

# DAILY BANGLADESH WATCH

29 May 2026

## Takeaways

### Politics

- ◆ **‘If you get time, take a look at the videos of Eid day in India’:** Under the rule of Hindu nationalism, Muslims in India experienced this Eid al-Adha with extreme suffering and fear. Highlighting some of this, online activist Sadikur Rahman Khan said, ‘If you get time, take a look at the videos of India’s Eid day.’ On Thursday, he made this call in his Facebook post. His status was presented as follows – “If you get time between sacrificing and eating meat, watch some videos of Eid day in India. **In Kolkata, the police are making announcements with a microphone, saying that cows cannot be sacrificed publicly or secretly. The court in Bangalore said that Eid happens even without sacrificing cows, so the state has issued instructions not to sacrifice cows. Forget about sacrifice, in 29 states many Indian Muslims did not go to Eid prayers, out of fear for their lives. In 1947, no country was divided, in 1947 we gained independence.** Our freedom to sacrifice, our freedom of land, our freedom of festivals, celebrations, and sustenance. **1947 gave us a wonderful blessing from Allah. Be thankful for this blessing, be grateful that today neither I nor you have to fear sacrificing or praying.** Eid means remembering relatives and loved ones, praying for them. Let us not forget our loved ones, Allama Iqbal, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Sher-e-Bangla A.K. Fazlul Huq, Salimullah Khan, or Hossain Shaheed Suhrawardy, along with the leaders of 1947. From our ancestors, we receive homes, land, and property, and our gratitude for that never ends. Jinnah, Sher-e-Bangla, and Suhrawardy gave us independence. Liberation. Our identity. Like everything else, freedom is also a blessing from Allah. And if we disrespect a blessing given by Allah, He takes that blessing away. May we feel the gratitude of living with this identity, this attainment, and this honor every moment. Heartfelt Eid ul-Azha greetings to all the oppressed in the world, freedom seekers, and those on the side of justice. Eid Mubarak” (*Amar Desh*, [28 May 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Tarique says cooperation key to building envisioned Bangladesh:** Tarique Rahman has said that building the Bangladesh people envision will require cooperation from all sections of society, stressing the need for everyone to carry out their responsibilities effectively. Attending a feast at Dhaka Cantonment marking Eid-ul-Azha on Thursday, the premier shared the plan while exchanging greetings with members of the Bangladesh Army. Tarique said, “The government is trying to gradually build the country in the way we, the common people of the country including the soldiers, see in our imagination. **He said the government is trying to build the country in line with the hopes and expectations of both soldiers and ordinary people. He also said the government remains aware of issues related to the welfare and responsibilities of the Army personnel.** Referring to an incident in which the offices of two newspapers – *The Daily Star* and *Prothom Alo* – were set on fire in December last year, the prime minister said the Army personnel rescued around 18 journalists from the scene, which he said deserved appreciation. **Highlighting the sense of responsibility of Army members, the premier said: “Many of you may not have been able to go on leave [on Eid day] due to the country’s needs.** The prime minister made the remarks while speaking at a reunion and feast

organized by “*Mrittunjoyee Potchis*” at the Zia Colony in the Dhaka Cantonment on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha. After the program, he exchanged Eid greetings with the Army personnel and later enquired after the living conditions of soldiers staying at the Army Mess (*bdnews24.com*, [28 May 2026](#); *Dhaka Tribune*, [28 May 2026](#)).

◆ **President Shahabuddin urges nation to embrace unity over division in Eid-ul-Azha message:** President Mohammed Shahabuddin has called on everyone to work together to build a “just, democratic, non-communal and prosperous” Bangladesh by upholding the ideals and values of Eid-ul-Azha. He made the call in a video message on Thursday marking Eid. Shahabuddin said: “Let us embrace unity instead of division, compassion instead of violence, justice instead of selfishness, and equality instead of discrimination by carrying the ideals and values of Eid-ul-Azha in our hearts.” In his video message, the president conveyed heartfelt greetings to the people of Bangladesh and Muslims around the world (*bdnews24.com*, [28 May 2026](#)).

◆ **Finance Minister says Country moving towards a welfare state:** Finance and Planning Minister Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury today stated that transition from a fragile economy to stability and progress will require time. “**We have but one request, one appeal to the citizens of the country; grant us this time. We are accountable to you as your elected representatives. We are advancing towards a welfare state, InshaAllah,**” he remarked. The Finance Minister said this while talking to journalists after performing Eid-ul-Azha prayers at his residence, Darus Salam Jame Mosque, located in city’s Uttar Kattali this morning. Noting that the prices of goods did not go up during this time Eid-ul-Azha, Finance Minister mentioned that typically, prices increase during Eid-ul-Azha, yet this year it actually declined. “**We aim to maintain this trend. We are making efforts to keep the prices of essential goods under control. Every possible measure is being taken to ensure that the prices remain within the purchasing capacity of the general populace. I am hopeful that prices will gradually decline. But we will need to allow some time for this,**” he concluded. The budget for the fiscal year 2026-27 is set to be revealed in the National Parliament on June 11. Said Amir Khasru, the first ever Finance Minister from Chattogram adding that it will provide the citizens with a new perspective on the economy for the first time. He briefly outlined the nation’s economic status to journalists while keeping the budget in consideration. The Finance Minister stated, “**It will not suffice to focus solely on superficial growth. The general populace must reap the benefits of the economy. If the prices of goods exceed the affordability of the common people, they will be deprived of the economic advantages,**” he said (*BSS News*, [28 May 2026](#)).

◆ **Home Minister says Govt aims to build national unity and develop country:** Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed on Thursday said the current government is committed to strengthening national unity and building the country. He made the remarks while briefing reporters after exchanging Eid greetings with Prime Minister Tarique Rahman at his Gulshan residence in Dhaka. The minister said people from all walks of life, regardless of political affiliation, must remain united to build a developed and prosperous Bangladesh. “**Our main goal and only slogan is ‘Bangladesh First’. We believe in working together to build the country, putting Bangladesh above all else,**” he said. “**We want to move forward through strength in unity by taking every citizen along with us,**” he added. The home minister also said Prime Minister Tarique Rahman and his wife Dr Zubaida Rahman visited the graves of late President Ziaur

Rahman and thrice-former prime minister Khaleda Zia, at the Zia Udyan in Sher-e-Bangla Nagar on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha. They also paid tribute to the 57 military officers, as well as others killed from February 25-27, 2009, in the Pilkhana tragedy, and prayed for the salvation of their departed souls, the home minister said (*Dhaka Tribune*, [28 May 2026](#)).

- ◆ **Info Minister for ensuring peaceful coexistence for all regardless of religion and race:** Information and Broadcasting Minister Zahir Uddin Swapon has said, peaceful coexistence of all regardless of religion and race must be ensured across the world. **“The whole world is now going through an unstable situation. Wars, conflicts and various crises have grieved the world. Particularly, brutal atrocities are being carried out against Muslims in the Middle East, which is deeply painful. Therefore, on this holy day, we must pray for peaceful coexistence of all people across the world irrespective of religion and race,”** he said. The minister said this after offering Eid-ul-Azha prayers at the South Sarikal Madhyapara Darul Jannat Noor Eidgah ground in Gournadi upazila of the district here this morning (*BSS News*, [28 May 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Veteran Journalist Shaukat Mahmud released on bail:** Senior journalist and former president of the National Press Club and Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ), Shaukat Mahmud, has been released on bail after spending more than five and a half months in prison. He was freed from Keraniganj Central Jail in Dhaka on Monday evening. Senior Jail Superintendent Faruk Ahmed confirmed the matter. Sources concerned said Mahmud had been in custody after being shown arrested in multiple cases filed under the Anti-Terrorism Act. He was released following court approval of his bail and completion of the required legal formalities (*Dhaka Tribune*, [27 May 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Former chief advisor Yunus departs Bangladesh for France:** Muhammad Yunus, head of the interim government, has left Dhaka for France early in the morning, weeks after stepping down from office. On Wednesday, an airport source said Yunus departed at 6:50am on a Turkish Airlines flight and was given VIP protocol at Shahjalal International Airport. Airport Executive Director SM Ragib Samad confirmed the departure. After stepping down as chief advisor, Yunus had remained in Bangladesh, while his office, Yunus Centre, continued issuing updates on his activities. **However, it did not announce the France trip beforehand** (*bdnews24.com*, [27 May 2026](#)).

## Economy

- ◆ **No alternative to Padma Barrage project for Bangladesh’s water security (OPINION):** Compared to the thousands of years of rivers flowing naturally, the history of river management and modern infrastructure on rivers is relatively very recent, only a few hundred years old. Among the most debated and controversial structures are dams built across rivers to generate electricity and control floods, and barrages constructed to divert the flow of water. These technologies were developed to meet human needs, but in many countries they are now being dismantled as their necessity declines. **Even in neighboring India, there are about 5,300 dams and barrages still in operation. Compared to that, how many dams and barrages does Bangladesh have? In total, only five. The two major ones are the Teesta Barrage and the Kaptai Dam.** So can it be said that river management in Bangladesh is excessively dependent on infrastructure? Perhaps not. However, the real question remains whether the right

infrastructure is being built in the right place. In particular, these questions are being widely asked about the current “talk of the town”—the Padma Barrage project. It is true that we are not yet in a position to make fully serious judgments about it, because we do not know its detailed design. So only the limited information available can be discussed. Broadly speaking, in light of Bangladesh’s water management reality, it is hard to deny that the project is necessary. **It has been scientifically proven that in recent years, due to the impact of the Farakka Barrage, water levels in southern rivers have decreased and salinity has increased. The Sundarbans—the world’s largest mangrove forest—is the most affected by this salinity intrusion.** The “top dying” disease is killing sundari trees there. **The Padma Barrage is expected to improve this situation.** Moreover, the barrage includes modern technologies such as navigation locks, fish passes, and silt flushing systems, which can significantly reduce environmental damage caused by the structure. **After Farakka, Bangladesh is a downstream country; therefore, upstream benefits only India while downstream losses are borne by Bangladesh—a “positive-sum game” in that context. But in the case of the Padma Barrage, both upstream and downstream are within Bangladesh itself. So both benefits and losses occur within the same country. Moreover, water is being stored and released within the same river system. This makes it a “zero-sum game.”** Upstream of the Ganges in India, there are about 300 additional small and large dams. Likewise, as mentioned earlier, thousands of dams and barrages around the world are located within countries themselves, functioning as zero-sum systems. This is how dams and barrages operate: they store water during the wet season and release it during the dry. **Sediment deposition can be a problem. However, one advantage is that because of the Farakka Barrage upstream, a large portion of sediment is already being deposited above Farakka, reducing sediment flow downstream into Bangladesh. After Farakka, very little new water and sediment are added in the Bangladesh section of the Ganges system.** However, the situation is complex: sedimentation is not the only issue—barrages can also cause riverbank erosion downstream. If properly designed and if “reservoir regulation rules” are developed intelligently, many of these negative impacts can be significantly reduced. **For several months, I have been watching multiple YouTube videos made by Indians about the renewal of the Ganges Treaty. In one of them, a statement by India’s foreign minister regarding the renewal of the Ganges or Indus treaties is noteworthy. The English statement translates as: “Neighbouring countries that do not wish to cooperate with India will have to pay the price.” Water withholding is considered one such form of pressure. It should be understood that requesting water from a shared river under a treaty is not simply like begging with an outstretched hand. For example, if a neighboring country has oil, asking for it freely is not guaranteed—they may or may not give it. But in the case of international rivers, the downstream country’s right to water is internationally recognized, and the upstream country is obliged to ensure its fair share. The diversion of water upstream has already been prohibited under international law. Therefore, such actions go against established principles. An international legal framework has also been developed on this issue. Unfortunately, neither Bangladesh nor India has signed it. However, even without signing, its guidelines can still be used as reference points in discussions and arguments, because the law was adopted by the United Nations based on the consensus of most member states worldwide.** Long before this law, there were also numerous examples of fair water-sharing agreements between countries based on customary international law. Bangladesh also needs to start planning with “water security” in mind. In this regard, there is no alternative to the Padma Barrage project (*Prothom Alo*, [29 May 2026](#)).

## Foreign Policy

- ◆ **Modi extends Eid greetings to Tarique Rahman:** Indian prime minister Narendra Modi has conveyed warm greetings to prime minister Tarique Rahman and the people of Bangladesh on the occasion of holy Eid-ul-Azha. In a message sent to Tarique Rahman, the Indian premier reaffirmed New Delhi's commitment to strengthening people-centric cooperation between the two neighbouring countries. Modi conveyed greetings on behalf of the people and the government of India to the 'brotherly people' of Bangladesh, according to the Indian High Commission in Dhaka. Modi said the festival is an integral part of India's rich and diverse cultural heritage and is celebrated with joy and enthusiasm by millions of Muslims across the country. **Referring to bilateral relations, Modi said India and Bangladesh share a deep-rooted bond built on shared sacrifices, cultural commonalities and a mutual aspiration for peace, stability and growth. He said the Government of India looks forward to working closely with Bangladesh to further strengthen cooperation in various sectors for the mutual benefit of the peoples of the two countries.** Modi also expressed hope that the shared development visions of the two nations would continue to contribute to the progress and prosperity of their people. Modi wished good health and well-being for prime minister Tarique Rahman and continued peace and prosperity for the people of Bangladesh (*New Age*, [28 May 2026](#)).
- ◆ **PM thanks Indian counterpart Modi for Eid greetings:** Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has thanked Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi for extending Eid-ul-Azha greetings to him and the people of Bangladesh. **In a message posted on the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) Facebook page in response to Modi's greetings, Tarique Rahman said: "I thank Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his very kind greetings to the people of Bangladesh and me on the joyous occasion of Eid-ul-Azha." "May the relations between the peoples of Bangladesh and India continue to be strengthened on the foundations of mutual respect, friendship and goodwill," he added** (*Dhaka Tribune*, [28 May 2026](#)).
- ◆ **Ties with Belgium deepening steadily:** Bangladesh and Belgium have discussed the way forward to capitalise on the momentum created by the meeting at the political level for mutual benefit of the two countries. Bangladesh ambassador Masudul Alam on May 26 met William Asselborn, Director of Asia and Oceania of the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the latter's office where they discussed issues of mutual interest. **The relationship between Bangladesh and Belgium has been deepening steadily and surely, said the Bangladesh Mission. The recent visit of foreign minister Khalilur Rahman to Belgium and his meeting with the deputy prime minister and foreign minister of Belgium added "new momentum" to this very important relationship, said the officials.** In a separate meeting, Ambassador Alam held fruitful discussions with EU Director-General Marc Lemaître to enhance Bangladesh's research collaboration with the European Union, which hosts one of the world's largest research and innovation platforms. The discussions focused on expanding cooperation in research, innovation and knowledge-sharing initiatives between Bangladesh and the EU (*New Age*, [27 May 2026](#)).

## Security

- ◆ **BGB tightens vigil to prevent smuggling, push-ins during Eid:** Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) has taken a strict stance along the border areas of Jessore and Khulna to prevent smuggling, illegal push-ins, and the trafficking of sacrificial animals hides during holy Eid-ul-Azha period. The enhanced security measures were confirmed on Thursday by Lieutenant Colonel Golam Mohammad, Saiful Alam Khan, commander of Jessore 49 BGB Battalion, and Lieutenant Colonel Nafiz Imtiaz Ahsan, commander of Khulna 21 BGB Battalion. Officials said that every year during Eid-ul-Azha, a large number of cattle are sacrificed across the country, creating concerns that hides may be smuggled across the border into India. To prevent such activities, BGB personnel have been placed on maximum alert, and public awareness campaigns, including loudspeaker announcements in border areas, have been carried out. **Coordination meetings with India's Border Security Force (BSF) are also being held regularly to address cross-border crimes. BGB said intensified patrols are underway across the border to prevent push-ins, drug trafficking, smuggling, and other illegal activities during and after Eid. Authorities have identified several vulnerable border points in Sharsha upazila of Jessore's 102-kilometer border—including Kashipur, Shalkona, Shikarpur, Dhanyakhola, Raghunathpur, Putkhali, Daulatpur, Sadipur, Ghiba, Goga, Rudrapur, Agradulot, Panchbhulot, and Dadhkhali—as high-risk routes for hide smuggling. Local leather traders have expressed concern over the issue, prompting increased vigilance by both BGB and police forces in these areas, officials added** (*Dhaka Tribune*, [28 May 2026](#)).
- ◆ **'Jamaat-e-Islami men' sold four Bangladesh men to Russian Army with job promises, allege families:** Two local leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami affiliates have allegedly trafficked four men from Lalmonirhat's Patgram Upazila to the Russian Army by luring them with prospects of high-paying jobs in a garment factory. **In a press conference at the Patgram Press Club on Tuesday, their family members spoke of the failed efforts to rescue the victims. One of the leaders, however, denied the allegation after the families reported the alleged trafficking to them. After complaints started to emerge against Upazila unit Jamaat youth wing President Yunus Ali and municipal unit General Secretary Mahin Islam, the party sacked them on May 20.** Yunus is also the former president of the district unit of Islami Chhatra Shibir, the student wing of Jamaat. According to the families, Yunus and Mahin lured the youths through an Uttara-based recruiting agency called "RS International". The families were charged Tk 950,000 each for visas, tickets and "jobs". The men were taken to Dhaka on May 4, leaving for Russia on May 7 and arriving in Moscow on May 8 (*bdnews24.com*, [27 May 2026](#)).

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