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### News Brief

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has laid emphasis on creating highly skilled manpower to meet future needs as the world is now talking about the fourth industrial revolution. The Premier was virtually addressing the inauguration programme of providing identification cards among freelancers of the country from Ganabhaban yesterday. The Premier reiterated that the young population of the country are extremely brilliant and quick learners given the scope. "The job of the government is to create that scope, and we're doing that." The Prime Minister further said, the government is providing ID cards to more than six lac freelancers in an aim to recognize them.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in a condolence message mourned the Argentine football great Diego Maradona, who died at his home in Argentina aged 60 after suffering a heart attack yesterday. The Argentine player, one of the greatest in football's history, will be remembered forever by the fans of the game and his sporting skills will inspire footballer for ages to come, she said

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader suggested the BNP to place its allegations before the country's people instead of foreigners saying that making any statement on the country's sovereignty does not suit the BNP leaders. The Minister came up with the remarks while addressing a virtual press briefing yesterday. Pointing to BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir's comment that there was no practice of democracy in Awami League, he said, those who were ousted from power through the people's movement in 1996 are now giving lessons of democracy. The Minister on behalf of the party and the country's people, congratulated Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for being nominated as the co-chair of 'One Health Global Leaders Group on Antimicrobial Resistance-AMR' for next two years.

Information Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud while addressing a meeting organized by Bangabandhu Awami Ainjibi Sommonny Parisad yesterday on the occasion of the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman said, Bangabandhu's daughter Sheikh Hasina has been serving the country as Prime Minister for almost a decade amid threats to oust her by the BNP. When BNP leader Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir talks about distorting the history of independence, it is ridiculous as they distorted history year after year and decade after decade. He said, while the country is moving forward, various conspiracies are taking place.

The number of deaths from Covid-19 in Bangladesh rose to 6,489 yesterday with the death of 39 more people. At the same time recovery count rose to 3,69,179, Directorate General of Health Services-DGHS disclosed this information in a press release yesterday. With the detection of 2,156 new cases the total number of Covid-19 cases rose to 4,54,146. Bangladesh will get 68 million doses of Covid-19 vaccine from the Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance under the global arrangement called Covax facility within 2021 at a cost of US \$1.62 to \$2 each, Expanded Programme for Immunization-EPI official said. Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Dr. A K Abdul Momen and Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen have tested positive for Covid-19. They are doing fine and remain in isolation, said the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Their planned visit to Niger has been cancelled.

The Cabinet Committee on Government Purchase in a virtual meeting yesterday chaired by Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Anisul Huq approved a proposal for procuring gas oil (diesel), Jet A-1, furnace oil, mogas (octane) and marine fuel for the January-June period of the

next year with a cost of Taka 3,583.50 crore. Along with other proposals, three proposals for procuring fertilizer were also approved in the meeting. Meanwhile, the meeting on Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs held virtually with Information Minister in the chair approved three proposals in principle for following the Direct Procurement Method.

Education Minister Dr. Dipu Moni at a virtual press briefing yesterday said, school admission in the coming academic session will be based on lottery and the application process will be done online, aiming to avoid health risks amid the Covid-19 pandemic. She also said, 50 per cent quota, instead of the current 40 per cent, would be reserved for students for admission to their local school in the capital. She hinted that the SSC and the HSC examinations next year could get delayed by a month or two. Besides, the results of this year's SSC tests would be given priority in deciding the results of this year's HSC examinations.

Foreign Minister Dr. A K Abdul Momen in a message marking the 'International Day of Eliminating Violence Against Women' has said, the government of Bangladesh, with visionary woman leader Sheikh Hasina at the helm, is pledge-bound to build a safer society for women and girls. He said, prevention of sexual violence against women requires a "whole of society approach" involving men, boys, youths, families, and parents.

Bangladesh has established diplomatic relationship with the Caribbean island state of Dominica. Bangladesh's Permanent Representative to the UN, Rabab Fatima, and Dominica's Permanent Representative to the UN, Loreen Ruth Bannis-Roberts, signed a deal in this regard in New York on Tuesday.

State Minister for Information Dr. Md. Murad Hasan has said steps will be taken to reinstate media workers who lost their jobs during the coronavirus period. He was addressing the concluding session of an exhibition organized by Broadcast Journalists Center at the of National Museum auditorium yesterday.

State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Nasrul Hamid has expressed Bangladesh's interest to work with India for the development of the energy sector in this region with special emphasis on clean and green energy as Indian High Commissioner Vikram Doraiswami met him at his ministry yesterday. The Indian High Commissioner said, India always looks at the relation with Bangladesh with dignity.

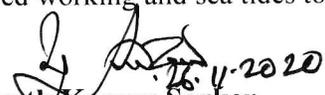
The ICT Division has launched an event titled "Bangabandhu Innovation Grant 2020 (BIG)", marking the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. State Minister for ICT Division Zunaid Ahmed Palak yesterday inaugurated the event at the 'ICT Tower in the city's Agargaon area.

The country's foreign exchange reserves crossed the US\$41 billion-mark again yesterday which was US\$40.99 billion on the previous working day.

The High Court yesterday questioned the legality of two provisions of the ninth wage board award involving the payment of income tax of journalists and workers of newspapers and news agencies and their gratuity, issuing a rule asking the respondents to explain in four weeks why the two provisions should not be declared illegal.

The Anti-Corruption Commission yesterday approved the charge sheet against 18 people of a case filed over the FR Tower fire, while seven others including the former Rajuk chairman were excluded from it.

Myanmar yesterday returned nine Bangladeshi fishermen, who were fishing in the south Bay of Bengal on November 10 and the engine of their fishing trawler stopped working and sea tides took them to Myanmar's maritime area.

  
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