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WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

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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.



Our target was to conclude discussions by July 31, and we have successfully done so. We will prepare the full version of the July Charter soon and share it with political parties.

PROF ALI RIAZ, vice president, consensus commission

AGREEMENT WITH NOTE OF DISSENT

- 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,

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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

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

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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

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NOTE: Figures likely underestimate total injuries.

INJURY CATEGORIES & COMPENSATION DISBURSED



FILE PHOTO

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

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

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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.

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