

# Consensus commission resumes talks with political parties

July 2, 2025

**Online Desk :** The seventh day of the second phase of talks between the National Consensus Commission and political parties began on Wednesday morning. The meeting began around 11am at the Foreign Service Academy in Dhaka, with representatives from various political parties, including BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami, in attendance. Commission's Vice Chairman Prof Ali Riaz is presiding over the meeting, joined by commission members Safar Raj Hossain, Justice Emdadul Haque, Dr Badiul Alam Majumdar and Dr Ayub Miah. Today's discussions will focus on three key issues, including demarcation of electoral constituencies, the framework of a caretaker government and the scope of the president's clemency powers.

The commission is holding issue-based discussions in this second phase to build consensus on reform proposals. Around 20 major reform proposals are on the table, with nine discussed so far. Only two issues have seen full consensus, while some others have partial agreement. None of the proposals have been dismissed from the discussions. Key topics already discussed include changes to Article 70 of the constitution, appointing opposition party members as heads of parliamentary committees, direct elections for 100 women's seats, introducing a bicameral parliament, the appointment process for the Chief Justice, forming a National Constitutional Council (NCC), presidential elections, the term limit for the prime minister, and the state's fundamental principles.

A new proposal has been introduced to replace the NCC with an 'Appointments Committee for Constitutional and Statutory Bodies.' So far, consensus has been reached on reforming Article 70 and appointing parliamentary committee chairs based on opposition party seat share. Most parties also tentatively support limiting any individual to a maximum of 10 years as prime minister, but final agreement is pending. BNP has opposed forming the NCC or similar bodies, linking this to their support for the proposed prime ministerial term limit.

Discussions on delimitations of constituencies, caretaker government model, constitutional amendment procedures, emergency declaration processes, women's representation in local government and other issues are yet to begin. Earlier, on June 29, Ali Riaz expressed concerns over signing the 'July Charter' on July 16, saying its success depends on political parties' willingness to cooperate.

Source: UNB