

NBR planning to expand income tax net

Star Report

The National Board of Revenue is planning to make its taxation policy progressive by its current regressive bias, according to sources in the NBR.

In its plan for the next fiscal year, the NBR will be exploring ways to expand the net of direct taxes like income tax instead of relying mainly on indirect taxes.

The percentage of income tax is negligibly low in Bangladesh compared to neighbours, a highly placed NBR source mentioned. As a result, the country has to depend on indirect taxes which is regressive in nature and the ultimate burden of such taxes fall on the consumers, source said.

Emeka greets Hasina

Commonwealth Secretary General Chief Emeka Anyaoku has felicitated Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for her assumption of the office of the Prime Minister, reports BSS.

The Commonwealth Secretary General in his message said, "I am writing to convey my warmest felicitations to you on your assumption of office of Prime Minister. This is, for you, the culmination of a long and illustrious career in public life. Please accept my best wishes as you embark on your new and onerous responsibilities. My colleagues and I look forward to working closely with your government to further strengthen the close links between Bangladesh and the Commonwealth and to promote shared objectives."

G-7 summit

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...ive world" also issued a warning about the Middle East peace process following the change of government in Israel. Underlining the need for "renewed impetus" in the peace process, the leaders urged Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his Arab counterparts to continue to seek a peace deal based on the principle of "land for peace."

"We urged all the parties to continue their efforts in favour of a comprehensive peace on the basis of the principle of land for peace and other principles enshrined in the relevant UN Security Council resolutions," it said.

The summit statement, the traditional climax of the annual meeting, plastered over some of the main disagreements of the three days of talks in a high security bunker on the banks of the river Rhone.

A key bone of contention pitted Washington against its G-7 allies over the US Helms-Burton Law which penalises foreign firms investing in the Communist island nation of Cuba.

Help for poor countries also provided fuel for disputes, in particular Germany was standing fast against its six allies over selling gold stocks to finance a global fund for poor countries in Africa and Latin America.

Russia was also discussed with Russian Premier Viktor Chernomyrdin who replaced President Boris Yeltsin busy at home with imminent elections, the final declaration stated simply that the G-7 leaders back the reform process in Russia, whoever wins the second round of Russia's presidential vote.

BNP

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The secretarial meeting of the party which was adjourned on Friday night, resumed yesterday morning and ended at 3 pm after detailed deliberations on post-election situation and party's organisational activities.

BNP Joint Secretary General Abdullah Al Noman, Selima Rahman, Mirza Abbas, NI Khan, Shamsunnahar Khwaja Ahsanullah, Zafarul Ahsan, Kabir Murad, Maj (Rtd) Hafizuddin MP, Khurshid Jahan Haq MP, AKA Firoz Noon, Maftul Hasan Tripti, Abul Kashem Chowdhury and Mayor of Khulna Sheikh Tayebur Rahman were among those who spoke at the meeting today.

Another report adds: Man-nan Bhuiyan said that the party had always worked for the wellbeing of the labourers and implemented various development programmes for their welfare in the past five-year rule of BNP.

Since the birth of BNP, it has been relentlessly working for the workers as their friend, he told the leaders of Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal central, city and national unions of the city unit at BNP central office.

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President Abdur Rahman Biswas administering oath of office to two ministers and four state ministers at Bangabhaban yesterday. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is seen on his left. — PID photo

Govt to make female edn free upto HSC: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said her government would fulfil its election pledges to make female education free upto 12th grade in order to empower the women community, reports UNB.

She also announced that steps would be taken to create self-employment opportunities for the women to make them self-reliant in real sense.

The Prime Minister was talking to a delegation of the Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, which called on her at her office Parishad General Secretary Ayesha Khanam led the delegation.

Meanwhile, a 33-member delegation of Bangladesh Book Traders Association, led by Fazlul Haq, called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office in the afternoon.

6 ex-army officers recalled from overseas missions

By Staff Correspondent

The Foreign Ministry has recalled six retired army officers posted in Bangladesh missions abroad.

They were involved in the military putsch on August 15, 1975, in which Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was killed, according to official sources.

Five other ambassadors and high commissioners, who were political appointees, have also been served with notice to return home.

According to Foreign Ministry sources, the five are — Julmat Ali Khan, Ambassador to Thailand; Habibullah Khan, Ambassador to South Africa; Akhtar-ul-Alam, Ambassador to Bahrain; Dr ASM Yousuf, High Commissioner to the UK and Mir Mohammad Nasir Uddin, Ambassador to Saudi Arabia.

Meanwhile, Mir Mohammad Nasir Uddin submitted his resignation on June 24.

Tk 75.90 cr Barisal Poura budget announced

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, June 29: A Tk 75.90, 91, 976/- crore budget for Barisal Poursava for the fiscal year 1996-97 was announced today. No new tax has been proposed in this budget.

A revised budget of Tk 13,61,76,358 for the current fiscal year was also presented.

Md Ahsan Habib Kamal, chairman, Barisal Poursava announced the new budget in presence of journalists and World Commissioner this afternoon.

In the new budget Tk 60,63,00,000/- crore has been allocated for the development sectors. Revenue earning has been shown as Tk 13,58,87,238/- while Tk 11,52,87,600 crore as expenditure.

CEC's letter

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state that any election-related complaint filed with the Election Tribunal should be disposed of within six months but do not specify any consequence case of failure to do so. Therefore, it is widely thought that an election dispute may be resolved without any time-frame, an EC source noted.

The locks and almirahs of the rooms 304, 305, 306, 311 and 312 were broken by the miscreants, police sources said.

The reason behind the attack, and how the incident occurred could not be known immediately.

Tk 359.5 cr DCC budget

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ferent civic problems. The Mayor said the corporation had earmarked Tk 198.13 crore in the current 1995-96 fiscal year for development, repair of roads, renovation and construction of drains and foreign and government-funded projects and special projects in power sector.

The estimates, however, were later lowered to Tk 176.86 crore considering the 'real situation,' he said, adding that works worth Tk 160 crore have already been completed and the rest is expected to be finished rapidly.

According to the budget estimates for 1996-97, an amount of Tk 182.94 crore will come in revenue income, including Tk 95 crore as rents and tax, while the rest resources will be available mainly from the government and foreign project funds.

The corporation expects Tk 32.33 crore as possession fees and rents this year as "a number of markets in different areas under the city corporation will be completed soon", the Mayor told the function.

A total of Tk 69 crore has been earmarked for development of the roads cut by different utility services with asphalt plants and improvement of drains and footpaths. Some Tk 3 crore will be spent for constructing multi-storied car-parking lots.

PM: Well-trained Armed Forces

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and other aspects including transfer and promotion will be guided by rules and regulations of the respective forces," she said.

The Prime Minister emphatically said that there would be no scope for politicisation of the Armed Forces and she requested them to forget if there were any internal chaos among them.

"More importance would be given on training to help build up the Armed Forces as a more smart and professional organisation," she stressed.

The Sheikh Hasina described the Armed Forces as the national force and praised their work in the development fields side by side protecting the national entity.

She hoped that the Armed Forces would use their potentials in greater degree by taking part in more constructive work in future.

"The government will come and go but the country, its people, Constitution and the national flag will remain," she said, adding that the Armed Forces would protect them.

She said the government's aims and objectives were to formulate plans and strategies for national targets while the Armed Forces would remain within their own jurisdiction and do their administrative responsibility to help achieve those targets.

"As the head of the government and minister in charge of the defence categorically announce that the government is fully aware of its duty towards the Armed Forces," she said, adding that the government would help them with necessary guidelines to perform their administrative duty and supply them required resources including food and other materials.

She reiterated her pre-election commitment and said that it would be certainly implemented. "I want to say it clearly that the Armed Forces are not for any party or coterie but it is a national force. Our government did not try to politicise them in the past and it will not do in the future also," she said.

In this respect, the Prime Minister referred to some false propaganda being spread by some quarters that Awami League had tried to weaken the Armed Forces in the past and it would do it in future also "it is a design of motivated conspiracy," she said.

Sheikh Hasina referred to the state of the economy soon after Independence and said Bangabandhu had started organising the Armed Forces on

priority basis amid severe adversities at that time. She said Bangabandhu had collected military hardware from various friendly countries, arranged training at home and abroad and set up Bangladesh Military Academy in 1973 after he realised the importance of patriotic armed forces for a sovereign country.

She also mentioned Bangabandhu's first son joining the regular army and the War of Liberation and second son joining the Bangladesh Army in 1975 after completing his regular training.

Two ministers

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the ministers and state ministers at a simple ceremony at Bangabhaban in the evening.

Chief Whip Abul Hasnat Abdullah, State Minister Satish Chandra Roy, Cabinet Secretary Ayubur Rahman, Secretary to the President, Nooruddin Almasood, Secretary to the PM Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, Military Secretary to the President Maj Gen Ruhul Alam Chowdhury and other senior officials were also present on the occasion.

President Biswas and Prime Minister Hasina congratulated the newly appointed ministers and state ministers after the oath-taking.

After the swearing-in, the new cabinet ministers and state ministers formally called on President Biswas. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was present.

Congratulating the new ministers, the President hoped that they would contribute their mite towards the country's development and people's welfare.

With the induction of the new ministers, the number of full ministers in Sheikh Hasina's cabinet rose to 13 and of state ministers to 12.

Earlier on June 23, a 20-member council of ministers headed by Awami League Chief Sheikh Hasina comprising 11 full ministers and eight ministers of state was sworn-in.

adverse situation. Paying tribute to all on behalf of her government and herself, the Prime Minister referred to the expansion and professional development in the Armed Forces over the last 21 years and admitted the contribution in this regard made by her predecessors.

The Prime Minister referred to the Armed Forces' active involvement in various activities including facing the natural disasters, relief works, disease control, accidents and restoration of communications.

She said the Armed Forces were also making commendable jobs in maintaining law and order, curbing terrorism and helping the civil administration in time of need.

She referred to Bangladesh Army's activities under UN missions as peacekeeping force and said their dutifulness had earned appreciation for the country. "Still we are receiving offer for the service of Bangladesh Army for peacekeeping purpose in various war fronts of other parts of the world," she said.

The Prime Minister in an unequivocal term praised the role of the Armed Forces who helped the last elections held under a free and fair atmosphere.

"I myself and on behalf of the nation and my government congratulate you all for your role during the last elections," she said.

She said, the Armed Forces is a national institution which is to carry out the responsibility of protecting the country's hard-earned independence and sovereignty.

Earlier, the Prime Minister arrived at the old airport where she was received by the Chiefs of the three services and the Principal Staff Officer of the Armed Forces Division.

The Prime Minister was presented with a guard of honour by smart contingents of Bangladesh Army, Navy and Air Force. She took salute and inspected the guard.

She then proceeded to the Shikha Anirban (the eternal flame). She placed wreath at the memorial and stood in solemn silence to pay homage to the members of the Armed Forces who embraced martyrdom in the War of Liberation in 1971.

The Prime Minister also signed the visitors book. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina then went to the Armed Forces Division headquarters where she was received by the PSO of the Armed Forces Division Major General M S A Bhuiyan.

Many tragic incidents have been included in the national history," she said adding that the Armed Forces were marching towards prosperity despite such conflicting and

The Midnight File

Clinton pledges \$20m to assist Bosnia

LYON, France, June 29: President Clinton at the closing of the G-7 summit, pledged 20 million US dollars today assist with recovery in Bosnia, citing a need for the United States to help erase the horrors of war in the Balkans, reports AP.

Ershad's letter Zinat to select nominees for women's seats

By Mizan Ali

Jailed former president and Jatiya Party (JP) chief H M Ershad has empowered party presidium member Zinat Hossain to select the party nominees for the reserved women's seats in the Jatiya Sangsad.

In a letter to a party leader recently, the JP chief said, "Zinat should be allowed to deal with the reserved women's seats, according to party sources."

The sources further said that JP is likely to get three seats out of the 30 reserved for women. Starting the negotiation seeking five seats, with the majority party Awami League, JP has settled down for three, they added.

JP sources yesterday said that the aspirants for party nomination for women's seats include Zinat Hossain, Razia Fayez Shaikh, Mahmud, Towfika Karim, Afroza Alam and Mansura Mohiuddin.

Hectic lobbying was going on in this regard but the party leadership is yet to take a decision, the sources added.

In his letter, Ershad reiterated that the losers in the June 12 election would not be rehabilitated in the by-election, the sources said.

Meanwhile in their bid to 'restructure career' some of the disgruntled JP stalwarts were rallying around Begum Roushan Ershad, wife of the former president, and opposed JP support for Awami League (AL) following the June 12 elections, a presidium member of the party pointed out. But their move failed as Ershad reaffirmed unconditional support for the AL, he added.

He recalled that at a meeting of the parliamentary party of JP, while on parole recently, Ershad hinted not to rehabilitate the heavyweight losers in the by-election.

Evaluating JP politics in the post polls days, some party leaders said had it waited to announce support for AL, its bargaining strength of JP would have come down to that of parties with only one seat each.

The unconditional support for AL which has the highest number of seats in the JS proved JP's firm belief in the constitutional process, they argued.

9 Ansars held on charge of dacoity

NARAYANGANJ, June 29: Police arrested nine Ansars from a village in Sonargaon thana on charge of dacoity early today, reports UNB.

The Ansars knocked at the door of rickshawpuller Abdul Aziz Mia at village Bargaon at about 2 am. But villagers gheraoed them as the house-owner raised hue and cry.

They beat up the suspected dacoits and later handed over them to Sonargaon police.

The arrested Ansars are: Al Amin, Rashed Ali, Mukul Hossain, Mansur Ali, Masud, Omar Farook Milon Hossain, Mizanur Rahman and Raham Ali.

Fire at BB electric sub station

By Staff Correspondent

A fire broke out at the electric sub station of the Bangladesh Bank at Motijheel in the city early yesterday.

The flame could not spread as the fire service personnel soon rushed to the spot and extinguished the blaze in about an hour's time. Fire Service sources said, Two units of the Fire Brigade were used in fighting the fire.

The fire that broke out at about 4:30am did not cause any major damage.

Grameen's 6-year plan

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they would be able to provide it at relatively cheap cost in the rural areas. "Purchase of air-time in bulk and retailing through Grameen borrowers will minimise the cost," said an official.

The flat topography of the country and its dense population will allow relatively simple and cheap coverage, they added.

The high unmet demand for telephones is likely to make a cellular service successful in cities, requiring only a marginal additional investment for rural coverage," Chowdhury added.

The partners of the Grameen will provide all necessary technical and financial assistance to build the infrastructure, the officials said.

Chowdhury also said that GT's partner, Telenor, the oldest telephone company in the world, is a pioneer in cellular services and founder of the Global System Mobile (GSM).

The Grameen would build physical facility styled Grameen Information Centre (GIC), which would provide an opportunity to make the Grameen family more stronger.

According to available statistics, there is only one telephone per 500 people in Bangladesh, whereas in neighbouring India the rates is one per 100 people.