

NEWS IN *brief*

Two looted Buddhist idols found

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Two idols of Lord Buddha were recovered from a pond at Mondolpara in Ramu upazila of Cox's Bazar yesterday.

The two were among the several hundred idols, which were looted during a mob attack on the Buddhist monasteries in the upazila on September 29 last year.

Rapid Action Battalion found the metal-brass idols--both weighing half a kg and measuring 15.5cm and 12.5cm in length--abandoned in the

Lead-based paints can cause brain damage: Experts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Seventy-seven percent of the population of the country is exposed to lead-based paints that can cause them irreversible brain damage, particularly who are under the age of six, experts said yesterday.

They were addressing the inauguration of "IPEN Asian Lead Paint Elimination Project" organised by Environment and Social Development Organisation in its head office at Lalmatia in the capital, says a press release.

Engineer Md Abdur Rahman, managing director, Anchor Paint Industries Pvt Ltd, said Bangladesh Paint Manufacturer Association is willing to take standard regulatory measures on

ACC okays 105 cases last Dec

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) approved filing of 105 cases against 141 people in last December on various corruption charges.

ACC Secretary Faizur Rahman Chowdhury said this at a press briefing in its headquarters in the capital.

The 141 accused include 69 government employees, 25 businessmen and three public representatives, he added.

The secretary also revealed that from January to December last year, the ACC took up 11,644 corrupt allegations for investigations.

He, however, declined to comment on the World Bank's external panel's letter to the commission regarding the Padma bridge graft case.



The Wasa intersection portion of the 20km "human wall" formed by BNP-led 18-party alliance in Chittagong city yesterday, protesting forced disappearances of opposition leaders and activists and the killing of Bishwajit Das. The human wall stretched between Patenga and Karnaphuli Bridge intersections. PHOTO: STAR

**PROTESTING FUEL PRICE HIKE
6hrs hartal today**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leftist political parties will observe a countrywide six-hour hartal from 6:00am to 12:00pm today protesting the recent increase of power and fuel prices in the country.

The parties include all seven left-leaning components of Gonoantrik Bam Morcha, Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) and Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD).

On January 3, the government increased the prices of diesel and kerosene by Tk 7 a litre, and that of octane and petrol by Tk 5 a litre.

The left leaders said the people will reject the decision of the government by making the hartal a success.

The six hours of suffering caused by the hartal is very little compared to the suffering of people caused by the fuel prices hike, they said.

Leaders of CPB and BSD held views exchanging meeting with bus and truck owners' associations of different terminals to make the hartal successful.



Founding ceremony

IUBAT will start a month-long celebration of its Foundation Day; Venue: IUBAT campus, Uttara; Time: 4:00pm.

Workshop

International Food Policy Research Institute will arrange a workshop on food security; Venue: Ruposhi Bangla Hotel; Time: 2:00pm.

Discussion

Oitijya Foundation will hold a discussion on Nawab Salimullah and Today's Bangladesh; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 3:00pm.

Rally

Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha will stage a rally demanding to a step to eliminate violence against women; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 3:00pm.

Discussion

Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Karmajibi Kalyan Parishad will organise discussion

**'MISCONDUCT' AT TRIBUNAL-1
Defence counsel asked to follow decorum**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday exonerated three defence lawyers for the accused Jamaat leaders from contempt of court proceedings accepting their unconditional apology over "misconduct" in courtroom.

The three-member tribunal led by Justice ATM Fazle Kabir however warned the defence counsel, Tajul Islam, and asked him to maintain the court decorum.

The tribunal issued a show cause notice on November 6 on the three lawyers--Mizanul Islam, Tajul Islam, and Tanvir Ahmed Al-Amin--about why contempt of court proceedings should not be initiated against them for their "misconduct" on the preceding day.

On November 5, the lawyers created a commotion at the tribunal over the alleged abduction of a prosecution witness by plainclothes police and boycotted the proceedings when the tribunal took time to investigate the matter. The chaos forced the judges to leave the courtroom.

During the commotion, defence coun-

sel Mizanul Islam repeatedly called the Chief Prosecutor, Ghulam Arief Tipoo, "a liar". On the same day, Tajul told journalists that the tribunal might have involvement in the "abduction".

In reply to the show cause notice, the three lawyers sought unconditional mercy of the tribunal.

Meanwhile, the tribunal yesterday rejected Jamaat leader Ghulam Azam's petition for accepting the reports of a Bangla daily on alleged Skype conversations between Justice Md Nizamul Huq, former chief of the tribunal, and an expatriate legal expert as defence documents.

Defence lawyers for the war crimes accused Salauddin Quader Chowdhury and Ghulam Azam yesterday completed submission of two petitions on removal of Prosecutor Zead Al Malum. The tribunal fixed January 20 for passing an order.

Another defence counsel, Abdur Razzaque, completed submission of three petitions on the review of the retrial order for Jamaat leaders Ghulam Azam, Motiur Rahman Nizami and Delawar Hossain Sayedee.



Slight rise in night temperature

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country in 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

Thick fog may occur over the river basins and moderate to thick fog elsewhere over the country during midnight till morning, Met Office said.

Mild cold wave is sweeping over Rangpur division and the regions of Pabna, Jessore, Rajshahi, Kustia, Rangamati, Barisal and Srimangal and it may continue.

Night temperature may rise slightly and day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:33pm and rises tomorrow at 6:43am.

Country's highest temperature 28.2 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sitakunda and lowest 07.2 degrees at Srimangal.

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

	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max:	Min:	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	26.5	12.3	68	52
Chittagong	25.0	12.4	86	72
Rajshahi	26.2	09.6	97	69
Rangpur	24.7	09.4	88	73
Khulna	26.8	12.0	98	79
Barisal	26.6	10.0	95	70

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