

US refuses to waive \$50m quota penalty

RAFIQ HASAN

Washington has turned down Dhaka's appeal for waiving \$50 million worth of quota penalty for over-shipment of apparel in 2002 in what the commerce minister said would be a big blow to the garment sector in Bangladesh.

course, a key part of the arrangement. It would be impossible to explain a waiver of the penalty to the US textile industry or to the other countries that have abided by their quotas," said the US trade representative, Robert B Zoellick, in a recent letter to Commerce Minister Amir Khoshru Mahmud Chowdhury.

penalty for over-shipping 1.75 lakh dozen pairs of cotton trousers in 347/348 categories.

The US trade representative's letter came after Khosru wrote to him in June this year, requesting waiver of the penalty of 200 garment exporters for their over-shipments. Zoellick also informed the commerce minister that Bangladesh already fulfilled 80 per cent of its

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

Reforms a must to remove legal stagnation: PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday emphasised reforms in the outmoded judicial system while urging judges to ensure quick justice.

"Colonial laws, slow trial process, weak institutional system, stagnant administration of the court, delay in case management and inappropriate infrastructure have altogether failed to meet the need of the time," she said while underlining the need for legal reforms and judicial management.

Referring to the government's efforts, she said the legal system and functions of legal institutions could be expedited through reforms.

The prime minister was addressing the foundation-laying ceremony of Dhaka District Judge's Court Extension Building on the District Judge's Court premises in old Dhaka yesterday.

Ministers, Dhaka Mayor, MPs, judges, diplomats and a large number of legal practitioners attended the function.

The proposed eight-storey building will be constructed under t h e

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

Palestinian PM Abbas quits

Arafat accepts resignation

AP, Ramallah

Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas, increasingly unpopular and worn out by a power

Related story on page 10

struggle with Yasser Arafat, resigned yesterday -- dealing a serious blow to a US-backed peace plan.

With Abbas gone, Israel and the United States don't have a negotiating partner, at least temporarily. The two nations shun Arafat, saying he is an obstacle to peace-making. Israel said yesterday it will not accept a government controlled by Yasser Arafat or one of his loyalists.

Arafat accepted the resignation, SEE PAGE 11 COL 4



Mahmoud Abbas

Guideline okayed for public purchase

STAR REPORT

A cabinet sub-committee yesterday approved a procurement guideline to ensure transparency, accountability and efficiency in purchases in the public sector and to fulfil a World Bank (WB) condition.

Lack of a coordinated guideline for public sector purchases gave rise to widespread allegations of corruption and nepotism.

The WB had asked the government to approve the guideline as a condition for development support credit of \$300 million. The guideline was supposed to be approved by February 8 this year but was delayed due to bureaucratic tangles.

The guideline approved by the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Economic Affairs headed by Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman at a meeting will be

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

Hamas founder Yassin hurt in airstrike

AP, Gaza City

An Israeli warplane dropped a bomb on a house in Gaza City yesterday, wounding Hamas founder Sheikh Ahmed Yassin and 15 other people in an airstrike that Israeli officials confirmed was an attempt to wipe out the Islamic group's top leaders as they assembled for a meeting.

The bomb hit a third-floor apartment in a building belonging to a well-known Hamas activist, Marwan Abu Rass. Yassin and

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Sept 07		6-11 pm
Sept 08	5-42 am	

Prayer Timings		
September 7		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-45	5-10
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-33	5-00
Maghrib	6-18	6-22
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation



PHOTO: AFP

Relatives of Indian Kashmiri Abdul Samad express their grief in Srinagar after he was killed by a car bomb in a busy Kashmir marketplace, taking the toll to 77 in a week of bloody violence.

Eight killed in Kashmir blast

PTI, Srinagar

At least eight people, including two army men, were killed and more than 36 seriously wounded in a powerful car bomb blast in a crowded fruit market in Parimpora on the outskirts of Srinagar in Jammu and Kashmir.

An Army convoy was passing

through the market when the blast occurred. A senior Army officer, Brigadier AC Chopra, a captain and two Jawans are among those injured.

The blast took place at 9.45 am at the main entrance of the market, completely damaging the Army vehicle, two trucks and two three-

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Prove terrorist camp claim

Dhaka asks Delhi

PTI, Dhaka

Bangladesh yesterday dismissed India's allegation that Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) is running terrorist training camps in the country, and asked New Delhi to prove the presence of such camps.

"The helicopter is ready, come and show us where the camps are,"

Foreign Minister Morshed Khan told reporters in Chittagong.

"We have never allowed our territory to be used against others and will never do so in the future," Morshed said.

Commenting on Dhaka's relations with New Delhi, the foreign minister said all existing troubles

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

Rivers swell suddenly

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Water levels in major rivers witnessed sudden and sharp rise, but the flood situation in Chapainwabganj may remain unchanged, according to the Flood Forecast and Warning Centre (FFWC).

The Brahmaputra-Jamuna registered rise at all points, while the

Ganges-Padma at upstream points, the FFWC reports said yesterday.

It is apprehended by the FFWC that the Brahmaputra-Jamuna and the Ganges-Padma are likely to rise further. The prevailing flood situation in Chapainwabganj may remain unchanged, while it will improve in Munshiganj and

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5