



A child seeks warmth in her mother's lap at a slum in the city, as the mild cold snap continued in the capital and elsewhere in the country yesterday. The mild cold wave is likely to continue for two to three more days.

PHOTO: STAR

Cold wave continues

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The mist and fog across the country is predicted to remain unchanged for next two-three days and the present mild cold wave is also to continue, the Met Office forecasted.

Meanwhile, the difference between the maximum and minimum temperatures in the capital is also decreasing. The lowest temperature was 11 degrees Celsius and the highest 14.5 yesterday.

"If the difference between maximum and minimum temperatures increases and solar radiation comes out, city dwellers would feel comfortable," said Deputy Director of the Met Office Dr. Samarendra Karmakar.

The lowest temperature of the country was recorded at Ishurdi at 6.9 degrees Celsius while the highest of 27.2 was at Teknaf.

The met office forecasted that the sky would remain cloudy with medium to deep mist occurring in the northern region of the country and the river basins. The mild cold wave that has been sweeping

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

BDR, police on alert for crime comeback

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has put the paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), Armed Police Battalion and other law-enforcement agencies on a high alert across the country to curb any lawlessness following the withdrawal of the army.

Sources at the home ministry and police said the law-enforcement agencies would be relocated in strategic places. Besides, there is a plan to deploy an additional number of Armed Police Battalion in the capital and other sensitive areas of the country.

Police sources said currently there are four battalions of Armed Police in the Chittagong Hill Tracts and the authorities have suggested to the home ministry to relocate at least two battalions in Dhaka.

The intelligence network in Dhaka, Chittagong and some other specific areas would also be enhanced. Officials said a decision

has also been taken to further enhance intelligence network of the armed forces.

Both the army intelligence and DGFI will assist the government by providing timely information related to crime, criminals and drugs. They said the government has ordered the troops and law enforcers to take instant action if any political activists or criminals try to break law.

The newly floated Rapid Action Team of police, which is expected to swing into action from the last week of this month, will be given special assignments. They said next batch of 150 members of police would soon be sent for para-commando training after the passing out of the first batch.

"We have decided to train up some 2,000 smart police personnel to make the Rapid Action Team an effective force. Gradually its territory would be all over the country,"

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Gas gap keeps yawning

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The gas supply crisis in and around the city showed no signs of improvement yesterday, affecting both domestic and bulk consumers.

Titas Gas Managing Director Abdul Baset said the supply situation is unlikely to improve throughout the winter.

A source in the Gas Transmission Company Ltd (GTCL) said the problem would not have arisen had the Taka 500 crore Ashuganj-Elenga 30 inch second pipeline project been implemented. This project - that seeks to increase gas flow to Dhaka and its adjacent areas - is stuck in Petrobangla for the last one year.

The gas crisis has affected indus

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

HC verdicts on police promotion upheld

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court on Sunday dismissed two leave petitions filed by the government challenging a High Court verdict.

The High Court upheld an Administrative Tribunal judgement that said promotion of 135 officiating assistant superintendents of police (ASPs) should take effect from 1998 instead of 1991, as the government had ordered.

The bench comprising Justice Ruhul Amin, Justice Abu Sayeed Ahammed and Justice Fazlul Haq passed the order terming that promotion of 135 officiating ASPs "unlawful".

The Inspector General of Police (IGP) in 1998 promoted 135 Inspectors to the rank of ASP with

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

SUST teachers stage sit-in for study leave

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Two teachers of Shahjalal University of Science & Technology (SUST) staged a sit-in for the second day yesterday to press for approval of their study leave they had applied for earlier.

Assistant Professor of Anthropology Kazi Afzal Ahmed and Assistant Professor of Industrial and Production Engineering Md. Mostafizur Rahman alleged that despite approval by the 'Study Leave Committee', university authorities only granted them leave without salary, adding that they had been victims of the VC's grudge.

The two teachers staged the sit-in from 10:00am to 5:00pm in front of the Registrar's Building. About 60 teachers of the university expressed solidarity with them and signed a

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Rejoinder

The Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) has contradicted a news item, titled Sarbahara leader dies during army interrogation, published in The Daily Star on January 8.

In its rejoinder, the ISPR said the death of the Sarbahara leader, Nasir Uddin, had no connection with army interrogation.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

Security deposit for manpower export to KSA now Tk1cr

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A sudden increase in the mandatory deposit as security for the agents exporting manpower to Saudi Arabia has sparked resentment.

The government yesterday issued a circular making mandatory a deposit of Tk 1 crore up from Tk 15 lakh.

The announcement led the Bangladesh Association for International Recruiting Agencies (BAIRA) to call an emergency meeting last night, protesting the move.

The BAIRA demanded immediate reconsideration of the circular issued under section 10 of the Immigration Ordinance, 1982.

"The step was taken to discipline manpower exports and lower the migration cost to Saudi Arabia as it went beyond control," said Mohammad Quamrul Islam, state minister for expatriates welfare and overseas employment.

The expatriates welfare and overseas employment ministry received a lot of complaints about sufferings of migrants to Saudi Arabia, he said.

"I have warned recruiters several times about the higher migration cost, but they did not heed."

"The money will be taken as security for compensation to the

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

Re-export of three items approved

MONJUR MAHMUD

A move is underway to allow limited re-export of three products to other countries.

The government yesterday in principle agreed to allow three local companies to import wheat, mustard seed and boulder salt, and re-export them in consumer packs after processing.

A high-powered committee headed by Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Commerce Bazlur Rashid in a meeting yesterday okayed separate applications submitted by three local companies.

According to sources, Nepal and Bhutan apart, Bangladeshi traders would be able to get market in northeastern states of India when the plan is finally implemented.

"If it works smoothly, more companies might be included in the

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

Khaleda to urge Mahathir to lift manpower ban

RAFIQ HASAN

Manpower export to Malaysia could top the agenda when Prime Minister Khaleda Zia meets Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad on the sidelines of the February 24-25 Non-alignment Movement (NAM) summit in Kuala Lumpur.

The summit was scheduled for Dhaka but later shifted to Kuala Lumpur after the Bangladesh Nationalist Party-led coalition government declined to host it on grounds of financial constraints.

According to sources, Khaleda may request Mahathir for withdrawal of the ban on fresh recruitment from Bangladesh.

The Bangladesh delegation

would take every opportunity to raise manpower export with the Malaysian government, the sources added.

The Mahathir government slapped a ban on fresh recruitment from Bangladesh in 1997. Since then, the Southeast Asian country has allowed workers from a number of other developing and underdeveloped countries.

Some 500,000 Bangladesh workers were employed in mills and factories in Malaysia during the 1995-96 period, according to available official figures.

The Mahathir government imposed a restriction on manpower recruitment after it found out that

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

Indemnity Ctg Bar to boycott court Jan 16

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Chittagong District Bar Association (CDBA) will boycott all civil and criminal courts in the port city on January 16 protesting the cabinet's approval of the ordinance indemnifying army actions during the anti-crime drive.

The decision was taken at a general meeting of the CDBA held at its office yesterday afternoon.

Presided over by advocate Abu Mohammad Hashem, senior vice-president of CDBA, the meeting was addressed among others by General Secretary Mohammad Nazmul Ahsan Khan, Kamal Uddin, Sammoysri Barua, and AKM Sirajul Islam.

The speakers at the meeting criticised the government for approving the ordinance.

Terming the 'Joint Drive Indemnity Ordinance -2003' anti-humane, the lawyers noted that it would curb peoples' rights.

They demanded probe and trial of the custodial deaths of the 50 people during the joint drive.

They also demanded exemplary punishment of those responsible for the torture and the killings.

Tigers fly off

SPORTS REPORTER

A 19-member Bangladesh World Cup cricket team left the Dhaka yesterday afternoon to participate in the World Cup tournament to be held in South Africa.

The squad will be heading for Namibia first for a two-week conditioning camp before embarking on the World Cup campaign.

During their stay in Namibian capital Windhoek, Bangladesh are scheduled to play five one-day matches against the home side who have also qualified for the World Cup final through the ICC Trophy championship in which they became runners up behind the Netherlands. The team will then leave for South Africa on January 31.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

Shibir wants to spread wings over DU

STAR REPORT

Having established dominance in some major public universities and educational institutions across the country, Jamaat-e-Islami's student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) is now contemplating to expand their activities on the Dhaka University (DU) campus with more vigour.

Its immediate past president Nurul Islam Bulbul said they would start holding processions and rallies on the campus in favour of party programmes to strengthen the organisation's position.

The ICS insiders said its high-ups are considering holding a rally on January 17 to wish luck to the admission seekers to the university.

DU admission tests begin on January 17. It is customary of student bodies to bring out processions and hold rallies marking the occasion to woo students.

The former president claimed the ICS has officially requested the DU authorities to let them participate in meetings of the Paribesh Parishad, a forum of all student organisations active on Dhaka University campus. The DU authorities denied having received any such request from the ICS.

In the past, members of the Paribesh Parishad did not allow the ICS to join the forum for what they said its pursuing communal politics and its role (then Islami Chhatra

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

SC stays HC order on Viqarunnisa

UNB, Dhaka

The Supreme Court yesterday stayed for six weeks the execution of Sunday's High Court order asking the authorities concerned to reopen the Viqarunnisa University forthwith and create proper academic atmosphere on the campus.

Syed JR Modassir Hossain, Chamber Judge of the Appellate Division, passed the order upon a petition moved by Attorney General AF Hassan Arif for the government.

The private university within the Viqarunnisa School and College premises functioning since October 2001 was closed down following a government notification cancelling its registration on November 27 last.

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Jan 14		5-32 pm
Jan 15	6-44 am	

Prayer Timings		
Jan 14		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-30	6-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-35	5-41
Esha	7-00	7-30
Source: Islamic Foundation		