

CLAWS Newsletter



Bangladesh Breifing | Volume I | Issue No II

by Anjali Manhas

Governmental Affairs

1. **Bangladesh Army's Operations Reduce Crime:** The Bangladesh Army's operations over the past 50 days, since December 28, have led to a significant decline in mob justice, extortion, theft, and murder cases. According to Col Shafiqul Islam, extortion cases dropped from 250 to 110, with theft cases also decreasing. These efforts highlight the army's role in enhancing public safety and maintaining order nationwide. (United News of Bangladesh)
2. **Army Chief Visits Kuwait to Strengthen Bilateral Ties:** Chief of Army Staff General Waker-Uz-Zaman left Dhaka for Kuwait on Sunday for a three-day official visit, leading a five-member delegation. He will meet high-ranking civil and military officials to discuss military cooperation. The visit aims to enhance defence relations and boost mutual confidence between the two nations. (The Financial Express)
3. **Chief Adviser Dr. Muhammad Yunus' Address:** Chief Adviser Dr. Muhammad Yunus pledged to strengthen local government institutions to deliver the full benefits of the July uprising to the people. Speaking on National Local Government Day, he emphasized public engagement, especially among the youth, in building a corruption-free and progressive Bangladesh. He expressed hope that the day's observance would inspire greater commitment to national development. (Dhaka Tribune)
4. **Adviser Khalid: Service to People is a Pride-Worthy Job:** Religious Affairs Adviser to the interim government, Dr. AFM Khalid Hossain, emphasized that serving people is a noble duty while inaugurating a free medical camp at Babunagar High School, Satkania. Organized by the Noore Habib Welfare Foundation, the event was presided over by Associate Professor Saeed Ahsan Khalid. Dr. Khalid highlighted the importance of health and assured the establishment of a government-run medical centre in Babunagar. (Dhaka Tribune)
5. **Bangladesh Army Chief's Warning on National Stability:** On February 25, 2025, Bangladesh's Army Chief, General Waker-uz-Zaman, issued a strong warning against efforts to undermine law enforcement agencies. He emphasized that internal conflicts and attempts to discredit the armed forces, police, and other security bodies could threaten the nation's independence and sovereignty. Highlighting their irreplaceable role in maintaining

stability, he called for unity to safeguard Bangladesh's security and national integrity. (Hindustan Times)

6. **Bangladesh Army Acquires MKE Boran 105mm Howitzers:** The Bangladesh Army has received its first batch of Turkish-made MKE Boran 105mm howitzers, enhancing its artillery capabilities. Reports suggest 18 units have been acquired under a 2023 agreement, with plans to expand the fleet beyond 200 units. (Global Defence News)
7. **Cox's Bazar Military Clash:** On February 26, 2025, a violent clash erupted between residents of Cox's Bazar's Samitipara area and the Bangladesh Air Guard over a dispute regarding the expansion of an airbase. The confrontation, sparked by local protests against government-led evictions, escalated into stone-pelting by residents and the firing of blank rounds by the military. Authorities reported that one person, Shihab Kabir Nahid, was killed, though the military denied responsibility. (Global Defence Corp)
8. **Army Chief Inaugurates Sinha Memorial Plaque in Teknaf:** Chief of Army Staff General Waker-Uz-Zaman inaugurated the Sinha Memorial Plaque in Shamlapur, Cox's Bazar, honouring Major (Retd) Sinha Mohammad Rashed Khan. Built under BGB supervision, the memorial pays tribute to his service. The army chief expressed condolences to the family and assured a swift trial for those responsible for his death. Major Sinha, a decorated officer and UN peacekeeper, was fatally shot by police on July 31, 2020. (Dhaka Tribune)

Foreign Affairs

1. **US Cuts Bangladesh Political Funding Amid 'Deep State' Allegations:** The Trump administration has halted \$29 million in US aid for Bangladesh's "Strengthening Political Landscape" program, citing cost-cutting measures under the Elon Musk-led Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). This follows President Trump's denial of US involvement in Bangladesh's regime change last year. The US has also cut funding for voter turnout in India and fiscal programs in Nepal as part of broader spending reductions. (NDTV World)
2. **India-Bangladesh Talks on SAARC, Ganges Treaty & Border Security:** Bangladesh's Interim Foreign Affairs Advisor Touhid Hossain met India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on the side-lines of the 8th Indian Ocean Conference in Muscat. Hossain sought India's support to revive SAARC and renew the 1996 Ganges Water Treaty. Jaishankar, however, focused on bilateral ties and BIMSTEC in his statement. (India Today)

3. **China Ready to Assist Bangladesh on Teesta Project:** Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh, Yao Wen, reiterated China's readiness to assist Bangladesh in implementing the Teesta River water management project. Speaking at a media briefing, he noted that China had provided feedback in 2023, suggesting phased resubmission due to unnecessary components in the original 2021 proposal. (Dhaka Tribune)
4. **China-Bangladesh Diplomatic Meeting:** On February 20, 2025, Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Sun Weidong met with Bangladesh's new Ambassador to China, Nazmul Islam. Sun reaffirmed China's commitment to strong bilateral ties, emphasizing non-interference, good neighborliness, and deepening cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative. Nazmul Islam expressed Bangladesh's appreciation for China's support and reiterated Bangladesh's commitment to the one-China policy. (Ministry Of Foreign Affairs, The People's Republics of China)
5. **Pakistan-Bangladesh Resume Direct Trade After Five Decades:** For the first time since the 1971 separation, Pakistan and Bangladesh have resumed direct trade, with a Pakistan National Shipping Corporation (PNSC) vessel carrying 50,000 tonnes of rice to Bangladesh. The deal, finalized in early February through the Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP), will be completed in two phases. This marks a significant step in restoring economic cooperation and reopening dormant trade channels. (The Hindu)
6. **Briefing on the Meeting Between the Japanese Ambassador and Bangladesh's Commerce Adviser:** Japanese Ambassador SAIDA Shinichi met Commerce Adviser Sk Bashir Uddin on Monday to discuss strengthening trade and investment ties. The meeting reflected on the adviser's recent Japan visit, where major Japanese firms showed interest in investing in Bangladesh. The ambassador expressed optimism about boosting bilateral trade and proposed a Japanese language program to support skilled worker recruitment. (Dhaka Tribune)
7. **French Envoy Meets BNP Leaders to Discuss Bilateral & Political Issues:** French Ambassador to Bangladesh, Marie Masdupuy, met BNP leaders at the party chairperson's Gulshan office on Wednesday. BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir led the discussions. The meeting covered Bangladesh-France bilateral and economic ties, the political landscape, elections, and investment opportunities. (Dhaka Tribune)
8. **Pakistan's High Commissioner Assures 24-Hour Visa Processing for Bangladeshis:** Pakistan's High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Syed Ahmed Maroof, announced that Bangladeshis traveling to Pakistan for non-business purposes would receive visas within 24 hours. Speaking at the Rangpur Chamber of Commerce and Industries, he also stated

that the visa process will be further simplified within a month. Additionally, Pakistan will offer tax-free export facilities for Bangladeshi imports this year. (Dhaka Tribune)

9. **UN Chief António Guterres to Visit Dhaka from March 13-16:** UN Secretary-General António Guterres will visit Bangladesh from March 13 to 16, as confirmed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The visit comes at the invitation of Dr. Muhammad Yunus, Chief Adviser of the interim government. The invitation was officially delivered by Chief Adviser's High Representative on Rohingya Affairs, Khalilur Rahman, during a meeting in New York on February 7. (Dhaka Tribune)
10. **Bangladesh-Algeria Bilateral Engagement:** Algeria reaffirmed full support for Bangladesh's Interim Government and invited Chief Adviser Prof. Muhammad Yunus to visit. Algerian Ambassador Abdelouahab Saidani conveyed this during a meeting in Dhaka, where Prof. Yunus reciprocated the invitation and urged stronger trade ties. Algeria plans to import more Bangladeshi products and will send its Energy Minister to Dhaka in March. Bangladesh sought Algeria's backing in upcoming elections for the IMO Council (2025), UNHRC (2027), and UN Security Council (2030). (Dhaka Tribune)
11. **ACU Meeting in Dhaka Focuses on Digital Currency & Cross-Border Transactions:** The Standing Technical Committee of the Asian Clearing Union (STCACU) met in Dhaka on February 19, 2025, emphasizing digital currency adoption and streamlining cross-border transactions. Discussions centered on implementing ACUMER, a unified financial messaging system aimed at faster inter-bank settlements. Member countries were urged to join ACUMER by March 2025. A report highlighted ACU's 2024 transactions reaching \$18.73 billion, marking a 21.90% increase from 2023. (The Financial Express)
12. **Nepali Army's 262nd Raising Day Observed in Bangladesh:** The Embassy of Nepal in Bangladesh marked the 262nd Raising Day of the Nepali Army on February 26. Nepali Ambassador Ghanshyam Bhandari emphasized the Army's dedication to Nepal and its people while highlighting military cooperation with Bangladesh. Military Attaché Colonel Anjan Keshar Khatri underscored the Army's role in national security, development, and UN peacekeeping. (The Rising Nepal)
13. **Sweden Reaffirms Development Partnership with Bangladesh:** Sida Director-General Dr. Jakob Granit reaffirmed Sweden's commitment to Bangladesh's development, emphasizing climate adaptation, economic growth, and sustainability. During his visit, he engaged with government officials, civil society, and development partners to discuss key areas such as democracy, human rights, environmental protection, and economic resilience. (Dhaka Tribune)

14. **South Korea to Support Bangladesh's Quality Economic Growth:** South Korean Ambassador Park Young-sik reaffirmed his country's commitment to supporting Bangladesh's pursuit of quality economic growth through innovation, technology, and manufacturing. He emphasized reducing high tariffs to boost domestic manufacturing and expanding key trade sectors. He highlighted the need for improved FDI policies, addressing corruption, and enhancing living conditions to attract global investors. (Dhaka Tribune)
15. **China Shows Interest in Importing 1,000 MT of Ilish from Bangladesh:** Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh, Yao Wen, has expressed interest in importing 1,000 metric tonnes of ilish fish, along with mango, jackfruit, and guava, to reduce the trade gap. In a meeting with Commerce Adviser Sk Bashir Uddin, they discussed enhancing trade, investment, and bilateral relations. The adviser urged increased Chinese investment in agriculture, transportation, and healthcare, while calling for tariff reductions on Bangladeshi exports. (Dhaka Tribune)

Politics

1. **Bangladesh Protest Advisory:** Activists from the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) will hold rallies across all eight divisions on February 18-20 and 22, focusing on election issues and law reforms. Demonstrations are expected near major roads, public squares, and government buildings, with high attendance and increased police presence. Traffic disruptions and heightened security measures are likely. (Safe Abroad)
2. **Jubo Dal's Stern Warning Against Unlawful Activities:** Bangladesh Jatiotabadi Jubo Dal has reaffirmed its zero-tolerance policy towards any unlawful or anti-national activities under its name. At a press conference, leaders emphasized that strict action, including expulsion and legal proceedings, will be taken against any member found engaging in terrorism or activities against public interest. General Secretary Nayon highlighted that around 140 leaders have already been expelled, and cases have been filed against offenders. (Dhaka Tribune)
3. **Bangladesh in Crisis: Political Turmoil and Military Warning:** Bangladesh faces deepening political instability following last year's student-led uprising that ousted Sheikh Hasina. The interim government, led by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, struggles to restore order, while Army Chief General Waker-Uz-Zaman warns of threats to national sovereignty, hinting at possible military intervention. Law enforcement is overwhelmed, with mass arrests under "Operation Devil Hunt." Meanwhile, student leader Nahid Islam

has resigned from the interim government to form a new political party, intensifying the crisis. Relations with India are tense, and global scrutiny is increasing, with UN and US concerns over governance and foreign aid. (The Economic Times)

4. **NCP Set to Launch in Dhaka Amid High Anticipation:** Manik Miah Avenue in Dhaka is witnessing a historic moment as the National Citizen Party (NCP), born from the July uprising, gears up for its official launch this afternoon. Organized by the Jatiya Nagorik Committee and Students Against Discrimination, the event has drawn thousands, including students and young professionals from across Bangladesh. With large LED screens, medical teams, and security measures in place, anticipation is high. Attendees see NCP as a fresh political force representing youth aspirations. Party leaders will take the stage at 3 PM, marking a new chapter in Bangladesh's political landscape. (The Daily Star)

Elections

1. The 13th National Parliament election is expected between December this year and March next year, as per Shafiqul Alam, press secretary to the chief adviser of the interim government. The timeline depends on political parties' stance on reforms—minimal reforms could lead to elections by December, while extended governance may push it to early 2026. However, adverse weather conditions from April to June make elections impractical, reinforcing the December–March window as the likely timeframe. (Dhaka Tribune)

Environmental

1. **High Court Intervenes to Protect Satkhira's Pransayer Canal:** The High Court has issued a rule questioning the legality of the occupation and pollution of the historic Pransayer Canal in Satkhira. A bench comprising Justice Md Akram Hossain Chowdhury and Justice Rasheduzzaman Raja directed authorities to determine the canal's boundary, evict encroachments, and control pollution. The court also mandated a time-bound action plan and report submission. The order follows a public interest litigation filed by BELA, highlighting severe encroachment and pollution, including illegal structures and waste dumping. (Dhaka Tribune)
2. A study by IIED reveals that climate-induced migration in Bangladesh is fueling forced labour and modern slavery. Displaced by extreme weather, many migrate internally or to

Gulf nations, with 92% of internal and nearly all overseas migrants facing exploitation, including wage theft, violence, and debt bondage. The lack of climate resilience and social safety nets worsens vulnerability, pushing people into distress migration. IIED urges stronger social protection, safer migration pathways, and international climate funding to prevent exploitation and support affected communities. (Climate Home News)

Laws and Rights

1. **Myanmar's Rohingya Situation -- Feb 1, 2025:** Myanmar's military government has released around 1,000 Rohingyas in a rare goodwill gesture, days after an Argentine court issued arrest warrants for the junta chief and 22 officials over the 2017 crackdown. The Rohingya, a persecuted Muslim minority in Rakhine State, continue to face severe human rights abuses since the 2021 coup. Meanwhile, the U.S. decision to freeze foreign aid has worsened conditions for 1.2 million Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. (Shia Waves)

Border Security

1. The Border Security Force (BSF) foiled a gold smuggling attempt along the India-Bangladesh border in West Bengal, seizing 3.42 kg of gold worth ₹2.95 crore. (The Hindu)
2. The BSF detained four Bangladesh nationals at Teliamura railway station in Tripura, foiling a smuggling attempt at Kullubari. (The Hindu)
3. The Indian Border Security Force (BSF) expressed regret over the assault of five Bangladeshi citizens after they illegally entered India. (Dhaka Tribune)
4. Border forces of India and Bangladesh will hold their bi-annual talks. (The Shillong Times)
5. **India-Bangladesh Border Talks:** The 55th Director General-Level Border Coordination Conference between India's BSF and Bangladesh's BGB was held from February 17-20 at the BSF headquarters in New Delhi. Key discussions focused on border security, curbing cross-border crimes, and infrastructure development. The Indian delegation was led by BSF DG Daljit Singh Chawdhary, while BGB was represented by Maj Gen Mohammad Ashrafuzzaman Siddiqui. Talks included preventing attacks on BSF personnel, tackling Indian insurgent groups in Bangladesh, and enhancing cooperation under the Coordinated

Border Management Plan. The conference marked the first high-level engagement since the fall of Sheikh Hasina's government. (The Times of India)

Terrorism

1. **ATS Alert -- Bangladeshi Terrorist Infiltration in Jharkhand:** The Jharkhand Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) has flagged the infiltration of Bangladeshi terrorists into Pakur, Jharkhand, for training local operatives. Jamat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) member Abdul Mammun illegally crossed the border on January 6, trained 15 members of the JAHA-India group, and returned via Dhuliyan on January 7. The ATS has issued alerts to SPs and DIGs, citing potential anti-India conspiracies post the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government. Preventive measures and intelligence gathering have been intensified. (The New Indian Express)



About the Author

Anjali Manhas is a Research Assistant at the Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS), where she specializes in defence and strategic studies with a focus on South Asian geopolitics. She completed her Master's in Defence and Strategic Studies from Rashtriya Raksha University, where she developed a strong foundation in security, international relations, and strategic analysis. Anjali's current research centers on Bangladesh, examining its security dynamics, regional relationships, and strategic posture in South Asia. Her work aims to contribute to policy development and strategic insights for enhancing regional stability and security. With a keen interest in defence and strategic affairs, Anjali is committed to advancing knowledge and fostering a deeper understanding of South Asian security issues.



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