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"The United States is our adversary, and their talkative 'peacemaker' has now fully embarked on the warpath with Russia."

Says Former Russian president **Dmitry Medvedev** referring to Trump

RPO AMENDMENT

Alliance candidates must use their own party symbols

Fugitives cannot contest polls; 'no vote' returns in case of single candidate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The advisory council yesterday approved major amendments to the Representation of the People Order, 1972, making it mandatory for candidates contesting polls under an alliance to use the symbol of their own party, not that of the coalition leader.

The amendments also bar anyone declared a fugitive by a court from contesting elections, reintroduce the "no vote" option for single-candidate constituencies, and recognise the armed forces as law enforcement agencies during elections.

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus chaired the meeting at his Tejgaon office.

Briefing reporters afterwards, Law Adviser Prof Asif Nazrul explained the change in rules for symbols of alliances. The move aims to give voters a clear idea of each candidate's party identity, he said.

- Armed forces may be deployed directly by the EC
- EC can now cancel polling across entire constituencies
- False affidavits will lead to probe, legal action, loss of seat
- All provisions related to EVMs scrapped
- Nomination papers must be submitted in person
- Creating, spreading false, AI-generated content have been criminalised

In the past, smaller partners in alliances led by major parties like the Awami League and BNP were able to run under the larger party's symbol.

Contacted for comments over this amendment, BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed said his party opposed the change.

"From our side, we gave a proposal that this should not be changed. We think it should remain the same as before. If the small parties in an alliance cannot use the symbol of the big party, then there will be no meaning in being part of the alliance."

Asked about the amendments, Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Mia Golam Porwar said the changes would create problems for some parties.

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PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

Sacks of radish, cauliflower, pointed gourd, and other winter vegetables from early harvests await transport at Naohata market in Rajshahi's Paba upazila yesterday, signalling winter is not far away. Customers there complained that retail prices remain much higher compared to wholesale despite improved supply.

ACC may get power to probe Bangladeshis abroad

Cabinet okays draft law aimed at boosting anti-graft body's authority

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission is set to gain authority to investigate corruption involving Bangladeshi citizens both at home and abroad, as well as foreign nationals residing in the country.

It will be handed this power under the draft Anti-Corruption Commission Ordinance 2025, which received in-principle approval at an Advisory Council meeting chaired by Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday.

Briefing reporters at the Foreign Service Academy afterwards, Law Adviser Asif Nazrul said the ACC will now be able to pursue allegations against anyone living in Bangladesh, regardless of nationality, and will also have the authority to probe Bangladeshi citizens abroad if evidence of graft is found.

He, however, noted that the mechanisms for conducting investigations overseas are yet

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Govt to ease labour union requirement

Draft ordinance prohibits blacklisting of workers, recognises house helps as workers

ASIFUR RAHMAN *and* SUKANTA HALDER

The government is planning to relax key labour law requirements, significantly lowering the entry barrier for a trade union in any establishment.

The advisory council yesterday approved a draft ordinance to allow groups of as few as 20 workers to apply to form a trade union, a major regulatory shift in worker representation, particularly in smaller industrial units.

It came after the government recently ratified three ILO Conventions that would guarantee workers' rights, safety and freedom from violence and harassment in the workplace.

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The victorious Bangladesh team celebrates with the trophy after winning the series-deciding third ODI against the West Indies by 179 runs to clinch the series 2-1, and end a four-series losing streak in the format at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

We will ensure Dhaka-Delhi ties based on respect

Says Shafiqur, apologises for any mistakes since 1947

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Shafiqur Rahman yesterday said if elected to office, his party would ensure Dhaka's relationship with Delhi is based on mutual respect.

"We want to respect our neighbour, and in the same way, we expect respect from our neighbour," Shafiqur said in response to a question during a meeting with journalists in New York on Wednesday.

He said, "India is 26 times larger than Bangladesh. Its resources and manpower are much greater than ours. Considering that, we respect their position. However, they must also respect the existence of our small territory, home to nearly 18 crore people. This is our demand. If that happens, not only will both neighbours live happily, but one neighbour will also be respected in the global arena because of the other."

Replying to another question, he said, "I want to make one thing very clear: over the last 54 years, people of different religions have migrated from Bangladesh. We are not in favour of forcibly stopping anything, nor are we in favour of forcibly expelling anyone from the country.

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'State runs on laws, not on emotions'

CA has no authority to issue constitutional order, says BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Opposing the stance of Jamaat-e-Islami and the National Citizen Party, the BNP yesterday said the chief adviser has no authority to issue a constitutional or executive order to give the July charter legal recognition, arguing that such a move would exceed the government's powers.

Addressing an event at the Jatiya Press Club in the afternoon, BNP Standing Committee Member Salahuddin Ahmed said, "Some people are saying that the chief adviser can now promulgate a law or issue an order in line with the people's wishes expressed during the July uprising.

"That is a revolutionary and emotional statement. But a state does not run on emotions; it runs according to laws, rules, and regulations."

"I notice with frustration that some political parties are trying to delay the election, trying to make sure it is not held on time. This is not right."

BNP Secretary General **Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir**

He explained that any law can only be issued with the cabinet's approval, and in the absence of parliament, the president can issue an ordinance, according to a UNB report.

Earlier, on Wednesday, Jamaat and the NCP said the chief adviser should issue an executive order to give the July charter legal and institutional recognition.

To that, Salahuddin said, "The government can only issue gazette notifications, or circulars as part of its administrative powers.

"The chief adviser, being the head of government, does not have any such right under our constitution."

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