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News Brief

The Cabinet yesterday approved the draft of Sheikh Hasina Medical University, Khulna Bill-2020 to set up a medical university in Khulna division, aiming to expand facilities for medical education, research and healthcare services in the region. The approval came from a cabinet meeting with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina virtually presiding over. The Cabinet also approved the draft of the “Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation Order-1973 (Amendment-2020)” and “The Medical Degrees (Repeal) Act, 2020”. Besides, the Cabinet approved in principle two separate proposals on joint declaration regarding establishing diplomatic relations between Bangladesh and Commonwealth of Dominica, a mountainous Caribbean island nation, and Saints Kits and Nevis, an island country in the West Indies.

At the outset of the meeting, the Prime Minister unveiled the cover of a pictorial book titled “Sheikh Mujib: A Nation’s Father”, published by the Ministry of Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment. During the Cabinet meeting, the Premier apprehending the second wave of coronavirus in the approaching winter, instructed the authorities concerned to take all-out preparations up to the field-level. In a briefing after the cabinet meeting, Cabinet Secretary Khandaker Anwarul Islam said, the government would take a tough stand against those who do not wear masks.

The high level session of the 75th United Nations General Assembly-UNGA started virtually from this morning. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina gave a pre-recorded speech at the inaugural session urging the UN to formulate a “credible and practical roadmap” for delivering on commitments and responding resolutely to global challenges. The Premier also called upon the UN member states not to allow “geopolitical rivalries” to weaken the world body. Foreign Minister Dr. A K Abdul Momen at a virtual press briefing yesterday said, during the UNGA, along with other issues, the Premier will mainly highlight the Rohingya crisis and equal global distribution of potential COVID-19 vaccine at affordable cost. The Premier will deliver her pre-recorded speech at the UNGA general debate on September 26 in Bangla like every year, he said. Besides, he said, the Premier will also highlight Bangladesh’s successes in containing COVID-19, SDG implementation, establishing women empowerment and rights, poverty elevation, anti-terrorism and anti-drug trafficking, economic advancement, sustainable democracy and good governance and maintenance of world peace. The Premier will also virtually participate in and deliver speeches at five other sideline events.

A meeting of Awami League Local Government Public Representative Nomination Board was held at Ganabhaban yesterday with the Board President and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair. The candidates for contesting the upcoming district, upazila and union parishad polls were finalised in the meeting.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in a message on the occasion of the International Day of Peace, which is being observed today, has reiterated her government's firm conviction to global peace, justice and harmony through upholding the values and principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader said, there has been positive progress in the talks of water sharing of common rivers including Teesta as outgoing High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh Riva Ganguly Das paid a courtesy call on him at his office yesterday. The Minister also said, Bangladesh-India friendly relations are multi-dimensional. Any unresolved issue between the two neighboring countries can be settled easily, he added.

Information Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud after holding a meeting with the leaders of Bangladesh Chalachithra Prodorskah Samity at his ministry yesterday said, the cinema halls could be reopened with half of the capacity of audience from October 16 if the trend of coronavirus infections continues to

decline. The Minister also informed that Prime Minister has given approval for forming a special fund for providing short and long term easy loans to reopen cinema halls, modernize and construct new cinema halls. Information Secretary Kamrun Nahar was present at the meeting.

The government has formed a credit fund of Taka 700 crore to rehabilitate the expatriate workers who returned home amid coronavirus pandemic. Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Imran Ahmed informed this while virtually inaugurating a loan disbursement programme for such expatriate workers at Rangpur yesterday.

State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Nasrul Hamid while virtually addressing a solar home system installation program by Northern Electricity Supply Company Limited- NESCO in Rajshahi yesterday said, under the direction of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, 100 per cent electrification will be ensured in all grid areas of the country within December this year. The State Minister also informed that at present, there are 58 lakh solar home systems in the country.

State Minister for ICT Zunaid Ahmed Palak while joining an online programme on freelancing career on Sunday said, the government will provide 'virtual card' to freelancers which would give identity to some 6.50 lakh self-employed professionals in the country. According to the 2017 Online Labour Index of Oxford Internet Institute, Bangladesh supplies 16 per cent of the total online workers, the second highest after India which provides 24 per cent.

Bangladesh yesterday recorded 40 more fatalities from the novel coronavirus, in a daily count, raising the death toll from the pandemic to 4,979. At the same time recovery count rose to 2,58,717 after another 2,152 patients were discharged from the hospitals during the period. The country also saw further rise in coronavirus cases with the detection of 1,705 new cases taking the total number of cases to 3,50,621. Meanwhile, the government has permitted antigen-based rapid testing for Covid-19 at all government hospitals, district hospitals, government PCR labs and all health institutes, a circular of the health service division of September 17 said. Official sources informed, Bangladesh Biman got permission to run commercial flights to Saudia Arabia from October 1.

Joytu Sheikh Hasina International Online Chess tournament, on the occasion of the 74th birthday celebration of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, will be held on September 24-26, participated by players from South Asian Countries and some other countries like Vietnam, Singapore, Russia.

Bangladesh Bank has relaxed the foreign exchange transactions rules for traders by allowing them to open LCs for imports of onion on 90 days deferred or usance basis under supplier's or buyer's credit terms until December 31 this year, to facilitate uninterrupted supply and stabilize the price of onion.

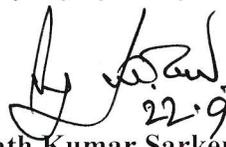
The High Court issued a rule yesterday asking the government to explain as to why directives should not be given to the authorities concerned to free the 83 Bangladeshi workers who returned from Vietnam and Qatar recently.

New PSC Chairman Md. Sohrab Hossain was sworn in yesterday. Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain administered the oath at Supreme Court Judges' Lounge.

Information Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud, State Minister Dr. Md. Murad Hasan and Information Secretary Kamrun Nahar have expressed profound shock at the death of PIB Director Ilias Bhuiyan. Ilias Bhuiyan was killed in a road accident at Jatrabari in the capital yesterday.

Government primary school assistant teachers would get their salaries in higher grade under the 13th grade on the national pay scale soon as the up gradation work of the 'iBAS++' software is at the final stage, said a PID handout yesterday.

A Narayanganj court has granted bail to eight suspended officials of Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Limited till October 28, over the blast at Narayanganj mosque.



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