

ADP's local share

FROM PAGE 1
Of Tk 350 crore for the current revised ADP, the estimated proposed ADP for the next fiscal does not have any policy loan.

Commodity and food aid are also believed to be 64 percent less in the coming ADP compared to the current fiscal's revised ADP.

Special development support loan of Tk 1380 crore for the current fiscal's ADP remains the same for the next fiscal's ADP too.

Project aid however is likely to increase by 23 percent for the next ADP and is expected to stand at Tk 8,750 crore. Sources said chances are very high that in the end the same percentage of project aid will not be received as the same was the case for the current ADP too. The project aid size had to be decreased by 5 percent in the current ADP and may very well be cut further when the final estimation will be made.

In the current year's original ADP, Tk 1,040 crore had been included as a condition to debt relief provided to the government by Japan, but in the revised ADP it was re-fixed at Tk 406 crore.

In the coming ADP too Tk 1247 crore has been proposed as allocation derived from debt relief provided by Japan but if the current fiscal year's record is anything to go by the real amount will be much less in reality.

CURRENT FISCAL'S REVISED ADP

Allocations for agriculture, education, transport, health, oil, gas and natural resources sectors have been reduced in the revised ADP. While allocations for rural development, power and infrastructure sectors have been raised.

The original ADP size in the current fiscal amounting to Tk 24,500 crore has been cut by Tk 3000 crore bringing it down to Tk 21,500 crore.

In the revised ADP allocation for the agriculture sector has been reduced to Tk 1088 crore, down by Tk 37 crore. Block allocation of Tk 500 crore for agricultural assistance in the original ADP has been dropped altogether in the revised one.

Agriculture ministry sources said the block allocation existed only in the ADP document, it was never handed over to them in reality. They sent letters to the finance ministry on several occasions over the last four months, but to no avail, they said.

Allocations for health, nutrition, population and family welfare have been re-fixed at Tk 2,110 crore, down by Tk 159 crore from the original ADP.

Allocations for education and religious affairs have been cut by Tk 434 crore bringing it down to Tk 2863 crore.

Allocations for oil, gas and natural resources have been cut by Tk 650 crore, bringing it down to Tk 394 crore.

Allocation for the transport sector has been set at Tk 2855 crore, down by Tk 184 crore. A planning ministry source said these amounts actually have not been cutbacks, rather the respective ministries have not been able to spend them. So the planning ministry has just reallocated the amounts to those ministries that require more than what had been allocated before.

Allocations for rural development and institutions have been raised to Tk 3,056 crore, up by Tk 60 crore. For the power sector Tk 263 crore was raised to make it Tk 3382 crore; for physical planning, water supply and housing sectors an additional Tk 202 crore was allocated bringing it up to Tk 1497 crore.

BIDS SUGGESTS EFFICIENT IMPLEMENTATION AND EVEN SMALLER ADP

BIDS suggested taking up fewer projects in the road sector in the next ADP to ensure quality and timely implementation of those projects.

Last week it sent a 'Policy Recommendations for National Budget 2006-07' to the government where it said, "A large number of road projects are often taken up on political considerations resulting in very thin distribution of resources over many road projects and consequent slow rate of project implementation."

It pointed out that among 183 ADP projects in the transport sector 138 were road projects and depicted a picture as to how much time will be needed if resources are allocated in the present pattern to complete those projects.

"Because of a large number of road projects, resource allocations to these projects have been such that at the current rate of implementation, nearly 20 percent of the projects will require a completion time of more than 10 years while about 10 percent of them will require completion time of more than 20 years," the BIDS recommendation said.

It suggested, "Inclusion of new road projects should be restricted in the budget 2006-07 and further allocations to projects that have experienced extremely slow progress so far should be minimised and resources should be diverted to projects which have progressed the most so that these can be completed at an early date."

It suggested a maximum ADP size of Tk 24,000 crore for 2006-07 fiscal against the planning ministry proposal of Tk 26,000 crore.

Analysing the target ADP size and their implementation rate over the last several years, BIDS showed that the government had always fallen short of implementing its total ADP plan. For example, during the first eight months of the current fiscal, only 37 percent of ADP was implemented.

BIDS observed, "As a result, there is a rush to quickly achieve the target towards the end of the fiscal year. This results in wastage and inefficient use of resources. In 2006-07, the concern becomes even more serious as the risk of fiscal profligacy remains high in an election year."

Emphasising on quality expenditure, BIDS said, "The three-year rolling investment programme, which will involve better synchronisation of the Poverty Reduction Strategic Paper target and resource allocation for development, should be put in place."

Rain disrupts

FROM PAGE 16
The downpour created serious water logging in most of the city streets and the low-lying areas went under knee-deep to waist-deep water.

During the incessant downpour yesterday noon a shanty at the Matijhama slum at the foothill near Lalkhan Bazar was crushed in a mudslide leaving two women injured.

They are Fatema Begum, 22, and Taslima Akter, 25. Fatema and Taslima were rushed to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) for treatment.

The continuous rainfall caused several low-lying areas like Sholokbahar, Chawkbazar, Bakalia, Bogarbil, Korbanjoni, Kapashola, Pathantooli, Agrabad CDA residential area and Halishahar to go partially underwater.

The rain also disrupted operations of Chittagong port and delayed flights at Chittagong International Airport.

Meanwhile a tornado hit Banshkhali upazila damaging houses and properties yesterday.

Sources said at 1:00am the tornado, lasting seven minutes, lashed through Nagmura and Tessipara of Pukuria union wreaking huge destructions.

It damaged over 100 houses, uprooted many trees and flattened standing crops in the area. However, no casualties were reported.

State Minister for Forest and Environment Jafrul Islam Chowdhury, the local lawmaker, visited the tornado-hit villages around 2:00pm yesterday. He directed the district administration to take immediate measures in providing relief to the affected people.

Torrential rain and onrush of water from highlands overwhelmed a vast area of the Banshkhali yesterday overflowing the Shankha river. Sources said the rain triggered flash floods in the area as embankments along the canals Jaladir Chhara and Napurar Chhara were breached.

Hasina

FROM PAGE 1
wounds," the foreign minister said.

He said it is time for all nations in the region to get together to face such challenges posed by the nature and mitigate the sufferings of the humanity.

The foreign minister said Bangladesh is ready to extend all possible assistance that may be helpful for the people of Indonesia at this critical hour.

Dr Kamal

FROM PAGE 16
judges, especially in the lower courts.

In his speech as special guest, Mainul Hosen, chairman of the editorial board of the daily Ittefaq, alleged that the political parties are responsible for violence. "Political activists are involved with violence. That's why we should raise our voice against those political leaders who are harbouring these criminals."

Habibur Rahman, father of late Sabegunnahar Sony, urged all to ensure the security of the students on the campus.

Bijor S Talukdar, president of Sony Memorial Foundation, said despite knowing beforehand about a political clash that left Sony killed, the government and the ruling party did not take any action to stop their party men.

Khair Uddin Ahmed presided over the meeting, while ABM Osman Gani, Tajim Uddin, Col (Retired) Abdul Latif Malik, Subrata Chowdhury and FR Siddique addressed it.

Jail sees

FROM PAGE 1
Minister Khaleida Zia has been conspiring to be the president.

Jail, also coordinator of the 14-party opposition coalition said the leader of the opposition expressed her concerns observing that the prime minister has been hatching a conspiracy to grab the post of the president changing the parliamentary system.

Jail asked the government to let the people know the real condition of the president.

He said even the adviser to the prime minister on parliamentary affairs, Salauddin Quader Chowdhury, in an interview to a private television channel on Friday preparing the fresh voter list, but the legality of his unilateral move was challenged in the court and the HC on January 4 asked the EC to revise the existing electoral roll.

Urging Bhuiyan to refrain from delivering speeches against Sheikh Hasina, Jail asked why the government failed to protect garment factories even though the state minister for home affairs said it had early information on possible unrest in the sector.

He blamed the four-party alliance government of failure to ensure security to the country's largest forex earning sector.

Jail said Bhuiyan's speech clearly proves that they do not want a dialogue to take place. For this they have been trying to include war criminals and godfathers of the militants in the process.

"Under no circumstances we will sit with the war criminals and anti-liberation forces," Jail said reiterating his vows to resist any attempt to holding elections under the present election commission and without reforms in the system of caretaker government and the election commission.

When contacted, commander of 20 Rifles Battalion said they strongly protested the killing and asked the BSF to return the bodies immediately.

EC empowerment

FROM PAGE 1
students, NGO workers, and cultural activists attended the dialogue to listen to the discussion.

Barisal City Corporation Mayor Mujibur Rahman Sarwar was the chief guest at the dialogue held at Shaheed Abdur Rob Semibab Auditorium at the deputy commissioner's office complex.

CPD Executive Director Debapriya Bhattacharya conducted the discussion while former adviser of caretaker government Hafiz Uddin Khan, and Sultana Kamal of Ain O Shalish Kendra spoke on behalf of the Nagorik Committee 2006 formed to prepare a vision paper for the next government.

President of Barisal Nagorik Parishad advocate Enayet Peer and former president of Bangladesh Medical Association Barisal Dr AKM Mokhesur Rahman were the special guests at the regional dialogue.

Shajid Sharif, deputy editor of the Protham Alo and Anisatul Yusuf Fatema of the CPD also participated in the discussion.

The dialogue was part of the civil society initiative for the campaign for honest and competent candidates in the next general election.

This was the fourth round of such regional dialogue as three previous dialogues were held in Mymensingh, Jessore and Comilla on the same topic. The next round of the regional dialogue will be held in Sylhet.

Stressing the need for a national consensus in greater national interest, Barisal Mayor Mujibur Rahman Sarwar said, "There would not be false voters and controversy on the voter list if the political parties had prepared the lists on the basis of a consensus."

"We also do not want to see the influence of black money in the elections but the nomination of candidates comes from the party high command," he said, adding that the CPD should hold dialogue with the top leaders of the two major parties for nomination of honest and competent candidates.

Advocate Enayet Peer said corruption and politics have become closely related which is very shameful for the politicians. He called upon the politicians to become united for saving the country from misrule and anarchy.

He said the 'inefficient' chief election commissioner is pushing the nation towards conflict and confrontation.

The country could not reach the level of a medium income state due to lack of good governance, Hafiz Uddin Khan said.

He suggested more power for the Election Commission, updating voter list every year, registration of political parties and arrangement for holding staggered polls.

Referring to the question of empowering the Election Commission (EC), Khan said the EC did not exercise whatever power it had been given.

As citizens of this country, the people should be vocal against corruption, misrule and injustice in the society, Sultana Kamal said, adding that people should not vote for those who are known as communal, against

the country.

He said it is time for all nations in the region to get together to face such challenges posed by the nature and mitigate the sufferings of the humanity.

The foreign minister said Bangladesh is ready to extend all possible assistance that may be helpful for the people of Indonesia at this critical hour.

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the Liberation War and do not want gender equity in the society.

The dialogue began with inaugural songs rendered by the artistes of local Udichi Shilpi Gosthi and Protham Alo Bandhu Sabha.

The other speakers who participated in the general discussion are: Dr Syed Habibur Rahman, SM Iqbal, Nazrul Islam Rajon, M Moazzem Hossain, Nurul Alam Farid, Mir Moniruzzaman, Dr Captain Sirajul Islam, advocate Talukder Mohammad Yunus, Dr Mizanur Rahman, Ebadur Rahman Chan, Mintoo Basu, Nikhil Sen, Manobendra, Ahsan Habib Kamal, AKM Mizanur Rahman, Rahima Sultana Kamal, Nusrat Jahan, Monirul Ahsan Khan, Prof Abdus Sattar, Mahmud Golam Sadeque, Bazlur Rashid Hawlader, advocate Shahida Talukder, Tofazzal Haque Chowdhury, Mohiuddin Manik, Shamsuddin Alam Kamal, Jiban Krishna Dey, Nur Jahan Begum, Alhajj Abdul Razzak, Monir Hossain, Sheikh Abdur Kader, Mohsinul Islam Habul, Rabeya Khatun, Ismail Hossain Negahban, SM Saleh, advocate Abdul Hai Mahbub, Fazlul Bari, Shahidul Islam, advocate Salahuddin Masum, Arpita Halder, Mamunur Rashid, Santosh Mukherjee, Aminur Rahman Khoka, Kazi Enayet Hossain, Minto Kumar Ghose, Shameem Azad, Rashedul Hasan Miraj, Sajeda Matin, and advocate Golam Masud.

Mamun Rashid, chief executive officer of Citibank NA, also said garment owners should allow trade unionism.

Former president of the BGMEA said as garment industry is a labour intensive one and most of the workers are women who are not so educated, trade union leaders might mislead them.

Another former BGMEA president, Anisul Huq, said it will have to be ensured that there will be no unwanted incident in the sector due to trade union activities.

Some speakers said mid-level management in garment industry is very weak, resulting in a communication gap between the owners and workers. They suggested more investment on building an efficient management to put an end to this.

The garment manufacturers also gave their views on workers' demands for increased minimum wages, appointment letter, weekly holiday and maternity leave.

Anisul Huq said minimum wage is now a 'myth and slogan'. "And instead of it, we now favour sector-wise wages."

The garments owner also sought formation of a transparent enquiry committee to probe the recent violence in the industry.

Dr Hamida Hossain, director of Ain O Salish Kendro, said the BGMEA repeatedly made commitments on workers' rights but did not implement those. "You should now give a time frame to fulfil the workers demands," she added.

Fazlul Haque, president of Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA), said the recent violence will affect foreign investment in garment industry.

Other speakers included Dr Shahdeen Malik, advocate of the Supreme Court, BGMEA vice-presidents Abdus Salam Murshedy and Shahadat Hossain Chowdhury.

Dr Pratima Paul-Majumder, research fellow of BIDS, Nazma Akhtar, general secretary and executive director of Sammilito Garments Sramik Federation

Meanwhile, Kuleswar, whom law enforcers held for sheltering six insurgents in Kamalganj of Moulavibazar a year ago, yesterday received the body of Sanjay autopsied at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Law enforcers, who kept him detained since he went to Uttara Police Station to receive his son's body Friday evening, allowed him to go to Moulavibazar for his burial.

Police also went to Moulavibazar with Kuleswar to ensure that he comes back to Dhaka face quizzing about the killings.

Law enforcers found the bodies of three slaughtered Manipuri men, including Sanjay, an HSC examinee from Milestone School and College, in a house at Uttara-6 Thursday night.

The DB will produce the three - Ashit Kumar, Jisair and Lipson - whom police picked up from the house Friday for quizzing, before court today seeking remand, said DB sources.

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) recovered the bodies and later handed over those to Uttara police. Rab Intelligence chief Lt Col Gulzar Ahmed told The Daily Star yesterday that Rab is also probing the matter.

Deputy Commissioner of the DB Shahidul Islam last night said they are trying to know the whereabouts of Sanjay's said sisters and Sumon.

Owners

FROM PAGE 1
"I have never seen or heard that because of trade unionism, trade or business have been stopped."

The MCCI chief also said garment manufacturers will have to address the existing problems in the sector.

Amirul Haque Amin, general secretary of Jatiya Garments Sramik Federation, said no garment owner could cite any instance of closure of a factory due to trade unionism.

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Low pay

FROM PAGE 1
Minister Khaleida Zia to take immediate action to 'clean up' the industry.

ITGLWF General Secretary Neil Kearney expressed their concerns through an e-mail to the prime minister on May 23.

The letter said in light of the labour conditions that prevail in the industry, the events of the last few days, while tragic, are hardly surprising.

The organisation had warned repeatedly of the growing frustration at the payment of starvation wages, excessive hours of work, cheating on piece work, falsification of overtime rates, abusive treatment and the appalling health and safety conditions. But unfortunately, instead of trying to resolve the problems and demanding that employers respect the rights of their workers, the authorities have been persecuting the workers, the letter said.

It went on saying, the reality is that the Bangladesh garment industry owners impose a regime, which is beyond human endurance. Last year the government legalised a 72-hour work week. But the reality is even harsher. Even on Fridays, which is supposed to be their weekly day of rest, workers in hundreds of factories can be found working 18 hours a day. Sometimes workers are forced to work around the clock, it said.

For an example Kearney mentioned, "A leading Bangladeshi retailer recently drew my attention to the situation at a factory owned by a senior member of BGMEA (Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association), where after working 29 days for 12 hours a day, last month a worker earned only Taka 400 (less than \$6) a month - less than half the legal minimum wage. This is truly a scandal. No wonder the industry is in uproar!"

"Some of the details are still unclear, but we understand that the unrest started at FS Sweater Factory in Gazipur in Dhaka on May 20. There had been tensions at the factory for months, with workers being forced to work excessive overtime, being cheated on piece rates and facing verbal abuse from supervisors and managers," he wrote.

The letter said workers had gone on strike to press for fairer piece rates, the release of three detained workers and withdrawal of charges against eighty other workers. Actions had been taken against the workers in question following a dispute over piece

rates in which the management had called in thugs to terrorise and intimidate the workers.

ITGLWF claimed that some workers reported that they were shot at not only by the Ansars, but also were attacked by armed outsiders and gangs. The protest became even more desperate and angry after the shooting and the unrest quickly spread to other areas.

The ITGLWF also rejected the response of the industry employers associations BGMEA and BKMEA (Bangladesh Knitwear and Manufacturers Association), which have claimed that the violence was the result of a 'conspiracy by a neighbouring country'.

BGMEA brushed aside the notion that the violence is the result of low wages and poor conditions, claiming that workers were 'well paid and enjoyed good conditions'.

The ITGLWF letter said such a reaction is so divorced from the reality of the industry that it made the employers of Bangladesh a laughing stock internationally. It is regrettable that when so much effort has been made to try to stabilise and expand the industry in the post-MFA (Multi Fibre Arrangement) climate, employers seem determined to shoot themselves in the foot, the letter added.

The international organisation of garment, leather and textile workers called on the government to undertake an urgent inquiry into the root causes of the riots.

The organisation identified some problems and urged the government to solve those to save the garment industry of Bangladesh. The problems identified by ITGLWF are, excessive long working hours, low rates of basic earnings, abuses in piece rate payments, late payment of wages, child labour, issues of structural and fire safety, corrupt police practice of charging workers on the flimsiest of evidence, the practice of supervisors acting as labour contractors who illegally rake off a percentage of workers' wages, the practice of using hired goons to terrorise and intimidate workers, behaviour of the police and other paramilitary forces when unrest occurs.

Yudhoyono made a snap visit to the scene after learning of the scale of the disaster, bringing forward a planned visit by 24 hours.

Yudhoyono, who ordered the health and social affairs ministers to oversee the relief effort and told the military to evacuate victims, urged rescuers to work round the clock.

"The first priority is to save lives, to treat the injured. Make sure that hospitals or camps have enough doctors, paramedics and food," he told rescue workers.

The tsunami scare started when Yogyakarta province police chief Bambang Hari Sampurnojati told local radio that the earthquake was to be followed by tidal waves.

"We panicked when we heard that there was a tsunami. We were ready to flee," Yogyakarta resident Clemon Cilik told the state Antara news agency.

As several aftershocks shook the region, many residents were to afraid to return home, wandering dazed and confused in the streets, many in tears.

Russian President Vladimir Putin offered his condolences along with Chinese President Hu Jintao and Italian President Giorgio Napolitano.

Japan said it was sending a relief team and was ready to provide aid.

A team of about seven people including doctors and bureaucrats would head to Indonesia on Sunday to assess the needs, a foreign ministry official said.

Neighbouring Malaysia said it will send a 56-member search team, doctors and medical supplies, and the European Commission said it would release up to \$3.8 million in emergency aid.

Heru Nugroho, spokesman for the state-run Sardjito hospital in Yogyakarta, around 4