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News Brief

The ECNEC yesterday approved a total of nine projects involving an overall estimated cost of Taka 2,744.44 crore including one for dredging Dhepa and Gorveswari River with Taka 327.27 crore. The approval came from the first ECNEC meeting of the new fiscal year with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair. Of the nine approved projects, four projects are under LGRD and Cooperatives Ministry, two each under the Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Ministry and the Water Resources Ministry, and the rest one under the Shipping Ministry. During the meeting, the Premier directed the authorities concerned to be careful over maintaining the proper height of the bridges while constructing such structures on the rivers.

Bangladesh yesterday recorded 44 more fatalities from the novel coronavirus in a daily count, raising the death toll from the pandemic to 2096. At the same time recovery count rose to 76,149 after another 3,524 patients were discharged from the hospitals during the period. Directorate General of Health Services-DGHS came up with the disclosure at its daily health bulletin. The country also saw further rise in coronavirus cases with the detection of 3201 new cases taking the total number of cases to 1,65,618. A total of 14,245 samples were tested at 68 authorised laboratories across the country during the time, DGHS added.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader criticizing BNP for its past record of becoming champion in corruption in contrast to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's result-yielding anti-corruption stance said, it sounds ridiculous that BNP speaks out against corruption as common people consider graft and BNP as synonymous. The Minister at a virtual press conference yesterday also said, BNP leaders have been misleading people by spreading ludicrous information amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. The Minister also urged the BNP leaders to shun the politics of divide and enmity and join the fight against coronavirus aiming to protect the lives of people.

Information Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud coming down heavily on BNP leaders for their frequent comments against Awami League said, BNP leaders only gave speeches on televisions. But they didn't stand beside the commoners during the catastrophe. The Minister made the comments while addressing at a press briefing at his ministry yesterday. Criticising the comments of BNP leader Ruhul Kabir Rizvi, the Minister added, Awami League has distributed relief to over 1.25 crore families. Besides, about seven crore people have already been brought under the government's assistance programme in various ways.

Education Minister Dr. Dipu Moni while addressing a virtual seminar yesterday urged the mobile phone operators to announce free internet packages for students so that they can join online education programmes easily. About the payment of tuition fees during the closure of educational institutions, the Minister called upon both sides - all the educational institutions and parents to be humane.

Local Government Minister Md. Tajul Islam in a meeting at his ministry yesterday issued a note of warning against compromising the standard of work in the development projects of the government. Stern action will be taken against anyone responsible for lowering the standard of the project-works, he said.

The flood situation may worsen in northwestern districts of Natore and Naogaon as water levels of the Atrai River marked a sharp rise overnight at Atrai point and the Gur river at Singra point, said a bulletin of the Flood Forecasting and Warning Center. It also added, the situation may remain steady in two central districts of Munshiganj and Shariatpur. However, the overall flood situation in Tangail, Kurigram and Jamalpur has improved slightly as the water level in many major rivers has been decreasing slowly. Meanwhile, the government has allocated 10,900 mts of rice and cash Tk 1.73 crore as humanitarian assistance for people affected by different natural disasters including flood, said a press release of the Disaster Management and Relief Ministry yesterday.

Bangla playback legend Andrew Kishore died of cancer in Rajshahi last evening. Andrew Kishore who attained a huge fame giving voice in several hundred Bangla movie songs and won National Film Award for eight times breathed his last at the age of 65. President Md. Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina have expressed profound shock and sorrow at the death of legendary singer.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs through a press release yesterday expressed its suspicion that certain quarters are purposefully doing harm to the Government of Bangladesh against the backdrop of its recent success (upgraded to tire-2 in TIP) in controlling human trafficking through threatening to attack Bangladesh missions abroad involving illegal Bangladeshi migrants. The release came to clarify a recent incident of attempt to illegally occupy the Bangladesh mission in Vietnam by some undocumented illegal Bangladeshi nationals. Foreign Minister Dr. A K Abdul Momen talking to media said, it is very unfortunate and this kind of act in foreign land tarnishes Bangladesh's image.

Two high-ranking Myanmar military generals involved in the systematic and brutal violence against the Rohingya people have been barred from entering into the UK, British Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab announced yesterday. A total of 49 people were black-listed for the first sanction of the post-Brexit UK.

Dhaka North City Corporation yesterday fined Taka 2.22 lakh for having Aedes larvae at 85 houses and establishments as a part of the second-phase of its combined operation to eliminate mosquitoes.

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