

AGRICULTURE AND HOUSEHOLD ACTIVITIES

Measure contribution of women to economy

Experts tell post-budget discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Women's contribution to national economy through their agriculture and household activities must be measured to prepare a gender-sensitive budget, experts at a post-budget discussion said yesterday.

They said as the non-economic household activities are not measured in Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the women are deprived of enjoying their economic freedom.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad organised the discussion titled 'Gender sensitivity in the proposed budget' at the National Press Club.

Dr Fahmida Khatun, additional director of Centre for Policy Dialogue presented the keynote paper.

Criticizing the budget allocation she

said women enjoy very insignificant portion of the revenue budget as only 10 to 15 percent women are being employed. Sixty five percent of the development budget benefits men while 35 percent benefits women.

The speakers also said that it needs to count total time spent by the women for domestic works, to assess those works and include that in the national economy.

Stressing the need for a gender responsive budget, the speakers called for setting up a cell to monitor the allocations and expenditures with regard to women issues in different ministries.

Quoting the explanation of economist Abul Barakat, the speakers said if women's contribution in domestic activi-

ties is measured economically, it would be 48 percent in the country's GDP.

"As the budget is not coming out from the market philosophy, gender budgeting also is not taking place literally," said Assoc Prof Sharmin Neelormi of Jahangirnagar University.

President of Bangladesh Women Chamber of Commerce and Industries Selima Ahmad said the proposed budget does not specify what steps would be taken for the women entrepreneurs.

Executive Director of Brac Dr Mahbub Hossain, Prof MM Akash of Dhaka University, Dr Gour Gobinda Goshwami of North South University, Ayesha Khanam, president of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad and Maleka Banu, general secretary also spoke at the discussion.

Violence Against Children

Saarc ministerial meet begins today

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

In a bid to end violence against children, the third Saarc ministerial level meeting is beginning in Kathmandu today (Wednesday), official sources said.

Ministers and senior government officials of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are taking part in the meeting.

Nepalese Prime Minister of Madhav Kumar Nepal is scheduled to inaugurate the meet to be held at Soltee Crown Plaza in Kathmandu.

The Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare of Nepal is hosting the Secretariat of the South Asian Forum for Ending Violence against Children.

The meeting will discuss the issue of integrating South Asian Forum (SAF) with the secretariat or establishing a separate secretariat.

The SAF set up in 2005 as an outcome of the Regional Consultation on the UN Study on Violence against Children held in Islamabad works on trafficking, early marriage, sexual abuse and exploitation and child protection.

It is supported by the South Asian Coordinating Group for Ending Violence against Women and Children, a group of regional UN Agencies and International NGOs.

2 JMB men jailed for blast at court

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced two leaders of Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh to 32 years' of rigorous imprisonment for the serial bomb blasts on the Mymensingh court premises in August 2005.

Judge Mohammad Rezaul Islam of the Speedy Trail Tribunal-4 handed down the verdict in presence of convicts Kawar Alam alias Sumon and Aamullah Akhond alias Sanaullah.

The court also acquitted Salauddin alias Salehin and nine others as the charges pressed against them were not proved.

Earlier, the prosecution and the defence completed their closing arguments and the court recorded statements of 23 prosecution witnesses.

According to the prosecution, around 11:10am on August 17, 2005, several bombs were blasted on the Mymensingh court premises that injured four people.

Later, a case under the Explosive Substances Act was filed against the banned Islamist militant outfit JMB leaders and activists with Mymensingh Police Station.

After an investigation, police pressed charges against 12 alleged JMB leaders and activists.

BNP readies for June 27 hartal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP and its front and associate organisations have been preparing to make the June-27 dawn-to-dusk hartal successful.

The party's alliance partners have expressed their solidarity with the programme and said that they would also be active on the streets on that day.

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia called the hartal on a number of issues like ensuring supply of gas, electricity and water, and stopping extortion, tender manipulation and land grabbing by ruling party activists, and scrapping the "anti-national" deals signed with India.

There will be mass contact, small processions and distribution of leaflets and pasting of posters at different places of the capital in support of the hartal, the first since the current government assumed power.

Senior leaders of BNP yesterday held a preparatory meeting with BNP leaders of Dhaka district unit and adjacent areas.

All presidents and general secretaries of all units and former MP candidates under Dhaka district sat with the party's standing committee members yesterday at the chairperson's Gulshan office.

Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain chaired the meeting and presidents and general secretaries of Narayanganj, Narsingdi, Gazipur, Manikganj and Munshiganj districts were present.

Abdul Moyeen Khan, Goyeshwar Chandra Roy, Prof MA Mannan, Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, Amanullah Aman, Khairul Kabir Kokkon and Abdus Salam were also present.

Earlier, Khaleda Zia herself sat with leaders of like-minded parties including Jamaat-e-Islami. Following the meeting Jamaat expressed their support for the hartal.

MONEY LAUNDERING No bar to arrest SQ Chowdhury Says lawyer

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court (SC) yesterday stayed for six weeks a High Court (HC) order that directed the law enforcers not to harass or arrest BNP leader Salauddin Qader Chowdhury in a money laundering case.

Chamber judge of the Appellate Division Justice SK Sinha passed the order upon a petition filed by the government against the HC order.

The HC on May 16 directed Salauddin Qader to surrender before the Metropolitan Special Tribunal in Dhaka within eight weeks in the money laundering case and also asked the law enforcers not to harass or arrest him in this case during this eight-week period.

The government recently filed a leave-to-appeal petition with the SC, seeking a stay on the HC order.

Additional Attorney General MK Rahman told The Daily Star that there is no bar to arrest Salauddin Qader in the money laundering case following the chamber judge's order.

On May 6, Toufiqul Islam, assistant director of Anti-Corruption Commission, filed the case against him with Dhanmondi Police Station. The case statement says Salauddin Qader laundered \$250,000 and HK\$100,000 (\$12,864) to buy Beximco Pharmaceuticals' global depository receipts (GDRs).



Journalist Shafiqul Kabir and three members of his family are brought to a court in the city yesterday in connection with the death of Farzana Kabir Rita and her two children. (Story on Page 16)

Call to end negative political culture

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Putting an end to the negative political culture and ensuring full democratisation of society and state are a must to achieve women's political empowerment, speakers at a conference said yesterday.

They also stressed the need to strengthen the relations between women's movement and the political parties.

The Steps Towards Development organised the daylong Sufia Kamal Fellow Conference at RDEC auditorium, LGED Bhaban, in the city.

Lawmaker Meher Afroz Chumki said more women are now entering politics, they are being elected to parliament directly and they are also taking the helm of ministries following some positive steps taken for their empowerment.

The people also have confidence on them as there are no allegations of corruption and

misuse of power against women leaders, she said.

Advocate Sultana Kamal, former adviser to the caretaker government, called for identifying and removing the obstacles to ensuring women's participation in politics and other professions.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad President Ayesha Khanam called on all to follow the ideology of poet Sufia Kamal.

If politics can be made free of black money and muscle power, and greater democratic practices in the political parties can be ensured, more women will be encouraged to enter politics, she said.

Rasheda K Chowdhury, former advisor of a Caretaker government, Mujahidul Islam Selim, general secretary, Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), Sharif Nurul Ambia, general secretary Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD), also spoke at the programme.

PROMOTION OF PUBLIC SERVANTS

Amendment to rules on cards

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is considering amendment to the rules for promoting public servants, particularly of high-level ones, to bring transparency while raising their ranks said LGRD Minister Syed Ashrafur Islam yesterday.

While replying to lawmakers' queries, Ashrafur, also in charge of the establishment ministry in the parliamentary affairs, said giving promotion to public servants in a transparent way is an important task of the government.

"Therefore, we are considering amendment to the promotion rules of 2002," he said.

The minister said the BNP-Jamaat led alliance government made a total of 3,669 officials OSD (officer on special duty) during its five-year tenure and forced 46 officers to retire.

Earlier in January this year, Ashrafur had informed the House that a total of 224 officials in different positions including secretaries were made OSD during the first year of the present government.

In response to another query, the minister yesterday said the present government has sent a secretary on forced retirement.

He said the total number of public servants is 10,48 lakh including 2.23 lakh females as per the Statistics of Civil Officers and Staffs 2009.

FAST UNTO DEATH 13 physiotherapy students fall sick

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Physiotherapy students continued their hunger strike for the second day yesterday while 13 students fell sick due to scorching heat.

Bangladesh Physiotherapy Students Union (BPSU) began the fast unto death programme at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city on Monday demanding immediate start of the construction of building of Bangladesh College of Physiotherapy.

The students said they will lay a siege to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) to press for their demand.

Bangladesh Physiotherapy Society expressed solidarity with the students yesterday.

CASES AGAINST FARROQUE SC stays HC order

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court (SC) yesterday stayed for six weeks a High Court (HC) order that stayed the proceedings of seven defamation cases against Opposition Chief Whip Zainul Abdin Farroque.

The cases were filed in Dhaka, Bogra, Shariatpur, Rangpur, Nilphamari, Pabna and Sylhet against Farroque on charge of making derogatory remarks against Sajeeb Wazed Joy, son of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Farroque in separate statements in March alleged that Joy was involved in running illegal Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) business.

Chamber judge of the SC's Appellate Division Justice SK Sinha yesterday passed the order in response to a petition filed by the government seeking stay on the HC order.

The judge also asked Jesmin

SC lets special court-4 deal with criminal cases

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Appellate Division of Supreme Court yesterday stayed for six weeks a High Court order that directed the government to withdraw the sessions power of the judge of Special Court-4 of Dhaka.

The HC in March this year in a verdict directed for withdrawal of the sessions power (jurisdiction to try criminal cases) of the judge of special court Jesmin Anwar.

In the verdict, the HC observed that Jesmin Anwar could not properly evaluate the evidence on record when she delivered a judgement in a criminal case as an Additional Sessions Judge in Mymensingh in 2004.

Chamber judge of the Appellate Division Justice SK Sinha passed the order following a petition filed by Jesmin seeking stay on the HC order.

The judge also asked Jesmin

to file a regular leave to appeal petition with the apex court against the HC order within six weeks' period.

Jesmin Anwar, while serving as an Additional Sessions Judge of Mymensingh, in a verdict convicted and sentenced Mustaq Ahmed of Halaughat in an extortion case on October 20, 2004.

In 2005, Mustaq filed an appeal with the HC challenging the verdict.

Following his appeal, an HC bench of Justice Syed Muhammad Dastagir Husain and Justice Zubayer Rahman Chowdhury on March 25 this year delivered a verdict acquitting Mustaq of the extortion charges and directed the ministry of law to withdraw the sessions power of Jesmin Anwar.

The law ministry on June 15 issued a notification withdrawing the sessions power. Advocate Khurshed Alam Khan appeared for Jesmin Anwar.

Drive on to save Shitalakhya

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The joint team of Narayanganj district administration and inland water transport authority demolished a large illegal portion of a six-storied flour mill at Bhagabangan yesterday as part of the ongoing drive to retrieve the river Shitalakhya.

Though the authorities of the mill named SM Flour Mills sought some time pleading that they would demolish the illegal part on their own, they did not, reported our Narayanganj correspondent. The team had to spend whole working day to knock down the illegal portion.

The demolition work was carried with a tugboat of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA). Executive magistrate of

Narayanganj Zahirul Islam led the drive.

The drive is scheduled to continue today with demolition of illegal portion of Barnali Dyeing and guide wall of ACI Salt in Haziganj under Narayanganj Sadar, said Alamgir Kabir, deputy director of BIWTA.

The drive is also scheduled on June 28 and 29 to demolish illegal structures around Fatullah launch terminal in a part of river Buriganga under jurisdiction of Narayanganj district, he said.

Meanwhile, Dhaka district administration and BIWTA have fixed an eviction drive against encroachment in the river Turag near Mirpur on July 7, said Sharif Afzal, port officer of Dhaka river port.

Jute genome team gets reception tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina plays host to a reception tomorrow to be accorded to Dr Maqsood Alam and his team that has successfully decoded the genome of jute plant.

Officials of the 'Swarnajatra' -- the consortium of scientists, researchers, academics and graduate students -- that earned the rare feat in genomics under the leadership of expatriate Bangladeshi scientist Dr Alam told The Daily Star that the programme is scheduled for 11:30am tomorrow.

Dr Alam along with some 39 core members of the research group, their associates and some of the family members would be joining the audience with the prime minister at her official residence.

Chris Detter, the Director of the world's most sophisticated genomics lab -- Joint Genome Institute -- is also flying in tonight from the United States to join the programme.

Dr Alam, who left Dhaka for Kuala Lumpur after addressing June 17 press conference at agriculture ministry, is also coming back tonight.

PM Sheikh Hasina was the first to declare before the nation that Bangladeshi scientists have sequenced the genome of the golden fibre when she addressed the parliament on June 16.

Police bar JCD men's way to DU

6 BCL men served show cause notices

DU CORRESPONDENT

Law enforcers yesterday morning barred a procession of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal trying to enter Dhaka University campus to stage protest against Monday's assault on fellow activists.

Tension ran high as Bangladesh Chhatra League members already took position at most entrances to the campus to resist archival Chhatra Dal, the BNP backed student body.

JCD President Sultan Salauddin Tuku said they were supposed to demonstrate on the campus against the attack that injured at least 25 activists of their organisation.

Tuku vowed to observe the indefinite student strike at DU from July 1.

Meanwhile, DU authority yesterday issued notices upon six BCL men asking them to clarify within three days why academic action would not be taken against them for Monday's violence.

Later around noon, JCD held a rally on the street near public library. They were chanting slogan against university authorities and for countrywide hartal on June 27 declared by main opposition BNP.

Ruling Awami League-backed organisation BCL brought out a procession and held a rally on campus in protest of violence and strike at the university.

Top BCL leaders vowed to resist the strike and followers of Tuku accusing him of patronising militancy.

Following Monday's attack, JCD declared the indefinite strike on the campus from July 1. Their demands include punishment to the attackers and resignation of university vice-chancellor and proctor.

JCD will hold a protest rally at Muktangan in the capital tomorrow.

JS body report on Law, Order Disruption Crimes bill placed

BSS, Sangsad Bhaban

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Home Ministry placed its report on the Law and Order Disruption Crimes (speedy trial) (amendment) Bill, 2010 in the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday.

Committee Chairman Maj Gen (Retd) Abdus Salam placed the report with a recommendation for passage of the bill. Earlier on June 17, Home Minister Advocate Sahara Khatun piloted the bill with a proposal to extend the effectiveness of the act by another two years up to 2012.

Kaler Kantha editor, publisher sued

COURT CORRESPONDENT

An Awami League (AL) lawmaker yesterday filed a civil suit against the editor, publisher and a reporter of the daily Kaler Kantha claiming Tk 200 crore as compensation on charge of running a news item against him in their daily.

Gataul Kawsar Rony, MP from Patuakhali-3 constituency, filed the suit against editor Abed Khan, publisher Mostafa Kamal Mohiuddin and reporter Shafiqul Islam Jewel with the Fourth Joint District Judge's Court of Dhaka.

Judge Al Shams Joglul Hossain fixed August 29 for the next hearing on the suit.

Rony, in his complaint, said the daily had run a news item titled 'Shobar Upore MP Rony' on May 23 that defamed his name and reputation in the society as well as in the political arena.

WEATHER TODAY

No change in temperature

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at many places over Rajshahi, Barisal, Chittagong, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and at a few places over Khulna division in next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy to heavy falls are also likely at places, Met Office said.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:49pm today and rises at 5:12am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 35.8 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 23.2 degrees Celsius at Rangpur.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius	Humidity in percentage		
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	32.3	28.2	75	73
Chittagong	32.0	26.3	92	85
Rajshahi	35.2	27.7	80	90
Khulna	33.8	27.8	83	82
Barisal	31.2	27.4	92	90
Sylhet	31.9	26.1	92	96
Cox's Bazar	31.8	26.4	78	81



Some 15 opposition BNP lawmakers visit the Detective Branch (DB) office in the city last night to express their concern over torture of Mahmudur Rahman, acting editor of the daily Amar Desh, in the remand.