Subsidised rice

FROM PAGE 1

will be introduced from this month. Already around 11.2 lakh families have been given the fair price cards.

A cardholder would get 10 kg of rice and 10 kg of wheat every month at Tk 24 and Tk 20 per kg respectively.

About four lakh families of the fourth-class government employees, Village Defence Police and village head of the Ansars will also be given the cards.

The government has a plan to keep the rice price within the range of Tk 20-24 per kg. The price will be fixed at today's monitoring committee meeting.

The OMS has now been launched all over the country through which a person can procure maximum 5 kg of rice at Tk 24 per kg. The areas covered by OMS will be extended and today's meeting would take a decision in this regard.

Food ministry officials said OMS programme has been conducted by 93 trucks in people's income. in the capital. The government considers increasing the number of trucks to 125, they added. The officials said about 65

lakh families across the country will be benefited

through OMS.

Besides, rice and wheat would be sold at low prices throughout the country through test relief and food for work programmes.

The Directorate of Food has suggested that the government increase its food stock to run these programmes. The directorate said the programmes would face hurdles if food stock were not increased, sources said.

Food Minister Abdur Razzak told The Daily Star the food stock is satisfactory. He added the stock was 8.3 lakh tonnes yesterday and import of another 3 lakh tonnes food was on cards.

Moreover, the government expects to get in its silos 2.5 lakh tonnes of rice being imported from Vietnam in January and February.

On the increase of rice price, the minister said it was caused mainly due to the price hike in international market and increase

He said huge agricultural loans are being disbursed among farmers and remittance sent by expatriate workers is also improving financial condition of the rural people.

that the ongoing gas crunch

will not affect this new

projects, majority of the

country's large industries

generate power for their own

requirements using natural

gas. In the last few years,

their power generation was

industries generate more

than 1,000 MW of power, in

addition to that on the

national grid. But Titas Gas

Transmission and

Distribution Ltd, which

deals with gas supplies for

major industries, says these

industries generate more

than 2,500 MW of power

also use natural gas to run

their boilers and other gen-

erators. Now they will have

the option to run those using

based production causes

heavy pollution which

requires the industries or

power plants to have their

own treatment plants.

Otherwise, this will create a

new problem for the coun-

10 minutes after the vaccine

was administered, he added.

under the supervision of

Forkan Ali, health assistant

of Kaligani health complex,

gave Sami the vaccine

told The Daily Star that the

child was playing in the yard

right before he was given the

echoed the same claim that

his son was not suffering

from illness of any sort while

the news of Sami's death

shocked him to the very core.

Keramat Ali, on duty doctor

of World Health Organisation

Pankaj, Deputy director of

primary day-care Rajendra

Meheta, district health offi-

cial Abdus Sattar and

Kaliganj upazila health offi-

cer Arun Kumar visited the

victim's house around 2:30

Jhenidah Civil surgeon

The father of the victim

Nurunnahar, Sami's aunt,

around 1:30pm.

Volunteer Milon Hossain

try, officials noted.

Child dies

However, furnace oil-

Besides, the industries

using gas.

furnace oil.

The PDB estimates these

Other than these power

power generation.

greatly disturbed.

Energy boost year. Use of oil will ensure

while exchanging views with four non-resident Bangladeshi (NRB) energy experts and officials of the Power Division and Power Development Board.

The Daily Star had invited the four NRBs to Dhaka to talk about alternative energy and new technology. The PDB invited them for further sharing of knowledge.

Towfiq said the government decision comes in the wake of various measures taken by it to ease the country's power crisis. And a Statutory Regulatory Order (SRO) has been framed in this regard.

He also said as in the previous year, the government will again distribute 12 million energy saving lamps for free across the country to discourage use of traditional light bulbs. A traditional 100 watt bulb utilises only five percent of the power it consumes, and its replacement will reduce power demands.

Later, talking to The Daily Star, Chairman of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) Nasiruddin Ahmed said the SRO on the withdrawal of duty is now being printed for gazette notifica-

'There is a severe energy crisis in the country, and this will help ease this crisis. It's true that we will lose some revenue from import. But, as the import (of furnace oil) will increase power generation and industrial production, we expect our overall revenue to increase," the

chairman said.

Meanwhile, large industries like Youngone are seeking this kind of incentive from the government so that they can build their own power plants based on imported furnace oil. They want it even though the cost of furnace oil-based power will be higher than that of gas-based power. "I can tell you that within six months, industries will change the power crisis " said Captain

Sikder Ahmed of Youngone. Gas supplies have become erratic and no one knows for sure when the government will be able to supply it with appropriate pressure to industries to run their boilers or generators. Salman Karim of Orion Group says, "All our new equipment are ready to consume both gas and furnace oil.'

The decision concerning

furnace oil will also help

ease storage of imported oil

issue. Till now, the BPC

imports and stores all kinds

of petroleum at its depots.

This year the government's

oil import will go up by 1.9

million tonnes just to cater

to the needs of diesel and

furnace oil- based rental,

private and government

power projects. Of this addi-

tional import, most will be

furnace oil. The BPC does

not have adequate storage

facility for this additional oil.

for diesel and HFO-based

expensive power projects to

add around 2,400 megawatt

The government opted

Cold wave

FROM PAGE 20

grip the country several times this month, officials at the Dhaka Met Office fore-

The divisions, Rajshahi and Rangapur along with Tangail, Jessore, Kushtia and Moulvibazar districts are experiencing a mild cold wave while Chuadanga is suffering from a wave of moderate intensity, Bazlur Rashid, a meteorologist at Dhaka Met Office told The Daily Star.

The lowest temperature recorded in the country yesterday was at Chuadanga, which was 7.9 degrees Celsius while the highest was recorded at Sitakundu at 29.3 degrees of power by the end of this

Celsius, he added.

Biman pilots to asks for withdrawal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

of notices

Biman Airlines Pilots Association sends a letter today to the Biman managing director asking to withdraw the show cause notices served on seven of their colleagues.

The administration of Biman Bangladesh Airlines on Thursday issued show cause letters to seven senior pilots accusing them of creating weeklong unrest in Biman in October last year. A senior leader of the

association wishing not to be named said, "If the authorities do not stop harassing our colleagues, we will raise the issue before the prime minister as well as before the nation through a press conference".

Biman pilots will go for further movements if necessary, he added.

In the notices, the authorities asked the accused to explain within seven days why action should not be taken against them for causing immense loss to the airlines in terms of money and reputation.

Speaking for anonymity, one of the accused told The Daily Star that in reply they will say they did not violate the service rules of Biman. A top administrative

day said the administration will launch an enquiry if replies of the accused are considered unsatisfactory. Leaders of the association yesterday said pilots of the

official of the airlines yester-

national flag carrier became anxious after their colleagues were served with the notice. Talking to this correspondent, they said they are utterly disappointed over the issue, which might affect

passengers' safety during Earlier, the Biman man agement on October 24 2010, issued show cause notices to many pilots and warned them not to act

against Biman service rules. The respondents replied the following day, but the authorities told them their reply was unsatisfactory and misleading, said some Biman pilots.

Campaign

polls. All of them are claiming to have been nominated by their parties.

Jativa Party leader Mojidul Islam is also a mayoral candidate in Kurigram municipality. He said, "I am the grand alliance candidate as per the central AL decision. I can't understand why AL is allowing other candidates here.

In Thakurgaon, the district unit AL expelled Alamgir Sarkar for taking part in the elections at Rani Shangkoli municipality violating the party decision.

Alamgir, instead of supporting grand alliance candidate Jatiya Party's Md Toha, is campaigning for himself, said AL Thakurgaon unit secretary general explaining the reason for Alamgir's ouster.

The district unit AL nomi nated SMA Moyeen and SMA Slolaiman for the other two municipalities. BNP, however, has no rebel candidates here.

BNP also managed to have no rebel aspirants within the party in Panchagarh municipality while AL is to deal with two dissidents.

In Lalmonirhat, BNP's two rebels stand against the party nominated Hafizur Rahman Babla, district unit BNP secretary. Reazul Islam Rintu has been nominated there from the grand alli-

ance. In Sunderganj municipality of Gaibandha district, AL has two candidates campaigning for themselves. In Gaibandha municipality both AL and BNP have two candidates each vying for the mayoral post.

5 drown

FROM PAGE 20 Hatia upazila in Noakhali.

Officer-in-Charge Jahirul Islam of Hatia Police Station said the boat capsized Friday evening with 11 on board. Three of them managed to swim ashore and three are still missing.

Local fishermen recovered the five bodies yesterday evening from the river near Kazi Bazar, he added.

BNP struggles

FROM PAGE 1

trusted ally Jamaat-e-Islami or to stay away from it. The BNP has been put in a tight corner following the arrests of top leaders of Jamaat in connection with war crimes. The arrest of Salauddin

Quader Chowdhury, a stalwart of the party, is also testing BNP on its stand on the trial of those accused of committing crimes against humanity during the 1971 Liberation War.

The party, however, enjoyed two major successes. Manzur Alam was elected the mayor of Chittagong with its support by defeating ruling party backed stalwart and then incumbent mayor Mohiuddin Ahmed. The second success was

holding the party's central council election after a hiatus of 16 years. But the party continued to face criticisms that this council reinforced some undemocratic prac-Zia and her son Tarique had been given more arbitrary powers than ever before. The central council,

however, left out a dozen district units including Dhaka city and party's secretary general's home district Manikganj. Senior Joint Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir observed that it was not unusual for a large party like the BNP to have such anom-

In general, the BNP top tier remains divided on the question of boycotting parliament. Some favour joining while others, including the chairperson, are reportedly against it.

Sources close to the party say the BNP is still plagued by internal feuds.

Party leaders now look forward to Khaleda Zia's countrywide tour that they hope can help resolve the organisational problems. Khaleda is scheduled to address public meetings in 21 districts.

However, some of the moves that the party highups had taken earlier had failed to yield any good result.

For instance, BNP failed to implement the decisions made during the maiden meeting of party's central executive committee held in July last year.

Similarly, the party made some moves at the central council on December 8, 2009, which appeared to be ineffective. At the council, the BNP announced a 386member committee to run

the party. But there are questions about many committee members. Especially the low turn up of leaders during anti-government programmes like hartal is a sore point among the rank

and file. In the recent years, the right centric party had tilted more towards extreme right by making Jamaat-e-Islami its key ally. However, in the last two years, BNP has become more cautious in dealing with Jamaat -- a party that opposed the war of liberation and chose to serve the Pakistani rulers in 1971.

Husband

FROM PAGE 20

husband Shahed Ali and his first wife Sheuli Begum in this connection.

She claimed to have opened the door at about 5:15am after hearing knocks following which Shahed clamped his hands over her mouth, said Towhidul Islam, sub inspector of Shah Ali Police Station.

Then Sheuli broke open a bottle containing acid, poured it in a 'plastic bowl' and poured the liquid on her right leg, Shahnaz alleged. Later, she informed the

police who admitted her to the hospital at about 6:00am.

Shahed, a house painter, lived with his first wife and children at Darussalam of Mirpur, while Shahnaz used to live by herself in a tin shed house in Block C.

Shahnaz filed a case accusing the two in this connection.

This is evident from the fact that after the arrest of a number of Jamaat leaders, who are accused of war crimes, BNP's reaction was mild. At the same time, the BNP does not unconditionally support trial of war

criminals. Despite huge pressure from Jamaat, the BNP leadership did not agree to make any formal deal with its ally on backing pro-Jamaat mayoral candidates in the upcoming municipality elections. The main opposition

party has been criticised for its boycott of parliament. BNP lawmakers attended

the House only 43 of 169 working days in the last seven sessions of the current parliament. Khaleda Zia and senior

leaders repeatedly said they will go for anti-government movement but they could do little in this respect. The party observed three dawntices of BNP where Khaleda to-dusk hartals with but half-hearted participation of party leaders and work-The party chairperson

was bold against the government and at least three of her press conferences have drawn public attention. She placed a number of proposals through press conference before the budget. Her speeches, which were given before prime minister's India visit and climate conference in Copenhagen in December 2009, were also praised. But Khaleda, leader of

the opposition in parliament, was highly criticised for last-minute withdrawal from an anti-poverty rally in October, 2009 apparently to avoid meeting Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Organisers hoped to bring both the prime minister and the opposition leader on the same platform with the Speaker in the chair.

Khulna brick

FROM PAGE 20

The divisional office of DoE was directed to file a case against the owner Imam Hossain Morol, vice president of Fultola Awami League, who has been on the

Aggrieved locals gathered at the brick kiln site during the drive and set its office on fire. They claimed the owner collected top soil of their (local's) land and used the mud to produce bricks.

Locals narrated how the owner grabbed their land at gunpoint. Many farmers could not cultivate their land for the last three years.

The farmers could have harvested 50 to 60 thousand maunds of rice during the period, estimated the DoE officials.

The brick kiln 'Mrs New United Bricks' was set up in 2005. The local administration turned a deaf ear to their sufferings, complained the

According to the law, no brick kilns can be set up within two kilometres of any residential area.

1,200 sued

mosque.

Sub-inspector (SI) Babul Miya of Karnaphuli Police Station filed the cases naming 13 persons. He also accused 1200 unidentified people in each of the cases.

One case was filed under the speedy trial act on charge of setting fire to shops and houses, vandalising vehicles and goods, while the other was on charge of obstructing government officials on duty, added the SI.

Law enforcers detained 50 persons from the spot. Of them, 39 were taken into custody and the rest were freed. The Sunni of Juldha and

On Friday noon they were

locked in a clash at Fakirnin

Haat in Patiya upazila.

the Wahabi Muslims of Shah Amirpur villages have been to them [Somali pirates], he feuding for long to win control of the mosque, locals said. To achieve this each group had been trying to appoint its Imam to the

seven to eight hijacked ships including Bangladeshi Jahan Monianchored around them.

AL leader shot in city

city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Miscreants yesterday evening shot a city Awami League leader in Agargoan area leaving him critically injured. The victim is Noor

Mohammad, 68, president of ward no 41 unit AL. A group of three to four

youths shot several rounds of bullet at him while he was talking with three people at his Mamata Bohumukhi Somobai Samity office at West Agargaon bazar around 7:00pm, said a witness. The offenders managed

to escape after the incident.

The injured, former president of the traders' association of West Agargaon bazar, was rushed to National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation and later shifted to National Institute of Diseases of the Chest and Hospital.

Protesting the incident, traders of the bazar shut down their businesses. Noor Mohammad wished

to run for the post of councillor of Dhaka City Corporation, locals said. He had no rivalry with anybody, family sources

claimed. Visiting the spot police could not find any clue to the incident immediately, said Reaz Hossain, officer-incharge of Sher-e-Bangla

BSF returns

Nagar Police Station.

FROM PAGE 1

the BSF at about 6.00 am on Friday.

BGB and police sources said Nur Islam went to India along with his daughter about 10 years ago. The BSF shot his daughter Felani as they were crossing the Indian border fencing, leaving her dead on the spot.

Indian border forces took away the body in their camp.

After postmortem of the body in India, BSF handed over it to Kashipur BGB Company Commander Naeb Subedar Abdur Razzak at 11:45am yesterday.

Sub-inspector Shahin of Fulbari police station said they have received the body from Kashipur BGB and filed an UD case. The body has been sent to Kurigram morgue for autopsy again.

Hijacked ship

ransom is paid, he hoped

Giasuddin was among 22 crew members of the German vessel MT Marida Marguerite which was hijacked by Somali pirates on May 8 last year and was released on December 28. His family got the news of the ship's release the same day but their anxious wait ended yesterday.

Another Bangladeshi crew of the ship and its Chief Officer Jafar Iqbal would come back within a few days after completion of some procedures, Giasuddin said.

Over 30 family members of Giasuddin were waiting anxiously at the Chittagong Shah Aamanat International Airport yesterday afternoon for his arrival on board an Oman Airlines flight.

Shirin Akhter, mother of Giasuddin, said since her son called Friday to tell her when he was coming home, she has not been able to sleep.

Giasuddin's wife Bibi Fatema, failing to pave her way through the huge crowd at the airport, could only exchange smiles with her husband when the two got on a microbus at the airport. In the evening, Giasuddin

briefly shared his experiences with the journalists at their CDA Colony home in the port city's Mehedibagh. He said around 50 armed

Somali pirates hijacked their 'Though the pirates were

equipped with modern arms like AK-47, machine guns and others, they never misbehaved with us and arranged water and Somali food when our stock ran out," he said. "Hijacking ships for ransom is nothing but a business

frame. said, adding that if the owner Expressing similar views, company pays their AL presidium member demanded ransom today they Obaidul Quader said the would release the ship tomorprime minister has recently directed all to prepare their Giasuddin said they saw wealth statements.

"We will do what the majority of people want us to do," he told The Daily Star.

tricity, the PM said that in the near future there will be no more shortage of electricity. She urged the people of

Rangpur division to remain alert against the abuse of drugs among the youths. Hasina said the govern-

Syedpur will also be reto Rangpur after extraction of commissioned. gas from new fields. "Bangla-The Rangpur Stadium will desh is facing gas crisis right be developed and there will be an indoor stadium with a we'll give top priority to its

> she assured. AL District Unit Convener Abul Monsur Ahmed presided over the meeting while Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister GM Quader, Education Minister Nurul Islam Naheed and Presidium Member of Jatiya Party Begum Rowshan Ershad,

Users face FROM PAGE 1

secretary of Bangladesh Association of Internet Service Providers, however, claimed Internet surfers who's service providers use Mango Teleservices Gateway did not face any problems. People using modems of

mobile operators did not face

Bangladesh Google site either, Biddut told The Daily "Some customers and users have complained that they received message reading 'Google Bangladesh

when they tried to access the Most of around 200 internet service providers use the Mango Gateway but many use BTCL Gateway as it

OwN3D by TiGER-M@TE

.com.bd websites. No BTCL officials were

available for comments. ment has ensured electricity In Bangladesh there are over 80 lakh internet users, which is expected to cross the one crore-mark very soon, according to Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission, the

FROM PAGE 20

draw the case. MPP Abdullah Abu then submitted an application to the Fourth Additional Metropolitan Sessions year rule. They failed to pro-Judge's Court of Dhaka on May 4 along with a recommendation letter from the

pending

in corruption as reflected by Towhid's wife Hamida in her statement on July 29 last International, Bangladesh year said a group of criminals report. That's why they are led by Dilip and Yusuf reluctant to keep their promattacked her husband when he was talking with some of Only Finance Minister his friends in front of their AMA Muhith made his

> Instructed by Dilip, Yusuf shot her husband and the other criminals fired indiscriminately at others injuring Yunus and Nuru seriously. Locals took them to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared

Station the following day. The investigation officer pressed charges against Yusuf, Dilip, Raju and Jony. AL General Secretary Syed

occasions said they have submitted their statements hiding after the killing. to the National Board of Hamida told The Daily Star Revenue and the Election

public the wealth statement Contacted, AL acting killed my husband over an general secretary Mahbubu enmity. So the case should Alam Hanif told The Daily not be withdrawn consider-Star that wealth statements ing it a political case," she of the people concerned

MPP Abdullah Abu said he

per home ministry's direction. "I have nothing to do if the government decides to withdraw any cases," he explained.

Rangpur FROM PAGE 1 tives taken to produce elecpride that a daughter-in-law from Rangpur is our prime

minister," he added.

and factories," he said.

change their lot, he added.

now. If new gas field is found,

introduce national service

programme for the youth

assistance to you," she said.

the last two years, she said the

'Monga', a curse for the peo-

ple of greater Rangpur, has

ment would provide high

yielding variety of seeds for

the paddy growers of the area.

She requested the farmers to

cultivate maize and wheat if

there is no scope for cultiva-

tion of paddy. "We'll extend

our cooperation in this

ern facilities would be made

available in Rangpur Medical

College Hospital so that the

people of this division could

receive better medical treat-

production of food grains.

massive development

"How could they be happy?

They plunged the country in

corruption during their five-

duce even single megawatt of

Referring to various initia-

electricity," Hasina said.

A torgotten

caretaker government.

promise," said Akbar Ali

Khan, former adviser to a

member Lt Gen (retd)

Mahbubur Rahman said

the Transparency

wealth statement public and

family members' wealth

on February 14 last year that

the wealth statements of

ministers, lawmakers and

their relatives would be made

But in the last two years

AL leaders showed an atti

tude that they would back

track on this particular elec-

Ashraful Islam on different

public by June 2010.

The finance minister said

Hasina said the govern-

She pledged that all mod-

regard," she said.

ment.

country."

programmes.

FROM PAGE 1

ise, he added.

statements.

toral pledge.

Commission.

of any person.

The PM said the govern-

been removed from the area.

Hasina asked the youths to

supply here.'

Mujibur Rahman."

soon, she said.

Ershad urged the PM to supply gas through pipeline

for industrialisation of Rangpur division. "Please give us gas, we will give you mills ment will provide an inter-city If gas is supplied, people of train for Rangpur from Dhaka Rangpur themselves will and expand the railway communication here. The Railway In response, Hasina said Workshop and Airport at gas connection will be given

designated space for women,

UNB adds: The premier said the present government is implementing its election pledges one by one. "We are committed to establishing a poverty-free golden Bengal of Bangabandhu Sheikh The government has taken the initiative to provide easy among others, addressed it. loan to the farmers here and

time before everything is

take collateral free loan from Rashed Amin Biddut, joint the Employment Bank and set up agro-based industries. "We'll provide all sorts of Narrating the stories of success of the government in

> any problem searching for information using the

directs internet traffic to all

in the rural areas during the irrigation season for higher The premier said the present government is "servant of the people, not the ruler of the industry regulator. Pointing her finger to the

opposition party, she said Govt moves they are not happy as the present government is taking

home ministry. Subsequently, Towhid's brother Mofizur Rahman filed a writ petition with the High Court challenging the legality of the government decision. The hearing is now

Three prosecution wit-BNP standing committee nesses including Towhid's wife and brother have given statements before the trial people suspect AL is involved court so far.

people appreciated it. He however did not publish his

> Towhid and Yunus dead. Mofizur, Dilip's brother, filed a murder case against Yusuf, Dilip and several others with Sutrapur Police

Police arrested Yusuf and Dilip who were later granted bail. Raju and Jony went into

the accused are not linked with any political parties but they had appealed to the However, according to the rules, the NBR cannot make government to withdraw the "They were directly involved in the killing. They

would be made public. But Mofizur also said the he did not give any time accused killed his brother and Yunus following a feud in the

> had submitted the petition for withdrawal of the case as