

DAILY BANGLADESH WATCH

16 September 2026

Takeaways

Politics

- ◆ **Crimes against humanity: Obaidul Quader, 6 other sentenced to death:** Seven accused, including Awami League (whose activities have been banned in the country) General Secretary Obaidul Quader, have been sentenced to death for crimes against humanity committed during the July mass uprising. A three-member bench of International Crimes Tribunal-2, headed by Justice Nazrul Islam Chowdhury, delivered the verdict today, Tuesday. The other two members of the tribunal are Justice Md Manzurul Basid and Justice Nur Mohammad Shahriar Kabir. The other accused sentenced in the case are Awami League (activities banned) Joint General Secretary AFM Bahauddin Nasim; former state minister for information and broadcasting Mohammad Ali Arafat; banned Jubo League Chairman Sheikh Fazle Shams Parash; General Secretary Mainul Hossain Khan; banned Chhatra League Central President Saddam Hossain; and General Secretary Sheikh Wali Asif. All the accused are absconding. Sheikh Hasina, president of the Awami League (activities banned) and ousted prime minister, was sentenced to death on 17 November last year for crimes against humanity committed during the July mass uprising. Nearly 10 months later, the verdict has been delivered in the case against seven accused, including the party's general secretary, Obaidul Quader (*Prothom Alo*, [15 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Chief prosecutor says Confiscated assets of convicted AL leaders to go to July uprising victims:** Chief prosecutor Md Aminul Islam on Tuesday welcomed the International Crimes Tribunal-2 verdict sentencing all seven accused, including fugitive Awami League general secretary Obaidul Quader to death, saying 50 per cent of their movable and immovable assets would be confiscated and the proceeds would be used to support families of those killed or injured in the July-August uprising. 'This is an important aspect of today's judgment,' Aminul told reporters after the verdict. He said that the tribunal ordered the confiscation of 50 per cent of the total movable and immovable assets of the five convicted Awami League leaders. The confiscated assets would be sold through the July Foundation or another statutory body, and 50 per cent of the sale proceeds would be distributed among the families of those killed and those who suffered injuries and disabilities during the uprising, he said. Aminul said each accused had faced four charges and that the prosecution had proved most of the charges beyond reasonable doubt. 'We are grateful for this judgment on behalf of the families of those killed and injured,' he said (*New Age*, [15 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Pro-AL lawyers hold silent vigil after seven sentenced to death:** Pro-Awami League lawyers held a silent vigil at the Supreme Court on Tuesday following the announcement of death sentences for seven top leaders of the activity-banned Awami League, Jubo League, and the banned Chhatra League over crimes against humanity. Around 1:30pm, a group of lawyers supporting Awami League gathered in front of the Advocates' Lounge at the Supreme Court Annex Building to observe the programme. According to eyewitnesses, some participants uttered slogans of "Joy Bangla, Joy Bangabandhu" during the gathering (*Daily Times of Bangladesh*, [15 September 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Zahed says Death penalty is about justice, not revenge:** Prime Minister's Information and Broadcasting Adviser Dr Zahed Ur Rahman has said there is no connection between revenge and the death sentences handed down to seven accused, including banned Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader, in a case involving crimes against humanity. He also said the government welcomes the verdict and wants to ensure justice in society. The adviser made the remarks while answering questions from journalists at a press conference on Tuesday on the progress of various government activities. Asked about the government's position on the court's death sentence against Obaidul Quader, Zahed Ur Rahman said: "Our government has nothing to say. Certainly, our prosecution team is working on this case." He said: "We are the people. So what we want to see is this: many say that we have become extremely happy seeing the death sentences. But rather than being extremely happy over someone being sentenced to death, what is more important is whether we are able to ensure justice in our society" (*Dhaka Tribune*, [15 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **58 AL leaders, activists held in Jashore, Munshiganj:** Police have arrested 58 leaders and activists of Awami League, whose activities are currently banned, in Jashore and Munshiganj. In Jashore, at least 27 AL leaders and activists were arrested during a special drive in different areas under nine police stations in the district on Monday night, said Mirazul Islam, additional superintendent of Jashore district police, today. During the drive, police also recovered narcotics, crude bomb-like objects and bomb-making materials, Mirazul said. The drive was conducted based on information that the detainees were planning to carry out subversive activities in different parts of the district, he said. The detainees were produced before a court this afternoon after police filed a case against them with Kotwali Police Station under the Explosive Substances Act, Mirazul said. The court later sent them to jail, the police official added. In Munshiganj, police arrested 31 AL leaders and activists early today on charges of preparing for a flash procession. Three microbuses carrying them were seized during the operation. Police claimed that masks and various materials bearing the inscription "Vote for Boat" were recovered from the vehicles (*The Daily Star*, [15 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Crude bomb explodes at SC gate after AL leaders given death penalty:** Unidentified people hurled crude bombs next to the main gate of the Supreme Court on Tuesday noon, shortly after the International Crime Tribunal-2 announced the death penalty for a number of top leaders from Awami League. No casualty or damage was reported in the incident. Shahbagh Police Station Officer-in-Charge Md Moniruzzaman said two unidentified youths approached the SC front gate around 1:18pm and hurled crude bombs targeting the gate. They quickly fled the scene, he added. Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed has said an investigation is under way into the explosion of a crude bomb in front of the main gate of the Supreme Court, next to the road. He said two people who carried out the explosion had been identified from CCTV footage. They could be members of the Awami League, which is currently barred from political activities, he said, adding that the government is investigating the incident(*Daily Sun*, [15 September 2026](#); *Prothom Alo*, [15 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Students step on Jinnah, Ghulam Azam photos as Ducusu seeks action over archive damage:** The controversy over the display of photographs of Pakistan's founder, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, and former Chhatra Sangha leader Abdul Malek at the Dhaka University Central Students' Union (Ducusu) archive gallery escalated today, as students placed photos of Jinnah and Ghulam Azam on the floor and stepped on them. Meanwhile, Ducusu leaders

sought action against students who allegedly damaged photographs, documents and other materials in the gallery. Ducusu General Secretary SM Farhad and other union leaders met Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Administration) Prof Dr Mohammed Almujaaddade Alfasane today, as Vice-Chancellor ABM Obaidul Islam is abroad at the moment. The leaders had gone to meet the VC to demand action against students over the alleged vandalism, along with several other demands (*The Daily Star*, [15 September 2026](#)).

- ◆ **TIB contests claim of ‘highest human rights’ under BNP govt:** The Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) has disputed claims by Prime Minister’s Spokesperson Mahdi Amin that the BNP government has ensured unprecedented levels of human rights during its seven months in office. **TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman said his data paints a different picture of the human rights landscape, as he cited dozens of arrests for exercising the freedom of speech, seven custodial deaths and at least one incident of enforced disappearance by a state-run security agency.** Dr Iftekharuzzaman and Mahdi Amin made their case while addressing a discussion session on “democracy, human rights and accountable governance” held at the MIDAS Centre, Dhanmondi in the capital on Tuesday. **The TIB chief also criticised the lawmaking process by the BNP-dominated parliament. Many ordinances from the interim government era have been transformed into regular laws, but not one of these laws went through an inclusive vetting process** (*Daily Sun*, [15 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Salahuddin says EC’s local election schedule only tentative, not final:** Referring to the EC’s plan to hold Union Parishad polls in phases beginning on November 12 next, Shome Minister alahuddin said the schedule presented by the commission was explicitly described as “tentative.” “I watched the video regarding the tentative plan the Election Commission presented yesterday [Monday]. ‘Tentative’ implies a proposed schedule,” he said. The minister suggested that the media might have misunderstood the announcement of the proposed dates as a firm decision to hold the elections. He said no final decision has yet been made on the schedule. Asked about the remarks of State Minister for Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives Mir Shahe Alam that the EC announced the schedule without consulting the government, Salahuddin said the EC operates within the framework of the law. **The Election Commission (EC) will have to coordinate with the government when setting the schedule for local government elections, Prime Minister’s Adviser on Information and Broadcasting Dr Zahed Ur Rahman has said. He also said the timeline announced by the EC should not be considered the government’s final decision** (*Dhaka Tribune*, [15 September 2026](#); *The Daily Star*, [15 September 2026](#); *Dhaka Tribune*, [15 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **EC-govt at odds: Local polls at crossroads as Jamaat, NCP allege interference:** Long-pending local government elections have entered uncertainty as Election Commission (EC) and the government find themselves at odds over the poll schedule, with opposition parties accusing the government of interfering with the authority of the constitutional body. The dispute surfaced after EC announced a possible schedule for Union Parishad (UP) elections from 12 November, while State Minister for Local Government Mir Shahe Alam said the government had not been informed about the decision and no discussion had taken place with the ministry. **Opposition parties, including Jamaat-e-Islami and National Citizen Party (NCP), have criticised the development, accusing the government of undermining the EC’s independence and raising concerns over the prospects of a fair and impartial election.** Opposition parties, however, said the dispute raised questions over EC’s independence. Jamaat

Assistant Secretary General Ahsanul Mahboob Zubair said ministers had repeatedly commented on the timing of local government elections, although the matter was not within their jurisdiction. NCP also accused the government of interfering in EC's affairs and questioned the commission's independence. NCP alleged that government pressure had forced EC to take inconsistent positions, undermining public confidence and affecting the prospects of a fair and neutral election. It demanded that EC work independently and free itself from government influence (*Daily Times of Bangladesh*, [16 September 2026](#)).

Economy

- ◆ **Sakhawat seeks Chinese investment in health sector:** Health and Family Welfare Minister Sardar Md Sakhawat Husain today sought Chinese investment in Bangladesh health sector to improve healthcare in the country. **“Bangladesh government is attaching highest importance to primary healthcare for improving health services in the country. It has plans to establish 20 large hospitals in different regions. We expect technical assistance and training from China for establishing these hospitals,” he said.** He made the remarks at a meeting with senior officials of Hainan Province at the Boao Lecheng International Medical Tourism Pilot Zone in Hainan, China. Secretary of the Hainan Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of China Feng Fei and Vice Governor Xie Jing were present at the meeting. The minister said Bangladesh wants to further strengthen mutual cooperation in the health sector by leveraging its strong bilateral relations with China. The meeting discussed scholarships for Bangladeshi medical students, exchanges and training of doctors, prevention of tropical diseases, and cooperation in Traditional Chinese Medicine (*BSS News*, [15 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Gas output climbs as twin LNG terminals in Moheshkhali reach 90% capacity:** LNG supply from Moheshkhali's two floating terminals has risen, pushing Bangladesh's total gas supply to 2,610 million cubic feet per day (mmcf). Petrobangla data shows the regasified LNG (RLNG) supply stood at 990mmcf at noon on Tuesday, with domestic fields supplying 1,620mmcf. Total supply was 2,362mmcf at 8pm on Monday, with RLNG at 762mmcf then. Supply rose 248mmcf over the next 16 hours, 228mmcf of it from RLNG. The jump came Monday night. After 9pm, Excelerate Energy's Moheshkhali LNG (MLNG) terminal raised supply to 500mmcf, while Summit LNG (SLNG) delivered 480mmcf, taking combined terminal output to 980mmcf. By 10pm, total supply had climbed to 2,582mmcf, with domestic gas at 1,602mmcf (*bdnews24.com*, [15 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Bangladesh reaffirms commitment to peaceful use of nuclear:** Science and Technology Minister Faqir Mahbub Anam has reaffirmed Bangladesh's firm commitment to the peaceful use of nuclear science, maintaining the highest standards of safety and strengthening international cooperation. He made the remarks while representing Bangladesh at the 70th General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna. Addressing the President of the 70th IAEA General Conference on Monday, the minister said Bangladesh has benefited from the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Program for more than five decades in several critical sectors, including health, agriculture, food, water management, industry and energy. He said Bangladesh recently signed the Country Program Framework (CPF) for 2026-2032, which will create new opportunities for technical cooperation in the coming years. **Referring to the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant as a historic milestone for Bangladesh's energy security, the minister said the fuel loading of Unit-1 marked significant progress towards carbon-free electricity generation.** He said the project

will not only help meet the country's growing electricity demand but also create new opportunities to strengthen energy security and address climate change. Highlighting Bangladesh's strong commitment to nuclear safety, Faqir Mahbub Anam said Bangladesh's inclusion as the first country in South Asia in the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management reflects the country's commitment to implementing a safe and responsible nuclear program. **He said Bangladesh remains committed to ensuring nuclear safety and security and responsible management in line with the highest international standards** (*Dhaka Tribune*, [15 September 2026](#)).

- ◆ **4,000 MT of diesel reach Parbatipur via India-Bangladesh pipeline:** Nearly 4,000 metric tonnes (MT) or 4.7 million litres of diesel have arrived at the Parbatipur Receiving Terminal Depot in Dinajpur from India through the India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline. The diesel came as part of the pipeline's 72nd consignment. The transfer began at 9 AM on Sunday (September 13) and ended this afternoon (September 15), Operation Manager of Dinajpur Parbatipur Rail Depot Md Robiul Alam said. Under a 2018 bilateral agreement, Bangladesh and India agreed to import around 2 million tonnes of diesel over 15 years. Since the pipeline was inaugurated in March 2023, Bangladesh has imported 330,087 tonnes of diesel through it. The fuel is distributed almost equally among three state-owned companies - Padma Oil, Meghna Petroleum and Jamuna Oil (*Financial Express Bangladesh*, [15 September 2026](#)).

Foreign Policy

- ◆ **Kobir says Bimstec must look beyond tensions, widen regional engagement:** State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir has urged Bimstec member states to look beyond bilateral tensions and widen regional engagement, stressing mutual trust, political will and a shared sense of purpose to make the grouping more effective. **"For Bimstec to be successful, we must not dwell on bilateral tensions but widen the net of engagement," he said.** The state minister was speaking at a reception hosted by Bimstec Secretary General Indra Mani Pandey and his spouse Sushma Pandey at a hotel in Dhaka, marking Bimstec Secretariat Establishment Day on Monday evening. Diplomats, including representatives from Bimstec member states, business leaders, civil society representatives and senior journalists attended the reception. Kobir said Bangladesh would work closely with all member states and the Bimstec Secretariat in the coming months to advance implementation across various mechanisms and prepare for the next Bimstec Summit, which Bangladesh is expected to host in Dhaka in 2027. The summit of heads of state and government in Dhaka would provide an important opportunity to review progress, set new priorities and give further political direction to the common regional agenda, he said (*Dhaka Tribune*, [15 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Chinese Ambassador meets Rizvi:** Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Yao Wen has paid a courtesy call on BNP Acting Secretary General Advocate Ruhul Kabir Rizvi at the BNP Chairman's office in Gulshan in the city. According to BNP Media Cell, the Chinese Ambassador greeted Ruhul Kabir Rizvi with flowers during the meeting. **At that time, cordial discussions were held on further strengthening the friendly relations between Bangladesh and China and further accelerating the ongoing development activities of the two countries. Besides, discussions were also held on advancing the political and ongoing friendly relations between the two countries.** They hoped that the ongoing development works of the two countries would be further accelerated (*BSS News*, [15 September 2026](#)).

- ◆ **The Print reports India ‘holding up’ approval of next Bangladeshi high commissioner to Delhi:** India has yet to give formal approval to Bangladesh for the appointment of Asad Alam Siam as Dhaka’s next high commissioner in New Delhi, Indian media outlet ThePrint reports. Dhaka began efforts to appoint new high commissioners and ambassadors in July. A month has passed since Delhi’s approval was sought to appoint Siam. Without that approval, he cannot be formally announced as high commissioner. **According to Article 4 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, “the sending State must make certain that the agrément [approval] of the receiving State has been given for the person it proposes to accredit as head of the mission to that State”. India is not required to state its reasons for any rejections. The process is kept private to prevent public incidents.** Current Bangladeshi High Commissioner to India M Riaz Hamidullah is expected to take up the post of permanent representative of Bangladesh to the UN around mid-October. Siam was appointed as the foreign secretary of Bangladesh by the Muhammad Yunus-led interim government in 2025. He had previously served as the country’s ambassador to the US, and is one of the senior-most career diplomats in the foreign service. The hold-up of his appointment comes amid frostiness in relations between the neighbouring countries (*bdnews24.com*, [15 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Zahed says Handover of Hasina, Quader an important condition for better ties with India:** Information and Broadcasting Affairs Adviser to Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, Zahed Ur Rahman, has said that handing over former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and Obaidul Quader, the general secretary of the Awami League (whose activities have been banned in the country), along with others to Bangladesh is an important condition for improving relations with India. **He said they hope the Indian government will hand them over.** Zahed Ur Rahman made the remarks at a regular press briefing organised by the Ministry of Information at the Secretariat on Tuesday to highlight the government’s activities. Asked about the issue after seven accused, including Obaidul Quader, were sentenced to death by the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) today in a case involving crimes against humanity committed during the July mass uprising, Zahed Ur Rahman said, “We want Sheikh Hasina. So why would we not want Obaidul Quader and others?” **“I would like to urge the Indian government to consider this as an important condition for improving relations with Bangladesh,”** he added. **“I tried to convey our position on Sheikh Hasina and the others from my side. For a working engagement with Bangladesh, they (India) should consider these issues,”** he said (*Prothom Alo*, [15 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Delhi says Tarique gets 2 invitations to visit India:** Bangladesh prime minister Tarique Rahman had received two invitations from New Delhi to visit India, Indian Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said on Tuesday. Responding to a question about the invitation to Tarique to visit India at the ministry’s weekly press briefing in New Delhi, Jaiswal clarified the nature of the invitations New Delhi extended to Dhaka. **‘We had invited the prime minister of Bangladesh on a bilateral visit, and subsequently, he was invited for the BRICS Summit as chair of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation. So, he had received two invitations, one on the bilateral side and the other for the BRICS Summit as well,’** Jaiswal said. The bilateral invitation was extended in February. Indian parliament Speaker Om Birla attended the swearing-in ceremony of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party-led government on February 17, following Bangladesh’s general elections. Birla carried a letter from Indian prime minister Narendra Modi congratulating Tarique and inviting him to visit India with his wife and daughter. India later invited Tarique to the outreach session of the recently held 18th BRICS

Summit in his capacity as the current chair of BIMSTEC. **About Tarique's not attending the outreach session, state minister-1 for foreign affairs Humaiun Kobir said Bangladesh had not been properly invited. Bangladesh even did not send any representative to the session** (New Age, [16 September 2026](#)).

Security

- ◆ **'Fraud ring': 63 foreigners to face two days of police questioning in Chattogram:** A Chattogram court has allowed police to question 63 foreign nationals for two days each over allegations that they were setting up a global online fraud ring. Chattogram Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Mohidul Islam issued the order after a hearing on Tuesday. Chattogram Metropolitan Police (CMP) Deputy Commissioner (Prosecution) Mohammad Hasan Iqbal Chowdhury told bdnews24.com, "An application was filed requesting the 63 arrested foreigners to be remanded for seven days. After the hearing, the court granted a two-day remand for each of them. Last Thursday, police raided a seven-story building in the Krishnachura residential area of Khulshi Thana and arrested 63 foreign nationals, including 20 women from China, Pakistan, Laos, Nepal and Vietnam. According to the police, they were setting up a global "online fraud" ring (bdnews24.com, [15 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **168 Bangladeshis return from Libyan detention centre:** A total of 168 irregular Bangladeshi migrants, many of whom allegedly endured abduction and torture after being trafficked to Libya, returned home on Tuesday from a detention centre in the North African country. They arrived in Dhaka at 10:04am aboard a special Buraq Air flight after being repatriated from the Ganfuda Detention Centre in Benghazi of Libya, according to a Foreign Ministry press release. The repatriation was jointly facilitated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh Embassy in Libya and Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment in cooperation with the Libyan government and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). **The returnees, who had been detained at the Ganfuda facility, had voluntarily expressed their willingness to return to Bangladesh. According to information received by the authorities, most of them had entered Libya with the encouragement and assistance from human traffickers in an attempt to reach Europe illegally by sea** (Daily Sun, [15 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**]*