**PRESS INFORMATION DEPARTMENT**

### GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH

### DHAKA

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**News Brief**

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## Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said Awami League wants to see the next general election to be held in a free and fair manner to give democracy an institutional shape. She said this in her speech at a joint meeting of AL central working committee and advisory council at her official residence Ganobhaban in Dhaka yesterday. The PM reaffirming the present government's intention to ensure credible elections said, in various by-elections and local government elections it was proved that people can franchise their rights properly and the government did not interfere in those elections.

## Former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has urged Myanmar to make sure the half-million Rohingya refugees who have fled in the last two months can go home. He also said, Myanmar's government needs to create conditions that will allow the Rohingya refugees to return with dignity and with a sense of security. He said this after addressing a Security Council meeting on the issue on Friday. Addressing the same meeting, European Union Ambassador Joao Vale de Almeida said, the conditions for the safe, voluntary and dignified return of the Rohingya refugees must be put in place. It also asked the Myanmar government to intensify efforts to ensure full, safe and unconditional access to Rakhine State for humanitarian assistance without delay. In Naypyidaw on Thursday, Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi said, she had created a committee to oversee all international and local assistance in Rakhine.

Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamid, who is also the Home Minister of the country, is scheduled to reach Bangladesh today to discuss Rohingya issues. During the visit he will have meetings with Foreign Minister Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali and Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Nurul Islam. William Lacy Swing, IOM Director General, will arrive in Dhaka today on a four-day visit to see current Rohingyas situation on the ground. He will visit Cox’s Bazar from tomorrow. He is expected to meet Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali, among others, during the visit.

Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed has urged the country's exporters and manufacturers to take a 'Look East' approach to expanding and diversifying export market and products. He made the call while speaking at the inauguration of 'Showcase Korea 2017' organized by the Korea-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Dhaka on Friday. Taking part at the function, Korean Ambassador in Dhaka Ahn Seong-doo said, some 200 Korean companies have invested $ 1.3 billion in Bangladesh.

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Anisul Huq is going to hold a press briefing on recent issues today. An official of the ministry, in terms of anonymity, said to the media that the minister will hold the press briefing basically to give reply of the statement given by Chief Justice SK Sinha during leaving country for Australia on Friday night.

Bangladesh will take on hosts South Africa in their first one day international (ODI) of the three-match series at the Diamond Oval in Kimberley today. The cricket match will begin at 2:00pm (Bangladesh Standard Time).

Bangladesh’s capital and megacity, Dhaka, has now been ranked at the bottom in The Economist's ‘Safe Cities Index 2017’, while Tokyo has topped the list yet again. The results of the 2017 Safe Cities Index, which now covers 60 cities, again show a sharp divide in overall levels of safety between the rapidly urbanising developing world and the stagnant developed world.

In the latest Business-to-Commerce (B2C) e-commerce index, Bangladesh ranked 103rd among the 144 countries.  This list is prepared and released by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) this month. In the last year index, Bangladesh ranked 117th among the 142 countries.

DSEX, the key index of Dhaka Stock Exchange, declined by 2.22 per cent, or 137.90 points, over the week to close at 6,064 points on October 12 after gaining 109.5 points in the previous week.

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