



"We continue to call for sustained, safe, and unhindered access for medical aid into and across Gaza... Peace is the best medicine."

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus



DHAKA FRIDAY AUGUST 1, 2025

REGD. No. DA 781

VOL. XXXV No. 188

SRABAN 17, 1432 BS

www.thedailystar.net

SAFAR 6, 1447 HJRI

20 PAGES: Tk 15.00

NAT'L CONSENSUS COMMISSION

Accord reached, dissent noted

Final day sees 7 issues settled, 6 with reservations

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR and MD ABBAS

Marking a crucial step in the reform initiative, political parties yesterday reached consensus on seven key issues, including the appointment of the caretaker government chief, formation of an upper house, and election of the president.

However, six of the agreements carried notes of dissent, mostly from the BNP and allies.

Over two months of negotiations led by the National Consensus Commission, parties have now agreed on 19 reform issues including those aimed at balancing executive power, restructuring state institutions, and restoring public trust in governance.

The issues include the procedure for appointing an election-time caretaker government, imposing a 10-year term limit for the prime minister, barring party chiefs from holding the prime minister's post, and establishing a bicameral legislature.

After the final day of talks at the Foreign Service Academy in Dhaka yesterday, National Consensus Commission Vice-President Prof Ali Riaz said, "Today, the majority of political parties reached an agreement on seven issues, although several parties, including the BNP, expressed dissent on six of them."

The commission said most of the parties have agreed to form a committee to select the chief adviser to the polls time caretaker government, while the BNP and its allies have partially agreed to the proposal.

The parties also agreed to form a 100-member upper house of parliament through the proportional representation system based on total votes obtained by parties in lower house polls.

During the talks yesterday, the participants agreed to incorporate constitutional provisions for appointing the heads of four constitutional and statutory bodies.

These are the Public Service Commission, the Anti-Corruption Commission, the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General, and the Ombudsman's office.

AGREEMENT WITH NOTE OF DISSSENT

- How chief adviser of CG will be picked
- PR system for a 100-member upper house
- Party chief can't serve as prime minister
- Most senior judge of SC to be chief justice
- Women's representation in parliament

ALL PARTIES AGREE TO

- "Equality, human dignity, social justice, democracy, and religious freedom and harmony" must be included as basic principles
- None can serve as PM for more than 10 years
- MPs can vote against party lines, except on no-confidence motions, finance bills
- Opposition MPs will chair 4 key standing committees
- Permanent HC benches in every division
- Presidential clemency power regulated through a law
- President will be elected in secret voting by both houses



TIMELINE OF TALKS

- National Consensus Commission formed on Feb 2
- First round of talks held between Mar 20 and May 19
- Commission held 44 meetings with 32 parties, alliances
- Consensus reached in first round on 62 issues
- Second round held between June 3 and July 31
- Commission held 23 meetings with 30 parties, alliances
- Agreements reached on 19 major proposals

Polls date 'within a few days'

Says Asif Nazrul; CA's press secy says next 5/6 days crucial for country

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Adviser Prof Asif Nazrul yesterday said the date for the upcoming parliamentary election will be announced within a few days.



"Just wait, [you] will hear the announcement of the election date within a few days," he said in response to a question at a press conference where he highlighted his ministry's achievements over the past year.

When asked whether the people can vote this time, the adviser said, "Of course. Everyone will be able to cast their vote."

He said people in the country, including himself, have not been able to vote in the last 18 years.

"I used to go to class and ask my students who had voted, and they would burst into laughter. Some would claim to have cast 10 to 12 votes each,

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

Inflation, tariff risks keep Bangladesh on tight monetary path

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Bank has held its key policy repo rate steady at 10 percent for the first half of the current fiscal year, reaffirming its commitment to a tight monetary stance aimed at curbing persistent inflation, weak private investment, and growing uncertainty over global trade.

"Until inflation comes below 7 percent, the policy repo rate will remain unchanged," the central bank said in its half-yearly monetary policy statement yesterday. It added that a downward adjustment may be considered later, if inflation eases and the real interest rate reaches a more sustainable level.

The repo rate is the rate at which banks borrow money from the central bank for short-term needs. The central bank uses the rate to control inflation by curbing the flow of money.

In the monetary policy statement, the central bank signalled flexibility in response to future external shocks. "If exports weaken due to tariff shocks and the weaker global growth outlook, accompanied by depreciation pressures, Bangladesh Bank will adjust the policy rate as needed to cushion the

- The repo rate remains unchanged at 10%
- Governor says economic stability must come before rate cuts
- US tariffs and global demand weakness are major risks

short-term impact while safely guiding its inflation objectives," it said.

After peaking at 11.66 percent in July 2024, inflation eased to 8.48 percent by June 2025, falling below 9 percent for the first time in over two years. However, the central bank remains cautious about underlying risks, especially from currency depreciation and the knock-on effects of US tariffs, warning that the "deceleration in inflation" may not be

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



Fakhrul warns repeat of 1/11, urges timely election

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday expressed concern that if the people are not united and careful, a recurrence of an incident like 1/11 cannot be written off.

Urging the chief adviser not to delay more, he said if the national polls are not held by February next year, there is a possibility that Prof Muhammad Yunus's reputation could be harmed.

At another event, BNP acting chairman Tarique

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

NOTE: Figures likely underestimate total injuries.

DHAKA DIVISION	6,545 injuries (highest recorded)
CHATTOGRAM	1,826
RANGPUR	1,301
KHULNA	1,282
RAJSHAHI	1,191
SYLHET	794
MYMENSINGH	441
BARISHAL	431

INJURY CATEGORIES & COMPENSATION DISBURSED



FILE PHOTO

CATEGORY A - Severe disabilities
Total affected: 602 individuals
Types of injuries: Loss of eye/hand/leg, full blindness, critical impairment preventing independent living
Entitlement: One-time grant of Tk 5 lakh
Disbursed so far: Tk 2 lakh per person
Total payout: Tk 9.86 crore

CATEGORY B - Serious but partial impairments
Total affected: 1,118 individuals
Types of injuries: Partial visual impairment, serious brain injuries
Entitlement: Tk 3 lakh grant
Disbursed so far: Tk 1 lakh per person
Total payout: Tk 9.08 crore

CATEGORY C - Recovered victims
Total affected: 12,080 individuals
Condition: Injured but recovered ability to work
Entitlement: Tk 1 lakh per person
Total payout: Tk 106.42 crore

SOURCES: DGHS MIS, LIBERATION WAR AFFAIRS MINISTRY

JULY UPRISING

The wounds that are yet to heal, one year on

NILIMA JAHAN

This week marks one year since 15-year-old Md Shahin Alam's life was forever changed - not by illness or accident, but by a bullet that tore through his left leg during a rally on August 5, 2024.

He was unarmed and part of a jubilant crowd outside Uttara East Police Station during the Victory March that followed the fall of the Awami League government.

Today, Shahin lies bedridden at the National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation (NITOR), his leg still held in external fixators after eight surgeries. With no clear timeline for recovery, his future is clouded by pain, poverty, and uncertainty.

A 10th grader from Mymensingh, Shahin had been visiting his parents in Dhaka during school holidays. His father pulls a rickshaw. His mother, a domestic helper, quit her job to care for him full time.

"It was around 4:00pm," Shahin recalled. "They fired tear gas first. I couldn't move. Then a policeman shot me just below the knee. I collapsed on the spot."

Doctors say the fixator may be removed soon, but will likely be replaced, possibly more than once.

Shahin spends his days mostly idle, scrolling through short videos on his phone. "I can stand a

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4



THE CULTURAL FLAMES OF JULY

When tyranny tightened its grip and blood stained the streets, the country's cultural vanguards rose. Artists from film, music, theatre, and television didn't stay silent - they stood tall and united. As the regime unleashed internet blackouts, mobile shutdowns, curfews, and a storm of fear, these voices of resistance lit a fire. They marched with placards, defied the silence, and turned art into defiance.

READ STORY ON PAGE 10