

# Higher price for acquired land

Compensation to be 3-4 times the market value of land

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cabinet yesterday approved a draft law that proposes paying three times the market value of land acquired by the government as compensation for the owners.

If a private organisation acquires land for public interest, like setting up a school, it would have to pay four times the market value.

"The Immovable Asset Acquisition and Requisition Act-2017" also has a provision that would allow the authorities to acquire land of religious institutions for public interest.

As per the law approved in the cabinet meeting with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair, the market price of the acquired land would be based on a year's average going rate of same kind of land in the area, Cabinet Secretary Mohammad Shafiqul Alam told reporters after the meeting.

He said the existing law was an ordinance promulgated in 1982. The Ministry of Land placed the draft before the cabinet in line with an earlier cabinet decision to transform all ordinances into acts after translating those into Bangla to comply with a court order, he added.

The draft law has a provision for acquiring the land of places of worship, like mosques, temples, churches, and pagodas alongside graveyards, crematoriums for any obligatory public interest.

The ordinance does not allow acquiring such land.

"But, as per the proposed law [Section 4(13)], such land could be acquired if it is crucial for public interest," he said, adding, "The persons and the organisations willing to

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Hundreds of people from Keraniganj and Savar demonstrate in Atibazar area of Keraniganj yesterday protesting a proposed land acquisition by Rajuk for a housing project in the area.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

# Locals protest Rajuk move to acquire land in Keraniganj

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hundreds of people yesterday formed a human chain along the road from Kalatia to Bosila in Keraniganj in protest at a proposed land acquisition by Rajuk for a housing project there.

Taking part in the demonstration, villagers of Savar's Bhakurta and Keraniganj's Taranagar and Kalatia vowed to protect their land at any cost.

"I will lose about 11 bighas of land I inherited from my forefathers if the project is implemented. How can I give the land to the government where my forefathers are laid to rest?" Shafiqul Islam, 55, of Kalatia told The Daily Star yesterday.

Mamun-ur-Rashid of Bhawal area in Keraniganj said, "Why the government is planning to build a housing project evicting thousands of villagers? We will not let it happen at any cost."

The government could take unused land available near Dhaka city, he opined.

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# Tough task for Tigers

First T20 against Sri Lanka today

SAKEB SUBHAN from Colombo

Three stats dominate the discussion before Bangladesh and Sri Lanka lock horns in the first of two T20Is at the R Premadasa International Stadium in Colombo tonight at 7:30pm (Bangladesh time). Sri Lanka have won four of their last five T20Is, including two series in the T20I strongholds of South Africa and Australia. Bangladesh, on the other hand, have lost seven straight T20Is going back to the World Twenty20 around a year ago. The wildcard stat thrown into the mix is that Sri Lanka have lost 10 out of 11 ODIs at the Premadasa.

Therefore, on a tour where the visitors have often had to fight against the tide of history as far as ground records go, today's

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# Other side of Saudi women

Lawmaker Hoda Al-Helaissi tells the story of women empowerment

SHAKHAWAT LITON and MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

It was a stunning revelation for many in the world when the education ministry of Saudi Arabia released the statistics two years ago showing more women were studying in the universities than men.

According to the statistics released in May 2015, women constituted 51.8 percent of university students and there were 5,51,000 female undergraduate students compared to 5,13,000 males.

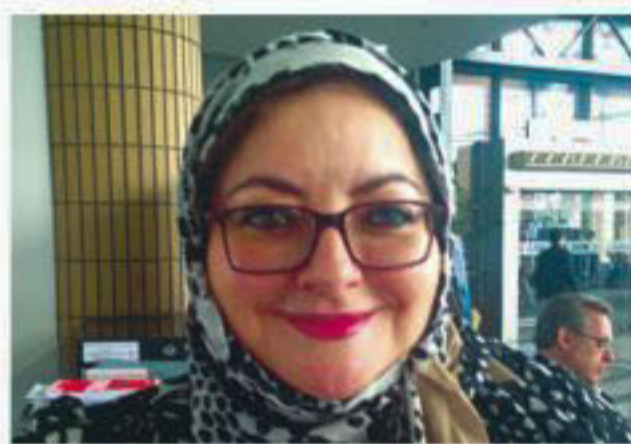
The statistics appeared as a mystery to many as the world commonly perceive Saudi women as a group deprived of many basic rights.

But the changes are now a reality in the Saudi society as described by Hoda Al-Helaissi, one of only 30 women in the Consultative Assembly of Saudi Arabia, also known as Majlis Ash-Shura.

"Saudi women now want career, they want to get back to society, they want to work and they want to be a part of the economy," she said in an exclusive interview with The Daily Star on Sunday. She was attending the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) conference in Dhaka as a member of the Saudi delegation.

"Our focus is on giving women the possibility of having jobs, of being empowered and be independent," she said, adding: "The situation in our country is improving a lot for women."

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# CTG BOAT CAPSIZE Five die, 18 still missing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Five bodies were recovered yesterday after a boat capsized at Sandwip Channel of Chittagong on Sunday night with at least 50 people.

The dead were identified as Sachindra Jaladash, 55, Boroda Jaladash, 60, Md Salauddin, 30, and Hafez Amin Rasul, 45, of Sandwip, and Abdul Haque, 60, of Noakhali's Senbagh, said Sandwip administration officials.

The body of Hafez was recovered by boatmen near Noakhali's Hatia, some 40km away from the spot where the boat sunk. The rest were found by Bangladesh Coast Guard in the channel.

Sandwip Upazila Nirbahi Officer Md Golam Zakaria said at least 18 people were still missing while 26 swam ashore or were rescued by locals.

The boat capsized at around 8:00pm Sunday at Guptachhar area due to rough weather and tidal waves of the sea. Traffic on channel was suspended since the capsize, said Shamsul Islam, officer-in-charge (OC) of Sandwip Police Station.

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# Leopard shuts down airport



AFP, Kathmandu

Nepal had to close its only international airport for around half an hour yesterday after a leopard was spotted close to the runway.

A spokesman for the airport in Kathmandu said wildlife and security officers were searching for the animal, believed to be hiding in the drains, after it was spotted by a pilot.

"We closed the airport for about 30 minutes after the incident was reported but we haven't found the leopard yet," Prem Nath Thakur told AFP.

One international flight was delayed but no other flight was scheduled during the closure.

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# 7 held over suspected militancy link

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Police detained seven people for their suspected link to militancy in Mymensingh town yesterday.

They are Shahidul Islam, 28, and Ashiqur Rahman, 19, of Halaughat upazila; Al Amin, 25, of Dhobaura upazila; Masum Ahmed, 30, Shah Al Hossain Shamim, 27, Ruman Miah, 27, of Netrakona's Purbadhala; and Amir Uddin, 27, of the district's Mohanganj.

Kamrul Islam, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Police Station, claimed that Amir is a third-year student of Mymensingh Medical College.

Syed Nurul Islam, superintendent of Mymensingh police, said acting on a tip-off, police raided a one-storey building on Boro Kalibari Road around 12:30pm.

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# 2 cops from Maldives in Rajshahi

To help probe death of student

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Two top Maldivian police officials flew to Rajshahi yesterday to assist Detective Branch of police in probing the death of Raudha Athif, a medical student and model from that country.

Chief Superintendent Mohamed Riyaz and Chief Inspector Ahamed Ali of the Maldivian police landed in Shah Makhdom Airport around 5:00pm, said Rashidul Islam,

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A notice asking landlords to collect tenant information for the police hangs at the entrance of a building on Eskaton Road in the capital. Dhaka Metropolitan Police has distributed forms to house owners to get necessary details about their tenants, a move law enforces said was made to ensure security of citizens. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

# HC upholds ban on production by 28 companies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday upheld a previous order that had directed the government to stop the production and sale of antibiotics of penicillin and cephalosporin groups, hormonal and anti-cancer drugs by 28 companies.

The drugs were found substandard and injurious to public health.

Delivering the verdict on a writ petition, the court also directed the government to form a five-member committee in 15 days to monitor whether the companies were following the Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) set by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

The government may allow any of the companies to produce and sell the medicines if the committee finds that the respective company was following the GMP, said the court.

The five-member committee will be comprised of representatives from WHO, Dhaka University's pharmacy department, health ministry, department of drug administration and the expert committee concerned, Advocate Manzill Murshid, lawyer for Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB) which filed the petition, told The Daily Star.

The HC also said the petition remains as a continuous "mandamus" as any party of the case can seek necessary orders from it in future.

The bench of Justice Syed Muhammad Dastagir Husain and Justice Md Ataur Rahman Khan came up with the verdict after hearing the petition.

Following the same petition, the HC on February 27 directed the government to stop in 72 hours production and

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