

2000 tons of WFP rice for flood victims

UNB, Dhaka

The World Food Programme (WFP) will soon start distributing 2000 tons of rice to flood victims as initial response to the need for emergency relief of flood-affected people of Bangladesh, reeling from severe flooding following catastrophic rains in the region. "As we go along with the emergency, responding to the need of flood victims, the World Food Programme will start rice distribution after this week," WFP Resident Representative Douglas Broderick told reporters after a meeting with Foreign Affairs Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury yesterday.

Asked about the quantity of rice to be distributed by the UN food agency, he said initially, about 1500 to 2000 tons of rice would be distributed. And, "hopefully, we will be able to increase that."

He thanked Australia, Canada and

Germany for extending cooperation to WFP by committing food for Bangladesh.

Asked if the WFP fears food shortages in the wake of loss of standing crops by floods, Broderick said, "Obviously, we are quite concerned and looking at the issue."

He observed that when the livelihood is wiped out, small farms destroyed and croplands flooded significantly, it is a matter of concern.

According to official statistics, standing crops on about 12,00,000 acres of land were completely or partially damaged by the current monsoon floods.

"It is an important concern for us and for the government of Bangladesh," the WFP representative said, adding that they want to look into the extent of total damage.



PHOTO: STAR

Foreign Affairs Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury speaks at function organised by Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) in association with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) at the BEI auditorium in the city yesterday. On his left are BEI President Farooq Sobhan and UNDP Country Director Manoj Basnyat

Dealing with terrorism requires special legislation: Lt Gen Masud

BSS, Dhaka

Dealing with terrorism requires special legislation beyond criminal law to provide the military and security forces with necessary legal authority and investigation tools to ensure the prosecution of suspected terrorists.

This was stated by Principal Staff Officer of Armed Forces Division Lt General Masud Uddin Chowdhury while inaugurating a week-long seminar titled 'Developing rules of engagement and combating terrorism' organised jointly by Bangladesh Army and US Department of Defence at Dhaka Cantonment yesterday.

The seminar was organised with the help of the Defence Institute for Legal Studies (DILS) and under the supervision of Army Signal Brigade, said an ISPR press release.

Lt Gen Masud said such legislation

must be in conformity with international, humanitarian and human rights laws. "We must remember that good governance and respect for human rights are key to combating terrorism effectively," he pointed out.

Mentioning that terrorism transcends national boundaries and has become an issue of serious concern in the international community, the PSO said combating terrorism is a complicated matter calling for the cooperative efforts of agencies within a country and the international community.

"Counter-terrorism operations may assign such roles to military forces or law enforcement agencies for which they have not been properly trained and equipped," he said, adding, "Political pressure and provocations from the extremists can create difficult operating conditions."

In combating terrorism, the media

should be regarded as a friend, he continued, they can provide accurate and objective information to the public and the quality of reporting would certainly be improved for combating terrorism.

Lt Gen Masud thanked the US government, Defence Wing of US Embassy in Dhaka and the DILS for their endeavour in sharing expertise and enriching the knowledge of Bangladesh Army on such important issues.

Representative of US embassy in Dhaka Colonel John Atkinson and high officials of Bangladesh army and government were present at the inaugural session.

A total of 60 officials including 10 from abroad and representatives from defence ministry, Bangladesh Army and different local and international law enforcement agencies are taking part in the seminar which will end on August 16.