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News Brief

President Md. Abdul Hamid has urged the country's university authorities to give more emphasis on research works for ensuring their global standard. He made the urge when a delegation of Rajshahi University met him at Bangabhaban yesterday. During the meeting, the President underscored the need for arranging extracurricular activities, including sports and culture for the students apart from their regular academic activities.

Bangladesh has signed a long-term "LNG Sales and Purchase Agreement with Qatar's RasGas" to import up to 2.5 million tonnes of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) annually to meet the country's growing energy demand. After the agreement signing ceremony in Doha yesterday, State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Nasrul Hamid said, Bangladesh is planning to invest more for ensuring uninterrupted energy supply. The construction works for two FSRU (Floating Storage Re-gasification Unit) having 7.5 million tonnes LNG per year is going on along with land based LNG terminals aimed at reducing demand and supply gap, he said adding the government has also undertaken initiative to construct LNG based power plant alongside importing small scale LNG.

Bangladesh has sought support from the World Bank to provide health services to Rohingyas. State Minister for Health and Family Welfare Zahid Malik said, 'The government has sought an amount of US\$250 million from the lending agency and a letter has already been issued in this regard. Bangladesh will succeed in helping the Rohingya people as it had overcome other crisis moments in the past.' The State Minister said this as he was briefing the reporters after a meeting on Bangladesh's preparedness and World Bank's assistance in disaster and epidemic management at the secretariat yesterday.

China yesterday said it wanted to play a constructive role in resolving the Rohingya crisis as soon as possible. Chinese Ambassador in Dhaka Ma Mingqiang said this while addressing a reception at the Chinese embassy marking the 68th founding anniversary of China. The diplomat said, some 150 tonnes of relief materials from China for the Rohingyas would reach Chittagong within a couple of days.

Solution to the Rohingya crisis lies in the refugees returning voluntarily to Myanmar from Bangladesh in a safe and dignified manner, said United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi. He was addressing a press conference in Dhaka yesterday. The United Nations wants the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to intensify actions to solve the Rohingya refugee crisis, in which it is ready to cooperate with the 10-member regional body. "The time to act is now," said UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres in a meeting with the Foreign Ministers of the association members on the sidelines of the UNGA in New York over the weekend.

Durga Puja, the biggest religious festival of the Hindu community, begins today with enthusiasm and much religious fervour across the country. President Md. Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday felicitated the Hindu community in separate messages on the occasion of Durga Puja. Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Md Asaduzzamman Mia told journalists yesterday that there is no specific security threat but security has been reinforced considering the present national and international situation.

With the view to reaching e-service to the doorsteps of people, online Educational Institution Identification Number (EIIN) programme and the education directory application have been launched. Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid inaugurated the services at a function at Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics (BANBEIS) in Dhaka yesterday.

A 15-member National Committee for Monitoring and Implementation of Doing Business Reforms has been formed to improve the country's overall business environment. Cabinet Secretary is the Chair of the committee and Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) will act as its secretariat.

The broader index of Dhaka Stock Exchange finished yesterday at 6,106.24 points.

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