



Md Nasir Bin Baharom, managing director of TM International (Bangladesh) Limited - AKTEL, hands over a cheque for Tk 15 lakh to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in donation to PM's Relief Fund yesterday.



Unocal Bangladesh started distribution of relief materials for flood victims in Sylhet on July 22.

Brac, Asa expand relief programmes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Brac and Asa, two non-governmental organisations, have decided to expand their relief programmes in view of the severity of floods wreaking havoc across the country.

The Brac has increased its relief budget from Tk 50 lakh to Tk 6 crore to cover 37 flood-affected districts.

It has also appealed to the donors for additional funds to supplement its efforts. Besides, the employees of Brac, Brac Bank and Dhaka Brac Housing Finance Corp. Ltd. will donate their one day's salary.

The emergency relief operation includes distribution of dry food for six days, saline and water purifying tablets. Brac will also distribute biscuits for the children. It is also sending containers of purified water to the affected areas.

At its regional and area offices, employees are making bread (chapati) for the flood-affected people. Also, 19 medical teams are working to combat water-borne diseases.

The relief operations will be followed by rehabilitation work.

Meanwhile, Asa has raised the budget to Tk 60 crore for its assistance programme for the flood victims. Earlier, it sanctioned Tk 36 crore.

Four lakh affected families will be benefited from this programme in Asa operational areas.

Under the programme, essential drugs, oral saline and water-purifying tablets will be distributed.

Besides, each family will receive Tk 500 in interest-free loan. The NGO will spend the amount from its own resources.

Karmasangsthan Bank MD forced into retirement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

MA Yusuf, managing director of Karmasangsthan Bank, was forced into retirement yesterday.

According to the directive of the finance ministry, he was given 'early retirement' at the end of his 25 years of public service.

But his tenure of service was due to expire in 2011 as per government rules, sources said.

More bodies help flood victims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With more areas going under floodwaters, various organisations and individuals have come forward to step up relief operation for affected people across the country.

Unocal Bangladesh has taken up a relief distribution programme in greater Sylhet with a budget of US\$ 20,000.

The Unocal employees have started distributing relief supplies in 23 shelters in Sylhet town where about 20,000 people have taken refuge. The relief programme began at the Sylhet Government Pilot School on Thursday.

The employees have also been helping out the marooned people near the company's Jalalabad-Kailashitla gas pipeline route.

Environment ministry officials and employees of the Ministry for Environment and Forest have decided to donate their one day's salary to the Prime Minister's Relief Fund for the flood-affected people.

The decision was taken at a meeting yesterday, with State Minister for Environment and Forest Jafrul Islam Chowdhury in the chair.

Sherpur Zila Samity Sherpur Zila Samity donated Tk 25,000 for the marooned people in Sherpur district yesterday.

At a meeting on July 24, the Samity also decided to collect foods, clothes, medicines and money from the generous people for distribution among the flood victims. Samity President and PSC Member Prof Md Suhrah Ali chaired the meeting.

It called on all to extend a helping hand to mitigate the hardship of the suffering humanity.

Social Investment Bank Social Investment Bank Ltd has distributed relief materials worth Tk 10 lakh among the flood victims in Chandpur, Comilla, Bogra, Brahmanbaria and Sylhet.

The relief items included foods, oral saline and water purifying tablets.

Follow AL steps to face floods

Hasina tells govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina yesterday suggested the government to follow the programmes taken by her government during 1998 devastating flood to tackle the current deluge which has swamped two-thirds of land.

"If the prime minister wants to successfully face the current deteriorating flood situation, she can follow the steps taken by previous AL government," said Hasina while talking to newsmen at Zia International Airport prior to her departure for India on a four-day visit.

Recalling the flood of 1998, the former prime minister said her government at that time had boldly faced the situation by taking various steps which included fair distribution of relief materials and VGF (vulnerable group feeding) cards to the destitute people.

Hasina censured Khaleda for what she said, "The prime minister remarked that flood brings welfare. They see the flood as harbinger of welfare because it creates opportunity for them to steal relief materials, but it brings sufferings for the common people."

The AL president also criticised the

alliance government for "inadequate supply of relief to flood-hit people."

About her visit, Hasina said she, along with her sister Sheikh Rehana, was going to India on a private tour to visit Ajmeer Sharif and offer fatha at the holy shrine.

The Indian government has proposed Hasina to make a courtesy call on Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh and Congress President Sonia Gandhi during her tour and she agreed.

The AL president will return home on July 29.

Party central leaders were present at the airport.

Pak PM shocked at floods

BSS, Dhaka

Pakistan Prime Minister Chaudhury Shujaat Hossain yesterday expressed his shock at the devastating floods in Bangladesh.

In a message to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, her Pakistan counterpart said, "I'm deeply saddened to learn about the devastating floods in Bangladesh that have caused so much damage to life and property."



Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina with the party leaders who saw her off at the airport in the city yesterday. Hasina left for Delhi on a four-day visit.

Call for popular use of renewable energy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Energy experts at a meeting yesterday called for popular use of renewable solar energy and efficient power consumption to address power shortage and the growing need for electricity.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is actively considering to fund four projects on alternative power generation in Bangladesh, said Dr A Atiq Rahman, executive director of Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS).

The centre organised the meeting of stakeholders on an ADB project, 'Promotion of Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency and Greenhouse Gas Abatement (Prega)', in the city.

The four projects -- Waste to

electricity, Co-generation in sugar mills; Solar-wind-diesel hybrid power and Shifting from oil to gas -- have been recommended in the Bangladesh country study report of ADB, said Prega project team leader and BCAS senior fellow Dr M Eusuf in a presentation.

Although ten projects have been recommended, the ADB has attached priority to these four projects in line with its Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) policy.

Under the 'Waste to electricity' project, at least 20 megawatt electricity can be produced with available technology an hour by using five thousand tons of garbage generated in and around Dhaka metropolitan area, said Dr Eusuf.

The solar-wind-diesel hybrid power can electrify smaller towns

and rural areas in a decentralised manner of power generation, he added.

Prof M Ibrahim, executive director of Centre for Mass Education in Science, said at least two megawatt electricity is being generated by solar photovoltaic home system developed by a private company.

The energy experts said meaningful and coordinated efforts of various power-generating agencies and environment-friendly systems were imperative for consistent power production.

They also said bureaucratic tangle often creates serious obstacles to alternative power generation projects.

Chief engineer of Bangladesh Power Development Board Delwar Hossain, BCAS Chairman Dr Saleemul Huq and Director of Power Cell BD Rahamatullah also spoke.

'2,000 die of rabies a year'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 2,000 people die of rabies every year in the country, said the speakers at a press conference yesterday.

This is the second highest death rate from rabies caused by dog bite in the world, they added.

The press conference on 'Rabies in Bangladesh' was organised by Renata Limited, a pharmaceutical company, at a tyre restaurant.

Managing Director of Renata Limited Syed Kaiser Kabir said Nervous Tissue Vaccine (NTV), which is still used to prevent rabies, is outdated and

has many side effects.

It needs 14 doses of vaccine in navel and its failure rate is 10 percent. There is another Tissue Culture Vaccine (TCV) whose side effect is much less but it costs a little more. It, however, needs only five doses, he added.

Kabir said it is a matter of concern that the death rate is not declining due to lack of awareness.

Product Manager Emdadul Huq said it is very urgent to start the treatment within 24 hours.

Journalist Shafiq Rehman, Shafiqul Alam and Mohammad Halimussan of Renata Ltd also spoke.

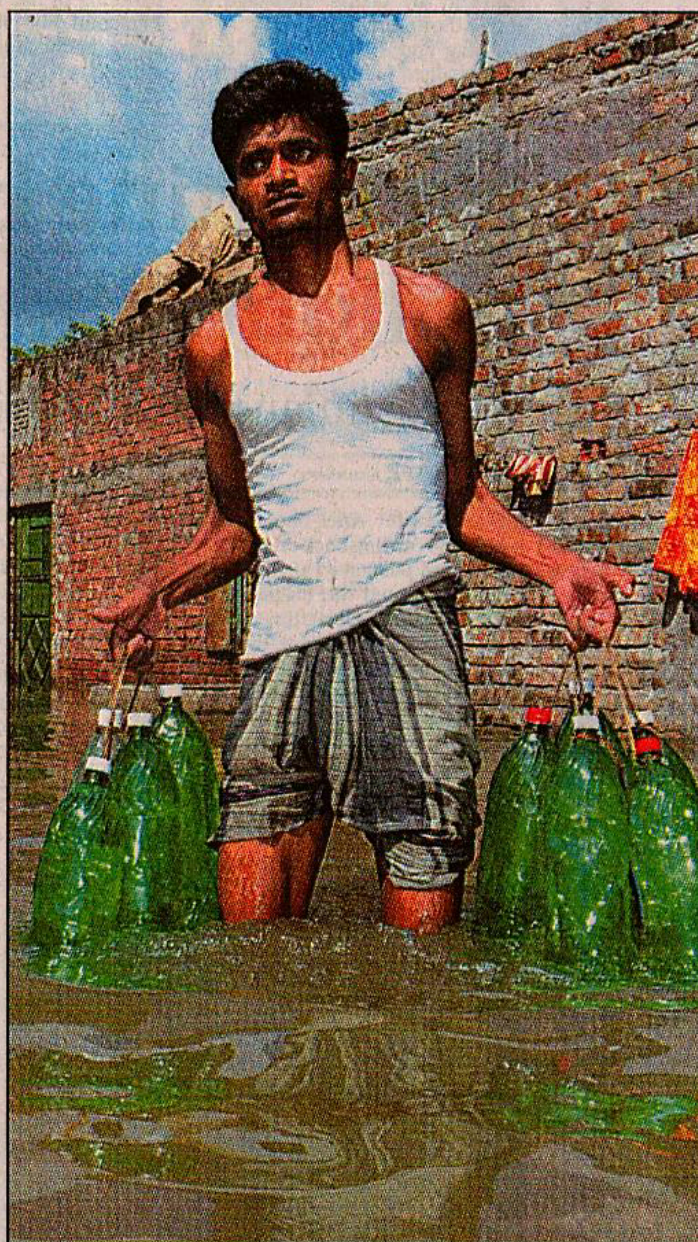
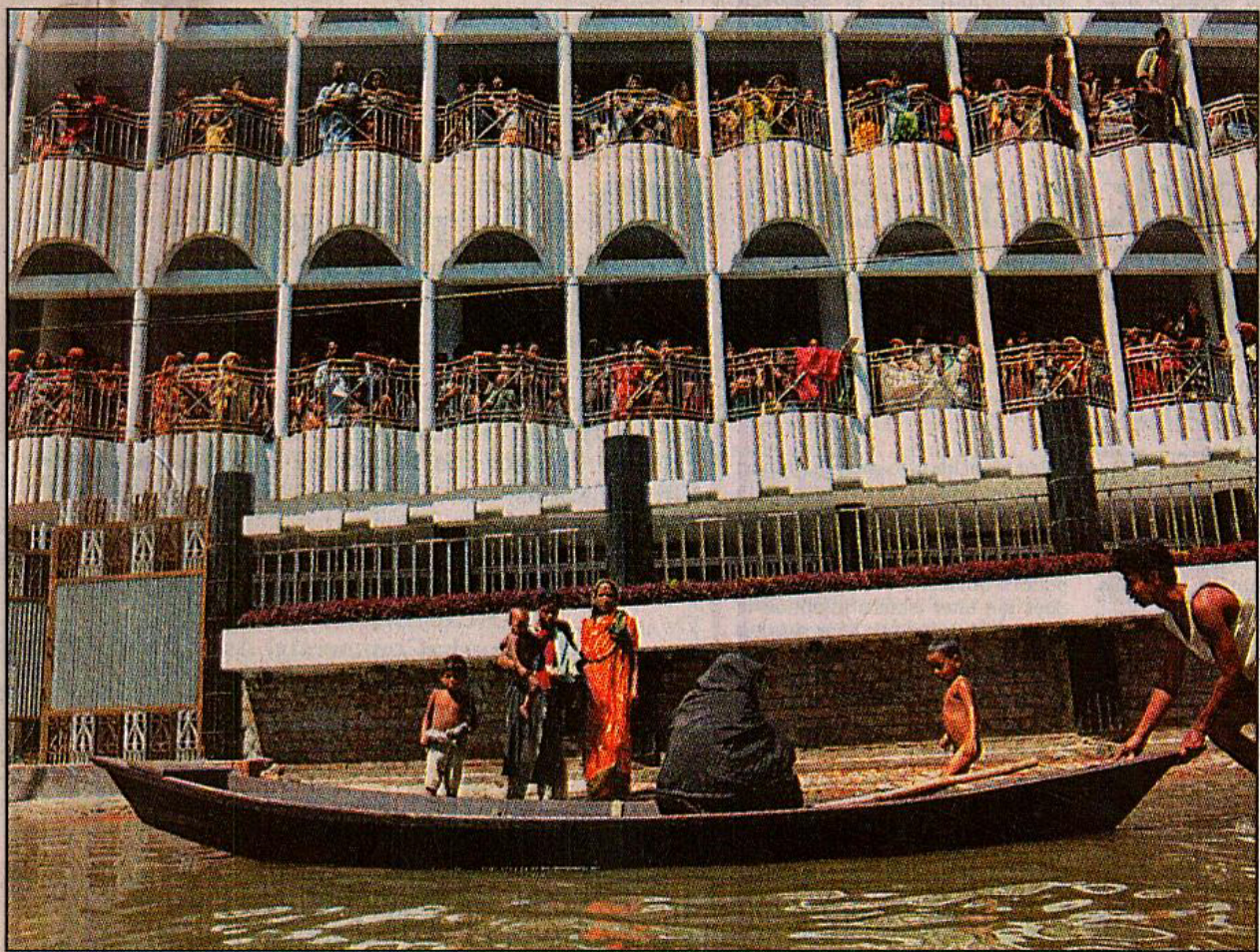
Death anniversary



Modhumita Group, says a press release.

Today is the 12th death anniversary of Md Salahuddin Faruq, Managing Director of Modhumita Cinema and Modhumita Group, says a press release.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to pray for the departed soul.



FLOOD FURY IN CITY

Spotlight: Kamrangirchar

Floods continue to wreak havoc in Kamrangirchar areas yesterday, swamping more places and adding to the suffering of displaced people. (Clockwise from top left) Al Hera Community Centre has now turned into a flood shelter where hundreds of people have taken refuge; a youth fetches bottles of safe water from a distant place for his family; starving people at a flood shelter tell their miseries to newsmen; workers carry piles of cloths to dry places from their inundated factory; and an elderly woman struggles to protect her cows from the fury of floods.

PHOTO: SYED ZAKIR HASSAN

