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News Brief

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has laid emphasis on considering the competent officers for promotions in Bangladesh Navy and Air Force to safeguard the country's independence and sovereignty in future. The Premier was virtually addressing the first session of Navy and Air Force Selection Board-2021 at the Navy and the Air Force Headquarters, joining from Ganabhaban yesterday. The Premier expressed the optimism that Bangladesh will continue moving ahead with the ideology of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the spirit of the War of Liberation to become a developed and prosperous 'Golden Bangladesh' in the future". Addressing the members of the Navy and Air Force, she said, "... I think serving the people and doing their welfare is my biggest job. I am working with this motto and I always seek your (Navy and Air) cooperation in making the country prosperous." Mentioning that her government has formulated the "Forces Goal-2030" in light of the Defense Policy framed by the Father of the Nation in 1974, the Premier also briefly highlighted the modernization initiative taken by her government for Navy and Air Force such as modern warships, submarine, helicopter, maritime patrol aircraft, specialized force and modern technology in Navy while introducing modern aircrafts, modern maritime search and rescue helicopters, air defense radar, surface-to-air missile and modern training aircraft to the Air Force.

Speaker Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury left for Vienna yesterday to attend the 3-days long 13th 'Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament', the 5th Conference of Speakers of Parliament and the first Global Parliamentary Summit on Counter Terrorism, beginning today in Vienna, Austria, at the initiative of the Inter-Parliamentary Union-IPU and in collaboration with the United Nations and the Austrian Parliament. The Speaker is leading a three member delegation team.

The government has a plan to open a part of Dhaka Elevated Expressway from Kawla to Tejgaon for vehicular movement in the next year, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader came up with the information while visiting the progress of construction works of the Expressway in Banani area yesterday. The 19.73 kilometer Dhaka Elevated Expressway is being implemented in three phases, he said. In first phase, the project is being implemented from Kawla, near Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, to Banani railway station, the second phase from Banani railway station to Maghbazar rail crossing and the third phase from Maghbazar rail crossing to Kutubkhali on Dhaka-Chattogram Highway, he said. The Minister said, physical progress of first phase now stands at 66.25 per cent, second phase at 21.50 per cent and third phase at 2.33 per cent while overall progress of the project is now 30.50 per cent.

Agriculture Minister Dr. Md. Abdur Razzaque has said that all possible cooperation will be provided for the exports and processing of potatoes. He said, the country currently produces more than 1 crore tons of potatoes a year. But potato chips and Pringles are being imported from abroad at high prices, he said. The Minister was addressing a meeting at Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council-BARC at Farmgate in the capital yesterday. A lab has been set up at Shampur in the city to enhance the testing facilities of potatoes, he said, adding that another modern lab will be built in Purbachal. The Minister called upon the private sector to come forward to increase potato production and exports through contract farming by implementing Good Agricultural Practice-GAP.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud is expected to open the "Bangabandhu Media Centre" at the prestigious Press Club of India-PCI today, being established with the support of Bangladesh New Delhi mission in honor of Father of the Bengali Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Bangladesh High Commissioner to India Muhammad Imran, Jatiya Press Club (Bangladesh) President Farida Yesmin and former PCI President Gautam Lahiri will address the inaugural function with PCI President Umakant Lakhera in the chair. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Bangladesh High Commission, New Delhi and Press Club of India will be signed to this end

Earlier the Minister left for New Delhi yesterday on a four-day official visit. According to sources, his Indian counterpart Anurag Thakur, Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla will hold courtesy meetings with the Minister during his stay in New Delhi. Besides, he is scheduled to place floral wreaths at the Samadhi of Mahatma Gandhi at Raj Ghat, visit Swachhata Kendra this morning and will interact with media people apart from giving interview with the Doordarshan. Apart from this, he will address at a function of Indian Council of World Affairs and is expected to join a dinner to be hosted by the Observer Research Foundation (ORF), an Indian think tank. He is expected to give a lecture to Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF) during his visit. The Minister is expected to return home on September 9.

Prior to leaving the country, Dr. Hasan, while talking to newsmen said, BNP is deceiving the people over the grave of Ziaur Rahman as his body is not there. He said, "I've newspaper cuttings of that time in my mobile phone and it was reported that nobody witnessed the body of Zia". He added, Tareque Rahman was wailing to see the body, but he was not allowed. "Even, Begum Khaleda didn't see the body," he said. The Minister further said, the then Chairman and a witness Jahir of Rangunia is still alive and he said that the body was exhumed but they didn't see the dead body of Zia. In fact, BNP is doing politics standing on falsehood, he added. Criticizing a comment of BNP leaders, the Minister said, their unity has always been with militants, Jamaat and fundamentalist groups who want to make the country a Taliban state. About the implementation of clean feed of foreign TV channels, Dr. Hasan said, actions would be taken if the distributors do not run ad-free contents of foreign TV channels from October 1 and do not obey the rules and regulations of cable operating license.

The government has decided to hold the classes of the students of the SSC, the HSC and Class-five on regular basis from September 12, Education Minister Dr. Dipu Moni announced the decision after presiding over an inter-ministerial meeting at the Cabinet Division at the Secretariat yesterday. On the other hand, the students of class-I to class-IV will have to come to the educational institution once a week, she said. She said, strict health safety guidelines will be followed from the opening day of educational institutions. There will be no assembly at educational institutions right now, the Minister said. But, she said, considering the mental and physical well-being of the students, their sports or physical activities will continue following the health guidelines. She informed, short syllabuses for this year's secondary and higher secondary students have already been prepared.

Meanwhile, UNICEF has "wholeheartedly" welcomed the decision by the government of Bangladesh to reopen schools. "Together with other development partners, we will continue to work closely with the government to keep schools open safely," Tomoo Hozumi, UNICEF Representative in Bangladesh said yesterday.

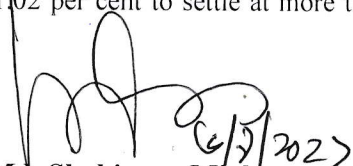
Posts and Telecommunications Minister Mustafa Jabbar in a statement, marking the 48th anniversary of the membership of the International Telecommunication Union-ITU, UN specialized body for telecommunications technology, said that the acquisition of membership of the ITU was the fruit of Bangabandhu's visionary leadership. Bangabandhu sowed the seeds of digital Bangladesh by becoming a member of this organization even while standing on the ruins of war in newly independent Bangladesh, he said. The Minister also released a commemorative stamp worth Taka 10 and an opening envelope worth Taka 10 from his office marking the day. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman germinated the seeds of Digital Bangladesh by setting up a satellite ground station at Betbunia, establishing a T&T board and gaining UPU membership to ensure modern telecommunication services to the world, the Minister said. From 1996 to 2001, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina converted the sprouted seeds into saplings, he added.

The Minister in another development said, the digital criminals involved in e-commerce frauds should be punished mercilessly and brought to book in the shortest possible time to curb such crimes. The Minister made the remarks following the recent move of Nagad, mobile financial service arm of Bangladesh Post Office, to suspend some accounts temporarily for suspicious e-commerce transactions and thus handing over those accounts information to the law enforcement agencies. In a webinar, titled "E-commerce: Current Situation and Possibilities" he came up with the remarks.

The country yesterday recorded 70 fatalities from COVID-19, taking the total death toll to 26,563. With 2,430 fresh cases, the number of infections surged to 15,14,456. The positivity rate stood at 9.66 per cent as 25,163 samples were tested during the time. At the same time, the recovery count rose to 14,51,063, DGHS disclosed this information in a press release yesterday. Besides, a total of 315 dengue patients got admitted in different hospitals across the country in the 24 hours till 8am last morning, DGHS informed.

A Dhaka court yesterday set September 30 for holding hearing on charge framing in two cases filed against BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia on charges of celebrating fake birthday on the National Mourning Day, and stigmatizing the War of Liberation by rehabilitating the anti-liberation forces.

DSEX, the benchmark index of the Dhaka Stock Exchange-DSE, crossed the 7,000-mark for the first time yesterday, a record high since its inception in 2013. DSEX, soared 71.76 points or 1102 per cent to settle at more than 7,052.



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