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**News Brief**

More than 150 retired officers of Army, Navy and Air Force called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Ganabhaban yesterday and expressed their solidarity with the Awami League and pledged to work for the party's victory in the upcoming national election. The Premier while welcoming retired armed forces officers highlighted tremendous development over the last 10 years and said, the goal of the government is to cut poverty rate by 4 to 5 per cent further in the future and then Bangladesh would be a poverty-free country.

Outgoing Italian Ambassador to Bangladesh Mario Palma made the farewell call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at PMO in Dhaka yesterday. During the meeting the Premier expressed satisfaction over level of relation between the two friendly countries. The Italian Envoy appreciated Bangladesh for starting the trial of the perpetrators of the 2016 terrorist attack at the Holey Artisan Restaurant in which nine Italians were also killed. The Ambassador praised the professionalism of the law enforcement agencies of Bangladesh in exposing the culprits to justice in a quick time.

Newly appointed German Ambassador to Bangladesh Peter Fahrenholtz has said, the German businesses are keen to contribute in power and energy sectors in Bangladesh. The Ambassador said this as he made a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office in Dhaka yesterday. Welcoming the new envoy the Premier said, the relations between Bangladesh and Germany are deep rooted. Both parts of the then Germany extended support to the War of Liberation of Bangladesh in 1971. Germany also provided immense help to Bangladesh to rebuild the war ravaged country.

Election Commission has said, if anyone goes for arranging showdown during submission of nomination papers for the upcoming parliamentary election, legal action will be taken against him or her. Candidates cannot make any showdown before December 10. The EC Secretary Helaluddin Ahmed said this to the media at the Nirbachan Bhaban in Dhaka yesterday. No candidate except the party chiefs can use helicopter for election purpose, the EC secretary said adding, but they will not be allowed to drop leaflets from the helicopter.

Attorney General Mahbubey Alam has said, BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia, who has been convicted in two graft cases, cannot take part in forthcoming parliamentary election. She has to wait for five more years to take part in the polls even if she is acquitted by the High Court.

The officials of the local government institutions including union parishad, pourashava, city corporation, district council and upazila parishad have been asked to work impartially and not to participate in election campaign at its particular areas. The Local Government Division issued an executive order in this regard on November 19.

A delegation of International Federation of Film Archives met Information Secretary Abdul Malek at the Ministry of Information in Dhaka yesterday. During the meeting, they discussed various issues relating to holding World Film Archive Congress in Dhaka in 2021.

About 35 representatives from 20 companies of Dezhou City under Shandong Province in China held a meeting with the officials of Bangladesh High-Tech Park Authority in its office in Dhaka yesterday. During the meeting, the Chinese companies expressed interest in investing in the high-tech park industry of Bangladesh as investment-friendly atmosphere is prevailing in the country.

DSEX, the key index of Dhaka Stock Exchange, added 0.17 per cent, or 9.29 points, to close at 5,288.54 points yesterday.

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