

BANGLADESH FOREIGN POLICY REVIEW

BANGLADESH FOREIGN POLICY REVIEW is a fortnightly roundup of key events and developments shaping Bangladesh's foreign relations. It covers major diplomatic engagements, bilateral and multilateral relations, economic diplomacy, regional cooperation, security, and Bangladesh's engagement with the wider world. This edition covers developments from 1 to 15 September 2026.

SEPTEMBER 1, 2026

BANGLADESH EXPRESSES SOLIDARITY WITH NEPAL AFTER DEVASTATING FLOODS

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir signed a condolence book at the Embassy of Nepal in Dhaka on behalf of the Bangladesh government following the devastating floods and mudslides that struck northern Nepal on August 26, 2026. In his message, Kobir conveyed Bangladesh's condolences over the loss of hundreds of lives, including tourists, and widespread damage to property and infrastructure. He expressed solidarity with the government and people of Nepal and said Bangladesh stood ready to provide assistance as required. Kobir also expressed confidence in Nepal's resilience and ability to overcome the aftermath of the disaster.



BANGLADESH SEEKS STRONGER IPU COOPERATION ON DEMOCRACY, ROHINGYA CRISIS

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed Islam met Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Secretary General Anda Filip in Dhaka, discussing democratic governance, digital safety and the Rohingya crisis. Obaed congratulated Filip on becoming the first woman secretary general in the IPU's 13-decade history and briefed her on government efforts to strengthen democratic institutions and inclusive governance. She called for greater parliamentary cooperation to address digital harassment and disinformation, particularly targeting women and girls. Obaed also sought stronger global parliamentary advocacy for the repatriation of



Rohingyas to Myanmar. Filip reaffirmed the IPU's commitment to strengthening cooperation with Bangladesh through parliamentary exchanges and capacity building.

BANGLADESH WEIGHS PARTICIPATION IN MAKKAH PACT

Bangladesh said it was assessing the proposed Makkah Pact before deciding whether to participate, with State

Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed Islam stressing that national interest would guide the decision. She said that Dhaka had not yet received a formal invitation to join the Saudi Arabia-Pakistan-Türkiye grouping. Her comments followed earlier remarks by State Minister Humaiun Kobir expressing a positive view of the initiative. The emerging security arrangement has prompted debate over how participation might affect Bangladesh's strategic relationships in the Middle East and beyond.

SEPTEMBER 2, 2026

BANGLADESH CALLS FOR EASING REGIONAL TENSIONS IN MEETING WITH IRANIAN ENVOY

Iranian Ambassador to Bangladesh Dr Jalil Rahimi Jahanabadi paid a courtesy call on State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir in Dhaka, with the two

sides discussing issues of mutual interest. During the meeting, Kobir expressed Bangladesh's hope for an early easing of tensions in the region and the establishment of lasting peace and stability. He emphasised that regional peace and stability would serve the interests of people both within the region and beyond.

SEPTEMBER 3, 2026

BANGLADESH, ISDB SIGN \$1 BILLION DEAL TO EXPAND EASTERN REFINERY

Bangladesh and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Group signed a \$1 billion financing agreement to modernise and expand the Eastern Refinery, in the presence of Prime Minister Tarique Rahman and IsDB Group Chairman Muhammad Al Jasser. The project will add annual refining capacity of three million tonnes of crude oil and, once completed, is expected to enable domestic production to meet around 45–50 percent of Bangladesh's demand for petroleum products. Rahman

and Al Jasser also discussed expanding Bangladesh-IsDB cooperation in economic development, investment and infrastructure.

BANGLADESH CONTRIBUTES \$1 MILLION TO NEPAL'S DISASTER RELIEF EFFORTS

The government of Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has contributed \$1 million (Tk 12.3 crore) to Nepal's Prime Minister's Disaster Relief Fund following the devastating floods and mudslides in northern Nepal. State Minister



for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir conveyed the contribution to Nepalese Ambassador Ghanshyam Bhandari while handing over a letter from Rahman to Nepalese Prime Minister Balendra Shah. Bangladesh had

earlier expressed solidarity with Nepal, with Kobir signing a condolence book at the Nepalese Embassy on September 1. The Jatiya Sangsad also adopted a condolence motion on August 27 following the disaster.

SEPTEMBER 6, 2026

BANGLADESH, NIPPON FOUNDATION DISCUSS ROHINGYA CRISIS AND LEPROSY SUPPORT

Nippon Foundation Honorary Chair Yohei Sasakawa met State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir, highlighting the organisation's more than five decades of engagement with Bangladesh. Sasakawa recalled its



assistance dating back to 1971 and its subsequent support for development, healthcare, education and the Rohingya response. He also expressed interest in

assisting people affected by leprosy in Bangladesh, drawing on the foundation's decades of work in the field. Kobir welcomed the foundation's humanitarian assistance and Japan's efforts towards a durable solution to the Rohingya crisis through safe, voluntary, sustainable and dignified repatriation to Myanmar.

BANGLADESH BEGINS WORK ON NEW WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY ACTION PLAN

Bangladesh has begun developing its second five-year National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), with State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaid Islam calling for an inclusive, realistic and measurable framework. Speaking at a two-day workshop jointly organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UN Women Bangladesh, she reaffirmed the government's commitment to advancing the WPS agenda. Bangladesh's first NAP covered 2019–2025 and is currently under review. UN Women Representative Gitanjali Singh called for greater emphasis on implementation, women's leadership, measurable outcomes and accountability in the next-generation plan.

SEPTEMBER 7, 2026

BANGLADESH, SWITZERLAND SEEK STRONGER TRADE AND INVESTMENT TIES

Swiss Ambassador Reto Renggli met State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir in Dhaka, with the two sides discussing ways to deepen bilateral economic relations. They explored increased Swiss investment in promising sectors of Bangladesh's economy and agreed to pursue practical measures to expand technical and vocational skills development. Kobir also emphasised regular political, cultural and people-to-people exchanges, while Renggli said the new Bangladesh Embassy in Bern could help broaden bilateral ties. The two sides reaffirmed their commitment to democracy, human



rights, multilateralism and international law. Switzerland also reiterated its support for the safe, voluntary and sustainable repatriation of Rohingyas to Myanmar.

FOREIGN MINISTRY REVIEWS BANGLADESH'S BLUE ECONOMY POTENTIAL

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs held a briefing on Bangladesh's Blue Economy, chaired by State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaid Islam. The session reviewed the current state and future potential of key maritime sectors, including marine fisheries and mariculture, ports and shipping, offshore energy, coastal tourism and marine biodiversity conservation. Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Environment, Forest and Climate Change Md Saimum Parvez and Foreign Secretary Asad Alam Siam attended the briefing. Commodore Sheikh Mahmudul Hassan (Retd), head of the ministry's Maritime Affairs Unit, delivered the presentation.

US EYES INVESTMENT IN BANGLADESH'S LNG INFRASTRUCTURE

The United States has expressed interest in investing in Bangladesh's floating LNG storage and regasification

projects, US Ambassador Brent T Christensen said during a meeting with Commerce Minister Khandaker Abdul Muktadir. Christensen stressed the need for transparent and competitive bidding for major infrastructure projects, saying US companies were keen to invest in Bangladesh. Muktadir said capable US companies offering faster implementation and reliable LNG supply would receive priority in the competitive process. The talks also covered bilateral trade and energy cooperation, including Bangladesh's plan to import 117 LNG cargoes from the US between 2026 and 2038.



SEPTEMBER 8, 2026

KHALILUR RAHMAN ASSUMES UNGA PRESIDENCY

Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dr Khalilur Rahman assumed the presidency of the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) as the session opened in New York. Rahman was elected on June 2, securing 99 votes against 91 for Cyprus's Andreas Kakouris. His presidency will run for one year and carries the theme "Restoring Trust, Managing Transformation: A United Nations That Delivers for All."

BANGLADESH, AUSTRALIA DISCUSS SKILLS TRAINING, LABOUR MOBILITY AND ROHINGYA CRISIS

Australian High Commissioner Susan Ryle met State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir in Dhaka, discussing cooperation in trade, investment, energy, labour mobility and regional and global issues. Kobir sought closer collaboration between Australia's Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutions and Bangladesh's Technical Training Centres, as well as

Australian support for training Bangladeshi caregivers. He also welcomed Australia's continued assistance in addressing the Rohingya crisis. Ryle reaffirmed Australia's support for Bangladesh in vocational training and health and its commitment to efforts towards resolving the Rohingya crisis. The two sides also discussed cooperation at the UN and other international forums.



BANGLADESH, INDONESIA DISCUSS TRADE, CEPA AND REGIONAL COOPERATION

Indonesian Ambassador Listyowati met State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir in Dhaka, discussing trade, investment, disaster management, education and regional cooperation. Kobir urged Indonesia to increase imports from Bangladesh and expressed readiness to move bilateral trade towards a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). He also sought easier visa processing for Bangladeshis and greater cooperation in disaster management. Bangladesh requested Indonesia's support for its bid to become an ASEAN Sectoral Dialogue Partner and join the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). Listyowati reaffirmed Indonesia's support for these initiatives and for diversifying Bangladeshi exports, including pharmaceuticals, to the Indonesian market.

BANGLADESH, OMAN DISCUSS ECONOMIC TIES AND LABOUR MARKET

Omani royal family member Al Sayyid Mohammed Salim Ali Al Said met State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed Islam in Dhaka, with discussions focusing on strengthening economic relations and opening Oman's labour market to Bangladeshi workers. Al Sayyid praised the contribution of Bangladeshi workers to Oman's development and economy and highlighted opportunities for expanding mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries. The meeting was also attended by Al Sayyid Saif Mohammed Abdullah Al Busaidi, adviser to Oman's Ministry of Labour, Oman's chargé d'affaires in Bangladesh Fathia Ahmed Al Balushi, and other members of the delegation.

BANGLADESH TO SKIP BRICS SUMMIT IN INDIA

Bangladesh will not send a representative to the BRICS summit in New Delhi, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir said. Prime Minister Tarique Rahman had been invited to the summit's outreach session in his capacity as BIMSTEC chair rather than as Bangladesh's prime minister. Kobir said Dhaka wanted Rahman's first visit to India to be a dedicated bilateral engagement rather than part of a multilateral event. He added that such a visit would take place when the environment was favourable and mutual respect was maintained, stressing that there was no need to rush high-level exchanges between the two neighbours.

BANGLADESH CONDEMNS ISRAELI SETTLEMENT PLAN IN OCCUPIED WEST BANK

Bangladesh strongly condemned Israel's plan to advance settlement construction in the E1 area of the occupied West Bank, saying the move violates international law and relevant UN Security Council resolutions. Dhaka warned that further settlement activity would undermine the territorial integrity of the occupied Palestinian territory and prospects for a viable two-state solution. Bangladesh called on Israel to halt settlement activities and urged

stronger international diplomatic efforts to protect Palestinian statehood. It also reiterated its support for an independent and sovereign Palestinian state based on the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

BANGLADESH REAFFIRMS SUPPORT FOR PALESTINE IN MEETING WITH ENVOY

Palestinian Ambassador Yousef S. Y. Ramadan met State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir in Dhaka, thanking Bangladesh for its continued support for the Palestinian people and their cause. Kobir reaffirmed



Bangladesh's solidarity with Palestinians and their legitimate rights. He also expressed concern over Israel's plan to expand settlements in the E1 area of the occupied West Bank, saying such actions contravene international

law and relevant UN Security Council resolutions. The two sides also discussed the situation in Gaza and ongoing bilateral cooperation in various sectors.

SEPTEMBER 11, 2026

BANGLADESH REVIEWING 101 AGREEMENTS AND MOUS WITH INDIA

Bangladesh is reviewing 101 agreements and memorandums of understanding signed with India, BNP Chief Whip Nurul Islam Moni said, adding that the outcome would be announced soon. Speaking after the third session of the 13th Parliament, Moni made the

remarks when asked about agreements allowing vessels from friendly countries to use Chattogram and Mongla ports. He also said Bangladesh sought relations with all countries, including its neighbours, while giving greater importance to relationships involving stronger national interests.

SEPTEMBER 13, 2026

BANGLADESH SEEKS STRONGER TRADE AND ECONOMIC TIES WITH PAKISTAN

President Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir called for stronger Bangladesh-Pakistan relations, particularly in trade, investment, air connectivity, education and training, during a meeting with Pakistani High Commissioner Imran Haider at Bangabhaban. The two sides discussed expanding and balancing bilateral trade, strengthening business links and increasing direct flights following the resumption of Dhaka-Karachi connectivity. Alamgir highlighted opportunities for greater Bangladeshi exports, including tea, ceramics, agricultural products and pharmaceuticals. The two sides also discussed joint ventures and exchanges in

military and civil-service training. Pakistan's President Asif Ali Zardari invited Alamgir to visit Pakistan, while Alamgir extended a reciprocal invitation.

BANGLADESH SEEKS 'RESET' IN RELATIONS WITH INDIA

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humairun Kobir said Bangladesh wants to "reset" relations with India and move beyond the nature of bilateral ties maintained over the previous 15 years. Speaking at a Foreign Ministry briefing, Kobir said Prime Minister Tarique Rahman should make a dedicated bilateral visit to India rather than combine it with a multilateral engagement. He also said agreements previously signed with India were being scrutinised through the parliamentary process. On Rahman's upcoming visit to New York for the UN General Assembly, Kobir said no meeting with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi had been confirmed.

BANGLADESH, FRENCH SENATORS DISCUSS TRADE, INVESTMENT AND LABOUR MOBILITY

A three-member delegation of French senators met State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaid Islam in Dhaka, discussing parliamentary cooperation, trade, investment and migration. Islam sought deeper engagement with the French Senate and greater access





for Bangladeshi exports, including pharmaceuticals, leather, ceramics and jute products. She also encouraged increased French investment and cooperation in technical and vocational skills development. The two sides discussed expanding opportunities for legal labour mobility, while Bangladesh reaffirmed its commitment to combating irregular migration and human trafficking. They also exchanged views on climate change, women's empowerment and multilateral cooperation.

SEPTEMBER 14, 2026

BANGLADESH, CHINA DISCUSS ECONOMIC CORRIDOR, MONGLA PORT AND ENERGY COOPERATION

Chinese Ambassador Yao Wen met State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed Islam in Dhaka, discussing a range of bilateral initiatives. Islam welcomed China's continued support for Bangladesh's infrastructure, human development and capacity building, while Yao reaffirmed Beijing's commitment to the bilateral partnership. Discussions covered the Bangladesh-China-Myanmar Economic Corridor, the Chinese Economic Zone, development of Mongla Port, a proposed 1,000-bed hospital in Rangpur, education, renewable energy, human-resource development and women's empowerment. Yao also invited Islam to visit China with a delegation of Bangladeshi women entrepreneurs, an initiative she welcomed.

BANGLADESH SEEKS GREATER CANADIAN INVESTMENT AND MARKET ACCESS

A five-member Bangladesh Business Chamber of Canada (BBCC) delegation met State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed Islam in Dhaka, discussing investment and opportunities to expand Bangladeshi exports to Canada. The BBCC highlighted the need for a legal framework to protect Canadian investment and raised barriers affecting shrimp exports. It identified garments, IT outsourcing, jute and leather goods as sectors with potential for greater market access. Islam called for increased Canadian foreign direct investment and assured government cooperation for a BBCC roadshow planned in Canada next year to promote Bangladeshi products, while requesting concrete proposals from the chamber.





BANGLADESH CALLS FOR STRONGER, PEOPLE-CENTRED BIMSTEC COOPERATION

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir reaffirmed Bangladesh's commitment to strengthening BIMSTEC as the organisation marked the 12th anniversary of its Secretariat in Dhaka on September 14. Kobir emphasised greater regional cooperation in trade and

investment, connectivity, the Blue Economy and people-to-people ties. As the current BIMSTEC chair and host of its Secretariat, Bangladesh would work with member states to translate commitments into tangible outcomes, he said. Kobir described BIMSTEC as a bridge between South and Southeast Asia and stressed that bilateral differences should not impede wider regional cooperation.

[SEPTEMBER 15, 2026]

DHAKA LINKS EXTRADITION OF HASINA, QUADER TO IMPROVING INDIA TIES

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's Information and Broadcasting Affairs Adviser Zahed Ur Rahman said the handover of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader and others from India was an important condition for improving bilateral relations. Speaking at a government briefing, Rahman said Dhaka hoped New Delhi would hand them over and had conveyed its position to Indian High Commissioner Dinesh Trivedi. His remarks came after the International Crimes Tribunal sentenced Quader and six others to death in a case involving crimes against humanity during the July mass uprising.



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