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**News Brief**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has assured the people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts that they would enjoy the ownership of their land in the area. The Prime Minister made the assurance while opening the 4000<sup>th</sup> Para Kendra (Village Centre) in CHTs through a video conference from Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel in Dhaka yesterday. Urging the people of the CHT region to maintain peace and discipline, the PM said 'we're working to improve the living standard of every person of the region'.

Jatiya Sangsad yesterday passed the 'Groundwater Management in Agricultural Activities Bill, 2018'. Agriculture Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury moved the bill in the House. Health and Family Welfare Minister Mohammad Nasim informed the House that the adolescent- friendly health care services programme will be extended to 30 districts in next five years. Water Resources Minister Anwar Hossain Manju informed the parliament that the government is planning to dredge another 178 rivers to increase their navigability. Since 2009 around 1,200 kilometres of river route has so far been increased through dredging, he added. In reply to a question, Religious Minister Principal Matiur Rahman said, the government has undertaken a project to construct 560 model mosques and Islamic cultural centres across the country.

The three-day second phase of Biswa Ijtema at Tongi ended with Akheri Munajat` seeking divine blessings for the country and Muslim Ummah yesterday. President Md. Abdul Hamid joined the Munajat of Bishwa Ijtema from Bangabhaban.

Foreign diplomats have committed to continue their support towards achieving sustainable solution to the Rohingya crisis. They expressed their commitment during a diplomatic briefing organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at State Guest House Padma yesterday. Envoys of 52 missions including USA, UK, KSA, India, China, Japan and Qatar engaged into an interactive discussion with Foreign Minister A.H. Mahmood Ali during the session on the return of Rohingyas.

Russia has assured Bangladesh to provide duty-free and quota-free market access for readymade garment products soon. Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed said this to reporters after having a discussion with a seven-member Russian delegation at Secretariat in Dhaka yesterday. Russia's Deputy Minister of Agriculture Levin Segey Lvovich led the delegation.

A total of 1, 27,198 Bangladeshi pilgrims would be able to perform the holy hajj this year. Religious Affairs Minister Principal Matiur Rahman disclosed this at a press conference at his ministry yesterday.

The Hindu community in the country is celebrating the Saraswati Puja today. President Md. Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in separate messages greeted the members of Hindu community on the occasion.

Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Huq has said, roads at all the district as well as upazila levels would be named after the freedom fighters of those respective areas to make people of the locality aware of the contribution of the nation's heros. He was speaking at a function in Bogra yesterday.

Pro-Awami League Gonotantrik Oikya Parishad has swept the registered graduate representatives' poll to Dhaka University Senate. Candidates from the Parishad bagged 24 seats out of 25 posts while Jatiyatabadi Parishad bagged the remaining post.

DSEX, the prime index of the Dhaka Stock Exchange, settled yesterday at 6,147 points.

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