

600 new canals to be dug from Nov. 1

059

Six hundred new canals will be dug from November 1 this year to add to 885 canals dug during the last year and 193 the year before reports BSS.

At least 80 canals will be excavated in each district excepting Banderban and Chittagong Hill Tracts where the number will be ten for each.

In addition to this, repairing and maintenance of the total 1058 canals excavated in 1979-80 and 1981-82 can constitute an importance task in the next phase.

Acting President Mr. Justice Abdus Sattar who issued instructions regarding the continuation of the programme in further vigorous way has entrusted responsibilities of looking into the projects with the Ministers—one district one Minister.

The Acting President has already sanctioned five lakh maunds of wheat under Food for Works Programme which has been estimated at 15 per cent provision of the total cost for canal digging.

The third phase of the 600 canals will cover a total length of 2700 miles as against 2,981 miles of the second phase and 675 miles of the first phase.

When completed 15 lakh acres of land will be brought under round-the year irrigated cultivation from these six hundred canals. In the first and the second phases irrigation facilities were provided to 16 lakh and six lakh acres of land respectively.

With the optimum utilisation of the irrigation facilities from the current phase of the project, an additional yield to the tune of 15 lakh tons of foodgrains is expected.

Irrigation facilities for pro-

ducing 21 lakh tons of additional foodgrains have already been built up in the first and the second phases.

A total of seven thousand power pumps will be distributed free of cost to feed the new canals to be excavated this year. Earlier, the Government sanctioned 11,500 sets of power pumps for fielding in the projects executed in 1979-80 and 1980-81.

The Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) has been particularly instructed to be alert and active for timely supply and fielding of the power pumps.

The power pumps to be distributed free of cost by the government will ultimately be

owned by the beneficiaries of the projects through co-operatives.

Local administration in collaboration with the Members of Parliament and public leaders will coordinate the canal digging programme. Rural institutions like Union Parishad, Swa nirvar Gram Sarkar, Village Defence Party, voluntary organisations, educational institutions, Ansar, Police and people from all walks of life are expected to play an active role in implementation of the projects. Implementation cells at different stages of the administration will also be formed for proper execution of the projects.