



Most Urgent  
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### News Brief

In the wake of massive surge of the lethal coronavirus, the government decided to extend ongoing countrywide lockdown for one more week till April 28, State Minister for Public Administration Farhad Hossain said adding that the fresh lockdown starting from April 22 would be a stricter one. The decision was taken in a Secretary level meeting chaired by Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam held virtually yesterday. Principal Information Officer (PIO) Surath Kumar Sarker disclosed this in a briefing at his office in the Secretariat last afternoon. Meanwhile, Civil Aviation Authority, Bangladesh-CAAB extended ongoing ban on operation of all international and domestic flights for one more week following government's decision to extend ongoing nationwide lockdown. No restriction will however be imposed on the movement of chartered flights, cargo flights, air ambulance and special flights. Amid the flight suspension, special flights to Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, UAE and Singapore will continue so that stranded Bangladeshi expatriate workers here can go back to their workplaces, CAAB official source said.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said, the government is extending all sorts of support to the farmers, to help them grow more food in view of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, to make sure that the farmers have food in their houses and godowns. The Premier said this in a video message, marking the 49th founding anniversary of Bangladesh Krishak League-BKL, an associate body of Awami League, yesterday. Elaborating her government's measures for the welfare of the farmers, the Premier said, her government has already made allocations of required money to give financial aid to the farmers hit hard by the recent natural calamities. The Premier further said, the government has made an arrangement so that the 'borga chashis' (share croppers) can get collateral-free loan through the Krishi Bank. Referring to shooting down of 18 farmers for demanding fertilizer during the BNP-Jamaat misrule, she said, the price of fertilizer was reduced to Taka 12 per kilogram which was Taka 90 during the BNP regime. The Prime Minister said that her government has been working to make the agriculture mechanized in line with the goal of Father of the Nation so that the farmers can grow more food. "We're giving 70 percent subsidy to this end," she mentioned.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will provide around Taka 834.73 as Eid gift among around 33.39 lac low-income group people who have been affected from the current COVID-19 pandemic situation. 'Nagad', the digital financial service of Bangladesh Post Office, will distribute the lion share or around 45 per cent of the fund, officials said. Earlier in last year when the pandemic hit the country, the Prime Minister's Eid gifts were delivered among some 34.06 lac affected families through mobile financial services-MFS.

The government is considering easing lockdown before Eid-ul-Fitr for need of the people's livelihoods and for the homebound people, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader came up with the information while speaking at a regular press briefing yesterday. The Minister said, many people, particularly the working ones, are struggling for their livelihoods amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. In this circumstances, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has decided to provide financial assistance to the jobless workers, including the transport ones, he said. Relief will be distributed among the floating people. The district administrations will look into the matter, he added. Earlier, the Minister joining a meeting on the review of the progress of various ongoing development works in the Rangpur zone of the

Roads and Highways Department through videoconferencing, instructed the engineers of the Roads and Highway Department to take the ongoing development works of the government forward.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud said, the activities of arrested Hefazat leader Mamunul Haque are threat to the state, society and religion as well. While talking to newsmen yesterday, Dr. Hasan said, Mamunul Haque even mocked with the Prophet as he showed how the Prophet used to move his leap. “Who gave him the right to do this? If anyone else had done it, then what Mamunul Haque and his followers would have done to him?” he posed questions. Dr. Hasan further said, it was clear that he (Maulana Shafi) was pushed to death through torture. And everyone witnessed that the room of Maulana Shafi, the founder of Hathazari Madrasha, was vandalized during his illness, his ambulance was forcibly stopped for about one hour on the way to hospital and oxygen tube was opened, he added. Replying to a query over the comment of BNP leader Mirza Abbas, the Minister said, he (Abbas) told the truth on online meeting. But, later, he tried to blame the media for that statement after facing criticism from his party.

Meanwhile, a Dhaka court yesterday placed Mamunul Haque on seven-day remand in a 2020 case lodged over carrying out vandalism.

Bangladesh Bank yesterday in a circular asked all the banks to pay up to Taka 50 lac to the families of first class officials and above for a death due to Covid-19 pandemic. While families of the trainee assistant official or same rank will get Taka 37.50 lac and families of the staff or sub-staff of the banks will get Taka 25 lac.

The National Board of Revenue has withdrawn 5 per cent Advance Tax on import of refined palm oil in a bid to control the price of edible oil in the local market. Earlier on April 11, the government waived Advance Tax on unrefined edible oil and palm oil.

Three Bangladeshi nationals were killed in a road accident in Oman on Sunday morning. The three used to work at a curtain shop in Muscat, the capital of Oman. Rezaul Karim, the Bangladeshi owner of the shop confirmed the matter.

Doctors, nurses and other health workers engaged in emergency health services have been instructed to “must use” ID cards amid the ‘lockdown’ situation. The Directorate General of Health Services-DGHS gave the instructions in this regard yesterday.

The country recorded the highest number of deaths yesterday since its first detection on March 8 last year with 112 fatalities, taking the death toll to 10,497. With 4,271 fresh cases, the tally of infections surged to 7,23, 221. At the same time recovery count rose to 6,21,300, DGHS disclosed this information in a press release yesterday. A total 15,057 people were administered the first dose of COVID-19 vaccines while 1,40,678 received the second dose of the vaccine across the country yesterday. With this, the number of vaccine receivers given the first dose of vaccine rose to 57,29,147, while a total of 15,07,287 people received the second dose of the vaccine. A total of 71,31,716 people got registered till 2.30 pm yesterday to take COVID-19 vaccines, DGHS sources said.

  
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