



BNP banks on a blend of old and new faces

Announces a list of 237 potential candidates; Fakhrul hints at some changes after talks with allies

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

The BNP yesterday unveiled a list of potential candidates for 237 constituencies, including three for its chairperson Khaleda Zia and one for acting chairman Tarique Rahman.

Khaleda will contest from Bogura-7, Dinaipur-3, and Feni-1, while Tarique will run from Bogura-6 (Sadar), his ancestral constituency and a seat once held by his mother.

Although he has played a key role in devising the party's political strategy and election plans for nearly two decades, this will be Tarique's first time contesting an election.

Bogura, the birthplace of late president Ziaur Rahman, has been a BNP stronghold since the party's founding. Khaleda has repeatedly contested from the district -- first from Bogura-7 (Gabtali and Shahjahanpur) in 1991, and later from Bogura-6 (Sadar) since June 1996. She won both times. The three-time former prime minister was born and brought up in Dinaipur, while Feni is her ancestral home.



The construction of the six-lane TT Para underpass near the Kamalapur Railway Station has been completed and is awaiting inauguration. Once opened, this infrastructure will enable vehicles to pass smoothly beneath the railway lines, eliminating the risk of collision and ensuring uninterrupted train movement overhead. The underpass has been constructed as part of the Padma Bridge Rail Link Project.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

JULY CHARTER, REFERENDUM DISPUTE

Resolve differences, preferably in 7 days

Govt asks political parties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amid the raging dispute over the referendum and the July charter implementation order, the interim government has called on political parties to settle their differences and reach a unified decision as soon as possible, preferably within a week.

Law Adviser Professor Asif Nazrul made the call at a press conference following an emergency meeting of the advisory council, chaired by Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus at his Tejgaon office yesterday.

According to Asif Nazrul, the meeting discussed finalising the July charter implementation order as well as the date and content of the referendum.

The council noted that despite prolonged discussions between the consensus commission and political parties, disagreements remain over several reform recommendations, the timing and subject matter of the referendum, and amendments to the Representation of the People Order.

BNP wants the referendum on the July charter on the election day, while Jamaat wants it to be held by November.

Also, the government is considering stepping back from an amendment to the RPO that it approved recently.

The amendment, endorsed at an advisory

“Anti-fascist political parties have been in dialogue over the past 15 years, reaching numerous decisions and standing united through difficult times. The government now expects these parties to hold discussions and present a unified decision.”

Law Adviser Asif Nazrul

council meeting on October 23, made it mandatory for each party in an alliance to contest the polls with its own symbol instead of a common one. If reversed, it would allow parties in an alliance to use a common symbol in the election.

While the BNP supports the government's move to undo the amendment, Jamaat-e-Islami, the NCP, and Khelafat Majlish oppose it, saying it would unfairly benefit a particular political party.

In light of these issues, Asif Nazrul said

Bangladeshis getting tricked into Russia's war

BRAC report reveals

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

A growing number of Bangladeshis are being tricked into travelling to Russia under the guise of legal migration, only to be forced into fighting in the Russia-Ukraine war, according to a new investigation by the BRAC Migration Programme.

The report titled "Promises Written in Blood: How Legal Migration Turned into Forced Recruitment in the Russia-Ukraine War," is based on survivor accounts and family testimonies. It details how at least 10 Bangladeshi men, lured by promises of secure jobs and decent pay, ended up in combat zones. Some of them are feared dead.

According to the report, the men travelled to Russia with valid work visas, believing they had secured well-paying jobs in oil, construction, or logistics. Instead, upon arrival, their passports were confiscated, and they were coerced into auxiliary combat units and sent to military camps near the front lines.

The report urged immediate, coordinated action by the government and international actors, warning that "untrained foreign labourers are being used as expendable manpower".

BRAC found that the victims followed proper migration procedures -- obtaining authentic work visas, departing from recognised airports,

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- 63 seats kept for partners or undecided nominees
- 83 nominees never contested national polls
- 10 women, 4 members of minority communities picked
- BNP didn't disclose any candidate for all three Bagerhat seats

Tarique is expected to return after 17 years in exile in London, where he lived with his wife, Zubaida Rahman, and daughter, Zaima Rahman.

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, who is contesting the upcoming polls from Thakurgaon-1, read out the list following a meeting of the party's standing committee at the chairperson's Gulshan office.

The party kept 63 seats vacant -- some for allies and some because it could not finalise candidates there. During the 2018 election, the BNP had reserved 22 seats for its alliance partners.

The published list shows that 83 of the nominees have never contested a national election before. Among them are Abdul Awal Mintoo, Zahid Hossain, Ishraque Hossain, Sanjida Islam, JCD leader Kazi Rawnakul Islam, and Shamsur Rahman Shimul Biswas.

"This is our list of possible appropriate candidates. For those who have been with us in the simultaneous movement, we haven't nominated anyone in the constituencies they're interested in. We hope they'll announce their candidates soon, and then we will finalise our list."

"It may change, especially after discussions with the parties that joined

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Photo: Sajid Hossain, Prothom Alo