

DAILY BANGLADESH WATCH

30 September 2026

Takeaways

Politics

- ◆ **Govt takes measures for peaceful Durga Puja:** The government has directed the relevant ministries, administration and law enforcement agencies to take all necessary measures to ensure peaceful, festive and safe celebrations of the upcoming Durga Puja. The authorities have also been asked to maintain communal harmony, prevent rumours and ensure prompt legal action through impartial investigations in the event of any untoward incident. The directives were issued at an inter-ministerial preparatory meeting held at the Ministry of Religious Affairs on Tuesday morning. State Minister for Religious Affairs Mohammad Shamim Kaiser chaired the meeting. The state minister said the government is committed to ensuring a safe and festive environment for Durga Puja, the largest religious festival of the Hindu community. He also stressed ensuring the proper distribution of grants allocated by the Prime Minister's Office to Puja mandaps across the country through the Puja Welfare Trust. **The government is also planning to declare October 22 a public holiday by executive order on the occasion of Durga Puja, which would give government employees a five-day holiday from October 20 to 24.** Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has increased grants for the Hindu community's Sharadiya Durga Puja and the Buddhist community's religious festival. **The Hindu Religious Welfare Trust had sought Tk 40 million for Durga Puja, but Tk 50 million was allocated at the prime minister's special consideration.** Similarly, the Buddhist Religious Welfare Trust had sought Tk 20 million for the Kathin Chibar Dan ceremony, but Tk 30 million was allocated at the prime minister's special consideration (*Dhaka Tribune*, [29 September 2026](#); [30 September 2026](#); *Prothom Alo*, [29 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Salahuddin says No decision yet on how caretaker govt will be formed:** No decision has yet been taken on the process or composition of the caretaker government, Home Minister and chairman of the Special Committee on Constitutional Amendments Salahuddin Ahmed said on Tuesday. He made the remarks at a press conference at the National Parliament Media Centre after the committee's fourth meeting. **"An open discussion is needed on the caretaker government system, its process and the form of its formation. We need proposals. Parliament will consider what is deemed appropriate and we will accept it,"** Salahuddin Ahmed said. **"We have not yet been able to decide what process to follow or who will be included in forming the caretaker government,"** he added. The committee sought the views of media professionals involved in electronic media, television channels, online portals, news management and television talk shows, Salahuddin said. Salahuddin said the committee would consult people from different professions and walks of life, prominent citizens, constitutional experts, lawyers, serving and former judges, academics, and various social forces, organizations and individuals associated with the July uprising. **The meeting also heard proposals on whether Bangladesh needs a bicameral parliament, Salahuddin said. The committee also received differing views on the proposal to limit an individual's tenure as prime minister to a maximum of 10 years, Salahuddin said.** The committee also discussed engaging with the opposition, Salahuddin said. **He also urged those who had submitted proposals to participate in the discussions** (*Dhaka Tribune*, [29 September 2026](#)).



- ◆ **Akhter accuses BNP of taking contradictory stance on referendum:** National Citizen Party (NCP) Member Secretary Akhter Hossen has accused the BNP of taking contradictory positions on the referendum, saying the party is now seeking a fresh referendum after previously participating in one and campaigning for a “Yes” vote. **Speaking at a discussion organised at the NCP central office on Tuesday evening, Akhter said the “Yes” side had won the referendum, but alleged that the BNP was now refusing to accept its outcome. He claimed that the BNP leadership had earlier questioned the need for a referendum, saying that public money should instead be spent on issues such as fair prices for agricultural produce and employment. The BNP later participated in the referendum and campaigned for a “Yes” vote, Akhter said.** “Now we are hearing that they want to hold another referendum through the constitutional amendment committee,” he said. Akhter alleged that the BNP’s current position was inconsistent with its earlier stance. He claimed the party wanted a referendum on reforms that would reflect its preferred approach to running the state rather than implementing the people’s mandate (*Daily Times of Bangladesh*, [29 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Charmonai Pir says Govt has failed to curb extortion, violence:** Islami Andolan Bangladesh (IAB) Ameer Mufti Syed Muhammad Rezaul Karim, popularly known as Charmonai Pir said the government has failed to curb extortion, violence, corruption, looting, enforced disappearances and killings. **While addressing a ward representatives’ conference of the party’s Dhaka north and south city units at the Institute of Diploma Engineers auditorium in Kakrail, he said successive governments had failed to bring the desired changes and had forgotten their election pledges after coming to power. “If the country continues to be run under the existing system, we may celebrate the diamond jubilee or centenary of independence, but the fate of the people will not change,” he said.** He also said IAB had never compromised on its principles and would not do so in the future, expressing hope that people would support a change in the country’s political system through the party (*The Daily Star*, [29 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Humaion says Hasina has no chance of returning to Bangladesh:** State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaion Kobir has said former prime minister Sheikh Hasina has no chance of returning to Bangladesh, describing her planned virtual participation in an event in London as a “meaningless activity.” He made the remarks while responding to reporters after a meeting with South Korean Ambassador Kim Ji-jun at the Foreign Ministry on Tuesday. **Asked about the government’s position on Hasina and her son Sajeed Joy joining a news conference in London virtually on Wednesday, Kobir said the event was not being organised by the UK government. He said the government would inform the relevant authorities if necessary. “Speaking virtually from India to an event in London, these are meaningless activities,” he said.** On Hasina’s political future, Kobir said, “There is no opportunity for her to return to Bangladesh. Those who flee or are driven out have very little chance of returning.” The government has previously said it is pursuing diplomatic and legal efforts to bring Hasina back from India (*Dhaka Tribune*, [29 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Parliament committee questions BPC on ending shortages through higher fuel prices :** How did Bangladesh’s fuel crisis end simply by raising prices when the supply system remained unchanged? A parliamentary committee wants an answer from Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC). The question was raised Tuesday at the first meeting of the Public Undertakings Committee of the 13th Parliament. **According to a Parliament Secretariat media**

statement, the meeting reviewed the BPC and its subsidiaries. The committee discussed why petroleum prices had been raised and adjusted at different times, ways to keep them affordable, and the roles of Padma, Meghna and Jamuna Oil in price increases and reductions. It also examined what caused the fuel crisis after the current government took office (*bdnews24.com*, [29 September 2026](#)).

- ◆ **UPL condemns 'pressure' over sale of Mujib's memoirs:** Publishing house The University Press Limited has condemned what it described as 'unlawful pressure' over the sale of the country's founding president Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's autobiography 'The Unfinished Memoirs', saying such interference was harmful to knowledge, culture, and academic freedom. In a statement posted on Tuesday on its verified Facebook page after an incident at its Banglabazar showroom in Old Town on Monday, UPL said a group of people arrived at around 5:30pm, demanded that the marketing of the book be stopped—claiming it was banned—and pulled down the showroom's shutters. Two UPL sales employees were harassed and later taken to a police outpost, the publishing house said. They were later released. The incident with UPL grabbed huge criticisms on social media platforms. Rights organisation Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust on Tuesday issued a statement condemning the alleged attack. It demanded proper investigation into the incident and legal action against those involved in the incident. UPL senior assistant manager Raihan Taharat Leon earlier said that the group identified themselves as Bangladesh Nationalist Party activists (*New Age*, [30 September 2026](#)).

Economy

- ◆ **Millat says Biman to sign 10 Airbus purchase deal in Oct:** Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister M Rashiduzzaman Millat today said Bangladesh plans to sign an agreement in October to purchase 10 Airbus aircraft as part of efforts to expand Biman Bangladesh Airlines' fleet. "Yes, we are buying 10 Airbus aircraft. Inshallah, the agreement will be signed in October," he told journalists at the Secretariat. The minister said that the Airbus aircraft could begin arriving in 2033, with deliveries continuing through 2036 or 2037. Aircraft cannot be purchased for immediate delivery, he said, explaining why the government was placing orders years in advance. Millat said Biman was also trying to lease 10 aircraft to meet more immediate demand, but had yet to secure them despite repeated efforts. On the Boeing purchases, he said the first aircraft under an earlier agreement was scheduled for delivery in 2031 (*BSS News*, [29 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Bobby says US firms eye over \$1bn investment in Bangladesh's AI, semiconductor sectors:** State Minister for Primary and Mass Education Bobby Hajjaj has said the US semiconductor and Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology companies have expressed interest in investing more than US\$1 billion in Bangladesh. "There is significant potential for international investment in Bangladesh's technology sector. In particular, the interest of US technology companies in investing more than US\$1 billion in the AI and semiconductor industries will bring new momentum to the country's economy. The government is working to facilitate technology transfer, develop a skilled workforce and ensure an investment-friendly environment to turn this opportunity into reality," he said. He made the remarks while addressing the 'CEO and Senior Executives Roundtable' held at a hotel in California, USA, on Monday local time, said a press release received here today (*BSS News*, [29 September 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Chevron seeks labour law exemptions citing round-the-clock operations:** Chevron Bangladesh has defended its application for exemptions from several provisions of the Bangladesh Labour Act 2006, saying its operations run around the clock and many employees work rotational schedules that differ from standard office hours. In a response to New Age on Tuesday, the US energy company said it had submitted its application to the government through the proper legal process and that decisions on exemptions rested with the government. New Age on Tuesday published a report titled 'Chevron seeks further exemptions from labour law', revealing the company's appeal for exemptions from provisions on workers' fundamental rights, including working hours and leave. The application has drawn criticism from labour rights experts, who have called on the government to reject it. Experts said exemptions from labour laws could be considered only when necessary in the public interest, such as during natural disasters or for organising temporary fairs, neither of which applies to Chevron. The Chevron Bangladesh Employees Union has also expressed concern over the application, saying it was not consulted about the proposed exemptions (*New Age*, [30 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **ECNEC okays 13 dev projects with Tk 15,712.63cr:** The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council on Tuesday approved 13 development projects involving Tk 15,712.63 crore. The government will provide Tk 10,118.43 crore, external sources Tk 5,211.93 crore and the implementing agencies Tk 382.28 crore. The approval came in the ECNEC meeting held at the Bangladesh Secretariat with prime minister Tarique Rahman in the chair, state minister for planning Zonayed Abdur Rahim Saki told a press briefing at the NEC auditorium in the capital. The approval covers eight new projects, revisions to three existing projects and fourth extensions of the implementation periods of two projects without additional costs. Saki said a project worth about Tk 4,000 crore to tackle tuberculosis, HIV and malaria received approval in principle to meet a deadline linked to Global Fund financing. Its expenditure and priorities would undergo further scrutiny before administrative approval, and a restructured proposal would be placed before the next ECNEC meeting (*New Age*, [30 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **At Dighirpar, the golden fibre still draws crowds amid India's anti-dumping duties:** One of Munshiganj's traditional jute markets comes alive on designated days of the week as farmers and traders from surrounding areas gather at Dighirpar in Tongibari upazila to buy and sell the golden fibre. Bundles of jute arrive at the market by both waterways and roads, while traders arrange their produce for buyers. For generations, the Dighirpar market has remained an important centre of the local jute trade and a vital part of the rural economy. The traditional market, however, operates against a backdrop of renewed pressure on Bangladesh's jute exporters, with India recently revising its anti-dumping duties on jute products imported from Bangladesh. India's finance ministry, in a notification issued on September 24, re-fixed the duties following a mid-term review by the Directorate General of Trade Remedies. The revised rates vary by producer. Fifty-five named Bangladeshi producers have been given comparatively lower duty rates, while other producers face duties of up to \$445 per tonne on jute yarn and twine, \$88 on hessian fabric and \$283 on sacking bags (*New Age*, [29 September 2026](#)).

Foreign Policy

- ◆ **Jaiswal says Ganges water-sharing treaty to be discussed by 2 countries' joint river commission:** The issue of the Ganges Water Treaty between Bangladesh and India will be discussed by the Joint River Commission of the two countries. Discussions on this treaty are ongoing at the technical levels of both countries. In response to a question during a briefing by the Indian Ministry of External Affairs on Tuesday, Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said this. Recently, Bangladesh's Minister of Water Resources, Md Shahiduddin Chowdhury Anee told journalists at an event in Dhaka that Bangladesh wants a new agreement with India on Ganges water distribution. According to that agreement, water will be distributed equally between the two countries based on entitlement. He said that the country's interests should be protected by including this 'guarantee clause' in the new agreement. **When asked about India's stance on this matter during the briefing, Randhir Jaiswal said that there is a Joint River Commission for discussions on all rivers flowing between the two countries, not just the Ganges. All river-related matters will be discussed in that commission. He further mentioned that technical meetings about the Ganges treaty are being conducted** (*Prothom Alo*, [29 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **'No need to rush': Indian envoy says invitation for PM Tarique to visit Delhi remains open:** Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Dinesh Trivedi has played down talk of an imminent New Delhi visit by Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, insisting there is no need to rush and that relations between the two countries remain on "positive" footing. **After a courtesy call on State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir on Tuesday, Trivedi was asked whether a possible November date had been fixed for the trip. "As I said before, our invitation is open. I don't think there's any need to rush on this. When the time is right, it will certainly happen," he said. "Everything is very positive. But we must give due time. Within a certain period, everything will turn positive. There is no question about anything negative."** Trivedi said the response he received while speaking to people in Bangladesh was also positive, although he acknowledged there were "political compulsions" on both sides that remained a work in progress. "But overall, everything is absolutely positive, and I am sure we are very confident whenever the prime ministers of both sides find it convenient, things will happen" (*bdnews24.com*, [29 September 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Humaiun hopeful of PM's India visit:** State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir today expressed optimism about progress towards a possible visit by Prime Minister Tarique Rahman to India, saying existing challenges could be addressed through dialogue and the visit would require a mutually conducive environment. **"I am very positive that we may have positive outcomes in the very near future," he told journalists at the foreign ministry after Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Dinesh Trivedi called on him. "Challenges do exist, which we will overcome through dialogue. We will undertake this visit when the environment is conducive, based on mutual respect," he said. Humaiun described the meeting, the Indian envoy's first courtesy call on him since he assumed office as state minister, as cordial, productive and constructive.** Asked when the prime minister's visit might take place, he said the timeline would be discussed once the two sides had created a mutually favourable environment. He declined to comment on speculation that the visit could take place in November. "Discussions are ongoing. But I cannot talk based on rumours," he said. The state minister said the Indian national security adviser's possible visit to Dhaka had not been discussed at the meeting. He did not elaborate when asked to identify the challenges he had mentioned (*BSS News*, [29 September 2026](#)).

Security

- ◆ **SRB-4 arrests alleged mastermind of international human trafficking ring:** The Special Response Battalion-4 (SRB-4), in a joint operation with SRB-1, arrested an alleged key mastermind of an international human trafficking ring from Banani C Block in Dhaka on Monday, based on intelligence provided by the National Security Intelligence (NSI). The arrestee was identified as Mohammad Arzu Rahman (47). **According to the SRB, Rahman has allegedly been involved in illegal manpower recruitment and human trafficking for around 12 years, using the names of various agencies, including Arzu Immigration Limited and Nafis Air Immigration Limited.** The investigation found that Kamrun, Fatema, Azuman Ara, Parvez, Firoz and Mehedi Hasan, among others, were allegedly lured with promises of high-paying jobs in European countries. The gang allegedly first sent victims to different Asian and Middle Eastern countries before attempting to route them through Nepal or Sri Lanka to Egypt or Libya and eventually to Europe via dangerous sea routes, the SRB said (*Daily Sun*, [29 September 2026](#)).

- ◆ **7 BCL activists sent to jail over Hasina birthday procession:** Seven activists of the banned Bangladesh Chhatra League were sent to jail on Monday after being arrested for holding a procession in Gopalganj to mark the birthday of deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina, police said. Police arrested the seven on Sunday night in Tungipara upazila while they were allegedly taking part in a procession organised by the student wing of the banned Awami League. **They were produced before a local court on Monday and subsequently sent to jail, according to police sources. Gopalganj police super Md Habibullah confirmed the arrests, saying the seven were detained while participating in the procession.** ‘Police remain on high alert to prevent any further untoward incidents in the district,’ he said. Meanwhile, social media posts showed that activists of the banned Awami League and its affiliated organisations held birthday programmes for Hasina at several other locations across Gopalganj (*New Age*, [29 September 2026](#)).

- ◆ **DMP arrests 40 ‘active’ Awami League activists in Dhaka:** Police have arrested 40 active members of the Awami League, whose activities have been banned. The arrests were made in raids across different parts of the capital on Wednesday, according to Dhaka Metropolitan Police’s Deputy Commissioner (Media and Public Relations) Akhtar Hossain. Police said legal proceedings against those arrested are under way (*bdnews24.com*, [30 September 2026](#)).

- ◆ **182 held in anti-teen gang drive in Lakshmipur:** Police detained 182 people in a five-hour drive against teen gangs across Lakshmipur district on Tuesday evening. The joint operation was conducted from 6pm to 11pm by police from all six police stations in the district along with the Detective Branch (DB). Police said the drive was conducted at different locations where there had been complaints of harassment and nuisance by teenage youths. According to police, 64 people were detained in Lakshmipur Sadar, 21 in Chandraganj, 20 in Raipur, 24 in Ramganj, 13 in Ramgati and 17 in Kamalnagar police stations. Another 23 were detained in separate drives by DB police. Police said they were verifying the involvement of those detained in criminal activities and taking necessary legal action accordingly (*Daily Sun*, [30 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**]*