



WITH TODAY'S ISSUE

SHOUT



NO CRIMINAL MINISTERS

Indian SC tells govt, but declines to issue any ruling on the matter

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CHARGED WITH NEGLIGENCE

France opens investigation into IMF chief Christine Lagarde over her 2008 role

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PM's caution goes in vain

8,000 acres of flood flow zone to accommodate housing

TAWFIQUE ALI

The housing and public works ministry has approved the filling up of over 8,000 acres of flood flow zones and farmlands around the capital, ignoring the caution voiced by the prime minister.

A seven-member ministerial committee headed by Housing Minister Mosharraf Hossain approved the destructive plan on Monday, virtually to help illegal private housing companies implement about a dozen housing schemes.

It was the second such approval in three months, and is in violation of a number of laws, including the environment law.

Presiding over a cabinet meeting earlier on Monday, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina discussed at length the devastating consequences of filling up the flood flow zones and wetlands and warned the housing minister against making any such move, said a minister who attended the cabinet meeting.

"I know you will do it and succumb to the wealthy land developers. But do not do it," the minister quoted the PM as telling Mosharraf Hossain.

Contacted, the housing minister said, "What's wrong if flood zones are filled up, when even seas are filled up to build structures? ... Are you an engineer? I am an engineer and I know better all about it."

Asked why he had ignored the PM's advice in this regard, Mosharraf said, "She [Hasina] did not forbid me to fill up flood flow zones for housing."

Flood flow zones and farmlands are earmarked in the 1,528 square-kilometre Detailed Area Plan (DAP) of Dhaka city for planned urban development, conservation of environment and ecology, flood water drainage and urban livability.

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GRABBING GETS LEGAL

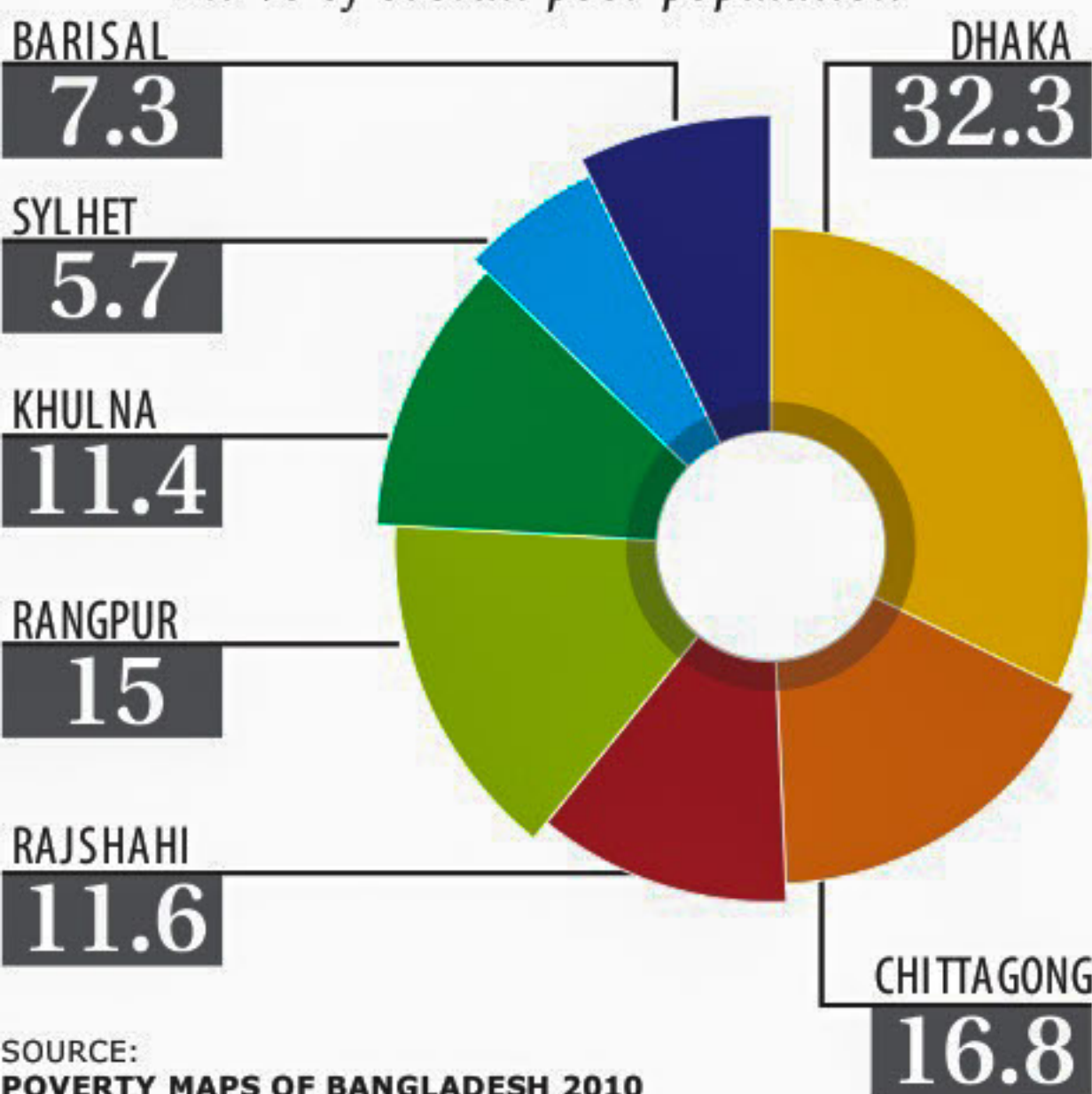


A river grabber built pillars in the Turag at Kamapara in Tongi and the BIWTA left this "plot of land" untouched even though on Tuesday they made a ludicrous attempt to recover the "plot" right next to it.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

UNDER POVERTY LINE

In % of overall poor population



SOURCE: POVERTY MAPS OF BANGLADESH 2010

Dhaka division home to highest number of poor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka division has the highest share of the country's poor population, followed by Chittagong, as people from impoverished areas have migrated to these economic hubs in search of employment.

Of a total of 4.94 crore poor people of the country, 1.59 crore or 32.3 percent live in Dhaka and 82.99 lakh in Chittagong. This means nearly half of the country's total poor population live in these two regions.

Interestingly, these two divisions make the highest contributions to the national GDP, with Dhaka metropolis alone contributing 36 percent and Chittagong 11 percent.

These figures were revealed in Poverty Maps of

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Brutal murder in the capital

Criminals kill imam tying family members at his house

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unidentified assailants slit the throat of the chief imam of the Supreme Court mosque and a presenter of Islamic programmes in two private television channels at his East Rajabazar house in the capital last night. Shaikh Nurul Islam Faruki, aged around 60, was also international affairs secretary of Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat, an Islamist group. He also owned a hajj agency, Faruki Tours and Travels Private Ltd.



Nurul Islam Faruki

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Beximco in severe cash crunch

Claims Salman; BB help sought to reschedule its loans

SAJJADUR RAHMAN

An extreme liquidity crisis has brought Beximco Ltd, the largest company of Beximco Group, on the verge of collapse.

So says Salman F Rahman, vice chairman of the group, in a letter to the central bank governor early this month.

"Beximco Ltd is facing an extreme liquidity crisis and is on the verge of closing down," Salman said in the letter.

He blamed the situation on two factors -- politically motivated credit restrictions on the group between 2001 and 2008 and repayment of Tk 800 crore in bank loans in the last three years.

The group is beset by huge loans worth Tk 5,245 crore to seven banks and requires urgent restructure of its debt to survive, the letter said.

Beximco Ltd owes Tk 4,315 crore to four state-owned banks -- Sonali, Janata, Agrani and Rupali -- and the rest Tk 930 crore to three private banks -- AB, Exim and National.

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