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News brief

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday inaugurated the Dhaka International Trade Fair, announcing leather as the “product of the year” for 2017. She asked authorities to take steps to provide necessary cooperation and incentives to boost the leather sector and help explore its potential. The premier urged the businessmen and exporters to stay updated on the changing regime of global trade. She stressed the importance of exploring more international markets for Bangladeshi products instead of running after GSP. She also distributed the National Export Trophy for fiscal 2013-14.

The government has decided to appoint the Bangladesh Army for supervising the Padma Bridge rail link project. A deal was signed with the Construction Supervision Consultant (CSC) of Bangladesh Army in this regard yesterday, said Railways Minister M Mazibul Hoque while talking to the reporters after the signing ceremony. Bureau of Research, Testing and Consultation of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) will provide support to the CSC.

The government is going to enhance the operational skills of the newly created regions, sectors and battalions of the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) with modern equipment. The BGB under the Ministry of Home Affairs has taken a project titled ‘Strengthening border security through modern equipment’ at an estimated cost of Tk 28.42 crore.

Bangladesh wants to build a road along its 825km border with Tripura in India. The idea is to increase vigilance. The country has sought permission from India to use their border road in Tripura to carry construction materials to build the road. Bangladesh yesterday placed the proposal at a joint district-level conference held with India in Chittagong. The three-day bilateral meeting, which started on Tuesday, concluded yesterday.

Raw hides would not be allowed to enter Hazaribagh for processing after January 31, industries secretary Mosharraf Hossain Bhuiyan told reporters yesterday, issuing the new ultimatum to errant tanners after a meeting with representatives of two of their organisations.

Newly appointed High Commissioner of Bangladesh to Nigeria Maj Gen Kazi Sharif Kaikobad met President Abdul Hamid at Bangabhaban yesterday. During the meeting, President Abdul Hamid said Nigeria is a market of about 18 crore people. Various Bangladeshi products, including medicines, readymade garments, leather, have export potentials. The President asked the envoy to take steps to utilize the potentials.

The government has set a plan to bring down the country's position in doing business ranking to below 100 from the existing 176 within fiscal year 2019-20 (FY20), the end year of the implementation of the 7th five year plan (FY 2015-16 to FY2019-20). Cabinet Secretary Mohammad Shafiul Alam said that they discussed taking up possible programmes for implementation of ten sub matrix of the ease of doing business to create an investment friendly environment in the country to boost overall investment.

Textbooks Festival Day-2017 was celebrated across the country yesterday, marking distribution of new textbooks among the pre-primary and secondary-level students for the new academic year. The government distributed a total of 36, 21, 82, 285 textbooks among 4,33,53,209 students on the first day of New Year through the textbook festival.

DSEX, the prime index of Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) settled yesterday at 5,083.89 points.

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