

Student union elections: JCD panel delayed over internal feud

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The Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, long absent from Jahangirnagar University campus politics, has yet to announce a panel for the upcoming Jucusu election, though nomination submissions closed on August 21.

According to sources, internal feuds are the main reason for the delay.

The JCD last formed a full-fledged JU committee in 2007. A new one was announced on January 8 this year, but disputes soon followed.

Insiders in JCD factions, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the feuds slowed polls preparations.

The situation worsened on August 8 after the JCD announced its extended and hall committees, sparking controversy over post allocation.

Dissident leaders alleged the committees included former Chhatra League activists, clandestine Shibir members, murder accused, and individuals expelled for drug abuse and mugging. They staged protests, barring the JU unit's top leaders from campus for nearly nine days.

Tensions peaked on August 17, when the JCD central general secretary arrived on the campus and the JU unit's leaders re-entered, triggering a face-off with dissidents. That same day, a probe committee was formed to investigate the disputed appointments, with its report due on September 15.

Although the conflict has since cooled, several senior leaders allege the rift was provoked by infiltrators to weaken the JCD ahead of the polls.

JU JCD Convener Jahir Uddin Muhammad Babor said, "We're united over Jucusu. We have multiple aspirants for several posts, many of whom submitted nominations for more than one position. We're taking time to select the most qualified candidates."

He said the JCD would announce a full panel for Jucusu and hall elections in two to three days. "We'll contest with a full panel in four of the 11 male halls, while in the others, partial panels will be announced. No panels will be formed for female halls, but if anyone seeks support, we will provide it."

He added that non-committee-based candidates with strong standing on the campus were also being considered.

Sources said Sheikh Sadi, Tanjila Hossain Boishakhi, Mirza Saki, Syeda Ananna Faria, Abdul Gaffar Jisan, Rubel Hossain, Arshad Habib Bishal, and Mehadi Emon are likely to contest top posts from the JCD panel.

They added that a female candidate may run for vice-president or general secretary.

Meanwhile, Islami Chhatra Shibir and Bangladesh Gonotantrik Chhatra Sangsad (BGCS) have already announced full panels.

On Friday, BGCS declared its "Shikkharthi Oikkyo Forum" panel, in which Convener Arifuzzaman Ujjal will run for VP, while Member-Secretary Abu Touhid Mohammad Siam will contest for GS. Ziauddin Ayan and Maliha Namla will vie for AGS in the male and female categories.

Two BGCS leaders, Nazmul Islam Limon and Kawsar Alam Arman, who failed to secure posts, are preparing to contest independently for AGS.

Ahsan Labib -- an accused in the murder case of Shamim Molla, a former leader of the banned student organisation Chhatra League - has been nominated for secretary of social services and human development. The panel has yet to name candidates for drama and sports secretary.

On Thursday, Islami Chhatra Shibir announced the "Shomonnito Shikkharthi Jote" panel. Arifullah Adib has been nominated for VP, and Mazharul Islam for GS. Ferdous Al Hasan will contest for male AGS, and Ayesha Siddika Meghla for female AGS. The panel does not include indigenous or minority students.

Three other panels are also in the fray: one jointly backed by Jahangirnagar Sangskritik Jote and a faction of Chhatra Union (Adri-Ankur); another by Jahangirnagar Theatre and a faction of Chhatra Union (Imon-Tanjim); and an independent alliance led by Abdur Rashid Jitu and Shakil Ali.

The "Samprতির Oikyo" panel, likely to be led by former JU Chhatra Union president Amartya Ray and former Sangskritik Jote president Sharan Ehsan, will include leaders from cultural organisations under the Teacher-Student Centre, along with indigenous and minority students.

Sharan said, "We'll announce our full panel by Monday or Tuesday. It will include 8-10 women along with members of indigenous and minority communities." Sources said Prapti Taposi, Irfanul Islam Iftu, and Nur-e-Tamim Srot might vie for top posts from this panel.

Another panel, possibly named "Shikkharthi Oikkya Sangsad", is expected under theatre activist and former Students Against Discrimination coordinator Mahfuz Islam Megh, and Jahidul Islam Imon, president of another JU Chhatra Union faction.

Megh said, "It [the panel] will be inclusive, with cultural activists, indigenous and minority students. We plan to contest around 10-12 posts," he said, adding it will be announced within two days.

The "Swatantra Jote" panel, led by former Students Against Discrimination coordinator Abdur Rashid Jitu and Shakil Ali, is expected to contest around 20 posts. Jitu said he would run for VP and Shakil for GS, adding that Sultan Mulk Shubho and Anwar Hossain Rudro will run for other key positions in the panel, which will be announced by Monday.

Several independents and partial alliances, including Chhatra Front's Sohagi Samia with a possible partial panel, are also expected to contest.

A total of 276 nominations were submitted for the Jucusu polls and 467 for the hall elections. For Jucusu, 25 posts will be contested, with six reserved for women. The number of voters is 11,919 -- 6,102 men and 5,817 women.

The Jucusu election, which was last held in 1992, is scheduled for September 11.