



Parties agree to cap PM's term at 10yrs

Reach consensus on independent police commission

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR and MD ABBAS

Political parties have agreed that no individual can serve as prime minister for more than 10 years during their lifetime.

On the 19th day of the second phase of political dialogue, held at the Foreign Service Academy in Dhaka yesterday, they also agreed, in principle, to the formation of an independent police commission.

However, the discussion over the fundamental principles of the state in the constitution turned into a heated debate, as four leftist parties strongly objected to the National Consensus Commission's new proposal on the matter.

During the talks, consensus commission Vice-President Prof Ali Riaz said all the parties have reached an agreement on capping the number

- Leftist parties oppose changes to basic principles
- Draft National Charter to be sent to parties today
- Consensus reached on 12 issues: Ali Riaz

of years someone can serve as prime minister to 10 during their lifetime.

The commission first proposed that no individual can be prime minister for more than two terms. Disagreeing with the proposal, the BNP proposed that a person can serve more than two terms, as long as there is a break after two consecutive terms.

On June 23, all the political parties, except the BNP and two others, agreed that an individual cannot be the prime minister for over 10 years. On that day, BNP leaders did not support the 10-year cap. But they have changed their minds.

Jamaat Assistant Secretary General Maulana Rafiqul Islam Khan and National Citizen Party (NCP) Member Secretary Akhtar Hossen said their parties supported the 10-year cap.

POLICE COMMISSION

On the proposal to form an independent police commission, Prof Riaz said, "We will now hold discussions on its structure and formation process," adding that the police commission will ensure transparency,

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Teachers returning school bags and other belongings that children left behind during the tragic jet crash at Milestone School & College in Uttara's Diabari. A week after the crash, the campus remains closed, and the decision to reopen is yet to be made. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

Education at Rohingya camps in disarray

Fund crunch leads to suspension of classes, reduction in class hours at 6,400 learning centres

PORIMOL PALMA, MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and MOKAMMEL SHUVO

More than 400,000 Rohingya children now face uncertainty over schooling, as around 6,400 NGO-run informal schools at refugee camps in Cox's Bazar have either suspended classes or drastically reduced class hours due to a fund

crunch.

UNICEF and Save the Children, which supervise the informal schools known as learning centres, on June 3 suspended classes for students from kindergarten to class 4. The decision came after hundreds of teachers protested the dismissal of 1,100 colleagues amid aid cuts affecting over a million

refugees in Cox's Bazar.

Of the 8,000 teachers employed at the centres, 3,900 were Bangladeshi nationals and the rest Rohingyas.

According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, \$72 million is required to cover educational expenses this

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Dhaka plans to buy 25 Boeing jets as trade talks enter final phase

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA and RASHIDUL HASAN

Bangladesh has expanded its plan to buy Boeing aircraft from 14 to 25 in a last-ditch effort to persuade the Trump administration to lower tariffs on its exports ahead of the August 1 deadline.

A high-level delegation led by Commerce Adviser Sk Bashir Uddin is scheduled to depart for Washington today for a final round of trade negotiations. The three-day meeting with the United States Trade Representative (USTR), beginning Tuesday, is aimed at securing a favourable duty structure for the country, whose exports to the US exceed \$8 billion annually.

The other members of the delegation are Commerce Secretary Mahbubur Rahman, National Security Adviser Khalilur Rahman and an additional secretary of the commerce

Biman is not aware of the purchase of 25 aircraft from Boeing.

ABM Raoshan Kabir, Biman's general manager of public relations

ministry. Some private sector entrepreneurs, including garment exporters, may also join the delegation, but they will not be inside the negotiation room.

The aircraft purchase plan is the centrepiece of a package offered by Dhaka to narrow a trade deficit, with US imports standing at \$2 billion. But Biman Bangladesh Airlines said it has no clue about the developments.

In a significant move on July 20, Bangladesh signed an agreement with US Wheat Associates to purchase 700,000 tonnes of US wheat annually for the next five years. Bangladesh has also agreed to increase imports of LNG and cotton, and offered zero import duty on some US goods.

Commerce Secretary Mahbubur Rahman
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Makeshift stalls have taken over the pavement of Mirpur Road outside the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases in the capital. This inconveniences patients and their relatives entering and exiting the hospital and pedestrians. With several other public hospitals located along the same stretch, the pavement sees heavy foot traffic daily. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

EXTORTION ALLEGATIONS SAD suspends activities of all committees except central Umama says rot runs deep

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students Against Discrimination (SAD), the platform that led last year's mass uprising, has suspended activities of all its committees across the country, except its central committee, amid extortion allegations against some of its leaders and activists.

SAD President Rifat Rashid announced the decision at an emergency press conference outside the National Museum in Shahbagh yesterday evening.

"We have observed several incidents, including yesterday's [Saturday], where individuals tried to misuse the SAD banner for unethical activities," said Rifat.

"We had warned from the beginning that such actions would not be tolerated. Unfortunately, under the influence of political parties, some members engaged in corrupt practices, which have now become nearly impossible for us to control," he added.

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Road crashes, deaths unabated as laws, guidelines ignored

6.26 lakh unfit vehicles threaten road safety

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Anarchy and indiscipline continue to plague the transport sector, largely due to the non-implementation or poor enforcement of laws, regulations, and government directives. This makes roads increasingly hazardous and causes thousands of deaths and injuries each year.

A few lakh unfit and outdated vehicles are operating across the country while drivers, many of whom do not have licences, often engage in speeding due to lax monitoring and enforcement of the law.

7TH ANNIVERSARY OF ROAD SAFETY MOVEMENT

At least 6.26 lakh vehicles did not get their fitness certificates as of July 24 this year, according to Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) data.

On the other hand, 80,309 vehicles, or 27 percent of total registered commercial vehicles have already exceeded their economic life, according to BRTA data updated on July 16.

With a large number of unfit and outdated vehicles still on the roads, road crashes and fatalities have continued unabated.

Against the backdrop, the country is going to observe tomorrow the seventh anniversary of the road safety movement, when

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WELCOMES
ITS NEW CHAIRMAN

Hossain Khaled

A seasoned entrepreneur and the Bank's current Vice Chairman, Mr. Khaled is the Group Managing Director of Anwar Group, one of the country's leading conglomerates, and a former President of the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI).

We look forward to a new era of growth under his visionary leadership.