

UP budget to focus on farmers, infra, job

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Lucknow: Farm sector, infrastructure, employment generation, MSME and social welfare are likely to be core focus areas as the Yogi Adityanath government tables its fifth budget -- probably the last before the next state polls -- on Monday. This would be Uttar Pradesh's first paperless budget and its size is likely to cross previous year's Rs 5.12 lakh crore despite Covid-19 pandemic.

Political analysts believe that the budget will have the reflection of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's promise to take the state's economy to 1 trillion dollar economy-mark.

The government's efforts for doubling the farmers income by 2022 amid a prolonged farmers' agitation is likely to get a push.

Before tabling the budget at 11 am on Monday by finance minister Suresh Khanna, the CM would head a cabinet meeting to fine-tune the document.

On Sunday, Khanna had a series of meetings with the CM, secretaries in the finance department and the organisational leaders to prepare a budget which strikes a balance between populism and realities of decline in overall revenue receipt and per capita income due to Covid-induced lockdown in the first four months of this financial year.

Khanna had recently told TOI that despite pandemic blues and increased expenditure to fund the battle against Covid, the size of the budget would be much larger than the previous year's with a main focus on key areas of infrastructure, social welfare and rural development.