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### News Brief

The nation yesterday observed the historic March 7 across the country commemorating Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's epoch-making speech of 1971 at the then Race Course Maidan, now Suhrawardy Udyan in Dhaka, that drew the crucial strategy for an independent and sovereign state. The UNESCO has included the speech in the Memory of the World International Register – a list of the world's important documentary heritage. On the occasion, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina paid rich tributes to Bangabandhu by placing wreaths at his portrait in front of Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi in the city yesterday. Thousands of people from all walks of life thronged Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi and paid rich tributes to the Great Leader to mark the day.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has asked the followers of Bangabandhu's ideology, particularly Awami League leaders and workers, to find out homeless people in their respective villages and localities for fulfilling the desire of Bangabandhu by ensuring homes for them within the Mujib Borsho. The Premier made the urge while addressing a discussion marking the historic March 7 speech of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in Dhaka yesterday. The Prime Minister said, the governments of General Zia, General Ershad and Khaleda Zia had banned playing of the speech but overcoming all hurdles, the Mujib soldiers played the historic speech on different occasions. Sheikh Hasina described the appeal of Bangabandhu's March 7 speech as everlasting, saying that this historic address of the Father of the Nation will continue to energize the world people alongside the countrymen for ages.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina along with her sister Sheikh Rehana and daughter Saima Wazed Putul also joined the 'Joy Bangla Concert' marking the historic 7th March speech of Bangabandhu organised by Centre for Research and Information at the Bangladesh Army Stadium in Dhaka yesterday. Like the previous years, the leading band groups of the country enchanted the audience by performing songs of the Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra.

President Md. Abdul Hamid returned home yesterday afternoon wrapping up his 11-day official visit to Uruguay and London. Earlier, the President left Dhaka on February 26 on an 11-day visit to Uruguay to attend Uruguayan Presidential Command Transfer Ceremony at Montevideo and join some private programmes in London.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader talking to the reporters in Dhaka yesterday said, the denial of historic March 7 speech of Bangabandhu is tantamount to denial of the independence. Mentioning March 7 as a very significant day for Bangalee nation he said, Bangabandhu in true sense had declared country's independence through his landmark March 7 address.

Information Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud, bitterly criticizing BNP for not observing historic 7 March said, denial of historic 7 March is tantamount to denial of independence of the country. He said this while addressing a function marking the historic 7 March speech organized by the Department of Films and Publications in Dhaka yesterday. Later, Dr Hasan Mahmud distributed awards among the eight persons including Amzad Ali Khandoker and Syed Mainul Ahsan who had recorded Bangabandhu's historic 7 March address in 1971. Information Secretary Kamrun Nahar also spoke on the occasion.

Different countries also observed yesterday the March 7 historic Speech of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman through various programmes. Press

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Information department issued a numbers of handouts on the celebration of the day at Bangladesh missions in Kolkata, Mumbai, New Delhi, Islamabad, Tokyo, Istambul, Vietnam and New York. More news items on observing the day are still coming in from abroad.

The International Women's Day is being observed today across the country with the theme 'Projonmo Hok Somotar, Sokol Narir Odhikar' as elsewhere in the globe with a call for building a gender-equal world. On the eve of the day, President Md. Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in separate messages, greeted all women across the world. The Prime Minister is scheduled to attend at a function on the occasion at Osmani Auditorium in Dhaka today.

Foreign Minister Dr. A K Abdul Momen while talking to reporters at Sylhet yesterday said, none of the foreign guests scheduled to attend the 'Mujib Year' inaugural ceremony cancelled their trips due to coronavirus outbreak. He said, the global coronavirus outbreak will not affect the 'Mujib Year' programme and that the government is cautious and careful.

The United States Postal Service in line with the worldwide programmes to celebrate the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman has taken an initiative to release pictorial postmark to glorify the occasion. Jackson Heights Post Office in New York will release the pictorial postmark on Bangabandhu's upcoming birthday on March 17.

IEDCR in a press briefing in Dhaka yesterday advised the people to keep contact with their hotline numbers if needed saying coronavirus may spread in Bangladesh any time. It also said, there is no reason to get panic as all precautionary measures have been taken at hospitals across the country.

Kuwait civil aviation directorate has suspended all flights to and from seven countries, including Bangladesh, for a week to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus in the country. For this move, Biman Bangladesh Airlines cancelled its two flights to Kuwait scheduled on March 6 and 10.

State Minister for Disaster Management and Relief Dr. Md Enamur Rahman while speaking on the occasion of National Disaster Preparedness Day in Dhaka yesterday said, the government will purchase equipment worth Tk 17 crore to boost the country's capacity to fight disasters.

Assistant USTR for South and Central Asia Christopher Wilson, a top US trade official, talking to media yesterday said, Bangladeshi RMG expanded its market in the United States in the recent years, attributing to the development of improved product quality and compliance factors like workplace safety. Wilson said, Bangladesh emerged as the third-largest garment supplier to the US after China and Vietnam with its current stake in US market being seven percent.

  
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