



PRESS INFORMATION DEPARTMENT  
GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH  
DHAKA



Most Urgent  
For: Bangladoot, All Missions  
MSG: 70/2020-21  
Date: Monday, 12 October 2020

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### News Brief

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said, the government has adopted the “Forces Goal-2030” in line with the “Defence Policy” taken by the Father of the Nation in 1974 to build a time-befitting, well-equipped, and modern technology and knowledge based army to face the 21st century’s geopolitical and military challenges. The Premier was addressing a national standard (national flag) handing over ceremony to 10 units and organizations of the Bangladesh Army through videoconferencing from Ganabhaban yesterday. The Premier called upon the army personnel to put forward the country by upholding its constitution. Highlighting the government’s different endeavors to offset the coronavirus blow, the Prime Minister also asked all concerned to show austerity in spending public fund as the government will need huge money if the Covid-19 appears afresh with immense blow.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed profound shock and sorrow at the death of Ekushey Padak recipient and language veteran Dr. Mirza Mazharul Islam who died of old age complications at a city hospital yesterday morning at the age of 93.

Following the directive of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, a proposal with an aim to amend the Prevention of Violence against Women and Children Act-2000 incorporating the provision of the death penalty as the maximum punishment for rape is likely to be taken up to the Cabinet today.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader while inaugurating Bangabandhu Corner at BRTC headquarters through a videoconferencing yesterday said, the government is in a very tough stance against any offence, including repression on women. About the movement of BNP, the Minister said, after failing to get people’s response, BNP carried out their evil attempts to capitalize on quota reform movement and students’ movement for road safety and now they want to divert the anti-rape movement to a different direction. The people have no trust in that party’s movement, he added. The Minister further said, the government will not make any obstacle in peaceful and democratic movement but if anyone carries out violence or wants to create an unstable situation, the evil attempts will be dealt with an iron hand.

Agriculture Minister Dr. Md. Abdur Razzaque has said that the government has a plan to construct the latest hydraulic elevator dam for storing water for irrigation and expanding water reservoir facility across the country. The Minister said this during virtual inauguration of the first piloting of such a dam constructed under the supervision of Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation at Anwara upazila of Chattogram yesterday.

Information Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud referring to the incident of BNP activists throwing eggs and stones at the house of party Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said, the party leaders who are detested by their own workers, how they will be endeared to the countrymen. Criticising a comment of BNP leader Nazrul Islam Khan, the Minister said BNP has been telling since 2009 that movement would be waged against the government and it cannot be given more time. “But, we saw that whenever BNP talked against the government, then movement started within their party,” he said. The Minister was addressing a memorial meeting on six journalists of Chattogram division organized by Chattogram Bibhagh Sangbadik Forum at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

Health Minister Zahid Maleque while talking to reporters after inaugurating the 13th Regional Population Training Institute in Manikganj yesterday said, compared to other countries, the covid-19 situation has come under control in Bangladesh as the infection rate is

now 11 per cent. The government's target is not to let a single person die from coronavirus, the Minister said.

The 32nd span of the multipurpose Padma Bridge on the 4th and 5th pillars at the end point of Mawa was installed yesterday making over 4.8 kilometers of the bridge visible. The 6.15 km-long bridge will have a total of 41 spans.

China has expressed concern as repatriation of forcibly displaced Rohingyas has not yet started to their land of origin in Myanmar's Rakhine state from Bangladesh when the Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Li Jiming called on Foreign Minister Dr. A K Abdul Momen at the Foreign ministry yesterday. Referring to the recent incident of killing eight Rohingyas in a series of clashes between two rival Rohingya groups at Cox's Bazar camps, Dr. Momen expressed Dhaka's fear that Rohingyas will appear as a threat to regional security if their repatriation to Myanmar is delayed and Dhaka's concern over Myanmar's troops deployment close to the Bangladesh-Myanmar border. The Minister requested China to renew visas for the Bangladeshi students who got stuck here due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Chinese Ambassador informed that the book written by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman titled "Amar Dekha Naya Chin" is being translated into Chinese language and to be published soon.

Outgoing Thai Ambassador Arunrung Phothong Humphreys has said, the Thai visa processing is going to be easier and quicker for the Bangladeshis. She has also apprised that a big Thai company is interested in a joint venture in the sugar refinery project in Bangladesh. Humphreys shared this at virtual farewell programme organized in her honour by Bangladesh-Thai Chamber of Commerce Industry recently.

Bangladesh and India want to resume flight operations through a special "air bubble" arrangement "as soon as possible" after finalizing the "technicalities", official sources said.

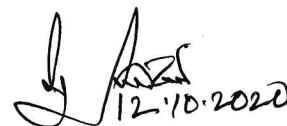
The country yesterday recorded 24 more fatalities from the COVID-19, in a daily count, raising the death toll from the pandemic to 5,524. At the same time recovery count rose to 2,92,860, said an official press release yesterday. The country also saw further rise in coronavirus cases with the detection of 1,193 new cases taking the total number of cases to 3,78,266.

The government has appointed Air Vice Marshal Mohammad Mostafizur Rahman as the new Ambassador of Bangladesh to Indonesia, said the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

On the occasion of the International Day of the Girl Child yesterday several adolescent girls availed the opportunity to serve as Ambassadors and High Commissioners for a day in a virtual event jointly organized by the Australian High Commission, High Commission of Canada, Embassy of France, Embassy of Germany, Embassy of the Netherlands, Embassy of Norway, Embassy of Switzerland, Embassy of the USA and UNICEF Bangladesh. The Ambassadors applauded the Bangladesh government's commitment to gender equality and commended civil society, non-government organisations and communities for their great work at the grassroots to advance gender equality and girls' rights.

About 100 million rural people in Bangladesh are going to get high-speed internet access by the end of 2020, Info Sarkar-3 project of ICT division is working in this regard.

The parliamentary standing committee on the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock has recommended placing of 'Marine Fisheries Bill, 2020', and 'Fisheries and Fisheries Products (Inspection and Quality Control) Bill, 2020' before the House after necessary scrutiny and amendment. It was decided in the 12<sup>th</sup> meeting of the committee at the Sangsad bhaban yesterday.



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