



ELECTION in February

Yunus announces in his address to the nation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus last night announced that the next general election will be held in February 2026, kickstarting the process of transferring

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The chief adviser said that his government will begin mental and



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Prof Muhammad Yunus

power to an elected government.

"On behalf of the interim government, I will send a letter to the chief election commissioner, requesting that the Election Commission hold the national election before next Ramadan in February 2026," he said in a televised address to the nation marking one year of the July Uprising.

Ramadan will begin on February 17 or 18 next year, subject to the sighting of the moon, which means the election is likely to be held in the first half of February.

Prof Yunus announced the much-anticipated election timeframe just hours after unveiling the July Declaration, which calls for constitutional and state recognition of the 2024 student-led mass uprising that ended Sheikh Hasina's rule.

"We want to make the election day like an Eid festival. This time, the joy of voting will be among everyone. All of you will go

institutional preparations from today to ensure that this election becomes memorable in the country's history in terms of joy and festivity, peace and order, voter turnout, and mutual respect and sincerity.

"Please pray that the election is held peacefully so that every citizen of the country moves forward in building a new Bangladesh. On behalf of the government, we will extend all-out support and cooperation to ensure that the election is held in a fair, peaceful, and festive manner," he said.

"For many years, we could not vote. This time, we all will vote. No one will be left out," Yunus said. Emphasising the value of every single vote, he urged the people to cast their ballots to set the country on the path to building a new Bangladesh.

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Crowds burst into celebration yesterday at Manik Mia Avenue, marking one year since the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led regime. The first July Mass Uprising Day became a canvas of red and green as people rejoiced in the victory achieved from last year's historic movement. PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

BNP, other parties hail polls timeline

Jamaat, NCP yet to react

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP yesterday welcomed the chief adviser's announcement to hold the national election in February, while Jamaat-e-Islami and the National Citizen Party refrained from issuing any official statement.

Leaders of Jamaat and NCP said they had held internal discussions on the Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus's speech regarding the election timeline and would announce their formal stance soon.

Meanwhile, five political parties -- BNP, Nagorik Oikya, Ganosamhati Andolon, Islami Andolan Bangladesh, and the Amar Bangladesh Party (AB Party) -- said the

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July Declaration to get constitutional recognition

Prof Yunus unveils document; uprising heroes to have legal protection

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday read out the July Declaration, saying that constitutional and state recognition would be granted to the 2024 student-led mass uprising.

"The people of Bangladesh desire that the student-people's uprising of 2024 will receive proper state and constitutional recognition, and that the July Declaration will feature in the

schedule of the reformed constitution by the government formed through the next national election," Prof Yunus read from the document.

He added that the declaration was formulated to reflect the aspirations of the people of Bangladesh, victorious in the mass uprising of August 5, 2024.

Leaders of political parties, including the BNP, National Citizen Party, and

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Flanked by political leaders and others, Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus reads out the July Declaration at the South Plaza of the National Parliament building yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: CA PRESS WING

JULY MASS UPRISING DAY Flags, flares and freedom take over Manik Mia

SAJJAD HOSSAIN and
SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

Just as the clock struck 2:25pm, a wave of jubilation swept through Manik Mia Avenue in Dhaka as slogans rang out and hundreds of balloons floated skyward, all commemorating the anniversary of the historic day when deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina fled the country.

Exactly one year ago, she had boarded a military helicopter and later fled to India, following intense student-led protests.

To mark yesterday's July Uprising Day, observed as a public holiday, thousands gathered with drums, slogans, and flags. Families of martyrs, ordinary citizens, activists, and political leaders joined the event, vowing to build a discrimination-free Bangladesh.

On the final day of the "36 Days of July", as uprising leaders termed it, the government and various political groups organised programmes across the country. District administrations also

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Star COMMENTS

Election shines a path forward

Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus has finally provided what Bangladesh has needed most: clarity about a general election. In his televised speech yesterday, Yunus announced a plan to hold the next election in February. In doing so, he began "the most important and final chapter" of his administration -- the process of transferring power to an elected government. This single act, coming on the anniversary of the previous government's collapse, replaces a year of uncertainty with a clear timeframe for transition to democracy.

The nation can now rally around two fundamental and inseparable goals: the promise of a return to representative rule and the urgent necessity of reforms, especially in governance, anti-corruption, and policing. These are the twin pillars upon which a stable future must be built. An election without reforms risks a return to the flawed politics of the past, while reforms without the legitimacy of an elected government would remain fragile.

The months leading to the February election should be a period of progress in reforms. It's a crucial window to implement the key institutional changes already underway. Equally vital is progress on justice, as Yunus emphasised, to ensure accountability for past atrocities.

The election announcement will also be a much-needed boost to economic confidence. For the past year, both

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