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From: PIO, PID, Dhaka  
Fax: 9540553/9540026  
E-mail: pidhaka@gmail.com  
Web: www.pressinform.gov.bd

### News Brief

President Md. Abdul Hamid left Dhaka for Dubai yesterday for health check-up and treatment of eyes. Agriculture Minister Dr Abdur Razzak, cabinet secretary and chiefs of the three services saw the President off at the airport. The President is scheduled to return home on October 22.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader at a virtual press briefing in Dhaka yesterday said, BNP had introduced the culture of impunity in the country during its reign as the present government replaced it with the culture of justice. He said, the government has taken a strong stance against irregularities, graft and social offences that is reflected as it has already promulgated an ordinance incorporating a provision of death penalty for rape. Claiming that the country's economy has already turned around under the strong and visionary leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Obaidul Quader said, despite the floods, cyclones and coronavirus pandemic, the country's foreign exchange reserve has reached nearly US \$40 billion.

Agriculture Minister Dr. Abdur Razzaque while addressing a research reviewing programme of Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute yesterday asked the scientists to devise an action plan with a target to become self-sufficient in onion production.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan mentioning the government's strict position against rape incidents has said, action will be taken against offenders after proper investigation into rape cases. While interacting with reporters at his ministry yesterday also said, investigation into the 'Sylhet custodial death' is underway.

Information Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud while addressing a meeting marking the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Jatiya Press Club in Dhaka yesterday said, BNP has failed to accept Bangabandhu due to its misery of political spirit and also their attempts to destroy the real history. Dr. Hasan Mahmud said, Bangabandhu is a revered leader to all Bangalees around the world.

Industries Minister Nurul Majid Mahmud Humayun while addressing a function marking the World Standards Day in Dhaka yesterday called for expanding the activities of BSTI to ensure the quality of the products produced in the factories set up in the villages.

Environment, Forests and Climate Change Minister Md Shahab Uddin while addressing a workshop in Dhaka yesterday said, if the preparation of Red List of 1,000 Plant Species in Bangladesh is completed, the government will be able play a major role in plant and forest conservation.

Deputy Secretary of State Stephen E. Biegun arrived in Dhaka yesterday to discuss Bangladesh-US cooperation on Covid-19 response and sustainable economic development. Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen received the US Deputy Secretary of State at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport. Biegun held a meeting with State Minister for Foreign Affairs M Shahriar Alam last evening. He is scheduled to meet Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Gonobhaban today.

The newly appointed High Commissioner of India Vikram Kumar Doraiswami has said Bangladesh will get top priority to trial, distribution and partial co-production of the potential Indian vaccine. He made the assurance during a meet with State Minister for Foreign Affairs Md. Shahriar Alam at foreign ministry in Dhaka yesterday. The High Commissioner said, the upcoming virtual summit is not being seen as a substitute for in person visit by Prime Minister Modi, rather it will be a complementary summit.

President-elect of the COP26 and UK Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Alok Sharma in his latest article said, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's leadership of the Climate Vulnerable Forum is helping to amplify the calls from the most vulnerable countries for decisive and immediate action. Alok Sharma in his article "the world must support developing countries in tackling climate change" also said, it was extremely encouraging to hear Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina speaking with great passion and commitment at the UN General Assembly recently.

Bangladesh is set to overtake India in terms of per capita GDP in 2020-21. According to International Monetary Fund's World Economic Outlook report, India's per capita GDP is likely to fall 10.5 percent to \$1,877, the lowest in four years due to the sharp economic contraction following the strictest nationwide lockdown in the world due to the Coronavirus pandemic. On the other hand, Bangladesh is expected to see its per capita GDP to grow by four percent to \$1,888. Meanwhile, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations Ambassador Rabab Fatima addressing a meeting of Committee of the General Assembly on eradication of poverty in New York on Tuesday highlighted the success of the Bangladesh government in eradicating poverty.

Saima Wajed Hossain, daughter of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, speaking at a webinar to mark the inauguration of an awareness campaign yesterday called for changing mentality towards women to put an end to rape and violence against them. Centre for Research and Information, UNDP and National Human Rights Commission launched the campaign.

Bangladesh yesterday recorded 16 more fatalities from the novel coronavirus in a daily count, raising the death toll from the pandemic to 5,593. At the same time recovery count rose to 2,97,449. The country also saw further rise in coronavirus cases with the detection of 1,684 new cases taking the total number of cases to 3,82,959. Meanwhile, Bangladesh set to begin antigen tests before possible second wave of COVID-19. DGHS informed media that they are collecting 200,000 kits for antigen tests and UNFPA is supposed to give 1 million kits. In another development, local drug firm Globe Biotech yesterday reached an agreement with the ICDDR,B for conducting human trial of its COVID-19 vaccine.

The Ministry of Information has given permission to all concerned to screen films in the country's cinema halls from October 16 ensuring proper hygiene and social distancing during the prevailing COVID 19 situation; the ministry issued a circular in this regard yesterday. Air communications between Bangladesh and India will resume from October 28 after being suspended for more than seven months due to Covid-19. The decision was made at an inter-ministerial meeting in Dhaka yesterday.

State Minister for Information Dr. Murad Hasan while addressing a memorial meeting at Jatiya Press Club in Dhaka yesterday said, AL leader Mohammed Nasim was a 'bright star' in country's political history and he dedicated his entire life for the welfare of the country.

Information Secretary Kamrun Nahar inaugurated a film museum at Bangladesh Film Archive Bhaban in Dhaka yesterday. Speaking at the function, Kamrun Nahar said, the newly developed film museum would open a door for the development of the country's film industry.

The World White Cane Safety Day, the safety symbol for the blind people, is being observed in the country today. President Md. Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, issued separate messages on the occasion.



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**Surath Kumar Sarker**  
Principal Information Officer  
Phone- 9546091