

## Admin officials hit out at judiciary separation

Demand deferment, review of implementation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Administration cadres from across the country yesterday gathered in the capital and demanded deferment and review of implementation of separation of the judiciary from the executive.

About 600 administration officials at a seminar strongly opposed stripping of their magistracy power and the process of absorbing BCS cadres in the judicial service, which sets separate provisions of job experience for administrative and judicial cadres.

Leaflets of the BCS Admin Cadre Association were circulated among the audience. The leaflets said all administration cadres will be forced to resign if the government separates the judiciary in such

discriminatory way. The cadres, however, expressed their ignorance about who distributed the leaflets.

Bangladesh Institute of Administrative Management (BIAM) foundation organised the seminar titled "Separation of Judiciary for Good Governance" at the BIAM auditorium.

Abu M Moniruzzaman Khan, rector of Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, attended the seminar as chief guest while Dr Abul Hossain, a project director of the women and children affairs ministry, presented the keynote paper. Dhaka Divisional Commissioner Ekram Ahmed presided over the function.

Speakers said at the seminar that if the government continues

with its decision to implement separation of the judiciary on November 1, there will be anarchy in delivering justice and maintaining law and order as necessary infrastructure and logistics support have not been made available.

The aggrieved field-level administrators said the administration will be weakened and there will be lawlessness if the government takes away their judicial power, including that of controlling law and order, running mobile courts and acting as magistrates during public examinations and elections.

It will also take away the local administrators' power of implementing government programmes like disaster management programmes and looking after

public has land.

"We cannot push the country towards anarchy in the name of independence of the judiciary," Magistrate Rokon-Ud-Doula said, adding that it is not possible to implement a meaningful separation of the judiciary before 2021.

On appointment of 179 new judicial magistrates, Dr Abul Hossain said in his keynote paper, "It is totally impossible to run 655 magistrate's courts with only 179 judicial magistrates."

He pointed out the discrimination in fixing the eligibility of the administration cadres and judicial cadres and opposed the provision of absorbing the BCS cadres in judicial service.

An administration cadre needs

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## Judicial service men criticise admin officials' stance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different organisations including Bangladesh Judicial Service Association yesterday strongly criticised the move of Bangladesh Administrative Service Association opposing the government step to separate judiciary from the executive.

Terming the move a "contempt of court", some of them even consider that the move initiated by the BCS (Administration) cadres' association is a challenge to the directives of the Supreme Court (SC) on judiciary separation.

Bangladesh Judicial Service Association President and Dhaka District Judge AKM Ishtiaq Husain told The Daily Star the BCS (Admin) cadres' association cannot talk on such an issue by convening a meeting.

The BCS association could raise their problems earlier or move to the SC instead of doing it now on the eve of the separation scheduled

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## Fees for national ID cards set

SHAKHAWAT LITON

A person will have to pay fees to get permanent national ID cards, the home ministry has decided.

The ministry has also finalised the draft ordinance for mandatory use of the cards.

According to the rules, a citizen will have to pay Tk 30 for a permanent paper-laminated card and Tk 40 for a copy of that card, Tk 250 for a plastic card and Tk 500 for a smart card--a small plastic card on which information is electronically stored. The charge for correction of information on the cards has been fixed at Tk 20.

Officials involved said these rules will be formulated once the mandatory use of national ID card for getting services in 19 fields is made a law.

"We have finalised the draft ordinance for making the law for mandatory use of the identity cards. The draft will be sent to the

advisory council soon for approval," a senior official told The Daily Star yesterday.

Earlier, the home ministry held a series of meetings with senior officials of other ministries concerned and the Election Commission (EC) Secretariat to discuss the draft ordinance proposed by the EC.

The home ministry formed a committee comprising officials of ministries concerned to finalise the rules. The committee headed by a senior home ministry official will sit on October 25 to finalise the draft rules, sources said.

Currently the EC is simultaneously preparing the voter list with photographs and national ID cards only for citizens eligible to be registered as voters. The registered voters will be given temporary national ID cards, which will be replaced by the permanent cards.

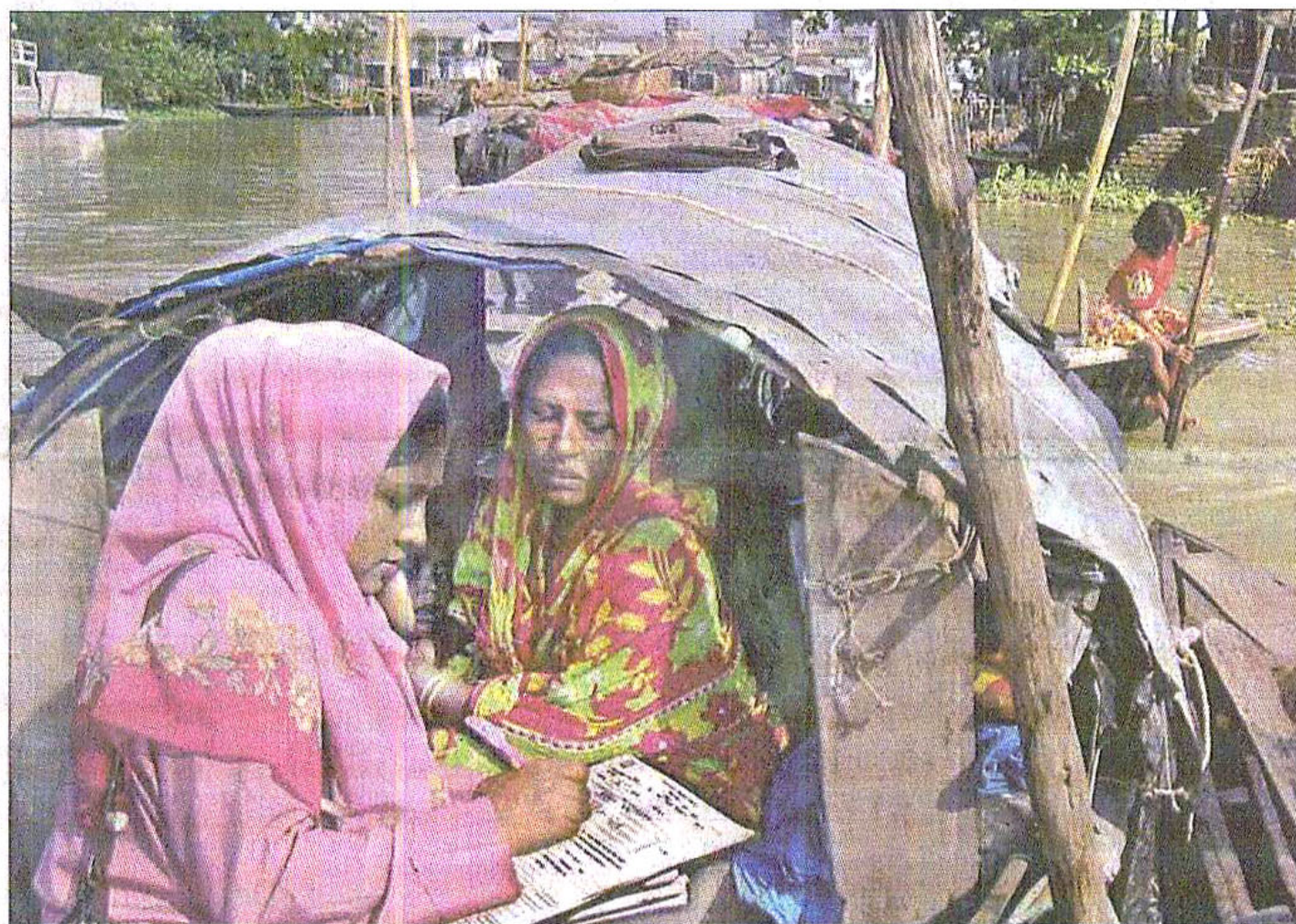
People ineligible now as voters will have to wait for an indefinite

time to get the national ID card as the responsibility of preparing national ID cards for them does not lie with the EC.

According to the draft ordinance, the government will set up a national registration and database authority for preparing the national ID cards. The authority will remain as a permanent body and continue collecting particulars of those who could not have ID cards to prepare and issue national ID cards to them.

One will have to show national ID card for getting new passport and driving licence or for their renewal, Taxpayer Identification Number, business identification number, trade licence, admit cards of public examinations, applying for jobs, opening bank accounts and getting loan from banks and micro-credit institutions, drawing government allowances, sale and purchase of land and properties,

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An enumerator yesterday enlists snake charmer river-gypsies on the Kirtankhola in Barisal for the voter list and for national ID cards.

PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

## Mainul shocked at admin opposition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Adviser Barrister Mainul Hossain yesterday said as part of the government the administrative cadres cannot oppose the move to separate the judiciary from the executive.

Asked about the seminar where the admin officials yesterday demanded that the separation be implemented in phases, he said, "They are part of the government, they should come over and talk to the government. They are not politicians, they cannot make such comments."

Currently, the separation is scheduled to take effect from November 1.

"It is not something happening out of the blue. We could not fulfil the pledge to separate the judiciary for the last 36 years," he added.

Talking to a private TV channel at his Baridhara residence yesterday, he said that if the administrative cadres had any demand they should have communicated the message to the government through representatives.

"I still think the top brass won't be willing to shoulder the blame for delaying the judiciary separation for so long," Mainul observed.

Assuring the administrative

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## Better Business Forum by next month

Aim is to involve businessmen in policymaking

MD HASAN

The government plans to set up a public-private platform styled 'Bangladesh Better Business Forum' (BBBF) by early next month to involve the business community in policymaking.

To be headed by the chief adviser, the forum will consist of government's policymakers, chief of army staff, business leaders, civil society members and economists.

A draft proposal prepared by the Chief Adviser's Office to that effect has already been sent to the business leaders for their feedback.

Earlier on September 5, Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed proposed forming the forum at a dialogue between the government and businessmen.

According to the proposal, the forum will seek to increase interaction between the business community and the government high-ups

and ensure policy supports to the investors as well as the businessmen.

For a better business climate it will work to identify problems facing the economy and recommend solutions to those.

The business leaders have welcomed the initiative that they believe will not only help restore confidence in the businessmen but also make it easier for the country to graduate to a middle-income nation.

They have already met twice to firm up their recommendations in this regard. A final proposal will be sent to the chief adviser by tomorrow.

Meanwhile, International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group dedicated to promoting sustainable private sector investment in developing countries, has recommended forming a forum modelled

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## ACC launches probe into graft of 11 fresh suspects

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has initiated preliminary enquiry into alleged graft by 11 people, including City Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka, whose names appeared on the fourth list of 35 suspects on October 4.

The ACC on October 18 tasked 11 officials with conducting the primary enquiry into their alleged graft in 10 days. The anti-corruption watchdog will issue notices to the suspects after the enquiry is completed.

Other 10 suspects are Awami League (AL) leaders Tofail Ahmed and Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, former BNP state ministers Maj (retd) Kamrul Islam and AKM Mosharraf Hossain, former adviser to caretaker government Justice Fazlul Haque, former BNP whip and former Red Crescent Society chairman Shahidul Haque Jamal, son of former finance minister M Saifur Rahman Shafiqur Rahman Babu, former chairman of Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) Taimur Alam Khandaker, former APS (1) to ex-PM Khaleda Zia Deputy Secretary Shamsul Alam and former communications secretary Rezaul Hayat.

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DG LEVEL MEET OCT 24

## BDR to press for BSF-held land in Naogaon

SHAMIM ASHRAF

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) will ask Indian Border Security Force (BSF) to hand over the demarcated Bangladesh land under their possession at Naogaon border during the upcoming director general level conference in Dhaka.

In addition, installation of border pillars along 35.5km border at Berubari and Shingpara-Khudipara in Panchagarh, demarcation of un-demarcated areas in Muhurir char, Daikhata and Lathitila and stopping smuggling of illegal firearms, explosives and

drugs into Bangladesh will also figure high during the six-day meeting starting on October 24.

Maj Gen Shakil Ahmed, DG of BDR, is going to lead the 22-member Bangladesh team while DG BSF Ashish Kumar Mitra will lead an 18-member Indian team.

The second and last conference this year of the border forces of the neighbouring countries, the meeting will be held at BDR headquarters in Dhaka. The previous conference was held in New Delhi from February 26 to March 3 this year.

BDR sources said 1200 bighas of land near Punorbhaba river at the

Naogaon border was handed over to Bangladesh after a joint commission comprising officials from both the countries during a demarcation in 2003 found it to be Bangladesh's.

However, one month into the handing over, BSF set up 12 camps there and the area is still in their possession, the sources added.

"Since setting up of the camps, Bangladesh farmers were forced to move away from the land," a journalist from the area told The Daily Star on Saturday.

The BDR officials will ask the

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## 3 hill dists to stay out of judiciary separation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Judge's court will not be introduced now in three hill districts of Bandarban, Rangamati and Khagrachhari even though the separation of judiciary will come into effect on November 1.

Although the judicial power of administrative officials will end through the separation of judiciary, deputy commissioners (DC) of the three hill districts will retain the post of "civil judge," said Abdul Majid Shah Akand, DC of Bandarban, at a view-exchange meeting with the Supreme Court's Special Monitoring Team at the

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## Polls meaningless if graft not uprooted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Army chief General Moeen U Ahmed yesterday said holding elections without uprooting corruption would be worthless, as history proves democracy is never strong or stable without honest people governing.

He urged all Bangladeshis to unite and work for the country, while speaking at a civic gathering, attended by over 400 people in Miami, United States, reports the

US-based agency NewsWorld. Gen Moeen said, "The country was rescued with the help of the patriotic military when internal enemies were trying to turn the country into a Somalia."

"It will be worthless to hold elections without uprooting corruption. That is why the government has started its drive against corruption... everyone has seen this proved in the past," he said.

He said even though the country

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## Women's group slates attack on Brac teacher by husband in NY

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad yesterday strongly condemned the recent physical and sexual assault on Brac University lecturer Nadine Murshid by her husband Sajid Huq in New York, where he is a student at Columbia University.

Sajid was arrested in New York late September for sexually abusing and physically assaulting Nadine, who is currently fighting for her life.

In a statement released yesterday, the parishad said Sajid's father has been harassing the Murshid family by filing false cases against them and issuing threats in order to pressure the Murshid family into dropping the charges against Sajid in New York.

The parishad statement, signed by 21 prominent women's rights leaders, strongly condemned the incident and urged the government and concerned ministries to

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PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Clogging and polluting of this canal in Keraniganj near Dhaka resumes after a brief break when the government launched a drive against polluters and illegal occupiers of the canal that leads to the Buriganga.

## Unity call gets louder in BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Recognising the need for party unity, the top leaders of both the old guard and the pro-reformists of the BNP are working out their differences.

The party's Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain yesterday agreed to consider formal proposal for unity from the reformists while pro-change stalwart Ashraf Hossain said they would continue their efforts to keep the party from falling apart.

"Unity is necessary to make the party strong; we'll consider any formal proposal to that effect," Delwar told reporters at his apartment.

Echoing him, expelled joint

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## AL meet today to decide on talks with EC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League Central Working Committee (ALCWC) is scheduled to meet today and decide whether the party would hold dialogue with the Election Commission (EC).

If the meeting gives the go-ahead for the dialogue, the ALCWC during the same meeting will also finalise the party's agenda of discussion as well as the names of 10 representatives taking part in the November 4 dialogue with the EC.

The ALCWC meeting is set to be held at 10:00am at the political

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