



PRESS INFORMATION DEPARTMENT  
GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH  
DHAKA



Most Urgent  
For: Bangladoot, All Missions  
MSG: 343/2021-22  
Date: Monday, 27 June 2022

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### News Brief

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged the Kuwait government to invest in Special Economic Zones of Bangladesh. The PM made the request when outgoing Ambassador of Kuwait to Bangladesh Adel Mohammed AH Hayat paid a courtesy call on her at her official residence Ganobhaban. She also urged the Middle Eastern country for recruiting more skilled and semi-skilled manpower from Bangladesh. The PM said, her government is trying hard to meet the basic needs of the people of Bangladesh including providing jobs, land and houses. The PM thanked the Ambassador for his sincere efforts for strengthening relations between Bangladesh and Kuwait. The Ambassador congratulated the Prime Minister for successful completion of the Padma Bridge. He lauded the leadership of the Prime Minister in becoming Bangladesh a developing country. He thanked the Prime Minister for her government's support to Kuwait in bilateral and multilateral arena.

Prime minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon the new generation to be prepared with the knowledge of science, technology and research to lead the country towards prosperity by utilising their hidden talents. The Premier said this while addressing an award distribution ceremony among nationwide winners of the Bangabandhu Talent Hunt Competition-2022, speaking virtually from her official Ganabhaban residence in Dhaka. Expressing her heartiest greetings to the winners, she said, your hidden talents are the future of our country. Against the backdrop of global advancement in science and technology, she said, Bangladesh has to keep pace with evolution. She also referred to her government's first separate allocation of Tk 12 crore for research, particularly on agriculture, to make Bangladesh self-reliant in food production after assuming power in 1996. The PM mentioned that they allocated Tk 100 crore in the budget the next year (1997) for research, saying, research can show us the path (of prosperity and advancement).

Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Haque yesterday said, digital certificates and identity cards (IDs) will be handed over to all freedom fighters (FFs) within the next two months. He said this to the media at the secretariat yesterday. The distribution of digital certificates and ID cards of the heroic freedom fighters is starting from yesterday. In the first phase, digital certificates and cards are being provided to 37,091 freedom fighters of 13 districts, he said. Mr. Mozammel further said in the first phase, certificates and ID cards of freedom fighters of Gopalganj, Kishoreganj, Madaripur, Magura, Jhenaidah, Jashore, Satkhira, Bagerhat, Sunamganj, Habiganj, Moulvibazar, Narail and Gazipur districts will be distributed. Freedom fighters will get both certificates and ID cards, but only digital certificates will be given to freedom fighters who have already passed away, he added. He said maximum security measures have been taken to prevent forging of digital certificates and ID cards. A total of 14 types of security measures have been taken in digital certificates while 12 types in digital ID cards, he said.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Dr Hasan Mahmud yesterday said, neighbouring India, the US and Pakistan extended greetings to the government as Bangladesh opened the biggest self-financed Padma Bridge but the irony is BNP could not hail the feat. He said this to the media while exchanging views at the Secretariat. Though all Bangladeshis at home and abroad have been happy with the Padma Bridge opening, BNP leaders couldn't be happy and thus they have admitted that they hatched conspiracy against Padma Bridge by failing to extend congratulations, he said. He extended thanks to the media for presenting the auspicious occasion of the Padma Bridge opening to people all over the country and the world.

On the first day of opening of the Padma Bridge, people from all walks of life were seen crossing the bridge with utmost excitement and happiness after the bridge was opened for vehicular movement from 6am yesterday. After crossing the bridge, people expressed their satisfaction with a joyous and happiest look in their face and extended gratitude to the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for making the dream of country's 180 million people come true.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal yesterday said, the Myanmar authorities were not taking any measures to stop drug smuggling into Bangladesh. He made the remark while addressing a programme in the capital yesterday organised by the Department of Narcotics Control on the occasion of 'International Day against Drug Abuse and Illegal Trafficking'. He gave an estimate that currently about 8 million people in Bangladesh took drug. Earlier on the day, he said, dope test would be mandatory for students before their university admission as the relevant law would be amended for that purpose. He said this to the media at the secretariat. The government had already started dope tests for police members when the PM announced zero tolerance against the drug abuse, he added. The Department of Narcotics Control arranged different programmes yesterday to mark the day as the country is vulnerable to widespread drug abuses and most drug addicts are youth.

LGRD Minister Md Tajul Islam yesterday said, the government has taken steps to develop the rivers around Dhaka, so that more passenger boats can operate to ease traffic in Dhaka. He said this while speaking at a function marking the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Water Development Board and South City Corporation in the city. The bridges over rivers around Dhaka are not high enough to allow vessel movement. Already the authorities concerned have identified some bridges and directives have been given to demolish those and make the rivers suitable for navigation, he said. The waterlogging problem in the city has eased this year due to the re-excavation of canals and eviction of illegal occupants, he added. Most of the buildings in the city have no septic tanks, he further added. He also urged the authorities concerned to take strict action including shutting down the sewerage lines of those owners who refused to follow the government decision.

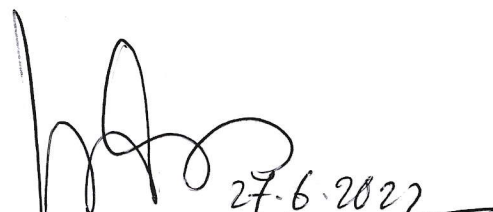
Fisheries and Livestock Minister SM Rezaul Karim yesterday said, the government will adopt environment-technology and other procedures in the country's livestock sector. He said this at a workshop titled 'Clean and Energy Efficient Cooling for Livestock Supply Chain in Bangladesh' jointly arranged by the Department of Livestock and the World Bank at a local hotel in Dhaka yesterday. To this end, the cooperation of the World Bank and other development partners is needed to make the common people familiar with the technology and create awareness in the long run. The people of Bangladesh will welcome any technological development in the livestock sector and they will apply those. Bangladesh incurs a huge loss and damage each year due to natural disasters induced by climate change, he said.

The sitting of the parliament session has been adjourned till 5pm today. Jatiya Sangsad Panel Chairman AB Tajul Islam made the announcement yesterday.

The government has decided to ban the movement of motorcycles on Padma Bridge. The decision will come into effect from 6am today and continue till further notice. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting issued a notice in this regard yesterday.

The Directorate General of Health Services yesterday reported two more Covid deaths and 1,680 new cases. The daily test positivity rate was 15.66 per cent after 10,728 tests were conducted in the 24-hour reporting period till 8:00am on the day.

DSEX, the key index of the Dhaka Stock Exchange, dropped by 0.41 per cent, or 26.56 points, to close at 6,301.08 points yesterday after gaining 16 points in the previous two sessions.

  
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