# Europe now takes US cue

tion paper' to be presented at

the next hearing of the

United States Trade

Representative (USTR) in

Bangladesh to submit the

position paper by January

31," the commerce secretary,

Mahbub Ahmed, told report-

ers after a consultation meet-

to the commerce minister

wanted to know the improve-

ments Bangladesh made

over the years in four broad

areas -- ready-made garment

(RMG) sector, shrimp pro-

cessing sector, export pro-

cessing zone (EPZ) and fire

sector, the USTR wanted to

know the progress made in

the registration of trade

unions, the investigation into

the abduction and murder of

With regards to the RMG

The USTR in a letter sent

ing at his secretariat.

"The USTR asked

March.

safety.

FROM PAGE 1 against Bangladesh.

A foreign traders' association in Brussels informed the ambassador of its wish not to buy garment products from factories in Bangladesh with inadequate fire-safety mea-

Europe, which is Bangladesh's largest export destination, buys 60 percent of the nation's garment prod-

sures, according to the letter.

Meanwhile, the US is threatening to cancel the generalised system of preferences (GSP) facility for Bangladesh, with the unsafe working conditions in factories being one of the reasons.

Bangladesh's delay in singing the Trade and Investment Cooperation Framework Agreement (TICFA) could be another reason, Commerce Minister GM Quader said at a separate event in Dhaka.

"The recent US government move on the GSP facility might have indirectly been linked to the TICFA," Quader said.

Given this backdrop the and the appointment of commerce ministry, in conlabour advocate or ombudssultation with the different stakeholders, has been preparing the country's 'posi-

The USTR wanted to know the progress made in resolving the recent indecent working conditions in the shrimp sector, Ahmed said.

Regarding EPZ, the USTR sought details about progress in Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority's plan to abolish rules that blacklist workers for labour protests.

On fire safety, the USTR wants to know whether Bangladesh would seek help from the US, the International Labour Organisation or a third party for a baseline analysis of fire fighting capacity and introduce a hotline for fire information.

"We have improved significantly in many areas. I hope the USTR will be satisfied with the measures Bangladesh has taken particularly in improving the fire safety and compliances," | ble. labour leader Aminul Islam Ahmed said.

# 45,000 get registered

FROM PAGE 20 applicant Tk 200 to Tk 320, far more than the set rate of Tk 50

for the service. "I had to give Tk 200 for registration," said Rafiqul

Islam of Lawta village of Dighi union parishad. Ramzan of Ramanpur

village said he had paid Tk 320 for the online registration. Contacted by The Daily

Star over the phone, Shafiqul Islam and Emdadul Haque, accused of overcharging, said candidates had willingly overpaid them. In Patuakhali district of

Barisal, 19 of its 72 unions remained out of service due to a lack of equipment, trained manpower and slow speed of internet.

"We are facing slow speed internet that causes delay in the registration process," said Sohel Rana, an operator of a centre.

The Patuakhali additional deputy commissioner admitted that they could not provide the facility in 19 unions.

"We asked people [of these unions] to go to the neighbouring centres where the service is available."

Visiting some centres in Faridpur districts, Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Khandaker Mosharaff Hossain warned aspiring candidates not to let middlemen intervene in the recruitment process. "No middlemen will be

allowed to exploit the labour market," he said at a Kuizuri union information centre.

Anyone engaging brokers to help him get a job in Malaysia would be punished,

the minister added.

In Barisal district, 77 out of 85 centres gave the service while the rest remained inactive due to power shortage and disruption in internet.

The registration also began in other districts, including the capital Dhaka Munshiganj, Narsingdi, Narayanganj and Jamalpur.

Expatriates' Welfare Secretary Zafar Ahmed Khan visited some centres of Keraniganj upazila of Dhaka district. He admitted that candidates faced some problems initially but later those were solved.

Asked about the allegations of extra money taken from candidates, he told The Daily Star that none was allowed to charge applicants more than the fixed fee.

# Cops cleared

villagers, saying robbers had

FROM PAGE 1

been caught.

The mob started bludgeoning the six, without knowing the ill-fated youths had already gone beyond all pain and this was how the murder became known as an incident of mob beating.

The dead were Tipu Sultan of Tejgaon College, Towhidur Rahman Palash, Kamruzzaman Kanto and Ibrahim Khalil of Mirpur Bangla College, Shams Rahim Shamam of Maple Leaf International School, and Sitaf Jabi Munif of Bangladesh University of Business and Technology.

The next day, sand trader Abdul Malek filed a robbery case against the six and Al-Amin, the lone survivor of the Aminbazar incident,

with Savar Police Station. Arrested in March last year, Malek confessed to the killing before a court and said police hand gone to the spot before the villagers

reached. Al-Amin was also beaten up on the policemen's advice.

He also mentioned that he had filed the false robbery case under pressure from Mahbubur Rahman, officerin-charge of Savar Police

According to court sources, Sharif Uddin Ahmed, additional superintendent of Rab and investigation officer of the case, submitted charge sheet yesterday to the Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court of Dhaka.

The IO dropped names of four arrestees -- Forhad, Loton, Shahid and Tara Miah -- as the charges brought against them "were not proved".

He named Malek as the prime accused.

Following the submission of charge sheet, Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Kazi Shahidul Islam cleared Al-Amin and six others of the

robbery charges and directed the IO to file a case against Malek. He also ordered filing a

case against the sand trader for the false robbery case.

Of the charge-sheeted accused, all residents of Baradeshi village under | Savar, 24 were arrested Thirteen have secured bails from different courts on different dates while the rest 36 are on the run.

Fourteen accused have given their confessional statements.

In the charge sheet, the IO said Malek and his accomplices, all involved in extortion and other crimes, killed the victims and announced over a loudspeaker that robbers had attacked them.

The Rab took over the investigate following a High Court directive on August 7 last year as the Criminal Investigation Department could not make significant progress in investigations.

## Yousuf said the two journalists left Rahim's cabin

He was told that AL leader Ivy Rahman and many other activists were killed in the attack. Yousuf then conveyed the message to then NSI chief Rahim.

"DG sir then asked me who were the other leaders that got killed?" Yousuf told

his boss about the attack, Rahim specifically wanted to know what happened to Sheikh Hasina, the NSI

In reply, Yousuf told him that Hasina narrowly escaped death, but she sustained injuries to her left

around 7:00pm, two journalists went to Rahim's cabin in the hospital. The then director of Directorate The then NSI chief General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI) Brig Gen Rezzakul Haider Chowdhury was also in the cabin at that time, said Soon after the grenade Yousuf who was outside

"When they [two journalists] were coming out of the cabin, I heard them discussing that the grenade attack had been carried out following a feud between Sheikh Hasina and Sheikh Selim and such news would not be acceptable to public at all,'

After an hour, Rezzaku

The NSI official told the court that he took care of Rahim for three more days after the August 21 attack.

Judge Shahed Nuruddin recorded Yousuf's statement and fixed today for his crossexamination by defence.

Twenty-four people, including Ivy Rahman, wife of President Zillur Rahman, were killed and hundreds of party activists and leaders were injured in the grenade attack at Bangabandhu Avenue on August 21, 2004.

Two cases -- one under

FROM PAGE 20

Lankan

"The president this morning signed the letter removing Shirani Bandaranayake from the office of chief justice," Rajapakse's spokesman Mohan Samaranayake told AFP. "The letter was handdelivered to her by a secretary accompanied by presidential security staff."

The Commonwealth had asked Rajapakse on Saturday to reflect on the "constitutional and other ramifications" at a time when Sri Lanka is preparing to host the 54-member group's next summit later this year.

A spokesman for Bandaranayake confirmed that she received the letter sacking her on Sunday, but declined comment. No replacement has been named by the government.

Sri Lanka's Sunday Times newspaper said Rajapakse had offered to allow Bandaranayake to retire and so avoid impeachment during a meeting Saturday with other supreme court judges, but a source close to her told AFP that she was not amena-

Rajapakse's spokesman would not comment on what was discussed in Saturday's meeting.

The ruling party initially framed 14 charges of financial, professional and personal misconduct against Bandaranayake, but later cleared her of financial wrongdoing and convicted her only on three counts of misconduct.

Legislators had found her guilty of tampering with a case involving a company from which her sister had bought an apartment, of failing to declare dormant bank

month after accusing government legislators of verbally abusing her and not giving her a fair trial. She has denied all the allegations against her.

rebels in May 2009 following a long civil war.

## Jackie Chan

United States? The most Phoenix TV last month.

spoke.

itself," Fisher said. Jackie Chan also said China is a relatively young country, where in the first half of its history it was "bullied by so many people", and that it only achieved "real

Chan, who is known for his martial arts skills and daring stunt work, sparked criticism in Hong Kong, which was returned to China in 1997, after he reportedly told a Chinese magazine last December that protest in the city should be restricted.

had earlier arrested the garsaid that he was bullied by Hong Kong triads and had to ment factory's administrative hide in the United States. He also said he needed to carry a gun everyday to protect himself, leading to a police Amin, 27. investigation.

SAYEDEE'S TRIAL

# Closing arguments start again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The prosecution started delivering their closing arguments again in the war crimes case against Jamaate-Islami leader Delwar Hossain Sayedee at the International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday.

The prosecution and the defence had completed their closing arguments on December 6 and the case was awaiting verdict delivery. But, the court decided to rehear the arguments since Tribunal-1 had been reconstituted.

The tribunal was reconstituted after resignation of its former chairman Justice Md Nizamul Huq amid controversy over his alleged Skype conversation with

Target 9

The foreign minister could

not provide details about the

defence purchase that

involves \$1 billion and

referred to the defence min-

Three agreements to be

signed are Agreement for

State Export Credit for

financing the preparatory

work for Rooppur Nuclear

Power Plant for a maximum

amount of \$500 million,

Agreement for establish-

ment of Nuclear Energy

Information Centre in

Dhaka on the premises of

Bangabandhu Novo

Theatre, and Agreement for

FROM PAGE 1

istry.

expatriate legal expert Ahmed Ziauddin.

Even though the defence wanted retrial, the tribunal rejected the plea and asked both the sides to place their closing arguments again.

Sayedee is facing 20 charges of crimes against humanity allegedly committed by him during the Liberation War in 1971. Prosecutor Syed Haidar

placing arguments for 11 charges. The proceedings of the case were adjourned until today.

Ali yesterday completed

Earlier in the morning, the three-member tribunal, led by Justice ATM Fazle Kabir, ordered private television channel ATN News and

to advancement of bilateral

relations, particularly in the

highest level visit from

Dhaka to Moscow after a

span of 40 years since

Bangabandhu Sheikh

Mujibur Rahman first visited

the then Soviet Union in

member delegation, which

includes the foreign minis-

ter and State Minister for

Science and Technology

Hasina, who flies to

Moscow by a special flight of

Biman Bangladesh Airlines,

will hold official talks with

Russian President Vladimir V

Putin at his Kremlin office

tomorrow followed by sign-

ing of deals and a joint press

briefing, US Ambassador

Dan Mozena and Indian

High Commissioner Saran

separately met the foreign

minister and discussed

various matters, which Dipu

Moni claimed bilateral

issues between Dhaka-

Washington and Dhaka-

Asked if the renewed

Just ahead of the press

Yeafesh Osman.

conference.

New Delhi.

Hasina will lead a 54-

1972.

This will be the second

area of nuclear energy.

state-run Bangladesh Television to refrain from telecasting reports that could interfere with the administration of justice.

city

The order came after the defence last week filed two petitions with the tribunal to bring contempt of court charges against ATN News reporter Mashhudul Haq and BTV Director General M Hamid and its reporter Sujon Halder in connection with interfering with the administration of justice and prejudicing the case.

The defence alleged the television reports had prejudiced the case, while the prosecution argued that the media reports should not even be taken into cognisance.

stood beside us in 1971 as

well as we want to develop

good relations with those

had not been much cordial-

ity and cooperation between

Bangladesh and the Russian

federation, but the present

government after assuming

office took the initiatives to

advance bilateral ties

imbibed with the spirit of the

The present volume of

bilateral trade is just \$500

million, of which

Bangladesh's export stands

there are numerous possi-

bilities to enhance export as

Customs Union of Belarus,

Kazakhstan and Russia

together offers 180 million

consumers with significant

omy having a size of \$1.83

trillion is expanding fast, so

the government has taken

the initiatives to strengthen

Foreign Secretary Mustafa

Kamal, Director General

(External Publicity Wing)

Shameem Ahsan and

Director General (Europe)

Besides, Russian econ-

The foreign minister said

She said after 1975 there

who opposed us."

Liberation War.

at \$140 million.

buying capacity.

a medic at the city's hospital said. Both spoke on condi-

the attacks.

**FROM PAGE 20** 

issued the order on January court sources.

a petition with the court the same day and sought time for his client citing security concerns and sickness. But the court rejected it. The murder case was filed with Tejgaon Police Station

on April 2, 1997 after two persons -- Khalid Hossain Mamun and Shamim -- were killed in the office of Public Works Department at Shere-Bangla Nagar in the capi-Bikash, who was arrested

in 1997, was freed secretly on December 14 from a the bail on June 20, 1999.

But he had been kept in prison for about 13 years on the basis of production warrants, which are used to keep any person detained if he is also accused in many other cases and if the person needs to be produced before

out notifying the law

Police and intelligence sources said Bikash went into hiding soon after his release. One of the sources said he had sneaked into neighbouring India.

## Nazi nurses

**FROM PAGE 20** 

other groups Hitler deemed "undesirable" and assisting

photographs has captured these women, probably in the nursing profession's darkest hour.

them in their controversial endeavours are often

diverse history of the nursing profession.

But this collection of photographs captures the occupation in its probably its darkest hours.

turbing project the nurses of Nazi Germany assisted in was the Lebensborn

children who didn't measure up were sent to concentration camps. In 1939, the Nazi's went

children. The youngsters were transferred to Lebensborn

clinics where they were

# Ex-NSI chief in the dock

FROM PAGE 1 an AL rally on August 21, 2004 to assassinate Sheikh Hasina, the then leader of the opposition. Yousuf, who was a field officer of NSI, is now an assistant director of the organisation.

Rahim had been admitted to the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) in Dhaka cantonment with piles on August 12, nine days before the grenade attack. And Yousuf was one of the three NSI officials responsible for taking care of their boss by turns.

"The DG sir [Abdur official said at the court. Rahim] went to Hawa Bhaban a day between August 12 and 21 in 2004 while receiving treatment at the Combined Military Hospital," said Yousuf in his deposition as the 66th prosecution witness of the cases before Dhaka Speedy Trial Tribunal.

returned to the hospital from Hawa Bhaban and August 25.

received treatment there till attack on an AL rally at Rahim's cabin.

Bangabandhu Avenue, Yousuf learnt about it over

his walkie-talkie.

the court.

When Yousuf informed

A few hours later, at

after 15 minutes.

said Yousuf.

left the cabin, said Yousuf.

the explosive substances act and the other for killing -were filed in connection with the incident.

accounts, and of staying in office while her husband faced a bribery charge. Bandaranayake walked out of a parliamentary select committee hearing last

The government launched the impeachment process in November after a spate of Supreme Court decisions went against the administration of Rajapakse, who has tightened his hold on power after crushing Tamil Tiger

FROM PAGE 20 "When you talk about corruption -- the whole world, is there corruption in the corrupt in the world!" the Rush Hour star, who has made headlines recently for his controversial views, told

Chan reaffirmed his view after the show's host questioned him -- "Of course! Where did the great breakdown come from? The world, the United States started it," Chan said, referring to the financial crisis

and gesticulating as he His comments were rebuked Thursday by Max Fisher, a foreign affairs blogger for the Washington Post, who called them "anti-

American" rhetoric that was rooted in China's insecurity. "To the degree that Chan's comments were anti-American, they likewise reflect a common Chinese view of the United States, one that is rooted not just in attitudes toward America but in China's proud but

sometimes insecure view of

success" in the past decade. "Our country's leaders admit they are corrupted, etcetera. We are improving --I can see our country is constantly improving and learning," he said, adding that everyone is making an issue out of China because it is 'powerful" now.

> tion for each. In the same interview, he

> > officer Dulal Uddin, store incharge Hamidul Islam Lavlu, and security supervisor Al

the State Export Credit for financing defence purchase of \$1 billion. Six memoranda of understanding (MoUs) would be signed in the sectors of agriculture, health, education, culture, law and justice, and

counter-terrorism. Asked whether jet fighters would be purchased from Russia as the government drew flak by purchasing Mig-29 in the past, she said the Migs were bought by the previous Awami League government given the good relations with Russia at that

FROM PAGER 20

added.

Shafique said.

Shafique said the government

has restored the constitution

of 1972 to establish the spirit

Bangladesh is now a secu-

lar state as per the provision of

the existing constitution, he

AR-RAHMAN-AR-RAHIM is

not a part of the constitution,

as it has been kept above the

preamble of the charter,"

has ensured the rights of

people of all religions includ-

ing Hindus, Buddhists and

Christians along with

Muslims, he told the report-

law minister said his ministry

has achieved success in many

cases would be reduced if the

government could amend the

Criminal Procedure Code and

Replying to a question, the

"A huge backlog of criminal

The existing constitution

"The phrase BISMILLAH-

of Liberation War in 1971.

collaboration with Moscow is a strategic shift, Dipu "Nobody in the past could purchase the Mig at such a Moni said "No, it's not at all a cheaper price," she claimed strategic shift in our foreign and said the cooperation agreements to be signed on January 15 would contribute

Riaz Hamidullah were pres-"We want to boost our relations with those who ent at the press conference. No scope

> ing of criminal cases through compromise outside the court", he said. The government has already amended Civil Procedure Code to introduce ADR system for disposing of

civil cases, the minister added Shafique also mentioned that around two million cases lie pending with the courts

across the country. Replying to another question, the law minister said the president has pardoned 21 convicted accused, who were sentenced to death in different cases, by exercising his constitutional powers, and there is nothing to raise any

question over that issue. On repatriation of Bangabandhu's killers, Shafique said the government is trying hard to bring back two convicted accused -- Nur Chowdhury and Rashed Chowdhury -- from Canada introduce alternative dispute and the US and put them on

added.

resolution (ADR) for dispostrial. State Minister for Law Qamrul Islam placed a written statement during the press briefing, saying that the government has constituted two International Crimes Tribunals to hold trials of people who had committed crimes against humanity and war crimes during the

> LiberationWar. Thirteen cases remain pending with the tribunals while trial proceedings of three cases among them are at

the final stage, he said. Qamrul said the present government has appointed 10 judges to the Appellate Division, 61 judges to the High Court Division and 331 judges to the lower courts for quick

disposal of cases. The government has formulated 202 laws and issued 23 ordinances and 1,450 statutory regulatory orders (SROs) in the last four years,

### 3 Tazreen staff held November 24 fire last year, gates when the fire broke out.

sectors.

CID. "They had been Ashulia police filed the case Had they acted responsibly, deployed on the ground floor of the factory, from where the fire had originated." Mansur, also the investiga-

Meanwhile, a probe report tion officer of the case that led of the Bangladesh Garment to the arrests, said they were Manufacturers and arrested in their hideouts and Exporters' Association were produced before a (BGMEA) on December 31 Dhaka court, with a seven-day last year said the fire was preremand prayer for interrogaplanned. An 11-member team Detective Branch of police

headed by BGMEA Vice-President SM Mannan Kochi had found that several factory officials were involved in the fire, the report said.

the casualties in the fire.

The three staff members Two days after the had locked all the collapsible

against several unknown many victims could have escaped to safety, the report persons in connection with added. Tazreen Fashions had lacked safety measures for

workers but the suspicious behaviour of level one's midlevel officials during the incident indicated that it was intentional, according to the team's findings. Earlier, a home ministry

investigation on December 17 described the fire as an act of "sabotage" and recommended suing nine officials of the factory and its owner Delwar Hossain.

## 3 Iraq soldiers killed in attack AFP, Samarra An attack by militants on an

Iraqi army checkpoint north of Baghdad yesterday left three soldiers dead, security and medical officials said. Insurgents threw hand grenades at the checkpoint, which lies east of Samarra,

110 kilometres north of

Baghdad, before opening

fire with machineguns, an

army lieutenant colonel and

tion of anonymity. No group immediately claimed responsibility for

## Bikash

The Special Judge's Court-3

9, as Bikash defied a court directive and did not appear before it on that day, said Bikash's lawyer Moslehuddin Bhuiyan filed

Kashimpur prison on bail without the knowledge of the law enforcement agencies. Bikash had obtained

the court in those cases. His release raised questions about the role of the home ministry. A parliamentary committee on January 10 asked the home ministry to explain why it had secretly released such a top criminal from jail with-

the ties with Russia, she enforcement agencies. Bikash has been accused Foreign Secretary in at least 12 cases, including Shahidul Haq, Additional five for murder.

in the creation of "Super Race Children". A collection of harrowing

The actions of the Nazi doctors throughout the war are well documented but the actions of the nurses and others who assisted

ignored. Whether they were simply following orders, or trying to help out, or fight, for a cause they believed in, these women are part of the

Probably the most dis-

Program, where scientists, on orders of Heinrich Himmler, attempted to breed an elite race of pure Aryans to lead the Third Reich. Under the horrific plan,

even further, travelling to occupied territories such as Poland to steal hundreds of thousands of Aryan-looking

"Germanised" and then adopted out to SS families. Children who refused to be indoctrinated were

beaten, and often sent to concentration camps where they were killed.