



Biweekly Election Update

30 October - 12 November 2023

Summary

In recent events in Bangladesh, the political landscape has been marked by escalating tensions and crackdowns between the ruling Awami League (AL) and opposition parties, primarily the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP). The AL has pledged to resist what it perceives as 'anarchy' instigated by the BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami.¹ Meanwhile, the Election Commission continued its preparations for the upcoming election amidst the ongoing political violence against the backdrop of nationwide blockades called by BNP and its allies.² The schedule for the upcoming election had also been said to be announced in the first half of November 2023, while the election itself is likely to take place between 6 and 9 January 2024.³

The international community has shown increasing concern, with foreign missions issuing joint statements and representatives giving statements, urging restraint and a conducive environment for a free, fair, and participatory election.⁴ The US condemned political violence, pledging support for democracy, while the UN and Amnesty International expressed worries about human rights

¹ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216353/al-led-alliance-vows-to-resist-anarchies-of-bnp-jamaat>

² <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/6x6am3i567;>
<https://www.newagebd.net/article/217216/bnp-allies-announce-fresh-48hrs-blockade>

³ <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/elections/news/natl-election-likely-between-january-6-9-3462596>

⁴ <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/7-foreign-missions-urge-restraint-following-two-days-violence-3456931;>

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/217042/stop-excessive-use-of-force-to-suppress-protests-intl-rights-orgs-urge-bangladesh-govt;> <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216413/violence-during-political-programmes-unacceptable-us;>
<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/elections-cannot-be-fair-when-opposition-targeted-hrw-3458756>

violations and Human Rights Watch urged the release of political prisoners.⁵ Dialogue efforts between the political parties also faced obstacles with the AL rejecting talks with the BNP.⁶

As arrests of major and local opposition leaders and activists mounted, reaching around 10,000 arrests by the end of this biweekly reporting period, the political scenario saw diplomatic engagements, including US Ambassador Peter Haas' meeting with the Election Commission and statements from international actors like the EU and Canadian Parliament Members.⁷ The domestic situation remained tense, marked by arrests, disappearances, and protests, while the Election Commission attempted to engage political parties for discussions on election preparations, despite challenges posed by the absence of key opposition figures.⁸

Despite international calls for dialogue and concerns over human rights, the domestic political scene in Bangladesh continues to be marked by arrests, protests, and uncertainty regarding the upcoming election. The Chief Election Commissioner emphasised the commitment to holding the election on time, even as the opposition called for blockades.⁹ Overall, the summary underscores the complexity and gargantuan challenges faced in navigating the path to a free and fair election in Bangladesh.

Glossary				
Political Parties	Govt. Officials	Election Commission	International	Others

⁵ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/fp44e04w06>

⁶ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216606/no-dialogue-with-bnp-quader>

⁷ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/g5nyexz9w4>;

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/haas-calls-dialogue-without-preconditions-deescalate-violence-3457801>;

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/216967/us-eu-express-concern-over-arrest-of-opposition-activists-in-bangladesh>;

<https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/9brbo6ow0u>

⁸ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/2qyt2yhg3u>;

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/216514/ec-wants-discussion-with-parties-says-no-comment-on-question-over-bnp>;

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/elections/news/bnp-among-nine-parties-skip-second-session-talks-ec-3461326>;

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/217449/three-jcd-leaders-still-untraced-for-six-days>

⁹ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/3sccqpsbpw>

October 30

The AL-led 14-Party Alliance vowed to resist the ‘anarchy’ that was being created by BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami, at their rally in Dhaka.¹⁰

BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia is being kept under the observation of specialists for three days following a successful liver surgery.¹¹

The body of a Swechchhasebak Dal leader in handcuffs was recovered in Cumilla from near his house following a police raid at his house.¹²

The Election Commission had said that they will continue their preparation for the upcoming election despite the political violence. The Election Commission Secretary had also said that there are no major obstacles to holding an election at the moment.¹³

The Information and Broadcast Minister had said that there is no scope for dialogues with a “terrorist organisation” like the BNP.¹⁴

The Foreign Minister briefed diplomats, UN agencies and international organisations regarding Bangladesh’s political situation, and had said that BNP “unleashed chaos” on October 28.¹⁵

Seven foreign missions in Bangladesh signed and issued a joint statement calling on all stakeholders to exercise restraint when it comes to violence and to work together to create a conducive environment for a free, fair and participatory election.¹⁶

The Election Monitoring Forum (EMF) had said that the upcoming national election in Bangladesh should be participatory. They had also called on the government to hold a dialogue with the political parties, following a visit to the Election Commission office by an EMF delegation.¹⁷

¹⁰ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216353/al-led-alliance-vows-to-resist-anarchies-of-bnp-jamaat>

¹¹ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/dyjyh7j072>

¹² <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216350/one-dies-500-arrested-as-police-keep-hunting-bnp-across-bangladesh>

¹³ <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/politics/news/ecs-preparations-go-despite-political-violence-3456556>;

<https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/xe3oyqkxxy>

¹⁴ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/spvu1e8yo7>

¹⁵ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/415s4znr0j>

¹⁶

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/7-foreign-missions-urge-restraint-following-two-days-violence-3456931>

¹⁷ <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/emf-calls-participatory-election-3456726>

US State Department Spokesperson Mathew Miller had said that the US condemns the political violence that happened on October 28 and encourages the relevant authority to investigate the incidents surrounding the rally, and hold the individuals responsible for the violence accountable. He further said that the US will take action to support democracy in Bangladesh if necessary.¹⁸

October 31

AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader had said that AL's 'peace and development' rallies will continue throughout the country until further notice. AL leaders and activists were seen on the streets across Dhaka and elsewhere in the country with sticks, protesting against the blockade in rallies and processions.¹⁹

BNP had sent a letter to multiple foreign diplomats, including the US, informing them about the violent attacks against them by the government on October 28 at Nayapaltan.²⁰

Amar Bangladesh (AB) Party held a rally in Dhaka in solidarity with the three-day blockade, and to protest against the crackdown on BNP leaders and activists and the vandalism of AB Party's central office as well as the mass arrests. BNP and other like-minded parties also held rallies and staged demonstrations across Dhaka in support of the blockade. Meanwhile, Jamaat-e-Islami had also announced a three-day nationwide blockade from October 31.²¹

BNP Standing Committee Member Mirza Abbas and Joint Secretary General Syed Moazzem Hossain Alal were arrested by the Detective Branch of Police (DB). Prior to this, an arrest warrant was also issued against Mirza Abbas regarding a corruption case that was filed against him in 2007 by the Anti-Corruption Commission.²²

¹⁸ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216413/violence-during-political-programmes-unacceptable-us>

¹⁹ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216393/peace-rally-to-continue-al>;

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/216481/al-continues-to-remain-on-streets-with-processions-rallies>

²⁰ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/xsvwrdsqde>;

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/216382/bnp-sends-letters-to-foreign-missions-accusing-govt-for-oct-28-crackdown>

²¹ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/ti9uyy28n9>; <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/zjicyklt53>;

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/216500/ganatantra-mancha-urges-people-to-observe-blockade>

²² <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/g5nyexz9w4>; <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/3vasxbk18v>

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal-JSD, a partner of Ganatantra Mancha, had called on the government to stop restricting the mass movement against the government with the use of force, and had put forth a five-point demand to resolve the ongoing political crisis.²³

Several Jatiya Party (JP) MP's had told the parliament that the country's economic situation might worsen if the upcoming election is one-sided. They had also called upon the PM to hold dialogues with the political parties and find a solution to the political crises. Furthermore, JP lawmaker Hafiz Uddin raised a question to the parliament regarding whether the upcoming election will be conducted like the election of 2014.²⁴

The PM had said that she will hold a dialogue with "killers" the day US President Joe Biden holds a dialogue with former US President Donald Trump.²⁵

The Election Commission had decided to hold dialogues with registered political parties on November 4 to inform them of the preparations being made for the upcoming election.²⁶

The PM had told the EMF delegation that Bangladesh is committed to holding a free and fair election.²⁷

US Ambassador Peter Haas held a meeting with the Election Commission, where the Chief Election Commissioner had said that there is no alternative to holding the upcoming election on time. He further said that the upcoming election will be held as per schedule regardless of whether the electoral environment is favourable or not. Following the meeting, Peter Haas called for an unconditional dialogue between all the political parties, and that any action that undermines the electoral process brings into question the ability to have a free and fair election.²⁸

²³ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216480/stop-applying-forces-to-restrict-mass-movement-jsd>; Note: The Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (National Socialist Party) is split into two factions - the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal-JSD, which supports the opposition, and the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal-Jasad, which supports the ruling party.

²⁴ <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/politics/news/hold-dialogue-resolve-crisis-3458461>;
<https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/parliament/vcz32qi2jr>

²⁵ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/government/ek2kb120k3>

²⁶ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216496/ec-says-polls-on-time-dialogue-on-preparation-on-nov-4>

²⁷ <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/govt-committed-free-fair-natl-polls-pm-3457551>

²⁸ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/local-news/0iuuq63atd>;
<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/haas-calls-dialogue-without-preconditions-deescalate-violence-3457801>;

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/elections/news/polls-will-be-held-scheduled-regardless-whether-environment-favourable-cec-3457896>

US State Department Spokesperson Mathew Miller had said that the US is “closely monitoring” the pre-election electoral environment in Bangladesh, and that they take incidents of violence “very seriously”.²⁹

Amnesty International urged the Bangladeshi government to stop their crackdown on the protestors which also signals an attempt to clamp down on dissenting voices ahead of the upcoming election.³⁰

The UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres expressed his concern regarding the violence that had unfolded during the political rallies.³¹

The UNOHCHR called for the government to observe restraint to stop the political tension, and to ensure that human rights are upheld prior to, during and following the election. They had also mentioned protesters and “masked individuals riding on motorcycles, who are thought to have been ruling party supporters” who had assaulted around 30 journalists.³²

The British High Commissioner Sarah Cooke called on all stakeholders to “exercise restraint, shun violence and work together to create the conditions for free, fair, participatory, and peaceful elections”. She said this during a meeting with AL leaders.³³

Top officials of law enforcement agencies had said that they are in favour of sending the ballot papers to the polling stations the day before the election, citing a lack of manpower as the reason behind why they cannot be sent to the Stations on election day.³⁴

November 1

DB picked up Masud Rana, Member Secretary of Ward 7 of Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal south unit. When asked, the DB had said that they had not picked up anyone of that name. His whereabouts remained unknown until he was produced before a court on November 8 in a case related to the political violence that took place on October 28 during BNP’s grand rally.³⁵

²⁹ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216509/us-takes-political-violence-in-bangladesh-very-seriously-miller>

³⁰ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216408/ai-urges-bangladesh-authorities-to-stop-crackdown-on-protesters>

³¹ <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/un-chief-calls-all-parties-bangladesh-refrain-violence-3457891>

³² <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/ke8pxfx0je;>

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/216503/oct-28-masked-attackers-thought-to-have-been-ruling-party-supporters-uns-ohchr>

³³ <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/diplomacy/news/exercise-restraint-shun-violence-uk-envoy-3458391>

³⁴ <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/top-cops-sending-ballots-day-polls-3457366>

³⁵ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216861/whereabouts-of-juba-dal-leader-not-known-for-3-days-family;>

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/217202/whereabouts-of-khilgaon-juba-dal-leader-not-known-for-six-days>

BNP Joint Secretary General Syed Moazzem Hossain Alal and Standing Committee Member Mirza Abbas were handed a five-day remand by the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court in Dhaka.³⁶

Islami Andolan Bangladesh (IAB) received permission from the Dhaka Metropolitan Police to hold a rally at Suhrawardy Udyan on November 3. The objective of the rally is to demand for the dissolution of the parliament, holding the upcoming election under a "national government", introduction of a proportional electoral system and the resignation of the current Election Commission.³⁷

The Home Minister had said that they are ready to hold dialogues with anyone, as long as they come without any conditions.³⁸

The Foreign Ministry, in a statement, had said that they reject the suggestion made by the UNOHCHR in their press note on October 31 that the 'masked individuals' on motorcycles were ruling party supporters. They also expect the UNOHCHR to rectify their press note and to "reviews its method of collection and verification of the information before publishing".³⁹

The Government had sent letters to foreign missions to invite international observers and journalists interested in observing the upcoming election.⁴⁰

Election Commission Secretary Jahangir Alam had said that the Election Commission was committed to hold the upcoming national election on time as per the Constitution. He had also said that the Election Commission wishes to hold discussions with 44 parties registered with the Election Commission regarding ways to hold the upcoming election in a free and fair manner. He had "no comments" to how BNP would attend this discussion given that "its Chairperson was not attending political programmes, the Secretary General was in jail, and other senior leaders [are] either in jail or in hiding."⁴¹

³⁶ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/9bv9x6jc7l>;
<https://www.newagebd.net/article/216513/mirza-abbas-put-on-five-day-remand-in-violence-case>

³⁷

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/politics/news/islami-andolan-gets-dmp-nod-hold-rally-city-tomorrow-3459391>

³⁸ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/2f1beym3s5>

³⁹ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216573/bangladesh-govt-expects-un-rights-body-to-rectify-report-on-violence>

⁴⁰ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/fqfew1efg3>

⁴¹ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216512/ec-committed-to-hold-elections-on-time-as-per-constitution>;

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/216514/ec-wants-discussion-with-parties-says-no-comment-on-question-over-bnp>

The Election Commission had sent letters to 44 registered political parties, including BNP, to attend a discussion meeting on November 4 regarding the progress of the preparation of the upcoming election. However, the BNP central party office is still under police control so there is no one to receive the letter. Furthermore, three of its top leaders are in prison and the others are in hiding. The Election Commission had also directed concerned ministries and departments to perform their duties properly to organise a free and fair election.⁴²

Stéphane Dujarric, Spokesperson for the UN Secretary-General, had said that they do not want to see any harassment, arbitrary arrest or violence in Bangladesh while the country's general elections are nearing.⁴³

Human Rights Watch (HRW) had called upon Bangladesh's international partners to insist that the upcoming election cannot be fair when the opposition is targeted, harassed and put in jail. They had also made a call to free political prisoners and protect the right to peaceful assembly.⁴⁴

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Turk urged the PM to release BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia from prison and enable her to go abroad for urgent treatment.⁴⁵

November 2

BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami had called for a 48-hour nationwide blockade from November 5.⁴⁶

The Police arrested Zahir Uddin Swapon, a senior leader of BNP and Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury, BNP Standing Committee Member and former minister.⁴⁷

JP Secretary General Mujibul Haque Chunnu called upon the PM while speaking at the Parliament, to call all political parties for a dialogue regarding the election. JP leader and Chief

⁴² <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/2qyt2yhq3u;>
<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/elections/news/fulfil-responsibilities-properly-fair-peaceful-polls-ec-tells-ministries-3458916>

⁴³ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216593/un-for-no-harassment-arbitrary-arrest-or-violence-in-bangladesh>

⁴⁴

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/elections-cannot-be-fair-when-opposition-targeted-hrw-3458756>

⁴⁵ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/3iixv2lu76>

⁴⁶ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/8nzo7pdea6;>

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/politics/countrywide-blockade/news/jamaat-calls-48-hr-countrywide-blockade-sunday-3460161>

⁴⁷ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/tqluuasptz;>
<https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/4ae1wh0dim>

	Patron Raushan Ershad had also told the Parliament that the upcoming election should be free, fair, impartial and participatory; and that the state power must change through the elections. ⁴⁸
	AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader had said that dialogues cannot be held with a “terrorist party” like BNP. ⁴⁹
	Almost 120 million individuals have been enlisted as voters for the upcoming national election, as was revealed by the Election Commission. ⁵⁰
	British High Commissioner Sarah Cooke urged all stakeholders to create an environment for a free, fair and participatory election without violence, during a meeting with BNP leaders. ⁵¹
	US Ambassador Peter Haas held a meeting with the Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh Masud Bin Momen at the Padma state guesthouse in Dhaka. The details of the meeting were not divulged to the media following the meeting, nor would the Foreign Ministry comment on it without the presence of the Secretary. The US Embassy had simply said that they spoke to a wide variety of institutions “that helped them better understand Bangladesh and strengthen their bilateral relations.” ⁵²
	The Parliament had passed the Ansar Battalion Bill, 2023, however, the Ansar Battalion was not given the power to make arrests and search individuals. ⁵³
November 3	
	The Police detained BNP Joint Secretary General Mujibur Rahman Sarwar from a house in Mohammadpur, Dhaka. ⁵⁴
	People identifying themselves as the DB detained BNP’s Dhaka City North Unit Joint Convener Anwaruzzaman and Chhatra Dal's Vice President Nazmul Ahsan. The Dhaka Metropolitan Police said they have no knowledge regarding their detention. ⁵⁵

⁴⁸ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/vouu4hmhyd>;

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/politics/news/raushan-calls-participatory-elections-3460376>

⁴⁹ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216606/no-dialogue-with-bnp-quader>

⁵⁰ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216612/about-12-crore-voters-enlisted-for-natl-polls>

⁵¹

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/216684/british-envoy-to-bangladesh-urges-parties-to-create-environment-avoid-violence>

⁵² <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216674/us-ambassador-holds-meeting-with-bangladesh-foreign-secy>

⁵³ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216671/ansars-cant-arrest-search>

⁵⁴ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216692/bnp-leader-mujibur-rahman-sarwar-detained-in-dhaka-party>

⁵⁵ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/ld1lvey83e>

BNP Standing Committee Member Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury and Media Cell Convener Zahir Uddin Swapan were both placed on a six-day remand in police custody. They were both sent to jail following their six-day remand.⁵⁶

IAB during their rally made a four-point demand, including an ultimatum to AL to step down by November 10 and hand their power over to a 'national government' comprising all the registered political parties.⁵⁷

The Commonwealth will send a Pre-Election Assessment Mission (PEAM) to Dhaka from November 19-23, as confirmed by the Chief Election Commissioner.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216698/khasru-swapan-placed-in-police-custody-as-crackdown-on-https://docs.google.com/document/d/10o90dDnM6clts16frX5XdaVsJk4V55QrrCRPWwBh-qU/edit>

⁵⁷ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216697/hand-over-power-to-natl-govt-by-nov-10-iab>

⁵⁸ <https://www.thedailystar.net/top-news/news/commonwealth-send-pre-election-mission-nov-19-3460521>

November 4	
	BNP announced a dawn-to-dusk strike in Chattogram for November 5 to protest against the arrest of BNP Standing Committee Member Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury and his remand by the DB. ⁵⁹
	Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Juba Dal leader Rajib Hasan was picked up by a group of plain-clothed people who introduced themselves as DB members from a relatives house in Dakkhin Banasree, Dhaka. His whereabouts still remain unknown. ⁶⁰
	The DB detained BNP Organising Secretary Syed Emran Saleh Prince from his sister's house in Badda, Dhaka. He was later placed on a three-day remand in police custody. ⁶¹
	JP Chairman GM Quader had said that they will participate in the upcoming election only if they are held in a credible manner. ⁶²
	Only 14 parties out of the initial 22 invited for the first session of the discussion with the Election Commission regarding the preparations for the upcoming national election attended it. Furthermore, only 13 parties out of the other 22 invited for the second session attended the discussion. Awami League Presidium Member Faruk Khan had said that the Constitution does not mention anything regarding the inclusion of BNP in the upcoming national election. ⁶³
	The Chief Election Commissioner had urged the parties to solve the ongoing political crisis as the Election Commission has neither the capacity nor the mandate to do so. ⁶⁴
November 5	
	RAB arrested BNP leader Sabira Nazmul from Jashore in a case filed on October 31 for allegedly carrying out activities of sabotage. ⁶⁵

⁵⁹ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216788/bnp-calls-hartal-in-chattogram-for-today>

⁶⁰ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/217202/whereabouts-of-khilgaon-juba-dal-leader-not-known-for-six-days>

⁶¹ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216802/police-detain-bnp-organising-secy-emran-saleh-prince-party>;

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/216887/bnp-organising-secy-prince-placed-on-three-day-remand>

⁶² <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/politics/news/will-boycott-polls-if-its-not-credible-3461651>

⁶³

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/elections/news/bnp-among-nine-parties-skip-second-session-talks-ec-3461326>;

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/216782/ecs-discussion-with-registered-political-parties-begins>;

<https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/444aqdt5l8>; <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/jx0d5fzldu>

⁶⁴ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216842/ec-incapable-of-resolving-crisis-cec>

⁶⁵ <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/elections/news/natl-election-likely-between-january-6-9-3462596>

	BNP Vice-Chairman Barrister Shahjahan Omar (Bir Uttam) was arrested by the law enforcement agency from Dhaka. He was later given a four-day remand in police custody, following which he was sent to jail. ⁶⁶
	BNP Vice-Chairman Air Vice Marshal (Retd.) Altaf Hossain Chowdhury was arrested by RAB from Tongi, Gazipur. ⁶⁷
	The AB Party condemned the arrests of national leaders and demanded their immediate release, during a demonstration which the police had stopped forcefully at one point. ⁶⁸
	Law Minister Anisul Haq had said that BNP leaders were being arrested not for their political background, but for their involvement with criminal activities. ⁶⁹
	Josep Borrell Fontelles, High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy had expressed concern over the arrest of more than 8,000 BNP leaders and activists. He had also stressed finding a peaceful way to hold a participatory election. The US had also agreed to this statement. Meanwhile, AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader had said that the EU's statement had an "information gap". ⁷⁰
	The Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord Implementation Movement called on all political parties to include their demand for implementing the 1997 Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord in their upcoming election manifestos. ⁷¹
November 6	

⁶⁶ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216876/bnp-vice-chairman-shahjahan-omar-arrested-party>;
<https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/2af80tvckm>;
<https://www.newagebd.net/article/217277/six-activists-still-untraced-after-detention-bnp>; Note: Bir Uttam is the second highest award for individual gallantry in Bangladesh, and the highest gallantry award for a living individual for their bravery during the 1971 Liberation War

⁶⁷ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216870/bnp-leader-altaf-hossain-chowdhury-detained-from-tongi>

⁶⁸ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/mxv6zoist0>

⁶⁹ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216882/bnp-leaders-arrested-not-for-political-reasons-law-minister>

⁷⁰ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216967/us-eu-express-concern-over-arrest-of-opposition-activists-in-bangladesh>;
<https://www.newagebd.net/article/216962/eu-statement-over-crackdown-on-opposition-has-info-gap-quader>

⁷¹

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/216972/political-parties-urged-to-prioritise-cht-accord-implementation-in-election-manifestos>; Note: The Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord Implementation Movement is a platform pressing for the full execution of the 1997 Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord. The Accord allowed for the recognition of the rights of the peoples and tribes of the Chittagong Hill Tracts region and ended the decades-long insurgency between the United People's Party of the Chittagong Hill Tracts and government forces.

BNP leader Shamsuzzaman Dudu was picked up from his sister's house in Cantonment, Dhaka by around 15 people who had identified themselves as members of DB. He was placed on a three-day remand by the Court, and was later sent to jail. Meanwhile, BNP Joint Secretary General Syed Moazzem Hossain Alal was sent to jail following his five-day remand.⁷²

Three Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal leaders were picked up and disappeared by the Police from their residences in Dhaka. They remain missing.⁷³

Leaders of Ganatantra Mancha urged the Election Commission to not announce the schedule for the upcoming election without resolving the current political crisis.⁷⁴

BNP and its allies announced another 48-hour nationwide blockade from November 8.⁷⁵

The Election Commission is continuing to prepare for the upcoming national election amidst the political violence. Preparations are underway under the assumption that the polls will take place between January 6 and 9, 2024.⁷⁶

Eight international rights organisations submitted a joint statement urging the government of Bangladesh to stop using excessive force and resorting to violence to suppress protests.⁷⁷

US State Department Principal Deputy Spokesperson Vedant Patel had said that the US is engaging with the Bangladesh government, opposition parties, civil society, and other stakeholders to have them work together ahead of the upcoming election. He also said that the US is closely monitoring the electoral environment in Bangladesh.⁷⁸

⁷² <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216943/bnp-leader-shamsuzzaman-dudu-picked-up-from-sisters-dhaka-home>; <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/politics/news/shamsuzzaman-dudu-placed-3-day-remand-alal-sent-jail-3463126>; <https://www.newagebd.net/article/217277/six-activists-still-untraced-after-detention-bnp>; See Notes 13 and 28

⁷³ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/217449/three-jcd-leaders-still-untraced-for-six-days>

⁷⁴ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/217015/ec-urged-to-refrain-from-announcing-polls-schedule-now>

⁷⁵ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216970/bnp-allies-declare-fresh-48-hr-blockade-across-bangladesh>;

<https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/wwdz0ckbi8>;

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/politics/countrywide-blockade/news/jamaat-declares-blockade-nov-8-9-3463286>

⁷⁶ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/6x6am3i567>;

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/elections/news/natl-election-likely-between-january-6-9-3462596>

⁷⁷

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/217042/stop-excessive-use-of-force-to-suppress-protests-intl-rights-orgs-urge-bangladesh-govt>

⁷⁸

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/elections/news/us-engaging-govt-opposition-other-stakeholders-polls-3463701>; <https://www.newagebd.net/article/217047/us-closely-monitoring-electoral-environment-in-bangladesh>

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police had announced that they will reward individuals with Tk. 20,000 if they can help the police catch arsonists with evidence.⁷⁹

November 7

BNP had said that around 9,000 of its leaders and activists have been arrested nationwide thus far, in mass arrests which had started a few days before their scheduled October 28 grand rally.⁸⁰

The Police had picked up BNP's Pirojpur District Unit Member Secretary Gazi Wahiduzzaman Lavlu from Bailey Road, Dhaka and took him to the DB office.⁸¹

AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader had said that they do not care about statements given by other countries or unions. He made this remark a day after the EU voiced their concern regarding the mass arrest of opposition leaders and activists.⁸²

Election Commissioners are yet to reach a unanimous decision regarding the process of appointing poll officers for the upcoming election.⁸³

The Chief Election Commissioner held separate meetings with the chiefs of three intelligence agencies, however, the agenda of the meetings is unknown.⁸⁴

Members of the Police are being awarded promotions left and right days before the upcoming election. 329 police officers were promoted to the posts of Additional Deputy Inspector General and Superintendent of Police.⁸⁵

November 8

BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi had said that the movement against the current ruling party will continue until democracy has been restored.⁸⁶

⁷⁹ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/216965/dmp-announces-reward-for-help-with-catching-arsonists>

⁸⁰ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/217115/bnp-faces-9000-arrests-in-recent-raids>

⁸¹

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/217091/police-pick-up-pirojpur-bnp-leader-wahiduzzaman-from-dhakas-bailey-road>

⁸² <https://www.newagebd.net/article/217116/we-dont-care-about-any-countrys-statement-al>

⁸³ <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/elections/news/ec-yet-decide-appointing-polls-officials-3463446>

⁸⁴ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/y4aebv1lx5>

⁸⁵ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/217071/promotion-spreed-in-police-days-before-election-schedule>

⁸⁶ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/1wa3jkl6zl>

	<p>Law enforcement agencies have arrested over 500 leaders and activists in the last 24 hours. The Police and AL men have also vandalised the residences of multiple BNP leaders and activists and continue to do so.⁸⁷</p>
	<p>The Left Democratic Alliance (LDA) demanded the immediate resignation of the current government to resolve the ongoing political issue, at a press conference.⁸⁸</p>
	<p>State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam hoped that there will be no need to summon foreign diplomats for any issues before the upcoming election. He had said this after being asked by a reporter whether foreign diplomats will be summoned following their statements regarding Bangladesh's internal politics. He had also said that the foreign diplomats should be patient as the election schedule will be announced soon.⁸⁹</p>
	<p>The Election Commission had said that the EU, the Commonwealth and the National Democratic Institute have “expressed their desire to monitor” the upcoming election.”⁹⁰</p>
	<p>Election commission (EC) Secretary Md Jahangir Alam had said that the environment for announcing the schedule of the upcoming election exists. The schedule will be announced on the first half of November.⁹¹</p>
	<p>The US State Department had said that the threat made by Chattogram's Banshkhali upazila's Chambol union Awami League Convenor Mujibul Haque Chowdhury to beat US Ambassador Peter Haas up, is “deeply unhelpful”.⁹²</p>
	<p>Eight Parliament Members of Canada's House of Commons sent a letter to the Bangladesh PM calling for free and fair elections in Bangladesh.⁹³</p>
<p>November 9</p>	

⁸⁷ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/217184/police-al-men-vandalise-bnp-peoples-houses>

⁸⁸ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/217145/lda-demands-resignation-of-al-govt>

⁸⁹

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/diplomacy/news/shahriar-hopes-diplomats-be-careful-about-what-they-say-3465196>; <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/z7cluzymv0>

⁹⁰

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/elections/news/2024-polls-eu-commonwealth-ndi-interested-monitoring-says-ec-3464671>

⁹¹ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/20ctpcipul>;

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/217144/ec-now-says-environment-favourable-for-announcing-polls-schedule>

⁹² <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/crg5ogkk0p>

⁹³ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/9brbo6ow0u>

AL formed an election management committee to launch electoral activities for the upcoming election. ⁹⁴
BNP's Brahmanbaria District Convening Committee member Hafizur Rahman Mollah was arrested by RAB in connection with two sabotage cases. ⁹⁵
Six BNP activists still remain untraced after they were picked up by the Police in Dhaka and Cox's Bazaar. ⁹⁶
BNP and its allies called a 48-hour nationwide blockade from November 12. ⁹⁷
Jatiyatabadi Juba Dal activist Rajib Hasan was produced before the Dhaka Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court, after being picked up by plain-clothed people and disappeared on November 4. ⁹⁸
The Home Minister had said that they are still trying to hold the upcoming election on time with the participation of all the parties, and "despite disruptions". ⁹⁹
The Chief Election Commission had met with the President Mohammad Shahabuddin to brief him regarding the preparations for the upcoming election. The President urged the Election Commission to "ensure democratic and constitutional continuity of the country at any cost". Following this meeting, the Chief Election Commissioner had said that the upcoming organisation must be organised on time "at any cost". He further said that the election schedule will have to be announced soon and that the upcoming election must be held before January 29. ¹⁰⁰

⁹⁴ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/217254/al-launches-electoral-activities-forms-management-committee>

⁹⁵

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/politics/news/brahmanbaria-bnp-leader-hafizur-arrested-sabotage-case-s-3465406>

⁹⁶ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/217277/six-activists-still-untraced-after-detention-bnp>

⁹⁷ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/217216/bnp-allies-announce-fresh-48hrs-blockade>;

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/politics/countrywide-blockade/news/jamaat-calls-48-hour-blockade-sun-day-3465941>

⁹⁸ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/217345/juba-dal-activist-missing-for-5-days-appear-at-court>; See Note 51

⁹⁹ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/217273/were-still-trying-to-hold-election-involving-all-parties-hm>;

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/elections/news/polls-be-held-time-despite-disruptions-3466181>

¹⁰⁰ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/3sccqpsbpw>;

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/217212/cec-briefs-president-about-preparations-for-upcoming-polls>;

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/elections/news/ensure-democratic-constitutional-continuity-any-cost-president-tells-ec-3465516>

Chinese Ambassador Yao Wen had said that they want stability in Bangladesh and that they will continue their cooperation, but it is up to the people of Bangladesh to determine how they want to see the upcoming election.¹⁰¹

The Indian Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi had said that they have “no comments” regarding the arrests of opposition leaders in Bangladesh, however, it respects the democratic process in Bangladesh.¹⁰²

CIVICUS and the Asian Human Rights Commission submitted a joint statement calling upon the UN member states to use Bangladesh’s upcoming UPR session to call out Bangladesh’s repeated and ongoing failure to implement previous recommendations related to civic freedom.¹⁰³

November 10

The Socialist Party of Bangladesh had said that the people will not accept a unilateral general election schedule. They had also called upon the government to resign from power before the upcoming general election, and hold the upcoming election under a neutral caretaker government in a free and fair manner.¹⁰⁴

Tangail District BNP General Secretary Advocate Farhad Iqbal and three local Jubo Dal leaders in Feni were sent to jail in two separate sabotage cases.¹⁰⁵

A total of 17 cases against 1,200 BNP leaders and activists were filed in Sylhet within the past 12 days.¹⁰⁶

Election Commissioner Md. Anisur Rahman had said that the election schedule may be announced within a week.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰¹

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/china-wont-interfere-bangladeshs-internal-affairs-envoy-3465491>

¹⁰² <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/7j1x2i6mim>

¹⁰³

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/217207/un-states-urged-to-call-out-bangladesh-govts-violations-of-civic-freedoms>

¹⁰⁴ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/217299/people-wont-accept-unilateral-general-election-schedule-spb>

¹⁰⁵

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/politics/news/sabotage-cases-tangail-feni-bnp-leaders-sent-jail-346655>

¹⁰⁶

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/crime-justice/news/1200-bnp-jamaat-men-sued-17-cases-sylhet-3466591>

¹⁰⁷

<https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/6tg7z5660n>

	The PM ordered action against the AL leader who had threatened to beat US Ambassador Peter Haas up. ¹⁰⁸
	Agricultural Minister Md Abdur Razzaque had said that the upcoming polls will be held on time even if BNP does not participate in it. ¹⁰⁹
	Indian Foreign Secretary Vinay Mohan Kwatra had said that the upcoming election in Bangladesh is Bangladesh's internal matter and that it is for the Bangladeshis to decide their future. He said this following the India-US 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue. He had also said that India has shared their perspective on Bangladesh "very clearly" during the Dialogue. ¹¹⁰
	Around 10,000 BNP leaders and activists have been arrested within the last two weeks according to an estimate by a Deputy Inspector General of Police who is posted in Dhaka. ¹¹¹
November 11	
	The DB arrested Bangladesh Jatiya Dal Chairman Syed Ehsanul Huda from Shegunbagicha, Dhaka. He was later placed on a six-day remand by the court in a case lodged regarding the attack on the Chief Justice's residence during BNP's grand rally on October 28. ¹¹²
	Amnesty International had said that the UN member states must use the upcoming UPR on Bangladesh to hold Bangladesh accountable for the mass human rights violations ahead of the upcoming election. ¹¹³
	University Grants Commission Member Professor Sazzad Hossain urged university teachers to work towards bringing "at least 80 percent voters" to polling stations for the upcoming election. ¹¹⁴
November 12	

¹⁰⁸ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/217360/pm-orders-action-against-al-leader-for-threatening-us-ambassador>; See Note 83

¹⁰⁹ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/217321/polls-on-time-even-if-bnp-does-not-participate-minister>

¹¹⁰ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/217297/bangladeshs-general-election-internal-matter-india-tells-us>

¹¹¹ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/217355/bnp-peoples-arrest-across-bangladesh-tops-10000>

¹¹² <https://www.newagebd.net/article/217480/jatiya-dal-chairman-on-6-day-remand-in-cj-residence-attack-case>

¹¹³ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/xa6iim7y28>

¹¹⁴

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/ugc-member-urges-teachers-ensure-80pc-turnout-polls-3467581>

A bus was set on fire near an AL 'peace rally' in Mirpur, Dhaka while the Police were present nearby. On the other hand, a man carrying a firearm was seen at the very front of an AL procession in Nandail, Mymensingh.¹¹⁵

IAB had announced that they will besiege the Election Commission in Dhaka the day the Election Commission announces the election schedule.¹¹⁶

The Chief Election Commissioner had said that the introduction of an online nomination system will make the election process more transparent, easy and fair. He said this during the inauguration of the Online Nomination Submission System and 'Smart Election Management BD' application. The application will help voters find poll-related information via the application.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/politics/e2hunxfg33>; <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/city/04zlawwspr>

¹¹⁶ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/217473/iab-to-besiege-ec-if-polls-schedule-announced>

¹¹⁷ <https://www.newagebd.net/article/217514/online-system-to-make-polls-process-fair-cec>;
<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/online-nomination-reduce-polls-code-violations-3468306>;
<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/elections/news/ec-roll-out-mobile-app-voters-3467356>