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Cancun talks collapse over rich's rigidity

STAR DESK

World trade talks in Cancun collapsed Sunday after rich countries refused to slash billions of dollars of subsidies they give to their farmers and rather pressed poor states to negotiate "Singapore issues", including new rules on foreign investment, competition and government procurement.

Poor states complained that trade laws were already rigged against them and unless developed countries agree to cut tariffs and

open markets, trade liberalisation will not be meaningful, according to AFP Reuters, BSS and BBC News Online.

They fear that a new international investment trade regime would benefit multilateral corporations and open their industries to control by foreign multinationals.

However, trade ministers agreed to reconvene in Geneva by December 15 to see whether the talks could be revived. But the deal

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ADP projects caught in catch-22 state

REJAUUL KARIM BYRON

The government saw no improvement in project approval and implementation under the annual development programme (ADP), even if it laid high importance on its speedy utilisation.

Most plans seeking approval continue to toggle between the planning ministry and different other ministries for one reason or another, according to sources.

Different ministries point an accusing finger at the planning ministry for sitting on their projects, while the planning ministry claims it does not have adequate projects for scrutiny.

By contrast, the planning ministry accused other ministries of taking a long time to send their projects for clearance.

Late last month, Prime Minister's Principal Secretary Kamal Uddin Siddiqui in a letter to the planning

secretary said over 100 projects were pending with the planning ministry for clearance and asked him to speed up the approval process.

In July, the communications secretary wrote to the planning secretary, saying there were as many as 86 projects awaiting approval by the planning ministry.

Similar allegations were made by Petrobangla that the ministry has long been sitting on nearly two

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Asking PM, speaker to apologise not proper JS ruling says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The speaker yesterday gave a ruling in parliament saying that it was not proper on the part of the opposition to ask for apologies from the prime minister and the speaker.

"Such statements are not appropriate, nor do they conform to parliamentary norms. There should not be any repetition of such statements in future," said Akhtar Hamid Siddiqui while presiding over parliament session after the Maghrib breakfast night.

The Chair's ruling came just a day after the main opposition Awami League (AL) demanded apologies from the prime minister and the speaker for their recent remarks as the precondition for returning to the House. The AL felt

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AL, left parties back today's hartal call

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jute, Cotton and Textile Mills Employees Action Committee has called a daylong countrywide hartal for today in protest against the government policy to close down mills and factories.

The action committee gave the call in the wake of the government decision of closing down three jute mills in Khulna, a decision on which the government reneged later. But the committee at a meeting at the Workers Party of Bangladesh office, last night stuck to their earlier deci-

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Thousands of demonstrators of the Awami League rally in Dhaka yesterday in their biggest showdown since the last parliamentary election against what they called misrule and misdeeds of the four-party coalition government.

Step down

Hasina asks govt from 'mass procession'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thousands of Awami League (AL) demonstrators took to Dhaka streets yesterday, protesting the 'misrule' of the government in the biggest showdown since the party's debacle in the last general elections.

The demonstrators of the AL and its front organisations shouted anti-government slogans and carried banners reading 'People don't want the anti-people government any more', 'Step down immediately' and 'Khaleda is an autocrat'.

Some carried coffins in a symbolic depiction of the 'death of democracy and other fundamental institutions' under the present government and some others beat drums.

The coffins were covered with black shrouds written with anti-government slogans.

AL President Sheikh Hasina led the procession, also attended by frontline leaders of the party and its front organisations.

Before the procession got underway, Hasina addressed a rally of party activists where she said people had no confidence in the present BNP-Jamaat coalition government as it totally failed to run the country.

She asked the government of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia to step down immediately, showing respect to people's desire.

"We're in a movement now to end the misrule of this government as fast as possible," Hasina said.

She said the procession was aimed at protesting the 'misrule and corruption' of the government and saving democracy and the rule of law.

The procession also protested the price spiral of essentials, shutdown of mills and factories, job cuts, politicisation of the administration, killing of AL leaders and workers by the ruling party men.

The programme of 'mass procession' was announced by Hasina at a party rally at Paltan Maidan on August 31.

The leaders and activists of the AL began to throng the road in front of the AL central office on Bangabandhu Avenue in processions from different parts of Dhaka and by 4:00pm, the gathering turned into a sea of humanity.

The procession continued to grow by the minute with the joining of people on its march to the Russell Square where it terminated.

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TIMBER! Pakistan batsman Yousuf Youhana (R) is clean bowled by Bangladesh pacer Mushfiqur Rahman (not in picture) as wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud (L) looks on.

Gul upends Tigers

Dream. Dare. Do.

GrameenPhone Ltd., the official sponsor of the National Cricket Team of Bangladesh wishes our cricket team every success

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HASAN MASOOD From Lahore

Slow batting and some quick fall of wickets in the early overs prevented Bangladesh from putting Pakistan under pressure in the third one-day international of the five-match series at the Ghaddafi Stadium last night.

Pakistan eventually won by 42 runs and took an unassailable 3-0 lead.

Given a revised target of 244 to win in 44 overs under the Duckworth Lewis method after

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4 forest staff rescued after kidnap in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police rescued one forest official and three guards, a few hours after their kidnap by illegal loggers Sunday night in the hilly areas of Patkchhari upazila, 58km north of the city.

They also arrested the alleged mastermind behind the abduction, Monu Mia, a local Union Parishad member. Police quizzed Monu Mia

and began a hunt for the abductors. The abduction was the tenth such incident in Chittagong in 52 days, since the kidnap of magnate Jamal Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury. The paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) aided the police in the rescue operation.

The rescued are Deputy Ranger Jahiruddin Khan and guards Delwar Hossain, Akhter Hossain and

Shahadat Hossain of Chittagong forest department.

Police said the incident occurred when a mobile team of the forest department, led by Deputy Forest Officer (DFO) Jafrul Hasan, was attacked by an armed gang of about 40 loggers at Harinmara point near Balukhail at around 7:00pm Sunday.

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