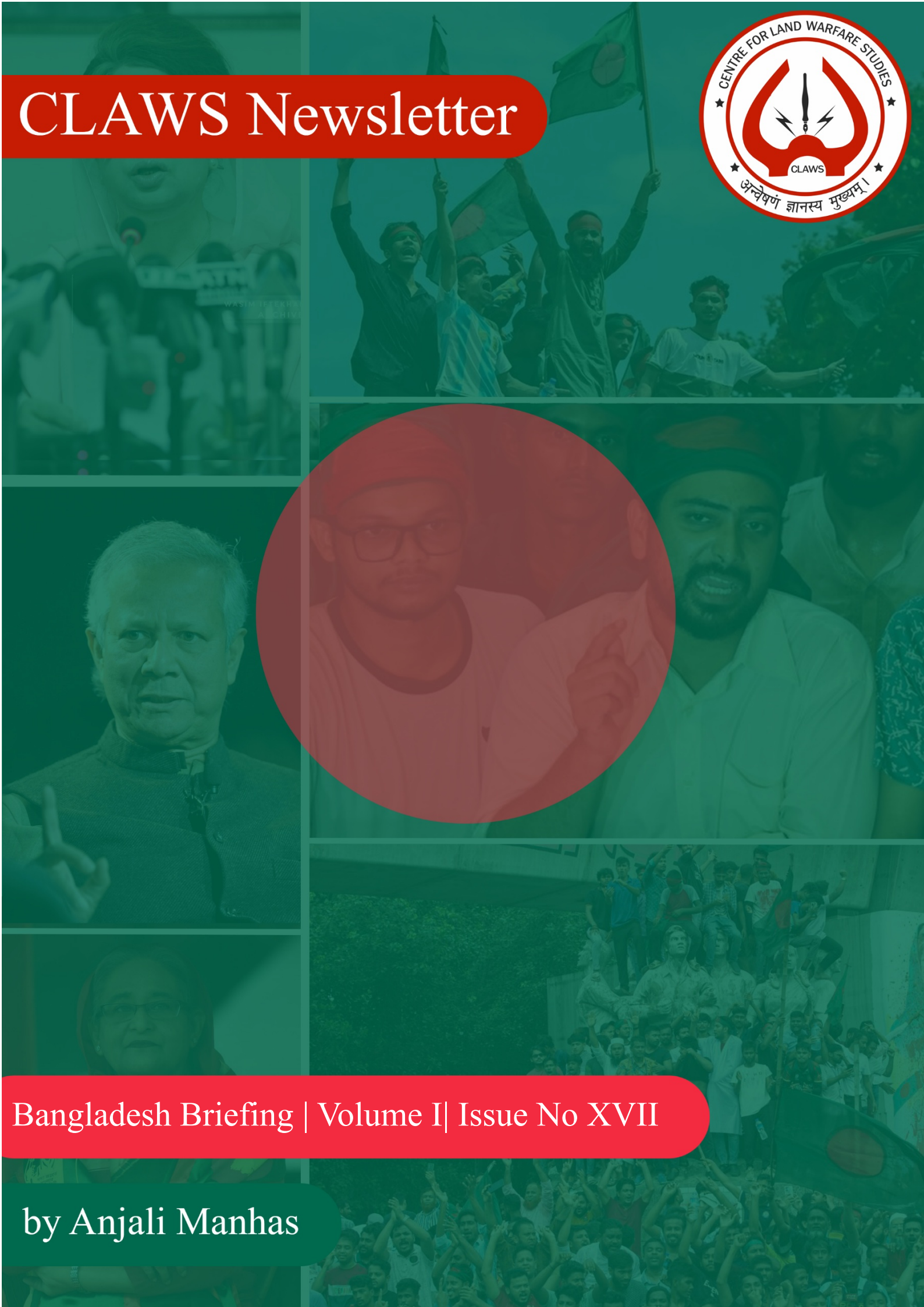


CLAWS Newsletter



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by Anjali Manhas

Political Developments

1. BNP Warns of Foreign Powers Competing for Control in Bangladesh ([The Daily Star](#))

At a discussion marking the 6th death anniversary of BUET student Abrar Fahad, BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed warned that two regional powers and one global superpower are currently vying for dominance in Bangladesh.

Key Points:

- Salahuddin claimed all three foreign powers are pursuing their own interests but will ultimately harm Bangladesh's sovereignty.
- He invoked Abrar Fahad as a "martyr against foreign domination", referencing his criticism of Indian influence, which allegedly led to his death.
- The BNP leader connected the 2024 mass uprising to Bangladesh's historic struggle for independence, saying over 422 people, including students and activists, sacrificed their lives for democracy.
- He criticized Sheikh Hasina for allegedly enabling foreign interference in domestic politics.
- Salahuddin emphasized BNP's foreign policy stance of "Bangladesh First", pledging to prioritize national interest in all international dealings.
- He called on the youth to be informed, patriotic, and ethical, stressing that politics should be a space for merit and integrity.

2. Arrest Warrants Issued by Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal ([Newsonair+2](#))

The International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) has issued arrest warrants against 30 individuals, including top military officers and former PM Sheikh Hasina, for alleged crimes such as enforced disappearances, torture, and abuses during the previous Awami League government. Fifteen Bangladesh Army officers have already been detained, with more under investigation. Hasina herself is currently residing in India, which has not responded to Bangladesh's extradition request.

3. Will Tarique Rahman Be Bangladesh's Next Prime Minister? ([Mathrubhumi](#))

Tarique Rahman, long exiled in London, has declared his intention to return to Bangladesh after nearly 20 years and contest the February 2026 national elections. He is the son of former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and ex-President Ziaur Rahman, and is viewed as the

de facto leader of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP). Rahman was convicted in absentia for a grenade attack in 2004 (which he claims was politically motivated) and was sentenced to life in prison. Many of his legal cases have been overturned since the fall of Sheikh Hasina's government in 2024. With the Awami League dissolved and Hasina in exile, BNP hopes to reclaim influence under Rahman's leadership. His key challenge will be convincing voters that his return would usher in renewal instead of a return to dynastic politics.

4. DGFI Under Siege: Yunus Regime Moves to Reshape Bangladesh's Security Landscape ([Australia India News](#))

- **DGFI Targeted for Dismantling:** The Muhammad Yunus-led interim government is accused of systematically dismantling the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI)—Bangladesh's top military intelligence agency—which had historically cooperated with India in counterterrorism but is now under pressure from Pakistan's ISI and Jamaat-e-Islami.
- **Push for Islamic Revolution Army (IRA):** Influenced by the ISI and Jamaat, the Yunus regime is reportedly planning to replace the Bangladesh Army and DGFI with a loyal force modeled on Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)—the so-called Islamic Revolution Army (IRA)—directly loyal to the government, not the nation.
- **Criminal Charges Against Former DGFI Chiefs:** Several top ex-DGFI and army officials, including Lt Gen (retd) Mohammad Akbar Hossain, Maj Gen (retd) Saiful Abedin, and Lt Gen (retd) Md Saiful Alam, have been chargesheeted for alleged crimes against humanity, alongside Sheikh Hasina, based on a controversial, foreign-funded documentary.
- **Political Backlash and Suspicion of Dictatorial Intent:** The move has alarmed opposition parties like the BNP and NCP, who now question whether Yunus intends to hold elections at all, as he consolidates control over state security. They fear the DGFI's dismantling is part of a broader effort to weaken national institutions in favour of personal power backed by ISI-aligned forces.

Defence Updates

5. BAF Chief Visits Turkey for Defence Talks ([BSS News](#), [Northeast News](#))

Chief of Air Staff of the Bangladesh Air Force, Air Chief Marshal Hasan Mahmood Khan, embarked on a six-day official visit to Turkey on October 1, 2025. Invited by the Turkish Air Force Commander, the visit includes discussions on mutual defence interests with key Turkish military and civil leaders. He toured ASELSAN and Turkish Aerospace Industries (TAI) to explore advanced air defence systems, radar technologies, and long-range combat drones under consideration by the BAF. Turkey proposed establishing a joint drone manufacturing facility in Bangladesh to develop indigenous capabilities and produce combat drones locally. Ankara is also reportedly close to finalizing a deal to supply Hisar-O+ and Siper long-range surface-to-air missile systems to Bangladesh. These initiatives align with Bangladesh's Forces Goal 2030 modernization plan. The Air Chief returned to Dhaka on October 6.

6. Bangladesh to Acquire 20 Chinese J-10C Fighter Jets by 2027 ([Dhaka Tribune](#))

Bangladesh is set to purchase 20 Chinese J-10C "Vigorous Dragon" multirole fighter jets by 2027 as part of a \$2.2 billion modernization plan for the Bangladesh Air Force. The government-to-government deal includes training, maintenance, and logistics, with payments spread over 10 years. The J-10C's integration will significantly elevate the BAF's air defence capabilities.

7. USS Fitzgerald Docks in Chittagong for Joint Naval Exercise with Bangladesh

([Newson Air](#)) - A US guided-missile destroyer, USS Fitzgerald, docked at Chittagong Port for a three-day joint exercise with the Bangladesh Navy from October 8–10, 2025. This marks the first such U.S. naval presence since 1971, signaling a new era in Bangladesh-US maritime cooperation and interoperability in the Bay of Bengal.

8. Pakistan Army General Gets Red-Carpet Welcome in Bangladesh Amid Shifting Geopolitical Ties ([The CSR Journal](#))

- Lt Gen Tabassum Habib, Director General of Joint Staff of Pakistan's military, received full military honours upon his arrival in Dhaka on October 6. His visit, involving meetings with Bangladesh's top military leadership, underscores warming defence relations between Dhaka and Islamabad—a significant shift under the Yunus-led interim government.

Border Security

9. BGB-BSF Hold Border Meeting to Curb Killings and Smuggling ([BSS News](#))

On October 4, 2025, a battalion commander-level meeting between BGB and BSF officials was held at the Maheshpur border near Matila BOP. Both sides discussed curbing border killings, human trafficking, and smuggling while committing to deepen cooperation and maintain peace along the frontier.

Foreign Relations

10. Turkish Deputy FM Meets BNP Leaders in Dhaka ([Dhaka Tribune](#))

Turkish Deputy Foreign Minister E Beris Ekinci met BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and senior leaders to discuss trade, investment, and bilateral cooperation. Turkey expressed support for credible elections and reaffirmed its intention to strengthen economic ties with Bangladesh.

11. India Ready to Work with Any Government Elected Through Inclusive Polls in Bangladesh ([Dhaka Tribune](#))

- Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri stated that India is prepared to engage with any government formed through inclusive elections in Bangladesh. The interim government led by Dr. Muhammad Yunus, however, rejected the remarks as unwarranted interference in domestic affairs, highlighting ongoing diplomatic tensions between the two neighbours.

12. Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia Sign Historic Worker Recruitment Deal ([Dhaka Tribune](#))

Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia signed their first formal agreement for the recruitment of general workers, focusing on expanding employment opportunities, worker welfare, and contract transparency, marking a milestone in bilateral labour relations.

13. Bangladesh and Maldives Pledge to Expand Bilateral Trade and Cooperation ([Dhaka Tribune](#))

- Bangladesh's newly appointed High Commissioner met Maldivian President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu in Malé, reaffirming commitments to expand trade, education, and defence cooperation.

14. China and Bangladesh Mark 50 Years of Diplomatic Ties with Pledge for Deeper Cooperation ([MOFA](#))

- Chinese President Xi Jinping and Bangladeshi President Mohammed Shahabuddin exchanged messages commemorating 50 years of diplomatic relations, pledging to enhance cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative and strengthen the strategic partnership.

- 15. Diplomatic Cooperation with Oman ([Arab News](#))** - Bangladesh signed an MoU with Oman to strengthen capacity building for foreign service officials through academic training programs and a master's level curriculum in diplomatic studies, reinforcing ties and support for Bangladeshi migrant workers in Oman.
- 16. Bangladesh Deploys Warships to Protect Hilsa During Spawning Ban ([Arab News](#))**- Bangladesh enforced a three-week fishing ban (Oct 4–25) to protect hilsa during spawning season. The Navy deployed 17 warships and helicopters for surveillance, while experts advised drones instead to reduce ecological disruption. The government offered rice aid to affected fishing families.
- 17. Bangladesh Army Chief Likely to Skip UNTCC Conclave in India ([IANS News](#))**- Amid strained bilateral relations, Army Chief General Waker-Uz-Zaman is unlikely to attend the UN Troop Contributing Countries' Chiefs Conclave in New Delhi, marking cooling ties between the two militaries.
- 18. India and China Resume Direct Flights After Five-Year Hiatus ([The Financial Press](#))**- IndiGo will restart daily Kolkata–Guangzhou flights from October 26, symbolizing a cautious thaw in India-China relations following recent leadership-level diplomatic exchanges.

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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