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50 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE



From left ... Bangabandhu's daughters -- Sheikh Rehana and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina -- and guest of honour President of the Maldives Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, and Bangladesh President Abdul Hamid at the inaugural day of the 10-day celebrations of Mujib Borsho and Golden Jubilee of the country's independence.

PHOTO: PTI

Now time to forge ahead

Says Hasina; 10-day celebrations begin

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The history of the people of this land is that of repression, of colonialism, and of being ruled and looted by foreign forces. So, their struggle for liberation and self-rule was something that was the most sought after.

While many leaders emerged and fought for this cause, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was the one who ultimately inspired, mobilised, and led the people in snatching independence from the last of their rulers -- the then West Pakistani junta. The Pakistanis



"Anti-Bangladesh forces are still active at home and abroad and they want to disparage the achievements through various malpractices."

discriminated against the Bangalee nation and dominated them in all possible terms, be it political, economic or cultural.

Yesterday was the birth centenary of the great leader and also the National Children's Day. This year is special because the nation is celebrating the golden jubilee of its independence.

To mark the occasion, the government has taken up a 10-day celebration programme, under the title Mujib Chirantan (Eternal Mujib). The country went into a festive mood with the

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A symbol of democracy, freedom

Maldives president on Bangabandhu

UNB, Dhaka

Maldivian President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih yesterday said Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was a symbol of democracy and freedom, whose efforts were instrumental in securing an independent destiny for Bangladesh's people.

He said Bangabandhu would remain a source of inspiration for many generations to come.

The visiting Maldivian president spoke as the guest

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3 patients die after ICU fire

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and MOUDUD AHMED SUJAN

Bulbul Ahmed Kajol heard an explosion near ICU bed-12 at the Covid-19 unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital's (DMCH) new building around 8:10am yesterday.

Soon after, he saw smoke spreading out from the ICU bed.

The sudden and awful incident forced him to evacuate the ICU and shift his ailing brother Abdullah Al Mahmud, 48, a critical Covid-19 patient, like attendants of 13 other ICU patients there.

Three of those ICU patients, including Bulbul's brother, died after they were relocated.

Two other dead were identified as Engineer Kazi Golam Mostafa, 66, of Chandpur, and Kishore Chandra Roy, 70, of Tangail.

Some of the 14 critical patients were taken to a nearby coronary care unit (CCU)



on the same floor of the 10-storey building whereas some were shifted to other wards or hospitals.

According to Bulbul, the smoke spread out so dangerously that they could not even see anything or breathe easily.

"When I was taking my brother out of the room like others, nurses instructed us to rush to the nearby CCU."

"But my brother died after two hours as there was no high-flow oxygen supply," he told The Daily Star.

"None of the hospital officials helped us while evacuating the ICU. I had to put off medical equipment from my brother's body while moving him out," he said.

Five firefighting units brought the flames under control around 8:40am and completely doused the fire at 9:35am.

Seeking anonymity, a nurse who was

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DGHS wants full lockdown

Recommends govt not open schools, hold public exams

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The DGHS has proposed that the government not reopen educational institutions and hold any public examinations in the wake of rising number of Covid-19 patients.

In Tuesday's meeting at the Prime Minister's Office, the DGHS officials also suggested going for a complete lockdown to curb the virus transmission.

The high-ups of the PMO, however, opined that the authorities concerned will make decision on such issues and asked the DGHS to strengthen enforcement of health safety guideline and reopen the Covid-19 hospitals that were shut down earlier.

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BUSINESS

USE OF FOREX RESERVE

Caution in the air

Warning is in the air, as the government gears into using its burgeoning forex reserve of \$43 billion for the first time in what it calls its "strategic development projects".

Good development, because a small portion of the emergency fund will now be used in infrastructural development to give more

MORE ON PAGE 2

STORY ON B1

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