**PRESS INFORMATION DEPARTMENT**

### GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH

### DHAKA

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**News Brief**

 Pope Francis, the leader of the world's 1.2 billion Catholics, arrives in Dhaka today on a three-day state visit at the invitation of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Catholic Bishop's Conference of Bangladesh. President Md. Abdul Hamid will receive Pope Francis, who is now visiting Myanmar, at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka around 3 pm.

 President Md. Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed hope that the visit of Pope Francis to Bangladesh would further strengthen the country's relationship with Vatican City. They expressed the hope in separate messages on the eve of the three-day apostolic and
official visit of Pope Francis to Bangladesh from November 30 to December 2.

 Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is set to inaugurate today the main construction work of the much-awaited Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant in Iswardi of northern Pabna district. The Rooppur plant is expected to add 2,400MW of electricity to the national grid by 2024 which would help the country meeting an increasing demand for electricity. The mega project is being implemented by the state-run Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission under the Science and Technology Ministry, with financial, technical and technological support given by Russia through its state nuclear agency, Rosatom.

 Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday renewed her call to the international community, including the United Nations, to put more pressure on Myanmar to take back its nationals from Bangladesh. She said this when UN Under Secretary Fekitamoeloa Katoa Utoikamanu paid a courtesy call to the PM at her office in Dhaka yesterday. The UN Under Secretary highly appreciated Bangladesh's development in various sectors.

 A meeting of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Memorial Trust was held at Bangabandhu Bhaban, Dhanmondi in Dhaka yesterday. Chairperson of the trust Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina reviewed the social welfare activities of the trust and decided to carry forward its different projects faster. The meeting also adopted a resolution on the UNESCO recognition for Bangabandhu's historic 7 March speech as a world documentary heritage.

 Industries Minister Amir Hossain Amu yesterday said, Bangladesh has turned into a manufacturing hub as the government is offering facilities to the investors. Bangladesh is located at the centre of China, India and ASEAN countries. The government is setting up 100 economic zones across the country and providing all facilities to the investors in the zones. He said this while speaking at the conference titled "Economic Times Asian Business Leader Conclave at Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia.
 Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu said freedom of speech of citizen's would be kept under the newly proposed Digital Security Act and the Broadcast Act. The Minister came up with the observations while talking to the media after attending an inter-ministerial meeting on formulating draft of the Digital Security Act at the Secretariat yesterday.

 National Income Tax Day-2017 will be observed today across the country aiming to create awareness among the people for payment of income tax regularly. President Md. Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina have issued separate messages on the occasion wishing a success of the day.

 Bangladesh Bridges Authority (BBA) and a Chinese company signed a deal yesterday in Beijing on construction of Dhaka-Ashulia Elevated Expressway, meant for leapfrogging traffic blockage in Dhaka's busiest transport corridor. Bridges Division Senior Secretary and Executive Director of BBA Khandker Anwarul Islam inked the US$ 1.31 billion contract. On China's side, Board Chairman of China National Machinery Export and Import Corporation Ruan Guang signed it.

 Kunming Iron & Steel Holding Company Ltd. will invest $2.3 billion for setting up a steel factory and a power plant in either Maheshkhali or Mirsarai economic zone. Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority and Yunnan Yongle Overseas Investment Co Ltd signed a Memorandum of Understanding in this regard at a ceremony held in Dhaka yesterday.

 A four-day cultural festival of SAARC countries began today at Shilpakala Academy in Dhaka.
Cultural Affairs Secretary Ibrahim Hossain Khan will inaugurate the four-day festival at 5 pm at Shilpakala Academy's Nandan Mancha where handicrafts of the South Asian countries will be displaced and historical dances will be performed.

 The key index of Dhaka Stock Exchange, DSEX, inched up by 0.09 per cent to close at 6,278.55 points yesterday.

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