

BANGLADESH

PM INVITES JAPAN'S MARUBENI TO INVEST IN IT, AI, FERTILISER, ENERGY



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has invited Japan's Marubeni Corporation to expand its investment in Bangladesh, focusing on information technology, artificial intelligence (AI), cybersecurity, fertiliser and energy. During a meeting with a delegation led by Marubeni President and CEO Masayuki Omoto, the two sides discussed establishing an AI-powered data centre within the next 12 months, developing skilled IT professionals, and positioning Bangladesh as an international service hub. They also explored the possibility of setting up a second Karnaphuli Fertilizer Company Limited (KAFCO) plant, with Marubeni expressing interest in the proposal. Potential

cooperation in applying AI and modern technologies to agriculture was also discussed. The proposed Bangladesh-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), once implemented, is expected to further strengthen bilateral trade and investment ties.

Source: <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/governance/news/pm-invites-japans-marubeni-invest-it-ai-fertiliser-energy-4295871>

TARIQUE RAHMAN CALLS SUDDEN BNP PARLIAMENTARY PARTY MEETING

Prime Minister and BNP leader Tarique Rahman has called an unscheduled meeting of the party's parliamentary group to discuss internal discipline, the law and order situation, constitutional amendments and upcoming local government elections. Scheduled for 11 October at the Jatiya Sangsad, the meeting comes ahead of the next parliamentary session, which may begin in the second week of November. The discussions are expected to address allegations of land grabbing, extortion and violence involving party leaders and activists, following disciplinary actions and expulsions linked to recent incidents. Lawmakers may also discuss the BNP's position on implementing the July National Charter and proposed constitutional reforms, alongside consultations with political parties and other

stakeholders. The meeting is also expected to focus on local-level leadership selection, grassroots grievances and organisational restructuring as the ruling party seeks to maintain discipline and manage political challenges.

Source: <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/j9yirjgdjm>

PM TARIQUE RAHMAN PLEDGES SUPPORT FOR THREE GRASSROOTS COMMUNITY PIONEERS

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has pledged government support for three individuals recognised for their contributions to primary education and environmental conservation. During a meeting at the Bangladesh Secretariat, he met Nayla Sharaf, a BUET graduate who left potential government and banking careers to teach underprivileged children in Netrakona; Md Altaf Hossain, who founded a school in Narsingdi in 2007 despite being born without arms; and Rezaul Kibria Babul, a mosque imam from Bhola who has spent nearly three decades planting thousands of trees using his personal resources. Altaf's school currently serves 145 students with 10 teachers, and the prime minister pledged government funding to construct a modern school building. Praising their voluntary initiatives, Tarique Rahman emphasised the importance of individual contributions to nation-building, social welfare and environmental protection. **Source:** <https://www.newagebd.net/post/country/317982/pm-tarique-assures-support-for-three-grassroots-community-pioneers>



BANGLADESH SEEKS TALKS TO EXTEND STRANDED WORKERS' SAUDI VISAS

Bangladesh is seeking bilateral discussions with Saudi Arabia to extend the visas of stranded Bangladeshi workers and help them return to their jobs amid disruptions caused by recent attacks in Riyadh. State Minister for Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Nurul Haque Nur said the Bangladesh embassy in Riyadh was monitoring the situation and assisting injured workers. Between Saturday and Tuesday morning, 23 direct and 39 transit flights on Bangladesh-Saudi Arabia routes were cancelled, leaving 9,674 passengers stranded or delayed. The attacks reportedly killed at least 18 people, including two Bangladeshis, and injured at least 26 Bangladeshi nationals. The government is providing assistance to affected families, with registered workers' families eligible for approximately Tk 13.5 lakh in financial support in the event of a death. Authorities are also exploring alternative labour markets, including Malaysia, and prioritising affected workers for government-to-government recruitment.

Source: <https://www.newagebd.net/post/foreign-affairs/317797/bangladesh-seeks-talks-to-extend-stranded-workers-saudi-visas>

BANGLADESH CONDEMNS HOUTHI ATTACKS AS THREE SAUDI NATIONALS KILLED IN RIYADH AIRPORT

Bangladesh has strongly condemned Houthi attacks on civilian infrastructure in Saudi Arabia, including airports, warning that such strikes violate international law, endanger civilians and threaten regional stability. In a statement on 9 October, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed solidarity with the Saudi government and people and called for an immediate halt to the attacks. Saudi authorities reported that three people, including the captain of a Saudia Airlines aircraft, were killed in attacks targeting Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport. The strikes disrupted air travel, forcing flight delays and cancellations, while interception debris reportedly damaged a kindergarten and a medical complex in the capital. The escalation comes amid intensified fighting between the Iran-backed Houthis and Yemen's Saudi-supported government forces. Riyadh has reportedly ruled out a truce until Yemeni government forces regain territory lost in recent weeks, raising concerns over further regional instability and disruptions to civilian and transport infrastructure.



Source: <https://www.newagebd.net/post/human-rights/317236/bangladesh-condemns-houthi-attacks-as-three-saudi-nationals-killed-in-riyadh-airport->

INDIA



INDIA'S 'COCKROACH' LEADERS JAILED AFTER HOLDING PROTEST

Two leaders of India's Gen Z-led Cockroach Janta Party (CJP), Saurav Das and Ashutosh Ranka, have been remanded to five days of judicial custody after allegedly entering Delhi's Jantar Mantar protest site by climbing a locked gate and crossing police barricades. The group has been demanding electoral reforms and the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar over alleged irregularities in voter registration, which the Election Commission denies. Police have accused the activists of trespassing, violating prohibitory orders and obstructing public officials, while the leaders deny the charges. The arrests followed days of demonstrations during which hundreds of protesters, including journalists, were detained and later released. Opposition leaders, including Rahul Gandhi, Mamata Banerjee and Arvind Kejriwal, condemned the arrests and

expressed support for peaceful protests. The controversy has intensified scrutiny of electoral-roll revisions and raised concerns among protesters over restrictions on public demonstrations and political dissent.

Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c6q8n09l1ny0o>

THOUSANDS MARCH TO INDIAN SUPREME COURT TO DEMAND ELECTION CHIEF RESIGN

Thousands of opposition supporters marched through New Delhi to the Supreme Court, demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar over alleged irregularities in a controversial revision of voter lists that has removed tens of millions of names. Led by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, the "March for Democracy" followed days of protests and mass detentions. Gandhi and Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge submitted a petition raising concerns about the election chief's conduct, while the Election Commission and the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) rejected allegations of electoral fraud. The Supreme Court indicated that the matter would be heard at the earliest opportunity in accordance with the law. Authorities deployed extensive security forces, restricted movement across parts of the capital and announced that demonstrations would no longer be permitted at Jantar Mantar. Reporters Without Borders also condemned the detention of journalists covering the protests.



Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cwr5y2lgr4gdo>

PAKISTAN



JAILED IMRAN KHAN'S WOES COMPOUND AFTER PAKISTAN SUSPENDS HIS PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

Pakistan has imposed emergency rule in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, suspending the provincial government led by jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party. The federal government accused PTI of failing to address rising militant attacks, while the party called the move a political takeover intended to weaken its influence and prevent supporters from marching on Islamabad to demand Khan's release.

The development comes as Khan's family raises concerns about his deteriorating health, including vision loss in one eye and fluctuating blood pressure. His three sisters and hundreds of supporters were arrested ahead of planned protests. PTI has challenged the emergency rule in the Peshawar High Court, while rights groups have urged the government and the party

to resume political dialogue. The suspension further intensifies tensions between Khan's party, the federal government and Pakistan's powerful military establishment.

Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/jailed-imran-khans-woes-compound-after-pakistan-suspends-his-provincial-2026-10-14/>



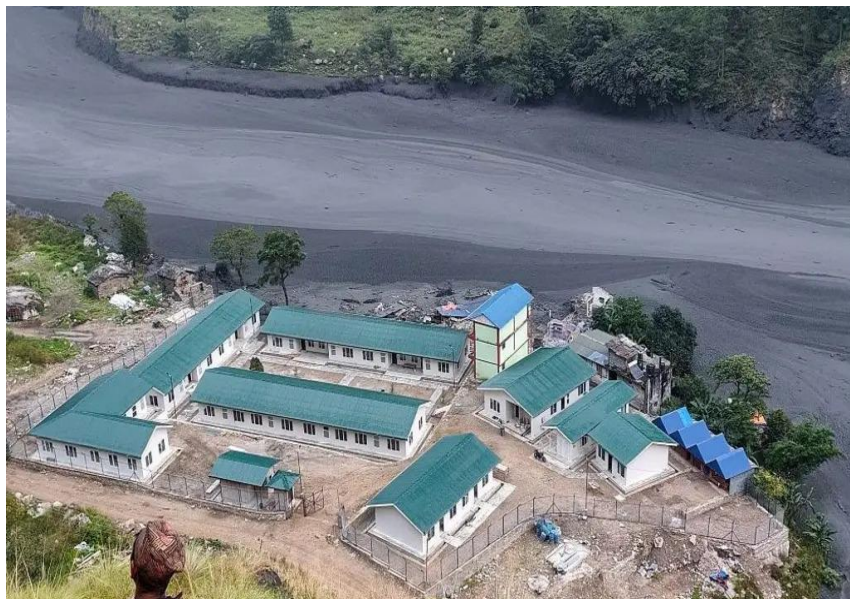
PAKISTAN STANDS SHOULDER-TO-SHOULDER WITH SAUDI ARABIA UNDER MAKKAH DEFENSE PACT, SAYS PM

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has reaffirmed Islamabad's commitment to protecting Saudi Arabia's sovereignty, territorial integrity and regional security under the Makkah Joint Defense Agreement, signed by Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye on August 7, 2026. The pact treats an armed attack on one member as an attack on all. Sharif made the statement during a meeting with the alliance's Secretary-General, retired Lt. Gen. Nauman Mahmood, who briefed him on plans to strengthen defense cooperation and prepare military capabilities for rapid deployment in Saudi Arabia.

The announcement follows repeated Houthi missile and drone attacks on Saudi territory, including civilian and oil infrastructure. Pakistan's Defense Minister Khawaja Asif also reiterated that Islamabad's resources were available to help protect the Kingdom. The agreement signals closer security cooperation among the three countries amid rising regional tensions linked to the US-Iran conflict.

Source: <https://www.arabnews.com/world/pakistan-stands-shoulder-to-shoulder-with-saudi-arabia-under-makkah-defense-pact-says-pm-3006325/>

NEPAL



CHINA BORDER SHUTDOWN PUTS FESTIVE SUPPLIES AT RISK

A flash flood swept through Nepal's central Gorkha district on Sunday, washing away homes and bridges, damaging 204 houses and leaving five people, believed to be herders, missing. Nepalese authorities reported that 95 people, including nine foreigners, had been rescued, while more than 650 people were affected. At least two villages suffered extensive damage, around 100 cattle were reported missing, and several communities were cut off, leaving air transport as the only available means of delivering essential supplies. More than 700 security personnel and four army helicopters were deployed for search and rescue operations. The cause remains unclear, with officials investigating whether a landslide blocked the Budhi Gandaki River before the accumulated water burst through; a glacier-related event has also been suggested. Delayed official warnings raised concerns about gaps in Nepal's early-warning system, as some residents reportedly received alerts through local networks before government notifications arrived.

Source : <https://www.bbc.com/news/live/cr15jq00d51vt>

POST-DISASTER RECOVERY BILL TOPS RS 559 BILLION AS GOVT FORWARDS 504 PROJECTS

Nepal's government has forwarded 504 reconstruction and recovery projects to the Ministry of Finance, seeking Rs 559.72 billion to address damage caused by floods, landslides and other monsoon-related disasters. The proposed plan covers affected areas along the Bhotekoshi, Trishuli, Kaligandaki and Budhigandaki river systems. Roads and transport infrastructure account for the largest funding demand, with more than Rs 374 billion requested for road projects outside the Bhotekoshi-Trishuli corridor and a further Rs 48.26 billion for reconstruction in the flood-hit corridor. Other proposed investments include repairing bridges, rural roads, drinking water and irrigation systems, health facilities and schools, as well as restoring agricultural and livestock services. The plan also includes hydrological monitoring stations and stronger emergency communication networks. Implementation will depend on approval from the Ministry of Finance.



Source: <https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/post-disaster-recovery-bill-tops-rs-559-billion-as-govt-forwards-504-projects>

BHUTAN



HIS MAJESTY GRANTED AN AUDIENCE TO THE 5TH UNPKF CONTINGENT

His Majesty The King granted an Audience this morning to the 5th United Nations Peacekeeping Force (UNPKF) contingent, which is set to deploy to the Central African Republic (CAR) on 7 October 2026 in Paro. The 180-member contingent, which includes 13 women, is expected to fly out of Bhutan in two groups, on 8 October and 19 October.

Bhutan began participating in UN peacekeeping in 2014, contributing military observers, staff officers and individual police officers. In 2022, Bhutan began sending 180-member contingents to support the UN mission in CAR (MINUSCA).

Source: <https://thebhutanese.bt/his-majesty-granted-an-audience-to-the-5th-unpkf-contingent/>

SRI LANKA



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IMF VOWS CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR SRI LANKA

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has reaffirmed its readiness to support Sri Lanka as the country continues its economic recovery. Sonali Jain-Chandra, Deputy Director of the IMF's Asia and Pacific Department, said Sri Lanka's macroeconomic situation had improved significantly, with strong fiscal performance, largely completed debt restructuring and progress on governance reforms. Earlier in October, the IMF reached a staff-level agreement with Sri Lanka on the seventh review of its Extended Fund Facility programme, potentially unlocking approximately US\$345 million in financing following approval by the IMF Executive Board. The board is expected to consider the agreement in the coming weeks, followed by another review mission before the programme expires in March 2027. The IMF also indicated that future engagement could include a new financial arrangement, policy advice and capacity development support.

Source: <https://www.dailymirror.lk/international/IMF-vows-continued-support->

AFGHANISTAN



TALIBAN INVITES SAUDI ARABIA TO EXPLORE RENEWABLE ENERGY INVESTMENT IN AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan's Taliban administration has invited Saudi energy officials to explore investment opportunities in solar and wind power. Water and Energy Minister Mohammad Younus Akhundzada discussed renewable energy cooperation with Saudi Deputy Energy Minister Mohammad Ibrahim during a visit to Saudi Arabia for the 17th World Energy Forum in Riyadh. According to Afghanistan's Ministry of Water and Energy, discussions covered renewable electricity generation, technical expertise and potential areas of cooperation. The Saudi side reportedly agreed to send a technical delegation to Afghanistan to assess investment opportunities. However, no specific investment agreement or joint project has been announced, and the delegation's visit has not yet been scheduled. The initiative reflects the Taliban administration's efforts to attract foreign investment and expand Afghanistan's energy infrastructure.

Source: <https://www.afintl.com/en/202610156718>

BEI WEEKLY UPDATES



BEI ENGAGES BARISHAL STAKEHOLDERS ON BANGLADESH'S EMERGING FOREIGN POLICY

As part of its research project “Shaping Creative Diplomacy in Bangladesh,” the Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) convened a consultation in Rangpur and Barishal on 12 September to 15 September 2026, bringing together civil society representatives, journalists, and other distinguished stakeholders to reflect on the study’s emerging findings and recommendations.

Ambassador M. Humayun Kabir (Retd.), President of BEI, delivered the welcome remarks, while Md. Alif Ifteker Seaum, Research Officer, led presentations on the study’s key findings. The ensuing discussion offered valuable perspectives on advancing a more people-informed and responsive approach to Bangladesh’s foreign policy.



ABOUT BEI

Bangladesh Enterprise Institute is a non-profit, non-political research center. Established in October 2000, the Institute has established for itself a reputation for excellence in its research and advocacy work focusing on the growth of private enterprise in Bangladesh. The Institute promotes issues of importance to the private sector and seeks to initiate essential measures and influence policy for the development of a market-oriented economy. Through the promotion of sustainable growth in domestic trade, commerce and industry, BEI hopes to address the enormous challenge for Bangladesh in securing a fair share of the global market.

BEI has a particular interest in the support and growth of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs), which have the potential to be the engine of economic growth in Bangladesh. BEI also undertakes research and policy advocacy work focusing on the issues of foreign policy and security, particularly those of terrorism impacting Bangladesh and South Asia.

Being conscious of the enormous challenge to securing a fair share for Bangladesh in the global market as well as to address issues of trade and investment promotion, the Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) was established under the initiative of some leading business personalities of the country.

M Humayun Kabir, former Ambassador, has been working as the President and Chief Executive of the institute.

The institute is registered with the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies, Bangladesh, under the Societies Registration Act.

DISCLAIMER

In compiling this weekly news update, BEI has attempted to include the most relevant news accounts from the past week concerning South Asian Region. From time to time, news beyond South Asia has also been included if it finds relevance on any issues to the region. We recognize that some developments may have been overlooked, and that some sources may not be viewed by all as credible or balanced. Inclusion of a news story and its summary does not constitute any kind of endorsement or position taken by BEI, and the text and positions included in the above are solely extracted from various news articles published in the print media in various countries in South Asia and beyond. If you have any comments or feedback for us regarding this digest, please email at bei@bol-online.com. For more information about BEI and our work, please visit <https://www.bei-bd.org/>

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