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News Brief

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has directed the authorities concerned to devise plans to face the upcoming global recession due to the coronavirus outbreak. The Premier made the instruction while talking to field level officials through videoconference from Ganabhaban yesterday. Stressing the need for continuing the food production in the coming days, she directed the authorities concerned not to keep any piece of land uncultivated. The Prime Minister said, the ongoing nationwide holidays may be extended for five more days till April 9 to contain the spread of deadly coronavirus. He also said, with the extension of holidays the communication system has to be kept open on a limited basis. The Premier said, the government has taken steps to prevent the coronavirus spread from the very beginning and for that reason there had not been many cases in the country. The Prime Minister also asked all not to hold any public programmes marking the upcoming Pahela Boishakh, rather to celebrate the event in a digital way. The Prime Minister asked the officials concerned to prepare a list of distressed people up to ward level who are in very bad situation due to the holidays and ensure relief materials for them. She also said, none will be spared for corruption and irregularities. The government won't tolerate people taking advantage of the bad times to become rich, she warned. At the same time, she directed the authorities concerned to take legal actions against those who are trying to spread rumours over coronavirus through the digital technology from home and abroad. Sheikh Hasina asked authorities concerned to take immediate measures for tackling mosquito which might pose another problem in the coming days. The Premier expressed her concerns about Rohingya camps in Cox' Bazar and ordered the authorities concerned to check entry of outsiders alongside increasing surveillance.

Two more new coronavirus positive cases were detected in the country over the last 24 hours, while no death was reported after March 25. IEDCR at a virtual media briefing in Dhaka yesterday confirming this said, the total number of positive cases stood at 51. As during the last 24 hours till yesterday, six coronavirus infected people have recovered and the number of the recovered patients stood at 25.

Finance Minister A H M Mustafa Kamal has said, the highest priority of the government is now to save the country's people from the onslaught of coronavirus. He said this while addressing a meeting on the possible impact of coronavirus in Dhaka yesterday. He said, the government has already undertaken some short and mid-term plans to overcome the impact of coronavirus.

Information Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud's family organisation NNK Foundation has begun distributing relief materials among the day-labourers and lower-income people at Rangunia Upazila in Chattogram. The organization yesterday gave away relief materials to 500 families of the area.

Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi in a statement yesterday urged the owners to consider with sympathy the house rent issue of the industrial labourers in this unusual situation rendered by the deadly COVID-19 pandemic.

Bangladeshi local companies like Walton would produce ventilators, mechanical breathing devices for the coronavirus patients. State Minister for ICT Division Zunaid Ahmed Palak informed this at a virtual briefing in Dhaka yesterday.

Bangladesh yesterday joined a teleconference of civil aviation authorities of 33 Asia and Pacific countries for sharing information on the prevailing situation of aviation sector

Please Turn Over

amid coronavirus pandemic. Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh Chairman Air Vice Marshal M Mafidur Rahman addressed the conference and shared the measures taken by the Bangladesh government for aviation sector.

The heads of the World Trade Organization, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization issued a joint statement yesterday calling on governments to minimise the impact of COVID-19 related border restrictions on trade in food. When acting to protect the health and well-being of their citizens, countries should ensure that any trade-related measures do not disrupt the food supply chain, the joint statement read.

The government is going to launch special open market sale of rice at a subsidised rate in all city corporations' areas of the country in order to ensure food for lower income people amid ongoing nationwide shutdown due to the spread of the novel coronavirus. Food Secretary Dr. Nazmunara Khanam talking to media yesterday informed that the programme will start possibly from the next week. Meanwhile, Social Welfare Ministry yesterday distributed foods, other daily necessities and masks among poor and destitute people at Tejgaon and Agargaon slums.

Nine naval ships of Bangladesh Navy have been involved in alerting the fishermen fishing in the sea and rivers of coastal areas about maintaining social distance to prevent coronavirus infection, sources of Bangladesh Navy said yesterday.

A list of around 50 social media accounts have been sent to BTRC to close those and take action and a number of people have also been detained in Chandpur, Khagrachhari, Chattogram, Dhaka and Kishoreganj districts on charges of spreading rumours about coronavirus infection in the country, Police Headquarters sources said yesterday.

A ship from Indonesia arrived at the Payra Port on March 30 with 22,227 metric tons of coal for Bangladesh-China Power Company Limited. The ship will leave the port today after unloading coal. All medical preparations, including the Corona virus, were done before the ship was boarded.

Bangladesh Bank in a circular yesterday said, the central bank has taken a decision to keep open the operation of repurchase agreement and interbank call money market in a limited scale during the general holidays for managing the liquidity risk due to interbank transactions.


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