

DAILY BANGLADESH WATCH

28 July 2026

Takeaways

Politics

- ◆ **Freedom fighter allowances increased from July 1:** The government has increased the monthly honorarium and other financial benefits for freedom fighters, families of martyred freedom fighters and war-wounded freedom fighters. The revised rates, announced in a notification issued by the Budget Branch of the Ministry of Liberation War Affairs, will take effect from July 1, 2026. **Under the new rates, monthly honorariums, festival allowances, medical allowances and special grants for Victory Day and the Bangla New Year have been increased for various categories of freedom fighters and their families.** Benefits for families of martyred freedom fighters have also been raised. The ministry said the decision was taken under Section 3 of the Bangladesh Freedom Fighters Welfare Trust Act, 2018, and the relevant rules framed by the ministry, with the aim of strengthening the welfare, dignity and social security of freedom fighters (*Dhaka Tribune*, [27 July 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Dismissed police personnel seek PM's intervention for reinstatement:** A group of dismissed police personnel on Monday urged the prime minister to intervene and ensure their reinstatement, claiming they were removed from service during the Awami League government's tenure due to political persecution rather than proven misconduct. They made the demand during a human chain program held in front of the Jatiya Press Club in the capital. Speaking at the program, representatives of the dismissed personnel said they were among 1,522 police officers and employees who had either been dismissed or forced into retirement without fair departmental inquiries. **They alleged that the previous government removed hundreds of honest and competent police personnel to serve political interests and suppress dissent** (*Dhaka Tribune*, [27 July 2026](#)).
- ◆ **32 officials involved in 'controversial' 2018 election sent into compulsory retirement:** The government has sent 32 officials, including former deputy commissioners (DCs) who served as returning officers during the controversial 2018 parliamentary elections held during the Awami League tenure, into compulsory retirement. **The Ministry of Public Administration issued a gazette notification on Monday, sending the officials, who were serving as officers on special duty (OSDs) at the rank of joint secretary, into retirement.** According to an enquiry commission constituted by the then interim government on 26 June 2025, the three national elections held in 2014, 2018 and 2024 were orchestrated at the highest levels of the state, with segments of the administration, police, Election Commission, and intelligence agencies mobilised to implement the plans (*Daily Sun*, [27 July 2026](#)).
- ◆ **PM seeks editors' support in framing policy for independent media:** Prime Minister Tarique Rahman on Monday sought cooperation of newspaper editors for the government's ongoing move to formulate a policy for independent media and journalists. **He sought the cooperation during a meeting with the leaders of the National Editors' Council at his office in the Cabinet Division at the Bangladesh Secretariat this afternoon, said PM's Deputy Press Secretary Md Suzauddhowla (Sujan Mahmud).** The Prime Minister also urged the editors

to highlight the government's positive initiatives alongside doing constructive criticism so that people remain informed about the measures being taken in the public interest (*Prothom Alo*, [27 July 2026](#)).

- ◆ **CPJ urges Bangladesh authorities to drop crimes against humanity charges against Farzana Rupa, Mozammel Babu:** Bangladeshi authorities should immediately drop the charges of crimes against humanity against journalists Farzana Rupa and Mozammel Babu and release them without delay, the Committee to Protect Journalists said Monday. Prosecutors at Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) on Monday submitted a formal charge sheet naming the two journalists and 39 other people — including former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina — in a case linked to a May 2013 crackdown on a rally by Islamic group Hefajat-e-Islam at Shapla Chattar, in which 58 people are alleged to have been killed. **Expressing their concerns, the CPJ in the statement said, if found guilty, Rupa and Babu could face the death penalty because the tribunal does not have sentencing guidelines for specific offenses.** Both journalists have been in custody since August 2024 on separate murder charges connected to the 2024 mass protests. Although the High Court order granted bail in those cases, the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court issued a stay and, even if it is lifted, authorities can keep the journalists in prison under the ICT case. CPJ also said it sent emails to Bangladesh's Ministry of Law and the Office of the Chief Prosecutor but they did not reply to the platform's request for comment (*Prothom Alo*, [27 July 2026](#)).
- ◆ **ICT indicts Hasina, 40 others over Shapla Chattar killings:** More than 13 years after the deadly security operation against Hefazat-e-Islam activists at Dhaka's Shapla Chattar, the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) on Monday formally launched trial proceedings by accepting charges against ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina and 40 others over alleged crimes against humanity linked to the 2013 crackdown. **The tribunal accepted the prosecution's formal charge sheet, ordered the production of 10 accused already in custody on 16 August and issued arrest warrants for the remaining 31 fugitives, including Hasina. The charges relate to the deaths of 52 people during the Shapla Chattar operation in Dhaka on 5 May 2013 and a subsequent incident in Siddhirganj, Narayanganj, on 6 May.** The three-member ICT-2 bench, headed by Justice Nozrul Islam Chowdhury, took cognisance of the charges against Hasina, who has already been sentenced to death in another crimes against humanity case over July uprising (*Daily Sun*, [28 July 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Ex-Bangladesh Bank deputy governor SK Sur gets 3-year jail term:** Former Bangladesh Bank deputy governor Sitangshu Kumar Sur, also known as SK Sur Chowdhury, has been sentenced to three years in prison in a case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) over his failure to submit a wealth statement. Judge Ayesha Nasrin of Dhaka Special Judges' Court-2 handed down the verdict on Tuesday, ACC prosecutor Abul Kalam Azad said (*bdnews24.com*, [28 July 2026](#)).
- ◆ **EC meets acting speaker ahead of presidential election schedule announcement:** The Election Commission led by chief election commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin has sat in a meeting with acting speaker Kayser Kamal on Tuesday morning ahead of the announcement of schedule for the presidential election. As per the Presidential Election Act, 1991, the Election Commission needs to consult the Speaker before fixing the schedule for the presidential election. As per the Presidential Election Act, a candidate's nomination paper must be proposed by one MP and seconded by another. The candidate securing the highest number of votes will be declared elected by the CEC. In the event of a tie, the result will be determined by a lottery, and the

CEC's declaration of the result will be final. **Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) AMM Nasir Uddin on Tuesday said the Election Commission (EC) is entirely ready to conduct the upcoming presidential election** (*New Age*, [28 July 2026](#); *Times of Bangladesh*, [28 July 2026](#)).

Economy

- ◆ **Time for China to make more strategic investment, says finance minister:** Bangladesh's ties with China have reached a point where Dhaka expects more strategic investment from Beijing, Finance Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury has said. On Monday, he urged Chinese investors to expand their presence in Bangladesh and called on Beijing to help establish a skills development centre in Anwara or Chattogram. **"This will help supply skilled workers to industries set up through both Chinese and domestic investment."** **"Our partnership with China is not only economic; it is also strategic. Therefore, we want China to make strategic investments in Bangladesh."** Investment in garments, pharmaceuticals or machinery manufacturing is welcome, but our relationship has now reached a stage where we can expect more strategic investment." Speaking at the inauguration of infrastructure development work for the Chinese Economic and Industrial Zone (CEIZ) in Anwara, Khosru hoped the establishment of the CEIZ would generate employment for 100,000 people and attract more than \$1 billion in investment (*bdnews24.com*, [27 July 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Energy minister says Damaged floating LNG unit to resume operations within 15 day:** Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Iqbal Hassan Mahmood on Monday said the country's damaged Floating Storage and Regasification Unit (FSRU) is expected to resume operations within the next 10 to 15 days, easing the gas supply crunch caused by disruptions to liquefied natural gas (LNG) imports. **A fire broke out at one of Bangladesh's two FSRUs about a week ago, forcing the suspension of LNG regasification, the minister said** at a policy roundtable titled "Navigating Global Shifts: Fostering Energy Security and Resilience in Bangladesh." The disruption has left two LNG cargoes waiting offshore as they cannot be unloaded until the FSRU resumes operations, Mahmood said. **The minister said the country's power sector remains heavily dependent on natural gas, while alternative fuels such as LNG and coal are largely imported. Many gas-fired power plants remain idle because of fuel shortages, even as the government continues to make capacity payments to private power producers, he said.** Mahmood said Bangladesh imported fuel worth about \$3.65 billion over the past six months, putting pressure on foreign exchange reserves as global prices of gas and other fossil fuels remain high. **He also blamed mounting financial stress in the power sector on unpaid liabilities inherited from the previous government. To reduce dependence on imported fossil fuels, the minister said the government has stepped up efforts to expand renewable energy generation. Bangladesh has adopted a new renewable energy policy targeting the addition of 10,000MW of renewable power generation capacity over the next five years, he said.** The event was organised by the Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS) and attended by policymakers from the public and private sectors. The discussion was moderated by BIPSS President Major General (retd) ANM Muniruzzaman (*Dhaka Tribune*, [27 July 2026](#)).
- ◆ **New gas connections for industries put on hold for now:** Average domestic gas production in Bangladesh is declining by more than 150 million cubic feet per day each year. Even imports of liquefied natural gas (LNG) have failed to make up the shortfall. Whenever imports are

disrupted for any reason, the gas shortage worsens. **The shortage has been affecting power generation and industrial production on a regular basis. Meanwhile, demand for gas continues to rise. Against this backdrop, the government will not provide new gas connections to industries for the time being.** On 14 July, the Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources sent a letter to the chairman of Bangladesh Oil, Gas and Mineral Corporation (Petrobangla). The letter said that production from domestic gas fields is declining. At the same time, LNG imports remain constrained by the country's two floating storage and regasification unit (FSRU)-based facilities. As a result, granting new gas connections to industries is not being considered at this time. **People associated with the energy sector say supply cannot realistically be increased within a year. Even if new gas fields are discovered, it could take several years before production begins. Expanding LNG imports would also require at least 18 months to build the necessary infrastructure** (*Prothom Alo*, [28 July 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Bangladesh's RMG sector faces a new U.S. tariff reality:** The country's export sector is once again grappling with a challenging situation, as the United States has imposed new import taxes on Bangladeshi goods due to lax enforcement of measures intended to prevent goods allegedly made with forced labour. The new tariff regime officially came into force at midnight on Friday, but discussions about its economic impact are already underway. **While the new tariff regime won't have a downside impact on exports, according to the Bangladesh government, many economists have suggested that its long-term impacts should be studied. The latest development is also a clear sign that access to markets is now based not only on price competitiveness but also on labour standards, supply chain transparency, and international trade laws within the current international trading system.** The government has sought to reassure the exporters, saying it has not impacted the country's overall competitiveness. The main competitors of Bangladesh – China, Vietnam, and Thailand are not imposing higher tariffs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said. **The officials are therefore confident that Bangladesh's competitiveness in the U.S. market remains largely intact. However, economists warn of more caution.** They believe that the tariff cuts they are pushing, or even changes in tariff rates, can make a significant difference in consumer buying decisions in highly competitive global apparel markets, where buyers operate on extremely narrow profit margins. An increase in import prices may give the international brand more attractive margins to renegotiate prices, reduce order volumes, or, ultimately, begin slowly diversifying production to other manufacturing centres. In the short term, the effects might not seem so dire, but over the years, the effects can also be more dire (*Times of Bangladesh*, [28 July 2026](#)).

Foreign Policy

- ◆ **China eases visa process for Bangladeshis attending 140th Canton Fair:** The Chinese Embassy in Dhaka has announced a simplified visa process for Bangladeshi businesspeople and visitors planning to attend the 140th China Import and Export Fair (Canton Fair) in Guangzhou. In a notice issued on Tuesday, the embassy said the on-site exhibition will be held in three phases from 15 October to 4 November 2026. **Under the new arrangement, Bangladeshi applicants seeking a Canton Fair visa will only be required to submit the official invitation letter issued by the organisers as the mandatory document for their visa application** (*Daily Sun*, [28 July 2026](#)).

- ◆ **US offers technical assistance as Bangladesh works to finalise verified freedom fighters database:** The United States is ready to help Bangladesh build a database of freedom fighters and preserve the history of the 1971 Liberation War, Ambassador Brent Christensen says. Christensen made the offer during a meeting with Liberation War Affairs Minister Ahmed Azam Khan on Monday, the ministry said. **The talks also covered preserving the history of the 1971 Liberation War and the 2024 mass uprising, as well as support for families of the slain and injured. Ministry Secretary Md Ashraful Islam said preserving the history of the Liberation War and the July Uprising remains one of the ministry's key priorities.** Work is now under way, under the Jatio Muktiyoddha Council (Jamuka), to finalise an accurate list using digital profiling (*bdnews24.com*, [27 July 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Bangladesh eyes regional aviation hub status:** Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister Afroza Khanam today said the government is working to transform Bangladesh into a regional aviation hub connecting South Asia with the wider world. **"Our goal is to establish Bangladesh as a regional aviation hub that will connect South Asia with the wider world," she said.** The minister was addressing as the chief guest at an event titled "Saudia and HSBC: Powering Global Connectivity-Celebrating Saudia's Journey in Bangladesh" at a city hotel this evening. **Afroza said Bangladesh is entering a new era in its aviation journey under the leadership of Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, with the government focusing on modernising airport infrastructure, improving passenger services and expanding international air connectivity. "In this journey, we warmly welcome international airlines, financial institutions and strategic investors," she said.** Speakers stressed the need for further strengthening air connectivity, trade, investment, tourism and people-to-people contacts between Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia. They also highlighted the aviation sector's growing role in expanding global connectivity and discussed prospects for future cooperation (*BSS News*, [27 July 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Bangladesh showcases mangoes in Kathmandu to boost exports:** Bangladesh has showcased its diverse late-season mangoes and processed products at a festival in Kathmandu, aimed at promoting the country's agricultural excellence and expanding agro-product exports to the Nepali market. The Bangladesh Embassy in Kathmandu organised the "Bangladesh Mango Delicacy" at UTSAV Kunja, bringing together diplomats, senior Nepali government officials, business leaders, importers, traders and media representatives, said a press release. Around 250 guests attended the festival, which featured fresh Bangladeshi mangoes alongside a wide range of value-added products and mango-based desserts. **Ambassador Gahendra Rajbhandari, Joint Secretary of the South Asia Division at Nepal's Foreign Ministry, praised the initiative for showcasing Bangladesh's hospitality and helping build stronger connections between the peoples and business communities of Bangladesh and Nepal. Appreciating what he described as Bangladesh's innovative "mango diplomacy", he stressed greater engagement to strengthen channels of friendship and cooperation amid complexities in contemporary diplomacy** (*BSS News*, [27 July 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Food security, climate resilience must advance together:** State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed Islam today stressed that ensuring food security must go hand in hand with environmentally sustainable agriculture and strengthened climate resilience. She made the remarks when World Food Programme (WFP) Resident Representative and Country Director in Bangladesh Coco H. Ushiyama called on her at the foreign ministry here, said a foreign ministry's press release. During the meeting, Shama expressed appreciation for WFP's longstanding cooperation with Bangladesh in the areas of food security, nutrition,

social protection and humanitarian assistance. She thanked WFP for its continued assistance to the forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals (Rohingyas) temporarily sheltered in Bangladesh despite prevailing resource constraints. The state minister underscored the need for sustained international support to ensure uninterrupted food and nutrition assistance for the Rohingyas (*BSS News*, [27 July 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Washington likely to push for its cos over Chinese rivals:** Washington is likely to press Dhaka for full compliance with the recently concluded Agreement on Reciprocal Trade, particularly the provisions relating to digital platforms, during United States special envoy for South and Central Asia Sergio Gor's visit to Bangladesh this week, according to officials concerned. Sergio Gor, who also serves as US Ambassador to India, is scheduled to arrive in Dhaka on July 30 on a three-day official visit, foreign ministry officials have confirmed. **The USA wanted to prevent China from establishing dominance in Bangladesh's digital sector, they said, adding that Washington would push for the ART to be complied fully.** Bangladesh agreed not to adopt anything that discriminates against the US digital products as articulated in the agreement signed towards the end of the Professor Mohammad Yunus-led interim government in February, 2026 amid widespread criticisms against the deal. **According to foreign ministry officials, discussions during the meetings will extend beyond the digital field and the implementation of the ART and include a range of regional issues as well** (*New Age*, [28 July 2026](#)).

Security

- ◆ **BGB launches computer training for youths in Dinajpur:** The Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) has launched a computer training programme for young people living in border areas of Dinajpur, aiming to improve their employability and discourage their involvement in cross-border crimes. The programme, organised by BGB Battalion-42, began on Monday and will continue until 20 August at the Biral Upazila Model Mosque Complex. Ten trainees from border villages are taking part in the course, according to a BGB press release. BGB said the initiative is part of its wider community engagement efforts, alongside its primary responsibility of guarding Bangladesh's borders and combating cross-border crimes, including smuggling, drug trafficking, human trafficking and illegal arms movement (*Daily Sun*, [27 July 2026](#)).
- ◆ **CTTC chief says Bangladesh faces no extremism resurgence risk:** There is currently no risk of extremist activities resurging in Bangladesh, Mohammad Shamsul Haque, additional police commissioner of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) and chief of the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit, said on Monday. **Speaking at a press conference at the DMP Media Centre, he said law enforcement agencies are maintaining round-the-clock surveillance through online platforms, social media, intelligence inputs, and their own databases to prevent extremist activities. He said technology-based monitoring and intelligence operations would continue to deter any potential extremist threats. Responding to a question about whether extremist activities were increasing following recent explosions in several locations, including Keraniganj, and the recovery of a bomb-like object inside an umbrella in Motijheel, Shamsul Haque said authorities do not see any alarming situation.** Asked about the progress of militancy-related cases, Shamsul Haque said detailed arrest statistics would be shared later. However, he confirmed that seven people have been arrested in the high-profile FATA Combat case (*Dhaka Tribune*, [27 July 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Water 'poisoned' at joint forces' camp in Ali Nagar school:** Police suspect that an unidentified toxic substance has been poured into the water supply of a temporary joint security forces' camp in Chattogram after a pipeline serving the facility was deliberately cut. Members of the security forces stationed at a temporary camp inside Ali Nagar School in Sitakunda Upazila detected an unusual smell from the water when they used it on Sunday morning. Several personnel who rinsed their mouths or splashed the water on their faces later complained of stomach pain and eye irritation, police said. The camp was established at Ali Nagar School after a large-scale security operation in March involving more than 3,000 personnel from the army, Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), police and other agencies. On May 24, armed assailants attacked the temporary camp and damaged another permanent facility under construction nearby, triggering a gunfight with security forces. Police are preparing to file a case on sabotage charges, Sitakunda Police Station Inspector (Investigation) Alamgir Hossain said. **The police filed a case in the early hours of Monday accusing 54 people of involvement in poisoning the water supply at a joint forces camp at Jungle Salimpur of Sitakunda upazila in Chattogram. Of the accused, 34 have been named, while another 20 are One person has been detained over the incident, though his identity was not disclosed** (*bdnews24.com*, [27 July 2026](#); *New Age*, [27 July 2026](#)).
- ◆ **BHBCUC alleges Mob violence evolved into sectarian attacks:** Leaders of the Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council on Monday alleged that mob violence had evolved into sectarian violence over the past six months in the country. They made the allegation at a press conference organised by the council at the National Press Club in Dhaka. In his written statement, the organisation's acting general secretary, Monindra Kumar Nath, said that although the overall number of mob violence incidents had declined during the six months ending in June, such violence had increasingly taken a sectarian turn, with members of religious minority communities becoming the main targets. **He claimed that at least 257 incidents of sectarian attacks had taken place across the country during the period. According to him, at least 44 people belonging to religious minority communities were killed and five women were raped, while numerous temples, idols, houses and business establishments owned by members of religious minorities were vandalised and looted.** Monindra demanded the immediate release of Haridas Chandra Tarani Das, a Hindu youth from Gaibandha who was arrested after planning to build an 81-foot mural of the Hindu deity Ram. He also called on the government to take immediate steps to prevent sectarian attacks and ensure the safety and security of religious minority communities (*New Age*, [27 July 2026](#)).

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