

EU holds emergency summit on refugees

Hungary rejects Germany's 'moral imperialism'

AFP, Brussels

EU leaders were to stage an emergency summit yesterday on boosting aid and tightening borders to tackle the migration crisis, but a growing east-west split over a deal to relocate 120,000 refugees threatened to poison the talks.

Hours before the meeting, Hungary's prime minister rejected Angela Merkel's "moral imperialism" over the worst such crisis since World War II while Slovakia said it would dispute the refugee quota deal in court.

Despite Croatia reporting a record number of arrivals and countries across the region feeling the strain from refugees from war zones like Syria and Afghanistan, EU leaders appeared as divided as ever.

Hungary, the Czech Republic, Romania and Slovakia voted against the relocation plan, arguing the EU has no right to override national sovereignty and make them accept people

from overwhelmed frontline states.

"The most important thing is that there should be no moral imperialism," Hungary's hardline leader Viktor Orban said during a visit to the southern German state of Bavaria when asked what he expected from Merkel.

Before the summit, Donald Tusk, head of the European Council, called for an end to "the cycle of mutual recriminations and misunderstandings" fuelling the split between the EU's richer west and poorer former communist east.

"The most urgent question we should ask ourselves tonight is how to regain control of our external borders," Tusk, a former Polish prime minister, told reporters.

"The conflicts in the Middle East, especially in Syria and Iraq, will not end anytime soon," he said. "This means today we're talking about millions of potential refugees trying to reach Europe, not thousands."



A cattle market in Bogra's Shibganj is brimming with traders and buyers, trying to cut a deal yesterday, the last market day before the Eid.

PHOTO: STAR

Pilgrims pray for peace

FROM PAGE 1
against the use of any political slogans or banners during Hajj.

To organise the flow of pilgrims, security forces formed human chains along the roads, while volunteers handed out boxes of food and cold water bottles.

The faithful gathered in their hundreds of thousands for noon prayers, as water sprays were turned on to cool them down while helicopters hovered overhead.

For many pilgrims, Hajj is the spiritual highlight of their lives.

"We feel blessed. I got goosebumps, a feeling that cannot be explained, when reaching the top of the mountain," said Ruhaima Emma, a 26-year-old Filipina pilgrim, who said she has been "praying for a good life for everyone".

For Akram Ghannam, 45, from war-torn Syria, being in Arafat is a "feeling that cannot be described. I pray to God for the victory of all those who are oppressed."

Many reached Arafat by bus while some walked from the holy city of Makkah about 15 kilometres away.

Other pilgrims arrived from nearby Mina using the elevated Mashair Railway linking the holy sites of Arafat, Muzdalifah and Mina, a tent city where many pilgrims spent Tuesday night.

No major incidents were reported on Arafat but the civil defence agency announced that there were more than 200 cases of "fainting and fatigue" after doors failed to operate at one of the railway stations, causing crowding.

After sunset yesterday, the faithful moved to Muzdalifah. There they gathered pebbles for a symbolic stoning of the devil ritual today, which is also the Eid al-Adha feast of sacrifice marked by the world's more than 1.5 billion Muslims.

This year's gathering is about the same size as last year's, with 1.4 million foreign pilgrims joining hundreds of thousands of Saudis and residents of the kingdom.

They are undeterred by a construction crane collapse at Makkah's Grand Mosque earlier this month that killed 109 people, including foreign pilgrims.

About 400 people were injured by the crane which was working on an expansion of Islam's holiest site.

Previously marred by stampedes and fires that killed hundreds, the pilgrimage had been largely incident-free for the past nine years after safety improvements.

The Hajj is among the five pillars of Islam and every capable Muslim must perform it at least once in a lifetime.

This year's gathering takes place against a backdrop of increased jihadist violence in some Muslim countries, a surge of the potentially deadly MERS virus and the war in Saudi Arabia's neighbour Yemen.

About 100,000 police have been deployed to secure pilgrimage sites and manage the crowds.

Authorities say they are on alert for possible attacks by extremists, after Islamic State group jihadists bombed security forces and Shia mosques in the kingdom in recent months.

This year's Hajj also comes with Saudi Arabia leading an Arab coalition conducting air strikes and supporting local forces in Yemen against Iran-backed rebels.

Most Yemeni pilgrims performing the Hajj this year already reside in the kingdom.

Among other challenges facing Saudi authorities is potential transmission of the deadly Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV).

The capital saw a jump in infections last month, but health officials say there has never been a case of MERS infection among pilgrims.

The health ministry has mobilised thousands of medical workers to help ensure a virus-free pilgrimage and to care for routine ailments.

Pilgrims began the Hajj on Tuesday by entering ihram, a state of purity in which they must not quarrel, wear perfume, or cut their nails or hair.

During ihram, men wear a seamless two-piece shroud-like white garment, while women must wear loose dresses, generally also white, exposing only their faces and hands.

The clothing emphasises their unity, regardless of whether they spend the Hajj in Makkah's five-star hotels or in shabby high-rise hostels.

"I'm hoping for mercy and that Allah accepts our prayers," said Pakistani pilgrim Abdeghafour Abu Bakr, 38, who came with friends.

Tighter scrutiny

FROM PAGE 1

The move comes in line with the government's recent emphasis on promoting performance-based work culture and improved governance.

Earlier on Sunday, secretaries of all the 48 ministries and divisions signed APAs with the Cabinet Division for the 2015-2016 fiscal at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and presented Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina with copies of their respective agreements.

It was the second instance of APA-signing after the Government Performance Management System (GPMS) was introduced in the second half of the last financial year (2014-15).

Sources at the Cabinet Division told The Daily Star that this year the government is taking the GPMS down to the levels of all the subordinate departments and institutions under different ministries and divisions.

Cabinet Division Secretary (Coordination and Reform) Md Nazrul Islam told The Daily Star yesterday that there will be a grace period up to October 29 for those who will fail to sign the agreements by the stipulated time for genuine reasons.

He said all the agreements would be made available on the official websites so that the public can have access to all the information.

He explained that on top of being pledge-bound to ensure better governance and people's right to information, the ministries, divisions and the departments under them have to make public each of their 'Citizens and Client Charter' (CCC) and dispose of at least 50 percent of audit objections within a year.

There are performance ratings for all tasks and commitments signed under the APAs, he said, adding that an individual ministry's performance would be as good as the collective ratings of all the departments under it.

Responding to the APA move, Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman told The Daily Star yesterday that "this is very positive, something unprecedented in Bangladesh."

"We all must welcome the move. If APAs can be implemented on a reward and punishment basis, it will definitely yield good results in quality enhancement of governance," he said.

He suggested that in addition to the government's own assessment of APA implementation, an independent assessment done by a third party can be considered too. He also underscored that the assessment results be disclosed to the public.

Talking over the phone, Matia Chowdhury, a senior member of the Sheikh Hasina-led cabinet, said, "APA is an improved version of the existing ADP (annual development programme) review. We're engaging with the prime minister through these contracts, which will infuse new enthusiasm in achieving further excellence in delivering public services."

Asked about the ratings achieved by ministries and divisions during the first cycle of APAs (2014-15), Matia said that it was a good beginning.

The PMO has started the process by signing APAs for 2015-16 with six of its subordinate departments while women and children affairs ministry became the first among all the ministries by striking APAs with all of its subordinate departments on Monday.

The APAs seek to address three basic questions: What are the main strategic objectives of a ministry/division in a particular year? What activities they propose to achieve

these objectives? And how would someone know about the progress in implementing the activities at the end of the year?

Md Nazrul Islam said there are performance indicators and scientific appraisal systems in place through which it can be measured how each of the ministries and divisions and their subordinate public offices is faring.

Elaborating on performance ratings, he cited the APAs between the Cabinet Division and the Road Transport and Highways Division, and said, "For instance, there are certain points for road building, repair and maintenance. If the authorities concerned deliver the job as per the agreements, they will get full points but if the success rate is not up to the mark, they will get poor points."

He said similar types of performance-based work culture can be found in Kenya and also in some of our neighbouring countries including India and Bhutan.

Sources at the women and children affairs ministry told The Daily Star that as State Minister Meher Afroze Chumki will be away from home on a

APA AIMS

- Yearly target-setting by all govt offices
- Publication of 'Citizens and Clients Charter'
- Quick disposal of audit objections
- Transparent information disclosure
- Better governance and integrity
- Year-end assessment of collective performance

foreign tour for quite some time, she has already struck APAs with the departments under her ministry on last Monday.

In the APA, the department of women affairs has set targets for providing life skills and food and monetary aids to over a million women in 2015-16; for employing 6,500 women and training 40,000 adolescents; and for helping 100 women entrepreneurs.

Bangladesh Shishu Academy has aimed to bring out 55 new books for children in the current fiscal year while Jatiya Mahila Sangstha has pledged to provide vocational training to nearly 28,000 women and give loans to 1,350 women in 2015-16.

In November last year, the government arranged a special workshop for all the stakeholders on introduction of APA. Prapoti Trivedi, the first Indian Secretary of Performance Management at the Cabinet Secretariat in India, attended the workshop that the Cabinet Division organised in association with the World Bank.

For APA implementation, there is a Cabinet Secretary-led national committee. To facilitate striking these performance agreements, there is a technical committee headed by the Cabinet Division Secretary (Coordination and Reform).

For coordinating APA implementations among the ministries and divisions, there are several Focal Point Officials at the Cabinet Division, each dedicated to attend the needs of four to five ministries or

PM flies

FROM PAGE 1
High Commissioner to Bangladesh as well as high civil and military officials were also there.

After nearly a three-hour stopover at the Heathrow International Airport in London, she will fly to New York by a British Airways flight that will land at the John F Kennedy International Airport.

Delegation members of the PM include Finance Minister AMA Muhith, Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali, Expatriates Welfare Minister Nurul Islam, Prime Minister's Political Affairs Adviser HT Imam, International Affairs Adviser Dr Gowher Rizvi, Economic Affairs Adviser Mashhur Rahman, State Minister for Women and Children Affairs Meher Afroze Chumki and State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam.

This year's UNGA is being considered very important for Bangladesh as the "Champions of the Earth", the highest environment-related award of the UN, and the 'ICT' in Sustainable Development Award' of the International Telecommunication Union would be handed over to the Bangladesh prime minister.

During her stay in New York, Hasina along with other heads of state and the government will attend the opening session of the 70th UN General Assembly on September 28.

On her way back home, she will stay in London for a day where she will be accorded a community reception at a hotel on October 2.

The premier will return home the next day.

WHAT MAYORS ARE DOING

- 3.80 lakh bags being distributed
- 17,264 cleaning staff deployed
- 595 slaughter spots fixed in Dhaka (see The Daily Star online for list)
- 1,640 litres of antiseptic solution to be sprayed on streets
- 31,750kg bleaching powder to be sprayed to kill germs
- Water carriers of city corporations, Wasa and army to remain at slaughter spots
- Containers to be provided for dumping waste, leftover

People can also buy such a bag for Tk30.

"It is an initiative to build awareness. I believe people who have the ability to spend at least Tk 30,000 for an animal also have the ability to buy a bag at Tk 30," Captain Raquib Uddin, chief waste management officer at the DNCC, told a press conference on Tuesday.

Traditionally, people sacrifice animals in open areas in front of their houses or on the roads and alleys, leaving smelly piles of animal parts here and there, which can contribute to the spread of diseases.

Aminul Islam, chief estate officer at the DNCC, told The Daily Star that people should slaughter their animals at the selected places only.

"They also should keep the waste in the particular bags and later the DNCC garbage management workers will collect those from the spots," he said.

NEED HELP FOR WASTE DISPOSAL?

AREA	CONTACT NO.
Dhanmondi, Shukrabad, New Market, VIP Locality, Segun Bagicha, Paribagh, other	01712-293186 01677-559515
Khilgaon, Basabo, Motijheel, Kamalapur, Malibagh, other	01715-432367 01971-478375
Lalbagh, Hazaribagh, Azimpur, Jigatola, other	01911-709878 01552-442391
Nayabazar, Siddiquebazar, Laxmibazar, Sutrapur, other	01712-592126 01711-697574
Sayedabad, Jatrabari, Jurain, Dayaganj, Gendaria, other	01937-691639 0119-214143
AREA	CONTACT NO.
Uttara, Kuril, Khilkhet, Joarsahara, Azampur, Abdullahpur, other	01717-102025
Mirpur-1 to 14, Pallabi, other	01711-577474
Gulshan, Banani, Badda, Narda, Nakhalpara, Moghbazar, Rampura, other	01923-113636
Shewrapara, Kalyanpur, Darussalam, other	01712-584086
Karwanbazar, Farmgate, Monipuripara	01711-313289

People under the DSCC can file their complaints on <http://www.dhakasouthcity.gov.bd/complain/>

SOURCE: DNCC & DSCC

Eid-ul-Azha tomorrow

FROM PAGE 1
sacrifice animals and are distributing around 3.8 lakh free biodegradable bags among the city dwellers.

The target of the corporations is to remove waste from the capital within 48 hours from the noon of Eid day, officials said.

Eid will be celebrated in Bangladesh tomorrow.

At least 2.8 lakh bags are being distributed in the Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) areas, while one lakh in the Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) areas.

"But what I am not going to do, is make changes to our border protection policy sitting here with you," he told the interviewer.

"Our policies will change, all policies change. But when we do make changes, we will do so in a considered way and they will be made by the

minister, myself, the cabinet." Australia's immigration policies, hardened by the conservative government that took power in 2013 to include the physical turn back of boats, have long been criticised.

Rights groups and refugee advocates have claimed asylum seekers are subject to indefinite detention in inadequate conditions, with particular concerns about the safety of children.

Immigration Minister Peter Dutton said he supported the prime minister's comments but there would be no let-up in the "stop the boats" policy which had stemmed the arrival of asylum

seeker boats.

"The prime minister has stated publicly, as he has to me privately, that he wants a continuation of the policy to make sure that we don't allow the people-smugglers to get back into business," Dutton told Sky News.

Turnbull, who ousted Tony Abbott for the leadership of the Liberal Party and the government last week, said he would ensure decisions were made quickly but in a well-considered way.

"We are not going to make, nor am I, nor any minister, we are not going to make policy changes... on the run," he said.

Australia PM 'concerned' about refugee camps

AFP, Sydney

Australia's new Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull yesterday admitted he had concerns about asylum seekers being held in Pacific island camps, but gave no indication of immediate change to the hardline policy.

All asylum seekers coming by boat to Australia are sent to camps in Papua New Guinea and Nauru and ultimately denied resettlement in Australia even if they are found to be genuine refugees.

Asked about the plight of hundreds of these people, some of whom have been in the much criticised camps for