

**PRESS INFORMATION DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH
DHAKA**

MOST URGENT
FOR: BANGLADOOT, ALL MISSIONS
MSG: 31/2017
Date: Thursday, 9 February 2017

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NEWS BRIEF

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday told parliament that her government outlined mega plans to set up 100 specialized economic zones (SEZs) to attract foreign investment. The premier said the government took measures to get the country's economy on firm footing. She also said, her government has set a target to increase the country's export and foreign reserve and chalked out various measures to draw private investment.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday sought cooperation from armed forces in combating militancy and terrorism to keep the country's ongoing development process undisrupted. The premier was addressing as the chief guest at the graduation ceremony of the Defense Services Command and Staff College (DSCSC) 2016-17 Course at Sheikh Hasina Complex at Mirpur Cantonment in the capital yesterday morning. The prime minister also urged all to play their due role so that children don't get involved in terrorism and militancy and addicted to drugs.

President Md. Abdul Hamid yesterday reiterated Bangladesh's zero tolerance policy against acts of terrorism and militancy. The President said this while addressing the inaugural session of the Asia-Pacific Business Forum-2017 (APBF) at Sonargaon Hotel in the capital. The President also called upon the leaders of the Asia Pacific region to build a united resistance against terrorism for attaining continued peace, prosperity, stability and development. He underscored the need for giving priority and joint efforts to eradicate poverty in this region.

President Md. Abdul Hamid yesterday called upon all concerned to consider education as a weapon of development and progress of the nation and its citizens not to use it as a tool for profit making. He said this while addressing the 16th convocation of the East West University (EWU) in the city in the afternoon yesterday. President Hamid stressed the need for building up patriotic and educated human resources ensuring the world standard and quality education in each university.

The cabinet committee on economic affairs awarded China Harbour and Engineering Co Ltd to develop an economic and industrial zone dedicated for Chinese investors at Anwara in Chittagong yesterday. The cabinet committee yesterday approved another proposal for the appointment of a developer for another economic zone at Mirsharai in Chittagong. It also approved signing of an agreement with POSCO Daewoo Corporation for gas exploration and extraction at deep-sea block DS-12.

Finance Minister AMA Muhith yesterday said , a total of \$6 billion is in the pipeline from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) as aid. The finance minister informed this while talking to reporters after a meeting with visiting ADB Vice-President Wencai Zhang at his office.

The government decided yesterday to begin disbursing money to the country's garments workers from a central fund which was designed for the welfare of workers in the export-oriented apparel sector. The board of the Central Fund took the decision in the third meeting held at the labour and employment ministry chaired by State Minister for labour and employment Mujibul Haque Chunnun.

Bangladesh has strongly protested the act of 'unprovoked aggression' committed by Myanmar's Border Guard Police (BGP) by firing at an unarmed fishing boat of Bangladesh in the Naf River on 6 February. One fisherman died from bullet injury due to this incident while another was seriously injured. In a Diplomatic note sent to the Embassy of Myanmar in Dhaka, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs protested the act of aggression and urged the government of Myanmar to make sure the authorities concerned of Myanmar to stop the recurrence of the same.

Jordanian entrepreneurs welcomed a Bangladesh proposal for setting up a joint venture TSP fertilizer factory in Bangladesh in presence of Industries Minister Amir Hossain Amu who is now on a visit to Jordan and placed the proposal during a meeting with Amman Chamber of Industry

State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Nasrul Hamid yesterday informed the Parliament that supply of daily natural gas has increased to 1000-mcft. In this connection, the state minister said the present government has taken various measures to overcome the deficit and provide required gas supply to the people.

Vice President of Asian Development Bank Wencai Zhang yesterday visited Ishwardi Export Promotion Zone and said ADB is looking forward to extend cooperation to Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority.

Bangladesh is going to connect with the 2nd submarine cable on 21 February to get another 1500 gbps bandwidth. The South East Asia-Middle East-Western Europe 5 consortium is set to launch its global operation on this day.

Bangladesh will take 28th place among the world's most powerful economies by 2030 and Bangladesh's GDP at PPP terms will exceed Malaysia by 2050 according to an analysis from PricewaterhouseCoopers. The PwC analysis said Bangladesh will be benefited from its youthful and fast growing working-age population.

DSEX, the prime index of the DSE, settled yesterday at 5,488.23 points.

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