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News Brief

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina leaves for Rome today morning on a four-day official visit to Italy to attend the annual Governing Council meeting of IFAD. On her way to Rome, the PM will make a stopover in Dubai for nearly two hours. The Prime Minister is joining the IFAD meeting at the invitation of its President Gilbert F Hounqbo. She will present a keynote paper at the meeting. The PM is scheduled to attend a community reception in Rome in the evening on February 13. During her stay in Rome, the PM will also visit the Vatican City to hold a meeting with the Pope Francis on February 12.

British Secretary of State of Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Boris Johnson has assured of continuing its support to Bangladesh on Rohingya issue. The assurance came as the British Minister was visiting Rohingya camp at Ukhia upazila in Cox's Bazar yesterday. He highly appreciated Bangladesh's incredible work in providing safe shelter to a huge number of forcibly displaced Rohingyas. The British Foreign Minister reiterated his country's stance on safe and dignified return of Rohingyas to their homeland. Earlier on Friday, Boris Johnson met his Bangladesh counterpart AH Mahmood Ali at State Guest House Padma in Dhaka. It was informed in the meeting that the direct Dhaka-London cargo flight is expected to resume shortly as Britain is going to lift the ban imposed on Bangladesh in this regard in March 2016.

Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed has said, power crisis in the country's southern parts will be solved immediately as the government has undertaken different pragmatic steps in this regard. The Minister told journalists after visiting the Independence Museum (Swadhinata Jadhugar) in Bhola yesterday. Referring to new gas field in Bheduria Union of Bhola, which is expected to hold 1.5 trillion cubic feet of gas, the minister said, Bhola district will be a developed one if the gas-based industries and mills-factories are established in the island.

A three-day national farm machinery fair begun at the Krishibid Institute Bangladesh premises in Dhaka yesterday. LGRD Minister Khandker Mosharraf Hossain opened the fair. Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury was also present at the function. Speaking on the occasion, LGRD Minister said, around 68 percent people of the country is involved in agriculture sector which is the backbone of the country's development. The Minister terming the fair as time-befitting said, using of modern agricultural machineries and technologies is essential for sustainable food security.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Mohammed Nasim has stressed on ensuring mental health services for the people at the grassroots level. The Minister made the stress while inaugurating the 6th Asian Cognitive Behavior Therapy Conference in Dhaka yesterday. The Minister said, government has been working tirelessly to improve the health facilities across the country, including the mental health.

The government of China with UNDP and UNFPA extended further humanitarian supports to help rehabilitate the people badly affected by last year's floods. The embassy of China in Bangladesh together with UN organizations and the Nilphamari district administration yesterday distributed various relief materials among the flood victims of the district. Cultural Affairs Minister Asaduzzaman Noor attended the relief distribution event.

DSEX, the key index of Dhaka Stock Exchange, lost 0.93 per cent, or 55.82 points, over the week to close at 5,965.63 points on Thursday after losing 194.36 points in the previous week.

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