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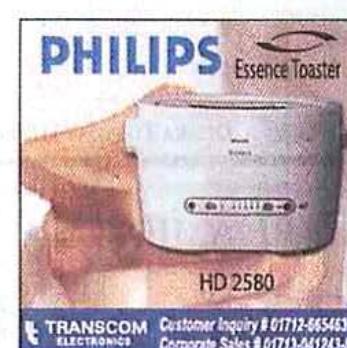
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BEFORE AND AFTER POLLING DAY Army given blanket power to arrest

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The Election Commission (EC) in an unprecedented move yesterday agreed to allow the armed forces to arrest anyone from any place without a warrant during their engagement in election duties.

The Armed Forces Division (AFD) in a proposal earlier sought the power for the army, navy and the air force for seven days including the polling day to ensure a peaceful atmosphere and security of voters in light of the existing law and order situation.

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EWG won't monitor polls sans all-party participation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Election Working Group (EWG), an alliance of NGOs that monitors polls, will not undertake any national-level election monitoring initiative if all the major political parties do not participate in the upcoming election.

The decision was taken yesterday following the directives of its donors, said the group's Media and Communication Specialist Javeed Ahsan. "There is no use monitoring a 'one-sided' election, which it is

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dismantle.

Speaking very highly of the CG, immediate past prime minister Khaleda Zia on Friday defended its steps for making changes in the top posts of the police besides changing the SPs (superintendent of police) of all 64 districts and the OCs (officers-in-charge) of metropolitan and district areas.

An analysis of the so-called reshuffle, however, shows that many police officers, who had enjoyed favour during the five-year rule of the previous government, have been given promotion and postings that involve duty during the upcoming election.

On the other hand, those who were deprived of due promotion and postings during the previous government's rule have been neglected this time also.

These deprived police officers

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