

NEWS IN *brief*

**Convention for Adivasi Jan 14**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two-day long national convention of National Coalition for Indigenous People (NCIP) will start on January 14 at LGRD Bhaban in Agargaon in the city. NCIP representatives announced this at a press conference in National Press Club yesterday. Save the Children, USA Director M Habibur Rahman read out the written speech in the press conference. Four seminars on four important issues will be held in the convention and short, middle and long term plans for proper activities of NCIP will be taken along with finalisation of organogram and formation of the director panel.

**'City schools overcharging fees'**

DU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra Union of Dhaka Mahanagar Unit yesterday protested the excessive admission fee in different educational institutions in the capital. The union leaders said the government has fixed a maximum of Tk 5,000 for admission purposes, but different schools are charging three to seven times the amount. The allegation came from a human chain Chhatra Union formed in front of the Jatiya Press Club in the city. Union President Manobendra Dev and Mir Mosharaf Hossain Khan also addressed the programme presided over by M Ibrahim.

**Eight Jica volunteers arrive**

METRO DESK

Eight members of Jica volunteers arrived in Bangladesh on Saturday for a period of two years of assignment, says a press release. The members will be assigned to work in different fields of expertise to help improve the lives of Bangladeshi people. The team met Jica Chief Representative Takao Toda yesterday and described their target activities. One member of the team will work on rural community development in Tangail, two on infection control in Comilla, one on surgery in Cox's Bazar, one on computer technology in Chittagong, one on agriculture extension in Dhaka, one on environment education in Dhaka city, and one on judo coaching at Bangladesh Judo Federation.

**Paban's bail term extended**

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday extended till January 26 the bail term of Khondaker Akhter Hamid Paban, son of BNP Secretary General Khondaker Delwar Hossain, in a cracker blast case. Judge Mohammad Zohurul Hoque of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court passed the order after Paban along with his lawyers appeared before the court and submitted a petition seeking extension of his bail term as it expired yesterday. The court also directed authorities concerned to publish an advertisement in two national dailies asking Omar Faruk, former Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) president of Chatkhil thana unit of Noakhali district to appear before it on January 26. The same court on November 22 last year extended his bail term till yesterday.

**GP distributes blankets**

METRO DESK

Grameenphone Ltd has started distributing blankets in Northern Bangladesh from January 7. Around 8,500 blankets is being distributed in 14 districts of Rajshahi and Rangpur divisions, namely Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj, Sirajganj, Joypurhat, Naogaon, Pabna, Nilphamari, Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Gaibandha, Rangpur, Dinajpur, Thakurgaon and Panchagarh. The blankets are being distributed with the help of local administrations.



PHOTO: STAR

Artist Quayyum Chowdhury looks at a cartoon in an exhibition titled 'Dhaka Toons' at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

**Obituary**

METRO DESK



Rashed Mowdud Khan, president of Bangladesh Ceramic Ware Manufacturers' Association (BCWMA) and chairman of Bengal Fine Ceramics Ltd, passed away at Apollo Hospitals in the city yesterday at the age of 72, says a press release.

He was laid to rest at Banani graveyard in the city after his namaz-e-janaza at Dhaka University Mosque after Asr prayers yesterday. All have been requested to pray for eternal peace of the departed soul.

**Death anniversary**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the first death anniversary of Nurul Hassan, former president of Institute of Cost and Management Accountants of Bangladesh (ICMA) and South Asian Federation of Accountants (SAFA), says a press release.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil will be held at his Uttara residence.

**Qulkhwani**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Qulkhwani of Rawshan Ali, former director of Federation of Bangladesh Chambers and Commerce Industries (FBCCI), will be held at his residence at 41/8 Purana Paltan in the city after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

Rawshan, a philanthropist of Arai Hajar Upazila of Narayanganj, passed away at Birdem hospital on Friday. Rawshan left behind his wife, two daughters, one son and a host of relatives and well-wishers to mourn his death.

He is the father-in-law of Md Mofakkarul Iqbal, senior information officer of housing and public works ministry. **Mehrnessa Begum**

METRO DESK



Qulkhwani of Mehrnessa Begum, wife of late Mohammed Akram, will be held at Gausia Manzil, 12 Gausul Azam Avenue, Sector 13, Uttara in the city after Maghrib prayers today, says a press release.

Mehrnessa passed away after prolonged illness due to old age on Friday. She was laid to rest at the Uttara Sector 4 graveyard on Saturday.

**Cartoons speak of city's water crisis, gridlock**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With a pitcher of water, a father came to visit his daughter in Dhaka. The surprised daughter asked him the reason for bringing water from their village home far away. The father replied that he brought water as he heard about an acute crisis of drinking water in Dhaka. This was not a real story, not even one in a book. Cartoonist Khalil depicted it through a cartoon describing the scarcity of drinking water in Dhaka. Khalil's cartoon and of others portraying different types of sufferings and problems in Dhaka was on display in a cartoon exhibition 'Dhaka Toons' at National Press Club in the city yesterday. A total of 71 cartoons drawn by 34 professional and non-professional cartoonists are on display. They described stories of unbearable traffic congestion,

water crisis, load-shedding, fear of earthquake, power crisis, waterlogging, water pollution and other problems. Cartoonist Shishir Bhattacharya, Ahsan Habib, artists Quayyum Chowdhury and Rafiqun Nabi drew three cartoons after inaugurating the exhibition, to continue till tomorrow. A new platform titled Bangladesh Cartoonist Association, formed by a group of cartoonists, also emerged through the exhibition. Attending the function, Ahsan Habib congratulated the young cartoonists for organising such a wonderful function and forming the association. Habibur Rahman Hasan of Dhaka College, while visiting the exhibition, said, "This is really amusing. The cartoonists described most of Dhaka's problems through their cartoons." Cartoons published in different newspapers as well as some unpublished are on display.

**200 tolas gold stolen from national temple**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 200 tolas of gold ornaments and Tk 4.5 lakh in cash were stolen from Dhakeshwari Mandir in the city on Saturday night. Worshiping in the temple remained stopped since yesterday morning in protest of the theft. Police detained four persons including the security guards and cleaners. Nirmal Chatterjee, joint secretary of Mahanagar Sarbojaneen Puja Committee, said two sebayets (people that conduct pujas) left locked all the locks of the main temple on Saturday night and found all the locks missing on return yesterday morning. "All the ornaments were worn on the bodies of three goddesses as devotees presented those. The money was kept in the boxes in front of the goddesses." "We suspect an organised gang is involved in the burglary," Nirmal said. Nirmal alleged that they had informed the government authorities several times of the insecurity of Dhakeshwari temple, but in vain. A protest meeting was held in front of the temple yesterday morning when the temple committee announced another protest rally today. The puja committee President Bires Chandra Saha filed a general diary (GD) with Chawkbazar Police Station.



PHOTO: STAR

Attractive reception initiatives for children attending school for the first time, such as being greeted by this playful Minnie Mouse, were taken at Wills Little Flower School and College in the city yesterday.

**WAR CRIMES ISSUES  
Top US official due today**

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

US Ambassador-at-Large for War Crimes Issues Stephen J Rapp arrives in Dhaka today on a five-day visit for a round of meetings with senior government officials, political leaders, civil society groups, and the media of Bangladesh. According to an announcement of the US Embassy in Dhaka, Bangladesh government invited the envoy here to share his experiences and perspectives on war crimes issues. His departure from Dhaka is scheduled for January 13. Before holding the current post, Ambassador Rapp served as prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone in January 2007, leading the prosecutions of former Liberian president Charles Taylor and other persons alleged for the atrocities in the civil war in Sierra Leone.

**Minor boy burnt dead**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A minor boy was burnt to death and his brother injured critically in a house fire at Goran in the city last night. The deceased is Morshed Sujon, a two and a half years old boy, whose brother Abul Kashem, 7, is fighting for life at Dhaka Medical College Hospital with his 40 percent body burnt. Fire Brigade sources said a tin-roofed house caught fire around 8:00pm, and they doused it half-hour later. They could not tell reasons of the fire immediately. Local people managed to bring Kashem out from the house, but they could not bring out Sujon.

**Call to sort out harmful objects from waste**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Harmful objects should be sorted out from waste before throwing those into the dustbins or dumping sites, said speakers at a seminar yesterday. This system will protect those women and children who work on the garbage sites from harmful materials, including sharp objects or medical waste. Research Initiatives, Bangladesh (RIB) and Grambangla Unnayan Committee (GBCU) organised the seminar on 'Depraved conditions of scavenging children and women' at Cirdap Auditorium in the city. Over four lakh people, including children, scavenge through these garbage dumps to earn their livelihoods. They face serious health hazards and are deprived of basic human rights, said the speakers. "People express a feeling of repulsion towards us. They ask us to stay away from them," said Sufia, a scavenger at DCC landfill in Matuail. These women are forced to take their children in the landfills. These children are exposed to harmful waste materials, said the speakers. The situation cannot be solved immediately but the government should take short-term initiatives to this end, said Prof Anisur Rahman. Speaking as the chief guest, Foreign Minister Dipu Moni said some of the health hazards faced by the scavengers could be minimised by providing them with protective gloves and boots. RIB Chairman Dr Shamsul Bari chaired the programme while GBCU Executive Director AKM Maqsood presented the keynote paper.

**MONIRUZZAMAN, RIZVI  
Allow them to go abroad  
HC asks govt**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the government not to restrict former Dhaka University vice chancellor Prof Moniruzzaman Mia, and BNP leader Ruhul Kabir Rizvi to go abroad and return back to country. An HC bench of Justice Miftahuddin Choudhury and Justice Jahangir Hossain passed the order following two separate writ petitions filed by Prof Moniruzzaman and Rizvi. They filed the petitions yesterday following some newspaper reports earlier published saying that they would be restricted to go abroad. The court also issued separate rules upon the government to explain within four weeks why such decision to restrict the petitioners to go abroad should not be declared illegal.

**WEATHER TODAY**

**Fall in night temperature likely**

UNB, Dhaka  
Weather may remain dry over the country with partly cloudy sky in next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Moderate to thick fog may occur over Rajshahi and Rangpur divisions and the river basins of the country. Light to moderate fog may occur elsewhere over the country during midnight till morning, Met Office said. Mild cold wave is sweeping over Rajshahi, Pabna, Dinajpur, Sayedpur and Kushtia and it may continue. Night temperature may fall slightly over the country.

**The sun sets in the capital at 5:29pm today and rises at 6:43am tomorrow.**

Country's highest temperature 30.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Cox's Bazar and lowest 08.5 degrees Celsius at Ishwardi.

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	26.3	14.2	77	68
Chittagong	28.5	17.0	86	78
Rajshahi	23.6	08.7	88	67
Rangpur	23.5	10.4	100	80
Khulna	26.0	13.3	84	73
Barisal	27.0	13.4	87	74