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News Brief

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has expressed her sadness as her British counterpart Boris Johnson has contracted novel coronavirus. The Bangladesh Premier in her letter to the British Prime Minister said, her government is ready to work closely with the United Kingdom government to overcome the challenge arisen due to the outbreak of the lethal virus across the globe. In the letter, The Premier wished full recovery of Boris Johnson from the Covid-19 at the soonest.

Meanwhile, British Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Office Lord Ahmed of Wimbledon yesterday called Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and offered financial assistance to Bangladesh under the umbrella of the World Health Organization to contain the novel coronavirus. During the conversation, the Prime Minister inquired about the health condition of UK Premier Boris Johnson, Prince Charles and Health Secretary Matt Hancock who have tested positive for coronavirus. She also wished their early recovery. The Premier appreciated the steps taken by the UK government to contain the spread of the lethal virus.

No new coronavirus positive case was detected in the last 24 hours till yesterday in the country and also no death was reported during the same period. The total number of positive cases stood at 48. Among the COVID-19 infected patients, four have recovered during the last 24 hours, the number of recovered patients stood at 15. IEDCR informed this in a virtual briefing in Dhaka yesterday. Apart from the IEDCR, the testing facility has been extended to Dhaka Shishu Hospital, Public Health Institution, and the Bangladesh Institute of Tropical and Infectious Disease in Chattogram.

The government will sit in an emergency meeting at 11:00 am tomorrow at the Prime Minister's Office to assess the extent of possible losses caused to the economy by the COVID-19 pandemic and also devise a strategy to overcome it.

The earlier imposed ban on international scheduled passenger flight operation has been extended from March 31 to April 7. The special and scheduled cargo flight operation will remain continue. Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh issued an order regarding this yesterday.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan told media that the Police Headquarters has been directed to ask policemen to perform their duties with more professionalism and behave well with people. They cannot obstruct people when they come out for emergency needs like buying food items, protective equipment, daily essentials, medicines and banking.

Under the initiative of Information Minister Dr Hasan Mahmud, physicians, nurses, local government officials and volunteers were given Personal Protective Equipment at Rangunia upazila in Chattogram yesterday.

Local Government Minister Md. Tajul Islam said, necessary disinfection programs will be conducted to control germs in the country during the coronavirus pandemic. He said this to the journalists while visiting the germicide spraying programme of WASA in Dhaka yesterday.

Dhaka South City Corporation started distributing food items for one month among 50,000 low-income families to mitigate their hardships during the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. DSCC Mayor Mohammad Sayeed Khokon while inaugurating the food distribution programme yesterday said, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has directed the public representatives and the administration to stand by the poor people in this coronavirus pandemic. The Dhaka North City Corporation authorities yesterday sprayed 1,30,000 litres of disinfectant water in around 20.5 lakh square feet areas of the capital aiming to contain the spread of coronavirus. Wasa and Dhaka Metropolitan Police also spraying disinfection water

The Press Information Department of the government has asked the people of the country not to circulate or share any false or misleading news regarding coronavirus on the social media. PID in a handout yesterday requested all to verify any information found in social media before sharing it.

Jack Ma Foundation and Alibaba Foundation is sending 300,000 masks which will be delivered today. Chinese Embassy in Dhaka informed this yesterday. The Chinese embassy also confirmed that none of the 40,500 COVID-19 test kits donated to Bangladesh is from Shenzhen Bioeasy Biotechnology, the company that was questioned by Spanish government earlier for supplying "faulty" kits. All the medical supplies from China were purchased through standard procedures and from qualified suppliers, the embassy added.

The Asian Development Bank approved \$300,000 emergency grant to support the Bangladesh government's fight against the novel coronavirus pandemic. The grant will support procurement of health safety materials including personal protective gears, N95 masks, aprons, thermometers, and biohazard bags, said an ADB press release received in Dhaka yesterday.

The United States on Friday announced US \$174 million financial assistance for 64 countries, including USD 3.4 million for Bangladesh, to help them fight the coronavirus pandemic.

State Minister For Industries Kamal Ahmed Majumdar distributed relief materials at his own initiative among one thousand distressed families at Kazipara, Senpara and Shewrapa in Mirpur in the capital yesterday. The relief goods for each family included 10kg rice, 2kg pulse, 2kg potato, soap and hand sanitizer. To tackle the coronavirus situation, the government has so far allocated 7 crore 58 lac 72 thousand 264 taka and 24,717 metric ton rice for the low- income people of 64 districts, a PID handout yesterday said.

The Beximco Group decided to provide Personal Protective Equipment, medicines, test kits worth Tk 15 crore for diagnosis and protecting the frontline healthcare workers during the coronavirus pandemic. Nazmul Hassan, managing director of Beximco Pharma, yesterday handed over the first consignment of the equipment to the representatives from different testing centres and government designated hospitals for treating COVID-19 patients.

Bangladesh Television and Sangsad TV will start airing lessons for students of class VI to class X from today as the educational institutions were shut until April 9 to prevent transmission of coronavirus. Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education yesterday published a lesson routine for the students.

The Road Transport and Highways Division extended time for renewing vehicles' fitness until June 30 if it expires within the ongoing holiday. Vehicle owners will be able to renew the clearance without paying any fine.

The 27th span of the Padma Multipurpose Bridge was installed at Zazira point in Shariatpur yesterday, making 4.05 km out of the total 6.15 km bridge visible.


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