

## US adds seven countries to full travel ban list

### Expanded ban goes into effect Jan 1

REUTERS, Washington

US President Donald Trump on Tuesday expanded a list of countries subject to a full travel ban, prohibiting citizens from an additional seven countries, including Syria, from entering the United States.

The White House said in a statement that Trump signed a proclamation “expanding and strengthening entry restrictions on nationals from countries with demonstrated, persistent, and severe deficiencies in screening, vetting, and information sharing to protect the Nation from national security and public safety threats.”

Tuesday’s move banned citizens from Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, South Sudan, Syria and those holding Palestinian Authority-issued travel documents. The action also imposes a full ban on Laos and Sierra Leone, which had previously only been subject to partial restrictions.



PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

These vehicles have been lying abandoned on Narinda Road in Wari for years now, slowly rusting away. Originally seized by police, they have been kept here without any due process, hampering pedestrian movement. The photo was taken yesterday.

## Growing global focus on February 12 vote

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Ivars Ijabs, a member of the European Parliament, will serve as the chief observer of the EU delegation.

In an October 21 meeting with Yunus, an IRI delegation confirmed that the American non-profit organisation will send at least 10 international observers for Bangladesh’s national election.

“We will have robust election observation in February,” said the delegation head, Christopher J. Fussner, also an IRI director.

Deployment of election observers is expected to help mitigate the chances of violence during the vote, he said.

An IRI pre-election team visited Bangladesh in October and submitted

its report.

The total number of observers from the US, including the IRI delegation, is expected to be about 50, according to EC and foreign ministry officials.

The Commonwealth mission, meanwhile, is likely to comprise about 30 observers. Its pre-election team also visited Bangladesh in October.

The Bangkok-based ANFREL conducted a pre-election assessment mission in Bangladesh from November 21 to December 5.

“We will deploy an international election observation mission for the parliamentary election, but the number is yet to be finalised,” said Afsana Anayat Amey, programme associate — Bangladesh Elections and

Democracy Programme of ANFREL.

Meanwhile, the EC yesterday instructed all educational institutions designated as polling centres to ensure that their existing CCTV cameras remain operational.

The directive further states that at centres without CCTV coverage, the managing committees or authorities should be requested to make arrangements for CCTV installation for polling day.

The commission has also instructed the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to ensure equal opportunities for all candidates in election campaigns broadcast on Bangladesh Television (BTV) and all private TV channels ahead of the polls.

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was not the case in the last 15 years,” he added.

“They [India] know that they had a very good relationship with the previous government in the last 15 years. They [India] didn’t utter a single word when the elections were a farce at that time. Now we are moving towards a good election, there is no need to advise us at this moment.”

Asked about similar advice from other countries or blocs, including the European Union, Touhid said the situations were not the same. “We always have some communication with them [EU and others], and they also have communication with the Election Commission, because we want them to send their observers here.”

Besides issuing the statement, the MEA summoned Bangladesh High Commissioner to India Riaz Hamidullah to express “strong concerns about the deteriorating security environment” around the Indian High Commission in Dhaka.

India’s move came amid protests in Dhaka yesterday, when police stopped several hundred people under the banner of “July Oikya” from marching towards the high commission.

The demonstrators demanded the return of deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina and others who fled to India during and after the July uprising last year. An announcement to lay siege to the mission prompted the Indian Visa Application Centre at Jamuna Future Park to close at 2:00pm.

Bangladesh’s relations with India have remained strained since the fall of the Awami League government on August 5, 2024. Dhaka has for several times demanded Hasina’s repatriation to face justice over killings during the uprising. She has been sentenced to death in a case over crimes against humanity.

On Sunday, Bangladesh’s foreign ministry summoned Indian High Commissioner Pranay Verma to convey Dhaka’s “strong concerns over India allowing Hasina to continue

making incendiary statements from Indian soil”.

The ministry said Hasina had been calling on her supporters to engage in terrorist activities aimed at destabilising the country and derailing the upcoming parliamentary elections.

Dhaka also sought New Delhi’s cooperation in preventing suspects in the recent attempted assassination of Sharif Osman Hadi, an independent aspiring candidate for Dhaka-8, from fleeing to India. Bangladesh urged their immediate arrest and extradition should they enter Indian territory.

The Indian MEA yesterday rejected what it called a “false narrative on extremist elements” surrounding recent events in Bangladesh.

“It is unfortunate that the interim government has neither conducted a thorough investigation nor shared meaningful evidence with India regarding the incidents,” it said, adding that India’s ties with Bangladesh are rooted in the Liberation War and strengthened through development and people-to-people exchanges.

The MEA also said India expects the interim government to ensure the safety of diplomatic missions in line with its obligations.

Touhid said Hasina had initially limited her remarks to social media but “subsequently, her statements with a lot of provocation have appeared in mainstream media”.

“We will object to this or seek their [India’s] cooperation to send her back. But they have not moved in that direction,” he said, while acknowledging that Bangladesh cannot stop Hasina if India does not intervene.

“We will ask India to stop her so that the environment being created here for the election is not harmed by the incendiary statements she is giving. If they do that, we will take it as a good positive step. If not, I cannot force her,” Touhid said.

Asked about comments by National Citizen Party leader Hasnat

## Bring ‘AL criminals’ to book even if not accused in cases

### Home adviser directs police; over 1,900 arrested in 24hrs

STAR REPORT

Law enforcers arrested 1,921 people nationwide in the 24 hours till yesterday evening, including 1,398 in the ongoing “Operation Devil Hunt Phase-2,” a drive to curb crime and recover illegal firearms ahead of the national election.

Police Headquarters said 3,264 people have been arrested nationwide and at least 10 foreign and local firearms, ammunition, and sharp weapons recovered in the past four days. In addition, 2,046 more people were held on cases and outstanding warrants.

The government initiated the operation on Saturday following a spate of killings across the country, particularly after the shooting of Dhaka-8 aspirant and Inqilab Moncho spokesperson Sharif Osman Hadi.

Meanwhile, Home Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury directed police to bring “Awami League criminals” under the law even if no cases are registered against them, warning of action against officers who fail to comply.

Addressing an event in Narayanganj, where student leaders blocked his convoy with a seven-point demand, the adviser called the demands “reasonable” and said several steps had already been taken.

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## India advising on our polls ‘unacceptable’

Abdullah regarding India’s Seven Sisters states, Touhid said Hasnat was not part of the government.

“Bangladesh does not believe in terrorism. We have a policy on this matter. We certainly will not shelter any separatists on our land. This government will not do this, and I presume no government in Bangladesh will do this,” he said.

“A political activist might say that, but that is certainly not the government’s position.”

Touhid also talked about Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Victory Day tweet on December 16, which made no mention of Bangladesh. Touhid said this was not new.

“They [India] always try to downplay our role in the Liberation War. And they celebrate it differently in Kolkata, observing it as their ‘Eastern Command Day’ because they believe their army achieved victory through warfare,” he said.

He noted that Indian experts themselves have written that the war would have taken longer, caused greater destruction and claimed many more lives had Bangladesh’s freedom fighters not mounted strong resistance and weakened the Pakistani military.

“Those who deny the contribution of the freedom fighters have no knowledge of military history or military science. They try to deny it, but denial is meaningless. Without the freedom fighters, this victory could not be achieved.”

On whether Bangladesh-India relations had entered a new phase, Touhid said it was difficult to say.

“We have always said that we want a good working relationship, but now both sides must try to move the relationship forward. I think perhaps both sides together have not been able to progress that far.”

Asked if Dhaka was considering reducing manpower at its high commission in India, he said, “If we see that there is not sufficient work for our officers, then we will try to do that.”

## Condition of Osman Hadi ‘very critical’

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On Saturday, he was airlifted to Singapore for advanced treatment.

Earlier in the day, Inqilab Moncho in a Facebook post said doctors were waiting for Hadi’s condition to be stable enough for surgery, which might take place in Singapore or in England.

It said the surgery would be done to restore his brain function and reconnect the brain with the body, while all other organs are currently functioning properly.

The post added that Hadi’s family has sought special prayers for his recovery.

In a separate post, the platform said the government is bearing the full expense of Hadi’s treatment and has assured his family of maximum support for advanced medical care.

### PRIME SUSPECT’S PARENTS SENT TO JAIL

The parents of prime suspect Faisal Karim Masud were sent to jail yesterday after giving confessional statements in the attempted murder case filed over the attack on Hadi.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Monirul Islam recorded the statements of Humayun Kabir, 70, and his wife Hasi Begum, 60, after police produced them before the court, a court official said.

Following the recording, the magistrate ordered that they be sent to jail. The contents of the statements were not disclosed.

On Tuesday, the Rapid Action Battalion detained Humayun and

Hasi for allegedly assisting their son, the prime accused in the case, both before and after the incident. They were later handed over to the Detective Branch of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, which is investigating the case.

Meanwhile, investigators, following the recovery of the firearms allegedly used in the shooting, yesterday told The Daily Star that the weapons were taken to Narsingdi by the prime suspect Faisal’s brother-in-law, Shipu, who was arrested on Monday.

After the attack, Faisal and his accomplice Alamgir left the weapons at Faisal’s sister’s residence on Colonel Gali in Dhaka’s Agargaon. Shipu later transported the firearms to Faisal’s house in Narsingdi.

According to DB sources, nine people have so far been arrested in connection with the case: Faisal’s father Humayun Kabir and mother Hasi Begum; his wife Saheda Parvin Samia; his brother-in-law Wahid Ahmed Shipu; his girlfriend Maria Akter Lima; his associate Mohammad Kabir; his friend Shipu; Nuruzzaman, a rent-a-car businessman; and Abdul Hannan.

However, two individuals, Sibirun Dio and Sanjay Schism, detained in Mymensingh on Saturday night for allegedly helping the accused flee across the border, are yet to be shown arrested in any case.

Contacted, DB Chief and DMP Additional Commissioner Shafikul Islam said the two were being interrogated by Shahbagh police.

### HANNAN’S ARREST RAISES QUESTIONS

Rab on Saturday detained Abdul Hannan from a flat in Mohammadpur’s Chandrima Housing over the allegation that the motorcycle used in the shooting was registered in his name, police said. Paltan Police Station later showed him arrested under Section 54 and sought a three-day remand, which the court granted.

In a press release yesterday, however, the DMP Media Wing and the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime unit said they recovered the motorcycle used in the attack, fitted with a fake number plate, along with a helmet. The items were recovered from the ground-floor parking of a house in the Agargaon Bonolota Residential Area.

According to the release, the motorcycle was originally owned by Abdur Rahman and changed hands eight times before being registered in the name of Mainuddin Islam using the NID card of Faisal’s associate Mohammad Kabir.

DB sources said the motorcycle used in the shooting was a Honda Hornet.

Earlier on Saturday, Hannan’s wife told The Daily Star that her husband owned a Suzuki Gixxer, which they sold in December 2024.

Several attempts were made to reach Commander MZM Intekhab Chowdhury, director of Rab’s Legal and Media Wing, but he could not be reached.

## Canada will miss climate targets for 2030, 2035: PM

AFP, Montreal

Canada will not meet its targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions for 2030 and 2035, Prime Minister Mark Carney acknowledged in an interview that aired Tuesday on Radio-Canada.

The federal government in Ottawa, under former prime minister Justin Trudeau, had set a target in 2021 of slashing total carbon emissions by 40-45 percent below 2005 levels by 2030.

Trudeau’s government had also set a goal of creating a net-zero power grid by 2035.

“What’s clear is that Canada is not going to reach our 2030 and 2035 climate targets with current policy,” Carney, who took office in March 2025 after replacing Trudeau as Liberal Party leader, told the state broadcaster.

“We need to change that.”

## Tougher time awaits BNP

FROM PAGE 12

Bangladesh a happy and welfare-oriented country, he emphasised initiatives such as family cards, farmer’s cards, health cards and steps to reduce unemployment.

Meanwhile, the BNP has formed a reception committee ahead of Tarique’s return to Bangladesh.

The committee was formed with BNP Standing Committee Member Salahuddin Ahmed as the convener and BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi as the member secretary, said BNP Media Cell member Shairul Kabir Khan.

The committee includes the party’s 10 divisional organising secretaries, the presidents and general secretaries of BNP front organisations and the conveners and member secretaries of BNP’s Dhaka North and South city units.

The party has appointed Brigadier General (retd) AKM Shamsul Islam as the chief security officer to oversee the security of Tarique and his mother, the party Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

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