



"My whole life, I've made deals. I think we're going to have this one done, hopefully soon."

DONALD TRUMP on meeting with Vladimir Putin for peace in Ukraine

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## July charter signed, NCP stays away

24 parties including BNP, Jamaat ink landmark document for state reform; 4 left parties skip ceremony; Gono Forum abstains from signing



Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus, flanked by Consensus Commission Vice President Ali Riaz and political party leaders, holds up the July National Charter just after it was signed by 24 parties at the South Plaza of Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban yesterday. PHOTO: CA PRESS WING

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In a display of political unity, 24 parties signed the much-anticipated July National Charter yesterday. However, five parties – including the NCP, formed by student leaders who spearheaded last year's July mass uprising – sat out the ceremony.

The signing – the outcome of three rounds of negotiations between the National Consensus Commission and 30 political parties – took place on a rainy autumn afternoon at the South Plaza of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

The event was marked by protests from a group calling itself July Warriors, who demanded formal recognition in the charter.

Parties long split along ideological lines shared a single stage in what organisers hailed as a watershed in the country's political history.

"It is a great day. It gives me goosebumps ...," said Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus, moments after the signing.

"Today is the day of a new birth. We have introduced a 'New Bangladesh' through the signing."

The chief adviser said the political consensus on complex national issues achieved by Bangladesh could become an example worldwide.

"People across the country witnessed the debates and joined the process. Consensus was reached on many complex issues through discussion. These achievements will be included in textbooks so the young generation can



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Prof Muhammad Yunus

learn about the path our politicians have shown."

Yunus also paid a glowing tribute to the martyrs and injured of the July uprising, saying, "The nation is forever indebted to the July fighters."

He recalled that his government was cautiously optimistic about the consensus commission's success when the efforts were launched to build national consensus on key issues proposed by the reform commissions.

"We had quietly hoped it might be able to bring the political parties together on one or two issues."

But leaders reached consensus on many issues and made their way to the stage for the signing ceremony, he added.

"The entire nation has come together. All the political leaders have united to sign the July charter. None of us could have imagined such an event would take place."

The chief adviser credited the members of the consensus commission for uniting the parties behind the July charter.

"The members of the consensus commission will be remembered in history," he said. "Their names will endure. People will wonder how they managed to achieve this."

Yunus hoped that the changes will take the country forward with proper execution of the charter by all, setting aside differences.

"We have to bring changes in our national life. Changes have to be made in our constitution and in running the government," he said.

CEREMONY

The ceremony began at 4:37pm with the national anthem. Earlier, Yunus arrived amid a light drizzle to a welcome by school and college students in traditional red and green attire, beating drums.

Members of the consensus commission sat beside him on stage, surrounded by leaders of 25 political parties in the second row.

At 5:05pm, two representatives from each party signed the charter alongside Commission Vice-President Prof Ali Riaz and other members. Yunus signed it two minutes later. The signatories then raised

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CHECK OUT THE 4-PAGE PULLOUT ON JULY CHARTER

## Some parties deceived people by signing July charter: Nahid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Citizen Party Convener Nahid Islam yesterday said that some political parties were deceiving people in the name of national consensus by signing the July Charter.

Speaking at the launch of Jatiya Sramik Shakti, the party's labour body, in the capital's Eskaton, he said that a meeting of a few parties cannot be considered a manifestation of national unity.

"National unity is when workers and people from various professions come together to work for the country's welfare and fight for their rights."

The interim government has formed several commissions. A labour commission was formed. But there has been no discussion about this commission. There has been no discussion about the health commission either, the NCP leader said.

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## LAST-MINUTE CHANGES Proclamation of independence retained

Legal indemnity added for July uprising activists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Consensus Commission yesterday made last-minute changes to the July charter, retaining the Proclamation of Independence in the constitution and adding provisions for legal indemnity for July uprising activists.

Four left-leaning parties – the Communist Party of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (Basod), Bangladesh JSD, and Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (Marxist) – along with Gono Forum, had objected to the recommendations for removal of the Declaration of Independence (March 26, 1971) and the Proclamation of Independence (April 10, 1971) from the constitution.

They also protested the exclusion of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's March 7 speech.

The left parties stayed away from the July charter signing event yesterday, while Gono Forum attended the ceremony but abstained from signing the agreement.

Speaking to The Daily Star last evening, Prof Ali Riaz, vice-president of the commission, said the Proclamation of Independence was retained in response to demands from some political parties.

Earlier, in the hours leading up to the signing ceremony, groups calling themselves July Warriors staged protests in and around the parliament complex, demanding state recognition for the July martyrs and the injured; rehabilitation for their families; and legal assistance and indemnity.

While addressing the agitating protesters at the South

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## Police break up July Warriors' protests

10 hurt in clashes near JS ahead of signing ceremony

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The signing day of the July charter, hailed by the government as historic, was marred by protests from groups calling themselves the "July Warriors."

The protesters gathered at the south plaza of the parliament complex yesterday morning, where the signing of the charter was scheduled for the afternoon.

They climbed over barricades and took positions inside the parliament complex as preparations were underway for the programme. The protesters occupied the seats arranged for guests.

They were demanding state recognition of those killed in the 2024 mass uprising as "martyrs," recognition of the injured as "July Warriors," a specific roadmap for the rehabilitation of martyrs' families, and legal assistance for the injured, among others.

Around 1:15pm, law enforcers moved in to break up the gathering, firing tear gas shells and using batons on the protesters, leading to several injuries.

Tejgaon Division Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Ibne Mizan said they were instructed to disperse the protesters.

"A programme of the chief adviser was going to take place there, and there were security concerns. Other agencies were also present. We had given them time to leave peacefully, but since they did not, they were dispersed on instructions from higher authorities," he said.

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## East Senpara turning into a 'chemical colony'

Illegal warehouses, factories thrive in Mirpur's residential areas

SHAMIMA RITA and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Right under the authorities' noses, chemical warehouses and small factories are operating in full swing in Mirpur's densely populated residential areas, defying safety regulations and gambling with thousands of lives.

Despite repeated warnings and past tragedies, these establishments have been running for years without proper authorisations or monitoring – an issue that came to light following Tuesday's devastating Rupnagar fire that claimed at least 16 lives.

According to the Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments (DIFE), officials face challenges in taking necessary actions, as the boundaries between residential and commercial areas remain blurred.

During a visit to Rupnagar's Shialbari area, this newspaper found that residential buildings stand a mere 14 metres from the site of the deadly fire.

According to the fire service and locals, over a hundred buildings in the Rupnagar residential area house chemical warehouses, small- and medium-sized garment factories, and dyeing units.

Kazi Nazmuzzaman, assistant director of the Fire Service and Civil Defence, said, "Every time there has been a fire, that's when we've learnt about these warehouses. These warehouses mainly store highly flammable dyeing chemicals, and they operate without following any regulations."

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Atikur Islam, who lost his right arm during the July uprising and now relies on a prosthetic, falls to the ground during police action on protesters calling themselves the "July Warriors". Ahead of the signing of the July charter, they staged a demonstration outside the South Plaza of the parliament complex yesterday morning, demanding compensation, rehabilitation, and legal protection. PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## Shibir sweeps Rucu too

Wins 20 of 23 central posts

ARAFAT RAHAMAN

The Islami Chhatra Shibir-backed Somnilito Shikharthi



Jote has swept the Rajshahi University Central Students' Union (Rucu) election, securing 20 out of 23 central posts in the first such polls held in 35 years.

The panel also dominated the hall and senate elections, marking a near-clean sweep across the university's student representative bodies.

Results were announced around 8:00am yesterday by Chief Election Commissioner Prof F Nazrul Islam at the Kazi Nazrul Islam Auditorium, following an overnight vote count that began at 8:30pm Thursday.

Mostakur Rahman Jahid of Somnilito Shikharthi Jote was elected vice-president with 12,687

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