Please cite as: EUAA, '2.1. Composition and mandate ' in *COI Report - Bangladesh: Country Focus*, August 2025.

2.1. Composition and mandate

The interim government is led by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Muhammad Yunus, who was installed as Chief Adviser of Bangladesh (head of the interim government66) on 8 August 2024. 67 Yunus was the choice of the student protest movement68 and was appointed by the President of Bangladesh, following a meeting with key coordinators of the student protest movement, senior military leaders, civil society members, and some business leaders.69 Moreover, 22 individuals were appointed as advisers to the interim government, comprised of 18 men and 4 women,70 with the responsibility to supervise allocated ministries.71 The appointed advisers include civil society representatives, environmentalists, former senior bureaucrats, academics, as well as two key coordinators of the student movement.72 Political parties, however, have no representation in the interim government.73 Although the army is described as a 'pillar of power' in the government,74 it has promised to support Yunus,75 and army chief General Waker-Uz-Zaman has pledged not to interfere with politics.76

Bangladesh used to have a system with an independent caretaker government leading the country during election periods. However, the former government abolished this system in 2011. 77 In August 2024, there were therefore no constitutional provisions that allowed the formation of an interim government78 nor any provisions that outlined its mandate and authority,79 and as a result the interim government lacks constitutional basis.80 The President sought an advisory opinion on the matter from the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, under article 106 of the Constitution.81 The Court held a virtual court hearing on 8 August 202482 during which it ruled that forming an interim government was legal due to the 'urgent need to run state affairs' and to 'fill the constitutional vacuum'.83 The interim government and Yunus enjoy strong public support.84 There is, however, a reported uncertainty as regards the authority of the interim government to enact, amend or repeal laws, and the risk of future governments to declare its actions as invalid given its lack of constitutional basis.85 Legislative changes have been adopted by Presidential ordinances, that are equivalent to laws, which will be retroactively placed in Parliament to be ratified.86 As described by International Crisis Group, the interim government has been able to rely on this method by 'banking on a combination of a pliant Supreme Court, political consensus, military backing and popular legitimacy'.87

The interim government's primary task is to organise new elections.88 According to the Constitution, elections should be held within 90 days following the dissolution of Parliament.89 The interim government, however, formed several reform commissions following its installation, 90 and Yunus has stressed the need to await necessary reform work before the next election.91 The next parliamentary election is envisaged to take place sometime between December 2025 and June 2026,92 depending on the reform work.93 The Election Commission is reportedly planning to announce an action plan for the coming election in July 2025.94 Meanwhile, the

political party BNP has been putting pressure on the interim government to hold elections as soon as possible,95 while discussions with political parties on what reforms to implement before the election have been ongoing.96

- 66

  Reuters, Bangladesh Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus takes charge of caretaker government, 8 August 2024, url

- 67

  Al Jazeera, Muhammad Yunus takes oath as head of Bangladesh’s interim government, 8 August 2024, url

- 68

  Al Jazeera, Bangladesh protesters want Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus to lead government, 8 August 2024, url

- 69

  Al Jazeera, Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus to lead Bangladesh interim government, 6 August 2024, url

- 70

  Bangladesh, Cabinet Division, Hon'ble Chief Adviser, Advisers and Special Assistant, 11 March 2025, url

- 71

  Business Standard (The), Dr Yunus-led interim govt legal: SC, 9 August 2024, url

- 72

  Print (The), 4 BNP affiliates, 3 Jamaat-leaning & others seen as ‘apolitical’ — Bangladesh interim govt a mixed bag, 9 August 2024, url; Business Standard (The), Dr Yunus-led interim govt legal: SC, 9 August 2024, url; Daily Star (The), Advisers to the interim government, 9 August 2024, url

- 73

  National Herald, Bangladesh: Students, lawyers, banker and activists but no politician in interim govt, 9 August 2024, url; Sweden, Migrationsverket, Bangladesh – Protester och regeringsfall, 20 August 2024, url, p. 5

- 74

  TIB, ‘New Bangladesh’ Tracking the First 100 Days after the Fall of the Authoritarian Regime, 18 November 2024, url, p. 15

- 75

  Reuters, Exclusive: Bangladesh army chief strongly backs interim government, eyes elections within 18 months, 24 September 2024, url

- 76

  TIB, ‘New Bangladesh’ Tracking the First 100 Days after the Fall of the Authoritarian Regime, 18 November 2024, url, p. 15

- 77

  International Crisis Group, Beyond the Election: Overcoming Bangladesh’s Political Deadlock, 4 January 2024, url

- 78

  Business Standard (The), Dr Yunus-led interim govt legal: SC, 9 August 2024, url; Law Library of Congress, Interim Government and the Constitution of Bangladesh, 29 August 2024, url

- 79

  Business Standard (The), Bangladesh's post-revolution government is sailing through uncharted legal waters, 23 August 2024, url; International Crisis Group, A New Era in Bangladesh? The First Hundred Days of Reform, 14 November 2024, url; Law Library of Congress, Interim Government and the Constitution of Bangladesh, 29 August 2024, url

- 80

  Daily Star (The), Bangladesh’s Interim Government: What should be its tenure?, 16 August 2024, url

- 81

  Business Standard (The), Dr Yunus-led interim govt legal: SC, 9 August 2024, url

- 82

  Bdnews24.com, Interim government headed by Yunus is legal, says Supreme Court, 9 August 2024, url

- 83

  Business Standard (The), Dr Yunus-led interim govt legal: SC, 9 August 2024, url

- 84

  Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2025: Bangladesh, 2025, url; Al Jazeera, The Take: Can a Nobel laureate lead Bangladesh into a new era? [Podcast], 15 August 2024, url, 06:00–06:15

- 85

  International Crisis Group, A New Era in Bangladesh? The First Hundred Days of Reform, 14 November 2024, url

- 86

  International Crisis Group, A New Era in Bangladesh? The First Hundred Days of Reform, 14 November 2024, url; HRW, After the Monsoon Revolution, 27 January 2025, url

- 87

  International Crisis Group, A New Era in Bangladesh? The First Hundred Days of Reform, 14 November 2024, url

- 88

  Reuters, Bangladesh Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus takes charge of caretaker government, 8 August 2024, url

- 89

  International Crisis Group, A New Era in Bangladesh? The First Hundred Days of Reform, 14 November 2024, url

- 90

  Daily Star (The), A new chapter for the nation begins, 16 January 2025, url

- 91

  Al Jazeera, Bangladesh's Yunus seeks time, says election roadmap after reforms, 17 November 2024, url; AFP, Bangladesh to hold elections in late 2025 or early 2026: Yunus, 16 December 2024, url

- 92

  Business Standard (The), BNP seeks meeting with CA Yunus to discuss election timeline, 9 April 2024, url

- 93

  EIU, Democracy Index 2024, February 2025, url, p. 27; AFP, Bangladesh to hold elections in late 2025 or early 2026: Yunus, 16 December 2024, url

- 94

  Prothom Alo, EC plans to announce election action plan by July, 8 April 2024, url; Daily Star (The), 'July Charter to guide next national polls', 9 April 2025, url

- 95

TIB, ‘New Bangladesh’ Tracking the First 100 Days after the Fall of the Authoritarian Regime, 18 November 2024, url, p. 15

- 96

Daily Star (The), How to avoid a summer of political discontent, 8 April 2025, url; Prothom Alo, Reforms and election: Roadmap must be announced soon, 8 April 2025, url; Business Standard (The), Consensus Commission revises NCC proposal, but BNP stands firm against it, 25 June 2025, url

© European Union Agency for Asylum 2026 | Email: info@euaa.europa.eu