

At centre of tussle, Ayushman Bharat comes to Delhi

ASTHA SAXENA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 23

IN A significant announcement, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said during Monday's budget that the Aam Aadmi Party government will implement Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ambitious health project, the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana — Ayushman Bharat (PMJAY-AB) in the fiscal year 2020-2021.

"The Delhi government will implement the Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana in Delhi in 2020-21 to provide health insurance cover up to Rs 5 lakh per family every year," said Sisodia.

The scheme has been a bone of contention between the Delhi and central governments. The AAP government had asked the National Health Authority to rename the scheme to Mukhya Mantri Aam Aadmi Swasthya Bima Yojana — Ayushman Bharat in Delhi. During the assembly polls, BJP leaders had criticised the AAP government for not implementing the scheme, depriving Delhi residents of its benefits.

Launched in 2018, PMJAY-AB provides a cover of up to Rs 5 lakh per family per year, which includes 1,400 packages spread over 23 specialties.

Last year, Kejriwal wrote a letter to Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan stating the Delhi Health Scheme is ten times better than Centre's Ayushman Bharat. Comparing both, Kejriwal had said while the Centre's scheme has restrictions, Delhi government's health scheme is available to all. In 2018, he had called the scheme a "publicity stunt".

Reacting to the decision, BJP Media Incharge Pratyush Kant said, "Kejriwal government shouldn't have waited for this calamity to strike for implementing the scheme."

On Monday, Sisodia said: "One of the most important and talked about principles of the Kejriwal-led government is to have healthcare facilities for all. Making health facilities available for a certain section of society was followed earlier in Delhi. But under the Kejriwal model of gov-

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

₹65,000 cr
Total budget proposed

₹6,828 cr
Financial support to local bodies

Contribution of Delhi to the national GDP

3.97% in 2014-15

4.20% in 2019-20

EDUCATION

■ Government to setup Delhi's own State Board of Education

■ At 24.33%, or ₹ 15,815 crore, the highest budget allocation remains in education

TRANSPORT

■ 2,485 new buses (1,300 DTC and 1,185 cluster buses, including 685 electric buses) to be added to the fleet during 2020-21

■ 1,880 buses (444 DTC and 1,436 cluster buses) will be purchased in 2021-22.



Finance Minister Manish Sisodia arrives at the Delhi Assembly on Monday. Amit Mehra

HEALTH

■ Bed capacity of hospitals to be increased from 10,000 to 26,000

■ Govt to implement Ayushman Bharat in Delhi



TOURISM

■ New scheme — 'Branding Delhi' — to be introduced to ensure that tourists spend at least two days in Delhi on an average



CAMPAIGNS

■ In the wake of Northeast Delhi riots, gov't to launch a 'Campaign for Communal Harmony'



■ Govt to introduce an awareness campaign — 'Behavioural Change for Safety of the Women' — aimed at effecting behavioural change in society

ernance, we have given identity to mohalla clinics and government hospitals; and with the introduction of projects like Farishtey scheme and free testing in private hospitals, we have taken the Delhi healthcare system to a different level."

The Delhi government has allocated Rs 7,704 crore in 2020-2021 towards healthcare. In the previous budget, a total outlay of Rs 7,485 crore was allotted. The number of mohalla clinics will be increased to 1,000, with an outlay of Rs 365 crore being made for these and polyclinics. "From April to December,

over 55 lakh patients have availed services at mohalla clinics. Around 2.15 crore people have been treated at polyclinics and the government hospitals in Delhi," Sisodia said.

Talking about coronavirus, Sisodia said the Delhi government has been working diligently in coordination with the Centre. A provision of Rs 50 crore has been made for 2020-21 and Rs 3 crore in the current financial year. "We will continue to allocate as much as required to deal with this epidemic," he added.

The state government has also started the work of upgrad-

ing and expanding existing hospitals and construction of new hospitals to increase the bed capacity from 10,000 to 26,000.

The government will also provide free treatment, surgery, radiology, diagnostic schemes and medical treatment through the Delhi Arogya Kosh (DAK) under the the Mukhya Mantri Swasthya Yojna. Under the new scheme, 1,016 surgical, 123 oncology and 10 neonatal procedures, as well as six medical packages, have been made part of the 86 surgeries already covered under the DAK — a corpus that funds various health schemes for residents of Delhi.

Education key focus as Sisodia presents first budget of AAP 2.0

SOURAV ROY BARMAN
NEW DELHI, MARCH 23

AN OUTLAY of Rs 65,000 crore will keep Delhi running in 2020-21, helping it fund its existing services as well as new projects, Finance Minister Manish Sisodia said on Monday, presenting the first annual budget of the AAP government in its second term.

The highlight of Sisodia's nearly hour-long speech was his attempt to repack the AAP's initiatives in bringing about improvements in fields of education, health, water and power as the "Kejriwal model" of governance and economy, having returned to office powered by the AAP chief's mass appeal.

Sisodia stressed that the city's economy was sound with the basic economic components remaining "very strong". The

Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) was likely to record a growth of 10.48 per cent in 2019-20 (at current prices), he said, pegging the per capita income at Rs 3.89 lakh.

He reminded that the size of the AAP government's first budget was Rs 30,000 crore while per capita income was Rs 2.70 lakh. Incidentally, Sisodia's last budget had an allocation of Rs 60,000 crore, which was later revised to 54,800 crore.

The fine print indicates that the government is likely to miss its budgetary target of GST collection of Rs 29,000 crore in 2019-20. The total GST and VAT collection till February 2020 stand at Rs 22,808 crore, states the budget, against the revised estimate of Rs 27,000. Excise duty collection has seen a shortfall, with Rs 4,669 crore being collected till February against the

budgeted target of Rs 6,000 crore in 2019-20.

For the year 2020-21, the target of GST, including VAT, has been proposed at Rs 30,000 crore, while excise revenue has been targeted at Rs 6,300 crore.

The budget, which did not impose any additional taxes on citizens, largely revolved around making allocations to fund existing schemes, while most of the fresh initiatives are in the education sector. The government's decision to implement the Centre's Ayushman Bharat scheme are among the highlights, apart from the plan to re-brand Delhi's tourism sector.

No separate announcements were made for relief and rehabilitation efforts in the communal riots-hit Northeast district.

As the budget session was made a day-long affair due to the coronavirus, Sisodia also tabled

the economic survey for 2019-20 and the outcome budget of the ongoing financial year (till December 2019) on Monday.

"We had promised to make Delhi a world class city. Today, Delhi is considered a model of development. This has come to be recognised as the Kejriwal model of governance across the country...The Kejriwal model of governance has proven that every child can receive standard education. Same goes for health...many states are replicating these schemes," Sisodia said.

While Rs 467 crore has been set aside for the free lifeline water subsidy scheme for providing 20,000 litres of water free to 6 lakh beneficiaries, Rs 2,820 crore has been allotted for the power subsidy scheme. Sisodia promised to keep the free bus rides scheme for women running in the coming year as well.

Plan for a new education board in capital

SUKRITA BARUAH
NEW DELHI, MARCH 23

IN AN unprecedented step, the Delhi government has set aside a portion of its Rs 65,000 crore budget estimate for developing a new school education board for the state.

Since it came to power in 2015, the Aam Aadmi Party-government has been dedicating the largest section of its budget to education, particularly schools. This time too, it has dedicated 24.33% of the total budget — or Rs 15,815 crore — to the education sector.

Of this, it has set aside Rs 62 crore for setting up a separate state board of education for Delhi and developing a new curriculum for its schools. While almost all schools run by the state governments in other states follow their respective state boards,



An expert committee will prepare curriculum for the new board

Delhi's government schools follow the Central Board of Secondary Education.

"Our government believes that education should play a guiding role in society. This is possible only when we connect education with the contemporary needs of society, and the possibilities of tomorrow. For this, we will also have to make

changes in our curriculum and examination system so that our students can go beyond book knowledge and gain practical knowledge and use it properly. The aim of the new Board is to establish such a system of education and examination in which children focus on understanding and learning rather [than] score marks by rote learning, so that they prepare themselves for the possible challenges of the upcoming world," said Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia while presenting the budget.

He also stated that an expert committee of "eminent scholars" will prepare a new curriculum for all classes of its schools, beginning from nursery.

Last year, Sisodia had raised the need for a separate Board in Delhi after the CBSE introduced a significant exam fee hike.

He also announced that stu-

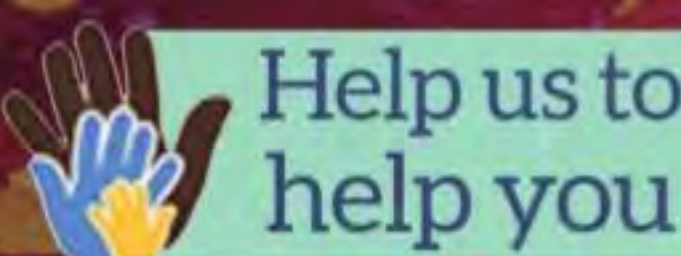
dents of Delhi government schools will be prepared to appear for the 2024 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) exam. An international test of education quality and student ability, the exam takes place once every three years for 15-year-old students in participant countries.

Among the other education initiatives mentioned include providing newspapers to students and organising "parent workshops" for parents of government school students, and setting up five schools of excellence specialising in specific streams in each of the 29 zones in Delhi.

The infrastructure proposals include construction of 17 new school buildings in 2020-2021, creating at least 10 "digital classrooms" in every government school and converting 90 double shift schools into single-shift ones.



Ministry of Health & Family Welfare
Government of India





NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Protective measures against Coronavirus




A distance of at least 1 meter is necessary to ensure safety for all







Wash your hands with soap and water regularly




If soap and water is not available, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol



Wash hands before touching eyes, nose and mouth



Throw used tissues into closed bins immediately after use



Cover your nose and mouth with handkerchief/tissue while sneezing and coughing




Avoid mass gathering and crowded places


If you are experiencing symptoms like fever, cough or difficulty in breathing, please call the state helpline number or 24x7 helpline numbers of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India and follow the instructions.


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