

During last 15 months LGRD Ministry constructs 21,875 km rural road, 2,600 bridges

LGRD Ministry has constructed 21,875 km rural metalled road, 2,600 bridges and developed 300 bazaars and planted trees on sides of 1500 km roads during the last 15 months in the rural areas of the country, reports BSS.

The ministry also launched a 320 crore taka micro-credit distribution programme among the rural poor emphasising the rural women community for self-employment generation and uplift of their socio-economic status.

The rural infrastructure development work done by the ministry will further help to create new job opportunities in the rural areas and gear up rural trade, business and other activities.

This was disclosed at a high level meeting on rural infrastructure development and poverty alleviation programme held at the Local Government Ministry conference room yesterday.

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Zillur Rahman presided over the meeting. State Minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury (Maya), Local Government Division Secretary AHM Abdul Hye and Rural Development and Cooperatives Secretary Sayed Margub Morshed were present. Among others chief engineer LGED, chief engineer DPHE, DG BRDB, cooperatives registrar and the heads of the other concerned development agencies attended the meeting.

The meeting was informed that 34936 different types of tubewells were sunk in rural areas of the country during the

time of present government and 201913 sanitary latrines were distributed in the rural areas to motivate the rural people in national sanitation programme and supply of safe drinking water to the village people.

Speaking on the occasion Zillur Rahman directed the concerned officials to integrate the various development activities and complete the development projects particularly the foreign aided ones in time. The government took the decision quickly in undertaking and implementing the projects in time," he added.

Zillur Rahman also asked the concerned agencies to ensure that the micro-credits go to the persons who deserved the loans and stressed the need for setting up of agro-based small and cottage industries for self-employment of the rural poor and rapid growth of the rural economy.

Zillur Rahman said, "The government wants to create dynamism in the rural economy by increasing the purchasing capacity of the rural people and income generating activities in the rural areas through constructing strong rural infrastructure.

He said the desired national economic uplift would not be possible without making the rural people self-reliant without increasing the buying capacity of the rural poor people.

He also said the government wants to strengthen the rural economy in the interest of rural people and to stop the influx of rural people to urban areas.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina speaking at the inaugural function of the Golden Jubilee of the Bangladesh Chhatra League at the Ramna Batamul in the city yesterday.

— PID photo

JS body on Religious Ministry discusses Hajj policy

A meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Religious Affairs Ministry was held yesterday at Sangsads Bhaban with committee President Shah Hadizuzzaman in the chair, reports UNB.

The meeting discussed matters relating to coming Hajj and Hajj policy, particularly the issues of renting houses in Saudi Arabia for the Hajj pilgrims, transportation cost, treatment facilities and improvement of service.

Activities of Imam Training Academy, Islamic publications, mosque-based library projects, construction of Islamic Foundation Complex and its activities came up at the meeting for discussion.

The meeting also discussed the matters to make the Bangladesh Mission in Madina more effective and expand the activities of mosque-based children and mass education.

Committee members State Minister for Religious Affairs Maulana M Nurul Islam, Minister without portfolio Kalparanjan Chakma, Hafez Ruhul Amin Madani, M Lutfar Rahman Chowdhury, Religious Affairs Secretary ABM Abdus Shakur and officials concerned were present.

JS body on Private Members meets

Meanwhile, another meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Private Members Bill and Resolution was held yesterday at Sangsads Bhaban with its President Colonel (retired) Shawkat Ali in the chair.

The Private Company (Officer and Employees) Service Rule Bill 1996, which was earlier placed in Parliament by Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury MP to examine, was discussed at the meeting.

The meeting decided to submit a report on the bill in the Parliament.

Committee members Razidin Ahmed Razu, M Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury and officials concerned were present.

Scouts team leaves for India

A 19-member Bangladesh Scouts contingent left Dhaka yesterday to attend the 3rd SAARC and 13th National Jamboree at Khurda, Orissa, India, reports BSS.

Squadron Leader of Bangladesh Air Force and Secretary, Bangladesh Scouts, Air region, Julfique Uddin Mollah will lead the Bangladesh delegation.

The jamboree which began yesterday will continue till January 9.

What's on today....

Drama: The fifth performance of the drama 'Anuradha' by Mukto Mancha Theatre will be held. Venue: Guide House auditorium. Time: 6 pm.

Ananda Nattyadal: A function to mark the first founding anniversary of the organisation will be held. Venue: Ananda Sangskrit Kendra, 16/A, Mymensingh Road. Time: 4 pm.

935 refugees of 185 families return home from Tripura

A total of 935 tribal refugees of 185 families returned home from exile in Indian state of Tripura yesterday, the fourth day of the sixth phase of repatriation through Ramgarh border point, officials said in Kharachhara yesterday, reports BSS.

With this 3,895 tribal refugees of 756 families have returned home from the Kathalchhara refugee camp of Tripura in four days in the current phase resumed on January 1.

Officials said the repatriation will continue until the last refugee is returned.

Eight hundred forty-four tribal refugees of one hundred eighty-six families are scheduled to return home today, according to repatriation schedule.

According to a government commitment, the repatriated tribal refugees immediately after reporting to the reception centre, are being sent to their respective destinations providing them with three months of free ration. Taka 21,000 in cash and other incentives including government sponsored transports to reach their homes.

Hajj training begins Jan 10

A three-day training programme for the intending Hajj pilgrims will be organised from January 10 at Dampara Madrasa mosque in Chittagong, reports BSS.

The course, organised by Tahfiz-e-Haramain Parishad Bangladesh will be free of cost said a press release.

Russian envoy meets Mosharraf

Russian Ambassador to Bangladesh E P Ivanov yesterday called on Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Engineer Mosharraf Hossain at his office, reports BSS.

They discussed matters of mutual interest and bilateral relations.



A nineteen member Bangladesh Scouts team led by Squadron Leader Julfique Uddin Mollah left Dhaka to join the 3rd SAARC and 13th National Jamboree at Khurda, Orissa, India yesterday.

Weather

Cold spell may continue

Weather is likely to prevail dry and cold over the country in the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Met Office said, night temperature across the country may rise in next two days, but little change is expected after the next five days.

Country's highest temperature yesterday was recorded 25.9 degrees Celsius at Sylhet and lowest 8.0 degrees at Jessore.

The sun sets today at 5:25 pm and rises on Tuesday at 6:43 am.

Maximum and minimum temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius	Humidity in Percentage
	Max	Min
Dhaka	16.0	11.5
Chittagong	24.5	11.6
Rejshahi	20.8	9.6
Khulna	21.8	10.2
Barisal	21.6	8.5
Sylhet	25.9	11.5
Cox's Bazar	25.2	13.5
	95	88
	100	77
	92	—
	88	80
	92	—
	84	67
	79	79

Metropolitan

JS body on Estimate meets

A meeting of the Estimate Committee of parliament was held yesterday at the Sangsads Bhaban, reports UNB.

The meeting discussed the allocations and expenditure of 76 projects under Water Resources Ministry for the last fiscal year.

It also discussed the allocations of 78 projects under the same ministry for the current fiscal year.

The meeting reviewed the activities and responsibilities of different departments

Chinese envoy meets Nasim

Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Wang Chungui called on Minister for Post and Telecommunications and Housing and Public Works Mohammad Nasim at his office in the city yesterday, reports UNB.

Prospects of Chinese investment in the development of Bangladesh's telecommunications sector including modernisation of the Telephone Shilpa Sangsta (TSS) came up for discussion during the meeting.

US professor visits DU

Professor Joe S Foote, dean of College of Mass Communication and Media Arts of Southern Illinois University, USA, called on the chairman of the Mass Communication and Journalism Department of Dhaka University, Dr Sitara Parveen, at the latter's office yesterday, reports BSS.

During the meeting, they discussed matters of mutual interest.

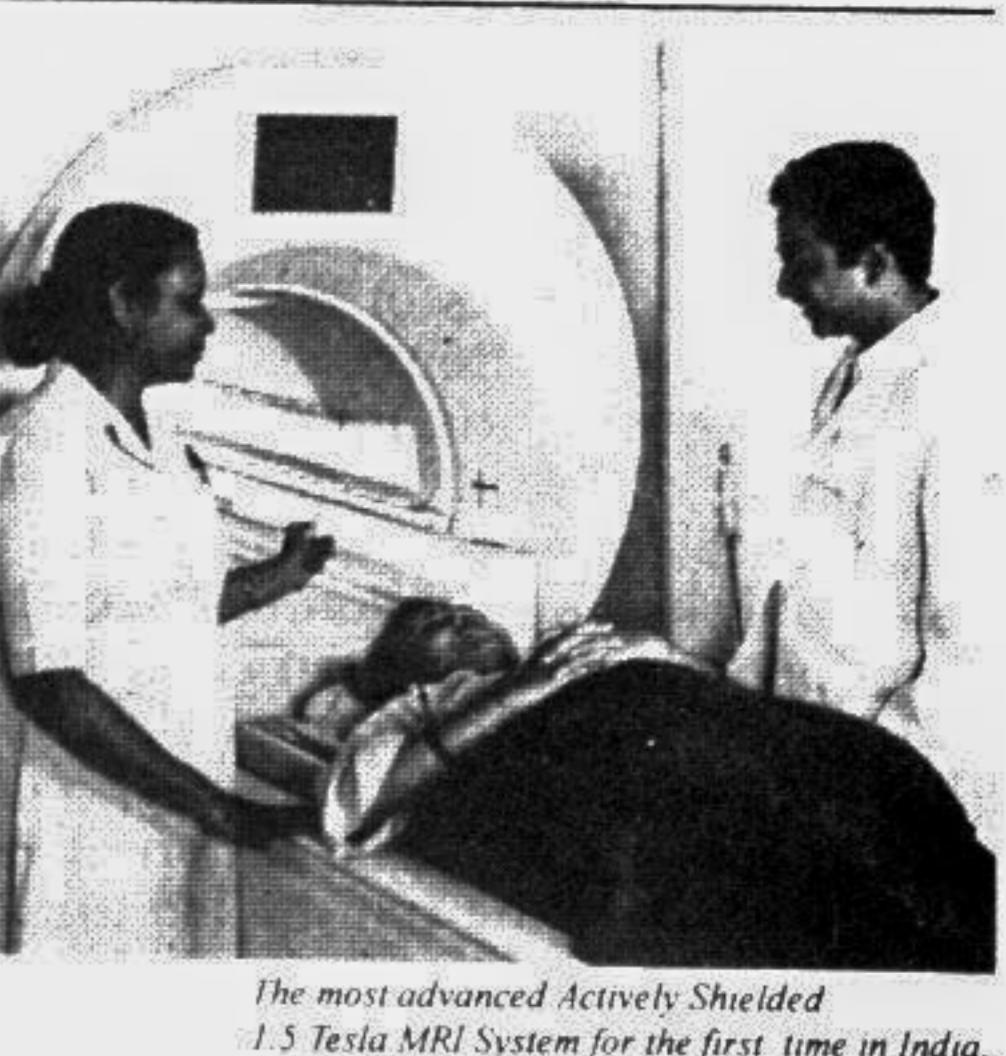
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Mr. Rupak Barua, Manager Marketing, The Calcutta Medical Research Institute will be in Dhaka on 5th and 6th of January, 1998.

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