

DAILY BANGLADESH WATCH

18 August 2026

Takeaways

Politics

- ◆ **Hasina's legal status in India remains unclear, ICT Chief Prosecutor Aminul says:** Bangladesh does not yet know under what legal status former prime minister Sheikh Hasina is currently residing in India, or whether she has been granted political asylum, according to Md Aminul Islam, chief prosecutor of the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT). He made the remarks on Monday when asked by reporters whether clearance from an Indian court would be required to extradite Hasina to Bangladesh. Aminul, however, said the government has already submitted an extradition request to New Delhi to bring Hasina back to face justice. "The request made is a legal procedure, and the Bangladesh government has taken the necessary steps to bring her back through that process," he added. **The chief prosecutor declined to comment on a report published by The Indian Express, which claimed that extradition would require approval from an Indian court** (*bdnews24.com*, [17 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Tribunal summons Shyamal Dutta, 2 other journalists in crimes against humanity case:** Three journalists have been ordered to appear before the International Crimes Tribunal in a new case over crimes against humanity committed during the July Uprising. **They are Shyamal Dutta, Mozammel Babu and Farzana Rupa. The three have been asked to appear before the International Crimes Tribunal-2 bench on Aug 24.** On Monday, a single bench of International Crimes Tribunal-2 Member Judge Md Manjurul Basit passed the order after hearing an application by the prosecution (*bdnews24.com*, [17 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Prosecution seeks death penalty for Quader, 6 others:** The International Crimes Tribunal-2 on Monday concluded the hearing in the crimes against humanity case against Awami League general secretary Obaidul Quader and six others over their alleged roles in committing atrocities during the 2024 mass uprising. **The three-member tribunal, headed by former High Court judge Justice Md Nozrul Islam Chowdhury, said that it would deliver its verdict any day.** The tribunal's decision came when prosecutor Gazi Monawar Hossain Tamim concluded the prosecution's closing arguments. Besides Quader, the other accused are Awami League joint general secretary AFM Bahauddin Nasim, former state minister Mohammad Ali Arafat, Juba League chairman Sheikh Fazle Shams Parash, its general secretary Mainul Hossain Khan Nikhil, Chhatra League president Saddam Hossain and its general secretary Sheikh Wali Asif Inan. **All seven accused in the case are now in jail and faced the trial in absentia** (*New Age*, [17 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Former Appellate Division judge Asaduzzaman to lead ACC:** Retired Appellate Division Justice AKM Asaduzzaman has been appointed chairman of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC). Jahangir Alam Khan and Financial Reporting Council Chairman Sajjad Hossain Bhuiyan have been appointed as commissioners. **The appointments end a 166-day vacancy at the top of the anti-graft watchdog.** The Cabinet Division announced their appointments in a gazette notification on Monday (*bdnews24.com*, [17 August 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Govt forms committee to monitor social media activities of teachers, employees:** Bangladesh government has formed a committee to monitor social media use by teachers and employees under the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, particularly posts deemed anti-government, negative, misleading or objectionable. The information was disclosed in a letter issued by the DSHE on Monday. Copies of the letter have been sent to all directors, regional directors and principals under the directorate. Professor Tipu Sultan, director of the Monitoring and Evaluation Wing of the DSHE, has been appointed convener of the committee, named the Social Media Monitoring Committee. **The letter said government officials and employees must comply with relevant guidelines and service rules while using social media. The Cabinet Division issued the Guidelines on the Use of Social Media in Government Institutions, 2019 (Revised Edition) in this regard, it said.** The committee was formed to monitor whether members of the education community under the DSHE are complying with the guidelines while using social media, according to the letter (*New Age*, [18 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **74pc of Cabinet decisions implemented till July 31:** The government has implemented 80, or 74 percent, of the 108 decisions taken at 17 Cabinet meetings held since the government assumed office until July 31 in 2026, while 28 decisions, or 26 percent, are under implementation. The information was revealed in the second-quarter report of 2026 on the implementation of decisions taken at the previous Cabinet meetings, which was placed in the Cabinet meeting today. Prime Minister Tarique Rahman chaired the meeting at the Cabinet Division conference room in the Bangladesh Secretariat here. **To expedite implementation of Cabinet decisions, the Cabinet Division organized a total of 43 inter-ministerial meetings between February 17 and July 31. During the period, seven policies, strategies and action plans were approved by the Cabinet.** The Cabinet also approved proposals for signing or ratifying drafts of three international agreements or protocols. Of these, one has already been signed, while the remaining two are under implementation. **A total of 104 laws have been passed in sessions of the Jatiya Sangsad during the tenure of the current government** (*BSS News*, [17 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Local government polls: Opposition gears up, BNP mired in disputes:** Main opposition parties, including Jamaat-e-Islami and the National Citizen Party, have stepped up preparations for the upcoming local government elections despite uncertainty over the schedule, while the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party remains bogged down by internal disputes, committee restructuring and concerns over rebel candidates, according to district-level leaders and activists. **For Jamaat, NCP and BNP, the elections will be the first opportunity in more than a decade to test their organisational strength and public support after years of political repression and disputed elections under the previous Awami League government. Talks with more than 30 leaders and activists at district, upazila and union levels revealed that Jamaat and the NCP have already begun selecting candidates and mobilising supporters, while the BNP remains focused on reorganisation.** Senior BNP leaders, however, rejected the suggestion that the party is lagging in preparation, saying committee reorganisation and poll preparations would proceed simultaneously, with nominations to begin after the Election Commission announces the schedule (*BSS News*, [18 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Is BNP becoming part of the government?** After the government was formed under the leadership of Tarique Rahman on 17 February, the BNP faced two parallel responsibilities: running the state and keeping its long-standing organisational network active. **Six months on, it appears that party politics has largely been overshadowed by the demands of governing. Party leaders themselves acknowledge that the BNP's political and organisational programmes have been limited during this period. Apart from programmes marking various occasions, the party has not been**

particularly visible on the ground; rather, opposition parties have tried to remain active both inside and outside the parliament. There are some practical reasons behind this. A large proportion of the BNP's key grassroots leaders are now members of parliament, while many are ministers. Party leaders are also serving as administrators of district councils, municipalities and city corporations. Many leaders of the BNP's various affiliated and associate organisations, including Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal and Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal, have been given responsibilities in different government institutions and agencies. As a result, a large section of the party's grassroots leadership is now engaged in government responsibilities. Those who have not received any positions, meanwhile, are focused largely on the next local government elections and various opportunities and benefits. **Ultimately, the BNP will have to bear responsibility for the government's successes and failures, while every decision taken by the party will also affect the government. Therefore, keeping the party active on the ground, rather than allowing its leaders and activists to remain preoccupied with the centres of power, is now one of BNP's biggest political tests** (*Prothom Alo*, [17 August 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Opposition brands BNP govt's first six months a failure:** The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) government has completed its first six months in office, but opposition leaders have branded its performance a failure, citing rising prices, energy shortages, poor law and order, politicization and an inability to address the country's major problems. The BNP formed the government with a majority in the 13th National Parliamentary Election. Six months into its tenure, debate is now intensifying over how much of its 31-point election manifesto, which it pledged to voters before the election, has been implemented and how successfully it has been able to govern the country. **Opposition leaders say the government has failed to meet even people's basic needs. They have pointed to the rising prices of essential commodities, the fuel crisis, and the poor state of gas and electricity supplies as key indicators of the government's failure. They have also expressed disappointment over the lack of expected improvement in law and order. Some opposition leaders have described the government's first six months as a state of chaos.** They have urged the government to take initiatives to address national crises by prioritizing broad public opinion regardless of political affiliation and working together to find solutions. They have also called on the government to move away from politicization and ensure that competent people are placed in appropriate positions. **Jamaat finds no success in government's first six months** Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General and former lawmaker Mia Golam Parwar said he could find no success in the government's first six months. Parwar said the government did not appear to believe that there was an opposition party in the country. **After reviewing the government's activities during the first six months in office, Amar Bangladesh Party chairman Mojibur Rahman Bhuiyan Maoju on Monday said that it had failed to fulfil its key pledges.** 'If the electricity and energy shortages continue for long, people will not wait for the opposition to launch a movement. They will take to the streets themselves and make the situation volatile, which the government will not be able to control,' he said (*Dhaka Tribune*, [18 August 2026](#); *New Age*, [17 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Nahid says Democracy, space for dissent shrinking: Addressing** a programme organised by the NCP-affiliated Democratic Journalist Alliance in Dhaka, the opposition chief whip warned that attempts to portray peaceful protests as disorder could eventually be used to suppress political dissent. Nahid said journalists should continue reporting facts objectively, while political parties should play their respective democratic roles. **Referring to recent protests over gas and electricity supplies, he criticised the government for describing such demonstrations as "reckless". "Taking to the street and protesting is a legitimate democratic form of movement," he said. "In a democratic state, I can express any opinion democratically and**

non-violently. From that perspective, it seems to me that democracy is shrinking,” he said, urging the media to play an impartial role. **National Citizens Party leaders on Monday said journalists were facing growing pressure and that the space for independent journalism was narrowing. They also called for the implementation of the Media Reform Commission’s recommendations** (*The Daily Star*, [18 August 2026](#); *New Age*, [17 August 2026](#)).

- ◆ **PMO spokesperson Mahdi Amin hails six months ‘without political repression’:** Prime Minister’s Office spokesperson Mahdi Amin has claimed that Bangladesh has seen “not a single instance of political repression” since the BNP-led government took office six months ago. On Monday, Mahdi highlighted the government’s major achievements in its first 180 days. **“Over the past six months, we have shown the highest degree of humanity in freedom of expression, rule of law and human rights. Not once has there been any political repression,”** he said. He said the government had shown “maximum patience and tolerance” despite provocations and improper conduct, while carrying forward the legacy of Ziaur Rahman’s establishment of multiparty democracy (*bdnews24.com*, [17 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Home Minister says Law and order improves visibly over past 180 days:** Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed today said the country’s law and order situation has witnessed visible improvement over the last six months, or 180 days. **“The people of the country will assess whether they are satisfied with the law and order situation. However, from the government’s perspective, we can certainly say that there has been visible improvement over the last six months,”** he said. The minister made the remarks while briefing journalists after a meeting of the committee formed to make recommendations on the report of the Bangladesh Judicial Service Pay Commission, 2025, at the Ministry of Finance at the Secretariat this afternoon. He said more time would be needed to further consolidate the situation in line with people’s expectations. “We have completed only six months. During this period, we have carried out many reform initiatives, and you have seen several commendable initiatives by the law enforcement agencies,” he said (*BSS News*, [17 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Six months of BNP government: Strong on optics, less so on delivery:** The BNP government’s strides in sectors like social welfare have not been matched in law and order or energy, analysts say. Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has sought to project a restrained people-oriented image by cutting protocol, reducing state expenditure, and giving up some privileges traditionally associated with those in power. Analysts said such symbolic changes needed to be matched by progress in all sectors in light of the BNP’s election commitments. As the government completed its first 180 days in office yesterday, it highlighted the Family Card, Farmer Card and canal re-excavation programmes, record food grain stock as major achievements. It also said it has taken significant steps to restore democracy, ensure good governance, and fulfil its election pledges. The government touted its waiver of agricultural loans for small farmers, introduction of food assistance at Tk 15 per kg, easy-term loans for women entrepreneurs and young people, and startup fund. **Despite these initiatives, analysts said the government still had a long way to go to make people feel secure in terms of law and order and energy.** The ongoing energy crisis has disrupted production and caused hardship for consumers, while law and order remains a major concern, they said. The analysts also said some of the prime minister’s efforts to project a people-centric government were being undermined by the conduct of party colleagues. The *Daily Star* spoke to 31 people in eight districts -- Pirojpur, Netrokona, Pabna, Cox’s Bazar, Kushtia, Sirajganj, Jamalpur and Dhaka. Of them, 18 gave broadly negative assessments, mainly citing rising prices, stagnant or falling incomes, sluggish business, electricity and gas shortages, higher farm costs and concerns over law and order. Another 12 gave mixed or neutral views, saying six months was too short to judge the government or acknowledging

some improvements. One respondent gave a clearly positive assessment (*The Daily Star*, [18 August 2026](#)).

Economy

- ◆ **Cabinet approves April-March fiscal year from FY 2028-29:** The government has decided to change the fiscal year cycle from July 1-June 30 to April 1-March 31, with the new timeframe taking effect from FY 2028-29, following approval by the cabinet. **To implement the new timeline, the 2027-28 fiscal year will serve as a transitional year, concluding in nine months (July-March). The decision was taken today at the 17th cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, according to the Cabinet Division.** Explaining the rationale behind the move, the Cabinet Division in a press release said, "Infrastructure development activities continue during July-August, which is the monsoon season. As a result, the rains cause delays, compromise the quality of work, and create widespread public suffering." "If the April-March period is used as the fiscal year, infrastructure development activities can be completed before the monsoon," it added. In addition, the draft of the "Special Response Battalion (SRB) Act, 2026" received final approval at the meeting. The cabinet also approved the draft of the "National Strategy and Multi-Year Action Plan for a Lead-Free Bangladesh (2026-2035)" (*The Daily Star*, [17 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Cabinet approves duty-tax cut on green chilli, tomato imports:** The Cabinet has approved a proposal to reduce duties and taxes on imports of green chillies and tomatoes for a limited period to ensure food security, stabilise prices and protect consumers' purchasing power. Green chillies and tomatoes are widely consumed essential agricultural commodities. **Under the proposal, the combined tax rate will be reduced from the existing 61% to 20.5% in the first month after the notification is issued and 31% in the following month** (*Dhaka Tribune*, [17 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Govt to implement new pay scale for public servants this year:** Finance Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury today said the government will implement the new pay scale for public servants this year. He, however, indicated that more discussions are needed before taking a final decision. The Finance Minister said this after a meeting at the finance ministry at Bangladesh Secretariat today to review the judicial pay scale. He said the government would present the full decision once discussions on different aspects of the National Pay Commission's recommendations are complete. Khosru said the day's discussion covered one aspect of the pay scale, with other issues still to be examined before the government makes a final decision. A day earlier, the Prime Minister's Principal Secretary ABM Abdus Sattar had said a new pay scale for public servants could be announced "at any moment". A new Pay Commission was formed in 2025, 12 years after the Eighth Pay Commission was set up in 2013 (*BSS News*, [17 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Dollar and reserves offer relief, investment remains sluggish:** High inflation, stagnation in investment, a weak banking sector, a large revenue shortfall and mounting debt-repayment pressure—these are the structural problems the BNP (Bangladesh Nationalist Party) government inherited. Six months into its tenure, these problems remain unresolved. **There is some relief, however, in the dollar market, foreign exchange reserves, remittances and exports. Inflation also edged down slightly in July. But people's purchasing power is yet to recover after years of rising prices. There are no clear signs of a turnaround in investment or employment either. On top of that, recent gas and electricity shortages have disrupted industrial production.** Over the past six months, the government has taken some initiatives to remove barriers to business, attract investment and lower borrowing costs. But visible progress in reforms of the banking,

revenue and energy sectors remains limited. Overall, the economy has gained some stability, but recovery is yet to begin. Finance Minister Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury has also said that economic recovery will take two years. The government yesterday (Monday) released a list of measures it is taking to stabilise and revive the economy, including initiatives to control inflation, steps to reform the capital market and a Tk 190 billion refinancing programme (*Prothom Alo*, [18 August 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Mongla Port to be developed into nat'l economic hub:** Road Transport and Bridges, Railways and Shipping Minister Sheikh Rabiul Alam today said a national economic hub will be developed centering on Mongla Port to tap its full potential and create employment opportunities in the region. **"The problems of Mongla Port have been identified and those will be resolved within the next one month with cooperation from all concerned," he said.** The minister was speaking as the chief guest at a stakeholders' conference organized by the Mongla Port Authority at Hotel City Inn in Khulna this evening. He said Mongla Port has immense potential and stressed the need for creating a service-friendly environment in government offices to increase revenue collection (*BSS News*, [17 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **ADB to help Bangladesh become a trillion-dollar economy by 2034:** Asian Development Bank (ADB) Vice President Yingming Yang has said the Manila-based lending agency is ready to help Bangladesh realize its ambition of becoming a trillion-dollar economy by 2034. **"Our vision is to help Bangladesh realize its ambition of becoming an upper-middle-income country and a trillion-dollar economy by 2034. ADB remains committed to supporting a more productive, investment-driven, and resilient economy that creates opportunities across the country and improves the lives of all Bangladeshis," he said.** The ADB Vice-President for South, Central and West Asia said this in an exclusive interview with BSS after concluding his visit to Bangladesh from August 9 to August 13. During his visit, Yingming Yang held senior-level consultations on ADB's next Country Partnership Strategy (CPS), on key reform and investment priorities, and supporting the operationalization of the Integrated Growth Network Development (IGND) initiative. He said Bangladesh has demonstrated considerable resilience, supported by strong remittance inflows, sustained services activity, and a dynamic private sector (*BSS News*, [17 August 2026](#)).

Foreign Policy

- ◆ **Bangladesh sets tough conditions for Tarique Rahman's India visit:** Ahead of a possible visit by Bangladesh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman to India at the invitation of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Dhaka on Sunday set out a number of conditions, which various Indian media outlets have described as tough ones. The Times of India headlined its report, 'Bangladesh sets tough riders for PM Tarique Rahman's visit to India', while The Indian Express ran the headline: 'Send Sheikh Hasina back: Bangladesh's "red line" for PM Rahman's visit.' The report said many members of the diplomatic community viewed the development as the government yielding to demands for 'tough conditions' from its political opponents. **The conditions, it added, appeared to be framed in a manner that would make it difficult for India to accept them immediately.** Several Indian government sources told TOI that the invitation extended to Tarique Rahman remains valid, both for the BRICS summit and for a bilateral visit. The timing of the visit, however, now depends on Dhaka's decision (*Prothom Alo*, [17 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Dhaka awaits Delhi's response on creating propitious environment:** Discussions between Dhaka and Delhi over a possible visit to India by Prime Minister Tarique Rahman are continuing.

Dhaka is awaiting a clear response from Delhi on Bangladesh's position regarding the creation of a 'propitious environment' for the visit, including the extradition of Sheikh Hasina. Bangladesh will decide its next course of action after receiving the response. Diplomatic sources in Dhaka and Delhi said this to Prothom Alo on Monday. Meanwhile, a government source told this correspondent on Monday night that Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Dinesh Trivedi wants to meet Prime Minister's Defence Adviser Brigadier General (retd) AKM Shamsul Islam for discussions. The Indian High Commission requested the Foreign Ministry on Monday afternoon to arrange the meeting. **Government sources said Dhaka wants to know India's clear position on Sheikh Hasina. At present, mutual trust is the most crucial requirement for arranging the prime minister's visit and moving relations between the two countries in a positive direction.** And Sheikh Hasina, who is currently in Delhi, lies at the centre of the crisis of trust between the two neighbours. **Bangladeshi diplomats believe that if India clarifies its position on Sheikh Hasina, the crisis of trust between the two countries could be eased considerably.** Bangladesh has made it clear through various official communications over the past two weeks that Sheikh Hasina's public interaction with journalists in Delhi on 5 August has created a new obstacle to restoring trust in Dhaka-Delhi relations (*Prothom Alo*, [18 August 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Hasina extradition looms over Tarique's proposed India visit:** Dhaka is awaiting a clear message from New Delhi on deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina's extradition as negotiations continue between Bangladesh and India over prime minister Tarique Rahman's proposed visit to the neighbouring country, according to officials concerned in Dhaka and New Delhi. An official familiar with the development said that Bangladesh and India were currently negotiating the Hasina issue as part of discussions on the proposed bilateral visit. **'Whether Hasina is extradited or not, that's not the issue. But there has to be a clear message on the issue during the bilateral visit, and it has to be reflected in the joint statement,'** the official said. **According to the official, Dhaka wants the language in the joint statement to be favourable to Bangladesh's domestic politics while ensuring a 'win-win' outcome for both countries.** Another foreign ministry official, pointing to a recent Indian media report suggesting that the Hasina extradition issue would ultimately be decided by an Indian court, said that India appeared to be trying to frame the extradition issue in a different dimension. Meanwhile, a New Delhi-based official familiar with the discussions said that Dhaka's latest position had come as a surprise to India. **'The sudden statement from Dhaka was a complete surprise for us. Our position is very clear. We had already invited PM Tarique Rahman to participate in the upcoming BRICS summit, and when he decided not to participate, we came up with a bilateral invitation. Now the ball is in Bangladesh's court,'** the official said. Asked about Dhaka's condition of ensuring a 'conducive environment' for the visit, the Indian official said that a cabinet reshuffle was currently underway in New Delhi and officials were occupied with the process. **A senior Bangladesh foreign ministry official, also speaking on condition of anonymity, said that it would be difficult to prepare the visit at this stage because the timeframe was very short** (*New Age*, [18 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Saudi Crown Prince invites PM Tarique to visit KSA, discuss stronger ties:** Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has invited Prime Minister Tarique Rahman to the Arab country to hold talks on strengthening bilateral ties as well as global issues. **The schedule of the visit will be decided through mutual consultations, read the invitation letter dated 21 July.** Saudi Ambassador Dr Abdullah Zafer H bin Abiyah forwarded the letter to Tarique Rahman on Monday during a courtesy meeting at the Cabinet Division of the Bangladesh Secretariat. Saudi seeks strengthened bilateral ties to "fulfill the aspirations of the two countries and the brotherly people of the countries," said the invitation letter (*Daily Sun*, [17 August 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Bangladesh-Canada defence cooperation to be further strengthened:** Prime Minister's Defence Adviser Brigadier General (Retd) Dr AKM Shamsul Islam today expressed the hope that the existing friendship and defence cooperation between Bangladesh and Canada would be further strengthened and consolidated through various bilateral initiatives. He made the remarks when Canadian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Ajit Singh paid a courtesy call on him at his Armed Forces Division (AFD) office at Dhaka Cantonment here. During the meeting, they exchanged pleasantries and recalled the longstanding cordial and excellent bilateral relations between Bangladesh and Canada, said a release issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Directorate this afternoon. **The meeting discussed possible areas of Canadian cooperation in the overall modernisation and capacity-building of the Bangladesh Armed Forces, the release said. The two sides expressed positive views on strengthening cooperation in military technology exchange, strategic defence cooperation, joint training, disaster management and peacekeeping operations** (BSS News, [17 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Bangladesh, Netherlands embark on new journey in circular economy:** Bangladesh and the Netherlands have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to promote circular economy practices in the country's textile and readymade garment sectors, aiming to accelerate green transformation, reduce waste and enhance export competitiveness. **The MoU was signed at a ceremony titled “MoU Signing on Cooperation in the Field of Circular Economy” at the conference room of the Ministry of Commerce today, said a press release.** Commerce Minister Khandakar Abdul Muktadir signed the MoU on behalf of Bangladesh, while the Netherlands' Minister for Climate and Green Growth Stientje van Veldhoven signed on behalf of her country. The two ministers joined the ceremony virtually. **Under the agreement, the two countries will expand cooperation in resource efficiency, waste reduction, recycling, sustainable production and green industrialisation across the textile value chain** (BSS News, [17 August 2026](#)).

Security

- ◆ **RAB set to be abolished, SRB to take its place:** The Cabinet on Monday approved in principle and gave final approval, subject to vetting, to a draft law to establish a specialized unit named the “Special Response Battalion (SRB)” under Bangladesh Police, replacing the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB). The approval came at a Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Tarique Rahman at the Secretariat, according to a press release. **The draft of the Special Response Battalion (SRB) Act, 2026 was approved by the Cabinet, subject to vetting by the Legislative and Parliamentary Affairs Division. According to the draft law placed by the Ministry of Home Affairs, the existing RAB will be abolished and the SRB will be established as a specialized unit under Bangladesh Police.** The proposed law also provides for the formation of a multi-stakeholder grievance redress committee to address complaints from citizens as well as internal grievances of SRB members (Dhaka Tribune, [17 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **2 remanded over alleged involvement in terrorism:** A Dhaka court on Monday placed two suspected militants, Jewel Bhuiyan alias Ustad and Md Arif Chowdhury, on remand in a case filed under the Anti-Terrorism Act with Demra Police Station over alleged sabotage and terrorist activities. Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Jamshed Alam granted three days' remand for Jewel Bhuiyan and two days for Arif Chowdhury following a petition by police, said Prosecution Division Sub Inspector Mohin Uddin. Earlier, Sub Inspector Md Rafiqul Islam of the Anti-Terrorism Unit, also the investigation officer, produced the two accused before the court and sought 10-day remand for each. **According to the remand petition, on 16 August, the accused**

were arrested in the Demra area while allegedly staying with explosives with the intention of carrying out sabotage aimed at endangering public safety and damaging state property. The petition further said two live detonator bombs were recovered from the accused and the police Bomb Disposal Unit neutralised them after arriving at the spot. During initial questioning, the accused allegedly identified themselves as active members of “Dawlatul Islam” (*Daily Sun*, [17 August 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Home Minister says Govt can't rely on speculation regarding AQIS activities in Bangladesh:** Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed said on Monday that the government cannot rely on speculation made by a United Nations Security Council (UNSC) report regarding the activities of Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) in Bangladesh. Asked about the government's stance on the issue, the home minister said, “I have heard that AQIS might be using Bangladeshi territory to create terrorist cells. I have not read the report yet. There might be some reflections in that report, which I cannot talk about without seeing it first.” Replying to another question regarding if the government is considering the report, Salahuddin added, “We are not considering the report yet. We are yet to read it. We have heard from the media that the UNSC report is based on speculations, which the government cannot rely on” (*Daily Sun*, [17 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Police remove suspicious crude bomb-like objects from Elephant Road:** Police have removed four objects wrapped in tape that resembled crude bombs from the roadside on Elephant Road in Dhaka. An official from the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) bomb disposal unit said around 00:45am on Tuesday: "We have removed the items from the street. "Our team is currently examining them," the officer added. Earlier, around 10pm on Monday, police responded to reports of suspicious items at the scene. Md Shawkat Ali, additional deputy commissioner of police for the New Market zone, said several bomb-like objects had been spotted. Upon arrival, officers cordoned off the area and dispersed nearby bystanders before calling in the CTTC bomb disposal unit (*bdnews24.com*, [18 August 2026](#)).

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