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## We're in war-like situation: Yunus

At talks with parties, organisations, CA cites plots at home, abroad since AL ban

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday said the country had been in a state of war since imposing the ban on the activities of the Awami League.

"A war-like situation emerged both inside and outside the country, preventing us from moving forward, causing everything to collapse, and pushing us back into subservience," Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam quoted Prof Yunus as saying last night.

The CA said this at meetings with political parties yesterday, according to Shafiqul.

Prof Yunus met 20 leaders of different political parties and organisations in two separate sessions at state guest house Jamuna.

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**"There have been relentless efforts to destabilise the situation. We must protect ourselves from this."**

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus



Employees from various ministries and departments stage a demonstration inside the Secretariat for the second consecutive day yesterday, protesting the approval of the "Public Service (Amendment) Ordinance-2025".

PHOTO: STAR

### BUSINESS

#### NBR officials call off shutdown

Officials of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) called off their planned shutdown yesterday evening, following a government pledge to transform the board into a "specialised and autonomous agency" rather than dissolving it.

The officials, protesting under the banner of the "NBR Reform Unity Council", had earlier threatened a complete suspension of operations from today unless their four-point demand was met.

STORY ON B1

### JULY KILLINGS

#### Charges pressed against eight cops at ICT

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday took cognisance of charges against eight police officers for crimes against humanity, marking a significant step forward in the trial process over offences committed during last year's July uprising.

The tribunal accepted the charges just hours after prosecutors, for the first time, pressed formal charges against then Dhaka Metropolitan Police commissioner Habibur Rahman and his subordinates over the killings of six people in the capital's Chankharpul area on August 5 last year.

The accused face charges of conspiracy, incitement, abetment, and complicity in the murders that day, when tens of thousands of protesters marched in Dhaka, ultimately toppling the Sheikh Hasina-led administration and forcing her to flee to India. Four senior police officers face additional charges under the doctrine of command responsibility.

"The formal judicial proceedings concerning crimes against humanity committed in July-August last year have commenced today [yesterday] before the reconstituted tribunal," Chief Prosecutor Tajul Islam told reporters after proceedings ended for the day.

The three-member tribunal, headed by Justice Md Golam Mortuza Mozumder, fixed June 3 to resume the hearing. It also issued an arrest warrant against Habibur.

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### PUBLIC SERVICE ACT

## Ordinance out amid Secretariat protests

BAHARAM KHAN

The government last night issued an ordinance allowing dismissal of public servants for administrative disruptions within 14 days and without departmental proceedings.

The Public Service (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025, was gazetted hours after employees protested the move at the Secretariat, four days after the advisory council approved its draft.

One employee leader told The Daily Star that they would discuss the next course of action today, while another said they would resume protests this morning.

The protesting employees said they were left in the lurch despite demonstrations inside the Secretariat for the second consecutive day yesterday, and even after meeting four advisers.

Yesterday's protests lasted from morning until 1:30pm. Officers and staffers started gathering in front of building No. 6 at the Secretariat's Badamtola at 9:30am. After around an hour, members of the Secretariat Officers and Employees Joint Council, brought out a procession and marched

through the Cabinet Division, the new building, and the clinic building, before stopping at building No. 11. After a brief stay there, the procession circled various areas of the Secretariat.

Protest leaders met with Housing Adviser Adilur Rahman Khan, Home Adviser Jahangir Alam Chowdhury, and Commerce Adviser Sk Bashir Uddin. However, no solution was found.

Home Adviser Jahangir told reporters at his ministry, "The Awami League government amended the Government Service Act in 2018 to manipulate the election. Now, the government feels it is necessary to amend the law again. However, if employees have any concerns, a decision will be made through discussions."

The ordinance, an amendment to the Public Service Act, 2018, revives provisions of the Government Servants (Special Provisions) Ordinance, 1979, though in a slightly relaxed form.

Sources in the public administration ministry said the government introduced these amendments to streamline disciplinary action for civil servants, as the current seven or eight-

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#### Polls must be held by December

#### Says Tarique

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday said the national election must be held by December and hoped that the polls would be free and fair.

The head of the interim government is an individual who is admired at home and abroad, Tarique said, adding, "I hope the people will witness the freest and fairest national election in history under his leadership."

Citizens must raise their voices for their rights and the people are not at the mercy of the government, he said, addressing a discussion held by the National People's Party via a video link.

"The government is, of course, obligated to listen to the people and meet

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## Internal democracy lies at the heart of NCP charter

#### Party may publish it this week; priority on decentralised governance

MASHFIQ MIZAN

The National Citizen Party is set to unveil its charter this week, prioritising democracy within the organisation and presenting a vision for a "New Bangladesh" built on youth-driven decentralised governance.

The party's preamble intertwines its philosophy with three defining chapters of the nation's history—1947, 1971, and 2024.



**The year 1947 marked the beginning of our political self-assertion, 1971 was the culmination of our independence, and 2024 gave us the opportunity to build a new state system.**

Draft charter of the NCP

"The year 1947 marked the beginning of our political self-assertion, 1971 was the culmination of our independence, and 2024 is our opportunity to build a new state system," reads the preamble of the 39-page draft charter.

These three historical events should be pieced together to shape a democratic, inclusive, and self-sustaining state, it adds.

The party seeks to introduce a three-term limit for its top leader, who will be elected through triennial councils.

Javed Rasin, head of the party's charter drafting committee, said, "We want to prioritise internal democracy. To that end, we have drafted the charter in a way that ensures all key leaders are elected and are held accountable."

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### DSCC MAYOR

#### Oath-taking likely this week

#### Say multiple LGRD ministry sources; Nagar Bhaban remains closed

DIPAN NANDY

Officials of the local government ministry are discussing when BNP leader Ishraque Hossain will be sworn in.

The officials on Saturday received a High Court order which cleared Ishraque's path to become the mayor of Dhaka South City Corporation.

The ministry has yet to set a date for the ceremony. But multiple sources at the ministry said the oath-taking may take place within this week, if all formalities are completed in time.

Meanwhile, Nagar Bhaban remained closed yesterday due to protests by Ishraque's supporters and

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Palestinians transport their belongings as they flee the northern Gaza Strip toward the south along the coastal al-Rashid road yesterday. Rescuers in Gaza said eight people were killed and dozens more wounded in Israeli air strikes across the Palestinian territory yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Focus should be on key reforms only

#### Civil society members tell consensus commission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Civil society representatives in a dialogue with the National Consensus Commission yesterday urged the interim government to prioritise essential reforms, saying it was unlikely that consensus could be reached on all issues.

At the same time, they also emphasised that political support was crucial to ensure the continuation of all reform efforts undertaken during this period.

Meanwhile, speakers also urged the interim government to refrain from amending the constitution, arguing that such actions must be left to elected representatives to avoid future complications.

These recommendations came during a discussion between the consensus commission and members of civil society at the Krishibid Institution of Bangladesh in the capital.

Maj Gen (retd) ANM Muniruzzaman, president of the Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies, "At this point, only necessary and practical reforms should be carried out. Overstepping that boundary could worsen an already complex situation."

He stressed that the transition to democracy must remain the central goal. "One of the core aspirations behind the July uprising was the restoration of democracy. The reforms we pursue must reflect that goal."

He added, "We can't assume that every reform is possible right now. We must prioritise those that are feasible. And those reforms will be sustainable unless it is backed by political consensus."

On constitutional amendments, he said, "Only those elected through

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