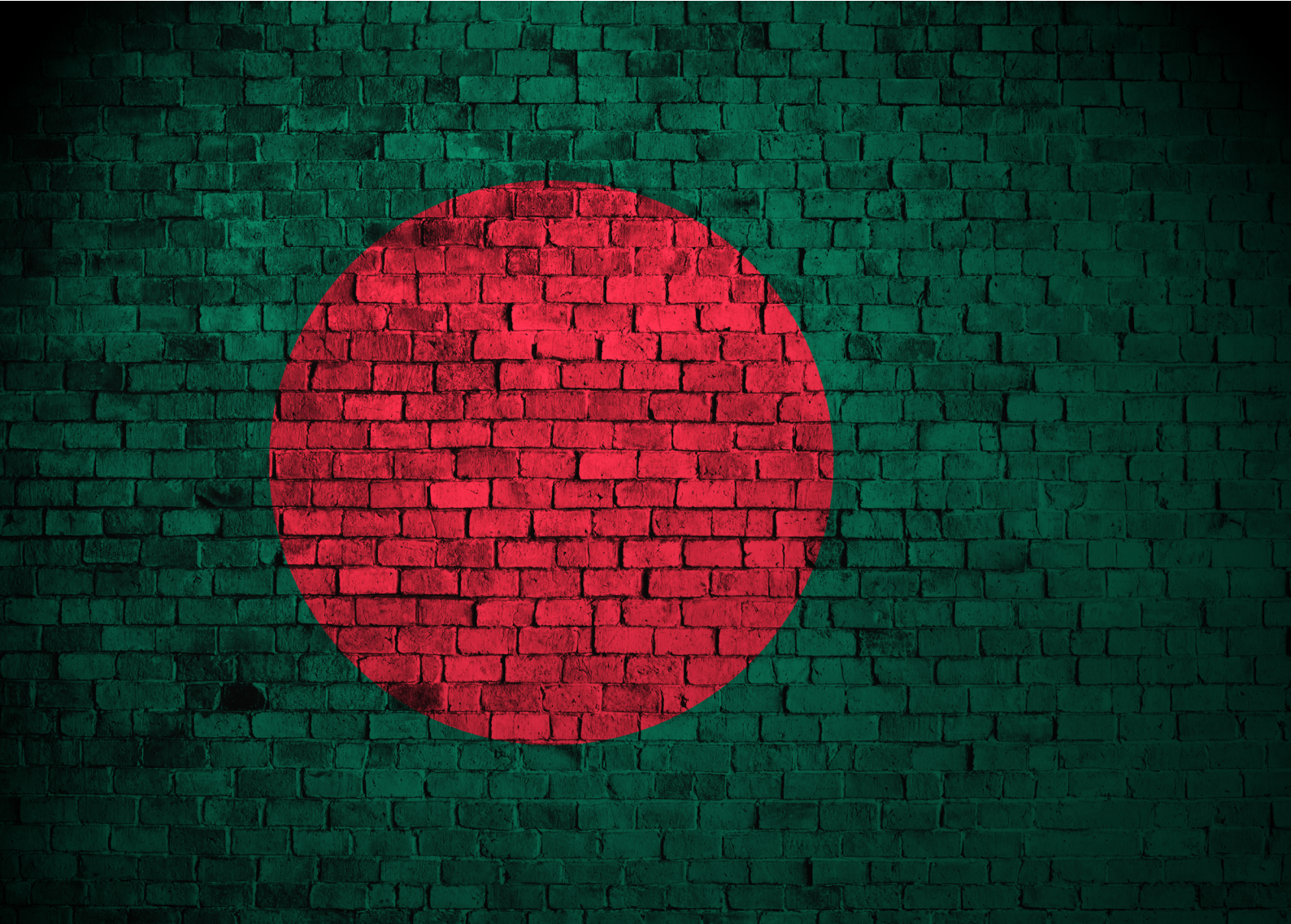


COUNTRY REPORT - THE ONGOING SITUATION IN BANGLADESH

November 2024



Commonwealth All-Party Parliamentary Group

Chair: Andrew Rosindell MP

Co-Chair: Lord Kamall

Co-Chair: Adam Jogee MP

Vice Chair: Baroness Uddin

Foreword

After a Summer of unrest and a change of administration in Bangladesh, it was only right that the Commonwealth APPG should consider events in that country. There is a significant Bangladeshi diaspora in the UK, and Commonwealth countries contribute millions to relief efforts for Rohingya refugees. Bangladesh is a crucial trading and security partner for many Commonwealth countries. The country's importance to the Commonwealth and to the UK mean that issues will continue to be raised in Parliament, and that parliamentarians will want to be informed.

Our Group produced a Call for Evidence and asked for comment from organisations and individuals from within and outside Bangladesh. We received scores of responses from respondents who didn't want to be named for fear of reprisals against themselves or relatives. However, a significant number of individuals and organisations did agree to be named. Moreover, we had an oral evidence session where we welcomed organisations and individuals to give evidence personally at an oral evidence session. Finally, we have used press reports where they backed up with references as evidence.

This report will be a step in our efforts to raise awareness of issues affecting important Commonwealth partners. The findings will be shared with Government, charities, and other stakeholders involved with Bangladesh and the Commonwealth. It is hoped that these issues are heard within Westminster and Whitehall, and this report helps to inform parliamentarians and decision makers.



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andrew Rosindell".

Andrew Rosindell MP – Chair of the Commonwealth APPG

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Despite the violence and turmoil, the fall of Sheikh Hasina's government at the start of August 2024 was met by many with great joy and hope. Notwithstanding considerable progress on economic and social fronts, the Awami League Government was characterised by sycophancy, corruption and a dismal human rights record. Our inquiry heard there was a lack of faith in public institutions, democracy and in a free media. However, we have also received evidence that raises questions about the efficacy of the new interim regime. There is an urgent need to end the culture of using the law as a political weapon, and that human rights and the rule of law need to be upheld. A failure to do this will not reflect well on the new interim regime of Professor Muhammad Yunas.
- We have received evidence that murder charges are being slapped on former Ministers, Awami League leaders, MPs, former judges, scholars, lawyers and on journalists in such numbers to raise questions around their credibility. Bangladesh is a highly politicised country where most professions are divided by party political allegiance – notably Sheikh Hasina's Awami League and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP). This has led to a culture where individuals associated with one side benefit considerably when they are in power – and experience marginalisation and oppression when the 'other side' govern. The use of the legal system in this context is common. However, charges of murder are a new feature and a dangerous escalation in an extremely polarised country.
- We have heard the security situation in some parts of Bangladesh remains extremely dangerous over three months after the initial student protests that led to the fall of Sheikh Hasina and the formation of the interim Government. As of the 4th August, the BBC reported that the death toll stood at 280. This number had risen to over 1000 by the end of August according to the Health Ministry and Human Rights Support Society. The majority of these coming after the 5th August when millions came into the street protesting against police tactics against demonstrators and looking for reappraisals against supporters of the last Government. We have received evidence of mobs attacking private homes, businesses, conducting violent attacks and committing murder. We detail these in the report, but also note a determination from the new Government to restore law and order. The also heard the security situation still very much varies by region.
- The inquiry has received evidence that religious and other minorities have become a target for persecution following the change of Government – but experience of this varies by region. We heard that this was driven primarily through a lack of law and order. It was widely reported in the media that Hindu temples and the private homes of Hindus came under attack following the events of 5th August. Moreover, our inquiry heard from the Bangladesh Hindu Association (UK) about recent restrictions on their religious freedom following outbreaks of violence. Similarly, the Global Association for Indigenous Peoples of the Chittagong Hill Tracts told us that indigenous communities in Bangladesh have come under attack with mobs using the opportunity of a deteriorating security situation to target property and communities.
- While these attacks may be opportunist rather than being sanctioned, the interim Government risk appearing to condone them unless security is guaranteed, and perpetrators brought to justice. The de-facto immunity for those responsible violence and protest announced on 15 October risks polarising further an already extremely tense situation and giving minorities little faith they will see justice.
- There is evidence emerging that hardline Islamists are becoming increasingly politically influential and visible since the fall of the Awami League Government.

BACKGROUND

- In June 2024 a series of protests took place in Bangladesh, primarily led by students, focussed on restructuring quota-based systems for government job recruitment. The Government's response to these protests (and a growing number of deaths) led to the spread of these protests with many of the students being ultimately replaced by groups concerned with other matters. The movement gathered strength as other grievances against the government were added: escalating food prices and energy costs, allegations of corruption and money laundering resulting from party cronyism, and political discontent resulting from the parliamentary elections in January 2024 in which many voters had abstained. The objective of the protests evolved from quota-reform to the resignation of the prime minister, Sheikh Hasina, and the fall of the Government.
- Following the loss of support from the Bangladeshi Army, the prime minister left the country on 5th August and her government was replaced with an 'interim administration' led by Nobel Prize winner Professor Yunas and incorporated some of the protest leaders.

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- Bangladesh has a history of political upheaval, coup and counter-coup starting in 1975 when the founding leader of the country was murdered. Following each of these 'events' imprisonment, asset removal, discrimination and reputational damage has often followed.
 - The last government (Awami League) had been in power since 2009 being re-elected on several occasions – though often the major opposition party (Bangladesh Nationalist Party) refused to take part claiming electoral malpractice. However, in that time the economy grew by an average of 6% annually, the country enjoyed a large trade surplus, poverty has decreased, and life expectancy has increased significantly.
 - Bangladesh matters to the Commonwealth and here in the UK. It is the third largest Muslim-majority population, and the second largest economy in South Asia. Bangladesh recently hosted the Commonwealth Business and Investment Summit. There is a considerable Bengali diaspora here in the UK with family and friends back in Bangladesh. They will have an understandable interest in events in Bangladesh and be motivated to use the UK media and political process to make their views heard.
 - Around one million people live in the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, the vast majority of whom arrived during the genocidal military offensives by the Burmese military in 2016 and 2017. Since 2017, the UK has provided £379 million of humanitarian support to Rohingya refugees and neighbouring communities in Bangladesh.
 - The last Government did face criticism from Freedom House in the U.S, and Amnesty International in the UK, of human rights abuses and a crackdown on the opposition, mass media, and civil society through politicised enforcement. Law enforcement carried out a cordon-and-search operation, arrested nearly 10,000 people, and enforced a curfew. An 11 day internet blackout inhibited human rights monitors and journalists from documenting abuses precisely the time when people were most at risk.

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- Much of the international media narrative around the fall of the previous administration and the new Government centred around opportunity and a new dawn for Bangladesh. There was a great deal (and still is) of good will towards Professor Yunas as the interim leader of the country given his excellent reputation and international connections. Most of the international media cited the need to lay the foundations for a truly democratic Bangladesh, for social cohesion, meritocracy, and disbanding security units identified as being responsible for human rights abuses. The recent positive economic of the country was also cited as something to build upon and the potential for Professor Yunas to be seen as an inspirational figure for South Asia.
 - However, it was also noted there was also a risk that in the absence of a clear plan and a deteriorating security situation that democratic structures can fall prey to a rotation of elites. International experience shows many examples of where leaders brought in as representatives of democratic forces turn to repression themselves to try and keep order. Clamping down on protest by those supportive of the previous regime – or by those impatient for change – can quickly squander the good will and the narrative of opportunity and hope.



ARRESTS AND POLICE ACTION FOLLOWING 5th AUGUST

- The politicisation of the legal system in Bangladesh is nothing new. Indeed, Professor Yunas himself was sentenced to six months in jail after being accused of violating the country's labour laws in January 2024 under the previous administration. However, our inquiry heard a fundamental change has been the scale and the severity of the charges brought against individuals from and supporters of the Awami League Government. It would be expected to see corruption charges brought forward, but the sheer number of murder charges made raise some serious questions relating to process.
- Our enquiry heard from the Rights & Risks Analysis Group (RRAG), an Independent Think Tank. Citing reports from the Daily Star newspaper – they claimed over 194,000 persons belonging to the Awami League (AL) have been arraigned in criminal cases. There were 26,268 people named and around 168,000 unnamed persons were accused in about 268 cases.¹ They told us that since then the filing of cases continued and it has become the trend in Bangladesh to be filing cases against hundreds of unnamed persons in one complaint to persecute the political opponents:
 - On 2 October 2024, in three separate cases more than 500 activists of the Awami League (AL) and its affiliated organization were accused for vote fraud, anarchy, and attacks on BNP leaders and activists of the anti discrimination student movement.²
 - On 21 October 2024, activists of the Anti-Discrimination Students Movement in Dhaka filed a case with Shahbagh Police Station, Dhaka against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina as the prime accused, 391 other named people and around 1,000 unnamed people, including leaders and activists from the Chhatra League, Awami League and Jubo League in connection with the July 15 attack on the quota reform protesters at Dhaka University.³
- The think tank told us that most of these arrests are arbitrary and fall within “Category III” of arbitrary detention as defined by the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention i.e.
- “When the total or partial non-observance of the international norms relating to the right to a fair trial, spelled out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the relevant international instruments accepted by the States concerned, is of such gravity as to give the deprivation of liberty an arbitrary character”.⁴
- Our inquiry was given a number of case studies involving MPs, Ministers and journalists where, following initial arrest and detention on charges such as murder, further cases filed one after the other were then made, with the sole purpose to deny bail and prolong his detention. These case studies have been attached to this report and include:
 - Mr Fazle Karim Chowdhury, former Chairman of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians of the Inter-Parliamentary Union
 - Mr Salman F Rehman, the former Adviser on Private Industry and Investment to the Prime Minister of Bangladesh
 - Former parliamentarian Rashed Khan Menon (81 years) and President of the Workers Party of Bangladesh
 - Former parliamentarian Hasanul Haq Inu (77 years)
- The number of individuals charged and cases that have been filed change daily and are disputed. But on 11 October, the Daily Star reported that between 6 August and 25 September, at least 1,474 cases were filed against 92,486 citizens, most accused of murder along with some other crimes. A total of 1,174 cases have been filed against 390 former ministers, MPs, advisers, the former Prime Minister, mayors, and Awami League leaders and activists.⁵

Arrest of Journalists

- Journalism is another profession in Bangladesh which was heavily politicised going back decades. Our inquiry heard from a number of prominent British Bangladeshis at the oral evidence session on 24th October that this was a prominent feature of the Sheikh Hasina's government and some used the phrase 'client journalism'.
- The Rights & Risks Analysis Group think tank submitted evidence that media freedom has increased for the opponents of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. While this is welcome after learning this was not the case under the previous administration, journalists that were favourable to the last Government are now facing the risk of arrest and detention. We have been told that as of 22 October, at least 54 journalists perceived as supporters of the previous government led by Sheikh Hasina were charged for various offences including for genocide and crimes against humanity, while at least six journalists remained in detention in Bangladesh. The crackdown on press freedom has been widely condemned by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)⁶ and the Reporters Without Borders⁷ which called on the interim government to respect journalists' rights and ensure fair trials. Case studies have been attached to this report and include:
 - Farzana Rupa and her husband Shakil Ahmed, both former journalists at Ekattor TV,
 - Mozammel Babu, Managing Director of Ekattor TV, and Senior Reporter Mahbubur Rahman,
 - Shyamal Dutta, Editor of Bhorer Kagoj along with Shyamal Dutta, Editor of Bhorer Kagoj.
 - Shahriar Kabir, journalist, author and activist
 - Suklal Das of Dainik Azadi;
 - Reaz Haidar Chowdhury and Azhar Mahmud of Bangladesh Pratidin;
 - Pramal Kanti Dey Komol of Somoy TV;
 - Anupam Shil of Independent TV;
 - Debdulal Bhounik, Secretary of Chattogram Press Club;
 - Ratan Kanti Debasis, Tapan Chowkrabarty of Banglanews24.com
 - Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) leader Kazi Mohsin;
 - Ekramul Haque Bulbul of Ekushey TV;
 - Ramen Das Gupta of Sarabangla.net;
 - Mintu Chowdhury and Uttam Sen Gupta of BDnews24.com;
 - Kutub Uddin of Samakal; Hritik Nayan; Rahul Das; Subal Barua of Pratidiner Bangladesh;
 - Runa Ansari of Deepto TV;
 - Rafiqul Bahar of Ekushey TV;
 - Ayon Sharma of Chattogram Pratidin;
 - Aminul Islam Munna, photojournalist of Dainik Azadi;
 - Bishwajit Raha; Masudul Hoque of DBC News;
 - Rashed Mahmud; Hamid Ullah of Amader Somoy;
 - Samresh Baidya of Bhorer Kagoj;
 - Showrav Bhattacharya of Cplus
- The columnist for the Daily Star identified that "we must be the country with the highest number of murder suspects masquerading as journalists in the whole world".⁸

SECURITY SITUATION

- Of all the written evidence our inquiry received, by far the most concerned the security situation and the rule of law. The initial student protests, their evolution into a wider movement, and then when thousands came out into the streets following the downfall of Sheikh Hasina's government have all been well covered by Bangladeshi and international media. What has been less well covered is smaller examples of violence and disorder that contributors claim is ongoing in Bangladesh. Our inquiry received a great deal of personal evidence containing images following properties that have been looted, arson attacks and violence against individuals. Sadly, many contributors stated that they did not wish to be named (such was the concern about reprisals against them personally or against friends and family) and there are obvious issues about corroborating this evidence. For this reason, we can't use much of this evidence.
- What cannot be denied is the reports of respected international media. As of the 4th August, the BBC reported that the death toll stood at 280.⁹ According to the Health Ministry and Human Rights Support Society this number had risen to over 1000 by the end of August¹⁰. The majority of these deaths occurred when millions came into the street protesting against police tactics against the initial demonstrators. Many publicly cited that they were looking for reappraisals against supporters of the last Government. The committee also heard that this type of tit for tat violence is common as Government's fall in the manner that occurred on 5th August.
- A few of the more widely reports of violence – which we also received written evidence to support – include:
 - The Bangabandhu Memorial Museum, which was the residence of the Father of the Nation Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, is historically significant as the place where he led the anti-Pakistan movement. On the 5th August the Memorial Museum was set on fire¹¹
 - Incidents of mob lynchings have been covered by both international and Bangladeshi media. A high profile case of mob lynching of Tofazzal Hossein at Bangladesh's oldest University covered by Voice of America.¹² Incidents of mob lynching spiked with 21 people beaten to death over the last 38 days.¹³
 - The shrine of Hazrat Shah Poran, a symbol of religious tolerance in Bangladesh, was looted and desecrated on September 6, 2024. Devotees were attacked, and the shrine's sacred relics were destroyed.¹⁴
- Our inquiry was sent written evidence that cited the human rights organisation, the Manabadhikar Shongskriti Foundation (MSF). They detailed a sharp rise in violence which included:
 - 5 people killed in September and 619 people were injured in political attacks
 - 53 incidents of mob lynching
 - 12 shrine attack incidents
 - 6 extrajudicial killings in September¹⁵
- The RRAG told our inquiry that by 5 September, a total of 5,818 weapons were looted in the country.¹⁶ Of these, 3,933 were recovered while 1,885 arms including rifles, SMGs, LMGs, and pistols, remained missing. Additionally, nearly 300,000 rounds of ammunition remained unrecovered.¹⁷
- Our inquiry received a letter from 100 individuals from the Bengali diaspora worldwide (UK, USA, Canada, Australia) and a handful from Bangladesh. They include academics, human rights activists, writers, and entrepreneurs. The letter details their analysis of events since 5th August which is clearly subjective – but it does corroborate the intimidation and assault of teachers, students, and doctors that is detailed in evidence we received from individuals who wish to remain anonymous in fear of reprisals. We have published this letter on our website.
- The letter also cites individual cases of mob violence, attacks on shrines, judicial independence and the targeting of legal professional, and what they consider to be a rise of Islamic extremism. The letter does not suggest that the interim Government was directly responsible for this violence, rather that they were not doing enough to address human rights violations.

- What was clear from many individual submissions which detail an attack on their property or home is a fear that no one will ever be held responsible for these actions. It should be noted that the interim government has since announced a de-facto immunity for the protesters for incidents which took place between 15 July and 8 August. AFP reported on 28 October that this order has raised concerns that there would be no justice for the violent attacks on people aligned with the Awami League, minority communities, and the killings of at least 46 law enforcement agents.¹⁸
- We received considerable written evidence from individuals suggesting that some of these attacks are being undertaken by Islamic militants. Many of these are being directed at minority communities which we explore in the next section. However, some have been targeted at high profile women with professional positions. Bloomberg reported on 27 September of the case of Tureen Afroz, the former chief prosecutor of a tribunal for war crimes committed during Bangladesh's independence movement in the 1970s. The horrific nature of this attack mirrors evidence we have received from respondents who asked to remain anonymous.¹⁹
- Fearing looting and vandalism amidst the political crisis, many shops, businesses and malls in the country closed for an extended period. Our oral evidence session heard from entrepreneurs worried about the economic impact of the turmoil and the ongoing security situation. This has also been widely reported in Bangladeshi and international media.²⁰



EXPERIENCE OF MINORITIES

- One of the most widely reported negative consequences of the events of July and August 2024, were attacks against religious and other minorities in Bangladesh. Reports of acts of violence against persons, property and religious sites were covered by international and Bangladeshi media. Moreover, our inquiry heard in oral evidence from the Bangladesh Hindu Association (UK), and in written evidence from members of the Hindu community living in Bangladesh. We also heard from respondents detailing the experiences of Christian and Buddhist communities in Bangladesh. Moreover, we also heard about the experiences of indigenous communities. Again, regrettable many would ask not be named in our report for fear of reprisals which does impact the ability to corroborate the evidence we have heard. We feel it is important to stress the courage of those that have given evidence directly impacted by events in Bangladesh.

Hindu and other minority faith Communities

- In oral evidence to our inquiry, the Bangladesh Hindu Association (UK) made it clear that individuals from their community were being discriminated against and attacked. The 2022 Census of Bangladesh, put the number of Hindus in Bangladesh at 13.1 million out of total 165.1 million population, thus constituting 7.95% of the population, which is a considerable drop from well over 20% at the time of independence. It was their belief that these attacks were occurring because of their religion, an assumption that their community were pro-India and somehow not true Bangladeshis. Their evidence detailed the following incidents prepared by Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council over the month of August:

Summary of 2010 Communiel Attacks from 4 August to 20 August 2024

Killings	9	Vandalism, looting and arson attacks on businesses	953
Vandalism and arson attacks on Temples	69	Forcefull possession of private properties	1
Rapes	4	Forcefull possession of land and businesses	21
Vandalism, looting and arson attacks on households	915	Physical harrasment	38
Total 2010	997		1013

- Their evidence also included another list of 57 incidents from the Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council dated 22/8/2024 to 12/10/2024 which included reports of 2 rapes, 3 abductions, 5 killings and 47 incidents of physical harassment, vandalism, arson attacks, robberies, theft, intimidation on Hindus and Buddhists. These incidents are sourced, and we have published on our website.
- In written evidence received, Kajal Devnath, a vice president of the Bangladesh Hindu Buddha Unity Council, stated:
 - “Anything can happen at any moment because there is no law and order. There is no place to complain. If they kill me, if they burn my house, there is no one I can complain to.”
- In written evidence received exiled Bangladeshi author Taslima Nasreen criticised the current Bangladeshi government, for failing to protect minority communities. She stated:
 - “In Bangladesh, teachers are being forced to resign, Journalists, ministers, and officials from the previous government are being killed, harassed, or being imprisoned. And Yunus remains silent.”
- The Bangladesh Hindu, Buddhist, Christian Unity Council (BHBCUC) reported 2,010 incidents, including murder and rape, between August 4-20.

Division Wise Information:

Division	Murder	Attack, Vandalization and setting fire on Places of Worship	Torture on Women/ Rape/ Gang rape	Attack, Vandalization, looting and setting fire on Houses	Attack, Vandalization, looting and setting fire on business establishments	Encroachment of houses	Encroachment of land and Business Establishments	Physical Torture	Total Number of violent incidents
Dhaka	1	16	-	80	51	-	3	9	160
Chattogram	1	4	-	50	42	-	2	1	100
Khulna	2	10	4	367	411	-	-	16	810
Rajshahi	1	14	-	134	135	-	7	6	297
Rangpur	1	11	-	145	109	-	4	1	271
Barishal	-	7	-	44	32	-	1	2	86
Mymensingh	1	6	-	75	138	-	3	1	224
Sylhet	2	1	-	20	35	1	1	2	62
In Total	9	69	4	915	953	1	21	38	2010

Summary

Total incidents of communal violence- 2010

Murder-	9	Attack, Vandalization, looting and setting fire on business establishments-	953
Attack, Vandalization and setting fire on Places of Worship-	69	Encroachment of houses-	1
Torture on Women/ Rape/ Gang rape-	4	Encroachment of Land and Business Establishments-	21
Attack, Vandalization, looting and setting fire on Houses	915	Physical Torture-	38

- A total of 1,705 families have been directly impacted by 2,010 incidents of communal violence in 68 districts and metropolitan areas out of the 76 in Bangladesh.
- Among those affected, 157 families had both their homes and businesses attacked, looted, vandalized, and set on fire.
- The Khulna division saw the highest number of cases of communal violence, where four women were raped, including one who is speech impaired.
- Of the 1,705 families affected by communal violence, 34 belong to indigenous communities, whose houses have been looted, vandalized, set on fire and lands of some of these families have been encroached upon.
- In communal violence, 69 places of worship were attacked, vandalized, looted and set on fire. An analysis of data on incidents of communal violence shows that these incidents occurred in every division and places of worship and people belonging to Hindu, Buddhist, Christian and indigenous communities were affected.
- From August 4 to 20, 2024, about 50,000 men, women, adolescents, children and people with disabilities were directly affected by communal violence and the number of victims of trauma is estimated at 20 million religious-ethnic minorities and indigenous people across the country who are currently living in panic and fear.
- There are 157 families who have lost their homes, business establishments, money and everything and are now living a miserable life with their families.
- The Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council state the list prepared based on the information received from the district/metropolitan committees of their organisation.
- It was also widely reported in International and Bangladeshi media that Hindus had to organize Durga Puja festival under State security – and the length of celebrations were curtailed – after threats from hardline Islamists. In Dhaka's Uttara neighborhood, Hindus were forced to hold the festival in a smaller venue after a procession by Muslims called on authorities to not allow them to install idols in an open field.²¹

Indigenous Communities

- The Global Association for Indigenous Peoples of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (GAIPC) offered offered written evidence to our inquiry. According to the 2011 census conducted by the Government of Bangladesh, the country's Indigenous population comprises approximately 1,586,141, 1.8% of the country's total population.
- Our inquiry received written evidence that claims from:
 - “19 September to 1 October 2024, the illegal plain settlers and Bangladesh Army led organized assaults on indigenous peoples in Dighinala and Khagrachari Sadar under Khagrachari district on 19 September, followed by further attacks on Rangamati Sadar on 20 September 2024 and Khagrachari district on 1 October 2024 after an illegal settler was murdered by his own community fellows.”
- The GAIPC presented evidence of 75 Indigenous people who sustained injuries during the attacks by illegal plain settlers at Dighinala, Khagrachari and Rangamati on 19-20 September 2024 and attack at Khagrachari on 1 October 2024. These included injuries to four Indigenous persons in the Dighinala attack on 19 September; injuries to 18 Indigenous persons in the Khagrachari attack on 19 September; and injuries to 55 Indigenous persons in the attack in Rangamati on 20 September. Furthermore, about 142 houses, shops and other business establishments, properties and Buddhist temples of indigenous people were set ablaze, destroyed and looted by the plain settlers.
- These attacks on indigenous peoples in the CHTs were condemned by Amnesty International on 20 September 2024,²² by forty-five eminent citizens and rights activists of Bangladesh on 21 September 2024,²³ the Minority Rights Group International on 24 September 2024,²⁴ International Work Group on Indigenous Affairs on 8th October 2024²⁵ and the Chairperson of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the UN Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Rights on 14 October 2024.²⁶
- We received evidence about threats to religious freedom with indigenous communities were forced to cancel their the “Kathin Chibar Dan” religious ceremony held after the end of the Rain Retreat of the Buddhist monks because of the lack of security.²⁷
- The plight of indigenous communities in Bangladesh have been championed human rights groups such as Amnesty International for decades. The previous Government were often charged with human rights abuses and illegal activity. Their record was clearly poor. However, the evidence we have received is clear that the lack of law and order and settlers and the army have used the instability to step up attacks.



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