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## PM announces 50 km dam to be built to protect city from flood

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday announced a plan to construct a 50 km long flood protection embankment-cum-ring-road encircling the city, report agencies.

The prime minister said the embankment, which will later be turned into a ring road having connections with Mirpur embankment, will stretch from Tongi to Demra.

Hasina revealed the plan while addressing a gathering of marooned people at Bara Berad under Gulshan thana in the city yesterday.

The embankment aims to protect the city from floods as well as to develop traffic and transport system of the metropolis.

The Prime Minister said the government also plans to set up a circular railway on the ring road to ease the traffic congestion in the city. A circular waterway will also be developed along the ring road in future.

She visited the area through which the proposed road-cum-embankment will be constructed to protect the capital from flooding and divert the increasing traffic from Joydebpur.

The prime minister said that the earthen embankment would

## Almost all BNP MPs deposited resignation letters: Delwar

By Nazmul Ashraf

The process of depositing BNP lawmakers' letters of resignation from the Jatiya Sangsad with the party chief has neared completion, with a few still delaying the party instruction, according to sources in the party.

The BNP legislators yet to deposit their resignation letters include party standing committee member Col. (Retd.) Oli Ahmed, his spouse Mamataz Begum, Major (Retd.) Akhtaruzaman and Ziaur Rahman Khan.

Two other heavyweights in the main opposition party — Prof A Q M Badruddoza Choudhury and M Saifur Rahman — deposited their resignation letter.

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A LIGHTER MOMENT: A father is trying to cheer up his son at the Motijheel T&T Colony flood shelter in the city yesterday. The baby's mother was standing in the long queue of the flood affected people for more than two hours for food. The father is trying to keep the baby smiling till his mother comes back with food. — Star photo by Anisur Rahman

## BSCIC's preliminary estimate 8334 small, medium units affected in 46 dists

By Rafiq Hasan

As many as 8,334 small and medium industrial units in 46 districts have been affected and their infrastructures and property worth about Tk 500 crore damaged by the current floods, according to a preliminary estimate prepared by the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC).

A total of 43 industrial estates out of 70 under the BSCIC have been affected by the floods. Of those, 27 were inundated by three to five feet water

and the rest were submerged partially, BSCIC sources said yesterday.

BSCIC Chairman A H M Rezaul Karim said the figure of affected small and medium size industries include those inside and outside of the industrial estates in the affected districts.

When contacted, Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed, said the government is yet to assess the number of affected industrial units and losses caused to the industrial sector by the

floods. The ministry is assessing the number of affected units and the losses, he said.

The assessment is being made with the help of major chamber and trade bodies including the Foreign Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industries, FBCCI, MCCI, and DCCI, the minister said over telephone.

The BSCIC's assessment has been done on the basis of reports sent by its offices in districts.

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## Ministries asked to cut miscellaneous expenditure by ten per cent

As part of austerity measure, the government yesterday asked ministries and divisions to cut down by 10 per cent the budget allocations under miscellaneous head, reports UNB.

A circular of the Ministry of Finance directed all the ministries and divisions not to buy any vehicle under revenue budget.

It asked all offices to keep down telephone expenses, stop purchase of new vehicles, forsake foreign tours.

The austerity steps were inevitable to meet the demands for fund for post-flood reconstruction and rehabilitation.

The circular said the finance

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## Rivers falling rapidly, water receding fast

The flood situation across the country improved further yesterday with water levels of major rivers falling rapidly, report agencies.

The situation in an around the capital also improved with the fall of water levels in the Buriganga, Shitalakhya, Turag and Kalganga.

If this trend continues, the flood situation across the country is likely to improve remarkably by end of this month, a Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) official said.

He, however, said this would depend on the quantum of rainfall in the catchment areas of the major rivers in an outside the country and unhindered discharge of waters through the Meghna estuary.

The natural flow of the flood waters through the Meghna estuary into the Bay of Bengal this year was greatly hampered by the exceptional tidal surge in the Bay for nearly a month.

Dhaka city's drainage system, clogged by excessive use of polythene bags during the flood, is blamed for the delay in recession of water from the capital.

An official of the Water Development Board said it might take at least two weeks for the

city's logged water to recede.

Buriganga receded by 17 cm at Dhaka, Shitalakhya by 12 cm at Narayanganj, and Turag by 21 cm and 10 cm at Mirpur and Tongi respectively yesterday.

However, the rivers are still flowing well above their danger levels, the FFWC said in its bulletin yesterday.

It will take at best 10 more days for the rivers to return to their respective red marks if the present trend of recession continues, the bulletin said.

The Buriganga at Dhaka is likely to fall by 18 cm, the Turag by 20 cm at Mirpur and 13 cm at Tongi today, the FFWC forecast said.

The situation further improved in greater Dhaka, Faridpur, Mymensingh, Pabna, Rangpur, Comilla, Noakhali, Sylhet and Barisal.

It returned to normalcy in Sylhet, Moulvibazar, Sunamganj, Chittagong, Cox's Bazar, Rangamati, Bandarban, Feni, Rangpur, Nilphamari, Lalmonirhat, Joypurhat and Magura.

The flood-related death toll rose to 978. Forty-two fresh deaths were reported yesterday including 14 from diarrhoeal diseases.

## CID suspects 4 more DB men involved in Rubel murder

By Staff Correspondent

CID investigators are suspecting that four more DB constables of AC Akram Hussain's team were involved in the murder of university student Shamim Reza Rubel in DB custody on July 23, sources close to the investigators said last night.

The CID charge sheet in the case may contain names of 14 people if investigators can confirm their involvement in the murder, sources said.

Of those likely to be accused by the CID, eight including Akram have already been arrested and are detained at the Dhaka Central Jail now, the sources said adding that two other probable accused are "missing" since the incident.

## Declare flood-hit areas as disaster zone: 7-party

BNP-led seven-party alliance at a meeting on Monday urged the government to immediately declare the flood affected areas as disaster zone, reports UNB.

The alliance also demanded formation of an all-party relief and rehabilitation committee and involvement of armed forces in relief and rehabilitation works.

The meeting was held at 29 Minto Road in the city with BNP leader Barrister Abdus Salam Talukder in the chair.

The alliance leaders Shamsul Islam and Anwar Zahid of BNP, Kazi Zafar Ahmed of JP, Mohammad Quamruzzaman and Abdul Qader Mollah of Jamaat and Shaiful Alam Pradhan of Jajga were present.

## Trader stabbed to death in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Sept 15: A leader of local businessmen was stabbed to death by unidentified assailants today at Pahartoli Sarapara area, police said.

Md Rafique Miah, president of Pahartoli Traders' Association, was attacked after the assailants called him out of his residence at around 4 am, police said.

The assailants stabbed Rafiq fatally and escaped from the

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## Kibria on food situation Measures taken to keep supply, prices stable

Star Report

Finance Minister S A M S Kibria yesterday dispelled any possibility of shortage in food supply and said that against an estimated total demand—production gap of 4.3 million tonnes, imports and donor assistance together would reach up to 4.5 million tonnes this year.

To meet this gap, the government has already taken adequate measures so that supply is ensured and prices remain stable, Kibria told The Daily Star. The country faces a normal food production gap of

about 2.1 million metric tonnes every year. As the floods have damaged crops, we estimate that in the worst case scenario there will be a food shortage of 2.2 million tonnes. This means, we will face a total food shortage of 4.3 million tonnes.

Against this shortage, the government envisages a 4.5 million tonnes supply from outside.

The government will import one million tonnes of foodgrains. Already we have opened LCs for six lakh tonnes.

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## Inside Today

### Article

#### Some Thoughts on this Year's Flood

by Shamsul Bari  
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### Focus

#### Election in Germany: Is Chancellor Kohl's time up?; World Ozone Day: Save the endan- gered earth

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### International

#### Judiciary committee chief wants to proceed with impeachment inquiry against Clinton

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## Some specific suggestions

By Staff Correspondent

The following are a summary of ideas generated, issues raised and suggestions made at The Daily Star roundtable on *Coping with Floods: Relief, Rehabilitation & Rebuilding the Economy*.

- During relief distribution, priority has to be given to elderly people, especially women and those who are physically weak.
- Providing peasants with seeds.
- Launching an extensive Food For Work (FFW) programme with an aim to generating employment and, thus, enhancing peoples' purchasing power.
- NGOs should be made a party to FFW programmes.
- Maize can also be tried in the coming winter season and millers can be asked to mix up maize with wheat (at

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## The Daily Star Roundtable 'Flood damages colossal but not irreparable'

By Staff Correspondent

Panelists at a roundtable in the city yesterday said the flood had caused enormous damages to the country's economy, but the damages are not irreparable. But the government needs to create an atmosphere in which the people could actively participate in the huge task of

reconstruction.

The roundtable styled *Coping with Floods: Relief, Rehabilitation & Rebuilding the Economy* was organised by The Daily Star in collaboration with Centre for Alternatives. A good number of economists, agriculturists, engineers, researchers, water experts, academics, NGO leaders and government officials took part in the discussions while some others gave their views on the issues when the floor was open for the audience.

The day-long roundtable, spreading over two sessions, was held at IBA Auditorium on DU campus. The first session

was held at IBA Auditorium on DU campus. The first session

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## A CLARIFICATION

Our attention has been drawn to the news item published on 14th September 1998 in some Bengali newspapers regarding 120 mobile telephone sets seized at the airport.

Ericsson would like to clarify that the so called 120 mobile telephone sets sent via DHL Worldwide Express on Thai Airlines flight TG 321 were actually dummy telephone sets. These dummy sets cannot be used at all as they do not contain any electronic or telecommunication parts. It is also not possible to replace any part from the dummy sets, as all parts of these dummy sets are plastic mock-ups. These dummy sets are solely used for display on counters, and have no commercial value.

The dummy sets were packed together with other promotional materials and documents, with the words "promotional materials" inadvertently missing from the invoice.

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