

SETTING UP OF CYCLONE SHELTER CENTRES

Govt to seek help from development partners

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government prefers seeking assistance from the development partners for permanent solutions like setting up more cyclone shelter centres and infrastructures to save the coastal people, rather than funding for seminars and workshops.

"There are only around 2200 cyclone shelter centres, and 2000 more are needed. We will approach internationally in next 15 to 20 days for such centres... spending money for seminars and workshops won't do anything to the victims," Food and Disaster Management Minister Dr Abdur Razzaque said yesterday.

Addressing a press conference at the ministry, he said the government would seek assistance from the international community for permanent solutions to the coastal people.

The decision in this regard will be taken in a meeting of External Relations Division tomorrow, Razzaque told newsmen.

Meanwhile, State Minister for Religious Affairs Shahjahan Miah, State Minister for Local Government and Rural Development Jahangir Kabir Nanak, Health Minister Dr AFM Ruhul Haque and Adviser to the Prime Minister Dr

Mashiur Rahman have been entrusted with the responsibility of coordinating the emergency relief operations in Patuakhali, Barisal, Bhola, Satkhira and Khulna districts.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina appointed them for the task on Monday's cabinet meeting, following allegation of lack of coordination in providing relief materials in the areas affected by the cyclone on May 25, Abdur Razzaque said.

Armed Forces Division (AFD), meanwhile, at another press briefing at Dhaka Cantonment yesterday said 1,500 people from army, navy and air force are deployed in the rescue and relief operation and will continue their operation until people return to normal life.

Abdur Razzaque said the government was planning short, medium and long-term initiatives to rehabilitate the Aila-affected people. Immediately, Tk 116 crore has been allocated to repair flood protection embankments, but total repair of the embankment will require Tk 416 crore.

Army will exclusively work in three upazilas to repair the embankment, he said.

According to the official statistics, so far 179 people died, while 7153 were injured and overall 34,19,528 people were affected by the cyclone that ripped

through 11 districts.

Damages in the cyclone include around 6 lakh houses, over 6000 kilometres roads and 1,493 kilometres embankments.

Over 10 lakh livestock died, while crops on over 3 lakh acres of land damaged.

"The cash or relief materials food, water, medicines we are providing are enough. We will increase the amounts if necessary," Dr Abdur Razzaque said, expecting that the affected people will soon be able to recover their losses.

The diarrhoea situation is also under control, he said, adding that 34 medical teams of army and navy have been deployed to treat diarrhoea patients.

Brig Gen Qazi Abidus Samad, director (operations and plan) of AFD, at the press briefing at Dhaka Cantonment called upon the media to focus on the Aila-affected areas where armed forces could not reach.

Lt Col Main Ullah Chowdhury, GSO-1 (Joint Operations) of Operations and Plan Directorate of AFD, said so far the armed forces distributed 36.5 tons of dry food, drinking water, water purification tablets, and cloths.

Pure water is being supplied to affected people through 16 water treatment plants, he said.



BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia speaks at a public meeting marking the 28th death anniversary of late president Ziaur Rahman at Gazipur stadium yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

Five of a family die in Feni road crash

BSS, Feni

Five members of a family were killed and two others seriously wounded in a tragic road accident on the Dhaka-Chittagong Highway at Lalpur near Feni town yesterday.

The victims were identified as Anwara, 50, her two sons and two daughters.

Police said the accident took place when a Feni-bound CNG taxicab collided head on with a truck coming from the opposite direction.

Three members died on the spot and two others succumbed to their injuries at Feni Sadar Hospital, they added.

The wounded two others were referred to Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

Physiotherapy students cancel strike unto death

DU CORRESPONDENT

The agitating physiotherapy students cancelled their hunger strike unto death yesterday as per assurance from the health and family welfare minister of laying the foundation stone for a separate physiotherapy college by next week.

Health Minister AFM Ruhul Haque gave the assurance in the wake of the students' threat to "commit suicide" in the afternoon.

Demanding immediate start of the construction of a separate physiotherapy college on the allocated land at Mohakhali, they began their hunger strike at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city on May 24.

At one stage on Monday, the students threatened to commit suicide by setting fire to their bodies if they do not get any clear assurance by the afternoon.

Health Minister Ruhul Haque and Health Adviser to Prime Minister Prof Syed Modasser Ali reached the spot around 2:15pm and broke their strike by offering water and juice.

An agitating student Arifur Rahman said the health minister assured them of laying the foundation stone of the college building on the allocated 5.28 acres of land at Mohakhali in the city between Sunday and Thursday next week.

"As per his assurance, we cancelled our programme," he added.

Earlier, the students on same demand observed the hunger strike in the last year and early this year.

BANGABANDHU MURDER US, Canada ready to deport killers

Says Hasan Mahmud

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Hasan Mahmud yesterday said a number of countries, including the US and Canada, responded positively to the government's move to bring home the convicted killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman absconding abroad.

"When I went to the US and Canada on a visit, I discussed the issue with the government of the countries, specially about those who are living in North America and they responded very positively," he said.

The minister said this at a reception ceremony of Thai Foreign Minister Kasit Piromya, reports private TV channel ATN Bangla. He further said that extra-

dition treaty would not be any bar to bringing them (convicted killers) back home.

Though exact information is unavailable about where the Bangabandhu killers are absconding, but it is suspected that they are hiding in Libya, the US and Canada.

The minister said, "No country wants to give shelter to killers and criminals. I hope there would be no problem in bringing Bangabandhu's killers back home."

In response to a query, Hasan Mahmud said the Tipaimukh dam visiting committee has completed their arrangement to visit the site.

The government will hold dialogues with the Indian authorities about the dam after getting the report of the team.

Take steps for dev of Bangla Academy

Prof Kabir Chy urges govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Professor Kabir Chowdhury yesterday sought cordial cooperation from the government for development of Bangla Academy, as it is the largest research centre for Bangla language and literature in the country.

"Bangla Academy is our national institution. The government should take necessary steps for implementing the plans designed by Bangla Academy for development of the institution," said Prof Kabir Chowdhury, also the president of the academy.

He sought the cooperation while presiding over an award giving ceremony titled 'Kabir Chowdhury Shishu Sahitto Puraskar-2008' at Bangla Academy seminar room.

Noted poet, writer and journalist Fayeze Ahmed received the award from Kabir Chowdhury at the ceremony for his contribution in child literature. He was awarded Tk 1 lakh, a crest and citation.

Receiving the award,

Fayeze Ahmed called on the young generation to be patriotic and bearing progressive ideology in mind for advancement of the country.

Previously, Fayeze Ahmed received a number of awards, including State Bank of Pakistan Award, Bangla Academy Award, and Shishu Academy Award for his contribution in Bangla language and literature.

Bangla Academy Director General Shamsuzzaman Khan and cultural personality Ramendu Majumdar, among others, were present at the programme.

Kabir Chowdhury and his wife Meher Kabir jointly established the 'Kabir Chowdhury O Meher Kabir Shishu Sahitto O Biggan Puraskar Fund'. Bangla Academy runs the award from a Tk 15-lakh contribution of the fund for giving awards in science literature and child literature.

The award, introduced in 2004, is usually given in one year for science literature and next year for child literature.



State Minister for Science and Information and Communication Technology Yeafesh Osman hands over a laptop to a student of Oxford International School in the city yesterday under the "One Student: One Laptop" project of the school implemented in association with Bank Asia and Smart Technologies (BD) Ltd.

Admission policy for renowned colleges next week: Nahid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will announce a definite policy next week for admission to renowned colleges of the country, said Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid yesterday.

He said recommendations from people concerned will be received as of tomorrow about what policies could be adopted regarding admission, and till then the admission procedures in the colleges will remain suspended.

The minister was talking to journalists after attending a view exchange meeting with

the principals of different colleges of the capital at Naem auditorium in the city.

"There is no seat crisis in the colleges of the country. However, some problems have been created due to competition in getting admission to renowned colleges of the capital. This competition will be over if all the colleges of the country ensures quality education," the minister said.

"The principals have given their opinions and recommendations. We will announce a new policy within one week," he said.

Principals from 216 educational institutes took part in

the meeting. Of them principals from 34 colleges have expressed their views.

They said admission based on age would be inhuman while some others said admission based on GPA only will also be inhuman.

They have suggested short tests for admission.

The meeting was also participated by Education Secretary Syed Ataur Rahman, Director General of Directorate General of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Prof Noman-Ur-Rashid, and Naem Director General Baitun Nahid.

Saudi prince calls on PM

UNB, Dhaka

Saudi Prince Badr Bin Abdullah Bin Farhan Al Saud paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office yesterday morning, when they discussed various bilateral issues of Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia.

The PM and the visiting Saudi Prince hoped that the two countries' relations would be strengthened further in the days to come.

The Saudi Prince expressed deep condolences at the death of Prime Minister's Husband, Dr MA Wazed Miah, and the deaths of over a hundred people in the cyclonic storm Aila in the country's coastal districts.

Role of Bangladeshi Britons lauded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Julian Braithwaite, director of Consular Service in the Foreign and Commonwealth office in London, yesterday said Bangladeshi community has been playing a laudable role in the British society for long.

"We are proud of their contribution to the field of British economy, industry and other sectors," he said, adding, "These people are contributing greatly and also committed to making Bangladesh a further prosperous country."

Julian said this at a press conference at a city hotel in the afternoon after his two-day visit to Sylhet region. Acting British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Duncan Norman and Delhi-based Regional Consular Director for Asian region David Grahame were also present.

The number of forced marriages among the UK immigrant families and others is in decline now and the situation has improved much as the parents are more aware of the matter and its consequences, he added.

The British high official said Sylhet is a little more important to the UK as more than 90 percent of the Bangladeshi origins are from this region. I am proud for the community there for their massive contribution to the local bodies in the UK also, he added, the relation will be stronger further in future.

Of the half a million British-Bangladeshis, around 40,000 to 50,000 people stay in Bangladesh, especially in Sylhet, at any time of the year, he said, adding, "We have many things to do for their betterment."

Earlier on Monday, the high-level British team visited the Sylhet liaison office of the high commission and met the city mayor at his office.

Killing of child condemned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Karmojibi Nari (KN) Secretary Sharmin Kabir and Executive Director Rokeya Rafiq in a joint statement yesterday condemned the killing of a seven-year-old child at Mirpur in the city, says a press release.

They also demanded immediate arrest and trial of the criminals.



PHOTO: STAR

CEC Dr ATM Shamsul Huda visits the site of a server station of Sadar Upazila Election Commission in front of the Sirajganj deputy commissioner's office yesterday.

LAND REGISTRATION

Lower fees from Sept

UNB, Dhaka

Low-rated new tax for land registration will come into effect from September with a view to netting more revenues from this sector as the government has already fixed a high target of Tk 80,000 crore as revenue collection for the coming fiscal year.

Of the total revenue target in the new budget of over Tk 100,000 crore, minimum Tk 60,000 crore is to come from the National Board of Revenue (NBR).

As per the cut-down rates under massive changes in land-management system, the land registration fees for mufassil area will be six percent of the total price of the land while the fees will be eight percent of the total value in city areas - both knocked down below the existing slabs.

The present land-registration rates in the urban and rural areas are 14.5 per cent and 18.5 per cent respectively of the total land price, according to a Land Ministry source.

An inter-ministerial meeting on land transfer decided the new rates for land registration with Finance Minister AMA Muhith in the chair on May 27.

The rates for stamp duty have been reduced to 2 percent from 5 percent of the total land price in mufassil area while 3 percent from 5 percent in the urban areas.

Registration fee is fixed at 2 percent from 2.5 percent of the total land price in mufassil and

city areas.

Local government tax will be implemented at a rate of one percent from two percent in mufassil and city areas.

The advance tax got reduced to one percent from 5 percent (for non-agricultural land priced over Tk 100,000) in mufassil area while reduced to 2 percent from 5 percent in towns and cities.

Land prices fixed by the government will remain same for upazila, municipal and cantonment board areas under mufassil domain.

Land price in district headquarters has been increased 2.5 times from the present rate, 3 times higher rate fixed for Rajshahi, Khulna, Sylhet and Barisal city corporations, Bogra, Narayanganj and Gazipur district towns, Tongi and Savar municipalities, and Keraniganj upazila Sadar.

The government has fixed four times higher rates for land in Dhaka and Chittagong cities.

For city-corporation areas and district headquarters deputy commissioner will be the chairman of the committee with the sub-registrar as the member secretary. The other members of the committee will be district registrar, upazila nirbahi officer (sadar upazila), district chamber of commerce president and respective city mayor.

The meeting decided to publish and distribute Balam Boi by January 1, 2010 to all land-registration offices across the country.

EC ready to hold DCC polls: CEC

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Dr ATM Shamsul Huda yesterday said Election Commission is prepared to hold elections to Dhaka City Corporation and local government bodies.

He said as the validity of local government bodies has already expired, the polls should be held by next January or February.

The CEC informed journalists while he was visiting the location of server station of Sadar Upazila Election Commission in front of the Sirajganj deputy commissioner's office.

Shamsul said server station would be installed at every upazila headquarters so that voters can get service from these stations.

During the visit, Voter ID Card Project Chief Brig Gen Moazzem Hossain, Sirajganj Deputy Commissioner Humayun Kabere, Acting Police Super Khandakar Faridul Islam, District Election Officer Nitish Chandra Dey accompanied the CEC.

Qulkhwani

METRO DESK



Qulkhwani of Bilkis Banu of Durumt in Jamalpur, wife of Syed Anis-uz-Zaman, former president of Chittagong Income Tax Bar Association and honorary chairman of Hoechst Pharmaceutical Ltd, will be held after Asr prayers at House # 21, Road # 2 at Nasirabad Housing Society in Chittagong today.

Bilkis passed away on June 1. The deceased was the mother-in-law of engineer Mahmud-ul Islam, former chairman of Chittagong Port Trust Authority, and Air Commodore (ret'd) Moinalul Islam, also a former ambassador, says a press release.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend the doa mahfil.

WEATHER TODAY logo with sun and cloud icons.

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Khulna and Rajshahi divisions in next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:43pm today and rises at 5:11am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 37.8 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 22.8 degrees Celsius at Srimongal.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

Table with columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in percentage (Morning, Evening). Rows include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar.

DHAKA TODAY logo.

Roundtable: National Youth Forum organises a roundtable on the role of Zia in building terrorism and corruption-free state. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 4:00pm.

Seminar: Bapa organises three seminars marking the World Environment Day 2009. Venue: Planning and Development Academy. Time: 9:30am.

Roundtable: CPB organises a roundtable on 'Climate change: Stance of public'. Venue: Mukti Bhaban. Time: 3:30pm.

Seminar: Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) organises a seminar on 'Global warming and climate change for school students'. Venue: DAM auditorium. Time: 9:00am.

CTG ARMS HAUL Rezaqul, Liakat placed under TFI cell for further interrogation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Former National Security Intelligence (NSI) chief major general (ret'd) Rezaqul Haider and former deputy director (mechanical) major (ret'd) Liakat Hossain were taken under Taskforce for Interrogation (TFI) cell in Dhaka yesterday in a six-day remand in 10-truck arms haul case for further interrogation.

Criminal Investigation Department (CID) police brought the two former NSI chiefs from Chittagong jail at around 10:30 am for taking them to Dhaka.

Rezaqul along with another ex-NSI chief brigadier general (ret'd) Abdur Rahim was placed on a six-day fresh remand each on May 20 in the sensational Chittagong arms haul case.

The former two chiefs were arrested from the capital on May 16 while ex-NSI DD Liakat on May 26 following a confessional statement of ex-NSI director (security) wing commander (ret'd) Sahab Uddin.

Liakat was placed on a six-day fresh remand on Monday when CID police produced him before the court after completion of a four-day remand on Sunday.

EXTORTION CASE Accused beat witness severely

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The accused in an extortion case beat the witness severely leaving his hands and legs broken in the city yesterday.

The victim was identified as Razibul Islam Rana, 30, a fish trader of the wholesale market at Merul Badda.

Locals said accused Kulu, Shakib, Dipu, Ismail and their five to seven cohorts took Rana from his business centre to a nearby field at around 4:30am where they beat him severely tying his hands and legs.

Hearing his scream devotees of a nearby mosque reached the spot and rushed him to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital.

The criminals escaped the scene before the devotees reached the spot.

Earlier on January 28, the accused gunned down the victim's uncle Mir Bakhtiar who was vice president of Merul Badda fish wholesale market, after failing to realise extortion money from him.

Fakhrul Alam, uncle of Rana, told The Daily Star that his killed brother Bakhtiar had filed an extortion case with Badda Police Station against the criminals as they threatened him for extortion.

He said the same gang attacked Rony yesterday as he was a witness of the case.

The criminals were freed on bail a few days ago and made the attack, he added.

Fakhrul said the extortionists again demanded money and threatened him to withdraw the case.

Dhaka dist BCL president held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested Fakhrul Alam, president of Dhaka District Chhatra League, and three of his aides, from Hemayetpur at Savar on early yesterday on charges of setting fire to a garment factory.

Police sources said he is wanted in 17 cases, including killing, explosive and extortion. Fakhrul has been demanding extortion from Mohammadia Garment Factory for the last few days, they added.

The three aides of Fakhrul were identified as Sharif, Anif and Rokon, a local contractor of Titas Gas Company.

'One student one laptop'

METRO DESK

Oxford International School (OIS) on Monday provided their students and teachers with laptops thanks to the "One Student: One Laptop" project signed earlier with Bank Asia and Smart Technologies (BD) Ltd.

Under a tripartite agreement inked on February 4, Bank Asia provided easy loan facilities while Smart Technologies Ltd supplied popular laptop brands like Acer, HP and Gigabyte to the OIS customers at a lower price, says a press release.

State Minister for Science and Information and Communication Technology Yeafesh Osman handed over the laptops to OIS students and teachers.

Yeafesh Osman stressed the need for making IT education compulsory in schools, which can play a major role in taking ICT to the doorsteps of the general community.