

DAILY BANGLADESH WATCH

28 August 2026

Takeaways

Politics

- ◆ **Law and order, fertiliser and power crisis dominate BNP parliamentary party meeting:** The law-and-order situation, fertiliser shortages and the power crisis dominated discussions at a meeting of the BNP parliamentary party. **Several sources familiar with the meeting said that the ministers concerned briefed the party lawmakers on the fertiliser and power crises. The ministers urged the lawmakers to convey the correct message to the public about the emerging situation so that people do not misunderstand the government during the crisis. Several MPs said that many lawmakers raised complaints about police officials who were involved in the persecution of opposition leaders and activists during the previous Awami League government.** Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed also warned against the growing “mob culture”. At the same time, Prime Minister and BNP Chairman Tarique Rahman instructed ministers and MPs to remain present in their respective constituencies during programmes marking the BNP’s founding anniversary on 1 September and to counter misinformation against the government. Sources familiar with the meeting said Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed briefed the lawmakers on the law-and-order situation, Social Welfare Minister AZM Zahid Hossain on the fertiliser situation, and State Minister for Power Aninda Islam (Amit) on the power situation. As the agriculture minister is not a lawmaker, the social welfare minister briefed the MPs on the fertiliser situation instead (*Prothom Alo*, [27 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Parliament heated over home minister’s remarks, Speaker concerned about its future:** The Jatiya Sangsad became heated on the opening day of the third session of the 13th parliament on Thursday, with tensions erupting over a remark made by Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed. **Opposition lawmakers strongly protested, accusing the home minister of belittling the opposition.** The disruption, marked by protests and shouting from opposition members, effectively paralysed parliamentary proceedings for nearly 10 minutes. Although the home minister said he would withdraw his remark following the opposition’s objections, the situation did not immediately calm down. After repeated attempts to restore order, Speaker Hafiz Uddin Ahmed said at one point that he was somewhat concerned about the future of the parliament (*Prothom Alo*, [27 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Three key bills placed in JS amid opposition’s walkout:** Three key bills-- the National Human Rights Commission Bill, 2026; the Enforced Disappearance Prevention and Redress Bill, 2026; and the Transfer of Property (Amendment) Bill, 2026-- were placed in the Parliament on Thursday (27 August). The three bills were subsequently sent to the respective parliamentary standing committees for further scrutiny. However, the opposition MPs staged a walkout shortly before the bills were formally tabled in the House. **Prior to presentation of the bills, opposition MPs voiced protests regarding parliamentary procedures and agenda prioritization. Leader of the Opposition on a point of order spoke on the House. The opposition walked out of the parliament protesting the government’s decision to introduce separate bills without forming a Constitutional Reform Council and after allowing some reform-related ordinances issued during the interim government to lapse. Before the National Human Rights Commission Bill**

and the Prevention and Remedy of Enforced Disappearance Bill were introduced, **Opposition Leader and Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Shafiqur Rahman said they did not want to be part of a “piecemeal” reform process.** He said the opposition would maintain its position demanding comprehensive reforms and implementation of the referendum verdict. Despite the opposition’s walkout, treasury bench leaders affirmed their commitment to advancing key legal and human rights reforms, confirming that the committee review process will proceed without delay (*Daily Sun*, [27 August 2026](#); *The Daily Star*, [27 August 2026](#)).

◆ **Govt puts 64 districts under oversight of 30 ruling party MPs, ministers:** The government has assigned ministers, state ministers and ruling party lawmakers to oversee and coordinate law and order, anti-corruption and anti-drug efforts, good governance, transparency and accountability, as well as development and public welfare activities across the country. The Cabinet Division issued a notification today assigning 30 ruling party MPs, including ministers and state ministers, responsibility for 64 districts. Cabinet Secretary Nasimul Gani signed the notification by order of the president. The notification said the ministers, state ministers and lawmakers concerned will oversee and coordinate overall government activities in their assigned districts without curtailing the legal powers of local government institutions and other constitutional and statutory bodies. It said sustainable development, good governance, transparency, accountability and eliminating corruption are among the current government’s priority programmes. The notification has set out three areas of responsibility for the ministers, state ministers and MPs assigned to the districts. First, they will provide necessary advice to the government offices concerned to maintain the overall law-and-order situation in the districts, including controlling drug abuse and illegal drug trafficking, preventing smuggling and curbing serious crimes. Second, they will oversee and provide advice on the implementation of the government’s election manifesto, poverty reduction, employment generation, social safety net programmes, and various development and public welfare activities. Third, those assigned responsibility may, when necessary, attend different district-level meetings and provide advice. The notification also set out the constitutional and legal basis for assigning these responsibilities (*The Daily Star*, [27 August 2026](#)).

◆ **CEC says Local polls likely by November-end or December:** Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin today said the Election Commission (EC) hopes to announce the schedule for the local government elections by September, with polling likely to begin at the end of November or in December. **“We hope to announce the schedule within September. Ultimately, some elections may go into next year, but the process will begin this year,”** he told reporters in the afternoon at his office at the EC headquarters in Dhaka’s Agargaon. The CEC said there was no lack of preparation for holding the local government elections. He noted that fixing the election date depends on several factors beyond the EC’s control (*The Daily Star*, [27 August 2026](#)).

◆ **‘No reason for anyone to find it hard to breathe’: Shafiqur on Mecca pact:** Opposition Leader and Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Shafiqur Rahman today said that joining the Mecca Joint Defence Agreement is entirely Bangladesh’s own decision. **“If Bangladesh takes any decision in the interests and needs of the country and its people, there is no reason for anyone else to find it hard to breathe,”** he wrote in a post on his verified Facebook page (*The Daily Star*, [27 August 2026](#)).

Economy

- ◆ **Foreign firms get nod for bank guarantees on government tenders:** Foreign companies can now obtain bank guarantees from any scheduled bank operating in Bangladesh to bid for international tenders. Bangladesh Bank approved the facility on Thursday, allowing banks to issue the guarantees in foreign currencies for such tenders. **The facility is open only to foreign companies operating in Bangladesh, and each guarantee must be tied strictly to the project.** Banks must follow rules, risk-management requirements and lending policies when issuing the guarantees, while also taking collateral. Companies receiving foreign currency against these guarantees can settle the amount in local currency. The central bank directed banks to observe single-borrower exposure limits on these guarantees, with board or authority approval sought where needed (*bdnews24.com*, [27 August 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Chinese assistance:** Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Yao Wen on Thursday said China is ready to cooperate with Bangladesh in renewable energy, particularly solar power. “I believe it’s high time for Bangladesh to develop renewable energy, solar energy, to get rid of reliance on fossil energy,” he told reporters at the Secretariat while responding to a question on how China can help Bangladesh in addressing its energy crisis. “That is a strength of China. I see a lot of opportunities in terms of our cooperation to help Bangladesh overcome this challenge,” Yao added. He was talking to reporters after his meeting with newly appointed LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan at the latter's office. State Minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Mir Shahe Alam was also present at the meeting. Ambassador Yao said China would give priority to development projects aimed at improving the livelihoods of underprivileged people, while expressing optimism about tangible progress in several major projects in Bangladesh. At the meeting, they discussed bilateral cooperation, particularly projects under the ministry’s jurisdiction. LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan has expressed the hope that China's cooperation in various sectors, including infrastructure, port management, waste management and renewable energy, will increase further in Bangladesh. **The meeting also discussed waste management and sewage disposal in Dhaka, housing, inclusion of Mandarin or Chinese language in Bangladesh's education curriculum, expansion of the necessary pipeline network to make the Dasherbandi Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) fully operational and increasing the use of renewable energy. The government will purchase electricity generated from waste at Aminbazar in Dhaka from a Chinese company at Tk 25 a unit, state minister for local government, rural development and cooperatives Mir Shahe Alam has said.** According to the state minister, the project will have a generation capacity of 42MW and is expected to begin generation within 18 months. The state minister said that an initiative had also been taken to generate electricity from waste accumulated at the landfill of Dhaka South City Corporation. The landfill has the potential to generate 40-50MW of electricity, he said, adding that an initiative had been taken to contact Chinese company PowerChina in this regard. **China has agreed to implement a Taka 10,000 crore modern housing project to rehabilitate residents of Korail, Sat Tala and Bhashantek slums under Dhaka-17 constituency, State Minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Mir Shahe Alam said.** The project, proposed through the Economic Relations Division (ERD), will be implemented in phases, he said. **Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Yao Wen said that China is working with Bangladesh to assess the feasibility of implementing the Teesta River project as part of growing cooperation between the two countries** (*Dhaka Tribune*, [27 August 2026](#); *BSS News*, [27 August 2026](#); *BSS News*, [27 August 2026](#); *New Age*, [27 August 2026](#)).

- ◆ **WB cancels \$335m loan, clouding \$3b road project:** The World Bank has cancelled \$335.33 million (about Tk4,124 crore) of its \$500 million loan for the first phase of a nearly \$3 billion WeCARE transport corridor project in western Bangladesh, citing prolonged planning and implementation failures. **The Western Economic Corridor and Regional Enhancement Project marks the WB's return to Bangladesh's road sector financing after a decade-long absence following corruption allegations over the Padma Bridge project.** The concern is that this cancellation casts doubt on the entire plan to build a 260-km road corridor linking western Bangladesh's land ports and Mongla port with India, Bhutan and Nepal. Although officials say the cancelled fund could potentially be recommitted to future phases, no proposals for those phases have even been prepared yet (*New Age*, [27 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Power generation disrupted at 62 plants, load-shedding increases:** Overall electricity generation has declined amid rising demand driven by hot weather, resulting in increased load-shedding and growing inconvenience for consumers. Alongside the ongoing gas crisis, shortages of coal and liquid fuel have also emerged. In addition, two major power plants have suddenly encountered technical faults. Some power plants are always under maintenance, as is still the case now. **Currently, the country has a total of 137 power plants, of which 64 are government-owned, 70 are private, and 3 are joint ventures with India and China.** According to the Power Development Board (PDB) and Power Grid Company of Bangladesh PLC (PGCB), the production of 62 power plants was disrupted yesterday, Thursday. Among them, production was halted in 20 power plants, while the rest produced at limited capacity. As a result, the highest load shedding yesterday during the day was 3, 664 megawatts (*Prothom Alo*, [28 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Bangladesh asks Qatar to prioritise LNG supplies:** Bangladesh yesterday requested Qatar to prioritise the supply of LNG to Bangladesh as soon as the Strait of Hormuz reopens and maritime movement resumes. State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir met Qatar's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad Al-Muraikhi on the sidelines of the 23rd OIC Extraordinary CFM in Jeddah and made the request. The state minister reaffirmed Bangladesh's support for Qatar's mediation efforts between Iran and the United States and commended Qatar's role in promoting dialogue, regional peace and stability. The Qatari state minister thanked Bangladesh for its support and expressed Qatar's readiness to further strengthen cooperation in the energy sector. They also discussed other bilateral issues, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*The Daily Star*, [27 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Faqir Mahbub, US Energy Secretary hold bilateral meeting:** Science and Technology Minister Faqir Mahbub Anam has said peaceful use of modern and safe nuclear technology could play an important role in meeting Bangladesh's growing energy demand, ensuring energy security, and achieving sustainable development. **In this regard, Bangladesh is seriously considering the potential of advanced nuclear technologies, particularly Small Modular Reactors (SMRs),** he said. Faqir Mahbub Anam, also Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology Minister, made the remarks during a bilateral meeting with United States Secretary of Energy Chris Wright on August 26 in Washington, said a ministry press release here today. The two sides discussed in detail the peaceful use of nuclear technology between Bangladesh and the United States, Small Modular Reactors (SMRs), energy security, mutual understanding, and the prospects for cooperation and assistance in the energy sector. Faqir Mahbub said that Bangladesh is committed to the peaceful, safe, secure, and responsible use of nuclear technology. He emphasized the need to further strengthen the exchange of knowledge, experience, and

technology, as well as mutual cooperation with technologically advanced countries, including the United States, in the interest of Bangladesh's energy security and economic development (BSS News, [27 August 2026](#)).

Foreign Policy

- ◆ **Dhaka open to Mecca pact if invited:** Bangladesh will positively consider joining the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement if formally invited by its existing members – Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and Pakistan – Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman said on Thursday, signalling Dhaka's openness to the emerging defence cooperation framework. **“This pact has been made among three countries. We view this pact positively. The question of joining it has not yet arisen because that depends on the intentions of the countries that are members of the pact,”** he said during the question-answer session in parliament. **He, however, said Bangladesh had not yet received any proposal to join the agreement.** Independent MP Rumeen Farhana asked what benefits Bangladesh could gain by joining the pact signed by Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and Pakistan on 7 August. In response, Khalilur said Dhaka viewed the agreement positively, but any decision on joining would depend on the existing members. **“If they express an interest in bringing Bangladesh into the pact, then we will certainly consider it positively,”** he said. The foreign minister said it was too early to assess the potential benefits and drawbacks of Bangladesh joining the agreement, adding that all relevant aspects would be considered if the issue arose. **He said the pact, if expanded, could eventually serve as a mechanism for the “self-defence of the global Muslim community”.** **“This is an internal matter of our Muslim family. Therefore, others have no scope to be concerned about it,”** he said (*Daily Sun*, [28 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Foreign minister: Bangladesh buries submissive diplomacy, won't bow to anyone:** Foreign Minister Dr Khalilur Rahman on Thursday said Bangladesh has buried the submissive foreign policy of the past and will never bow to any country again. Responding to a supplementary question from Naogaon-3 lawmaker Md Fazley Houda during the question-answer session in parliament, the minister outlined the government's foreign policy. **“Thanks to the strong and successful foreign policy pursued by our honorable prime minister, we are now standing tall with our heads held high,”** he said. **“Under the prime minister's leadership, we will continue to pursue this foreign policy, and Bangladesh will never again bow its head before anyone. We have buried the submissive foreign policy,”** Khalilur said. Referring to the previous Awami League regime, he said Bangladesh's foreign policy had, to a large extent, not remained under its own control during the 15 years of what he described as misrule. Replying to another supplementary question from Bagerhat-4 lawmaker Md Abdul Aleem, Khalilur said Bangladesh remains active in pursuing its fair share of water from common rivers. He said a team has been formed to prepare a new agreement following the expiry of the Ganges Water-sharing Treaty, and the Indian authorities have been informed accordingly. **“We are now waiting for their response,”** he said. The minister said Bangladesh has started a technical evaluation with China regarding the Teesta project, adding that further steps will be taken based on the outcome of the assessment (*Dhaka Tribune*, [27 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Pakistan says Makkah defence pact open to new members amid talks on Bangladesh joining:** Pakistan has said the newly signed Makkah Joint Defence Agreement (MJDA) remains open to new signatories, noting that Islamabad will consult partners Riyadh and Ankara on any formal

requests as discussions on Bangladesh's potential entry continue, according to Arab News. **Pakistan foreign office spokesperson Tahir Andrabi said during a media briefing on Thursday that the pact serves as an "evolving security architecture" open to nations sharing collective security commitments.** He emphasised that operationalisation remains at an early stage. The statement comes after Bangladesh State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obed told Arab News that while "no policy-level decision" has been reached on Dhaka joining the pact, active discussions remain ongoing (*bdnews24.com*, [28 August 2026](#)).

◆ **Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia reaffirm commitment to elevating partnership to a new height:**

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir called on Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud on the margins of the 23rd OIC Extraordinary Council of Foreign Ministers meeting today, Thursday in Jeddah. **During the meeting, the State Minister handed over a letter from the Prime Minister of Bangladesh addressed to Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman, says a foreign ministry press release. Both sides expressed satisfaction at the positive momentum in Bangladesh–Saudi Arabia bilateral relations and reaffirmed their commitment to elevating the partnership to a new height.** “Since the formation of the BNP-led government, a number of high-level visits have taken place between the two countries, creating fresh opportunities for advancing comprehensive cooperation across different sectors,” Humaiun said. **The Saudi minister said Bangladesh is among Saudi Arabia’s priority countries and stressed the importance of strengthening economic cooperation. He noted growing interest among Saudi companies in Bangladesh and expressed interest in expanding investment and business engagement. He also praised Bangladeshi expatriates’ contribution to the Kingdom’s development** (*Prothom Alo*, [27 August 2026](#); *bdnews24.com*, [27 August 2026](#)).

◆ **Bangladesh steps up Saudi, Türkiye engagement amid interest in Mecca pact:**

Bangladesh state minister for foreign affairs Humaiun Kobir met senior officials from Saudi Arabia and Türkiye on Thursday amid growing interest from the country in joining the newly established Mecca Joint Defence Agreement. **Kobir held separate meetings with Saudi foreign minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud and Türkiye’s deputy minister of foreign affairs Musa Kulaklıkaya on the sidelines of the 23rd OIC Extraordinary Council of Foreign Ministers meeting in Jeddah. The back-to-back meetings with officials from Saudi Arabia and Türkiye came amid Bangladesh’s growing interest in joining the Mecca Joint Defence Agreement, which was signed by Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and Pakistan on August 7 in Riyadh. There was no immediate indication that Bangladesh’s possible membership in the pact was discussed during the meetings.** Bangladesh Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman said on Thursday that Dhaka would positively consider joining the pact if its existing members expressed an intention to include Bangladesh (*New Age*, [28 August 2026](#)).

◆ **Humaiun Kobir says PM Tarique Rahman to visit Türkiye for COP summit:**

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir on Thursday said Prime Minister Tarique Rahman will visit Türkiye to attend the upcoming COP summit to be held in November this year. He disclosed the information during a meeting with Türkiye’s Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Musa Kulaklıkaya on the sidelines of the 23rd Extraordinary Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in Jeddah. During the meeting, the two sides exchanged views on regional developments and expressed their readiness to work closely together on issues of mutual interest. **Discussing bilateral relations, they expressed satisfaction with the existing level of cooperation in different sectors, including**

economy and defence, and underscored their shared interest in further expanding engagement across a wide range of areas and elevating bilateral relations to new heights (*Dhaka Tribune*, [27 August 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Bangladesh urges OIC states to fund Gambia's Rohingya ICJ case:** State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir on Thursday called upon the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) member states to contribute to the voluntary trust fund established to support The Gambia's case before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) concerning the atrocities committed against Rohingyas by Myanmar. **He also urged them to strengthen international efforts for the safe, dignified and voluntary repatriation of the Rohingyas to Myanmar.** The state minister made the call while speaking at the 23rd OIC Extraordinary Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) in Jeddah (*Dhaka Tribune*, [27 August 2026](#)).

Security

- ◆ **BGB foils push-in attempt of 6 people at Chapainawabganj border:** India's Border Security Force (BSF) attempted to push six men into Bangladesh through the Ramdaspur border in Gomostapur upazila of Chapainawabganj on Thursday morning. The men could not enter Bangladesh due to resistance from the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and are currently staying on the zero line along the border. **According to a BGB press release, members of the BSF's Shamsheernagar camp under the 12 Battalion attempted to push six men into Bangladesh.** Upon receiving the information, a BGB patrol team from the Ramdaspur border outpost reached the spot and prevented the men from entering Bangladesh. Lieutenant Colonel Ariful Islam, commander of the 16 BGB Battalion, confirmed the incident. He said the BGB has requested a flag meeting with the BSF over the matter (*Prothom Alo*, [27 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **2 more Indian nationals arrested at Dhaka Airport with Kush:** Two Indian nationals have again been arrested with Kush at Dhaka's Shahjalal International Airport, just two days after a similar arrest, the Department of Narcotics Control (DNC) says. **The DNC said in a media statement issued on Thursday that it had arrested the two Indian nationals—46-year-old Abdul Rahman and 45-year-old Mohammad Iqbal Ansari—with 5kg and 120g of Kush.** According to the statement, based on intelligence information, a team of DNC officials took position at the Green Channel in the arrival hall of Shahjalal Airport at 1pm on Thursday. **The two Indian nationals arrived at the Green Channel on a Thai Airways flight (TG-321) from Bangkok and were detained on suspicion.** A subsequent search of their luggages uncovered Kush that had been cleverly concealed underneath clothing. Besides the drugs, officials seized two Indian passports, \$500, 10,000 Indian rupees and three smartphones from them. The DNC said both arrestees are residents of India's West Bengal (*bdnews24.com*, [28 August 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Army chief says Defence industry to be made export-oriented:** Bangladesh Army is working to turn the country's defence industry into an export-oriented sector alongside meeting domestic requirements, chief of army staff General Waker-Uz-Zaman said on Thursday. **The initiative would create employment and help earn foreign currency, he said at a land agreement signing ceremony for the expansion of Bangladesh Ordnance Factories at the shut Jalil Textile Mills in Faujdarhat, Chattogram.** The 54.99 acres of land of the mill, which is under the control of Bangladesh Textile Mills Corporation, was handed over to the army for BOF expansion. General Waker said the site was selected because of its proximity to

Chattogram port, which would facilitate future exports of defence products. The army chief said a proper framework was needed to facilitate exports. 'The army had taken an initiative with the Ministry of Commerce regarding the export of defence products. However, approvals were being given on a case-by-case basis,' he said (*New Age*, [28 August 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**]*