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News brief

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has urged both local and international entrepreneurs to take measures to ensure labor rights side by side with creating more job opportunities. She also called upon them to take steps for the development of environment in their respective industries, ensure increased wellbeing of their workers, their healthcare and safety, and employ more women and physically-challenged people. The prime minister made the request yesterday while inaugurating the Dhaka Summit on Skills, Employability, and Decent Work in the Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the capital.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday reaffirmed Bangladesh's unwavering support for the rights of Palestinian people to their self-determination and independence. "Bangladesh always supports the cause of Palestine and it'll continue to do so," she said when Palestinian Foreign Minister Dr Riad NA Malki met her at her official residence Ganobhaban in the evening. Sheikh Hasina also said there is a special place in the hearts of people in Bangladesh for Palestinians.

Director General of International Labour Organization (ILO) Guy Ryder yesterday said the partnership between ILO and Bangladesh is growing stronger. The ILO DG said this when he made a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the city. Guy Ryder noted that things are progressing well in Bangladesh after the Rana Plaza collapse in Savar. The ILO DG lauded the amendment brought to the Labour Act to ensure workers' welfare.

Bangladesh has expressed keen interest in developing large hydropower projects in Nepal. The view was expressed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina during a meeting with the Nepali Energy Minister Janardan Sharma in Dhaka on December 7. Minister Sharma held talks with Bangladeshi State Minister of Power Nasrul Hamid at a meeting where the Bangladeshi prime minister was also present.

Japan has reassured Bangladesh that its cooperation and assistance for accelerating its economy will continue. Japan has a big investment in the country and it has interest to increase it further, said Finance Minister AMA Muhith at a press briefing at his Secretariat office yesterday after returning from Japan. The minister said that Japan's Finance Minister Taro Aso has assured that there will have no restriction on the Japanese investors for doing business in Bangladesh as the Japanese government takes a decision to withdraw the travel advice for Japanese citizens on visiting Bangladesh.

The government now sets sights high on US\$1.0 trillion investment for elevating Bangladesh to a developed nation. To this end, an international projection will be arranged in Dhaka this month. Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) will organize the seminar titled 'New Economic Thinking for Bangladesh:2030 and Beyond' on December 21.

Germany has overtaken the US as the Bangladesh's largest export market in five months of the current fiscal year because of a huge rise in export earnings from the EU country against a slowdown in the elections-gripped US market. Export earnings boost from major EU countries, including Germany, helped the country heal the bruises it suffered from the downward trend in the US and the Brexit-hit UK markets in the July-November period of the FY 2016-2017.

The export of Bangladeshi manpower to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is expected to start soon, said Minister of Human Resources and Emiratisation of the United Arab Emirates Saqr bin Ghobash Saeed Ghobash. He said this when he paid a courtesy call on Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali on the side-lines of Ninth Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) began in Dhaka on Saturday.

Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed yesterday said Palestine has sought economic support from Bangladesh alongside the existing political cooperation. "Bangladesh has been backing Palestine regionally and internationally since long in favor of realizing rights of its people . . . now Palestine has sought economic support from Bangladesh," said the minister. The minister was speaking to media people after having a meeting with visiting Palestine Foreign Minister Dr Riad NA Malki at his secretariat office.

The visiting Administrative Development, Labor and Social Affairs Minister of Qatar Dr. Issa Bin Saad Al-Jafali Al Nuaimi has showed keen interest to recruit more skilled male and female workers from Bangladesh. He expressed the view during a bilateral meeting with Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Nurul Islam. B.Sc yesterday on the sidelines of the 9th Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD).

Bangladesh and Cuba have discussed various aspects of bilateral issues and the potential for expanding trade and business ties between the two countries. This was discussed when Oscar Martinez Cordoves, leader of the GFMD delegation from Cuba to Bangladesh, called on Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali yesterday on the sidelines the global meeting on migration.

Some 13 Birangonas, who have got recognition as freedom fighters in Sirajganj after around 45 years of the Liberation War, are now getting facilities including monthly allowance from the government. With this support, they are now leading better life than the previous years.

Principal Coordinator of SDG Programme Abul Kalam Azad yesterday sought active participation from media to help achieve the targets of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 and materialize the 10 special initiatives of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to make Bangladesh a middle income country by-2021. "If the initiatives of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is implemented successfully, the life standard of common people will be developed a lot," he told at a view-exchange meeting with print media journalists on "SDGs and Prime Minister's Special Initiatives" at Press Information Department (PID).

DSEX, the prime index of the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE), settled yesterday at 4,861.12.

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