



TEARS for taxpayers

Govt continues unethical subsidy to banks for bank plunderers

INAM AHMED and SHAKHAWAT LITON

Year after year, the government has been allowing this easy scheme of plundering our banks -- a group of politically well-connected people who stretch their long arms and take loans from state-owned banks with all kinds of shady schemes. Then they will forget to pay back.

By the time the year ends, the government will replenish the plundered amount from the taxpayers' pockets. And who are these taxpayers? The lower middleclass and middleclass people who have to sweat it out just to avoid drowning in poverty.

No matter how much illogical, immoral, unethical and unjust this system is, this process bureaucratically nicely termed as "recapitalisation of banks" is being repeated



by the government.

This year is no exception as Finance Minister AMA Muhith has set aside Tk 2,000 crore for the next fiscal year beginning July 1 from your and my pockets to pay off these "honourable entrepreneurs" who had to take the trouble of looting the banks.

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A woman in tears in front of a burnt down house in Tintila, about 76km from Rangamati town yesterday. Her mother was burnt to death inside when the house was set on fire Friday morning.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

It's planned

Victims say about Longadu attack

MINHAJ UDDIN and ANVIL CHAKMA, from Longadu, Rangamati

Friday's attack by Bangalee settlers in three villages of Rangamati's Longadu upazila was a planned one to drive indigenous people out of the areas, said a number of victims.

"If it was not a planned attack, they wouldn't have brought petrol and other flammable materials with them and burnt down our houses," Kulin Mitra Chakma, chairman of Longadu Union Parishad, told The Daily Star yesterday morning.

Kulin Mitra, himself a victim, said, "Many of those who took part in the attacks carried bottles full of petrol and octane, which were hurled at our houses after looting."

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VAT BURDEN ON MIDDLE CLASS

Worries there though Muhith assures

SOHEL PARVEZ

Finance Minister AMA Muhith denied that any of the tax hikes would affect the lives of the middle and lower middle class.

But, a simple analysis of his tax proposal should help clarify how much his assurance holds up.

From July 1 onward, anyone who wants to build a concrete home, either in rural or urban

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NEWS ANALYSIS

How ethical is it?

SHARIEF KHAN

The government is finding new ways to increase its revenue every year as the economy is getting bigger. But the latest one of these ways is making people question its methods. For instance, the government has been 'silently' deducting Tk 500 for every one lakh we are saving in the banks. This went on almost unnoticed for years. But depositors suddenly took notice when the

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Savers to keep off banks

Says MCCI blasting proposed hike in excise duty on savings

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country's business leaders and economists criticised the government heavily for hiking the excise duty on bank deposits in the proposed budget for next fiscal year.

The increased excise duty would discourage people to use formal financial channels, said Nihad Kabir, president of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Dhaka (MCCI).

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TOP QUOTE

"Increasing excise duty [on bank deposit] is a secret attack. It will harm the image of the government."

AHSAN H MANSUR
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF POLICY
RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF BANGLADESH

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Tahir spins SA to big win

AFP, London

Leg-spinner Imran Tahir took four wickets as South Africa beat Sri Lanka by 96 runs to begin their Champions Trophy campaign in style in London on Saturday.

Tahir finished with four for 27 in 8.3 overs after former captain Hashim Amla scored his 25th ODI century to set Sri Lanka a target of 300 runs.

Sri Lanka were cruising along at 116 for two when Tahir was introduced to the attack in the 18th over and South Africa immediately got a firm grip on the game.

Dinesh Chandimal took on one of South Africa's best fielders -- A.B. de Villiers -- on a misfield and was run out by a direct hit.

Three deliveries later, Chamara Kapugedera was

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APP-BASED TRANSPORT SERVICE Guideline soon

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

The government is soon going to make app-based transport hailing services like Uber officially permitted under the "Ride Sharing Service Guideline".

"We have primarily drafted a guideline for all app-based vehicles. We will sit today to finalise the draft and then send it to the ministry for final approval," Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) Director (enforcement) Nazmul Ahsan Majumder told The Daily Star yesterday.

The move comes at a time when six to seven app-based transport hailing services, like Pathao, Cholo, Amarbike, Uber, and taxiwala, are already in service in Dhaka.

The BRTA director said, "The app-based services should be under government monitoring. We have kept all the aspects of the services in our guideline. Information of how many vehicles will run on the street under this service, the details of the vehicles, vehicles' owners and drivers will be on BRTA record."

The app-based hailing services have been well received by city dwellers, irrespective of their economic standings, largely due to convenience, easy availability and reasonable fares.

USA-based Datavox Ltd first brought Uber-style motorbike service app service in Bangladesh in May last year. Share a Motorcycle (SAM) was the first e-hailing platform in Bangladesh.

When SAM held a press conference about their service, the very next day BRTA issued a notice and said such services were illegal as motorcycles were registered privately so there was no scope for using them for commercial purposes.

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OUR SHOWROOMS:

Dhaka: • Katabon • New Elephant road • Jamuna future park • Ring road - 01, Mohammadpur • Polwell carnation, Uttara • Rapa plaza, Dhanmondi • level-2, Shymoli square • Tokyo square, Mohammadpur • Lalmatia (Aarong) • Tajmahal road, Mohammadpur • Gulshan avenue, Gulshan-2 • New circular road, Malibagh • Shimanto square, Dhanmondi, Uttara • Mirpur shopping center, Mirpur • Ring road-2, Mohammadpur • Block-c Banasree, Rampura • New Market • Shaorapara bus stand, Mirpur • Main road, Banasree, Rampura, **Tangail:** • Main road, Tangail **Gazipur:** • Rabeya complex, chourasta, Gazipur **Sylhet:** • Ambarkhana Point, Sylhet **Narayangan:** • 2 Number DIT market, Narayangan **Upcoming Showrooms:** • Level-1, Shymoli square, Dhaka • Police plaza, Hatirjheel, Dhaka • Hajipara, Rampura, Dhaka • GEC, Chittagong.