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## News Brief

President Md. Abdul Hamid asked university authorities to give priority over ensuring a conducive learning environment for students with the knowledge about the country and its great Liberation War. The President came up with the directives as the first Vice Chancellor of the newly established Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman University-BSMRU, Kishoreganj, Professor Dr. Z M Parvez Sajjad called on him at Bangabhaban yesterday. Referring to the changed situation of worldwide educational system, the President also asked all to keep an eye on the educational activities so that the learners can keep pace with the changed situation.

The Cabinet yesterday gave final nod to a draft of “The Child Daycare Centre Act, 2021” keeping a provision of maximum 10 years in jail in case of failure to ensure proper security and safety to the children. Chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, joining from Ganabhaban, the meeting also gave final approval to the draft of “The Bankers’ Book Evidence Bill 2021” replacing the old Bankers’ Book Evidence Act 1891. Besides, the Cabinet approved a proposal to stop the production of the drug “Ketoprofen” in an effort to save the critically-endangered vultures. The Cabinet also directed the ministries to enact fresh laws by June next replacing the ordinances promulgated during the 1975 (August)-1978 and 1982-1986 (September) regimes in accordance with a judgment of the High Court passed in 2013. The meeting ratified an agreement signed on February 28, 2018 in Rabat, between Bangladesh and Morocco, for avoidance of double taxation and prevention of fiscal evasion.

During the Cabinet meeting, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina asked all concerned for reducing the age limit from 55 to 40 years to get registered for Covid-19 vaccination, aiming to expand and accelerate the Covid-19 inoculation campaign for commoners, Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam informed after the meeting. He said, the Premier also proposed to use Union Digital Centres for the registration purpose. The Premier called upon all to follow the health guideline properly which includes wearing facemasks and washing hands even after taking the Covid-19 vaccine.

Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain, who received his first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine on Sunday, urged lawyers to get vaccinated. The Chief Justice came up with the call during hearing of cases by the virtual bench of the Appellate Division yesterday.

Agriculture Minister Dr. Muhammad Abdur Razzaque while addressing a webinar yesterday said, if environment and ecology cannot be conserved, food security will face a threat, adding that the government remains very much conscious about conservation of environment. He said, productivity of crops should be increased through using necessary insecticides and fertilizers as it will not be possible to ensure food security in only organic method initially for the huge population. But the use of chemicals in cultivation should be minimized, he said.

Foreign Minister Dr. A K Abdul Momen urged BIMSTEC to play an instrumental and pivotal role in addressing social and economic impacts of COVID-19 through establishing a strong partnership and solidarity among its member states. The Minister was addressing the virtual inaugural session of ‘Bay of Bengal Economic Forum 2021’ yesterday, organized by South Asian Network on Economic Modeling-SANEM to discuss post COVID challenge in the region. He also emphasized on expediting the implementation of BIMSTEC Free Trade area and finalize the connectivity related agreements.

Bangladesh and the Maldives will hold bilateral talks today at State guest house Padma to find ways to strengthen the relations between the two countries. Foreign Minister Dr. A K Abdul Momen and his counterpart from the Maldives Abdulla Shahid will lead the respective side in the talks.

Following the Premier's direction at the Cabinet meeting, Health and Family Welfare Minister Zahid Maleque yesterday said, people aged 40 years and above now can get registered to receive COVID-19 vaccines, while as the frontline fighters, the health officials of both private and public hospitals will get priority in vaccination. Meanwhile, with the death of 16 more people yesterday, the number of deaths from Covid-19 in Bangladesh rose to 8,221. At the same time recovery count rose to 4,83,931, DGHS disclosed this information in a press release yesterday. With the detection of 316 new cases, the total number of Covid-19 cases rose to 5,38,378. A total of 46,509 people were administered Covid-19 vaccines on the second day of countrywide vaccination campaign yesterday, according to the DGHS. Till yesterday, the number of vaccine receivers rose to 77,669.

Being instructed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in bringing transparency and accountability and increase the efficiency of public money, the disbursement of stipends and allowances for educational accessories among primary school students through Nagad, the digital financial service of the postal department of Bangladesh, began yesterday. Posts and Telecommunications Minister Mustafa Jabbar and State Minister for the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education Md. Zakir Hossen inaugurated the fund distribution program at the secretariat.

State Minister for Information Dr. Md. Murad Hasan said, the relation between Bangladesh and India was intact in past and it will remain the same in the days to come. The historic Kolkata Press Club was one of the best allies of Bangladesh's Liberation War, he said. Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's speech delivered on February 6, 1972 at Brigade Parade Ground in Kolkata was the greatest public rally in the history where about 15 lac people of West Bengal assembled, he said. The Minister made the comments at a discussion titled 'Bangabandhu and Films of Bangladesh' at Kolkata Press Club, yesterday. Information Secretary Khaja Mia, among others, addressed it.

India facilitated the transit of fertilizer export to Nepal from Bangladesh via Rohanpur-Singhabad rail route. Under the new arrangement, Rohanpur railway station in Chapainawabganj district will be added as another entry and exit point apart from the existing six such transit stations. This year the first train loaded with export fertilizer to Nepal was handed over by Bangladesh Railways to Indian Railways on February 3.

The Country Representative of Japan External Trade Organisation-JETRO Yuji Ando met Major General Nazrul Islam, Executive Chairman of BEPZA, at the latter's office yesterday. BEPZA Executive Chairman sought cooperation of JETRO to attract more Japanese investment in the EPZs as well as in BEPZA Economic Zone, Mirsarai.

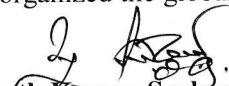
Myanmar's Army Chief General Min Aung Hlaing in a televised speech yesterday said, Rohingya refugees who escaped to Bangladesh during a 2017 crisis will be repatriated to Rakhine state, a newspaper report stated. Meanwhile, two Rohingya drug traders, belonging to Kutupalong Rohingya camp, were killed in a gunfight with members of Border Guard Bangladesh-BGB in Ghumdhum bordering area of Naikhangchhari upazila under Bandarban district yesterday.

A Dhaka court yesterday set February 16 to hold a hearing on charge framing in Niko graft case against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and others.

Additional Secretary attached with Local Government Division, Sohrab Hossain has been appointed new Director General of Bangladesh Television.

Admission test for the MBBS course at public and private medical colleges will be held on April 2. Besides, entry test for the BDS courses of dental colleges and units for the academic year 2020-21 will take place on April 30, Directorate General of Health Education said.

A team of Military Institute of Science and Technology-MIST has been awarded £5,000 as the winner of the global 'Medical Robotics for Contagious Diseases Challenge 2020', an Inter Service Public Relation-ISPR press release said yesterday. Imperial College of London organized the global competition and UK Robotics and Autonomous System Network sponsored it.

  
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