



PRESS INFORMATION DEPARTMENT  
GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH  
DHAKA



Most Urgent  
For: Bangladoot, All Missions  
MSG: 199/2020-21  
Date: Sunday, 21 March 2021

From: PIO, PID, Dhaka  
Fax: 9540553/9540026  
E-mail: [piddhaka@gmail.com](mailto:piddhaka@gmail.com)  
Web: [www.pressinform.gov.bd](http://www.pressinform.gov.bd)

### News Brief

President Md. Abdul Hamid called upon Bangladesh and Sri Lanka to identify potential investment sectors, including the areas of information technology, agriculture, health, education, tourism and services. The President made the call when Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, paid a courtesy call on him at Bangabhaban yesterday. The Sri Lankan Premier, who was on a two-day visit to Bangladesh to attend the celebrations of Golden Jubilee of Bangladesh's independence and birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, lauding the ongoing socio-economic progress of Bangladesh, stressed on exchanging experiences between Bangladesh and Sri Lanka in socio-economic development of the two countries.

Earlier, the Sri Lankan Prime Minister paid deep tributes to Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman by placing a wreath at his portrait on the premises of Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi road number 32 last morning. He also signed the visitor's book.

During the official bilateral talks held between Bangladesh and Sri Lanka at the Prime Minister's Office here yesterday, where Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Sri Lankan counterpart Mahinda Rajapaksha led their respective countries, the two countries agreed to move forward the mutual cooperation and explore new avenues in trade and commerce alongside the existing sectors. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina stressed on going for an early conclusion of Free Trade Agreement-FTA, emphasizing on facilitating greater private sectors participation. She also called for Sri Lankan investment in Bangladesh's special economic zones, industrial parks and high tech parks, agriculture sector and called upon Sri Lanka to import world class pharmaceutical products and medical devices in greater quantities from Bangladesh. Number of Ministers from both sides were present at the talks. The Bangladesh Prime Minister and the Sri Lankan Premier held a tête-à-tête for some time before the official talks.

A joint communiqué released by the Foreign ministry yesterday said, during the bilateral talks, the two countries reiterated their firm conviction to further strengthen the bilateral relations with pragmatic approach. Recognizing the threats to pluralistic societies arising from terrorism, violent extremism and radicalization, the two countries pledged to work together to counteract such challenges in both countries, the region and beyond. During the talks, Mahinda Rajapaksa appreciated the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for the effective handling of the COVID-19 pandemic in Bangladesh and the impressive economic growth during the pandemic. While discussing on a wide gamut of bilateral issues, the Bangladesh Premier requested her Sri Lankan counterpart to support Bangladesh in resolving the Rohingya crisis, it said.

Following the bilateral talks, Dhaka and Colombo signed six Memorandum of Understandings-MoUs to enhance cooperation between the two countries in different areas. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa witnessed the signing ceremony.

Foreign Minister Dr. A K Abdul Momen while briefing media about the outcomes of the bilateral talks between Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, terming the discussion 'very fruitful' said, Dhaka has expressed its keen interest to sign a FTA with Colombo to exploit the huge potential of bilateral trade between Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, in case of delay to sign Preferential Trade Agreement. Dr. Momen further said, both sides laid emphasis on shipping connectivity and agreed to sign agreements on feeder service between Colombo and Chattogram ports and on costal shipping line. Besides, the two countries agreed to sign investment promotion agreement and instrument on custom cooperation soon to expedite bilateral investment, he added. While agreeing to increase cooperation in various fields, the two leaders agreed to form a Joint Commission for Comprehensive Cooperation led by Foreign ministers of the two countries to review the progress of all bilateral cooperation including foreign office consultation, commerce secretary-level talk and working groups between the two South Asian Nations, the Minister said.

Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa left Dhaka last evening after wrapping up his two-day official visit. Foreign Minister Dr. A K Abdul Momen saw him off at the airport.

On the fourth day of the 10-day special program at the National Parade Ground yesterday on the occasion of the birth centenary of Bangabandhu and the golden jubilee of the independence of Bangladesh, OIC Secretary-General Dr. Yousef bin Ahmed Al-Othaimeen in a video message said, Bangladesh is now one of the brightest examples of religious harmony and peace. He added, Bangabandhu's lifelong service to the people of his nation remained always remembered and appreciated as the country marks the golden jubilee of independence. He further said, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the daughter of Bangabandhu, is continuing fight against discrimination and inequality and working tirelessly to realize her father's vision "Golden Bangla".

French Senator and President of the Inter-Parliamentary Friendship Group for South East Asia Madame Jacqueline Deromedi, in a video message, on the fourth day of the 10-day special program, assured Bangladesh of continuing its support at high level dialogues. Deromedi said, Bangladesh is continuing on development trajectory with the ambitious goal to improve social working condition and workers' rights. She said, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman would be proud of the country that is built today.

Speaker Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury said, the role Dhaka University played during all the movements including the Liberation war is incomparable and extraordinary as its students' community came forwards during the movements leaving the illusion of life. She was addressing an international conference titled 'Independence movement: Dhaka University in freedom and struggle' at university's Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhaban yesterday.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader addressing a press conference yesterday said, his party remains ready to give a befitting reply if anyone makes evil attempts to create unrest during the ongoing celebration of golden jubilee of independence. He said, now it is clear who carried out attacks and looting at the houses of Hindu community at Shalla in Sunamganj ahead of the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Bangladesh. This attack and looting were carried out as part of a pre-planned conspiracy, he said. He said, India was the main ally of Bangladesh's 1971 Liberation War. The head of the government of India was invited to join the celebration of the golden jubilee of independence and birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and this invitation was not extended to any particular individual, he said. He also paid glowing tributes to former President Zillur Rahman, on his 8th death anniversary saying, "Zillur Rahman's life and work will always remain as a source of inspiration to us."

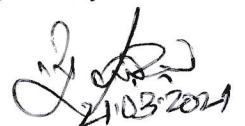
Murals of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman will be erected in all the Union Parishads of the country in phases. Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal stated this while attending a virtual inaugural program yesterday to unveil a mural of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the nameplate of heroic freedom fighters which were established at the Parbatinagar Union Parishad office in Sadar upazila of Laxmipur district.

Bangladesh is heading towards becoming a developed welfare state by 2041 under the leadership of Bangabandhu's daughter Sheikh Hasina, Information and Broadcasting Minister Dr. Hasan Mahmud stated while addressing a cultural function at Shilpakala Academy in the capital on Friday night. Bangladesh's position is the third among 22 countries which achieved positive GDP during the COVID-19 situation, he added. And, the position of the country in combating coronavirus is in top in South Asia and 20th across the globe, the Minister further said. Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka Vikram Doraiswami, the US Ambassador Earl Miller, Saudi Arabian Ambassador Essa Yusef Essa Al Dulaihan, Australian High Commissioner Jeremy Bruer, among others, took part in the function.

Local Government Minister Mohammad Tajul Islam while inspecting the construction work of Swadhinata Sarak in Mujibnagar in Kushtia's Meherpur yesterday said, the Swadhinata Sarak will play the role of a bridge of friendship between Bangladesh and India. "This village road is a witness to one of the greatest histories of the liberation war. For the swearing in ceremony of the first government of Bangladesh, great leaders and number of foreign journalists crossed the road. The road bears their memories and a journey towards the history," he added. State Minister for Public Administration Farhad Hossain, among others, was present during his visit.

International Forest Day is being observed in the country today with the theme "Forest Restoration: A Path to Recovery and Well-Being".

Meanwhile, with 26 more deaths yesterday, the number of deaths from Covid-19 in Bangladesh rose to 8,668. At the same time recovery count rose to 5,20,718. With the detection of 1,868 new cases, the total number of Covid-19 cases rose to 5,68,706. A total of 72,923 people got vaccinated yesterday, giving rise to the number of total vaccine receivers to 47,60,747. As many as 61,15,552 people got registered till 5.30pm yesterday to receive the vaccine.



Surath Kumar Sarker