

CONSENSUS TALKS Poor progress may delay July Charter

MOHUDDIN ALAMGIR and MD ABBAS

Political parties have failed to reach an agreement on any reform proposals for the fifth consecutive day of the consensus talks.

This casts doubt on whether the National Consensus Commission will be able to release the July Charter, a document outlining reform proposals agreed upon by the parties, by the end of next month, as expected.

The consensus commission yesterday held talks with 30 political parties at the Foreign Service Academy in the capital. It was the seventh day of the second round of talks on reforms.

The commission initially planned to finalise the charter by July 16 and then aimed for the end of the month, said a member, requesting anonymity.

Since the discussions began on June 2, nine issues have been discussed so far, and the parties have agreed on only two.

The commission has plans to hold discussions over a dozen other matters in the coming days.

The delays are mainly caused by issues and conditions raised by the parties, said a commission member.



We made progress in certain areas over the last week. To be honest, we are still somewhat behind in making the kind of progress we had hoped for.

Prof Ali Riaz

Vice-chairman of National Consensus Commission

"If talks go on at this pace, it will be difficult for us to prepare the Charter by July," the member added.

At the beginning of the discussion yesterday, Prof Ali Riaz, vice-chairman of the consensus commission, said, "We made progress in certain areas over the last week. To be honest, we are still somewhat behind in making the kind of progress we had hoped for."

He said he was uncertain about when the much anticipated July Charter would be signed.

"There's only one day left before the month of July begins. The commission is committed. We hoped to sign the charter collectively on the death anniversary of Abu Sayed [July 16]. Whether that will be possible depends on you [political parties]. We may not be able to achieve that. We must reach a conclusion within July," Prof Riaz said.

He emphasised that achieving progress was crucial because "none of us want to go back to where we were".

He urged political parties to bear in mind that the commission was not

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



With customs employees on strike, operations at Chattogram port come to a halt, leaving hundreds of lorries parked idle in the surrounding area yesterday. The strike was called off last night. More on B1.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

NCP to unveil declaration of July on Aug 3

Nahid blames govt for 'failing to deliver'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Citizen Party (NCP) has decided to announce the "July declaration" on August 3.

Criticising the interim government for failing to uphold its promise to issue the July Charter within 30 working days, NCP Convener Nahid Islam said, "Since the government has failed, we will not rely

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

NBR officials end strike after govt warning

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Following a stern government warning and mounting pressure from the country's top business leaders, officials of the National Board of Revenue have withdrawn their shutdown.

The announcement came from the NBR Reform Unity Council, the platform spearheading the protests, after a meeting with business leaders at the Bangladesh Chamber of Industries (BCI) in Tejgaon yesterday evening. Before this meeting, the business leaders sat with Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed at his office.

In a statement, the protest leaders said they decided to withdraw the complete shutdown "in view of broader

economic and public interest", and requests from the business leaders. But the group has expressed hope that positive momentum will continue to achieve "comprehensive and sustainable reform" of the revenue system.

BCI President Anwar Ul-Alam Chowdhury (Parvez) said they tried to understand the demands of protesting officials. He also said the country had to face such a crisis due to "some misunderstandings".

"In our discussions, we addressed the logical and legal aspects of their concerns. The government has assured them of considering their demands," he said.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 5

MURADNAGAR RAPE
Govt pledges a swift trial amid public uproar

STAR REPORT

In the wake of nationwide outrage, the government yesterday said it would ensure a speedy trial of those who raped, assaulted, and filmed a 21-year-old woman in Cumilla's Muradnagar upazila.

Also yesterday, the High Court issued directives for the government to see to the rape survivor's safety. It ordered the relevant authorities to remove the video, audio and photos related to the incident from all social media and digital platforms within 24 hours.

In response to a writ petition, the court also asked the authorities concerned to turn in a report after complying with the directives within 15 days.

The HC further issued a rule asking the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

New CrPC rules to prevent false cases: law adviser

STAR REPORT



New rules have been added to the Code of Criminal Procedure to prevent the filing of false cases and the harassment of innocent people, Law Adviser Prof Asif Nazrul said yesterday.

"An amendment to the CrPC has been presented at the advisory council meeting. We are embarrassed by some of the things that happened under our government, and we try to address these issues," Prof Asif told a press briefing after the advisory

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

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EDITORIAL/25