

"Politics has become a major business initiative in Bangladesh, as an increasing number of businesspeople are signing up for politics."
DEBAPRIYA BHATTACHARYA OF CPD. (PAGE 3)

"If the EC moves to use it [EVM] following the government directive ... we will file case against the government and the commission."
JSD CHIEF ASM ABDUR ROB ON EVM USE IN POLLS. (PAGE 3)

"We do not have Obama judges or Trump judges, Bush judges or Clinton judges."
US CHIEF JUSTICE JOHN ROBERTS IN A RARE REBUKE OF TRUMP'S COMMENTS ABOUT A JUDGE. (PAGE 9)

Stay alert

Chief election commissioner asks police, seeks their role in ensuring controversy-free polls

- CEC CALLS UPON COPS NOT TO**
- Harass polling officers
- Arrest anyone without warrant
- File any case to harass anyone

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The chief election commissioner yesterday said the role of police is most important in holding a free, fair, and acceptable election and the law enforcers must remain alert so that no questions arise over the December 30 polls.

"In the past, you discharged duties risking your lives. There is an expectation for an exciting election. Let our [people responsible for holding the polls] roles not make it questionable," CEC KM Nurul Huda told police high-ups at a special meeting at the Nirbachan Bhaban.

Hinting at media reports that said police were gathering personal information of probable polling officials, including their political leanings, the CEC said, "We did not instruct you to do this. Don't do this. This is embarrassing. We did not want this."

"If you need any important information, then collect it in your own way secretly," the CEC said, asking police not to go to the homes of officials.

Huda asked police to make a strategic plan on how and where members of different forces would be on duty.

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Mominul Haque equalled the record for most Test centuries by a Bangladeshi, getting his eighth ton on the opening day of the first Test against the West Indies in Chittagong. However he was dismissed after scoring a serene 120 as the Tigers ended the day on 315 for eight.

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Tigers edge dramatic day

SAKEB SUBHAN from Chattogram

A century, a pace-induced collapse and a lower-order counterattack -- the first day of the first Test between Bangladesh and West Indies had all the ingredients for a great day of cricket in Chattogram yesterday. At the end of the day, however, it was the hosts who will feel that they have the edge as, after Mominul Haque's eighth ton that took him level with Tamim Iqbal for the most by a Bangladeshi, lower-order batsmen Taijul Islam and debutant Nayeem Hasan took the score to 315 for eight at stumps.

Taijul was unbeaten on 32 and Nayeem batting on 24 in an unbroken 56-run ninth-wicket stand.

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AL-JP SEAT-SHARING Hasina, Ershad may talk it out today

RASHIDUL HASAN

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad is likely to meet Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, also chief of the ruling Awami League, at the Gono Bhaban today amid disagreement between the two parties over seat-sharing, said JP sources.

The JP believes the meeting will help settle the issue, the sources said.

Meanwhile, several AL leaders, wishing not to be

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Withdraw over 90 partisan officials

Oikyafont asks the EC about administration, police

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Oikyafont has demanded withdrawal of 92 officials of the civil and police administrations, including the secretaries to the Election Commission, home and public administration ministries, for ensuring a level playing field for all candidates ahead of the national election.

The opposition alliance, composed of BNP and some other political parties, submitted a list of "partisan and controversial officials" to the chief election commissioner yesterday.

A team of the Oikyafont, led by BNP Joint Secretary General Syed Moazzem Hossain Alal, handed over 13 letters to EC Secretary Helal Uddin Ahmed yesterday morning.

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JULY 30 BARISHAL POLLS EC agreed to stop voting

Commissioner reveals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amid allegations of anomalies, the Election Commission had agreed to stop the voting of Barishal City Corporation (BCC) polls several hours after it began on July 30.

However, the EC did not suspend the polling as it was doubtful whether law enforcement agencies would be able to handle the consequences. It was also worried about the security of the polls officials.

Election Commissioner Mahbub Talukdar made the disclosure while reading out a written speech at a closed-door

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BNP nomination seeker found dead

Cops recover body floating in Buriganga

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

The body of a BNP nomination seeker and the party's Jashore district unit leader has been found floating in the Buriganga river two days after he went missing from the capital's Bijoy Nagar area.

The dead, Abu Bakar Abu, 50, was vice president of Jashore district BNP, his nephew Ashikuzzaman told reporters yesterday after identifying the body.

Shah Zaman, officer-in-charge of South Keraniganj Police Station, told this newspaper that police recovered a floating body from the river in Char Khejurbag dockyard area on Monday afternoon.

Relatives identified the body at Sir Salimullah Medical College mortuary.

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Abu Bakar

Feroz's polls bid uncertain

HC halts ruling AL chief whip's ninth loan rescheduling

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Participation of ruling Awami League Chief Whip ASM Feroz in the upcoming national election hangs in the balance following a High Court order that halted the ninth rescheduling of his loans from Sonali Bank.

The HC yesterday stayed the Bangladesh Bank and Sonali Bank's decisions to allow M/S Patuakhali Jute Mills, owned by Patuakhali-2 lawmaker Feroz, to reschedule its loans of Tk 26.80 crore.

The HC bench of Justice Sheikh Hassan Arif and Justice Razik-Al Jalil passed the order following a writ petition filed recently by Patuakhali AL President Ziaul Haque, challenging the legality of the decisions.

Talking to The Daily Star, the petitioner's counsel Mainul Islam said Feroz is a loan defaulter and is now disqualified from contesting the upcoming parliamentary polls following the court order.

As per the Representation of People's Order, a loan defaulter is disqualified from contesting the election, he pointed out.

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Momtaz Begum, mother of Jubayer Alam, an organising secretary of Bangshal Chhatra Dal, talks to relatives of another arrestee on the premises of Dhaka Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court yesterday. Momtaz has been frequenting the court every day since Jubayer was arrested in TSC area on November 17. Below, relatives of other opposition men, held recently in different areas of the city, throng the court premises for their bail. Related story on Page 3.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

5 killed in 'gunfights'

STAR REPORT

Four drug traders and a robber were killed in "gunfights" with law enforcers in four districts in the last two days, said officials.

In Mymensingh, an alleged robber was killed in a "shootout" with detectives in Nayanpur of Bhaluka upazila early yesterday.

Shah Kamal Akanda, officer-in-charge of Detective Branch of police in Mymensingh, said Mobarak Hossain, 35, of Nayanpur, stood accused in 10 cases, including robbery and drug, filed with different police stations in Mymensingh and Gazipur.

The OC said detectives arrested Mobarak on Wednesday evening. Based on his information, police took him to Nayanpur to

recover firearms around 1:00am.

Sensing the presence of the law enforcers, his cohorts opened fire. The policemen returned fire, triggering the "gunfight". Mobarak was hit by bullets when he tried to flee, the police official claimed.

He was rushed to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

A case was filed with Bhaluka Model Police Station.

In Cox's Bazar, two suspected yaba traders died in a similar incident at Hariakhali Tourist Zone of Teknaf upazila around

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