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### News Brief

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina underscored the need for having ambitious and concentrated global action plans to address the liquidity crisis and sovereign debt burdens now and during the post-Covid-19 era. In a video message delivered at the 'Financing for Development in the Era of Covid-19 and Beyond Initiative: International Debt Architecture and Liquidity' on Monday, the Premier also said, developed countries, Multilateral Development Banks and International Financial Institutions should scale up liquidity for vulnerable countries. She also stressed on fulfilling the 0.7 per cent ODA commitment of the developed countries. There must be new international support measures for the graduating LDCs, at least till 2030, commensurate with the SDGs, the Premier further said. The Premier also highlighted her government's different measures to offset the COVID-19 crisis. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Jamaican Prime Minister Andrew Holness and UN Secretary-General António Guterres, who convened the meeting, also talked at the meeting.

All the public transport would run with 50 per cent less passengers than capacity from today in order to check the spread of coronavirus pandemic and the fare would be increased by 60 per cent to compensate the bus owners for carrying less passengers than capacity, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader said this while addressing a press briefing yesterday. The Minister said, the order will remain in force for the next two weeks, adding that if the situation is normal, the rent will be reinstated.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Railway started selling 50 per cent tickets of trains from yesterday as a measure to tackle the rising infection of coronavirus. Half of the tickets will be sold online and the other half from the station.

The Civil Aviation Authority yesterday made 14-day institutional quarantine mandatory for the travelers from the European countries including the UK, at government facilities or government approved hotels at passengers' own expenses. Upon completion of the quarantine period, Covid-19 PCR test will be carried out and the passenger will be released if the test result is negative. Irrespective of the Covid-19 vaccination, all passengers coming to Bangladesh shall mandatorily possess and show PCR based Covid-19 negative certificate during departure from origin or arrival at the airport, CAAB said.

The mass media in Bangladesh are enjoying more freedom than many developed countries across the globe, Information and Broadcasting Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud stated while addressing a discussion at Dhaka Reporters Unity auditorium in the capital yesterday. "The publication of 167-year old newspaper 'News of the World' was shut down for publishing wrong information in the United Kingdom. The executive officers of the BBC were forced to resign for broadcasting wrong information about a representative of the House of Commons. But, there is no such instance in Bangladesh," he said. About Digital Security Act (DSA), the Minister said, the act has been enacted to ensure security for all, not for a special group. He added, many countries, including India, Pakistan, the US, the UK, Nepal, the UAE, Germany and Singapore, have digital acts, which are similar to Bangladesh's Digital Security Act. He stressed on remaining careful in using the act.

The people of Pakistan should urge their government to offer a formal apology to the people of Bangladesh for all the atrocities that were committed in 1971, internationally renowned scholar from Pakistan Husain Haqqani opined at a virtual talk on Bangabandhu, organized by the Embassy of Bangladesh to Belgium and Luxembourg, and Mission to the EU in Brussels on Monday. Haqqani, currently a Senior Fellow and Director for South and Central Asia at Hudson Institute, a top think tank in

Washington, DC said, Bangabandhu is not only the greatest Bengali of all time, he is one of the greatest leaders emerging out of South Asia. He added that the then East Pakistan was the 'Golden Goose' to the Pakistani ruling elite as most of the foreign exchange was earned from there. Today's prosperous Bangladesh is the contribution of Bangabandhu and his able daughter, current Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, he further said. Foreign Minister Dr. A K Abdul Momen joined the event while Bangladesh Ambassador in Brussels, Mahbub Hassan Saleh, moderated the event.

Meanwhile, Pakistani magazine SOUTHASIA, in its March issue, has published a total of seven stories, with a photograph of Sheikh Hasina on the cover and a title "Fifty Years of Bangladesh-The Rising Sun" on the occasion of the golden jubilee of Bangladesh's independence, highlighting her government's success in achieving socioeconomic progress and tackling the coronavirus pandemic. In those stories, it was stated that in 2019, the Bangladesh economy was the fastest growing in the region, with a record growth of over 8.9 per cent, according to the UN. Pointing to the vaccination program against COVID-19 in Bangladesh, the stories said, this is an impressive achievement, especially given that many countries in the world have not yet started vaccinations. The stories mentioned that the journey of Bangladesh is heroic and laudable. One of the stories pointed out RMG and other potential sectors of Bangladesh which are invincible. In the fifth story, "Malice Towards None?", it was said that Bangladesh is going ahead maintaining good bilateral relations with all countries. The sixth story styled "Development Miracle" said, economic liberalization, farsighted public policies and democratic continuity contributed to developmental vibrancy in Bangladesh. The seventh story titled "Economic Solutions" says Bangladesh has sustained a higher growth rate which enabled it to progress at the fast pace.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police has banned the carrying of firearms and holding of rallies, processions, or agitation in and around the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban from 12:00am today until the end of the 12th session of the 11th parliament, which is scheduled to begin on April 1.

The country reported over 5,000 COVID-19 cases for the second consecutive day yesterday with 5,082 new cases while it recorded 45 deaths from the deadly virus, highest in around seven months. With this the number of COVID-19 cases reached to 6,05,937 and the number of deaths rose to 8,994. At the same time recovery count rose to 5,40,180, DGHS disclosed this information in a press release yesterday. A total of 67,57,869 people got registered till 2.30pm yesterday to receive the vaccine, DGHS said. Meanwhile, the government on Monday issued an 18-point directive to chase away the virus. The directives will remain in force for the next two weeks with an aim to contain the coronavirus transmission.

A total of 2,495 more Rohingyas voluntarily left Cox's Bazar camps for Bhasan Char yesterday as part of the government's move to relocate them to the island in the sixth phase.

The holy Shab-e-Barat was observed across the country on Monday night with due religious fervor and devotion.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in a condolence message, expressed deep shock and sorrow at the death of her former Personal Officer, also Bangladesh Awami League's Central Office Manager Md. Shahjahan, who died at a city hospital yesterday at the age of 58.

The torch relay of the Bangabandhu 9th Bangladesh Games, organized by Bangladesh Olympic Association, starts today from Tungipara, Gopalganj. Twenty former sports stars, split into ten groups, will carry the torch from there to the Bangabandhu National Stadium in Dhaka.



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