

'Want to bring fuel under GST'

HT Correspondent

htmetro@htlive.com

MUMBAI: In his reply to the debate on budget in state Assembly, deputy chief minister and finance minister Ajit Pawar said on Thursday the state wants petrol and diesel to be brought under the Goods and Services Taxes regime, so that the prices are reduced. Pawar said that until the decision is taken, the Centre should take steps to reduce its own taxes on fuel to give respite to citizens.

Pawar said the state government would, like a few other states, support the move, if the Centre brings petrol and diesel under GST. Under current financial conditions, the Maharashtra government is not in a position to reduce the VAT levied on fuel, he said.

At the same time, Pawar announced an increase in the area development fund used by the legislators in their constituencies. It has now been increased to ₹4 crore from the existing ₹3 crore a year. He also announced restoration of the 30% cut initiated on the salary of the legislators from April 2020 in the wake of outbreak of Covid-19. The restoration will come into effect from March 2021. Legislators (288 in Assembly and 78 in council) draw a salary of about ₹2 lakh a month, including allowances.

Pawar also assured the legislators to take a decision about the salary of the drivers of the legislators soon.

Tweaking his decision announced in the state budget, Pawar announced on Wednesday to increase the excise duty on branded and non-branded country liquor to 220% from



(From left) Home minister Anil Deshmukh, CM Uddhav Thackeray and deputy CM Ajit Pawar address the media at Vidhan Bhavan, on Wednesday.

VIDYADHAR RANE/HT

213%. In budget, it was increased only on branded country liquor.


The finance minister also announced Marathi Bhasha Bhavan on a vacant plot at Jawahar Bal Bhavan at Chowpatty. He also announced to build a Maharashtra Bhavan in Navi Mumbai on a plot earmarked by Cidco.

Meanwhile, energy minister Nitin Raut announced in the state assembly the state was resuming its drive to disconnect electricity lines over non-payment of bills.

He said that the decision was taken to ensure the survival of the power companies.

{ DEVENDRA FADNAVIS } OPPN LEADER

He (Ashok Chavan) tried to quote the Attorney General out of context



HT