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News Brief

The 47th year of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's receiving the Julio-Curie award is today. Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the founder of the Bengali nation-state and the architect of independence, the forerunner of democracy and peace movement, was awarded the Julio-Curie Peace Prize by the World Peace Council on 23 May 1973. Bangladesh Television will broadcast a program titled 'Julio Curie Bangabandhu'. Other media outlets will also take steps to promote the day with significance. It has been urged to commemorate the occasion by upholding the works of the father of the nation in establishing world peace and human rights.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called Chief Minister of Indian state of West Bengal Mamata Banerjee and enquired about the damages caused by the super cyclone Amphan, PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim said. The Prime Minister expressed sympathy to Mamata Banerjee over the loss of life and property caused by the cyclone and hoped they will overcome the loss very soon. The West Bengal Chief Minister thanked the Bangladesh Prime Minister for expressing this sympathy.

The tally of infections from the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in Bangladesh yesterday has surged to 30205 as 1,694 fresh cases were detected and the fatalities from the pandemic have climbed to 432 after 24 new deaths, the highest in a single day, were registered during a 24-hour period, said Additional Director General (Admin) of Directorate General of Health Services Prof Nasima Sultana in a virtual media briefing. Among the total infections, 20.49 percent patients have recovered while 1.43 percent died so far. She said a total of 223,841 samples have so far been tested adding 9727 tests in 47 labs across the country in the past 24 hours. Nasima said now 54,923 people are at quarantine 4007 people are in isolation and over 2003,171 PPE were distributed and 345, 395 are in stock.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday in a video conference from his official residence before distributing Eid gift items among the helpless poor people at the initiative of Swechchhasebak League and Chhatra League on Madhur Canteen Dhaka University premises here said the post-Amphan rehabilitation activities have been started under the supervision of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Quader said the struggle for survival is the biggest challenge for people rather than celebrating the joy of Eid. Lauding the relief activities of the leaders and workers of Awami League and its associated bodies amid the coronavirus outbreak, Quader, also Awami League (AL) General Secretary urged them to stand by the helpless and needy people before observing the holy Eid.

Information Minister Dr Hasan Mahmud yesterday while speaking at a coronavirus safety gears distribution programme at AL president's Dhanmondi political office here said the bold leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina contributed to minimising the loss and damage caused by cyclone Amphan. Hasan, also the Awami League Joint General Secretary, said, on the other hand, after the cyclone hit in 1991, Begum Khaleda Zia told parliament that casualties in the cyclone were fewer than that of prediction. The Information Ministry is working to register the online news portals and this process will be completed soon, the Information Minister said. Meanwhile, Monks of Buddhist monasteries and priests of Hindu community Mandirs of Rangunia upazila received Eid gifts on behalf of Awami League Joint General Secretary and Information Minister Dr Hasan Mahmud yesterday.

The National Moon Sighting Committee will meet today evening at the foundation's Baitul Mukarram office after Maghrib prayer to decide the date of Eid-ul-Fitr, the biggest religious festival of Muslims, an Islamic Foundation issued press release said. Advocate Sheikh Md Abdullah, State Minister for Religious Affairs and also president of the committee, will preside over the meeting, it added. Meanwhile, a total of five Eid jamaats (congregations) starting from 7.00 am will be held at the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque here on the occasion of the holy Eid-ul-Fitr. Due to coronavirus pandemic, no Eid congregation will be held at the Jatiya Eidgah Maidan said a press release.

Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen yesterday in a statement disseminated through virtual media said super cyclone Amphan effectively binned safety concerns about Rohingyas sheltered in offshore Bhashan Char as it remained unaffected while the killer storm ravaged the Bangladesh's southwestern coastlines bordering West Bengal of India. Momen said two mega dams, the outer one being 12 feet high and inner structure being 33 feet high, ensured the protection of the offshore island. Momen simultaneously criticized the attitudes of rights groups and different countries which suggest that it was Bangladesh which alone shoulder the responsibility of Rohingyas even if they were found stranded in deep sea — the Andaman Sea or Indian Ocean.

Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Md Shahab Uddin yesterday at an online discussion over World Biodiversity Day-2020 said that biodiversity should be preserved for the sake of our existence. The Environment Minister said this year's theme of World Biodiversity Day, "Our solutions are in nature", is proper and time befitting. The Minister also said the government is committed to fighting the threats to environment and biodiversity. We need to work together to save our forests and biodiversity, he added.

Imams, Muajjins and Khadems of 583 mosques in Sarishabari upzila under Jamalpur districts have received Taka 5,000 each as Eid gift from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on the occasion of the upcoming Eid-up-Fitr. State Minister for Information Dr Md Murad Hassan distributed the premier's Eid gift among the Imams, Muajjins and Khadems today at a function here, said a press release.

To offset the losses caused by cyclone 'Amphan', the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock has requested the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief to provide financial assistance or incentives and interest-free loans on soft terms to the concerned farmers and entrepreneurs on emergency basis, a press release said here yesterday.

Bangladesh brought back 74 more its stranded nationals from India yesterday. With the aforesaid returnees, Bangladesh has brought back over 3,500 people through 25 chartered flights amid the ongoing flight suspension due to COVID-19 pandemic, Biman Bangladesh Airlines Deputy General Manager (PR) Tahera Khondokar told BSS.

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