

DAILY BANGLADESH WATCH

17 September 2026

Takeaways

Politics

- ◆ **Rizvi says ‘PM Tarique decided not to attend BRICS, next day Adani unit shut down’:** BNP Acting Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi today alleged that India was creating a “web of conspiracy” against Bangladesh centred on ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina, saying the matter had become “very clear”. Rizvi claimed Tarique was not invited to the event in his capacity as Bangladesh’s prime minister, but in another role. He said the decision not to attend had upheld Bangladesh’s independence and sovereignty. “Tarique Rahman is the prime minister of an independent and sovereign country. So, will you not invite him as prime minister? Will he sit on the sidelines? That cannot happen. He did not go. By not going, the prime minister of Bangladesh upheld the country’s dignity, independence and sovereignty,” Rizvi said. **The BNP leader said Bangladesh and India describe each other as friendly countries but questioned why an Adani unit went offline soon after Tarique decided not to attend BRICS.** “He [Tarique] decided not to go, and the next day it was shut down. What was the reason behind that? Do you need to pass the bar exam to understand it? Do you need a PhD from a university? We understand what happened,” he said. BNP acting Secretary also said that Prime Minister Tarique Rahman’s decision not to attend the BRICS Summit in India demonstrated Bangladesh’s independence and sovereignty and created a sense of pride among its people. (*The Daily Star*, [16 September 2026](#); *Daily Times of Bangladesh*, [16 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Probe blames Asif Nazrul for World Cup absence:** The previous interim government was responsible for Bangladesh’s withdrawal from this year’s ICC Men’s T20 World Cup, according to a three-member investigation committee formed to examine the controversial decision. Barrister Faisal Dastagir, a member of the committee, said former Youth and Sports Adviser Dr Asif Nazrul and the government of the time were responsible for Bangladesh missing the global tournament. **“Based on media reports and after talking to experts, we came to the conclusion that the person responsible was Dr Asif Nazrul, who was in the government at the time, and that the government was responsible,”** Faisal told reporters at the National Sports Council (NSC) conference room. The NSC formed the probe committee on 10 May following widespread controversy over Bangladesh’s absence from the tournament, co-hosted by India and Sri Lanka from 7 February to 8 March. The committee, headed by Youth and Sports Ministry Additional Secretary Dr AKM Oli Ullah, submitted a 22-page report outlining the key factors behind Bangladesh’s non-participation. Former Bangladesh captain and chief selector Habibul Bashar and Supreme Court lawyer Faisal were the other members. **The report identified political tensions between Bangladesh and India, the ICC’s refusal to change the venue and government intervention as having a high impact on the decision. The BCB’s failure in negotiations was rated “high”, while a breakdown in communication was considered a “medium” factor. “Bangladesh should have gone and participated in the tournament,”** Faisal said (*Daily Sun*, [16 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Nahid questions ACC neutrality:** NCP Convener and Opposition Chief Whip Md Nahid Islam on Tuesday questioned the professionalism, competence and neutrality of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), alleging that it had accepted politically motivated claims against NCP

Spokesperson Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuyain as a formal complaint. In a statement issued at night, Nahid claimed that allegations circulated seven months ago by what he described as an Awami League “propaganda cell” had been taken up by the anti-graft watchdog, strengthening the case for fundamental reform of the commission. Nahid alleged that the move indicated an attempt to use the ACC as a political tool to discredit senior leaders of the mass uprising. He compared the development with what he described as the harassment of opposition politicians, including former BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, during the previous Awami League government (*Daily Times of Bangladesh*, [16 September 2026](#)).

◆ **Jamaat questions EC’s ability to ensure fair local polls:** Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Mia Golam Parwar has questioned whether free and fair local government elections can be held under the current Election Commission (EC). Speaking at a press conference at the party’s central office on Wednesday, he alleged that the EC was operating according to the government’s instructions and could not function independently. **Parwar also alleged that the government was pushing opposition parties toward boycotting elections. He further claimed that the government had appointed ruling party members as administrators in various places, making it difficult to ensure a level playing field and hold a neutral election.** At the briefing, Parwar presented eight demands concerning the local government elections. He demanded adequate time and opportunities for all candidates, a safe environment and a level playing field, and warned that no excuse for delaying the election would be accepted (*Dhaka Tribune*, [16 September 2026](#)).

◆ **Six injured as AL men attack BNP office in Kushtia:** At least six supporters of Bangladesh Nationalist Party were injured when a group of activity-banned Awami League and Juba League men allegedly attacked and vandalised a Krishak Dal office in Kushtia Sadar upazila on Tuesday night. The incident took place at about 8:00pm at the office near the Nalkola village intersection under Patikabari union. **Police, quoting witnesses, said that several Krishak Dal leaders and activists were holding a discussion at the office in the evening when 25 to 30 people, allegedly led by Patikabari union Juba League vice-president Ruhul Amin, arrived at the spot chanting ‘Joy Bangla’ and attacked the office. They allegedly beat the leaders and activists and ransacked furniture at the office. BNP leaders and activists also alleged that photographs of former president Ziaur Rahman, former prime minister Khaleda Zia and prime minister Tarique Rahman were damaged.** Patikabari union Krishak Dal president Abdur Rahman alleged that Ruhul, a leader of Juba League, led the attack (*New Age*, [16 September 2026](#)).

Economy

◆ **Sakhawat outlines four priorities to strengthen cooperation with China, others:** Health and Family Welfare Minister Sardar Md. Sakhawat Husain today outlined four priorities for further strengthening the cooperation in the health sector with China and other Asian countries. The priorities are pharmaceuticals and health technologies, artificial intelligence (AI) and digital health, healthy ageing and vaccines and health security. The health minister highlighted the priorities while addressing the BFA Global Health Forum-2026 Haikou Conference, held in Haikou in China. **Sakhawat said Bangladesh has a strong pharmaceutical industry with medicines from the country being exported to nearly 160 countries. He said Bangladesh is interested in working jointly with China to facilitate access for Bangladeshi pharmaceuticals to the Chinese market, as well as in the areas including active pharmaceutical ingredient**

(API) production, technology transfer, research and the development of smart health infrastructure (*BSS News*, [16 September 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Solar equipment import tax reduced to 1% to expand renewable power:** The government has further reduced import duties and taxes on solar power equipment and components to accelerate the expansion of renewable solar power generation amid the global energy crisis and power shortages. Under the new facility, importers will pay only 1 percent total tax on eligible solar power-related equipment and components. The National Board of Revenue (NBR) announced the decision in a press release today. The facility exempts such imports from customs duty above 1 percent, regulatory duty, supplementary duty, value-added tax (VAT), advance tax and advance income tax. The facility will remain effective for 180 days from the date of issuance of the relevant statutory regulatory order (SRO), said the NBR (*BSS News*, [16 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Cabinet Committee recommends import of 695,000MT fuel oil:** The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has recommended in principle the import of an additional 695,000 tons of fuel oil, including gas oil and jet fuel, under the government-to-government (G2G) arrangement for September-December 2026. The additional quantity is equivalent to 10% of the amount already approved for import through the G2G process for the 2026 calendar year. The Energy and Mineral Resources Division placed the proposal before the committee, which recommended its in-principle approval. The committee also recommended final approval of contracts for selecting private partners to reopen two textile mills under the Bangladesh Textile Mills Corporation (BTMC) through the public-private partnership (PPP) model (*Dhaka Tribune*, [16 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Mahdi Amin says 150 gas wells to be drilled, three LNG terminals to be built:** Mahdi Amin, spokesperson for the Prime Minister's Office and adviser to the prime minister, has said that 150 more gas wells will be drilled and three LNG terminals will be built in Bangladesh. Speaking about the government's initiatives in the energy sector, Mahdi Amin said a programme to drill 150 new wells across the country has begun as a medium-term solution to the gas crisis. Another 150 wells will be drilled in the next phase. To increase LNG capacity, the government plans to add three more terminals to the two existing ones. If possible, efforts are being made to bring the third terminal into operation before 2028. In the long term, the Eastern Refinery in Chattogram is being expanded to enhance energy security and capacity. International financing of USD 1 billion has been secured for the project, and work has begun, he said. Mahdi Amin made the remarks at a press conference at the Prime Minister's Office on Wednesday afternoon. The prime minister's press wing organised the briefing to highlight various government activities (*Dhaka Tribune*, [16 September 2026](#)).

Foreign Policy

- ◆ **Has India held up Bangladesh envoy's appointment? Dhaka says wait for official word:** State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed Islam has urged journalists to wait for an official statement from Bangladesh or India amid reports that New Delhi has yet to approve Asad Alam Siam as Dhaka's next high commissioner. She made the remarks at the foreign ministry on Wednesday when asked about a report in Indian media on the proposed appointment. "Until there is specific information or a statement from either Bangladesh's foreign ministry or the Indian government, I would request that these reports not be given credence," Shama said.

“I would also request that such reports not be published.” Indian news outlet The Print reported that New Delhi had yet to give its consent to Siam’s appointment more than a month after Dhaka sought its approval (*bdnews24.com*, [16 September 2026](#)).

- ◆ **India yet to give ‘specific reply’ over extradition of AL convicts:** Bangladesh is continuing diplomatic engagements for extraditing Awami League leaders, convicted over July Uprising atrocities, from India, but so far, New Delhi has not given any “specific response” in this regard, said State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed Islam on Wednesday. **The government has come to know that the Indian side is also pursuing a legal procedure concerning the fugitive leaders of Awami League, Shama said at a briefing held at the Foreign Ministry premises. To this end, both sides continue to exchange diplomatic letters, she added.** In keeping with the existing bilateral prisoner extradition agreement, works are continuing for extraditing former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, former home minister and others convicted for orchestrating killings during the July Uprising, the state minister said. Declining to elaborate further, she said the extradition is an ongoing process and the Minister of Foreign Affairs has the responsibility to act in line with existing legal and diplomatic procedures (*Daily Sun*, [16 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Efforts to continue until convicts brought back from India:** State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed Islam on Wednesday said Bangladesh will take all necessary legal and diplomatic steps under existing laws to bring back convicted fugitives including former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and those sentenced to death in the latest verdict. **She said the foreign ministry would initiate the required process with the Indian government once it officially receives all necessary documents related to the verdict delivered on Tuesday.** “Look, this is an ongoing process. I should not and do not wish to comment on the legal aspects,” she told reporters at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) on Tuesday sentenced seven people including Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader to death for their roles in suppressing the July 2024 mass uprising through incitement, provocation, attacks and killings (Dhaka Tribune, [16 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Bangladesh, EU eye UNGA sideline talks:** Bangladesh and the European Union (EU) today expressed readiness to discuss issues of mutual interest on the sidelines of the upcoming United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The willingness was expressed when EU Ambassador to Bangladesh Michael Miller paid a courtesy call on state minister for foreign affairs Humaiun Kobir at the foreign ministry here, said a ministry’s press release here. During the meeting, the two sides exchanged views on the upcoming UNGA and discussed possible engagement on bilateral, regional and global issues on its sidelines. **They particularly expressed readiness to discuss the Rohingya crisis during the UNGA to help keep the protracted issue high on the international agenda. The two sides discussed ways to deepen cooperation in trade and investment, including early progress towards formal negotiations on a Bangladesh-EU Free Trade Agreement to strengthen long-term economic ties. Migration management, cooperation in the aviation sector and sustainable development also featured prominently in the discussion.** (*BSS News*, [16 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Bangladesh eyes sending skilled workers to Bhutan:** Bangladesh has expressed interest in supplying professional, skilled and semi-skilled workers for the development of Bhutan’s Gelephu Mindfulness City (GMC). The issue came up during a meeting between Bhutanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Dasho Karma Hamu Dorji and Foreign Affairs State Minister

Humaiiun Kobir at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Wednesday. **Kobir expressed Bangladesh's keen interest in contributing to the development of GMC, particularly by supplying professional, skilled and semi-skilled human resources** (*Dhaka Tribune*, [16 September 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Bangladesh condemns 'drone attack' targeting Makkah:** Bangladesh has strongly condemned the reported drone attack targeting the Holy City of Makkah Al-Mukarramah in Saudi Arabia. 'Bangladesh reaffirms its deep respect for the sanctity of Makkah Al-Mukarramah and the other Holy Sites in the Kingdom, and expresses solidarity with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its people in protecting those,' a foreign ministry statement said on Wednesday. **Bangladesh underscores that the safety and security of the Holy Sites must be fully respected and protected at all times, it added.** BBC reports Saudi Arabia intercepted and destroyed a Houthi drone south of the Islamic holy city on Tuesday evening, according to the spokesman of the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen (*New Age*, [16 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Dhaka eyes resumption of direct NY flights: Millat tells Christensen:** Bangladesh is working to resume direct flights between Dhaka and New York next year, Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister M Rashiduzzaman Millat said today. The minister revealed the plan during a courtesy call by US Ambassador to Bangladesh Brent T Christensen at his office at the Secretariat here. Millat said the initiative was being pursued considering the growing commercial and diplomatic relations between Bangladesh and the United States, as well as the travel needs of the large Bangladeshi community living there. **He said securing Category 1 status under the US Federal Aviation Administration's International Aviation Safety Assessment (IASA) programme is essential for operating direct commercial flights to the United States. The US ambassador assured that Washington would extend all possible cooperation to facilitate the launch of direct flights on the Dhaka-New York (JFK) route.** During the meeting, the two sides emphasised further strengthening bilateral relations between Bangladesh and the United States, particularly in the civil aviation and tourism sectors (*BSS News*, [16 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Dhaka reviews US-led Pax Silica initiative:** Bangladesh is reviewing a United States' proposal to join Pax Silica, a US-led initiative aimed at securing global supply chains for semiconductors, artificial intelligence hardware and critical minerals, as Dhaka weighs the potential benefits and geopolitical implications. Foreign ministry officials confirmed that the government was examining the proposal. Pax Silica, launched by the US in December 2025, seeks to strengthen cooperation among participating countries on critical technology supply chains. During his visit to Bangladesh on August 1, US special envoy for South and Central Asia Sergio Gor conveyed the proposal to join the initiative. At a meeting with prime minister Tarique Rahman, Bangladesh expressed strong interest in attracting greater US investment, particularly in the information technology sector (*New Age*, [17 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Russian envoy says Rooppur plant to supply 300MW next month:** Rooppur nuclear power plant is expected to feed its first 300 megawatts of electricity into the national grid within the next month, Russian ambassador to Bangladesh Alexander Khozin has said. **Around 4,000 Russian specialists and engineers were currently working at the project to resolve outstanding technical issues at the power plant, the envoy said on Wednesday in Dhaka.** He made the remarks during a courtesy call on Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry administrator Md Fazlul Haque at his Gulshan office on Wednesday afternoon, according to a press release issued by the FBCCI. Alexander Khozin said the Moscow Chamber

of Commerce and Industry had expressed interest in forming a joint Russia-Bangladesh Business Council. He also proposed organising a Russia-Bangladesh Business Forum in Moscow to facilitate direct interactions between entrepreneurs from the two countries. Business-to-business sessions at the proposed forum would be arranged based on the profiles of participating Bangladeshi businesses, he said (*New Age*, [17 September 2026](#)).

Security

- ◆ **27 Bangladeshis detained as Malaysia busts 'fake work pass' ring:** Malaysia has detained 27 Bangladeshis, including 11 suspected of running an alleged document forgery operation targeting foreign workers, according to Malaysian media. The arrests came during simultaneous raids on 11 premises in Kuala Lumpur's Jalan Chan Sow Lin commercial area on Sept 14, the Malay Mail reports, citing Malaysian Home Minister Saifuddin Nasution Ismail. **The 11 suspected masterminds -- 10 Bangladeshi men and one woman -- were allegedly operating from the premises, according to the report.** Another 19 foreigners were detained for immigration offences, including 16 Bangladeshis, one Myanmar national and two Indonesians. Malaysian authorities seized 18 laptops, 21 printers and scanners, three mobile phones and 10 Bangladeshi passports during the operation, dubbed "Ops Serkap". They also found copies of allegedly forged electronic Temporary Employment Visit Passes (e-PLKS) and fake police reports (*bdnews24.com*, [16 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **New name, familiar logo as SRB replaces RAB:** The Rapid Action Battalion has begun operating as the Special Response Battalion (SRB), a day after a gazette notification formalised the change. The force began working under its new name on Wednesday, according to its chief, Ahsan Habib Palash. "The gazette notification for the SRB has been issued. **We have changed RAB's name to SRB and begun all operations under the new name from today,**" he told *bdnews24.com*. The change was also reflected in the force's official communications. An invitation to a press conference on Wednesday carried its familiar logo, but with "SRB Bangladesh" replacing "RAB". The design itself remained unchanged. The new branding also appeared on press releases issued by different units (*bdnews24.com*, [16 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **3 crude bombs explode in Dhaka University area at night:** Three crude bombs (locally known as cocktails) exploded in succession in the Dhaka University area on Tuesday night. At around 10:45 pm on Tuesday two crude bombs exploded in front of Jagannath Hall and another near the TSC Metro rail station. No casualties were reported immediately. When asked about the incident, Dhaka University Proctor Israfil Ratan told Prothom Alo, "**We have learnt about the incident. Police and assistant proctors have gone to the scene. They are working on the matter. We do not yet know who carried out the incident.**" Earlier on Tuesday, a cocktail exploded in front of the main gate adjacent to the road near the Supreme Court (*Prothom Alo*, [16 September 2026](#)).

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