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UNION PARISHAD POLLS EC asks law enforcers to go tough

PANKAG KARMAKAR

Chief Election Commission Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad yesterday directed the law enforcers to open fire on criminals if they try to occupy polling stations or stuff ballot boxes during the union parishad polls.

Law enforcers must stay alert at the polling centres to make sure that nobody can occupy those until the last bullet of lawmen is spent, the CEC told a meeting at the National Economic Council auditorium, said meeting sources.

The Election Commission organised the meeting to discuss law and order with law enforcement agencies ahead of the first phase of the UP polls on March 22.

Top officials of the home ministry, law enforcement and intelligence agencies, superintendents of police and deputy commissioners of districts were present.

A total of 738 unions will go to polls on March 22 and 650 unions on March 31. Polls to around 2,800 more will be held in four more phases till mid-June.

Conflict might arise within the grassroots of the ruling Awami League as several pro-AL candidates are running for the same post in many unions, EC officials told The Daily Star quoting intelligence officers.

Taking this opportunity, militants might carry out subversive activities.

The authorities must step up anti-militant drive ahead of the polls to avoid such a possibility, suggested the officers.

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The Asia Cup has so far been proved to be Yuvraj Singh's second wind in international cricket. After anchoring India against Pakistan, the left-hander showed signs of rediscovering his pristine touch against Sri Lanka. He also hit a fluent 14-ball 25 against UAE in India's nine-wicket win at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. Story on Page 18.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

7-MURDER TRIAL Journalists allowed to cover proceedings

STAR REPORT

A Narayanganj court yesterday recorded testimony of a prosecution witness in the sensational seven-murder case with journalists inside the court.

Selina Islam, wife of victim Nazrul Islam and complainant of a case, testified before Judge Enayet Hossain of District and Sessions Judge's Court.

On Monday, journalists were made to leave the court, worrying the victims' families and their lawyers over getting a fair trial.

Referring to a "court directive", the public prosecutor and counsels for the accused had said journalists were not allowed to attend the proceedings. The police then asked the newsmen to leave and the journalists complied.

But, later a court official told The Daily Star that he was not aware of any such order passed by the court.

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Martin Crowe passes away

AFP, Wellington

New Zealand's greatest batsman Martin Crowe died on Thursday at the age of 53 after a long battle with cancer, his family said.

"It is with heavy hearts that the family of Martin Crowe, MBE, advise his death," they said in a statement.

"Diagnosed in September 2014 with terminal double-hit lymphoma, he passed away peacefully today, Thursday, March 3, in Auckland surrounded by family."

Crowe enjoyed a 13-year international career from

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Panic in GOP as 'phony' Trump surges ahead

Leading Republicans scramble to halt the brash billionaire from being the party nominee

AGENCIES

American conservatives are facing a wrenching decision about their party's future: embrace Donald Trump's divisive but winning presidential bid, or somehow prevent him from seizing the Republican nomination.

With the brash billionaire apparently on a glide path to becoming the Republican standardbearer, some party leaders, operatives and voters have panicked at the prospect of nominee Trump, while others are saying it's already too late.

The last-ditch effort to halt Trump's victorious march, some say, threatens to rupture the Grand Old Party.

In some of the bluntest establishment criticism of Trump yet, 2012 Republican nominee Mitt Romney yesterday said that the real estate mogul would enable a Democratic victory if he runs against Hillary Clinton.

"Donald Trump is a phony, a fraud," Romney said in a speech in Utah, as he



urged voters to rally around one of the other candidates: Senator Ted Cruz, Senator Marco Rubio or Ohio Governor John Kasich.

"Prospects for a safe and prosperous future are greatly diminished" if Mr Trump becomes the nominee, he added.

Meanwhile, sixty Republican foreign policy veterans released a letter on Wednesday pledging to oppose Trump and saying his proposals would undermine US security, in the latest sign of fissures between the Republican presidential front-runner and the party establishment.

"Trump's own statements lead us to conclude that as president, he would use the authority of his office to act in ways that make America less safe, and which would diminish our standing in the world," the letter says.

"Furthermore, his expansive view of how presidential power should be wielded against his detractors poses a distinct threat

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No change in visa policy

Says Thai embassy on claims of visa hassle

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The Thai Embassy in Dhaka yesterday said there had been no change in the Thai visa policy towards Bangladesh.

In response to a query from The Daily Star regarding hassles over Thai visa, Press Officer Pacharapol Padermprach of the embassy also ruled out the allegations raised in some media reports that thousands of visa applications were pending with the embassy.

"There was no 20,000-30,000 passports accumulated at the Royal Thai Embassy. The figure was based purely on false speculation by sources from travel agencies," he claimed.

"During the visa processes, applicants can withdraw their passport

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World's youngest billionaire



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

For most people, becoming a billionaire is a dream that will never come to fruition before they die. That knowledge makes Alexandra Andresen's entry onto the Forbes billionaires list all the more hard to swallow.

The Norwegian teenager, 19, is estimated to be worth a staggering \$1.2 billion, making her the youngest billionaire in the world. Her 20-year-old sister Katharina is also worth \$1.2bn thanks to the 42.2 percent of the Ferd Holding company she and her sister both own.

Her father transferred the stock to his daughters in 2007 but still maintains control of the company.

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DOUBLE MURDER 'Shootout with cops' kills 2 suspects

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

Two suspects of a double-murder were killed and three others injured in a "gunfight" with police in Narsingdi Sadar upazila early yesterday, hours after the murder.

Those killed in the

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PRAYER TIMING
MARCH 4
Fazr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5-15 12-30 4-30 6-05 7-30
JAMAAT 5-50 1-15 4-45 6-10 8-00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Charming beauty of tea flowers

MOKARAM HOSSAIN

Five years ago I came across the tea fruit for the first time. The roundish fruits look a bit like olives. The coolies in the tea garden helped me spot the fruits hiding behind the leaves. A little careful look around the garden revealed that they were almost everywhere.

It was an amazing experience for me. I saw the flowers in November. The Samanbag Tea Garden area was in full bloom then. I was mesmerised by the beauty and immediately started taking photos of them. If I had not gotten into the garden, I would not have known that such a rare, beautiful flower even existed.

It is the leaves that matter in the tea industry, not the flowers. This is why the beauty of tea flowers is rather ignored. But the tea

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Obituary

With deep sorrow, we mourn the sad demise of **Mr. Jalaluddin Ahmed**, respected Director and former Chairman of SMC Board who breathed his last at 2:40 am on 3rd March, 2016 in Singapore. Inna lillahi Wa Inna Ilaihi Rajiun.

Late Mr. Jalaluddin Ahmed joined the SMC Board as a Director in 2005 and served as the Chairman from May 30, 2007 to May 3, 2013. He was reelected as Director of the Board in May 2013 and served the company till his departure for eternity.

Late Mr. Ahmed, a former Secretary, served the Government of Bangladesh in various administrative capacities. He was the former President, Board of Trustees of East West University, former ILO and UNFPA Advisor and was also US Congressional Fellow at US Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C.

We recall with gratefulness his valuable guidance and contribution for the growth of the company.

Late Mr. Jalaluddin Ahmed left behind his wife, a son, a daughter and a lot of admirers including us to mourn his death. We pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

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