**PRESS INFORMATION DEPARTMENT**

### GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH

### DHAKA

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| **MOST URGENT**  FOR: BANGLADOOT, ALL MISSIONS  MSG:85/2017  **Date: Wednesday, 26 April 2017** | **FROM: PIO, PID, DHAKA**  Fax: 9540553/9540026  E-mail: [piddhaka@gmail.com](mailto:piddhaka@gmail.com)  [piddhaka@yahoo.com](mailto:piddhaka@yahoo.com)  Web: [www.pressinform.portal.gov.bd](http://www.pressinform.portal.gov.bd) |

**News Brief**

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) yesterday approved the construction of 560 model mosques-cum-Islamic cultural centres at district and upazila levels with an estimated cost of Tk 9,062.41 crore. The approval came from the weekly ECNEC meeting in the NEC conference room in the city with ECNEC Chairperson and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair. A total of 13 projects were approved yesterday involving an overall estimated cost of Tk 20,402.75 crore. Of the approved 13 projects, 11 are new while two are revised ones.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed dissatisfaction over the service quality and business performance of state owned mobile carrier Teletalk, asking it to seek a suitable foreign company for probable merger. A network expansion project proposal for Teletalk was placed before Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who is also the telecom minister, at the ECNEC meeting. However, she came down heavily upon the operator's passive attitude on becoming a competitive player. The Prime Minister directed the management of Teletalk to find ways of becoming a profitable venture.

The government approved the establishment of 12 IT and hi-tech parks in different districts at a cost of Tk 1,796.40 crore, to move closer to a digital economy. The ECNEC yesterday approved the project, where Tk 1,544 crore will come in the form of credit from India and the government will bear the rest of the amount. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina presided over the meeting.

The construction of the 600-metre long Patenga container terminal, which is expected to take the pressure off the Chittagong port, will be completed by the end of 2019, the Chairman of the Chittagong Port Authority said yesterday.

The life expectancy at birth in the country rose to 71.6 years in 2016 from 70.9 years in 2015, according to the results of Sample Vital Registration System of 2016. Planning Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal told reporters yesterday. The average life expectancy was 70.7 years in 2014, 70.4 years in 2013 and 69.4 years in 2012.

Indian High Commission in Dhaka yesterday announced that the freedom fighters will henceforth be eligible for five-year multiple entry tourist visas. The decision was taken during the visit of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to India on April 7-10.

The Ministry of Agriculture yesterday received different agricultural machineries worth Tk 11 crore in grants from the Chinese government under an agreement for financial and technical assistance signed between the two countries. A total of 6,004 agricultural machineries of 13 categories have been supplied to Bangladesh.

Outgoing Brazilian Ambassador to Bangladesh Wanja Campos Da Nóbrega said yesterday that she has seen “tremendous growth and progress” in Bangladesh, especially in socio-economic sectors, throughout her tenure here.The remarks were made by the Ambassador during her farewell meeting with Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali at the Foreign Ministry.

Bangladesh Bank (BB) has so far received 73 project proposals involving US$ 435 million from export-oriented companies to facilitate long-term financing under the World Bank funded Financial Sector Support Project (FSSP). "We have already sanctioned 27 proposals with $109.77 million, of which $50.79 million of 18 proposals has been disbursed, the rest of the sanctioned amount is under the process of disbursement," a senior BB official said journalists yesterday.

DSEX, the prime index of Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE), settled yesterday at 5,469 points.

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