

Tk 15.75cr Canadian aid for Rohingya refugees

Canada will provide 5.25 million dollars equivalent to Tk 15.75 crore in assistance for refugees from Myanmar who are living in Bangladesh, reports BSS.

The grant by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) was announced yesterday by Foreign Affairs Minister Andre Ouellet which coincides with the visit of Raymond Chan, Canada's Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific) to Bangladesh.

The aid package includes 3.0 million dollars to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to assist some 200,000 Muslim refugees who have fled to Bangladesh since 1991. Half of these funds will be used for refugee support and half for a voluntary repatriation programme.

Another 2.0 million dollars will be paid for food aid to returning refugees within Myanmar under a programme administered by the World Food Programme. This matches the amount provided last year by Canada to buy rice for refugees in Bangladesh.

Finally, 25,000 dollars goes to Médecins Sans Frontières, Canada which has joined MSF-France to provide medical assistance in the refugee camps.

Another report says Ray-

mond Chan called on Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman at his office yesterday.

UNB adds: Chan met State Minister for Planning Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan at his Planning Commission office.

Canada-Bangladesh cooperation in economic field dominated the talks.

Chan also met Grameen Bank Managing Director Prof Mohammad Yunus and exchanged views with him.

Prof Yunus apprised the visiting Canadian Minister about the ongoing activities of his bank.

Women's Day

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establishing women's rights and improving their socio-economic status. "Women would have real dignity in the country and society if they are made educated and self-reliant."

In another message, Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina, stressed the need for taking realistic and integrated programme for ensuring social rights, education and overall development of women.

The Ministry of Women's Affairs has chalked out an elaborate programme which includes a discussion on 'Building a World Where Women are Respected.'

Sangsad prorogued

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ments had failed to satisfy the Opposition, Salam Talukder said, although they themselves had never sought apology for the insults hurled against the Speaker or for brandishing shoes at the ruling party MPs in the House in the past.

Salam Talukder, who spoke on behalf of the Deputy Leader of the House Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury who was suffering from a throat infection, also observed that the Opposition members never expressed their sorrow for hurling their files like saucers in the House and rushing towards the Speaker's podium in aggressive shows of protest against the chair in the past.

Referring to discussion in the House earlier yesterday on the February 25 Hebron massacre and adoption of a JS resolution condemning the incident, the LGRD minister said the Opposition, which had shown much eagerness for the discussion, on March 1 had kept themselves away from the deliberations on the issue.

Talukder warned that the Opposition would have to be accountable to their respective constituents for abstaining from the discussions on the subject.

The Opposition, however, at a press briefing outside the House yesterday afternoon, observed that the ruling party had failed to take 'effective measures' to pave the way for the Opposition to return to the assembly.

Meanwhile, the House witnessed discussion on the vote of thanks to the President for his speech in the House on the opening day of the just-concluded session.

The treasury bench members, deliberating on the presidential speech, accused the entire Opposition of trying to jeopardise parliamentary democracy.

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sion that the Opposition was determined to paralyse Parliament, Abdur Rab Chowdhury of the BNP said, "The Opposition has the right to stage a walkout as a mark of protest against certain steps of the government, but they have no right to boycott Parliament proceedings." The people had not voted the Opposition members to the Jatiya Sangsad for deserting Parliament, Chowdhury observed.

Major (rtd) Akhtaruzzaman felt that the Opposition was blackmailing the nation through its boycott of the JS proceedings.

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Out of the seven bills introduced, two government-sponsored bills — The Institute of Post-graduate Studies in Agriculture Bill, 1994 and The Finance Court Bill, 1994 were passed.

The other noteworthy events during the session included the placing of the Parliament Secretariat Bill seeking to set up a separate secretariat for the Jatiya Sangsad and submitting the special parliamentary committee's report on a Constitution amendment bill seeking to ensure the independence of the judiciary.

Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali read out the prorogation order at 3:15 pm yesterday.

The announcement came shortly after the Opposition parties at 2:45 pm reaffirmed that they would not return to the House unless the Information Minister formally apologised.

JS condemns massacre

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noted with concern the killing of 63 and injuring 270 in the Hazrat Ibrahim mosque at Hebron by Jewish settlers when the Muslims were in Fazr prayers. Stunned by the barbaric act, the people of Bangladesh condemn the killing and pray for peace of the departed souls.

The opposition which had taken initiative for Parliament to condemn the Hebron massacre was, however, absent from the House.

Supporting the resolution Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman described the Hebron killing as barbaric and dastardly act of Jewish settlers.

He said the incident evoked sharp condemnation from all the countries of the world. The government has also communicated the sentiment of the people of Bangladesh to the Palestinians and the Muslim countries as well.

The Foreign Minister refuted the Opposition criticism, saying it was the BNP government which succeeded in consolidating relations with the Muslim world. In this connection, he recalled the leadership given by late President Ziaur Rahman and his bold role in the Al-Quds Committee that struggled for the cause of

mostafizur Rahman expressed the hope that the opposition would refrain from doing politics on killing and criticising the government on wrong counts.

Maulana Ataur Rahman Khan said killing at the time of namaz (prayer) as happened in the Ibrahim Mosque was unprecedented in the annals of history. Quoting from the Quran he said the holy book also identified the Jews as the greatest enemy of the Muslims. He apprehended that the Hebron incident might obstruct the peace process on the West Bank.

Abdur Rab Chowdhury, in a flashback, said the settlement of the Jews, unwanted and hated everywhere, was forced in Palestine after the Second World War. He demanded all Jews' settlements be dismantled and Bangladesh extend financial, material and diplomatic support to the Palestinians.

Major (rtd) Akhtaruzzaman said Jews were the permanent source of trouble in the Middle East since their settlement was forced there. Akhtaruzzaman expressed his readiness to fight with the Palestinians for establishing their genuine right.

Editor : Mahfuz Anam

Printed & Published by A. S. Mahmud, Managing Director, on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd, 52, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000, from City Publishing House Ltd, 90 Kakrabi, Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No: 11, Road No: 3, Dhammandi R/A, Dhaka-1205. PABX: 5000924, Commercial: 500091 (Direct), Fax No: 98-2-863035, GPO Box No: 3257, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA.



BNP chairperson Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia addressing a public meeting at the Arpara Ideal High School ground in Shalikha thana under Magura district yesterday.

— PID photo

Life's ironies

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to grasp the fact of his father's tragic death in line of duty, was allowed by the relatives to fondle his brother for a moment with his tender hands. He must have been getting impatient for sharing his experience with his father who was taking too long to return from his duties.

For Farhad's mother who was at her daughter-in-law's bedside yesterday, it called for a great strength of character to maintain her equanimity. But then she had become hardened over the years, having lost as many as 17 near and dear ones including her husband, during the country's Liberation War in 1971. Yet, despite her stoicism, she couldn't avoid dabbing the corners of her eyes, wondering how delighted her son would have been at the latest arrival in the family. Alas, that was not to be!

Police raids

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But he declined to elaborate for the sake of investigation.

"We raided several places along with some of the suspects in our custody," said a DBP police officer.

In another development the senior police officers at a condolence meeting held at the police Headquarters at Rajarbagh in the city yesterday expressed their profound shock at the tragic death of police officer Hasanul Farhad at the hands of miscreants on Saturday.

Munajat was offered at the meeting for the peace of the departed soul. The meeting also conveyed its heartfelt sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

Paying tributes to the deceased the Inspector General of Police, ASM Shahjahan said late Farhad was a brave police officer.

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