

Cattleheads decline

Cattle population in the country declined to 20.3 million heads last year from 25 million heads in 1970 according to an official study, reports ENA.

The population of goats also fell sharply. The total number of goats in the country last year was estimated at 6.8 million as against 9.1 million in 1970. The population of buffaloes, however rose to 0.9 million during the period from 0.8 million in 1970.

The study conducted in April last year maintained that a serious damage was caused to the cattle and livestock population during the liberation war of 1971 and by the cyclone in 1970. This resulted in estimated 25 per cent decline in the growth rate of cattle and livestock population.

The study pointed out that loss of cattleheads would have a serious bearing on the agricultural production of the country. It observed the population of bullock or working cow (cow is also used for tilling land in some parts of the country) is now estimated to be 8.5 million while the demand is put at 11.5 million.

The requirement has been estimated on assumption that a pair of bullocks or working cow can cultivate four acres of land on an average, so 115 million working animals were required (Continued on page 12 col. 4)

Cattleheads

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to till the country's 22 million acres of cultivable land.

The study said that livestock contributed about five per cent to the gross domestic product (GDP) by way of meat, milk, by-products and hides and skins. About 25 per cent of the input into crop production is from animal draughts power equivalent to another ten per cent of GDP.

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