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BARIDHARA LAKE PARK

Protector turns into predator

TAWFIQUE ALI

The Baridhara Society is trying to grab several plots of land in the capital's Baridhara Lake Park, although it is entrusted to protect the patch of greenery in the neighbourhood, allege locals.

The society, an association of Baridhara home owners, is empowered by the Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk) to look after the park as a public space in the diplomatic enclave.

Kazi Sakawat Hossain Lintoo, general secretary of the society, said they had applied to Rajuk for around four pieces of land in the park -- each measuring between three to five kathas, to store some "machinery".

He said they needed the land to keep some mowers, pushcarts and garbage vans, and that they would make a deal with the Rajuk to use the space on a temporary basis.

Why they need four plots to keep the machinery Lintoo would not say. Rajuk Chairman Nurul Huda said there was no question of allowing the society to use the public place for any other purpose.

"The society has been authorised only to look after the lake park as per a memorandum of understanding," he said.

Several months ago, Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) had laid underground water pipelines in Baridhara. The society then convinced the Wasa officials to enclose approximately a five-katha plot with corrugated iron sheets and bamboos at the southern end of the park on the plea of securing their equipment, said locals.

As Wasa left the site after work, the society strengthened the boundary

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The Baridhara Society is planning to get rid of the corrugated iron sheet fence surrounding a five-katha piece of land in Baridhara Lake Park and build a permanent wall allegedly to grab the land. During the installation of underground pipes there, the Society convinced Dhaka Wasa to set up the fence. Wasa left finishing work but the Society kept the fence.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Urdu and the Nawabs

SYED BADRUL AHSAN

The reputed intellectual Badruddin Umar, who has researched extensively on the Language Movement, has noted the ramifications of Khwaja Nazimuddin's incendiary remarks on the language question. According to him, no less an individual than Yusuf Ali Chowdhury, general secretary of the East Pakistan Muslim League, was disturbed by the governor general's comments. Chowdhury agreed with Chief Minister Nurul Amin that no one in the ruling circles was aware that Nazimuddin would make such a statement.

Interestingly, not Bangla but Urdu was

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REVAMP OF DHAKA CITY BNP

Nobody willing to take responsibility

RASHIDUL HASAN

The revamp of the BNP's Dhaka city unit is in limbo as most of the senior party leaders are unwilling to take the responsibility of carrying out the job.

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia wants either ASM Hannan Shah or Rafiqul Islam Mia to lead a special committee to reorganise the most crucial unit of the party with a view to waging fresh anti-government movement, but none of them want to take the responsibility citing "old age" as the reason, according to sources.

At a meeting with BNP's Dhaka City unit on Monday, Khaleda said she would dissolve the existing convening committee of the city unit and form a special committee within a day or two. The special body will be tasked to form committees at each ward and thana of the capital through councils within a month.

"Three days have passed but Madam [Khaleda] is yet to announce the special committee. The unwillingness of Hannan Shah and Rafiqul Islam Mia is causing the delay mainly," a Dhaka city unit leader of

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TORTURE AT JUVENILE CENTRE

Supervisor suspended

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

The supervisor-in-charge of Gazipur Juvenile Development Centre has been suspended following some adolescents' protest by self-gashing different parts of their body against its mismanagement.

Aged between 14 and 18, some 20 boys inflicted severe wounds on themselves to protest the torture by its supervisor-in-charge Anwarul Kabir on Tuesday night.

The social welfare department suspended Anwarul on Thursday night for abusing the adolescents, Shah Nawaz Dilruba Khan, additional deputy commissioner (general) in Gazipur, confirmed The Daily Star yesterday.

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Valentine in the Vatican

Pope meets loved-up couples

AFP, Vatican City

Thousands of engaged couples clutching heart balloons and holding "I Love You" banners crowded into St Peter's Square yesterday for a highly unusual Valentine's Day date -- an audience with Pope Francis.

White silk cushions on which couples tie their wedding rings were handed out as gifts - complete with the pope's signature in Latin, "Franciscus" -- during an unprecedented event entitled "The Joy of Yes Forever".



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The photo taken on Wednesday shows residents looking at Mount Sinabung volcano erupting in Sumatra. Yesterday, residents were seen evacuating on a motorbike, inset, in Malang, East Java province, moments after Mount Kelud erupted, killing three.

PHOTO: AFP



KL detains 102 more workers

Bangladeshis among arrestees

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Malaysian immigration police yesterday detained 102 more illegal workers from different countries, including Bangladesh, in an ongoing crackdown against illegal expatriates.

The immigrants were among 257 people who were checked at 43 locations in Besut district, according to Malaysian national news agency Bernama.

However, the exact figure of arrested Bangladeshis could not be known immediately.

Begum Shahida Sultana, first secretary (labour) at

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Dhaka moves to close gap in ties with US

Foreign office team visits Washington on Feb 16-20

REZAUL KARIM

Bangladesh is sending a diplomatic mission to Washington to hold a comprehensive discussion with the State Department officials apparently to address the concerns of the United States.

Diplomatic sources say it would not be an easy task to achieve any tangible development as the US attitude is "negative" on a number of vital issues in Bangladesh like the January 5 election, workers' rights and safety, Grameen Bank, and overall rights situation, which were clearly reflected during the February 11 hearing at the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

They add the US-Bangladesh relations have also not been so warm over the past couple of years.

Foreign Secretary Shahidul Haq will lead the four-member team in the February 16-20 tour. The team also

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ONLINE POLL

Do you think it was justified for Additional Home Secretary Kamal Uddin Ahmed to say that the government has adopted zero tolerance for extrajudicial killing?

Yes


(17%)

No

(83%)

TOTAL VOTES: 196

The Daily Star



Integral Energy Limited

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think Bangladesh would be able to fulfill all the criteria given by the US administration for the revival of GSP facility?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT www.thedailystar.net

PRAYER TIMING

February 15

Azan Jamaat	Azan Jamaat	Azan Jamaat
Fajr 5:25 6:00	Zohr 12:45 1:15	Asr 4:30 4:45
Maghrib 5:57 6:01	Esha 7:15 7:45	

Source: Islamic Foundation

Thai govt go tough to stop protests

Cops move to clear protest site, army says enough is enough

AGENCIES

Thousands of riot police were deployed in the Thai capital yesterday to clear areas occupied for weeks by opposition protesters, tearing down makeshift barricades around the besieged government headquarters.

The operation in Bangkok marked an unexpected shift in tactics by Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra's government after months during which the demonstrators have often appeared to be more

in control of the city than the authorities.

Apparently emboldened by dwindling protester numbers and the failure of the opposition to have a recent election nullified by the courts, the government attempted to regain the upper hand by reclaiming key state buildings.

Police with shields and riot helmets, some carrying rifles, met little resistance as they re-took areas around Government House, which Yingluck had been unable to use for about two months.

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Robots to build future houses

MAIL ONLINE

They are as industrious as Bob the Builder and possess the same social intelligence as a colony of termites.

A crew of self-organising robots created by US scientists can construct towers, castles and pyramids without any supervision or detailed instructions.

It is hoped the study of the co-operative bots is a small step towards a time when autonomous robots could build real structures on Earth and even on other planets.

Each Termites bots are given an overall idea what the finished job

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