

DAILY BANGLADESH WATCH

14 August 2026

Takeaways

Politics

- ◆ **54 held in capital on suspicions of 'plotting 15 Aug sabotage':** The police detained 54 members of the banned Awami League (AL) and its affiliates from an apartment in the capital's Bhatara Police Station area on Thursday night, after receiving information they were plotting sabotage on Saturday. Saturday or the 15th of August marks the death anniversary of AL ideological leader, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Tanvir Ahmed, deputy police commissioner of Gulshan Division under Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), said police raided the house based on a tip-off that a large group of AL activists had gathered there with the plan to carry out "major subversive acts" on 15 August. Separately, however, Bhatara Police Station Officer-in-Charge Mazharul Islam downplayed the threats, saying the AL activists had gathered at the apartment only to plan a mourning programme, and flash processions on Saturday. They wore white and had a badge to the chest side, Mazharul Islam noted. The accused carried placards and banners, and were also canting "anti-state slogans" before they were apprehended, Tanvir Ahmed and Mazharul Islam both said. All the anti-state propaganda items were seized, the police officers added. Legal measures are underway against the detainees, he further said (*Daily Sun*, [14 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **DU identifies 58 teachers with secret AL links:** The Dhaka University administration has identified 58 teachers for their alleged involvement in secret activities linked to the Awami League and formed a three-member investigation committee to probe the allegations and recommend necessary actions. The university's Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education) Prof Abdus Salam heads the panel, which includes the dean of the Faculty of Science and the dean of the Faculty of Law as members. The committee has already begun scrutinising overall information about the accused teachers to submit its recommendations to the university administration. Public Relations Director Rafiqul Islam announced the development through an official press release issued on Thursday. According to the press release, the university authorities set up the probe body after a report published across various media outlets recently came to their attention. The media report claimed that 404 teachers from 22 universities across the country were involved in covert activities to reactivate banned Awami League and facilitate the return of fugitive convict Sheikh Hasina (*Daily Sun*, [13 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Mirza Fakhrul, Oli Ahmed poised for presidential contest as nominations close:** BNP leader Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) leader Oli Ahmed are set to contest the 23rd presidential election, scheduled for August 20, after nomination submission for the poll closed today, said Election Commission (EC) Senior Secretary Akhtar Ahmed. The secretary shared the information with reporters this afternoon, around 4:00pm, at the EC headquarters in Agargaon, Dhaka, following the conclusion of the six-hour-long nomination submission process. He said a total of three nomination papers were submitted to Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin, the returning officer for the presidential election (*The Daily Star*, [13 August 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Fakhrul's move to Bangabhaban opens key vacancy as Bangladesh weighs cabinet changes:** Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir is on the verge of leaving the centre of Bangladesh's ruling party for the country's highest constitutional office -- and his departure could trigger changes well beyond the walls of Bangabhaban. The BNP secretary general and Standing Committee member has resigned from both posts after being nominated as the party's presidential candidate. With the ruling party commanding an overwhelming parliamentary majority, his election as Bangladesh's 23rd president is all but certain. **His elevation will create vacancies in government and in parliament, while the BNP will also have to decide who takes over its most important organisational post. At the same time, the government is weighing changes to Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's six-month-old cabinet.** Some ministers or state ministers could leave, portfolios could be redistributed and new faces could enter government. Fakhrul is currently the local government minister. Standing Committee Member Salahuddin Ahmed, who currently holds the home ministry, is among those being discussed as a possible replacement. That would leave the home ministry open. **Within the BNP, there is speculation that Shahiduddin Chowdhury Anee, currently the water resources minister, could take over. Another possibility is former State Minister Lutfozzaman Babar, who spent years in prison after receiving a death sentence during the Awami League era** (*bdnews24.com*, [13 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **56 police officers sent into compulsory retirement:** Seven assistant commissioners of police and 49 police inspectors, a total of 56 police officers, have been sent into compulsory retirement, according to government notifications. The information was disclosed in two separate notifications issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs on Thursday. **The notifications said the officers had been sent into retirement in the 'public interest' after completing 25 years of service. Under Section 45 of the Government Service Act, 2018, the government may retire a public servant from service in the public interest, without assigning any reason, after the employee completes 25 years of service** (*New Age*, [14 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **'Dollars are available': Nahid blames power and fuel crisis on govt planning failures:** National Citizen Party (NCP) Convener and Opposition Chief Whip Nahid Islam today blamed the ongoing power and fuel crisis on the government's lack of planning and delays in approving fuel purchases, alleging the situation was being used to benefit favoured business groups. **"The dollars are available, but there is no timely purchasing schedule," he wrote in a Facebook post. Nahid said BNP had promised to end corruption and ensure fairness in the power and energy sector but was moving in the opposite direction six months after taking office.** Citing media reports, he said Bashundhara Oil and Gas sought permission to import, store and market refined fuel. Soon afterwards, the Energy and Mineral Resources Division gave Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) only four days -- from August 6 to 10 -- to prepare a draft policy on private-sector fuel imports and marketing. He alleged the BPC chairman was removed after opposing the move (*The Daily Star*, [13 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **NCP wants independent body to investigate complaints:** The National Citizen Party on Thursday demanded an independent body to investigate complaints of enforced disappearance. **The body should comprise people outside the chains of command of the police, armed forces, intelligence agencies and other security forces, the NCP said in a statement.** Without such a mechanism, the party said, the draft Prevention and Remedy of Enforced Disappearance Act, 2026, could, if passed, perpetuate impunity (*New Age*, [14 August 2026](#)).

Economy

- ◆ **3 more LNG terminals planned by 2029, says energy minister:** The government has plans to set up three more floating LNG terminals by 2029 as the gas crisis has intensified following a fire at a floating LNG terminal, says Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Iqbal Hassan Mahmood. He said feasibility studies are being conducted to set up terminals at Payra, Mongla and Hiron Point, while the government is also looking for investors. The minister made the remarks on Thursday while joining an online discussion organised by the private research organisation Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), titled “Bangladesh’s Energy Crisis: Immediate Priorities and the Path to a Sustainable Energy Future.” He said the government had “never imagined” that a fire would break out at a floating storage and regasification unit, or FSRU, in the deep sea. “An FSRU caught fire. This problem started after the fire,” he said (*bdnews24.com*, [13 August 2026](#)).

- ◆ **First batch of 19 new-generation Indian coaches to enter Bangladesh through Darshana:** The first batch of 19 new-generation broad-gauge passenger coaches is on its way to Bangladesh from India through the Darshana border. **Built at the Rail Coach Factory (RCF) in Kapurthala, Punjab, the coaches are the first consignment under Bangladesh Railway’s procurement of 200 modern passenger coaches. The arrival marks the resumption of passenger coach supplies from India to Bangladesh after nearly a decade.** The addition of the new coaches is expected to make rail services in the southwestern region, particularly those operating through the Padma Rail Bridge, more efficient and reliable. The 19-coach shipment comes after a lengthy procurement process initiated in 2022. Under the project, Bangladesh Railway planned to procure 200 broad-gauge passenger coaches at an estimated cost of Tk1,704.66 crore, with around Tk1,331 crore expected to come as an EIB loan (*Daily Sun*, [13 August 2026](#)).

- ◆ **LNG woes trigger 45% drop in Ctg gas flow:** Gas supply to Chattogram has dropped sharply after adverse weather prevented an LNG cargo from berthing at the Maheshkhali terminal, further deepening the gas crisis in the port city. **Supply from the two floating LNG terminals at Maheshkhali has fallen to just over half of their combined normal capacity, leaving Chattogram with only about 45 per cent of its daily gas requirement. The reduced supply has affected households, CNG filling stations and industrial units across Chattogram and adjoining areas.** To protect household consumers, Karnaphuli Gas Distribution Company Limited (KGDCL) has begun reducing gas supplies to some industrial establishments. Deputy General Manager (LNG) of Rupantarita Prakritik Gas Company Limited (RPGCL) Mohammad Nasir Uddin told TIMES that the two Maheshkhali terminals were supplying around 400 million cubic feet (mmcf) of gas to the national grid on Wednesday (*Daily Times of Bangladesh*, [14 August 2026](#)).

Foreign Policy

- ◆ **India should make use of that opportunity:** State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed Islam has said that whenever the heads of government of the two countries speak or bilateral discussions take place, opportunities arise to resolve many problems. India, she said, should make use of that opportunity. She made the remarks while responding to questions from journalists at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Thursday afternoon. The state minister was

asked whether a possible visit by Prime Minister Tarique Rahman to India could help ease tensions in relations between the two countries. **In response, she said, “I would say that whenever the leaders of the two countries speak, whenever bilateral discussions take place, there is an opportunity to resolve many problems. That opportunity is there and remains. India, too, should make use of that opportunity, shouldn’t it?”** Responding to a question about the prime minister’s possible visits to Japan and India, the state minister said that no dates have been finalised for either visit yet (*Prothom Alo*, [13 August 2026](#)).

◆ **Possibility of Tarique’s Delhi visit getting pace:** Policymakers in Bangladesh and India are now actively engaged in discussions over a possible visit by prime minister Tarique Rahman to New Delhi at the end of this month, according to officials familiar with the development. The latest engagements followed a meeting between Tarique Rahman and Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Dinesh Trivedi last week, after which diplomatic activities between Dhaka and New Delhi intensified over the PM’s bilateral visit at the invitation of India. **Speaking on condition of anonymity, an official at the Bangladesh mission in New Delhi said that they were asked to be ready for a high-level visit. ‘The time is really short. We are now preparing for every situation in that regard,’ the official told New Age. ‘Against this backdrop, political-level communication between the two countries has continued over arrangements for a possible state visit by the Prime Minister to New Delhi this month,’ the official added. However, prime minister Tarique Rahman is not going attend the outreach session of the BRICS Summit to be held in New Delhi on September 12-13, according to officials** (*New Age*, [14 August 2026](#)).

◆ **Delhi claims Dhaka engagement open for Northeast-mainland transit:** India continues to engage with Bangladesh on cross-border connectivity projects aimed at facilitating the movement of goods between its northeastern states and the mainland, according to a written reply by the Ministry of External Affairs in the Rajya Sabha. **In response to an unstarred question from Rajya Sabha member Rajeev Kumar, the ministry said the Indian government was continuing discussions with Bangladesh on connectivity initiatives that could improve access to the Northeast. Kumar asked whether the government was considering an alternative to the BBIN (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal) agreement to establish an efficient mechanism for transporting goods between India’s northeastern states and the mainland through Bangladesh’s road network. He also sought details of the efforts made so far. ‘The Government of India continues to engage with the Government of Bangladesh on the development of cross-border connectivity projects that would improve access to India’s Northeastern states, including by enhancing road and rail links, bilateral trade and connectivity,’ the ministry said. Kumar also raised a question about visa services for Bangladeshi nationals. The ministry said visa processing times vary depending on the merits of each application, supporting documents and, where applicable, the interview process** (*New Age*, [13 August 2026](#)).

◆ **Strong assurances received on renewal of Ganges Water Sharing Treaty:** The Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Water Resources was informed on Thursday that strong assurances have been received regarding the renewal of the Ganges Water Sharing Treaty between Bangladesh and India, commonly known as the Farakka Treaty. The committee was also informed that the main implementation work of the Teesta Master Plan is expected to begin next year. The first meeting of the committee on the Ministry was held at the National Parliament with committee chairman Mohammad Shofiqul Haque Milon MP presiding. The committee discussed various initiatives including advance preparations to prevent

river erosion and tree plantation programs. The meeting was informed that the Padma Barrage Project has already been approved by the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC). A presentation was made before the committee on the overall activities of the Ministry of Water Resources including ongoing development programs, project progress, implementation periods and allocations. According to the presentation, 93 development projects are currently being implemented under the ministry. A total of Tk 7,832.80 crore has been allocated for these projects in the 2026-27 fiscal year. The committee called for completing the development projects within their stipulated timelines, ensuring proper and efficient use of allocated funds and taking more effective measures to improve public services (*Dhaka Tribune*, [13 August 2026](#)).

◆ **PM, US business delegation discuss investment, job creation:** Prime Minister Tarique Rahman held a meeting with a 50-member delegation of the US-Bangladesh Business Council on Thursday to discuss ways to increase US investment in Bangladesh, create jobs and accelerate economic growth. **Speaking to reporters after the meeting, PMO Spokesperson Mahdi Amin described the discussions as “highly productive and effective”, saying detailed and positive talks were held on how the US private sector could help boost foreign investment, create new employment opportunities and accelerate Bangladesh's economic progress.** Representatives from leading US businesses took part in the meeting, which focused on expanding US investment in Bangladesh and further strengthening the long-standing trade and economic ties between the two countries. Mahdi Amin, also prime minister's adviser, said the meeting also discussed how the US private sector could contribute to implementing the government's election manifesto and various policies. The US businesses expressed interest in helping accelerate economic growth through job creation. He expressed hope that the visit by representatives of leading US businesses will further deepen Bangladesh-US economic ties (*Dhaka Tribune*, [13 August 2026](#)).

◆ **Bangladesh-Saudi flights to rise to 84 a week:** Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to expand passenger and cargo air services, increasing the number of authorised weekly passenger flights between the two countries from 49 to 84. The new arrangement between the civil aviation authorities of Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia, also allows 21 cargo flights a week, fifth-freedom traffic rights, code-sharing, co-terminalisation and aircraft leasing. Bangladesh Civil Aviation Authority (CAAB) Chairman Air Vice Marshal Md Mostafa Mahmood Siddiq disclosed the details at a meeting with media representatives at the CAAB headquarters in Dhaka on Thursday. He said the new agreement would allow designated airlines of both countries to operate up to 84 passenger flights a week, creating scope for 35 additional flights compared with the previous limit. The increased capacity is expected to particularly benefit Bangladeshi Hajj and Umrah pilgrims by easing seat shortages and operational pressures during peak seasons (*Daily Sun*, [14 August 2026](#)).

Security

◆ **UNSC flags al-Qaida efforts to exploit Bangladesh:** The UN Security Council has expressed “some concern” over attempts by al-Qaida in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) to exploit Bangladesh to establish cells in the country, according to a new report. The 38th report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, prepared pursuant to relevant Security Council resolutions and published on 10 August, said the overall threat level remained broadly

unchanged but had intensified in the Sahel and South Asia. The report comes as improvised explosive devices (IEDs) were found in different parts of the country and half a dozen suspected militants were arrested over the past year. **“Regional tensions in South Asia remained high as cross-border attacks between Pakistan and Afghanistan continued,”** the report said. Referring to developments in India and Bangladesh, the report said the November 2025 attack on Delhi’s Red Fort was officially attributed to AQIS. **“There was some concern about AQIS trying to exploit Bangladesh to establish cells there,”** it said (*Daily Times of Bangladesh*, [13 August 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Extremist activity: Same group linked to 11 incidents, planning sabotage:** Investigation officials have revealed that Neo-JMB members were involved not only in these two Savar incidents, but in at least eight other events following an explosion at the Al Qura Madrasah in Dakshin Keraniganj, Dhaka, on 26 December last year. Furthermore, investigators note that the same extremist group was involved in a total of 11 incidents, indicating plans for major sabotage. Officials from the CTTC and Anti-Terrorism Unit (ATU) involved in the investigation stated they had received intelligence regarding plans for large-scale sabotage. As part of that plan, the bomb concealed in an umbrella had been placed beneath the metro rail station on 24 July. A string of bomb recoveries and explosions around Savar and Ashulia has raised fresh concerns over possible militant regrouping on Dhaka’s doorstep, with investigators linking some recent incidents to suspected Neo-JMB operatives and warning of plans for major acts of sabotage. At least 16 explosives, including two powerful pressure cooker-type bombs, have been **recovered from Savar and Ashulia over the past two weeks**. The latest discoveries came on Tuesday, when police recovered 14 pipe bombs and bomb-making materials in separate operations and found another powerful device near a madrasa and mosque in Savar. The developments are part of a wider pattern emerging since late last year (*Prothom Alo*, [13 August 2026](#); *Dhaka Tribune*, [14 August 2026](#)).

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