Air Quality of Delhi-NCR

Delhi	124	Gurugram	91
Ghaziabad	159	Faridabad	130
Noida	123	Greater Noida	114

Good 0-50 | Satisfactory 51-100 | Moderate 101-200 | Poor 201-300 | Very Poor 301-400 | Severe >400

Air Quality Index at 4 p.m. yesterday (Average of past 24 hours) | Source: CPCB

AAP govt. presents ₹65,000-cr. budget amid virus outbreak

2020-21 budget contains allocation to handle COVID-19 pandemic and recent riots; Opposition calls it 'directionless and a juggling of statistics'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Manish Sisodia presented a ₹65,000-crore budget at the Delhi Assembly here on Monday with continuing focus on education, transport and health sectors. The Opposition BJP, however, termed it "directionless, disappointing and a juggling of statistics".

Mr. Sisodia said the 2020-21 budget contained an allocation of ₹50 crore to confront the ongoing COVID-19 epidemic in the city in addition to the necessary financial arrangements needed for the setting up of a 'Campaign for Communal Harmony' in the wake of the recent communal riots which ripped across north-east Delhi last month.

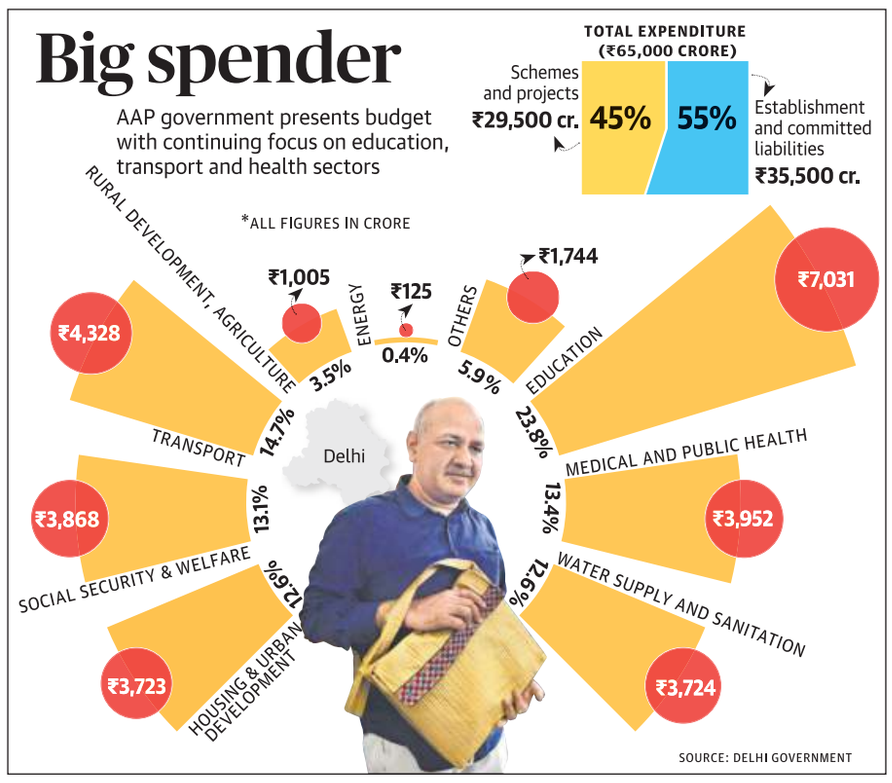
"This is the first budget of the government formed in Delhi for the third time under the leadership of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and I feel privileged that I have the opportunity to present the budget proposal in this House for the sixth consecutive time as the Finance Minister...The citizens of Delhi, under the leadership of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, have expressed their unwavering faith in the 'Kejriwal model of governance' over the last five years," Mr. Sisodia said.

The proposed budget of ₹65,000 crore, he said, would be financed from tax revenue of ₹44,100 crore, non-tax revenue of ₹800 crore, capital receipts of ₹1,100 crore and compensation of ₹7,800 crore under GST among other sources and was 18.50% higher than the revised estimates of ₹54,800 crore in 2019-20.

Focus on education

"The basic foundation of the Kejriwal model of governance is guaranteeing the best possible education to every child in Delhi...There has been work on education in the past, but the drawback was that only 5% of children were provided with excellent education and 95% of children were left with ordinary education. We have transformed this," he said.

Mr. Sisodia proposed to spend ₹15,815 crore for the education sector, which is 24.33% of the total budget including, ₹443 crore for education-related schemes and an amount of ₹7031 crore for the implementation of various programmes, schemes and projects related to the sector.



Health sector

For the health sector, Mr. Sisodia said he proposed a budget provision of ₹7,704 crore which included an amount of ₹3,952 crore for the implementation of various schemes, programmes and projects under the sector which was 55% higher than the revised estimate of ₹2,551 crore for 2019-20. This also included an immediate provision of ₹3 crore in the current fiscal's revised estimates and ₹50 crore for the coming financial year to confront the COVID-19 epidemic.

> **I feel privileged that I have the opportunity to present the budget proposal in this House for the sixth consecutive time as the Finance Minister...The citizens of Delhi have expressed their unwavering faith in the 'Kejriwal model of governance' over the last five years**
>
> MANISH SISODIA
> Finance Minister

"These are initial allocations and more will be made to tackle the epidemic as and when required. I assure you the government will leave no stone unturned in this regard," he said.

Transport sector

A budgetary allocation of ₹5,941 crore was made for the public transport sector of which ₹2,678 crore has been allocated for various programmes and schemes including, an outlay of ₹₹250 crore for the purchase of buses by the DTC and ₹1,100 crore for the viability gap funding of cluster buses.

While an outlay of ₹1,700 crore was made for development work in unauthorised colonies, ₹400 crore was pledged for the development of rural areas, ₹193 crore was proposed for the improvement of road infrastructure and ₹40 crore was dedicated to promote startups.

Delhi BJP chief Manoj Tiwari alleged the budget was "directionless, disappointing and a juggling of statistics". The people of Delhi, he said, had "high expectations" from the budget, but once again, the Kejriwal government had shown "stepmotherly behaviour" towards them.

"Like last year, this time too, the Delhi government has shown only dreams to the people of Delhi and no new plan has been introduced through this budget... the development of Delhi was never a priority for the Delhi government. New schools, colleges, hospitals, buses have been talked about for the last five years but till date nothing has been done at the ground level," he alleged.

Capital to get 2,485 buses by next fiscal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Capital's transport sector has been allocated ₹5,941 crore in the 2020-21 budget, the second-highest allocation for the coming fiscal, with an aim to fulfil Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's guarantee of providing "the largest and cheapest public transport system" in India, Finance Minister Manish Sisodia said, adding that the government had set a target of bringing the total fleet of State-run buses to 11,000, and laying 500 km of Delhi Metro lines.

After a decade

"After a gap of about 10 years, new buses have been added in Delhi's public transport system...buses with modern CCTV and 'disabled-friendly lift' have been included in the fleet for the first time in the country. New low-floor buses have been inducted for the first time since the Commonwealth Games. Altogether 2,485 new buses - 1,300 DTC and 1,185 cluster buses, including 685 electric buses - will be added to the fleet during 2020-21," Mr. Sisodia added.

As many as 1,880 buses - 444 DTC and 1,436 cluster buses - will be purchased beginning 2021-22. He added that the government will continue providing free travel aboard buses. "I propose an outlay of ₹250 crore for the purchase of buses by DTC and ₹1,100 crore for gap funding of cluster buses...four depots, in Okhla, Harinagar, Vasant Vihar and Hasanpur. These will probably be the first multilevel depots of their kind in the country," he said.

The government, he said, had approved all six corridors of the metro phase - IV project.

Delhi's per capita income 3 times higher than national average

Capital's contribution to national GDP also increases

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The per capita income of Delhi is estimated to be ₹3,89,143 in 2019-20, which is about three times the national average, which is estimated to be ₹1,34,432 in 2019-20, according to the Economic Survey of Delhi 2019-20 tabled in the Delhi Assembly on Monday.

Also, the contribution of Delhi to the national GDP has increased from 3.97% in 2014-15 to 4.20 % in 2019-20 though population of Delhi is only 1.49% of the India's population.

"The advance estimate of Gross State Domestic Product [GSDP] of Delhi at current prices during 2019-20 is likely to attain level of 8,56,112 crore, at a growth of 10.48% over 2018-19," it said.

Revenue surplus

According to the survey, Delhi has maintained its consistent revenue surplus which was ₹6,261 crore during 2018-19 as compared to ₹4,913 crore during 2017-18.

Also, per capita expenditure on health in Delhi has increased from ₹1,996 in the year 2014-15 to ₹3,044 in 2018-19. "South Delhi district has the highest forest cover area of 84.63 sq. km, and the lowest forest cover is in East Delhi of 3.75 sq. km," the survey said.

Also, about 4.65 lakh senior citizens have been provided monthly financial assistance in 2019-20 (till December 2019) compared to about 4.42 lakh senior citizens in 2018-19.

Financial assistance

Similarly, 93,475 persons have been provided financial assistance under the scheme Financial Assistance to Persons with Special Needs in 2019-20 (till December 2019) compared to 87,196 in 2018-19.

The total number of hospital beds increased from 48,096 in 2014 to 57,709 in 2018, thereby, bed population ratio (beds per 1,000 persons) increased from 2.65 to 2.94 in the same period.

AAP govt. to implement Ayushman Bharat

It had been opposing the scheme for several months; more mohalla clinics planned

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

In a change of stance, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government on Monday announced that it would be implementing the Central government's Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana here to provide ₹5 lakh health insurance cover to families per year, after having opposed it for several months.

A provision of ₹50 crore has been made in the budget to help fight spread of COVID-19 pandemic. ▪ BIBEK CHETTRI

Faces flak

AAP had faced flak from the BJP over this point on several occasions, with senior party leaders stressing on this point during the campaign to the assembly elections. With various leaders such as BJP MP Manoj Tiwari attacking the Delhi government for denying benefits of the scheme to the residents of Delhi. The scheme targets poor households to help meet their health expenses.

Commenting on this, BJP media in-charge Pratyush Kanth said that the Kejriwal government shouldn't have waited for this calamity to strike for implementing the scheme. Mr. Kanth had earlier submitted a petition before the High Court, calling for the implementation of the scheme here, he said.

Apart from this, in the health sector, Finance Minister Manish Sisodia announced that a provision of ₹50 crore was being made to help fight spread of COVID-19 pandemic.

He also announced an outlay of ₹365 crore to increase the number of mohalla clinics from 451 currently to up to 1,000. Through upgrading, expansion and construction of new hospitals, the government also plans to help increase the bed capacity at hospitals from 10,000 beds currently to up to 26,000 beds. An outlay of ₹724 crore has been proposed for the same.

In the outcome budget put out by the government, of a total of 743 critical indicators were applied to measure the progress of about 56 schemes under the health department. While only a few 'major indicators' have been specified in the report, it claims that out of these, 77% of the indicators were on track, while 20% were off track and three percent were not applicable.

AAP govt. to deploy environment marshals, build smog tower in CP

Sisodia allocates ₹20 crore to create mass awareness

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

With an aim to reduce air pollution in the city to one-third of the current levels, Finance Minister Manish Sisodia in the budget on Monday announced the deployment of "environment marshals" to aid district administration in enforcing environment laws.

The reduction in air pollution level to one-third was promised by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in the run up to the Delhi Assembly election as part of his 10-point guarantee card.

Mr. Sisodia on Monday also allocated ₹20 crore to create mass awareness on environment and also "Green citizen award" for people contributing towards environmental protection and preservation.

This comes after Environment Minister Gopal Rai stressed that the fight against air pollution has to be turned into a mass movement to make it a success.

Najafgarh drain

The Finance Minister also set aside ₹210 crore toward desilting, deepening of drains, constructing of series of check dams, barrages in 45 km length of Najafgarh drain with an aim to clean the Yamuna.

"We are yet to take a final call on which level official will be selected for environment marshals. They could be of the level from civil defence volunteers," an official told *The Hindu*.

Also, following a Supreme Court order on January 13, the Delhi government is in the process of building a "smog tower" in Connaught Place to clean the air and ₹30 crore was allocated in the budget for it.

"There is a need to carry out intensive campaigns all over Delhi to create awareness and public participation in the environment. I propose ₹20 crore in the budget," Mr. Sisodia said.

Also, in order to achieve the target of planting 2 crore saplings in the next five years, a target has been set to plant 40 lakh saplings by 22 green agencies in the year 2020-21.

Over ₹15,000 crore allocated for education sector

AAP govt. will be setting up its own education board to prepare students for challenges, says Sisodia

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Monday said that the government has allocated ₹15,815 crore for the education sector which is 24.33 % of the total budget keeping with the 'Kejriwal Model of Governance' which guaranteed quality education to all children by continuously investing a quarter of its total budget on education.

He said that the government will be setting up its own education board with an objective to focus on understanding and learning rather scoring marks by rote learning so that they prepare themselves for the possible challenges of the upcoming world.

The government, among other measures, has planned to convert all the classrooms from Classes IX to XII to hi-tech digital classrooms and build 17 new school buildings at a cost of ₹75 crore in 2020-21. It has also proposed to add five more schools of excellence in each zone, with an emphasis on excellence in any one particular subject, such as Science and Technology or Commerce or Arts or in the field of sports or vocational courses.

A school health scheme will be launched from next year and students will be given a multi-purpose identity card containing detailed health records. ▪ FILE PHOTO: R.V. MOORTHY

Number of initiatives

He also proposed a number of initiatives on skill and entrepreneurship development programme, spoken English competencies, patriotic course, with an aim for overall development of personality of students to become a good citizen.

Mr. Sisodia announced that a school health scheme will be launched from next year and students will be given a multi-purpose identity card containing detailed health records for which ₹22 crore is proposed. Mr. Sisodia said that the government is mulling joining the PISA Test in 2024. Elaborating on the test, Mr. Sisodia said "This process assesses how well the level of education received by children up to the age of 15 in a country or State meets international standards and needs. About 80 developed and highly developed countries of the world participate in this competition."

The government also proposed a new law which will ensure "quality early childhood education", overall development of children in age group of three to six.

Speaking about higher education, Mr. Sisodia said, "There is a provision of ₹20 crore in this budget to start a sports university and ₹15 crore to start Delhi Skill and Entrepreneurship University. Along with this, there is a proposal of starting Delhi Teachers Education University."

He added that the construction of the building at the eastern campus of Guru Govind Singh Indraprastha University has been completed to a great extent and 1,500 additional students can be admitted to this campus. The construction of Ambedkar University campuses in Dhirpur and Rohini is also likely to start, he added.

Coming fiscal, Capital to get improved roads, wider bridges and new flyovers

Over 1.32 lakh CCTV cameras have already been installed as promised by the government, says Finance Minister Manish Sisodia

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

New flyovers, wider bridges and improved roads are on the anvil for the coming fiscal, Finance Minister Manish Sisodia said here on Monday. He also said that the Delhi government had delivered on its promise of installing CCTV cameras across the city.

A three-lane flyover from the Munirka petrol pump to the Central base Post Office which was part of corridor improvement work on the Outer Ring Road from IIT to NH 8 had been completed, he said. The second part of the project, a two-lane underpass at the junction of Inner Ring Road, Benito Jaurez Marg and San Martin Marg would be completed by June-end, he added.

Increase in traffic

To address what he termed was "a steady increase" in traffic on the roads, for which there was a need to improve road infrastructure, he said the "improvement of road infrastructure" scheme with an outlay of ₹193 crore had been proposed.

"As I announced in the last budget, the work of widening of bridges on NH-10 at Rampura, Tri Nagar-Inderlok and Karampura has been started. About 20% work has been completed and entire project will be completed in 2020-21," he said.

"I had announced in my last budget speech to install 1.4 lakh CCTV cameras – 2,000 cameras per Assembly Constituency - I am happy to inform that about 1.32 lakh CCTV cameras have already been installed and now our government has increased the total number of cameras from 1.4 lakh to 2.8 lakh CCTV cameras for RWAs and market associations," he said.

Work related to phase-II, in relation to an additional 1.40 lakh CCTV cameras, he said, had also been started and would be completed in 2020-21 for which he proposed an outlay of ₹250 crore in addition to ₹150 crore provided in the revised estimates of 2019-20.

The Delhi government, he said, will also replace all the street lights on Public Works Department roads with energy efficient LED lights which would reduce the running cost of electricity bills for street lights from ₹6 crore per month to ₹3 crore per month.

Wi-Fi facility

"This project's cost shall be ₹100 crore and the work will be taken up in the year 2020-21...Our government is committed to provide the facility of free use of Wi-Fi to the general public by installing about 11000 Wi-Fi hotspots. The work has been started and about 2000 Wi-Fi Hotspots have been installed," he said.

"Construction of three new projects: a slip road bridge on Kondli Bridge and additional bridge over Ghazipur drain to widen the road from Hindon Canal to Dharmashila and work to the new Ashok Nagar Metro Station will be started during the year 2020-21. All three projects will save people's valuable time and will also save their energy and money," he said.

A total of ₹193 crore has been proposed under the head of 'Improvement of road infrastructure'. ▪ FILE PHOTO