

## Prof Asaduzzaman

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Dhaka University (DU). Asaduzzaman suffered a massive heart attack at his Fuller Road residence at around 9:45am. He was immediately taken to the Birdem Hospital where the doctors declared him dead a few minutes later.

He left behind his wife, two sons, a daughter and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

The first namaj-e-janaza of Prof Asaduzzaman was held at Dhaka University Central Mosque after Juma prayers yesterday. DU teachers, students, UGC Chairman Nazrul Islam, former DU VC Prof Anwarullah Chowdhury, Prof AK Azad Chowdhury, Bangladesh Bank Governor Saleh Uddin Ahmed, Jagannath University Vice-Chancellor Prof Sirajul Islam Khan, media personalities Faridur Reza Sagar, Shykh Siraj, among others, attended the janaza. The body was then kept at Birdem mortuary.

His second namaj-e-janaza will be held in front of Aparajeo Bangla on the DU campus at 11:00am today. The body will be kept there for an hour so that the teachers and students can pay their last respect to him.

Prof Asaduzzaman will be laid to rest at Martyred Intellectuals' Graveyard at Mirpur today.

President Iajuddin Ahmed, Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed and Education Adviser Hossain Zillur Rahman expressed deep shock at the death of former UGC chairman and DU teacher Prof Asaduzzaman.

In separate condolence messages, they recalled the contribution of the noted educationist to the development of the country's education sector. They prayed for the salvation of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to the bereaved family members.

DU Vice-Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz condoled the death of Prof Asaduzzaman. In a condolence message yesterday, Prof Faiz said Asaduzzaman was a devoted teacher, researcher and efficient administrator. In his death, the country has lost a noted educationist, he added.

He prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul.

Former education minister Osman Faruque, DU Pro-VC AFM Yusuf Haider, Treasurer Syed Abul Kalam Azad, Vice Chancellor of Bangladesh Agriculture University (BAU) Prof Muehsarrar Hossain Mian and Vice-Chancellor of Patuakhali Science and Technology University Prof Abdul Latif Masum also expressed deep shock at the death of Prof Asaduzzaman.

## Climate change

**FROM PAGE 1**  
guilty of the highest carbon emission would take in people from the countries worst affected. He said Bangladesh alone would have 20-25 million 'climate refugees' by 2050.

He noted that Bangladesh will be facing six major threats stemming from global warming. Even a one-metre rise in sea level would submerge one-fifth of the country by 2050-2075. Cyclones would be creeping deeper in the delta because of saline intrusion.

Cyclone velocity would increase, and storms would be increasingly more intense. Besides, floods would be more frequent; irregular rainfall would make it difficult for farming; and the North-West would become drier increasing the chances of greater food insecurity.

**DISCUSSION ON MEDIA FREEDOM**

The discussion on global warming was followed by the one on 'media freedom in Bangladesh'. There, editors of Prothom Alo, The Daily Star, and The Independent shared optimism that the media would enjoy greater freedom under a new democratic government after elections.

Prothom Alo Editor Matiu Rahman said violence against journalists had been a serious problem under successive governments.

He said that although there were cases of intimidation and assault on journalists during the current state of emergency, the media's resistance has forced the government to back off.

However, he lauded the government's decision to pass the Right to Information law that he believes would help the cause of media freedom here.

The editor of the highest circu-

## Women policy

**FROM PAGE 1**  
against the country's women education, co-education, population control and all kinds of women and social development.

The government-announced National Women Policy is in line with the country's constitution, Millennium Development Goals, poverty elimination programme and other national and international policies, the statement said.

"Formation of such a committee is contrary to the government-declared national development, equal rights and establishment of a corruption-free society," it said.

It needs to be explained whether the recommendations of the review committee on the government-announced policy will be legal or not, the women leaders said, adding that the initiative has angered half of the country's population.

They urged the political parties, social and cultural organisations and professional bodies who work for equal rights and establishing a corruption-free society to be vocal against this.

Ayesha Khanam, president of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, Sultana Kamal, executive director of Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK), and Hamida Hossain of ASK, Shirin Akter and Rokeya Kabir of Karmajibi Nari, Salma Ali of Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA), Hazera Sultana of Nari Mukti Sangsad, Fawzia Haque Khandaker of UNDP, and leaders of Bangladesh Nari Pragati Shingha, Mahila Muktiyoddha Sangsad, Bangladesh Trade Union Kendra and Steps Towards Development, are among the signatories to the statement.

Meanwhile, the workers of some Islamist organisations, led by Jamaat-e-Islami leader Delwar Hossain Sayedee, yesterday brought out a procession from the north gate of Baitul Mukarram National Mosque demanding cancellation of the National Women Policy.

They also demanded resignation of Women and Children Affairs Adviser Rasheda K Chowdhury.

## No famine in country: Aziz

UNB, Faridpur

Dismissing the claim by various quarters that a 'silent famine' is stalking through the country, Finance Adviser Dr Mirza Azizul Islam said the price of rice will come down after the harvest of Boro paddy.

"There is no famine in the country. The prices of essentials have gone up following the price-hike on the international market... this is not unusual," he said when local newsmen asked whether there is any famine in the country.

He was talking to the journalists after inaugurating a branch of Employment Bank in Alphadanga upazila in the afternoon.

The finance adviser said the government has taken various steps to bring down the prices of essentials and hoped that the rice supply will get a boost on the local market after the Boro harvest.

About the next budget, he said health, education and human resources development will get priority in the new budget.

## 16,000 tonnes more rice arrive thru' land ports

STAR REPORT

About 16,000 tonnes of rice entered country yesterday, the fourth day of resumption of rice import from India through Benapole land port.

With this a total of about 21,526 tonnes of rice at the rate of \$505 at tonne has been imported during the last four days.

Our Benapole correspondent reports, about 4,776 tonnes of rice was imported yesterday the government holiday through the local land port.

This is the highest amount of rice imported from India in recent days, said Abdul Aziz, assistant commissioner of Benapole customs.

Besides, about 9,558 tonnes of rice was imported from Sona Masjid land port by track and wagon.

About 2,800 tonnes of rice was also imported through Hili land port.

## War criminals

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Abdul Aziz, AKM Mostafa Zaham, Moksedur Rahman, Sheikh Kutub Uddin, Abdul Jabbar, Syed Harun Or Rashid and Advocate Abdul Hai, among others, addressed the meeting.

A draft list of 165 razakars in the district, including Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer of Patuakhali unit Maulana Ashraf Ali Khan, was announced at the meeting. According to the list, 91 razakars are from sadar upazila, 10 from Dunki, five from Dasmina, nine from Kalapara, 19 from Baulal and 31 from Galachipia upazila.

The district unit of Muktiyoddha Sangsad also announced a list of 318 martyred freedom fighters in the district-192 from sadar upazila, eight from Dunki, 65 from Baulal, 11 from Mirzagonj, three from Kalapara and 39 from Galachipia upazila.

Later, the freedom fighters went to Itbaria village under sadar upazila and talked to the family members of martyred freedom fighters and victims of tortures by the Razakars, Al-Badr and Al-Shams.

## Time to expand

**FROM PAGE 1**  
attended by former government officials, local journalists, civil society members and businessmen.

Almost all the Asian nations' growth rate ranges from 6 to 10 percent and it is a huge market, Iftekhar Chowdhury said, adding that this region has many home-grown ideas to share with the rest of the globe.

Referring to the concept of microcredit and non-formal education, he said these ideas originated in Bangladesh, but are now being copied in many parts of the globe.

The foreign adviser said Bangladesh has a vibrant civil society and media that are creating social mobility and helping gradual transformation of the society.

The country believes in its sovereignty and at the same time maintains good relations with the neighbouring countries, regional bodies, and international communities. It works relentlessly in the peace building processes of the world, he said. "This is a key feature of our diplomatic policies."

"In today's world, Bangladesh can be a good example of nation-building and peace-keeping," he observed.

He said the country, however, wants to reduce its external dependency and take decisions without external influences.

"We recently experienced that self-sufficiency in food is very important," he said.

Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star and chairman of ANN, and Werner von Busch, director of media programme, Konrad Adenauer Foundation, also spoke on the occasion. ANN is financially supported by Konrad Adenauer Stiftung.

## Retailers fix prices

**FROM PAGE 1**  
kets throughout the last couple of days.

The prices of rice were stable in the last few days following the sharp rise in the previous three weeks despite the import of rice from India since Thursday.

Traders said the price of rice may decrease further from today. The price of a 50kg sack of pulses dropped by Tk 50 in wholesale markets in the last three days. The price had fallen by Tk 300-500 the previous week but the decrease had no impact on its retail price.

The wholesale price of the local masur of better quality dropped to Tk 83 per kg this Thursday from the previous week's Tk 94, but the pulses were still selling at Tk 95-100 per kg.

Traders at Rahmatganj Dal Patti, country's largest wholesale market of pulses, told The Daily Star that the price has been decreasing every day in markets in Jessore, Faridpur and Rajshahi because of the availability of local varieties.

The wholesale price of a 74kg sack of local flour dropped to Tk 2,700 on Thursday from Tk 3,200 of two weeks ago, but the drop has not had any impact on the retail price. Flour was still selling at Tk 44-47 per kg, the same as a week ago.

A wholesaler at Karwan Bazar said the millers have been producing flour from local wheat that arrived in the market in the last two weeks, which caused the fall in its price.

Sugar was selling at Tk 34 per kg in wholesale market; the price was Tk 40 ten days ago. Its retail price was Tk 40-42 per kg which now stands at Tk 38-40.

The wholesale price of non-branded edible oil dropped by Tk 15-18 per kg but the price of branded soya bean oil did not see any decrease.

Non-branded soya bean oil was selling at Tk 3,680 per maund at wholesale markets yesterday; the price was Tk 4,300 around two weeks ago.

**FROM PAGE 16**  
will be held at 4:00pm with Prof Kabir Chowdhury in the chair.

Among others, Lt Col (ret'd) Abu Osman Chowdhury, commander of Sector No. 8 during the liberation war, Mukta Datta, deputy high commissioner of Indian High Commission in Dhaka, journalist Kamal Lohani, architect Rabiul Hussain and journalist Shahjir Kabir will be present at the discussion.

## Truth Commission

**FROM PAGE 1**  
their involvement in corruption and later make voluntary disclosures to the Truth Commission.

According to the draft ordinance, corruption and corrupt practices include offences mentioned in the schedule of the ACC Act 2004, Foreign Exchange Act 1947, Income Tax Ordinance 1984, Value Added Tax Act 1991, and Customs Act 1969, evasion of any government revenue including stamp duty, registration fee and any other charge or levy imposed by any law or rules, or contravention of any provision of the Bank Company Act 1994.

On full compliance and implementation of the Truth Commission's order within a timeframe, a person dealt with leniently by the commission will stand exonerated from the criminal liabilities as contained in their voluntary disclosure.

The Truth Commission, on full compliance and implementation of its order, will seal the exoneration of criminal liability for such corruption and corrupt practices which from then will be a conclusive proof for their exoneration.

On the need of forming the Truth Commission, the draft says, "It is considered necessary to establish a Commission to lessen the burden of prosecuting and proving offences and save the overburdened legal system from being preoccupied with dealing with corruption cases for a long period risking further backlog in the courts."

It also says the caretaker government pledged ridding the country of "pervasive" and "ingrained" corruption, "but prosecution for such widespread corruption has been diverting the focus from and hampering the much needed acceleration of economic and industrial growth."

Several sources, however, said it is the army-led National Coordination Committee on Corruption and Serious Crime (NCC) that conceived the idea of forming the Truth Commission after realising that it would take a long time to put all graft suspects behind bars, which may not be possible before the upcoming general elections.

Since the caretaker government undertook a mission to bring reforms in politics and bar any corrupt person from contesting the parliamentary elections, it was looking for a way to ensure that the corrupt people cannot take part in the upcoming elections, said the sources.

Although there are provisions in

weeks ago. However, the retail price of non-branded soya bean oil was between Tk 105 and Tk 110 a kg yesterday.

Meantime, most retailers are selling super palm oil as soya bean oil while many retailers are selling edible oil in litres although they purchased it in kilograms (one litre equals to 900 gram).

A wholesaler at Moulvibazar said the retail price of a 5-litre jerry can of soya bean of most companies remained at Tk 514 for the last one month although the price came down by Tk 90-100.

The price of farm chickens yesterday jumped to Tk 95-100 per kg from the previous week's Tk 75-80. The price of domestic chickens also rose by Tk 10-20 per piece in the last couple of days.

The price of eggs rose by Tk 2 per half (four eggs) in retail markets last week. Eggs were selling at Tk 18-20 and Tk 22-24 per half yesterday, depending on their variety.

Traders blamed short supply for the price hike of chickens.

Asked about the price situation, a customer at Anandabazar in Shahbagh area said, "I did not know that the prices of some commodities decreased. The grocers also did not tell me about it. I purchased pulses, sugar and soya bean oil at prices they were a week ago."

A few retailers meanwhile refused to admit the price fall and said the prices are still the same at the wholesale markets. They gave reasons that they had bought the commodities from wholesale markets at higher prices.

## Sehwag

**FROM PAGE 16**  
took 362 balls against Zimbabwe to score the previous fastest triple-hundred in 2003.

Only 19 of the 22 triple centuries in Test history have the number of balls faced recorded against them. Those that miss out are Garfield Sobers's 365 not out, Wally Hammond's unbeaten 336 and Hanif Mohammad's 337.

Sehwag, 29, was 309 not out as he and Rahul Dravid led India to 468-1 at stumps, replying to South Africa's 540.

Sehwag, who also made 309 against Pakistan at Multan in 2004, becomes only the third batsman alongside Australian legend Sir Donald Bradman and West Indies great Brian Lara to pass 300 twice in Test cricket and the only Indian to score more than 200 runs in a single day.

## Former Indian army veterans visit Comilla

UNB, Comilla

The visiting former Indian army officers, who participated in Bangladesh's War of Independence in 1971, arrived here yesterday morning and visited different places.

Led by Lieutenant General (ret'd) PN Kathapalia, the delegation came to Comilla Cantonment and placed wreaths at Swadhinata Sharani, built in memory of the Liberation War.

Later, they visited Mainamati Commonwealth War Graveyard at the cantonment.

Accompanied by the army officers of the cantonment, the delegation also visited other places including archaeological sites.

## Krishi Padak

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Manush", the broadcaster's signature programme on agriculture.

Syed Keramat Ali of Bagerhat, a trailblazer in shrimp farming in the country, was awarded this year.

The speakers said the farmers have been sacrificing for the country, now it is time the nation paid them back.

Agriculture Adviser CS Karim, LGRD Adviser Anwarul Iqbal, British High Commissioner Anwar Chowdhury, Head of Delegation of the European Commission to Bangladesh Stefan Frowein and Agriculture Secretary MA Aziz were present at the ceremony where eminent lawyer Dr Kamal Hossain made a special speech.

Dr Kamal said, "It is necessary to recognise the role of the farmers in building a Bangladesh of our hope", adding that the media can play an effective role in this regard.

Shykh Siraj, news director of Channel 1, read out a paper on the role of farmers and agriculture in the country.

He said the farmers have been producing 2.75 crore tonnes of food grain every year, adding that the country has gone to great pains to import just 15 lakh tonnes of rice following the floods and cyclone Sidi.

"It is just unthinkable if we had to import half of our total food demand," he said.

Following the brief discussion, Faridur Reza Sagar, managing director of Channel 1, and Shykh Siraj handed over the agriculture award to Syed Keramat Ali.

He received a crest and a cheque of Tk 1 lakh for his pioneering role in shrimp farming in the southern region. Incepta Pharmaceuticals also provided him with Tk 1 lakh.

Keramat started shrimp farming three decades ago. Thousands of people in the southern region followed suit since then. The 2006 and 2007 awards went to Haripada Kapali from Jhenidha and Kartik Pramanik of Chapainawabganj.

This year six persons also received awards for writing quality essays.

## Kajol dies

**FROM PAGE 1**  
other by General Secretary Anisul Haque Talukder Khokon—clashed on the campus on March 22, leaving ten students including Kajol injured.

Anisul Haque told The Daily Star that Kajal was an active worker of JCD Jagannath University unit and loyal to him.

## Tax holiday

**FROM PAGE 1**  
industries will get 100 percent tax exemption for first two years (from the start of production), 50 percent reduction for next two years and 25 percent in the final year.

Industries in other divisions -- Khulna, Rajshahi, Sylhet and Barisal, and CHT districts -- will enjoy the facilities for seven years. Any industry in these areas will get 100 percent exemption for the first three years, 50 percent for the next three years and 25 percent in the final year.

Another option proposes 5-15 percent of tax elimination of the industries up to seven years, while the fourth option proposes imposition of 0-5 percent of taxes for five years with conditions.

The conditions for all the four options say the industries will have to increase paid up capital to Tk 10 lakh from the existing Tk 1 lakh. Besides, the industries need to be equipped with tools and equipment to check environment pollution as well as waste management system.

The NBR study says individual taxpayers and industries in Bangladesh have been enjoying tax reduction facilities under 55 regulations, while 32 types of industries get tax holidays.

On average, three industrial units get tax holiday facilities from 1973 to 1975, while the number increased to 18 during 1976-1981, 102 during 1982-1990, and 185 during 1991-1994.

Average investment in the industries, which got the tax holiday facilities, were Tk 89 lakh in 1973-1975, Tk 8.7 crore in 1976-1981, Tk 141 crore in 1982-1990, and Tk 525 crore in 1991-1994.

The NBR report also shows on average the tax holiday-facilitated industries created 392 new jobs in 1973-1975, 1,267 in 1976-1981, 9,024 in 1982-1990, and 23,000 in 1991-1994.

## Asia faces rice crisis

**FROM PAGE 1**  
and climate change. There are concerns prices could rise a further 40 percent in coming months.

The higher prices have already sparked protests in the Philippines, where a government official has asked the public to save leftover rice. In Cambodia, Prime Minister Hun Sen ordered a ban on rice exports Wednesday to curb rising prices at home. Vietnamese exporters and farmers are stockpiling rice in expectation of further price increases.

Vietnam has become the latest rice-producing nation to limit exports of the grain against a backdrop of soaring global prices and demand. The world's second-biggest rice exporter, said, it would cut exports by 22% this year, following similar moves by India and Egypt.

Egypt has banned rice exports from April 1 to October to hold down local prices and the Philippines aims to import up to 2.2 million tonnes this year in what could be the biggest overseas purchase of the national staple in a decade.

Vietnam's food prices this month have risen 30 percent from last March, helping to push March inflation to 19.39 percent. Five months of double-digit inflation and the world economic slowdown have moved the government to cut its 2008 GDP growth target to 7.5 percent.

Prestolite Suyat of the May One Labor Movement, a left-wing workers group, warned that "hunger and poverty may eventually lead to riots."

The neediest are hit hardest. Rodolfo de Lima, a 42-year-old parking lot attendant in Manila, said "my family will go hungry" if prices continue to rise.

"If your family misses a meal, you really don't know what you can do, but I won't do anything bad," said de Lima, whose right foot was amputated after he was shot during a 1985 gang war.

Others might not be so restrained, said Domingo Casarte, 41, a street vendor.

"There are people who are hot-headed," he said. "When people get trapped, I can't say what they will do."

The US Department of Agriculture forecasts global rice stocks for 2007-08 at 72 million tons, the lowest since 1983-84 and about half of the peak in 2000-01.

The higher prices are stretching the budgets of aid agencies providing rice to North Korea and other countries, particularly with donations already falling.

Jack Dunford, head of a consortium in Thailand helping more than 140,000 refugees from military-ruled Myanmar, said soaring rice prices and a slumping U.S. dollar are forcing cuts in already meager food aid.

"This rice price is just killing us," he said. "This is a very vulnerable group of people under threat."

Chookiat Ophaswongse, president of Thailand's Rice Exporters Association, said: "I have no idea how importing countries will get rice." He forecast prices would rise further and warned that importing countries such as Indonesia and Iran had yet to issue tenders, leaving them exposed.

China is among several countries in the region that subsidise rice prices, an increasingly expensive proposition.

China is the world's biggest rice producer, but almost all of its crops is kept for the domestic market.

With the world's largest population to feed, Beijing keeps rice prices subsidised.

It said on Friday that it would now pay farmers more for both rice and wheat in an attempt to boost crop production and cool surging inflation.

Rice prices have almost doubled in Bangladesh in just a year, sparking resentment but no unrest yet. Repeated floods and a severe cyclone last year have cut production, forcing the government to increase imports.

In Vietnam, a major rice exporter, the crop has been hit by a virus called tungro and infestations

## B Chowdhury

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Criticising the present government for its failure to control price hike, Badruddoza said the government must address this challenge.

"We do not need high amount of foreign exchange reserve; what we need is food," he said, adding, "People may raise questions why the government could not import rice in the time of need."

The Bikolpadhara chief urged the government to start rationing and Open Market Sale in areas hit by cyclone Sidi and Monga without delay. He also proposed starting food cards in slum areas in the capital.

Prof Badruddoza advised the government to go for producing only rice, wheat and maize—no other food grains—in the next six months.

On his proposed "government of national consensus", he said, "We want to make it clear that such government could be formed after the election comprising representatives of political parties based on the seats they win in the election."

Maj (ret'd) MA Mannan, Kartik Thakur, Mahmuda Haq Chowdhury and Shariful Islam, among others, addressed the meeting.

of the brown planthopper insect.

Farmers there say they are not benefiting from the higher prices.

"The rice price has gone up 50 percent over the past three months, but I'm not making any more money because I have to pay double for fertilizer, insecticides and labor costs," said Nguyen Thi Thu, 46, a farmer in Ha Tay province, just outside Hanoi.

Another farmer, Cao Thi Thuy, 37, in Nam Dinh province, 120 kilometers south of Hanoi, said exporters have actually been paying less for rice over the last week.

"If the world prices are going up still, then Vietnamese rice-exporting companies are benefiting, not us," she said. "They tell us that now weather is better, and rice can grow more easily, so we should not expect higher prices."

Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, worried about anything that could spark a "people power" revolt against her, is assuring the public that rice won't run out or skyrocket in price during the traditionally lean months of July to September.

This week, she arranged the purchase of up to 1.5 million tons from Vietnam. She also has ordered a crackdown on price manipulation, hoarding and profiteering on subsidized rice, and will hold a food summit April 4.

Things are so tight that Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap has asked people not to throw away leftover rice and urged fast-food restaurants, which normally give customers a cup of rice with meals, to offer a half-cup option to cut waste.

The Philippines is facing "a perfect storm," said Sen. Mar Roxas, president of the Liberal Party. Problems coping with rising rice prices are compounded by higher oil prices and a U.S. economic downturn, which could reduce the money sent home to families by Filipinos working in the United States. Such remittances underpin the economy.

Philippine farmers say the country, which has become the world's largest importer of rice