

Next two projected

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Islam is going to announce and explain the changes today.

According to the Budget in Brief publication, in the final budget for 2007-08 the government has changed the non-development expenditure that had been proposed.

The MTBF in its global economic forecast says inflationary pressure in the upcoming year might get even more intense. It, however, projects downward inflation trends in the domestic economy.

According to the mid-term framework, inflation will come down to 5 percent in 2009-10 from the existing 7 percent.

In the MTBF, the government has set three-year revenue earnings plan to meet the budgetary expenditure.

A target of 15.8 percent revenue growth has been set for the 2007-08 FY. For 2008-09, the growth is set at 15.6 percent or Tk 66,260 crore while it is 13.56 percent or Tk 75,250 crore for 2009-10.

To perk up revenues in the coming fiscal years, the government will withdraw tax holiday and tax exemption provisions. The MTBF observes that such provision creates room for tax evasion.

In the framework, the government also hints at reforming the taxation sector. It says the government will introduce strong monitoring system for the field level taxmen.

Besides, systems of uniform tax identification number and full self-assessment system for the taxpayers will be introduced to make the taxation procedure more transparent.

On the expenditure side, the government has already brought 14 ministries under the MTBF. It also has allocations projected for the ministries in the next three years.

There will be some other measures to bring more transparency in expenditure. The government will soon launch a web-based integrated budget and accounts system (IBAS) where information about the allocation and expenditure will be available.

The MTBF noted that high remittance inflow has been one of the major reasons for higher inflation.

Besides, it says, political and market instability, hassles and lack

of infrastructure for maintaining the supply chain, and inflationary expectation account for higher inflation.

The government increased its non-development expenditure in the final budget for the fiscal 2007-08 although the overall size of the budget remains unchanged.

In the final budget, Tk 52,900 crore proposed for non-development expenditure rose to Tk 52,928 crore.

Truck strike

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that end but no activity took place yesterday.

Several hundred trucks loaded with goods have been waiting on both sides of the border.

Modern vessel

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Singapore Private Limited launched the container vessel built by ST Marine of Singapore at a cost of \$30 million. The ship is capable of carrying 1,030 TEU (twenty-foot equivalent units) containers made in a foreign country.

Tarique, eldest son of immediate past prime minister Khaleda Zia, is facing several criminal charges. He was arrested at his mother's cantonment residence on March 7.

Wife meets Tarique at jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dr Zubaida Khan Rahman met her husband Tarique Rahman at Dhaka Central Jail yesterday.

Zubaida's mother Syeda Iqbal Mand Banu accompanied her during the visit which the jail authorities said was a routine one.

They met Tarique in the office room of the senior jail superintendent at around 11:00am and stayed there for about half an hour, said Deputy Inspector General (Prisons) Major Shamsul Haider Siddique.

During the meeting, Tarique mainly inquired about the health of other members of his family, said a jail official.

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Narayanganj

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"When the cops, taking Anu with them, reached Ragunathpur, about 100 criminals attacked them with firearms and sticks and snatched Anu from their custody," locals said.

The criminals captured a land in the area on Thursday night and were staying there, they added.

The officer-in-charge (OC) of Fatullah Police Station admitted the incident. Police could not arrest Anu or any of his accompanies as of 7:00pm yesterday.

US soldiers

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deadliest month for US forces in Iraq since November 2004.

At least 3,576 members of the US military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. The figure includes seven military civilians. At least 2,936 died as a result of hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

Earlier US forces killed three people they described as militants and detained more than two dozen in a series of raids across Iraq on Friday targeting al-Qaeda networks.

The military said troops killed the three militants, one of whom was wearing a suicide vest, in a raid near the former rebel town of Fallujah in the western Sunni Anbar province.

In the same raid troops detained 16 militants for their alleged ties to a "top al-Qaeda in Iraq leader", while in the same province near the town of Karmah, another raid led to arrest of four more militants, the military said.

In a third operation south of Baghdad, troops searched a building to arrest a close aide of a militant known for orchestrating vehicle bombings in the capital, capturing the suspect and two other militants.

A fourth raid resulted in the arrest of another aide of a leader of al-Qaeda in the region of Tarmiyah, near Baghdad, the military said.

And in Mosul, two more suspects were detained in a raid targeting a top leader of al-Qaeda operating in the disputed oil-rich city of Kirkuk in northern Iraq.

"We're continuing to target the top of the terrorist network, as well as the operatives who carry out their murderous actions," said Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Garver of the US military in the statement.

In other developments, Iraqi police said a bomb exploded under an oil pipeline south of Baghdad on Friday, spilling crude oil and sparking a huge fire.

The explosives were planted under a stretch of pipeline in the Mowehlah area of Haswa, a town 50km south of the Iraqi capital, a police officer said on condition of anonymity because he was not authorised to release the information.

The pipeline transmits crude oil from Iraq's southern oil fields to the Dora refinery in Baghdad.

The blast ignited a huge fire around 5 am, the officer said. By midday, firefighters were still struggling to extinguish the flames, which were fuelled by a continuing leak of oil from the pipeline, he said. Workers also were looking for a way to temporarily cut off the oil flow, until a repair could be made, the officer added.

Commandos

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was sent to Chittagong Combined Military Hospital (CMH) yesterday for better treatment.

Officials of Danida yesterday had a meeting with army Brig Gen Ziaul Hasan and the Superintendent of Police (SP) but the law enforcers kept mum about the meeting.

Meanwhile, the detained 11 people, eight of them NGO employees including a Danida employee, were kept at Bokpara BDR camp. They were being quizzed, sources said.

"What happens next in Congress is unclear. But what happens on the ground is not. Immigrant workers and families will continue to live in fear, die in the desert, and be subjected to exploitation."

Tortured abroad

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belongings including 3,000 Dirham (equivalent to around Tk 28,000) and her passport after getting her drink water mixed with sedative at Satrasta in the capital.

Moyna had saved the money during her 14-month stay in Dubai.

Finding Moyna lying unconscious by a road in Satrasta, police took her to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday morning, police posted at the hospital said.

As her husband, working at a decorator's at their village home of Rikabi Bazar in Munshiganj Sadar, found it hard to maintain their six-member family, Moyna went to Dubai spending Tk 60,000 with the hope of bringing solvency.

She could barely send back the amount she had spent for going to Dubai.

However, overwork along with torture made Moyna's life miserable in a foreign country.

The wife of her employer slapped or struck her with whatever she found on trifling grounds like delay in serving a glass of water.

"I had to go to bed at midnight and get up at 3:00am every day. If I fell asleep during work she [wife of her master] would beat me severely," Moyna told The Daily Star as she regained her consciousness yesterday afternoon.

She had to work for 21 hours a day as she worked in a 16-member family as a domestic help, she said, adding that her employer has sent her back

Dhaka to present

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include Director (UN) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Hamidur Rashid.

The foreign ministry, with the support from all relevant ministries and the UN Country Team (UNCT) in Dhaka, has procured a 111-page report entitled "Meeting the Challenge: A Mid-term Review of Achieving MDG-1 in Bangladesh".

Councils planned

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A string of cases are in the offing against Khaleda too, a highly placed source in the administration said.

The cases will be disposed of before the councils and the two if found guilty will not be able to participate in the national councils, a senior BNP leader, who claimed to have been keeping close contact with the government policymakers, told The Daily Star.

Khaleda will be automatically disqualified from holding or contesting the post of chairperson according to the BNP constitution.

The AL constitution does not have any such provision, but the pro-reforms leaders on several occasions said that they would not bear the responsibility if Hasina ends up being convicted of extortion.

On the other hand, Khaleda believes most of the BNP rank and file will not support Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and allies in their efforts to leave her out.

The pro-reform BNP leaders, who unveiled a 15-point reform proposal apparently aiming to dislodge Khaleda from the post of chairperson, plan to approach the field level leaders and workers to mobilise support in favour of their proposals. If they are to have their proposals approved in the council, they will need the two thirds majority siding with them.

The BNP secretary general yesterday met some former ministers and lawmakers to discuss the campaign strategy. According to the plans, the former lawmakers will work to convince the grassroots level leaders-cum-councillors.

AL reform proposal

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leader of the party, if convicted by a court for any unlawful activity, will be expelled from the organisation, the AL reformists said.

"If anyone is proven guilty by a court for any unlawful activity, that person will not be eligible to hold any party post or any governmental post," Mukul Bose told The Daily Star.

If anyone is convicted of a crime by a court while in a party post, that person will lose the post and the membership of the party permanently, according to the amended AL reform proposal.

Sources said issues like development of human resources and education for citizens have also been included in the amended proposal as part of suggestions for social reforms.

Some other specific proposals including a ban on fundamentalist political parties, rooting out of militancy, implementation of four main principles of the state originally stipulated in the first constitution of the country, and establishment of the principles of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman among other things have been mentioned in the amended proposal, the reformists said.

Representation of religious minorities in both party and state affairs has been suggested in the new proposal, said a pro-reform AL leader.

It has been stated in the new proposal that the treasurer of the party will have to disclose the accounts every three months to the AL central working committee.

Sources said before seeking the final approval of the national council, the reformist leaders will take opinions of different party forums, different professional forums, intellectuals, members of the civil

as she was gradually losing the ability to work and lapses in her work became more frequent.

Physicians at the DMCH said it will take several hours more before Moyna could regain her full strength.

Khulna jail

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district jail authorities to grant division only to Talukder Khaleque, treating him as a VIP prisoner.

Seven others arrested are Superintendent of Khulna Narcotics Control Department Makbul Hossain, retired police inspector Abdul Aziz, former ward commissioner Nurul Islam Manu, local AL leaders Liqat Ali, Golam Mostafa, Abdul Malek and Jahangir Alam.

Sub-Inspector Bikash Chandra Shil of Khulna Sadar Police Station has mentioned in the case as complainant that a sum of Tk 22,000 and four sets of cards were recovered from the arrestees who were gambling at that time.

Deputy Commissioner of Khulna Metropolitan Police Abdul Jalil Mondol said the former state minister and his associates used to sit frequently in that house for hatching up 'conspiracy' against the present government.

Talukder Abdul Khaleque was elected lawmaker from Bagerhat-3 constituency (Rampal-Mongla) in 1991, 1996 and 2001 parliamentary elections.

Explaining the conditions of the railway lines he said, "Rail communication from Pathogram to other parts of the country remains snarled for at least 10 days a month on average due to derailments."

Two officers of Akhaura Railway Junction were suspended yesterday for negligence of duty after four wagons in the rear of a freight train derailed near the junction on Monday, our correspondent from Brahmanbaria reports.

The suspended officers are Assistant Executive Engineer Rafiqul Islam Barai and Senior Sub-assistant Engineer Abdul Matin Mandal.

At around 8:00pm Monday the Chittagong bound freight train from Dhaka derailed snapping rail communication between Dhaka and Chittagong for eight hours.

A probe body headed by Divisional Transport Officer Sarder Shahadat Ali was formed to investigate the accident.

A member of the body on condition of anonymity said the accident occurred due to irregularities in repairing the railway lines that were damaged in an earlier accident and the two engineers suspended were in charge of the repairworks.

Source said 30 feet of railway lines were badly damaged in the earlier accident but engineers repaired only 20 feet and okayed the rail lines.

"I presume, the Election Commission has made substantial progress in preparing a flawless electoral roll and I believe, the momentum of its work will increase while some cases are under trial.

The head of the caretaker government said it took a little time to prepare rules and regulations, organogram and mobilize manpower for the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), which were absent in the past.

The ACC is now more powerful and an effective body, he said and hoped that it would be functioning more expeditiously in future.

Depression crosses Orissa cost

UNB, Dhaka

The monsoon deep depression over north west Bay moved northwards and crossed Orissa cost of India near Puri at noon yesterday.

It is likely move in a northwesterly direction and may weaken gradually, said a special bulletin of the Met Office.

Under its influence, steep pressure gradient persists over north Bay and squally weather may affect the ports, it said.

Maritime ports of Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Mongla have been advised to keep hoisted local cautionary signal number three.

All fishing boats and trawlers over north Bay have been advised to remain in shelter until further notice.

Rail links

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were snapped due to the derailment.

Divisional Railway Traffic Superintendent in Lalmonirhat Sayeed Jahanul Hosen yesterday said six wagons had already been put back on the lines and hoped the remaining three wagons would be put on the lines soon.

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