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Titel:	The Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami (BJI) political party, including its ideology, structure, leadership, membership and membership documents, associated organizations and factions, and activities; its relationship to the group Hefazat-e-Islam; its treatment of political opponents and their supporters; the treatment of BJI members and supporters by political opponents and the authorities (2023-June 2025)
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4 July 2025

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Bangladesh : The Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami (BJI) [JI; JeI] political party, including its ideology, structure, leadership, membership and membership documents, associated organizations and factions, and activities; its relationship to the group Hefazat-e-Islam; its treatment of political opponents and their supporters; the treatment of BJI members

and supporters by political opponents and the authorities (2023-June 2025)

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

1. Overview

Sources describe the BJI as Bangladesh's "largest" Islamic political party (US 2024-04-22, 42; EFSAS 2017-03; Al Jazeera 2024-08-28). Sources indicate that the Jamaat-e-Islami party was founded by Abul Ala Maududi in 1941 (EFSAS 2024-04; Sinan Siyech 2023-07-15) in India (EFSAS 2024-04). A November 2022 report by Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) notes that the Jamaat-e-Islami is "an Islamist political party that supported the Pakistani army during the independence war in 1971" (2022-11-30, para. 3.85). According to the European Foundation for South Asian Studies (EFSAS), a think-tank based in the Netherlands that provides analysis and research on South Asian matters and is funded by the EU (EFSAS n.d.), the Jamaat-e-Islami split into Bangladesh and Pakistan chapters following the 1971 war when Bangladesh became independent [from Pakistan] (2024-04).

The *Times of India*, a daily newspaper based in India, notes that the BJI was founded in Bangladesh in 1975 (2024-08-06). According to a 2017 article on the BJI website, the party became "an Islamic political movement" in May 1979 after a constitutional amendment in 1977 removed the ban blocking the formation of an Islamic political party (2017-01-06a).

1.1 Ideology and Objectives

According to EFSAS, the original Jamaat-e-Islami aimed to "revive Islam" by opposing "foreign imperialism" and "the growing secularization and Westernization of Muslims" in the Indian subcontinent (2024-04).

In another 2017 article on its website, the BJI states that the party works "to implement the Islamic code of life ... with a view to turning Bangladesh into an Islamic welfare state" (2017-01-06b).

The *Economic Times*, an Indian newspaper owned by the media conglomerate Times Group which also owns the *Times of India* (Bloomberg 2024-11-21), reports that the BJI's "political agenda focuses on promoting Islamic values and implementing Sharia law within the political framework of the country" (2025-01-13). A 2016 article on the BJI website notes that the BJI participates in politics because Islamic law can only be implemented with "political force" (2016-12-31).

Sources report that the BJI "[r]ebrand[ed]" itself following the July–August 2024 protests (*The Diplomat* 2025-05-03) or the fall of the Awami League (AL) government in August 2024 (ThePrint 2025-02-12). According to an article written by Shafi Md Mostofa, an associate professor of world religions and culture at the University of Dhaka [who is also a security studies scholar with an interest in political Islam (*The Diplomat* 2024-09-02)], for the *Diplomat* [1], the BJI is pivoting to become an "Islamist left" party, offering "a blend of Islamic values with social and economic equity, inclusivity and broader citizenship rights" (*The Diplomat* 2025-05-03). The same source adds that the BJI is advocating for universal financial security and social welfare; it has also expressed support for full citizenship rights for minorities, which is a change from its previous "hardline positions" (*The Diplomat* 2025-05-03). ThePrint, an online news source based in India (ThePrint n.d.), similarly indicates that the BJI "has rebranded itself as 'moderate' and 'democratic', and is advocating for a peaceful transition to an Islamic welfare state" (2025-02-12). The *Diplomat* article notes that the BJI is seeking to appeal to a younger generation with this change, as the party has had "limited electoral success" in the past (2025-05-03). The *Economic Times* similarly states that the BJI has been aiming to "reassert its presence in Bangladesh,"

but notes that this is "particularly in rural areas and among conservative sections of the population" (2025-01-13).

1.2 Structure

The BJI's Constitution provides the following:

Chapter-III

Organizational Structure of Jamaat

Organizational Level[s]

Section 12

The organizational level[s] of Jamaat are as follows:

- Central Organization/Body;
- District/City Corporation [or Metropolitan] Organization/Body;
- Upazila/Thana [2] Organization/Body;
- Municipality/Union Organization/Body[;] and
- Ward Organization/Body.

Central Body

Section 13

The central organization of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami shall be created comprising the following bodies or posts:

1. National Council;
2. Ameer-e-Jamaat [3];
3. Central Majlish-e-Shura [4];
4. Central Working Committee[;] and
5. Central Executive Committee.

...

National Council

Section 14

1. National Council shall be considered as the highest forum of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami[.]

...

3. National Council will be formed comprising Ameer-e-Jamaat, [a]ll members (Male & Female) of Central Majlish-e-Shura, District/City level Ameer, [a]ll the Majlish-e-Shura member[s] (Male/Female) of the district/city level organizations, all the Majlish-e-Shura member[s] (Male/Female) of the Upa[z]ila/Thana level organizations and those members who have been elected Parliament Members, Upazila Chairman, Vice Chairman and Municipality Mayor.

4. Ameer-e-Jamaat will [be] the President of the National Council.

5. The duration of the National Council will be three years.

...

The Ameer-e-Jamaat

Section 15

...

2. The Ameer-e-Jamaat shall be elected for a period of three years by the Members (Rukons) in a direct election through secret ballot/vote.

...

The Central Majlish-e-Shura

Section 18

1. There shall be a Majlish-e-Shura in order to determine principles and to take important decisions. The name of this Majlish will be 'the Central Majlish-e-Shura or 'Majlish-e-Shura, Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami'.

2. The duration of the Central Majlish-e-Shura will be for three years.

...

4. The Central Majlish-e-Shura shall be formed in the following manner:

- a. The member[s] of the Majlish-e-Shura shall be elected in accordance with the ratio of representation of Members (Rukons) as determined by the outgoing ... Central Working Committee/Executive Committee but no organizational district shall be deprived of representation.
- b. There shall be representation in the Central Unit in accordance with the ratio of representation of Members (Rukons) as determined by the outgoing Central Working Committee/Executive Committee.
- c. The members elected in accordance with clauses (a) and (b) of subsection 4 shall at the second stage elect thirty members of the Majlish from amongst all the members (Rukons) of the whole country.

...

The Central Working Committee and

The Central Executive Committee

Section-23

A. Central Working Committee

1. The Central Working Committee shall be composed in combination of such number of Nayebe-Ameer(s) [5] as it requires, a Secretary General, required number of Assistant [S]ecretary Generals, Departmental Secretaries, and other members for assisting the Ameer-e-Jamaat in all forms.

...

B. The Central Executive Committee

Section-24

1. The Central Executive Committee shall be composed of members not exceeding 21 (twenty[-]one) in order to ensure the implementation of the decisions taken by the Central Majlish-e-Shura and the Central Working Committee.

...

District/ Metropolitan Organization

Section-31

...

2. The District/Metropolitan Organization shall be composed in combination of the District/Metropolitan members, District/Metropolitan Ameer, District/Metropolitan Majlish-e-Shura and the District/Metropolitan Working Committee.

...

Upazila/Thana Organization

Section-44

1. The Upazila/Thana Organization shall be composed in combination of the Body of Thana/Upazila Members (Rukons), the Upazila/Thana Ameer, the Upazila/Thana Majlish-e-Shura, if fulfills criteria, the Upazila/Thana Working Committee.

...

The Municipality/Union/Ward Majlish-e-Shura

Section-53

1. The Municipality/Union/Ward Majlish-e-Shura shall be composed of fifteen or more members (Rukons).

...

(BJI 2020-01, bold in original)

1.3 Leadership

According to the BJI's website, Shafiqur Rahman was elected as ameer in 2020 and re-elected in 2022 for the 2023-2025 term (2022-10-31). Sources indicate that Mia Ghulam Parwar is secretary general (VOA

2024-08-29; BJI 2025-05-03). In an article published in April 2025 on its website, the BJI lists the following individuals among its leaders:

- Nayebe-ameer: Mujibur Rahman;
- Assistant secretaries general: Rafiqul Islam Khan, Abdul Halim, Muazzam Hossain Helal, Ahsanul Mahboob Zubair;
- Central Executive Council members: Mobarak Hossain, Matiur Rahman Akanda (also the Secretary of the Central Publicity and Media Department), Nurul Islam Bulbul (also the Ameer of Dhaka City South) and Mohammad Selim Uddin (also the Ameer of Dhaka City North) (BJI 2025-04-13).

A May 2025 article on the BJI website notes the following individuals as assistant secretaries general: ATM Masum, AHM Hamidur Rahman Azad, Md Shahjahan and Ahsanul Mahboob Zubayer (2025-05-03).

According to sources, some BJI leaders have been convicted and sentenced to death in the 2010s by a tribunal [established by the AL government (UN 2025-02-12, para. 252)] investigating war crimes committed during the 1971 war of independence; 6 have been executed (UN 2025-02-12, para. 252; BBC 2016-09-04). However, sources interviewed for a fact-finding report on the 2024 protests by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), including lawyers and human rights defenders, noted "doubts" regarding the ability of the war crimes tribunal to conduct "genuinely independent, fair and effective proceedings" (UN 2025-02-12, para. 254).

1.4 Membership and Membership Documents

The BJI Constitution provides the following:

Chapter-II

Member (Rukon): Conditions, procedure, duties and responsibilities

Conditions for being a Member (Rukon)

Section-7

Any sane and adult (major) person of Bangladesh may be a member (Rukon) of Jamaat if he/she-

[p]erforms all the Farj (mandatory) and wajib (recommended) activities and may keep himself/herself from Kabira Gunnah (major sins)

abstains from such ways of income that [are] contrary to the submission to Allah and are illegal;

gives up the moveable and immoveable property acquired in the forbidden (haaram) way or misappropriated or ill-gotten from the actual owner, or returns the property to the actual owner;

... is in better position in the context of attaining moral and ethical values does not keep relationship with such party or organization whose policy[,] aims, or objectives are contrary to the basic principle[s] of Islam and to the aims, objectives and policy of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami;

is considered as competent as [a] member (Rukon) in the eye[s] of responsible persons of the organization.

Procedure of being a member (Rukon)

Section-8

If any competent person qualified under section-7 signifies his/her intention to be a member (Rukon), the membership (Rukoniat) of that person may be granted/approved in accordance with the procedure prescribed by the Central Executive Committee The person to whom membership is granted shall take oath before the Ameer-e-Jamaat or his representative and from the day of taking oath he shall be regarded as a member (Rukon) of the organization.

Duties and responsibilities of member (Rukon)

Section-9

...

B) Every member (Rukon) of Jamaat-e-Islami shall present in details the basic principles (Aakida) of Islam and the aims and objectives of Jamaat-e-Islami to the acquainted people and beyond that wherever he can approach, to the Bendas (human creatures) of Allah and shall inspire those who will accept these basic principles and aims and objectives to strive collectively for the establishment of Din of Allah and shall urge them to become the Member (Rukon) of Jamaat-e-Islami who will be ready to take part in this collective effort.

Section-10

Any citizen of Bangladesh conforming to the aims and objectives and programs of Jamaat-e-Islami may be the associate member of Jamaat.

Section-11

Any non-[M]uslim citizen of Bangladesh can be an associate member of Jamaat-e-Islami if he/she expresses solidarity with the political and economic programs of Jamaat-e-Islami. (BJI 2020-01, bold in original)

On its website, the BJI states that membership is limited to "committed" Muslims and that only members can become BJI leaders (2017-01-06a). The BJI also notes that its leaders are "democra[tically]" elected by members and that coming from "an influential family" is not a prerequisite for serving in BJI leadership (2017-01-06b).

According to the November 2022 report from Australia's DFAT, members of BJI "generally keep a low profile and ... do not campaign actively or publicly"; recruitment of new members is done "clandestine[ly]" "through personal connections" (2022-11-30, para. 3.87). The same source adds that "[t]he size of the party has shrunk in recent years and many former members [have] instead joined other parties, including the AL, though some have joined other Islamist movements, which may or may not be

similar" (Australia 2022-11-30, para. 3.87). In contrast, the *Daily Star*, an English-language daily newspaper in Bangladesh [6], cites a police intelligence report as indicating that the number of BJI permanent members has grown from 23,863 in 2008 to 73,046 in 2023 and the number of BJI activists has grown from 221,000 in 2008 to 639,000 in 2023 (2023-06-14). In an interview with the *Diplomat*, Shafi Md Mostofa noted that while the BJI lacks electoral support, the party has a base of "active workers and street activists" who can be mobilized to conduct "visible activism," giving the "impression of a much larger following" (*The Diplomat* 2024-09-02).

A copy of an application form to become a BJI associate member is available on the BJI website (BJI 2017-01-12).

Information on membership documents could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

1.5 Factions and Associated Organizations

Information on BJI factions and allied organizations was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

Sources indicate that the Chhatra Shibir [Bangladesh Islami Chhatra Shibir; Chhatrashibir; Chhatra Sangha] is the student wing of the BJI (Sinan Siyech 2023-07-15; *The Times of India* 2024-08-06) or a student organization "generally seen as linked" to the BJI (UN 2025-02-12, para. 11). According to sources, the BJI and its associated organizations, including the Chhatra Shibir, were banned by the AL government on 1 August 2024, but that ban was lifted by the interim government on 28 August 2024 (*Dhaka Tribune* 2024-08-28; *Prothom Alo* 2024-08-28).

Sources report that the BJI has been allied with the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) (VOA 2024-08-29; Australia 2022-11-30, para. 3.85), the "largest opposition party" under Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's AL government (VOA 2024-08-29). However, Australia's DFAT cites October 2021 media reports as noting that the BNP was reconsidering its alliance with the BJI due to "ideological differences" (2022-11-30, para. 3.85). According to *Prothom Alo*, a Bangladesh daily newspaper [7], the BNP and BJI were allies for "nearly" 22 years, but their relationship "weakened" when a multi-party coalition led by the BNP ended in 2022 (2025-01-16). A July 2024 article by Bdnews24.com, an online newspaper based in Bangladesh [8], reports that, after "prolonged disputes," the BJI "is no longer part of the BNP-led alliance" (2024-07-31). A January 2025 article by the *Economic Times* indicates that the BNP "has been trying to distance itself" from the BJI "to gain more support from secular and international communities" (2025-01-13). The same source adds that the BJI's goals "sometimes" conflict with those of the BNP (*The Economic Times* 2025-01-13). *Prothom Alo* notes that since the fall of the AL government, the BJI and BNP have fought over several issues, including the extent of changes to be made to Bangladesh's constitution, the role the AL should be allowed to play in politics, the removal of President Mohammed [Mohammad] Shahabuddin and the extent of electoral reforms to be completed before the next election (2025-01-16). The *Economic Times* notes that that the level of hostility between the parties is "unprecedented" and can be seen through "harsh" exchanges on social media between the parties' followers (2025-01-13). *Dhaka Tribune*, an English-language newspaper in Bangladesh [9], reports that in January 2025 a clash between supporters of the BNP and the BJI occurred over the election of a school committee in Mirpur, Kushtia district, resulting in 25 individuals injured and 1 BJI supporter deceased (2025-01-12).

1.6 Activities

Information on the BJI's activities was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

The BJI website lists the following categories for its activities:

- preaching,
- social and labour welfare,
- training and educational programs,
- political programs,
- health services,
- cultural activities,
- agricultural development,
- youth and sports, and
- international activities (BJI n.d.).

The BJI website further states that the party issues "political resolutions and statements" to "advise" the national government, including criticism and corrections for "wrong" measures adopted by the government, and organizes "non-violent" public meetings and marches (2017-01-06a).

The 2022 report from Australia's DFAT states that the BJI was unable to officially register as a political party under the AL government but was able to run candidates in a "small number of seats" during the 2018 elections "under the banner of the Jatiya Oikya Front [10]," of which the BNP is also a member (2022-11-30, para. 3.85).

According to the OHCHR fact-finding report, members of the Chhatra Shibir participated in the "umbrella movement" Students Against Discrimination (SAD), [which spearheaded the July-August 2024 protests against the Hasina government (Al Jazeera 2024-10-27)]; when SAD called for "a complete shutdown" of key roads and transportation infrastructure beginning 18 July 2024, "many" BJI supporters came out in

support (UN 2025-02-12, para. 299). In his interview with the *Diplomat*, Mostofa similarly noted that BJI followers "openly backed" the student protests (*The Diplomat* 2024-09-02).

According to sources, immediately after the fall of the AL government in August 2024, the BJI party reopened its central office, which had been closed for the previous 13 years (Bdnews24.com 2024-08-06; UNB 2024-08-06).

Sources indicate that in August 2024 in Chattogram, the Chhatra Shibir "took control" of 2 colleges (*The Daily Star* 2024-08-08) or leaders and activists from Chhatra Shibir were seen at 2 colleges (*The Business Standard* 2024-08-07). The *Economic Times* notes that the BJI has been using its student wing "to expand its influence in public universities and rural communities" (2025-01-13).

2. Relationship with Hefazat-e-Islam

Information on the relationship between the BJI and the Hefazat-e-Islam was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

Agence France-Press (AFP) describes Hefazat-e-Islam as a "hugely influential pressure group," made up of an alliance of different parties and Muslim organizations, that advocates for the implementation of sharia law (2025-05-02). According to *Prothom Alo*, in an attempt to create an electoral alliance of religion-based parties to contest the next election, BJI leaders met with leaders of other Islamist groups, including Hefazat-e-Islam's joint secretary general (2024-09-25). Similarly, the AFP notes that political parties, including the BJI, are courting the support of the Hefazat-e-Islam (2025-05-02).

3. Treatment of Political Opponents and Their Supporters by the BJI

Information on the treatment of political opponents and their supporters by the BJI was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

3.1 Under the AL Government

Australia's DFAT indicates that "[i]n the lead-up to and following the 2014 elections, Jamaat-e-Islami activists launched a wave of attacks against the Hindu community, killing more than two dozen, destroying hundreds of homes and businesses, and displacing thousands" (2022-11-30, para. 3.45).

The US Department of State's *International Religious Freedom Report for 2023* cites an Ahmadi community member who described a series of social media posts, "widely considered by observers" to be pro-BJI, condemning police efforts to end anti-Ahmadi violence that occurred in Ahmednagar (US 2024-06-26, 19).

The Associated Press (AP) reports that then-prime minister Hasina and her allies "blamed" the BJI and Chhatra Shibir for "inciting" violence during the July–August 2024 protests and imposed a ban on them in August 2024 (2024-08-01). However, the UN fact-finding report on the 2024 protests states that the AL government and its security forces had "systematically engaged in serious human rights violations, including hundreds of extrajudicial killings" and "other use of force violations involving serious injuries to thousands of protesters," to "suppress the protests and related expressions of dissent" (2025-02-12, i). The same source adds that Hasina and other senior government representatives "falsely accus[ed]" BNP and BJI members of the violence committed by the security forces (UN 2025-02-12, para. 250).

3.2 After the AL Government's Resignation

The information in the following paragraph was provided in the OHCHR fact-finding report on the July-August 2024 protests:

Beginning on 5 August 2024, "enraged crowds ... attacked Awami League officials and offices. In some cases, supporters of BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami were involved, according to witness testimony." According to some witnesses, on 15 August 2024 BJI and BNP supporters attacked AL supporters attending a commemoration, resulting in dozens injured, including many female AL supporters; 1 AL leader "reportedly died." "Some local members and supporters of the BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami opposition parties bear responsibility for human rights abuses committed during revenge attacks, including against members of the Hindu community." However, after 6 August 2025, there were "localized" efforts by political groups, including the BJI, to protect the property and places of worship of the Hindu community. BJI leaders publicly condemned the attacks. While "some members, supporters and local leaders" of the BJI participated in "some of the abuses," OHCHR "found no information showing that such human rights abuses were orchestrated at a national leadership level" (UN 2025-02-12, para. 217, 221, 268, 234, 303).

In a report based on Bangladesh media sources and internal data, Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), a Bangladeshi legal aid and human rights organization (ASK n.d.), provides the following statistics:

"Political Violence" from January to May 2025

Parties Involved	Number of Incidents	Number of People Injured	Number of Deaths
BJI and BNP	14	183	2
BJI and AL	2	5	0

Parties Involved	Number of Incidents	Number of People Injured	Number of Deaths
Chhatra Shibir and Chhatra League [AL's student wing (Al Jazeera 2024-10-27)]	1	3	0
Total (including violence between political parties, between members of the same party and between parties and law enforcement)	243	2473	55

(ASK 2025-06-19)

The Foundation for Human Rights Culture (Manabadhikar Shongskriti Foundation, MSF) [11] notes in a report [12] on events from 1 May to 31 May 2025 that out of a total of 54 incidents of "political violence," 6 were between BJI and BNP members and 1 was between BJI and AL members; 1 BJI member was killed in the BJI–AL incident ([2025-06], 8–9, 17).

Sources indicate that some members of Chhatra Shibir attacked a Sylhet-based college student, who is also a member of the student organization Talamiyah Islamiya [Talamiz-e-Islamia], in response to a Facebook post by the student (*The Daily Star* 2025-02-21; *The Business Standard* 2025-02-23); following the attack, the BJI's Metropolitan Ameer for Sylhet acknowledged the incident and issued a public condemnation (*The Business Standard* 2025-02-23). Sources indicate that at Rajshahi University, Chhatra Shibir members "attacked" (*Prothom Alo* 2025-05-28) or "confronted" (*Dhaka Tribune* 2025-05-28) students protesting a BJI leader's acquittal from war crimes charges (*Dhaka Tribune* 2025-05-28; *Prothom Alo* 2025-05-28), leading to "[a]t least" 10 people injured (*Dhaka Tribune* 2025-05-28).

4. Treatment of BJI Members and Supporters by Political Opponents and the Authorities

Information on the treatment of BJI members and supporters by political opponents after the fall of the AL government could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

4.1 Treatment by Authorities Under the AL Government

Sources report that, in 2013, the BJI was prohibited from running candidates in elections (AP 2024-08-01; *The Times of India* 2024-08-06; VOA 2024-08-29) and deregistered as a political party by the Election Commission (VOA 2024-08-29; AP 2024-08-01). According to the Voice of America (VOA), a US international broadcaster funded by the US Congress (VOA n.d.), the ban followed the establishment of the International Crimes Tribunal "which tried and convicted several senior Jamaat officials of war crimes [committed] during the 1971 conflict" (2024-08-29).

Sources indicate that the party was banned by the AL government on 1 August 2024 (*The Diplomat* 2024-09-02; AP 2024-08-01; *Dhaka Tribune* 2024-08-28), under the Anti-Terrorism Act (*Dhaka Tribune* 2024-08-28). According to the *Dhaka Tribune*, government officials released a notice on the same day stating that the party and its student wing "were responsible for the genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during the Liberation War in 1971" and that it believed that both organizations "were involved in terrorist activities" (2024-08-28).

The information in the following paragraph was provided in the report by Australia's DFAT:

The AL "has sought to restrict the activities of opposition political parties, particularly the BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami." BJI "[m]embers and supporters ... keep a low profile" to avoid "attention from authorities," and

"[p]eople who are perceived as being supporters of [the BJI] claim that they have been followed or intimidated by people they allege to be connected to the government, including when overseas." According to DFAT sources, "sometimes" BJI affiliation is "used as a slur." DFAT is not "aware of societal discrimination against JI members" but indicates that they "may experience fewer employment and business opportunities due to the underground nature of their personal and professional networks" (Australia 2022-11-30, para. 3.86, 3.69, 3.89)

The *Times of India* reports that after the 1 August 2024 ban on the BJI, law enforcement authorities "target[ed] offices and publication houses associated with the [BJI and its affiliates] in an effort to dismantle its operations within the country" (2024-08-06).

According to the US *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2023*, BJI leaders and members complained of not being able to "consistently exercise their constitutional freedoms of speech and assembly" due to "harassment" by law enforcement; the police "frequently" denied the BJI permission to hold rallies, although it received permission "in a few instances" (2024-04-22, 42). The same source cites June 2023 media reports as indicating that before the 2023 national elections, "police headquarters ordered units across the country to speed up pending criminal cases" involving potential BJI and BNP candidates, with instructions to collaborate with the judiciary to expedite cases and coordinate witness testimony, in order to have these candidates "declared disqualified for the election" (US 2024-04-22, 43).

4.2 Treatment by Authorities After the AL Government's Resignation

Sources report that the ban imposed on the BJI by the AL government was lifted by the interim government on 28 August 2024 (*The Indian Express* 2024-08-30; Al Jazeera 2024-08-28; *Dhaka Tribune* 2024-08-

28). Bdnews24.com indicates that the BJI appealed the high court decision that revoked its registration as a political party (2025-05-14). According to sources, BJI's party registration with the Election Commission was restored after a Supreme Court decision taken on 27 May 2025 (Al Jazeera 2025-06-01; AFP 2025-06-01), making it eligible to run in the next election (Al Jazeera 2025-06-01).

Sources indicate that the BJI held a rally in Dhaka [and across the country (*The Business Standard* 2025-02-18)] in February 2025 to demand the release of one of its leaders from prison (*Dhaka Tribune* 2025-02-18; *The Business Standard* 2025-02-18). According to Al Jazeera, the leader was released in May 2025 when the Supreme Court overturned his conviction (2025-06-01).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

Notes

[1] The *Diplomat* is a magazine that publishes analysis and commentary focusing on the Asia-Pacific region (*The Diplomat* n.d.).

[2] Upazila means sub-district; these were previously called thanas (Australia 2022-11-30, para. 2.29).

[3] An ameer-e-jamaat is the *ameer* (head) of the BJI (BJI 2017-03-05). He is responsible for directing the organization, determining its principles and strategies and deciding "all important matters" in consultation with the central committees (BJI 2017-03-05).

[4] The Central Majlish-e-Shura (Consultation Forum) is the BJI committee in charge of determining principles and making important decisions, whose members are elected for a term of 3 years, with the Ameer-e-Jamaat as the ex officio chairman of the committee (BJI 2017-03-12).

[5] Nayeb-e-ameer [nayeb-e-amir] means deputy chief (bdnews24.com 2023-08-15).

[6] Sources indicate that the *Daily Star* is owned by Transcom Group, which also owns *Prothom Alo* (Shongjog MSP 2021-10-12; BBC 2025-05-16). Sources indicate that the *Daily Star* has a "reputation for non-partisan quality reportage" (Shongjog MSP 2021-10-12) or has been critical of the AL government on "various issues" (BBC 2016-02-18) or has "maintain[ed] a certain editorial independence" from the government (RSF [2025]).

[7] Sources indicate that *Prothom Alo* is owned by Transcom Group, which also owns the *Daily Star* (BBC 2025-05-16; Shongjog MSP 2021-10-12). Sources indicate that *Prothom Alo* has "maintain[ed] a certain editorial independence" from the government (RSF [2025]) or "does not exhibit a particular political leaning," but has been critical of the AL government for corruption and other issues (BBC 2025-05-16).

[8] According to the Shongjog Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSP), a "collaborative effort made up of government, international and national NGOs and other groups" and funded by UK Aid that "ensure[s] that there are identified credible sources of information" and "aim[s] to promote trust between communities and the disaster response sector" (Shongjog MSP n.d.), bdnews24.com is run by a former BBC broadcaster and "draws bipartisan support" (Shongjog MSP 2021-10-12).

[9] According to the Shongjog MSP, the *Dhaka Tribune's* parent company is 2A Media Limited, a subsidiary of Gemcon Group, which is owned by an AL politician (Shongjog MSP 2021-10-12). However, BBC Monitoring

indicates that the *Dhaka Tribune* is "known to be liberal and impartial" (BBC 2025-05-16).

[10] The Jatiya Oikya Front was an anti-government alliance of opposition political parties launched on 13 October 2018, for which the founding partners included the BNP, the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD), Gono Forum and Nagorik Oikya (*Prothom Alo* 2020-12-06). A 2020 *Prothom Alo* article indicates that the alliance has become "inactive and ineffective" (*Prothom Alo* 2020-12-06).

[11] The Manabadhikar Shongskriti Foundation (MSF) is an "independent" NGO in Bangladesh that seeks to "protect and promote human rights across the country" (MSF n.d.).

[12] MSF notes that the report was prepared based on media reports with "almost every case ... verified by local human rights defenders" (MSF [2025-06], 17).

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