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## REFORM PROPOSALS

# BNP opposes two-term cap on prime minister

Suggests one cannot be PM for three consecutive terms, submits feedback to consensus commission

WASIM BIN HABIB, MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA and SAJJAD HOSSAIN

The BNP does not agree with the reform proposal that an individual cannot be the prime minister more than twice.

In the comment section of the spreadsheet provided by the National Consensus Commission, the party wrote, "We disagree. Regarding the prime minister's tenure, it would be enough to have a rule stipulating that one person will not be deemed eligible to be the prime minister for three consecutive terms."

The proposal sent by the commission says, "An individual can be the prime minister two times at most. Consecutively or through any other means, the individual cannot be the prime minister more than twice."

The BNP's reply seems to imply that a person can serve more than two terms as the PM, as long as there is a break after two consecutive terms.

It also disagrees with the commission's proposal that one cannot be the PM, leader of house, and the chief of a political party at the same time. It says this matter is something for the party concerned to decide.

"Imposing constitutional restrictions on political parties is contrary to the core essence of parliamentary democracy," reads the party's feedback on the reform proposals.

The consensus commission on March 6 wrote to the BNP and 36 other parties, seeking their feedback on 166 key reform proposals relating to



Dejected Palestinians amid the rubble and debris at the site of Israeli strikes in the previous night at the Nuseirat refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip yesterday. Story on page 14.

PHOTO: AFP

## THE FEEDBACK

- ➔ No need for National Constitution Commission
- ➔ Agrees with proposal for bicameral legislature
- ➔ Agrees with increasing women's reserved seat to 100
- ➔ Disagrees with lowering minimum age to run for office
- ➔ Disagrees with proposed fundamental principles

the constitution, election system, public administration, Anti-Corruption Commission, and judiciary.

The parties were asked to come up with their feedback by March 13.

The BNP submitted its feedback yesterday. So far, 15 other parties have submitted theirs.

BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed handed over the feedback to Prof Ali Riaz, co-chairman of the National Consensus Commission, at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

Salahuddin afterwards told reporters that BNP submitted its feedback as well as detailed opinions on five reform commission's proposals. "We will submit detailed feedback on the remaining reform proposals in a few days," he said.

The party does not deem it necessary to form a National Constitutional Council to handle the appointments to the Anti-Corruption Commission and Election Commission, and the posts of the chiefs of the army, navy, and air force.

It agrees with the reform commission's proposal for an interim government and its tenure, opining that an elected parliament should make amendments to the constitution to this end.

In principle, the BNP also agrees with the recommendation for a bicameral legislature with a 400-seat lower house, or the National Assembly, and a 105-seat upper house or Senate, and the four-year tenure of both houses. But this matter too must be discussed by elected MPs.

The BNP also supports the proposal for increasing reserved seats for

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## Unease at NCP over Hasnat, Sarjis's posts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A sense of unease prevails within the National Citizen Party (NCP) over the differing statements coming from its leaders regarding a meeting with the army chief on March 11.

The disclosure of such "confidential" matters on social media without prior discussion at party forum has irked many leaders, while some view the Facebook posts as attempts to gain "personal popularity", said insiders.

In a Facebook post early Friday, NCP leader Hasnat Abdullah alleged a conspiracy was afoot to bring the Awami League back into politics at the behest of India. A proposal for accommodating a "refined" AL was pitched to them at a meeting in the cantonment.

Hasnat's remarks touched off an intense political debate and also demonstrations for a ban on the AL.

Against this backdrop, NCP Chief Coordinator Nasiruddin Patwary at an event in Sylhet on Saturday said Hasnat's statement should not have appeared on social media, saying it was "inappropriate".

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## CONSENSUS COMMISSION NCP presses on for constituent assembly

Agrees with 113 of 166 proposals; CPB objects to changes in preamble

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Citizen Party (NCP) has agreed to 113 of the 166 key reform proposals that the National Consensus Commission has collated from various reform commissions.

The newly formed party stated that recommendations unrelated to the constitution could be implemented through ordinances, while constitutional matters would require a constituent assembly election.

Around 2:00pm yesterday, the party submitted its written opinions to the consensus commission at the LD Hall inside the parliament. Sarwar Tushar, NCP joint convener and coordinator of its reform coordination committee, later briefed

journalists.

The NCP partially agreed with 29 proposals, recording their opinions in the consensus commission's spreadsheet and providing explanations on their disagreements.

**"A July charter will be prepared based on consensus. However, some vital proposals will be excluded. Our question is, what will the commission's stance be on those proposals?"**  
— NCP Joint Convener Sarwar Tushar

classified by the government as not requiring dialogue. "On what basis was this determined?" he asked.

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## India knew of anti-Hasina wave but could not interfere Says Jaishankar

STAR DESK

India was aware of an anti-Hasina wave building up in Bangladesh ahead of the overthrow of her government on August 5, India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar told the Consultative Committee on External Affairs.

But India was not in a position to do much as it lacked the necessary leverage over Hasina, who could only be "advised", he told members of parliament on Saturday, reports The Hindu.

Jaishankar cited the UN Human Rights Chief Volker Türk's recent remarks about the UN warning the Bangladesh army against a confrontation with unarmed protesters during



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Dhaka police began installing wheel-locking traps at entry points of key roads yesterday to stop rickshaws from causing traffic jams on major thoroughfares. The photo shows a rickshaw stuck on one such trap installed near Ramna Police Station on Shaheed Captain Mansur Ali Sarani.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## ১০ম মৃত্যুবার্ষিকী

আমাদের সম্মানিত সাবেক চেয়ারম্যান  
জনাব রেজাউল করিম আনসারী-এর  
প্রয়াণের ১০ বছর পূর্ণ হলো।  
তিনি ২২ মার্চ ২০১৫ সালে  
আমাদের ছেড়ে চলে যান।  
আমরা গভীর শ্রদ্ধার সাথে  
তাকে স্মরণ করছি।  
পরম করুণাময় আল্লাহ যেন  
তাকে জান্নাত নসিব করেন।

যমুনা ব্যাংক