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News Brief

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said, sea cruise services can be introduced between Bangladesh and the Maldives during the winter season, as the High Commissioner of the Maldives to Bangladesh Shiruzimath Sameer paid a courtesy call on her at Ganabhaban yesterday. The Premier also stressed the need for exchanging experience and assistance between the two friendly countries in collecting fisheries in the deep sea. In response to the issue, the High Commissioner said a memorandum of understanding-MoU may be signed during the visit of Maldivian President to Bangladesh on the occasion of celebrating the Golden Jubilee of Bangladesh's independence. The Prime Minister also urged Maldivian students to come here in large numbers for study purpose and called upon the businessmen of the Maldives to make investment here.

Egypt would continue to stand by Bangladesh over the Rohingya crisis, the newly appointed Egyptian Ambassador in Dhaka Haytham Ghobashy gave the assurance while paying a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Ganabhaban yesterday. The Ambassador highly praising Sheikh Hasina's leadership described her as an "exemplary leader" of Muslim Ummah. The Ambassador said, Egyptian businesses could relocate their plants in Bangladesh to expand bilateral business relations. The Premier said, a lucrative market is here for foreign entrepreneurs as they can avail of the opportunity of grabbing a big market in South Asia.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina urged Sri Lanka to come up with more investments in the special economic zones-SEZs in Bangladesh as the newly appointed Sri Lankan High Commissioner to Bangladesh Sudharshan Deepal Suresh Seneviratne paid a courtesy call on her at Ganabhaban yesterday. The Envoy said, his country is keen to work and invest in shipping, hospital, tourism, education and cultural sectors alongside collaborating in the aviation sector and training up nurses in Bangladesh. Congratulating Saima Wazed Hossain for being WHO's champion for autism in the South-East Asia Region, he said, her work in the field of autism is praiseworthy.

Dope test has been made mandatory during the recruitment of all government employees, Chairman of Cabinet Standing Committee on Law and Order and Liberation War Affairs Minister A K M Mozammel Haque said this to journalists after a committee meeting yesterday.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader while addressing a press conference yesterday said, the BNP is showing skillfulness in spreading propaganda and rumors against the government and the constitutional institutions, like Election Commission. The BNP leaders want assurance of victory in elections. If the EC guarantees victory to the BNP, then the Commission, in their language, will be a neutral one, he added.

The government gave cash incentive amounting Taka 568.86 crore as gift from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina among 4,85,476 farmers, at a function held at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the capital yesterday, in order to mitigate their sufferings caused by the ongoing pandemic. Agriculture Minister Dr. Md. Abdur Razzaque addressing the function said, the government will provide its constant support to the fisheries and livestock entrepreneurs. Chaired by Fisheries and Livestock Minister S M Rezaul Karim, the program was also addressed, among others, by Planning Minister M A Mannan.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal said, the prisons will be turned into correction centers to bring back the prisoners to normal life in line with the direction of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. The Minister said this at a program in city's Kara Convention Center yesterday.

Information Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud urged BNP leaders to take the COVID-19 vaccines shunning shyness as he was talking to reporters after taking his first dose of COVID-19 vaccine at Bangladesh Secretariat clinic yesterday. Terming BNP leaders' propaganda over the vaccine a shameful act, he said, their propaganda proved that they always spread rumors to mislead people and put the government in trouble. He said, the way the Bangladesh government collected the vaccines in time is rare around the world and even the US and the European countries are struggling to manage the vaccines.

The Cabinet Committee on Government Purchase-CCGP in a virtual meeting yesterday chaired by Finance Minister A H M Mustafa Kamal approved a total of five proposals, including two for importing 67.20 lac per million British Thermal Unit LNG from Singapore. Prior to the CCGP meeting, a meeting on the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs with the Finance Minister in the chair, approved in principle a proposal for procuring 25 wheel excavators for pourashavas under Direct Procurement Method by the LGED on emergency state purpose.

Building height would be based on population and communication system of the area and the final decision to be taken after consulting with architects, urban planners and other stakeholders, Local Government Minister Md. Tajul Islam stated this at a meeting with representatives of Real Estate and Housing Association and Bangladesh Land Developers Association at his ministry yesterday.

Foreign Minister Dr. A K Abdul Momen asked all Bangladesh missions abroad to remain vigilant on negative campaign against Bangladesh and to present correct information about Bangladesh in their respective host nations. The Minister was speaking at the lecture series on Bangabandhu titled "Role of Bangabandhu in Language Movement", marking the birth centenary of Father of the Nation at Foreign Service Academy in the capital yesterday. Dr. Momen said, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's role in both language movement and independence struggle are unforgettable. Education Minister Dr. Dipu Moni, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Md. Shahriar Alam, among others, spoke on the occasion.

The operations of the metro rail from Uttara to Agargaon in the city would begin from the next Victory Day, Planning Minister M A Mannan expressed the optimism after visiting the physical progress of the project at Diabari depot in the capital's Uttara yesterday.

All people in the country will be vaccinated as there is no scarcity of COVID-19 vaccines, Health Minister Zahid Maleque said this at a function of Dhaka Dental College yesterday.

Meanwhile, with the death of 16 more people yesterday, the number of deaths from Covid-19 in Bangladesh rose to 8,314. At the same time recovery count rose to 4,89,254. With the detection of 443 new cases, the total number of Covid-19 cases rose to 5,41,877. Besides, a total of 2,26,755 people were administered COVID-19 vaccines across the country yesterday, giving rise to the number of vaccine receivers to 15,86,368. As many as 24,96,660 people got registered till 2.30pm yesterday to take vaccines.

Considering the overall situation, the government fixed the prices of edible oils to keep the price hike of the product under control. The price of loose soybean oil has been fixed at Taka 115 per litre, bottled soybean oil at Taka 135 per litre and palm super oil at Taka 104 per litre at the consumer level. Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi said these at a press briefing at his ministry yesterday, adding that the prices would be revised if the prices change in the international markets.


Malaysia's labor market for Bangladeshi workers will reopen only after the Covid-19 situation becomes normal there, Expatriates Welfare Minister Imran Ahmad said this while briefing the media at his ministry yesterday after a virtual meeting on labour issues between the two countries.

The UK will provide Bangladesh with the GSP facility up to 2027 so that it can prepare to face new economic challenges after the graduation from the group of the LDCs, British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Robert Chatterton Dickson yesterday said this while briefing newsmen on the outcome of the first UK-Bangladesh trade and investment dialogue on Tuesday. At least 10 to 15 UK companies will set up their businesses in Bangladesh in the next three to four years considering Bangladesh's continuous economic growth, availability of human resources and entrepreneurial spirit of the youths, Dickson said. The two countries will hold meeting of working group level at the end of the year, he added.

The High Court yesterday ordered Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission-BTRC to remove the report titled "All the Prime Minister's Men" of Al Jazeera, from all the online platforms in the country. Besides, the High Court upheld death sentence for 10 people, convicted by the lower court concerned in a case lodged over an attempt to murder Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in Kotalipara, Gopalganj, in 2000. The court also upheld the life imprisonment of convict Mehedi Hasan alias Abdul Wadud. A court in Narail yesterday issued arrest warrants against BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia and BNP standing committee member Gayeshwar Chandra Roy on charges of making offensive comments on martyrs of the Liberation War of 1971 and martyred intellectuals.

The first phase of Union Parishad polls to 323 Ups would be held on April 11. EC Secretary Humayun Kabir came up with the information after the EC meeting yesterday. Voting will also take place in nine municipalities on the same day using EVMs.

The authorities of Jahangirnagar University have decided to hold admission tests for the first year Honours students for the academic session of 2020-21 from June 6 which will continue till June 20.


18.2.2021
Surath Kumar Sarker