

Remove all non-judicial staffs from law ministry

Demands Judicial Service Association

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Judicial Service Association (BJSa) yesterday said it would challenge the legality of the proposed Judicial Service Secretariat Ordinance 2008 if it is promulgated and launch agitation against it.

At an emergency meeting the BJSa also demanded removal of all non-judicial officials from the law ministry, including Secretary Kazi Habibul Awal, and appointment of judicial officials to the posts.

According to the ordinance, the judicial service secretariat headed by the chief justice will not be allowed to directly contact the president and the prime minister and must go through the law ministry to contact them regarding matters related to its functioning.

On Sunday, the council of advisers to the caretaker government gave the final approval to the ordinance, which is now waiting to be promulgated by the president.

Legal experts said if the secretariat is set up under the Supreme Court keeping the structure of Registrar's Office in place, effective control and supervision of lower courts and tribunals by the Supreme Court would be easy. The law ministry's interference might hamper the new judicial secretariat's functioning, they observed.

Dhaka District Judge Mohammad Abdul Gafur chaired the meeting held at the Jagannath-Sohel Smriti auditorium on Dhaka District Judge's Court premises. Judicial officials from different districts attended the meeting where BJSa Secretary General Md Shahjahan placed a summary of their demands.

Referring to the higher salaries of judges in the neighbouring countries, the BJSa leaders urged the government to increase salaries and benefits of the judicial officials in line with the recommendations of the Judicial Service Pay Commission.

Former BJSa president Rafiqul Islam said if the ordinance is promulgated, they would challenge its legality and that they are already prepared to file a writ

petition with the High Court.

Kushtia Additional District and Sessions Judge Mohammad Harunor Rashid said the ordinance would obstruct judicial proceedings.

Chief Judicial Magistrate of Chapainawabganj Mostafa Kamal criticised those who are trying to curtail their legal demands and proposed abstaining from work, wearing black badges and offering the president's office to press home their demands.

Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge ANM Basir Ullah resented the fact that their salaries have not increased despite the higher court's order to that end.

Judge Golam Moortuza Mojumder urged the government not to promulgate the ordinance.

Judge Mohammad Masdar Hossain blamed bureaucrats for being indifferent to the demands of the judges and asked BJSa leaders to place their demands to the proper forum.

Moulvibazar Chief Judicial Magistrate Mahbub Morshed proposed placing their demands to the next elected government. Judge Zahurul Haque said they have been trying hard to keep intact the image of the judiciary.

District Judge Sheikh Jahangir Hossain and Khan Mohammad Abdul Mannan also spoke at the meeting.

Call to vote out war criminals

DU CORRESPONDENT

Uttaradikhar '71, a platform for Dhaka University (DU) students, yesterday called on all to vote out war criminals in the upcoming national election.

"During the Liberation War, Jamaat-e-Islami leaders formed anti-liberation forces such as Razakar, Al Badr and Al-shams who killed thousands of innocent Bangladeshis and looted their property," Abu Taiyab Habilder, general secretary of the organisation, said at a press conference at Madhu's Canteen.

They also killed academicians, writers, journalists and other professionals at the fag end of the war, he added.

"As Jamaat opposed our Liberation War, it has no right to come to power," Taiyeb said.



Participants at a roundtable on 'Election and Future Bangladesh' organised by the daily Prothom Alo at its office in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

'Elect pro-liberation forces, reject war criminals'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Peshajibi Shamannay Parishad, a platform of 14 pro-Awami League professional bodies, yesterday called on the countrymen to elect pro-liberation candidates and reject war criminals and corrupts in the general elections.

Convenor of the parishad barrister Shafique Ahmed said war criminals and corrupts have been trying to create obstacles to holding the free and fair elections by delivering different statements against the December 29 polls.

He was speaking at a press conference organised by Shamannay Parishad at the National Press Club in the city.

The leaders of the parishad at the programme put forward an 11-point demand, including ensuring neutrality at all levels of the administration and congenial atmosphere for holding the election in a free and fair manner.

Replying to a question, Dr

Shuhrah Ali, in-charge of Awami League election conduction committee of Sherpur district, said they have information that Jamaat-e-Islami candidate contesting in Sherpur-1 constituency has been purchasing votes by distributing cash through the local union parishad chairman.

He said they will file complaints with the Election Commission (EC) against the Jamaat candidate on charge of violating the electoral code of conduct.

Member secretary of the organisation Dr Kamrul Hasan Khan demanded that the government and EC ensure equal media facilities for all the political parties contesting in the election, all-time security for AL chief Sheikh Hasina and the family members of Bangabandhu, special security for the religious minority voters and maintenance of the electoral code of conduct.

He said it is unforgettable the



(From left) Actor Ilyas Kanchan, Barrister Rafiq-ul Haq, Prof Dr AR Khan and Dr Arup Ratan Chowdhury launch a book titled 'Tamak Pata O Dhupan' at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

WOMEN CANDIDATES

Call for more media coverage

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Women in Politics, a newly formed political platform, yesterday called for more media coverage of women candidates in the upcoming national election.

The organisation has established a monitoring cell with a view to assisting all the 49 women candidates in the fray, its leaders said at a meet the press programme at a city hotel.

"We are ready to provide all kinds of assistance to them," said Nahid Nazrul, convenor of the organisation, which also had tried to persuade major political parties to nominate more women candidates.

Women in Politics will give direct support to its three members who are contesting the national election. They are Ajmeri Begum Chhanda, a candidate of Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh for Dhaka-7

constituency, Tasmin Rana, an independent candidate for Madaripur-3, and Rehana Akter Hira of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal in Jhenidah-2 constituency.

Presenting the keynote paper, Member Secretary Syeda Fatema Salam Banu called on the media to give more coverage of all women candidates in the national election as well as upazila election.

The objective of this organisation is to raise awareness among the political parties and among the women about more participation of women in politics and their empowerment, its members said.

Adviser to Women in Politics Naima Khandaker, joint convenor Maksuda Ferdous Khan Elina and spokesperson Mehjabin Rahman also spoke at the programme.



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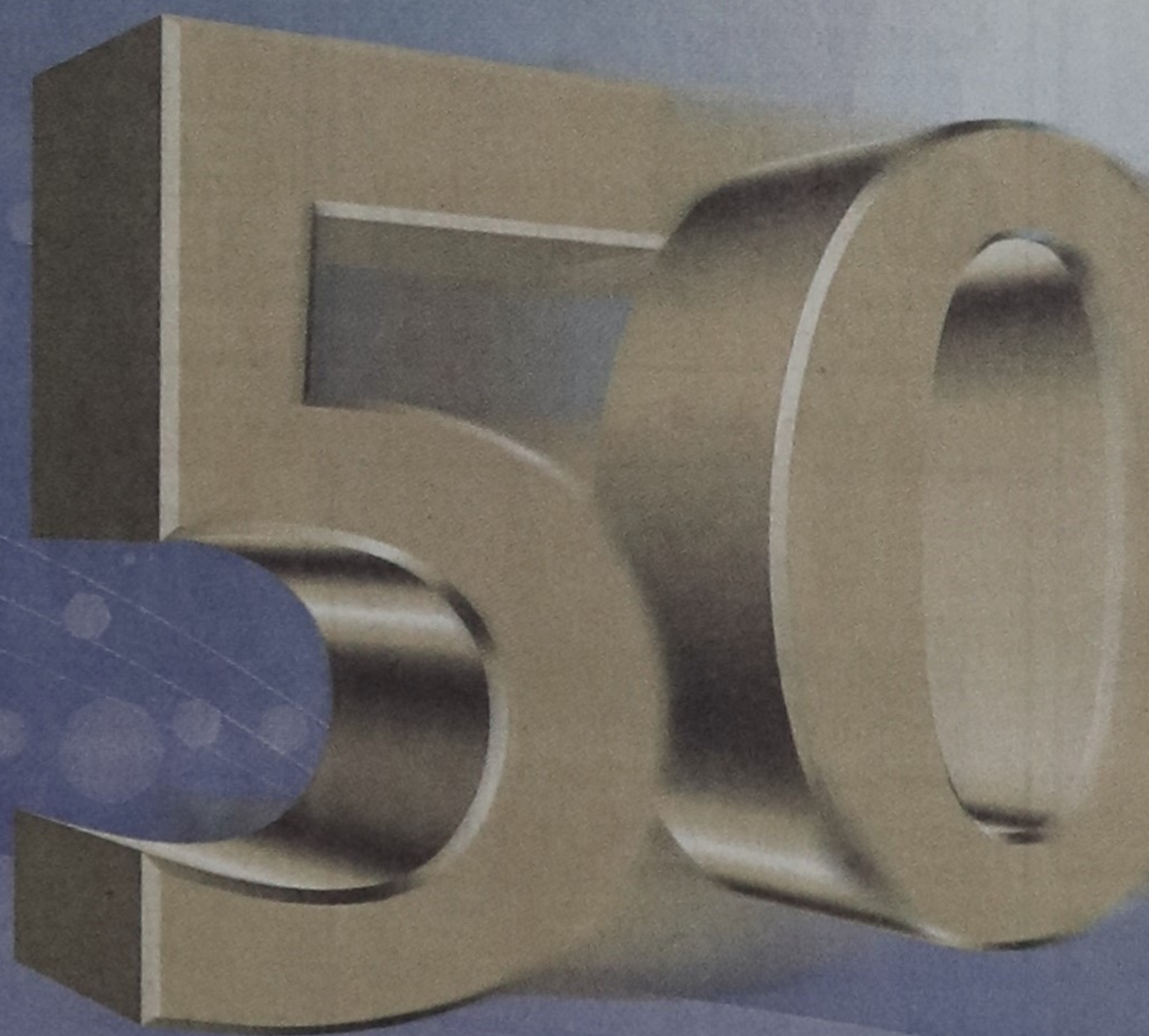
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