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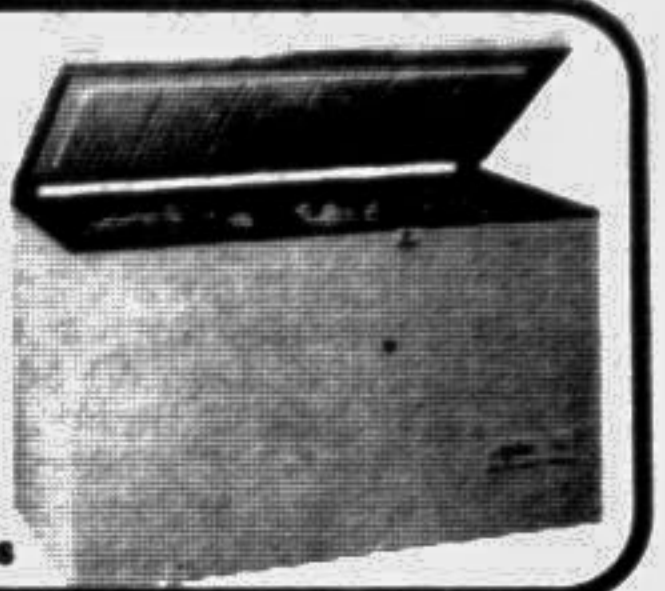
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Prime Minister's directive Draw up post-flood projects very fast

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked officials to take an integrated rural development programme, reports UNB.

"Take projects in the villages in line with the concept of Ashrayan programme for generating employment and ensuring all other development centres in the rural areas," she told officials of the LGRD and Cooperatives Ministry.

Reviewing the activities on post-flood rehabilitation programmes of the ministry at the secretariat, the prime minister also asked them to draw up and approve post-flood projects very fast for getting speedy help from the donors.

She said massive response had been received from the donors for post-flood rehabilitation works and the assistance would be coming soon after completion of the project profiles.

About the uplift of rural areas following the concept of Ashrayan project, she directed them to take up education, employment generation and health and sanitation programmes for the welfare of the villagers.

Hasina also suggested the cooperative system in the rural areas be reinforced for poverty alleviation and giving a boost to the rural economy.

She asked the officials for taking special care in maintaining cleanliness, ensuring safe drinking water and speedy garbage disposal.

Hasina told them to undertake special drives to combat mosquito menace in the urban areas, particularly in the capital city, and to take measures to contain spread of diseases by maintaining hygienic environment.

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Zillur Rahman, in the review meeting, hoped that the flood-stricken people would also be able to recoup the losses caused by the floods as they could successfully combat the calamity with the united efforts of all.

Local Government Division Secretary Hasnat Abdul Hye apprised the prime minister of the post-flood activities and said a Tk 11.27 crore project had been taken urgently for protection and maintenance of roads, bridges and culverts.

He said under the Public Health Engineering Department 65,876 tubewells were repaired in immediate flood-time rehabilitation schemes, 29,014 elevated and 27,887 tubewells installed, while 2,476 latrines were set up.

Dhaka WASA has spent Tk 3.89 crore for the rehabilitation of deep tubewells and repair of the power sub-stations and drainage system, Abdul Hye said.

For post-flood rehabilitation the government has allocated Tk 78 crore for various projects of the division, and the government is getting Tk 218.45 crore from the foreign donors, the secretary informed.

The donors also made commitment for Tk 72 crore for the repair of damaged roads in the capital and the government also got aid pledges from the World Bank, SIDA, German FWP, Japan and other donor countries and agencies.

Rural Development and Cooperatives Secretary Ahab Ahmad said 75 lakh members are working under the 145,000 cooperative societies.

He said Tk 300 crore had been allocated for micro-credit to the affected farmers and other groups through the cooperatives and Tk 88.87 crore distributed among the affected farmers.

Ahab Ahmad said among the cooperative farmers Tk 100 crore would be distributed for producing post-flood crops and that steps had been taken to sanction another tranche of Tk 150 crore for disbursement.

For rehabilitation of the affected poor and for income-generating works upto October, Tk 82.13 crore has been distributed. Under the rural livelihood programme, a Tk 316 crore project will be implemented, he said.



BNP leaders and activists marching towards Sangsad Bhaban in the city yesterday.

BNP march: Memo to Speaker

From Page 1
Bangla Motor crossing from where separate delegations went to the Speaker's chamber to submit their memoranda.

Contingents of riot police remained vigilant at Paltan Maidan well before the BNP leaders and workers had started arriving there at around 3 pm.

Before Khaleda Zia's arrival at 4 pm, her party's top leaders including some 40 MPs turned up. By then, several thousand people reached the venue where a BNP rally came under attack on November 7.

At 4.20 pm, the programme began with recitation from the holy Quran. Khaleda Zia addressed the gathering after to party's city unit chief Sadek Hossain Khoka, MP spoke, blasting the government for "foiling" their November 7 rally at the same place. He also warned of dire consequences had the Nov 7 incidents occurred again.

Just before the start of the march at 4.50 pm, the opposition leader asked her partymen to carry out the programme peacefully and guard against any trouble-mongers who she said might have been in the crowd.

"Terrorists may be planted here also. Remain alert and catch if you find any. We'll try such terrorist under the law of the land," she said.

Riding on a jeep, with her security van ahead, Khaleda Zia started leading the marchers, followed by riot policemen. Amid full-throated slogans by the workers, she passed through the Noor Hossain Square, the Purana Paltan crossing, the Jatiya Press Club, Matsya Bhaban and Shahbagh points to reach the Bangla Motor crossing. At places on her way, the BNP chief waived at the crowd along the streets. Riot and armed policemen were deployed at different points of the processions' routes.

"We sought the Speaker's intervention in the affairs, especially those related to the running of the Sangsad, and urged him to make the parliament more effective through his neutral role," he said and quoted

the Speaker to have told them that he would talk to the government leaders on the matter. Delwar said they reminded the Speaker of the four-point agreement with the government and sought his help in its implementation. "We also told him of the government's discriminatory attitude -- allowing Ershad, accused in several cases, to join the parliament session while barring two BNP lawmakers, KM Obaidur Rahman and Alamgir Kabir, from doing the same," he noted.

Ruling party's attack on the opposition agitators, ministers' "untrue" and "provocative" statements on the floor of the House were some other issues discussed, he said. "The Speaker assured us of his efforts, within his jurisdiction, to address the issues."

Later, BNP lawmakers joined the session at 6.50 pm. But Khaleda Zia, who stayed at her Parliament office for quite sometime, did not attend. BNP's memorandum to all the issues the party had been using to agitate against the government. On the much-talked-about hartal issue, he said hartal is a "democratic right."

Recalling that the AL, while in the opposition, observed hartal for 173 days, the memorandum alleged the government deployed notorious criminals against the BNP workers whenever the party observed any hartal. "Thus the country is being pushed towards an unwarranted anarchy."

Emerging from the meeting, Chief Whip of the Opposition Khandakar Delwar Hossain told the waiting reporters that their discussion ranged from the government repression on the street to its maltreatment of the opposition members in the House.

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CU Syndicate members

From CU Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, Nov 16: Dr Ershad Kamal of Economics and Dr Abdul Motaleb of Microbiology departments have been elected Syndicate members of Chittagong University from associate professors and lecturers respectively.

Four candidates from two panels -- Awami League-backed Pink Panel and BNP-Jamaat-backed White Panel -- contested the poll. However, Pink Panel candidates bagged the two post.

The election was held at Science Faculty Gallery from 9 am to 12 am.

The election was conducted by a 3-member election commission headed by Prof Mahbub-ur-Haque Majumder, Registrar of the university.

Abdur Razzak said the killings of Bangabandhu and the four leaders were closely linked.

He said, the killers had struck with the aim of destabilising the country's political situation, foisting autocracy over democracy and foiling the spirit of the War of Liberation.

Referring to the verdict in the Bangabandhu Murder Case, Razzak said it will ease the efforts to establish rule of law, consolidate democracy and accelerate development in the country.

Mohammad Nasim said the killers of Bangabandhu had made the four leaders as the next target because of their successful leadership in the War of Liberation in absence of the father of the nation.

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3 trawlers with smuggled salt seized

CHITTAGONG, Nov 16: A patrol boat of Bangladesh Navy today seized 3 trawlers loaded with salt and arrested 22 people from outer anchorage of the port, reports UNB.

Official sources said BNS Shapla chased the trawlers for two hours early this morning and caught them with 222 metric tons of unrefined salt.

The smugglers brought the salt from Myanmar and were going to Chandpur.

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2 women feared killed in septic tank collapse

By Staff Correspondent
Two women were feared killed yesterday afternoon when an abandoned septic tank at the Chest Disease Hospital premises collapsed due to weight of earth heaped on it from a nearby underconstruction building.

The two construction workers were identified as -- Aziron, 30, and Johura, 25, police said. Witnesses and local people also said that the two of 27 workers at the site has been missing since the incident.

A portion of earth heaped about 15 feet high suddenly collapsed and went under the tank at about 4 pm, fire sources added. Aziron and Johura were on top of the pile of earth at that time.

Fire Service and Civil Defence members along with construction workers were conducting the rescue operation till filing of this report late last night.

The labourers were engaged in digging earth and heaping those on the dilapidated septic tank inside the premises of the hospital at Mahakhali.

Some of the labourers, including Aziron and Johura, were dumping earth on the abandoned septic tank, about 15 feet deep.

Gulshan police, at about 11:30 pm, said their officials were on the spot. According to them the bodies of the victims were yet to be recovered.

Maulana Bhasani's 22nd anniversary of death today

The nation will pay homage to Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani on the 22nd death anniversary of the leader of the oppressed, reports APB.

Different socio-cultural and political organisations have taken elaborate programmes to mark the day.

The programmes include Khatm-e-Quran, Mazar Ziarat, Munajat for the salvation of the departed soul and distribution of sweets and visit to the Mazar of the late leader.

At Santosh, disciples and political followers of Maulana Bhasani will join in the day's programme. Publications on the life and work of the late leader will be put on display at an exhibition there.

Khaleda
From Page 1
escaped," she said adding, "Where is security of common man while the Opposition Leader and the MPs are not safe? It's now evident that there is no government in the country."

In her 20-minute-speech she delivered from her jeep, Khaleda Zia also blasted the government for "prevailing anarchy" in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, "spiraling" prices of essentials, "failure and corruption" in the post-flood management, imposing Tk 300 crore fresh taxes on the flood-ravaged nation, rapes at Jahangirnagar University and Dhaka College, attack on the Badrunessa Women's College students and "conspiracy" against the country's power system.

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Bill to mobilise Tk 200 cr

From Page 1
prolonged flooding in the last monsoon slowed down the revenue collection as economic activities remained stalled for two months.

Referring to food imports to replenish the stock, Kibria said the government would need some Tk 790 crore to buy 10 lakh metric tonnes of food-grain.

Apart from this, Tk 1027 crore is required for VGF distribution in the form of VGF, GR and Food for Works to feed the poor.

Besides, 15 lakh metric tonnes of food are expected from external aid while 10 lakh tonnes would be imported in the private sector.

"None has died from starvation as the government took emergency measures to arrange food," Kibria said. Assuring that there is adequate stock of food, he dismissed the fears of famine.

He said Tk 619 crore is needed for post-flood rehabilitation while Tk 158 crore had already been spent from the contingency fund.

The opposition lawmakers argued that if the external flood aid was sufficient, as claimed by the government, then what necessitated imposition of fresh taxes on the people.

They alleged that the surcharges imposed through an ordinance sidetracking the parliament reflected the "autocratic" mentality of the government.

Dr Moyeen Khan called the Bill unusual and asked what the government would do with "This Tk 300 crore" when the post-flood rehabilitation would

require a big chunk of Tk 15,000 crore.

Abdul Mannan said it would have been nice if the government could stop unproductive expenditure without imposing fresh taxes.

Dr Rustam Ali Farazi said the government cannot impose such taxes through ordinance as per relevant article of the Constitution that envisages that a new tax cannot be imposed without parliament's approval.

The House rejected the opposition's amendments and passed the Bill by voice vote.

Four multinational oil and gas companies operating in the country have donated 1 million US dollars to CARE Bangladesh and the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Diseases Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B) for flood relief and rehabilitation in the country.

Cairn Energy PLC, Occidental Oil and Gas, Shell and Unocal Corporation pooled the funds to help Bangladesh recover quickly from this year's catastrophic flooding, said member of the Board of Trustees, ICDDR,B, Major General (ret) MR Choudhury at a press conference in the city yesterday.

Editor Mahfuz Anam moderated the round-table meeting at the seminar room of Bio-Chemistry Department of Dhaka University.

Present among those who took part in the day-long programme were: Dhaka University vice chancellor Prof A K Azad Chowdhury, BCSIR chairman Prof. M Moshinuzzaman, Bangabandhu Medical University vice-chancellor

Promotion

From Page 1
Rashid Khan replaces him in the agriculture ministry.

Dhirajkumar Nath, JS, shipping ministry has been appointed Director General of Bangladesh Management Institute, Shakhawat Hossain, a JS (OSD) in establishment ministry has been appointed Director of Government Employees Welfare Directorate, Mizanur Rahman, formerly commercial counselor, Bangladesh embassy in Washington, has been promoted as JS and made OSD in establishment ministry, Shakhwat Hossain, JS (OSD) in establishment ministry has been transferred to agriculture ministry as a JS.

Dr. Ahmed Azad, an eminent biochemist based in Australia, told the seminar that use of manpower should be the key to development. "As a 'clever' country Bangladesh can use its biggest resource -- its people."

The DU vice-chancellor said the next millennium would be an age of biotechnology. "The nation which would be able to use this technology would gain most in achieving economic progress and emancipation of the lot of the common man."

"Unfortunately Bangladesh has already fallen behind but it is not too late," he said.

He sought patronage from the government and also from the private sectors to further development of biochemistry and biotechnology.

Prof Qaisuddin, president of Bangladesh Biochemical Society and IU VC, said biotechnology and biochemistry brought about remarkable changes in agriculture and medicine.

"Development of improved varieties of cereals, better varieties of fruits and vegetables will prepare a ground for revolution in the realm of agriculture," he said.

(Details of the conference will be published later)

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Young man's eyes gouged out