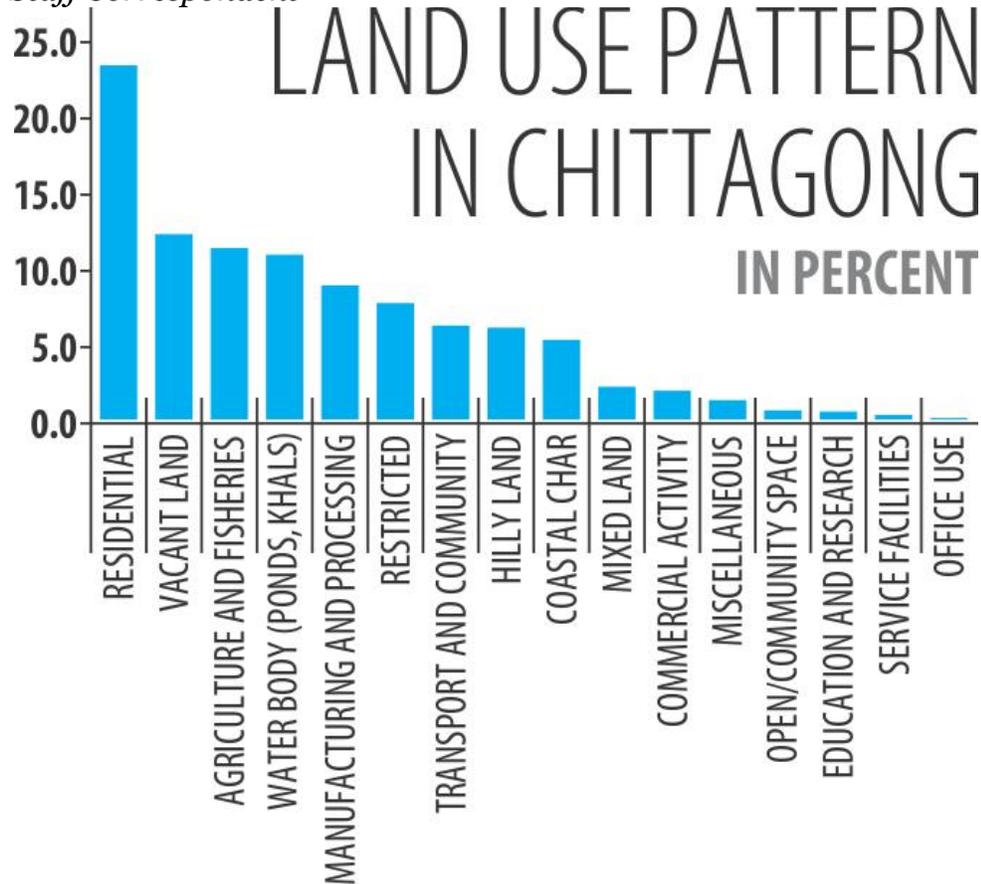


# Ctg economically untapped

Brac study points out unplanned urbanisation, lack of efficient transport system as two main reasons among many others

Staff Correspondent



SOURCE: CDA 2011

The port city of Chittagong could contribute much more to the national economy had it undergone planned development and had a modern mass transport system, reveals a study of the Institute of Governance and Development at Brac University.

The city's connectivity with the national capital has not grown in proportion to increased trade and passenger movement, causing an economic lopsidedness between the two, and also between Chittagong and the rest of the country.

The “State of Cities: Governance for a Liveable Chittagong”, prepared as part of IGD's annual research publication and released on Sunday, says piecemeal interventions in scattered locations have marked the use of land and development in this city, which has the country's biggest seaport and is a commercial and industrial hub.

Chittagong has witnessed soaring economic growth with the concentration of capital, labour, and manufacturing and service industries since the 1960s. But planned use of land with access to utility services is seen only in residential, commercial and industrial areas developed by Chittagong Development Authority, and in port establishments, government housing estates, military installations, some private housing areas, and export processing zones (EPZs).

The rest of the city is characterised by unplanned and undesirable development with an inappropriate use of land. Transport and other facilities in Chittagong have evolved centring about the seaport and are far from being adequate, the report says.

The findings also show that of the 179 sq km city area, 23 percent is covered by housing structures, 50 percent by agricultural land, water bodies, manufacturing and processing facilities, and vacant areas, and the remaining 25 percent by restricted areas, hills, the transport network, commercial activities, open spaces, education and service facilities, among others.

The research focused on public services, environmental degradation and governance highlighting the need for a planned urbanisation and improvement of the quality of life.

It found that a lack of accountability and coordination among the local agencies, overlaps in service delivery, inadequate administrative and financial authority, and excessive dependence of local bodies on the central government are major barriers to good governance.

The first and second reports, published in 2012 and 2013, focused on Dhaka and Narayanganj respectively.