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News Brief

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina reached the United Arab Emirates yesterday on a three-day official visit to attend Abu Dhabi Sustainable Week, Zayed Sustainable Awards Ceremony and other programmes. Bangladesh Ambassador to the UAE Muhammad Imran received the Prime Minister at the airport. The Premier will attend an envoy's conference during the visit. The Prime Minister is set to discuss about the various plans of the Bangladesh missions in West Asia regarding celebrating the Birth centenary of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Two instruments are likely to be signed between Bangladesh and the UAE. The agreements are — 'Addendum to the MoU signed between Emirates National Oil Company and Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources, Bangladesh' and 'Protocol of Amendment to the Agreement on allotment of land plot in Baridhara Diplomatic Enclave', Dhaka for Construction of Embassy Premises.

Outgoing Australian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Julia Niblett yesterday called on President Abdul Hamid at Bangabhaban in Dhaka yesterday. Referring to the recent Australian bushfires, the President expressed profound sorrow and sympathy at the casualties and damage. About recent high-level visit-exchanges between the representatives of two countries, Australian High Commissioner mentioned that such visits took the bilateral relation to a new height. Meanwhile, Nepal sought support from Bangladesh for establishing its National Defense University in Kathmandu. Nepal's Chief of Army Staff General Purna Chandra Thapa sought the assistance as he paid a courtesy call on President Md. Abdul Hamid at Bangabhaban in Dhaka yesterday. The Head of the State called for exchanging more high-level visits between the armed forces of Bangladesh and Nepal.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has joined the Akheri Munajat of the 55th Bishwa Ijtema as the first phase of the world's largest Muslim congregation after the holy Hajj ended on the banks of the river Turag at Tongi yesterday. Prime Minister took part in the munajat from Ganabhaban in Dhaka. Senior Islamic Scholar of Kakrail Mosque Hafez Maulana Mohammad Zobaer led the 35-minute prayer both in Bangla and Arabic languages. The second phase of the Ijtema is scheduled to begin on January 17 at the same venue and it will end on January 19.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has congratulated the new Sultan of Sultanate of Oman Haitham bin Tariq on accession to the throne. In a congratulatory message, the Prime Minister termed his (Sultan) accession to the throne as the testimony to the trust and confidence that the people of the Sultanate of Oman have in his able leadership.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader has said, the party's two 'clean-imaged mayoral candidates' Barrister Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh and Atiquil Islam are enough to conduct election campaign and face BNP candidates in the upcoming Dhaka city polls. He said this at a press conference after a secretariat meeting of the party at AL President's Dhanmondi political office in Dhaka yesterday. He also said 45 lakh winter clothes and Taka 3 crore have so far been distributed among cold-hit people in different areas in the country.

Information Minister Dr Hasan Mahmud will leave Dhaka today for India on a four-day official visit there. During his visit, he will hold a bilateral meeting with Indian Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar for expanding cooperation in the information sector of the two countries. The two Ministers are expected to jointly inaugurate the airing of Bangladesh Betar in India and simultaneous airing of Akashvani in Bangladesh. Besides, an agreement will be signed during the visit between the film development

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corporations of the two countries to make a film on the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Information Minister will also visit Ramoji Film City in Hyderabad to exchange experience for building the country's Bangabandhu Film City a modern one.

Information Minister Dr Hasan Mahmud has said, news published on proclamation of independence by the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in different international media on March 26 and 27, 1971 will be documented. He said this while talking to journalists after a meeting of the Media, Publicity and Documentation Sub-committee on the 'Celebration of the Birth Centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman' held at the International Mother Language Institute in Dhaka yesterday. He also informed a big media conference will be held in the city, side by side at Tungipara. Media conference will also be held at different big cities of the world, including Brussels, New York, London and New Delhi, he added. Meanwhile, Information Minister addressing at the launching ceremony of Swadesh Pratidin, a new Bangla daily, at the auditorium of Jatiya Press Club in Dhaka yesterday said, what contributions Begum Khaleda Zia could make to the Mujib Year as the BNP chief used to observe her fake birthday by cutting cake on August 15, the day Bangabandhu and most of his family members were killed.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal has said, none will be spared for their misdeeds whatever they are billionaires or politicians, issuing a note of warning against the people involved in illegal drug trading as well casino business. He said this at the inauguration ceremony of software of the Department of Narcotics Control at Segunbagicha in Dhaka yesterday. In collaboration with Korea, the website NIMS was inaugurated with a view to updating cases, license management, sample analysis management and operation so that law enforcement agencies can prevent drug use and build awareness against illicit drugs.

Foreign Minister Dr A K Abdul Momen has said, Bangladesh is concerned over the killing of its nationals on the Bangladesh-India border by the Indian Border Security Force. He said this at a press conference in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Dhaka on Thursday. There were top-level meetings between the border forces of the two countries, and both sides agreed on 'zero killing' on the border, he added.

Prime Minister's ICT Affairs Adviser Sajeeb Wazed Joy has said, the government has been working to bring the country's all people under internet coverage. He said this while speaking at the launching ceremony of Wi-Fi zone at different government educational institutions in the country at Posts and Telecommunications Division in Dhaka yesterday. Sajeeb Wazed Joy said, the government has brought 10 crore people under internet coverage in the last 10 years. Meanwhile, foreign television channels are likely to take Bangabandhu Satellite-1 services soon as the government has taken a move to approve the draft regulatory guidelines on landing rights for broadcasting satellite services in Bangladesh. Prime Minister's ICT Affairs Adviser at a meeting in the Secretariat yesterday asked the Posts and Telecommunications Division to place the draft before a Cabinet meeting.

The High Court yesterday directed the authorities concerned of educational institutions, especially universities, across the country to form squads and committees to stop ragging. The HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman also directed them to carry out the order within three months.

Bangladesh government has decided to observe 'State Mourning' today to honour Omani Sultan Qaboos bin Said who passed away on January 10 at the age of 79. Prayers will also be offered at other places of worship seeking salvation of the departed soul of Sultan Qaboos. The National flag is being hoisted at half-mast across the country and Bangladesh missions abroad.


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