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estimates for 2023-24 is overall lower than the budgeted estimates 2023-24 as the UT government was successful in streamlining its expenditure. The supplementary demands for 2023-24 of Rs 8,712.90 Cr pertain to the four Departments of Finance, Power Development, Hospitality and Protocol and Cooperatives.

The supplementary budget is required by Finance department in view of the repayment of debt, while Power Development department needs to provide for power procurement. The Hospitality and Protocol department intends to develop the new J&K Bhawan at Dwarka, New Delhi for which land will be allotted from DDA. The Cooperative department requires the funding additionally for its new CSS, Assistance to Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS). These additional demands are proposed to be catered with Supplementary Demands for the current year 2023-24.

The interim budget for 2024-25 makes provisions for the ongoing initiatives for infrastructure development, sustainable agriculture, new industrial estate, PRI level works, employment generation, developing tourism, and social inclusion.

During preparation of the interim budget proposals, consultations were held with all the Departments and various stakeholders to provide for ongoing initiatives and arrive at realistic budgetary numbers. For finalizing expenditure proposals, assessment of financing needs of infrastructure projects, social and economic measures undertaken by Departments was undertaken.

The budgetary exercise focused on the imperative of advancing the cause of the greater collective good within the realistically realizable resources. While the budgetary estimate for the next financial year 2024-25 is about Rs 1,18,728 Cr, the UT Government has proposed the Vote on Account for Rs 59,364 Cr.

This interim budget for 2024-25 covers revenue expenditure of Rs 40,081 Cr and capital expenditure of Rs 19,283 Cr.

HIGHLIGHTS...

- Rs 390 Cr for Flood Management Project of River Jhelum.
 - Rs 450 Cr for GST re-imbursement to ensure timely reimbursement of the claims.
 - Rs 272Cr for DDC/BDC grants improving local governance at district and block level
 - Rs 174 Cr for development of model schools under PM-Shri scheme.
 - Rs 150 Cr for developing rooftop solar and other avenues of new and renewable energy.
 - Rs 140 Cr for creation of Sports Infrastructure
 - Rs 100 Cr for conclusion of World Bank funded Jhelum Tawi Flood Recovery Project.
 - Rs 100 Cr for Mission Youth programmes for education, skilling, and employment.
 - Rs 100 Cr for heritage preservation.
 - Rs 91 Cr for new tourism destinations, new circuits, Sufi circuit and identified religious circuits, ropeways, highway resting places and promotion of Golf.
 - Rs 70 Cr under infrastructure for welfare of tribals for construction of Tribal Hostels/Milk Villages/ Nomad Shelters/Libraries for Gujjars.
 - Rs 100 Cr for sewerage projects in urban areas, Rs 70 Cr for development of new Townships and affordable housing and Rs 50 Cr for Dal development.
 - Rs 40 Cr for Tourism promotion, Rs15 Cr for the festival promotion and for promotion of cinema/ theatre.
 - Rs 40 Cr for meeting incentives as per the provisions of the Industrial Policy and Start-ups; Rs 15 Cr for trade promotion through J&K TPO; and Rs 100 Cr for Youth startup/Job fairs/employment fairs.
 - Rs 30 Cr for establishment of cold storage and Rs 30 Cr for high density plantation.
 - Rs 80 Cr for establishment of DDC/BDC/PRI accommodation and offices as also for security arrangements of DDC/BDC/PRI representatives.
 - Rs 59 Cr for construction of Police Housing colony and relief and rehabilitation
 - Rs 45 Cr for construction of Bunkers and for digitization and CCTVs in Police Stations
 - Rs 30 Cr for improving Quality in Schools, School Infrastructure, for Career Counseling and for introduction of additional Streams in Schools.
 - Rs 5 Cr for replacement of old fleet in transport sector.
- The two Appropriation Bills on the Supplementary Demands for 2023-24 and Vote on Account for 2024-25 of the UT Government are likely to be considered by the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha during 7th to 9th February 2024.

Congress 'ready' to...

Narendra Modi has established India as a glorious, strong and decisive nation in the last 10 years.

The Congress used to do politics of casteism and vote bank, but now report card politics is being followed in the government of Yashvi Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he said adding that the BJP has done what it had said, it has also done what it did not say in the interest of the country and the people.

Chugh said that as the elections approach, the Congress and the opposition remembers the caste census. Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that there are only four castes in the country, poor, youth, Annadata and Nari Shakti (GYAN), he said adding that if these four castes get welfare, then all the castes will get welfare. Therefore, all the schemes of BJP are focused on their welfare, he added.

Chugh said that no one had thought that Shri Ram Lalla would sit at his place and we all would get the privilege of seeing Ram Lalla being consecrated in a grand tem-

ple with the lotus feet of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"After 500 years, Prime Minister Narendra Modi also brought the struggle to a complete halt", he added.

Chugh said that the Bharat Jodo Nyaya Yatra that Rahul Gandhi has set out on is actually the Bharat Jodo Nyaya Yatra. Rahul Gandhi is trying to attract people's attention by doing some new drama every day, he said.

No compromise on...

now part of India's development journey," he said.

Shah said terrorism and insurgency have left many dead and injured, and the government has taken action not only on terrorism but its ecosystem too.

Giving an example, the home minister said there were over 2,600 organised stone pelting incidents in Jammu and Kashmir prior to the Modi government came to power and over 110 people lost their lives and more than 6,000 people were injured due to these incidents.

"Now there is not a single incident of stone pelting in Jammu and Kashmir. There is zero stone pelting," he said. Shah also said that after the implementation of the newly enacted three criminal justice laws, these will be the most modern laws.

LG emphasises on...

Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh NCC Directorate for their historic participation in the Republic Day celebrations.

"National Cadets Corps represents the great diversity of India and its unity. It is known for the values like discipline, comradeship, dedication to the Nation and to the cause of social equity," the Lt Governor observed.

He said the remarkable achievements of NCC cadets like Captain Ulfat Khan are an inspiring example for country's youth.

"Truly proud of Captain Ulfat Khan, the Parade Commander of Prime Minister's rally. You have made us all very proud," the Lt Governor said.

He also congratulated the JUO Dechen Chuskit for receiving the prestigious Raksha Mantri Padak.

Every NCC Cadet is the symbol of the limitless potential of our youth. I am confident that the young Cadets will continue to carry forward the rich legacy of this world's largest uniformed youth organization to build a prosperous and united society, he said.

Over the years, NCC has established its reputation of serving the society and the nation. The four new battalions will further cement the very foundation of the National Cadets Corps and increase the strength of cadets in Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh from 27,870 to 40,730, the Lt Governor further added.

The Lt Governor also felicitated the Cadets and instructors of J&K and Ladakh NCC Directorate with LG's Appreciation Certificates and mementos. He extended his felicitations to the NCC Cadets who have been selected for J&K Police and Defence Force.

A total of 122 cadets of Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh NCC Directorate had participated in this year's Republic Day celebration. 12 NCC cadets were selected to march on the Kartavya path and 09 cadets were selected for Guard of Honour. Senior Under Officer Rohit Sharma was the Guard of Honour Commander of the Prime Minister's Rally.

Alok Kumar, Principal Secretary Higher Education; Maj Gen Rajesh Kumar Sachdeva, ADG, NCC Directorate, Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh; Dr. Piyush Singla, Secretary, School Education Department; senior Officers and Instructors of NCC were present on the occasion at Raj Bhawan.

J&K suffered due...

said, adding that he has immense faith in the ability of the country and its people.

Hitting back at Prime Minister Modi over his criticism of Nehru, Congress leader Shashi Tharoor later said, "Poor Nehru ji has gone since 60 years, and he continues the same lament about Nehru ji. We are flattered that he is so worried about us that he has devoted his entire speech towards the Congress."

Talking about price rise, Modi again lashed out at Nehru and Indira Gandhi, and said history is witness that when the Congress comes, it brings price rise with it.

He quoted Nehru as saying that "there are problems because prices of all things have gone up and the common people are caught up in it"

"After 10 years of this statement, Indira Gandhi said, 'You are facing problems due to price rise....'," Modi said.

The prime minister said his government has reined-in inflation despite two wars and the Covid pandemic.

He again attacked Nehru when talking about Kashmir and said the Congress leader's thinking was the root cause of the problems that Kashmir and the country had to face.

The Prime Minister predicted that the BJP will "definitely" get 370 seats and the ruling National Democratic Alliance will cross 400 seats in the Lok Sabha polls as he tore into the Congress, saying its "shop" is on the verge of closure.

In his nearly 100-minute reply to the discussion on the Motion of Thanks on the President's address in Lok Sabha, he said his government in its third term will take "very big" decisions and lay a strong foundation for the India of next 1,000 years while the opposition has made up its mind to remain in opposition with reduced numbers.

Opposition members failed to offer any constructive suggestion in the debate even in the Parliament's last session before the polls and many of them will be relegated to visitors gallery, he said, adding that he has heard some of them want to change their constituencies while some others are eyeing a Rajya Sabha berth.

The Congress was in power for many decades and now it has resolved to remain in the opposition for decades, he said.

Modi exuded confidence of retaining power for a third term and kept the attack mostly on the Congress.

"The shop of the Congress is on the verge of closure as it tries to launch the same product again and again," he said in a swipe at Rahul Gandhi, currently leading his party's Bharat Jodo Nyaya Yatra, who has often referred to the Congress opening "mohabbat ki dukaan (shop of love) to counter BJP's alleged 'hate politics'".

There were frequent protests by opposition party members as Modi criticised its stalwarts Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi over a host of issues.

The Congress has not only harmed itself but other opposition parties and the country too, he said in his likely last speech in the current Lok Sabha.

He said the Congress has adopted "cancel culture" as it seeks to cancel every achievement of the country in its single-minded pursuit to target him.

Modi also hit back at the opposition over its charge against his government that it was misusing probe agencies to target its leaders, asserting that his campaign against corruption will continue.

Probe agencies work independently and this is how the Constitution envisages them to function, he said, adding that it is for courts to judge their action.

He said the country needs a good and healthy opposition but the Congress failed in its role and did not allow other voices, including young leaders, to emerge due to its apprehension that they may overshadow others.

It cannot look beyond its "shahi parivaar" (royal family), he said in a jibe at the Gandhi family.

In its first term, his government filled up the "ditches" left behind by the 10-year rule of the Congress-led UPA government, laid the foundation of a new India in its second term and will speed up the pace of a developed India in the third, he said.

"The third term will witness very big decisions. It will lay a strong foundation of India of the next 1,000 years," he said.

The prime minister cited a host of decisions taken by his government for different sections of society, including the poor, youth, farmers and women.

He spoke of the Ram temple's consecration ceremony to assert that not only did Lord Ram return home but the temple will continue to infuse new energy in India's great cultural tradition.

Noting that his third term is merely 100-125 days away, he said even Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge is speaking of "abki baar, 400 paar".

Kharge during his speech in Rajya Sabha had referred to the slogan raised by BJP members to apparently take a dig at the ruling party.

BJP members lustily responded with "400 paar" when Modi asked "abki baar" a few times.

"I normally do not get into numbers. But I can see the mood of the country. It will give over NDA 400 seats and at least 300 seats to the BJP," he said.

The ruling party had won 303 seats in the 543-member Lok Sabha in the 2019 general elections while the NDA had bagged 353 seats.

Modi projected 370 seats for the BJP after citing various government achievements, including the repeal of Article 370.

Amid INDIA bloc infighting, he said a "bhanumati ka kumba" (disparate alliance) was put together but its members are now saying "ekla chalo" (go alone), an apparent reference to the TMC decision not to have an alliance with the Congress in West Bengal.

Someone became a motor mechanic but could not effect alignment in the alliance, he said in another dig at Rahul Gandhi who had met a group of mechanics recently.

With the Congress and other parties raising the OBC pitch, Modi said they question about the number of backward officials in different posts but cannot see the biggest OBC, referring to himself.

Amid the charge that the BJP is also full of leaders promoting dynastic politics, he said if members of a family do well in politics on their own strength with people's support, his party has never called it dynastic politics.

Amit Shah or Rajnath Singh do not run their own political parties, he said after some opposition members mentioned the names of the Union ministers.

Dynastic politics is when a family runs a party and promotes its own members, he said, adding that otherwise even if 10 members of a family enter politics, he welcomes them.

"When it is certain that after one member, his or her son will become its president, then it is a threat to democracy," he said.

The Congress changed its leader but it continues to have the same tape recorder, he added.

When TMC's Saugata Roy questioned the absence of minorities' issues in President Droupadi Murmu's address, Modi retorted whether all steps taken by his government for women, farmers, youths and others do not benefit them.

"How long will you think divisively and divide the country," Modi said.

Noting that the opposition often makes light of his assertion that India will be the third largest global economy in his third term claiming it is no big deal and will happen on its pace, Modi said the then UPA government finance minister in his interim budget in 2014 had projected three decades for India to achieve the same status.

The prime minister took a swipe at P Chidambaram, the then finance minister, saying he considers himself as the biggest economist in the universe. The Congress leader was also full of self-praise about India becoming the 11th largest economy at that time, while it is now the 5th largest, he said.

It is "Modi's guarantee" that India will become the third largest economy in his third term. At the pace of the Congress government, it would have taken 100 years to build 4 crore houses that have been constructed under his dispensation in the past 10 years, he said.

IPS Pande posted...

Partde, IPS (AGMUT:2010) to Jammu & Kashmir with immediate effect and until further orders," read an order issued by Rakesh Kumar Singh, Under Secretary, MHA, GoI.

"This issues with the approval of the Competent Authority." it added.

Army distributes 22 artificial limbs among blast victims near LoC

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

MENDHAR: Army on Monday distributed nearly two dozen artificial limbs to the victims who lost their limbs due to Pakistani shelling or mine blasts along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district, officials said.

The first of its kind initiative for the people residing ahead of the Anti Infiltration Obstacle System (AIOS) in the Blimber Gali area of Mendhar sector was organised in collaboration with Kiwanis Artificial Limb Rehabilitation and Research Centre by Kiwanis Club, New Delhi, the officials said.

They said the campaign to provide artificial limbs to the blast victims was started in November last year, wherein 22 physically handicapped individuals from the forward villages were identified by the Army and invited to attend the camp for measurement of



Army officials along with beneficiaries during the camp.

prosthetic limbs by the experts from Kiwanis Artificial Limb Rehabilitation and Research Centre.

In the last two months state-of-the-art prosthetic limbs have been manufactured to suit the unique requirement of each individual, the officials said, adding these prosthetic limbs are made from high density polyethylene and are tailor made to meet the requirement of each individual.

The officials said the army-led initiative would not only

give a new lease of life to the physically handicapped persons but it will give them and their families confidence and empower them to achieve their dreams.

On February 3, Army's Ace of Spades division' in collaboration with the White Knight Corps organised a multi-specialty medical and artificial limb camp at Naushera sector of Rajouri district, which witnessed distribution of 54 prosthetic limbs, 47 crutches, and wheelchairs to those in need.

Secy Cooperative visits Coop Complex Bantalab

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Secretary, Cooperative, Babila Rakwal, on Monday visited Cooperative Complex, Bantalab and reviewed functioning of the department.

During the visit, the Secretary had an exclusive interaction with the employees regarding working of their respective units. She emphasized the pivotal role of cooperatives in community development while highlighting various centrally sponsored schemes, with a special focus on "Computerization of Registrar Offices and ARDBs".

The Secretary instructed the concerned officers to ensure cleanliness and

proper hygiene within the complex. She emphasized the commitment towards creating a conducive working environment for the cooperative society workforce. She asked for auction of dead stock and condemnation of obsolete vehicles to enhance operational efficiency and resource optimization.

Later, the Secretary listened to the grievances and concerns of the employees assuring an early redressal of the same.

Present on the occasion were Additional Registrar Jammu, Joint Registrar Special and Audit Jammu, Joint Registrar Banking and Finance, along with other officers and officials.

Progress of PWD(R&B) Sector projects reviewed at Rajouri; DC calls for timeline completion of works

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

RAJOURI: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Om Prakash Bhagat, presided over a meeting to assess the progress of the developmental projects being executed by the Public Works Department (R&B) in the district, here today.

The projects under review included those funded by the District Plan, Potholes, NABARD, City and Towns, CRF and bridges. It was informed that out of 339 projects, 240 have been completed. During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner meticulously examined the physical and financial advancements under each project. The purpose of this comprehensive review was to ensure that the projects were progressing as planned and

that the allocated funds were being utilized effectively.

Recognizing the importance of timely completion, the Deputy Commissioner Om Prakash Bhagat directed the concerned officers to closely monitor the progress in their respective divisions. He emphasized the need for expeditious completion of the projects while maintaining high-quality standards.

He asked the officers to continue their diligent work and maintain a proactive approach to expedite the completion of these projects. The review meeting provided a platform for constructive discussions, allowing the participants to exchange ideas, address challenges, and identify solutions.

The district administration Rajouri is determined to pri-

oritize the welfare and progress of its citizens. Through efficient execution and close monitoring of these developmental projects, the district administration aims to foster sustainable growth, improve infrastructure, enhance socio-economic conditions, and ultimately elevate the quality of life for all residents.

The meeting was attended by the Chief Planning Officer, Mohammad Khurshid; Superintending Engineer PWD(R&B) Devi Dayal; EXEN PWD(R&B) Rajouri, Sardar Khan; EXEN PWD Nowshera, VK Raina and Executive Engineers of PWD Kalakote, Thanamandi and other concerned officers from Public Works Department.

Dozens of vegetable shops gutted in fire at Ramban

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

BANIHAL: A fire broke out in a vegetable and fruit market with dozens of shops gutted in the Banihal area of Ramban district on Monday, officials said. There was no loss of life in the blaze, they said.

Locals, police, fire tenders and army personnel rushed to the spot and launched an operation to control the fire, they said.

The fire began at a kiosk in the market and quickly engulfed the entire market, making the operation to extinguish fire very difficult, officials said.

The fire was subsequently brought under control but dozens of tin and wooden sheds used by vendors were gutted in the fire, they said.

Meanwhile, National Conference leader and district president Ramban Sajjad Shaheen has expressed grief over the damage to property in a massive fire incident at vegetable market Banihal.

Shaheen has urged upon the authorities to ensure adequate compensation and rehabilitation of the affected persons. It is imperative that those impacted

by this calamity receive the necessary support to rebuild their lives and businesses.

In addition to seeking immediate relief measures, Shaheen calls for a thorough magisterial inquiry into the circumstances leading to the fire incident. "Understanding the root causes is crucial to implementing preventive measures and safeguarding against future tragedies," he added.

He has extended his solidarity and support to the affected individuals during this trying time. He urged the authorities to expe-

dite the process of relief and rehabilitation to alleviate the suffering of those affected.

He said that there is an immediate need of establishing well-equipped fire service stations across the district, adding that in hilly areas such stations should be opened at block level.

Shaheen has reiterated his demand for upgradation of Fire station Banihal besides setting up of fire service stations at Khari, Mahoo, Ramsoo, Neel, Ukharhal to cater to the needs of the people in their respective areas.