



# Like

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rajuk had to withdraw a drive against illegal commercial occupancy of a Gulshan residential plot by the International Club in the face of ministerial instruction yesterday allowing the club two days to shift their belongings.

Md Nurul Islam, executive engineer of Rajuk, told The Daily Star that their team just knocked down the boundary wall of the club and withdrew from the drive giving the time.

The club's occupancy of the two-bigha residential plot at house no-5 on the road no-74 to run commercial activities is unauthorised, he said adding that the drive has been postponed until next Sunday.

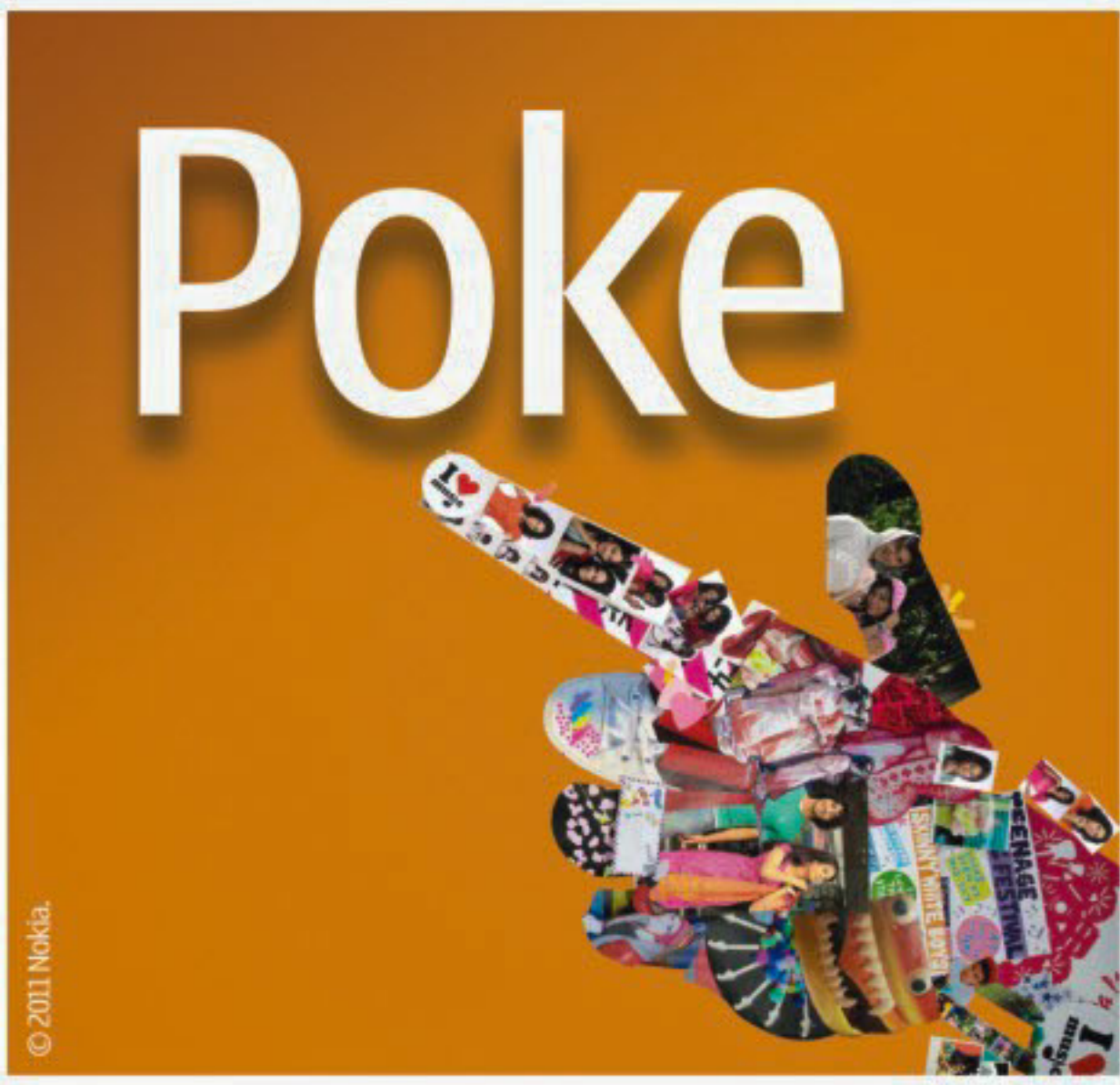
The club is run by Bangladeshis and Indian nationals with members of other foreign nationals staying in the capital.

Land owner and Nassa Group Chairman Nazrul Islam Mazumdar earlier had served an eviction notice asking the club authorities to vacate the premises.

Later, the club authorities obtained three-month stay order from the High Court (HC) against the notice. Again, they obtained a six-month stay.

Following a petition by the Nassa Group, appellate division of the Supreme Court made the six-month stay order ineffective for six weeks with the February 9 for regular hearing on the matter at the HC bench.

As the stay was made ineffective, Mazumdar applied to Rajuk for the eviction.



# Poke

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mild to moderate cold wave is sweeping over Rajshahi, Rangpur and Sylhet divisions and the regions of Mymensingh, Tangail, Faridpur, Sitakunda, Comilla, Noakhali, Jessore, Kushtia and Barisal and it may continue as a mild cold wave in next 12 hours till 6:00pm today.

Night temperature may rise by 1-2 degree Celsius over the country.

Weather is likely to remain dry with partly cloudy sky over the country, Met Office said.

Moderate to thick fog may occur over the river basins of the country and light to moderate fog may occur elsewhere over the country.

**The sun sets in the capital at 5:36pm today and rises at 6:43am tomorrow.**

Country's highest temperature 27.2 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sitakunda and lowest 05.4 degrees Celsius at Rajshahi.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	24.2	10.8	64	68
Chittagong	25.0	10.8	81	55
Rajshahi	24.7	05.4	95	64
Rangpur	21.5	07.6	94	71
Khulna	26.8	10.5	89	72
Barisal	25.5	09.2	68	74
Sylhet	22.0	10.0	84	68
Cox's Bazar	26.7	12.0	49	70

# Abide by host country's laws and customs

PM urges expatriates

UNB, Abu Dhabi

Prime Minister (PM) Sheikh Hasina urged expatriate Bangladeshis to abide by laws and customs of their host countries to avoid any hassle or harassment.

Addressing expatriate Bangladeshis at Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Community School on Tuesday, she highlighted her government's various measures for the welfare of the expatriate Bangladeshis.

The PM said a separate desk has been opened at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport while security measures are in place so that expatriate Bangladeshis do not face any problems.

Besides, she said Expatriate Welfare Bank has been set up to extend financial support to workers intending to work abroad.

In every district, there will be a cell containing information data of each expatriate Bangladeshi so they can be traced in times of emergency, she added.

The PM said provisions would be made so that expatriates could send money through private banks alongside public limited banks. Moreover, e-banking and SMS system were introduced to stop remittance through 'hundi'.

She said schools would be set up in areas of foreign countries where

Bangladeshis are high in density.

The PM said steps are also being taken to quickly resolve the problem facing expatriates in the UAE in getting the Machine Readable Passports (MRP).

She reassured that voting rights of the expatriates would be ensured.

Encouraging investment from expatriates, the PM said investment opportunities were increased and separate arrangements were made for their housing in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh Ambassador to UAE Nazmul Qaunine and the Bangalee community leaders also spoke on the occasion.

# Shaheed Asad Day today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the historic Shaheed Asad Day. Different socio-political organisation will observe the day in a befitting manner.

On this day in 1969, Asad sacrificed his life in front of Dhaka Medical College Hospital protesting repression of Pakistan military on the people of the then East Pakistan.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, President Zillur Rahman and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia gave separate messages marking the day.

The prime minister said the day has much consequence in the history of Liberation War movement.

President Zillur Rahman said sacrifice of Asad did not go in vain.

Shaheed Asad Parishad chalked out elaborate programmes, including rally, taking oath, placing wreath at the graveyard of Asad and a discussion at Shibpur College gate in Narsingdi.



Investors vent their frustration on a bus in the bustling Motijheel area yesterday after stock trading was stopped as Dhaka Stock Exchange lost 226 points around 2:30pm.

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PHOTO: STAR

# Strengthen secularism to fight religious extremists in S Asia

Speakers tell int'l seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Development and rights activists of South Asian countries yesterday stressed more democratisation of state to strengthen secularism at all levels for fighting religious extremism in the region.

At an international seminar, they also put emphasis on creating a Saarc parliamentary forum to bring the legislators of all countries together to envision a common future of South Asia.

The two-day seminar "Envisioning New South Asia: People's perspective" held at Brac Inn in the city concluded yesterday.

Income inequality, control of economic resources by the rich, and rise of corporate interest dominating the state institutions are only adding new tensions in the countries, said the speakers.

Former Indian navy chief M Ramdas said the world saw US\$ 1,200 billion trading of armament last year and 30 percent of it went to India followed by

14-15 percent purchase by Pakistan.

New Age Editor Nurul Kabir said secularism along with an equitable distribution of wealth and income in the society could provide the basis of a sustainable state.

Pakistani labour leader Karamat Ali, Lalita Ramdas of India, Netra Prasad Timsina of Nepal, and Nazma Sadiq of Pakistan also spoke at the seminar.

Participants from the Maldives, Sri Lanka, India, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Afghanistan were present at the programme.

# Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former district judge Muminur Rahman, father of Shafiqur Rahman, Deputy Secretary to the Ministry of Home Affairs, passed away in the city on Tuesday on suffering from brain hemorrhage and cancer at the age of 87 years.

He left behind his wife, one son and three daughters, says a press release.

A milad mahfil will be held at Shafiqur's residence after Maghrib prayers tomorrow.

Muminur, resident of Khaldhar Road in Jessore, was born at Char Mallikpur of Lohagara upazila in Narail on March 1925.

# HC grants anticipatory bail to Sircar, Akhtar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday granted anticipatory bail for four months to former speaker Jamiruddin Sircar and deputy speaker Akhtar Hamid Siddiqui in three separate corruption cases filed by the Anti Corruption Commission (ACC).

The commission on January 16 filed the cases with Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station in the city against them on charges of unauthorised use of government vehicles. Jamiruddin is accused in two cases, while Akhtar is accused in one case.

An HC bench of Justice Shamim Hasnain and Justice MR Hasan issued separate rules upon the ACC and the government to explain why the former speaker and deputy speaker should not be granted regular bail in the cases.

The bench passed the orders and issued the rules following three bail petitions filed by the BNP leaders on January 18.

Advocate TH Khan, Barrister Rafiqul Islam Mia and Barrister Bodruddoza Badal appeared for the petitioners.

# NGO heads worried over 'propaganda'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Heads of different non-government organisations (NGO) yesterday claimed that different quarters are trying to damage the image of NGOs through false statements.

They told a meeting of The Federation of NGOs in Bangladesh, says a press release.

Presided over by Dr Muhammad Ibrahim while Gono Shakkharota Ovijan Executive Director Rasheda K Choudhury also spoke.



# Govt forced to begin war crimes trial

Say speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a programme yesterday said the process of war crimes trial comes alive, as the issue has become a demand of mass people following years of campaign by some social organisations.

The government was compelled to start the trial as the demand for the trial had taken the shape of a huge social movement following the campaign, they said.

Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee organised the programme at TSC auditorium at Dhaka University marking the 19th founding anniversary of the organisation.

"The young generation has started hating the war criminals following movement for years demanding the trial by some social organisation," said Manjurul Ahsan Khan, president of Communist Party of Bangladesh.

Executive President of Nirmul Committee Shahriar Kabir said the trial organisations that helped the Pakistani forces in committing crimes against humanity during the liberation war should be also be tried.

Law Minister Shafique Ahmed, State Minister for Culture Promod Mankin, Workers Party President Reshed Khan Menon, JSD President Hasanul Haque Inu, historian Muntasir Mamun and Mahila Parishad President Ayesha Khanam also spoke with Nirmul Committee President Justice Gholam Rabbani in the chair.



# 'Municipal polls were free, fair'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The just concluded municipal elections across the country were free and fair except for a few stray incidents, says a report of Election Working Group (EWG), an alliance of non-government organisations.

The report released yesterday at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity also read that in the first three days, the polls were free from political influence but the last day witnessed direct political influence in some municipalities.

About the role of Election Commission (EC), it said the EC proved itself to be impartial through holding free and fair elections and gained people's trust.

But some incidents of violence would not have happened had the EC been more active, the report said.

Reading out the report summary, EWG Co-chairman Prof Nazmul Ahsan Kalimullah said turnout rate of women voters has been significant in the polls.

Besides, the polls witnessed positive changes in behaviour of candidates, voters and law enforcement agencies.

Referring to the report, Kalimullah, however, said contenders violated election code in some municipalities including Bhola, Chapainawabganj, Dinajpur, Rajshahi and Munshiganj while stuffing ballot boxes with fake votes was seen at Jamalpur, Narayanganj, Sherpur and Chapainawabganj polling stations.

No special arrangements were made for disabled and elderly people in 81 polling stations.

EWG co-chairman, Taleya Rahman also spoke.

The EWC prepared the report after its 390 workers visited 78 municipalities across the country and collected data during the polls.

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