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Living at risk of landslide

No visible step yet to relocate several hundred families from Ctg hill slopes

PRANABESH CHAKRABORTY, Ctg

With the monsoon here, fear of landslides grip those living in the hill regions, especially on the hillsides.

Several thousand people of low-income group live on the slopes and foot of hills in Chittagong city, but the authorities concerned are yet to take any effective step, except for some talks, to evacuate them to safer places.

On June 2, the Hill Management Committee (HMC) directed organisations and individuals who owned the hills or land around them to submit the lists of families exposed to the danger of landslides by June 8.

In the meeting, Chittagong Divisional Commissioner Md Abdullah, who heads the committee, also directed the authorities concerned to disconnect all utility lines at the vulnerable areas after receiving the lists.

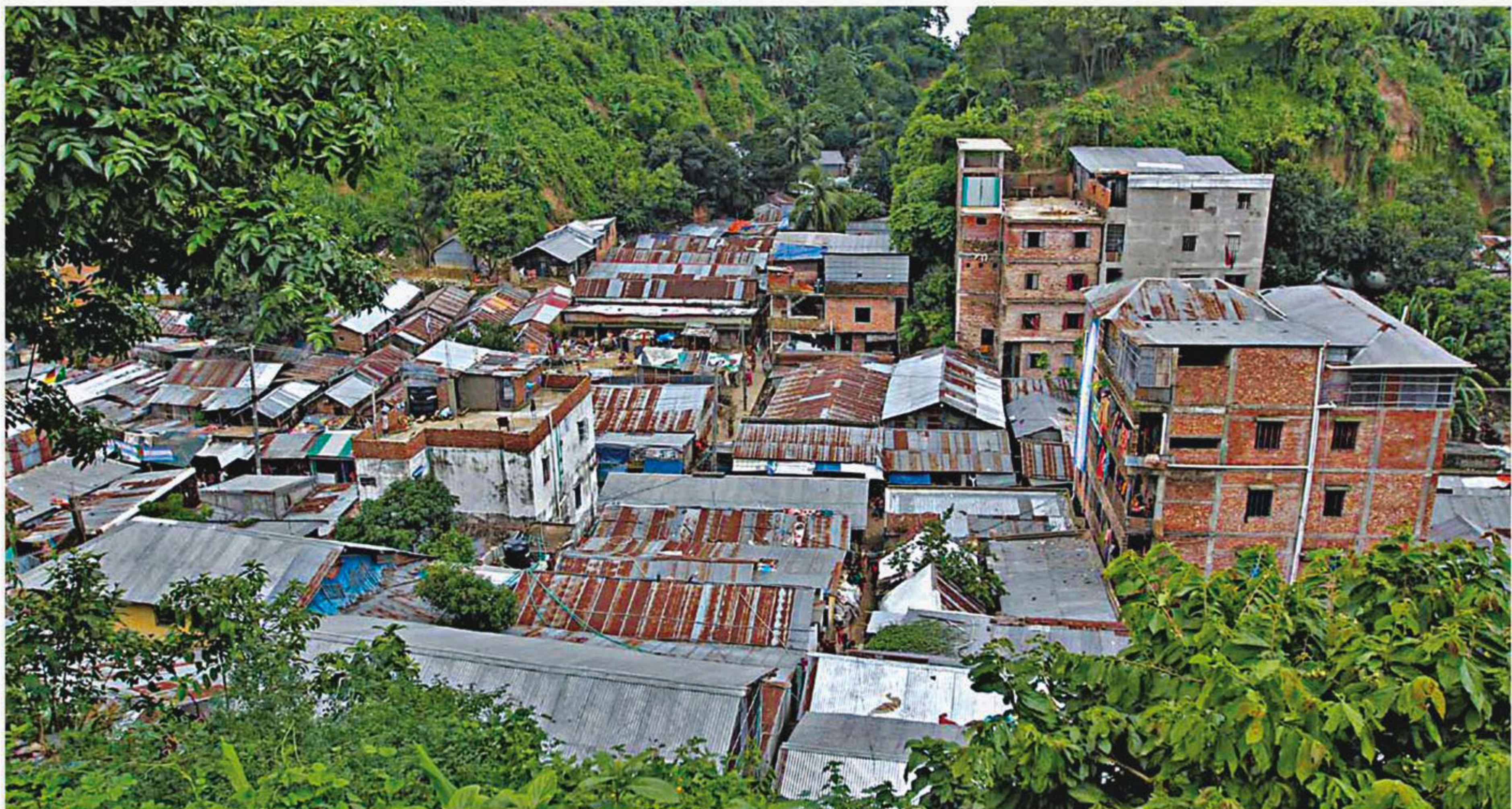
But none complied. Four days had passed since the deadline expired, but not even a single list was submitted till yesterday, according to sources.

Environmental activist Sharif Chouhan blamed this on political clout of people controlling the hillside residences, and lack of sincerity of the administration and of coordination among different government and private organisations.

Between 2007 and 2013, landslides during the monsoon killed at least 185 people in Chittagong.

Of them, 127 died in a single incident on June 11 in 2007. Following this, the HMC was formed. The committee made

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Tin-roofed houses, with a few buildings soaring out, stand crammed into a place at the foot of a hill in Lalkhan Bazar of Chittagong city. People from lower income groups live here amid risks of landslide. The authorities have done little for their relocation to safer places. A deadly landslide killed 127 people living on hill slopes in Chittagong in 2007. The photo was taken on Thursday.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

INDIA'S MILITARY OPS INSIDE MYANMAR

7 bodies recovered

Say official sources; less than a dozen hurt; target was one camp in Onzia, two in Ponyo; NSCN (K) leader, 40 cadres fled before strike

THE INDIAN EXPRESS

The June 9 cross-border strikes by the Army on insurgents inside Myanmar may have had less impact on their military capacity than early assessments had indicated, official sources have told The Indian Express.

According to assessments being conducted by the Army with Intelligence services, just seven bodies have been recovered so far -- as reported by The Indian Express on

June 9 -- and wireless intercepts suggest less than a dozen insurgents were injured.

Moreover, the targets, one camp in Onzia and two adjacent camps in Ponyo, did not hit perpetrators of the June 4 ambush that killed 18 Army personnel, said a senior military intelligence official who is involved in collating these assessments.

"These camps were chosen for reasons of tactical viability, rather than specific retaliatory

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Six human traffickers arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

In separate raids, police arrested six "listed" human traffickers at different parts of Cox's Bazar early yesterday.

Police said they were conducting a special drive in the district to catch the human traffickers.

Four "human traffickers" were nabbed in Teknaf upazila, while two others in Cox's Bazar town and Maheshkhali upazila.

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Saarc nations should go for economic union

Greater integration to bring dynamism in South Asian economy, Saarc central bank governors' conference told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Saarc countries should shift towards integration from cooperation in order to make South Asian Economic Union a reality, said a top Saarc Secretariat official yesterday.

Lakshmanan Savithri, director of Kathmandu-based Saarc Secretariat, said: "Almost all our mechanisms that are engaged in sharing of experience

and best practices would need to include integration aspects."

She said the Secretariat would request the countries to discuss genuine integration so that free movement of capital is facilitated and intraregional investments and remittances can be hassle-free within the region.

Savithri said these at the opening ceremony of the first day of the 30th Saarc Finance Governor's Symposium

on Financial Inclusion at Sonargaon Hotel in Dhaka yesterday.

She said the 18th Saarc Summit, which was held in Kathmandu in November last year, clearly stated that South Asian Economic Union should be achieved in a phased manner through a free trade area, a customs union, a common market and a common economic and monetary union.

SEE PAGE 13 COL 5

Interpol pulls out of 20m euro deal with FIFA

AFP, Lyon

Interpol yesterday pulled out of a multi-million-euro deal with FIFA to promote integrity in sport, as the corruption scandal engulfing the world's football governing body left it increasingly isolated.

The international police organisation announced it was suspending a 10-year partnership deal with FIFA worth 20 million euros (\$23 million) for its "Integrity in Sport programme".

Interpol boss Juergen Stock noted that partners in the programme "must share the fundamental values and principles of the organisation".

FIFA has been in crisis since May after 14 people connected to the organisation were charged as part of a US investigation into alleged corruption.

The scandal spectacularly brought down FIFA boss Sepp Blatter and has

SEE PAGE 13 COL 4



Shakib Al Hasan was relentless against India yesterday, taking four wickets and becoming the first Bangladeshi to take 100 Test wickets at home, as India reached 462 for six at the end of the third day of the one-off Test in Fatullah. Stories on page 14.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

India's iconic Rock Garden creator dies

AFP, New Delhi

Nek Chand, an Indian artist who toiled in secret for nearly two decades to create a sculpture garden that later became a top tourist attraction, died yesterday aged 90.

Chand died in hospital in the northern city of Chandigarh after suffering a heart attack, his son Anuj Saini told AFP by phone.

His works are on display in museums around the world, but he is best known for creating the Chandigarh Rock Garden -- a 20-acre (eight-hectare) garden filled with sculptures made from the rubble of the city's construction.

Chand, who had no formal education and worked as a road inspector in the new city, secretly cleared large areas of forest, transforming the landscape with his sculptures.

"I started building this garden as a hobby" in the 1950s, he said in a rare interview with AFP in December.

"I had many ideas, I was thinking all the time... I saw beauty and art in what people said was junk."

Waste like broken crockery, electrical fittings, glass bangles, bathroom tiles, wash basins and

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Nek Chand

2 more quakes hit Nepal

313 aftershocks since April 25 mega tremor; landslide toll climbs to 35

AGENCIES

Two moderate earthquakes of 4.6 and 4.4 magnitudes yesterday struck Nepal, taking the total number of aftershocks in the country to 313 after two devastating tremors killed nearly 9,000 people.

The first quake was recorded at 1.22am with its epicenter in Dolakha district, some 150 kilometres west of Kathmandu. Another tremor of

4.4 magnitude was recorded at 10.19 am with epicenter in Dolakha district.

The two quakes have followed a 5.3 magnitude tremor that struck central Nepal on Thursday.

Meanwhile, rescuers yesterday recovered 14 more bodies following a landslide triggered by heavy rains in northeast Nepal, taking the confirmed death toll to 35.

Up to 20 people are still missing after the landslide, which crushed villages in mountainous Taplejung district Thursday following incessant rains.

"The toll has reached 35, but we believe another 20 might be missing," Shanti Raj Koirala, the district's deputy superintendent of police told AFP.

Rescuers struggled to reach affected villages in

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PRAYER TIMING

JUNE 13

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

4-05 12-45 5-00 6-50 8-15

JAMAAT 4-40 1-15 5-15 6-55 8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION