

**JUDICIARY SEPARATION
Govt given 6 weeks more to comply with SC directives**

UNB, Dhaka

The Supreme Court (SC) yesterday gave the government another six weeks' time to separate the judiciary from the executive.

The SC passed the order asking 13 government officials including four top secretaries who face contempt of court charges, to comply with the court's 12-point directive on separation of the judiciary within six weeks.

In December 1999, the SC ordered the government to execute the directives for separation of the judiciary in the much-talked-about Masder Hossain case.

Since then, the successive governments of Awami League and BNP-led four-party alliance have been seeking repeated time extension for doing it.

The nine mid-level officials are

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4-party hails EC for polls schedule

Accuses AL of plotting against election

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP-led four-party alliance leaders yesterday appreciated the Election Commission for announcing the polls schedule and said the upcoming election must be held as per the schedule.

"I thank the Election Commission as they have announced the election schedule in time," BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said at a big rally in front of BNP central office at Naya Pallan in the capital.

He urged the party men to make preparations for the election scheduled for January 21, 2007 and approach people to vote for four-party alliance candidates.

Dhaka city unit of the four-party alliance organised the rally to protest Awami League (AL)-led 14-party combine's 'killing, terrorism, anarchy and conspiracy' to foil the elections.

Leaders, workers and supporters joined the meeting in processions. They were chanting slogans in favour of Khaleda Zia and BNP's election symbol sheaf of paddy while supporters of Jamaat-e-Islami chanted slogans in favour of their election symbol scales.

The BNP secretary general said the AL is involved in a deep conspiracy to foil the election, as they know they have no preparation for the election.

"Failing to create a movement

against the BNP, they [Awami League] have taken shelter of court. Even they are trying to create obstacles in the election process. It proves that they don't want election," he said.

"After showing objection about Justice Hasan and Justice Aziz, Awami League is now demanding the president's resignation from the post of chief adviser. If this demand is fulfilled, they will raise the demand for ensuring power for them," Bhuiyan said.

"Awami League knows that they have no future in election as they tried to destroy the country's economy and so they want to create difficulties in the path of election,"

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CG to follow liberal policy in allowing poll monitors

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The caretaker government will follow a liberal policy to allow foreign election observers to ensure presence of maximum number of observers during the 9th general election.

However, the government will strictly monitor entrance of suspicious persons or listed international criminals in the name of election observers.

The decisions were taken at an inter-ministerial meeting held at the home ministry yesterday with Home Secretary SM Jahurul Islam in the chair.

The meeting also formed a three-member committee comprising additional home secretary, a director general of the foreign ministry and a joint secretary of the election commission to oversee the matter.

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PHOTO: STAR

Barrister Amir-Ul Islam speaks to reporters during Supreme Court Bar Council news conference in the city yesterday following Sunday's chaos at court.

SC order today on 6 condemned JMB leaders' appeal petitions

UNB, Dhaka

The hearing of the petitions filed by six JMB militants seeking leave to appeal against their death sentences concluded yesterday and the Supreme Court will pass its order today.

A seven-member full court of the Appellate Division, headed by Chief Justice Syed JR Mudassar Husain, heard both sides for three days.

The petitioners are outlawed JMB Chief Abdul Rahman, his second-in-command Siddiqui Islam alias Bangla Bhai, brother Ataur Rahman Sunny, son-in-law Abdul Awal, and suicide bombers Iftakher Hassan Al Mamun and Khaled Saifulah.

Execution of their death

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RULE ON GOVT HC stays MBBS admission for 6 weeks

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court (HC) yesterday stayed for six weeks the results of November 17 admission test of medical colleges and order for admission.

The court issued a rule on the government to explain why the results and order for admission to the medical colleges should not be declared unlawful.

A division bench comprising Justice M Awlad Ali and Justice Moinul Islam Chowdhury passed the order upon a writ petition filed by a number of unsuccessful admission seekers.

They submitted that the question papers were leaked before the admission test. As a result, meritorious students could not qualify in the competitive test.

Attorney General AJ Mohammad Ali opposed the writ while Barrister Amir-Ul Islam and others appeared for the petitioners.



PHOTO: STAR

A professional date sap harvester wanders the city street near Moghbazar in the capital for work. He charges Tk 50 for setting a pitcher on a date tree for collecting sap.

EU wants people's verdict to reflect in next polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The European Commission (EC) feels that the political parties of Bangladesh should play their due role in preparing the field for holding a free and fair election.

Although it termed the present political situation as "very difficult," it expressed its hope that the authorities will do everything possible for an election where people's verdict is reflected.

Dr Stefan Frowein, head of the delegation of the EC to Bangladesh, made the observations yesterday at the opening ceremony of a two-day workshop on political parties and people's representation at Spectra Convention Centre in the city.

European Public Law Center, Organization of Development Program for the Underprivileged (ODPUP), Odhikar and Bangladesh Center for Communication

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39 killed in Iran military plane crash

AFP, Tehran

An Iranian military plane crashed shortly after takeoff at Tehran's Mehrabad airport early yesterday killing all 39 people on board, including 30 members of the Revolutionary Guards, police said.

High ranking Iranian police commander, Eskandar Moemeni, told the Fars news agency that three people who initially survived the crash of the Antonov 74 died on their way to hospital.

"An engine failure and veering from the runway resulted in the crash," he said.

The chief commander of the Islamic republic's Revolutionary Guards, General Yahya Rahim Safavi, did not rule out sabotage but added it was "too soon to

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Israel extends olive branch to Palestine

AFP, Sde Boker

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert extended a vision of peace with the Palestinians Monday, offering to resume long deadlocked talks as he sought to capitalise on a fledgling new truce.

"We are ready to withdraw from considerable territory in exchange for peace with the Palestinians," Olmert announced in a speech delivered on the second day of a truce in the Gaza Strip following months of unrelenting violence.

"I propose to you engaging on a new path. We started yesterday," added the premier, speaking at a ceremony commemorating the death of Israel's first prime minister David Ben Gurion, who is buried in Sde Boker.

Israeli troops withdrew from Gaza on Sunday, in keeping with the terms of the ceasefire that has seen no reported Palestinian rocket attacks on the Jewish state apart from initial impacts that violated the start of the truce.

Five months of military opera-

tions in the territory, waged to retrieve an Israeli soldier captured in June and to lessen rocket fire, have left around 400 Palestinians dead and three Israeli soldiers inside the coastal strip.

But Olmert outlined a more positive future should a much-hyped Palestinian unity government, which has yet to see the light of day, emerge and accept conditions imposed by the international community to resume an aid boycott.

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41,000 NON-BALLOTTEE PILGRIMS Residence problem may dash hajj hope

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

About 41,000 non-ballottee pilgrims under the supervision of different hajj agencies will not be able to perform hajj if their 'tasria'-- documents for hiring residence in Saudi Arabia -- are not received within seven days, said leaders of Hajj Agencies Association of Bangladesh (Haab) yesterday.

"We have received tasria for only

7,100 non-ballottee pilgrims out of 48,014 such pilgrims. They will not get visa if the governments of Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia do not jointly take immediate measures regarding tasria," said Mohammed Faruque, president of Haab, a platform of all hajj agencies in the country.

Addressing a press conference at a city hotel, he said, "We have

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Aminul made acting secy to CA's office

2 other secys transferred

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The caretaker government yesterday appointed Kazi Md Aminul Islam as acting secretary to the Chief Adviser's Office.

Prior to his new job, Islam was an acting member of the Planning Commission.

The government also made two changes in the administration. As per the changes, Science and ICT

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| Prayer Timing | | |
|---------------|-------|------|
| November 28 | | |
| | Azan | |
| Fajr | 5-10 | 5-45 |
| Zohr | 12-45 | 1-15 |
| Asr | 3-45 | 4-00 |
| Maghrib | 5-19 | 5-22 |
| Esha | 7-00 | 7-30 |

Source: Islamic Foundation



PHOTO: STAR

Sadia Nuzhat, who had filed a case against the leakage of question papers for the medical college admission test, breaks down in tears after the High Court stayed publication of the test results.

Clashes erupt in Baghdad

3 US soldiers, 13 Iraqis killed in attacks

AFP, Baghdad

Three US soldiers and at least 13 Iraqi people were killed in clashes in Baghdad after authorities yesterday lifted an indefinite curfew imposed after a series of bombings killed over 200 people last Thursday.

Nine of those killed on Monday were police while the rest were passers-by, said a medical source at Yarmuk hospital, who added that 20 policemen were also wounded.

The clashes took place in the western neighborhood of Yarmuk and the southern areas of Saidiyah and Dura.

Seven police were also wounded in Abu Chir, another southern neighbourhood, in similar clashes with insurgents.

Police there later raided a house

and arrested 11 suspects, confiscating a large number of weapons and bomb-making material, said a security official.

Gunmen also attacked Baghdad's municipal offices in the city centre and clashed with guards, wounding four. They then kidnapped three others.

Five corpses were also found in the east half of the city.

Monday was the first day that traffic moved freely in Baghdad with the lifting of a curfew imposed after a series of bomb attacks on the Shiite slum of Sadr City on Thursday that killed more than 200 people.

Despite the curfew, dozens more people have been killed since

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