

Proposal: Launching a Shadow Government Initiative under Policy Watch Bangladesh

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Introduction

Policy Watch Bangladesh has already established itself as a platform for critical thinking, evidence-based policy discussions, and civic engagement. As part of our next phase of growth, it is proposed that we launch a **Shadow Government Initiative** under the banner of Policy Watch Bangladesh.

The objective of this initiative is to monitor and shadow the activities of the Bangladesh interim government in a structured and transparent way. By doing so, we will not only enhance accountability but also establish Policy Watch Bangladesh as a pioneering think tank that bridges the gap between citizens, experts, and policymakers.

Why Shadow the Interim Government?

Bangladesh is going through a transitional political phase. At such times, the actions and decisions of the interim government directly shape the country's democratic future. However, without independent scrutiny, there remains a risk of misuse of power, inefficiency, and lack of accountability.

By shadowing the interim government, Policy Watch Bangladesh can:

- Ensure accountability by closely monitoring government decisions and highlighting concerns.
- Inform citizens by providing accessible, unbiased information about governance.
- Promote democracy by upholding transparency and encouraging civic participation during this transitional period.

Vision and Mission

Vision: A Bangladesh where governance is transparent, accountable, and responsive to citizens.

Mission: To monitor, analyze, and report on the activities of the interim government, while proposing constructive policy alternatives through a structured Shadow Cabinet model.

Structure of the Shadow Cabinet

The Shadow Cabinet will be designed to mirror the ministries of the Bangladesh government. For each ministry, there will be:

1. **Shadow Minister** – An individual with expertise in the respective field who will lead oversight of the ministry.
2. **Shadow Junior Minister** – An early-career professional or researcher who will assist the Shadow Minister.
3. **Support Team** – Students, volunteers, and researchers who will provide data, analysis, and administrative support.

This structure will allow us to build a strong team of committed individuals who can contribute both knowledge and energy to the initiative.

Recruitment and Selection

The Shadow Cabinet will be recruited through an open and transparent process. Interested individuals will be invited to apply, outlining their qualifications and motivations. A screening process will follow, where applications will be reviewed by senior Policy Watch members. Shortlisted candidates will undergo interviews and assessments, and final appointments will be made by the Board of Trustees of Policy Watch Bangladesh.

This process will ensure that Shadow Ministers, Junior Ministers, and Support Team members are not only qualified but also committed to the values of transparency and accountability.

Activities of the Shadow Cabinet

Once established, the Shadow Cabinet will perform the following activities:

- **Monitoring and Reporting:** Tracking decisions, actions, and policies of the interim government, and publishing regular reports.
 - **Policy Alternatives:** Proposing constructive and practical alternatives to government policies. For example, strategies to reduce Dhaka's traffic congestion, improve urban waste management, or enhance the skills of migrant workers.
 - **Advocacy and Awareness:** Running campaigns to promote transparency and accountability, and engaging with citizens to raise awareness.
 - **Public Dialogue:** Hosting discussions, webinars, and forums where experts and citizens can interact with Shadow Cabinet members.
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Digital Platform and Website Integration

The Shadow Government initiative will have a dedicated section on the official Policy Watch Bangladesh website. This digital hub will include:

- Profiles of Shadow Ministers and their teams.
- Ministry-wise updates, analysis, and policy suggestions.
- Interactive features such as forums and discussion spaces for citizens.
- Video discussions, webinars, and expert commentary.

This online presence will not only increase visibility but also enable wider citizen engagement.

Partnerships and Outreach

To maximize impact, Policy Watch Bangladesh will actively seek partnerships with:

- **Media outlets** for broad dissemination of information.

- **Civil society organizations** for joint advocacy campaigns.
- **Academic institutions** for research collaboration and policy analysis.

These partnerships will strengthen our credibility and expand our reach.

Funding and Sustainability

The Shadow Government initiative will be financed through grants, aligned sponsorships, crowdfunding, and voluntary contributions. By integrating this initiative within Policy Watch Bangladesh's existing structure, operational costs can be minimized while ensuring long-term sustainability.

Benefits of the Initiative

The Shadow Government initiative will create significant benefits for both participants and society at large. Members of the Shadow Cabinet will gain hands-on experience in policy research, governance monitoring, and public advocacy. At the same time, citizens will benefit from access to independent, evidence-based information and policy recommendations. Most importantly, Bangladesh's democratic culture will be strengthened through greater transparency, accountability, and civic participation.

Conclusion

Launching a Shadow Government initiative under Policy Watch Bangladesh will mark an important step in our journey as a leading think tank in Bangladesh. This initiative will not only position us as pioneers in governance monitoring but also contribute meaningfully to national development and democratic accountability.

Through research, engagement, and advocacy, Policy Watch Bangladesh can become the trusted voice that ensures governments—interim or elected—remain accountable to the people they serve.