proposals stipulated in the budget. Some Jatiya Party MPs who were made ministers must defend the budget in the parliament as the budget has been approved by the cabinet and it is the duty of every minister to stand by the cabinet decision collectively. It is beyond expectations that ruling AL MPs will criticise any budgetary proposals. So, the marathon discussion on the proposed budget will finally yield no positive result. Rather, MPs participating in the budget discussion will use the parliament floor to launch scathing verbal attack on the opposition BNP that has no representation in the current parliament.

advisory council member Suranjit Sen Gupta and some others have already questioned the BNP's right to criticise the proposed budget. This makes one wonder: Is the budget only for those who support the AL-led government? Isn't it a national budget, then?

In defence of collecting more revenue, the government however has said that it will carry out various development activities which will benefit people. However, people now urgently want the government's intensive attention to save their lives from the greed of unscrupulous traders who are mixing poison in foods to make money. The government's



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Keeping the income tax exemption limit same for the next one year is unjustified. The finance minister did not do justice to people by making such proposal.

Some ministers and the ruling Awami League leaders have also made it clear that they would not tolerate even any constructive criticism to the proposed budget. In their eyes, the proposed budget is of course people-oriented. In a surprising development, AL General Secretary Syed Ashraful Islam, AL

move to check formalin-tainted fish, fruits and vegetables in the capital and elsewhere in the country is very weak. It has moved to check only formalin, but those contaminated with other chemicals will remain untraced. The government does not have time to waste. It is legally bound to ensure the safety of public life. It has no other alternative, but to act without any delay.

If the government needs funds to take and implement comprehensive measures, it may ask or impose fresh taxes in the proposed budget to this effect. How much money does the government need to act vigorously to save people from this danger? If it is more money that is needed to keep these poisons from entering into our food, the finance minister should come up with a proposal to do so and declare an immediate war on the adulteration of foods.

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