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News Brief

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday allocated Taka 10.50 crore to all the Deputy Commissioners from the PM's Relief and Welfare Fund for assisting the poor, distressed, insolvent and floating people affected by the ongoing lockdown enforced to check further spread of the Coronavirus, PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim said this to the national news agency. He added that the money was allotted on the basis of the population of the districts and their need for relief. In accordance with the local list, relief will be distributed to the needy people at grassroots level, he continued.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will participate in the two-day Leaders' Summit on Climate, along with other 39 world leaders, at the invitation of the US President Joseph Biden, beginning today, a newspaper report said. The event aims to accelerate actions to address the climate crisis, including emissions reductions, finance, innovation and job creation, and resilience and adaptation. The Premier will make her remarks in the Leaders' Session tonight.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader urged BNP to stand by the country's people amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic by stopping its "lip service". While exchanging views with the officials of Khulna zone of the BRTC and BRTA through videoconferencing yesterday, he further said, the politics of people's welfare is an urgent now as BNP and fundamental forces affect the country's politics, the values of Liberation War and the advancement of the country's democracy. BNP continues ill-efforts to make the glorious days of the country and society controversial as the party is looking for a dark path to assume power without public support, he said.

The government has taken steps to bring coronavirus vaccines from other countries in addition to India, Information and Broadcasting Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud said to newsmen after taking the second dose of COVID-19 vaccine at Clinic Bhaban at Secretariat yesterday. Referring to the propaganda carried out about the availability of second dose of COVID-19 vaccine, he said, in reality, about 17 lac people have already taken second dose of the coronavirus vaccine. Dr. Hasan further said, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has been aware in giving health security to the country's people from the very beginning of the pandemic. For this, Bangladesh is ahead of many developed nations in combating the coronavirus epidemic and vaccination, he added.

The Cabinet Committee on Government Purchase-CCGP at a virtual meeting yesterday with Finance Minister A H M Mustafa Kamal in the chair approved a number of proposals including one to procure some 33.60 lac MMBtu of LNG from Vitol Asia Pte Ltd, Singapore at a cost of around Taka 267.58 crore in a bid to meet the growing demand of LNG in the country. Besides, the meeting approved another proposal from the Health Services Division under which Community Based Health Care Authority will procure some 80,734 cartons of 27 types of medicines from the Essential Drugs Company Limited under Direct Procurement Method at a cost of around Taka 140 crore.

Prior to the CCGP meeting, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs held virtually with the Finance Minister in the chair, approved a proposal for procuring weed harvesters, Model: BERKY 6925, Germany through Direct Procurement Method for the city corporations in the current fiscal year (FY21). While briefing reporters after the meetings, the Finance Minister said, the next budget for fiscal 2021-22 will give priority to the poor section of people while maintaining the lives and livelihood of all would get due emphasis in the next fiscal year in view of the current COVID-19 pandemic situation.

International community must not shy away from their responsibility to resolve the Rohingya crisis and relieve Bangladesh from the burden that Myanmar imposed on the country, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam said this, simultaneously calling upon the international community to engage in depth with Myanmar in a 'meaningful way' to find a lasting solution to the Rohingya crisis. While addressing a webinar titled "The Rohingya Crisis: Response of the International Community and the Repatriation Process", organized by Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies, he said the international community should make a concerted effort to stabilize the situation in Myanmar and effectively prevent any further mass displacement or cross border exodus. He further said that the relocation of Rohingya refugees to Bhasan Char is now a settled issue.

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The UN team and diplomats who have visited the Bhasan Char did not raise any "disagreement" but there are a few recommendations, he said.

State Minister for ICT Zunaid Ahmed Palak said, Korean EPZ high-tech Park or KEPZ will play important role in facilitating exports of Bangladeshi commodities. It will provide technical support to the entrepreneurs in mentoring, coaching, investment, employment generation and start-up culture as the park is being constructed on 100 acres of land in the port city Chattogram. The State Minister virtually inaugurated the construction work of the Park at Anwara in Chattogram yesterday. Korea is now in sixth position in direct foreign investment in the country as over 200 Korean companies are now investing in Bangladesh due to favourable infrastructural facilities and investment friendly environment here, he added.

Dutch investors have been urged to invest in Bangladesh's aquaculture sector for steady growth and diversification. Speakers at a webinar titled "Opportunities in the Aquaculture sector in Bangladesh" jointly organized by Larive International and LightCastle Partners yesterday came up with the call. On behalf of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Dhaka, Larive International, and their Bangladeshi counterpart, LightCastle Partners, have concluded a study on 'Opportunities in the aquaculture sector in Bangladesh'. Harry Verweij, Ambassador of the Netherlands to Bangladesh and M. Riaz Hamidullah, Ambassador of Bangladesh to the Netherlands; spoke on the occasion.

The minimum Fitra has been fixed this year at Taka 70 per person while the maximum is Taka 2,130. The National Fitra Fixing Committee of the Islamic Foundation fixed the amounts at a virtual meeting held yesterday.

A Dhaka Court granted 21-day remand to Mufti Shakhawat Hossain Razi and Manjurul Islam Afendi, central Assistant Secretary Generals of Hefazat-e-Islam, in three cases including a sabotage case lodged against them. The same court also placed Hefajat-e-Islam Dhaka city unit Vice-President Mawlana Korban Ali on seven-day remand in a case lodged over the mayhem in capital's Paltan area in 2013.

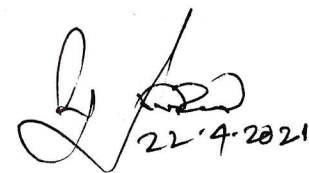
Six coaches of metro rail in the first consignment reached Diabari jetty at Uttara in the capital from Mongla yesterday, Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd officials said. Earlier on March 30, the trains were unloaded at Mongla port. They were carried from Japan's Kobe port on March 4 through a ship MV SPM Bankok.

The country fetched record US\$1.15 billion remittance in the first 15 days of April, while during the same month last year, remittance inflow stood at US\$1.09 billion, Bangladesh Bank data showed. The country's remittance inflow grew 35.1 per cent in the nine months (July- March) of the current fiscal year compared to the same period last fiscal, according to the BB data.

Bangladesh Embassy in Manila has handed over a commemorative artwork on Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Filipino National Hero Dr. Jose Rizal as a permanent showpiece to Jose Rizal Museum, as a part of the birth centenary celebration of the Father of the Nation of Bangladesh. The woodcarving was done by Filipino artist Nicolas P Aca Jr who was highly inspired by these two great leaders. Bangladesh Ambassador to Philippines Asad Alam Siam, among others, was present at the moment.

Bangladesh Ambassador to the Kingdom of Thailand Mohammed Abdul Hye presented his letter of credence to King Maha Vajiralongkorn Phra Vajiraklaochaoyuhua at the Ambara Villa, Dusit Palace in Bangkok on Tuesday.

The country recorded 95 fatalities from COVID-19 yesterday, taking the death toll to 10,683. With 4,280 fresh cases, the tally of infections surged to 7,32,060. At the same time recovery count rose to 6,35,183, DGHS disclosed this information in a press release yesterday. A total 16,817 people were administered the first dose of COVID-19 vaccines while 1,37,798 received the second dose of the vaccine across the country yesterday. With this, the number of vaccine receivers given the first dose of vaccine rose to 57,61,902, while a total of 18,15,987 people received the second dose of the vaccine. As many as 71,66,891 people got registered till 2.30 pm yesterday to take COVID-19 vaccines, DGHS informed.



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