

# CLAWS Newsletter



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by Anjali Manhas

### **Political Developments**

**Clashes and Unrest:** The political landscape in Bangladesh remained turbulent following the ousting of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Security forces clashed with her supporters, resulting in several fatalities and injuries. At least four people were killed during protests on July 16–17, with heightened tensions in Dhaka and other major cities. Authorities imposed strict security measures to prevent further violence, and rallies saw significant police deployment. (The Associated Press ; Al Jazeera)

**Student Protests:** July marked the anniversary of the significant student-led ‘July Uprising,’ with activists organizing symbolic protests, including demonstrations with red cloths tied over their mouths and eyes, demanding reforms and justice. Calls for creating a discrimination-free society remained at the forefront of these actions. ( BSS News)

**Charter for Reform:** Political groups and civil society have circulated a draft ‘July Charter,’ outlining a binding two-year roadmap for governance and justice reforms, with promises to amend the constitution and intensify anti-corruption efforts. (bdsnews24.com)

**Mob Justice and Ochlocracy:** There has been a notable rise in mob violence and public vigilantism, with over 185 fatalities and 281 injuries from August 2024 to June 2025. The interim government’s decision to grant executive powers to military officers and provide impunity for participants in the July uprising has generated criticism, for emboldening mob actions and undermining legal order. (Rights and Risk Analysis Group)

At least 20 people were killed and 171 injured when a Bangladesh Air Force F7 training jet crashed into the Milestone College campus in Dhaka’s Uttara area around 1:30 pm. The pilot was among the deceased. Rescue operations were launched by the Bangladesh Army and fire services, and an emergency hotline was set up at the National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery. The government declared a one-day state mourning. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed condolences, prayed for the injured, and offered support to Bangladesh following the tragic incident. (News On Air)

Despite a ban on Awami League’s political activities, party members were allegedly operating covertly both domestically and abroad, prompting law enforcement to issue a special alert for possible unrest between July 29 and August 8. The Special Branch of police warned that

coordinated online and offline campaigns might be used to incite violence, with potential attacks on government and private institutions. A directive was issued to senior police officials across the country, highlighting concerns over anti-government activities tied to the July uprising anniversary. Police were instructed to strengthen surveillance, conduct special operations, monitor suspicious activity, and enhance cyber intelligence during the alert period. (Dhaka Tribune)

**Increased Alertness:** The Indo-Bangladesh border remained on high alert due to internal unrest and ongoing border incidents. The Border Security Force (BSF) of India recently pushed at least 21 individuals into Bangladesh at Sherpur's Nakugaon border post. Security personnel stepped up patrols to prevent illegal entries and strengthen surveillance amid political instability. (BSS News)

### **Foreign Affairs**

**India-Bangladesh Relations:** Diplomatic ties with India showed resilience despite border-related worries. Bangladesh formally protested against the reported 'push-ins' where Indian authorities expelled Bengali-speaking Muslims and other individuals into Bangladesh, straining bilateral interaction. ( Dhaka Tribune ; BSS News)

**Bangladesh-Myanmar Relations:** The Ambassador of Bangladesh to Myanmar held discussions with Myanmar's leadership regarding security and repatriation issues, highlighting continued diplomatic engagement on border stability and the Rohingya crisis. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of The Union of Myanmar)

**Bangladesh and Pakistan** expressed deep concern over Israeli aggression and the worsening humanitarian crisis in Palestine during a meeting between Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar and Bangladesh's Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain on the sidelines of the UN's International Conference on the Two-State Solution. Reaffirming their solidarity with the Palestinian cause, both sides hoped for meaningful outcomes from the conference. They also reviewed bilateral relations, committed to enhancing cooperation across political, economic, and cultural sectors, and agreed to promote connectivity and high-level visits in the near future. (Dhaka Tribune)



**Bangladeshis and Cambodia:** Efforts were made to assist displaced Bangladeshis in Cambodia amid an ongoing armed conflict, with the Bangladesh embassy arranging temporary shelter, transportation, and medical aid. Labour Counsellor Fahad Parvez Bosunia met with the affected individuals in Phnom Penh and distributed food with support from the local Bangladeshi community. The embassy worked to restore peace in border areas to enable safe return to workplaces and urged Bangladeshi nationals to seek safe shelter. It also appealed to Cambodian authorities, the UN, and international agencies for support in ensuring the safety and relocation of its citizens. (Dhaka Tribune)

**Bangladesh and Denmark:** Denmark reaffirmed its commitment to supporting Bangladesh's ready-made garment (RMG) sector and green technology development during a meeting between Danish Ambassador Christian Brix Moller and BGMEA President Mahmud Hasan Khan in Dhaka. The discussion focused on sustainability, energy efficiency, and circular economy within the RMG industry, as well as Denmark's ongoing support through projects like CREATE, PaCT, and SWITCH2CE. Ambassador Moller emphasized Denmark's dedication to allocating 0.7% of its GDP to less-developed countries and sought BGMEA's cooperation in energy audits. Khan raised concerns over GSP+ access post-LDC graduation, declining garment exports to Denmark, and called for support in promoting a Unified Code of Conduct for the apparel sector. (Dhaka Tribune)

**Saudi Arabia and Bangladesh:** Saudi Arabia invited Chief Adviser Dr Muhammad Yunus to attend the ninth Future Investment Initiative (FII9) conference, scheduled to be held in Riyadh from October 27 to 30. The invitation from Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman was delivered by Saudi Ambassador to Bangladesh Dr Abdullah Zafer bin Abiyah during a meeting at the State Guest House Jamuna. This marked the first time a Bangladeshi head of government was invited to the annual event, which began in 2017. Dr Yunus expressed his gratitude for the invitation and said he would actively consider attending. He also thanked the crown prince for accepting an invitation to visit Bangladesh to mark the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries. (Arab News)

**Bangladesh and US:** The Bangladesh Army and the United States Army Pacific Command launched the six-day joint military exercise Tiger Lightning 2025 on July 25 at the Para Commando Brigade in Jalalabad Cantonment, Sylhet. Jointly supervised by the Bangladesh Army's Para Commando Brigade and the Nevada National Guard, the exercise aimed to enhance mutual collaboration, operational capabilities, and preparedness. Major General Ascot

A Winter of the USARPAC attended the opening ceremony as chief guest. A total of 66 personnel from the Nevada National Guard and 100 from the Bangladesh Army participated. The exercise reflected ongoing cooperation between the two nations in areas such as security, counter-terrorism, disaster management, and humanitarian assistance. (Dhaka Tribune ; Views Bangladesh)

The United States Trade Representative (USTR) invited Bangladesh to resume the third and final round of tariff negotiations on July 29, following Bangladesh's submission of its position paper on July 22 and a proposed meeting date of July 26. Commerce Adviser Sk Bashir Uddin was set to lead the Bangladesh delegation, with the possibility of holding the meeting either in person or virtually. Some private-sector exporters were expected to accompany the team but would not participate directly in the government-to-government talks. Commerce Secretary Mahbubur Rahman expressed optimism that the U.S. would reduce the current 35% tariff rate for Bangladesh, citing recent reductions for other countries. Bangladesh also offered zero-duty import access for several U.S. products and signed a deal on July 20 to import 0.7 million tons of wheat from American suppliers to boost trade. (Dhaka Tribune)

Bangladesh and the United States formally began the third round of tariff-related talks in Washington on Tuesday to enhance bilateral trade cooperation. The formal session started at 2pm local time, following an informal discussion earlier in the day, with negotiations scheduled to continue into Wednesday. The Bangladesh delegation, led by Commerce Adviser Sk Bashir Uddin, included senior officials such as National Security Adviser Dr Khalilur Rahman, Commerce Secretary Mahbubur Rahman, and Additional Secretary Dr Nazneen Kauser Chowdhury, while other officials participated virtually from Dhaka. The U.S. side was led by Assistant Trade Representative Brendan Lynch, with the Bangladesh Embassy in Washington coordinating the talks. (Dhaka Tribune)

**Bangladesh and China :** Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain stated that Bangladesh would continue efforts to ensure minimal or no impact from the Chinese hydropower project on the Yarlung Zangbo River. He noted that India also had interests in the matter and emphasized the importance of sharing hydrological data with experts for careful consideration. Hossain mentioned that the Chinese ambassador assured him the project was solely for power generation, with no water withdrawal planned, and thus posed no cause for concern. He acknowledged that while more river structures would be built, Bangladesh's focus remained on minimizing any harm from such developments. (Dhaka Tribune)

**Bangladesh and Hong Kong:** Handa Industries Co Ltd, a Hong Kong-based textile and apparel company, announced a \$250 million investment in Bangladesh during a meeting between its Chairman Han Chun and Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus at the State Guest House Jamuna. Originally planning to invest \$150 million, the company increased its commitment following strong support from Bangladeshi authorities. Handa decided to establish three factories—two garment processing units and one knitting and dyeing facility—expected to create 25,000 jobs. The company also signed a land lease agreement for an \$80 million factory in the Mirsharai Economic Zone as part of phase one, with preparations for phase two underway. Prof Yunus welcomed the investment and encouraged further Chinese investment and designer training initiatives in Bangladesh's textile sector. (Dhaka Tribune)

**BRAC (a leading Bangladeshi non-governmental organization) and The Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs:** Brac, with support from the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, launched the "Rain for Life" project on Tuesday to enhance water security and climate resilience for over 90,000 people in three coastal upazilas of Bangladesh. The initiative, running from January 2025 to December 2027, was introduced at an inception workshop attended by policymakers, development partners, and community members. The project aimed to promote rainwater harvesting, surface water treatment, and climate-adaptive agriculture, with a strong emphasis on women's leadership and nature-based solutions. Danish Ambassador Christian Brix Møller reaffirmed Denmark's commitment to climate-vulnerable communities, while Brac officials stressed the need for integrated, locally led approaches to tackle the twin challenges of water and food insecurity in the face of rising climate threats. (Dhaka Tribune)

### **Rohingya Issues**

**Humanitarian Aid and Pressure:** Bangladesh continues to host nearly one million Rohingya refugees. International agencies called for \$934.5 million in funding for critical aid in 2025, with aid shortfalls risking increased hardship and social tension in camps. (Human Rights research Centre; Operational Data Portal)

**Camp Conditions:** Environmental concerns and social stresses persist, with warnings that reduced aid may result in compounding food and health problems for both refugees and host communities. (Human Rights research Centre)



### 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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