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### News Brief

Bangladesh is observing one-day state mourning today in respect to the memory of Bahrain's Prime Minister Sheikh Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, who breathed his last on November 11 at the age of 84. Marking the day, national flag is being hoisted half-mast at all government, semi-government and autonomous offices, educational institutions and all government and non-government buildings and at all Bangladesh missions abroad. Special doa is being offered at all worship places on the day. President Md. Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in separate condolence messages have expressed deep shock and sorrow at the death of Bahrain's Prime Minister.

The Cabinet yesterday endorsed the draft of national nuclear and radiological emergencies preparedness and response plan in order to ensure safety measures for the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant. Chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina virtually, the Cabinet also approved the draft of the National Financial Inclusion Strategy for 2021-2025, to bring the maximum people under the financial accounting system and arrange the financial benefits for them. The Cabinet also approved the ratification proposal of the draft of the 'Agreement on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters' to be signed between Bangladesh and Turkey.

The Cabinet also decided to take tougher stance alongside conducting mobile court operations in the capital to make sure the use of facemasks in the wake of the fresh surge of the Covid-19. Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam said this at a news briefing following the meeting at the Bangladesh Secretariat. On Sunday, an order has been given to take more precautionary steps to this end, he said.

The 'Marine Fisheries Bill, 2020' was passed in the Parliament yesterday with a provision for maximum three-year imprisonment or Taka 5 crore fine or both for fishing illegally within Bangladesh's maritime boundary by any foreign national. The Jatiya Sangsad also passed the 'Fisheries and Fisheries Products (Inspection and Quality Control) Bill-2020' in a bid to ensure tougher punishment for marketing and exporting fish or fish products mixed with harmful chemicals. Besides, the parliamentary body on Home Affairs placed before the House the 'Narcotics Control (Amendment) Bill, 2020' dropping the provision of setting up separate narcotic control tribunals paving the way for competent courts to try narcotic-related crimes. The report on the 'Women and Children Repression Prevention (Amendment) Bill, 2020', seeking death penalty for rape, was also submitted to the Parliament yesterday.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday in an unscheduled discussion told parliament that it was the BNP that carried out the recent arson attack on buses to make the election questionable and malign the government. "We're in power. Then why our government will earn a bad name by setting fire to buses. Besides, it is our duty to ensure people's security", the Premier said. Those who are setting fire are being caught red-handed as there are CCTVs in all places, she said. The PM also played the record of a phone call conversation between a leader and a female activist of BNP in the House.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader described BNP as creator of arson terrorism in 2013-14 period saying if BNP could not come out from their evil acts, their politics would end in flame of fire. He was virtually addressing a meeting at Kabirhat upazila, Noakhali yesterday. The Minister said, BNP is again out to launch arson attacks to kill people to take revenge of its defeat in the polls as the people boycotted them both in movement and election. He said, they are spreading rumors and misleading information to destroy the country's peace and comfort for creating instability in the country.

President Md. Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in separate condolence messages have expressed deep shock and sorrow at the death of former Deputy Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad Colonel (Retd) Shawkat Ali, who breathed his last yesterday while undergoing treatment at the Combined Military Hospital, with various old age complications. Shawkat Ali, a veteran freedom fighter, was one of the accused in the historic Agartala Conspiracy Case. The body of Shawkat Ali was kept at Central Shaheed Minar in the last afternoon to facilitate people to pay last respects to him. On behalf of the President and Prime Minister, army personnel placed wreaths on his coffin. His namaz-e-janaza was held at Baitul Mukarram National Mosque after Maghrib prayer. His body is being flown to Naria in Shariatpur district by a helicopter this morning as he will be buried at his family graveyard there following another namaz-e-janaza.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's aunt and parliamentarian from Bagerhat-1 constituency Sheikh Helal Uddin's mother Zakia Naser died last night at a city hospital. She was 86. President Md. Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in separate condolence messages expressed deep shock at the death of Sheikh Zakia Naser.

Foreign Minister Dr. A K Abdul Momen expressing concern over communal attacks as well as persecution on ethnic minority in some countries, stressed on promoting inter-religious dialogues to advance peace and harmony in the society as he was addressing a high-level virtual Ministerial Meeting to Advance Freedom of Religion or Belief organised by Poland yesterday. In this context, he referred to the mass atrocities and persecutions of Rohingyas by the Myanmar authorities and their temporary refuge in Bangladesh.

Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi has urged the Turkish businesses to come up with more investment in the country's ICT, RMG and the pharmaceuticals sectors availing the investment-friendly environment in Bangladesh. The Minister made the call as Turkish Ambassador to Dhaka Mustafa Osman Turan met him at his ministry yesterday. According to official data, Bangladesh's exports to Turkey in recent times totaled US\$453.46 million against the imports of US\$233 million. Another report says, India's import of rice bran oil from Bangladesh is set to double in the current financial year 2020-21. Import of rice bran oil from Bangladesh have already hit 60,000 tons during April-October this year compared to total 75,000 tons during 2019-20, he added.

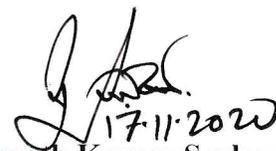
Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi while visiting Jaisalmer in Rajasthan to celebrate Diwali with Indian soldiers stationed at the border on Saturday, recalled the brutality of 1971 Liberation War saying it was a time when the Pakistani army was torturing, oppressing and slaughtering the innocent citizens of Bangladesh. "Women were inhumanely tortured. This notoriety of the Pakistani army exposed Pakistan's hideous face to the world," he said adding that Pakistan's horrible face was revealed to the world.

Undocumented Bangladeshis living in Peninsular Malaysia will get a chance to be regularised and recruited under a new programme-the Labour Recalibration Plan, Malaysian media reports, quoting the Home ministry as saying on Thursday.

More than 8,800 Bangladeshi students are studying in the United States in the 2019/2020 academic year, a new all-time high for Bangladesh, according to the 2020 Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange. It is a 7.1 per cent increase over the 2019 report (8,249 students), more than tripling since 2009.

The works of Matarbari Port Development Project at a cost of Taka 17,775 crore began yesterday. The port will be operational by the end of 2025 or the beginning of 2026.

Bangladesh Bank is releasing new 10 taka notes with hundred per cent cotton paper, which would be available in the market from today to prevent counterfeiting.



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