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News Brief

A joint meeting of the AL Parliamentary Board and the Local Government Election Nomination Board with Party Chief and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair at Ganabhaban in Dhaka yesterday finalized its candidates for vying in the by-polls of 5 parliamentary seats and mayoral candidate of Chattogram City Corporation (CCC) Elections. Road Transport and Bridges Minister and General Secretary of AL Obaidul Quader while formally announcing the names of the candidates after the meeting informed, former president of FBCCI Shafiul Islam Mohiuddin was nominated for Dhaka-10, Sahadara Mannan, wife of former AL lawmaker late Abdul Mannan for Bogura-1, Krishak League General Secretary Umme Kulsum Smriti for Gaibandha-3, Shahin Chaklader for Jashore-6, Amirul Alam Milan for Bagerhat-4 and Chattogram City AL General Secretary Rejaul Karim Chawdhury for the mayoral post of CCC. Earlier, a total of 78 aspirants collected nomination papers to get party tickets for the parliamentary constituencies and 20 collected nomination forms for mayoral post of CCC elections. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina speaking at the joint board meeting asked the party leaders and activists to work selflessly for the welfare of the people following the ideology of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

A delegation of the British Society of Gastroenterology (BSG) led by its President Dr. Cathryn Edwards called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Ganabhaban in Dhaka yesterday. Dr. Cathryn Edwards informed the Premier that the BSG recently inked a MoU with the Bangladesh Gastroenterology Society (BGS) with the aim of supporting BGS colleagues to establish a National Training Programme for Endoscopy based at the Sheikh Russel GastroLiver Institute and Hospital at Mohakhali in Dhaka. Welcoming the initiatives, the Prime Minister assured them of providing necessary supports from the government side. The Prime Minister also said, her government will continue its support to their efforts to ensure enhanced treatment facilities for the patients of gastroenterology and hepatology in the country.

Speaker Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury yesterday inaugurated the Spring Celebration and Pitha Festival 'at Parliament Members Club in Dhaka yesterday. The Speaker in her speech on the occasion said, Bangladesh is a country of six seasons and the nature is aesthetically pleasing and abounds in colours and soothing beauty to welcome the Spring.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal has said, the process of relocating one lakh Rohingyas from Cox's Bazar camp to Bhasan Char will begin on completion of erecting barbed-wire fences around the Cox's Bazar camp. He made the remarks while talking to reporters after attending the Silver Jubilee celebration of Bangladesh Coast Guards at its Agargaon headquarters in the city yesterday. The work to set up watchtowers and close circuit cameras in the camps in Cox's Bazar is underway to strengthen the surveillance on Rohingyas, he added.

Information Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud has said, BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia could apply for parole only after accepting her crimes. He said this while talking to the reporters after attending a function on Government Physical Education College ground at Mohammadpur in the capital yesterday. About the treatment of BNP Chairperson Dr Hasan Mahmud said, Khaleda Zia is regularly having health checkups and being treated by specialized doctors at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital. Meanwhile, the Information Minister while speaking at book unveiling ceremony at the Amar Ekushey Book Fair in Dhaka yesterday urged the youths to develop the reading-habit.

Railways Minister Md Nurul Islam Sujon while speaking at a function at Boda upazila in Panchagarh yesterday said, direct train service on Dhaka-Siliguri route will begin in June

after installation of the Chilahati-Haldibari rail track. He also revealed that the government is all set to inaugurate construction of Bangabandhu Railway Bridge on the Jamuna River on March 14.

The Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) yesterday released 312 people, kept at the Ashkona Hajj camp and Combined Military Hospital for observation since February 1. Director of the IEDCR said, all of them are in good condition. Earlier, IEDCR requested journalists not to stay at Ashkona quarantine camp and adjoining areas during the release of 312 Wuhan-returnees saying that keeping their identities secret is a moral responsibility.

Foreign Minister Dr. AK Abdul Momen while addressing a function in Sylhet city yesterday reiterated that Shamima Begum, who got her British citizenship revoked, will not be allowed to enter Bangladesh. Shamima Begum, a British woman of Bangladeshi decent who left Britain as a schoolgirl to join Islamic State in Syria was recently stripped of her British citizenship.

State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Nasrul Hamid has urged officials of Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board (BREB) to pursue rural people to raise their electricity consumption so the overall development will accelerate. He made the call while addressing the annual conference of BREB General Managers at its headquarters in the city yesterday. Meanwhile, around 1,000 families in erosion-prone Naria and Bhedarganj upazilas of Shariatpur district were given electricity connections yesterday for the first time. Deputy Minister for Water Resources AKM Enamul Haque Shamim inaugurated the electricity supply for the char people.

UK Election Commission Chair Sir John Holmes during a meeting with Bangladesh's Chief Election Commissioner KM Nurul Huda in London on Wednesday praised the digitised biometric voters' identity card and the Electronic Voting Mechanism of Bangladesh. Bangladesh High Commissioner for the UK and Ireland Saida Muna Tasneem also attended the meeting.

Bangladesh's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Rabab Fatima while addressing the UN Security Council in New York recently said, ensuring justice and accountability for the Rohingya is an important precondition for their safe, dignified and voluntary return to Rakhine State and eventual societal reconciliation. Rabab Fatima taking part in an open debate on "Peacebuilding and sustaining peace: transitional justice in conflict and post-conflict situation" at the UN Security Council also underscored Bangladesh's contribution to the UN's peacekeeping operations as major troop and police contributing country in many conflicts affected parts of the world.

The 79th birthday of internationally reputed nuclear scientist and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's husband Dr. MA Wazed Miah is being observed today in a befitting manner. On February 16 in 1942, Wazed Miah was born in a respectable Muslim family of Laldighi Fatehpur village under Pirganj upazila in Rangpur district. He breathed his last in Dhaka on May 9, 2009.

The Asian Development Bank has approved a second tranche loan of \$170 million to conclude the Third Capital Market Development Program in Bangladesh. ADB approved the program totaling \$250 million in November 2015 with a first tranche \$80 million loan to support vital capital market reforms accompanied by a technical assistance grant of \$700,000 to assist in the implementation of the reform actions, said a press release.

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