

## Awami League Wins 4<sup>th</sup> Term

Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has secured her fourth consecutive term and overall fifth term, with the ruling Awami League party. obtaining almost 75% of the seats in Bangladesh's general election in Jan. Voter turnout was reported at approximately 40%. The opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) is demanding new elections supervised by a neutral caretaker government following reduced voter turnout due to the BNP's boycott of the election. Its likely Bangladesh will experience unrest, risking disruptions to transportation, supply chains and business operations, likely exacerbating economic grievances and political instability. The voter turnout is also questionable as only 15% of the electorate turned out to vote prior to the last hour of elections. With economic troubles only growing, whilst the Awami league has won, they can only lose now.

## When National Interests trump Murder

Germany is ready to allow sales of Eurofighter jets to Saudi Arabia, Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said, having for years blocked arms deals with the Gulf kingdom. "We do not see ourselves, as the German federal government, opposing British considerations on other Eurofighter (sales)," Baerbock told journalists on a trip to 'Israel', in which she highlighted the Saudi role in the Middle East security crisis since the eruption of the Jewish entity's war on Gaza. Germany has blocked arms sales to Riyadh since the 2018 murder of dissident journalist Jamal Khashoggi in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul. "The fact that Saudi Arabia is now intercepting missiles fired by the Houthis at 'Israel', underlines this, and we are grateful for that," she added. "The fact that the Saudi air force also uses Eurofighters in this context is an open secret," the minister continued. "Saudi Arabia is a key contributor to Israel's security, even these days, and is helping to stem the risk of a regional conflagration." The German minister has shown once again, if there were any doubts, that murder can be forgiven if national interests are at stake. The Germans projected an image of a principled stance against Saudi Arabia when the Journalist, Jamal Khashoggi was murdered. But we see the Germans do not take the similar stance when a genocide is being televised live by the Jewish entity.

## Saudi Arabia Still Interested in Normalising relations with "Israel"

Saudi Arabia is still interested in 'Israel' normalisation after war on Gaza ends. Prince Khalid bin Bandar, Saudi Arabia's ambassador to the UK, says normalisation must lead to the creation of a Palestinian state. Prince Khalid bin Bandar, the Saudi ambassador in London, told the BBC that a normalisation deal was "close" but the kingdom paused US-brokered talks after the attack on Israel on 7 October by Hamas-led fighters. On Monday 8th Jan, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken met Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in Riyadh with normalisation on the agenda. "There's a clear interest here in pursuing that," Blinken said. "But it will require that the conflict end in Gaza, and it will also clearly require that there be a practical pathway to a Palestinian state," he told reporters.

## BJP Minister Visits Medina

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), India's ruling party, sent a delegation to Saudi Arabia on Monday 8th Jan, which visited Medina. Led by Minority Affairs Minister Smriti Irani, the two-day official visit is a rare instance of a non-Muslim dignitary being given access to the city. Foreign diplomats from non-Muslim countries are rarely taken to the area, as the Ummah believes these Holy Sites should not serve as a tourist site. Irani said the visit was aimed at strengthening bilateral relations and "gaining valuable insights into the arrangements required for the upcoming Hajj pilgrimage". The visit comes after Irani signed the 2024 Bilateral Haj Agreement with the Saudi Minister of Hajj and Umrah, Tawfiq bin Fawzan al-Rabiah, on 7 January. The agreement states that India has been granted a quota of 175,025 pilgrims for this year's Hajj pilgrimage. In a post published on social media platform X, Irani called the visit a "historic journey".