



NAVIGATING TRANSITION: THE ROLE AND CHALLENGES OF BANGLADESH'S INTERIM GOVERNMENT

PREPARED BY:
NEWVISION SOLUTIONS LIMITED



NEWVISION

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WHAT HAPPENED IN BANGLADESH?

On June 5th, students of Dhaka University, Bangladesh's top public university, initiated a peaceful movement against the current quota system in public sector jobs. Under this system, 30% of positions were reserved for families of Freedom Fighters (who fought in the 1971 Liberation War), 10% for women, 1% for persons with disabilities, 10% for district-based quotas, and 5% for members of indigenous communities, leaving only 44% open for merit-based selection. The movement, called the "Anti-Discrimination Student Movement 2024," sought to challenge this allocation.



Image Source: Prothom alo,
12th July, 2024

Image Source: Prothom alo,
12th July, 2024

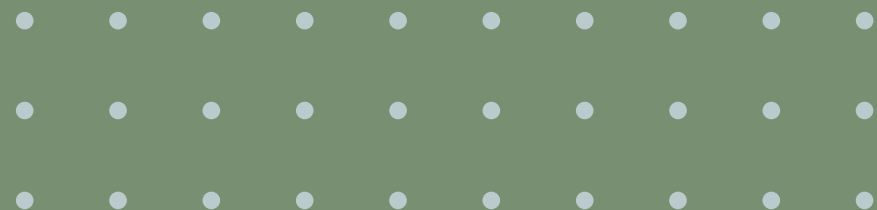


BACKGROUND OF THE MOVEMENT

The roots of this movement trace back to 2013, after the Freedom Fighter quota was expanded in 2010 to include the grandchildren of Freedom Fighters, following a similar extension to their children in 1997. Both expansions occurred under the Awami League government. Although a similar protest occurred in 2018, it was brief because Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina agreed to remove the Freedom Fighter quota from all first- and second-class public jobs. However, this decision was later contested, and in 2023, the High Court declared the government's move illegal.



Image source: Wikipedia: Students of BUET protesting to reform quota system. 2018



CURRENT SITUATION

This ruling reignited the movement, leading to a series of escalating events that ultimately culminated in the fall of the government. The unrest resulted in the tragic loss of at least 440 lives. Excessive force against students and death of students brought many other students and regular people to the movement. Also inflation, unemployment, absence of proper voting in the elections also added participation of the general public.

Awami League government collapsed on 5th August and Prime Minister Hasina resigned and left for India.

Following the government's collapse, the Army Chief intervened to stabilize the situation, temporarily taking control until an interim government could be formed. After discussions with political parties and student leaders, an interim government was established on August 8th, with Nobel Laureate Dr. Mohammad Yunus sworn in as the Chief Advisor, along with 16 additional advisors.



Image Source:
Facebook, Jasleen simran,
August 3rd, 2024



Image Source: Al
Jazeera, August
8th, 2024

PURPOSE OF THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT

The primary objective of this interim government is to restore law and order, hold a fair general election with the participation of all political parties, and reform the government structure. Investigating the incidents that led to the loss of life is also a significant task. Although the timeline for this interim government is not fixed, some reports suggest it could take 3 to 5 years to hold a general election, despite political parties urging for it to be held within 3 months.



Image Source: Voice of America, January 06, 2024



Image Source: Al Jazeera, Dec 30, 2018



Institutional Reform

Institutional reforms are underway. Over the past 15 years, the Awami League had positioned trusted individuals in key government roles. Many have resigned or been transferred due to the protests, including the Chief Justice, five justices of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, the Governor and Deputy Governors of Bangladesh Bank, and senior members of the Bangladesh Police. Further reforms are ongoing.



Political Reform

The interim government has initiated dialogues with various political parties in Bangladesh regarding the facilitation of a transparent general election. Efforts are underway to foster an atmosphere conducive to the independent functioning of all political entities. Furthermore, the interim government has taken steps to release politicians from incarceration, particularly those detained under false allegations or unfounded verdicts.

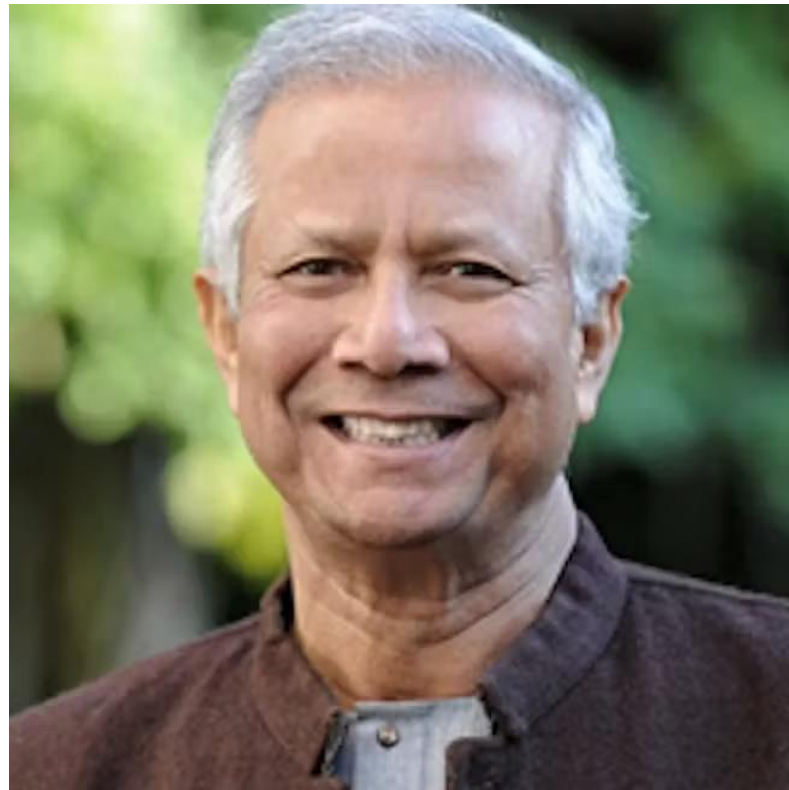


Bangladesh Bank

Besides, the interim government has appointed Dr. Ahsan H. Mansur as the new Governor of Bangladesh Bank. Dr. Mansur is a distinguished economist in Bangladesh with extensive experience working with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). He emphasized that two of his primary objectives are controlling high inflation and addressing the foreign exchange reserve crisis. These are critical for the successful economic reformation of Bangladesh.

**CURRENT
INITIATIVES OF THE
INTERIM
GOVERNMENT**

ADVISORS THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT



**PROFESSOR DR. MUHAMMAD
YUNUS
CHIEF ADVISER**

**IMAGE SOURCE:
DIFFERENT NEWS ARTICLES**

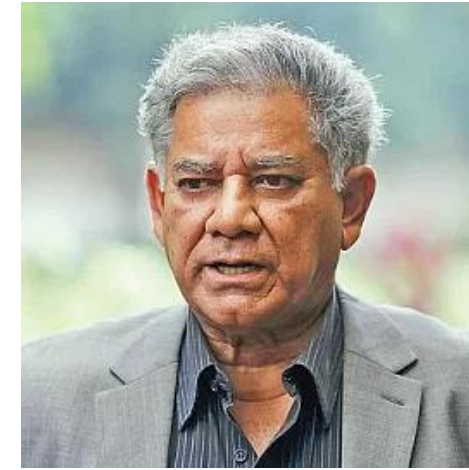
**THE ADVISORS' DETAILS, ALONG WITH
THEIR RESPECTIVE MINISTRIES, ARE
PROVIDED IN THE APPENDIX.**



**DR. SALEHUDDIN
AHMED**



PROFESSOR DR. ASIF NAZRUL



**BRIGADIER GENERAL
(RETIRED)
M SAKHAWAT HUSSAIN**



**MD TOUHID
HOSSAIN**



ADILUR RAHMAN KHAN



AF HASSAN ARIFF



SYEDA RIZWANA HASAN



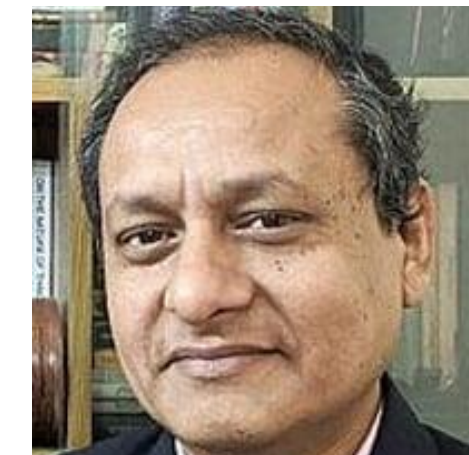
**NURJAHAN
BEGUM**



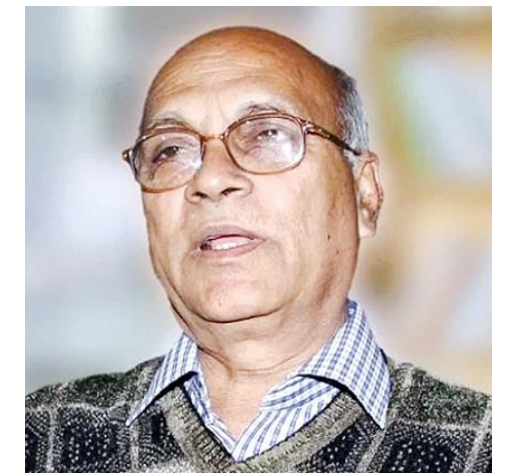
FARIDA AKHTAR



SUPRADIP CHAKMA

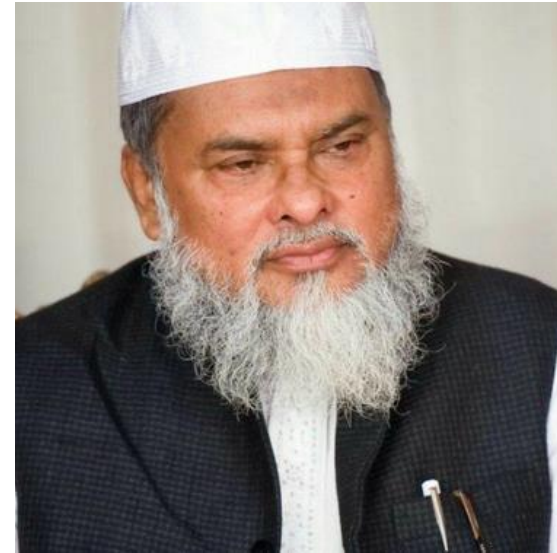


BIDHAN RANJAN ROY



FARUK E AZAM

ADVISORS THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT



AFM KHALID HOSSAIN



SHARMEEN MURSHID



MD NAHID ISLAM



ASIF MAHMUD SHOJIB BHUYAIN



DR. WAHIDUDDIN MAHMUD



ALI IMAM MAJUMDER



MUHAMMAD FOUZUL KABIR KHAN



LIEUTENANT GENERAL (RETD) JAHANGIR ALAM CHOWDHURY

**IMAGE SOURCE:
DIFFERENT NEWS ARTICLES**

ADDED TO THE ADVISOR PANEL LATER ON 16TH AUGUST

THE ADVISORS' DETAILS, ALONG WITH THEIR RESPECTIVE MINISTRIES, ARE PROVIDED IN THE APPENDIX.

MEET THE CHIEF ADVISOR

Dr. Muhammad Yunus is a Nobel Laureate and the founder of Grameen Bank, known for pioneering microfinance and social business. He earned his Ph.D. in economics from Vanderbilt University and has received numerous global honors for his efforts to combat poverty. Dr. Yunus has authored several books and is a strong advocate for social entrepreneurship. His innovative work has transformed millions of lives, particularly in Bangladesh, and continues to inspire economic and social development worldwide.

For more details, you can visit his profile [here](#).

Dr. Muhammad Yunus

Cheif Advisor, Interim Government

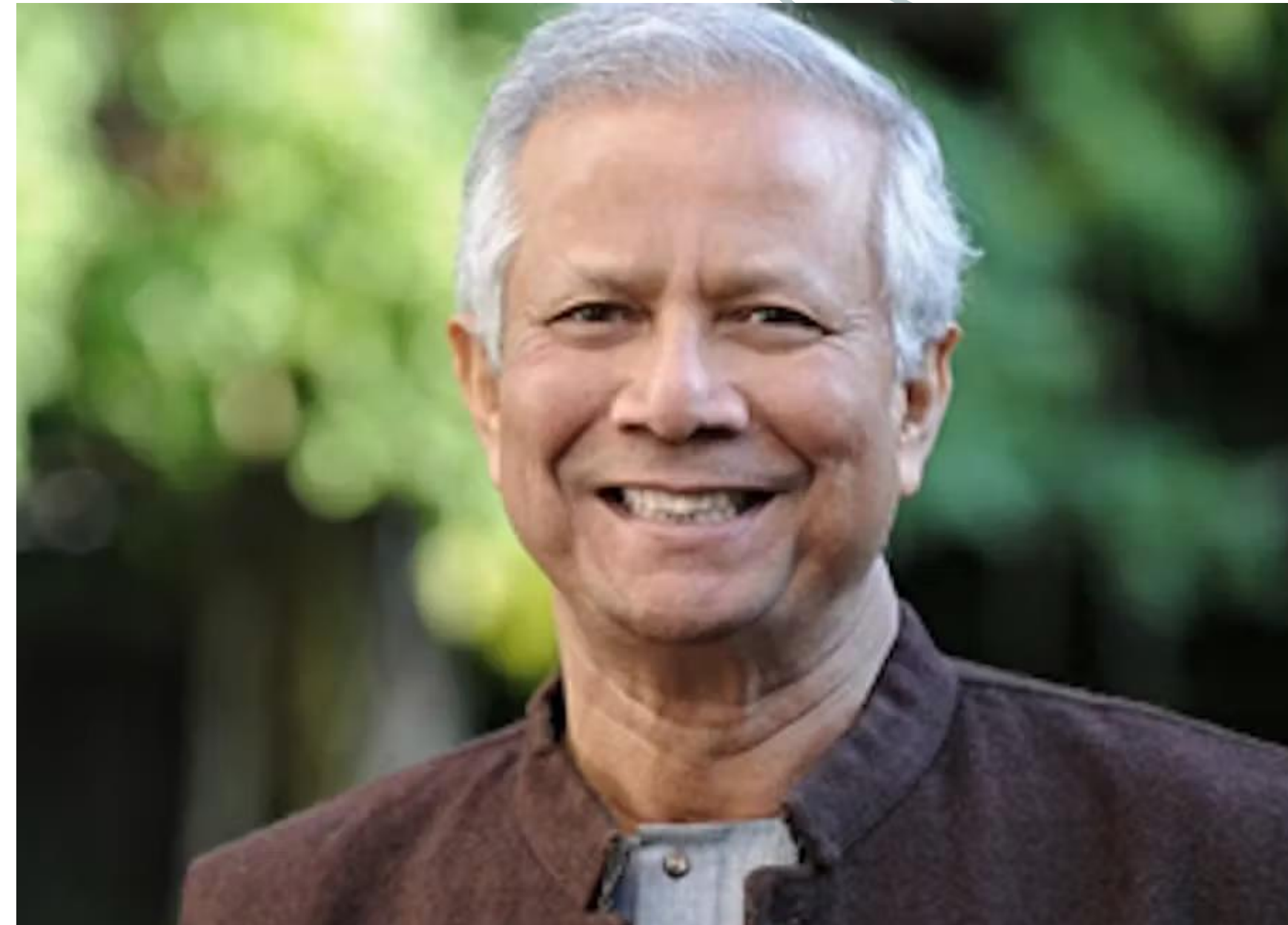
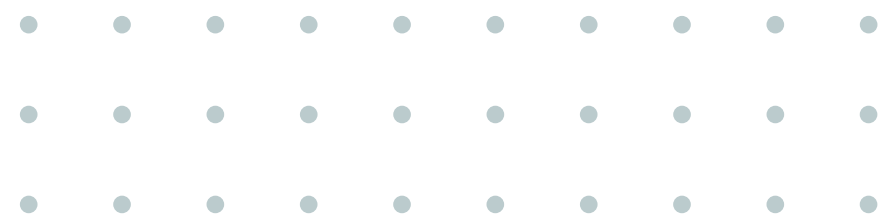


Image Source: United Nations Foundation

MEET THE ADVISOR

Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed is an accomplished academic and economist, currently serving as a Professor at BRAC University. He holds a Ph.D. in Economics and has held various prestigious positions, including former Governor of Bangladesh Bank. Dr. Ahmed has extensive experience in teaching, research, and banking, and has contributed significantly to policy development in Bangladesh. His expertise spans areas like monetary policy, financial inclusion, and development economics.

For more details, you can visit his profile [here](#).

Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed

Advisor Finance Ministry, and Commerce
Ministry



Image Source: BRAC University

MEET THE ADVISOR

Adilur Rahman Khan is a prominent human rights activist and lawyer in Bangladesh. He co-founded the human rights organization Odhikar, which focuses on documenting human rights abuses and advocating for justice. Khan has been recognized internationally for his courageous work, despite facing persecution and legal challenges in Bangladesh. His efforts highlight the importance of defending civil liberties and holding authorities accountable for human rights violations.

For more details, you can visit his profile [here](#).

Adilur Rahman Khan

Adviser Industries Ministry, Ministry of Housing and Public Works



Image Source: Prothom Alo

MEET THE ADVISOR

Syeda Rizwana Hasan is a prominent environmental lawyer and the Chief Executive of the Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA). She is renowned for her advocacy in environmental justice, focusing on issues like pollution, industrial impacts, and human rights related to the environment. Her legal work has led to significant policy changes and increased awareness of environmental issues in Bangladesh. Syeda Rizwana Hasan has received multiple awards for her dedication to environmental protection and sustainable development.

For more details, visit her profile [here](#).

Syeda Rizwana Hasan

Adviser Environment Ministry, Ministry of
Water Resources



Image Source: Prothom Alo

MEET THE ADVISOR

A.F. Hassan Ariff is a senior advocate and former Attorney General of Bangladesh. He has an extensive legal career spanning decades, including serving as a judge on the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh. His expertise lies in constitutional law, arbitration, and legal reform. He has contributed significantly to the legal community through his involvement in various legal and arbitration organizations and has been an influential figure in shaping legal discourse in Bangladesh.

For more details, you can visit his [profile](#).



Image Source: The Daily Star

A.F. Hassan Ariff

· Adviser, Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives (LGRD) Ministry

MEET THE BANGLADESH ARMY CHIEF

Lt. General Waker-uz-Zaman is the Principal Staff Officer of the Armed Forces Division in Bangladesh, with a career marked by excellence in various command, staff, and instructional roles. He has played a vital part in the strategic planning and operational readiness of the Bangladesh Armed Forces. His leadership extends to overseeing critical national security initiatives and supporting the modernization of military capabilities. Lt. General Waker-uz-Zaman is highly respected for his dedication and contributions to the defense and security of Bangladesh.

For more details, you can visit his profile [here](#).

Waker-uz-Zaman

Chief of Army Staff of the Bangladesh Army



Image Source: Rtv

MEET THE GOVERNOR OF BANGLADESH BANK

Dr. Ahsan H. Mansur is a distinguished economist with an extensive background in international finance and policy analysis. He began his career as a lecturer at Dhaka University before pursuing advanced studies in Canada. Dr. Mansur served in various roles at the International Monetary Fund (IMF), working across multiple regions, including the Middle East, Asia, and Africa. He played a key role in introducing the Value Added Tax (VAT) in Bangladesh in 1991. Currently, he is the Executive Director of the Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh.

For more details, you can visit his profile [here](#).

Dr. Ahsan H Mansur

Governor of Bangladesh Bank



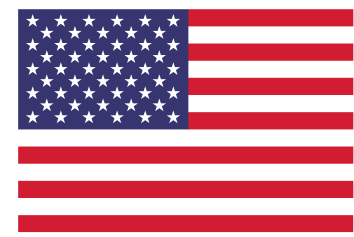
Image Source: The Business Post





INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

The international community has shown its willingness to collaborate with the interim government and its leader, Prof. Muhammad Yunus, who was sworn in on 8th August, 2024, three days after the fall of the Awami League government amid recent unrest.



THE UNITED STATE OF AMERICA

State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller said in a media briefing that, "We welcome Dr. Yunus's call for an end to the recent violence and are prepared to collaborate with the interim government and Dr. Yunus as they work towards a democratic future for the people of Bangladesh. He also added that they have been in touch with the interim government and that US Embassy Charge d'Affaires Helen LaFave attended the swearing-in ceremony.

UNITED NATIONS



The Secretary-General praises the efforts to restore calm and organize elections in Bangladesh with interim government support. He urges inclusivity, considering all voices, including women, youth, minorities, and Indigenous communities. He stands with the people of Bangladesh, calling for full respect of human rights and a transparent investigation into all violence.





GERMANY

German Ambassador to Bangladesh, Achim Troester, congratulated the interim government and wished them success. In an X post, he stated that Germany would support the government's key priorities, including restoring security, fully investigating all crimes, re-establishing the rule of law, implementing structural reforms, and ensuring a smooth transition to genuine democratic representation.

THE EUROPEAN UNION



EU High Representative Josep Borrell welcomed the interim government, noting its crucial role in preparing for democratic elections and addressing accountability for recent violence. He emphasized the importance of this transition for Bangladesh's democracy and its people's aspirations. The EU, a major trade partner with \$24 billion in annual imports, is eager to engage with the new administration and supports a peaceful, inclusive process grounded in good governance, democratic values, and human rights.





CHINA

China welcomed the interim government, emphasizing its commitment to strengthening bilateral relations and advancing their comprehensive strategic partnership. A Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson reiterated China's respect for Bangladesh's sovereignty and independence, and its policy of non-interference. They reaffirmed China's dedication to good neighborliness and enduring friendship with the Bangladeshi people.

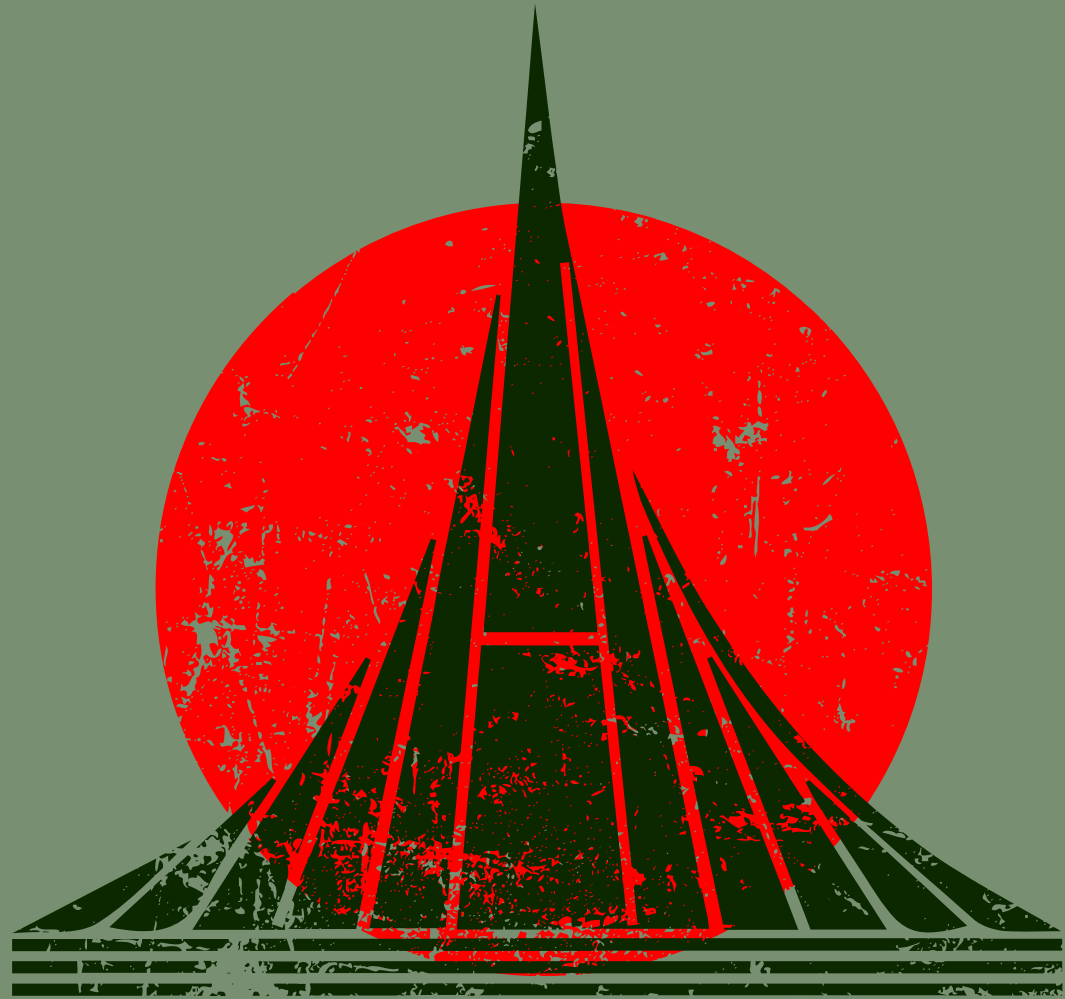
INDIA



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted: "Congratulations to Professor Muhammad Yunus on his new role. We hope for a swift return to stability, ensuring the safety of Hindus and other minority communities. India is committed to working with Bangladesh to achieve our shared goals of peace, security, and development."

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee also congratulated Prof. Yunus and those taking on new roles in Bangladesh, expressing hopes for better relations. On X, she wished for Bangladesh's development, peace, and progress for all its people, and expressed optimism that the crisis will soon end, benefiting both nations.





MAJOR CHALLENGES

CHALLENGES AHEAD OF THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT

BANKING SECTOR

A significant challenge facing the interim government is the banking sector. It is rumored that around \$92 billion has been illegally outflowed from Bangladesh over the past 15 years. According to the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), BDT 92,621 crore (USD 7 billion) was embezzled from banks through 24 major scams between 2008 and 2023. Reforming the banking system is a critical task.

LAW, ORDER, AND MORAL REFORM

Law enforcement institutions have been plagued by corruption and political influence. Critical reforms are needed to restore public trust in these institutions, including the Supreme Court, Bangladesh Army, and Bangladesh Police.

POLITICAL REFORM

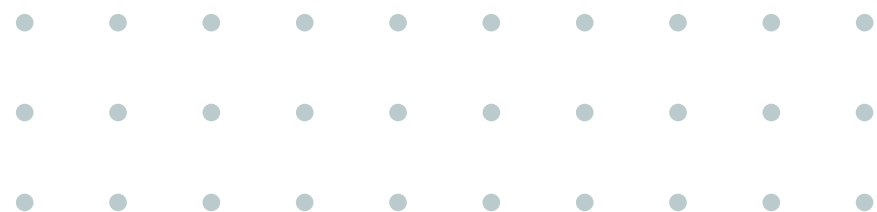
The Awami League's 15-year rule saw efforts to eliminate opposition parties using government resources. Reforms are necessary to ensure such practices do not recur.

EDUCATION AND HEALTH SECTOR REFORM

Both the education and health sectors require significant reform. Frequent changes to the education system have disrupted the core of Bangladesh's educational framework. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the weaknesses of the public health sector, largely due to corruption, and this will be another major challenge for the interim or future government.

Positive Trends

- Daily life is gradually returning to normal.
- The Home Ministry advisor has successfully brought police officers back to work.
- Government institutions are being reformed, with honest and qualified individuals being appointed to key positions.
- The Bangladesh Stock Exchange is performing well, with Dhaka stocks gaining for four consecutive days and turnover reaching its highest point in 23 months.
- Political parties are supporting the interim government and are satisfied with the decisions made by the advisory panel.
- The Chief Advisor and his team are managing the situation steadily without creating further issues.

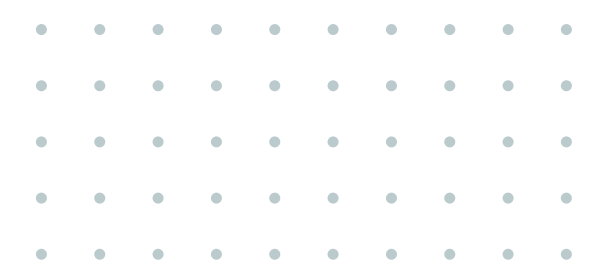




"OUR TAKE ON THE MATTER"

At NewVision, our focus is solely on the economic development of Bangladesh, not on advancing any political agenda. Our mission is to build a better Bangladesh with the support of Japan. We welcome Dr. Muhammad Yunus and his advisory panel and are committed to cooperating with and supporting the interim government in their efforts.





SOME OF OUR KEY OBSERVATIONS

COMPETENCE AND MATURITY

The newly formed interim government under the leadership of Noble Laureate Dr. Yunus is undoubtedly well-deserving and appropriately experienced, with the exception of the two students. However, they have demonstrated a commendable level of maturity and are working diligently with the secretariats to reform the institutions.

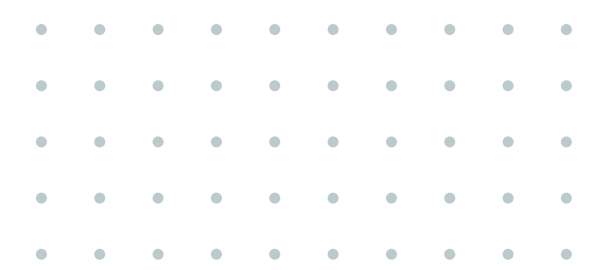
ENSURING CONTINUED PROGRESS AND EQUILIBRIUM

While we understand that meaningful reform takes time, it is crucial for the interim government to maintain momentum and avoid delays that could erode political and public support. We should advocate for a balanced approach that prioritizes thorough reform while setting clear, realistic timelines for key milestones, including elections. In the meantime, institutions will need to be reformed, which was politicized during the last 15 years.

ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

The government should continuously engage with political parties and the public to maintain their support. Regular updates on progress and inclusive dialogue will help ensure that the interim government retains the backing it needs to complete its mandate.

BALANCED FOREIGN RELATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS



Everyone should encourage the interim government to cultivate balanced and pragmatic relationships with key global and regional powers, particularly Japan. Japan has played a significant role in Bangladesh's past reforms, and we hope for continued collaboration in the future. Considering Bangladesh's strategic location, it is crucial to focus on fostering cooperative ties that will support the country's long-term stability and development. The interim government should continue to engage with international partners on various fronts—economic, security, and development—to ensure Bangladesh remains an active and respected member of the global community.

FUTURE OF BANGLADESH

We hope that the tenure of the interim government will see some much needed reforms in the institutions to depoliticize these. We are also hopeful that a lot of corruption will be removed by this neutral government, which was installed after the student movements. Students are also part of the new government and Dr. Yunus is constantly discussing with students to get their views about important matters. Students also showed positive traits by controlling the traffic when the police was absent, guarding the minority houses and temples so that they cannot be harmed and cleaning the mess that was created during the protest.

So overall, we hope for a bright future of Bangladesh, which will have less corruption and better and stronger institutions.

APPENDIX: THE FULL INTERIM GOVERNMENT

Advisor	Background	Ministry
Professor Dr. Muhammad Yunus	Dr. Yunus, a Nobel Laureate (2006) Chairman, Yunus Centre Ex- Managing Director of Grameen Bank (~ 2011) Ph.D in Economics from Vanderbilt University U.S.A.in 1970. Detailed Profile	the Cabinet Division, Defense Ministry, Armed Forces Division, Food Ministry, Land Ministry, Science and Technology Ministry, Public Administration Ministry, Shipping Ministry, Women and Children Affairs Ministry, Civil Aviation and Tourism Ministry.
Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed	Former Governor, Bangladesh Bank (the central bank of Bangladesh)	Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment; and the Ministry of Cultural Affairs.
Professor Dr. Asif Nazrul	Professor Law Department, Dhaka University	Law Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Ministry
Adilur Rahman Khan	Secretary, Odhikar (human rights organisation)	Industries Ministry, Ministry of Housing and Public Works
Syeda Rizwana Hasan	Chief Executive Officer, Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA)	Environment Ministry, Ministry of Water Resources
Nurjahan Begum	Executive Vice Chairman, Grameen Shikkha (an educational institute under Yunus Center)	Health Ministry
Brigadier General (retired) M Sakhawat Hussain	Former election commissioner of Bangladesh	Initially Home Ministry, later changed to Textiles and Jute ministry
Farida Akhtar	Executive Director, UBINIG (Policy Research for Development Alternatives)	Fisheries and Livestock Ministry

Advisor	Background	Ministry
Supradip Chakma	Chairman, Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board	Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs Ministry
Bidhan Ranjan Roy	Physician	Primary and Mass Education Ministry
Faruk E Azam	Freedom Fighter	Liberation War Affairs Ministry, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief
AF Hassan Ariff	Head of Chambers, AF Hassan Ariff & Associates	Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives (LGRD) Ministry
Md Touhid Hossain	Former foreign secretary of Bangladesh	Foreign Affairs
AFM Khalid Hossain	Former nayeb-e-ameer of Hefazat-e-Islam Bangladesh	Religious Affairs Ministry
Sharmeen Murshid	Chief Executive Officer, Brotee (a center for social change)	Social Welfare Ministry
Md Nahid Islam	Student (Chief Coordinator of the Students' Movement)	Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications, and Information Technology, and Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuyain	Student (Coordinator of the Students' Movement)	Youth and Sports Ministry and Ministry of Labour and Employment
Wahiduddin Mahmud	Renowned Economist and former professor of economics at the University of Dhaka	Ministries of Planning and Education
Ali Imam Majumder	Former cabinet secretary	Attached to the office of Chief Advisor
Muhammad Fouzul Kabir Khan	Former power secretary	Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources, Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges and the Ministry of Railways.
Lieutenant General (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury	Retd officer of Army	Home Ministry and Agriculture Ministry.



THANK YOU

Do you have any questions?

Contact us

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