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# Budget today; FM may take fiscally prudent steps

Sitharaman likely to  
announce stimulus  
for Covid-battered  
sectors

11/2/21

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NEW DELHI, DHNS

**T**he Budget for 2021-22 to be presented on Monday is likely to give a prudent spending plan, notwithstanding the rising demand for a large fiscal stimulus.

Healthcare and job creation through infrastructure and Atmanirbhar Bharat, which seeks to promote domestic manufacturing across sectors, is likely to be the main focus area, and may see substantially increased public spending.

Sectors still reeling under the impact of Covid-19 may receive some more relief package. Travel, tourism, hospitality and real estate may qualify for this as they have witnessed huge income and job losses.

No major tax relief for salaried individuals is expected but Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who hiked the limit of standard deduction from salaried income in her



Parliament floor leaders during a meeting with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in New Delhi on Sunday. PTI

## Better rail amenities

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is likely to give a push for the modernisation of railways and announce steps to provide better passenger amenities.

maiden Budget, may increase it further. Expenses incurred on work from home by employees may be taken care of.

The government may propose to spend more resources and manpower on the vaccination drive. Allocation for healthcare services may be doubled in the Budget and frontline health workers may be rewarded with more allow-

ances. Startups are likely to be encouraged for raising health infrastructure, especially in rural areas, with more tax benefits and holidays.

Sources in the government told DH that the Centre may come up with new avenues of job creation and income generation, as the Covid-19 pandemic has left deep scars on those fronts.

The Budget may also ease regulatory norms for the real estate sector and announce measures to get pending projects completed.

Middle-income and salaried employees should not expect much in the current year, said a source, but added that the finance minister will try to leave some more income in their hands.

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