

# BUDGET 2013-14

## Tasks of Rights-based NGOs cut out

SHAZZAD KHAN

THE size of the proposed budget looks quite mammoth and it is pretty evident that it has been placed so because we have an election ahead -- within 6 months time. However, even then there are some propositions which is deemed beneficial for the improvement in the livelihoods of those who actually bother little about the nature of the budget itself.

For the marginalised, excluded and those who live below poverty line, it is more important for them to tap the maximum out of the budget than to analyse the hidden purpose of it.

Although the budget targets the election rather than the people, the government has made some provisions which look rather encouraging for those who care for and work with the people needing support to graduate out of poverty or improve their life-standards.

In this regard, to tap these provisions, the role of the development organisations (NGOs) engaged in promoting rights and entitlements of the poor and marginalised is all the more important.

**Agriculture:** In the agriculture sector the government has already distributed 14,375,000 'input assistance cards' to the farmers. Holding of such cards ensures that farmers enjoy subsidy benefits given by the government. In the proposed budget the government has promised to continue the subsidy in the same manner by earmarking Tk.12,000 crore. The organisations which are working with the farmers' entitlements can ensure that the cardholder farmers continue to get these services.

**People living in Haors:** Most of the people living in the remote haor region are affected by floods every year and are deprived of basic facilities provided by the government. The NGOs working in the haor areas can ensure that these vulnerable people get the facilities from the schemes, taken up by the government, which has been allocated Tk.50 crore.

**Primary education for all:** The NGOs working for improving the quality of education and reducing dropouts can work on the provisions offered by the government in the next fiscal year. The NGOs can monitor whether government's claim of maintaining quality education and enrolment rate (97%) and dropout rate (29.7%) are correctly maintained.

Moreover, the government has committed to enrolling 83,000 disabled children over the next couple of years which needs to be rigorously monitored as part of ensuring their equal right to education.

**Healthcare:** The NGOs working for ensuring healthcare services for the poor and marginalised can monitor and persuade the union health complex and

upazila health complex authorities in the proper and optimum utilisation of resources allocated by the government and that these people are identified and get the health services from the government service providers. The overall proposed allocation for health care for the next fiscal year is Tk. 9,495 crore.

**Poverty alleviation and safety-net:** For the next fiscal year the government has raised its proposed budget against Social Safety-net Programmes (SSNPs) to 25,371 crore. It has also enhanced and widened the coverage of the allowances. SSNPs are the areas where NGOs have greater role to play. SSNPs are meant exclusively for the poor, marginalised, vulnerable and excluded communities, which cover a wide range of poverty-stricken people.

Most of these people are the target beneficiaries of the NGOs, especially for those who stand beside them to ensure their rights, entitlements and dignity. In continuation of previous year's programme the government

*The rights-based NGOs can ensure delivery of entitlements, services and creation of economic opportunities for the welfare, dignity and wellbeing of the poor, marginalised and excluded communities.*

has committed to carrying on 80 days employment work for 746,000 hardcore poor allocating Tk.1,400 crore.

The NGOs working with the extremely excluded communities like Hijra, Dalit, Harijan and Bede communities need to ensure that as per the commitment of the government the budget is being properly utilised in accordance with the planned activities.

The government has committed massive programme for the disabled for the next fiscal year. It has already started a survey on disabled people, which is expected to be completed in the next one year. After the survey is over, identity cards will be issued to all disabled people. The government has also proposed to allocate Tk. 12.50 crore for providing disabled people with services like physiotherapy, occupational therapy, hearing aid, visual test, assistive device, skill training and books in Braille.

Not only that, the government has committed to convert the National Foundation for Development of the Disabled Persons into a full-fledged Directorate. Moreover, in all future public constructions the government has committed to ensuring special toilets and

ramps for the disabled persons. The NGOs and civil society groups working for disability should look into the proper implementation of these commitments and take on advocacy and lobbying at the national level so that the proposed directorate can be formed and made functional.

**Women and children welfare:** Under the women and children welfare, the gender budget has been prepared for 40 ministries for 2013-2014 fiscal year. For imparting skill training to women entrepreneurs the government has allocated Tk.80 crore which was only 10 crore last year. The government is committed to support small entrepreneurship for the economic empowerment of women. As part of access to economic opportunity of the poor and vulnerable communities the rights-NGOs can facilitate the promotion of entrepreneurship development initiatives tapping the opportunities being offered by the government.

The government is also committed to the welfare of the street children. As done in the previous years the government has planned to provide welfare services to 60,000 street children in the next fiscal year. The government has already introduced Child Protection Information Management System. As many as 250 Community-based Child Protection Committees will be given the task of protecting street children from vulnerabilities. Strong performance monitoring is required from the relevant NGOs and civil society groups in this regard.

**Access to Khas land:** The government has committed to distribute 5,000 acres of Khas land among 21,000 landless families in the next fiscal year. Apart from that the government will continue to carry on the rehabilitation programme of the landless people in almost all the upazila's of the country. It is a great opportunity for the land rights NGOs to work with the relevant government departments in the identification of Khas lands and distribute those among landless people.

**Overseas employment:** In the previous year the government imparted skill development training through BMET on different trades to 65,000 potential migrant workers which will be raised to more than 100,000 in the next fiscal year as planned by government. The NGOs which have the programme of supporting migrant workers can facilitate the process of ensuring services and entitlements for those who need them.

The above-mentioned are some areas where the rights-based NGOs can ensure delivery of entitlements, services and creation of economic opportunities for the welfare, dignity and wellbeing of the poor, marginalised and excluded communities.

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## Where will the nuclear waste go?

ABDUL MATIN

FOLLOWING the signing of an agreement with Russia on November 2, 2011, to set up two, 1000 MWe nuclear reactors at Rooppur, Sergey V. Kirienko, director general of the State Atomic Energy Corporation (Rosatom) of Russia, announced that Russia would supply nuclear fuel for the lifetime of the plant and "also the spent nuclear fuel will be taken back to Russia."

Subsequently, we were told repeatedly by the concerned authorities in Bangladesh that we had no reason to worry about nuclear waste from the proposed Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant (RNPP). Kirienko again assured the prime minister of Bangladesh during her visit to Russia last January that they would take back the nuclear wastes as per agreement (UNB, January 16, 2013).

We were, however, surprised by a contradictory statement given by Yu Sokolov, Vice-Chairman of Rosatom, at the recent international seminar on nuclear power in Dhaka. To a question from the floor, he said that Russia would take back the spent nuclear fuel but there was no agreement between Bangladesh and Russia about the management of the nuclear waste. He further added that as per existing regulations, Russia cannot manage nuclear waste from other countries.

The minister of science and technology of Bangladesh, who was present at the seminar, did not contradict the statement of Sokolov. Does this mean that Russia may ultimately send back the high-level nuclear waste to Bangladesh? If this happens then why were we misinformed about the management of the nuclear waste from the Rooppur plant?

What will Bangladesh do with the high-level nuclear waste? In an article (*The Daily Star*, November 3, 2011) I explained that nuclear wastes are separated from the spent fuel through reprocessing and classified as low, mid and high-level wastes depending on their half-lives. The half-life is the time taken by a radioactive substance to lose half of its activity. Low and mid-level nuclear wastes can be disposed of relatively easily when their activities naturally come down to a negligible level through disintegrations in a reasonably short time.

High-level nuclear waste, which consists of 3% by volume of all radioactive waste and contains 95% of the radioactivity, can have half-lives of hundreds of thousands of years. The high-level waste is vitrified i.e. turned into glass, sealed inside stainless steel canisters for storage or disposal in dry and stable geological formations, preferably inside abandoned salt mines deep underground. Liquid high-level wastes are evaporated to solids, vitrified and stored like solid wastes.

Unfortunately, there is no such geological formation in Bangladesh and, therefore, it is not possible to permanently store high-level waste in our country. The other alternative is to store the waste inside a thick heavy concrete vault in an isolated area and guard it, including an exclusion zone, against human intrusion. It will also be difficult to find an isolated and environmentally safe location for storage of high-level nuclear waste in a densely populated country like Bangladesh.

It is, therefore, essential that the issue of management of high-level nuclear waste is resolved satisfactorily through discussions with Russia before the start of construction of the nuclear plant at Rooppur. Secondly, it is expected that the government takes the people in confidence and tells the whole truth, not the half of it, while dealing with nuclear power.

The writer is a former chief engineer of Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission.

ACROSS

1 Venomous viper  
Incense  
8 Pop  
12 Ball-bearing item  
13 Beelzebub's doings  
14 From square one  
15 Supreme Court Justice  
Thurgood  
17 Calm before the storm  
18 Comedian  
19 Refuge  
20 Downright  
22 Road's shoulder  
24 Hard to find  
25 Almond confection  
29 Got a Secret  
30 Left-hand page  
31 Ostrich's cousin  
32 Union

34 Valhalla  
VIP  
35 Loathe  
36 Losses  
37 Drive away  
40 "Wozeck" composer  
41 Summer-time treats  
42 Thatcher  
46 Commandment starter  
47 Birthright  
48 Historic period  
49 Huge amount of  
50 Across  
51 Tarzan's creator's mono-gram  
DOWN  
1 S  
2 Vast expense  
3 Storyteller in court  
4 Detox center  
5 Terrible guy?  
6 "Abner"  
7 Right angle  
8 Sandwich  
9 Burden  
10 Place to buy  
11 Piercing tools  
12 Slightly

Solution time: 25 mins.  
MOPS SAC PAPA  
OPEN AGE ONES  
SAINT TARS OTTAW  
SHIFTSY TUNE  
FORERANDAFT  
AMPLY MIA TAIT  
RARE PEN REIN  
CGI JAS BARRY  
HUGHAN BLOW  
GIRD ADDONS  
SLIP OAR ABET  
HASP RIG TIME  
ECHO ALE ATOP  
Yesterday's answer 5-3

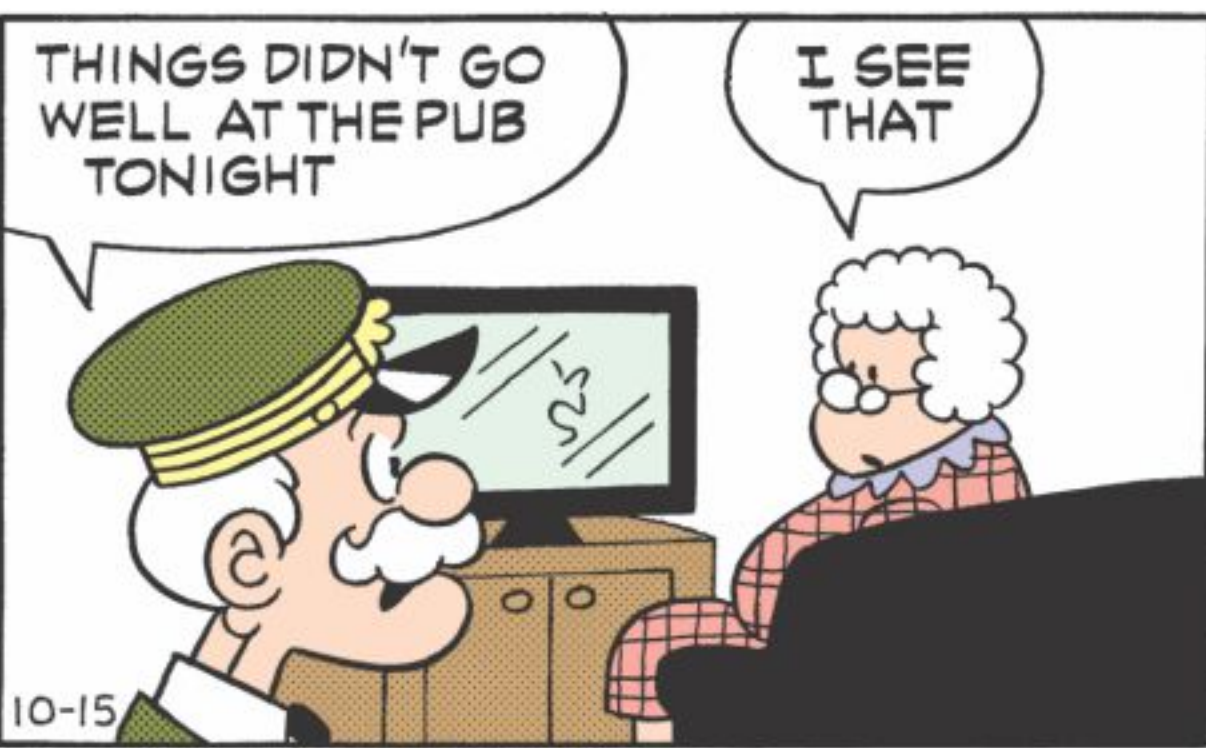
19 Ricelike pasta  
20 — and proper  
21 Volcanic spillage  
22 Cleopatra's boat  
23 Gaelic  
25 Vegan's no-no  
26 Distinguished ancestry  
27 In the thick of  
28 Sisters  
30 Test tube  
33 Variety of macaque  
34 Gumbo base  
36 Music transition  
37 Ceremony  
38 Canyon phenomenon  
39 Lowly worker  
40 Author Stoker  
42 Encountered  
43 "— was saying...  
44 Mess up  
45 Bill

CRYPTOQUIP  
DH TCW GQDKENY O RLEKN  
PWQ CH QNACN CB TCWZGNKH.  
D ZNPACB TCWY NBY WQ  
RNOZDRV O JNO GLDZL

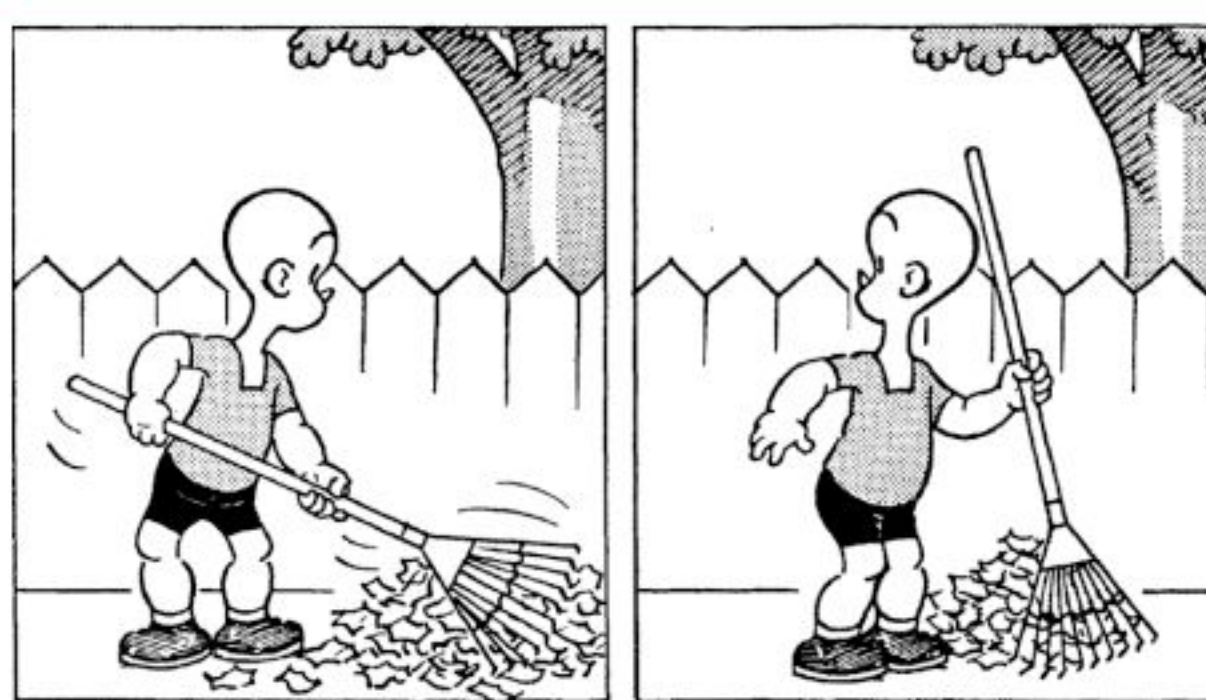
Last Cryptoquip: WHEN THAT STRING PLAYER WANTS A LIGHT, SWEET DESSERT TREAT, HE USUALLY CHOOSES CELLO PUDDING.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: T equals Y

### BEETLE BAILY



### HENRY



### QUOTABLE Quotes

"If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude. Don't complain."

Maya Angelou

NRB Bank

Not Just Another Bank

unlock your future

step in and make the change

because, we're not just another bank

#### Sales & Service Manager

##### Job Description/Responsibility

- To develop business.
- To ensure smooth operations
- To perform HR/Admin activities of the branch.
- Safeguard the bank from potential loss.
- To enhance productivity / effectiveness of the branch and quality of service.
- Maintain NRB Bank's internal control standards, implement and observe Compliance Policy and maintain awareness of operational risk and minimize the likelihood of it occurring.

##### Educational Requirements

Minimum Graduation in Marketing/ Finance/Accounting; Preferably MBA/M.Com from reputed universities with CGPA 3.25

##### Experience Requirement

Minimum 3 years experience as SSM with 7 years Banking experience.

##### Additional Job Requirement

- Must be able to independently manage clients, assess their requirements and handle their borrowing and other banking requirements.
- Knowledge on all Bangladesh Bank regulations.

- Familiar with banking products and operations.
- Must be able to develop a business portfolio.
- Knowledge of AML regulation.
- Must be capable of ensuring excellent customer service.
- Having practical knowledge and experience in Centralize banking in operations & Branch banking.

#### Relationship Manager Consumer Banking and SME Banking

##### Job Description/Responsibility

- Acquiring new Business and ensure quality services.
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- Ensure operational efficiency in every aspect.
- Safeguard the bank from potential loss.
- Tracking performance for End result.
- Marketing of products & Services to prospective client.
- To ensure that the Branch as an effective retail/SME sales and service outlet by providing superior customer service for increasing the customer base and achieving the branch asset & liability as well as other products.

- To Assist the SSM/CSM/Unit Head of SME to ensure that all the regulatory guidelines are followed in operations of the branch.

##### Educational Requirements

Minimum Graduation in Marketing/ Finance/Accounting; Preferably MBA/M.Com from reputed universities with CGPA 3.25

##### Experience Requirement

Minimum 2 years experience as Relationship Manager with 5 years Banking experience.

##### Additional Job Requirement

- Result Oriented Individual.
- Strategists, able to set guideline or take decision.
- Be practical, realistic, and decisive and quickly move to implement decisions.
- Good understanding of balancing corporate governance and developing the business.
- Sound planning, organizing, directing and control capabilities.
- Good organizational leadership and interpersonal skills.
- Excellent communication and negotiation skills.
- Having practical knowledge and

experience in Centralized banking in Operations & Branch banking.

#### Customer Service Officer

##### Job Description/Responsibility

- To ensure proper authorization of transactions and also to make sure accurate transactions in each customer service point as per policy and regulations.
- Ability to improve the customer service quality by studying, evaluating, and re-designing processes such as establishing and communicating service metrics.
- Extensive experience on handling customer service team, including a strong working knowledge of service processes, policies, techniques and applicable regulations.
- Work on a fast paced environment with strong organizational and multi-tasking skills.
- Ability to produce creative ideas to improve customer service standards and skills.
- Sound knowledge of Bangladesh Bank regulations, Negotiable Instrument Act and Company Act.

##### Educational Requirements

Minimum Graduation in Marketing/ Finance/Accounting; Preferably MBA/M.Com from reputed universities with CGPA 3.25

##### Experience Requirement

Minimum 2 years experience as Customer Service Manager with 5 years Banking experience.

##### Additional Job Requirement

- Sound planning, organizing, directing and control capabilities.
- Good organizational leadership and interpersonal skills.
- Good knowledge in centralized banking and branch operations
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills in English & Bangla.
- Computer proficiency in Microsoft Office.

#### Teller

##### Job Description/Responsibility

- Responsible for cash deposit & withdrawal in an efficient & accurate way so that the customer waiting time is reduced significantly.

- Ability to balance and report to teller transactions daily, in accordance with standard procedures.
- Must have knowledge of all applicable money laundering prevention and fake note detection procedures.
- Must have knowledge of Cash Transaction Report (CTR) and Suspicious Transaction Report (STR).
- Cash management which includes maintaining cash within vault limit; cash balance, return of the cash into the branch vault, monitoring the flow of cash at the counters and sorting of notes.

##### Educational Requirements

Graduation in any discipline

##### Experience Requirement

Minimum 1 year experience as Teller in a Centralized Bank with excellent track record.

##### Additional Job Requirement

- Good mathematical skills
- Good communication skills, with positive attitude towards customer services.
- Friendly and approachable personality.
- Computer proficiency in Microsoft Office.