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News Brief

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has asked the police personnel to stop cybercrimes alongside money laundering, human trafficking, terrorism, drug abuse, gang activities and repression of women and children. While addressing virtually the passing out parade of the 37th BCS batch of Assistant superintendents of Police from Ganabhaban yesterday, the Premier also called upon the police personnel to always serve the people with honesty, dedication, moral values and discipline by giving utmost priority to the people's fundamental rights, human rights and the rule of law and thus achieve the trust, confidence and love of the people.

Bangladesh Chhatra League-BCL, the student wing of Bangladesh Awami League-AL, is celebrating its 73rd founding anniversary through different programs today. Prime Minister and AL President Sheikh Hasina is expected to address a discussion program at Krishibid Institution, Bangladesh auditorium at 3.30 pm through a videoconferencing marking the anniversary.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader said, four mega Projects-Padma Bridge, Dhaka's Metro Rail, Elevated Expressway in Dhaka and Bangabandhu Tunnel in Chattogram will open to public by June next year. The Minister was talking to newsmen on contemporary issues at his ministry yesterday.

Agriculture Minister Dr. Md. Abdur Razzaque stressing the need for becoming self-sufficient in food production, warned that it would be difficult to procure food even with money available if there is a food crisis or famine due to the global Covid-19 pandemic. The Minister was speaking at a views-exchange meeting with the ministry officials marking the English new year at his ministry yesterday.

Information Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud while addressing a memorial meeting marking the 2nd anniversary of Awami League Former General Secretary Syed Ashraful Islam at the Jatiya Press Club in the city yesterday said, the name of Syed Ashraful Islam will be written in the history of the country as a gentleman and transparent politician as he took politics as vow. Coming down heavily on BNP Secretary General's comment that they will topple the government this year, the Minister said, actually, BNP, itself, isolated from the people as they try to topple the government during the last 12 years. He said, they make themselves funny to the people.

Foreign Minister Dr. A K Abdul Momen said, Dhaka is happy with the result of UN resolution on Rohingyas and Bangladesh sees it as its diplomatic success as 132 countries voted in favour of the resolution. Saying that a conducive environment for voluntary repatriation has to be in place as promised, Dr. Momen said Bangladesh expects that Myanmar will keep its word in the New Year. He also expressed his discontentment over false and negative campaign launched abroad against the Rohingya relocation to Bhasan Char, insisting that the island is safe, secure and stable place to live. While talking, the Minister also expressed his optimism over the fulfillment of Bangladesh's expectations by India as the two countries maintain a strong and friendly relationship. Regarding water sharing issues, he said, they are hopeful of a solution covering all common rivers.

Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi while addressing a press conference at his ministry yesterday said, the onions are now entering the country against which LCs were opened earlier. The current import price of those onions is Taka 39 per KG. The government would take decision on import of onion considering the interest of the consumers and producers, he added.

President Md. Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in separate condolence messages, expressed deep shock and sorrow at the death of Swadhinata Award and Ekushey Padak winning eminent litterateur Rabeya Khatun, who died yesterday at the age of 85.

The number of deaths from Covid-19 in Bangladesh rose to 7,626 yesterday with the death of 27 more people. At the same time recovery count rose to 4,60,598, Directorate General of Health Services-DGHS disclosed this information in a press release yesterday. With the detection of 835 new cases, the total number of Covid-19 cases rose to 5,16,019.

Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Md. Shahab Uddin while addressing an online discussion yesterday titled 'Bangabandhu's Contribution in Building Bangladesh' said, illegal occupants will be evicted from the forest lands and the forests will be brought back. The country will be turned into green Bengal by planting more and more trees, he said.

Biman Bangladesh Airlines would resume its flights to Saudi Arabia from January 6, the National flag carrier announced yesterday following Saudi Arabia's decision to lift suspension on all international flights to and from the Kingdom. Meanwhile, State Minister for Civil Aviation Md. Mahbub Ali while talking to newsmen said, no decision has been taken to suspend air communication with any country.

The Government of Turkey has expressed its keen interest for vast investment in Bangladesh, especially in the Special Economic Zone. Turkey wants to work on joint venture investment in the ship breaking and building industry here and also in setting up liquefied petroleum gas-LPG plants on the banks of the river Karnaphuli in Chattogram. Turkish Envoy to Bangladesh Mustafa Osman Turan said this while paying a courtesy call on State Minister of Shipping Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury at the latter's office yesterday.

The country's remittance hit an all-time high of US\$21.74 billion in 2020, having a growth of 18.33 per cent compared to the previous year, the central bank data showed. A massive growth of 37.6 per cent occurred in the first six months of the current fiscal 2020-21, over the corresponding period of the previous fiscal.

The fourth phase elections to 56 municipalities across the country will be held on February 14 as per the schedule announced by the Election Commission yesterday.

Bangladesh Bank yesterday in a circular further extended the deadline until March 31 for the disbursement of loans under the government-announced stimulus packages of Taka 20,000 crore for the COVID-19 affected cottage, micro, small and medium enterprise sector.

The key index of Dhaka Stock Exchange, DSEX rose by 216.89 points yesterday to 520 points, standing at 5,618.95, the second-highest single-day increase in history after last year.


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