

STUDENTS' UNION ELECTIONS

JCD, Shibir announce full panels for Cucsu polls 8 more panels declared; nomination submission deadline ends

CU CORRESPONDENT

The Chittagong University units of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and Islami Chhatra Shibir have announced full panels for the Cucsu election, scheduled for October 12.

Meanwhile, eight other panels were unveiled yesterday by political, socio-cultural, and independent groups, coinciding with the last day of nomination form submission for the Chittagong University Central Students' Union and hall union elections.

Nasir Uddin, JCD's central general secretary, announced the organisation's 26-member panel at a press conference at Buddhijibi Chatter.

For the top three posts, CU JCD Organising Secretary Sajjad Hossain

Hridoy was nominated for vice president (VP), Md Shafayat for general secretary (GS), and Aiyubur Rahman Taufiq for assistant general secretary (AGS).

Nasir said, "Only those who have worked and can continue to work for students were included in our panel. We are hopeful this panel will work wholeheartedly for students' interests." He added that alliances may be considered later if necessary.

Meanwhile, Shibir's CU unit announced its panel under the banner of "Sompritir Shikkharthi Jote" at a press conference in Jarultala. Saiful Islam, Shibir's central human resources secretary, formally declared the panel, which includes candidates



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Two schoolboys stand dangerously close to a moving train at Kawla Rail Gate in Dhaka, ignoring the level crossing gate. Some passengers also ride on the roof -- another risky and prohibited act. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

ENERGY SECTOR

'Quick rental' act enabled mega corruption

Speakers tell dialogue; criticise interim govt for doing 'little' to punish culprits

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ousted Awami League government enacted the now-defunct "quick rental" act to allow large-scale corruption in the power and energy sector by "rewarding and giving indemnity" to power company owners, said speakers at a dialogue yesterday.

However, despite such massive corruption, the interim government remained silent, doing little to identify and punish the culprits, which left many people frustrated, they also said.

They made the remarks at the event on "Security, Corruption and Energy", which was organised by the Centre for Governance Studies (CGS) at Cirdap in the capital.

At the dialogue, M Shamsul Alam, energy adviser at the Consumers Association of Bangladesh, said the Quick Enhancement of Electricity and Energy Supply (Special Provisions) Act, 2010 -- known as the "quick rental" act -- enabled "investment without competition".

"It was mega corruption," he said, adding that the interim government has remained silent so far in this regard.

BNP Standing Committee member Abdul Moyeen Khan said the act gave "indemnity and caused all the corruption" in the energy sector.

He also said although the interim government has repealed the law, the people still do not know what action has been taken against those who received indemnity.

Fouzul Kabir Khan, adviser to the energy ministry, said they took steps to repeal the act on the first day in office.

"It may sound strange, but the law was created to do corruption," he said.

The authority to set electricity prices was returned to the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission, he added.

Mollah M Amzad Hossain, editor of the fortnightly magazine Energy and Power, urged the government to use this opportunity to end corruption in the sector.

At the event, speakers also stressed that stability and tackling corruption are crucial for free, fair, and credible elections and a smooth democratic transition.

Maj Gen (ret'd) ANM Muniruzzaman, president of the Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS), said the country has long lacked a "national strategic policy" on security, which should involve not just the armed forces but also other agencies and citizens.

He said internal stability is a precondition for national security and warned that without consensus among political parties, military strength alone would not help.

He said Bangladesh's geographical location, particularly the Bay of Bengal, could place it "at the centre" of the US-China strategic rivalry, urging the government to act cautiously and avoid tensions stemming from such rivalries.

Badiul Alam Majumdar, secretary of Shujan and member

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The Quick Enhancement of Electricity and Energy Supply (Special Provisions) Act, 2010 -- known as the "quick rental" act -- enabled "investment without competition".

M SHAMSUL ALAM
Energy adviser at the Consumers Association of Bangladesh

He added that a national committee led by a retired judge was formed to probe ongoing projects taken under the act.

Besides, "structural issues" that led to corruption -- such as secretaries serving as chairmen of power-producing companies -- were also scrapped, he said.

Political decentralisation ignored in reform agendas Speakers tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

True decentralisation requires the transfer of real power and decision-making to the local level, but this continues to be ignored in Bangladesh, speakers said at a programme yesterday.

"Decentralisation is equated only with strengthening local government. That is part of the problem. True political decentralisation has not been brought to the table in Bangladesh. Neither interim governments nor consensus commissions have placed it seriously in reform agendas. Without it, sustainable decentralisation cannot happen," said Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman, executive chairman of the Power and Participation Research Centre.

He made the remarks while addressing the event as chief guest at the Policy Research Institute (PRI) in the capital.

The event was organised by PRI to disseminate findings from a joint BIDS-PRI research project on "Urbanisation and Bangladesh Development."

Explaining the consequences of weak decentralisation, Zillur said this is why Dhaka has become the country's "primate city." Unlike Thailand, Sweden, the Philippines or South Korea -- where secondary cities developed through natural processes and policy support -- Bangladesh has not allowed a second city to emerge.

"One fundamental feature of Bangladesh's institutional life is judicial encroachment -- institutions assuming responsibilities that are not theirs. For example, local government's

responsibilities for small-scale water management are often overtaken by water boards. When thinking of solutions, we must factor in this encroachment tendency," he noted.

"We build roads, sometimes bypass roads around towns, yet we have no policy to control roadside economic activity. That is why we have no access-controlled highways. Even when a highway is built, speeds do not increase -- because roadside activity is allowed unchecked. Anyone can set up a grocery shop, a tea stall, or a workshop. This is itself a typology of growth."

Zillur said mofussil towns were once supported by key institutions such as district schools, which shaped both society and the state. "Today, decentralisation has eroded. For instance, where do union chairmen live? If their families reside in Dhaka, then their unions become merely spaces of extraction -- subject to interest groups and contracts, including climate-related projects. This dynamic is missing from our political discourse," he added.

Presenting the keynote paper, Dr Ahmad Ahsan, director of PRI, said while urbanisation has long been a driver of growth, the current Dhaka-centric pattern is proving unsustainable.

Excessive concentration of people and economic activity in the capital -- combined with congestion, pollution, and diversion of resources from other urban centres -- was hampering development, slowing job creation, reducing industrial employment, and causing economic losses

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Ensure true political decentralisation
Address judicial, institutional encroachment
Develop national urbanisation policy
Support secondary city growth
Create unified, decentralised city govts



BNP punished over 7,000 members for misconduct

Says Tarique

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday said over 7,000 party members have faced demotion or expulsion over corruption, extortion, and misconduct, acknowledging the decision was difficult but essential.

"This has not been an easy decision, but it is a necessary one. Discipline is not a weakness -- it is our strength. By holding our own members accountable, we show the nation that we are serious about integrity and will hold ourselves to the same standards we demand from those in power," he said in a Facebook post.

Tarique stressed that rebuilding trust with the people, particularly the youth, required internal reform. He urged party members to remain united, disciplined, and committed to service.

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Six die of dengue, 647 get hospitalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Six dengue patients died and 647 others were hospitalised across Bangladesh in the 24 hours until 8:00am yesterday, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Of the deaths, two were reported from Dhaka North City Corporation, two from Dhaka South City Corporation, and one each from Barishal and Rajshahi divisions.

With these, the total number of deaths has risen to 167 this year, while reported cases climbed to 40,461.

So far, 38,252 dengue patients have recovered and been released from hospitals. Currently, 2,042 patients are receiving treatment across the country, of whom 1,325 are admitted outside Dhaka.



A couple looks at bonsai trees on the inaugural day of the 24th Annual Bonsai Exhibition 2025 yesterday, where 500 specimens are on display at the Women's Voluntary Association Auditorium in Dhanmondi. Organised by the Bangladesh Bonsai Society, the event promotes the conservation of indigenous trees.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Issue ordinance for central university by September 22

Demand students of 7 colleges



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students of Dhaka's seven colleges, previously under Dhaka University, have set a September 22 deadline for the education ministry to issue an ordinance converting the institutions into a central university.

They warned of a tougher movement if their demand is ignored. The announcement came yesterday during a press briefing in front of the Shaheed Minar at Dhaka College.

Students earlier marched and chanted slogans in favour of central university status, saying only an ordinance could provide a permanent solution to the colleges' problems.

The students accused some teachers of obstructing efforts to address these issues and alleged that current faculty are attempting to keep the colleges under the "National University" model.

They also claimed that students participating in the movement faced threats of poor exam results.