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News Brief

The government has extended the countrywide restrictions on public activities and movements until August 31 to contain spread of Covid-19. Markets, shops and shopping malls must be closed within 8pm, said a notification which contains a 10-point directive. Without very urgency, none will be allowed to go outside home between 10pm to 5am during that period. The notification issued by Cabinet Division also said, outside of home, wearing face-mask, keeping social distancing and maintaining health guidelines must be followed by everyone, otherwise rules violators will face legal actions. Government, autonomous, private offices, banks and financial institutions, trade and commerce, industries and factories and service providing institutions would remain open maintaining the health guidelines issued by the Health Services Division. Ill employees and expectant mothers would refrain from being present at the workplaces.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader joining a virtual memorial meeting arranged by the UK unit of AL on Sunday said, the perpetrators of August 15 carnage and August 21 grenade attacks are still continuing their evil designs. The Minister further said, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is the ideological shelter and Bangabandhu's daughter Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is the lighthouse of confidence to the nation while Bangabandhu's grandson Sajeeb Wazed Joy is the architect of Digital Bangladesh. In spite of having various limitations, Bangladesh has been facing the coronavirus pandemic with enormous courage, he added.

Information Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud has said, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has proved that disasters like Coronavirus catastrophe could even be handled with a right and farsighted leadership successfully. The Minister expressed the views as he was talking to the leaders of Chattogram Union of Journalists at the Port City yesterday. The Minister added, while BNP leaders are isolating themselves instead of helping the masses, the leaders and workers of Awami League stand beside the countrymen. The government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has set a rare example by supporting journalists unlike the neighbouring countries. Later, the Minister held a meeting with the government senior officials on COVID-19 situation in Chattogram.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Zahid Maleque while addressing media at his ministry yesterday said, Bangladesh witnessed low COVID-19 fatality with 1.31 per cent rate as the government led by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has taken multiple preventive measures to deal with the pandemic. The Minister added, the government is keeping connections with those countries who are performing phase-3 human trial on inoculation of COVID-19 to collect the vaccine within the shortest possible time.

Bangladesh yesterday recorded 30 more fatalities from the novel coronavirus in a daily count, raising the death toll from the pandemic to 3,184. At the same time recovery count rose to 137,905 after another 1066 patients were discharged from the hospitals during the period. Directorate General of Health Services - DGHS came up with the disclosure at its daily health bulletin. The country also saw further rise in coronavirus cases with the detection of 1,356 new cases taking the total number of cases to 2,42,102. A total of 4,249 samples were tested at 82 authorised laboratories across the country during the time, DGHS added.

Bangladesh has received US\$2.6 billion in July alone, the highest monthly remittance in the country's history. With this the central bank's foreign currency reserve reached to US\$37.287 billion. Finance Minister A H M Mustafa Kamal greeting the remittance fighters said, the

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government will take steps to remove all obstacles the expatriates face while sending money home through the legal channels.

Textiles and Jute Minister Golam Dastagir Gazi at a views exchange meeting at his ministry yesterday said, the government is working relentlessly to solve all problems in jute sector. The government is working to re-open the closed mills under the BJMC on an urgent basis by modernizing and restructuring the production system, he said.

Flood situation improved slightly in Brahmaputra and Ganges basins after water levels of major rivers of the regions receded yesterday due to dwindling of onrush of hilly water from upstream. In the Brahmaputra basin, water levels of major rivers were still flowing above the danger levels at eight points in five northern districts. The 30 river points monitored in Ganges basin, the water levels decreased at 21 stations, increased at seven points and remained stable at two points at 9 am yesterday. The rivers were flowing below the danger mark at 23 points, while above danger level at six points last morning.

The government has so far distributed over Taka 2.32 crore out of Taka 3.45 crore in cash among the flood affected people till August 2. In addition to this, the government has also allocated 14,410 tonnes of rice, from which 9,421 tonnes have been distributed among the flood affected people in 33 districts. Taka 64.54 lakh out of Taka 1.10 crore has been distributed as baby food assistance while more than Taka 1.27 crore out of Taka 2.78 crore has been distributed for procuring cattle feed. A total of 1,13,922 packets dry food have also been distributed. Around 56,397 people have taken shelter at 1,525 flood shelter centers in the flood-hit districts. The European Union is providing Tk 10 million for the flood hit areas in the districts of Jamalpur, Sylhet, Sirajganj, Kurigram, Lalmonirhat and Tangail. According to the National Disaster Response Coordination Center, a total of 2,11,017 metric tons of rice has already been allocated in 64 districts to deal with the corona virus situation.

The 3.5 kilometers long four-lane Bangabandhu Tunnel Project being implemented under the Karnaphuli river has made a breakthrough by completing its left line amid the pandemic as the submerge tubed roadway finally connected the Chattogram city with other part of the river for the first time. The construction work of the tunnel is expected to be completed by 2022.

All the public and private offices reopened yesterday after three days of holiday on the occasion of the Eid-ul Azha celebrated on August 1. As per the decision taken in the cabinet meeting, the government employees had to stay at their respective working places during this Eid vacation. Meanwhile, lower courts across the country will start regular operation from tomorrow, more than four months after the government declared nationwide general holiday and subsequent limited operations to tackle the outbreak of Covid-19.

A land lease agreement is scheduled to be signed between Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority - BEZA and Yabang Group of China at BEZA office in the capital today. Under the agreement, the Chinese company will be given some 100 acres of land at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Shilpa Nagar at Mirsarai, Sitakundu and Sonagazi upazillas under Chattogram and Feni districts.

  
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