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News Brief

President Md. Abdul Hamid has sought continued support from Indonesian government to ensure a safe, dignified, sustainable and voluntary return of the displaced Rohingyas who fled to Bangladesh from Myanmar. The President sought Indonesia's support while Indonesian President Joko Widodo paid a pre-dinner courtesy call on him at Bangabhaban in Dhaka yesterday. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina also attended dinner hosted by the President. The President requested his counterpart to ensure the access for Bangladeshi products to Indonesian market by removing tariff and non-tariff barriers. The Indonesian President lauded the role of Bangladesh in Rohingya issue. He assured of providing continued support for the settlement of the displaced Rohingyas. Earlier, the Indonesian President arrived in Dhaka on a two-day official visit to Bangladesh. President Md. Abdul Hamid received the Indonesian leader at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is scheduled to inaugurate the main construction work of Matarbari 1,200MW coal-based power plant through video conference from Ganabhaban today. The JICA is financing the project to construct the country's largest power plant at Matarbari. Moreover, the seaport being built for the Matarbari coal-fired power plant will be turned into a deep-seaport.

The second span of the Padma Multi-purpose Bridge would be installed today. The installation work of the second span suspended yesterday due to lack of visibility in the mighty river Padma. Earlier, the first span of the bridge was installed on September 30 last year.

Finance Minister AMA Muhith has said, the government is planning for increasing the contribution of tax in GDP through increasing the tax-GDP ratio to 20 percent by 2021. He said this while speaking at a function marking the International Customs Day at a hotel in Dhaka yesterday. Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed addressing the event said, Bangladesh has become a role model of development as the country is implementing the budget through its own finance.

Planning Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal has said, Bangladesh, among the SAARC countries, is in the leading position in the e-GP system. The Planning Minister, now in Turkey, to attend an international exhibition on public procurement, said this as he had a meeting with Turkish Minister for Development Lutfi Elvan on Thursday. Around 80 percent public procurement of some 56 ministries and divisions are being settled through the e-GP system, the Planning Minister informed the Turkish Minister. The Bangladesh Minister also met Turkish Deputy Prime Minister, also Chairman of Bangladesh-Turkey Joint Economic Commission (Turkey side), Bekir Bozdog.

Environment and Forests Minister Anisul Islam Mahmud has underscored the need for taking up sustainable development projects to meet the challenge of climate change. The Minister was addressing an international conference on climate finance at BICC in Dhaka yesterday. Some 250 scientists, experts, development partners and representatives of private sector from Bangladesh and 15 other countries were present in the conference.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid has said, the government attaches priority to expansion of madrasah education maintaining its quality for creating skilled workforce. The Minister said this in a rally of madrasah teachers and employees at the Suhrawardy Udyan in Dhaka yesterday.

The visiting business delegation of Uzbekistan expressed their interest to invest in Bangladesh garments sector for mutual benefits of the two countries. During a meeting with the leaders of BGMEA, the delegation, led by first Deputy Minister of Economy Mubin Mirzaev, said Uzbekistan wants to export fabrics and textile accessories to Bangladesh. The delegation also urged the BGMEA members to set up garments industries in Uzbekistan assuring them of proving land free of cost, power and gas connections.

Twelve personalities would be awarded with the Bangla Academy Shahitya Puroshkar for 2017 for their outstanding contributions to their respective field of literature. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is scheduled to hand over the awards to the recipients in the upcoming Book Fair on February 1.

DSEX, the key index of Dhaka Stock Exchange closed at 6,215.80 points on Thursday.

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