

ing that the local drug peddlers be brought to book.

Tk 660cr projects to reduce poverty

UNB, Dhaka

Social Development Foundation (SDF) is implementing three important projects involving \$101 million (Tk 660 crore) with a view to reducing poverty and rebuild and rehabilitate disaster-hit localities, as around 5.6 crore people still live at or below the poverty line.

The projects are 'Social Investment Programme Project' (SIPP), 'Flood Restoration and Recovery Assistance Programme' and 'Notun Jibon Cyclone Recovery Programme'.

SDF, an autonomous organisation established by the government in 2001, is implementing the projects with assistance from World Bank to rehabilitate the people affected by cyclone and flood, SDF officials said.

SIPP is being imple-

mented in Jamalpur and Gaibandha districts, reaching benefits to over two million poor people. It follows community driven development (CDD) approach where the community identifies their requirements and dictates the planning to meet their needs.

Under the project, village institutions have so far been formed in 922 villages of the districts through inclusion of women, youths and the poorest. It has reached over 190,000 poor households and mobilised them into 14,274 small livelihood groups (Jibikayan Groups) that engage in savings and internal lending.

"Even in the face of rising food prices and two subsequent floods in 2007 that destroyed household incomes, these groups have accumulated savings amounting to Tk 50 million and pro-

vided Tk 33 million as small loans to their group members to finance income-generating activities," said an SDF official.

As the current operation of SIPP has shown success, the government is now preparing a follow-on project to SIPP -- Empowerment and Livelihood Project (SIPP II) -- for Rangpur, Kurigram, Nilphamari and Dinajpur districts. "The work for implementing SIPP II is going on in full swing," the SDF official said.

The poverty rate in Nilphamari, Rangpur and Kurigram districts -- often hit by 'monga' -- is over 60 per cent, according to official statistics.

SDF along with Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) is implementing the 'Flood Restoration and Recovery Assistance Programme' in the districts devastated by floods in 2007.

On the occasion, his family organised a doa mahfil for the salvation of the departed soul.

Lt Col Abdul Qadir was commissioned in the Corps of Engineers in 1949.

The Qadirabad Cantonment in Natore was named after him in recognition of his role in the Liberation War. The government also issued a commemorative postage stamp in memory of him as one of the martyred intellectuals.

Ajit Kumar Datta

METRO DESK



The second death anniversary of late Ajit Kumar Datta, ex-chief accountant of

The Bangladesh Observer and a valiant freedom fighter, will be observed today, says a press release.

Special prayers and recitation from the Geeta will be held at his residence at 23 Shirish Das Lane (Laxmibazar) in Dhaka on the occasion for the salvation of the departed soul.