BUDGET 2008: GROWTH STIMULATING OR RETARDING ?

The Pathfinder Foundation in collaboration with SLBDC, has organized its Seventh Community Meeting (Sanvada) on the Government Budget to be presented to the Parliament on 7th November . The objective of this Community Meeting is to share the findings of the analytical studies commissioned by the Pathfinder Foundation on various aspects of the budget including its impact to the economic growth, and macro economic, sectoral and firm level implications of the tax proposals.

This Sanvada will be held on Friday, 16th November, 2007 at the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute from 8.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. and will include presentations on “Government Budget Proposals for 2008”. “Growth Stimulating or Retarding” by Dr. O.G. Dayaratne Banda, Ph.D (NUS) Senior Lecturer in Economics, University of Peradeniya, “The Budget 2008: A Critical Analysis” by Muttukrishna Sarvananthan, Ph.D (Wales), Principal Researcher, PPID, “Macro Economic, Sectoral and Firm Level Implications of the Tax Proposals 2008” by N.R. Gajendran, Partner, Gajma & Co. The proceedings will be conducted with simultaneous translations to Sinhala/Tamil/English. This dialogue, according to the organizers is meant for Hon. Members of Parliament, policy makers, Business Chambers, Professional Associations, Academics, Trade Unions, Students of Economics, Public Policy and other Social Sciences, interested civil society organizations and concerned citizens. Due to limited number of seats available the participants are requested to register well in advance.

A most interesting and pioneering study on gender analysis of budgetary expenditure will be the theme of presentation by Anoma Abhayaratne, Ph.D (Essex), Head of Economics Department with Ananda Jayawickrema, Ph.D Head of Economics Department, Senior Lecturer in Economics, University of Peradeniya, respectively. This presentation is titled “Budget Analysis through Gender Lense”.

These presentations will be followed by an Open Forum Dr. (Mrs.) Anila Dias Bandaranayake, former Assistant Governor and Director of Research of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka will chair this meeting. This Sanvada is expected to stimulate an open, informed, unbiased and non-passionate discussion during the open forum. The participants at this Seminar representing the Government Institutions, Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Trade Unions, professional associations and other civil society organizations will be provided with a Guide to Tax Proposals and a Sanvada document entitled “The Government Budget: A Critical Analysis of Transparency and Accountability.”

Further, the Pathfinder Foundation has established a Rapid Response Expert Team to respond to any queries on the Budget related Issues, primarily by the Parliamentarians or their Senior Officials. The availability of this Rapid Response to facilitate debates in Parliament by an independent, non-partisan institute too will be another pioneering experiment by the Foundation. The Parliamentarians who wish to utilize this service could direct their queries needing clarification to telephone No. 2596281, Fax No.2595894 or by e-mailing to info@pathfinderfoundation.org. The Foundation will direct such queries to the experts presenting papers at the above Sanvada who will in turn provide answers or independent analysis as required by them.