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FIRST TEST Cook, Pietersen seize control

BISHWAJIT ROY from Ctg

Captain Alastair Cook together with Kevin Pietersen made full use of the gifts given by his counterparts as England seized control on the opening day of the first Test against Bangladesh at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium here yesterday.

A surprise decision from Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan to put his opponents into bat on a batting paradise gave the visitors a big smile and it was the left-hander Cook who led from the front with an unbeaten 158 to continue his rich vein of form in the tour as the tourists finished the day on 374 for 3.

Cook added 170 runs for the third wicket with

Combing operations against outlaws soon

Govt to go tough on rising criminal activities in south-western region

HASAN JAHI TUSHER

The government is about to begin another round of combing operations in the nation's south-western districts to curb the recent increase in criminal activities by outlawed parties.

Highly placed sources told The Daily Star that operations will commence shortly after the State Minister for Home Shamsul Haque Tuku visits Khulna on March 16.

The operations are a response to the

non-fatal bomb attack on Khulna's Phultala upazila Chairman Sarder Alauddin Mithu on March 6.

The state minister said, "In the wake of rising of criminal activities in the region, I will hold a series of meetings with law enforcement agencies in Khulna."

"I will provide the necessary guidelines to root out criminal activity, especially by outlawed party men."

He said the government will show zero tolerance to extremists.

Fugitive outlaw party men and those

released on bail from various jails have regrouped over the last year and have contributed to a slide in law and order in the region.

Over 100 chairmen of upazila and union parishads in 10 districts of Khulna division have left their localities since the bomb attack.

Many are reported to have filed general diaries with police seeking protection, said sources at intelligence agencies.

Ashraf Alam Khan, chairman of

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SHIBIR MEN'S ROOMS RAIDED Jihadi books, 'hit list' seized from RU hall

RU CORRESPONDENT

Law enforcers have again seized documents including a hit list of 27 Chhatra League leaders and activists, and a scheme to attack BCL workers from the room of a Shibir activist at a Rajshahi University dormitory.

During a raid Thursday night, they seized 200 jihadi books and leaflets from Shaheed Shamsuzzoha Hall.

Earlier, law enforcers Thursday noon recovered a machete and 50 iron rods, and seized 1,000 jihadi books and leaflets from the rooms of Shibir activists at the hall.

RU officials with the help of law enforcers seized answer sheets of pharmacy department's final examination from the room of a Shibir activist.

Police said they found the documents at the room of Shibir

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RU VIOLENCE Shibir's Ekram again tells of Jamaat story

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Rajshahi University Shibir leader Ekram Hossain gave a confessional statement before a Rajshahi court yesterday reiterating his statement in Dhaka that linked central leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami and Shibir with the February 9 violence.

The violence in RU on February 9 left Chhatra League leader Faruk Hossain dead.

The second court of Metropolitan Magistrate Ziaur Rahman recorded Ekram's confessional statement under Section-164. It took him four

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Man dies, over 100 shanties gutted in fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man died and over 100 shanties and 10 shops were reduced to ash as fire swept through Kazi Bari slum in the capital's Mirpur early yesterday.

The deceased Muhammad Elim, 35, worked at Jamuna Restaurant at Mirpur Kitchen Market.

Firefighters said the blaze originated around 3:25am from a burning mosquito-repelling coil in a shanty and engulfed the other adjoining houses, leaving Elim killed on the spot.

Witnesses said high frequency of theft was responsible for the death and injuries

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A policeman examines handmade bombs recovered from near the district Jamaat-e-Islami office at Bhadughar in Brahmanbaria town yesterday. Story on page 1

Bird flu hits Thakurgaon poultry farm

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

It was avian influenza commonly known as bird flu that triggered death of chickens at a poultry house in Thakurgaon district headquarters in the last couple of days, said livestock officials yesterday.

District Livestock Officer Mosaddekur Rahman told The Daily Star that a total of 395 parent chickens at Kazi Breeders Limited Yakubpur branch had died until Thursday noon starting from Wednesday night.

As the mortality rate was abnormal, the farm authorities informed the livestock office, he said.

Livestock officials immediately collected samples and sent those to Joypurhat Field Decease Investigation Laboratory Thursday evening. Samples were also sent to

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'ADMISSION TRADE' Eden College tensed over feud in BCL

DU CORRESPONDENT

Tension rose on the Eden Girls' College campus yesterday after female leaders and activists of two factions of Bangladesh Chhatra League got involved in chase and counter-chase for hours following a dispute over "admission trade."

BCL activists loyal to unit president Selina Shamima Nijhum chased rival BCL leaders, who did not get enough of the spoils of "admission trade" this year, on the college campus at about 8:30am, said sources.

A few followers of the BCL unit president earlier drove out a rival BCL activist from Razia Begum Hostel.

Nijhum's supporters also beat up two rival BCL activists -- Shimu and Moumita -- near Razia Begum Hostel in presence of police at around 8:30pm.

At least ten BCL leaders revolted against Nijhum accusing her of being involved in "admission trade" and torturing resident students.

They alleged that Nijhum in collusion with unit general secretary Farzana Yasmin Tania got about 700 students enrolled illegally in this year's honours courses.

The BCL leaders also accused College Principal Mahfuza Chowdhury of abetting Nijhum in her illegal activities and demanded their resignation.

They vowed to launch a tough movement to realise their demands.

Nijhum however ruled out all allegations against her and said she will step down if anyone can prove the claims.

She alleged that unit vice presidents Champa Khatun, Sharmin Sultana Sharmi, Taniya Sultana Happy and Kanij

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PHOTO ON PAGE 5

OnlinePoll. Do you think government's move to tighten the subscription process of cell phone connection to fight crime will be effective? Yes (54.7%), No (42.6%), No Comments (2.7%). Total votes: 816. TODAY'S POLL. Do you think the government's programme to make the country beggar free in five years is feasible? Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net

Prayer Timing March 13

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-05	5-40
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-12	6-15
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation

Businessman shot dead in city 3 others bullet-hit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unidentified gunmen shot a businessman dead and wounded three others in separate incidents in the capital last night.

The deceased was identified as Md Sagor, 40, a rent-a-car businessman, while the injured were Abul Kalam Azad, 65, Awami League Ward 37 unit joint secretary general

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UN urges war crimes probe in Myanmar

AFP, Bangkok

A UN special envoy upped pressure on Myanmar's ruling junta yesterday with a pre-election call for an investigation into whether the regime is guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Tomas Ojea Quintana made the recommendation in a report to be examined next Monday by the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, noting "systematic violation of human rights" when he visited the country in February.

The report adds to growing international outrage at Myanmar's military regime after it

issued new laws for elections due later this year that bar detained pro-democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi from taking part.

"According to consistent reports, the possibility exists that some of these human rights violations may entail categories of crimes against humanity or war crimes under the terms of the statute of the International Criminal Court," said the report.

Quintana pointed out that the "mere existence of this possibility" requires the Myanmar government to investigate the allegations.

But the junta has failed to remedy abuses

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Top outlaw murdered in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

An activist of outlawed Purba Bangla Communist party (PBCP- Janajuddha) was hacked to death by their rivals in Haripur village under Ataikul upazila of the district early Friday.

The deceased was identified as Akkas Ali, 42, son of Gafur Pramanik of the same village.

Police said Akkas was holding a secret meeting with

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