

# '30 lakh acres of land vested property'

Government puts figure at 6.50 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

There are about 30 lakh acres of land treated as vested property in the country and most of them have been under the possession of vested quarters for the last 44 years, leaders of research and human rights organisations said yesterday.

But the government puts the figure at 6.50 lakh, they said at a press conference at the National Press Club.

They also said the proposed Vested Property Return (Amendment) Act 2009 is not acceptable, since it will protect the interest of only the vested quarters.

This Act does not have any specific provision regarding the return of the lands to the genuine owners, they added.

They also demanded that the government include specific rules in the

proposed law, so that the real owners can get back their property.

They also called on the government to publish a gazette notification on the enemy properties as per the census list of 1974, so that the co-partners or the family members or the community members of the original owners can apply to the court to get back the properties.

Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD), Sammilita Samajik Andolon, Orpito Sampatti Ain Protirodh Andolon (Enemy Property Law Resistance Movement), HDRC, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST), Bangladesh Economic Association (BEA), Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK), Nijera Kori (NK), Human Rights Congress for Bangladesh Minorities (HRCBM), and Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP) jointly organised the press conference.

Speaking at the press conference, Justice Mohammad Gholam Rabbani demanded enactment of a fresh law enabling the original owners or their family members to get back their properties.

ASK Executive Director Sultana Kamal said the proposed act is inconsistent with the spirit of the communal harmony, the constitution and the humanity.

Prof Abul Barakat, Advocate Subrata Chowdhury, Shamsul Huda, Ayesha Khanam, and Khushi Kabir also spoke while Advocate Tobarak Hossain read out a written statement.

Tobarak Hossain said influential people with the connivance of local land officials had occupied these lands, and that even the land officials themselves illegally occupied a large portion of the vested property.



Deputy Leader of the House Sayeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Chief Whip Abdus Shahid and Finance Minister AMA Muhith see off Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Zia International Airport in the city on Wednesday prior to her departure for Port of Spain in Trinidad and Tobago where she will attend a meeting of the heads of state of the Commonwealth countries.

## PARACETAMOL DEATHS

### BLAST for resumption of trial

METRO DESK

The Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) has urged the director general of the Directorate of Drug Administration (DDA) to take steps to resume the process of prosecution of those responsible for the deaths resulting from adulteration of paracetamol syrup.

The cases were initiated in December 1992 but have been delayed ever since.

BLAST made the call in a letter sent to DDA yesterday, says a press release.

This follows a letter that BLAST sent last week to the Attorney General's office requesting it to re-initiate action in these cases and to undertake its own inquiry into the stalled prosecutions.

It also pledged to assist in this process, if required.

"The deaths of thousands of children from Paracetamol adulteration in the 1980's and early 1990's was a terrible event in Bangladesh's history. It is important that those responsible are held to account, and BLAST is determined to ensure that this is done," said Advocate Ruhul Quddus Babu, on behalf of BLAST.

BLAST's action follows publication of a report in The Daily Star on November 11, titled 'Justice Delayed, Justice Denied'.

In the letter, BLAST has urged the DDA to undertake an inquiry as to why it has taken no steps to date to seek to vacate the orders of stay that are blocking the trials in two cases, or to initiate action

against the third company.

BLAST has also requested the AG's office to take immediate steps to ensure resumption of the trials, and to consider setting up a database of all High Court interim orders of stay and monitoring such matters to prevent further delays in proceedings.

British Council closed Nov 27-29

METRO DESK

British Council Offices in Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet will be closed from November 27 to 29 for Eid-ul-Azha, says a press release.

However, examinations scheduled during this period will be held as usual.

## Fraud case against ntv MD Bappi

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Former BNP lawmaker from Chapainawabganj-3 constituency Harun-ur-Rashid yesterday filed a fraud case against ntv Managing Director Enayetur Rahman Bappi and three police officers of Tejgaon Police Station.

The case was filed with the Dhaka Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court yesterday afternoon against Bappi, officer-in-charge (OC) of Tejgaon Police Station and two sub-inspectors.

Other accused are OC Mahbubur Rahman, SI Mohammad Jahangir Alam and SI Golam Rasul.

After the hearing, Metropolitan Magistrate AKM Emdadul Haque recorded the statement of the complainant and fixed December 6 for passing order on the issue.

The case in brief is that Harun on June 15 appealed to a Dhaka court to let him to take a duty-free imported luxurious Hummer vehicle his custody that was seized earlier by members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and kept at Tejgaon Police Station.

After the hearing on the petition, the court asked Tejgaon police chief to submit a report about the real owner of the vehicle to return it to its original owner. As the two sub-inspectors of the police station recently submitted separate reports before the court saying that the real owner Bappi had earlier taken the vehicle to his custody.

But the matter was pending with Special Judge's Court-4 and all the documents that seized were in the same court. On the other hand, Bappi in collusion with OC and two SIs made forged documents of the vehicle and took it to his custody.

Harun also said he never sold the vehicle to Bappi and handed over it, the complainant added.

On March 18, 2007 sub-inspector Yunus of Tejgaon police filed a case with Pallabi Police Station against the former lawmaker and Bappi for evasion of duty in importing the luxurious Hummer vehicle.

Rab seized the vehicle from Panthapath in the city on March 5 this year.

Investigation revealed that Harun-ur-Rashid of Chapainawabganj imported the duty-free vehicle at Tk 12.9 lakh and sold it to Bappi at Tk 98 lakh.

Police arrested Bappi, Harun and Ishtiaque Sadeq, owner of Sky Auto on March 7, 2007 in this connection.

They were arrested for tax evasion in importing a luxurious automobile by abusing duty-free car import privilege for members of parliament (MP).

Harun purchased the luxury vehicle, a Hummer H2, on April 25 in 2005 using his duty-free privilege and sold it to Ishtiaque violating his bond made to the parliament that he would use it for at least three years before handing it over to anyone else, police said in the forwarding report, adding that Ishtiaque later sold it to Bappi.

They called upon all to work unitedly for the expansion of democracy and establishing the rule of law in order to pay respect to the sacrifice of Dr Milon.

150km walk to create awareness

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Bhabon Sarker, a resident of Fatullah under Narayanjan Sadar upazila, will start a 150-kilometre walk today with the slogan "No alternative to Mother, No alternative to walking to stay healthy".

He will start his walk from in front of Narayanjan Press Club at 4:00pm today and will proceed towards Bangabandhu Bridge on the river Jamuna.

Bhabon, 48, works at a non-government organisation. He has taken the programme to build awareness for walking and health. Earlier, he also walked for the same purpose.

## Climate change to cause more health hazards in Bangladesh

UNB, Dhaka

Climate factors, including maximum and minimum temperatures, annual and seasonal rainfalls and salinity concentration, are likely to unleash various diseases like diarrhoea, skin problems and kala-azar in Bangladesh, according to a study.

The study says waterborne diseases will remain a major public health concern in the country with changes in climate factors.

Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS) and National Institute of Preventive and Social Medicine (NIPSOM) recently conducted the study titled 'Climate Change and Health Impacts in Bangladesh' with support from the Climate Change Cell under the Environment and Forests Ministry.

In addition to climate variability, the study found changes in the trend of climate factors, particularly yearly maximum and minimum temperatures over the last three decades.

The study was conducted in three different climate zones representing drought-prone Rajshahi, flood-prone Manikganj and salinity-affected Satkhira districts.

It said a number of vectors and waterborne diseases, including diarrhoea, dysentery, skin diseases, are common in Bangladesh. In addition, mental disorders, malaria, dengue, and malnutrition problems affect many people of the country.

The study said climate factors are associated with malnutrition problems. Incidence of diarrhoea was found to have positive correlation with total annual rainfall in Rajshahi and Satkhira districts. Total monsoon rainfall was also found to have positively correlated with diarrhoea in the two districts.

In contrast, dry season rainfall was found to have positive correlation with Manikganj study area. A positive correlation implies that the incidence of diarrhoea increases as the variation of temperatures also increases. A negative correlation means decrease in the incidence of diarrhoea when temperature differential rises, the study says.

Skin diseases and malnutrition were also found to be positively correlated with temperature differential in both Rajshahi and Satkhira, while these were negatively correlated in Manikganj study area.

The negative correlation of diarrhoea and skin diseases with temperature variation in Manikganj might have happened due to non-climatic factors as well as improved health services.

The study also shows that the climate factors of Satkhira are sensitive to diarrhoea, skin diseases and malnutrition as each of these was found to have positively correlated with at least one of the climate variables.

Besides, skin diseases and malnutrition are more or less highly correlated (positive) with all three climate variables - rainfall, temperature and salinity. Skin diseases were observed to be positively correlated with annual rainfall, annual average minimum temperature and salinity concentration.

The analysis of the primary data from survey on 300 households reveals that variations in temperatures is considered to be the main cause for most of the diseases (diarrhoea, fever, malnutrition) by the highest percentage of the respondents.

Rainfall variation comes next as the main cause of such diseases and is followed by hazards and disorders. It said the percentage of respondents having clear understanding on climate change was not very satisfactory.

According to respondents of the study areas, they were not aware about any particular coping strategy/project/programme to deal with health impacts due to climate change.

Against the backdrop of the climate change, the study suggested providing training to health professionals to deal with climate sensitive diseases, aware local community on climate changes and its impacts on public health, improve water supply and sanitation and protection of water resources.

## Eid congregation timings

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eid-ul-Azha, one of the two Eid festivals of Muslims, will be celebrated across the country tomorrow.

The main Eid jamat (congregation) of the holy Eid-ul-Azha will be held at the National Eidgah on the High Court premises in the city at 9:00am if the weather remains favourable, says a press release of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC).

In case of inclement weather, the main Eid jamat will be held at Baitul Mukarram National Mosque at 9:00am instead of National Eidgah.

Besides, arrangement for Eid congregation for women will be made at the southern part of the National Eidgah with separate entrance.

Under the arrangement of DCC, a total of 361 Eid congregations will be held (four in each of 90 DCC wards and one at Dhaka University playground) in the city.

All the necessary arrangements have been made for Eid

congregations, including car-parking facilities, supply of water, setting up of information centre at the National Eidgah.

At Baitul Mukarram National Mosque, five congregations will be held at 8:00am, 9:00am, 10:00am, 11:00am and 11:45am.

Three congregations will be held at Babu Rahmat of Dewanbagh Sharif at Arambagh at 9:00am, 10:00am and 10:30am.

Two congregations will be held at Dhaka University (DU) Central Mosque at 8:30am and 9:30am and Sir Salimullah Muslim Hall field of DU at 8:30am and 9:00am and at Baitul Falah Complex Mosque at Pallabi at 8:00am and 9:00am.

At 8:30am, Eid congregations will be held at Kalabagan Bashiruddin Road Jame Mosque, Ibrahimpur Central Jame Mosque of Dhaka Cantonment area, Nayapaltan Jame Mosque and Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) playground.

At 8:45am, Eid congregations will be held at SOS Shishu Polly Jame Mosque in Shyamoli.

At 9:00am, Eid congregations will be held at South Plaza of Jatiya Sangsad, Gulshan Central Mosque and Eidgah Society, Dhanmondi Eidgah Maidan, Gendaria East and Club Field, Sir Salimullah Muslim Orphanage field in Azampur.

At 10:00am, Eid jamat will be held at Enayetur Darbar Sharif in Sirajganj.

A number of political, social, cultural organisations, including Jatiya Party-JP, Bangladesh Jatiya Party-BJP, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD), Jubo Gonoforum, Bangladesh Christian Association, Bangladesh Krishak Samik Mukti Andolon, Bangladesh National Awami Party (NAP), Bangladesh Chhatra Jubo Oikya Parishad, Bangladesh Puja Uddhayan Parishad, greeted the countrymen on the occasion of the holy Eid-ul-Azha.

All the children parks under the DCC will remain

open for the unprivileged and destitute children.

Chittagong Staff correspondent from Chittagong adds: Chittagong Central Eid Jamaat Committee and Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) have completed all necessary arrangements for Eid congregations in all the 41 CCC wards in the city.

Under arrangement of the CCC, the first and main Eid congregation in Chittagong will be held at Jamiatul Falah National Mosque ground at 8:30am and the second congregation at the same venue at 9:15am.

The Central Eid Jamaat Committee arranges Eid congregation at CJKS Gymnasium adjacent to Chittagong MA Aziz Stadium at 9:00am. The Committee leaders also requested all to hold the Eid congregations under their arrangement by 9:00am.

Besides, Eid congregations will be held in different areas under local arrangements.

## Cabinet body okays 10 projects

UNB, Dhaka

The cabinet purchase committee yesterday approved 10 projects, including a Tk 430 crore bid for importing 2 lakh metric tonnes of urea fertiliser from China under a contract to cater for a high demand in the upcoming grand farming season.

Officials said the cabinet body gave the approval at a meeting at the cabinet division of the secretariat with Finance Minister AMA Muhith in the chair.

Of the approved projects also is a Tk 59 crore one for procurement of spare parts and services for the overhauling work of the unit-1 of Chittagong Thermal Power Station on turnkey basis.

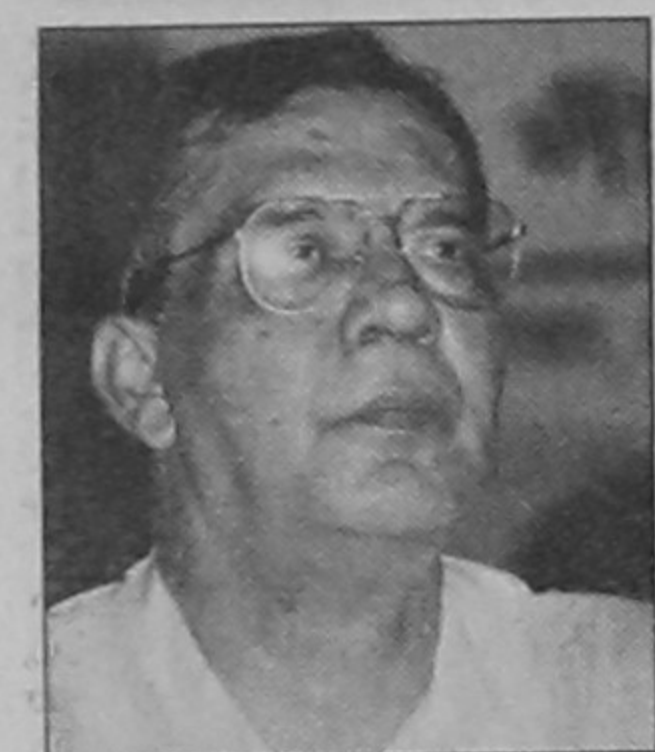
The other projects approved in the meeting are amended purchase proposal on Road Extension Project from Bijoy Sarani to Tejgaon Industrial Area involving Tk 48 crore.

Road construction work for Uttara Model Residential Town (3rd phase) with Tk 64.74 crore, appointing a consulting firm for mathematical modeling and detail survey and investigation for safe drinking water source identification work at

Tk 45 crore, bridge construction work for Uttara Model Residential Town (3rd Phase) project involving Tk 43.27 crore, consultation firm appointment for Skills Development Project under the education ministry at Tk 17 crore, appointment of consultant for socio-economic study EIA and detailed engineering survey and investigation and engineering design, import of one lakh tonnes TSP fertiliser under the Groupe Chimique Tunisien (GCT) between Tunisia and Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation and construction

of double-line track from Tongi to Bhairab Bazar, including signaling on the Dhaka-Chittagong Main Line. Another project of the Water Development Board was not placed in the meeting.

Planning Minister Air Vice-Marshal (Retd) AK Khandaker, Food Minister Dr Abdur Razzaque, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid, Industries Minister Dilip Barua, State Minister for Housing and Public Works Advocate Abdul Mannan Khan and secretaries concerned and other high officials were also present at the meeting.



## Hanif's death anniversary tomorrow

DU CORRESPONDENT

Tomorrow is the third death anniversary of Mohammad Hanif, the first elected mayor of Dhaka City Corporation and an Awami League leader.

Mayor Mohammad Hanif Memorial Foundation, Dhaka city unit of Awami League and different socio-cultural organisations have chalked out elaborate programmes to mark the day.

The programmes include doa and milad mahfil, offering fateha at his grave and discussion.

President Zillur Rahman, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Speaker Advocate Abdul Hamid Advocate in separate messages paid their rich tribute to the memory of Mohammad Hanif.

President Zillur in his message said Mohammad Hanif, who had come in active politics during student life by holding hands of Bangabandhu was a devoted follower of Bangabandhu's ideology.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said Hanif played a significant role in different democratic movements to free the country from autocracy.

Speaker Abdul Hamid said Hanif would remain alive forever among people through out his work.

Amirun Nesa Begum

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Dhaka Zila Muslim League of undivided Bengal, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil and prayer session will be held at her residence at Baitul Aman of Chashara in Narayanjan after Juma prayers.



## Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather may remain dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in next 12 hours till 6:00pm today.

Light to moderate fog may occur over the river basins of the country during midnight till morning, Met Office said.

Night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:10pm today and rises at 7:23am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 30.5 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Cox's Bazar and lowest 11.8 degrees Celsius at Rajshahi.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature Celsius	Humidity in percentage
	Max	Min
Dhaka	29.0	17.0
Chittagong	28.0	18.4
Rajshahi	27.6	11.8
Khulna	28.5	15.5
Barisal	28.7	14.8
Sylhet	29.7	17.6
Cox's Bazar	30.5	19.0