

Police scrap
PIO amid
criticism
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The police department cancelled all functions of the newly launched Political Intelligence Office (PIO) of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) in the wake of severe criticism from political parties and people of various other sectors.

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Nur Mohammad yesterday told The Daily Star, "We have decided to cancel all functions of the PIO since it drew severe criticism and protest."

"We stopped the PIO functions on August 24 to honour political party leaders and people of various sectors," the IGP said, adding, "The ordinance, however, exists."

Nur Mohammad said personnel who were designated to different

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Upazila elections from Oct 23 in two phases

200-250 upazilas go to polls in first phase; schedule on Sept 10

SHAKHAWAT LITON and
RASHIDUL HASAN

The Election Commission (EC) has finally decided to start holding the much-talked-about upazila elections from October 23, braving political parties' strong opposition to holding these polls before the national election planned for December.

In the first phase, the EC will hold elections in 200-250 of the 482 upazilas on two different dates, the commission decided at a meeting on Monday.

It has also decided to hold election to Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) alongside the upazila polls, EC sources said, adding that the date for DCC polls is yet to be fixed.

The EC has not also yet fixed the second date of the first phase polls but sources said it is likely to be October 27 or 28 and the DCC election will be held on that date.

The schedules for the upazila elections will be declared on September 10.

All major political parties including the Awami League (AL), BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami have

strongly opposed holding of upazila elections before the national elections in December.

The EC has so far completed voter registration in over 300 upazilas.

It had planned to hold elections in 300-350 upazilas but cut down the number to 200-250 fearing possible mess before the national election, EC sources said.

With the upazila election nearing, the caretaker government has already started reshuffling the civil administration according to EC

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

Parties must
get registered

Reiterates CEC
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) ATM Shamshul Huda yesterday said political parties must register with the Election Commission (EC) as the EC cannot deal with so many political parties in the country.

The CEC was talking to journalists after the inauguration function of the "First Dhaka Inter-School Debate Competition" held at St Gregory's High School in Old Dhaka.

"Registration is necessary because it is impossible for us to deal with 100 or more political parties," CEC Huda said, adding, "If there is a problem regarding registration by October 15, we can discuss it with political parties and reach a solution."

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

JS polls schedule after final voter roll

Says CA after Council of Advisers' meet in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Chief Adviser (CA) Fakhruddin Ahmed yesterday said it is the responsibility of the Election Commission (EC) to announce the schedule for national elections after completing voter list across the country.

He reiterated that the national elections would be held according to the roadmap as announced earlier.

"It is the responsibility of the Election Commission to announce the exact date of general election after finalising the voter list across the country," the CA said while briefing newsmen after holding a

meeting of the Council of Advisers at Khulna Circuit House conference room yesterday.

Chaired by the chief adviser, the meeting approved the draft of the Union Parishad Ordinance 2008. It also okayed different projects for the development of Khulna region.

The CA briefed the newsmen about some proposals and decisions endorsed by the council of advisers at the meeting.

He said construction of Padma Bridge will begin in 2010 and its design will be submitted next year. The project involves Tk 10,161 crore.

He said two projects for purchase of a cutter suction dredger at

a cost of Tk 58.56 crore and pilot boat and pilot despatch at a cost of Tk 24.70 crore are awaiting approval of the Planning Commission.

Besides, a project has been taken up at a cost of Tk 548.43 crore to project navigability of the Passur river channel of Mongla Port. The External Resources Division (ERD) has been asked to find out donor for implementation of this project as it is not possible for the government alone to provide huge money for that purpose, the CA said.

At the press briefing, the CA said it is not possible for the government to resolve gas and electricity

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

AL talks with EC Sept 4

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League (AL) will hold second round talks with the Election Commission (EC) on September 4 over issues including holding of parliamentary election before upazila polls, political parties' registration and lifting of the state of emergency.

"We want to sit with the Election Commission on September 4 as it sent a letter giving time for the talks between September 1 and 4," said AL acting General Secretary Syed Ashraful Islam.

He said the EC wants to resolve all crucial issues through discussion although it did not mention any topic for the discussion.

AL leaders said they want to discuss other issues including Representation of People's Order provisions like scrapping of front organisations and foreign chapters of political parties and option for "no" vote, national poll schedule, holding of party council, competence of the EC and its poll management and role of the army

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

ILL-GOTTEN WEALTH Manju jailed for 13yrs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A special court yesterday sentenced Jatiya Party (JP-Manju) Chairman Anwar Hossain Manju to 13 years' rigorous imprisonment (RI) for amassing wealth illegally and concealing information in his wealth statement submitted to the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

The court ordered confiscation of Manju's ill-gotten wealth worth Tk 2.10 crore.

Judge AKM Arifur Rahman of the Special Court-10 on the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban premises also fined him Tk 10 lakh, in default of which he has to serve jail term for one more year.

A former communications minister, Manju was handed down 10 years' RI for accumulating wealth beyond his known sources

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

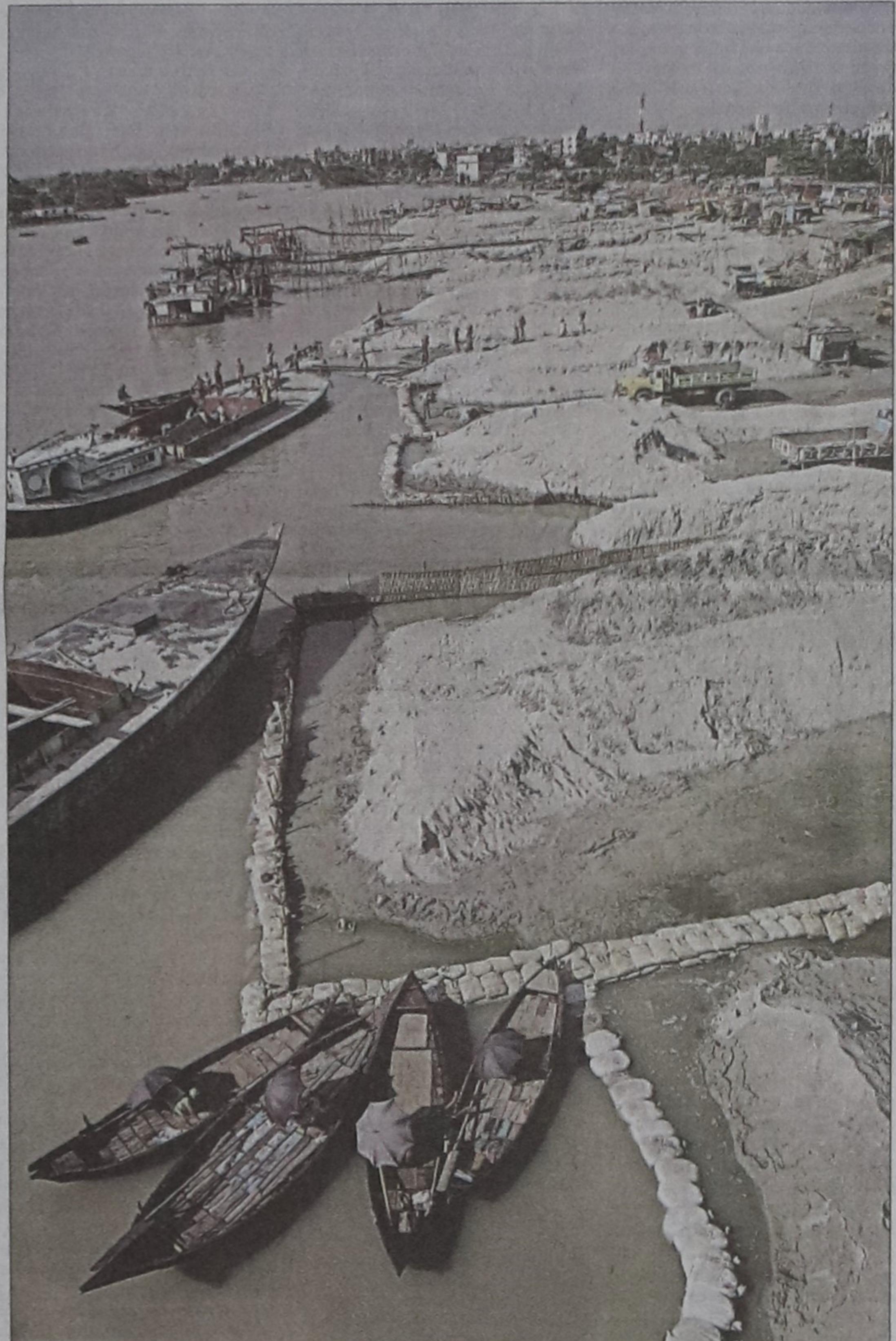


PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN
Sand traders occupy the Turag again at Amin Bazar in Dhaka even though the BIWTA evicted them several times during drives to recover encroached land of the river. The photo was taken yesterday.

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