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## Pledge not to challenge July Charter in court

### Consensus commission asks political parties

MD ABBAS

The National Consensus Commission (NCC) in its July Charter has sought firm commitments from political parties that they will not challenge the legality or necessity of the July Charter in court and that they will ensure legal and constitutional safeguards at every stage of its implementation.

The commission has also called for constitutional and state recognition of the people's uninterrupted 16-year struggle for democracy, human rights and the rule of law, which culminated in the July uprising.

The final version of the charter and its implementation process have yet to be sent to the political parties, The Daily Star has learnt from people familiar with the proceedings.

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## NATIONAL POLLS

# 42,618 centres to be set up

### EC publishes draft list

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission yesterday published the draft list of polling centres for the upcoming 13th national election, setting the figure at 42,618.

The draft list will remain open for claims and objections until September 25, while the final list will be announced on October 20, said EC Senior Secretary Akhtar Ahmed at Nirbachan Bhaban in the capital.

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Displaced Palestinians flee amid an Israeli military operation, after Israeli forces ordered residents of Gaza City to evacuate to the south. The photo was taken in Gaza City yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Israel strikes Yemen after Doha

Huthis say 35 killed in attack; Tel Aviv vows to 'act against its enemies anywhere'

AFP, Jerusalem

Israel yesterday warned its enemies they were not safe anywhere, a day after strikes targeting Hamas leaders in Qatar -- a US ally -- drew a rare rebuke from President Donald Trump.

Defence Minister Israel Katz vowed that Israel would "act against its enemies anywhere", while Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu urged Qatar to expel Hamas officials or hold them to account, "because if you don't, we will".

Israel's military said it struck Huthi rebel targets in Yemen yesterday, including in the capital Sanaa, as AFP journalists reported strikes on the Huthi

armed forces' media operation.

In a statement, the army said its targets included "military camps in which operatives of the terrorist regime were identified, the Huthis' military public relations headquarters and a fuel storage facility" used by the group.

The rebel-run health ministry in Sanaa said at least 35 people were killed and more than 130 wounded in the Israeli strikes.

Palestinian group Hamas said six people were killed in Tuesday's strikes on Qatar, but its senior leaders had survived, affirming "the enemy's failure to assassinate our brothers in the negotiating delegation".

The White House said Trump did not agree with Israel's decision to take military action and had warned Qatar in advance of the incoming strikes.

But Doha said it had not received the warning from Washington until the attack was already under way.

Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, Danny Danon, sought to justify the decision, telling an Israeli radio station: "We don't always act in the interests of the United States."

"It was not an attack on Qatar; it was an attack on Hamas," Danon told I03FM, adding: "It is too early to comment on the outcome, but the decision is the right one."

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## Procurement reforms aim to cut graft

### Says CEO of Public Procurement Authority

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government aims to eliminate political influence and reduce corruption in public procurement through key reforms in the draft Public Procurement Rules (PPR) 2025, said SM Moinuddin Ahmed, chief executive officer of the Bangladesh Public Procurement Authority (BPPA), yesterday.

Speaking at a views-exchange meeting at the IMED conference room, Moinuddin said a major revision is the removal of the controversial 10 percent plus-minus price provision from the 2016 rules.

"That clause made it difficult to prevent political interference and enabled manipulation of bids in favour of certain contractors. Even officials used it to their advantage by exploiting legal loopholes," he said.

To address these issues, the government plans to introduce a fully digital procurement system. This includes an electronic content management platform and an e-payment system allowing contractors to submit bills and performance securities online, eliminating the need for physical contact with officials.

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PHOTO: MOSTAFA SHABUJ

Farmers walk in a line across a muddy rice field, each balancing bundles of freshly harvested Aush paddy on their shoulders in Mahadevpur upazila of Naogaon yesterday. This season, Naogaon farmers cultivated the Aush paddy on 58,696 hectares -- more than any other district in the north. According to the local agricultural department, Naogaon is expected to see a yield of nearly 265,000 tonnes of Aush paddy this season.

## NBR seizes Hasina's locker in Pubali Bank

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Central Intelligence Cell (CIC) of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) yesterday took control of a locker belonging to former prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

The locker is at the Motijheel branch of Pubali Bank, a senior official told The Daily Star.

He said locker number 128 was traced to Pubali Bank's Sena Kalyan Bhaban branch under Hasina's name.

Of the two keys associated with the locker, one remains in her possession. So, the CIC could not open the locker.

"As the locker can only be opened by matching both keys and Hasina is now a fugitive, we will proceed in line with the law to open the locker," the official said.

The move comes as the NBR launched an inquiry into the allegations of tax evasion by deposed PM Hasina, who fled to India following a student-led mass uprising.

The tax authority has frozen the bank accounts of Hasina as part of the investigation, officials said.

## Protests grip France as new PM starts job

AFP, Paris

France's new Prime Minister Sebastien Lecornu was set to take office yesterday as protesters took to the streets in a show of grassroots opposition to President Emmanuel Macron, sparking clashes with police and dozens of arrests.

The demonstrations, led by a loose left-wing collective under the slogan "Block Everything", are a baptism of fire for Lecornu, 39, a close ally of Macron and defence minister for the past three years.

France deployed some 80,000 police nationwide as protesters in and around Paris built barricades from rubbish bins, blocked schools and roads and pelted police with garbage early in the day.



In the southeastern city of Lyon, protesters blocked a road running through the city and set bins on fire, while in the western city of Nantes police used tear gas to disperse protesters.

Interior Minister Bruno Retailleau warned demonstrators that there would be "zero tolerance" for violence.

By mid-morning, close to 200 arrests had been made, Retailleau told reporters, most of them in and around Paris.

In the southern port city of Marseille, police stopped some 200 demonstrators from blockading a main road. Macron's decision to name a close ally as prime minister was a "slap in the face", said Florent, a protester in Lyon who gave only his first name. "We need change," he said.

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