

July 10, 2014

Shri Randeep Singh Surjewala, Spokesperson, AICC and Cabinet Minister, Government of Haryana has issued the following statement to the Press today on the Union Budget 2014-15.

- “1. Union Budget 2014-15 is a mere accounting statement, is ‘visionless’, is bereft of any ‘Road Map’ and reflects apparent ‘superficiality’.

Finance Minister has laid no direction qua ‘reduction of inflation and prices’, ‘creation of jobs’, ‘promotion of infrastructure’ and ‘preservation of social welfare schemes’.

Even the artificial claim of generation of adequate resources and reduction of current account deficit to 4.1% is not backed by any avenue of ‘resource generation’ or ‘resource creation’ symbolic of lack of specifics, clarity and purpose in the budget.

Prime Minister and Finance Minister must tell people of India as to where are the much promised big ticket reforms, what is the new promised direction of ‘good governance’ and how do they promise to usher in much touted ‘अच्छे दिन’ ?

2. Budget 2014-15 appears to introduce new Schemes/Programmes with abysmally low outlays making them neither workable nor implementable for next 10-20 years.

This yearning for populism by announcing Schemes/Programmes without budgetary allocation raises serious doubt on the bonafide and intention of PM and FM in making lame duck promises to people of India.

Some of these Schemes/Programmes may be seen hereunder:-

- (i) Much touted ‘Good Governance’ Programme of PM gets a merely Rs.100 crore of budgetary allocation for the entire country of 125 crore people.
- (ii) ‘Virtual Class Rooms’ Scheme projected by PM in the run up to the elections gets a budgetary allocation of merely Rs.100 crore for the entire country.
- (iii) ‘Women Safety’ Scheme by Road Transport Ministry for entire India gets a mere Rs.50 crore. ‘Women Safety’ Scheme of Home Ministry

for over 100 big cities gets merely Rs.150 crore i.e. Rs.1.5 crore per city.

- (iv) 'Broad Band Connectivity Programme' through National Rural Internet Commission for over 7 lakh villages of India gets a pittance of Rs.500 crore.
- (v) All important National level Coastal Security issue for creation of marine police stations, construction of new jetties and purchase of boats get a mere Rs.150 crore.
- (vi) Much touted project of PM and FM for linking of rivers gets a pittance of Rs.100 crore.

Projects for cleaning and recreation of river front and ghats in eight cities also get a pittance of Rs.100 crore i.e. Rs.12 crore per city.

- (vii) One of the most prominent election issues qua cleaning of Holy Ganga that requires over Rs.60,000 crore, according to Government's own claims, gets a pittance of Rs.2,037 crore. At this pace, it will take 30 years to complete the project.
- (viii) FM mokes at the farming community by announcing construction of two new Agricultural Universities and two new Horticultural Universities by merely allocating Rs.100 crore.
- (ix) While FM announces allocation of a 'Soil Health Card' to the entire farming community i.e. 62% of India's total population, he allocates a mere Rs.100 crore making it a cruel non-implementable joke.

In another shocking allocation for agriculture sector, FM allocates merely Rs.100 crore to entire farming community (62% of India's population) for fighting 'Climate change' by creating a National Adaptation Fund for climate change.

FM similarly allocates a pittance of Rs.50 crore for indigenous cattle breeding.

- (x) Playing a practical joke on India's poor and middle class as a biggest inflation control measure, FM allocates a small amount of Rs.500 crore as 'Prices Stabilization Fund' to fight volatility in agriculture and food products.
- (xi) Trade and Handloom Facilitation Centre for mega textiles cluster get merely Rs.50 crore. Similarly, entire Pashmina Production Programme of Jammu & Kashmir also gets a pittance of Rs.50 crore.

- (xii) Much touted creation of 100 smart cities gets an insignificant allocation of Rs.7,060 crore making it a per city contribution of less than Rs.70 crore. How does PM and FM propose to set up a smart city in Rs.70 crore is beyond comprehension?
- (xiii) Similarly, urban metro projects get merely Rs.100 crore despite knowingfully well that each such project costs Rs.5,000 crore.
- (xiv) In power sector, scheme for segregation of feeders started by Congress government as 'Rajiv Gandhi Vidyutikaran Yojna' gets a pittance of Rs.500 crore for the entire country.

What is even worse is that creation of 'ultra modern super critical technology' for Thermal Power Plants to produce clean power gets merely Rs.100 crore. To top it, all three big solar power projects to be set up in three different States get merely Rs.500 crore.

- (xv) Construction of four new AIMS and 12 new Medical Colleges gets a pittance of Rs.500 crore. Considering the fact that every single AIMS requires an investment of Rs.1,000 crore and every Medical College requires an investment of over Rs.300 crore, these projects are unimplementable.
- (xvi) 'बेटी बचाओ योजना', 'Technology Development Fund' and 'Agricultural Infrastructural Fund' similarly get Rs.100 crore each making them mere paper announcements.

These examples can be multiplied manifold and are reflective of an escapist mindset, visionless approach and a design to dupe the common man on part of PM and FM.

- (3) PM's and FM's real pro-rich and anti-poor agenda gets exposed in their announcement to rationalize subsidies. FM refuses to State the budgetary allocation for MGNAREGA and instead professes to altar its contours without giving details, raising a lurking suspension on the intent of BJP qua implementation of the largest Employment Guarantee Programme in the world. In 2013-14, Congress government made a budgetary allocation for MGNAREGA of over Rs.1,42,000 crore.

FM intentionally omits to reflect on budgetary allocation of the largest food scheme to be implemented under Right to Food & Nutrition, guaranteeing 5 kg of wheat/rice/coarse grain per person @ Rs.2/- per kg. His statement that he is not sure about number of beneficiaries to be included raises a lurking doubt on the intent of the government.

FM chose to give a complete go-bye to detailing of National Rural Health Mission and promise of an identical 'National Urban Health Mission' for Urban areas.

Despite tall promises made by PM and FM of urban renewal, no details qua budgetary allocation under JNURM and UIDSSMT are given.

All these raise a lurking suspicion in the mind of people of India that drastic cuts in budgetary allocation of these social welfare schemes shall be imposed to finance the reduction in current account deficit and fill up the resource gap.

Entire Budget 2014-15 is an exercise in delusion and a clear attempt to dupe the people of country by PM, Shri Narendra Modi and FM, Shri Arun Jaitley. Truly, 'अच्छे दिन हवा हुए' (**Good days have evaporated**)."

POINTS ON UNION BUDGET 2014-15

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