

Sindh budget to be presented on Wednesday

The annual budget of Sindh for the coming financial year 2020-21 will be presented on Wednesday, June 17.

This was announced by Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah as he addressed a parliamentary party meeting of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) at the CM House on Sunday. The CM said he would present the budget himself. The parliamentary party meeting was attended by former provincial minister Manzoor Wassan, all provincial ministers, Adviser to the CM on Law Murtaza Wahab and a majority of the MPAs of the ruling PPP.

The CM said that before presenting the budget for the next financial year in the Sindh Assembly, he would chair a cabinet meeting to approve the budget. He said the COVID-19 pandemic had not only affected the people but also the budget estimates for the next year. "Despite the critical condition, I will try my best to provide relief to the poor people of the province through budgetary measures," he said.

Shah added that in the next budget, priorities would be given to the health sector, under which new facilities would be established. "We earlier contained the virus, which is now spreading throughout the province," he said.

He lamented that coronavirus was claiming more lives every day and the number of daily cases had crossed 2,000. This is a serious situation, therefore, our people have to adopt precautionary measures and we have to further strengthen our health system, he remarked.

Informing his parliamentary party members about the budgetary priorities, he said water and sanitation sector, poverty reduction, development of social sector and revival of provincial economy would be given top priorities. However, he added that instead of launching new schemes, focus would be on the completion of the ongoing projects.

After coronavirus, locust swarm attacks had formed a persisting threat to the agro-economy of the province, the CM said. "This threat may cause food security issues in the province." The CM said that due to the coronavirus emergency, necessary measures to ensure social distancing in the assembly hall would be taken during the budget session. "We, in consultation with opposition members in the assembly, are trying to develop SOPs for the budget session," he said.

At the outset of the meeting, Fateha for the late Sindh human settlement minister Ghulam Murtaza Baloch was offered. The meeting eulogised his services for the party and the Sindh government.