

Zia opens country-wide canal digging

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Resist those trying
to create anarchy

From Raquib Siddiqui

CHIRIR BANDAR (Dinajpur), Nov 1: Amidst enthusiasm, visibly much greater than that of last year, President Ziaur Rahman set this year's voluntary canal digging programme rolling with the inauguration of the Chirir river excavation programme this morning.

The President called it a historic day and said that the happy occasion of this year's canal digging programme started from Chirir Bandar.

The greater response, according to local people, is primarily for two reasons. First one is that the uncertainty of

last year is not there any more. Those who had expressed doubts about the outcome of the programme of last year are silent. For, alongwith the people, they have also witnessed the benefit of canal digging. The other reason is that the local people here have become much interested in growing additional crops particularly wheat.

They now believe that water is needed for growing additional crops during the dry season for which digging is essential.

Thousands of men and women, young and old witnessed President Zia formally starting the programme by participating in earthwork.

RESERVOIRS

Local elderly people told me that all the six canals totalling a length of 45 miles which were excavated last year have turned into water reservoirs.

Situated 26 miles east of Dinajpur town under Chirir Bandar police station, the project envisages re-excavation of silted up Chirir river. It will be three miles long, 40 feet wide and 10 feet deep. This will join another portion of the same river excavated last year.

The canal will get water from Kakra river and will provide irrigation to 2,000 acres of land and help grow additional 60,000 maunds of wheat and 36,000 maunds of paddy worth about Taka one crore annually.

Addressing a largely attended public meeting after the inauguration of the Chirir river excavation project, President Ziaur Rahman said that when nine crore people of the country were engaged in nation-building work, some political parties were trying to create a chaotic situation and cause destruction.

He expressed the hope that they would not be able to succeed in their anti-people effort. He called upon the people to resist them in villages, towns and cities.

President Zia said that last year's canal digging programmes resulted in increasing food

production in the country. Through the peaceful revolution, he said, we want to double our food production. The excess production will enable us to export food and to use the money earned by export for development projects and other sectors, he said.

President Ziaur Rahman said that members of Village Defence Parties students peasants workers local people members of Swanirvar Gram Sarkars and Union Parishads and Government officials will participate in the voluntary canal digging projects. He called upon the people to engage in removing the curse of illiteracy from the society.

The President who arrived here this morning from Dacca

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