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News Brief

The ECNEC yesterday approved a project involving Taka 607.16 crore for excavating and re-excavating major canals in the capital in order to address city's long standing water logging problem. The meeting with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair approved 10 projects with an estimated cost of Taka 3,415.86 crore. The approved projects also include 'strengthening publicity programme for the development of rural communities' involving Taka 59.63 crore under the Department of Mass Communication of the Ministry of Information .

The country's economic output is likely to jump to 7.65 percent in the current fiscal driven by a robust growth in industry and agriculture sectors. Planning Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal revealed this at a press conference after the ECNEC meeting in Dhaka yesterday. The Minister also informed, per-capita income is going up from \$1,610 to \$1,752 in the current fiscal.

President Md. Abdul Hamid is visiting Khulna today to attend the 3rd convocation of KUET and 67th founding anniversary of Mongla Port. The President will return to Dhaka tomorrow evening.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina attended a function with the members of Bangladesh Association of Banks (BAB) and their families at Ganabhaban yesterday. The BAB leaders, including chairmen, managing directors and chief executive officers of different banks along with their spouses, joined the event.

National Film Day was celebrated in the country yesterday. Artists and film personalities attended a function arranged on the occasion at the BFDC premises. Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed while speaking at the function said, the day is not far away when the dream of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's "Sonar Bangla" would be realised. Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu, in his address said, the government of Sheikh Hasina has taken many steps including developing infrastructure for the film industry. State Minister for Information Tarana Halim, in her address, proposed e-ticketing in cinema halls for the sake of transparency.

Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali, in a bilateral official meeting in Moscow on Monday, informed his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov of challenges posed by the Rohingya crisis. He also sought the active cooperation of Russia and all others for resolving the issue. In reply, Lavrov praised the efforts by Bangladesh and assured possible assistance of his country in this regard.

Primary and Mass Education Minister Mostafizur Rahman has said, the government has decided to drop MCQ evaluation system from PEC Exam from this year. The decision came following recommendations of the educationalists to prevent question leaks in public examinations, the Minister told a press conference at his ministry in Dhaka yesterday.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan has said, stringent security measures have been taken for smooth celebration of Pahela Baishakh across the country. The Minister said this while talking to reporters after attending a meeting on the preparation of the day. The authorities concerned have been asked to refrain from arranging any cultural programme at open places after 5 pm, he added.

WHO has ranked Bangladesh as the top primary healthcare provider among South and South-East Asian nations, attributing the success to the community ownership in the country's primary healthcare system. WHO's regional director Dr Poonam Khetrpal made the appreciation before wrapping up her four-day official visit to Bangladesh.

DSEX, the benchmark index of the Dhaka Stock Exchange, finished yesterday at 5,790 points.

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