

DAILY BANGLADESH WATCH

01 July 2026

Takeaways

Politics

- ◆ **News outlets broadcasting Sheikh Hasina's interview will be warned, says information advisor:** The government will issue warnings to media outlets that broadcast an interview with ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina, who is currently in India, according to Prime Minister's Information Advisor Zahed Ur Rahman. **He said, "Broadcasting such content is contrary to the court's directive. Media organisations should respect the law and the judiciary and refrain from airing such material."** He said there is a court order prohibiting the broadcast of Hasina's statements. However, several domestic media outlets recently aired one of her interviews, and the matter drew the government's attention. **Regarding the government's response, he said: "Initially, the media organisations concerned will be warned, and the Ministry of Information will also formally notify them."** However, he added that the government is not taking a hardline approach at this stage but has urged media organisations to comply with the court's directive (bdnews24.com, [30 June 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Govt won't allow activities of 'refined AL', says Zahed:** Information Adviser Zahed Ur Rahman today said there is no scope for the banned Awami League to carry out political activities whether it is by itself or under the name of another outfit. **Referring to discussions about a "refined Awami League", Zahed said the party cannot organise programmes under any name while the ban remains in force.** "We sometimes see discussions about a 'refined Awami League' in various places, especially on social media. As long as Awami League's programmes are banned, they cannot hold any programmes under any name -- whether it is 'refined', a new Awami League, or Trinamool Awami League," he said while responding to questions from journalists at a weekly press briefing at the Secretariat. **Whether the Awami League will be permanently banned is a matter for the courts to decide, he added. "Until then, the government believes its programmes should remain banned"** (*The Daily Star*, [30 June 2026](#)).
- ◆ **JS passes Cyber Protection (Amendment) Bill 2026:** The parliament on Tuesday unanimously passed a bill to repeal section 20 of the existing Cyber Protection Act, which had provided for penalties of up to two years imprisonment, a fine of up to Tk 1 crore, or both for offences related to online gambling. The Cyber Protection (Amendment) Bill 2026 was approved in the second session of the 13th Jatiya Sangsad after being introduced by posts and telecommunications minister Faqir Mahbub Anam. Under the repealed provision, it was an offence to create or operate online portals, applications or devices for gambling, participate in online gambling, or facilitate or encourage such activities in cyberspace. The law also criminalised advertising or directly or indirectly promoting gambling. Conviction carried a maximum sentence of two years' imprisonment, a fine of up to Tk 1 crore, or both. Explaining the amendment, minister said the provision had been removed following parliament's passage of the [Gambling Prevention Act 2026](#) on the same day (*New Age*, [30 June 2026](#)).

- ◆ **EC preparing for local govt polls:** Local Government and Rural Development Minister Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir on Tuesday said the Election Commission has already started preparations to hold the local government elections in a free and neutral manner. Fakhrul said the EC has undertaken the necessary preparations to ensure that a credible and participatory local government election is held within the stipulated timeframe (*Dhaka Tribune*, [30 June 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Jamaat announces month-long programmes to mark July uprising anniversary:** Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami announced a month-long programme to commemorate the second anniversary of the July uprising. The schedule includes meetings with the families of those killed, injured and permanently disabled during the uprising, as well as remembrance events, discussions and prayer programmes at sites associated with the movement in Dhaka from July 2 to 9. On July 16, separate discussion meetings will be organised by the party's Dhaka north and south city units to observe July Martyrs' Day. From July 18 to 31, similar programmes will be held across the country. Jamaat will also organise processions in metropolitan areas, districts and upazilas on August 1, while its labour wing will hold separate programmes from August 2 to 4. On August 5, the party will join and support rallies and processions to be organised by the 11-party alliance in Dhaka and elsewhere in the country to mark July Uprising Day. **Addressing the press conference, Golam Porwar said Jamaat would press demands during the anniversary observance, including expediting the trials of those responsible for the killings during the July uprising and other crimes against humanity, and ensuring justice in the killing of Sharif Osman Bin Hadi** (*The Daily Star*, [30 June 2026](#)).
- ◆ **'Look at yourself in the mirror':** Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Mia Golam Porwar yesterday responded to BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir's call for Jamaat to apologise to the nation for opposing Bangladesh's independence in 1971 by questioning the BNP's own record on the issue. **"After coming to power, the BNP appointed at least 14 or 15 people who had supported Pakistan's unity and opposed Bangladesh's independence as ministers, MPs, presidents and prime ministers," he said at a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club. "So, the BNP should answer for that,"** Porwar said at the event organised to announce Jamaat's 36-day programme marking the second anniversary of the July uprising. Pointing to Fakhrul, Porwar said, "Look at yourself in the mirror... There are allegations that your father was an offender. You should therefore choose your words carefully" (*The Daily Star*, [01 July 2026](#)).

Economy

- ◆ **Parliament passes Tk 9.38 trillion budget for FY26-27:** Parliament on Tuesday passed a Tk 9.38 trillion (938,000 crore) national budget for 2026-27 fiscal year, setting ambitious targets to accelerate economic growth to 6.5 per cent and bring inflation down to 7.5 per cent after prolonged price pressures eroded living standards for much of the population. The budget, first presented by Finance Minister Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury, is 19 per cent larger than the Tk 7.9 trillion (790,000 crore) budget for the current fiscal year. The fiscal deficit has been projected at Tk 2.43 trillion (243,000 crore), equivalent to 3.6 per cent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP), while the overall budget size represents 13.7 per cent of the projected GDP for FY2026-27. **As part of the government's economic roadmap, the finance minister unveiled a "3R Strategy" aimed at reviving the economy and supporting Bangladesh's ambition of becoming a USD 1 trillion economy.** The strategy comprises Recovery and

Stabilisation, Restoration, and Reconstruction for Acceleration, and will be implemented in three phases over a period of one to five years (*Prothom Alo*, [30 June 2026](#)).

- ◆ **No scope for concern by any other country over Teesta Mega Project:** Prime Minister's Information and Broadcasting Adviser Zahed Ur Rahman on Tuesday reaffirmed the government's firm stance on the Teesta Mega Project, saying Bangladesh, as an independent and sovereign state, will implement the project in accordance with the interests of its people and the country, leaving no scope for concern by any other country. **"Replying to another query on whether the project poses any geopolitical challenges, Zahed Ur Rahman said, "As a sovereign country, Bangladesh will take steps in the interests of its people and the state. The country has the right to exercise its independence and sovereignty in this regard."** He said, **"We see no reason why any other country should have concerns over this development initiative. India or any other country will engage with Bangladesh as a sovereign state. Even if anyone has any security concerns, Bangladesh will take those into consideration. We will proceed on such sensitive issues without compromising."** Criticising the previous government, the information adviser said, **"During the previous government's tenure, attempts were made to maintain relations with not only one country but several countries by compromising the interests of the people. The present government has completely moved away from that position. We will work with any country while safeguarding mutual and national interests."** **Zahed Ur Rahman also said, "This project or the construction of barrages does not mean Bangladesh is abandoning its demand for a fair share of river waters. We have continued our diplomatic efforts to secure our rightful share of water from the Teesta, the Ganges and 53 other common rivers. However, work on the downstream barrage project for river management and protection must be carried out quickly in our own national interest"** (*Prothom Alo*, [30 June 2026](#)).

Foreign Policy

- ◆ **Bangladesh speaker to join Khamenei's funeral in Tehran:** Bangladesh Speaker Hafiz Uddin Ahmad is scheduled to join the state funeral of late Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei in Tehran. Speaker Hafiz Uddin is likely to be in Tehran on July 3 at the invitation of Iranian Speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf, a diplomatic source told UNB. The speaker's upcoming visit to Tehran follows an official invitation from the Iranian government, confirmed Md Monir Hossain, director of public relations at the Parliament Secretariat. The funeral of Iran's late Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei will begin in Tehran on July 4, and he will be buried in his home town of Mashhad on July 9, according to Iranian state media (*Dhaka Tribune*, [30 June 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Jamaat-e-Islami Delegation Going to Iran to Attend Khamenei's Funeral:** A high-level parliamentary delegation from Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami is going to Iran to attend the funeral and state ceremony of Iran's late Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The delegation will travel to Iran on July 3 at the invitation of the Iranian government and will remain there until July 9, 2026. **The delegation will be led by Jamaat-e-Islami Deputy Emir Professor Mujibur Rahman, with other members being Mohammad Nurul Amin, Dr. Mohammad Keramat Ali, and Dr. S.M. Khaliduzzaman.** The Jamaat delegation will participate in Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's funeral and state ceremony to express deep condolences, sympathy, and solidarity with the government and people of the Islamic Republic

of Iran. During the Iran visit, the delegation will hold courtesy meetings with top Iranian leadership and relevant government authorities as per the government program (*Jugantor*, [30 June 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Foreign Ministry budget prioritises sovereignty, national interest:** Foreign Minister Dr Khalilur Rahman on Tuesday told Parliament that the Foreign Ministry budget has been formulated with the highest priority given to protecting Bangladesh's sovereignty, economic growth, and the national interests of its people. He came up with the remark, responding to several opposition MPs' proposals to reduce the budget of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the 2026–27 fiscal year to Tk1. Highlighting the rationale behind the proposed budget of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the foreign minister said if the ministry's budget is reduced to Tk1 in line with the proposal, Bangladesh missions in different countries around the world will have to be closed, the red-green flag—the symbol of the country's independence and sovereignty—will have to be taken down, and all services provided to expatriates will have to be stopped. **In today's competitive world, he said, the main driving force and goal of Bangladesh's diplomacy is "Bangladesh First, the most recent example of which is the historic visit of Prime Minister Tarique Rahman to Malaysia and China** (*Dhaka Tribune*, [30 June 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Indian visa centres in Bangladesh to introduce automated time slots from July:** India's High Commission in Dhaka is changing the process for scheduling visa application submissions, with appointment times to be assigned automatically from Jul 1. The new system will take effect at all Indian Visa Application Centres (IVACs) across Bangladesh, according to a notice issued on Tuesday. India resumed accepting applications for all categories of visas from Bangladeshi nationals on Jun 28 after a suspension of nearly two years. The announcement came three days after India's new High Commissioner to Bangladesh Dinesh Trivedi confirmed that visa services would resume. Indian Visa Application Centres were first closed on Jul 18, 2024 amid violence surrounding the Anti-discrimination Student Movement. Visa operations remained suspended through daily announcements. Relations between Bangladesh and India began improving after the BNP won the February election this year. In mid-May, reports emerged that India was preparing to resume tourist visas for Bangladeshi nationals. Around six weeks later, the new high commissioner announced the restoration of all visa categories. **Before resuming full visa services, India had already introduced another change to the application process. Many recent applicants said they are now required to upload supporting documents while submitting their online visa applications. Previously, uploading documents was not required and printed copies submitted with the application were sufficient. India does not charge Bangladeshi nationals any visa fee. However, applicants must now pay Tk 1,500 as a visa application processing fee. Before Aug 10, 2025, the processing fee was Tk 800. In a separate advisory, India also urged applicants not to seek assistance from agents or middlemen to obtain appointment time slots** (*bdnews24.com*, [30 June 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Govt wants to maintain relations with Japan:** The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) government is seeking to ease the strains that emerged between Bangladesh and Japan during the tenure of the interim government over several development projects. As part of this effort, the government has decided to proceed with two Japanese-funded metro rail projects—MRT Lines 1 and 5. It has also decided to handover the operation of the third terminal at Dhaka's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport to Japan. Tensions arose during

the interim government's tenure over the high bids submitted by Japanese companies for the two new metro rail projects in the capital. The interim government subsequently suspended procedural work on both projects. The BNP government will now move the projects forward, while continuing negotiations to bring down their costs. To this end, a seven-member technical committee has been formed. State minister for Road Transport and Bridges, Habibur Rashid, told Prothom Alo that the government's policy decision is to construct the two metro rail lines with Japanese financing. However, discussions are continuing with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Japan's development partner, to reduce project costs. The state minister expressed hope that the matter would be resolved (*Prothom Alo*, [01 July 2026](#)).

Security

- ◆ **Surveillance eases as extremists seek to regroup:** On December 26, 2025, police discovered a bomb-making factory in a rented house in Keraniganj, Dhaka, linked to Ummul Qura International Madrasah. The explosion recovered large quantities of explosive materials, including hydrogen peroxide, acetone, nitric acid, and nearly 400 liters of chemicals, plus nine assembled bombs. Seventeen suspects were arrested, including Sheikh Al Amin (madrasah director), Oli Ullah Jony, and Shaheen (Abu Bakar)—all previously involved in extremist activities. Investigators identified them as members of Neo JMB, an IS-inspired extremist group. Police linked the Keraniganj cell to three other incidents: a February attack on police in Jatrabari with recovered bombs, a March explosion in Syedabad during a police search, and another blast at a Shiva temple in Cumilla the same month. All four incidents showed similar bomb designs, confirming Neo JMB's involvement across multiple operations. **Following the fall of the Awami League government on 5 August 2024, many members of various extremist organisations escaped from prison, while others secured release on bail. Law enforcement officials believe the Neo JMB group began stockpiling bombs and explosives after being released on bail, a development that came to light following the Keraniganj explosion.** Subsequent explosions and attacks on police further heightened security concerns over the group's activities. However, based on allegations made by Sheikh Al Amin and Oli Ullah, both arrested in the Keraniganj explosion case, a police officer is currently standing trial before the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT). **Several law enforcement officials said this has created a degree of unease among officers on the ground when dealing with similar cases.** The Keraniganj explosion alerted law enforcement agencies to attempts by the IS-inspired extremist group to reorganise. Although authorities initially stepped up efforts to arrest those involved, several officials familiar with the matter said surveillance has since eased considerably. **Speaking on condition of anonymity, several officials said the online activities of extremist organisations, the movements of suspected members, the activities of individuals released from prison and possible links with foreign extremist groups are all supposed to be monitored on a regular basis. With such monitoring largely absent, law enforcement agencies have no clear picture of whether members of banned organisations are attempting to regroup or are engaged in other activities. Law enforcement agencies have also yet to establish why the bombs and explosive materials recovered in Keraniganj had been stockpiled.** Although multiple sources initially claimed that investigators had obtained some information on the matter from those arrested, no clear findings have since been disclosed. **tter from those arrested, no clear findings have since been disclosed.** Several officials from different levels of the law enforcement agencies said officers faced various difficulties after two individuals were arrested and filing of a case with Savar police station during the tenure of

the interim government on allegations of links to Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which operates along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. They said that experience has made many officers reluctant to become involved in counter-extremism operations. Many have adopted a cautious approach for fear that any action they take in such cases could be interpreted differently (*Prothom Alo*, [01 July 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Mobs kill 33 in June:** At least 33 people were killed in incidents of mob violence across Bangladesh in June, up from 32 deaths recorded in May. The attacks were reportedly triggered by allegations of thefts, attempted rapes, mugging and land disputes, according to a rights organisation report. The findings were disclosed in the review report of human rights violations during May and June by the Manabadhikar Shongskriti Foundation published on Tuesday. The figures point to a growing tendency among people to take the law into their own hands, while the nature of the allegations suggests that social disputes are increasingly escalating into violence, according to the report. **According to the report, 14 people were killed in incidents of political violence in June, up from six in May. Regarding border-related incidents, MSF reported that six people were killed along borders with India and Myanmar. The organisation further recorded that seven individuals were allegedly pushed into Bangladesh by the Indian Border Security Forces. Moreover, BSF attempted to push 423 people into the country in June. At least nine prisoners died in jail custody in June, compared to seven in May, the report said** (*New Age*, [30 June 2026](#)).



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