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NEWS BRIEF

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday told parliament that some 3.5 lakh undocumented Bangladeshi workers working in Malaysia will get the scope to work there since the Malaysian government has announced to issue temporary work passes for such workers. She said that following successful diplomatic efforts of the present government steps have been taken to provide legality to some 8 lakh undocumented expatriate Bangladeshi workers in Saudi Arabia, while 2.67 lakh in Malaysia and 10,000 in Iraq. She mentioned that the present AL government has taken a firm stance to check human trafficking through enacting of the Human Trafficking Deterrence and Suppression Act, 2012. She also said that her government had always taken all-out measures to ensure the fairness of all the elections held in the country so far.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon the students to read books more to earn knowledge. She also said that the practice of literature can prevent them from stepping into the wrong path. The premier said this while inaugurating the month-long "Ekushey Grantha Mela" (Book Fair) on the Bangla Academy premises in the city yesterday afternoon. Through the same function, the premier opened a four-day International Literature Conference 2017 and handed over prizes among the winners of 'Bangla Academy Sahitya Puroshkar 2016'.

President Hamid received the Palestinian President yesterday at the VVIP Tarmac of Hazarat Shahjalal International Airport amid a 21-gun salute. Then the Palestinian President was taken to Hotel Le Meridien Dhaka on the Airport Road through a ceremonial motorcade where he will be staying during the visit. A MoU on formation of a joint commission at foreign minister level is likely to be signed. President Abbas will have official talks with prime minister Sheikh Hasina at the prime minister's office today. Both sides will discuss bilateral, regional and international issues at the meetings. He will attend banquet preceded by cultural programme hosted by president Hamid in honour of the Palestinian president.

Speaker of the Parliament Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury said the government is working to establish an IT-business friendly environment as the sector can contribute more in the national economy. Speaker made this remark while addressing the inaugural ceremony of four day long BASIS Soft Expo at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre (BICC) at Agargaon in the capital yesterday. Referring to \$3 trillion global software market special guest Planning Minister Mustafa Kamal said Planning Ministry will support BASIS at all square to lead the local tech outlets. State Minister for ICT Zunaid Ahmed Palak said the government is working together with private sector to create a business-friendly environment for the technology sector to achieve the milestone of \$1 billion revenue from ITES export by 2018.

Foreign Minister Abul Hasan Mahmood Ali said that Bangladesh will expand its bilateral cooperation with Palestine in "depth and dimensions". Foreign Minister Ali made the remark at a meeting with the visiting Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas yesterday after his arrival on a three-day state visit. Both sides hoped at the meeting that the visit will be "successful".

Agriculture minister Matia Chowdhury said that the government has allocated Taka 32.90 crore for providing agricultural assistance among the small and marginal farmers to raise aus production during the current summer season. She disclosed this while addressing a press briefing at her ministry conference room in Dhaka yesterday. As many as 2,25,988 small and marginal farmers will get necessary agricultural inputs including seed and fertilisers for cultivating high yielding variety of local Aus and Nerica .

Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Nurul Islam said yesterday in Parliament that Bangladeshi expatriates remitted some US\$ 150 billion in the last 25 fiscal years. The minister said Bangladesh exported some 7.58 lakh workers in 2016, while 5.56 lakh in 2015, 4.26 lakh in 2014, 4.09 lakh in 2013 .

State Minister for foreign affairs Shahriar Alam yesterday that Bangladesh's decision to gradually relocate the documented and undocumented Rohingyas to Noakhali's Hatiya Island will be a 'temporary arrangement', considering the 'humanitarian ground'. Shahriar Alam said this is a success of Bangladesh's foreign diplomacy and the government is seeing its reflection everywhere on the cause.

Bangladesh Ambassador to the United States Mohammad Ziauddin has said Bangladesh is deeply engaged with the USA and other friendly countries to counter terrorism to ensure democracy and development. The envoy made the remark when he met with Republican Senator Ron Johnson in Washington DC on Tuesday.

Bangladesh Ambassador in Nepal Mashfee Binte Shams has announced the government's plan to buy hydroelectric power at a roundtable in Kathmandu. She has said Bangladesh is ready to invest \$2 billion for hydropower projects. She also shared Bangladesh's renewable energy experiences at the roundtable recently.

DSEX, the prime index of the DSE, settled yesterday at 5473.89 points.

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