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Complete reforms in 2yrs after polls

Political parties urged in draft July Charter; their opinions sought

MD ABBAS

The National Consensus Commission has called on political parties to pledge to complete all constitutional and legal reforms to be outlined in the July National Charter within two years of assuming office through the next general election.

It has prepared a draft of the long-awaited charter and sent it to the parties, saying they must also commit to ensuring long-term sustainability of these reforms. The Daily Star has obtained a copy of the draft.

Additionally, parties are urged to recognise and "enshrine the historical importance of the 2024 anti-discrimination democratic movement and popular uprising in the constitution with due prominence".

Speaking to The Daily Star yesterday, the commission's Vice-President Prof Ali Riaz said they sent the draft to the political parties so that they can go through it and review the language.

"After the completion of the ongoing

Parties must commit to ensuring long-term sustainability of reforms

They are urged to recognise, enshrine July uprising in constitution

Caretaker govt formation, upper house issues remain unresolved

talks, we will incorporate the issues, on which there will be consensus, into the charter," he said.

As the commission is expected to finalise the charter by July 31, it asked the political parties to send their opinions by Wednesday.

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Knee-deep in water, autorickshaws make their way through a submerged street in Chattogram city's Katalganj area. Persistent rainfall under monsoon influence caused waterlogging in much of the port city's low-lying areas yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

'July Proclamation likely by Aug 5'

MD ABBAS

The government is likely to issue the July Proclamation by August 5, in which it will recognise the fall of Awami League regime in the face of a mass uprising last year.

A reliable source told The Daily Star that the government earlier this month sent a draft of the July Proclamation to several political parties, including the BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami, and the NCP and requested feedback.

Based on their responses, a final draft has been prepared and resubmitted to the parties for their final opinions within the next couple of days.

The BNP had proposed that the July Proclamation be annexed as the Fourth Schedule of the constitution. While that demand may not be fully adopted, the proclamation will contain a paragraph recognising the mass uprising as a legitimate transformation of power, the source said.

The NCP supports incorporating the entire proclamation into the constitution's preamble, while Jamaat backs the idea of granting constitutional legitimacy to the July uprising.

According to leaders of the parties involved, the proclamation contains 27 key clauses.

In the first draft sent to the parties, it was mentioned that the Awami League was overthrown under the "leadership" of the Students Against Discrimination, to which the BNP objected.

In the second draft, the term "leadership" was changed with "call".

The proclamation will also acknowledge the struggles of opposition parties, like the BNP and Jamaat, during Sheikh Hasina's 15-year rule.

Following BNP's input, the draft proclamation included recognition of the soldiers' uprising on November 7, 1975, and the fifth amendment to the constitution enacted by president Ziaur Rahman's administration in 1979.

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July being used as a moneymaking machine: Umama

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former spokesperson for Students Against Discrimination (SAD) Umama Fatema yesterday alleged corruption among the platform's leaders.

She said she was "used like a tissue paper or a doormat" and claimed all key decisions came from Hare Road, where the government's advisers reside.

Umama made the remarks during a Facebook Live from her verified account early yesterday. She spoke about the circumstances under which she joined SAD as spokesperson and what she experienced afterward.

She served as spokesperson for SAD's first committee, formed in September last year following the July uprising. She left the committee and the platform altogether in June this year.

Umama was also one of the key coordinators during the uprising. Earlier, she served as member secretary of the Bangladesh Students Federation's Dhaka University unit, a post she left before joining SAD.

In the 2.20-hour long video, Umama described her time with SAD as a "tragic



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Parties still split over caretaker, PSC, ACC setup

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Political parties are yet to agree on the appointment process for key constitutional and statutory bodies, including the Public Service Commission, the Anti-Corruption Commission, and the Comptroller and Auditor General.

Despite 20 days in the second round of talks between political parties and the National Consensus Commission, the structure of the caretaker government system is still unresolved. Only three days remain before the commission's July 31 deadline for finalising the "July Charter" ends.

Yesterday, Jamaat-e-Islami proposed a new method for forming the caretaker government. For the chief adviser selection, the party suggested that if a unanimous decision cannot be reached by the proposed five-member committee, the panel members can go for open ballot rank-choice voting system, a method where voters rank candidates in order of preference.

According to Jamaat, this approach would reduce the risk of "horse trading" and promote greater transparency.

Meanwhile, the BNP walked out of the consensus commission

The BNP walked out of the consensus commission dialogue session yesterday, protesting the tabling of appointment of Ombudsman and formation of three key constitutional bodies. The party rejoined the talks around 12:30pm.

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Govt set to reshuffle admin ahead of polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will carry out key administrative reshuffles ahead of the upcoming national election and will provide specialised training to around 150,000 police personnel to ensure proper execution of polls duties.

The decisions were made yesterday at a meeting, presided over by Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus, reviewing the law-and-order situation and preparations of law enforcement agencies for the election.

It was also decided that around 60,000 army personnel will be deployed to bolster election security.

"They will act primarily as a striking force to maintain law and order," Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam told reporters after the meeting at State Guest House Jamuna.

Army personnel have been active in the field since early August and have magistracy powers, he said, adding that with robust coordination between the army, police, and civil administration,

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FILE PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

INSIDE THE JULY UPRISING

Women led, the nation followed

TANGILA TASNIM

With clenched fists and fierce voices, a group of fearless women stood before the locked gates of their residential halls on the night of July 14, 2024. There were no commands, no central leader -- only rage and a deep sense of injustice. They broke through the gates and poured into the streets.

"Tumi ke, ami ke? Rajakar, Rajakar!" Their cry ignited a fire that swept across

Dhaka University's women's halls. Male students soon followed, rallying at the Raju Memorial Sculpture.

There was no script. Yet from Ruqayyah Hall to Eden College, from garment factories in Gazipur to campuses in Chattogram and Sylhet, women marched, shouted, shielded, bled -- and led.

This was no ordinary student protest. The July 2024 uprising has come to be seen as a landmark in women-led resistance.

Across cities, women weren't just present -- they were pivotal.

"When the former prime minister called us -- ordinary students -- traitors, my blood felt like boiling," said Nasrin Akhter, a master's student at Ruqayyah Hall. "That night, we made our own decision. We broke the locks of our hall gate and came out. I felt there was no room for silence anymore."

The breakout unleashed a tidal wave. By dawn, the movement had outgrown

campus walls.

On July 15, students from Eden, Badrunnesa, Dhaka College, and City College gathered at the Raju Sculpture. The ruling party's student wing, Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), had a separate rally, but the general students stood their ground.

"They came at us with hockey sticks and knives," said Lamia Raihan, a third-year student at Eden. "We were unarmed, but

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THE JULY THAT ROCKED BANGLADESH

JULY 29, 2024

Protesters return, undeterred

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

On July 29, 2024, the Awami League-led 14-party alliance recommended that the government ban Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing, Islami Chhatra Shibir, citing their alleged involvement in anti-state activities.

On the same day, the High Court expressed strong displeasure

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