

DAILY BANGLADESH WATCH

08 October 2026

Takeaways

Politics

- ◆ **PM says Religion, identity must not stand in way of citizens' rights:** Prime Minister Tarique Rahman on Wednesday pledged to build a Bangladesh where religion, race or identity will not stand in the way of anyone's rights and opportunities, with equal rights and dignity for every citizen. **"We want to build a Bangladesh where religion, race or identity will not stand in the way of people's rights and opportunities. Our goal is to ensure equal rights and dignity for every citizen of the country," he said.** The prime minister made the remarks at a view-exchange meeting with representatives of the Hindu and Buddhist communities at his office at the Secretariat, said his Deputy Press Secretary Shahadat Hossain Shadhin. During the meeting, representatives of the Hindu community thanked the prime minister for extending the government holiday for Durga Puja, saying the decision has added to the festive joy of the Hindu community. **The representatives of the Hindu and Buddhist communities also raised various problems, needs and demands before the prime minister. Tarique Rahman listened to their views and assured them that the government is sincerely working for the welfare of people from all communities.** The Hindu community representatives invited the prime minister to visit different Durga Puja mandaps during five-day Durga Puja beginning on October 17. **Later, the prime minister handed over cheques – for Tk 5 crore to the Hindu Religious Welfare Trust for Durga Puja and Tk 3 crore to the Buddhist Religious Welfare Trust for the Buddhist religious festival.** The Hindu Religious Welfare Trust had sought Tk 4 crore for Durga Puja, while the prime minister approved Tk 5 crore as a special consideration. Similarly, the Buddhist Religious Welfare Trust had sought Tk 2 crore for the Kathin Chibar Dan festival, but Tarique Rahman approved Tk 3 crore, also as a special consideration. **The government has also declared a three-day holiday from October 20 to 22 on the occasion of Durga Puja, allowing a five-day holiday as October 23 and 24 are weekend** (*Dhaka Tribune*, [07 October 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Rizvi says Fugitive fascist's cohorts working to destabilise country:** BNP Acting Secretary General and Political Adviser to the Prime Minister Advocate Ruhul Kabir Rizvi today said that the cohorts of the fugitive fascist are working in various ways to put the elected government in trouble and destabilize the country. **"Tarique Rahman's government is the people's government, and the government will not tolerate any kind of anarchy or crime," Rizvi said, calling upon everyone to resist the evil forces.** Rizvi made the remarks while speaking at a leaflet distribution programme on dengue awareness on the premises of Bangladesh Medical University in the capital this noon (*BSS News*, [07 October 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Rashed Khan says AL plotting from India to disrupt Durga Puja:** Rashed Khan, political assistant to the prime minister, has alleged that the Awami League was plotting from India to create unrest during the upcoming Sharadiya Durga Puja festival. Speaking to journalists after a preparatory meeting at the Jhenaidah Shishu Academy Auditorium. **He said the government had information about the Awami League's alleged conspiracies against the elected BNP government. Rashed warned that anyone attempting to disrupt the festival would face a stern**

response. He urged leaders and activists of the BNP and its affiliated organisations to remain prepared and vigilant to counter any such attempts. Criticising the Awami League, Rashed alleged that the party had remained in power for 16 years with India's support and established what he described as a fascist system under Indian protection and patronage (*Daily Times of Bangladesh*, [07 October 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Different politics, common ground in crime:** Their political ideologies may differ, but when it comes to land grabbing, extortion, attacks, vandalism and looting, activists from rival parties appear to find common ground. **Several recent incidents have highlighted the trend, with police and intelligence agencies finding the involvement of some activists linked to the BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami and even the Awami League.** Police and intelligence officials said they had found evidence of political links among alleged masterminds, patrons and several suspects arrested over attacks on the Radda MCH-FP Centre in Mirpur-1 and content creator Salman Muqtadir's studio. The two incidents have drawn significant attention in Dhaka in recent weeks. **Thirty-eight citizens have issued a statement condemning the incidents, while social and crime experts blamed the recent political transition, the use of muscle power under party banners and the deterioration of law and order. They said the government could not evade responsibility and called for those involved, along with their patrons, to be brought to justice.** Meanwhile, Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) has strongly condemned the armed attack and attempted murder of media workers at Rajshahi University. The anti-graft watchdog called for the perpetrators to be brought to justice regardless of their political affiliations or influence (*Dhaka Tribune*, [07 October 2026](#)).
- ◆ **3 Mymensingh convicts denied bail in 1971 war crimes case:** The Appellate Division's Chamber Court has denied bail to three men serving life sentences for crimes against humanity committed in Mymensingh during the 1971 Liberation War. Justice Md Rezaul Haque passed the order on Wednesday and set Nov 17 for a full hearing of their appeals. The trio -- Md Fakhruzzaman, Md Abdus Sattar and Khandkar Golam Rabbani -- have filed separate appeals against the same verdict, seeking acquittal. Two others, Md Harmuz Ali and Khandaker Golam Sabbir Ahmed, were also sentenced to life imprisonment in the case (*bdnews24.com*, [07 October 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Opposition leader Shafiqur leaves Dhaka for Turkiye:** Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer and opposition leader Dr Shafiqur Rahman left Dhaka for Turkiye on Wednesday morning to attend an international conference on Bangladesh studies. **He departed from Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport for Istanbul to attend the Second International Conference on Bangladesh Studies at Istanbul University as the chief guest.** Jamaat Secretary General Mia Golam Porwar, Assistant Secretary General and Central Publicity and Media Secretary Advocate Ahsanul Mahboob Zubair, and Central Executive Council Member Md Mobarak Hossain were present at the airport to see him off. **The conference, jointly organised by Istanbul University and the Center for Policy and Social Research (CPSR), will be held under the theme "Multidimensional Perspectives on Reforms in Bangladesh 2.0 and New Horizons of Turkiye-Bangladesh Cooperation."** Academics, policymakers, diplomats, researchers and representatives of various organisations and institutions from Bangladesh, Turkiye and other countries are expected to attend the conference. After attending the conference in Turkiye,

Shafiqur Rahman will travel to Saudi Arabia to perform Umrah. He is scheduled to return home on the morning of Oct 11 (*Dhaka Tribune*, [07 October 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Govt to prepare accurate Liberation War martyrs list:** Liberation War Affairs Minister Ahmed Azam Khan pledged to preserve the authentic history of the Liberation War and prepare accurate lists of martyrs, Bir Muktiyoddhas and Biranganas with integrity, transparency and neutrality. He also said existing applications would be thoroughly scrutinised to ensure that no genuine freedom fighter is excluded and no fake claimant is enlisted. **“The government does not want to leave any inconsistency or controversy unresolved regarding the history of the Liberation War and the list of freedom fighters for future generations,”** he said at a press conference following an exchange-of-views meeting at the ministry today. The meeting was organised to discuss strategies and courses of action for preparing the list of martyrs and authentic lists of Bir Muktiyoddhas and Biranganas of the Liberation War, according to a press release (*The Daily Star*, [07 October 2026](#)).

Economy

- ◆ **Govt approves \$3.3b foreign loans for power, fuel:** The government has approved \$3.3 billion in non-concessional foreign loans to modernise the country’s power distribution system and continue importing fuel oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG) from the international market. The approval was given at a meeting of the Standing Committee on Non-Concessional Loans (SCNCL), chaired by Finance Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury at the Secretariat on Wednesday. **Of the total amount, \$200 million will be borrowed for a new power-sector project, while \$3.1 billion has been approved retrospectively for emergency fuel imports, according to Economic Relations Division (ERD) officials. The committee approved a proposal to borrow \$200 million from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for the Power Distribution Network Enhancement Project, being implemented by the Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board (BREB) under the Power Division.** According to the ERD working paper prepared for the meeting, the ADB loan will carry an interest rate based on the Secured Overnight Financing Rate (SOFR) plus a 0.50% spread. The 25-year loan will have a five-year grace period, a 0.10% maturity premium and a 0.15% commitment charge. The grant element is only 5.70%, below the 25% threshold, making it a non-concessional loan. The \$200 million project aims to improve the reliability, environmental sustainability and climate resilience of electricity supply in 13 rural electricity cooperative areas surrounding Dhaka (*Daily Sun*, [07 October 2026](#)).
- ◆ **ECNEC approves 13 projects involving Tk 16,207.55cr:** The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council on Wednesday approved 13 projects involving total cost of Tk 16,207.55 crore, including a project to construct a 442-MW peak solar power plant at Rampal in Bagerhat. **Of the total project cost, Tk 10,600.80 crore will come from government funds, Tk 4,081.85 crore from project loans and Tk 1,524.91 crore from concerned agencies’ own funds.** The approval came at the 5th meeting of the ECNEC held at Bangladesh Secretariat with prime minister and ECNEC chairman Tarique Rahman in the chair. Of the approved 13 projects, 10 are new, two are revised and one involves extension of its implementation period (*New Age*, [07 October 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant draws both hope, worry for Bangladesh:** Bangladesh is preparing to switch on its first nuclear power plant, a long-delayed project promising relief from chronic electricity shortages — even as some fear living beside it. The 2.4-gigawatt Rooppur nuclear plant, a \$13-billion project more than a decade in the making, has transformed the once sleepy nearby village of the same name, bringing Russian workers, new businesses and jobs. Once fully operational, its two reactors are expected to supply more than 10 per cent of electricity demand in the South Asian nation of 170 million people, which has been hit hard by the fuel crisis sparked by the conflict in the Middle East. Bangladesh finally signed an agreement with Moscow in 2015, with the Russian state offering a loan covering about 90 per cent of the project's original cost. **The project has since faced delays, including disruption from the Covid-19 pandemic and sanctions on Russia after its invasion of Ukraine, which complicated equipment deliveries and payments. There have also been corruption allegations surrounding the project, including against ousted former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and members of her family. They have rejected the accusations. For most Bangladeshis, however, the biggest question is when Rooppur will finally deliver reliable electricity** (*New Age*, [07 October 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Solar power cheaper than oil and coal, focus shifts to solar:** A 100-megawatt solar power plant was commissioned in Bhabanipur, Pabna, in 2024. The plant was built on 400 acres of land on the vast sandy char of the Padma River. During the day, the plant supplies solar-generated electricity to the national grid. As rising global prices of fuel oil and gas and supply shortages have made it increasingly difficult and costly to operate the country's fossil fuel-based power plants, the solar power plant on the Padma char is supplying electricity to people. Solar power does not require fuel imports using foreign currency, nor does it cause air pollution. It is also relatively cheaper. **Since the new BNP government took office, tenders have so far been invited for the construction of 10 solar power plants. However, the deadline for submitting bids has been extended several times. As a result, it is not known how many bids have been submitted or which companies have expressed interest. During the Awami League government's tenure, sovereign guarantees were provided for foreign loans taken for power plants. The interim government scrapped the practice. Sources at the PDB and private power plants say foreign lenders are reluctant to provide loans without sovereign guarantees. There have also been difficulties in purchasing land for the past two years. The companies that have recently secured power plant projects have limited experience** (*Prothom Alo*, [08 October 2026](#)).
- ◆ **DP World set to get Ctg port terminal operation amid protests:** Bangladesh is set to sign a 15-year concession agreement with United Arab Emirates-based DP World today to operate and maintain Chattogram Port's New Mooring Container Terminal amid protests from various quarters including workers' threat to shut the port if the deal is signed. According to Invest Bangladesh, the signing ceremony will be held at 3:00pm at its auditorium in the capital. Its chairman Chowdhury Ashik Mahmud Bin Harun and DP World Group chairman Essa Kazim are expected to attend the event. 'This milestone marks a bold step toward realising Bangladesh's economic growth ambitions, unlocking new frontiers of investment, efficiency and skills development,' Invest Bangladesh, the apex government agency responsible for promoting investment, said in an invitation letter issued on the occasion. **Meanwhile, Bangladesh Labour Welfare Federation Chattogram, Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad and Bandar Rokkha Committee in separate statements on Wednesday strongly protested at the government's decision to sign the deal with the foreign company for operating the largest container-**

handling facility at the country's busiest port. They called for consultations with workers, port users, experts and other stakeholders before signing any agreement with any foreign company (*New Age*, [08 October 2026](#)).

Foreign Policy

- ◆ **Dinesh Trivedi meets Narendra Modi in New Delhi, what did they discuss?:** Dinesh Trivedi, the Indian High Commissioner stationed in Bangladesh, met with India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday, Tuesday afternoon, in New Delhi. **Diplomatic sources have said that, in addition to matters concerning the relationship between the two neighbouring countries, there was also a discussion between Narendra Modi and Dinesh Trivedi regarding the current position of Dhaka on the possible visit of Bangladesh's Prime Minister, Tarique Rahman, to India.** Dinesh Trivedi arrived in New Delhi from Dhaka on Monday night and met with Narendra Modi on Tuesday afternoon. **Moreover, the country's High Commissioner in Dhaka met with India's Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri.** Dhaka's diplomatic sources have reported that Dinesh Trivedi is expected to return to Dhaka next Thursday. However, nothing has been officially communicated by India regarding the discussion this time. **Yesterday, India's High Commissioner Dinesh Trivedi also met with the country's Army Chief, General Dhiraj Seth. The meeting discussed various aspects of strengthening bilateral cooperation and defence relations between Bangladesh and India.** This information was shared in a post on the verified Facebook page of the Indian Army yesterday (*Prothom Alo*, [07 October 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Germany backs early Bangladesh-EU FTA, envoy:** German Ambassador to Bangladesh Dr. Rüdiger Lotz today reaffirmed Germany's commitment to deeper bilateral cooperation, stressing an early Bangladesh-EU free trade agreement, stronger aviation ties and expanded trade, investment and people-to-people exchanges. He made the remarks during a courtesy call on State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir at the foreign ministry here this afternoon. **Ambassador Lotz congratulated the state minister on his recent assumption of office and expressed confidence that Bangladesh-Germany relations would continue to strengthen. He placed particular emphasis on the early conclusion of a Bangladesh-European Union Free Trade Agreement and greater cooperation in the aviation sector. The German envoy also called for expanding trade and investment as well as people-to-people exchanges between the two countries** (*BSS News*, [07 October 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Australia provides A\$18m assistance for Rohingya response:** Australia has reaffirmed its support for Bangladesh in addressing the Rohingya crisis, signing a new multi-year assistance agreement worth A\$18 million (about Tk 155 crore) with BRAC to support Rohingya refugees and host communities. Australian High Commissioner Susan Ryle and BRAC Executive Director Asif Saleh signed the agreement today in the presence of Disaster Management and Relief Minister Asadul Habib Dulu. **Under the agreement, assistance will be provided in healthcare, water and sanitation, education, disaster risk management, skills development and protection for Rohingya refugees and host communities in Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char.** The programme will also strengthen the capacity of partner organisations at the local and national levels, expanding the scope of the assistance (*BSS News*, [07 October 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Japan grants \$145,000 for TB screening in Dhaka slum:** Japan will provide US\$145,000 to expand mobile tuberculosis screening in Dhaka's slum areas, helping around 9,000 people annually access diagnostic services and connecting previously undiagnosed patients with medical care. Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Saida Shinichi signed the grant contracts with icddr,b at the Embassy of Japan yesterday, an embassy press release said today. **The assistance is being provided under Japan's Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP). Under the project, icddr,b will procure a Toyota Land Cruiser and a Fujifilm portable digital X-ray unit, enabling mobile teams to take TB screening directly to communities with limited access to healthcare.** The initiative is expected to support earlier detection and treatment of tuberculosis and help prevent the spread of infection (*BSS News*, [07 October 2026](#)).
- ◆ **US supports vaccination drive to protect 3.4 million children:** The United States is supporting Bangladesh's national measles-rubella catch-up vaccination campaign through UNICEF, with the aim of protecting 3.4 million children aged six to 59 months amid the ongoing outbreak. US Chargé d'Affaires Eric Geelan today visited the vaccination campaign at T&T Field in Korail, Banani, here. **The campaign, launched on September 26, is being supported under the United States' America First Global Health Strategy, according to a statement attributable to US Mission Spokesperson Poornima Rai. The campaign represents a nationwide effort to vaccinate vulnerable children against measles and rubella as Bangladesh continues to respond to the current outbreak.** The US support, channelled through UNICEF, is aimed at strengthening the government's immunisation response and expanding vaccine coverage among children in the target age group (*BSS News*, [07 October 2026](#)).
- ◆ **UAE envoy calls on Attorney General:** Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to Bangladesh Abdulla Ali Abdulla Alhmoudi today called on Attorney General Md Ruhul Quddus Kazal at the Attorney General's office at the Supreme Court this morning. **During the meeting, they discussed legal issues of mutual interest to the two countries. They also exchanged views on further strengthening the existing friendly and cooperative relations between Bangladesh and the UAE.** Attorney General Barrister Md Ruhul Quddus Kazal said the UAE ambassador sought cooperation on legal matters of mutual interest to the two countries, and he assured him of extending necessary cooperation (*BSS News*, [07 October 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Bangladesh-led AI rights resolution adopted by UN council:** The United Nations Human Rights Council has adopted by consensus a Bangladesh-led resolution on artificial intelligence and human rights, the first of its kind at the council, according to Bangladesh's Permanent Mission in Geneva. The resolution, titled "Implications of Artificial Intelligence for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights", was adopted in Geneva on Tuesday, a press release from the mission received here today. Bangladesh advanced the initiative alongside fellow core group members Algeria, Austria, Egypt, Greece, Guyana, Kuwait and Nepal. **The resolution seeks to promote a balanced, forward-looking and human rights-centred approach to artificial intelligence. It recognises the technology's potential to support development and innovation while addressing its implications for human rights.** A key focus is expanding access to the benefits of emerging technologies, particularly for developing countries, through international cooperation, technical assistance, knowledge-sharing, access to technology and capacity-building (*BSS News*, [07 October 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Shama Obaed says Cox's Bazar insecurity 'cannot become the new normal':** Seeking a genuine solution to the Rohingya crisis, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed Islam on Wednesday warned that rising crime and insecurity affecting Cox's Bazar host communities "cannot be allowed to become the new normal." **The state minister urged the international community to move from statements of support to actionable and predictable assistance. She addressed the National Policy Dissemination Program on "Uncertain Return: Rohingya Voices on Repatriation Barriers," organized by the Department of Criminology and the Criminology Research Forum of the University of Dhaka, as chief guest at the Senate Bhaban, University of Dhaka. She said the solution lies in Myanmar and that Bangladesh cannot sustain the crisis indefinitely.** Referring to the study conducted by the Department of Criminology on the envisaged return of the forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals (FDMNs), she mentioned that the Rohingyas are not rejecting Myanmar as their home. They are rejecting a return to the conditions that forced them to flee. She identified recognition and identity, land and property, security, and trust with credible guarantees as the pillars of a credible roadmap, adding that "repatriation is an act of trust" and that the Rohingyas are "asking for rights, not charity" (*Dhaka Tribune*, [07 October 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Bangladesh, ICRC pledge deeper cooperation on humanitarian action:** Bangladesh and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on Wednesday reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening cooperation on international humanitarian law and humanitarian action, including assistance to Rohingyas and host communities. **The commitment came during a meeting between State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir and ICRC Head of Delegation in Bangladesh Nicolas Fleury at the foreign ministry here, said a ministry press release.** Kobir appreciated the ICRC's longstanding humanitarian engagement in Bangladesh, particularly its contributions to promoting International Humanitarian Law (IHL), humanitarian assistance, disaster response, capacity-building and emergency support. He reaffirmed Bangladesh's firm commitment to the Geneva Conventions and IHL, underscoring the important role of the National IHL Committee (*Dhaka Tribune*, [07 October 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Bangladesh eyes stronger tourism, fisheries cooperation with Maldives:** Underscoring the potential to expand cooperation with the Maldives in tourism and fisheries, Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister M Rashiduzzaman Millat urged closer collaboration to promote sustainable fisheries, develop tourism and create new avenues for bilateral engagement. The minister made the call while speaking at a chief guest at "The Great Tuna Gala – Flavours from the Sunny Side", organised by the Maldives High Commission to showcase the country's sustainable tuna fishery, culinary heritage and tourism opportunities while strengthening trade, business and people-to-people ties between Bangladesh and the Maldives. **High Commissioner of Maldives to Bangladesh Shiuneen Rasheed highlighted the close connection between the Maldives and the ocean and the central place fisheries holds in the country's economy, communities and culture** (*Dhaka Tribune*, [07 October 2026](#)).

Security

- ◆ **UK arrests three over alleged scheme helping Bangladeshis fake gay asylum claims:** The UK has arrested three people over alleged links to a network accused of helping asylum seekers make false claims about being gay to obtain protection, the BBC reports. Two people were arrested at

London addresses on Tuesday on suspicion of fraud and immigration offences, while a third was detained over suspected illegal residence. Officers seized phones, jewellery and thousands of pounds in cash. **The BBC said the suspects are believed to have helped dozens of Bangladeshi men submit asylum claims and charged up to £4,500 for fabricated evidence, including false letters, certificates and staged photographs.** Chris Foster of the Home Office said the investigation involved false claims linked to Aponjon, a Bangladeshi LGBT organisation in Whitechapel, east London. More than 100 related asylum applications are now being reviewed. According to the BBC, immigration judges have previously criticised evidence from Aponjon as unreliable. In one case, an applicant submitted staged photographs after claiming to have attended the group's events. The arrests follow a BBC investigation earlier this year that found some legal firms and advisers were helping migrants pretend to be gay in asylum applications. Two people linked to that investigation were arrested in May (bdnews24.com, [07 October 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**]*