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News Brief

The Cabinet has approved the draft of the 'Health Development Surcharge Management Policy-2017', aiming to control tobacco use, prevent non-communicable diseases as well as create mass awareness against the bad impacts of tobacco. The approval was given at a meeting of the Cabinet held at the Prime Minister's Office with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair yesterday. The Cabinet also felicitated the PM for being regarded as 'Star of the East', 'Mother of Humanity' and being compared with 'Raoul Wallenberg' by local and international media. A prominent daily newspaper of United Arab Emirates (UAE) Khaleej Times highly admired the Premier for her humanitarian approach to the Rohingyas and this newspaper dubbed her 'Star of the East'. British media Channel 4 has titled Sheikh Hasina 'Mother of Humanity' for her benevolence towards the Rohingya refugees. On the other hand, The Asian Age has compared Sheikh Hasina with 'Raoul Gustaf Wallenberg' who became history for his great humanitarian role during the Second World War.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said, the ongoing Rohingya problem could be solved through her five-point proposal placed at the UN General Assembly on September 21 last. She said this while receiving cheques of donations to her Relief and Welfare Fund from the leaders of Bangladesh Association of Banks (BAB) at her office yesterday.

The European Union has announced suspension of invitations to Myanmar Military Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and other top military commanders of the country. The announcement came in response to the brutal operation against Rohingyas. The EU at a meeting in Luxemburg on Sunday said it may consider additional measures if the situation does not improve. Meanwhile, The World Bank has held back \$200m development loan to the Myanmar government due to the persecution on Rohingyas.

Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia Dr. Ahmad Zahid Hamidi has said Malaysia will remain beside Bangladesh to ensure smooth repatriation of forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals. He said this after visiting Kutupalong Rohingya camp in Ukhia, Cox's Bazar yesterday. Referring to Myanmar's unwillingness to take back its nationals, Hamidi opined that Naypyidaw would be compelled to take back its nationals if the ASEAN countries put pressure on Myanmar authorities to this end.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) responding to the proposal of Bangladesh took Rohingya issue as the top emergency item in its 137th assembly in the Russia's St. Petersburg. The IPU adopted three resolutions as 'emergency items' for discussions, of them the Bangladesh proposal on Rohingyas issue was accepted receiving the highest 1027 votes. Deputy Speaker Md. Fazle Rabbi Miah raised Rohingya issue in the IPU.

Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj is scheduled to arrive in Dhaka on 22 October at the invitation of her Bangladesh counterpart AH Mahmood Ali. During the visit, Bangladesh FM is expected to request the Indian FM to provide strong political support for ending exodus of forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals and resolving the protracted crisis. Sushma Swaraj is due to co-chair a meeting of foreign minister-level India-Bangladesh Joint Consultative Commission (JCC). Meanwhile, India has temporarily closed Land Integrated Check Post at Radhikapur near to Biral in Dinajpur with immediate effect. Indian High Commission in Dhaka, in a notification, said this yesterday.

Bishwa Ijtema, the second largest congregation of the world's Muslims, will be held in two phases on the bank of the river Turag near Dhaka from January 12-14 and January 19-21. Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan said this to the media after attending a meeting at his office yesterday.

The High Court yesterday asked Information Ministry, Post and Telecommunications Ministry and Bangladesh Telecommunication Regularity Commission to take measures to block the gateway of much talked about 'Blue Whale' game.

The key index of Dhaka Stock Exchange, DSEX, inched up 0.08 per cent or 4.89 points, to finish at 6,013.84 points after losing 133 points in the previous three sessions.

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