



Adviser Asif Mahmud to Leave Election-Time Government Role to Ensure Transparency in National Polls



Collected picture

To avoid a “conflict of interest,” Asif Mahmud Sajib Bhuiyan, Adviser to the Interim Government in charge of the Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Ministry, as well as the Youth and Sports Ministry, has announced he will not remain in office during the election period. He also suggested that fellow adviser Mahfuz Alam should resign as well.

Speaking on Tuesday (August 12) on the US-based media outlet Thikana’s program Thikanay Khaled Mohiuddin, Asif Mahmud said, “I have been active in politics since 2018. Therefore, I will step down from the government before the election schedule is announced.” He further noted that several others in the government are also involved in politics, such as Mahfuz Alam, and they too should not be part of the election-time administration. As a reason, he said, “The Chief Adviser wants to gift the nation the best possible election. Therefore, avoiding any ‘conflict of interest’ is crucial.”

Earlier, there had been political speculation that before the election, the two former student leaders turned advisers—Asif Mahmud and Mahfuz Islam—might step down from the government and join the National Citizens Party (NCP). However, during the talk show, Asif Mahmud did not confirm whether he would join the NCP or run as a candidate in the upcoming election.

In his political career, he has previously faced controversy. When disputes arose with some leaders of the National Citizens Committee over the formation of the NCP, allegations surfaced that the party office was moved from the Rupayan Centre in Banglamotor, Dhaka, under his direction. Though discussed on social media, Asif Mahmud made no clear comment on the matter.

Political circles have also been abuzz with speculation that he might contest from the Cumilla-3 (Muradnagar) constituency. This has reportedly caused tension with Kazi Shah Mofazzal Hossain Kaikobad, BNP leader, former MP, and current Local Government Adviser. However, Asif Mahmud has denied the rumors, saying, “Some people think I will contest the national election from Muradnagar—this is not correct.”

Notably, the suspended organization ‘Democratic Chhatra Shakti’ had leaders who played an active role in the uprising that led to the fall of the Awami League government. The group’s central convener was Akhter Hossain, its member secretary was Nahid Islam, and its Dhaka University unit convener was Asif Mahmud. They were previously affiliated with the Chhatra Adhikar Parishad but left in 2023 to form ‘Chhatra Shakti.’