



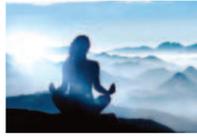
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# Divisions widen over July Charter's status, implementation

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR and RASHIDUL HASAN

Major political parties are divided over the July Charter's implementation timeline and its standing in relation to the constitution and existing laws.

Giving the July Charter precedence over the constitution would set a "negative" precedent, the BNP said in its official feedback on the final draft prepared by the National Consensus Commission.

The party also opposes any provision barring legal challenges to the charter in court.

BNP Standing Committee Member Salahuddin Ahmed said the bid to allow the July Charter to override the constitution is illogical and unacceptable.

"Can a consensus document be treated as a 'supra-constitutional instrument' — one that stands above the constitution itself?" he said at a press conference regarding BNP's feedback on the final draft of the charter on Tuesday.

On the other hand, Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami supported the commission's proposal that the charter take precedence in the event of a conflict with existing laws or the constitution.

"Because the July Charter contains all the aspirations and expectations of the nation and the people," Ahsanul Mahboob Zubair, assistant secretary general of Jamaat, told The Daily Star.

Many major changes were incorporated in the July Charter in comparison to the constitution.

"That's why the charter must be given preference over the constitution," he added.

The Communist Party of Bangladesh, Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal (Marxist) and the 12-Party Alliance all opposed the commission's proposal to grant the July Charter precedence over the constitution and existing laws.

The National Citizen Party wants a new constitution enacted by a new constituent assembly. That constitution should have a provision stipulating that there can't be any amendment that conflicts with the July Charter.

"The new constitution that will be framed through the constituent assembly should function as the guiding principle for resolving all national issues," said Javed Rasin, joint convener of the NCP.

On August 16, the commission sent the final draft of the July National Charter to political parties, without specifying a deadline for implementing the proposed reforms, a shift from its earlier stance.

The commission urged political parties to incorporate all provisions of the charter and its decisions into the constitution. If there is any conflict between the charter and existing laws or the constitution, the charter will take precedence.



- So far, 24 parties submit feedback
- Commission to sit with experts, parties again
- Jamaat, NCP for full implementation before the upcoming election
- BNP says the next parliament should deal with the constitutional issues

"Since the method by which all provisions, principles, and decisions of this charter would be incorporated into the constitution has not been specified, we do not agree with this clause," the NCP said in its feedback to the consensus commission.

All provisions, principles, and decisions of this charter must be incorporated into the constitution through a constituent assembly election, the party proposed.

"All recommendations should be implemented before the election and formalised through a constituent assembly," said Javed Rasin.

Regarding the implementation timeline of the July charter, Salahuddin said that the election schedule will be announced in mid-December. Until then, the few months available are sufficient for drafting laws and regulations.

"All ordinances can be issued within one or one and a half months, and executive orders can be implemented. It would be better not to include the phrase "before the national parliamentary election" in the charter."

But issues related to constitution changes should be implemented through the next national parliament, he said.

Jamaat and the NCP said they prefer full implementation of the charter before the polls.

The NCP in its feedback said the commission has proposed that the recommendations deemed "immediately implementable" be carried out by the interim government and relevant authorities without any delay.

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Boys scrape the bottom of large pots to get some food at a charity kitchen in Gaza City yesterday, amid widespread hunger in the tiny Palestinian territory. Story on page 12.

PHOTO: AFP

## STUDENT UNION ELECTIONS

### JCD panel delayed over internal feud

SAKIB AHMED

The Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, long absent from Jahangirnagar University campus politics, has yet to announce a panel for the upcoming Jucusu election, though



submissions closed on August 21.

According to sources, internal feuds are the main reason for the delay.

The JCD last formed a full-fledged JU committee in 2007. A new one was announced on January 8

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### Housing, food may top the manifestos

MAHATHIR MOHAMMED

Panels contesting Ducusu election are signalling key reform priorities in their upcoming manifestos, including accommodation, food quality, research, campus safety, employment, transport and administrative overhaul.

The university is set to publish the final list of candidates on August 26, with formal campaigning beginning the same day. At least nine panels have been announced, alongside several independents.

While most panels are yet to unveil their manifestos, leaders are already outlining pledges in conversations with students and the media.

The Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal-backed panel has pledged to transform Dhaka University into a fully residential university. Its VP candidate Abidul Islam Khan said, "When the full manifesto is unveiled, you'll see it all. For now, one thing that will be included in our manifesto is uprooting the culture of guest rooms and common rooms [gono rooms] permanently."

The panel's VP, general secretary and assistant general secretary candidates visited three hall canteens yesterday. "While I ate there, I tried to identify problems myself and also spoke to students to include solutions in our manifesto," GS candidate Tanvir Baree Hamim told The Daily Star.

Abu Baker Mojumder, GS candidate of Boishommo Birodhi Shikharthi Sangsad, backed by Bangladesh Gonatantrik Chhatra Sangsad, said, "This panel is different from others in terms of political



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### Tensions swirl on campus ahead of Rucusu polls

NUR AHSAN MRIDUL

As the Rajshahi University Central Students' Union polls are set to take place after 35 long years on



রাজশাহী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

September 15, protests, disputes and various demands have gripped the campus.

Since the election date was announced in late July, student organisations have been scrambling to secure positions with excitement

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## Ties based on mutual interests stressed

**Pak deputy PM meet NCP, Jamaat, BNP leaders**

DIPLMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of political parties met Pakistan Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar in Dhaka yesterday, where both sides discussed strengthening bilateral ties on the basis of mutual respect and interest.



Delegations of the National Citizen Party (NCP), Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami, and BNP met with the Pakistani at the Pakistan High Commission.

After the meeting, NCP National Member Secretary Akhtar Hossen said Pakistan should resolve the unresolved issues of 1971 with Bangladesh to advance bilateral ties. "We believe that any move to strengthen ties must address the 1971 issue. We raised that matter with them," he told reporters.

He said the NCP sees scope to build a friendly relationship between the two nations but stressed that the perception of Bangladesh's people must be handled "in the most sensitive manner."

Akhtar said, "We tried to present to them the perception of the people of Bangladesh about Pakistan. The NCP believes that there is room for improvement in the previously held hostile relations between Pakistan and Bangladesh."

The three unresolved issues are Pakistan's formal apology for the 1971 genocide and atrocities,

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BGB patrols the Naf River in Teknaf to prevent possible Rohingya infiltration yesterday morning.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF BGB

## Threat of fresh Rohingya influx looms as clashes erupt in Myanmar

MOKAMMEL SHUVO, Cox's Bazar

Gunfire and explosions were heard late Friday night from villages across the border in Myanmar opposite Whykong union in Teknaf upazila of Cox's Bazar. Residents, gripped by panic, reported that this was the most intense gunfire they had heard in months.



Quoting their relatives in Rakhine, community leaders (Majhis) at Teknaf Rohingya camps said armed clashes broke out between the Arakan Army and Rohingya armed groups on the opposite side of Whykong from Friday night until early yesterday morning.

They said it was the fourth such clash in the past month amid reports of Myanmar junta troops preparing to retake parts of Rakhine.

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