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Leased for tourism, used in other ways

Govt moves to reclaim misused
Cox's Bazar land

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has decided to reclaim the Cox's Bazar plots, which were leased out to boost tourism but have been illegally used for other purposes, to make the beach town a modern tourist hub.

An inter-ministerial meeting yesterday formed a high-powered committee to identify the structures used illegally for purposes other than tourism in violation of the conditions of the Hotel/Motel Zone under Jhilangza mouza along the sea beach.

"The tourism secretary will head the committee, which will visit Cox's Bazar soon and submit a report in 30 workdays," Land Minister Rezaul Karim Hira told newsmen after the meeting held at the conference hall of his ministry.

Aviation and Tourism Minister GM Quader, Land Secretary Delwar Hossain, officials from the ministries of land, tourism and public works, and Cox's Bazar district administration attended the meeting.

According to officials, over 100 plots on 150.75 acres of land in Jhilangza mouza were declared as Hotel/Motel Zone and were allotted to different individuals.

As per rules, the plots were meant for building hotels and motels in three years to boost tourism on the world's longest beach.

"But conditions of the lease were violated in case of at least 61 such plots," says a land ministry official.

"Besides, at least 47 plots are still vacant," says a source in Cox's Bazar.

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Demarcation of the Cox's Bazar sea beach by hoteliers is on ignoring its beauty, ecology and the campaign to make it one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



Writ petition filed against killings in 'crossfire'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A writ petition has been filed with the High Court (HC) for declaring illegal extra-judicial killings 'in the name of crossfire or encounter' by law enforcement agencies.

Three human rights organisations -- Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK), Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust

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PAY SCALE

Govt working on closing salary gap

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The government may narrow the gap between the highest and lowest salaries for public servants, fixing the lowest basic salary at Tk 4,800 by doubling that on the present scale of pay.

The Pay Commission had suggested the lowest basic salary at Tk 4,000 but a cabinet committee for implementation of the pay scale recommended doubling the present Tk 2,400.

Headed by the cabinet secretary, the com-

mittee has almost finalised the report of its review of the Pay Commission's proposals and it will submit it to the cabinet very soon, committee sources said.

They said the recommendations have been made in accordance with the desire of government high-ups to minimise the salary gap between the highest and lowest echelons.

According to the existing pay scale, the ratio of the lowest and highest salaries is 1:9.58. The

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HC asks for steps against edn officer

He verbally abused
a headmistress

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday issued a rule upon the education secretary to explain why a directive should not be passed to take legal action against upazila education officer of Kurigram for making an objectionable remark against the headmistress of a

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Dhaka, London partner in fighting terrorism

Joint working group on counter terrorism launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh and UK yesterday launched a joint working group (JWG) to enhance counter terrorism cooperation between the two countries for building capacity of combating terrorism.

At the first meeting of JWG, high officials of the two countries primarily identified the areas of cooperation, including sharing intelligence and training of law-enforcers.

They agreed to hold the next meeting of the group by the end of this year to finalise the modalities of their cooperation under the group.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Hasan Mahmud and UK Minister for Security and Counter-Terrorism Lord West led their respective sides at the day-long meeting at state guest-house Meghna.

"Bangladesh sought UK support for

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PHOTO: STAR

Young volunteers departing from Panchbaria village in Rajshahi after holding an awareness raising meeting with the locals against child marriage and violence against women.

'Red force' foils early marriage

AMENA KHATUN, back from
Rajshahi

Known as Lal Bahini (red force) to the villagers for their red T-shirt and cap, a group of young volunteers are working for prevention of early marriage by creating awareness and convincing the parents of underage boys and girls.

Whenever the volunteers get any information about any possible child marriage, they promptly reach there and persuade parents of the children to stop such marriage.

Driven by their own conscience, fifteen youngsters aged between 15 and 22 years work voluntarily in four unions of Charghat upazila in Rajshahi aiming at freeing the upazila from all kinds of social ills.

Even they inform union parishad (UP) chairman or

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Jackson family seeks fresh autopsy

LA cops question doctor

AFP, Los Angeles

The family of Michael Jackson yesterday ordered a second autopsy of the pop icon as associates told of mounting anger over "unanswered questions" surrounding the superstar's death.

Jackson's family members were huddled at their compound in Los Angeles, where they have gathered since the most famous member of their clan died suddenly on Thursday at age 50 after suffering an apparent cardiac arrest.

Los Angeles police yesterday conducted a second interview with doctor Conrad Murray, the only person with him when he collapsed. A spokeswoman for the cardiologist said he "clarified some

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Pakistan offers reward for capture of Mehsud

Troops kill 11 militants

AFP, AP, Peshawar

Pakistan yesterday offered a 615,000-dollar reward for information leading to the capture, dead or alive, of local Taliban head Baitullah Mehsud, currently holed up in the tribal belt.

Two national Urdu-language newspapers and local papers in the northwest city of Peshawar carried an advert offering the 50-million-rupee (615,300-dollar) reward for Mehsud, and other amounts for 10 of his senior militants.

"The government has announced a cash reward for anybody providing authentic information leading to the capture of these (11), dead or alive," said the advertisement. It then lists the wanted men, along with their bounties.

"Innocent people are being killed because of the bloody activities of these so-called defenders of Islam," the advert adds.

Fighter jets and helicopter gunships have been pounding Mehsud's hideouts for weeks,

ahead of an expected ground offensive following a similar operation to root out Taliban in and around northwest Swat valley launched in late April.

In the latest offensive on Sunday, warplanes and helicopter gunships pounded suspected militant positions in Pakistan's troubled northwest, killing 11 Taliban fighters, intelligence officials said.

Elsewhere in the region, two government soldiers were killed and four were wounded when insurgents attacked a pair of military outposts near Wana in South Waziristan shortly after morning prayers with rockets, missiles and small arms fire, two intelligence officials said.

The military confirmed that two bases had been attacked, but could not immediately comment on casualties.

Violence has spiked in recent weeks in South Waziristan, a rugged tribal area along

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OnlinePoll

Do you think it was right for BNP to approach the UN for an independent enquiry into torture on political leaders and businessmen during the caretaker regime?

☐ Yes (51.7%)
☐ No (47.1%)
☐ No Comments (1.2%)

Total votes: 745

TODAY'S POLL

Do you agree with BNP that Asian Highway actually means giving corridor to India?

Please cast your vote at
www.thedailystar.net

Prayer Timing

June 29

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-05	5-40
Zohr	1-45	2-15
Asr	6-00	6-15
Maghrib	7-54	7-57
Esha	9-19	9-45

Source: Islamic Foundation



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