

FLOOD CYCLONE LOSSES \$190m agreement with ADB to accelerate economic growth

UNB, Dhaka

An agreement on a \$190 million credit was signed yesterday between the government and the Asian Development Bank for funding a project aimed at accelerating economic growth through recovery from the colossal damage done by the last floods and cyclone in the country.

Economic Relations Division Secretary M Aminul Islam Bhuiyan and ADB Country Director Hua Du signed the deal at a ceremony at the ERD office on behalf of the respective sides.

"The project will contribute to sustainable economic growth by minimising the devastating impact of the severe floods and cyclone that hit the country last year and, at the same time, reduce future risk from similar catastrophes," said Hua Du. She said the project will also assist in capacity building and training to strengthen government's disaster preparedness by adopting cost-effective and disaster-resistant infrastructure design standards and improve early warning system through increased sub-regional cooperation.

The project will be implemented over two and a half years from January 2008 to June 2010 through LGED, RR&HD and BWDB. Its main objective is to sustain economic development by supporting government efforts to

rehabilitate high-priority and essential infrastructures damaged in the 2007 flooding and cyclone Sidr.

The project would be implemented in five parts. The first will provide financing to import essential commodities and inputs, particularly for agriculture, to ensure quick recovery. The component is the main under the project with a budget of \$75.56 million of the total project cost.

ADB is extending a loan of \$120 million equivalent from its confessional Asian Development

Fund and \$200,000 technical assistance grant to the Emergency Disaster Damage Rehabilitation Sector project.

Japan Bank for International Cooperation is extending a \$60 million loan and the Canadian International Development Agency is preparing a grant of \$10 million for the project. Further co-financing is expected from other partners through ADB. The government is providing \$30 million to complete funding requirement.



Department of Paediatrics of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University take out a procession on the campus in the city yesterday on the occasion of the World Cancer Day.

Saifuddin Manik laid to rest with state honour

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Saifuddin Ahmed Manik, a liberation war veteran and Gono Forum general secretary, was laid to eternal rest with state honour at Mirpur Martyred Intellectuals' Graveyard in the city yesterday.

Earlier at about 11:00am his body was taken in an ambulance from Birdem mortuary to Central Shaheed Minar where people from all walks of life including politicians, educationists, intellectuals and journalists paid last respect to the valiant freedom fighter.

He was given a guard of honour by a police contingent. Bugles played the last post while his coffin was draped in national flag.

Leaders of different political parties including Awami League, BNP, Communist Party of Bangladesh, Workers' Party, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal and Gono Forum thronged the Shaheed Minar to have a last glimpse of the late leader.

They also wrote their feelings in the condolence book kept at the Shaheed Minar.

At 1:00pm, the coffin was taken to National Eidgah where his last namaz-e-janaza was held after Zohr prayers.

It was attended among others by Abdur Razzak and Tofael Ahmed of Awami League, Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Khandaker Delwar Hossain and MK Anwar of BNP, Dhaka City Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka, Manjural Ahsan Khan of CPB, Rashid Khan Menon of Workers' Party, and Hasanul Huq Inu of JSD.

Imam of the Gono Court mazaar mosque Hafez Maulana Ashrafur Haque led the namaz-e-janaza.

Qulhwani The qulhwani of Saifuddin Ahmed Manik will be held at his 45/1 Gopibagh residence in the city on January 15, family sources said.

EXTORTION CASE Former BNP lawmaker Milon on 2-day remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed detained former BNP lawmaker AKM Fazlul Haq Milon on a two-day remand for interrogation in connection with a Tk 5.5 lakh extortion case.

Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Al-Mamun passed the order after Sub-Inspector (SI) Azharul Islam Kabir of Shahbagh police produced Milon before the court with a seven-day remand prayer for interrogation.

In his prayer, Kabir who is also the investigation officer (IO) of the case, said Milon is directly involved in the extortion and he needs to be remanded for finding out vital clues about the incident and to know the whereabouts of his accomplices involved in extorting, the IO said.

Opposing the remand prayer, defence lawyers submitted a bail petition along with cancellation of the remand prayer saying that their client was falsely implicated in the case. Milon was a prominent student leader and could never indulge in extortion.

After the hearing, the court rejected the bail prayer and placed him on a two-day remand for interrogation.

According to the prosecution, Shamsul Huda, managing director of SIAM Bangla Industries Ltd, said Milon had visited the industry at Khalapara under Kaliganj upazila of Gazipur district and introduced him as MP of the area. But he did not mention any date of the incident. He asked the factory owner to pay Tk 2 lakh every month as tolls threatening to disrupt operation of the factory.

The complainant gave Tk 50,000 every month and the payment was made on different dates from September 9, 2003 to February 12, 2006 through 11 cheques of Dutch-Bangla Bank Ltd at Banani branch, the prosecution added.

Following the incident, the complainant filed the case against Milon with Shahbagh police on January 23 this year.



People from all walks of life pay their last respects to Gono Forum General Secretary Saifuddin Ahmed Manik at Central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday.

IFC may help construct Padma Bridge

UNB, Dhaka

Lars Henrik Thunell, IFC (International Finance Corporation) executive vice-president, yesterday said IFC is thinking about ways and means to invest in Bangladesh infrastructure development, including construction of the proposed Padma Bridge.

The top executive of IFC, a member of the World Bank group, said this when he met Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed at his office.

The CA said Bangladesh needs investments for infrastructure development, particularly in communications and power sectors. He thanked IFC for establishing Bangladesh Investment Climate Fund (BICF) to provide advisory services, in its effort to improve the investment climate of Bangladesh, from which the country has already benefited.

He said IFC could also play an important role in telecommunications and ICT sectors and can also extend help in the health sector and construction of a four-lane Dhaka-Chittagong Highway.

He said the financial institution could also extend support in poten-

tially export-oriented sectors.

The IFC vice-president said agricultural supply and food-processing chains could help Bangladesh make economic progress and generate employment.

The official said a team of agricultural experts would visit Bangladesh in this regard.

World Bank Country Director Xian Zhu, ERD Secretary Aminul Islam Bhuiyan, Secretary to CA's office Kazi M Aminul Islam and CA's Press Secretary Syed Fahim Munaim were present.

IBA admission test on Feb 8

BSS, Dhaka

The written test for admission of MBA at the Institute of Business Administration (IBA) of Dhaka University under the academic session 2007-08 will be held at 3:30pm on February 8.

Candidates have been advised to report to their examination hall by 3:00pm on the day of the test, said a DU press release yesterday.

Dipjal's wife jailed for 8 years for tax evasion

UNB, Dhaka

A special court trying corruption suspects yesterday sentenced Romana Monwar, wife of fugitive cine-villain Monwar Hossain Dipjal, to eight years in prison for tax evasion.

Pronouncing the verdict, judge AK Roy also fined the convict Tk 20,000.00.

Romana, who was released on bail in connection with her earlier jail sentence, didn't turn up in the court during the pronouncement of the judgment.

As a result, the court declared the convict fugitive and ruled that the sentence will be effective "after her arrest or surrender to the court", prosecution sources said.

Earlier, in August last year, a special tribunal had jailed the filmmaker's spouse along with her husband for seven years each in an arms case.

GRABBING OF PUBLIC PROPERTIES

Basundhara group chairman, three others chargetsheeted

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday pressed charges against Basundhara Group Chairman Ahmed Akbar Sobhan Shah Alam and three others in a case filed for grabbing public properties of Baridhara in the city.

SI Sohrab Hossain, who is also the IO of the case, submitted a charge sheet against Shah Alam and three others, to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka.

The other accused are Abu Sufian, Shamsuddin Ahmed and Engineer Abul Kalam Shamim. Of them, Shah Alam and Abu Sufian have been absconding since the case was filed against them while two others are now in jail custody.

The IO prayed for issuance of arrest warrants against Shah Alam and Abu Sufian and the order to attach their properties.

The charge sheet will be placed before the court on February 12 for its acceptance.

According to the prosecution, Shah Alam and others grabbed 80 acres of public property at Baridhara in the city's Badda area that caused a great loss to the government.

Detective Branch (DB) of police Inspector Salahuddin filed the case against Shah Alam and three others with Badda police on June 7 last year.

Shah Alam, accused in dozen of criminal cases, was convicted for evading tax.

DU first batch LLB alumni reunion Feb 23

BSS, Dhaka

The reunion and annual picnic of the Alumni Association of the first batch of LLB (Honours) and LLM students of Dhaka University (DU) will be held on February 23.

All concerned have been requested to contact Advocate Atiqul Karim (phone-8122318; 01911-723397), said a press release yesterday.

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