

Take active part in canal digging programme: PM

NOAKHALI, Jan 6: Prime Minister Shah Azizur Rahman today urged the people to actively participate in the canal digging programme initiated by Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman, reports BSS.

Shah Aziz was addressing a large gathering while inaugurating the re-excavation of Ghosh Kamta Baragaon Canal—fifteen miles from the district town.

The Prime Minister said Shaheed President Zia had initiated the canal digging programme two years back to raise food production and make the country self-reliant.

The four-mile-long canal is being re-excavated on self-help basis to make it 20 feet wide and 7 feet deep in about two months' time.

With the completion of the re-excavation work, 2,000 acres of crop land will get water for irrigation by which annual production may be increased by 10,000 maunds of additional foodgrains worth Taka 10,00,000.

Shah Aziz said that about 1,000 canals had been dug for re-excavated throughout the country since the launching of the programme by Shaheed President Zia.

This, he said, has already helped the country to increase food production substantially as a result of which a record quantity of foodgrains could be stored by the government in the foodgrains, this year.

The country's food deficit also has been brought down to one million tons as a result of the benefits of the canal digging programme, Shah Aziz said.

The Prime Minister hoped that within a short period Bangladesh would not only be self-sufficient in food but would also have an exportable surplus.

The Prime Minister said that it was the sacred responsibility of the people of Bangladesh to

complete the unfinished tasks of the beloved leader Shaheed President Zia.

Shah Aziz also called upon the people to actively participate in the mass literacy programme of the late leader.

The Prime Minister said that the Government was firmly committed to removing illiteracy from the soil of Bangladesh within the Second Five-Year Plan period.

So far, he said, forty lakh people have been imparted functional education.

All colleges, schools and madrasas should be turned into mass literacy centres. He said, he also urged teachers, students and educated people to volunteer their services in the centres.

Shah Aziz called upon the people to sustain the spirit of Bangladeshi nationalism, and programmes for self-reliance and productivity initiated by late President Zia.

The Prime Minister said that Shaheed President Zia had given the nation a definite sense

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of direction and political philosophy to march ahead towards the path of progress and prosperity.

Shah Aziz said that no other leader could give either a sense of direction or a programme for developing the country before Shaheed Ziaur Rahman.

The Prime Minister thanked the people for making President Abdus Sattar victorious in the last presidential election.

He called upon the people to sustain and nourish the multi-party system of democracy in the country restored by the late leader and resist any anti-people and anti-democratic practice.

The Prime Minister urged the Gram Sarkars and Village Defence Party to be vigilant against anti-social elements.

Presided over by Mr Borhanuddin, MP, the gathering was also addressed by Mr K M Hussain, MP and District Development Coordinator of Noakhali.