the threshold of greatness and a double-digit growth rate is reachable. I believe that a high growth rate while establishing a kind, just and equitable society is achievable, though it will demand all our skills, and all our efforts. I seek the cooperation of all of you to make Chandigarh a model city. My best wishes to each and everyone on this Republic Day.

Jai Hind!