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B S Yediyurappa, Chief Minister

State Budget in March first week, says CM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Udupi

CHIEF Minister B S Yediyurappa on Tuesday said that he is looking to present the State Budget in the first week of March. Till such time, he will assess the financial situation depending on which, allocations will be made under different heads. Speaking to reporters in Kundapur, the CM said that timely and bountiful rains in the state have helped the farming community reap richer harvest.

"The Legislative Assembly session will start from January 28 and we will discuss how the budgetary allocations can be made this time, given the financial constraints due to the Covid-19 pandemic. But a budget acceptable to all will be presented after a thorough study," he stressed.

The CM, who hold the Finance portfolio, will start holding a series of consultative meetings with the various departments as well as trade and industry bodies over the next few weeks before giving final shape to the budget.

The CM had earlier indicated that there could be a deficit of Rs 40,000-50,000 crore in the budget due to the pandemic and natural disasters like floods and drought. He had also expressed concern over not being able to take up development works on expected lines.

While the government is making all efforts to bring the economy back on track, and also wooing foreign investors to generate employment opportunities, it has also sought central assistance of Rs

5,495 crore, as recommended by the 15th Finance Commission, to tide over the current financial crisis.

Regarding allocation of portfolios to the newly-inducted ministers, Yediyurappa said that it will be done within two days after holding discussions. When asked about disgruntled BJP MLA Renukacharya visiting party leaders in Delhi to vent his ire, the CM told reporters that he has already spoken to the lawmaker and any differences will be sorted out.

Amid all the political wrangling arising out of the cabinet expansion, Yediyurappa is in the coastal town on a temple-hopping spree. His visits, planned right in the middle of the present turmoil, has generated both curiosity and attention.