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News Brief

President Md. Abdul Hamid will address the 11th session of the Eleventh Jatiya Sangsad commencing today at 4:30 pm as the maiden session of 2021. The President convened the session exercising the power bestowed upon him as per the Article 72 (1) of the Constitution.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has urged all concerned to make more films on the Liberation War as the generation after generation could know the real history of Bangladesh. The Premier was virtually addressing the National Film Award-2019, from Ganabhaban yesterday organized by the Ministry of Information at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre. The Prime Minister said, the government has been working to reach the cinema culture to the upazila level and for which a fund of Taka 1000 crore is going to be raised from where people can take loan at low interest rate to build cinema halls or Cineplex's. The Prime Minister simultaneously said that her government would do whatever necessary for modernization of the film.

Information Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud who chaired the function recalled contributions of Bangabandhu to the making of the country's film industry an effective media for social awakening said, Bangabandhu's daughter Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is giving new life to the country's film industry. Cineplex's will also be built in the tathyo (information) complexes approved by the Prime Minister in each district. The Premier also formed the welfare trust recently for the film artistes, he added. The Minister handed over the awards to the awardees on behalf of the Prime Minister. Information Secretary Khaza Miah spoke on the occasion while state Minister for Information Dr Murad Hasanah attended as special guest.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader while addressing a press conference yesterday said, the massive voter turnout in the municipal polls is an expression of people's continuous confidence on Sheikh Hasina-led government and the electoral system, as second phase polls to 60 municipalities were held on Saturday. Turning to BNP, the Minister said, BNP is gradually lagging behind in politics of votes due to its weak leadership and ill political practice of making blind criticism and spreading falsehood against the government without seeking votes to people.

Agriculture Minister Dr. Md. Abdur Razzaque said, the government is working to raise irrigation efficiency up to 50 per cent by 2030 from its present capacity of 38 per cent, aiming to expand more cost-effective irrigation facilities for the farmers. The Minister was addressing a seminar at Sech Bhaban at city's Manik Mia Avenue yesterday. Dr. Razzaque said, under the present government, the irrigation area has been extended by 10.50 lac hectares. Irrigation channel up to 13,351 kilometers, 10 rubber dams and one hydraulic elevator also have been installed, he said.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan while talking to reporters at a food distribution ceremony at a city hotel yesterday said, Rohingyas who went to Saudi Arabia identifying themselves as Bangladeshis with Bangladeshi passports will be considered if they apply for renewing passports. He, however said, "They're not Bangladeshi citizens who are from Myanmar; they're Myanmar citizens. It's clear." The Saudi Ambassador to Bangladesh Issa bin Youssef Al-Duhailan, who was present there said, they are considering those Rohingyas as Bangladeshis who have been to Saudi Arabia with Bangladeshi passports.

The government has approved two new stimulus packages of Taka 2,700 crore to boost the cottage, small and medium enterprises and to develop the living standards of people at the grassroots level in the country. The authority concerned will start process of the implementing packages immediately, a press release of the Finance Ministry said yesterday.

Local Government Minister Md. Tajul Islam said, the municipal councils must focus on increasing income or face dissolution as the government plans to change the law to this end. He was addressing a National Policy Dialogue on 'Strengthening the Urban Local Governments in Bangladesh' at a city hotel yesterday. British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Robert Chatterton Dickson taking part in the discussion said, Bangladesh's progress in recent years in poverty eradication and several human development fronts is remarkable.

US Ambassador to Bangladesh Earl R Miller while talking to media said, the Bangladesh-US relations will only get stronger with no major changes under the new Biden Administration. Regarding Rohingya issue, Ambassador Miller said, joint efforts should be there to continue to put the pressure on Myanmar to produce the circumstances on the ground so that all the Rohingyas can return to their homeland in a "safe, dignified and voluntary" manner and that has to begin soon.

Bangladesh, Myanmar and China will hold a tripartite virtual meeting tomorrow to discuss ways to expedite the Rohingya repatriation where Vice Minister of China Luo Zhaohui will take part in the discussion, Foreign Ministry said.

The government is earnestly trying to send back Bahrain expatriates who earlier came home due to corona pandemic. Bangladesh mission in Bahrain have been maintaining constant communication with that country's government, a Foreign Ministry press release said yesterday.


The residents of Dhaka would get Covid-19 vaccine at around 330 points in at least 50 hospitals, sources said. Meanwhile, the Clinical Research Organization in an application submitted to the Bangladesh Medical Research Council-BMRC yesterday, asked for permission to launch a clinical trial of Covid-19 vaccine Bangavax, developed by Globe Biotech Ltd of Bangladesh. The number of deaths from Covid-19 in Bangladesh rose to 7,906 with the death of 23 more people yesterday. At the same time recovery count rose to 4,72,437, DGHS disclosed this information in a press release yesterday. With the detection of 569 new cases, the total number of Covid-19 cases rose to 5,27,632.

The month-long Amar Ekushey Book Fair 2021 will be held this year in a traditional way, not virtually. State Minister for Cultural Affairs K M Khalid came up with the information while addressing a special press conference at Bangla Academy yesterday. A proposal will be sent to the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina proposing 'February 20', 'March 7' and 'March 17 as possible date to commence the book fair, he said.

State Minister for Shipping Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury said, 3,423 houses will be built to accommodate families those become victims of Payra Port land acquisition process. He said this while inspecting the under construction houses for the victims of land acquisition victims in Patuakhali yesterday.

Bangladesh Bank yesterday formed a Taka 1,000 crore fund to provide cheap loans to export-oriented industries to upgrade technologies they currently use. According to a central bank notice, the interest rate will range between 5 per cent and 6 per cent.

A total of 14,65,046 new voters-9,01,983 males, 5,63,048 females have been included in the draft of the latest electoral roll of 2019-2020. The number of voters now stands at 11,12,84,158, the Election Commission said yesterday.


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