



PRESS INFORMATION DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH
DHAKA



Most Urgent
For: Bangladoot, All Missions
MSG: 92/2019-20
Date: Tuesday, 29 October 2019

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News Brief

President Md. Abdul Hamid has asked the outgoing Cabinet Secretary Mohammad Shafiul Alam, now appointed alternative Executive Director of the World Bank, to uphold country's image of development and progress globally. The Head of State gave him this directive as he paid a courtesy call on him at Bangabhaban yesterday. The President urged Shafiul to take necessary steps to strengthen the existing relation between Bangladesh and World Bank. Meanwhile, Senior Secretary to Bridges Division Khandker Anwarul Islam will join as the 22nd cabinet Secretary today.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will brief the media on her just concluded Azerbaijan tour for attending the 18th summit of the Non-Aligned Movement at Ganobhaban this afternoon. The Premier attended the NAM summit held on October 25-26 in Baku, Azerbaijan.

The Cabinet yesterday gave final nod to the draft of the Gazipur Development Authority (GDA) Act, 2019 to speed up the development of the areas of Gazipur town in a planned way. The approval came from the regular Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Prime Minister's Office in Dhaka yesterday. The Cabinet also approved a list of 22 government holidays for 2020. Besides, the Cabinet also approved the 'Agreement between the Government of the Republic of South Africa and the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh regarding the waiver of visa requirements for holders of diplomatic and official passports.'

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday received a souvenir of proceedings of 1972 Cabinet meetings with Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in the chair as the Cabinet division dug out the documents. Cabinet Secretary Mohammad Shafiul Alam handed over the proceedings to the Premier in three forms - the scanned ones of the main English version, the translated versions in Bangla and rewritten verbatim copies in English.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader has warned that stern action would be taken against extortionists to stop toll collection on roads and highways aiming to bring discipline in the transport sector. The Minister said this at a press briefing at the Secretariat in Dhaka yesterday. The Minister directed all concerned to take steps to bring discipline in the transport sector.

Bangladesh and India are set to conduct the 9th 'Bangladesh India Friendship Dialogue' at Cox's Bazar on November 1 and 2 to ensuring people-to-people and business-to-business contacts between the two countries. Speaker Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury will inaugurate the conference where Indian think tanks, academics and lawmakers will be present.

About the preparedness of the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's birth centenary celebration, the Information Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud said, all-out preparation has been taken to celebrate his birth centenary, while a one-year elaborate programme has been taken in this regard to attract the international media. The Minister also said, Bangladesh and India will jointly produce a film on the life and works of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The Minister said this to the media at International Mother Language Institute in Dhaka yesterday. State Minister for Information Dr. Murad Hasan was also present in this program.

A three-day the Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) Radio Asia Conference and Radio Song Festival will begin at Hotel Intercontinental in Dhaka today. Information Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud will inaugurate the ceremony. State Minister for Information Dr. Murad Hasan, Secretary General of ABU Dr. Javed Mottaghi, Information Secretary Abdul Malek and Director General of Bangladesh Betar Narayan Chandra Shil will also present at this inaugural ceremony.

The government has approved a proposal for taking \$84.97 million as loan for procuring 200 MG coaches for Bangladesh Railway. The approval came from the 29th meeting of the Standing Committee on Non-Concessional Loan with Finance Minister A H M Mustafa Kamal in the chair held at his ERD office in Dhaka yesterday.

State Minister for Disaster Management and Relief Dr. Md Enamur Rahman, MP, has said, the government is working to build a disaster resilient nation instead of a relief-dependent country. The State Minister said this to the media while visiting the ongoing construction works of the District Relief Godown cum Disaster Management Information Centre in Rangpur yesterday.

The first phase of Bishwa Ijtema, the second largest congregation of Muslim community after Hajj, will be held from January 10 to 12 and the second phase from January 17 to 19 next year. The decision was taken yesterday at a preparatory meeting for holding the Bishwa Ijtema at the Home Ministry conference room in Dhaka. State Minister for Religious Affairs Advocate Sheikh Md. Abdullah said to the media yesterday.

Mentioning that 7,000-8,000 tonnes of onion will be brought from Egypt by the first week of November, Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi has said, there is no scope for its price to come down until the consignments arrive. The Minister said this while talking to reporters after attending an event of Business Confidence Survey 2019 arranged by Business Initiative Leading Development at a city hotel in Dhaka yesterday.

Planning Minister M A Mannan yesterday asserted that the government is committed to attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Planning Minister said this while addressing a seminar on challenges of achieving SDGs at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday. Highlighting the successes of Bangladesh in attaining the Millennium Development Goals, the Minister said that the government is very much sincere and committed to attaining the SDGs. Turning to the requirement of huge resources for implementing the SDGs, the Minister also said, the message of the Prime Minister is that if any development partners come forward with their assistance to help implement the SDGs, the government would gladly accept it.

Biman Bangladesh Airlines yesterday launched a direct flight operation to Madina from Dhaka as the second destination to Saudi Arabia after Jeddah. The national flag carrier will operate flights on Dhaka-Madina-Dhaka route for three days in a week – Monday, Wednesday and Saturday- and one on Chattagram-Madina-Chattagram route every Thursday. State Minister for Civil Aviation Md. Mahbub Ali inaugurated the maiden Dhaka-Madina flight at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka.

A meeting of the National Moon Sighting Committee will be held today to fix the date of holy Eid-e-Miladunnabi of Hijri 1441 and review reports of moon sighting of Rabiul Awal month. The meeting will be held at Islamic Foundation in Baitul Mukarram National Mosque at 5.45 pm with State Minister for Religious Affairs and National Moon Sighting Committee President Advocate Sheikh Md. Abdullah in the chair.



29.10.2019

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