

DAILY BANGLADESH WATCH

09 September 2026

Takeaways

Politics

- ◆ **NCP to contest local govt polls alone, Asif in Dhaka North, Patwary in South:** The National Citizen Party (NCP) is preparing to field candidates independently in city corporation and other local government elections as the party will not form an alliance with Jamaat-e-Islami in the upcoming elections. It has already finalised mayoral candidates for five city corporations, including Dhaka North and Dhaka South. **NCP spokesperson Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuyain will contest in the Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) mayoral election. The party's chief coordinator, Nasiruddin Patwary, will contest in Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC).** The party will formally announce their candidacies later. According to NCP sources, at a recent preparatory meeting for the 11-party alliance's Dhaka-Chattogram long march, the alliance partners agreed to contest local government elections separately rather than jointly. Subsequently, the NCP's political council meeting decided to revise its list of city corporation candidates (*Prothom Alo*, [08 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Hasina's plan to hand party leadership to Sheikh Selim frustrates senior leaders in Kolkata:** With Sheikh Hasina away, her apparent choice of Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim to preside over the Awami League has stirred frustration and anger among a section of the party's senior leaders. **Several senior Awami League leaders staying in India made their displeasure known at a meeting Monday night, according to multiple sources who were in attendance.** The meeting was held at the New Town residence of Sheikh Helal Uddin, Hasina's cousin and a former MP. An Awami League leader present at Monday night's meeting told bdnews24.com that a central leader raised his discomfort over the party president's decision before Helal. **Others then separately expressed their anger over Selim's long absence from the party's organisational activities as well as his behaviour towards party leaders and activists.** One of them then told everyone, "Organisationally, he (Selim) has ruined the Awami League. Controversial people have entered different levels of the party because of him. No one has ever seen him treat leaders and activists well. In the last 15 years, he could not be found for any party work without lobbying." The leader told Sheikh Helal, "Brother Selim has never maintained any relationship with the party, so why should he be given the responsibility of president? Even if we accept it, no one else will. We hope you can explain the matter properly to [Hasina]. We hope you will now speak to [Hasina] about this. Is there no one else besides [Selim]?" **Another leader told bdnews24.com that the gathering at Helal's residence that night was mainly a meeting to highlight Presidium member Nanak as "particularly important".** The leader said, "There is no question about who is currently the senior leader in the party, Brother Selim. But organisationally, activists have not seen him. **Brother Nanak has been serving this party from Chhatra League onwards. That is what we wanted to convey to her, so that the leader gives the matter importance.**" A source present at the meeting said Helal assured them that he would convey everyone's views to Awami League President Sheikh Hasina and try to find a solution (*bdnews24.com*, [08 September 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Govt wants to bring Hasina back, not wait for her return' - Says info adviser to PM:** The government wants to bring Sheikh Hasina back to Bangladesh rather than wait for her to return voluntarily, said Zahed Ur Rahman, information adviser to the prime minister, yesterday. **"The assumptions some are making about whether the government wants to bring Sheikh Hasina back are incorrect. The government has no tactic of demanding extradition merely to build pressure on India,"** Zahed said at the government's weekly press conference at the Secretariat. **"The matter was placed as a condition before the Indian government, and it was asked to take it seriously."** Referring to Hasina as an accused, absconding accused and convicted person sentenced to death, Zahed said the government wants to bring her back through legal means. "Even if she returns to the country, she will not have the opportunity to seek a review of the trial held against her," he said, quoting the ICT chief prosecutor. "Technically, the situation now is that she will arrive, and the death penalty awaits her," he added. **Zahed also expressed the government's dissatisfaction over Hasina being allowed to give interviews to Indian media despite Bangladesh's objections** (*The Daily Star*, [08 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Islami Andolan announces Friday demos for repeal:** Islami Andolan Bangladesh on Tuesday announced demonstrations in all divisional cities across the country on Friday, demanding the repeal of a recently passed law – Transfer of Property (Amendment) Act, 2026 – it described as 'opposed to Shariah'. At a regular party meeting at the Paltan central office, party secretary general Maulana Gazi Ataur Rahman also said that a press conference would be held on Thursday, to outline the party's position on this law and Shariah (Islamic law). **The government is constitutionally obliged to help the country's Muslim majority people practise their religion, he said, adding that the government had repeatedly pledged not to enact laws contrary to the Quran and Sunnah.** However, the government had passed a law which is contrary to Shariah within six months of taking office, he alleged. Criticising the law, he said, 'Bangladesh has one of the best religious educational institutions in the world. It has the best Ulama [Islamic scholars] of the age. Ulama have already expressed their dissenting views on this law.' Ataur Rahman said Bangladeshi religious scholars had criticised the use of references from Christian scholars on a Sharia-related issue in the law, which he said clearly disregards the country's history, tradition and intellectual wealth. 'We don't expect this from the government,' he said, urging the government to repeal the law immediately (*New Age*, [09 September 2026](#)).

Economy

- ◆ **Bangladesh, Australia discuss cooperation in trade, investment, energy:** Bangladesh and Australia on Tuesday discussed various bilateral and multilateral issues, including cooperation in trade, investment, energy, labour mobility, and regional and global issues. **Australian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Susan Ryle, who paid a courtesy call on State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir at his office, reaffirmed that Australia will continue to support Bangladesh regarding vocational training and health issues. The envoy said Australia will always be with Bangladesh in resolving the Rohingya crisis as well.** She also mentioned that Australia and Bangladesh are closely cooperating at the UN and other international forums, said the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. State Minister Humaiun sought closer cooperation and collaboration between Australian TAFE (Technical and Further Education) institutions and our Technical Training Centres (TTCs), as well as in training for Bangladeshi caregivers (*Financial Express Bangladesh*, [08 September 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Govt working to strengthen energy security:** Prime Minister's Adviser on Finance and Planning Rashed Al Mahmud Titumir on Tuesday said that the government is taking a number of initiatives to strengthen the country's energy security, including setting up a land-based regasification unit at Matarbari and exploring offshore gas blocks. **"The government is working on various fronts to ensure energy security, including establishing a land-based regasification unit at Matarbari and exploring offshore gas blocks,"** he said. The adviser was addressing a seminar titled "Electricity, Energy Situation and the Way Forward" as the chief guest at BRAC University's Merul Badda campus in the city, said a press release. The government's initiatives are aimed at diversifying energy sources and strengthening infrastructure to reduce vulnerabilities in the energy supply system, he said (*Daily Sun*, [08 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Govt targets 20pc of electricity from renewables by 2030:** The government has set a target of generating at least 20 percent of the country's total electricity from renewable sources by 2030, State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Aninda Islam Amit told Parliament on Tuesday. **Of this, rooftop solar is expected to contribute 5,500 megawatts and ground-mounted solar 4,500 megawatts, while wind, waste-to-energy, hydropower, floating solar and agrivoltaic technologies are projected to contribute a further 450 to 550 megawatts, he said.** Replying to a notice calling attention to matters of urgent public importance moved by reserved-seat MP Helen Jerin Khan, **the state minister outlined the government's renewable energy roadmap, saying electricity demand could reach 24,000-25,000 megawatts by 2030 if the current pace of economic growth and industrialisation continues.** To curb reliance on imported fuel amid rising demand, he said, the government has prepared the "National Renewable Energy Development Strategy 2026-2030", which envisages generating at least 30 percent electricity from renewable sources by 2040 (*Dhaka Tribune*, [08 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Bangladesh trade policy: WB finds para-tariffs doubling border protection, urges phased reform:** Bangladesh's actual protection at the border is roughly double what its tariff schedule suggests, with regulatory and supplementary duties, not customs tariffs, driving both the distortion and the fiscal risk of reform, according to a new World Bank study presented on Tuesday. The study, titled "Bangladesh Trade Policy at a Crossroads: Evidence for the National Tariff Policy, LDC Graduation, and the Next Generation of Trade Agreements," was presented by Nora Dihel, Senior Economist for Macroeconomics, Trade and Investment at the World Bank, at a programme organised by the Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh (PRI) at its Banani office. **Using FY2026 data, the study finds Bangladesh's trade-weighted average Most Favoured Nation (MFN) tariff stands at 7.0 per cent across 5,666 tariff lines. But once regulatory and supplementary duties, so-called para-tariffs, are added, average nominal protection nearly doubles to 15.4 per cent.** The report notes that tariff rationalisation, though committed to under the National Tariff Policy gazetted in August 2023 and reiterated under the Smooth Transition Strategy, has not moved beyond the proposal stage. **The study recommends a phased approach, prioritising duty cuts on intermediate inputs alongside reductions on the most protected consumer goods, followed by a pre-announced multiyear phase-out of remaining para-tariffs, and eventual convergence toward the tariff levels of regional competitors India, China and Vietnam. It cautions that reforming intermediate inputs alone, without addressing high-protection consumer goods, could worsen the existing bias against exporters** (*Financial Express Bangladesh*, [08 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Economy and sovereignty will be at risk if New Mooring Terminal falls into foreign hands:** If the Chittagong Port's critical New Mooring Container Terminal (NCT) is leased out to a foreign company, it will involve not merely economic considerations, but also questions of

political, military, and national sovereignty, observed economist Professor Anu Muhammad. According to him, there is no need to rely on foreign companies to enhance the port's operational efficiency. Alongside reforming customs, bureaucracy, and infrastructure, domestic capabilities must be strengthened. Professor Anu Muhammad made these remarks at a roundtable titled "Chittagong Port and National Interest," held at the Tofazzal Hossain Manik Miah Hall of the National Press Club on Tuesday. The event was organised by the Media and Civil Rights Society (MCRS). Anu Muhammad said, "Bringing in a foreign company is not just an economic matter; we must also give serious consideration to its political and military dimensions." He further noted that foreign interest and maneuvering surrounding Chittagong Port are not new. In 1997, an initiative was taken to grant a long-term lease of the port to a US company named SSA. However, due to worker-employee movements and legal processes, it was not implemented (*Prothom Alo*, [09 September 2026](#)).

Foreign Policy

- ◆ **Jaiswal says No new information on Bangladesh PM's participation in BRICS summit:** India's Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal has said there is no new information on whether Bangladesh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman will attend the BRICS summit to be held in New Delhi. He made the remarks in response to a question at the Indian foreign ministry's weekly briefing on Tuesday. A journalist asked how many heads of state or government had confirmed their participation in the BRICS summit scheduled for later this week, and whether the Bangladesh government had formally informed the Indian government about Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's participation. In response, Randhir Jaiswal said he had no new information regarding Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's participation in the outreach session of the BRICS summit in his capacity as chair of BIMSTEC. He also did not provide details about which countries or leaders would attend the summit (*Prothom Alo*, [08 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Indian envoy Dinesh Trivedi says New Delhi 'sincere' about advancing Bangladesh ties:** India is keen on and committed to advancing its relationship with Bangladesh in a positive and constructive manner, Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Dinesh Trivedi has said. During a meeting with Road Transport Minister Shaikh Rabiul Alam on Tuesday, he expressed hope that ties would grow stronger, with the mutual wellbeing of both countries' people and their respective interests given priority. Rabiul said, "Bangladesh and India are historically close neighbours. We hope to advance our relations in a more positive and fruitful manner, prioritising mutual ties, cooperation and the welfare of our people. "Bangladesh is sincere about further strengthening existing relations so that the people of both countries can benefit from mutual cooperation." Trivedi said, "India is very keen and sincere about advancing its relations with Bangladesh in a positive and constructive manner. Relations will grow stronger, prioritising the mutual wellbeing of the people of both countries and the interests of both nations." The meeting discussed different issues of mutual interest and prospects for stronger future cooperation (*bdnews24.com*, [08 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **President Fakhru calls for dialogue-based resolution of India-Bangladesh issues:** President Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir has called for the early resolution of outstanding issues with India through discussions to strengthen bilateral ties. The president made the remarks when Indian High Commissioner Dinesh Trivedi met him at Bangabhaban on Tuesday morning, according to the President's Press Wing. The press wing said the president told the high commissioner that "fair, mutually acceptable" solutions to issues of common interest would help build trust

between the peoples of Bangladesh and India. He also called on India to take effective steps towards the equitable sharing of waters from shared rivers, including the Ganges and the Teesta, saying their management directly affects people's lives and livelihoods in both countries. Trivedi said his government was taking positive measures on the issue, as per the press wing. The president said Bangladesh attaches great importance to India as its closest neighbour and a major trade and development partner. **"Bangladesh is interested in building a dignified, forward-looking, mutually respectful and mutually beneficial partnership with India while upholding sovereign equality, national interests and dignity, and the welfare of the people."** Trivedi congratulated Fakhrul on assuming office as president and conveyed his respect and good wishes. Noting that India attaches great importance to its relations with Bangladesh, Trivedi reaffirmed his country's commitment to expanding cooperation between the two countries in various areas, including people-to-people ties (bdnews24.com, [08 September 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Bangladesh, India plan to resume cross-border train services by October:** Bangladesh and India are planning to resume cross-border passenger train services by October 2026. **Railway officials said the three major routes are expected to resume operations after being suspended for more than two years. The services covered by the planned resumption are the Maitree Express between Dhaka and Kolkata, the Mitali Express and the Bandhan Express.** Passenger train operations between the two countries were suspended on 19 July 2024, shortly before the fall of Sheikh Hasina's government on 5 August. **Railway authorities from Bangladesh and India are due to hold a two-day annual meeting in Dhaka starting Tuesday, where officials will discuss arrangements for restarting the services. Bangladesh is also expected to propose a new passenger train service linking Rajshahi with Kolkata during the meeting, according to officials.** The country is further seeking to reroute the Maitree Express through the Padma Bridge instead of the Jamuna Bridge, which has historically been used by the service. The Padma Bridge, which opened during Hasina's tenure, is expected to be a key issue in discussions on the future routing of the Maitree Express (*Daily Sun*, [08 September 2026](#)).

*[Disclaimer: We do not subscribe to the views or interpretations expressed by various Bangladeshi commentators we make available for perusal by our experts/analysts/policymakers every day. We put it all together in Daily Bangladesh Watch (DBW) with a view to acquainting our readers with the existing thought process in Bangladesh having its bearing on India, with the hope that such effort will help us in devising appropriate policies to deal with Bangladesh in a more effective manner. DBW is curated by **Dr. Ankita Sanyal, Research Fellow, CPS**]*