



PHOTO STAR  
Family members of those killed by the Pakistani army and their collaborators at Mirpur Jalladkhana Killing Field during the Liberation War visit the Killing Field Memorial to pay homage to their dear ones as the Liberation War Museum observes the first anniversary of the memorial yesterday. (Story on page 1)

## Decentralise power, expand economic activities to save Dhaka

Speakers urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday underscored the need for decentralisation of power and spreading out the economic activities across the country in order to save Dhaka city from any disaster.

"The rush of people towards Dhaka city will have to be stopped by creating employment opportunities and rehabilitation for them through right planning and initiatives. If the capital city cannot be depopulated, its risks will continue to increase. Political goodwill and commitment are needed to build Dhaka a beautiful city," they said.

Protesting a government plan to build underpass railways, they proposed to launch a system of banning the movement of private cars from 8:00am to 10:00am and 4:00pm to 6:00pm, the daily office

hours, and widen the footpaths with a view to reducing traffic jam in the city.

They were speaking at a roundtable on "What to do at this moment to turn Dhaka into a real capital and an urban system of international standard in the socio-economic backdrop of Bangladesh," organised by Citizens' Rights Movement at the National Press Club in the city.

Presided over by Citizens' Rights Movement Chief Adviser Syed Margub Morshed, the roundtable was addressed by former minister ASM Abdur Rab former army chief Lt Gen (retd) Mahubur Rahman, Bapa Chairman Abu Naser, Buet Prof K Shahriar Iqbal, journalist Syed Abul Moksud, former director general of BDR Maj Gen (retd) ANM Fazlur Rahman, engr Mohammad Alfaz, CPB leader

Rubin Hossain Prince and Rajuk official Tapan Kumar Nath.

Citizens' Rights Movement Secretary General Tusher Rehman presented a keynote paper at the roundtable.

ASM Abdur Rab said that if the city corporations, municipalities, Rajuk and other local bodies cannot function independently, the environmental and ecological balances would not be created and as a result, the capital city would turn into a city of garbage.

"A pro-people democratic government will have to be formed in order to make Dhaka an environment-friendly developed city," he said, adding that there is no alternative to decentralisation of power to save Dhaka city.

Mahubur Rahman said a beautiful Dhaka city has become an ugly one since the Buriganga is being killed.

"With 140 million people, Dhaka city has completely turned into a slum. If a moderate earthquake occurs here, its 70 lakh people will be killed. Our government, even the army, has no capacity to face the disaster and to rescue the (probable) victims in the calamity," he said.

He said supply of electricity must be ensured and the industries to be transferred from the capital city. National will and political commitment are needed for this purpose.

Tusher Rehman, in his written statement, said circular waterways will have to be built surrounding the city and setting up of water treatment plants to be made mandatory at the mills and industries on the banks of Buriganga, Turag, Balu, Shitalakkha to make the city attractive and remove the water pollution.

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