

OMS rice in Barisal division from today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Rice under OMS programme will start in Barisal city and other urban areas in the division today.

The rice will be sold through 118 dealers - 20 in Barisal city corporation area, 30 in other district headquarters and five municipal towns and 68 in upazila headquarters, official sources said. All preparations are complete to launch the programme, they said.

One person will get up to 3 kgs at the rate of Tk 25 per kg.

A dealer will get 850 kgs of rice on alternate days and 12.75 tonnes a month.

The OMS programme will continue till April. Rural areas will not be covered under the programme as Amon harvest has just been completed, the officials said.

Talking to this correspondent, some sources said the OMS programme should also cover worst affected rural areas because relief there is inadequate to the need.

50 OUTLETS IN KHULNA CITY

In Khulna city, Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) on Monday started Open Market Sale (OMS) office at 50 spots, our staff correspondent reports.

Of these, 10 spots have been fixed only for jute mill workers.

At each of the spots, 850 kilogrammes of rice will be sold per day at Tk 25 per kg, according to Khulna district controller of food Md. Moniruzzaman.

The food department will also start selling rice at Tk 25 per kg from today through 40 dealers in the city.

8,000 kg rice seized from 'hoarder' in Kotchandpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Rapid Action Battalion recovered 8,000 kg of rice from the go-down of Abdur Rashid in Kotchandpur upazila yesterday afternoon.

The rice will be sold at Tk 25 per kg and a single person will get not more than five kg. Kotchandpur Upazila Nirbahi Officer Moniruzzaman said.

Kurigram teachers donate to Sidr relief fund again

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Teachers and other employees of all non-government schools, colleges and madrasas in Kurigram are donating money

to create a fund for rehabilitation of Sidr victims.

Donations are being collected as per a decision taken at a meeting of UNOs of all nine upazilas, representatives of educational institutions and other officials, held on December 25 at the office of Kurigram Deputy Commissioner. The DC presided.

An amount of Tk 500 is being collected from college teachers getting salary less than 7,200 and Tk 300 from those getting less than 6,800, sources said.

Schoolteachers and other employees of colleges and schools have been asked to donate Tk 200 each.

UNOs of nine upazilas have been asked to collect the money from their respective areas.

A teacher of Razgarhat Women College on condition of anonymity

2 lakh Sidr victims still without shelter in Patuakhali, Barguna

Govt relief too inadequate for need, officials admit

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

Over two lakh Sidr-affected families are still without shelter in Patuakhali and Barguna districts.

Over six lakh people including children of these families are suffering in biting cold as they cannot erect sheds with the meagre government house building relief.

The government has allotted only one bundle of CI sheet and Tk 3,000 to 5,000 for each family. Only 2,200 bundles of CI sheets were distributed and Tk Tk 24.27 crore disbursed among cyclone victims in Patuakhali district till December 30 while the deserving families are over two lakh.

In Barguna, about 2,000 bundles of CI sheet and over Tk 20 crore were distributed among Sidr victims till January 1, a sources at district relief and rehabilitation office (DRRO) said.

Sobahan Gazi, 45, of Panpattee village in Galachipa upazila said, told, "My tin-shed house was blown away.

"I need at least 5 bundles of CI sheet and Tk 20,000 to rebuild my house anyhow. The upazila administration in presence of army gave me only Tk 5,000 and one bundle of CI sheet."

Sobahan, Jabbar, Khalil and many others like them said the winter came as a woe after Sidr. Many affected families are passing nights under sheds covered with polythene, they said.

Anwara Begum, 60, of Char



PHOTO: STAR
Victim of the November 15 Sidr, this family like many in Char Kauwa still lives in a makeshift hut in Patuakhali coastal areas.

Kauwa, about 10 kilometres from Kuakata sea beach, told this correspondent, "I am living under the open sky as Sidr blew away my thatched house. I need help to rebuild it".

Jalil Howlader of the same area said, "All the 300 families in the char (shoal) lost their dwellings and none of them got any assistance to rebuild houses."

Talking to this correspondent, Patuakhali District Relief and Rehabilitation Officer (DRRO) Abdul Malq admitted that the relief was too inadequate to the need.

A small percentage of people, specially middle class peasant families, rebuilt their houses anyhow as they could not seek relief because of their social status, official said.

"The relief we are giving is not sufficient to their needs. They need at least four times more to rebuild houses", he said.

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