**PRESS INFORMATION DEPARTMENT**

### GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH

### DHAKA

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**News Brief**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said, ruling Awami League aimed to keep up country's journey towards further prosperity. The PM said this while addressing a mammoth rally at Sylhet Alia Madrasah Ground yesterday. The PM urged the countrymen to stay alert against terrorism, militancy and corruption calling them as major social vices. After visiting the holy shrines of Hazrat Shah Jalal, Hazrat Shah Paran and Hazrat Gazi Borhan Uddin in Sylhet, the PM launched the campaign for Awami League saying the next Parliamentary elections are set to be held in December this year. Earlier, the PM inaugurated a number of already implemented development projects which include Sylhet divisional and district NSI office building, Sylhet Muktijoddha Complex Bhaban and 12-storied Nagar Bhaban of Sylhet City Corporation. The PM also laid the foundation stones of several development projects including the construction of Begum Fazilatunnesa Mujib Hall at Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, students' hostels at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College and a 250-bed district hospital.

Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed has said, Bangladesh has earned US $ 81.03 million foreign currency from vegetable export in fiscal 2016-17. The Minister said this while responding to a query in the house yesterday. Disaster Management and Relief Minister Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhdury Maya, Bir Bikram informed the House, the government has a plan to procure modern rescue equipments at a cost of Taka 153.52 crore for infusing dynamism into rescue operations in any disaster.

Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed has expressed the hope, United Nations Economic and Social Council will announce Bangladesh's graduation from the LDCs in its next evaluation meeting in March. The Minister expressed the hope as he was addressing a meeting with the newly elected DCCI Board of Directors at his ministry office yesterday. He said, Bangladesh is prepared to face the challenges which would emerge after the country's graduation from LDCs. The Minister hoped, the country would be able to attain GSP plus and other facilities from the developed world following the graduation of LDCs.

Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu has attributed the formation of the 9th wage board, as a result of combined efforts of journalists, Information Ministry and the government's journalist-friendly guidelines. He said this while addressing a press conference in the PID conference room yesterday. State Minister for Information Tarana Halim also spoke on the occasion.

Planning Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal hoped, the United Kingdom would always stand beside Bangladesh like they did in the past. The Minister expressed such hope at a meeting with the high ups of the Crown Commercial Service of the UK in London on Monday. During the meeting, the Minister and the Crown Commercial Service leaders discussed the public procurement systems of both the countries along with various issues relating to bilateral interests. The Minister is attending an international exhibition on public procurement in London.

Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali has urged the international community to continue their engagements with the Myanmar government to ensure a suitable environment in Rakhine State for safe and dignified return of the forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals. The Foreign Minister made the urge while addressing a symposium on 'Developing National Action Plan on the United Nations Security Council Resolution-1325 on Women, Peace and Security' at a city hotel yesterday. The Foreign Minister said, the forcibly displaced Rohingya people have been subjected to systematic persecution, discrimination and human rights violations possibly amounting to mass atrocity crimes.

US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Daniel N Rosenblum has said, his country would keep continued insistence on Myanmar to create congenial atmosphere in Rakhine state for safe return of the Rohingyas. He also demanded Myanmar army's respect to their civilian government's commitment to ensure the safety of those who voluntarily agree to return. He told a dialogue on ‘The United States and the Indo-Pacific Region’ organized by BIISS in Dhaka yesterday.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to inaugurate the traditional month-long Amar Ekushey Book Fair on the Bangla Academy premises in the city on February 1. This was disclosed at a press conference at the academy yesterday. A total of 800 stalls will be installed in the book fair. Bangla Academy will publish 146 new books this year. The Premier will also launch a two-day International Literature Conference. Poets and writers from 15 countries will join the Conference to be held on February 22 and 23 in the book fair, Bangla Academy DG informed the media.

 DSEX, the key index of Dhaka Stock Exchange, closed yesterday at 6,127.80 points.

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