

Steps taken for post-cyclone rehabilitation: Saifur

The government has undertaken extensive measures in all the sectors for post-cyclone rehabilitation in the affected areas of the country. Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman said on Monday, reports BSS.

Addressing an inter-ministerial co-ordination meeting on post-cyclone rehabilitation programmes held at the National Economic Council (NEC) conference room at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, the Finance Minister said, rehabilitation programmes on housing, agriculture, fisheries, communication, sanitation, education and industries had already started.

Chaired by the Finance Minister the meeting was attended by all the Secretaries and members of the Planning Commission.

The meeting decided that as an immediate step each needy family in the affected areas would be provided with two bundles of C I sheet and Taka 1,000 for fully damaged and Taka 500 for partially damaged houses.

The Minister said preliminary work for reconstruction of those educational institutions which have SSC centres had already started.

Saifur Rahman said reconstruction of the embankment around the Export Processing Zone (EPZ) in Chittagong and coastal embankment in all the affected areas would be undertaken with immediate effect through test relief and Food for Work programmes which would generate employment opportunities for the affected people.

He said allocation of necessary funds for this purpose had already been made.

The meeting decided that to rehabilitate the agricultural sector all necessary inputs would be provided to the farmers through Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC).

The minister informed the meeting that instructions had already been given to Bangladesh Krishi Bank and the schedule banks to provide agricultural and fisheries loans on easy terms. The earlier loans had been rescheduled, he added.

The meeting further decided that an extensive deep tubewell sinking scheme would be implemented through the LGRD ministry. The tubewells will serve both the purpose of irrigation as well as source of pure drinking water.

The meeting decided that all future government constructions in the affected areas including educational institutions, health centres and project offices would be multi-storied buildings which would act as cyclone centres.

The meeting also decided that coastal afforestation programmes would be strengthened to minimise the impact of future cyclones and tidal bores.

In his concluding remarks the Finance Minister said the government had engaged all its resources to rehabilitate the cyclone victims and that money would not be a constraint in this regard. The friendly countries and the donor agencies are always with us in time of need, he added.



Bodies of two sisters who tied themselves with the same rope, obviously not to get separated from each other at the time of the April 29 cyclone and tidal surge. Bodies found at Gohira village of Anwara upazila two days back. —Photo: Nurul Alam

Post-cyclone exigencies

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The government's resources were contained within "reasonable limits". Even after relief and other related operations in the wake of the devastating cyclone, such expenditures would be only about Taka 500 crore more than that of last fiscal year. The increase will be about 7.5 per cent.

The same sources pointed out that the government revenue budget in 1990-91 was strained by costs of repatriation of displaced workers from Iraq and Kuwait and other expenses related with the Gulf war. The net additional outlays would amount to Taka 200 crore. Besides, an additional current expenditure to the tune of Taka 125 crore will be involved because of dearness allowances at the rate of 10 per cent for the government employees with effect from December last.

Considering these unforeseen developments, the growth in current expenditures in 1990-91 will not be much, the sources said. They pointed out that current expenditure growth in the eighties was about 18 per cent in nominal terms. Adjusted for inflation, the real growth was 8.5 per cent, leading to short-

age of domestic resources in implementation of programmes under the development or investment budgets. This was a sore point with the donors, the sources said.

The overall revenue shortfall in 1991-92 is not likely to be more than Taka 150 crore. Though tax receipts in the year will be about Taka 300 crore short of the original estimates, the non-tax receipts particularly from Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) will be higher, the sources said. BPC's contributions will be alone Taka 150 crore because of upward price adjustments for petroleum products. Under the original budgetary projection, its contributions were estimated at about Taka 60 crore in 1990-91.

The government has also finalised the revised Annual Development Programme (ADP) for 1990-91 at Taka 6,500 crore against the original outlay of Taka 5,668 crore. Higher amount of disbursements of project and commodity aid and also of self-financing by the autonomous corporations will make it possible to revise up the ADP allocation in 1990-91. The revised ADP will be placed before the National Economic Council (NEC) soon for approval, the sources said.

MCCI

Meanwhile, the country's leading trade organisation, the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI), highlighted the caution for a zero growth rate in the public sector wages bill to overcome the strains on the budgetary resources of the government. It mentioned that in the recently announced Indian budget for 1991-92, zero growth was projected for public sector wage increase for reducing budgetary deficit.

Besides effective steps to restrain the growth of current expenditures of the government matching realistic revenue projection, the government, the MCCI suggested, should introduce pre-shipment inspection of all imports and consider measures to tap the potentials for resource mobilisation from the agricultural sector.

Hearing of prayer for transferring Ershad's case begins

The hearing of the petition for transferring the arms case (Special Tribunal Case No. 60 of 1991) against former President HM Ershad began Monday before the Division Bench of the High Court division, reports BSS.

The court comprises Justice Abdul Bari Sarker and Justice Kazi Ebadul Haque.

After preliminary hearing of both the sides, the court was adjourned till 2 p.m today (Tuesday).

On May 12 HM Ershad filed a petition under Section 526 of the Criminal Procedure Code before a Division Bench of the High Court Division for transfer of the arms case, now pending in the court of Senior Special Tribunal, Dhaka, to the court of any other special tribunal or to the High Court Division itself.

But the court, comprising Justice ARM Amirul Islam Chowdhury and Justice Badrul Islam Chowdhury did not hear the petition as they felt embarrassed and referred the petition to the Chief Justice for placing the same before any other court.

The Chief Justice set up the Division Bench, comprising Justice Abdul Bari Sarker and Justice Kazi Ebadul Haque for hearing the petition of HM Ershad.

Diarchy in admn has affected relief work, says Menon

By A Staff Correspondent
Workers Party leader Rashed Khan Menon MP, said on Monday that the diarchy in administration was hampering the relief operations and urged to the ruling party to immediately take decision regarding form of government.

At a press conference at the party office he alleged that the cabinet of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia had totally failed to tackle the overall post-cyclone situation.

"It took 10 days to bring the President's relief godown under Prime Minister's control, which caused enormous sufferings to the cyclone victims", he added. He also said, "the poor performance of the government has forced the people to recollect the past".

"Even the autocratic ruler, Ershad sent letters to us to be a member of the national committee for facing the disaster then but unfortunately, our proposal to form a national committee was rejected by a democratically elected government", he said. He reiterated his call for forming a national committee with the representatives of the three alliances, leaders of different professional groups, chiefs of three services, BDR police and ansars and representatives, from international and local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to tackle the situation.

He alleged that the ruling party undermined the parliament. After May 3, the Prime Minister did not come to the parliament to make a statement on the latest situation, he said.

Farakka

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The country after India's unilateral withdrawal of the Ganges water in 1976. The Farakka Barrage was commissioned on April 21, 1975.

In the light of the consensus statement of the United Nations, the historic five-year Ganges water sharing agreement was signed in November 1977, he said.

Manikganj storm

From Page 1 Col. 7
river Jamuna.

Some 2,000 people have been made homeless by the storm which, packing winds of upto 90 km per hour, battered about 1,000 thatched houses in seven upazilas.

The dead were identified as Abdul Hamid (26) of Hasanpur and Afzal Hossain in Sadar upazila, Akbari Begum (50) of Vangura upazila and Jahangir (30) of Iswardi upazila.

Seriously injured 15 were admitted in Sadar hospital and 11 in Iswardi hospital, medical sources said.

Five people were injured when the tin-shed Jameta Asrafiya Madrasa in the town collapsed. Hospital sources said the condition of Ali Imam, a Fajel student of the madrasa, was critical.

Our Staff Correspondent

adds: A moderate nor'wester lashed the capital Monday evening leaving some semi-pucca houses collapsed and disrupting electric supplies in some areas, fire service sources said.

The nor'wester with winds of upto 65 kilometres per hour accompanied by heavy rain paralysed city life for several hours.

The tin roof of a two storied building at Agamashi Lane in the old part of the city was blown off but nobody was reported injured.

Some trees also fell on the roads blocking traffic for some time.

The charity football match between Mohammedans and Abahani KC for the cyclone victims was abandoned because of the nor'wester.

Form of govt

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Sattar defeated Awami League candidate Dr Kamal Hossain in a big margin, he said adding the election was the manifestation of the people's support for presidential system.

He said the manifesto of BNP in the last election also had not been changed and people gave their verdict in favour of presidential system while the manifesto of Awami League, pleading for parliamentary form, was rejected. He said, if BNP reverted to parliamentary form it would be an act of ignoring the people's verdict.

Baksal leader Abdur Razzak said, the Acting President in his inaugural address mentioning about a sovereign parliament on the basis of the Joint Declaration of the three alliances. He said the people were very much eager to know about the future form of government. He said the people were in favour of parliamentary form and wanted a change in the existing presidential system and a parliament, to which the government would remain accountable.

He said, all political parties struggled unitedly to topple the autocratic regime and now all members of the parliament should come forward to implement the Joint Declaration.

BNP MPs Humayun Khan Panni, Md Abu Taher, Mahbubul Alam Tara, Haroon-or-Rashid Mollah, Prof Rezaul Karim, Major (ret'd) Shahjahan Omar, Abdus Salam Pintu, Azizur Rahman and Khurshida Jahan Haq.

Awami League MPs Meababuddin, Asaduzzaman, Dharendra Nath Ghosh, Dipankar Talukder, Tabibur Rahman Sardar, M A Awal and Mansur Ali; JP MPs T I M Fazle Rabbi, Montraul Haque, Abu Lais M o h o m m a d M o h s i n Chowdhury; Jamaat MPs Abdus Sobhan and Hafiza Asma Khatun; CPB MP Mazhar Hossain; Islami Otkya Jote MP Obaidul Haque and others participated in the discussion.

Mahbubul Alam Tara of BNP

said, there was some inconsistency in the address of the Acting President, which could not give proper direction to the nation.

Khurshida Jahan Haque of BNP urged the members of the Opposition to behave in a manner which could help the parliament complete its term.

Moulana Abdus Sobhan of Jamaat-Islami said, there was no provision in the Constitution to allow the Acting President to continue in his office for an indefinite period. And the Acting President himself also expressed his desire to quit the office as early as possible. He said, the people of the country would like to get out of the clutches of one-man rule and it could be achieved only by establishing parliamentary form of government.

Mrs Hafiza Asma Khatun also pleaded for parliamentary democracy.

Asaduzzaman of Awami League said, about 38 per cent voters of the country voted for parliamentary form of government. He said, the present House could also be reverted to a sovereign parliament. He said parliamentary democracy could be implemented by repealing from the fourth to the 10th amendments.

He cautioned the government against the "presence of the US army" in Bangladesh and posed a question whether the government thought that the presence of the US army in Bangladesh "impaired the independence and sovereignty of the country".

Jatiya Party leader T I M Fazle Rabbi said, the killings of former presidents Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Ziaur Rahman were justified by describing them as autocrats. But they were not autocrats, he said adding similarly, former president Ershad also was not an autocrat and he was elected from five seats in the parliament elections. He said that it would be better for functioning of democracy if Ershad was released and allowed to sit in parliament.

Donors pledge more aid

Aid pledges by foreign countries and donor community continued to increase for relief and rehabilitation of the survivors of the century's worst cyclone and tidal surge in the coastal belt of Bangladesh.

Till Monday, foreign assistance stood at 244.56 million US dollars with pledges by 29 countries and five agencies.

Briefing newsmen, Information Secretary Monjur-i-Mowla said on Monday, efforts taken by the government for relief and rehabilitation of the vast multitude of cyclone victims have received positive response from the international community. As such, the comity of nations has extended generous support, both in cash and kind, he said.

The Secretary stated, Islamic Solidarity Fund was one of the latest organisations which pledged assistance to

By A Staff Correspondent
Bangladesh. The fund has offered one lakh US dollar, he added.

Meanwhile, the representatives of the donor agencies and resident ambassadors and high commissioners in Bangladesh met in Dhaka on Monday to discuss the latest situation about external assistance and the progress of relief operation in the cyclone affected areas.

Economic Relation Division (ERD) Secretary Enam Ahmed Chowdhury presided over the meeting. He informed the meeting that an amount of Taka three crore in cash was distributed among the cyclone affected people so far through the government channel.

The government placed a preliminary report on the extent of damages caused by the natural disaster before the meeting.

An official source said, the

No diarrhoea

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saline just to use in cooking which may give a false impression that diarrhoea is spreading he stated.

He also informed that 50 per cent of the tubewells in the coastal areas were functioning.

Members of The Italian medical team which has come for relief work and assessment of the present disaster prevention awareness also spoke at the press briefing.

WHO has supplied life saving drugs worth 10,000 US dollars on an emergency basis for the cyclone hit people. It will also give medicines worth two lakh dollars at the request of the Health and Family Welfare Ministry.

Dr. Abeyasundara said the five-member team is now assessing the damages and ascertaining requirements in the health sector for immediate and long term needs.

According to its report, WHO has already sent medicines for the prevention of malaria which is expected to break out.

He said that measles that usually breaks out among the children and claims many lives has been prevented through immunization.

team, Dr. Chiaara Venter of Central Technical Unit under the Directorate General for Development and Cooperation in the Italian Foreign Ministry, said along with emergency aid, short, medium and long term plans should be taken for preparing the community in facing natural disasters. She said priority should be given to health infrastructures.

She said an Italian medical team will assess and evaluate the health facilities in the coastal areas.

The team will work from May 15 through May 21 and evaluate what can be done in the coastal health sector and for community preparedness in facing future calamities.

The team will also inspect if the present cyclone centres are effective and make recommendations to the Italian government for future assistance.

Dr. Aldo Stiganano, Chief Technical Unit (Europe) of the same Directorate said Italy will help Bangladesh in immediate and medium term preparedness programmes.

government will need 1.4 billion US dollar for immediate relief, repair and reconstruction in the cyclone battered areas. This amount does not cover funds which will be needed for medium and long term rehabilitation programme. The request to the donor community for this programme will be sought later, the source added.

Speaker's ruling on Anwar's arrest unfortunate: Moudud

By Staff Correspondent
Acting leader of Jatiya Party Parliamentary Party Barrister Moudud Ahmed on Monday termed Sunday's ruling by the Speaker Abdur Rahman Biswas on the arrest of JP MP Anwar Hossain Manju as unfortunate.

Addressing a news conference at the JP office at the Sangsad Bhavan he said that former Minister Anwar Hossain Manju was arrested on April 28 under preventive detention and not under a criminal case as stated by the Speaker in his ruling.

The ruling was thus contrary to the law, which protects MPs from preventive detention for a period extending from 14 days before the start to 14 days after the end of a session of Parliament.

He said that privilege notices given by JP MPs on Monday on the arrest of Anwar Hossain Manju were rejected by the Speaker on the plea that a ruling was given on it.

He said that the Speaker was the custodian of the rights and privileges of MPs. How could there be democracy if the prestige of the Jatiya Sangsad was not upheld, he asked.

Barrister Moudud Ahmed said that all relevant laws were examined on April 26 when Anwar Hossain Manju was administered the oath of office and the Chief Whip of BNP Khandaker Delwar Hossain had told the Jatiya Sangsad that an honourable MP could not be arrested for preventive detention.

The JP leader complained that democratic principle was not followed in distributing seats to the Jatiya Party MPs. Jatiya Party got only one front seat even though it was the second largest opposition party in the House.

The Midnight File

UK, Iraqi troops exchange fire

ZAKHO, May 13: British Royal Marines shot at two Iraqi soldiers near one of Saddam Hussein's summer palaces after their patrol came under fire three times. British military officials said Monday.

There were no British casualties and no reports of Iraqi wounded. It was the first report of hostile gunfire in 24 days after allied ground operations in northern Iraq to help Kurdish refugees, reports AP.

Kurd aid concert in London

LONDON, May 13: International rock stars sang in aid of Kurdish refugees on Sunday in a controversial pop concert expected to raise more than 30 million dollars. The Princess of Wales, wife of her to the British throne Prince Charles, was among 11,000 people at the Kurd aid concert, entitled "The Simple Truth," in London's Wembley arena, reports Reuter.

Winnie Mandela found guilty

JOHANNESBURG, May 13: A supreme court judge Monday found Winnie Mandela guilty of being an accessory in the beating of four young men who were abducted from a church home in 1988. Justice M S Stegmann ruled Mrs. Mandela, the wife of African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela, was guilty of being an accessory after the fact to assault, a lesser charge than the assault and kidnapping charges she faced during the three month trial.

The judge convicted two co-defendants, Xoliswa Palati and John Morgan, of kidnapping and found Mrs Palati guilty of assault, reports AP.

Grim battle

From Page 1 Col. 7
In Anwara upazila Taka 1.5 crore as cash relief and Taka 2.5 crore as house-building grants was urgently needed, according to an official estimate.

Tk. 75,00,000 is needed for reconstruction of the damaged schools and other educational institutions.

For transportation of relief goods, four pick-up vans, 10 mini-trucks and two trawlers are required immediately.

The official sources told our Staffer that transportation will be no problem from Tuesday as more transports will be pressed into service. Remote inaccessible areas will also be covered for distribution of relief goods.

Official source claimed that adequate relief materials have been distributed in Banshkhal upazila.

Our Chittagong correspondent Nurul Alam reports that diarrhoeal diseases in the offshore island of Sandwip, 40 kilometres from Chittagong city are increasing at an alarming rate.

Meanwhile, over 20,000

people in the cyclone-ravaged coastal belt of Bangladesh were attacked with diarrhoea in the 24 hours ending 6 pm Monday, official sources said. Of them, 70 died.

Briefing newsmen, Information Secretary Manzur-i-Mowla said in Dhaka Monday evening that the total number of cyclone victims suffering from diarrhoeal diseases since May 1 was 39,796.

The disease took a toll of 235 persons, he added.

An unofficial estimate however put the death toll at 5000 till now.

The districtwise break-up of diarrhoea victims, only in the cyclone-hit areas during last 24 hours was mentioned by the Secretary as follows:

Chittagong — deaths-55, affected - 18,965, Laxmipur - deaths-3, affected - 30, Feni - deaths -one, affected-87, Noakhali— deaths - 4, affected - 123, Bhola affected - 84 and Barguna - affected - 30. No deaths were reported from Ishola and Barguna districts.

The Secretary could not give the number of deaths and affected in Cox's Bazar district.

WFP

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and adjustable to changing circumstances.

Two zones are being considered distinguished according to the intensity of the damage and needs and requiring to different levels of intervention. In zone A, 25 percent of the population will receive a ration of wheat, vegetable oil and also in addition some soyafLOUR biscuits during the first month to be distributed to the most vulnerable cases.

In zone B, wheat and oil will be distributed in the first month and wheat only during the second and third months to 12 per cent of the population.

About 20 per cent of the resources will be channelled through NGOs operating in the area and 80 per cent through the vulnerable groups feeding network and its proved methods of selection of the poorest.

This plan calls for 53,270 tonnes of wheat, about 1517 tonnes of vegetable oil and 60 tonnes of soyaflour biscuits.

Khaleda

From Page 1 Col. 8
used as schools and hospitals, but they would hold sufficient stock of food and emergency medicines so that relief operations could be launched from there immediately after a disaster, she said.

She said the government would welcome help and assistance from the donor countries and agencies in making this programme a success.

Speaking about the rehabilitation programme in the cyclone-hit areas, the Prime Minister said the government was going to take up schemes to create job opportunities for the affected people immediately.

Ctg varsity reopens today

CHITTAGONG, May 13: Classes and the halls of the Chittagong University will reopen today after remaining closed for over four and a half months, reports BSS.

শুধির্দুর্গতদের সাহায্যার্থে
সম্মিলিত শিল্পীসমাজ ত্রাণ কমিটি
সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠান
১৩, ১৪ ও ১৫ই মে, ১৯৯১
স্থান : বাংলাদেশ জাতীয় যাদুঘর মিলনায়তন
সময় : সন্ধ্যা ৬-৩০ মিনিট

অংশগ্রহণ : সর্বজন্য সাবিনা ইয়াসমিন, সৈয়দ আবদুল হানী, ফেরদৌসী রহমান, অজিত রায়, বুরজিদ আলম, এম্বু কিশোর, সুবীর নন্দী, আবদুল জব্বার, আবিদা সুলতানা, রফিকুল আলম, শামী আখতার, কুমার বিশ্বজিৎ, শেখ ইশতিয়াক, ওজ সবে, পাপিয়া সারোয়ার, তপন মাহমুদ, সাদি মোহাম্মদ, ফাহিম হোসেন চৌধুরী, বাসেম হোসেন, লিলুকার ইয়াসমিন, শবনম মুন্সেরী, সান্নিরা আফরিন রশিক, ফাতেমাহুজ জোহার, ফেরদৌস আরা, সিমকী শামস কাককী, ইয়াসমিন মুশতরী, নীনা হামিদ, রবীন্দ্রনাথ রায়, করিলা পারভীন, ইয়াহমদ রাজবন্দী ও স্ত্রী, কিরকান্ত রায়, বিপ্লবী উজ্জ্বল, আবু বকর সিদ্দিক, লিলুকা বাবু, জহির আলীম, রত্না বসাক, মহিউজ্জামান ময়না, ফকির আলমশীর প্রমুখ শিল্পীবৃন্দ।

বৃত্তা : শামীম আরা নীপা, শিকলী মোহাম্মদ, হাসান ইয়াহম, ওজ সারকার, নীপা বন্দকর, বেলাল মোহাম্মদ, সোহেল, রতন প্রমুখ শিল্পীবৃন্দ ও সুকল দত্তের পরিচালনায় বাংলাদেশের ব্যাতনামা আশিষ্টাঙ্গ।

নির্মলিখিত স্থান থেকে প্রবেশপত্র সংগ্রহ করুন : অঙ্গী ব্যাক, বালা একাডেমী শাখা। জনতা ব্যাক, টিএসপি। অঙ্গী ব্যাক, নিউমার্কেট শাখা। জলিল টেডিং, ১৭৫ নিউমার্কেট, কুলাস, মিরপুর রোড। কনিষ্ঠ, মিরপুর রোড। আড়, মিরপুর রোড ও আড় মৌচাক ও অনুষ্ঠানের দিন জাতীয় যাদুঘর মিলনায়তন কাউন্টারে।

উপদেষ্টা : জনাব সুফের রহমান সরকার

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