

449 dev projects
completed in
Barisal

BARISAL, Mar 17: A total of 449 development projects were completed in Barisal district under test relief programme at an allocation of 866 metric tons of wheat during the last rainy season, reports BSS.

According to official sources, the projects included the construction of bridges, repair of roads, development of educational institutions, clearing of bushes, jungles and water-hyacinths and digging of drainages.

Of the total, 39 projects were completed in Agailjhara thana at an allocation of 66 metric tons of wheat, 40 projects in Gournadi thana at an allocation of 71 metric tons of wheat, 52 projects in Hizla thana at an allocation of 83 metric tons of wheat, 49 projects in Mehendiganj thana at an allocation of 87 metric tons of wheat, 40 projects in Muladi thana at an allocation of 87 metric tons of wheat, 25 projects in Babuganj thana at an allocation of 58 metric tons of wheat, 40 projects in Bakerganj thana at an allocation of 121 metric tons of wheat, 80 projects in Barisal sadar thana at an allocation of 129 metric tons of wheat, 44 projects in Wazirpur thana at an allocation of 82 metric tons of wheat and 40 projects in Banaripara thana at an allocation of 82 metric tons of wheat.

Card phone
popular in
Chandpur

CHANDPUR, Mar 17: About Tk 60,000 has been earned as revenue since the introduction of card phone system at Chandpur Head Post Office, reports UNB.

The card phone system has been introduced in the district town since January last and response from the people is satisfactory, said the post master of Chandpur head post office.

Local people alleged that through this phone they can talk only within Bangladesh but they can not talk to their near and dear ones working abroad as the card phone booth has no overseas connection.

Local elite urged the concerned authorities to introduce overseas connection immediately for the convenience of the people.

£2m TV ad for
Dunlop Tyres

"It's the biggest spend ever for a British tyre company on TV advertising," says Stuart Wyss, the man responsible for advertising of Dunlop brand tyres. "Our two million pound television campaign eclipses what our competitors are planning this year."

"Unexpected" the stunning new commercial for Dunlop tyres broke on national TV at the end of May, says a press release.

SP Tyres, the manufacturers of Dunlop tyres, challenged TV advertising's most controversial director, Tony Kaye, to film the Unexpected. Tony's revolutionary approach to the brand will take the tyre market by storm.

The storyline is surreal and the visual effects, created by colourisation, are unique. "Unexpected" is the most ambitious advertising concept undertaken by SP Tyres UK since acquiring Dunlop in 1985. The 60 second commercial features a malevolent magician conjuring up bizarre situations to threaten a car travelling a desert highway.

The surreal theme extends into the medium used to film and edit the new Dunlop tyre ad. Colourisation creates visual effects that cannot be achieved using conventional colour film, so Tony Kaye shot in black and white and employed the latest digital technology to take colourisation to a level not previously seen.

"The ad is visually stunning, there has been nothing like it before, but the actual star throughout is the Dunlop tyre," says Stuart Wyss.

The crazy world of life-threatening incidents created by the magician allows the tyre to demonstrate its dependability and performance. It reinstates all the traditional quality values associated with Dunlop, but gives the brand a new excitement and glamour."

SP Tyres believe the impact will alter the Dunlop image dramatically making the brand stand out from its rivals and grab the imagination of both public and trade.

This ad will be shown on Bangladesh Television today as Dunlop sponsors the serial 'A Law'.

Demand, supply position of
petroleum satisfactory

PABNA, Mar 17: The demand and supply position of petroleum and petroleum products all over the country including the western zone is satisfactory.

Chairman of Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) M Fazlul Hoq said this during a visit to the floating barges at Nagarbari, Pabna after reviewing the overall demand and supply position of petroleum fuel in the region, reports BSS.

He held a meeting with the regional managers and the field level marketing officers of BPC.

Three floating barges with a combined capacity of eleven lakh litres of diesel have been installed by the BPC in January this year to cope with increased demand of fuel during the on-going irrigation season in the northern region.

During the meeting it was noted with great satisfaction that the demand and supply situation of petroleum fuel in the region and also all over the country is completely normal.

It was further stated that the country has sufficient stock of petroleum fuel to cope with any emergency and abnormal situation.

Apart from commissioning some floating depots and barges in different parts of the country to keep the supply of petroleum products steady and normal during dry season, the government has also taken other measures like installation of rail-head depot at Santahar which will be opened tomorrow.

The BPC chairman asked the officials to constantly monitor and supervise demand and supply position to keep the

overall situation normal.

Tk 8 cr sanctioned for
drinking water

UNB report says: An amount of Tk eight crore has been sanctioned for drinking water supply scheme in the district pourashava area in the current fiscal year, officials said.

The work on the programme will be started from next June with the financial assistance from Asian Development Bank (ADB). The scheme includes installation of three overhead tanks, three deep tubewells, 50 km pipelines and hand tubewells where deep tubewell pipe line can not be installed and repair of 40 km old pipe line.

After the implementation of the scheme, drinking water facilities for the town-dwellers will increase to a great extent.

France confirms
\$ 55b budget
deficit

PARIS, Mar 17: The government confirmed Wednesday that its total 1993 budget deficit was 315.7 billion francs (55 billion dollars) widening from 1992's deficit of 226 billion francs, reports AP.

The final 1993 figure is 1.9 billion francs less than a previous official estimate for a deficit of 317.6 billion francs.

A communique from the Budget Ministry explained that 1993 fiscal revenues were 9.2 billion francs higher than expected, due notably to an increase in value-added tax receipts.

In the meantime, total expenditures surpassed their target by 7.2 billion francs, nearly half of which was attributed to a boost in transfers to local governments. In the end, revenues totalled 1.142 trillion francs against 1.458 trillion francs of expenditures.

Washington to help Moscow
convert defence industry

SHANNON, Ireland, Mar 17: US Defence Secretary William Perry predicted today "an avalanche" of nearly 100 million dollars in contracts for US and Russian firms to help build housing in Russia and convert that country's Cold War defence industry to civilian production, reports Reuter.

Perry spoke to reporters flying with him to Moscow from Washington at the start of a weeklong trip to Russia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Belarus to improve US military ties with the young democracies and help convert their defence industries.

"Roughly 100 million dollars in defence conversion (is what) I expect to be expended in the next six months," he said before his plane made a brief refuelling stop at Shannon.

Perry conceded as "well-founded" some criticism that the US programme was working too slowly but said it was now ready to move ahead

quickly. "Those contracts are going to come in an avalanche for them (US and former Soviet firms) in the next two or three months," he said. "We have moved very aggressively and put an awful lot of energy in getting from where we were last March to where we are one year later."

He and other defence officials said most of the 100 million would go to Russia, although other former Soviet states would receive funds. Another 100 million would probably be committed in the following year.

Perry, who is to meet Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev and other senior government officials in Moscow over two days, said the Pentagon was preparing to approve contracts between US companies and firms in Russia and Ukraine to build prefabricated housing and convert defence plants.

Rao's Britain
visit strengthens
business links

NEW DELHI, Mar 17: Indian Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao returned home today from a four-day visit to Britain which took bilateral ties to a new high and paved the way for stronger business links, reports AFP.

The 72-year-old premier did not speak to reporters at the airport after flying in from Edinburgh.

But he told journalists accompanying him that his whirlwind visit, highlighted by significant trade accords and Queen Elizabeth's agreement to visit India, had been 'highly successful,' the Press Trust of India said.

Rao said his talks with British Prime Minister John Major and other leaders had brought 'great friendliness and closeness' between the two countries.

It was the first trip to Britain by an Indian premier since Rajiv Gandhi travelled there in 1985. In London, officials said relations were 'now better than at any time' since the departure of the British Raj from India in 1947.

A bilateral investment protection accord and an agreement to prolong by a year the successful Indo-British partnership initiative (IBPI) marked the visit, which Indian officials said would boost trade and investment links.

The IBPI, set up in January 1993, has given a major impetus to two-way trade which has soared more than 20 per cent.

Seoul plans to
open front-line
military sites to
foreign tourists

SEOUL, Mar 17: Hoping to cash in on having the last Cold War frontier in the world, South Korea plans to open sensitive front-line military sites to foreign tourists, reports AP.

The plan is part of the Seoul government's "Visit Korea Year 1994," a year-long campaign to bring life back to South Korea's sluggish tourism industry.

The 248 kilometer (155 mile)-long Korean border is the world's most heavily armed, with nearly two million troops deployed on both sides of the divided peninsula. Since the collapse of communism, it has been billed as the world's last Cold War frontier.

Defence Ministry officials say they are prepared to open to tourists sensitive military observation posts along the border and three infiltration tunnels dug by Communist North Korea under the four kilometer (2.5 mile)-wide Demilitarized Zone.

Prices of shares,
US dollar fall
in Tokyo

TOKYO, Mar 17: The US dollar slipped against the Japanese yen Thursday, while prices on the Tokyo Stock Exchange edged down, reports AP.

The dollar ended at 105.78 yen, down 0.05 yen from Wednesday's Tokyo close and below its overnight New York finish at 106.07 yen. The currency opened at 105.85 yen and ranged from 105.60 yen to 105.90 yen.

The dollar, weakened as Japanese exporters sold it, dealers said. Their frustration over the US currency's inability to recover above the 106 yen level prompted them to sell it at lower levels than earlier, they said.

But players kept the dollar from falling below 105.60 yen because they suspect the Bank of Japan may conduct dollar-buying intervention at around 105.50 yen per dollar to prevent the currency's further decline, dealers said.

On the stock market, the 225-issue Nikkei Stock Average fell 85.61 points, or 0.41 per cent, ending the day at 20,592.16. On Wednesday, the average gained 168.92 points, or 0.82 per cent, closing at 20,677.77.

The Tokyo Stock Price Index of all issues listed on the first section was down 4.74 points, or 0.29 per cent, to 1,648.53. The TOPIX rose 10.33 points, or 0.63 per cent, to 1,653.27 points the day before.

Foreign investors continued to buy, but prices fell because of profit-taking and other selling by Japanese corporate investors, traders said.

Japanese companies were selling in an attempt to book profits ahead of the March 31 end of fiscal 1993, they said.



KUWAIT: Nine-month-old Fahad Abdul-Rahman, the youngest child in his family, sits Tuesday in the middle of a pile of Kuwaiti dinars worth about 10,000 US dollars. Fahad was the beneficiary of an Arab and Muslim custom at the end of Ramadan, which is that during the festival of the Eid, relatives and guests shower the youngest child with gift money.

— AFP photo

US farm exports to add \$8.7b
under GATT in 2005

WASHINGTON, Mar 17: A new worldwide trade agreement would add as much as \$8.7 billion dollars to US farm exports in the year 2005, Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy said Wednesday in urging congressional passage of the pact, reports AP.

At the same time, the agreement will cut their amount the government spends for farm programmes except for the dairy programme. Espy's department said in an analysis of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

The analysis was released as Espy and Trade Representative Mickey Kantor outlined the terms of the agreement to the House Agriculture Committee. "We were able to create a level playing field in order that US agriculture could benefit all over the world," Kantor said.

However, dairy state lawmakers raised doubts about the benefits which will be justified in supporting GATT, said Rep

Steve Gunderson, R-Wis. He said the agreement will let Europe continue to subsidize a far higher volume of dairy products than the US.

Lawmakers also questioned the administration's progress in resolving a dispute with Canada over its subsidized wheat exports and barriers to US dairy, poultry and eggs.

The agreement would open markets to US products in 116 countries, while forcing member countries to cut their export subsidies. Import barriers such as licenses would be replaced by tariffs, which would be reduced over six years.

But the United States says Canada is obliged under the North American Free Trade Agreement to end its tariff barriers to dairy, poultry and eggs. Canada's wheat subsidies are under investigation by the International Trade Commission, which is to complete its report in July.

Unemployment
rate in UK
falls to 9.8 pc

LONDON, Mar 17: Hopes for economic recovery remained muted Wednesday after contradictory government figures for February showed a welcome fall in unemployment, but revealed a worrying surprise drop in retail sales, reports AP.

Unemployment fell a larger-than-expected 38,800 in February to a total of 2,752,000 taking the unemployment rate to 9.8 per cent of the working population from 9.9 per cent in January.

Analysts had predicted a drop of 20,000 in the jobless total.

But retail sales fell 0.5 per cent, against analysts' expectations of a 0.2 per cent rise, heightening fears that the slight momentum behind economic recovery might not be sustained through large tax increases in April.

De Klerk assures homeland
citizens of job security

PRETORIA, Mar 17: President F W de Klerk, seeking to avert another homeland uprising, told public workers in the sovereign territories Wednesday they would have jobs after April's election, reports AP.

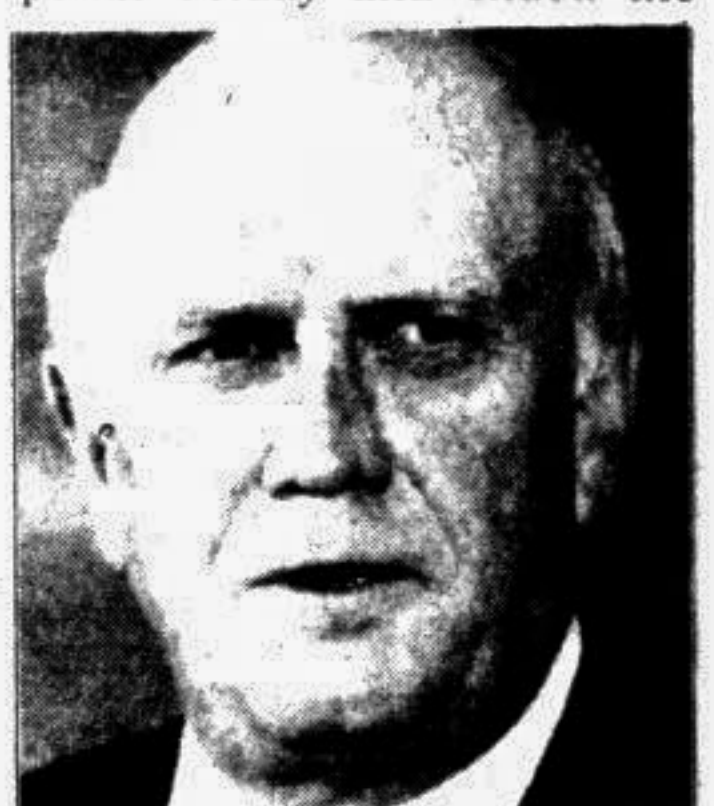
De Klerk also acknowledged that the ousted leader of the Bophuthatswana homeland, Lucas Mangope had been "secured" by South African troops for his own safety. But he denied Mangope's claim he was under house arrest.

"Our approach all along has been that we were concerned about his safety and that in the turmoil and the volatility... it would be in his best interests to be very careful in his movements," de Klerk told a news conference.

De Klerk said after Mangope complained to him personally, the government assured him he was free to leave

his home in Bophuthatswana.

A civil uprising by homeland citizens demanding to vote in South Africa's April 26-28 election forced Mangope out of power Friday and ended the



F W de Klerk

homeland's status as an independent state.

The uprising, which killed

at least 24 people, started as a strike by civil servants demanding immediate pension payouts in case they lost their jobs after the election. The 10 tribal homelands created under apartheid will lose their self-governing status after the vote and be reincorporated into South Africa.

Civil servants in the Ciskei homeland embarked on a similar strike last week and warned of widespread unrest unless their pensions were paid. The Ciskei government late Wednesday agreed to pay the pensions but rejected demands for an interim administrator to take over the homeland until the election.

At the wide-ranging news conference, de Klerk also referred to the threat from right-wing whites opposed to April's election.

Congress being asked for \$ 112m USAID programme in Bangladesh

Future US aid to support development, stability in S Asia

WASHINGTON, Mar 17: The Clinton Administration's plan for future assistance to South Asia is designed to support democracy, development and stability in the region, Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Robin Raphael said, according to USIS release.

The administration hopes to bring US aid programmes "more in line with the realities of the post Cold War world," in which regional conflicts, weapons proliferation, over population, environmental degradation, narcotics trafficking and terrorism constitute the "most important challenges facing the international community."

Raphael and Margaret Carpenter, an assistant administrator at the US Agency for International Development (USAID), appeared before the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific to discuss the administration's foreign aid request for South Asia for fiscal year 1995, which begins this October.

In the process, they covered a wide range of topics re-

lating to US policy towards South Asia, including the on-going conflict in Afghanistan, the suspension of US aid to Pakistan and reports of human rights abuses in India.

The administration is asking Congress for about 330 million US dollars in funding for USAID programme in South Asia, Carpenter noted. Of that total, 112 million US dollars is slated for Bangladesh, 155 million US dollars for India, 28 million US dollars for Nepal and 35 million US dollars for Sri Lanka.

Carpenter noted that the figure represents "substantial reductions" in USAID funding for the region, but added that the change is mostly attributable to the elimination of programmes in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

US dealings with both those countries — and the absence of aid programmes there — were examined at length during the hearing, which was chaired by Representative Gary Ackerman (Democrat of New York).

Raphael explained that the suspension of US aid to

Pakistan is a function of the 1985 law known as the Pressler Amendment, which was passed when Pakistan was one of the largest recipients of US aid. The law requires the US president to certify to Congress annually that Pakistan does not have a nuclear weapons capability and that continued US aid will reduce the probability of its having one in the future. That certification was denied in 1990, and US aid programme were suspended.

Raphael noted that the Clinton Administration's early interest in removing the Pressler Amendment was inspired by its desire to eliminate all "country-specific" language from US foreign aid laws. The administration has since decided not to oppose the Pressler Amendment, out of concern that such a move would be misinterpreted as a lack of resolve on the nuclear issue.

Indeed, Raphael said that the Pressler Amendment "has been helpful in slowing down

the Pakistani nuclear programme," and she suggested that the measure might still have some "leverage." The administration is anxious to work with Congress, she said, to evaluate how that leverage might best be used.

Asked by sub-committee Chairman Ackerman whether the administration would seek an exception to the Pressler Amendment so that Pakistan can receive delivery of the American F-16's it has already paid for Raphael said she could not discuss that issue in a public forum. She did, however, stress that if the administration ever chose to support delivery of the aircraft, it would do so only after thorough consultations with Congress.

Turning to the elimination of USAID programme in Afghanistan, Carpenter told the sub-committee that continued fighting among Afghan factions and the attendant security concerns for foreign personnel make it "virtually impossible to carry out a meaningful development programme" there.

The United States continues to support multilateral aid programmes for Afghanistan, mostly through the United Nations, Carpenter said. The Clinton Administration has proposed a two million dollar contribution to UN agencies, to be used primarily for immunization programme and it continues to support de-mining activity, she added.

Asked whether the former king of Afghanistan might function as a peace-maker, Raphael said that, based on her conversations with people who have spoken to the former king, "It's not clear if he's willing or able" to take on that role. Raphael was later challenged on that point by Congressmen Dana Rohrabacher (Republican of California), who claimed that the former monarch is in fact "anxious" for a peace-making role in Afghanistan.

Raphael stressed that Afghanistan is responsible for its own destiny, and that the United States can only play a supporting role. "We can't come up with a solution for the

Afghan people. But we stand ready to help," she said.

Regarding human rights in India, the assistant secretary told F H Faleomavega (Democrat of American Samoa) that the human rights situation in Punjab has improved "markedly" over the past two years. She added that, overall, India has taken a number of positive steps in the area of human rights. It has established a human rights commission, shown an increased willingness to engage in a "more active dialogue" with organisations such as Amnesty International, and says it will allow the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to conduct a survey in Kashmir, Raphael said.

Raphael also reiterated "US policy towards the dispute in Kashmir, which is that it views 'the entire territory of Jammu and Kashmir as disputed territory.' The conflict should be resolved, she said, through discussions between India and Pakistan, taking into account the wishes of the Kashmiri people.