

# Ducsu elections: Will prioritise student welfare

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GS candidate SM Farhad tells Star



SM Farhad, general secretary candidate from the Islami Chhatra Shibir-backed Oikkoboddho Shikharthi Jote in the upcoming Ducsu election, wants to ensure a sound atmosphere on campus for academic activities and prioritise the welfare of students.

If elected, he said, his panel would focus on six key student issues: campus safety, housing, security for female students, improved transportation, healthcare and food standards, and career support.

Talking to The Daily Star, Farhad also outlined some clear red lines. "We will oppose authoritarian politics, torture, guest-room and gono-room practices, violence, and extortion. Neither Islamophobia nor dress-related pressure will be tolerated. No one should feel pressured to wear hijab, and no one should be afraid to wear other kinds of clothing."

Farhad, president of DU Chhatra Shibir, voiced optimism about a favourable outcome, saying his panel reflects the diversity and aspirations of students.

Explaining the composition of his panel, he said candidates were chosen strictly on merit. "For instance, our sports secretary nominee is a black-belt trainer, while the law and human rights secretary candidate has long defended students' rights and spoken against repression."

Farhad said inclusivity is his panel's main strength. "Our panel includes critics of Shibir, hijabi and non-hijabi students, Bengalis and non-Bengalis, non-Muslims, even a student who lost an eye in the July movement. Demographically and ideologically, this diversity mirrors our vision of Bangladesh and the campus of the future."

He added that his "political journey has always been close to the expectations and sentiments of students."

"Despite obstacles, I have stood by them—fighting for their rights, making organisational practices more student-friendly, and working to restore an academic atmosphere on campus. That is why I believe students now view us positively."

Acknowledging that his personal appeal stems from his organisation, Farhad said: "Whatever influence I have is inseparable from my organisation. The initiatives I've pursued for students were possible only through collective strength."

Farhad alleged that the electoral environment was already "murky," with the administration favouring a particular group, and called on teachers to remain neutral.

Asked about a writ petition challenging his candidacy, he said: "The matter is before the court, which will decide if I can contest. But no attempt will be allowed to derail the elections. We will resist such moves."

Farhad claimed that the issue of 1971 is being repeatedly raised against him as a distraction.

"Our opponents raise this only as a political ploy. They lack effective student welfare programmes, and they fear the rising popularity of Shibir. So, they keep raising the same old questions. We have already responded to these officially many times, in various forums."

Concluding on a conciliatory note, he said he sees other contestants not as rivals, but as associates. "Whoever wins will take responsibility, and the rest of us will assist."