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Parliament's joint sitting across three chambers

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NEW DELHI, DHNS

In a first, parliamentarians would be seated in three chambers— the Central Hall, the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha— when President Ram Nath Kovind addresses the joint sitting of both Houses of Parliament on January 29, marking the beginning of the Budget Session.

While the president would address the joint sitting from the Central Hall, lawmakers would spread out to the three chambers to maintain physical distancing as per the Covid-19 protocol.

In another first, most of the documents of the Union Budget and the Economic Survey would be available in digital format as Covid-19 protocol had made it impossible for ensuring a 10-day quarantine for finance ministry officials involved in the printing of budget papers.

“Only the President’s Address and the Finance Minister’s budget speech would be made available in the printed booklet form,” Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said here.

The Budget Session of Parlia-

ment will be held from January 29 to April 8 with a three-week recess beginning February 16.

Birla said elaborate arrangements have been made for carrying out RT-PCR tests on Parliamentarians and their family members during the Session period.

“We will be setting up testing centres near the cluster of residences of the MPs so that their family members need not come to Parliament for getting tested,” the Speaker said.

Earlier, the Speaker chaired a meeting of senior officials from the ministries of Health and Ayush, New Delhi Municipal Council, CPWD, DRDO, ICMR, AIIMS, Delhi Police and Delhi government.

Separately, the Speaker has also written to state governments asking them to ensure that parliamentarians face no difficulty in attending the Parliament Session.

Birla also rejected any chances of Covid-19 vaccination for Parliamentarians on a priority basis.

“The vaccination process shall proceed as per the government policy,” the Speaker said.