



# Cloud hangs over the signing of July charter

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Uncertainty looms over the signing of the July charter, slated for tomorrow, as parties are still at odds over its implementation mechanisms and the timing of the proposed referendum.

At an emergency meeting, chaired by Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday evening, the major political parties reiterated their firm but conflicting stances on how the charter should be implemented.

The BNP called for the referendum to be held concurrently with the national elections, expected in early February, and said it was ready to sign the charter.

Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami insisted that the referendum be held next month. It added that it would notify whether it would sign the charter tomorrow, the day the charter is scheduled to be signed.

NCP said it would consider signing the charter only once the implementation pathways and the issue of notes of dissent were clarified.

Four left-leaning parties said they would not sign, citing concerns, including the proposed reforms not upholding the 1972 constitution's four foundational principles – nationalism, socialism, democracy, and secularism.

At the meeting, convened by the National Consensus Commission and attended by 30 parties, Yunus said the consensus reached in the July charter would be inscribed “in red letters” in the history of Bangladesh and would also stand as a landmark in global political history. He proposed that “the pens used by party leaders to sign the charter be preserved as symbolic artefacts.”

The chief adviser expressed optimism that the signing ceremony of the “July National Charter 2025” would become an occasion for national celebration. “You [the parties] have

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## WHERE THE PARTIES STAND

- ➔ BNP ready to sign July Charter
- ➔ Jamaat to announce decision on signing day
- ➔ NCP will sign only after clarity on implementation and dissents
- ➔ Four left parties will not sign

**You have made what seemed impossible possible. We will join the ceremony on Friday in a festive mood and sign it.**

Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus



Firefighters spraying water on the still-burning chemical warehouse in Mirpur. The photo was taken at 8:00am yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## Seven teenage workers among dead, missing

NILIMA JAHAN

At least seven of those killed or missing in the Arian Fashion fire in the capital's Rupnagar were aged between 13 and 18.

All school dropouts, they were working for wages of some Tk 7,500 a month, well below the legal minimum for the ready-made garments sector.

Under the Bangladesh Labour Act 2006, employment of anyone under the age of 14 is prohibited.

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**PROLONGED INACTION, RECURRING FIRE TRAGEDIES  
BURN INJURIES CLAIM FOUR LIVES A DAY: GOVT REPORT**

## MIRPUR FACTORY FIRE Chemical fumes still in the air

Shialbari residents urged to evacuate; blaze under control after 27hrs

KEERO ADHNAN AHMED and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

The massive fire that swept through a chemical warehouse and an adjacent garment factory in Shialbari of the capital's Mirpur was brought under control yesterday – 27 hours after it broke out.

However, with toxic fumes still billowing from the site, the area

remains highly dangerous.

Lt Col Mohammad Tajul Islam Chowdhury, director (operations and maintenance) of Fire Service and Civil Defence, said the blaze was contained around 2:20pm, but it would take another 36 to 72 hours to completely extinguish the fire and conduct a search operation inside the warehouse.

He added that public

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Teachers of MPO-listed educational institutions break through a police barricade at Shahbagh intersection in the capital yesterday. They are demanding house rent 20 percent of their basic salaries.

PHOTO: STAR

## MPO teachers threaten march to Jamuna today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Agitating teachers from MPO-listed institutions yesterday threatened to march towards Jamuna, the chief adviser's residence, to press home their demands, including a 20 percent house rent allowance based on their basic salary.

Delwar Hossain Azizi, member secretary of the Alliance for Nationalisation of MPO Institutions – the platform leading the demonstration – announced around 5:00pm, shortly before ending their three-hour blockade at Shahbagh intersection.

“If the government does not issue a gazette notification by 12:00 noon tomorrow [Thursday], we will march towards Jamuna,” Azizi told the protesters. “If the gazette is not issued, we will not confine ourselves to the three-point demand; we will rather launch a one-point demand – nationalisation.”

“No one will be able to stop us from pursuing our legitimate demand. If necessary, we will even risk our lives.”

Their three-point demand includes a 20 percent house rent allowance for

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## Counting underway in Cucsu polls

Voting largely peaceful with some allegations of mismanagement

MD ABBAS and SM MAHFUZ AHMED

The Chittagong University Central Students' Union (Cucsu) and hall council elections were held mostly peacefully yesterday.

However, several student panels brought allegations of mismanagement against the university administration and the Election Commission.

Polling began about 30 minutes later than scheduled, but concluded at 4:00pm as planned. Around 70 percent of registered students cast their votes at 15 polling centres across five faculty buildings, according to election officials.

Vote counting started around 5:15pm in the presence of polling agents, with the process monitored through CCTV cameras, said Election Commissioner Anwar Hossain.

Some groups, including the Chhatra Dal panel, lodged complaints about ballots lacking official signatures, erasable ink, and overall mismanagement, said Chief Election Commissioner Monir Uddin.

Three student panels – Boichitrer Oikya, Droho Parishad, and Ahingsho Shikharthi Ekota – also accused the administration and the EC of bias.

“We are seeing many signs that the election was not fair – the administration has not done its job properly,” said Dhruvo Barua, the VP candidate from the Boichitrer Oikya panel.

He also brought allegations of irregularities against both the Shibir-supported and Chhatra Dal-supported panels.

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**ONLY 5 DAYS LEFT!**

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**BRAC BANK The Daily Star**

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