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News Brief

The 11th Parliament went into its 14th session yesterday. Earlier, President Md. Abdul Hamid convened the session exercising the power bestowed upon him as per the Clause (1) of Article 72 (1) of the Constitution.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has told the Parliament that Khaleda Zia has brought the killers of Father of the Nation to Parliament going one step forward of her husband Ziaur Rahman who gave indemnity to them alongside postings at foreign missions. The Premier was taking part in a discussion on an obituary reference at the deaths of sitting MP Prof. Ali Ashraf of Cumilla-7 constituency, seven former lawmakers including a State Minister, and some noted personalities. The Premier paid tributes to late Prof. Ali Ashraf praising his versatility as a seasoned parliamentarian, teacher, businessman and politician. Coming down on the memory lane, the Prime Minister said, Ali Ashraf always protested the August 15, 1975 carnage and met her in London in 1980 and also testified against the killers in the 1975 November 3 jail killing case. The Parliament also expressed profound shock at the casualties in some recent incidents including the Rupganj fire in Narayanganj, lightning strike in Chapainawabganj, Haiti earthquake and the recent accidents that took place at home and abroad.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said, the government has already taken measures to collect 24,54,52,700 doses of COVID-19 vaccine as part of its initiative to inoculate all the people. The Premier came up with the information while taking part in the question-answer session in the Parliament yesterday. The government has ensured getting over one crore doses of jabs per month while as per the schedule of the Sinopharm, the company will provide six crore doses of its vaccine by December with giving two crore per month from October, the PM added. In total 2,61,29,187 doses of the Covid-19 have so far been administered till 30 August, 2021 of which 1,82,89,018 people have got a single dose while 78,40,169 people have received two doses of the vaccine, she said.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, in a felicitation message, has extended heartiest congratulations to the national cricket team for winning the first T20 match against New Zealand by seven wickets at the Sher-e Bangla National Cricket Stadium yesterday. The Premier greeted all the players, coach and officials of the national cricket team as well as Bangladesh Cricket Board officials for beating New Zealand.

Liberation War Affairs Minister A K M Mozammel Haque has said, BNP is doing politics of falsehood over Ziaur Rahman's body. "Individually, I do not have any dispute with Zia, but we do not want distortion of history... Zia's body is not in the Chandrima Udyan, but BNP pays respects there, and such distortion of history should not be allowed," he said. He was speaking at the unveiling ceremony of the book 'Operation Jackpot', a heroic epic of naval commandos in the great Liberation War, at his ministry yesterday. The Minister urged the BNP for conducting a DNA test to prove that the body of Zia has been buried there. He called for removing all the structures, including Zia's so-called grave, which were not in the original design from the vicinity of the Parliament building.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader has said, the 43-year history of the BNP is the history of falsehood and conspiracy hatching against the country. While addressing a press conference yesterday, the Minister, claimed that the ruling Awami League never disputed BNP founder Ziaur Rahman, but Zia established himself as a villain of history through his ambitious and reckless works. During his lifetime, Zia never claimed himself as the proclaimer of the country's independence, but the BNP leaders are trying to establish him as the proclaimer of the independence, he said adding, in making Zia a hero of history, the BNP leaders not only made him controversial, but also put him on the dock of the history. Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had prepared the nation for the liberation war step by step but the ill-attempt of BNP leaders to establish Zia next to Bangabandhu is equal to absolute audacity, he opined.

Pragmatic steps have been taken to double the productivity of rice aiming to ensure food security of possible 20 crore people in 2050, Agriculture Minister Dr. Md. Abdur Razzaque stated this while speaking at a strategy-paper unveiling program titled 'Doubling Rice Productivity (DRP) in Bangladesh' at a city hotel yesterday. On the occasion of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Birth Centenary, Bangladesh Rice Research Institute-BRRI formulated the strategy paper presented in the program. He added that the government is giving importance on increasing rice production by innovating developed-technologies and reducing yield gaps. Emphasis is also being laid on nutritional development of paddy, he said.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud has warned that stringent measures will be taken against unregistered online news portals, IPTVs soon. He added that no IPTVs around the world are allowed to publish news. Even the personnel of the registered IPTVs won't be able to carry press cards like reporters, he said. The Minister was speaking at an event of Crime Reporters Association of Bangladesh-CRAB at the Dhaka Reporters Unity in the city yesterday. The Minister extending congratulations to BNP leaders on their party's founding anniversary, expressed the

optimism that BNP will come out from the politics of patronizing and sheltering the war criminals, militants, terrorists and petrol bombs.

The authority of Bangladesh Television-BTV handed over one acres of land to Bangladesh Film Development Corporation-BFDC yesterday to set up its Chattogram unit. BTV DG Soharab Hossain and BFDC DG Nuzhat Yeasmin signed the documents on behalf of their respective organizations at the meeting room of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in the Secretariat. Information and Broadcasting Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud, present on the occasion, put emphasis on protecting the environment and nature while establishing shooting spots and other establishments for films. State Minister Dr. Md. Murad Hasan and Secretary Md. Mokbul Hossain were present in the function.

Foreign Minister Dr. A K Abdul Momen has stressed on the international community's responsibility towards establishing and supporting accountability and justice for the massive human rights violations perpetrated against Rohingyas in Myanmar. He expressed the view while holding a meeting with UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet, in Geneva on Tuesday. During the meeting, Dr. Momen reiterated Bangladesh's strong commitment to promoting the safe, dignified and voluntary return of the Rohingyas in a conducive environment in Myanmar. The Bangladesh Foreign Minister also conveyed Dhaka's readiness to work with Myanmar, UNHCR, OHCHR and other concerned parties to bring about a sustainable and durable solution of the Rohingya crisis.

Meanwhile, Dr. Momen has urged for continuation of LDC-specific 'international support measures (ISMs)' for the countries including Bangladesh those have been graduating from the LDC status. He made the urge while holding a meeting with World Trade Organization Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala at her office in Geneva on Tuesday. During the meeting, Dr. Momen highlighted Bangladesh's development trajectory under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina that has enabled the country to be eligible for graduation from the LDC category in 2026. Dr. Momen also expressed concerns over possible negative impacts on the development momentum of the graduated countries if they lose ISMs. Later, the Minister also held a meeting with Director-General of ILO Guy Ryder. During the meeting, Dr. Momen highlighted the incremental progress that Bangladesh has made in the RMG sector which was duly recognized and appreciated by the ILO DG. Terming Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina as the "Friend of Workers", the Minister emphasized on the initiatives taken by the Bangladesh government during the pandemic for the welfare and protection of the RMG sector workers.

A year-long training program to equip women entrepreneurs in Bangladesh with soft skills began in Dhaka yesterday. The 'All About Soft Skills' training series was virtually inaugurated yesterday by State Minister for ICT Zunaid Ahmed Palak and Indian High Commissioner to Dhaka, Vikram K Doraiswami. Indian High Commission here in association with Bangladesh ICT Ministry, Women & E-commerce and SilkOak Global of India is organizing the program. The training program is a part of the '50 years of Bangladesh' celebrations as well as the '75 years of Indian independence' celebrations, 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav', a press release of the Indian HC said. Over 700 women entrepreneurs are expected to avail the training program that focuses on development of soft skills required for businesspersons.

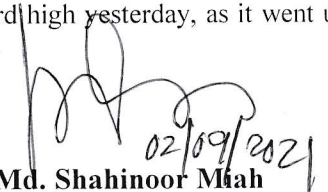
A total of 10 lac doses out of 60 lac of Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine, gifted by the United States arrived at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka yesterday. Secretary of Health Service Division Lokman Hosen Mian and the US Ambassador to Bangladesh Earl R Miller received the consignment at the airport. Remaining 50 lac doses of Pfizer vaccine will arrive in phases by this month, the Health ministry sources said.

The Education Ministry will hold a high-level meeting led by Education Minister Dr Dipu Moni, on Sunday to decide on the reopening of educational institutions across the country amid the COVID-19 pandemic, sources said.

A decision will be taken soon whether school students will be vaccinated against COVID-19, Prof. Abul Bashar Mohammad Khurshid Alam, Director General of the DGHS informed. The decision is likely to be taken today (Thursday) at a high-profile meeting of government officials, he told the reporters yesterday.

The country yesterday recorded 79 fatalities from COVID-19, taking the death toll to 26,274. With 3,062 fresh cases, the number of infections surged to 15,03,680. The positivity rate stood at 10.11 per cent as 30,294 samples were tested during the time. At the same time, the recovery count rose to 14,31,984, DGHS disclosed this information in a press release yesterday. Besides, a total of 295 dengue patients got admitted in different hospitals across the country in the 24 hours till 8am last morning, DGHS informed.

DSEX, the benchmark index of the Dhaka Stock Exchange-DSE, hit a record high yesterday, as it went up by 47.14 points or 0.68 per cent to settle at 6,916, the highest since its inception in 2013.


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