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News Brief

The country's Covid-19 death toll hit 214 after 8 more patients died and total number of detected cases soared to 13,770, after 636 people tested positive for coronavirus in 24 hours till yesterday. Additional Director General (Admin) of Directorate General of Health Services Prof Nasima Sultana said this in a virtual media briefing at her office. She said a total of 1,16,919 samples have so far been tested adding 5,465 tests in 35 labs across the country in the past 24 hours. However, the recovery count rose to 2,414 after a record 313 patients were discharged in a single day from hospitals. Of the total 214 fatalities, 112 deaths were recorded in Dhaka city. Nasima said now 37,183 people are at quarantine, 1,874 people are in isolation and a total number 4,14,076 PPE are in stock.

The Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday while speaking at a virtual press conference on the contemporary affairs from his official residence urged the party leaders and activists to stand by the poor and destitute people with the money they are supposed to spend for shopping in the upcoming Eid-ul-Fitr. The Awami League General Secretary said I ask BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and his party BNP to stop criticisms and play a humanitarian role by standing beside the people in this crisis. The Minister mentioned that many countries have already eased lockdown to keep their economies vibrant. He said the administration will monitor whether the people are following health guidelines during shopping or not.

The government yesterday issued an ordinance for allowing courts to hold trials digitally. The cabinet on May 7 approved the ordinance to resume regular court activities amid the general holidays declared to stop transmission of coronavirus in the country. The ordinance will allow usage of Information and Communication Technology to ensure virtual attendance of the concerned parties in courts for holding trial, inquiry, hearing, recording testimonies, arguments and passing judgement.

Ankara yesterday assured Dhaka that Turkey will raise the Rohingya repatriation issue at the next United Nations Security Council meeting. The assurance was made while Bangladesh foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen talked with his Turkish counterpart Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu over telephone. Mr Momen also sought Turkey's help in advocating the ME countries so that Bangladeshi expatriate workers can get financial support equivalent to their six months' salary, if they are forced to leave their host countries. Both the Ministers agreed to work together on the issues over trade enhancement as well as food security during post corona pandemic period. Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen yesterday in a video statement circulated to media asked foreign diplomats to maintain protocols in expressing concerns over Bangladesh's internal issues calling "very unfortunate" a concerted tweet campaign of a group in the diplomatic corps over legal actions involving a section of media. The Foreign Minister questioned whether these diplomats "wanted to do politics or contest elections in this country". Momen said he would have been happy if the diplomats would have jointly come up with a statement expressing their concerns over issues at current situation in Rakhine and urge Myanmar to stop Rohingya purging right away.

Food Minister Sadhan Chandra Majumder yesterday expressed optimism that there would be no food crisis as the country has witnessed a bumper production of Boro paddy. The government would procure more rice than previous years as per the directive of the Prime Minister, he said while addressing a video conference with the officials concerned of Nagaon district from his official residence in the city. The Minister hoped that about 3.50 crore metric tons of Boro and Aman rice would be produced in the current Boro session. Besides, about 20 lakh to 25 lakh metric tons of Aush rice would be produced, he said.

Posts and Telecommunications Minister Mustafa Jabbar yesterday launched Krishak Bondhu Postal Service (KBPS) at a video conference ceremony aiming at free transportation of agriculture products of marginal farmers into the wholesale markets of capital city in this unwanted situation rendered by deadly COVID-19 pandemic, said an official press release. At this moment marginal farmers of Manikganj District can avail this service, but gradually the KBPS would be expanded to across the country, said Jabbar in the opening ceremony.

The 11th death anniversary of noted nuclear scientist and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's husband Dr M A Wazed Miah was observed in a befitting manner in Rangpur yesterday. Different organisations chalked out limited programmes in observance of the death anniversary strictly maintaining physical distance due to the coronavirus outbreak.


As per the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's directive, National Professor Anisuzzaman was shifted to the Combined Military Hospital, Dhaka from another hospital in the city yesterday after his health condition deteriorated, said Barrister Biplob Barua, Special Assistant to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. He was admitted to the Universal Cardiac Hospital in the city on April 29 with various health complications.

State Minister for Industries Kamal Ahmed Mojumder yesterday while distributing daily necessities and sanitizer in city's Mirpur area urged all to maintain social distancing and follow the health guidelines strictly to contain the deadly coronavirus, said an official press release. In his speech, Kamal Mojumder said under the intensive supervision of the government, the Boro paddy harvesting has already been completed.

State Minister for Shipping Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury yesterday in a relief distribution programme in Dinajpur said the government is working in unison with all concerned to tackle the coronavirus (COVID-19) situation.

One more policeman, traffic constable Jalal Uddin Khoka(48), died from the coronavirus infection at the Central Police Hospital in Rajarbagh yesterday evening, Assistant Inspector General (Media) of Police Headquarters Md Sohel Rana told media. Meanwhile, a number of 'special teams' have been formed to visit and inquire about the health of Covid-19 positive patients of the police force, said a press release issued by police headquarters here yesterday. The government has also designated the Impulse Hospital in Dhaka for treatment of policemen with COVID-19.

A total of 165 more stranded Bangladeshis returned home from Chennai, India yesterday while 129 Indians left for Delhi by separate chartered flights amid flight suspension due to Coronavirus pandemic, HSIA Director Group Captain AHM Touhid-ul Ahsan told media.


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