

CR Abrar 'next education adviser'

Advisory council of interim govt to expand

The size of the interim government is set to expand for the third time since it took charge in August last year.

The oath-taking ceremony is scheduled for 11:00am today at the Bangabhaban.



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Chowdhury Rafiqul Abrar, also known as CR Abrar, will be sworn in as an adviser and is expected to take charge of the education ministry, said Shafiqul Alam, the chief adviser's press secretary, during a briefing at the Foreign Service Academy in the capital yesterday.

Abrar is a former professor of the University of Dhaka's international relations department and the president of Odhikar, the human rights organisation founded by Adilur Rahman Khan, the adviser for the ministries of industries and housing and public works.

Abrar is also the executive director of the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit founded by his wife Tasneem Siddiqui, a member of the committee formed by the interim government to prepare a white paper report on the Bangladesh economy.

He will take over from Wahiduddin Mahmud as the education adviser.

"Wahiduddin Mahmud has long expressed that managing two ministries simultaneously has been challenging for him. Given his advanced age and the heavy responsibilities at the planning ministry, CR Abrar is being added to the [advisory council](#)," Shafiqul said.

However, the exact number of new advisers who would be sworn in today remains uncertain.

The expansion follows the passing of adviser Hasan Ariff and the resignation of adviser Nahid Islam, which have left Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus with additional ministerial responsibilities.

Since he prefers not to handle too many portfolios himself, new appointments are being made to redistribute the workload, The Daily Star has learnt from people involved in the proceedings.

Prof Yunus's advisory council expanded twice after the interim government took office on August 8 last year. He also reshuffled council responsibilities multiple times.

At present, the advisory council consists of 22 members, including the chief adviser.

Additionally, three special envoys and special assistants hold advisory ranks, while three deputy minister-ranked special assistants assist the advisers of three ministries.