

Holiday mood

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of Hazrat Ibrahim's sacrifice for Allah, and this sacrifice adds a special joy to the celebration. Office-goers in the city mostly take extra few days' leave to go to their ancestral or village homes for celebrating Eid with their near and dear ones ignoring the heavy rush of people for any mode of transport.

With the majority of the population leaving, the city roads get a relief for a few days.

"I came to Moghbazar from Motijheel by bus which took only five minutes and I had a pleasant stroll on my way to office," said Biplob, an employee of a private firm in the city's Karwan Bazar.

"I wish Dhaka was always like this," he sighed to voice one of the office-goers' yearning yesterday.

Meanwhile, the secretariat also observed a relaxed day yesterday with a very few

officials attending the office since ministers are busy celebrating the festival with their family members and party men in their constituencies.

"Today (yesterday) was almost a day of exchanging greetings with a thin presence of officers," said an official of the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment.

"This time two days of the three-day vacation fell in weekly holidays--Friday and Saturday," moaned an official of the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management.

The secretariat would be active in a day or two, and those who went home on vacation already started arriving in the capital, he said.

Gias Uddin Ahmed, a banker, said he took two days extra leave to spend some more time with his family in Begumganj, Noakhali.

Lamy warns 'time running out' for WTO Doha deal

AFP, Geneva

World Trade Organization chief Pascal Lamy warned yesterday that time was running out for the conclusion of a global trade liberalisation pact, saying that concrete action was vital to seal the Doha deal.

"Time is running out, and it is not credible at this stage to see issues in isolation from the work and the achievements of the past eight years," he said in opening remarks to ministers from more than 100 countries attending a key WTO meeting in Geneva.

Launched in the Qatari capital in 2001, the Doha Round of talks have foundered amid disagreements between developed and developing countries over the level of cuts to agriculture subsidies and industrial products tariffs.

World leaders have pledged on several occasions this year to conclude the negotiations by 2010, but progress has been slow.

Lamy had warned that next year's deadline would be missed if talks were not accelerated.

"The moment of truth is fast approaching when you will have to decide whether the 2010 target can be met. Political leaders are practically unanimous that they want to meet it, but reaffirmation is not enough," he said Monday.

"Now we need action, concrete and practical action, to close the remaining gaps," he stressed.

Reflecting the Doha stalemate, the WTO's 153 member-states did not want negotiations officially on the agenda at the meeting, the first of the WTO's top decision-making body in four years.

In previous ministerials, member states made offers and counter-offers relating to the Doha deal.

Boy killed

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Police said they had fired 10 teargas canisters before firing more than 50 rubber bullets to disperse the people, estimated at 20,000, who engaged in the clash. At least 20 people, including police, were wounded in the clash. Both sides used locally made weapons.

Acting Police Super Anisur Rahman confirmed the death of Abul Hossain in police firing. The body was sent to Sherpur Hospital for autopsy.

Witnesses said residents of Pathalia, Guabari and Naobhangi villages of Jamalpur and adjacent areas of Char Pakhbari union of Sherpur claiming ownership of the char of about 4,000 acres of land engaged in the clash in the afternoon.

Sherpur sadar upazila chairman Ilias Uddin said police came from Jamalpur and opened indiscriminate fire without any provocation. He alleged that police were influenced in taking such drastic action that took away the life of a young boy.

PM to visit

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Bharati and Bangladesh because a large number of students from that country study in VisvaBharati. Hasina was awarded 'Desi Kottama', the highest award by the university, some years back.

Road accidents

FROM PAGE 1

Police and locals said some 12 people were coming to Pabna in the microbus for celebrating the Eid.

In Dinajpur, at least two persons were killed and one was injured critically as a bus hit a motorcycle carrying the three. The accident occurred near Gora Bazar in Biragang upazila Friday morning.

Two persons including a woman were killed in two road accidents on the Eid day in Patuakhali.

One person was killed and 10 were injured in two accidents on Natore-Dhaka highway in Natore on Friday.

Police and witnesses said in one incident a truck fell into a roadside ditch near Mahisbhanga village, and in the other a 'bhotbhoti' (shallow engine-driven vehicle) collided with a motorcycle.

In Gopalganj, an elderly person died on the spot when a bus crushed him under its wheel at Pona bus stand in Kashiwan upazila.

A boy was killed in an accident on Magura-Jessore highway at Bhitasayer on Saturday.

Worst victims

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"Climate change is affecting agriculture, food production and thus affecting the initiatives for attaining the food security," she said.

Sheikh Hasina pointed out that Bangladesh and other developing and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) need financial assistance from the international community, particularly from the developed countries, for tackling the challenges emerging from the global warming.

She further laid emphasis on mitigation process for safeguarding the existence of the globe from disastrous consequences of excessive carbon emissions.

In this context, the PM called for transfer of environment-friendly technology to the developing and least developed countries from the developed nations in order to protect the environment and climate of these countries from pollution and warming.

She also made a strong plea for taking special care of women and children in facing the climate-change challenges as she said these members of the global community were present at the summit during the opening ceremony.

WTO meet begins

FROM PAGE 16

The United States will be in the spotlight as some developing countries say it holds the key for pushing the talks forward.

In an apparent reference to the world's largest economy Brazil's Foreign Minister Celso Amorim said "one country ... is stopping us from moving forward."

Another Latin American diplomat said: "We clearly lack an explicit position from one of the most important members of the negotiations. We are of course talking about the United States."

He added that the WTO ministerial meeting "should pressure" President Barack Obama's administration to make a deeper engagement on trade.

Dogged by domestic problems such as health care and the war in Afghanistan as well as a Democratic-led Congress largely hostile to trade liberalisation, the United States has not put concrete reforms on the table, analysts say.

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Ministers from the Cairns Group of 19 agricultural exporting countries said they were dismayed by the lack of progress in ending the Doha stalemate.

"We are disappointed with the limited progress in resolving or narrowing differences on the outstanding agriculture modal-

ities," the ministers said in a statement, after a meeting on the sidelines of the WTO conference.

Modalities refer to broad formulas or approaches for tariff cuts, under the Doha

accord.

"We have a strong message--conclude the Doha Round in 2010," Australian Trade Minister Simon Crean said after chairing discussions of the Cairns Group, which account for more than 25 percent of the world's agricultural exports.

More than 100 developing countries also called Sunday for an "urgent" conclusion of WTO negotiations.

The call first came from the Group of 20, a coalition of countries led by India and Brazil pushing for a reduction of trade-distorting farm subsidies and for greater access to industrialised markets.

It was endorsed by other groups representing African, Caribbean and Pacific countries as well as least developed states.

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