

## Reforms and Justice After the July Uprising



On 1 August 2026, [#Odhikar](#), in collaboration with its network of Human Rights Defenders, organised a discussion meeting titled “Reforms and Justice After the July Uprising” at the Tofazzal Hossain Manik Mia Hall of the National Press Club. The discussion was moderated by ASM Nasiruddin Elan, Director (Finance and Administration) of Odhikar. The gathering brought together families of those martyred in the July 2024 mass uprising, injured fighters, Members of Parliament, representatives of political parties, human rights defenders, journalists, a prosecutor from the International Crimes Tribunal, and a former member of the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances, all of whom delivered statements underscoring the urgency of reform and justice.



Mumtaz Begum, mother of July martyr Shahriar, voiced her deep frustration that even after two years, justice has yet to be delivered for her son’s killing. Her statement underscored the enduring pain of families still awaiting accountability. Mohayemin Pulak, a July fighter who lost vision in his left eye to police gunfire, issued a strong appeal to end the use of pellet guns and other lethal weapons in crowd control, stressing that such practices have no place in a democratic society. Kabir Hossain, father of martyr Jabir, recounted the obstacles he faced in his pursuit of justice. He explained that when he attempted to file a case at the police station, the authorities

refused to register it, forcing him to take the matter directly to court. He further observed that in the two years since the uprising, verdicts have been delivered in only seven cases — a figure that starkly underscores the slow and discouraging pace of judicial progress.



Ridwan Hasan, a July fighter who led in the Jatrabari area during the uprising, condemned the deliberate attempts to weaken the movement by discrediting its leaders through character assassination and by silencing the demand for reforms. He underscored that meaningful reforms are essential to ensure that future democratic movements are not obstructed, stressing that without such changes, the sacrifices of July risk being undermined.



Barrister Asaduzzaman Fuad, General Secretary of the AB Party, criticised the ruling BNP for retreating not only from the commitments made during July but also from its own 31-point reform pledge. He stated that by politicising public administration, local government, and even the sports sector, the BNP has violated its promises and undermined the credibility of its own reform agenda.

Akhtar Hossain, Member Secretary of the NCP and a Member of Parliament, strongly criticised the government and BNP's recent appointment of party loyalists to the Election Commission and other institutions, describing such actions as a clear violation of reform commitments. He urged the BNP, as a political party, to take concrete steps toward ensuring accountability for crimes committed by the Awami League as a party, emphasising that genuine reform must be rooted in transparency and justice.



Tanvir Hasan Zoha, a cyber security prosecutor of the International Crimes Tribunal, highlighted several factors contributing to the slow pace of the judicial process. He pointed to administrative and political lobbying during trials, as well as severe limitations in investigative human resources, as key obstacles to ensuring timely justice.

Dr. Nabila Idris, a former member of the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances, expressed grave concern over the re-emergence of disappearance after they had ceased following the July uprising. She noted that within just 24 hours of the BNP reinstating the National Human Rights Commission Act-2009, a man named Miraj Sheikh was disappeared in Bagerhat. Dr. Nabila emphasised that justice can never be achieved through a system where investigations are conducted by the very forces accused of committing the violations, underscoring the urgent need for independent mechanisms of accountability.



Political analyst and NCP leader Sarwar Tushar criticised the BNP for failing to deliver on its promise to strengthen human rights protections. He noted that although the party had pledged to review the Human Rights Commission Act and the ordinance on preventing enforced disappearances, the draft National Human Rights Commission Act they have proposed is even weaker than the 2009 law enacted during the Awami League regime, as it denies the Commission the authority to conduct independent investigations. He further warned that the draft law, which assigns investigative authority over enforced disappearances to the police, will remain a major obstacle to achieving justice in cases of enforced disappearances.



Tariqul Islam, President of Jatiya Juboshakti, assessed the post-July Uprising environment by noting that the aspirations of the movement have not been properly realised — particularly the essential reforms needed to dismantle the state's centralised power structure. He warned that this failure has left space for new fascist forces to emerge. Tariqul further highlighted that the disappearance of Miraj Sheikh in Bagerhat on 10 April marked the first case of enforced disappearance after the uprising, underscoring the grave consequences of stalled reforms.



