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**FROM: PIO, PID, DHAKA**  
Fax: 9540553/9540026  
E-mail: piddhaka@gmail.com  
piddhaka@yahoo.com  
Web: www.pressinform.portal.gov.bd

**NEWS BRIEF**

The Parliament yesterday unanimously adopted a resolution to observe March 25 as Genocide Day. On this day in 1971, Pakistani army cracked down on the Bangalees and killed them indiscriminately.

President Md. Abdul Hamid yesterday signed three bills, including Child Marriage Restraint Bill 2017 that has a provision for underage marriages in 'special circumstances'. The others are Ansar Battalion [Amendment] Bill 2017 and Bangladesh Unnayan Gobeshona Council Bill 2017, said a parliament secretariat release.

Garment exports to non-traditional markets increased 3.4 percent year-on-year to \$2.08 billion in July-December of the current fiscal year, according to data from Export Promotion Bureau. Except for the European Union, the US and Canada, Bangladesh considers all other countries as non-traditional markets.

Bangladesh Navy is all set to start its historical journey as a 'three-dimensional force' as two submarines are going to be added to its fleet for the first time today. The commissioning of two submarines procured from China will be held at a special ceremony in the area adjacent to Chittagong naval jetty in the presence of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister's Office sources said yesterday.

Commonwealth trade and investment ministers concluded their two-day meeting in London on Friday with a commitment to make the full use of the 'Commonwealth advantage' to boost trade within the 52-member bloc. Ministers and representatives from more than 35 countries attended the meeting, jointly convened by the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council. Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed represented Bangladesh in the meeting.

State Minister for posts and telecommunications division Tarana Halim said Facebook authorities have so far blocked 87 Facebook accounts, pages and links of Bangladesh at the request of the government. The government of Bangladesh requested Facebook authorities in the last 18 months to block a total of 196 accounts, pages and links for having contents of violence, religious instigations and other objectionable matters. She said this to the House yesterday.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the largest source of foreign remittance for Bangladesh, is eager to hire more skilled workers to help materialise the Saudi Vision 2030, Riyadh's envoy in Dhaka Abdullah H M Al Mutairi has said. The Saudi Vision 2030 is a plan to reduce the nation's dependence on oil and rely on alternatives diverse economy and the development of service sectors such as health, education, infrastructure constructive, recreation and tourism and many more. During an exclusive interview with The daily Independent at his office on Wednesday, he was full of praise for the huge number of Bangladeshi workers living in the Kingdom, saying that they are contributing to the development of both the countries.

The government has formed a tripartite advisory council to address labour issues that sometimes stimulate volatility in the labour-intensive readymade garment industry and hinder its further growth.

A three-day conference of South Asian and neighboring countries police chiefs' will begin today in the capital. The conference on regional co-operation in curving violent extremism and other transnational crime will conclude on March 14.

The U.S.-based Google Glass startup and healthcare company Augmedix Inc. has announced that it would recruit more than 7,000 employees from Bangladesh in the next five years. The announcement came on Friday at a Meet the Press held at Dhaka.

Bangladesh Ambassador to Brazil Mohamed Mijarul Quayes died of multiple organ failure at a hospital in Brasilia about 6:00am yesterday (Bangladesh time). He was 57.

The key index of Dhaka Stock Exchange, DSEX, added 1.52 per cent or 84.87 points over the week, to close at 5671.52 points on Thursday.

**Kamrun Nahar**  
Principal Information Officer  
Ph: 02-9546091