

## Cops monitoring those trying to join TTP: IGP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law enforcement agencies are monitoring individuals attempting to join the banned militant group Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Inspector General of Police Baharul Alam said yesterday.

At a press conference at the Police Headquarters in the capital, the IGP cited several recent cases, including the arrest of a man in Savar three months ago who had allegedly tried to join the TTP.

"The DMP's Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime unit is investigating whether anyone else is involved," he said in response to a query.

The IGP added, "The arrestee, however, claimed that after performing Umrah, he travelled to Pakistan, where a friend asked him to join the outfit. He said he refused and returned to the country."

According to an earlier The Daily Star report, Md Foysal, 33, was arrested in Savar by the police's Anti-Terrorism Unit on July 2 for alleged links to the TTP. On July 14, Shamin Mahfuz, 48, was arrested by the Rapid Action Battalion in Narayanganj on similar charges.

Baharul also confirmed that police had received information about two other Bangladeshis killed in Pakistan while allegedly operating for the TTP. One was identified as Faisal Hossain from Madaripur.

He said the other individual allegedly operated drones for the TTP. "We have learned that he is a Bangladeshi, but we have not yet been able to confirm his identity," he added.

Faisal, from Kalikapur Union of Madaripur Sadar upazila, left the country for Dubai in March 2024. His brother, Arman Morol, told The Daily Star that the family believed he was working there and was unaware he had travelled to Pakistan until Madaripur police informed them two months ago.

"A journalist sent me a photo of Faisal's body on WhatsApp on September 27. That was the first time we learned about his passing," Arman said.

Md Naimul Hasan, superintendent of police in Madaripur, said an investigation is underway to determine how Faisal ended up in Pakistan and uncover the circumstances of his death.



UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Filippo Grandi calls on Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus at his hotel in New York yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

## US HUMAN TRAFFICKING REPORT Bangladesh stuck in Tier 2 for 6yrs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has retained its position on Tier 2 of the US State Department's Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report for the sixth year in a row.

It means the country continues to make significant efforts to eliminate human trafficking, but has failed to fully meet the minimum standards required for the top tier.

However, compared with the previous reporting period, the government demonstrated overall increasing efforts, said the 2025 report released on Monday.

Among the progresses acknowledged by the report include increasing training for frontline officials on victim identification and trauma-informed care, as well as the formal adoption of a National Referral Mechanism (NRM).

Authorities identified and referred more victims to services compared to the previous year.

Yet, the report stresses that the government fell short in several critical areas, such as internal trafficking – including sex trafficking and forced child labour – which remained pervasive.

The number of traffickers who faced investigation, prosecution, and conviction

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Adopt fully resourced National Action Plan
- 2 Expand tribunals; probe Rohingya exploitation
- 3 Eliminate recruitment fees for migrants

dropped.

Labour inspectors remained severely under-resourced, particularly in monitoring the informal sector. Victim protection and reintegration services continued to be inadequate, especially for Rohingya refugees and returning migrant workers.

The TIP report criticised the government for continuing to allow high recruitment fees that left many Bangladeshi migrant workers indebted and vulnerable to trafficking.

It said that courts often imposed fines

instead of prison sentences, weakening deterrence and undercutting the government's overall efforts.

Corruption and official complicity inhibiting law enforcement efforts also remained significant concerns, with no convictions of complicit officials reported.

The US State Department has issued a set of prioritised recommendations, including expanding Anti-Trafficking Tribunals, strengthening labour inspector capacity, improving services for all categories of victims, eliminating recruitment fees, investigating credible allegations of Rohingya exploitation, and adopting a fully resourced National Action Plan.

The TIP report places countries in four categories based on compliance with the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA).

Among Bangladesh's South Asian neighbours, India, Pakistan and Bhutan have also remained on Tier 2.

Nepal and the Maldives continue to be on the Tier 2 Watch List – the third category, while Afghanistan has again been placed in Tier 3, the lowest ranking reserved for governments that make little effort to meet the minimum standards.

## Yunus lays out 7-point plan at UN conference

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fundraising next year are grim.

"Unless further resources are forthcoming, we will be forced to make more cuts, while striving to minimise the risk of losing lives – children dying of malnutrition, or people dying at sea as more refugees embark on dangerous boat journeys."

UN Special Envoy on Myanmar Julie Bishop said fighting between Myanmar's army and separatists is proving an "insurmountable barrier" to the return of displaced Rohingyas.

She cautioned that elections planned for December could worsen tensions. "Under current conditions, there is significant risk of increased resistance, protest and violence, further undermining the fragile state."

Bishop added that an inclusive Myanmar is only possible if it guarantees safety, justice and opportunities for all communities,

most critically the Rohingya; and addresses the root causes of conflict, discrimination, and disenfranchisement.

Meanwhile, Bangladeshi officials warn of growing challenges in the camps, including domestic violence, trafficking, and extremist ideologies. Refugees may increasingly spill outside the camps as conditions worsen.

The rebel Arakan Army now controls about 90 percent of Rakhine. Its clashes with Myanmar's military have killed scores of Rohingyas and displaced thousands.

#### 7-POINT PLAN, US PLEDGE

Yunus laid out seven key actions for the international community.

He called for a roadmap for safe and dignified repatriation, pressure on Myanmar and the Arakan Army to end violence, and prioritise the return of those who recently arrived in Bangladesh and those internally

displaced.

He also urged support for stabilising Rakhine, international monitoring, and confidence-building measures so that the Rohingya integrate into Rakhine society. Yunus further called for fully funding the Joint Response Plan, pursuing accountability and restorative justice, dismantling the narco-economy, and tackling transboundary crimes.

"The world cannot keep the Rohingyas waiting any longer. Today, let us pledge to act together to resolve the crisis once and for all. Bangladesh stands ready to extend its full cooperation to this end."

As funding declines, he argued, repatriation remains the only sustainable option. "This will entail far fewer resources than continuing their international protection."

Saying Bangladesh was a victim of the crisis, Yunus added, "We are forced to bear huge financial, social

and environmental costs. Criminal activities, including narco-flows into Bangladesh through Rakhine, threaten our social fabric."

Meanwhile, the US announced more than \$60 million in assistance for the Rohingyas in Bangladesh. It pressed Dhaka for policy changes, allowing refugees' livelihoods.

US Special Envoy for Best Future Generations Charles Harder urged other governments and actors to step forward. "All nations, organisations, and private donors must share the burden by increasing their contributions."

The conference included an opening session, a plenary for member states, UNGA observers and civil society, and a closing segment. The president of the UN General Assembly will prepare a concise, action-oriented summary of the discussions.

Shefali Marma, standing in front of the DC, voiced her anger: "We are not beggars. My two shops were burned down. My house was burned down. Who will take responsibility for this?... Everything has been destroyed... We want everything restored to the way it was."

#### BLOCKADE SUSPENDED

The Jumma Chhatri Janata, through a Facebook post around 9:00pm yesterday, suspended its road blockade in Khagrachhari.

"Following the assurances and initiatives of the local administration and showing respect to Durga Puja, we have suspended the blockade from 11:00pm today until October 5," it said.

"However, if the administration fails to fulfil the eight-point demand presented, the organisation will launch a tougher programme."

## Locals speak of shattered lives

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September 28 when a protest by Jumma Chhatri Janata, a platform of indigenous communities, against a recent alleged rape incident was attacked.

Three members of the hill community were shot dead and at least 11 others were injured in the attack.

Recalling the horrific incident, Angsanu said, "The boys [Jumma Chhatri Janata members] started gathering and shouting before the incident. Shortly after, the gunfire began. I ran with my wife and daughter."

Like Angsanu, many shopkeepers lost everything in the arson attack.

Visiting the Bazar yesterday, this correspondent saw destroyed shops and homes along both sides of the road. Entry to the market was

restricted by an army checkpoint where everyone was being questioned.

About 50 shops were reduced to rubble. The fire was so intense that nearby trees were scorched.

Jeweller Athaye Prue Marma said,

"Masked men attacked. I lost Tk 33,000 in the fire."

Women's clothes seller Michen Rakhain told this newspaper, "Since our religious festival is approaching, I had stocked up on clothes and fabrics worth nearly Tk 20 lakh. Many of the garments were custom stitched. Everything has been burnt. I don't know what to do now."

Former Guimara upazila chairman Usepru Marma told this correspondent, "This was the largest marketplace of the Marma community in the district."

The local administration has begun

assessing the extent of the damage.

"Initially, the damage is estimated at around Tk 20 crore," said an official, preferring not to be named.

The district administration yesterday formed a five-member committee to investigate the incident.

Visiting the spot, Deputy Commissioner ABM Iftekharul Islam Khondakar told reporters, "We are working to restore peace in the area. We have taken initiatives to meet Jumma Chhatri Janata's seven-point demand."

Superintendent of Police Arefin Jewel said, "The perpetrators will be brought to justice. If the victims' families do not file cases, police will lodge cases as complainants."

The administration yesterday distributed relief materials to some of the affected locals.

which nominally runs Palestinian population centres in the occupied West Bank, would be allowed a role in Gaza's governance.

Trump noted that during their meeting Netanyahu had strongly opposed any Palestinian statehood – something that the US plan leaves room for.

"I support your plan to end the war in Gaza which achieves our war aims," Netanyahu said.

"If Hamas rejects your plan, Mr

President, or if they supposedly accept it and then basically do everything to counter it, then Israel will finish the job by itself."

Trump said that Israel would have his "full backing" to do so if Hamas did not accept the deal.

Reaction was global, and swift. Key Arab and Muslim nations, including mediators Egypt and Qatar, hailed the agreement's "sincere efforts" in the wake of their own talks with Trump last week.

## Jamaat, five parties

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roundtable discussions, and seminars. The programmes also include rallies in Dhaka and all divisional cities on October 10, and the submission of memorandums to deputy commissioners on October 12.

Apart from Jamaat and Islami Andolan, the other parties joining this phase are Bangladesh Khelafat Majlis, Bangladesh Khelafat Andolan, Jatiya Ganatantrik Party (Jagpa), and Nizam-e-Islam Party.

Like in previous phases, the parties' demands remain nearly identical and scheduled for the same dates. While some have outlined five points and others seven, the core demands are the same.

These include: holding the election based on the July Charter; introducing a proportional representation system in the national election for parliament (some propose only for the upper house); ensuring a level playing field for all parties and candidates; justice for oppression, killings, and corruption committed by the previous "fascist" regime; and banning the activities of the Jatiya Party and the 14-party alliance for supporting autocracy.

At a press conference at Al Falah Auditorium in Dhaka's Moghbazar yesterday afternoon, Jamaat Secretary General Md Golam Porwar announced his party's programmes.

"We want to declare unequivocally that our five-point public demands have already become rational and acceptable to the people. The people have extended massive support and joined the street movement for these demands."

"The current government must immediately accept the people's five demands and hold the 13th parliamentary election in February based on the July National Charter. If the government ignores these legitimate demands and fails to resolve the ongoing crisis, the people

"will be forced to intensify their movement."

The BNP has maintained that reforms requiring constitutional amendment under the July Charter should be left to the next elected parliament.

Jamaat, on the other hand, wants constitutional amendments implemented before the election, either through an interim constitutional order or a referendum. It demands full implementation of the July Charter ahead of the polls.

In the morning, Islami Andolan Bangladesh Secretary General Maulana Yunus Ahmad announced a 12-day programme at a press conference at the party's central office in the capital's Paltan area.

Accusing the government of ignoring people's demands despite a series of programmes and dialogues, he said, "If a government formed by the people's blood continues to disregard their demands, it will lose its moral and legal legitimacy."

Bangladesh Khelafat Majlis, in a press release signed by party Ameer Mamunul Haque and Secretary General Jalaluddin Ahmad, announced an 11-day programme, including mass rally in Dhaka, to press home its demands, including legal recognition of the July Charter.

The statement warned of tougher programmes if their demands are not met.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Khelafat Andolan said it would also join the second phase with a seven-point demand.

Jagpa Vice President and spokesperson Rashed Prodhan announced the party's programmes at a press conference at its Paltan office.

Nizam-e-Islam Party's Publicity Secretary Abdulla Al Masud Khan issued a press release outlining their programmes.

Killings carried out at 438

stay in power. As a result, people from all walks of life joined the movement in 2024."

The IO said his probe also found that the then government deliberately shut down the internet and took control over the media with the intention to suppress the uprising.

On July 10, the ICT-1 framed charges against the trio. The charges include murder, attempted murder, command responsibility, torture, and the use of lethal weapons and other crimes against humanity.