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### News Brief

President Md. Abdul Hamid expressed satisfaction over the overall activities of the Armed Forces Division, as the Chief of Army Staff General S M Shafiuddin Ahmed, Chief of Naval Staff Admiral M Shaheen Iqbal and Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Shaikh Abdul Hannan paid a courtesy call on him at Bangabhaban last evening marking the Armed Forces Day-2021. The Head of the State hoped that through this celebration, the new generation would be able to know about the AFD's contribution to the country's Great War of Liberation.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina while virtually addressing a reception held at Senakunja on the occasion of the Armed Forces Day, hoped that members of the armed forces would continue to uphold the glory of the country by contributing to development activities alongside protecting the sovereignty. The Premier also recalled that Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had said, "The Bangladesh Army will be the people's army". Apart from upholding the sovereignty of the motherland, the members of Bangladesh armed forces are always ready to make the highest sacrifices at any juncture of the country, the PM added. At present, in establishing world peace, Bangladesh has once again been able to retain its place of glory as the highest peacekeepers providing nation, she said. The Prime Minister highlighted the development initiatives taken by her government for the armed forces, including establishment of NDC, MIST, BIPSOT and Armed Forces Medical College along with recruiting female officers in Army, Navy and Air force in 2000. The Awami League government also formulated the "Forces Goal-2030" and "Defence Policy, 2018", for the overall development of the armed forces, the Premier said.

The Premier in her address, highlighting the success stories of the government said, through the successful implementation of Vision-2021, Bangladesh has already achieved success in all the three indicators of being a developing country and it is ranked among the top five countries in the world in terms of economic progress. Mentioning that at present Bangladesh is the 41st largest economy in the world, she said, the government has brought the poverty rate down to 20.5 per cent and raised the per capita income to US\$ 2,554 alongside achieving unprecedented development in all socio-economic indicators. A second Perspective Plan has been formulated to achieve the 'Sustainable Development Goals' by 2030 and to build a hunger-poverty-free and prosperous-developed Bangladesh by 2041, the PM further said. The country also adopted 'Bangladesh Delta Plan-2100', she added.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said that she did not want to see any impediment towards Bangladesh's advancement, calling upon all to march the country forward by maintaining the ability it has achieved to keep pace with the international standard. She was virtually addressing a reception accorded to the gallantry award winning freedom fighters of the armed forces and their heirs marking the AFD-2021 yesterday. The PM also presented peacetime awards to the selected members of the armed forces for their outstanding contribution to their respective fields during 2020-21. On behalf of the Premier, Liberation War Affairs Minister A K M Mozammel Haque handed over the peacetime award to the recipients at the Army Multipurpose Hall in Dhaka Cantonment. Marking the day, the PM also presented gifts to the families of the successors of Birshreshthos and other gallantry award-recipient freedom fighters of the armed forces.

The postal department released a commemorative postage stamp of Taka 10, a first day cover of Taka 10, a data card of Taka 5 and a special seal marking the golden jubilee of the armed forces day. Post and Telecommunication Minister Mostafa Jabbar released those.

Maldivian Vice President Faisal Naseem arrived here this morning on a three-day official visit to strengthen bilateral ties and mutual cooperation between the two South Asian nations. During his visit, the Vice President is likely to hold meeting with President Md. Abdul Hamid, sources said. Faisal Naseem is also scheduled to hold meeting with numbers of Bangladesh Ministers including, Foreign Affairs, Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment, Health and Family Welfare and Education.

There is no scope to send BNP Chief Khaleda Zia abroad for her treatment as per the country's law, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal made the remarks while talking to newsmen after a meeting with the leaders of five political parties under the BNP-led 20-party alliance at his ministry yesterday. The leaders of the alliance submitted an application to the Prime Minister seeking steps to create a scope for sending the BNP Chief abroad for better treatment, the Minister informed. Replying to a query, the Minister said, it is possible to bring any specialized physician from abroad and the hospitals of the country are well-equipped.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud has said, BNP does not want Khaleda Zia's recovery from illness rather they want her illness so that they can do politics with her sickness. While talking to newsmen after attending a roundtable organized by the ATCO, marking the World Television Day at a city hotel yesterday, the Minister further said, crores of people are doing their treatment in Bangladesh as there are some world-class hospitals in the country. "Why should Begum Zia be sent abroad for her knee pain or stomach problems?" he questioned. Earlier, the Minister said, television is not only for entertainment or news, rather it should work for building society and country as well.

Finance Minister A H M Mustafa Kamal has said that the United Nations has been a trusted and a long-term partner of Bangladesh since the country's independence while this organization has been playing an important role towards the overall attainments of the country. The UN has increased its development cooperation with Bangladesh during current Awami League government, he said while speaking virtually at a program marking the release on 'The United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework-UNSDCF 2022-2026'. The Economic Relations Division and the UN Resident Mission jointly organized the function at the NEC-2 conference room in the city's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar area yesterday. Planning Minister M A Mannan, UN Resident Coordinator Mia Seppo also spoke at the function.

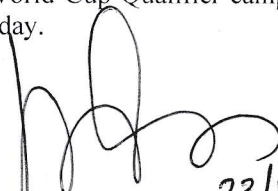
The construction works of eight high-standard hospitals at eight divisions are almost complete to treat the people with Non-Communicable Diseases like cancer, kidney and liver, which will reduce people's out-of-pocket expenditure on healthcare, Health and Family Welfare Minister Zahid Maleque disclosed this while speaking at an event organized by the Health Economics Unit of the Health Services Department at a city hotel yesterday.

Interoperable digital transition platform will be introduced in January aiming to make money transition smooth and minimize its cost, State Minister for ICT Division Zunaid Ahmed Palak came up with the information while speaking at the second session of a capacity building training workshop arranged by Bangladesh Women Chamber and Commerce and Industries at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre yesterday for Anandamela platform users. He said, the government will give Taka 5,000 to 2,000 to small women entrepreneurs each for developing their websites and marketing their products. The size of country's e-commerce sector is expected to reach Taka 25,000 crore by 2023, he added.

A total of 600 migrants, including 37 Bangladeshis, were rescued in Mexico, the country's National Migration Institute said on Saturday.

The Country yesterday recorded 07 fatalities from COVID-19, taking the total death toll to 27,953. With 199 fresh cases, the number of infections surged to 15,74,088. The positivity rate stood at 1.16 per cent as 17,135 samples were tested during the time. At the same time, the recovery count rose to 15,38,198, DGHS disclosed this information in a press release yesterday. Some 110 dengue patients got hospitalized in the 24 hours till 8:00am last morning, DGHS confirmed.

Bangladesh national women's team began their ICC Women's Cricket World Cup Qualifier campaign on a winning note after defeating Pakistan by three wickets in Harare, Zimbabwe yesterday.

  
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