

POST-SIDR REHABILITATION

Dev partners to assist
CA hopes

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser (CA) Fakhruddin Ahmed yesterday hoped that the development partners and friendly nations would come forward to help Bangladesh in its long-term rehabilitation programme.

He expressed the hope while receiving donations for the Chief Adviser's Relief and Welfare Fund from different organisations and individuals at his office.

"I told the representatives of the development partners and the envoys of friendly countries at a meeting on Monday that it is their responsibility to provide assistance to Bangladesh as the country has

become a victim of climate change... it faced flooding and cyclone the same year," the CA said.

In the meeting, the head of the caretaker government sought \$1 billion from donors for a long-term disaster management.

The CA said the government has already started reconstruction of houses, rehabilitation of agriculture, fisheries and livestock in the cyclone battered districts alongside the relief operations.

Yesterday's donors include former foreign secretary and Chairman of Delta Brac Housing Finance Corporation Faruk A Chowdhury, Communications

Secretary Mahbubur Rahman, National Professor MR Khan, Chairman of Sadharan Bima Samul Alam, Chairman of Dhaka Bank Ltd Khandokar Moniruddin, President of Bangladesh Fruits, Vegetables and Allied Products Exporters Association SM Jahangir Hossain, Chairman of Islami Insurance Bangladesh Ltd Tofazzel Hossain, Country Manager of Malaysian Palm Oil Council AKM Fakhrul Alam, Secretary of Bangladesh Tea Sangsad GS Dhar and National Director of SOS International Sishu Palli Bangladesh GS Ishaq.

Waive installment of agri loans

Gen Moeen asks NGOs, receives more donations for cyclone victims

UNB, Dhaka

Army Chief General Moeen U Ahmed yesterday received cheques for about Tk 2.25 crore and other relief items for Bangladesh Army Relief Fund from individuals and

organisations at Army Headquarters mess in aid of the cyclone-hit people.

The organisations and individuals, who donated to the fund, are Premier Bank and Bank Asia Tk 50 lakh, Col (ret'd) Jalaluddin, on behalf of USA expatriate Shawkat Hossain, 50,000 US dollar, Salauddin Ahmed of Bangladesh Foundation, Florida 6,500 US dollar, Purbani Group Tk 10 lakh, Al Amin Group Tk 20 lakh, Paradise Group, Hamdard Laboratories and Dhaka Customs Agent Association and Aid Group Tk 5 lakh each, Al-Iraqi Association Tk 7 lakh, Dhaka Bank Tk 5.10 lakh, Maj Gen Jibon Kanai Das on behalf of Bangladesh Ordinance Factory Tk 3 lakh, Maj Gen Ashab Uddin on behalf of Savar Golf Club, Merchant Association Madhabdi Tk 3.15 lakh, Sylhet Division Development Parishad and Healthcare Pharmaceutical Company Ltd Tk 2 lakh each, Rawa Ladies Club, Well-tail International, RS Shipping and Trading Company Ltd and

Bangladesh Book Publishers' and Seller Association Tk 1 lakh each.

Brig Gen Nizam on behalf of Shaheed Bir Uttam Lt Anwar Girls' College also handed over 500 cartons foodstuff, Confidence Salt 3mts salt, Rotary Club of Dhaka Purbasha cheque for Tk 1 lakh and foodstuffs and cloths, My One Television Tk 50,000, Khandakar Faizul Morsalin and Khandakar Faizur Rahman Tk 50,000, Institute of Diploma Engineers' 2,000 pcs sweaters, Ananda Niketan English Medium School, Sylhet cheque for Tk 1.38 lakh and 44 cartons foodstuffs, Sylhet Foundation cheque for Tk 1 lakh, and six power tillers, Sylhet Chamber of Commerce six power tillers, foodstuffs and cloths and Madhabdi SP Institution cheque for Tk 25,000.

After receiving the cheques and relief items, the army chief requested the NGOs, working at the cyclone-hit areas, to waive installment of the agriculture loan that distributed among the farmers considering their distress.

SWID Bangladesh
elected AFID
board member

SWID Bangladesh was elected a board member of the Asian Federation for the Intellectually Disabled (AFID) recently, says a press release.

The election was held at the general assembly of the 18th Conference on Intellectual Disability in Taipei, Taiwan, recently.

Sajida Humayun Kabir, former secretary general and first vice president of SWID Bangladesh and the president of its Ramna branch, was elected a member of the AFID Board securing the highest vote.

Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, Japan and Iran participated in the election.

About 600 delegates from 21 countries took part in the conference.

Sajida Kabir presented the country paper on behalf of SWID Bangladesh.

The other member of the delegation was Saleha Chowdhury, former third vice-president of SWID and executive committee member of Dhanmondi Branch, SWID Bangladesh.

The 19th AFID will be held in Singapore in 2009.

New president
of Ramakrishna
Mission

Swami Atmasthanandaji Maharaj was elected president of the Ramakrishna Mission at a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Math and the governing body of the Mission on December 3, says a press release.

He is the 15th president of the Order.

Swami Atmasthanandaji had been one of the vice-presidents of the Math and Mission since May 22, 1997.

Born in 1919 at Sabajpur, near Dhaka, he received mantra diksha from Swami Vijnananandaji Maharaj, a monastic disciple of Sir Ramakrishna, in 1938 and joined the Ramakrishna Order at Belur Math on January 3, 1941 at the age of 22.

Stephen Murray
new CEO of ISD

Stephen Murray, an educationist of international repute, has recently joined the International School Dhaka (ISD) as its chief executive officer, says a press release.

He is British and has taught and been involved in education for over 30 years. He was the headmaster/CEO of Antwerp International School in Belgium until recently.

Before moving to Belgium, Murray was senior consultant/operations manager for the West Australian Department of Education and Training. He was also the joint CEO of Alice Smith School in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

EARTH
Foundation
director
Mahiuddin on
3-day remand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed detained EARTH Foundation director Syed Mahiuddin Ahmed on a three-day remand for interrogation in a criminal case.

Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested Mahiuddin, one of the directors of much controversial Effective Assistance and Rehabilitation for Tormented Humanity (EARTH) Foundation, on charges of his involvement in swindling people out of over Tk 100 crore.

Rab officials said Mahiuddin is a close aide to already detained EARTH Foundation Chairman Khan Mohammad Khalid Hossain.

"We are expecting to find out important information from Mahiuddin as he was a close aide to Khalid," Major Ehsan of Rab-2 told The Daily Star yesterday. He said they are also expecting to get information about the huge amount of money the organisation took from different people and organisations by means of cheating.

Khalid was arrested on November 18 from the city's Panthapath area.

Rab officials said they produced Mahiuddin before the court seeking a 10-day remand. The court, however, granted only three days.

BIJOY TV CASE
Mayor Mohiuddin
produced before
Ctg court

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury was produced before a court in connection with a graft case concerning Bijo TV yesterday for the first time since he was arrested on March 7.

The court of Chittagong Divisional Special Judge SM Solaiman fixed December 9 as the date for issuing gazette notification about another accused in the case, CCC Chief Engineer Mokher Alam, who is still at large.

Detained CCC Chief Executive Officer Intiaz Hossain Chowdhury, another accused in the case, was also produced before the court.

Mayor Mohiuddin was brought to Chittagong District Jail from Dhaka on Monday afternoon and was produced before the court amid tight security at around 10:35am.

Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) filed the case on May 27 against Mayor Mohiuddin, Chief Engineer Mokher Alam, Superintendent Engineer Md Shahidullah and Director of Theatre Institute of Chittagong (TIC) Ahmed Iqbal Haider for launching the private television channel Bijo TV without permission from the government.

During the investigation, the ACC found out that the then secretary and incumbent CEO of CCC Intiaz Hossain was also involved in graft, sources said.

Names of the two accused were later dropped from the charge sheet as involvement of TIC Director Ahmed Iqbal could not be established and Engineer Shahidullah died in police custody on July 4.

ACC submitted the charge sheet against Mayor Mohiuddin, Chief Engineer Mokher Alam and CEO Intiaz Hossain on November 22.

In the charge sheet, it was alleged that the mayor and two other officials embezzled over Tk 80 lakh from the CCC fund in the name of launching Bijo TV.



Appeal for help

Darpan, a seven-year-old boy, sustained severe electrical burns in an accident in September and is now undergoing treatment at South View Hospital in Mirpur, says a press release.

His right hand was burnt completely.

As the treatment involves a huge amount of money, his father Md Mizanur Rahman, a resident of West Kaziara in Mirpur, with his meagre income now finds it difficult to continue the expensive treatment of his son.

He has appealed to generous people at home and abroad to extend a helping hand to save his son.

Contributions can be sent to A/C No. 21032337, Prime Bank Limited, Islamic Banking Branch, Mirpur, Dhaka-1216.

Interested persons can also call at 01726360069 for further details.



Sector Commanders Forum held a view exchange meeting at a house at Banani in the city yesterday. (From left) Maj Gen (ret'd) KM Shafiqullah, Air Vice Marshal (ret'd) AK Khandker and Maj Gen (ret'd) CR Dutta and Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka, 2nd from right, were present at the meeting.

Make overseas employment
process gender-sensitive
Suggests study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

While there is no official statistics on the number of Bangladeshi workers living abroad, a study conducted by a private research organisation says over 4.37 lakh female and 27.70 lakh male Bangladeshis are presently working abroad on temporary basis.

About 60 percent of the female migrants work in the Middle Eastern countries, while around 35 percent of them work in India. The females who work in India hail mostly from the north and south-western regions of the country, said the study of Drishti Research Centre.

The findings of the study were revealed at the launch of a book titled 'Documenting the Undocumented: Female Migrant Workers from Bangladesh' at Dhaka Reporters Unity Auditorium in the capital.

The researchers of the study are Therese Blanchet and Hannan Biswas of Drishti Research Centre and Prof Abdur Razzaque of Dhaka University.

The study was conducted in 1500 villages of 94 unions across the country.

Briefing newsmen on the findings of the study, Director of Drishti

Research Centre Therese Blanchet said most of the female workers migrate to other countries through irregular channels because of various restrictions imposed on them and negative social attitude towards free movement of the women.

She said the study found that the women who migrated to other countries hail mostly from Dhaka, Gazipur, Narayanganj, Jessore, Manikganj, Narail and Munshiganj.

"The government should find out the risks of women working abroad, so that they can take right decisions before going abroad," she said.

Proper training and skill building will ensure the protection of the migrant workers as well as the interest of the nation, Therese added.

The study recommended that the overseas employment process and Bangladesh missions abroad should be more gender-sensitive considering the female trend of migrating to other countries for employment.

Quoting statistics of Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training, Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Secretary

Abdul Matin Chowdhury said 52 lakh Bangladeshis including 68000 women left the country as temporary workers in different countries since 1976.

The number of returnees however was not documented, he added.

Speaking as chief guest Matin said the issue of female migrants is sensitive one because of social and religious stigma.

"If we want to control female migration, they will go through irregular channels," he said, adding that many female migrants in the Middle East lead vulnerable lives, which is one type of servitude.

Regional Programme Manager of International Organisation for Migration in Dhaka Alko Kikkawa suggested more awareness among aspirant migrants so that they can take right decisions about the overseas employment.

Presiding over the function, noted economist Dr Atiur Rahman said the overseas employment sector should get more attention and investment because of its huge potentials and the importance of the remittances that they send back home.

Junior Programme Officer of Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation Marie Gilhrin also spoke on the occasion.



Litterateur Mokbula Monjur receives Anannya Literary Award 1414 at a ceremony at Poet Sufia Kamal Auditorium of the National Museum in the city yesterday while Litterateur Selina Hossain, left, and Anannya Executive Editor Dil Monowara Monu, second from left, look on.

CENTENARY OF SCOUTING
8-day COMDECA
begins Friday

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh Scouts has chalked out an eight-day camp (COMDECA) 2007 at Cox's Bazar sea beach beginning from Friday in observance of the Centenary of Scouting.

Scouts and Rovers will participate in 10 different challenges in this international camp. About 6000 Scouts, Rovers, leaders and officials from home and abroad will attend the camp.

President Iajuddin Ahmed is expected to inaugurate the COMDECA on December 9.

Information and Law Adviser Mainul Hossain will attend the closing ceremony as the chief guest on December 14.

Management Net
reunion Dec 7

Management Net, organisation of the former students of 10 batches of Department of Management (83-92) of Dhaka University, will hold its grand reunion on December 7 at Business Studies Bhawan on the Dhaka University campus, says a press release.

On the occasion, a fund raising programme for the cyclone victims and a voluntary blood donation programme will be organised.

Immediate release of
RU teachers demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different political parties and student organisations yesterday demanded immediate release of four Rajshahi University (RU) teachers sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment each on charge of bringing out silent procession on August 21 violating the emergency power rules.

Expressing deep concern over the imprisonment of the teachers, the leaders of the organisations in separate press releases expressed the fear that academic atmosphere in educational institutions will be affected severely following the judgment.

They also mentioned that awarding punishment to the teachers so quickly reveals the government's double policy regarding the countrywide student movement.

The government earlier said that it would withdraw the cases filed in connection with the incident and pardon the persons responsible for it, but in fact the government tried the teachers at an unprecedented speed, added the press releases.

The organisations that expressed concern over the incident include Democratic Left Alliance, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, Bangladesh Chhatra League and Chhatra Sangram Parishad.

Meanwhile, Samajtantrik Chhatra Front in its press release alleged that the profession of

teaching has been undermined before the nation when efforts are on to rehabilitate corrupt people and businessmen by forming truth commission.

Robbers' gang
leader killed
in shootout
with Rab

UNB, Pirojpur

The leader of a robbers' gang was killed in a shootout between the members of Rab and his cohorts at Boro Machhua in Mothbaria upazila early yesterday.

The dead was identified as Golam Mostafa, 35, leader of inter-district robbers' gang.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of Rab-8 went to Khezurbari village early hours yesterday. Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) said.

But as the team reached near the steamer ghat at about 5:00am, the gang opened fire on the elite force. The Rab team also returned fire, triggering a gunbattle.

"Mostafa caught by bullets in the crossfire and died on the spot," said a witness account of Rab.

A shutter gun, two bullets and a cartridge were also recovered from the scene.

HARRISON FUND
\$4.5 lakh help
for cyclone
victims

UNB, Dhaka

The George Harrison Fund for UNICEF has announced a donation of 450,000 US dollar for relief and recovery efforts for the cyclone victims in Bangladesh.

A release from Washington Monday said the cyclone-affected about 8.5 million people in Bangladesh in 30 districts and about half of the affected people are children. An estimated 600,000 of them are under five.

The contribution-- evenly split between immediate relief and long-term recovery interventions-- will go towards meeting the immediate funding needs of UNICEF, currently estimated at almost 30 million US dollar.

George Harrison had a long association with Bangladesh and UNICEF.

"Children are at their most vulnerable during natural disasters and it is incumbent upon all of us to act fast to save as many lives as possible," said Olivia Harrison, wife of late George Harrison whose great contribution to Bangladesh's War of Liberation is still remembered with gratitude.

Caryl Stern, President and CEO of the US Fund for UNICEF said, "with such a large number of children affected in Bangladesh, UNICEF is playing a key role in ensuring their survival in the coming weeks and months."

He said, "This contribution keeps alive George Harrison's longstanding tradition of goodwill towards Bangladesh, but shows that children need our assistance, regardless of the borders they are born between."

In 2005, Olivia Harrison launched the George Harrison Fund for UNICEF in her late husband's name with an initial donation of one million US dollar.

Mokbula Monjur
wins Anannya
Literary Award

DU CORRESPONDENT

Litterateur Mokbula Monjur has been awarded Anannya Literary Award 1414 in recognition of her contribution to Bangla literature.

Prof Anisuzzaman gave away the award to the winner at a ceremony at Poet Sufia Kamal Auditorium of the National Museum in the city yesterday.

The award carries a crest and Tk 50,000.

Anannya, a fortnightly magazine for women, has been giving the award 'Anannya Sahitya Puroskar' to women litterateurs for the last 14 years.

Presided over by litterateur Selina Hossain, the award giving ceremony was addressed by Prof Niaz Zaman, writer and publisher Mofidul Haq and Executive Editor of the Anannya Dil Monowara Monu.

Obituary

CU CORRESPONDENT

Rahela Mahbub, wife of eminent litterateur and journalist Mahbub Ul Alam, passed away due to old age complications at a clinic in the capital yesterday at the age of 94.

She left behind a host of relatives and admirers to mourn her death.

She will be buried at her family graveyard after a namaz-e-janaza at Fateyabad under Hathazari in Chittagong at 9:00am today.

Alhaj Begum Fatima Khatun



Alhaj Begum Fatima Khatun, mother of Ruhul Amin Kutub Uddin, Representative of Land & Sea Company in Bangladesh, passed away at her home at Tuptara in Khulna on Friday at the age of 80, says a press release.

Fatima, wife of late Alhaj MM Abdullah, a district registrar, helped the freedom fighters during the Liberation War.

A mother of three daughters and two sons, she won the 'Ratnagarva' award.

Death anniversary



Today is the 8th death anniversary of Hajj Mohammad Selim, former president of Dhaka city Muslim League, says a press release.

All are requested to pray for salvation of the departed soul.