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From: PIO, PID, Dhaka
Fax: 9540553/9540026
E-mail: piddhaka@gmail.com
Web: www.pressinform.gov.bd

News Brief

The nation celebrates the 51st Independence and National Day coinciding with the grand celebration of the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and golden jubilee of independence. On March 26, 1971, Father of the Nation declared Bangladesh's independence following the barbaric crackdown on unarmed and sleeping population of the country by the Pakistani occupation forces on the night of March 25. On the occasion, President Md. Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina gave separate messages extending heartfelt greetings to the countrymen living both home and abroad. The National Memorial at Savar, which is the main venue of the celebration of the day where President Md. Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina placed wreaths early in the morning as a mark of profound respect to the memories of the martyrs. The day's programmes began by heralding a 50-gun salute early in the morning as a mark of profound respect to the heroic struggle of this nation. The national flag hoisted atop all government, semi-government, autonomous and private buildings. The grand celebration of twin mega events marked the physical attendance of five heads of states and governments and virtual attendance of other global leaders, started on March 17 at the National Parade Square in the presence of Maldivian President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih. The 10-day grand celebration ends today following the celebration of the country's 51st Independence and National Day with the attendance of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in person as the guest of honour.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in a nationwide address on the eve of the Independence and National Day said Bangladesh must take a fresh vow to heighten further its stature as the nation celebrates the golden jubilee of Independence simultaneously with the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The Premier said Bangladesh now outstripped its neighbours in various indexes like average life expectancy, gender equality, universal primary education, women education and rights, women and children's mortality rates, sanitation and food availability. Sheikh Hasina said annual per capita income now stood at US\$ 2,064 which was \$ 543 in fiscal 2005-06, while poverty rate declined to 20.5 percent from 41.5 percent. The Premier gave all credits of such achievements of the country to commoners saying that farmer-labourer-professionals have made the impossible possible with their labour, talent and innovative power.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi will arrive in Dhaka this morning on a two-day state visit to attend the celebration programme of the birth centenary of Father of the Nation and golden jubilee of independence. Narendra Modi will be received by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the airport. Modi is scheduled to go to the National Martyrs' Memorial in Savar to pay homage to the heroic martyrs of the Liberation War. Later, the Indian Premier will visit the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi 32 to pay respect to Father of the Nation. Later, the Indian Premier will join the twin mega celebration program as guest of honor at the National Parade Square. In the evening, Modi is scheduled to inaugurate the 'Bangabandhu-Bapu Museum' jointly with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Bangabandhu International Conference Center. At the second day of his visit, Narendra Modi will visit the Mausoleum of Bangabandhu at Tungipara in Gopalganj. He is expected to visit the Orakandi temple in Kashiani upazila of Gopalganj and the Jessoroswari Devi Temple at Ishwaripur under Shyamnagar in Satkhira district. He will hold a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Prime Minister's Office. At the same time, in the presence of the prime ministers of the two countries, various MoUs will be inked and a number of projects to be inaugurated virtually. Later, the Indian premier will meet President Md. Abdul Hamid at Bangabhaban.

Meanwhile, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed happiness over his two-day visit to Bangladesh saying that he looks forward to having "substantive discussions" with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. The two historic occasions are also coincided with the establishment of 50th years of India-Bangladesh diplomatic ties. Modi said in his departure statement ahead of his visit to Bangladesh.

More than five MoUs are likely to be signed between Bangladesh and India during the Indian premier visit. As top leaders of the two countries would sit for bilateral talks all major issues are likely to be discussed during the meeting. Foreign Minister Dr. A K Abdul Momen gave the information while talking to the reporter yesterday.

The nation celebrated the ninth day of the ten-day programme of the Birth Centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and golden jubilee of Independence with the theme 'Gonohottar Kalratri o Alover Avijatra' at the National Parade Square in the city yesterday. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has presided over the programme. A recorded cultural function has been played. At the discussion session, recorded video messages of South Korean Prime Minister Chung Sye-kyun, Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Metodiev Borisov, Cuba President Miguel Diaz-Canel Bermodez, Zambia President Edgar Chagwa Lungu, Poland President Andrzej Duda and Czech President Milos Zeman were screened. Prince Charles of British Royal Family, Foreign Secretary of the Philippines Teodoro Locsin Junior and Bangladesh's Japanese Friend Takasi Hawakawa's son Osamu Hawakawa also sent message on the occasion.

Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan has written a letter to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, congratulating her on 50th anniversary of Bangladesh's independence and Mujib Borsho, seeking to fortify the existing bonds between the two countries and to build new ones for the succeeding generations.

The government published the first list of 147,537 freedom fighters including Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, four national leaders and 191 martyred intellectuals. Liberation War Affairs Minister A K M Mozammel Haque announced the list at a press conference yesterday.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader said, the announcement of withdrawal of all programmes by BNP on the golden jubilee of Independence is extremely 'mysterious'. The Minister made this comment while joining a discussion rally marking the Genocide Day virtually from his residence yesterday. Terming the Operation Search Light on March 25, 1971, a grisly incident in the history, Obaidul Quader said the gruesome genocide of the history has not yet been internationally recognized, adding that even Pakistan so far did not seek apology for committing its heinous crimes against humanity.

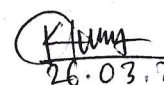
Due to the recent rise of Covid-19 cases in Bangladesh and other parts of the world, the secondary and Higher Secondary level Educational institutions will be re-opened on May 23 after Eid-ul Fitr. Education Minister Dr. Dipu Moni said in a meeting with the National Advisory Council yesterday for re-opening of educational institutions of the country.

The combined first year MBBS entry tests of government and private medical colleges will be held on April 2. Health minister Zahid Maleque said this at the Secretariat on Wednesday.

State Minister for Information and Broadcasting Dr. Md Murad Hasan said the March 25 genocide was not just mere a night rather it was the beginning of one of the most heinous genocides of the world civilization. He said in a discussion organized by the Department of Film and Publication on the occasion of Genocide Day at the Information Building in Dhaka yesterday.

To overcome the disruptions caused by the pandemic, particularly in women's economic empowerment, will require strong and visionary leadership. We're fortunate to have Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina lead us from the front in this battle against the pandemic. Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations in New York Ambassador Rabab Fatima made the statement while speaking at a side event on "Women's Economic Empowerment: Good Practices in Covid-19 Response and Recovery" organised as part of the 65th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women virtually on Wednesday.

With the death of 34 more people yesterday, the number of deaths from Covid-19 in Bangladesh rose to 3587. At the same time recovery count rose to 5,29,894, DGHS disclosed this information in a press release yesterday. With the detection of 3,587 new cases, the total number of Covid-19 cases rose to 5,84,395. A total of 65,26,538 people have so far been registered to receive COVID-19 vaccines till yesterday. Total number of vaccine receivers stood at 50,69,049.

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Principal Information Officer
Phone- 9546091