



**PRESS INFORMATION DEPARTMENT  
GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH  
DHAKA**



Most Urgent  
For: Bangladoot, All Missions  
MSG: 107/2018-19  
Date: Monday, 26 November 2018

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**News Brief**

President Md. Abdul Hamid has thanked the people and government of Sudan for providing support and assistance to Bangladesh on the Rohingya issue. The President conveyed the appreciation as non-resident Ambassador of Sudan to Bangladesh Sirajuddin Hamid Yousif paid a farewell call on him at Bangabhaban in Dhaka yesterday. During the meeting, the President referred to the excellent bilateral relations between the two countries and said the commerce and investment relations between the two countries are increasing gradually.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina laying importance on strengthening cooperative movement across the country has said, cooperatives are a tested strategy to expedite economic development. The Premier said this while speaking at a function marking the 47th National Cooperative Day at the Bangabandhu International Convention Center in Dhaka yesterday.

Chief Election Commissioner K M Nurul Huda has asked the executive magistrates to discharge their duties neutrally without any bias and treating all candidates equally in the forthcoming general election slated for December 30. The CEC made the directive while briefing the executive magistrates at Nirbachan Bhaban in Dhaka yesterday.

The Election Commission will hold a meeting with the officials of BTRC and mobile operators at the Nirbachan Bhaban in the capital today to curb abuse of social media in polls campaign.

The ruling party started distribution of its nomination letters among the selected candidates to contest the 11th national election. Awami League President and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will contest the election from Gopalganj-3 and Rangpur-6 parliamentary seats.

The EU parliament is not sending any observer for the next general election as the European Parliament believes that the Bangladesh government is capable of holding the election in a free and fair way. Rupert Matthews, Member of the European Parliament said this to the media in Dhaka yesterday. Bangladesh is well prepared to handle the next election on its own, the visiting European Parliamentary Delegation Member added.

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Anisul Huq has said, the present government believes in the freedom of judiciary and it would not make any compromise on this issue. The Minister said this while addressing a training course for District and Session Judges and Metropolitan Session Judges at Judicial Administration Training Institute in Dhaka yesterday.

Foreign Minister A H Mahmood Ali has said, Bangladesh will give a breakthrough in the field of blue economy soon by increasing its research works in collaboration with the private sector. The Minister said this while inaugurating a workshop titled, 'Blue Economy and EU Horizon 2020' in Dhaka yesterday.

Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Hiroyasu Izumi has said, Bangladesh is now focused as a country of tremendous potential for development and attracting more and more foreign companies for investment. Ambassador Izumi said this while addressing a function marking the birthday of the Japanese Emperor in Dhaka on Saturday.

South Korea will provide US\$4.6 million to support operations of the World Food Programme in Bangladesh to help households and communities become more resilient in the face of natural disasters. The fund will be disbursed through the Korea International Cooperation Agency.

DSEX, the key index of Dhaka Stock Exchange, lost 0.55 per cent, or 29.70 points, to close at 5,276.24 points yesterday.

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