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News Brief

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, yesterday in a condolence message, expressed deep shock at the death of Khulna AL's Phultala upazila unit General Secretary Sardar Shahbuddin Jippi, who died on Friday at a hospital in Khulna at the age of around 66.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader in a press statement yesterday said, the caretaker government issue is now a matter of the past and it has been settled by the country's highest court. He said that the next national elections will be held in accordance with the constitution like in other democratic countries in the world. Responding to the remarks of the BNP leaders that the President's dialogue is valueless as BNP did not participate in it, the Minister said, BNP might forget that besides them, there are more political parties in the country. If the BNP does not take part, the democracy of the state and the continuity of the constitutional process will not stop, he opined.

Turkey signed a memorandum of understanding-MoU with Bangladesh yesterday, on cooperation among the law enforcement agencies of the two countries on security issues. The instrument was signed after a Home Minister-level meeting of the two countries in Dhaka, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan said to newsmen. Turkey also agreed to assist Bangladesh in strengthening the police, the Border Guard Bangladesh, the Coast Guard and the Ansar and VDP with providing training and intelligence sharing between the two sides, the Minister informed. Turkey also agreed to extend support in repatriation of Rohingyas of Myanmar to their home in Rakhine and humanitarian support in Rohingya camps in Bangladesh, he added. Earlier, Turkish Interior Minister Suleyman Soylu reached Bangladesh on a day trip last morning. He visited Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar and Bangabandhu Memorial Museum in Dhaka during the trip. Turkish Ambassador to Bangladesh Mustafa Osman Turan and his Bangladesh counterpart Mosud Mannan accompanied him during various meetings.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud has emphasized on accelerating the country's economic development utilizing the potentials of tourism in Chattogram Hill Tracts-CHT. The Minister made the suggestion while addressing the closing ceremony of 'Parbotya Mela' at Sheikh Hasina Parbotya Complex at city's Baily Road yesterday. He further said, the people of the CHT region were repressed during the tenures of Ziaur Rahman and Ershad. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has taken the region to the path of peace and development through the 'Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord', Dr. Hasan added. CHT Affairs Minister Bir Bahadur Ushwe Sing presided over the function.

With the rising trend of COVID-19 infection in Bangladesh, the Education Ministry is scheduled to hold a meeting today with the National Technical Advisory Committee-NTAC on COVID-19. The government, however, does not want to shut the educational institutions now, Education Minister Dr. Dipu Moni said this to newsmen after a program in a college in the capital yesterday. Dr. Dipu Moni also inaugurated the daylong voluntary blood donation campaign, organized by Bangladesh Chhatra League-BCL, marking its 74th founding anniversary, in front of Aparajeyo Bangla on the Dhaka University campus yesterday.

Strict restrictions would be imposed within a day or two as per the proposal of the technical committee to prevent the infection of COVID-19, Health Minister Zahid Maleque said this while distributing winter clothes among the cold-hit distressed people in Manikganj yesterday. Peoples' movement by public transports will be restricted, if the rising trend of COVID-19 continues, he added. He said, shops

and shopping malls will remain closed after 8 pm and nobody will be allowed to enter hotels and restaurants without COVID-19 vaccination certificates. The government has no plan right now to shut educational institutions as COVID-19 situation is still under control in Bangladesh, he added.

Turkey will stand beside Bangladesh in facing the Rohingya crisis and will continue to stand its cooperation until the crisis is solved amicably, Turkish Interior Minister Suleyman Soyly said this while inaugurating a 50-bed field hospital, funded by Turkish government organization AFAD at Balukhali Rohingya camp in Ukhia Upazila in Cox's Bazar district yesterday. Later, the Turkish Minister visited an under construction makeshift camp for Rohingyas displaced by the fire in the camp. State Minister for Disaster Management and Relief Md. Enamur Rahman received the Turkish Minister and later also spoke at the function.

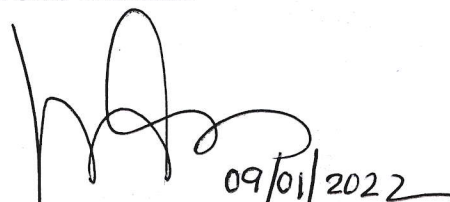
The government launched 'Bangladesh IT Connect Portal-Netherlands', a virtual desk in Bangladesh embassy in the Netherlands to connect investors and partners, explore business and help attract Foreign Direct Investment. State Minister for ICT Zunaid Ahmed Palak inaugurated the desk. As part of the event, a discussion was organized, marking 50 years of Bangladesh and the Netherlands friendship. Addressing the function, the State Minister said, the government has been establishing Sheikh Hasina Institute of Frontier Technology, Center for Fourth Industrial Revolution-4IR, Digital Leadership Academy and building innovation ecosystem to cope up with the 4IR. The government is also establishing 35,000 Sheikh Russel Digital Labs and 300 schools of future. Bangladesh has been developing ICT infrastructure including 39 Hi-Tech/ IT Parks for the investors and many local and foreign companies are running business in the already-built 10 Hi-Tech/IT Parks and IT incubation centers, he added.

State Minister for Shipping Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury urged all to stay united and work together against all conspiracies being hatched to hinder the development and progress of the country. The State Minister said this while distributing winter clothes at different places under Hazaribagh police station in the capital on behalf of the Dhaka-10 lawmaker yesterday.

Two vessels, JS URAGA and JS HIRADO of the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force-JMSDF, arrived at Chattogram Port yesterday for a goodwill port visit. Ambassador of Japan to Bangladesh Ito Naoki greeted the Japanese vessels and the delegates. The ships will stay in Chattogram till Jan 10, the Embassy of Japan said.

Mujib Barsho, which was announced for celebration of the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, has been extended upto March 31 next as it has not been possible to arrange all programs of the Mujib Barsho properly due to coronavirus pandemic. Cabinet Division issued a notification in this regard.

The country yesterday recorded single fatality from COVID-19, taking the total death toll to 28,099. With 1,116 fresh cases, the number of infections surged to 15,92,209. The positivity rate stood at 5.79 per cent as 19,275 samples were tested during the time. At the same time, the recovery count rose to 15,50,688, DGHS disclosed this information in a press release yesterday. Besides, 02 new dengue patients got hospitalized across the country in 24 hours till 8:00am last morning, DGHS informed.



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