

# DAILY BANGLADESH WATCH

08 May 2026

## Takeaways

### Politics

- ◆ **Nahid Islam, convener of the National Citizens' Party (NCP) and opposition chief whip, said that after the elections in West Bengal, Muslims and various communities are being persecuted. The impact of this will also be felt in Bangladesh. He said, we want to make one thing clear - after the results of this election in West Bengal, Bangladesh's responsibility has greatly increased. Bangladesh must act responsibly. It is our duty to ensure the safety and civil rights of all the Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, and Christians in this country. We want to show that Bangladesh is the safest country for minorities in South Asia.** Nahid Islam said West Bengal is an important neighboring region for Bangladesh, but its election is an internal matter of India. He, however, claimed that before the election, several hundred thousand voters were allegedly deprived of citizenship and voting rights, many of them from Muslim and Matua communities. **He further alleged that after the election, minorities, including Muslims, Matua and Dalit communities, have faced continued persecution, warning that such developments could have implications for Bangladesh. Islam said, our enemies, who are anti-Bangladesh and against the interests of Bangladesh, will incite various provocations, try to spread communalism, and propagate various propaganda. We must be aware of this.** He added that Bangladesh should set an example in South Asia by ensuring safety for all minorities and becoming a secure place for all communities, including Muslims, Dalits and Matua populations.
- ◆ **Maulana Jalaluddin Ahmad, General Secretary of Bangladesh Khalafat Majlis, has expressed deep concern and strong condemnation over the incidents of attacks, vandalism, arson, and intimidation against the Muslim community in the recent political context of West Bengal and Assam, India. In a statement sent to the media on Thursday, he said that the way violence is being carried out targeting minority Muslims over election results is a clear violation of human rights, religious freedom, and democratic values. The statement made by West Bengal BJP leader Suwendu Adhikari, claiming that Muslims did not vote for him, essentially involves indirectly legitimizing hatred and attacks against Muslims. Such remarks by a responsible political leader further fuel the situation. Maulana Jalaluddin Ahmad further said that information published in various media and local sources indicates that these terrorist activities have direct support from the extremist supporters of the ruling BJP.** Attacking minority communities on the basis of religious identity cannot be acceptable in any civilized and democratic country. He called upon the government of Bangladesh, stating that the government must officially express strong condemnation of the ongoing attacks on Muslims in India and must press the Indian government to ensure the safety of minority Muslims through effective diplomatic measures. He said that silence regarding the persecution of Muslims in a neighboring country is by no means desirable. To maintain peace, stability, and communal harmony in South Asia, it is essential to ensure the security of all religious communities.

- ◆ **Leaders of a faction of Jatiya Party on Thursday urged the Indian government for signing the Teesta river water sharing deal with Bangladesh and resuming the issuance of visas for Bangladeshi tourists who want to visit India.** The JP faction leaders placed the demands before the outgoing Indian high commissioner, Pranay Verma, at the Indian High Commission in Dhaka. The leaders, led by its chairman Anisul Islam Mahmud, secretary general ABM Ruhul Amin Hawlader, executive chairman Mujibul Haque Chunnu and special international envoy of the chairman Masroor Mawla met with the high commissioner in the morning.
- ◆ **Opposition Chief Whip and coordinator of the National Citizens Party (NCP), Nahid Islam, has stated that Jamaat-NCP could form an alliance in local or city corporation elections.** He said, 'We are in an electoral alliance. When the election period approaches, it can be determined whether we will contest individually or not. However, like every other party, we are also making preparations.'
- ◆ **The National Implementation Committee for Administrative Reorganisation (NICAR) has approved a proposal to establish Bogura City Corporation along with five new upazilas. The decision was made at the committee's 120th meeting held at the Bangladesh Secretariat on Thursday afternoon, chaired by Prime Minister Tareq Rahman.** Bangladesh currently has 11 city corporations. With Bogura included, the number will rise to 12. The information was shared on the verified Facebook page of the Prime Minister's Office. The new upazilas are Mokamtala, to be formed by dividing Shibganj upazila in Bogura; Matamuhuri, by splitting Chakaria upazila in Cox's Bazar; Ruhia and Bhulli, by dividing Sadar upazila in Thakurgaon; and Chandraganj, by splitting Sadar upazila in Lakshmipur. Bangladesh currently has 495 upazilas. With these five additions, the number will increase to 500.
- ◆ **Jamaat-e-Islami does not want to limit itself to just parliamentary debates, notices, or walkouts as the party wants to increase pressure on the streets by highlighting issues such as the implementation of referendum verdicts, local government elections, energy, commodity prices, and law and order. The party's goal is to keep the BNP government under political pressure from both the parliament and the streets. Their agenda will also prioritise issues like rape, murder, terrorism and dominance in educational institutions, and extortion. Discussions with various levels of Jamaat have revealed these thoughts and plans.** Jamaat wants to strongly bring forward the issue that the BNP government has taken a stand against reforms—in both parliamentary and field programmes. Unlike in the past, they do not intend to limit themselves to just boycotting parliament or symbolic protests but want to simultaneously conduct parliamentary debates, walkouts, and street movements. Jamaat supports quick elections excluding party-appointed administrators and not allowing these administrators to participate in those elections. Jamaat Assistant Secretary General Hamidur Rahman Azad has said that, outside the 11-party alliance programme, the parties will carry out separate activities under their own banners, including meetings, seminars, protests, and rallies. According to discussions with Jamaat leaders, they are considering playing an active role in talks related to constitutional and political reforms. They believe that public concern is growing over economic pressures and hardships in daily life. Therefore, they intend to maintain a consistent position on these issues. In addition, Jamaat is reportedly making several plans to further intensify its street-level programmes. As part of these plans,

initiatives have been taken to mobilise the families of those killed in the July mass uprising to demand the implementation of the July Charter and the referendum verdict.

- ◆ **The International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) has been scrutinising the roles of former foreign minister Dipu Moni and journalists Mozammel Babu and Farzana Rupa in connection with the killings during Hifazat-e-Islam’s rally at Shapla Chattar in Motijheel**, says Mohammad Aminul Islam, the tribunal’s chief prosecutor. He also said that the tribunal is viewing the incident as a systematic crime (planned crime).
- ◆ **A Dhaka court has rejected an application seeking to file a criminal case against former chief advisor Muhammad Yunus and 15 others over alleged negligence in the Milestone School and College aircraft disaster in Uttara’s Diabari**. Metropolitan Magistrate Ariful Islam passed the order on Thursday afternoon, saying there was “no sufficient material” to take cognisance of the case, according to court process server Shahadat Hossain. Earlier in the morning, the petition was filed by Usaimong Marma, father of student Ukky Chaing Marma, who was killed in the crash. The court recorded the complainant’s statement and kept the order pending before rejecting the plea later in the day.
- ◆ **UNICEF had warned the Muhammad Yunus-led interim government of a looming vaccine shortage in Bangladesh months before the crisis deepened, an official correspondence letter has shown**. In a letter sent on Feb 10, two days before the parliamentary election, UNICEF Representative in Dhaka Rana Flowers urged former health advisor Nurjahan Begum to take immediate action to avoid a “major vaccine crisis”.
- ◆ **The Bangladesh Nationalist Party-led government on Thursday decided to provide Family Cards to 41 lakh beneficiaries at a cost of around Tk 12,373 crore under the social safety net programme in the next financial year 2026–27**. Officials said that Farmer Cards would also be provided to 42 lakh beneficiaries with a financial allocation of Tk 1,062 crore in FY27. Family Card holders will receive cash assistance of Tk 2,500 per month, while Farmer Card holders will receive Tk 2,500 once a year. The decisions were taken at a review meeting on social safety net programmes, presided over by finance and planning minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury at the secretariat in the capital.

## Economy

- ◆ **Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Minister Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir on Thursday called for increasing use of modern water and wastewater treatment technologies for sustainable development. He made these remarks at a meeting with Chief Executive Officer of Chennai-based multinational water technology company VA Tech Wabag Limited Shailesh Kumar in his office at the Secretariat on Thursday, said a ministry press release**. The minister said the government is giving emphasis on timely implementation of the projects and maintaining quality. The meeting discussed in details the country’s water management, water purification process and ensuring the standard of safe drinking water. The meeting particularly discussed the water quality of the Buriganga River when the minister said the government is taking effective initiatives to prevent pollution in

the country's rivers. Local Government Division Secretary Shahidul Hasan and senior officials of the ministry were present.

- ◆ **The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs on Thursday approved the draft of "Bangladesh Offshore Model Production Sharing Contract (PSC) 2026" aimed at accelerating offshore oil and gas exploration in the country.** The approval came at a meeting of the committee held at the Secretariat with Finance Minister Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury in the chair. The proposal was placed by the Energy and Mineral Resources Division, said officials. **The draft PSC 2026 is expected to serve as the updated framework for engaging international oil and gas companies in offshore exploration activities in Bangladesh's maritime areas in the Bay of Bengal. Officials said the revised model contract is intended to make the country's offshore energy sector more attractive to foreign investors amid growing demand for energy security and domestic resource exploration.** At the same meeting, the committee also approved in principle another proposal related to ensuring an uninterrupted power supply across the country.
- ◆ **The Cabinet Committee on Government Purchase on Thursday approved two separate proposals for purchasing electricity from power plants operated by the North West Power Generation Company Limited(NWPGCL) under revised levelized tariff rates.** The approvals came at a meeting of the committee held at the Secretariat with Finance Minister Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury in the chair. **According to officials, the committee approved a proposal from the Power Division for purchasing electricity from the 225MW Sirajganj Combined Cycle Power Plant (Unit-2) established by NWPGCL.** Under the proposal, the revised levelized tariff charge has been fixed at US Cents 4.513 per kilowatt-hour, equivalent to Tk5.541 per kWh, while another tariff component has been set at US Cents 19.298 per kWh, equivalent to Tk23.698 per kWh at the current market rate. The committee also approved another proposal for purchasing electricity from the 410MW Bheramara Combined Cycle Power Plant operated by the same company.
- ◆ **The government has begun identifying large tracts of unused public land for renewable energy projects, asking ministries and state agencies to submit details of contiguous, dispute-free plots larger than 3.5 acres, as part of a broader push to expand renewable energy generation and reduce reliance on fossil fuels.** Under the initiative, agencies including the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (Beza), the Roads and Highways Department, the railways ministry and the water resources ministry have been instructed to provide information on unused land under their jurisdiction to the Public Private Partnership (PPP) Authority Bangladesh. The move follows directives from Prime Minister Tarique Rahman to implement solar power projects on unused land owned by government bodies and autonomous organisations.
- ◆ **All power distribution companies in the country have proposed raising electricity prices at the consumer level, prompting the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) to schedule public hearings on May 20 and 21.** BERC Chairman Jalal Ahmed confirmed the matter to Dhaka Tribune on Wednesday night. He said the commission had earlier received proposals from the Power Development Board (PDB) to increase both wholesale and retail electricity tariffs. Northern Electricity Supply Company (NESCo) submitted its proposal on Tuesday, while the remaining distribution companies submitted theirs on Wednesday,

leading BERC to fix the hearing dates. He said all distribution companies sought retail tariff increases in line with the wholesale hike proposed by the PDB.

- ◆ **The Cabinet Committee on Government Purchase (CCGP) approved the procurement of three cargoes of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) from the international spot market to help meet the country's rising gas demand.** The approval came from the 20th meeting of the CCGP in this year held at Bangladesh Secretariat with Finance Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury in the chair. According to the available documents of the meeting, the total expenditure for the procurement has been estimated at Tk 2,186.35 crore. The procurement was carried out through international spot market quotations in line with Rule-105(3)(Ka) of the Public Procurement Rules, 2025. Under the approved arrangement, three Singapore-based suppliers—Vitol Asia Pte Ltd, BP Singapore Pte Ltd, and Gunvor Singapore Pte Ltd—have been selected for the LNG cargo supply.

## Foreign Policy

- ◆ **India yesterday (7 May) asked Bangladesh to expedite the verification of the nationality of nearly 3,000 suspected illegal immigrants from the neighbouring country, days after Dhaka said it would take action if New Delhi forcibly pushes any individuals believed to be Bangladeshis across the border.** Bangladesh's foreign minister Khalilur Rahman, in a message in Bengali posted on the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party's Facebook page on Tuesday (5 May), a day after the Bharatiya Janata Party won assembly elections in the border state of West Bengal, said Dhaka will take action if there are any "push-in" incidents from the Indian side. **External affairs ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal told a weekly media briefing that the Indian side had noted the comments from Bangladesh on this matter.** "These comments must be seen in the context of the core issue of repatriation of illegal Bangladeshis from India," he said while responding to a question on Rahman's remarks. **At the same time, Jaiswal sought Bangladesh's assistance to handle the issue of illegal migrants. "This obviously requires cooperation from Bangladesh.** Over 2,862 cases of nationality verification are pending with Bangladesh, and a lot of it for over five years," he said. "Our policy is that any foreign national who is illegal in the country, he or she must be repatriated as per our laws, procedures and established bilateral arrangements. We expect that Bangladesh will expedite nationality verification so that repatriation of illegal immigrants can take place in a smooth manner," Jaiswal said.
- ◆ **Bangladesh has called for stronger global cooperation to protect migrants' rights, prevent irregular migration, reduce migration costs, ensure fair wages, strengthen accountability and expand migrants' access to justice.** Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Ariful Haque Choudhury made the call yesterday (7 May) while addressing the general debate of the International Migration Review Forum at the United Nations headquarters in New York, according to a press release. He said Bangladesh is strengthening accountability and expanding migrants' access to justice through a "whole-of-government and whole-of-society" approach. The minister also said Bangladesh has formed a Migration Compact Taskforce and adopted a national action plan for 2026–2030 as part of

implementing the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration

- ◆ **Bangladesh on Wednesday formally sought China's involvement and support in the Teesta River Comprehensive Management and Restoration Project (TRCMRP) as the two countries reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening their comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership.** The issue came up during a bilateral meeting between Bangladesh Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi at the Diaoyutai State Guest House in Beijing on Wednesday, according to a joint press release issued after the meeting. Khalilur Rahman is visiting China from 5 to 7 May at the invitation of Wang Yi, marking his first official visit to China since assuming office.
- ◆ **Foreign Minister Dr Khalilur Rahman met Minister of the International Department of the Central Committee of CPC (IDCPC) Liu Haixing in Beijing on Thursday. During the meeting, they discussed Bangladesh-China friendship, connectivity, trade and investment, multilateral cooperation and regional issues.** The foreign minister highlighted Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's vision for a connected and globally engaged Bangladesh. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to the One China Principle and deeper bilateral cooperation.
- ◆ **Bangladesh and China discussed expanding development financing cooperation, with a focus on concessional loans, investment and preferential credit facilities to support Bangladesh's infrastructure and sustainable development priorities.** It was discussed when Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dr. Khalilur Rahman today held a meeting with Vice President of the Export-Import Bank of China Dong Yangning at the Diaoyutai State Guest House in Beijing. During the meeting, the two sides discussed strengthening bilateral cooperation in development financing, with particular emphasis on boosting investment, expanding concessional loan facilities and enhancing Preferential Buyer's Credit arrangements for Bangladesh. Both sides expressed optimism that deeper financial engagement would further strengthen the longstanding economic partnership between Bangladesh and China while contributing to Bangladesh's long-term growth and development goals.
- ◆ **Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed has sought Germany's support for enhancing the capacity, modernisation and professional training of the Bangladesh Police.** The request came during a meeting with German Ambassador to Bangladesh Dr. Rudiger Lotz at the Home Ministry office at the Bangladesh Secretariat today. During the meeting, Ahmed described Germany as one of Bangladesh's key development partners and appreciated its cooperation in sectors including renewable energy, climate change mitigation, the textile and ready-made garments industry, and technical and vocational education, said a press release. He particularly sought German cooperation in providing training and technical assistance to strengthen law enforcement capacity and improve policing standards in Bangladesh.

## Security

- ◆ **Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) has intensified security and surveillance along Benapole border in Jashore amid concerns over possible push-ins following the situation surrounding the West Bengal Legislative Assembly election in India. Since Thursday morning, strict security measures have been enforced across nearly 102 kilometers of**

**border areas under the jurisdiction of Jessore-49 BGB and Khulna-21 BGB.** Commanding Officer of Jessore-49 BGB Battalion, Lieutenant Colonel Golam Mohammad Saiful Alam Khan, said the force remains on high alert to prevent all forms of intrusion and cross-border crimes. **Additional BGB members have been deployed at several border points in Benapole including Raghunathpur, Shikarpur, Sadipur, Ghiba, Putkhali, Goga, Daulatpur and Rudrapur. Patrol and round-the-clock monitoring have also been intensified in those areas.** Authorities have also warned people against unnecessary movement near border areas, particularly at night. “Strict surveillance is being maintained along the border to ensure that no intruders can enter Bangladesh from India. Additional patrol measures have also been strengthened,” said Colonel Golam Mohammad. Sources said security was tightened considering the situation in West Bengal following the elections.

- ◆ **The Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) has tightened surveillance and patrol operations along the Cumilla border to prevent possible infiltration attempts.** Lt Col Mir Ali Ejaz, commanding officer of Cumilla Battalion-10, said security has been bolstered across the district's frontier following directives from BGB Headquarters. On Thursday, BGB personnel were seen conducting regular patrols near the barbed-wire fence in the Golabari border area of Adarsha Sadar upazila. Suspected vehicles and pedestrians were also being questioned cautiously during the operation.
- ◆ **The Border Guard Bangladesh have seized various types of smuggled goods and contraband drugs worth over Tk 183.20 crore from across the country in April.** The BGB also recovered six pistols, one magazine, 1,725 rounds of bullets, eight landmines, one mortar shell, two crude bombs, two hand bombs and two other weapons. **During the drives, BGB arrested 149 smugglers, detained 86 Bangladeshi citizens and two Indian citizens and 545 Myanmar nationals for illegal border crossing and involvement in trafficking drugs.**
- ◆ **One hundred and seventy four more Bangladeshi nationals returned home from Libya early Thursday under a voluntary repatriation programme, implemented jointly by the government, the Bangladesh mission in Libya and the International Organization for Migration.** The repatriation was carried out with the cooperation of the Libyan government and the International Organization for Migration through coordinated efforts of the ministry of foreign affairs, the Bangladesh embassy in Libya, and the ministry of expatriates' welfare and overseas employment. **Officials concerned said most of the returnees had entered Libya irregularly after being lured by human traffickers with false promises of reaching Europe through sea routes. Many of them reportedly became victims of abduction, torture and other forms of abuse during their stay in Libya.**
- ◆ **Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed has said the government has taken a policy decision to gradually withdraw the army from field-level law enforcement duties as the overall law and order situation in the country has improved.** “We believe we have been able to bring the police force back to a disciplined state. Public confidence in the police has also increased. So, the army will be withdrawn from the field gradually,” he said. He made the remarks while speaking to journalists after a meeting on stone quarry management held at the ministry in the Bangladesh Secretariat on Thursday. The minister said the army could not remain deployed indefinitely to maintain law and order after an elected political government assumed office.

◆ **The United Kingdom has announced a fresh round of sanctions targeting Russia's drone production network and groups, including a Bangladeshi travel agency, accused of exploiting vulnerable migrants to support Moscow's war in Ukraine.** The new measures—published on 5 May—target 35 individuals and organisations, including those linked to human trafficking operations and companies supplying components for Russia's military drone industry. Bangladesh's Dream Home Travels and Tours Ltd is among the organisations facing the sanctions. Meanwhile, the British High Commission in Dhaka clarified that the relevance to Bangladesh of these sanctions is that the UK is sanctioning the travel agency, which is responsible for the deception and exploitation of Bangladeshis to fight in Russia's war in Ukraine.

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