

CHINESE INFLUENCE OPERATIONS IN BANGLADESH



AN INVESTIGATIVE REPORT BY
INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM REPORTIKA

This investigative report reveals how China shapes Bangladesh's media, influencers, education, and think tanks to push its foreign policy agenda.

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Chinese Influence Operations in Bangladesh

Over the past decade, China has steadily deepened its strategic footprint in Bangladesh—not only through infrastructure and trade, but also by shaping public discourse, academic narratives, and policy thinking. This report investigates how Chinese influence is now permeating Bangladeshi media, social media, legacy journalism, think tanks, and educational institutions. Through a calculated mix of partnerships, soft power diplomacy, and information management strategies, Beijing has embedded itself within the very architecture of Bangladesh's informational and educational landscape.

Since the political transition that led to the ouster of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and the rise of unelected Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus, this influence has grown notably more aggressive and targeted. While China's economic presence in Bangladesh has long been visible, its efforts to control the narrative and sway public sentiment have accelerated in recent months—often under the radar.

From glowing media coverage of China-backed jute initiatives to frequent publication of geopolitically loaded stories unrelated to Bangladesh, a pattern of alignment with Beijing's interests is evident. Influential think tanks are hosting Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) promotion events; universities are expanding Chinese partnerships and language programs; and prominent journalists and social media influencers are echoing narratives favorable to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

This investigation draws on a broad body of evidence—spanning news articles, institutional collaborations, diplomatic signals, and social media analysis—to expose the subtle but systematic manner in which China is shaping the national discourse in one of South Asia's most geopolitically significant nations.

Media Influence

1. Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS)

Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) is the news agency of Bangladesh. BSS was established on 1 January 1972 by the Government of Bangladesh soon after the Bangladesh Liberation War. Mahbub Morshed is the current managing director and chief editor of the agency.

News Exchange Agreements with Chinese Groups:

- Signed **MoUs with China Media Group (CMG) and Xinhua News Agency in July 2024**, during Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to China. (Link: <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/dhaka-beijing-sign-21-instruments-announce-7-projects-3653501>)
- **News Exchange Agreement with Xinhua:** Signed in 2023, this agreement enables content sharing between BSS and Xinhua, focusing on news related to Bangladesh-China relations, such as BRI projects (e.g., Padma Bridge) and diplomatic events. It promotes positive coverage of China's role in Bangladesh.

16. The MoU between the China Media Group (CMG) and Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS).
17. The MoU between the China Media Group (CMG) and BTV.
18. An Agreement between the Xinhua News Agency and BSS.
19. An Agreement between the Xinhua News Agency and BTV.

Figure 1 The BSS mentioned in the list of agreements signed between China and Bangladesh



Figure 2 News reports on BSS showcasing its alignment with China and Chinese Media

- **Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS)** routinely publishes press releases from the Chinese Embassy and reprints Xinhua News Agency articles verbatim, often irrespective of their direct relevance to Bangladesh. This consistent practice reflects a strong alignment with Beijing's official narratives and frequently promotes China's strategic and political messaging without critical analysis.
- Following is a comprehensive analysis of articles, news reports, and editorials published by BSS in March and April 2025, with particular emphasis on the diplomatic visit of Chief Adviser (CA) Yunus to China from March 26 to March 29, 2025

Overall Statistics

- **Criteria:**
 - **Pro-China:** Articles that portray China positively, highlight cooperation, investments, or cultural ties with Bangladesh, or defend Chinese policies/interests.
 - **Anti-China:** Articles that criticize China, highlight tensions, debt traps, human rights issues, or geopolitical concerns involving China.
 - **Neutral:** Articles that mention China without clear positive or negative bias or focus on factual reporting without judgment.
- **Total China-Related Articles:** 127
- **Pro-China:** 57 (44.9%)
- **Anti-China:** 11 (8.7%)
- **Neutral:** 59 (46.5%)

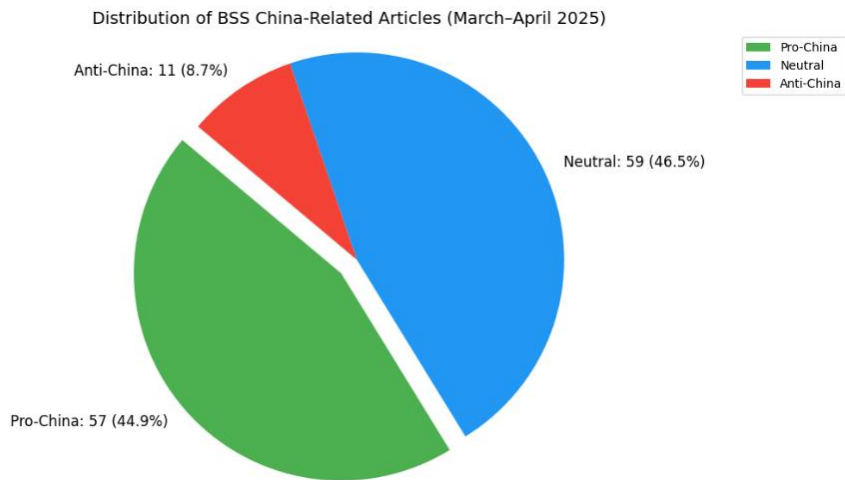


Figure 3 Distribution of China Related Articles Published on Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS)

Before CA's Visit (March 1–25, 2025)

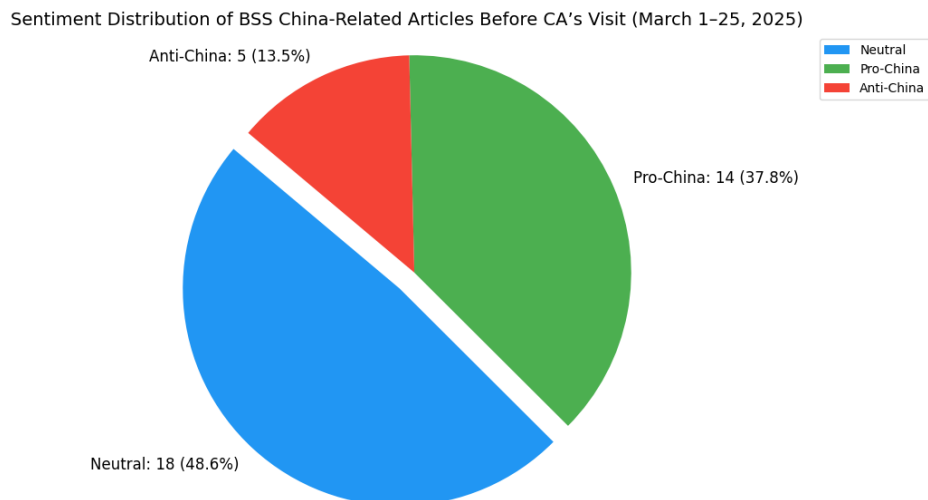


Figure 4 Distribution of China Related Articles Published on BSS before CA Yunus' visit

Total Articles: 37

Pro-China: 14

- Chinese lessons in Saudi schools show growing ties (4 Mar)
- China-Russia ties a 'constant in a turbulent world': Chinese FM (7 Mar)
- China to use AI in elder care as population ages: official (9 Mar)
- China eyes increases investment in Bangladesh's key sectors: envoy (11 Mar)
- Debut of Manus AI digital assistant from China causes stir (11 Mar)
- Chinese solar panel giant Longi to invest in Bangladesh: envoy (16 Mar)
- Chief Adviser goes to China Mar 26, meets President Xi Mar 28: Shafiqul (16 Mar)
- China says to pursue 'correct' path of globalisation (23 Mar)
- CA's visit to China will be a milestone: Envoy (23 Mar)
- China says seeking to deepen ties with France in 'turbulent' world (24 Mar)
- China to import mango, guava, jackfruit from Bangladesh (20 Mar)
- Yunus to hold talks with Xi on March 28: Foreign Ministry (13 Mar)
- CA leaves for China tomorrow, meets President Xi Mar 28 (25 Mar)

- CA's China visit to focus on drawing foreign investment: Alam (25 Mar)
- Several instruments to be signed during CA's visit to China (25 Mar)
- BEPZA chief eyes high-end product manufacturing industries in CA's China visit (19 Mar)

Categories of Focus

- **Economic Cooperation:** China's investments in Bangladesh, including key sectors and fruit imports (e.g., "China eyes increases investment in Bangladesh's key sectors: envoy" [11 Mar]).
- **Diplomacy and Global Role:** China's diplomatic efforts with Bangladesh, France, and Russia (e.g., "China says seeking to deepen ties with France" [24 Mar]).
- **Technological Innovation:** Advancements in AI for elder care and digital assistants (e.g., "China to use AI in elder care" [9 Mar]).
- **Bangladesh-China Relations:** Anticipation of CA Yunus's visit and bilateral agreements (e.g., "CA's visit to China will be a milestone: Envoy" [23 Mar]).

Anti-China: 5

- Hong Kong firm offloads Panama ports after Trump pressure (5 Mar)
- China-US trade war heats up as Beijing's tariffs take effect (10 Mar)
- Beijing warns UK against 'provoking tensions' over South China Sea (11 Mar)
- China warns ICC against 'politicisation' in arrest of Duterte (11 Mar)
- China says acted 'in accordance with the law' after Canadians executed (20 Mar)

Categories of Focus

- **Geopolitical Tensions:** China's confrontational stance in disputes, such as South China Sea warnings to the UK and ICC criticism over Duterte's arrest (e.g., "Beijing warns UK against 'provoking tensions' over South China Sea" [11 Mar]).
- **Trade Conflicts and Controversies:** Escalating US-China trade war and controversial actions like executing Canadians, portraying China negatively (e.g., "China-US trade war heats up as Beijing's tariffs take effect" [10 Mar]).

Neutral: 18

- China's defence spending to rise by 7.2% in 2025: official document (5 Mar)
- China says to impose fresh tariffs on US agricultural imports (4 Mar)
- China consumption slump deepens as February prices drop (9 Mar)
- China says to slap fresh tariffs on Canadian farm, food products (8 Mar)
- China holds talks with Walmart on impact of US tariffs (12 Mar)
- Chinese tariffs on Canadian agricultural products kick in (20 Mar)
- China targeting growth of 'around 5 percent' in 2025 (5 Mar)
- China congratulates Carney on becoming Canada's next PM (10 Mar)
- US Treasury chief pushes Canada, Mexico to match tariffs on China (1 Mar)
- Iran, Russia, China to hold joint military exercises (9 Mar, 10 Mar)
- China urges all parties to 'immediately stop' clashes in Syria (10 Mar)
- China concludes 'Two Sessions' annual political meetings (11 Mar)
- China says to host Russia, Iran for nuclear talks this week (12 Mar)
- China urges 'diplomatic' solution to Iran nuclear issue ahead of Beijing talks (13 Mar)
- China calls for 'dialogue' to resolve US trade tensions (13 Mar)
- China's top diplomat says Iran nuclear issue at 'critical' juncture (14 Mar)
- China deports Japanese tourists over Great Wall buttocks pic: reports (14 Mar)
- Chinese military jet crashes, pilot safely ejects (15 Mar)
- China, Russia, Iran reaffirm dialogue as only viable option for Iranian nuclear issue (15 Mar)
- China 'welcomes' efforts towards Ukraine ceasefire after Putin-Trump call (19 Mar)

- China signals renewed tech sector support, but concerns linger (2 Mar)

During CA's Visit (March 26–29, 2025)

Sentiment Distribution of BSS China-Related Articles During CA's Visit (March 26–29, 2025)

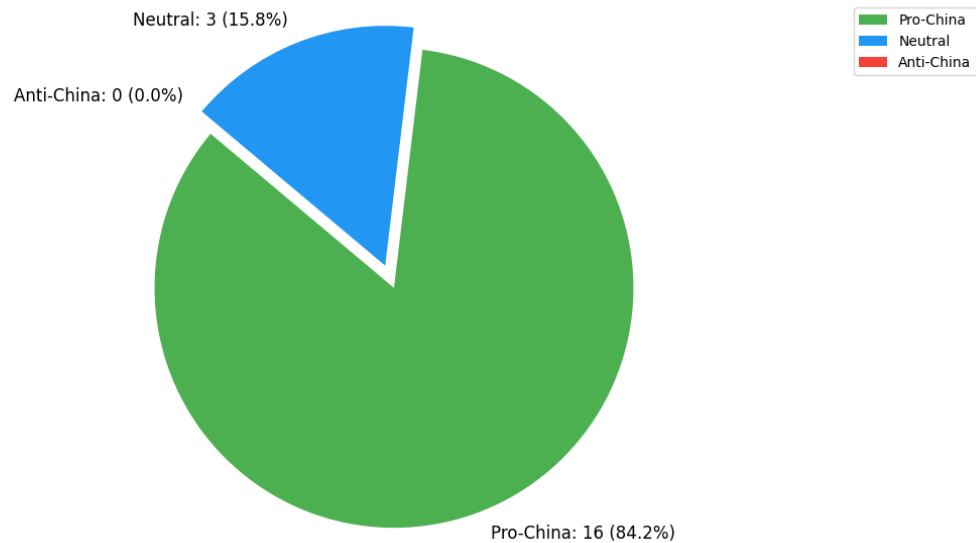


Figure 5 Distribution of China Related Articles Published on BSS during CA Yunus' visit

Total Articles: 19

Pro-China: 16

- CA arrives in Hainan to join Boao Forum meet (26 Mar)
- CA to speak at Boao Forum meet in China tomorrow (26 Mar)
- China Executive Vice Premier meets CA (27 Mar)
- China Export-Import Bank chairman calls on CA (27 Mar)
- In Beijing, France FM urges 'powerful' ties with China (27 Mar)
- Chinese Exim Bank to support relocation of manufacturing plants in Bangladesh (27 Mar)
- CA seeks FAO's support in exporting fruits, farm products to China (27 Mar)
- China and Bangladesh to deepen ties (27 Mar)
- Renowned Chinese banker meets Chief Adviser in Hainan (27 Mar)
- Chief Adviser holds talks with Chinese President (28 Mar)
- CA seeks China's greater role in establishing peace, prosperity, stability (28 Mar)
- Xi assures CA of more investment in Bangladesh (28 Mar)
- Dhaka, Beijing agree to strengthen cooperation in hydrological forecasting, flood prevention (28 Mar)
- Bangladesh and China ink 9 instruments (28 Mar)
- Dhaka seeks a 50-year master plan from Beijing for water management (28 Mar)
- Bangladesh secures commitment of \$2.1 billion in investments, loans and grants from China (28 Mar)
- Xi lauds taste of Bangladeshi mangoes, jackfruits (28 Mar)
- Bangladesh-China relations to enter new stage: CA Yunus (28 Mar)
- CA invites Chinese investors to relocate their factories to Bangladesh (29 Mar)
- Peking University confers honorary doctorate on Prof Yunus (29 Mar)
- China Eastern to operate flight on Chittagong-Kunming route (29 Mar)
- China's Xi sends quake condolences to Myanmar junta chief (29 Mar)
- CA returns home wrapping up historic China trip (29 Mar)
- CA leaves Beijing for home (29 Mar)

Categories of Focus

- **Diplomatic Engagement:** High-level meetings, including CA Yunus with Chinese leaders, strengthen bilateral ties (e.g., “Chief Adviser holds talks with Chinese President” [28 Mar]).
- **Economic Cooperation:** China’s \$2.1 billion investment and support for manufacturing and trade in Bangladesh (e.g., “Bangladesh secures commitment of \$2.1 billion in investments” [28 Mar]).
- **Cultural and Trade Bonds:** Agreements and gestures like fruit exports and an honorary doctorate for Yunus enhance relations (e.g., “Xi lauds taste of Bangladeshi mangoes, jackfruits” [28 Mar]).

Anti-China: 0

Neutral: 3

- France's top diplomat in China for talks on Ukraine, trade (27 Mar)
- China’s Xi says free trade facing 'severe challenges' (28 Mar)
- China’s top diplomat Wang Yi to visit Russia for Ukraine talks (28 Mar)

After CA’s Visit (March 30–April 30, 2025)

Sentiment Distribution of BSS China-Related Articles After CA’s Visit (March 30–April 30, 2025)

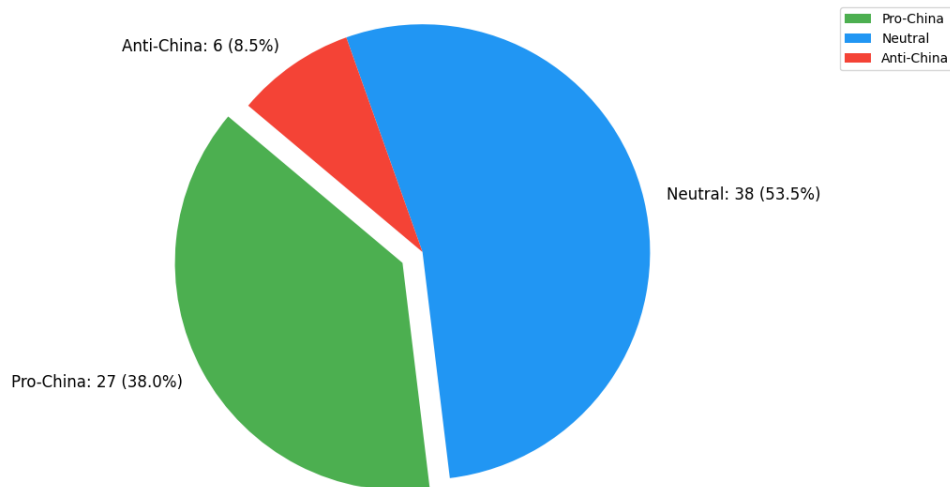


Figure 6 Distribution of China Related Articles Published on BSS After CA Yunus' visit

Total Articles: 71

Pro-China: 27

- CA’s China visit puts bilateral10. **China tells Trump to 'stop threatening and blackmailing'** (16 Apr)
- China accuses US spies of Asian Winter Games cyberattacks (15 Apr)
- China says US 'goes against the whole world' with tariff hikes (10 Apr)
- China’s Shenzhou-19 astronauts return to Earth: state media (30 Apr)
- China hopes for resolution of root causes of Ukrainian crisis (29 Apr)

- Auto Shanghai to showcase electric competition at sector's new frontier (22 Apr)
- CA's China visit puts bilateral relationship on strong footing: Khalilur Rahman (30 Mar)
- China to gift 1,000-bed hospital to Bangladesh (13 Apr)
- Chinese exports soared in March ahead of Trump's 'Liberation Day' (14 Apr)
- China's exports beat forecast in March despite trade war woes (14 Apr)
- China's economy beats forecasts ahead of Trump's 'Liberation Day' (16 Apr)
- China's Xi meets Malaysian leaders in diplomatic charm offensive (16 Apr)
- China's Xi arrives in Cambodia for state visit (17 Apr)
- Chinese investment sparks rise of Mandarin in Cambodia (17 Apr)
- China successfully launches six satellites (19 Apr)
- Sino-Bangla friendship enters new stage: Yao Wen (20 Apr)
- Bangladesh, China looks cooperation between Ctg, Yunnan (20 Apr)
- Governor of Yunnan Province of China meets Commerce Adviser (20 Apr)
- DU VC for intensifying academic ties with China (20 Apr)
- Top priority is now to move forward with plans, CA tells Chinese envoy (20 Apr)
- China to launch new crewed mission into space this week (22 Apr)
- Veteran Chinese astronaut to lead fresh crew to space station (23 Apr)
- Chinese astronauts set to blast off for space station (24 Apr)
- China says Xi to visit Vietnam, Malaysia and Cambodia next week (11 Apr)
- Maiden Chinese calligraphy exhibition begins in city (29 Apr)
- Syria FM says wants to 'strengthen relations' with China (29 Apr)
- China says wind and solar energy capacity exceeds thermal for first time (25 Apr)

Categories of Focus

- **Economic Strength:** Strong exports, space missions, and renewable energy achievements (e.g., “Chinese exports soared in March” [14 Apr]).
- **Global Diplomacy:** State visits and assertive stances against pressures (e.g., “China's Xi meets Malaysian leaders” [16 Apr]).
- **Bangladesh-China Ties:** Investments and cultural exchanges post-visit (e.g., “China to gift 1,000-bed hospital” [13 Apr]).

Anti-China: 6

- New Zealand, Philippines sign troops deal in 'deteriorating' strategic environment (30 Apr)
- France to tax small parcels from China amid tariff fallout fears (30 Apr)
- Asian markets struggle as trade war hits China factory activity (30 Apr)
- China's manufacturing shrinks in April as trade war bites (30 Apr)
- BRICS ministers meet in Brazil over Trump trade policies (28 Apr)
- China seizes disputed reef near key Philippine military outpost: report (27 Apr)
- Gunmen attack Chinese-owned power plant site in Chile (21 Apr)
- Trump says China 'reneged' on Boeing deal as tensions flare (15 Apr)

Categories of Focus

- **Geopolitical Tensions:** China's aggressive actions, like seizing a Philippine reef, and regional military deals signal instability (e.g., “China seizes disputed reef near key Philippine military outpost” [27 Apr]).
- **Trade Conflicts:** Tariffs, market struggles, and a failed Boeing deal highlight China's economic challenges (e.g., “China's manufacturing shrinks in April as trade war bites” [30 Apr]).

Neutral: 38

- Chinese tea hub branches into coffee as tastes change (30 Apr, 27 Apr)
- Xi says China must 'overcome' AI chip challenges: state media (26 Apr)
- Trump says won't fire Fed chief, signals China tariffs will come down (23 Apr)
- China says appoints new trade envoy as tariff war bites (16 Apr)
- China warns global economic climate growing 'more complex and severe' (16 Apr)
- Xi warns protectionism 'leads nowhere' as starts SE Asia tour (14 Apr)
- Trump 'optimistic' about China deal despite tariff row: White House (12 Apr)
- Hundreds of flights cancelled as strong winds sweep northern China (12 Apr)
- Fire in northern China nursing home kills 20: state media (9 Apr)
- Russian oil imports by China down 14.7% in Q1 2025: statistics (20 Apr)
- Top Iranian diplomat to visit China next week (19 Apr)
- Iranian foreign minister to visit China on Tuesday: spokesman (21 Apr)
- Trump trade deals appear distant as tariff tensions simmer (25 Apr)
- Beijing says claims of ongoing US-China trade talks 'groundless' (24 Apr)
- Chinese business in Vietnam struggles with Trump tariffs uncertainty (24 Apr)
- Trump seeks 'fair deal' with China but pathway unclear (24 Apr)
- China insists no trade talks with US, despite Trump claim (26 Apr)
- US unveils new port fees for Chinese-linked ships (18 Apr)
- Ford 'adjusts' some exports to China due to tariffs (19 Apr)
- China warns tourists to 'fully assess risks' before travelling to United States (9 Apr)
- China says raising tariffs on US products to 84%: finance ministry (9 Apr)
- China says has 'firm will and abundant means' to fight trade war: state media (9 Apr)
- Beijing slams 'irresponsible remarks' after Zelensky says Chinese recruits fighting for Russia (10 Apr)
- China to 'moderately reduce' number of US film imports: China Film Administration (10 Apr)
- China slaps 125% tariffs on US goods but to 'ignore' further hikes (11 Apr)
- China urges US to 'immediately cancel' new tariffs, calls for 'dialogue' (3 Apr)
- China's economy likely grew 5.1% in Q1 on export surge: AFP poll (15 Apr)
- China says industrial output rose 6.5% in Q1, up from previous quarter (16 Apr)
- China says ready to improve Canada ties after Carney win (29 Apr)
- China expresses condolences after pope death (22 Apr)
- Chinese delegation meets BNP (26 Apr)

Trends and Notable Observations

- **Before CA's Visit (March 1–25, 2025):**
 - Pro-China: 14 (37.8%)
 - Anti-China: 5 (13.5%)
 - Neutral: 18 (48.6%)
 - **Observations:** Neutral articles dominate, reflecting factual reporting on trade tensions and diplomatic activities. Pro-China articles focus on anticipated cooperation with Bangladesh and technological advancements, while anti-China articles highlight early trade war issues and geopolitical tensions.
- **During CA's Visit (March 26–29, 2025):**
 - Pro-China: 16 (84.2%)
 - Anti-China: 0 (0%)
 - Neutral: 3 (15.8%)
 - **Observations:** Strongly pro-China, driven by positive coverage of CA Yunus's visit, investment agreements, and diplomatic engagements, with no anti-China articles, emphasizing strengthened bilateral ties.

- **After CA's Visit (March 30–April 30, 2025):**
 - Pro-China: 27 (38.0%)
 - Anti-China: 6 (8.5%)
 - Neutral: 38 (53.5%)
 - **Observations:** Neutral articles are the majority, covering trade negotiations, economic updates, and diplomatic activities. Pro-China articles continue to highlight Bangladesh-China cooperation and other positive engagements, while anti-China articles focus on trade wars and regional tensions.

2. United News of Bangladesh (UNB)

- United News of Bangladesh (UNB) is a Bangladesh private sector news agency established in 1988. Enayetullah Khan established UNB in the 1980s. It is the first fully digitized private wire service in South Asia. UNB has news exchange agreements with other major news agencies and networks, such as Associated Press, UNI, Xinhua, Kyodo, ANSA, Suomen Tietotoimisto and . UNB is a member of international bodies such as Organization of Asian and Pacific News Agencies, Commonwealth Press Union, Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre and AsiaNet.
- Holds a **news exchange agreement with Xinhua** signed in **September 2018**.
- Frequently republishes stories from Xinhua on:
 - China's humanitarian aid to Gaza, Africa, and South Asia.
 - Chinese President Xi Jinping's diplomatic achievements.
 - U.S. aggression towards Taiwan, framed from the PRC's perspective.



Figure 7 UNB Chairman Amanullah Khan and Xinhua Bureau Chief in Dhaka Liu Chuntao signed the News Exchange Agreement in 2018. Photo: UNB



Beyond the religious rituals, Eid in China is a time for social bonding, festive meals, and charitable activities that strengthen bonds within Muslim communities and promote cultural harmony.

Eid-ul-Azha in China exemplifies a rich tapestry of religious harmony and cultural festivity, reflecting the country's commitment to multicultural coexistence and mutual respect among diverse faith communities.

Figure 8 News on UNB whitewashing the situation of Muslims in China

China leads global push for ecological civilization: Experts

UNB NEWS LOS ANGELES PUBLISH- JUNE 07, 2025, 03:59 PM XINHUA/UNB

China's railway passenger traffic surpasses 4.31 billion in 2024

UNB NEWS BEIJING PUBLISH- JUNE 06, 2025, 09:18 PM XINHUA/UNB

China's trade surges 2.5% in first five months of 2025

UNB NEWS BEIJING PUBLISH- JUNE 09, 2025, 02:08 PM XINHUA/UNB

Figure 9 UNB getting pro-China narrative updates from Xinhua News

The United News of Bangladesh (UNB) has faced scrutiny for promoting pro-China narratives, driven by its 2018 news exchange agreement with Xinhua, China's state-run news agency. This partnership facilitates content sharing, aligning with Beijing's strategy to expand global media influence. UNB's coverage often portrays China favorably across economic, cultural, environmental, and foreign policy narratives, including sensitive issues like the treatment of Muslims, which contrasts with international reports of human rights abuses. Below is a concise analysis with evidence highlighting UNB's pro-China bias.

Social Media Presence

- Facebook: [709K followers](#)
- Twitter (x): [6,160 Followers](#)
- YouTube: [144K subscribers](#)

UNB-Xinhua Agreement

In 2018, UNB signed a news exchange agreement with Xinhua to share articles, images, and videos, aiming to strengthen Bangladesh-China ties. While presented as cultural cooperation, the deal raises concerns about editorial independence, as Xinhua's content reflects the Chinese Communist Party's agenda, promoting positive narratives about China's policies, economy, and global role.

Pro-China Bias in UNB's Coverage

UNB's reporting frequently emphasizes China's economic contributions, environmental leadership, cultural harmony, and foreign policy objectives, often aligning with Beijing's messaging. This is evident in its portrayal of China as a global leader in investment, ecological initiatives, and diplomacy, as well as its selective coverage of Muslim communities in China. This bias aligns with Bangladesh's geopolitical shift toward China under Muhammad Yunus's interim government (post-2024), marked by \$2.1 billion in Chinese investments.

Key Examples

- **China's Market Remains a Magnet for Foreign Investment (2025):** This UNB article quotes a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson, portraying China's market as a global investment hub. It emphasizes economic opportunities without mentioning concerns like market access restrictions or geopolitical tensions, aligning with Beijing's narrative of economic openness.
- **China Leads Global Push for Ecological Civilization: Experts (2025):** UNB highlights China's environmental leadership, citing "experts" who praise its ecological initiatives. The article omits criticisms of China's environmental record, such as coal reliance, promoting Beijing's narrative of global sustainability leadership.
- **Eid-ul-Azha Celebrated in China with Religious Fervour and Festivity (2025):** This article describes vibrant Eid celebrations at Beijing's Niujie Mosque, emphasizing religious freedom and cultural harmony. It ignores documented Uyghur oppression in Xinjiang, aligning with China's sanitized narrative of multicultural unity.
- **How Muslims Celebrate Eid in China (2025):** UNB portrays Muslim communities in China celebrating Eid freely, omitting restrictions on Uyghurs, such as mosque surveillance or bans on religious practices, to support Beijing's claim of religious tolerance.
- **Foreign Policy Narratives:** UNB's coverage often amplifies China's diplomatic stance, such as in articles defending China against EU trade restrictions or U.S. chip export bans (e.g., "China Slams EU's Protectionist Measures" and "China Criticizes US over Chip Restrictions," 2025). These pieces echo Beijing's rhetoric of opposing "unilateralism" and advocating for "fair trade," aligning with China's foreign policy goals.

YouTube Channel of UNB and the positive coverage of China

- **70th Anniversary of PRC Exhibition (2019):** Celebrates China's achievements, with Bangladesh's Education Minister praising China's support, reinforcing Beijing's image as a benevolent partner.
- **Bangladesh-China Relations: Prognosis for the Future (2021):** A 2+ hour discussion highlights China's role in Bangladesh's development, echoing Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) narratives without addressing debt risks.

- **Id Kah Mosque in Xinjiang (2023):** Showcases tourism in Xinjiang, ignoring human rights abuses against Uyghurs, aligning with China's sanitized narrative.
- **Mindray's Global Impact (2023):** Promotes a Chinese medical tech firm, emphasizing China's innovation leadership.
- **Yunus Urges Chinese Investment (2025):** Features Yunus inviting Chinese investors, reflecting Bangladesh's pro-China shift.

Contrasting Evidence

UNB's positive portrayal of China contrasts with global reports. For instance, while UNB highlights Muslim celebrations, international sources document China's detention of over 1 million Uyghurs, forced labor, and religious suppression in Xinjiang. Similarly, UNB's emphasis on China's economic and environmental leadership omits issues like BRI debt traps or China's high carbon emissions, suggesting selective reporting influenced by the Xinhua agreement and Bangladesh's growing economic reliance on China.



Figure 10 Chinese Embassy in Bangladesh regularly featuring UNB

Chinese Embassy and Ambassadors' Engagement with UNB

The Chinese embassy and its ambassadors have actively engaged with UNB, using the platform to publish articles that promote Beijing's narratives, indicating UNB's role as a key channel for Chinese diplomacy in Bangladesh. Examples include:

- **June 24, 2020:** Ambassador Li Jiming published "Humanity is a Community with a Shared Future" on UNB, promoting China's vision of global cooperation, a cornerstone of its foreign policy.
- **July 1, 2020:** On the day China granted zero-tariff treatment to 97% of Bangladeshi exports, Ambassador Li Jiming published "New Starting Point, New Hope" on UNB, highlighting China's economic support and strengthening bilateral ties.
- **July 6, 2020:** Li Jiming's article "Some Basic Facts About Hong Kong National Security Law" appeared on UNB, defending China's controversial law and countering global criticism, also published on Bangladesh Post and bdnews24. These instances show UNB's prominence in disseminating Chinese diplomatic messaging.

Overall Statistics

- **Criteria:**
 - **Pro-China:** Articles that portray China positively, highlight cooperation, investments, or cultural ties with Bangladesh, or defend Chinese policies/interests.

- **Anti-China:** Articles that criticize China, highlight tensions, debt traps, human rights issues, or geopolitical concerns involving China.
- **Neutral:** Articles that mention China without clear positive or negative bias or focus on factual reporting without judgment.
- **Total China-Related Articles:** 66
- **Pro-China:** 35 articles (53.03%)
- **Anti-China:** 6 articles (9.09%)
- **Neutral:** 25 articles (37.88%)

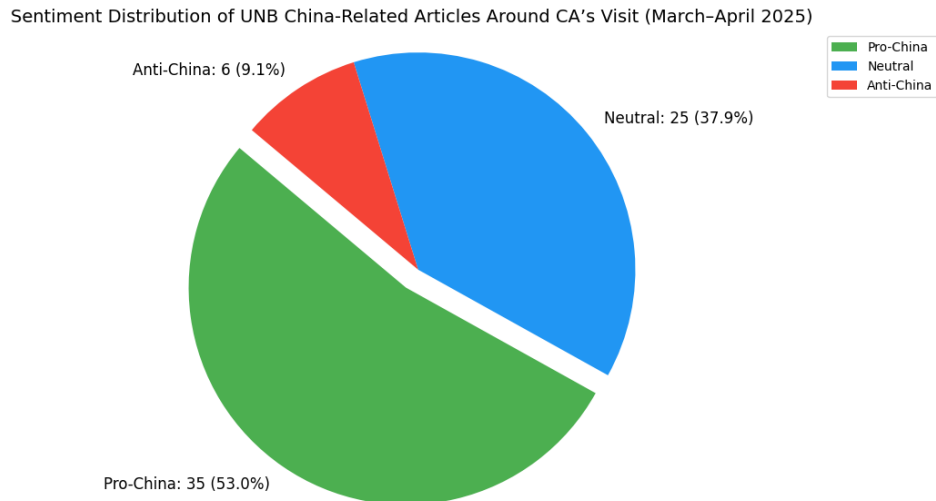


Figure 11 Analysis of the China Coverage on the United News of Bangladesh Portal

Pro-China Articles

Total: 35 (53.03%)

Examples:

- China wants strong, stable, democratic Bangladesh: Fakhrul (April 2025)
- First automated driving zone in China aims to demonstrate 'vehicle-road coordination' (April 2025)
- China prepares for launch of 3-person space station replacement crew (April 2025)
- EVs in the spotlight as China claims a leading global role at Shanghai's auto show (April 2025)
- Bangladesh, China pledge enhanced cooperation linking Yunnan, Chattogram (April 2025)
- Xi Jinping highlights China-Cambodia role in global south, urges multilateral cooperation (April 2025)
- Forging Unity: China strengthens ethnic harmony with vision of shared future (April 2025)
- China, ASEAN media and think tanks urged to embrace AI, address its challenges (April 2025)
- China under Xi contributed to global prosperity: Spanish PM (April 2025)
- Spanish PM in China to boost ties amid Trump tariffs (April 2025)
- Khaleda's photo of 1995 visit to China displayed at CPC Museum (April 2025)
- Foreign journalists visit Museum of the Communist Party of China (April 2025)
- China visit a 'major success' for interim government: Fakhrul (April 2025)
- China launches test satellite for satellite internet technology (April 2025)
- Yunus' China visit paved way for stronger ties: Govt (April 2025)
- Interview: Bangladesh-China relations to enter new stage, says Bangladeshi interim gov't chief adviser Yunus (April 2025)
- Bangladesh willing to deepen strategic partnership with China: Dr Yunus (April 2025)

- Dr Yunus seeks FAO support to export fruits, farm products to China in large volume (March 2025)
- CA Dr Yunus off to China, eyeing to take Dhaka-Beijing ties to new height (March 2025)
- China harnesses AI to develop climate-resilient 'Super Crops,' reshaping global agriculture (March 2025)
- Bangladesh, China to sign key deals as Dr Yunus to meet Xi in Beijing on March 28 (March 2025)
- Dr Yunus' China visit to be very productive, successful with some announcements (March 2025)
- China cautions nations against trade deals with US that could harm Beijing (April 2025)
- China targets 3 alleged US operatives over cyberattacks during Asian Games (April 2025)
- As Trump imposes tariffs, China moves to fill the void left by alienated US allies (April 2025)
- China's vast thorium reserves could provide unlimited nuclear energy: Report (March 2025)
- China's Global South role: Economy, democracy and green growth (March 2025)
- BNP to sign Teesta water management deal with China, if elected: Moyeen Khan (February 2025)
- Moyeen Khan seeks China's support for RMG raw material production (February 2025)
- China could be one of Bangladesh's best friends: Chinese Vice Minister (February 2025)
- Bangladesh's medical group to China to boost broader collaboration: Ambassador Yao (March 2025)
- First batch of Bangladesh's medical tourists to leave for China Monday (March 2025)
- First eleven medical tourists to China to leave March 10 (March 2025)
- Haier global commendation summit in China: Bangladeshi engineer honored with the "Global Technical Excellence Star" (March 2025)
- China Bangladesh's most reliable friend, says Chinese envoy (March 2025)

Categories of Focus:

- **Diplomacy and Bilateral Relations (17 articles):** Highlight strengthened ties with Bangladesh, Cambodia, and Spain, portraying China as a reliable partner (e.g., Yunus' China visit, Bangladesh-China cooperation).
- **Technology and Innovation (5 articles):** Emphasize advancements in AI, autonomous driving, satellite technology, and space (e.g., China launches test satellite, automated driving zone).
- **Economic Influence (4 articles):** Focus on China's role in global markets, including electric vehicles and trade (e.g., Shanghai auto show, Global South role).
- **Cultural Influence (2 articles):** Showcase cultural achievements like CPC Museum exhibits and international recognition (e.g., Khaleda's photo).

Anti-China Articles

Total: 6 (9.09%)

Examples:

- China Stages military drills near Taiwan in response to US and Taiwan remarks (March 2025)
- China condemns G7 over statements on maritime security (March 2025)
- US sanctions Thai officials over Uyghur deportation to China (March 2025)
- China's foreign minister criticizes US tariffs and accuses the country of 'meeting good with evil' (March 2025)
- China criticises US tariffs, warns of trade war losses (March 2025)

- ‘If US wants war, we are ready’: China (March 2025)

Categories of Focus:

- **Trade War and Economic Policy:** Focus on China’s criticism of U.S. tariffs and trade war rhetoric (China’s foreign minister criticizes US tariffs).
- **International Relations and Geopolitics:** Portray China as confrontational with G7 or in regional disputes (China condemns G7).

Neutral Articles

Total: 25 (37.88%)

Examples:

- China lowers tax refund threshold for tourists to boost spending (April 2025)
- Bessent criticises IMF, World Bank; sees ‘big deal’ opportunity with China (April 2025)
- China’s economy grows at a 5.4% annual pace in Jan-March quarter (April 2025)
- Apple unlikely to make iPhones in US despite Trump’s China tariffs (April 2025)
- Consumer prices fell in China in February, remain flat in sluggish economy (March 2025)
- China’s exports surge while imports dip amid rising US tariffs (April 2025)
- China’s Xi makes strong push for greater foreign investment as economy continues to lag (March 2025)
- China plans to boost consumer spending as Trump’s tariff war threatens exports (March 2025)
- China’s trade declines in Jan-Feb amid uncertainty (March 2025)
- Moyeen Khan raises concerns over BCIM corridor’s strategic impacts, seeks China’s attention (March 2025)
- China keeps its economic growth target at ‘around 5%’ despite a looming trade war (March 2025)
- China raises tariffs on US goods from 84% to 125% (April 2025)
- China-founded e-commerce sites Temu and Shein say they’re raising prices due to tariffs (April 2025)
- Asian shares sink, with Japan’s Nikkei down 5.6% as China-US trade war escalates (April 2025)
- China reaches out to others as Trump layers on tariffs (April 2025)
- Trump pauses reciprocal tariffs for 90 days, except for China (April 2025)
- China raises retaliatory tariff on US to 84% as it vows to ‘fight to the end’ (April 2025)
- China vows to fight after Trump threatens more tariffs (April 2025)
- Trump warns of additional tariffs on China (April 2025)
- China pauses TikTok deal after Trump announces new tariffs (April 2025)
- Stock Market endures worst week since 2020 as China retaliates against Trump’s Tariffs (April 2025)
- China files lawsuit with WTO following US new tariffs (April 2025)
- China to impose 34% tariff on all US imports from April 10 (April 2025)
- China’s Ne Zha 2 Stays Atop Hollywood’s ‘A Minecraft Movie’ at the Worldwide Box Office (April 2025)
- China, Russia and Iran call for end to US sanctions on Iran and the restart of nuclear talks (March 2025)

Trends and Notable Observations

- **UNB’s Role in China’s Propaganda Narrative:** The United News of Bangladesh (UNB) exhibits a strong pro-China and neutral bias, with 90.91% of its 66 China-related articles being

either pro-China (53.03%) or neutral (37.88%). This suggests UNB serves as a conduit for China's propaganda narrative, emphasizing positive aspects like diplomatic partnerships, technological leadership, and economic resilience while marginalizing criticism. The limited anti-China coverage (9.09%), confined to issues like Taiwan tensions and Uyghur deportations, further supports this alignment, as critical perspectives are minimal and narrowly focused.

- **Spike in Pro-China Coverage During Bangladesh CA's Visit:** Pro-China articles surged around and during Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus' visit to China in March 2025, with articles like Bangladesh, China to sign key deals as Dr Yunus to meet Xi in Beijing on March 28 and Yunus' China visit paved way for stronger ties: Govt (April 2025) highlighting deepened bilateral ties, medical tourism, and infrastructure projects. This concentrated focus on positive diplomatic outcomes, particularly in March and April 2025, reflects a deliberate effort to amplify China's image as a trusted partner during high-profile engagements.
- **Promotion of China's Technological and Global South Leadership:** UNB's pro-China articles frequently showcase China's advancements in AI, space, and energy, as seen in China's vast thorium reserves could provide unlimited nuclear energy (March 2025) and China harnesses AI to develop climate-resilient 'Super Crops' (March 2025). Additionally, articles like China's Global South role: Economy, democracy and green growth (March 2025) position China as a leader in sustainable development, reinforcing its soft power and appeal to Global South nations like Bangladesh.
- **Neutral Trade War Framing Minimizes Criticism:** Neutral articles, comprising 37.88% of the coverage, focus heavily on the U.S.-China trade war, reporting factually on tariffs and economic impacts, as in China raises tariffs on US goods from 84% to 125% (April 2025) and China's economy grows at a 5.4% annual pace in Jan-March quarter (April 2025). This neutral tone avoids overt criticism of China, aligning with a propaganda narrative that emphasizes economic challenges as global issues rather than China-specific flaws, further softening any negative portrayal.

3. Dhaka Tribune

The Dhaka Tribune is a prominent English-language daily newspaper in Bangladesh, launched on **19 April 2013** and headquartered in Dhaka. Known for its dynamic op-ed section and contemporary news coverage, it appeals to a diverse readership including youth, expatriates, diplomats, academics, and the business community. The newspaper also operates a Bengali-language online platform called **Bangla Tribune**.

Published by **Kazi Anis Ahmed** and edited by **Zafar Sobhan**, a renowned journalist and international columnist, the Dhaka Tribune has emerged as one of the fastest-growing English dailies in the country.

- Frequently publishes interviews and analyses aligning with China's official stance.
- Example:
 - *"China is Bangladesh's tested friend in need"* – article praising China's vaccine support and BRI-linked infrastructure.
 - Several BRI-positive coverage pieces around the Padma Bridge Rail Link and Karnaphuli Tunnel.
- Although **Dhaka Tribune** does not have a *formal news-sharing agreement* with **Xinhua** or other Chinese state media, as per available records, several editorial decisions and media practices reveal a **consistent alignment with Chinese narratives**, particularly around foreign policy, investment, and soft power.

Social Media Presence

- Facebook: [1.9M followers](#)
- Twitter (x): [575.3K Followers](#)
- YouTube: [147K subscribers](#)

Evidence of Pro-China Editorial Tendencies

1. Publishing Chinese Ambassador's Propaganda Articles

- On **February 1, 2022**, Dhaka Tribune published an op-ed by then-Chinese Ambassador **Li Jiming**, titled *"Beijing Winter Olympics: Together for a Shared Future"*.
- The editorial promoted China's global image and Beijing 2022 Olympics, reflecting the typical soft-power messaging used by Xinhua and CGTN.

Source: [Dhaka Tribune Op-Ed](#)



Figure 12 Chinese Embassy in Bangladesh regularly featuring Dhaka Tribune

2. Repeated Interviews Promoting Chinese Foreign Policy

- In **multiple interviews** (e.g., March 16, 2024, and August 31, 2022), Dhaka Tribune gave exclusive space to Chinese ambassadors to defend China's geopolitical stance and pitch strategic narratives on **China-Bangladesh cooperation**.

Source: [Embassy FB Post – March 2024](#)

3. Publishing Rebuttals to China-Critical Editorials

- On **April 27, 2023**, Dhaka Tribune published a sub-editorial questioning Chinese debt practices titled: *"Strings Firmly Attached: Can Bangladesh Avoid Falling into the Chinese Debt Trap?"*
- Shortly after, it published a **rebuttal by the Chinese Embassy's Economic Counsellor**, minimizing China's debt risks and labeling Chinese loans as a "treasure trove."
- Subsequent debt-related stories in Dhaka Tribune have **avoided directly naming China**, despite discussing debt traps broadly. ([Debt Trap Coverage – 2024](#))



Figure 13 Article on Debt Trap without mentioning China Directly

4. Publishing Supplements Celebrating CCP Anniversaries

- On **October 1, 2023**, Dhaka Tribune published a **Chinese embassy-funded supplement** celebrating the **74th anniversary** of the founding of the People's Republic of China, including narratives around **Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)** achievements.
- Also participated in similar supplement campaigns in 2021 and 2022 along with other pro-China outlets.



Figure 14 Chinese embassy-funded supplement celebrating the anniversary of the founding of the PRC

5. High-Level Editorial Meeting with Chinese Delegation

- On **March 5, 2024**, Chinese Ambassador **Yao Wen**, along with representatives from **Xinhua**, **China Media Group**, and **Chinese Enterprises Association**, met with **Dhaka Tribune's Editor Zafar Sobhan** and editorial staff.
- The meeting focused on **media cooperation**, BRI promotion, and synchronized narratives around China's global role.



Figure 15 Chinese Embassy officials and Ambassador Mr. Yao Wen visited the officer of Dhaka Tribune

Owner's Pro-China Orientation

Kazi Anis Ahmed (Gemcon Group Director and Principal Shareholder)

- Has **publicly praised China**, stating:

“China is the emerging power of this century... We are on the way of global orientation with policies like the Belt and Road Initiative.” — Quote published by Xinhua during Chinese New Year Celebration (2018)

- Also a key figure in **University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB)**, which maintains cultural collaborations with Chinese institutions.
- Reported by: [Xinhua](#)



Figure 16 Kazi Anis Ahmed (Gemcon Group Director and Principal Shareholder) quoted by Xinhua News

Current Controversies Around Ownership

- The **Kazi family**, owners of Dhaka Tribune and Gemcon Group, are currently under **judicial scrutiny** for large undeclared assets and overseas investments.
- As per a **Daily Sun report (June 2024)**, the court has ordered asset seizures of over **362 acres of land, multiple flats, and foreign holdings** linked to Kazi Nabil Ahmed and Kazi Anis Ahmed.

Source: [Daily Sun – June 2024](#)

Overall Statistics

Criteria:

- **Pro-China:** Articles that portray China positively, highlight cooperation, investments, or cultural ties with Bangladesh, or defend Chinese policies/interests.
- **Anti-China:** Articles that criticize China, highlight tensions, debt traps, human rights issues, or geopolitical concerns involving China.
- **Neutral:** Articles that mention China without clear positive or negative bias or focus on factual reporting without judgment.

Total China-Related Articles Analysed (March to June 2025) : 31

- **Pro-China:** 17 articles (54.8%)
- **Anti-China:** 3 articles (9.7%)
- **Neutral:** 11 articles (35.5%)

Sentiment Distribution of Dhaka Tribune China-Related Articles (March–June 2025)

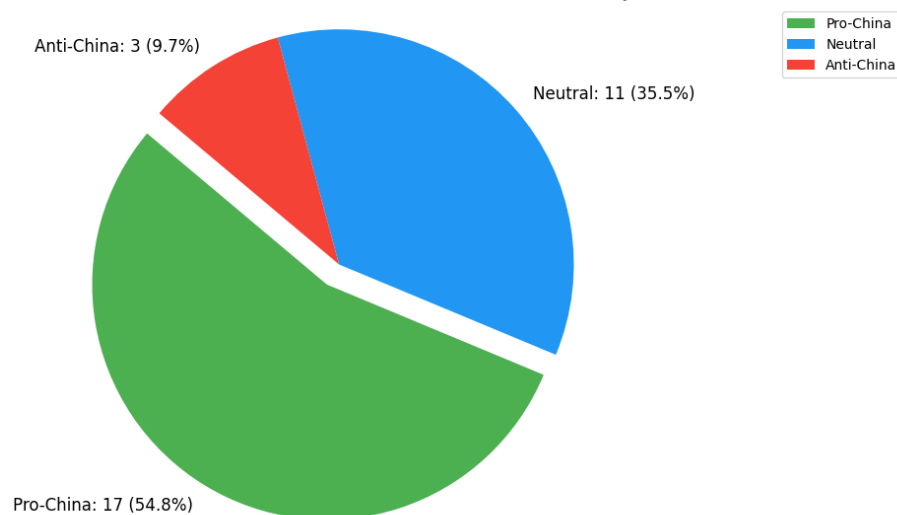


Figure 17 Analysis of the China Coverage on the Dhaka Tribune

Pro-China Articles

Total: 17 (54.8%)

Examples:

- Yunus urges China-Bangladesh partnership to revive jute's lost glory (1 June 2025)
- China to cooperate with Bangladesh on agriculture, research (1 June 2025)
- Mango exports to China set to begin on Wednesday (27 May 2025)

- Liu Jianchao: CPC keen to sign political MoU with BNP (25 June 2025)
- China eyes stronger ties with Bangladesh's incoming govt (24 June 2025)
- Fakhrul hails China's regional role as positive (23 June 2025)
- BNP delegation to visit China, Fakhrul hopes for discussions on ... (22 June 2025)
- High-level BNP delegation to leave for China Sunday night (22 June 2025)
- Bangladesh, China, Pakistan pledge to deepen trilateral cooperation (21 June 2025)
- Taking our relationship with China to newer heights (30 March 2025)
- CA Yunus: Bangladesh-China relations to enter new stage (29 March 2025)
- Dr Yunus returns home wrapping up his China visit (29 March 2025)
- China increases importance of Xi-Yunus meeting (27 March 2025)
- CA Yunus off to China, eyeing to take Dhaka-Beijing ties to new height (26 March 2025)
- Press Secretary: Chief adviser's China visit aims to attract investors (25 March 2025)
- Ambassador: Dr Yunus' China visit to be productive, successful (23 March 2025)
- Shafiqul: Yunus to leave for China on March 26, meet Xi on March 28 (16 March 2025)

Categories of Focus:

- **Economic Cooperation:** Emphasizes trade, investment, and agricultural partnerships to boost Bangladesh's economy through Chinese support. Includes initiatives like jute and mango exports. (Example: "China to cooperate with Bangladesh on agriculture, research" highlights China's \$100 million annual jute imports and research collaboration.)
- **Diplomatic Relations:** Focuses on high-level visits and agreements to strengthen bilateral ties, particularly under Yunus's leadership. Includes meetings with Chinese leaders like Xi Jinping. (Example: "CA Yunus off to China, eyeing to take Dhaka-Beijing ties to new height" details Yunus's visit to sign MoUs and enhance relations.)
- **Political Partnerships:** Highlights China's engagement with Bangladeshi political parties like BNP to foster long-term political alignment. Includes discussions on MoUs and regional roles. (Example: "Liu Jianchao: CPC keen to sign political MoU with BNP" discusses potential CPC-BNP collaboration.)
- **Trilateral Cooperation:** Covers Bangladesh-China-Pakistan initiatives to deepen strategic and economic ties in South Asia. Focuses on mutual principles and regional stability. (Example: "Bangladesh, China, Pakistan pledge to deepen trilateral cooperation" reports on the Kunming meeting to advance trilateral goals.)

Anti-China Articles

Total: 3 (9.7%)

Examples:

- Report: Developing nations face tidal wave of China debt (28 May 2025)
- Trump tariffs torch chances of meeting with China's Xi (22 April 2025)
- Rare earths: China's trump card in trade war with US (11 June 2025)

Categories of Focus:

- **Economic Concerns:** Highlights risks of China's lending practices, particularly debt traps for developing nations like Bangladesh. Discusses financial burdens from Chinese loans. (Example: "Report: Developing nations face tidal wave of China debt" warns of record-high debt repayments to China in 2025.)

- **Geopolitical Tensions:** Focuses on US-China trade disputes and strategic rivalries, portraying China as a contentious global player. Includes tariffs and rare earths as leverage.

Neutral Articles

Total: 11 (35.5%)

Examples:

- A Thai citizen of Chinese descent, Hong works at a small taxi ... Southeast Asia walks tightrope between China and US (25 June 2025)
- Need for vigilance amid new 'Nimbus' Covid-19 variant (25 June 2025)
- China helpless as Middle East war craters regional leverage (24 June 2025)
- Asean opens summit with Gulf nations and China amid US tariffs threat (27 May 2025)
- China says it backs Pakistan in defending sovereignty (20 May 2025)
- US-China tariff deal: What you need to know (13 May 2025)
- Envoy: China not involved in 'so-called humanitarian corridor' issue (8 May 2025)
- China says evaluating US offer of tariff talks but wants 'sincerity' (2 May 2025)
- US reaches out to China for tariff talks (1 May 2025)
- Where things stand in the US-China trade war (10 April 2025)
- Bangladesh gains ground in US apparel market amid China's decline (16 April 2025)

Trends and Notable Observations

- **Pro-China Dominance:** Pro-China articles (54.8%) emphasize Bangladesh's deepening ties with China under Yunus's interim government, focusing on economic and diplomatic gains. This reflects a strategic shift post-August 2024, as Bangladesh seeks to counterbalance India's influence.
- **Limited Anti-China Criticism:** Anti-China articles (9.7%) focus on debt risks and US-China trade tensions, indicating cautious criticism due to Bangladesh's reliance on Chinese investment. The debt trap narrative aligns with global concerns about the Belt and Road Initiative.
- **Neutral Global Focus:** Neutral articles (35.5%) cover US-China trade wars, Middle East conflicts, and regional diplomacy, maintaining a factual tone. This reflects Dhaka Tribune's balanced approach to global issues impacting Bangladesh indirectly.
- **Absence of Sensitive Issues:** No articles address human rights, security, or data privacy concerns related to China, suggesting an editorial preference for economic and diplomatic narratives, aligning with Bangladesh's pro-China public sentiment.



'China is expanding crackdown on mosques beyond Xinjiang'



How is China whitewashing its Xinjiang policy?



18 trapped in Xinjiang gold mine collapse



Shanghai hit by Covid protests as anger spreads across China



Deadly Xinjiang fire stirs anger at China's zero-Covid policy



US asks UN rights council to debate China rights abuses



UN rights council credibility at stake over China, Russia response



Factbox: The many growths in Xinjiang



UN expert: Forced labour, possible enslavement in Xinjiang



US electronics firm struck deal to transport and hire Uyghur workers



US Senate passes bill to ban all products from China's Xinjiang



US set to add more Chinese companies to blacklist over Xinjiang

Figure 18 The examples critical stance of Dhaka Tribune wrt to Xinjiang handling of China

- Historical Criticism of Xinjiang and Uyghur Human Rights:** Since 2020, the Dhaka Tribune has consistently criticized China's Xinjiang policies, focusing on human rights abuses against Uyghur Muslims. However, this critical coverage, including articles and op-eds, has **significantly declined after 2024**, due to Bangladesh's deepening economic and media ties with China under Muhammad Yunus's interim government. The following examples highlight the earlier critical stance:
 - “China is expanding crackdown on mosques beyond Xinjiang” (details suppression of Islamic practices)
 - “How is China whitewashing its Xinjiang policy?” (critiques China's global narrative)
 - “UN expert: Forced labour, possible enslavement in Xinjiang” (highlights forced labor allegations)
 - “Report: Over 570,000 Uighurs involved in Xinjiang cotton coerced labour” (addresses cultural erasure)
 - “Deadly Xinjiang fire stirs anger at China's zero-Covid policy” (covers protests linked to Xinjiang)
 - “321 NGOs urge UN to probe China rights abuses” (reports international calls for UN investigations)

4. Daily Observer

The **Daily Observer** is an English-language daily newspaper in Bangladesh, launched on **1 February 2011**. It was founded by **Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury**, the former editor of *The Bangladesh Observer*, following the closure of that publication. As a continuation of his journalistic legacy, *The Daily Observer* serves as a key platform for national news and opinion. In 2017, its editor faced a defamation lawsuit filed by Awami League MP Nizam Uddin Hazari over a critical article. It boasts of [73K followers](#) on Facebook.

Evidence of Pro-China Editorial Bias in the Daily Observer



Figure 19 Pro-China News Coverage on Daily Observer

1. Selective, Uncritical Promotion of China's Soft Power and Tech

- **“China innovates eco-friendly pesticide safe for human consumption”**
→ Presents China as a *global leader in sustainable technology* without any independent scientific or third-party validation. The tone mirrors Chinese propaganda emphasizing green innovation.
- **“China’s first high-level automated driving zone enters large-scale deployment phase”**
→ Echoes Chinese claims of tech leadership, portraying progress without context about surveillance or data rights concerns that such technologies often raise in democratic media.

2. Favorable Diplomatic Framing

- **“China ready to help Teesta River dev project soon: Ambassador Yao”**
→ Frames China as a generous, ready partner on a sensitive regional issue, subtly undermining India’s position on Teesta water-sharing. No critical voices included, nor mention of strategic implications.
- **“China will stand by Bangladesh to protect its sovereignty”**
→ Direct amplification of Chinese ambassador Yao Wen’s line—suggesting a military-political alliance. The article does not explore whether this claim has domestic support or regional repercussions.
- **“BD, China hold talks on bilateral ties, ‘common concern’”**
→ Emphasizes “mutual respect” and “shared development goals”—terms lifted directly from Chinese state media diplomacy templates.

3. Highlighting Pro-China Geopolitical Narratives

- **“China expresses deep concern over India’s missile strikes in Pakistan”**
→ Prioritizes Chinese condemnation of India, serving Beijing’s South Asia narrative. The story doesn’t include Indian views or broader geopolitical context.
- **“China vows to stand with Russia in face of ‘hegemonic bullying’”**
→ Propagates Chinese alignment with Russia against the West without analysis or critique. Uses CCP language like “hegemonic bullying” uncritically.

4. Showcasing China as an Economic Savior

- **“Mangoes set to make maiden voyage to China” and “1.2 lakh metric tons of mangoes to be exported to China”**
→ Both portray China as opening new economic opportunities for Bangladesh. There is no mention of trade dependency, market access risks, or phytosanitary standards—key journalistic checks.
- **“China eyes Waste-to-Energy projects in Bangladesh”**
→ Promotes China's environmental investment in Bangladesh as a goodwill gesture, omitting discussions of previous project controversies or environmental impact studies.

5. Amplification of China’s Global Vision

- **“China supports vision of strong, democratic Bangladesh: Fakhru”**
→ Uses a local political figure to legitimize China’s claim of supporting democracy—without balancing it with China’s own record on human rights and press freedom.
- **“China says on ‘right side of history’ in trade standoff with US”**
→ Gives headline space to Chinese ideological framing, common in Global Times and Xinhua, positioning Beijing as morally superior.

While the **Daily Observer** does not openly declare a formal partnership with Chinese media, its **consistent editorial tone, uncritical amplification of Chinese diplomatic language, and repetition of Beijing’s narratives** across tech, diplomacy, education, and South Asia politics provide clear evidence of **pro-China media alignment**.

Overall Statistics

Criteria:

- **Pro-China:** Articles that portray China positively, highlight cooperation, investments, or cultural ties with Bangladesh, or defend Chinese policies/interests.
- **Anti-China:** Articles that criticize China, highlight tensions, debt traps, human rights issues, or geopolitical concerns involving China.
- **Neutral:** Articles that mention China without clear positive or negative bias or focus on factual reporting without judgment.

Total China-Related Articles Analysed (March to June 2025) : 53

- **Pro-China:** 29 articles (54.7%)
- **Anti-China:** 2 articles (3.8%)
- **Neutral:** 22 articles (41.5%)

Sentiment Distribution of Daily Observer China-Related Articles (March–June 2025)

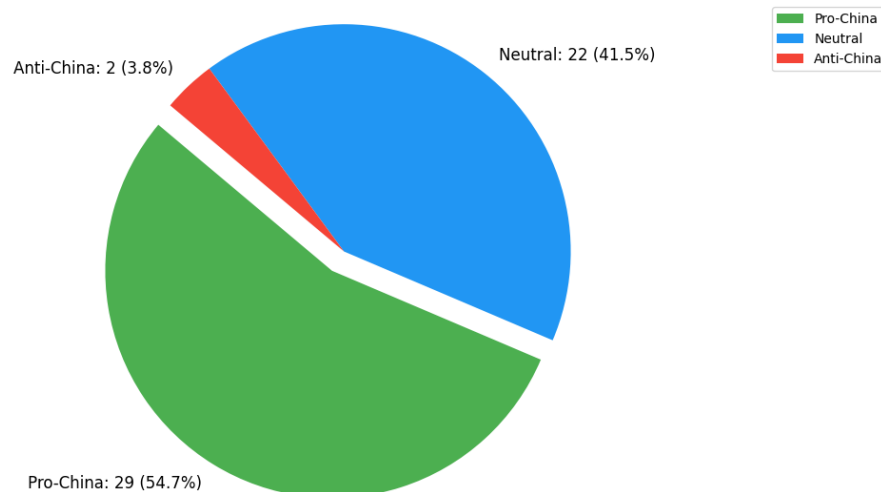


Figure 20 Analysis of the China Coverage on Daily Observer

Pro-China Articles

Total: 29 (54.7%)

Examples:

- China eyes industrial investment in Mongla: Press Secretary (June 2025)
- China eyes stronger ties with BD's incoming govt (June 2025)
- China eagerly waiting to work with new Bangladesh govt (June 2025)
- CPC invites Tarique to visit China (June 2025)
- BD demonstrates robust and expanding presence at China South-Asia Expo (June 2025)
- Bangladesh expands footprint at China-South Asia expo (June 2025)
- BNP, Communist Party of China hold high-level talks in Beijing (June 2025)
- Fakhrul-led BNP delegation to visit China from tomorrow (June 2025)

- BNP delegation to visit China next Sunday (June 2025)
- High-level BNP team to visit China on June 24 (June 2025)
- Bangladesh-China sports ties strengthen with new BKSP collaborations (June 2025)
- Bangladesh-China sports ties strengthen with new BKSP collaborations (June 2025)
- Every village can be production hub with China's help: CA (June 2025)
- Bangladesh-China sign two MoUs to bolster bilateral trade (June 2025)
- New horizons in BD-China economic cooperation opens: BIDA chief (June 2025)
- China vows to boost Bangladesh's export capacity (June 2025)
- CA opens BD-China trade, investment confce today (June 2025)
- Bangladesh-China trade conference on Jun 1, 250 investors to participate (June 2025)
- China explores cross-border trade cooperation with Bangladesh (June 2025)
- After mangoes, China expresses interest import of raw hides (June 2025)
- Mangoes set to make maiden voyage to China (May 2025)
- 1.2 lakh metric tons of mangoes to be exported to China (May 2025)
- Bangladesh, China pledge swift action on bilateral projects (April 2025)
- China to gift 1,000-bed hospital to Bangladesh: Health Adviser (April 2025)
- CA's China visit big success for govt: Mirza Fakhrul (April 2025)
- Yunus' China visit paved way for stronger ties: Govt (March 2025)
- CA returns home wrapping up historic China trip (March 2025)
- Bangladesh secures commitment of \$2.1 bn in investments, loans and grants from China (March 2025)
- China launches satellite Chinasat-9C (June 2025)

Categories of Focus:

- **Economic Cooperation:** Emphasizes trade, investment, and export initiatives to strengthen Bangladesh's economy through Chinese support, including industrial and agricultural projects. (Example: "Bangladesh-China sign two MoUs to bolster bilateral trade (June 2025)" highlights agreements to enhance e-commerce and trade capacity.)
- **Diplomatic Relations:** Focuses on high-level visits, agreements, and commitments to deepen Bangladesh-China ties, particularly under Yunus's leadership. (Example: "CA returns home wrapping up historic China trip (March 2025)" details Yunus's successful visit and strengthened bilateral relations.)
- **Political Partnerships:** Highlights China's engagement with Bangladeshi political parties like BNP to foster long-term political alignment and influence. (Example: "CPC invites Tarique to visit China (June 2025)" notes the invitation to BNP's Acting Chairman for discussions.)
- **Cultural and Sports Collaboration:** Covers initiatives to strengthen people-to-people ties through sports and cultural exchanges, marking milestones like the 50th anniversary of bilateral friendship. (Example: "Bangladesh-China sports ties strengthen with new BKSP collaborations (June 2025)" celebrates sports cooperation.)
- **Technological Achievements:** Showcases China's technological advancements, such as satellite launches, as positive contributions to global innovation. (Example: "China launches satellite Chinasat-9C (June 2025)" highlights a successful satellite launch.)

Anti-China Articles

Total: 2 (3.8%)

Examples:

- Israel-Iran conflict exposed China's 'limited leverage': Analysts (June 2025)
- US defence secy warns Indo-Pacific allies of 'imminent' threat from China (June 2025)

Categories of Focus:

- **Geopolitical Tensions:** Highlights conflicts and criticisms involving China, particularly in global and regional disputes, portraying China as a limited or threatening actor. (Example: “Israel-Iran conflict exposed China’s ‘limited leverage’: Analysts (June 2025)” critiques China’s limited influence in global conflicts.)
- **Security Concerns:** Focuses on warnings about China’s regional influence, particularly from the US perspective, highlighting perceived threats. (Example: “US defence secy warns Indo-Pacific allies of 'imminent' threat from China (June 2025)” emphasizes US concerns about China’s regional role.)

Neutral Articles

Total: 22 (41.5%)

Examples:

- US, China sign trade agreement (June 2025)
- US-China trade truce leaves military-use rare earth issue unresolved (June 2025)
- Global stocks rise on easing US-China trade tensions, cool US inflation (June 2025)
- US, China agree on trade negotiation framework after London talks (June 2025)
- Asian markets edge higher as US-China trade talks show signs of progress (June 2025)
- Asian markets falter as Trump-Musk clash overshadows US-China talks (June 2025)
- Global alarms rise as China's critical mineral export ban takes hold (June 2025)
- China accuses Trump of 'pouring oil' on Iran, Israel conflict (June 2025)
- Trump accuses China of violating tariff de-escalation deal (June 2025)
- China, US slash sweeping tariffs in trade war climbdown (May 2025)
- US, China agree to slash tariffs as Trump says will speak to Xi (May 2025)
- US, China agree to temporary tariff cuts after Geneva talks (May 2025)
- China warns countries against striking trade deals with US at its expense (April 2025)
- China ‘firmly’ opposes trade deals with US (April 2025)
- China tells Trump to 'stop threatening and blackmailing' (April 2025)
- US tariffs will 'inflict serious harm' on poor nations: China minister (April 2025)
- China raises tariffs on US goods from 84% to 125% (April 2025)
- China raises retaliatory tariff on US to 84% as it vows to 'fight to the end' (April 2025)
- China calls US trade surplus ‘inevitable’, warns it's ready for trade war (April 2025)
- China vows to fight US tariffs 'to the end' (April 2025)
- Trump threatens to hike China tariffs further (April 2025)
- Trump threatens further 50% tariffs on China (April 2025)

Trends and Notable Observations

- **Pro-China Dominance in Bangladesh Context:** Pro-China articles (54.7%) emphasize Bangladesh-China ties under Yunus’s interim government, focusing on economic investments and political engagement with BNP. This reflects Bangladesh’s strategic shift post-August 2024 to deepen ties with China.
- **Political Outreach to BNP:** June 2025 articles highlight China’s engagement with the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), including high-level talks and invitations to leaders like Tarique Rahman, indicating China’s intent to influence Bangladesh’s political landscape ahead of elections.
- **Trade and Economic Focus:** Pro-China articles emphasize trade initiatives (e.g., mango and raw hide exports, trade conferences) and infrastructure support (e.g., 1,000-bed hospital), aligning with Bangladesh’s economic priorities and public sentiment favoring China.

- **Minimal Anti-China Coverage:** Anti-China articles (3.8%) are limited to critiques of China's geopolitical leverage and US warnings about its regional influence, suggesting a restrained critical stance, due to Bangladesh's economic reliance on China.
- **Neutral Focus on Trade and Geopolitics:** Neutral articles (41.5%) dominate trade war discussions, covering US-China negotiations and global market impacts with a factual tone. This reflects balanced reporting on global developments affecting Bangladesh indirectly.

5. Prothom Alo

Prothom Alo, the most widely circulated Bangladeshi daily with over 6.6 million online readers, has exhibited a consistent editorial tone that aligns with Chinese diplomatic interests and narratives. There are several notable instances and media practices suggesting its pro-China stance:

Chinese Embassy Supplements and Sponsored Content

On **October 1, 2022**, *Prothom Alo* published a full-page supplement in collaboration with the **Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Bangladesh** to commemorate the **74th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China**. The supplement featured:

- An article by Chinese Ambassador Yao Wen titled “*China and Bangladesh: Heart to Heart, @Future.*”
- Graphical representations showcasing Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) achievements.
- Highlighted Chinese companies contributing to Bangladesh's development projects.

This type of promotional collaboration reinforces China's soft power and portrays bilateral relations in a heavily favorable light.

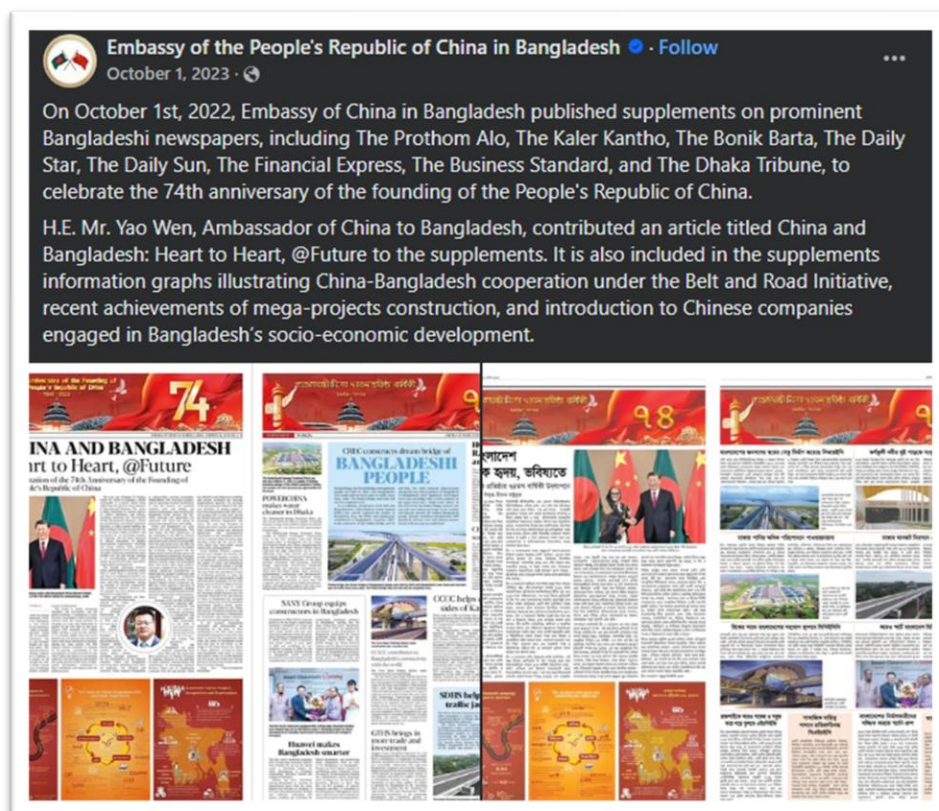


Figure 21 Chinese Embassy Posts on embassy-funded supplement in Bangladesh Media including *The Prothom Alo*

Exclusive Interviews with Chinese Diplomats

On **December 12, 2022**, *Prothom Alo* published a **full-length exclusive interview** with Chinese Ambassador **Li Jiming**, titled “*Future of China and Bangladesh Relations is Very Bright.*” The article gave prominent space to the ambassador’s optimistic vision of Sino-Bangladesh ties, with minimal critical questioning or opposing views, further indicating an editorial leaning toward promoting Chinese diplomatic messaging.

YouTube Channel Coverage and Tone

Prothom Alo's YouTube channel, with over 5 million followers, features numerous videos on China, many of which carry positive or neutral tones on Chinese policies, development, and bilateral cooperation. Examples include:

- “সময়ের আগেই যেভাবে কার্বন নিঃসরণ কমিয়ে ফেলছে চীন” (How China reduced carbon emissions ahead of time)
- “চীন-ভারতের নতুন কূটনীতি” (New diplomacy between China and India)
- “ঔষধ উৎপাদনে যেভাবে বিশ্বসেরা হতে চায় চীন” (How China plans to become a global leader in pharmaceuticals)
- Repeated features on **Bangladesh-China Friendship Bridges** and **China's New Year celebrations**.

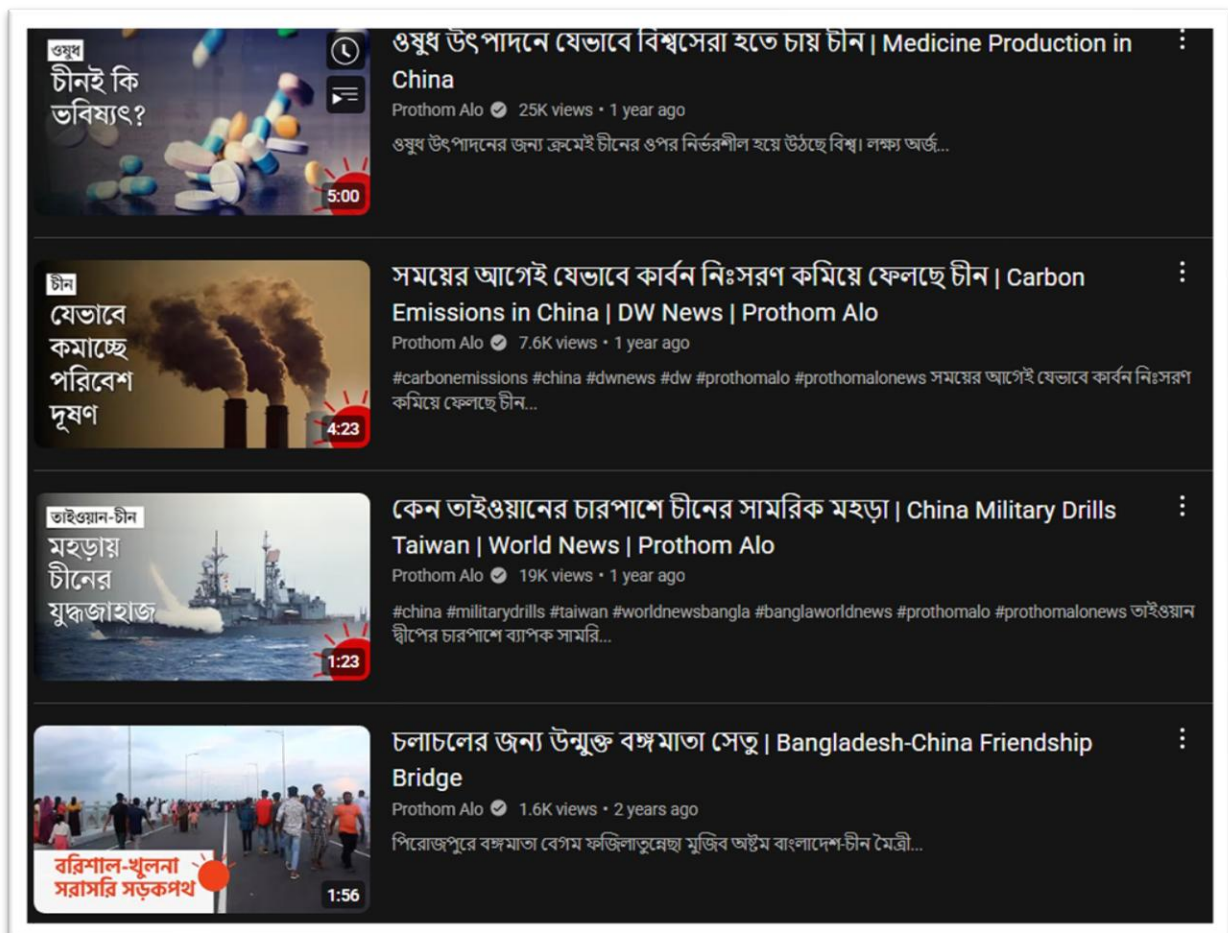


Figure 22 Pro-China coverage on the Prothom Alo YouTube Channel

Despite some coverage of Chinese internal issues like COVID-19 or Hong Kong protests, these are typically reported in a factual or surface-level manner, without deep scrutiny or criticism of Chinese policies.

Pro-China Tilt in Coverage: Evidence from Recent News Reports

The compilation of news stories from April to June 2025 reveals a discernible **pro-China editorial direction**, characterized by **amplified coverage of China's diplomatic efforts, trade deals, and regional partnerships**—often portrayed in a positive or strategic light. Several indicators suggest this tilt:

Positive Spin on China's Global Initiatives

- Multiple reports highlight **China's economic resilience** (e.g., *China's Q1 GDP beats forecasts*), **diplomatic outreach** (e.g., *hosting Latin American and Pacific Island leaders*), and **development aid** (e.g., *proposed China-Bangladesh Friendship Hospital*).
- These stories often lack critical analysis or mention of underlying strategic ambitions, such as debt-trap diplomacy or military implications.
- For instance, the **Bangladesh-China mango export** was a symbolic act, yet it was covered prominently, reinforcing a narrative of deepening friendship.

Unrelated Global News Favoring China

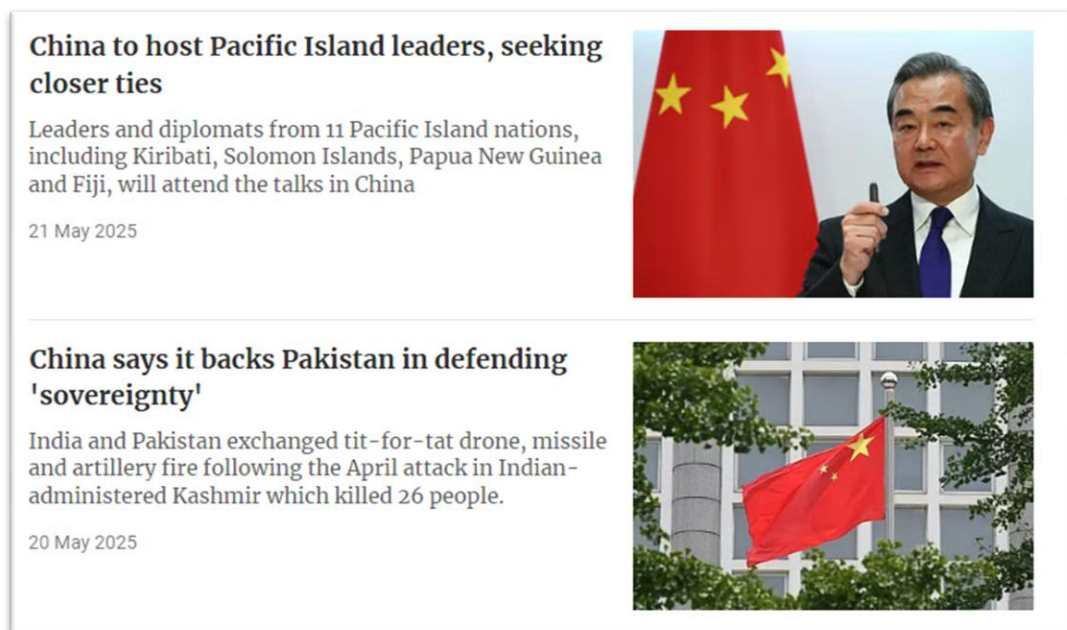


Figure 23 Prothom Alo reports with a Chinese Bias

- A substantial number of reports concern **US-China relations, China's tariffs and trade diplomacy, Xi Jinping's regional visits, and China's rebuttals to Western criticism (e.g., Macron, Rubio)**—even though they have no direct connection to Bangladesh.

This suggests an editorial approach **designed to frame China as a responsible global power**, countering Western narratives. The repetition of such stories gives the impression of **agenda-setting rather than neutral reportage**.

Overall Statistics

Criteria:

- **Pro-China:** Articles that portray China positively, highlight cooperation, investments, or cultural ties with Bangladesh, or defend Chinese policies/interests.
- **Anti-China:** Articles that criticize China, highlight tensions, debt traps, human rights issues, or geopolitical concerns involving China.
- **Neutral:** Articles that mention China without clear positive or negative bias or focus on factual reporting without judgment.

Total China-Related Articles: 29

- **Pro-China:** 13 articles (44.8%)
- **Anti-China:** 5 articles (17.2%)
- **Neutral:** 11 articles (37.9%)

Pro-China Articles

Total: 13 (44.8%)

Examples:

- China playing positive role in regional politics: Mirza Fakhrul (23 Jun 2025)
- Kunming summit Bangladesh, Pakistan, China agree to advance trilateral cooperation (21 Jun 2025)
- High-level BNP delegation off to China (23 Jun 2025)
- BNP delegation led by Mirza Fakhrul to visit China in late June (12 Jun 2025)
- Chinese investment can be game changer for Bangladesh economy: CA (02 Jun 2025)
- Professor Yunus for China-backed boost for jute in economy (01 Jun 2025)
- Mango deal sweetens ties between Bangladesh and China (29 May 2025)
- China hosts Iranian, Russian defence ministers against backdrop of 'momentous change' (26 Jun 2025)
- China hosts Latin American leaders in move to deepen ties (12 May 2025)
- China not involved in humanitarian corridor, ready for Teesta project: envoy (08 May 2025)
- Top priority now is to move forward with plans, Chief Adviser to China ambassador (20 Apr 2025)
- Diplomacy China intends to set up a large hospital in Bangladesh (13 Apr 2025)
- Chief adviser's China visit big success for govt: Mirza Fakhrul (01 Apr 2025)

Categories of Focus:

- **Economic Cooperation:** Highlights Chinese investments, trade initiatives, and infrastructure projects to boost Bangladesh's economy, including agricultural and river management efforts. (Example: "Chinese investment can be game changer for Bangladesh economy: CA (02 Jun 2025)" emphasizes job creation through Chinese support.)
- **Diplomatic Relations:** Focuses on high-level engagements, summits, and agreements strengthening Bangladesh-China ties and China's regional role. (Example: "China hosts Iranian, Russian defence ministers against backdrop of 'momentous change' (26 Jun 2025)" highlights China's diplomatic leadership.)
- **Political Partnerships:** Covers China's outreach to Bangladeshi political parties like BNP to foster long-term political alignment. (Example: "High-level BNP delegation off to China (23 Jun 2025)" notes BNP's visit at the invitation of the Communist Party of China.)

*Anti-China Articles***Total:** 5 (17.2%)**Examples:**

- Beijing slams Rubio 'attack' on China after Tiananmen Square remarks (04 Jun 2025)
- Pentagon chief warns China 'preparing' to use military force in Asia (31 May 2025)
- China rebukes Macron's comparison of Ukraine and Taiwan (31 May 2025)
- As Dalai Lama approaches 90, Tibetans weigh future (21 Apr 2025)
- China launches military drills around Taiwan, calls its president a 'parasite' (01 Apr 2025)

Categories of Focus:

- **Geopolitical Tensions:** Highlights criticisms of China's regional actions, military posturing, or historical events like Tiananmen Square. (Example: "Beijing slams Rubio 'attack' on China after Tiananmen Square remarks (04 Jun 2025)" critiques China's response to US comments on its history.)
- **Regional Security Concerns:** Focuses on China's military activities or territorial ambitions, particularly regarding Taiwan and Tibet, portrayed as threats. (Example: "China launches military drills around Taiwan, calls its president a 'parasite' (01 Apr 2025)" reports on China's aggressive rhetoric.)

*Neutral Articles***Total:** 11 (37.9%)**Examples:**

- Trump says China can buy Iranian oil, but urges it to purchase US crude (25 Jun 2025)
- India defence minister heads to China summit (24 Jun 2025)
- US urges China to keep Iran from shutting key trade route (23 Jun 2025)
- China 'strongly condemns' US strikes on Iran: Foreign ministry (22 Jun 2025)
- Trump touts 'done' deal with Beijing on rare earths, Chinese students (11 Jun 2025)
- US, China agree to reduce tariffs for 90 days (12 May 2025)
- China urges India, Pakistan to exercise restraint (07 May 2025)
- Bangladesh eyes opportunity as Trump imposes high tariffs on Chinese goods (12 Apr 2025)
- China's economy beat forecasts in Q1 ahead of Trump's Liberation Day (16 Apr 2025)
- Trump threatens further 50% tariffs on China (07 Apr 2025)
- Trumps presses on with 104pc tariffs on China (09 Apr 2025)

Trends and Notable Observations

- **Balanced Coverage with Pro-China Tilt:** Prothom Alo's coverage shows a slight Pro-China tilt (44.8%) over Neutral (37.9%) and Anti-China (17.2%) articles, emphasizing economic and diplomatic ties.
- **Pro-China Focus on Bilateral and Regional Ties:** Pro-China articles highlight economic cooperation (e.g., jute, hospital, and Teesta projects), political engagement with BNP, and China's positive regional role, reflecting Bangladesh's strategic alignment with China post-August 2024.
- **Moderate Anti-China Coverage:** Anti-China articles (17.2%) focus on China's military actions (e.g., Taiwan drills) and historical criticisms (e.g., Tiananmen Square), indicating a critical perspective on China's regional and global role, more pronounced than the Daily Observer's minimal Anti-China coverage (3.8%).

- **Critical Articles on Tibet and Taiwan:** Unlike other papers that focus on superficial issues, Prothom Alo includes critical articles addressing deeper geopolitical concerns, such as China's territorial ambitions in Tibet and aggressive military actions toward Taiwan, highlighting significant regional tensions.

6. Bangladesh Television (BTV)

- Bangladesh Television, commonly known by its acronym BTV, is the state-owned television network of Bangladesh. The network was originally established as the East Pakistan branch of Pakistan Television in 1964. It was rebranded right after the independence of Bangladesh.
- It signed an **MoUs** with CMG and Xinhua in **July 2024**.

Infrastructure Expansion Funded by China

- In **2018**, then Information Minister **Hasanul Haq Inu** confirmed that China would finance the expansion of BTV by helping build **six independent BTV stations** in divisional headquarters.
- **Quote from Minister Inu (bdnews24.com, July 9, 2018):**

“Everything is ready. We hope to sign an agreement within the next two months... for the first time, China has come up with such cooperation.”

- **Financial Details:**
 - **USD 115 million** committed by China out of a total **USD 160 million** project ([Daily Sun Article](#)).
 - This makes China the **largest foreign investor** in BTV's infrastructure to date. ([bdnews24.com](#))

Strategic Media Alignment and Official Endorsements

- At a Chinese Embassy-hosted workshop in Dhaka in 2018, Chinese Ambassador **Zhang Zuo** articulated China's goals for deeper media ties:

“Let's become the loudspeaker for China-Bangladesh relations... and the propeller for China-Bangladesh cooperation.”

- China proposed **four pillars** of cooperation:
 1. Bilateral communication mechanisms
 2. Integration and innovation
 3. Friendship through mutual media learning
 4. Shared development opportunities
- This language positions BTV not only as a **broadcasting partner** but as a **strategic tool for shaping regional narratives** aligned with Beijing's soft power objectives.

Launch of BTV News – A New Chapter in State Media

- In **2024**, Bangladesh launched **BTV News**, a dedicated news channel under the state-run BTV umbrella.
- While the channel claims to aim for “**impartial and objective news**” and serve **expatriate audiences**, its timing and positioning follow a long string of China-Bangladesh media partnerships and cultural events that have promoted **Chinese global narratives**.

“BTV News aims to expand global recognition of Bangladesh and serve expatriate audiences.”

Journalists Taken to Xinjiang on Sponsored Trips

In July 2023, the Chinese government sponsored a **10-member Bangladeshi media delegation** to **Xinjiang**, aiming to strengthen media ties and promote China's narrative on sensitive issues like **human rights, ethnic policy, and the Belt and Road Initiative**.

The delegation included journalists from major Bangladeshi media outlets:

- **Masud Karim** – Chief Reporter, *Daily Jugantor*
- **Titu Das Gupta** – Deputy Editor, *The Business Standard*
- **Mir Mostafizur Rahaman** – Special Correspondent, *The Financial Express*
- **Porimol Palma** – Diplomatic Correspondent, *The Daily Star*
- **AKM Moinuddin** – Special Correspondent, *UNB*
- **Nafiza Dawla** – Special Correspondent, *Independent TV*
- **Ashiqur Rahman Apu** – Chief Reporter, *ATN News*
- **Tasnim Mohsin Mishu** – Diplomatic Correspondent, *Daily Samakal*
- **Ahmed Reza** – Senior Reporter, *Jamuna TV*
- **Tajwar Mahmud** – Diplomatic Correspondent, *Somoy TV*

During the visit, they toured locations such as the **Xinjiang Museum** in Urumqi and were briefed on China's policies related to **religion, ethnic unity, rural development, women's rights, and human rights laws**. The trip was promoted as an opportunity for the journalists to “learn the truth about Xinjiang” directly from the ground—language that mirrors Chinese state media rhetoric aimed at downplaying allegations of repression in the region.

Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh **Yao Wen** praised the initiative and urged Bangladeshi journalists to document and spread positive stories about China-Bangladesh friendship, effectively encouraging them to act as informal ambassadors for Chinese soft power.

This trip is part of a broader pattern of **Beijing-sponsored tours**, which critics say are designed to **influence foreign media coverage** and shape favorable public opinion in strategically important countries like Bangladesh.

Source: [*Dhaka Tribune*, July 21, 2023](#)

1. February 2025 — 22-Member "Friendship Delegation" Including Journalists

- A **22-member delegation** — featuring leaders from major political parties, think tanks, student groups, and **two journalists** — visited **Beijing, Shaanxi, and Yunnan** for an 11-day trip.
- The tour was organized by the **Communist Party of China (CPC)** to “press the acceleration button” on diplomatic outreach following Bangladesh's political transition ([dhakatribune.com](#)).
- The delegation included UNB Special Correspondent **Abdur Rahman Jahangir** and Dainik Amader Somoy Diplomatic Correspondent **Md Arifuzzaman Mamun** ([dhakatribune.com](#), [Global Times](#))



Figure 24 The delegation visits used by Chinese Media to further their foreign policy narratives

2. June 2024 — 19-Member Youth Exchange Program with Journalists

- From **June 2–11, 2024**, a **19-member youth delegation**, comprising **13 university professors, 3 researchers, and 3 journalists**, visited **Yunnan, Shanghai, and Beijing**.
- Organized by the Centre for China Studies and Shanghai Institute for International Studies, the visit aimed to exchange views on technology, urban planning, sustainability, and culture (thefinancialexpress.com.bd).

These **China-facilitated tours** reflect a coordinated push to enhance “people-to-people” and **elite-level engagement**—spanning journalists, students, politicians, and academics. Frequently, **Chinese diplomatic messaging phrases** such as “shared prosperity,” “modernization,” and “deepening cooperation” are emphasized, aligning with **China’s broader soft-power diplomacy** in South Asia.

Case Study: Israt Amin



Figure 25 Israt Amin (Center) during the delegation visit to China

Israt Amin, a prominent **Bangladeshi broadcast journalist** with Channel 24, has over **660,000 followers on Facebook** and is widely recognized for her sharp presentation style and authoritative reporting. In 2023, Amin visited China as part of a carefully curated foreign delegation under the auspices of the **Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs**. Her visit and subsequent media portrayal offer a textbook example of how Beijing deploys soft power by co-opting high-profile foreign journalists to amplify state-sanctioned narratives—particularly surrounding the **Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)**.



Figure 26 Israt Amin (Right) prominently featured on Global Times

Beijing's Media Playbook: The Role of Journalists as Narrative Multipliers

Israt Amin's participation in the **10th Belt and Road Forum** was strategically leveraged across a suite of **Chinese state-affiliated media platforms**, including:

- **WE ARE CHINA** (25 million followers): A digital storytelling platform often accused of disseminating Chinese propaganda.
- **People's Daily**: The official newspaper of the Chinese Communist Party.
- **Global Times** and **CCTV**: Known for their nationalistic and government-aligned editorial slant.

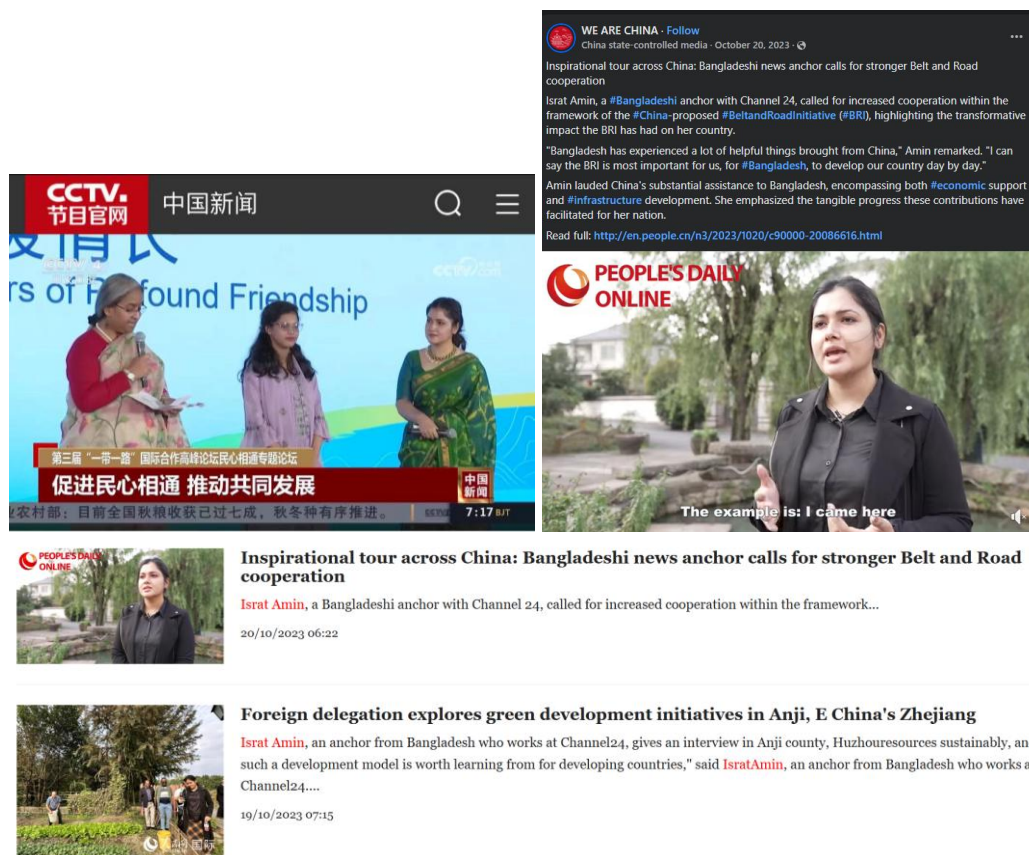


Figure 27 Prominent Media Houses in China using Israt Amin for promoting Chinese Narratives

Amin's delegation trip was transformed into a media spectacle, where her public endorsements of China's global policies—especially the BRI—were repeatedly quoted and disseminated for international and domestic consumption.

Framing the Message: Her Key Statements

Israt Amin's public remarks during and after her visit to China reflect core CCP narratives. In one **interview widely promoted by People's Daily**, she stated:

“Bangladesh has experienced a lot of helpful things brought from China. I can say the BRI is most important for us, for Bangladesh, to develop our country day by day.”

By aligning her personal views with China's foreign policy framework, she provided a **credible local voice** reinforcing Beijing's message that the **BRI is beneficial, unifying, and necessary**—countering criticisms of debt traps, labor exploitation, or sovereignty erosion.

Soft Power Through Hospitality and Shared Culture

A significant component of China's influence strategy relies not only on formal diplomacy but **emotional appeal and cultural engagement**. Amin's Facebook posts during her China visit reflected admiration for **Chinese hospitality, tradition, and governance**:

“This is a lifetime experience... We get to meet Communist Party heads from different states of China. China's main strength is their patriotism.”

“Eating with chopsticks while showing courtesy was a challenge... but every province's special food in China fascinated me.”

This framing positions China not as an authoritarian state, but as a generous, cultured host—aiming to **win the hearts of foreign publics** through personal, relatable experiences by trusted local voices.

Objectives of the Chinese Government Behind Her Inclusion

Israt Amin's visit served multiple strategic goals for the Chinese government:

1. **Legitimize the BRI Narrative:** Through a journalist respected by Bangladeshi audiences, China reinforced the notion that the BRI is an engine of prosperity.
2. **Shape Public Perception in South Asia:** As a female journalist with mass appeal, Amin served as a highly influential voice to soften and humanize China's image in the Global South.
3. **Build Interpersonal Trust Among Foreign Elites:** Her meetings with Chinese Communist Party heads and state officials exemplify Beijing's attempt to **embed political goodwill** through non-traditional diplomatic channels.

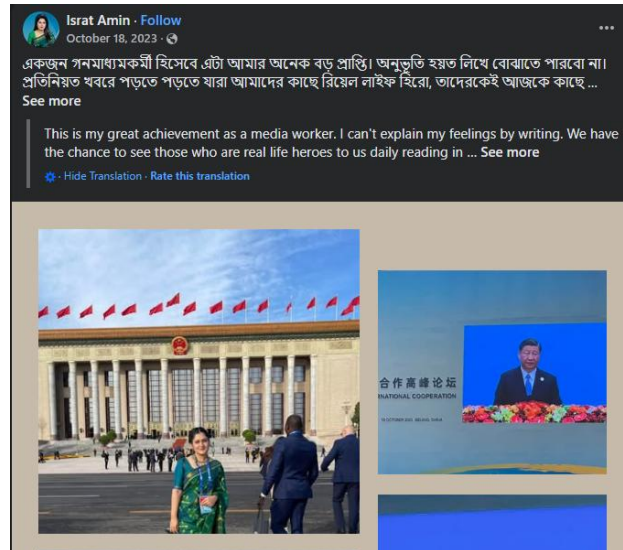


Figure 28 Israt Amin social media post on the visit



Figure 29 Israt Amin promoting Chinese Food debunking the popular narrative

China's Long-Term Strategy: Media Diplomacy via Delegation Visits
 Amin's case reflects China's broader strategy of "**media diplomacy**"—inviting journalists, social media influencers, and editors from developing nations on **state-sponsored visits** designed to generate **positive coverage, cultural affinity, and political alignment**. While these visits are often framed as educational or cultural exchanges, they serve **propaganda functions**:

- **Control the narrative** by curating what journalists see.
- **Personalize propaganda** through first-person testimonials.
- **Localize messaging** by using voices the domestic audience already trusts.

Prominent Influencers

Salahuddin Sumon

Link: www.youtube.com/@SalahuddinSumon

- Joined Oct 21, 2011
- 2.66M subscribers
- 586 videos
- 516,227,864 views

Controversial Travels and videos:

Based on the content pattern, Salahuddin Sumon is a **popular Bangladeshi YouTuber** and travel vlogger with **2.66 million subscribers**. His channel includes **a significant number of travel documentaries from China and Tibet**, many of which are **presented in a positive and sometimes promotional tone**. This includes:

Indicators of Pro-China Narrative:

1. **Frequent travel content from China, Tibet, and Xinjiang** – over 25+ videos in the last few months alone.
2. **Video titles often portray Chinese culture, infrastructure, and Muslims in a favorable light**, e.g.:
 - "Bangladeshi tourists overwhelmed by the hospitality of Chinese Muslims"
 - "China's 644-year-old mosque"
 - "The world's highest railway to Tibet"
 - "Chopsticks taught by a Chinese girl"
3. **Rarely includes any critical content** about issues like **human rights in Tibet or Xinjiang**, despite covering these regions extensively.
4. **Travel facilitated by Chinese entities?** Several titles imply organized trips (e.g., "Bangladeshi tourists" group format), suggesting potential collaboration with China's soft power or tourism outreach programs.
5. **High-quality production and consistent coverage of China's rural and urban development**, which is a known tactic in **China's global narrative-building strategy**.

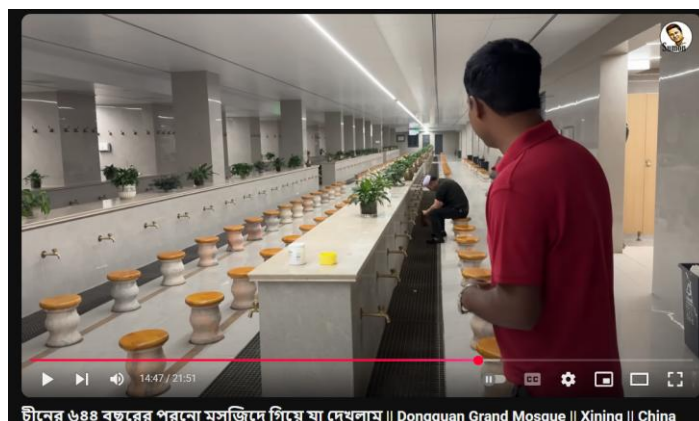


Figure 30 Salahuddin Sumon whitewashing the conditions of Muslims in China



Figure 31 Salahuddin Sumon showcasing Tibetans being living happily in China

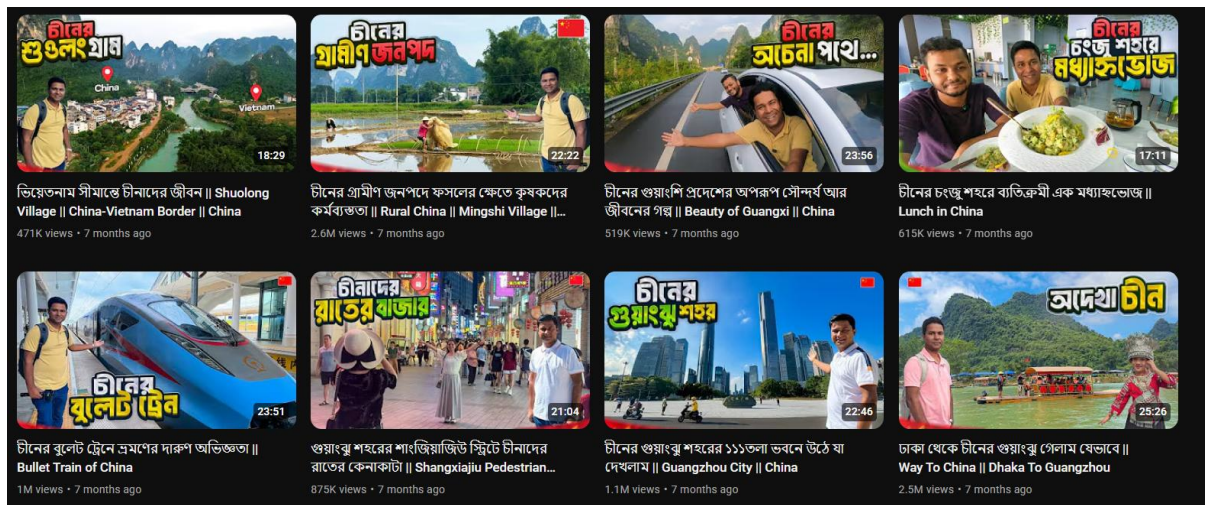


Figure 32 Salahuddin Sumon regularly pushing China's development narrative

Activities Suggesting Pro-China Activities

A growing pattern of Salahuddin Sumon's activities, affiliations, and omissions strongly indicate a **pro-China alignment** that goes beyond casual travel content:

- Founder of Bengal Vista – A China-Focused Travel Company:** Sumon is the founder of Bengal Vista (Link: <https://www.facebook.com/bengalvistabd>, <https://bengalvista.com.bd/>), a travel agency that appears almost exclusively dedicated to promoting tourism to China. The “About Us” section of Bengal Vista is explicitly framed around Sumon’s admiration for China:

“...I’m bringing that same level of dedication and insight to help you discover China like never before... We offer comprehensive services for all types of Chinese visas, expertly crafted tour packages across China...”

The agency also promotes **package tours to Tibet and other Chinese regions**, reinforcing a highly curated, government-friendly narrative of China’s image to Bangladeshi travellers.

About Us

Few words from the Founder of Bengal Vista Salahuddin Sumon

As the founder of Bengal Vista, I'm thrilled to introduce a travel agency built on trust, expertise, and my personal passion for exploring new destinations. Many of you already know me from my years as a social influencer and documentary filmmaker, where I've shared incredible travel experiences across the globe. Now, through Bengal Vista, I'm bringing that same level of dedication and insight to help you discover China like never before.

We offer comprehensive services for all types of Chinese visas, expertly crafted tour packages across China, and convenient air ticket booking assistance. Whether you're looking to explore China's rich history, breathtaking landscapes, or modern wonders, Bengal Vista is here to ensure a seamless and unforgettable journey.

What sets us apart? Sometimes, I'll personally join you on select trips to guide you through the experience, ensuring you witness something truly fascinating—just like you've seen in my travel documentaries. With Bengal Vista, you're not just booking a trip; you're embarking on an adventure with a trusted guide who understands the beauty and diversity China has to offer.

Figure 33 The "About Us" of Bengal Vista (company of Salahuddin Sumon) exclusively focus on China

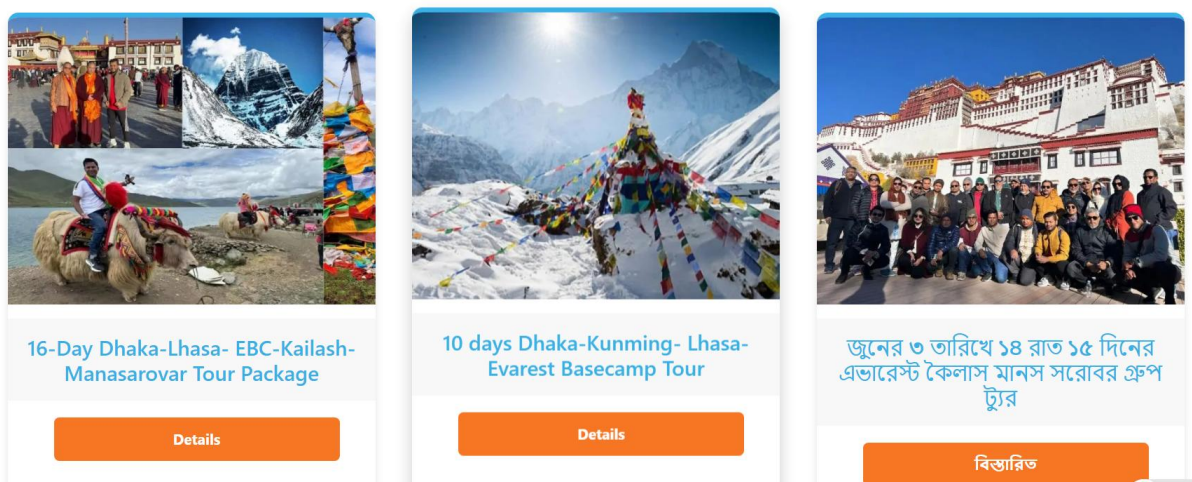


Figure 34 Trip packages on Bengal Vista

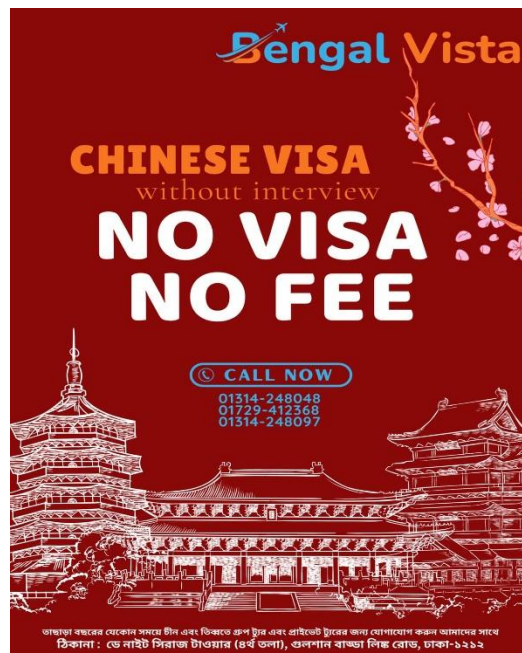


Figure 35 Bengal Vista collaboration with China on Visa for Bangladeshi citizens

- Promoting Chinese Government Messaging:**
 He posts content like “China wants to provide medical services to Bangladeshis at low

cost,” aligning directly with **Beijing’s soft power and health diplomacy goals** under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

- **Participation in Chinese Medical Tourism Campaigns:** Sumon attended the “Ni Hao! China – China Medical Tourism Promotion Conference,” a state-sponsored effort to brand China as a healthcare destination. His participation was acknowledged by the **Belt & Road Chinese Center (一带一路汉语中心)**, which publicly thanked him—highlighting an explicit link to Chinese state-sponsored platforms.



Figure 36 Sumon attended the “Ni Hao! China Medical Tourism Promotion Conference,” and acknowledged by the Belt & Road Chinese Center

- **Frequent Visits to Tibet and Xinjiang:** He has regularly filmed and shared content from **sensitive Chinese regions such as Tibet and Xinjiang**, presenting a sanitized and idyllic version of these areas. His narratives consistently avoid discussion on ethnic unrest, cultural suppression, or surveillance — issues well-documented by international rights groups.



Figure 37 Frequent visits of Sumon to China

Md Enamul Hassan

Md Enamul Hassan, a former **diplomatic correspondent for the *Daily Sun*** in Bangladesh, emerged as a key Bangladeshi voice promoting Chinese state narratives—especially during sensitive geopolitical moments surrounding Xinjiang, Tibet (Xizang), and the COVID-19 pandemic. After relocating to Beijing to work as a **news editor and broadcast journalist with China Media Group (CMG)**, China’s primary state-run broadcaster, Hassan became a visible agent in the CCP’s international public relations efforts. He is currently based in England, and since 2023, his media activity appears to have declined significantly.

Media Personality Used to Legitimize Xinjiang Narratives

Hassan's most prominent role in China's soft power strategy was as a **"foreign journalist eyewitness"** used to validate Beijing's version of the situation in **Xinjiang**, a region marred by global allegations of genocide and repression of Uyghur Muslims.

In the **YouTube video** titled *"A Bangladeshi Journalist Takes You to Discover Xinjiang"* (Tianshan Fairyland, Nov 11, 2021), Hassan praises Xinjiang as "a land full of surprises," noting its "stunning scenery, tasty food, and warm-hearted people." Urging viewers to "see for yourself," Hassan serves as a conduit for the Chinese government's disinformation strategy: presenting Xinjiang as a tourist-friendly region rather than a human rights flashpoint.

[Watch: A Bangladeshi journalist takes you to discover Xinjiang](#)

His views were amplified not only by Chinese state-linked YouTube channels but also by official propaganda handles such as **Discover Xinjiang**, and **retweeted by Zhao Lijian**, spokesperson for the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China**, signaling top-level approval and orchestration.

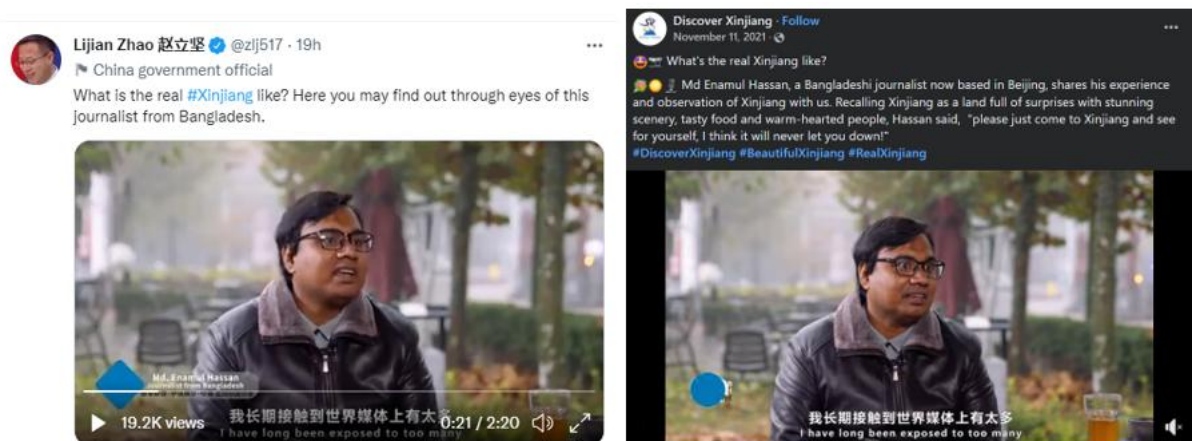


Figure 38 Enamul Hassan's propaganda videos shared by Zhao Lijian and prominent handles like Discover Xinjiang

Articles That Echo Beijing's Core Talking Points

Hassan has authored multiple op-eds on **People's Daily**, China's main Communist Party mouthpiece, using journalistic language to whitewash Chinese abuses and frame Western media as inherently biased. His writings closely follow the rhetoric of Chinese foreign policy, targeting Western democracies, human rights NGOs, and Muslim critics of Beijing's policies. Some notable examples include:

- **"Western media blind to vast development in Xinjiang"** – Blames Western outlets for "refusing" to report on China's progress.
- **"Muslims have no reason to believe Western propaganda over Xinjiang"** – Appeals directly to Muslim audiences in developing countries.
- **"Allegation of genocide in Xinjiang the biggest lie in history"** – Repeats language used in CCP white papers.
- **"Adrian Zenz, man behind the lies..."** – Attacks the credibility of German researcher Adrian Zenz, a primary critic of China's Xinjiang policies.
- **"Xi Jinping: A global leader in the fight against coronavirus"** – Portrays China's COVID-19 management as a global model while blaming the West for global misinformation.



[Home >>](#)

US tramples on hopes for global unity by boycotting Beijing Olympics

By Md Enamul Hassan (People's Daily Online) 16:54, January 17, 2022



[Home >>](#)

US should look in the mirror before lecturing on democracy

By Md Enamul Hassan (People's Daily Online) 10:33, December 14, 2021

Just the other day, I was listening to some high-profile speakers at the Dialogue on Democracy held in Beijing, which shed light on the definition of democracy and the competing narratives behind it.

The dialogue featured Le Yucheng, China's Vice Foreign Minister, and many renowned scholars such as Eric Li S. M and Zhang Weiwei from China, Kishore Mahbubani from Singapore, and Martin Jacques and John Ross from the UK.

Figure 39 Enamul Hassan's columns in Chinese Media promoting China's Foreign policy narratives

These articles serve Beijing's two-pronged goal: (1) deflect international scrutiny, and (2) win the hearts and minds of Muslim-majority countries like Bangladesh through "trusted" local voices.

Full article list: [People's Daily – Md Enamul Hassan Contributions](#)

Instrumentalization at Major Propaganda Events

Hassan's inclusion as a **foreign delegate to the 2023 "Forum on the Development of Xizang"** (China's official rebranding of Tibet) further underscores his value to Beijing. This forum, unlike its earlier iterations, replaced the word *Tibet* with *Xizang*, signaling a strategic language shift aimed at further Sinicizing the region. His participation as a non-Chinese Muslim journalist was critical for China's optics, reinforcing the narrative that the world—especially the Muslim world—endorses Beijing's control over contested regions.

Embassy Promotion and Diplomatic Links

Before his move to Beijing, the **Chinese Embassy in Bangladesh** actively promoted Hassan's interviews and articles, indicating state-level interest in cultivating him as a soft power amplifier. His

“insider” role helped China bridge narratives between the state and the Bangladeshi audience, making him an ideal spokesperson for internal and external propaganda.

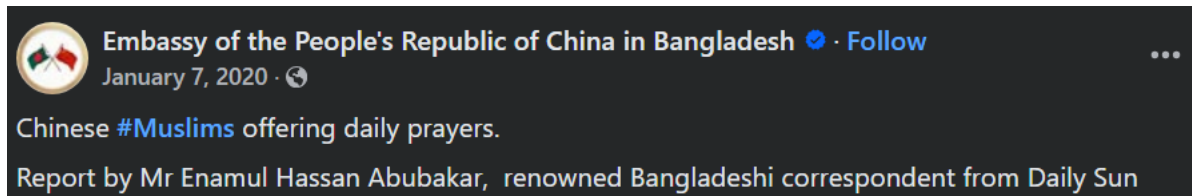


Figure 40 Official handle of Chinese Embassy in Bangladesh quoting reports written by Enamul Hassan

Decline in Visibility Post-2023

Since late 2023, Hassan’s presence in Chinese media has significantly diminished. While the reasons remain unclear, this decline may reflect shifting propaganda strategies or changing personal circumstances. Nonetheless, his earlier contributions remain accessible and continue to be cited across pro-China platforms.

Mahedi Hassan Sunny

Mahedi Hassan Sunny, a Bangladeshi national and graduate of Peking University’s Yuanpei College, has become a recurring face in Chinese state-linked media promoting pro-China narratives. Though Sunny does not command a large social media following of his own, he has been prominently featured by **Chinese state-run media outlets** to project **positive narratives** about China—especially its development, technological progress, ethnic harmony, and poverty alleviation programs.

Activities Used to Amplify Chinese Narratives

- **China Daily (2021–2022)** featured multiple articles and videos authored or starring Sunny, including:
 - **“Understanding China from an International Student's Perspective”** – an op-ed praising China's development, urban architecture, and poverty alleviation programs. ([Link](#))
 - **“Victory against poverty, Congratulations China!”** – a piece hailing China’s rural development and poverty eradication as “remarkable in human history.” ([Link](#))

Victory against poverty, Congratulations China!

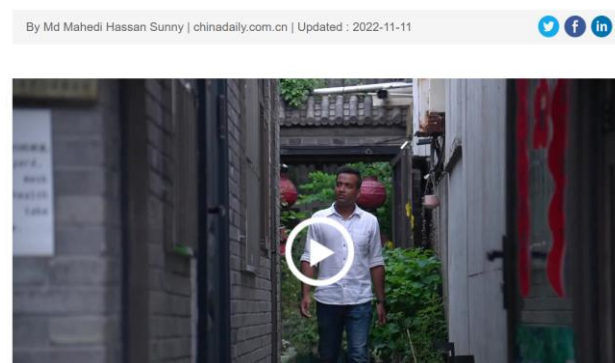


Figure 41 China Daily featuring video of Mahedi Hassan Sunny

- **“My China Surprise”** – a China Daily video project showcasing Sunny’s travel impressions across various Chinese provinces. ([Link](#))



Figure 42 China Daily featuring reports on Mahedi Hassan Sunny

- New China TV (Xinhua's YouTube Channel) featured him in the video:
 - “China's Xinjiang in eyes of Bangladeshi expat”, in which Sunny praises Xinjiang’s diversity and lifestyle, contradicting widespread allegations of repression. [Video](#)



Figure 43 Xinhua's YouTube Channel featuring video of Mahedi Hassan Sunny on Xinjiang

- CGTN (China Global Television Network) also promoted his journey, framing him as a sincere witness of China’s “real story.” He is quoted as saying:

“In Xinjiang, I witnessed how various ethnic cultures coexisted... In Fujian and Jiangxi, I saw China’s achievements in poverty alleviation... I hope to show the real China to the world.”

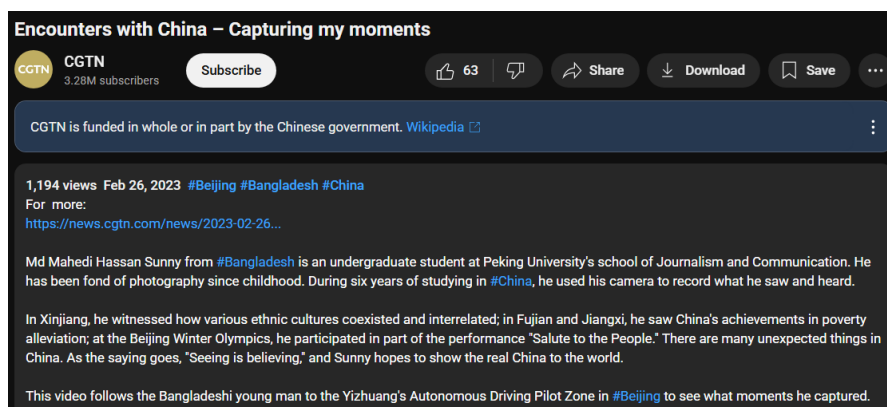


Figure 44 Chinese Global Propaganda Media CGTN featuring video of Mahedi Hassan Sunny

- Peking University acknowledged his media contribution on its official page (Oct 8, 2021), noting his interview with China Daily about China’s socioeconomic development.



Figure 45 Peking University acknowledging Mahedi Hassan Sunny

- He served as a **Content Creator** for the **Office for Global Communication of Peking University**, which collaborates directly with media arms that promote Chinese narratives overseas.
- He co-founded **SayLab**, a social media initiative aimed at introducing Chinese culture to English-speaking audiences, operating from Beijing between 2021 and 2023.

His video on supporting Wuhan and China was shared by the official handle of the Chinese Embassy in Bangladesh during Covid19 crisis.



Figure 46 Official handle of Chinese Embassy in Bangladesh quoting videos shared by Mahedi Hassan Sunny

While Sunny has **limited independent social media reach**, he is clearly **used strategically by Chinese government-affiliated media** to legitimize China's policies and image abroad—particularly in **Bangladesh**, a critical partner in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). His **Bangladeshi identity**, **student status**, and **soft storytelling approach** make him a potent asset for Beijing's foreign influence campaigns.

Think Tanks

Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies

1. A state-run policy think tank with a history of subtle, academic-style support for Chinese strategic initiatives such as the **Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)** and **Global Security Initiative (GSI)**.

Journal Articles Supporting GSI & BRI: Example: Md Nahiyen Shajid Khan (Research Officer, BISS) published in 2024: “Bangladesh can access innovative solutions to address non-traditional security issues like food, cyber, and climate threats.” — [DOI link to article](#)

2. Leadership-Level China Engagement:

- Frequent **high-level meetings** with Chinese Ambassador Yao Wen.
- These meetings are often publicized by the **Chinese Embassy in Dhaka (on Twitter (x))**, indicating strategic messaging coordination.



Figure 47 BISS events featuring officials from Chinese Embassy



Figure 48 Chinese Ambassador meeting DG of BISS (Shared by Chinese Embassy Handle)



Figure 49 Chinese Ambassador delivering keynote in the BISS events on Bangladesh-China relations

3. Influence of Former BISS Chairman Munshi Faiz Ahmad:

- Former ambassador to China and head of the **Association of Bangladesh-China Alumni**.
- **Praised China's political system** as more democratic than some democracies.



Figure 50 Former BISS Chairman Munshi Faiz Ahmad on Democracy in China

- **Former BISS Chairman Munshi Faiz Ahmad** advocated for **currency swap arrangements** with **China**.
 ➤ [Example: Article supporting China currency deal](#)

World should consider alternatives to dollar's monopoly on trade: ex-ambassador Munshi Faiz Ahmad

The former Bangladesh ambassador to China believes currency swaps and 'her options would ease strains on foreign reserves

"[China] has been making currency swapping deals with many countries already. I think countries like Bangladesh and others who are suffering now, because of the monopoly of the dollar in international finance, [should] think twice and find out if we can also get into this arrangement of currency swapping, which will reduce our dependence on the dollar and the American channel of money transfers and transactions."

Figure 51 Former BISS Chairman Munshi Faiz Ahmad supporting currency swaps with China for de-dollarization

- **Munshi Faiz Ahmad is a Frequent Participant in High-Profile China-Aligned Events:**

- Often joins events with Chinese Ambassador Yao Wen and is acknowledged by the **Chinese Embassy's official social media.**



Figure 52 Munshi Faiz Ahmad at Chinese Embassy events and being quoted by the Chinese Embassy handle

- **Munshi Faiz Ahmad was the Key Organizer and Speaker at China-Themed Cultural Events:**
 - **November 27, 2023** – Attended the high-profile exhibition titled *"Belt and Road Initiative & Bangladesh-China Friendship: Opening a New Horizon"*

4. Workshops & Seminars Endorsing BRI:

- **Organized academic discussions like:**
 - ***“Implication of the Belt and Road Initiative for Sustainable Development Goals” (2020) – [BIISS Link](#)***
 - ***Country Lecture Series (May 2025):***
“Five Decades of Bangladesh-China Relations” – featuring Ambassador Yao Wen and Prof. Imtiaz Ahmed.



PROGRAMME

10 February 2020 from 1400-1630 hours

1330 – 1400 hrs : Arrival and Lunch

Chair : Ambassador M Fazlul Karim, Chairman, BISS

1400 – 1415 hrs : Welcome Address
 Colonel Sheikh Masud Ahmed, SPP, psc
 Acting Director General, BISS

Dr Namsuk Kim
 Projects Coordinator, UNDESA, New York

1415 – 1450 hrs : Presentation
 Potential Impact of the BRI on SDGs in Selected Asian Economies:
 Results from the Extended World Economic Forecasting Model
 Ms Lin Yang
 Programme Officer, UNDESA, New York

Implications of the BRI for SDGs in Bangladesh
 Dr Mahtab Kabir
 Research Director, BISS

1450 – 1510 hrs : Discussion by Distinguished Panelists
 Dr Nazneen Ahmed
 Senior Research Fellow, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies

Ms Sultana Afroz
 Additional Secretary, Economic Relations Division
 Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

1510 – 1530 hrs : Open Discussion

1530 – 1545 hrs : Address by the Guest of Honour
 Ms Zuena Aziz
 Principal Coordinator (SDG Affairs), Prime Minister's Office
 Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

1545 – 1600 hrs : Address by the Special Guest
 Dr Shamsul Alam
 Member (Senior Secretary), General Economics Division (GED), Planning Commission
 Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

1600 – 1620 hrs : Address by the Chief Guest
 H E Md Shahriar Alam, MP
 Honourable State Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
 Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

1620 – 1630 hrs : Concluding Remarks by the Chair
 Ambassador M Fazlul Karim
 Chairman, BISS

Invitation Text:

Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) and United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) cordially invite you to the Workshop on **Implications of the Belt and Road Initiative for Sustainable Development Goals in Bangladesh**

The workshop will take place at BISS Auditorium, Dhaka on Monday, 10 February 2020 from 1400 to 1630 hours

H E Md Shahriar Alam, MP
 Honourable State Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
 Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
 will grace the workshop as the Chief Guest

Dr Shamsul Alam
 Member (Senior Secretary)
 General Economics Division (GED), Planning Commission
 Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
 will be in the workshop as the Special Guest

Ms Zuena Aziz
 Principal Coordinator (SDG Affairs), Prime Minister's Office
 Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
 will be in the workshop as the Special Guest

RSVP: 01771594256; Fax: 48312425; E-mail: info@biiss.org; Website: www.biiss.org

Note: Mobile Phones may please be kept in silent mode during the Session

Figure 53 BIISS workshop on “Implication of the Belt and Road Initiative for Sustainable Development Goals”

5. Official Visits to China:

- Director General Maj Gen Sheikh Pasha Habib Uddin attended the “China-Bangladesh Relations Seminar” at the China Institute of International Studies, Beijing (Sep 2023).
- Other participants: Ambassadors Farooq Sobhan, Humayun Kabir, Tariq Karim, and scholars like Shahab Enam Khan.



Figure 54 China-Bangladesh Relations Seminar at the China Institute of International Studies, Beijing

Centre for East Asia Foundation (CEAF)

1. Organizational Overview:

- CEAF is a non-profit, non-political, and independent study circle registered under The Societies Registration Act, 1860, in Bangladesh.
- The foundation is committed to enhancing understanding and strengthening ties between the people and policymakers of Bangladesh with those of East Asian and Southeast Asian countries, particularly focusing on China.
[Official Website – ceafasia.org](http://ceafasia.org)

2. Key Leadership:

- **Mahbub Uz Zaman** – Former Ambassador and Chairman of CEAF.
- **Nasim Mahmud** – Executive Director of CEAF.



Figure 55 CEAF roundtable discussion on China-Bangladesh Relations and BRI

3. Pro-China Activities and Collaborations:

- **Roundtable Discussions:** CEAF organized a roundtable titled “*China-Bangladesh Relations and The Belt and Road Initiative*” at Dhaka University. It featured the Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh and delegates from the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences (SASS). [Dhaka Tribune Report](#)
- **BRI Promotion:** CEAF has actively published magazines and articles promoting the Belt and Road Initiative and China's image as a developmental partner. [Prothom Alo coverage](#)
- **Policy Messaging:** CEAF collaborates closely with the Chinese Embassy and organizes joint events that promote Chinese soft power in Bangladesh, often featuring speeches and articles by Chinese and CEAF officials. [Xinhua coverage](#)

Notable Pro-China Articles by Nasim Mahmud (Executive Director, CEAF)

- **“One-China Principle: A Cornerstone of Peace Across Taiwan Strait”**
Published on *May 23, 2025* in **Daily Observer**, this article defends China's claim over Taiwan, citing international law, historical arguments, and criticizing U.S. support for Taiwan's Democratic Progressive Party (DPP).
- **“China's 75-Year Journey to Modernisation”**
Published on *October 18, 2024*, this piece praises China's transformation since 1949, attributing its global rise to the Communist Party's leadership and peaceful development strategies.
- **“China's PLA Quest for Global Peace and Development”**
In this article, Mahmud portrays the **People's Liberation Army (PLA)** not as an aggressive force, but as a peacekeeping entity contributing to global development and stability. The piece echoes Chinese defense narratives, emphasizing that the PLA's mission includes disaster relief, UN peacekeeping, and defending sovereignty in line with Xi Jinping's vision of a “shared future for mankind.”

- Operates in tandem with Confucius Institutes in Dhaka.
- **Hosts exhibitions, student exchange forums, and cultural events** that serve soft power goals of the Chinese government.
- Partners closely with the Chinese Embassy and receives logistical support for every event.

BIPSS

1. Organizational Profile:

- **BIPSS** is a Dhaka-based independent think tank specializing in peace, security, and strategic studies.
- Led by **Major General A N M Muniruzzaman (Retd)**, BIPSS is known for producing policy-relevant research and engaging in regional security dialogues.

2. Bangladesh Centre for China Studies (BCCS) – An Institutional Arm for China Engagement

- BIPSS launched the **Bangladesh Centre for China Studies (BCCS)** to analyze:
 - China's foreign and security policy
 - Economic transformation and implications for South Asia
 - Bilateral development opportunities with Bangladesh
- **Official Objective:** “To partner with Think Tanks and universities in China as well as other institutes elsewhere focusing on China, and to act as a bridge between China and South Asia.”
- **Leadership:** The Centre is headed by **Maj. Gen. Muniruzzaman (Retd)**, who has led multiple delegations and Track 1.5 dialogues with China.

3. Key Collaborations with China:

6th China–Bangladesh Cooperation Forum (2023)

- Held in **Dhaka**, co-hosted with the **Yunnan Development Research Center (YDRC)** of the People's Government of Yunnan, China.
 - Brought together Chinese government officials and Bangladeshi policy experts to discuss:
 - Bilateral economic initiatives
 - Regional connectivity
 - Security cooperation
- [BIPSS Report](#)

7th China–Bangladesh Cooperation Dialogue (Kunming)

- Hosted by **YDRC** in Kunming, China.
 - BIPSS President led a four-member delegation.
 - Themes included trade, green energy transition, and cross-border infrastructure.
 - Ended with a **joint declaration**, reinforcing both sides' policy coordination.
- [Dialogue Summary](#)

Visit of Think Tank Delegation to China

- BIPSS President Muniruzzaman led a Bangladeshi **think tank delegation** to China.
 - The delegation visited major Chinese think tanks, universities, and policymakers.
- [Official Report](#)

Academic Exchange:

- A research delegation from the **Institute of South Asian Studies, Sichuan University**, visited BIPSS in Dhaka for strategic consultations and agenda-sharing.

4. Level of China Engagement vs. Other Countries

- While **BIPSS also engages with Indian**, American, and ASEAN think tanks, its collaboration with China is **institutionalized and strategic in nature**, as evidenced by:
 - A dedicated China Studies Centre (BCCS)
 - Annual Track 1.5 dialogues with Chinese government bodies
 - Repeated mutual academic delegations
 - Official joint statements and policy advocacy aligned with Beijing's interests

5. Strategic Significance:

- **BIPSS**, via BCCS, functions as a **policy influencer advocating deeper economic and political convergence with China**.
- It has contributed to China's **soft power and narrative-building** in Bangladesh, focusing on mutual development, BRI compatibility, and opposition to Western containment strategies.



Figure 56 BIPSS and Chinese Officials in a conference



Figure 57 Yunan-Bangladesh Cooperation Dialogue organized by YDRC and BIPSS

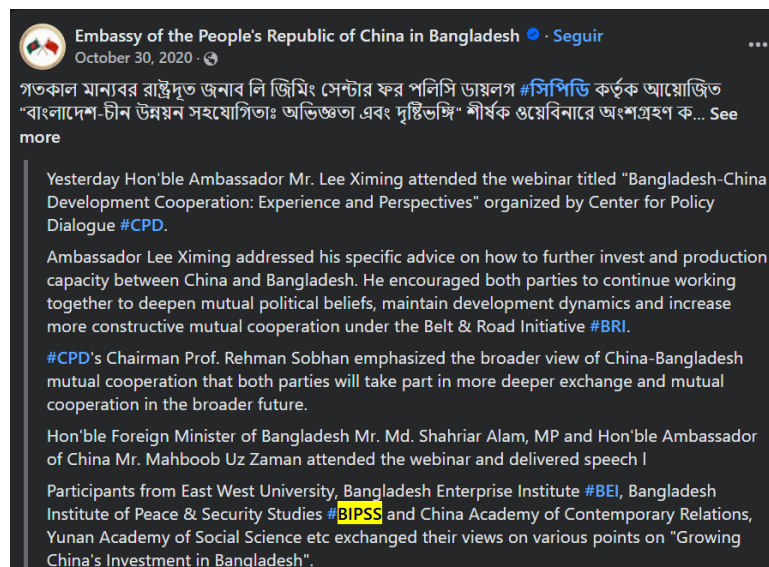


Figure 58 Official Handle of Chinese Embassy in Bangladesh featuring BIPSS



Figure 59 BIPSS President Muniruzzaman and Chinese Ambassador discussing China-Bangladesh relations

Asian Regional Conference on Belt and Road Initiative: Prospects and Challenges

In September 2018, BIPSS organized a two-day international conference titled "Asian Regional Conference on Belt and Road Initiative: Prospects and Challenges." The event brought together scholars, diplomats, and experts from countries including China, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Singapore, and Malaysia. The conference aimed to delve into the multifaceted aspects of the BRI, discussing its potential benefits and challenges for the region. Notably, the inaugural session featured addresses by the Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh, H.E. Zhang Zuo, and BIPSS President Maj Gen Muniruzzaman (Retd). A delegation from the Yunnan Academy of Social Sciences also participated, underscoring the collaborative nature of the event.

At the opening of the conference, BIPSS President Major General A.N.M. Muniruzzaman (Retd.) emphasized the strategic importance of Bangladesh in the BRI. He stated:

“Bangladesh is an important member of BRI and has signed several contracts for infrastructure construction and economic cooperation totaling 40 billion US dollars during the visit of President Xi Jinping to Dhaka in October 2016. We are a key maritime nation along the Road and a strategic Indian Ocean country. Our geo-strategic location at the critical entry point of the Bay of Bengal gives us the opportunity to play a major role in this geo-economic and geo-connectivity vision of BRI... We have the opportunity not only to play a major role in BRI but also take its best benefits. It will all depend on how we shape our future.”

Influence on Education

1. Confucius Institute, University of Dhaka (CI-DU)

- **Established:** October 14, 2016, as a joint initiative between **Yunnan University** and **University of Dhaka**, inaugurated by Xi Jinping and Sheikh Hasina (du.ac.bd).
- **Mandate:** Teach Mandarin, promote Chinese culture, and act as a bridge for people-to-people exchange and support BRI narratives .
- **Programs & Activities:**
 - Language classes and online instruction during COVID-19.
 - Alumni involvement in university-led **art/photo exhibitions showcasing BRI impacts**, e.g., hosted at Dhaka University with high-level participation (Dean of Fine Arts, Chinese ambassador) (du.ac.bd).
- **Alumni Impact:**
 - Graduates often become **Mandarin-speaking professionals** in international trade and diplomacy.
 - Institute includes alumni among speakers/organizers of BRI-aligned events (e.g., exhibitions with ambassador).

2. Confucius Institute, North South University (CI-NSU)

- **Founded:** June 2, 2005—Bangladesh’s first Confucius Institute, partnered with Yunnan University (china.aiddata.org, cpd.org.bd).
- **Key Offerings:**
 - Mandarin language classes, local teacher training (23 trained), and creation of **Bangla teaching materials** (“Great Wall Chinese in Bangla”) (northsouth.edu).
 - Houses first official **HSK test center** in Bangladesh (northsouth.edu).
 - Cultural events like Dragon Boat Festival, China-South Asia seminars, and language competitions (northsouth.edu).
- **Outreach & Alumni:**
 - Collaborates with **BCYSA (Bangladesh-China Youth Student Association)** to support scholarship searches and BRI training (en.wikipedia.org).
 - Faculty like **Dr. S.M. Rubyat**, with master's degrees from Yunnan and a Ph.D. from Yunnan University, bridge academic exchange with China (northsouth.edu).

3. Education-Driven Soft Power & BRI Promotion

1. CI as BRI Platform

- At international CI conferences (e.g., Kunming, 2016), leaders highlighted CI-DU as catalysts for “economic collaboration among China, Bangladesh, Myanmar, and India” under the BRI (sandia.gov, chinadaily.com.cn).

2. Curriculum Integration

- NSU’s Chinese faculty teach on topics like “Belt and Road Initiative and Bangladesh,” embedding BRI discourse in university-level instruction (northsouth.edu).

3. Cultural Diplomacy Events

- CI–NSU hosted high-visibility events like Dragon Boat Festival (2025) (en.wikipedia.org).
- CI–DU backed a “*BRI photo exhibition*” attended by Chinese Ambassador and academics, underscoring the alignment of culture, diplomacy, and infrastructure (bssnews.net).

4. Professional Networks:

- Through associations like BCYSA and ABCA, alumni network with Chinese agencies and participate in BRI-focused training and employment initiatives (en.wikipedia.org).
- **The Bangladesh-China Youth Student Association (BCYSA):** Founded in 2016 in Beijing, serves as a key platform uniting Bangladeshi students and professionals living in China. More than a student group, BCYSA plays a pivotal role in China’s soft power strategy in South Asia by promoting Chinese culture, philosophy, and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) among young Bangladeshis. Through initiatives like the *BCYSA Belt and Road Training Academy*, online Bengali news portal, and biannual magazine *Mahaprachir*, the organization actively disseminates pro-China narratives while fostering academic and professional opportunities linked to Chinese institutions.



Figure 60 Bangladesh-China Youth Student Association (File Image)

- BCYSA also assists Bangladeshis with scholarships, employment, and business in China, and recognizes pro-China contributors with its annual *Community Awards*. With its volunteer network and strategic programming, BCYSA is not just an educational body, but a soft power tool that reinforces China’s influence within Bangladesh’s emerging elite.
- **The Association of Bangladesh China Alumni (ABCA):** It is an active organization that brings together Bangladeshi professionals and scholars who have studied in China. Functioning as a crucial soft power vehicle, ABCA works closely with the Chinese Embassy and other institutions to promote Beijing’s narratives, political thought, and diplomatic goals within Bangladesh. Through high-profile events such as the “*Readers’ Forum on Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*”—hosted at the Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel—and cultural competitions tied to Chinese festivals, ABCA fosters ideological affinity toward the Chinese model of governance and development. The association also organizes webinars on topics like “*Poverty Eradication: Experiences from Bangladesh and China*” and “*72nd Anniversary of the PRC*,” reinforcing China’s

developmental success stories. With key members from academia, media, and civil society—such as university professors and language instructors—ABCA serves as a strategic platform to integrate Chinese political thought, including CPC leadership, into Bangladeshi intellectual and cultural discourse.

The Confucius Institutes at Dhaka University and North South University, along with their **demonstrable ties to Chinese institutions**, serve as **conduits of China's soft power**, strategically aligning Bangladeshi education with Beijing's broader ambitions. Through **language instruction, cultural diplomacy, scholarship pathways, and alumni networks**, these institutes have woven the **BRI narrative into academic and professional fabrics** across Bangladesh—shaping how a new generation perceives China and its geopolitical influence.

5. Intervention in Bangladeshi Education

In another recent development, **China has formally objected to the depiction of Arunachal Pradesh and Aksai Chin as Indian territories** in two Bangladeshi school textbooks and an official map published by the Department of Survey of Bangladesh. According to a report ([source](#)), Chinese officials raised the issue through diplomatic channels, requesting corrections to reflect China's territorial claims.

This incident reflects several key points:

- **China's assertiveness in influencing educational and governmental narratives in foreign countries**, even on internal matters such as school curricula and official cartography.
- It underscores **Beijing's growing diplomatic confidence in South Asia**, expecting neighboring countries like Bangladesh to conform to China's **geopolitical red lines**, including its claims over Arunachal Pradesh (considered by India as part of its state) and Aksai Chin (currently under Chinese control but claimed by India).
- The request puts **pressure on Bangladesh's academic and political independence**, essentially forcing Dhaka to navigate the sensitivities of two major powers—China and India—without provoking either.

This type of diplomatic pressure fits into a broader trend where **China is not just promoting its image** through media coverage and economic cooperation, but also **actively reshaping how other countries perceive geopolitical realities**, starting with young students.

Case Study : Social Media influence

There are numerous social media handles, public groups, and Facebook pages in Bangladesh that actively promote pro-China narratives—ranging from soft cultural diplomacy to strategic messaging around China's development and foreign policy. Many of these platforms operate under the guise of community engagement, alumni associations, educational collaboration, or news curation. What makes this network particularly significant is that **several of these pages are followed and indirectly endorsed by the official Facebook handle of the Chinese Embassy in Bangladesh**, lending them added legitimacy and visibility.

These platforms often publish carefully crafted content that aligns with Beijing's broader propaganda goals—highlighting China's economic success, technological innovation, and partnership with Bangladesh—while avoiding overtly political tones. This creates an **ecosystem of seemingly independent voices that collectively normalize and propagate China-friendly narratives** across Bangladeshi social media. The embassy's selective engagement with such pages reveals a strategic use of soft power, where influence is diffused across a wide network rather than centralized in a single source.

CRI Bangla (Facebook Handle: ChinaABC)

- **Managed from:** China and Bangladesh (as per Facebook page transparency)
- **Affiliation:** Part of **China Radio International (CRI)** – China’s state-controlled media network
- **Stated Goal:** “*Our goal is to present the vast and diverse China to Bengali speakers.*”

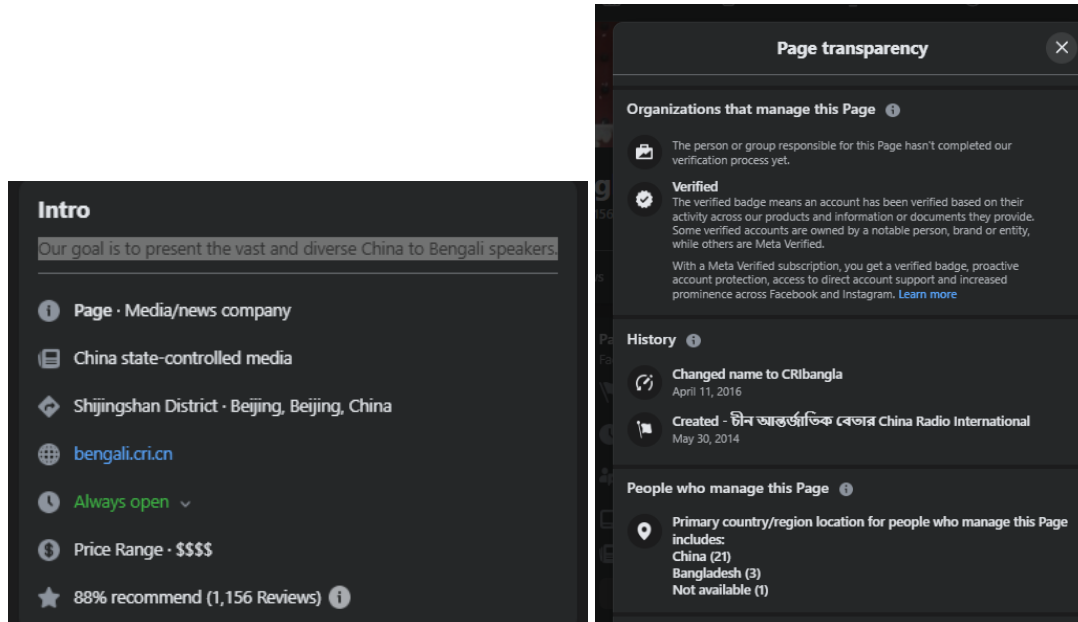


Figure 61 The page description of CRI Bangla

Follower Growth Analysis

- **Total Followers:** **11 Million+**
- **Unusual Surge in Followers (2022)**

A sudden spike in follower count was observed within just a few months in 2022:

Month	New Followers
July 2022	314,700
August 2022	254,844
September 2022	358,739
October 2022	385,538
November 2022	180,825

These figures suggest an **abnormal and inorganic growth pattern**, possibly indicating the use of paid promotions or other unethical methods to inflate follower numbers.

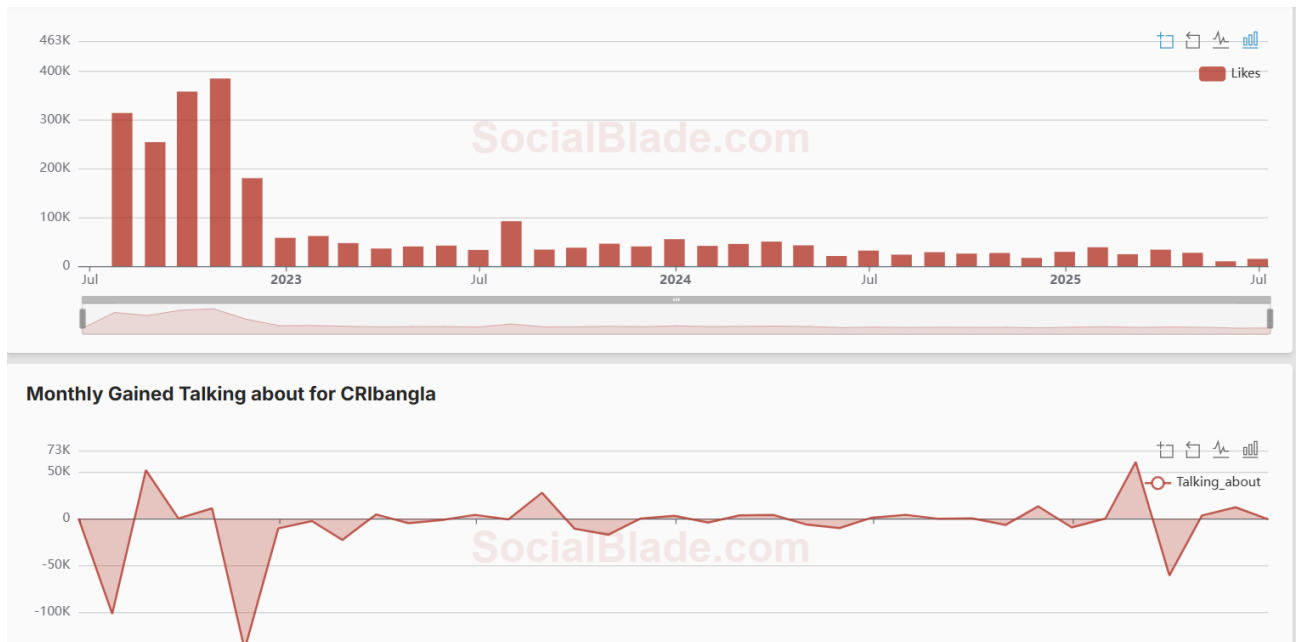


Figure 62 The sudden spike in the statistics of CRI Bangla (Source: Social Blade)

Recent Follower Activity (2025)

Timeframe	Follower Increase
Daily Average	493
Weekly Average	244
Last 14 Days	2,616
Last 30 Days	14,795

The **drastic slowdown** in recent follower growth further supports the suspicion of artificial boosting during the earlier period.



Figure 63 Posts on CRI Bangla translated into English language from Bangla

Narrative Focus and Language Strategy

The CRI Bangla handle is **heavily filled with state-curated “China Growth” stories**, positive portrayals of Chinese development, foreign policy, and its global vision. The content consistently mirrors **Beijing’s official worldview**, carefully crafted to portray China as a benevolent global power. All content is written entirely in **Bangla**, as the handle name suggests, making it highly accessible and culturally targeted. This language choice clearly aims to **influence Bangladeshi public opinion** and shape a pro-China narrative in the region through soft power and emotional resonance.

Association of Bangladesh-China Alumni

- **Followers:** [6.4K](#)
- **Admin Locations:** Bangladesh, China

The **Association of Bangladesh-China Alumni** is one of the many low-engagement yet strategically curated Facebook pages that subtly promote pro-China narratives in Bangladesh. While the page does not overtly push political propaganda, its content largely consists of **soft messaging**—highlighting China's cultural appeal, educational opportunities, development cooperation, and welfare activities related to alumni engagement.

Its posts typically fall into two categories:

1. **Soft propaganda about China** — such as positive stories about Chinese infrastructure, technological progress, or diplomatic gestures, all presented in a non-confrontational tone.
2. **Community and welfare posts** — focused on alumni networking, cultural exchange, and joint events between Bangladesh and China.

Though the page has a modest follower count and limited public interaction, its **value lies in its subtlety and networked effect**. When combined with dozens of similar pages operating under the radar, such platforms contribute cumulatively to a **larger, layered information ecosystem**. This coordinated messaging effort helps shape public perception gradually, reinforcing China’s soft power presence in Bangladesh without drawing overt scrutiny.

In addition to the official page, there exists a **public Facebook group** under the same name: **Association of Bangladesh-China Alumni – Public Group**

Members: [3.1K](#)

The ‘**About Us**’ of the Group reads, “ABCA is an alumni platform of Bangladeshi graduates from Chinese universities. Its aim to enhance and renew the lifelong China experience for all alumni and improve the friendly relation among people of two great friendly nations”.

This group functions in parallel to the main page and **amplifies similar content** through peer-to-peer interaction, member discussions, and reposting of curated narratives. Although the group also has a relatively small member base, its influence lies in its **role within a broader network of low-engagement but high-volume content hubs**.

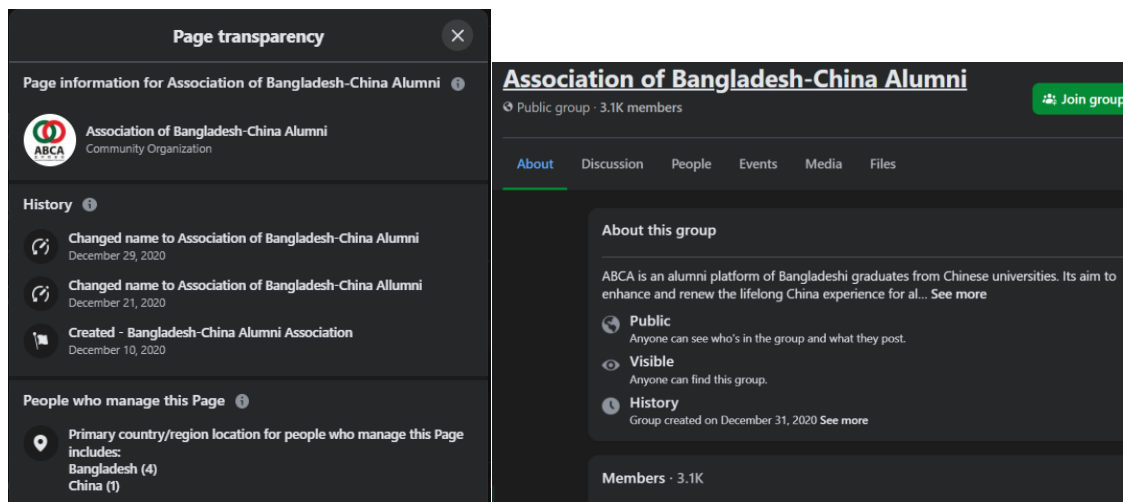


Figure 64 ABCA Facebook Page and Group

China-Bangladesh Media Friends Group

Type: Private Facebook Group

Members: 65

Created On: November 25, 2019

Visibility: Publicly visible (group name and description)

Content Access: Restricted to members only

The **China-Bangladesh Media Friends Group** is a small, closed Facebook group with only 65 members. Despite its limited size and low public activity, the group raises red flags due to its administrative control—one of its admins is the official Facebook handle of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Bangladesh. This association with a foreign diplomatic mission adds a layer of concern, particularly considering the private nature of the group and its closed membership structure.

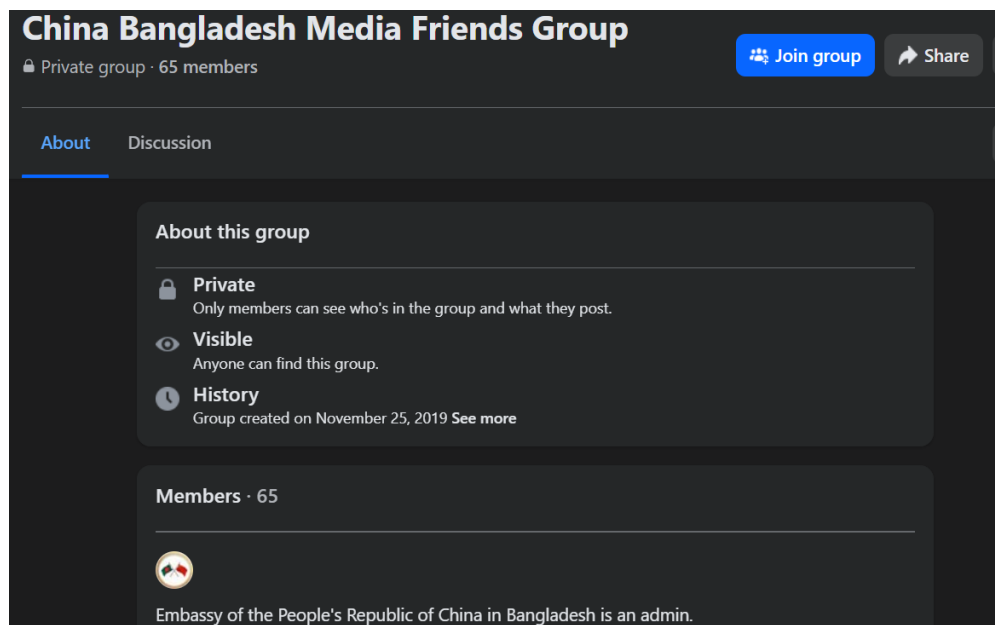


Figure 65 A private group of 65 members called "China Bangladesh Media Friends Group"

While the group may appear insignificant at first glance, its exclusivity and official backing suggest that it could serve as a **controlled communication channel**—possibly for coordination, targeted messaging, or influence operations among trusted media or communication actors within Bangladesh. The lack of

transparency around its content and participants makes it a **dubious and opaque node** within the broader China-linked propaganda ecosystem operating in the country.

Association of Bangladeshi China Returned Students & Scholars (ABCRSS)

Type: Public Facebook Group

Members: 1.1K

Admin: Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Bangladesh

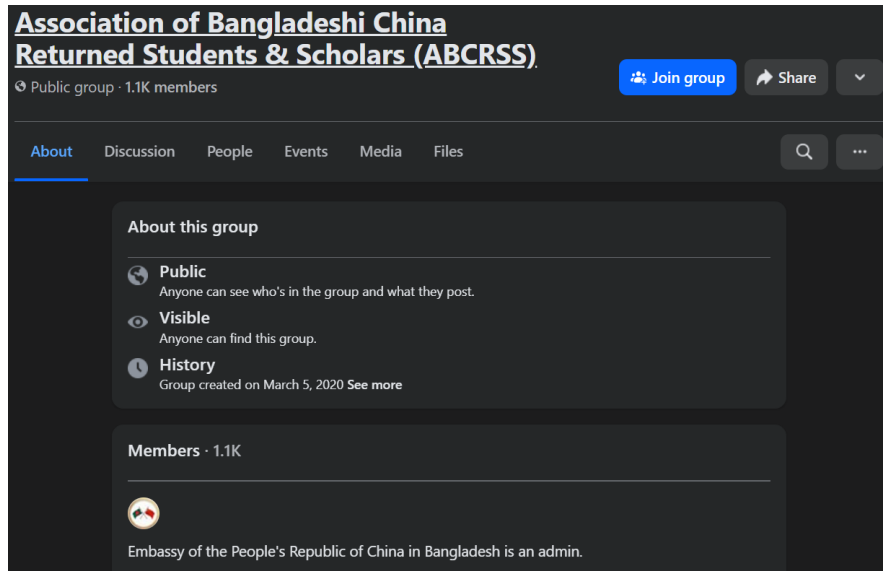


Figure 66 A group of over a 1.1K members called "ABCRSS"

The **Association of Bangladeshi China Returned Students & Scholars (ABCRSS)** is a public Facebook group with over 1,100 members. It is officially administered by the **Chinese Embassy in Bangladesh**, highlighting yet another example of direct state involvement in shaping soft power narratives through community engagement.

China-Bangladesh Friendship Group

Type: Public Facebook Group

Members: [3.3K](#)

Status: *Paused since March 22, 2024*

Admin: Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Bangladesh

The **China-Bangladesh Friendship Group** is a public Facebook group that previously served as a space to promote bilateral ties, cultural exchange, and diplomatic cooperation between China and Bangladesh. With **3,300 members**, the group was managed directly by the **Chinese Embassy in Bangladesh**, underscoring its strategic role in China's digital soft power efforts.



Figure 67 A paused group by Chinese embassy in Bangladesh

The decision to pause the group in March 2024 shortly before Sheikh Hasina's departure from office suggests a **calculated halt in engagement**, possibly reflecting shifts in diplomatic priorities or public perception. Despite its inactivity, the group remains visible as a symbol of **China-managed influence operations**, showing how digital platforms are leveraged during favorable political climates to advance China's strategic messaging in Bangladesh.

CMG Bangla (Facebook Page)

Followers: [95K](#)

Following: 112

Admin Locations: Bangladesh (14), China (9), India (1)

Affiliation: China Media Group – **State-Controlled Media**

CMG Bangla is another prominent Bangla-language Facebook page used to disseminate Chinese state narratives in Bangladesh. Affiliated with **China Media Group (CMG)**—Beijing's central media conglomerate—it functions in a similar fashion to **CRI Bangla**, pushing pro-China content tailored for Bengali-speaking audiences.



Figure 68 Post by CMG Bangla page on CCP

Though the page maintains a veneer of cultural exchange and international cooperation, its core function is to **promote Chinese state interests through localized soft power messaging**. Content typically includes features on China's economic development, achievements in technology, infrastructure, and its foreign policy successes—framed in ways that position China as a model partner for Bangladesh and the Global South.

The distribution of page managers—spanning **Bangladesh, China, and India**—underscores the cross-border coordination behind this digital influence effort. The strong presence of Bangladesh-based admins points at the **localized communication strategy**, aimed at enhancing relatability and legitimacy among native users.

CMG Bangla represents a key node in China's **state-run media ecosystem**, amplifying its geopolitical messaging in a culturally and linguistically adapted format to **shape public opinion and cultivate influence across South Asia**.

Bangladesh-China-Related Facebook Groups Promoting Soft Chinese Narratives

Group Name	Type	Members	Focus Area	Location	Link
Bangladeshi Chinese Speakers	Public Group	995	Chinese-speaking Bangladeshis, culture sharing	Global	Link
Chinese Speaking for Bangladeshi	Public Group	172	Chinese speakers from Bangladesh	—	Link
Chinese Language Interpreters in Bangladesh	Public Group	108	Language translation and interpretation	Bangladesh	Link
Bangladeshi Students Community in China	Public Group	92.5K	Student support, representation, soft power	Dhaka, Bangladesh	Link
Bangladeshi Student Community in China	Public Group	56.9K	Study info, scholarships, student guidance	Bangladesh, China	Link
Bangladeshi Student Study in China (Scholarship Info & Help)	Public Group	2.5K	Scholarship assistance and academic help	Barisal, Dhaka, Guizhou	Link
China Business Community in Bangladesh	Public Group	28.6K	E-commerce, wholesale, China-BD market growth	Bangladesh, China	Link
China-Bangladesh Business Group	Public Group	4.1K	SME trading, import-export	Bangladesh, China	Link
Bangladesh-China Friendship Club (BCFC)	Public Group	2.0K	Cultural, economic, trade ties	Bangladesh, China	Link
China-Bangladesh Buy/Sale Group	Public Group	1.4K	Consumer product sales, e-commerce	Uttara, Dhaka	Link
China to Bangladesh Shipping	Public Group	1.2K	Shipping & logistics between China and Bangladesh	Yiwu, Zhejiang, China	Link

These groups, though varying in size and purpose, form part of a **decentralized but coordinated digital ecosystem**. They cater to niche audiences—students, translators, traders, and Chinese speakers—yet collectively help embed **favorable perceptions of China** through community engagement, educational support, and cultural exchange. Many of them avoid overt political content, instead relying on **soft, persuasive tactics** to promote China’s image in Bangladesh.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the influence of Chinese propaganda in Bangladesh has grown significantly, permeating not only traditional media but also think tanks, educational institutions, and a network of social media influencers. These actors actively promote Beijing’s narratives with increasing intensity, capitalizing on the existing anti-India sentiment and the growing appeal of pro-China rhetoric among segments of the Bangladeshi population. This dynamic has been further amplified with the emergence of figures like CA Yunus, whose presence has coincided with a marked surge in anti-India content on social media and a parallel strengthening of pro-China messaging through institutional and academic channels. The reach and resonance of this propaganda network highlight China’s strategic soft power operations in Bangladesh, executed with precision and bolstered by a receptive local audience.