

PM to visit food aid programmes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia is likely to visit some districts to see the food assistance programme for flood-hit poor under Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) scheme.

She will go to Munshiganj on

September 18 and may visit flood-affected areas where the VGF programme is underway.

This was stated by Food and Disaster Management Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf while talking to reporters yesterday.

According to ministry sources,

the prime minister is likely to visit Manikganj, Sirajganj, Tangail and Jamalpur to see the programme in between September 19 and 25.

The minister said the government has already allocated food for all the 42 flood-affected districts to help start the VGF programme

within this month.

Under the programme, a total of 50 lakh VGF cards would be issued for providing 10 kg rice against each card per month.

The VGF programme will continue at least for three months.

Kamal Ibne Yusuf said army has been deployed to help local administration distribute cards and food among the poor and maintain law and order.

Members of the army are now checking and verifying the cards so that none can disturb or misuse the food assistance programme, he added.

Meanwhile, complaints have been received from a number of districts that the influential politicians have forced the local administration to include such areas into the programme which were not hit hard by the deluge.

Disaster ministry sources said they have received such complaints at least from five districts where VGF cards were being issued in areas not affected by floods. The districts are Mymensingh, Barisal, Noakhali, Pabna and Naogaon.

The district administrations concerned have been asked to send the list of the persons who prepared those cards to the ministry.

The ministry would check and send back the final list before September 18, the sources added.

Patterson arrives today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Torkel L. Patterson arrives in the city today on a four-day visit to Bangladesh.

He will meet Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina and Foreign Minister M. Morshed Khan.

Patterson, who was the director of Asian Affairs, National Security Council, has held his current position since March this year.

Govt to enact law on acid soon

UNB, Dhaka

The government will soon enact laws relating to import, production, storage, transportation, sale and use of acid.

This was decided at a meeting held at the home ministry yesterday, with State Minister for Home Lutfuzzaman Babar in the chair.

The meeting decided to involve

donor agencies as well as affluent people along with government grant in creating a fund for Acid Control Council.

It also decided to take necessary steps to launch social movement

against acid violence with the participation of government and NGOs.

Home Secretary Omar Faruk, law and information secretaries and NGO representatives attended the meeting.