



"Who can accept the genocide that has been going on in the Gaza Strip for so long?... and the UN no longer functions."

Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva

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## JULY CHARTER IMPLEMENTATION Commission races against time to find out ways

Talks on to make adoption binding for JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With only six days remaining before its extended tenure ends, the National Consensus Commission has yet to find a viable mechanism to ensure that the proposed constitutional reforms under the July charter will be implemented.

At a lengthy meeting yesterday, the commission discussed with legal experts the ways to ensure the charter's implementation as it is preparing to submit its final recommendations to the government.

Commission members acknowledged that the main challenge lies in the absence of any legal or historical precedent, either in Bangladesh or abroad, for binding a future parliament to specific constitutional actions.

A legal expert who attended the meeting told The Daily Star that under a parliamentary democracy, no legislature can be compelled in advance to act in a predetermined way.

Questions also arose over whether granting the next parliament "constituent power" would make it legally bound to approve the charter's reform proposals as they stand.

The unpredictable composition of the next parliament has also contributed to the challenges. The next government may not have a two-third majority, without which passing constitutional reforms would largely depend on political goodwill and cooperation.

The commission is scheduled to meet again this morning and may hold further consultations with constitutional experts if necessary.

### 2 OPTIONS ON TABLE

According to commission sources, two options were discussed in detail.

The first would stipulate that if the reform proposals are not implemented within 270 days, the parliament would be dissolved.

The second would make the reforms automatically effective and incorporated into the constitution after that period.

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- ➊ First option is to dissolve JS if reforms aren't implemented within 270 days
- ➋ Second option is automatic implementation of reforms after 270 days
- ➌ Both proposals legally, politically problematic: experts



The century-old paddle steamer PS Mahsud, newly renovated with modern facilities and safety features, will be officially relaunched on the Dhaka-Barishal route on November 15 as a tourist service. Built in 1928 during the British colonial period, the vessel stands as one of Bangladesh's oldest and most iconic paddle steamers. The photo was taken from the Buringanga Bridge-2 in the capital's Babu Bazaar yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## CHALLENGES IN POLICING 1 Police stations buckling under budget strain

SHAEEN MOLLAH and  
MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Acting on information, a team from Ashulia police rushed to a garbage dump near Jahangirnagar University on September 28 morning to recover the decomposed body of an unidentified man, aged around 30.

Three cleaners from a private firm were hired for Tk 2,100 to disinfect the body with chemicals and put it in a sack. The body was then sent to Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical

College morgue by ambulance.

"We already spent Tk 9,100, including Tk 7,000 for the ambulance, before even starting the murder investigation, for which the allocation is only Tk 6,000," said Sub-Inspector Manas Bhadra of Ashulia Police Station, highlighting the financial constraints under which police personnel carry out routine duties.

"I had to pay from my own pocket. I'll now inform the officer-in-charge of the station about the

expenditure, but I don't know when I'll be reimbursed," he said, adding that additional costs would follow at the morgue before the body is handed over to a charity for burial.

"All these expenses are incurred even before we begin probing the murder itself, tracing suspects and making any arrests," he said.

Several other officers said that faced with such shortfalls, they occasionally rely on complainants or victims' families if they are

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Workers navigate perilously narrow bamboo bridges along the Water Works Road in the capital's Rahmatganj area yesterday, as Dhaka South City Corporation's prolonged drainage work disrupts lives and endangering safety.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## RMG belt caught in cycle of extortion

A section of BNP men allegedly involved in Gazipur, Narayanganj, Savar

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

On October 20, four local BNP leaders allegedly demanded Tk 1 lakh from a garment factory owner in Gazipur's Manipur Bazar. "They said they needed money for the upcoming election," the owner told The Daily Star, seeking anonymity.

When he offered Tk 20,000, they threatened to shut down his factory. "I was forced to give the full amount. If I complain and the party gets angry, will the police stand by me?" he said, adding that a previous complaint to BNP's central office over a similar incident yielded no response.

Such incidents are not isolated. On October 17, the convener of Ward-20 BNP allegedly demanded Tk 65,000 in monthly extortion from a business owner in Gazipur city's Tek Kathora area. After refusal, the establishment was shut down.

**Businesspeople in Gazipur, Narayanganj and Savar -- home to over 6,000 garment factories employing 32 lakh workers -- say extortion and intimidation have not seen any decline despite the extortions linked to the Awami League fleeing after the previous government's fall on August 5 last year.**

A complaint has since been lodged with Gazipur Metropolitan Police.

In Narayanganj's Shibpur area, businessman Sohel Mia was attacked on October 2 by a Chhatra Dal leader

for refusing to pay Tk 2 lakh. The assault left two of his teeth broken and his right hand permanently paralysed. A case has been filed.

Businesspeople in Gazipur, Narayanganj and Savar -- home to over 6,000 garment factories employing 32 lakh workers -- say extortion and intimidation have not seen any decline despite the extortions linked to the Awami League fleeing after the previous government's fall on August 5 last year.

The sector, which generates 80 percent of Bangladesh's export revenue, is now witnessing a troubling continuation of politically backed coercion.

Factory owners say the lucrative trade of "jhut" -- fabric remnants and scraps from garment production -- has become a battleground.

Previously dominated by Awami

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## SPEAKERS



**Ruhul Quddus Khan**  
CEO and Managing Director, Unilever Bangladesh



**Ewa Wasiluk**  
Head of Supply Chain Operations, AMEA Syngenta



**Ejazur Rahman**  
Regional CEO, ISCEA (Asia)



**Syeda Tahya Hossain**  
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**Farah Zabeen**  
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