

Inside Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal

Allegations of Witness Deals and Prosecutorial Misconduct



Investigation Agency → Prosecution → State Witness → Tribunal → Verdict → Verdict



- July–Aug 2024: Violence
- Nov 2024: Witness Controversy
- Feb 23, 2026: Prosecutor Removed
- Post-2026: Review Announced

International Due Process Benchmarks

- ✓ Transparent Witness Agreements
- ✓ Independent Oversight
- ✓ Public Documentation
- ✓ Public Documentation
- ✓ Equal Application of Law

Investigative Review Series
February 2026 Edition

INTRODUCTION

The International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) was intended to deliver accountability for the violence surrounding July–August 2024.

Instead, recent allegations from within the prosecution team suggest deep internal fractures — including claims of bribery, manipulated “State Witness” arrangements, and selective prosecutions.

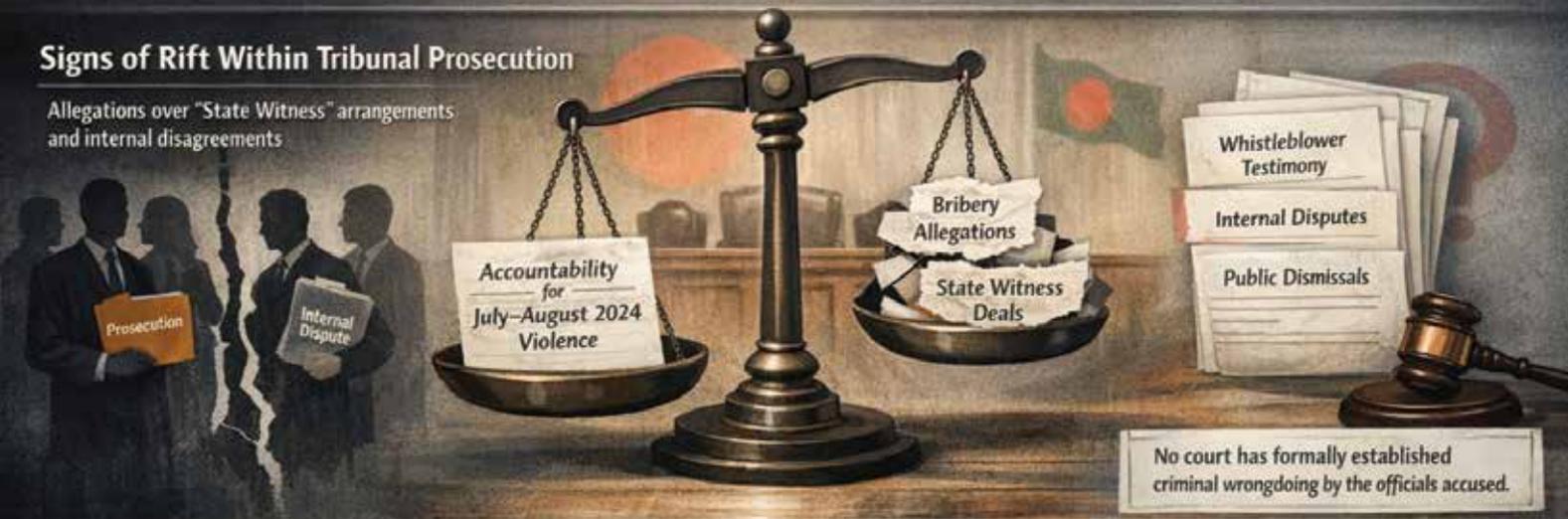


Signs of Rift Within Tribunal Prosecution Amid Allegations Over “State Witness” Deals

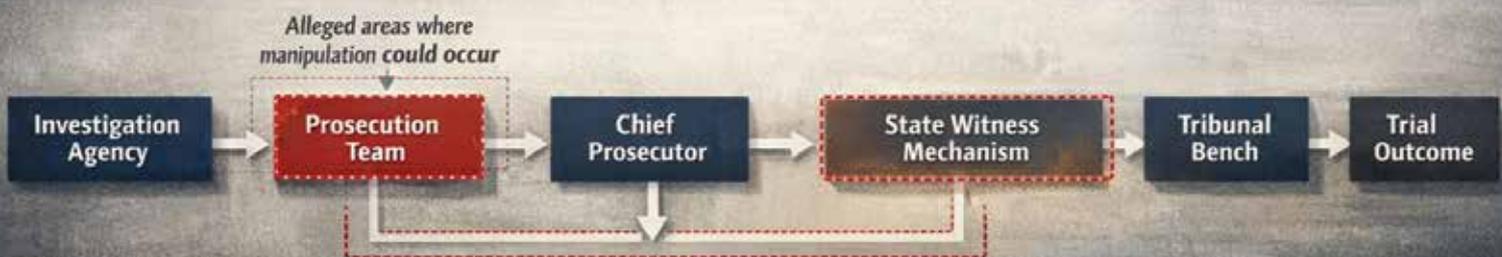
No court has formally established criminal wrongdoing by the officials accused. However, whistleblower testimony, internal disputes, and public dismissals have raised questions about the tribunal’s integrity.

Signs of Rift Within Tribunal Prosecution

Allegations over “State Witness” arrangements and internal disagreements



ICT Structure and Power Flow



SECTION 1 THE DISMISSAL THAT RAISED QUESTIONS

On February 23, 2026, Chief Prosecutor Mohammad Tajul Islam was removed from office and replaced by Aminul Islam.



*Aminul Islam replaces
Tajul Islam as
ICT chief prosecutor*



*ICT prosecutor raises corruption
allegations against Tajul, Tamim*

The removal followed internal allegations from members of the prosecution team, including claims that "State Witness" status had been granted under questionable circumstances.

Some prosecutors alleged that immunity arrangements were negotiated informally, bypassing procedural safeguards.

Tajul Islam has not been convicted of any corruption-related offence. Authorities have stated that internal reviews are ongoing.



*ICT prosecution bribery claims to be probed,
says new chief prosecutor*

TIMELINE OF KEY ICT EVENTS (2024–2026)

Developments Surrounding the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) Prosecution Leadership



SECTION 2

THE "STATE WITNESS" MECHANISM UNDER SCRUTINY

Central to the allegations is the use of the "State Witness" or "Approver" mechanism.

Under Bangladeshi law, individuals accused of crimes may receive reduced punishment or immunity in exchange for cooperating with prosecutors.



Ex-IGP Mamun sentenced to 5 years after turning state witness in Hasina crimes against humanity case

Whistleblowers allege that this provision was misused to shield certain accused individuals while directing cases toward politically significant defendants.

One senior prosecutor publicly alleged "witness manufacturing" — a claim that remains unproven but widely debated.

How a State Witness Process Should Work vs Allegations

Examining the 'Approver' Mechanism Under Scrutiny in Bangladesh's Tribunal Cases

Under Bangladeshi law, accused individuals may receive reduced punishment in exchange for cooperation. | Recent allegations question whether this mechanism.



Ex-IGP Mamun — Sentenced to 5 Years after turning state witness in Hasina Crimes Case

Clarifying the controversy without asserting guilt or proof of allegations.

SECTION 3 THE ASHULIA CASE CONTROVERSY

The Ashulia killings case became a focal point of dispute.

Internal sources alleged that an accused individual later designated as a State Witness had previously faced serious accusations tied to the burning of bodies.



Ex-IGP Mamun sentenced to 5 years after turning state witness in Hasina crimes against humanity case

No judicial ruling has determined that immunity was illegally granted. However, whistleblower accounts described internal disagreement within the prosecution team.

The ICT has not publicly released detailed findings addressing these claims.

Ashulia Case: Roles and Allegations

— Separating Verified Verdict from Whistleblower Claims —

Incident Overview

- August 4–5
- Killing of 7 youths
- Burning of 6 bodies
- Allegation: One victim burned alive?

Judicial Process & Role Designation



Court Outcomes

Death Sentence (6)	Life Imprisonment	7 Years Imprisonment (2)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muhammad Saiful Islam • AFM Sayed Rony • ASI Bishwajit Saha • SI Abdul Malek • Constable Mukul Chokder • Rony Bhuiyan 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheikh Abzalul Haque
		<p>Acquittal</p>

Allegations

- Internal Dispute in Prosecution
- Irregular State Witness Deal?
- Payment Claim Accusation?

Established Facts

- Verdict Delivered Feb 5, 2026
- 16 Charged
- Sentencing Confirmed
- No Immunity Ruling

SECTION 4

FORMER POLICE OFFICIALS AND NEGOTIATIONS

Former Inspector General of Police Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun was sentenced after turning State Witness in a crimes-against-humanity case.



Mamun spared death penalty, gets 5 years as approver

Media reports described negotiations surrounding his testimony. Critics argue that such arrangements obscured full command responsibility.

Supporters of the prosecution argue that plea arrangements are common in complex cases and can strengthen prosecutions.

High-Profile State Witnesses

Section 4 – Former Police Officials and Negotiations

Name	Former Position	Role in Case	Outcome
Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun	Inspector General of Police	Turned State Witness in crimes-against-humanity proceedings	Death penalty waived; 5-year sentence



Senior Official



State Witness

**Media reports referenced negotiations surrounding testimony. No court has formally ruled on allegations of improper conduct.*



Critics argue that negotiated testimony may obscure full command responsibility and limit accountability at higher levels.



Supporters argue plea arrangements are common in complex prosecutions and can strengthen broader accountability efforts.



SECTION 5 SELECTIVE PROSECUTION CLAIMS

Questions have also emerged regarding who was indicted — and who was not.

In multiple cases, video evidence allegedly showed lower-ranking officers directly involved in violence, yet some were reportedly designated as witnesses instead of defendants.



Videos reveal new incidents of deadly brutality by Bangladesh police

Critics argue that the prosecution prioritised high-level political figures, particularly members of the Awami League.

The ICT has not formally responded to all such claims.

Indicted vs Witnessed: Case Breakdown

Selective prosecution claims surrounding the International Crimes Tribunal proceedings



SECTION 5 — SELECTIVE PROSECUTION CLAIMS

Questions have emerged regarding who was **indicted** — and who was designated as witnesses.

In multiple cases, video evidence allegedly showed lower-ranking officers directly involved in violence, yet some were reportedly listed as state witnesses instead of defendants.



Video Evidence

Case Comparison Overview



Observed Pattern Indicators

- ▲ High-level political figures indicted
- ◆ Lower-ranking officers listed as witnesses
- 📺 Footage of police violence circulated publicly

Total Individuals Per Case:

Defendants

Witnesses



The International Crimes Tribunal has not formally responded to all such claims. Allegations referenced are based on public reporting and have not been adjudicated by a court.

SECTION 6

INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS AND LEGITIMACY

International legal observers have previously raised concerns about transparency and due process at the ICT.

Global transitional justice norms emphasise:

Transparent plea bargaining

Judicial oversight of immunity

Clear documentation

Independence from political influence

The recent internal fracture has renewed debate over whether the tribunal meets those standards.

International Due Process Benchmarks

Assessing Transparency and Legitimacy Standards in Transitional Justice



International Standards & Legitimacy

International legal observers have previously raised concerns regarding transparency and procedural safeguards at the tribunal.

Global transitional justice norms emphasise clear documentation, independent oversight, and impartial application of law.

Recent internal disagreements within the prosecution team have renewed debate over whether these benchmarks are consistently met.

Benchmark Checklist

-  **Transparent Witness Agreements** 
Critics have raised questions about clarity in certain "state witness" arrangements.
-  **Independent Oversight** 
Debate continues regarding institutional independence.
-  **Publicly Documented Immunity Deals** 
Observers have called for clearer public documentation.
-  **Equal Application of Law** 
Questions raised about consistency in prosecutorial decisions.

CONCLUSION

A TRIBUNAL AT A CROSSROADS

The dismissal of its chief prosecutor has exposed tensions within the International Crimes Tribunal.

Supporters argue that reforms are underway.

Critics say the damage may already be structural.

No court has established criminal liability against the officials accused of misconduct. Yet the allegations — from within the prosecution itself — have raised serious questions about credibility.

Whether the tribunal regains legitimacy may depend on one factor:

Independent, transparent review.

Trial
Verdict

State
Witness

CONFIDENTIAL



BANGLADESH
PERSPECTIVES