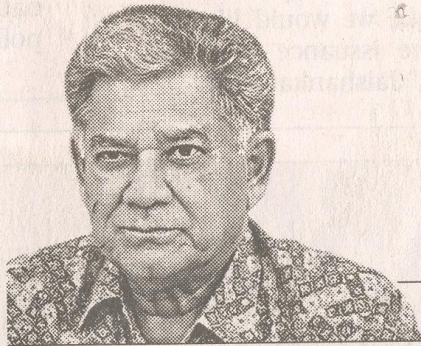




# The sudden move to empower Ansar is concerning



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The proposed Ansar Battalion Bill, 2023 is a deeply concerning move, especially given the upcoming election, growing political agitation, and the demands not to hold an election under the ruling government. The government's insistence on a free and fair election is belied by its actions.

The bill is likely unconstitutional and inconsistent with the Code of Criminal Procedure (CRPC). Giving Ansar the authority to arrest and search civilians is not acceptable. Ansar is not trained, designed, or structured to practice this kind of authority. We have the police force for that—the constitution and the CRPC

gives them this authority. So, are they going to change the CRPC next?

It is also unclear why it is being introduced now when there is political pressure from both within and outside the country. Are the Ansar, who are not trained or structured for law enforcement, being primed to be used unfairly against the opposition during the election season? Will they

be used to repress political opponents in rural areas and across the country?

The police are already accountable for numerous allegations of misconduct, but at least they are subject to oversight. How can the Ansar be made accountable?

The army is far better trained and coordinated than the Ansar, yet they have never had the power to arrest, even under martial law. The government's decision to grant the Ansar these powers is therefore highly questionable.

Members of the police have already expressed dissatisfaction with the proposed bill, and it is understandable why. If the Ansar are given similar powers and responsibilities, who will be responsible for what? What will the hierarchy and chain of command be like on the field?

This move will not help the government in the long run. It will instead put their credibility and their promise to conduct a free and fair election on trial. The government must rethink before implementing this bill.

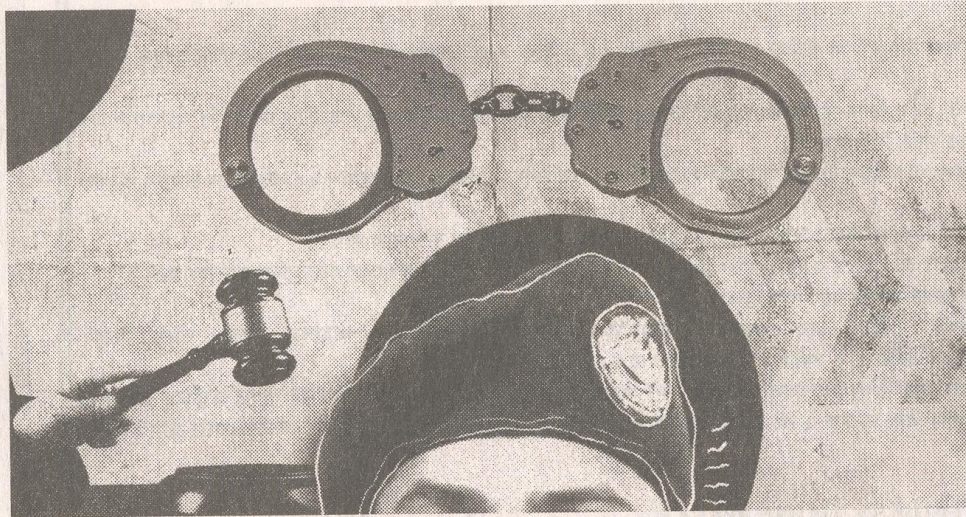


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