

# Unplanned renovation to cause waste of several crores of taka

Say leaders of Chaktai Canal Action Committee

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chaktai Canal Excavation Action Committee at a press conference yesterday demanded renovation and reconstruction of the canal in a planned and coordinated fashion.

The leaders of the committee at the press conference at Chittagong Press Club alleged that unplanned excavation and renovation of the canal would waste several crores.

The rain-induced devastating landslide and inundation that claimed a total of 132 lives on June 11 and October 16 last year was nothing but the result of unplanned renovation of Chaktai Khal and lack of maintenance of other canals, they observed.

They also alleged Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) took initiative for laying a 15-ft wide road

along Chaktai canal when the government following the June 11 disaster stopped construction of CCC housing projects levelling hills and identified structures including those of CCC constructed illegally on drains.

They added that during the years 2002-2006, CCC made concrete-bed and erected a boundary on the land along the canal at the cost of Tk 24 crore.

But, in the name of evicting the encroachers to restore land for a road beside the canal, CCC forcibly demolished many legal structures erected outside the boundary wall, whereas CCC kept its own illegal structures untouched, alleged the committee leaders.

Besides, CCC decided to construct the road some four feet above the ground level that would

block passage of rainwater and cause inundation and waterlogging during the down-pour, they added.

The committee leaders also protested the CCC initiative for setting up sluice gates at the mouths of Chaktai canal and Mohesh canal.

Sluice gates on two canals keeping the rest canals of the city open would not help check the inundation, they said.

The leaders demanded representation of all the authorities concerned and that of the people living along the canals while making decision on canal dredging and renovation or taking measures to rid the city of inundation and waterlogging.

They demanded compensation for the structures demolished

illegally so far and stop unplanned construction of the road along the canal.

They also demanded investigation into the corruption practiced during the construction of concrete-sole and boundary wall of Chaktai canal.

Chaktai Canal Excavation Action Committee General Secretary Shahriar Khaled read out the written statement at the press conference while organisation Chairman and Gono Forum leader Advocate M Kafil Uddin, Jatiya Party leader Jahangir Alam, former ward commissioner Abu Zafar, Abul Mansur and Kutub Uddin replied to different queries.

A large number of people living along the Chaktai canal were also present at the press conference.

## Watchdog slams conditions on Pakistan TV channel's return

AFP, Islamabad

A global media watchdog yesterday "deplored" what it said was the Pakistani government's insistence that a top television channel should drop key programmes to secure its return to the airwaves.

Geo News and Geo Sports came back on cable on Monday night, two and a half months after transmission of the popular Urdu-language stations was blocked by President Pervez Musharraf under a state of emergency.

Viewers had only been able to watch them on satellite or the Internet, despite the fact that Musharraf had lifted the emergency -- and restrictions on other broadcasters -- in mid-December.

But Paris-based Reporters Without Borders said that while it welcomed the stations' return, it "deplores the fact that President Pervez Musharraf made it conditional on the suppression of some of its programmes."

The watchdog said the agreement between Geo's owners and the government was conditional on the suppression of two key news programmes presented by veteran journalists Hamid Mir and Shahid Masood.

"It is regrettable that the government insisted on the withdrawal of certain programmes," the group said, adding that the two journalists had been allowed to continue working for the station.

"This constitutes yet further evidence that censorship is unfortunately still the rule just a few weeks before the parliamentary elections scheduled for 18 February," the organisation said.

Geo -- whose employees led a noisy protest campaign during much of the station's time off-air -- refused to comment on the two programmes that the watchdog said were suppressed.

"I shall not offer any comment on the issue," Geo President Imran Aslam told AFP. "What I can say is that slowly but surely, things will come back to normal."

He described the government's decision to lift the ban ahead of elections as "wise".

"We have been keen to be the part of the whole election process," he said.

Aslam said that certain "issues" still need to be resolved between the Geo management and the government but would not give further details.



PHOTO STAR

BSF North Bengal Frontier IG RA Tiwari speaks at a post-meeting joint press conference in Bogra yesterday. On his left is Kolkata Sector Commander SS Tomar and on his right is BDR Deputy Director General Brig Gen MA Bari. (Story on Page 1)

## Bring war criminals to justice

AK Khandkar urges govt

A CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

Air Vice Marshal (retd) AK Khandkar yesterday called on the government to bring the war criminals to justice for the sake of the country.

It is very unfortunate that those who opposed the liberation war and committed war crimes still hold the same view 36 years after independence, he said as the chief guest at a cultural festival at Noakhali Town Hall auditorium,

organised by the district Sammilita Sangskritik Jote.

These elements have also killed judges, lawyers and innocent people in bomb attacks in the last few years, he said, adding that it is high time to put the war criminals on trial.

Former law maker Asaduzzaman Noor said the caretaker government has been trying to create an environment conducive to a free and fair election through various measures such as

electoral and political reforms and drive against corruption and crimes.

But it is not possible to hold a fair election without bringing the war criminals to book, he added.

General Secretary of Sammilita Sangskritik Jote Golam Kuddus, theater activist Jhuna Chowdhury and former law makers Prof Md Hanif and Fazle Elahi also spoke at the programme presided over by Adv Delwar Hossain Mintu.

## N Korea tops list of disaster deaths: IFRC

AFP, Seoul

North Korea suffered the world's largest number of deaths from natural disasters over the past decade, the International Red Cross said in a new report seen Tuesday.

A total of 458,435 people died in disasters that hit North Korea from 1997 to 2006, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) said in its World Disasters Report 2007.

The figure accounts for about 38 percent of some 1.2 million deaths from natural disasters reported worldwide during the period, the report said.

The figure was more than double the number in Indonesia where 181,977 people died. Pakistan and Sri Lanka ranked third and fourth.

North Korea suffered famine in the mid- to late-1990s which killed hundreds of thousands, and still faces persistent food shortages.

The communist regime blamed the famine on severe floods but analysts said the clearing of hillsides to create more cropland is partly to blame.

Devastating floods, which relief agencies said were the worst in a decade, left at least 600 people dead or missing in August last year.

North Korea ranked second in disaster deaths from 1987 to 1996, when 153,458 died, according to the IFRC report.

The report also said the number of North Korean refugees decreased to 34,000 in 2006 after rising to a peak of 101,700 in 2003. It cited statistics from the US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants.

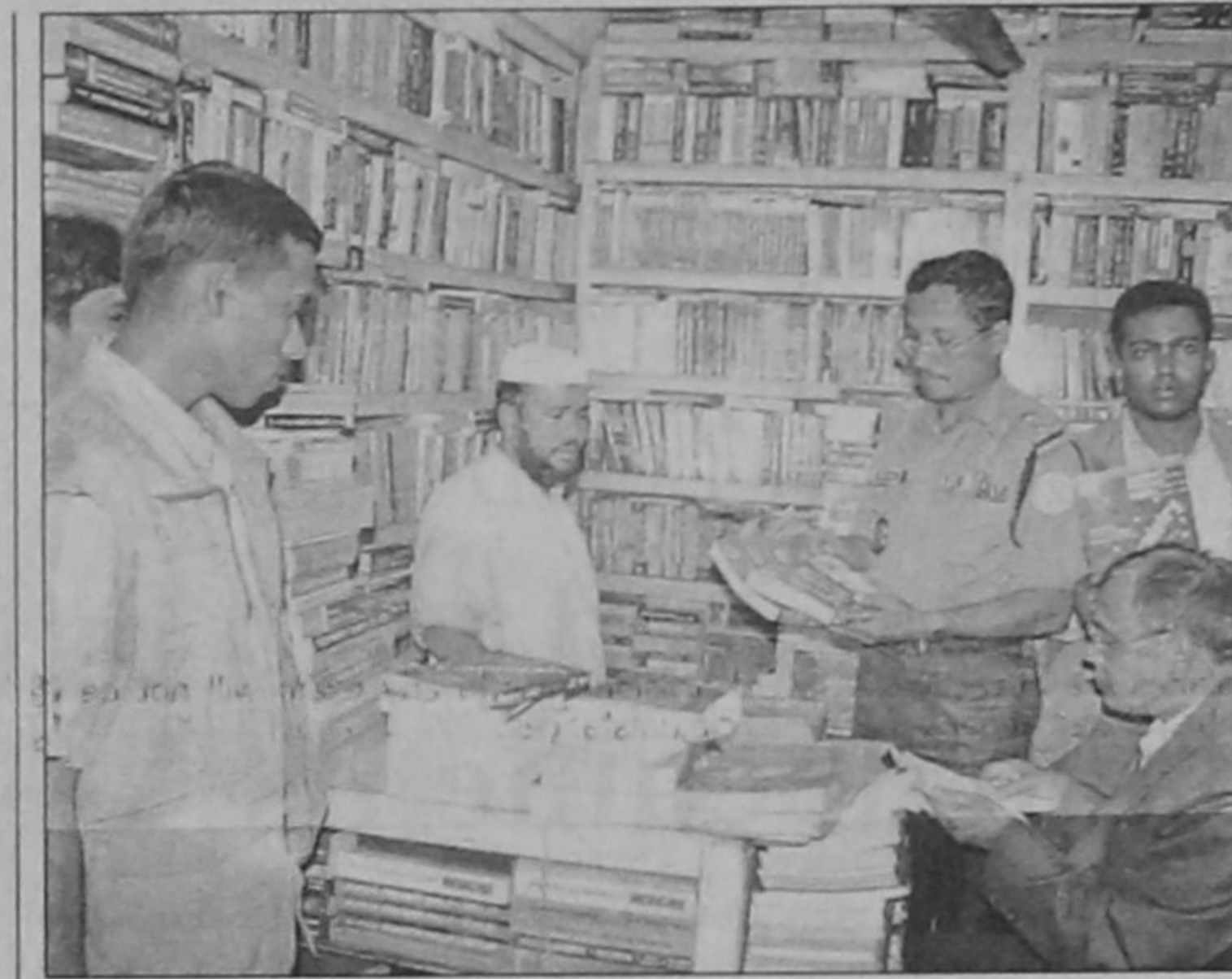


PHOTO STAR

Detective Branch (DB) of police conduct raids at different bookshops at Andarkilla in the port city yesterday in a drive against pirated medical books.

## CA thanks Pakistan for standing by Sidr victims

BSS, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed yesterday thanked the government of Pakistan for providing quick assistance to the Sidr victims.

The chief adviser conveyed it to the Pakistan government through his visiting Naval Chief Admiral M Afzal Tahir who paid a courtesy call on Fakhruddin at his office in the city. Pakistan High Commissioner Alamgir Babar was present.

Fakhruddin said the rehabilitation process in the Sidr-hit areas is going on and normal life is returning there gradually.

He personally thanked Pakistani president for sending help and medical team for the Sidr-affected people.

Wishing success of the visit of the Pakistan Naval Chief, the chief adviser hoped that he had fruitful discussion with his counterparts.

Cooperation between the two countries in different fields including navy will be increased day by day, he added.

Admiral Afzal expressed sympathy for the Sidr victims and appreciated the role of government in rehabilitating the affected people. He briefed the Chief Adviser about the activities of Pakistan Navy.

Secretary to the Chief Adviser's Office Kazi M Aminul Islam and Press Secretary to the Chief Adviser Syed Fahim Munaim were also present.

## Regional British Council director calls on DU VC

UNB, Dhaka

Central and South Asian regional director of British Council Dr Morna Nance called on vice chancellor of Dhaka University Prof SMA Faiz yesterday.

They discussed matters of mutual interest, specially the prospect of expansion of exchange and collaborative programmes between the university and the British Council.

Local director of British Council Dr June Rollinson present at the meeting also showed greater interest in academic activities and research programme of the university.

Prof SMA Faiz presented the university crest and convocation ties to the distinguished guests.

## UAE to help set up internet system for workers' dispatch

Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, who is in Abu Dhabi to attend a conference of labour sending and receiving countries, held a bilateral meeting with his

UAE counterpart on Monday evening, says a press release. UAE Labour Minister Dr Ali bin Abdullah Al Kaabi assured that UAE would assist Bangladesh in setting

up an internet technology system to assist the efficient dispatch of workers to the UAE.

They also decided to set up a joint committee between the two countries to implement the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in Dhaka during the recent visit to Bangladesh of the UAE minister.

"We are doing the best to take advantage of this huge market. If we can upgrade our skills, we can move higher in the quality employment scale," Iftekhar remarked to the media afterwards.

"The Abu Dhabi Dialogue is a significant event as it is the first time the receiving and sending states are meeting one another with the International Organization of Migration also in attendance," he added.

Expatriates' Welfare Secretary Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Ambassador of Bangladesh to the UAE Nazimullah Chowdhury and Director General of Foreign Ministry Dr Hamed Rashid were present during the meeting.

Director General of the International Organization for Migration Ambassador Brunson McKinley called on the foreign adviser at his hotel suite yesterday to discuss matters of mutual interest.



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**Request for Expression of Interest (EOI) to Participate as 'Sub-recipient (SR) in Malaria Control Program Supported by Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) Round 6**

Bangladesh has received a grant from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) under Round 6. This is a 5-year project (2007-2012), initially for two years in Phase I and thereafter based on performance three years in Phase II. There are two Principal Recipients (PR) of the grant, namely the Malaria and Parasitic Disease Control Unit (M&PDCU) of DGHS under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoH&FW) and BRAC. The project will strengthen and scale-up current malaria control activities in Bangladesh. Malaria diagnostic and treatment services will be expanded at the community level. Long lasting insecticide treated nets (LLINs) will be distributed and existing nets will be retreated to reduce malaria transmission in the high risk population. Vector control measures will be strengthened through Indoor Residual Spraying (IRS) particularly to contain outbreaks, if any, and promoting integrated vector management. Current behavior change communication (BCC) activities will be scaled-up, and partnerships with private health care services will be strengthened.

### Project objectives

- To provide quality diagnosis and effective treatment to 80% of the estimated malaria cases in 13 high endemic districts by 2012;
- To promote the use of ITN/LLINs in 80% of households in 13 high endemic districts and selective IRS for containment of outbreaks; and
- To strengthen program management capacity and coordination, and partnership in malaria control.

### Eligibility

BRAC, the PR for NGO component is inviting applications from the interested and capable Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to be sub-recipients of GFATM round 6 malaria component and implement the project activities in selected malaria endemic areas of Bangladesh. Current sub-recipient NGOs of GFATM round 6 will not be eligible to apply. Interested organizations must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the activities. Organizations must provide documentary evidences to establish that they have:

- Organization should have Registration of NGO Bureau and/or competent authority of the government.
- Organization should have experience of work in Sylhet, Sunamganj and Chittagong districts.
- At least three years of experience in implementing health program preferably on malaria or any other infectious and/or vector borne diseases control.
- Clear management structure with established organogram.
- Detailed description of the organization's experience providing the capacity of NGO to implement the malaria program (6 pages).
- Audit report (prepared by a competent audit firm) of past two financial years.
- Summarized activity reports in the related fields for minimum past two years (e.g. annual report).

### Submission of EOI

- Interested NGOs should submit 4 (four) copies of their EOI along with relevant documents on or before February 17, 2008 to the address below, with a covering letter expressing the interest to participate in the program and confirming that the information submitted in the EOI is correct and true.
- NGOs will be short listed in accordance with procedures set out in the GFATM/BRAC guidance and tools. Short listed NGOs will be assessed in terms of their capacity to implement the program. Assessment will be done by a firm appointed by BRAC as per GFATM guidelines. The final selection will be made based on the assessment and the selected NGOs will be informed.
- Interested NGOs may obtain additional information by sending formal written query (ies) to the undersigned at least 7 (seven) days prior to the closing date of EOI submission. No phone calls will be entertained.

### EOI submitted to:

Director  
BRAC Health Programme  
75 Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212  
Bangladesh  
e-mail: health.malaria@brac.net