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TRANSCOM ELECTRONICS

Myanmar commerce minister arrives tomorrow

UNB, Dhaka

Myanmar Commerce Minister Brig Gen Tin Naing Thein arrives in Dhaka tomorrow on a three-day visit.

He will hold official talks with Commerce Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury with a plan to raise the Dhaka-Yangon trade volume to \$ 100 million from \$ 30 million, a spokesman for the foreign ministry told reporters yesterday.

Zahirul Haque, director general of the external publicity (DGEP), said Bangladesh-Myanmar Joint Trade Committee meeting will be held in Dhaka towards the end of this year.

Minister Thein will be accompanied by Deputy Foreign Minister Col (ret'd) U Maung Myint.

4 killed in road crash

BDNEWS, Gazipur

At least four people died and 50 others were injured in a bus collision at Porabari on the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway yesterday.

Witnesses said the accident occurred at about 11:00am when a netrakona bound bus from Dhaka collided head on with two minibuses of Banasree Paribahan from Sripur to Dhaka, as they were trying to overtake each other.

Agitated people staged a demon

SEE PAGE 19 COL 8

Rab to get women forces

UNB, Dhaka

Women will join the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) as the government feels the need to include female members to the elite force to further gear up its anticrime operation.

Primarily, 10 female battalion ansars will be placed under each Rab battalion on deputation, an official announcement said yesterday following a home ministry decision.

The decision came at a high-level

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Millions flee as Rita brings more turmoil to US

AFP, Galveston

Monstrous Hurricane Rita, one of the deadliest storms ever recorded, sent millions fleeing, threatened vital oil production and cast fear far and wide as it ripped across the Gulf of Mexico yesterday whipping up winds of 170 miles an hour (275 kilometres).

The capricious Category Five storm raised the spectre of murderous flood tides across a southern swathe of Texas and Louisiana, billion dollar damage bills and new political turmoil, with the United States already punch drunk from a devastating hurricane season.

New Orleans, reduced to ruins just three-and-a-half weeks ago by Hurricane Katrina, quivered at the prospect of more misery, as experts

warned even glancing rains from Rita could overwhelm busted levees and send more floods gushing into the city.

The US National Hurricane Centre warned Rita could have a "potentially catastrophic" impact, even if it weakens slightly before slamming into land, late Friday or early Saturday.

At 1200 GMT, the hurricane was about 790 km (490 miles) southeast of Galveston, Texas under a mandatory evacuation order, issued by officials, desperate to learn lessons of the Katrina disaster.

Rita is "a potentially catastrophic category five hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson scale," the Miami based hurricane centre said.

"A slow weakening trend is expected but Rita is expected to

reach the coast late Friday or early Saturday as a major hurricane."

The centre said there could be up to 38 centimetres (15 inches) of rainfall when the storm, brewing new menace in the warm waters of the Gulf, hits the coast.

Tides were already about 30 centimetres (12 inches) above normal along the Mississippi and Louisiana coasts in areas affected by Katrina.

Forecasters predicted some flooding with tides up to 120 centimetres (four feet) over normal levels.

President George W Bush, yet to shrug off the storm of criticism over his role in the debacle at all levels of government sparked by Katrina, declared states of emergency in Texas and Louisiana.

Top terror Arman gets life term

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced Arman Khan, one of the most wanted criminals on the list of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), to life imprisonment in an arms case.

Arman, who is one of 23 most wanted criminals of DMP, received the first verdict against him. He is also accused in several other cases including murder cases.

Judge Mohammad Rabiul Hasan of the Second Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's

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Ice cream factory fined for using unlabelled chemicals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mobile court yesterday raided and fined an ice cream factory named 'Mark Ice Cream' at the city's Tejgaon commercial area for using chemicals and flavours without any label and not mentioning the expiry date on the ice cream packets.

During the drive, the court also found the factory recycling its unsold ice cream that may prove hazardous to health.

The court led by Magistrate Md

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13 Bangladeshi fishermen rescued off India

AP, Bhubaneswar

Thirteen Bangladeshi fishermen were pulled from Indian waters after their fishing trawler capsized during a cyclone in the Bay of Bengal earlier this week, police said Thursday.

The fishermen had set out from Barguna in Bangladesh on Sept. 15, but two days later were caught up in a severe tropical storm that capsized their boat, said P K Jena, a police inspector from Bhadrak district in India's eastern Orissa state, near

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Political double standards must stop to end global terrorism

Asian Islamic scholars say

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Renowned South and Southeast Asian Islamic scholars yesterday reached a consensus that double standards at political levels around the globe should be discarded at any cost to check the spread of world-wide terrorism.

They said justice and fairness should be brought to bear upon the settlement of all disputes and dealing with all sections of mankind to

attain peace from family to social, national and international spheres.

The concern was voiced at a three-day regional seminar on "Islam: Religion of Peace, Progress and Harmony; Bangladesh: Model of a Moderate Muslim Nation" that began at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre yesterday.

Former chief justice and chief adviser of the last caretaker government Justice Latifur Rahman inau-

gurated the seminar organised by the Dhaka-based Centre for National and Regional Studies (CNRS).

The scholars from six South and Southeast Asian countries said Islam is a treasure of peace and doctrine of disciplines; everybody should understand Islam as a religion promoting peace and progress.

A handful of Muslims may turn out to be terrorists, but the fact is

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KENNEDY SAYS

Blair's blind support for Bush costing lives

BBC ONLINE

Tony Blair's pride and his "blind support" for George Bush is costing lives in Iraq, says Liberal Democrat leader Charles Kennedy.

Kennedy told the Liberal Democrat conference in Blackpool the presence of UK troops in Iraq was now part of the problem.

And he claimed the "war on terror" had increased the threat of

terrorism.

He also insisted he would lead the Liberal Democrats into the next election and attacked people who thought they had "better ideas" about leadership.

They were "full of themselves", he said, promising to go on leading the party in a "genuine, sensible and mature way".

Kennedy also moved to reassure

SEE PAGE 19 COL 7

BSF kills 1

UNB, Thakurgaon

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) shot dead a Bangladeshi farmer on Baliadangi border under Thakurgaon yesterday.

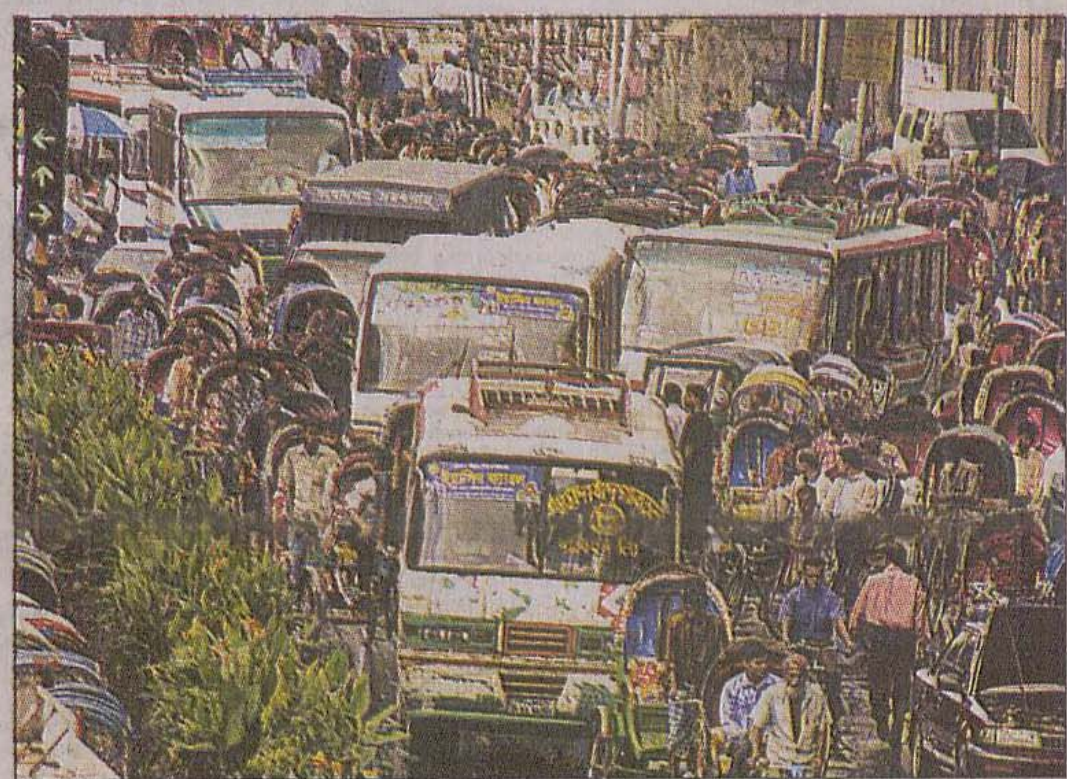
The dead was identified as Sadequ Islam, 26, son of Moslemuddin of Ratnai Kashibari village under Baliadangi upazila.

The Indian border guards of Sonamat outpost opened fire on

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Prayer Timing		
September 23		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-40	5-15
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-05	6-10
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation



Huge congestion has become a regular feature at Paltan intersection in the capital due to mismanagement by traffic police. The image was snapped yesterday.

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Blasts kill 6 in Lahore

AFP, Lahore

Two bicycle bombs exploded minutes apart in Pakistan's eastern city of Lahore yesterday, killing at least six people and injuring more than 30, police and security officials said.

The first bomb went off near the historic Minar-e-Pakistan monument in a crowded area of the city, killing one person and wounding 13, local police officer Amir Zulfiqar told AFP.

The device killed the owner of a nearby handcart, Zulfiqar said, adding that the condition of the injured people was not serious.

Minutes later a second blast in Ichhra, Lahore's busiest shopping district, killed another five people, Lahore police chief Tariq Saleem Dogar told AFP.

"A bomb exploded near a cig-

rette kiosk and it triggered an explosion in a nearby fireworks shop," added Ichhra police chief Waqar Ahmed.

"Four people were burned to death instantly and up to 20 people were injured," he said. Another injured person died on his way to hospital, police said.

A senior security official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said both bombs were attached to bicycles.

"A stranger came and parked his bicycle under an electric transformer and a few minutes later there was a big explosion," shopkeeper Mian Imtiaz told AFP at the scene.

"The place was filled with black smoke and I saw many people lying in a pool of blood and crying for help," he added. "It was very crowded when the explosion happened."

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EU backs down on Iran under pressure

Tehran warns aggressors of 'fire & destruction'

REUTERS, AFP, Vienna/Tehran

The European Union's three main powers have dropped a demand that the UN nuclear watchdog report Iran to the Security Council over its atomic plans due to opposition from Russia and China, diplomats said yesterday.

Moscow and Beijing have warned the United States, France, Britain and Germany against stepping up the nuclear standoff with Iran, undermining the Western drive to haul Tehran before the UN's highest body for possible sanctions.

Earlier this week, the EU had

circulated a US-backed draft resolution calling on the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) governing board to report Iran's secretive nuclear program to the Security Council.

But with at least a dozen of the 35 members of the IAEA board opposed to the EU draft -- including China and Russia -- the EU has omitted the key demand from a revised draft.

Several diplomats from the European Union's "big three" -- France, Britain and Germany -- told Reuters they had dropped the

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- Chittagong : Agrabad Branch
- Narayanganj : Narayanganj Branch, BB Road Branch
- Narsingdi : Baburhat Branch

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