



Quarterly Human Rights Report

January-March 2025

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Preface:

Since its inception in 1994, Odhikar has been reporting on human rights violations committed by the State. Odhikar stands with the victims of human rights violations and strives to ensure their justice.

On 8 August 2024, an Interim Government (IG) took office, after former authoritarian leader Sheikh Hasina was forced to flee to India on 5 August following the collapse of her regime to a student-led mass uprising. A UN fact-finding report which was published on 12 February 2025, claims that violent, revengeful mobs committed serious acts of violence, targeting police and people affiliated to the Bangladesh Awami League (Sheikh Hasina's party), especially from early August onwards. According to the same UN report, some Hindus, Ahmadiyya Muslims and members of ethnic minority groups from the Chittagong Hill Tracts were also subjected to violence, including the burning of homes and attacks on places of worship. Temples, shrines and other religious facilities were also subjected to mob violence.¹ Authorities were unable to ensure the protection of these victims against abuses by non-state actors. Independent factchecking proved that many of the reported attacks on Bangladeshi religious minorities, published by Indian government-patronised media outlets and others with vested interest, were fake or fabricated².

Odhikar has reported on human rights violations committed during the first quarter of 2025 in this Report. This Quarterly Human Rights Monitoring Report for January to March of 2025 draws on the human rights reports from human rights defenders affiliated with Odhikar and media reports.

¹ UN Fact Finding Report on Bangladesh: Human Rights Violations and Abuses related to the Protests of July and August 2024 in Bangladesh, 12 February 2025; <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/countries/bangladesh/ohchr-fftb-hr-violations-bd.pdf>

² Prothom Alo, 16 January; <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/51na53bxcr>

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Statistics on human rights: January-June 2025:

Statistics: January-March 2025*					
Type of Human Rights Violation		January	February	March	Total
Extrajudicial killings	Beaten to death	3	0	0	3
	Tortured to death	1	0	1	2
	Shot to death	0	3	0	3
	Total	4	3	1	8
Death in Jail		6	6	7	19
Death Penalty (sentenced to death)		7	11	6	24
Human rights violations by Indian BSF	Bangladeshis Killed	2	3	1	6
	Bangladeshis Injured	3	5	1	9
	Total	5	8	2	15
Attack on journalists	Injured	7	20	20	47
	Assaulted	4	1	5	10
	Attacked	0	1	0	1
	Threatened	0	3	2	5
	Arrested	0	0	1	1
	Total	11	25	28	64
Political violence	Killed	13	13	41	67
	Injured	471	632	896	1999
Dowry related violence against women		2	5	7	14
Rape	Girls (under the age of 18)	21	37	92	150
	Women	6	9	39	54
	Age could not be determined	18	14	21	53
	Total	45	60	152	257
Sexual harassment /Stalking of females		0	4	8	12
Public lynching		6	13	14	33

* Odhikar documentation

Interim Government and Reform:

1. Over the last 15 and a half years, the Awami League (AL) regime politicised all State institutions to force them into subservient bodies. The AL regime weaponised the State institutions including the Judiciary, the Election Commission, the Anti-Corruption Commission and the National Human Rights Commission, to execute its political agenda. After the fall of the Hasina-led regime through a mass uprising, the Interim Government (IG) formed 11 Reform Commissions to revitalise the State institutions³, namely:
 - The Electoral System Reform Commission
 - The Judicial Reform Commission
 - The Anti-Corruption Reform Commission
 - The Constitutional Reform Commission
 - The Police Reform Commission
 - The Public Administration Reform Commission
 - The Health Affairs Reform Commission
 - The Media Reform Commission
 - The Labour Rights Affairs Reform Commission
 - The Local Government Reform Commission
 - The Women's Affairs Reform Commission
2. The six Commissions, which were formed in October 2024, submitted their reports to the IG on 8 February 2025. To build consensus on the reform recommendations, a National Consensus Commission led by the Chief Advisor, Dr. Muhammad Yunus, is holding discussions with various political parties. The IG has compiled the key recommendations from five of these Commissions in a table. However, this table does not include reform proposals recommended by the Police Reform Commission (PRC). The PRC believes its recommendations can be implemented through administrative measures.⁴ On 6 March 2025, the IG forwarded 166 recommendations to 34 political parties for their comments. Of these recommendations, 70 are related to Constitutional reform, 27 are related to electoral system reform, 23 are for judicial reform, 26 are related to public administrative reform and 20 are related to the Anti-Corruption Commission. The enforcement of the reform recommendations depends on the will of the political parties. According to

³ Prothom Alo, 11 September 2024; <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/68csnenzkx>, The Daily Star, 19 November 2024; <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/govt-forms-five-new-reform-commissions-3755736>

⁴ Prothom Alo, 16 March 2025; <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/ucsonm70ge>

the IG's plan, a national charter will be created from the consensus of the political parties on the reform proposals⁵.

The Anti-Corruption Commission:

3. Lack of transparency and accountability during the authoritarian Awami League regime, allowed corruption in all sectors to reach an alarming level. The deposed dictator Sheikh Hasina, her sister Sheikh Rehana and their family members, members of Sheikh Hasina's Cabinet, MPs affiliated to her Party, her Party members, public employees, business people, and journalists who were subservient to her, reportedly laundered huge amounts of money overseas⁶.
4. Rather than initiating measures against such corruption, the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), subservient to the deposed regime, took initiatives to harass opposition leaders and dissenting voices. After assuming responsibility for governance, the IG appointed a new Chairperson and Commissioners to the ACC. Recently, some bureaucrats from the Administration cadre of the Bangladesh Civil Service were appointed on deputation to the ACC. One of the Administration cadre officers recently employed as a Director to the ACC is Al Amin Parvez, who was accused in a criminal case for siphoning off BDT 222.1 million during the acquisition of land for construction of an office building for the Police Bureau of Investigation in Cox's Bazar Municipality⁷. Furthermore, at least 50 officers who were a beneficiary of Hasina's autocratic rule and were appointed on deputation, have not yet been removed. These circumstances are believed to be the reasons behind the poor coordination in the ACC's anti-corruption drive and are impeding the IG's efforts to ensure transparency and accountability, and the realise of the recommendations of the Reform Commissions. Although the officers from the Administration cadre are not experienced in investigating cases, they have been deployed on deputation to the ACC for years, in contravention of the ACC Rules of Business, which provides that the officers deployed on deputation can serve the ACC for no longer than three years. There are also allegations that officers from the Administration cadre are appointed to the ACC on deputation deliberately to 'save' the Administration cadre officers already in the ACC who may be involved in corruption⁸.

⁵ Prohom Alo, 10 March 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/lco4522jjb>

⁶ Jugantor, 24 December 2024; <https://www.jugantor.com/crime/894415>

⁷ Inqilab, 17 February 2025; <https://dailyinqilab.com/national/news/733544>

⁸ Junantor, 19 February 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/tp-firstpage/918610>

National Human Rights Commission:

5. The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) was established in 2008 during a military-backed Caretaker Government. Due to weaknesses in the law that governs it, during the AL rule, the entity became dysfunctional when the ruling party politicised it. As a result, the victims of severe violations of human rights, e.g., victims of violation of freedom of expression, enforced disappearances, torture and extrajudicial executions, did not get any form of redress. The NHRC did not play any role during the Monsoon Revolution of July-August 2024, which witnessed an unprecedented scale of human rights violations. It must be noted that the NHRC received foreign donations to counter human rights abuse.⁹ Widespread public outcry against their silence forced the Chairperson of the NHRC Kamal Uddin Ahmed and all other members of the Commission to step down on 7 November, 2024.¹⁰ The IG is yet to reconstruct the NHRC despite calls to reorganise the NHRC as a powerful and effective body to work on the widespread human rights violations committed during the deposed autocratic regime.

The International Crimes Tribunal and Justice:

6. Allegations of mass killings, enforced disappearance and crimes against humanity continue to be filed against deposed PM Hasina and her aides, for firing on people during the July-August 2024, protests and other crimes committed throughout her dictatorial rule¹¹. The International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) has already received evidence supporting some of the allegations. One piece of evidence testifies to the allegations of Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) firing from helicopters to quell the protests during the uprising. Taking the evidence into cognizance, the ICT issued a warrant to arrest the then Director General (DG) of RAB, Md Harun-Ar-Rashid¹². On 9 January 2025, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) filed a case with the ICT for the extrajudicial killing of 2,276 and the enforced disappearance of 153 BNP-affiliated activists and leaders between 2008 and 2024.¹³ On 12 March, the ICT issued arrest warrants for nine accused persons including Sheikh

⁹ Information collected by Odhikar.

¹⁰ Prothom Alo, 7 November 2024; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/hvtrvmy3n8>

¹¹ The Daily Star, 20 August 2024; <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/crime-justice/news/hasina-faces-another-ict-case-3681431>

¹² The Daily Star, 26 January 2025; <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/crime-justice/news/ict-issues-arrest-warrants-against-ex-rab-dg-harun-3808711>

¹³ The Daily Star, 10 January 2025; <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/crime-justice/news/bnp-files-two-ict-complaints-against-hasina-3795396>

Hasina, for directing the mass killing at Shapla Chattar in Motijheel, Dhaka on 5 May, 2013.¹⁴

7. On 12 February 2025, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) published a fact-finding report on human rights violations and abuses that occurred during the mass protests of July-August, 2024. The report revealed that Hasina's government and its security and intelligence apparatus, along with violent elements affiliated to her party, engaged systematically in serious human rights violations in a coordinated effort to suppress the protests. During the release of the report, the High Commissioner of the OHCHR Volker Turk said, "The brutal response was a calculated and well-coordinated strategy by the former Government to hold on to power in the face of mass opposition. There are reasonable grounds to believe hundreds of extrajudicial killings, extensive arbitrary arrests and detentions, and torture, were carried out with the knowledge, coordination and direction of the political leadership and senior security officials as part of a strategy to suppress the protests." He added, "The testimonies and evidence we gathered, paint a disturbing picture of rampant State violence and targeted killings, that are amongst the most serious violations of human rights, and which may also constitute international crimes."¹⁵
8. Odhikar believes that if the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) adheres to international standards throughout the judicial process, it will be able to deliver justice to the victims and their families. The ICT was established during the Sheikh Hasina regime in 2010 purportedly to try crimes against humanity committed in 1971 during Bangladesh's Liberation War. In the past, the path to justice at this Tribunal was obstructed during her regime. Some of the flaws that led to the deficit in the fairness of justice delivery included failure in evidence gathering, lack of independence of the judges, complicity of prosecutors and the government in manipulating justice, interference with the witnesses, ignoring the right to self-defence, enforcing the death sentence and even enforcing the disappearance of an accused persons relative.¹⁶ The ICT has requested India to send back Sheikh Hasina under an extradition treaty, so that she can be produced before the Tribunal. Like Sheikh Hasina, several other accused AL leaders have fled to India and other countries.

¹⁴ The Business Standard, 12 March 2025; <https://www.tbsnews.net/bangladesh/court/ict-issues-warrant-against-hasina-9-others-over-mass-killing-shapla-chattar-1090646>

¹⁵ UN Fact Finding Report, 12 February 2025; <https://bangladesh.un.org/en/289108-bangladesh-un-report-finds-brutal-systematic-repression-protests-calls-justice-serious>

¹⁶ Human Rights Watch, 22 October 2024; <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/10/22/bangladesh-arrest-warrant-sheikh-hasina>

Politics and Violence:

9. Although Shiekh Hasina's authoritarian rule has collapsed because of the student-led mass uprising, criminal elements are still influential in politics, and violence and extortion continue. There are allegations of extortion committed by those affiliated to Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) and by coordinators of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement (ADSM) (who played the most vital role in the protests that deposed Hasina). The victims reported an increase in the rate of extortion. Two of the key coordinators of ADSM, Hasnat Abdullah and Sarjis Alam met the Chairperson of the ACC on 29 August 2024 and requested him to take action against those who are involved in extortion using the names of ADSM coordinators. Zakir Hossain, a Rukon (a top-tier member of JI's three-tier membership) of Feni District unit JI, demanded money from Feni Alia Kamil Madrassa's Principal, Maulana Mahmudul Hasan when he was asked to help him 'get rid' of a case.¹⁷ In another incident Abdur Razzaque, the Convener of Kotwali Upazila unit of Bangladesh Jatiotabadi Chhatra Dal (student wing of BNP), was beaten by the people and then handed over to the police as he had abducted a member of a minority community while in the guise of an Officer-in-Charge (OC) of a police station in Dinajpur and then tried to extort money from him.¹⁸ Being unable to extort any money, BNP leaders and activists reportedly took control of more than 400 shops at Siddhirganj in Narayanganj District.¹⁹ Many other allegations of offences have also been reported against BNP affiliates such as illegally occupying a house²⁰, armed extortion after an announcement with a megaphone²¹, stealing fish from a large well²², looting a tender box²³, burning a bus after being refused extortion²⁴, involvement in the black market²⁵, unlawful peddling of fertilizer²⁶, beating up a police officer²⁷, beating up a teacher²⁸ and students²⁹, snatching away accused persons from police

¹⁷ Amar Desh, 13 March 2025; <https://eamardesh.com/2025-03-13>

¹⁸ Samakal, 10 January 2025; <https://samakal.com/whole-country/article/274670/>

¹⁹ Jugantor, 12 January 2025; https://epaper.jugantor.com/storage/2025-01-12/12/link_img_second_ed_1736650948_5.jpg

²⁰ Jugantor, 5 January 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/bnp/899620>

²¹ Jugantor, 23 February 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/tp-second-edition/920453>

²² Samakal, 2 February 2025; <https://samakal.com/whole-country/article/278550/>

²³ Manab Zamin, 4 February 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=147068>

²⁴ Manab Zamin, 2 February 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=146819>

²⁵ Samakal, 13 March 2025; <https://samakal.com/whole-country/article/285339/>

²⁶ Samakal, 6 February 2025; <https://samakal.com/whole-country/article/279295/>

²⁷ Jugantor, 11 January 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/country-news/901994>

²⁸ Samakal, 3 February 2025; <https://epaper.samakal.com/nogor-edition/2025-02-03/11/960>

²⁹ Jugantor, 30 January 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/campus/910478>

stations³⁰, attempting to take back an accused from a police station,³¹ attacking a female police official³² and killing a person with a gun.³³ For example, BNP leaders in Barishal have occupied markets, launch terminals, bus terminals, the Chamber of Commerce and other facilities.³⁴ The President of Bangladesh Jatiotabadi Jubo Dal's (youth wing of BNP) Narsingdi city unit, Mahmudul Hasan Chowdhury, was reportedly involved in extortion at Narsingdi Railway Station, as well as sexual harassment and violence against the Railway Station staff.³⁵



Injured police officer beaten by BNP leaders and activists during an investigation. Photo: Jugantor, 11 January 2025



Injured student in Jagannath University. Photo: Jugantor 30 January 2025

³⁰ Prothom Alo, 11 January 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/district/9a0rc06xho>

³¹ Amar Desh 25 January 2025; https://images.dailyamardesh.com/cropped-images/image_sl11_row10_date_25-01-2025_edition_1_page3_102923_482350_watermarked_3ddfa86d-a74b-4412-9dbb-87ec251ddb26.jpg, Jugantor, 19 March 2025; https://epaper.jugantor.com/storage/2025-03-19/2/link_img_second_ed_1742352066_17.jpg

³² Bangla Tribune, 9 March 2025; <https://www.banglatribune.com/country/dhaka/889423/>

³³ Prothom Alo, 17 January 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/district/me3ebtj597>

³⁴ Jugantor, 27 January 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/tp-lastpage/908884>

³⁵ Samakal, 27 February 2025; <https://samakal.com/whole-country/article/282858/>

10. During this quarter, clashes between BNP and JI, as well as between BNP and AL were reported.³⁶ The house of an AL leader was reportedly robbed and set on fire. A youth wing leader of BNP was reportedly killed by a mob when he was vandalising a house.³⁷ Use of firearms in clashes were also reported, such as in one clash between BNP and Chhatra Dal.³⁸ Furthermore, the Army had recovered arms and ammunition from the house of a BNP leader.³⁹ Also, there is a perception that the online speeches by the deposed dictator Hasina from India to her Party people in Bangladesh was inciting violence, and has also contributed to a declining law and order situation. One such speech aggrieved the students and citizens to the extent that they attacked Hasina's father's house at Dhanmondi in Dhaka and razed it to the ground on 5 February.⁴⁰ Also, houses of AL leaders, former Ministers and lawmakers in 35 districts were vandalised and set on fire.⁴¹
11. On 3 January, clashes between BNP and AL in Baghmara of Rajshahi District had left 15 people injured.⁴² On 21 March, clashes between BNP and AL in Raipura of Narsingdi District, regarding control over the area, killed two people named Bashar and Amin.⁴³
12. On 3 February, clashes between BNP and AL in Faridpur damaged 30 houses and injured eight people.⁴⁴



Houses were attacked during clashes between AL and BNP leaders and activists in Fusra Village, Faridpur Sadar Upazila. Photo: Samakal 4 February 2025

³⁶ Manab Zamin, 7 January 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=143019>

³⁷ Jugantor, 24 January 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/country-news/907931>

³⁸ Samakal, 29 January 2025; <https://samakal.com/whole-country/article/277856/>

³⁹ Manab Zamin, 25 March 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=153922>

⁴⁰ Manab Zamin, 6 February 2025; <https://m.mzamin.com/news.php?news=147406>

⁴¹ Prothom Alo, 7 February 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/hmojqpxuxl>

⁴² Jugantor, 3 January 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/country-news/898800>

⁴³ Samaka, 22 March 2025; <https://samakal.com/bangladesh/article/286687/>

⁴⁴ Samaka, 4 February 2025; <https://samakal.com/whole-country/article/278887/>

13. On 18 February, over 150 people were left injured in clashes between Chhatra Dal and ADSM over the issue of banning student politics on campus at Khulna University of Engineering and Technology.⁴⁵



Niloy Ahmed, a Textile Engineering student, injured during a clash between the ADSM and Chhatra Dal at Khulna University of Engineering and Technology. Photo: Prothom Alo 19 February 2025

14. On 13 March, BNP men attacked an Iftar Mahfil (Ramadan congregation) at Kaliganj in Gazipur District.⁴⁶
15. On 29 March, clashes occurred between BNP and AL over the location of the Eid prayer congregation in Dagonbhuiyan of Feni District, which left 25 people injured.⁴⁷

BNP Infighting:

16. During this reporting period, incidents of infighting within the BNP over control of neighbourhoods,⁴⁸ left many people injured.⁴⁹ These intra-party clashes erupted for several reasons, e.g., selection of beneficiaries for rice sold at subsidized prices⁵⁰, extortion⁵¹, establishing control of bus counters⁵², over

⁴⁵Prothom Alo, 19 February 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/district/fisxgu0xa4>

⁴⁶Prothom Alo, 14 March 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/district/mnuytm2q0z>

⁴⁷Jugantor, 30 March 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/tp-news/935567>

⁴⁸Amar Desh, 10 March 2025; https://images.dailymardesh.com/cropped-images/image_sl8_row7_date_10-03-2025_edition_2_page2_17805_505546_updated_watermarked_a1556282-5cc0-46c0-9366-926b27460a24.jpg

⁴⁹Jugantor, 27 March 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/index.php/tp-lastpage/934333>

⁵⁰Prothom Alo, 18 March 2025; <https://epaper.prothomalo.com/Home/ShareArticle?OrgId=183fee0726d&eid=1&imageview=0&repdate=18/03/2025&sedId=1>

⁵¹Jugantor, 23 January 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/country-news/907296>

⁵²Manab Zamin, 9 February 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=147785>

committee formation⁵³, controlling the scrap cloth business⁵⁴, getting tenders for sand mining⁵⁵, availing of contracts⁵⁶, distribution of TCB cards (which allows low-income people to get essentials at reduced prices), distribution of rice under the VGF (Vulnerable Group Feeding) programme⁵⁷, and other interest-driven conflicts.⁵⁸

17. On 12 January, Abul Hasan Ratan, the President of BNP's Rauti Union unit, was killed following an internal clash between two factions of BNP over the formation of a Party committee at Tarail of Kishoreganj District.⁵⁹
18. On 1 February, a BNP activist named Selim Bhuiyan was beaten to death during a clash between two factions of BNP while he was on his way to a political meeting in Nangolkot Upazila under Cumilla District.⁶⁰
19. On 8 March, a rickshawpuller named Golam Hossain Rocky was severely injured during a clash between two factions of BNP in Rajshahi, over the arrest of an AL leader. When Rocky was taken to the hospital, BNP activists tried to prevent him from receiving proper treatment. When Rocky's wife Poribanu Begum went to Boalia Police Station to file a case, the police refused to accept it. Rocky succumbed to his injuries at the hospital three days later on 11 March.⁶¹
20. On 26 March, clashes between two factions of BNP at Mirsarai, Chittagong left a pedestrian named Javed dead.⁶²
21. After the fall of the authoritarian regime, there has been a rush to file cases at police stations. Local Jubo Dal Convener, Mohammad Monowar Hossain filed a case on 29 October 2024 for the sabotage of the BNP office at Melandah in Jamalpur District. In this case, the Melandah Police Station arrested Zulfikar Ali alias Lebu Master, the head teacher of KGS Mahar Sobhan Mafiz Uddin High School, on 8 March. The local citizens claimed that he was not affiliated to any political party. Moreover, the plaintiff of the case did not even know him.⁶³ Allegations of extortion, in the form of threats to file cases unless

⁵³ Jugantor, 8 January 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/country-news/900916>

⁵⁴ Prothom Alo, 6 February 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/district/ymz50geb59>

⁵⁵ Jugantor, 18 March 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/country-news/930872>

⁵⁶ Samakal, 23 January 2025; <https://samakal.com/whole-country/article/276802/>

⁵⁷ Samakal, 8 March 2025; <https://samakal.com/whole-country/article/284385/>

⁵⁸ Jugantor, 7 March 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/bnp/925507>

⁵⁹ Prothom Alo, 12 January 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/district/kqt4c5a12b>

⁶⁰ Prothom Alo, 1 February 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/district/zjc1gmpwth>

⁶¹ Jugantor, 13 March 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/tp-news/928306>, The Daily Star, 14 March 2025; <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/crime-justice/news/killed-my-eyes-widow-devasted-after-auto-rickshaw-driver-dies-bnp-clash-3847946>

⁶² Jugantor, 27 March 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/index.php/tp-lastpage/934333>

⁶³ Prothom Alo, 9 March 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/district/idx7pkfh3>

payment was not made, were also reported during this period.⁶⁴ In some instances, the list of people accused in these cases reportedly included dead individuals and persons living abroad.⁶⁵

22. In 2018, during the AL regime, a case was filed against 70 people including the President of the Urdu Speaking People's Rehabilitation Movement, Sadaquat Khan Fakku, for vandalising and burning AL's electoral campaign centre. In the same year, leaders of the Urdu Speaking People's Youth Rehabilitation Movement were implicated in two other cases filed against organising a procession demanding the release of Khaleda Zia, and for sabotage. Those cases are still pending before the courts. Surprisingly, the same Sadaquat Khan Fakku and others have been accused in a case filed after 5 August 2024 for shooting at protesters during the anti-discrimination movement that toppled Hasina's authoritarian regime.⁶⁶

Infighting in the AL:

23. Although most AL leaders and activists went into hiding after 5 August 2024, there were reports of AL infighting in various locations.⁶⁷ AL's student wing Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), were allegedly behind the alarming increase of mugging, extortion and robbery after 5 August 2024. This banned organisation⁶⁸ reportedly engaged known criminals in these activities in a planned manner across the country, including the capital Dhaka.⁶⁹
24. On 7 March, Prabartana, the business facility owned by Farhad Mazhar, a poet and political analyst; and Farida Akhtar, Advisor to the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock in Mohammadpur, Dhaka was bombed.⁷⁰ Farhad Mazhar was one of the key critical voices against the authoritarian regime of Sheikh Hasina and was once picked up in 2017 by unidentified people and later rescued by security forces. Since he had kept silent about the incident thereafter, it is believed that the security apparatus was involved. In another incident, an AL leader from Dhaka's Mohammadpur area, Mohammad Selim, attempted to kill a government employee after he was released on bail in a

⁶⁴Manabzamin, 2 March 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=150577>

⁶⁵Manabzamin, 13 March 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=152205>

⁶⁶Samakal, 5 February 2025; <https://samakal.com/bangladesh/article/279091/>

⁶⁷ The Financial Express, 26 January 2025; <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/bn/nrsingdeete-aoozamee-leeger-dui-gruper-mdhze-sngghrsh-niht-2>

⁶⁸The Daily Star, 24 October 2024;

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/politics/news/chhatra-league-banned-3734816>

⁶⁹ Jugantor, 11 March 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/politics/927276>

⁷⁰ Samakal, 8 March 2025; <https://samakal.com/crime/article/284348/>

case filed for his involvement in firing at protesters during the July-August uprising.⁷¹

25. On 4 February, three persons were injured when AL activists threw handmade bombs at a BNP procession at Fulbari in Dinajpur District.⁷²
26. On 15 March, AL men vandalised and looted the BNP office at Badarganj Upazila in Rangpur District.⁷³
27. Interest-driven intra-party clashes within AL are still continuing.⁷⁴ On 6 January, a man named Darbesh Ali was killed in a clash at Pargacha of Rangpur District between two AL factions over the occupation of an island in the Teesta River.⁷⁵
28. On 26 January, two people called Alamgir Hossain Alam and Ali Ahmed were killed during an intra-party clash between two AL factions at Raipura in Narshingdi District.⁷⁶
29. On 8 March, siblings Saiful Sardar and Ataur Sardar and their cousin Palash Sardar were killed during an intra-party clash between two AL factions at Sadar Upazila in Madaripur District.⁷⁷
30. **Between January and March 2025, political violence has left at least 67 people dead and 1999 people injured. In these three months, six incidents of internal conflict within AL and 164 within BNP have been recorded. In the internal conflicts within the AL, four people were killed and 26 people were injured, and in the internal conflicts within the BNP 28 people were killed and 1255 were reported to have been injured.**

Repression by the State

Operation Devil Hunt and Extrajudicial Killings

31. On the night of 7 February, miscreants attacked approximately 15 people in the house of former Minister for the Ministry of Liberation War Affairs, Mozammel Haque in Gazipur. After this incident, a joint law enforcement agency meeting held at the Ministry of Home Affairs decided to launch a special operation called “Operation Devil Hunt”⁷⁸ and establish a “Joint

⁷¹Manabzamin, 16 February 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=148686>

⁷²Amar Desh, 5 February 2025; https://images.dailyamardesh.com/cropped-images/image_sl4_row3_date_05-02-2025_edition_1_page2_960386_512731_watermarked_889b7fac-0664-4d27-be3d-52fad0d66a97.jpg

⁷³Sangbadsarabela, 16 March 2025; <https://sangbadsarabela.com/country/article/64562/>

⁷⁴Manabzamin, 12 January 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=143656>

⁷⁵January, 6 January 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/tp-news/899733>

⁷⁶Daily Observer, 26 January 2025; <https://www.observerbd.com/news/509214>

⁷⁷Manabzamin, 10 March 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=151773>

⁷⁸Prothom Alo, 19 February 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/012yu44txl>

Force” to improve the law and order situation. This gave rise to allegations of law enforcers launching operations in plain clothes and committing extrajudicial killings and criminal activities.⁷⁹

32. In the dead of night on 12 January, the Joint Forces launched an operation in Sonaimuri of Noakhali District and arrested former JCD (student wing of BNP) leader Abdur Rahman and his nephew Habibur Rahman. Abdur Rahman’s cousin Mohammad Hanif complained that Abdur Rahman had died the following day after he was tortured in custody and was not given timely medical care. The residential medical officer of Noakhali General Hospital, Rajib Ahmed remarked that both Abdur Rahman and Habibur Rahman were carrying wounds.⁸⁰
33. In the dead of night on 30 January, Touhidul Islam, a Jubo Dal leader and employee of a shipping company in Chittagong, was picked up by members of the Joint Force from his own house at Panchdhubi Union in Comilla Adarsha Sadar Upazila. Touhidul died at the Comilla Medical College Hospital the following day on 31 January. Touhidul’s brother Sadequr complained that his brother died as a result of torture in custody. He also said that he saw signs of torture on his brother’s body. Additional Superintendent of Police, Mohammad Saiful Malik said that the Army had asked the police to take Touhidul into their custody at 11:00 am on 31 January 2025. Touhidul was unconscious when the Army handed him over to the police. When the police took him to hospital, the attending doctor declared him dead.⁸¹



Villagers form a human chain in Itala Village of Comilla Adarsh Sadar Upazila to protest the death of Jubo Dal leader Touhidul Islam. Photo: Prothom Alo, 1 February 2025

34. On 19 February, two people called Jumman (25) and Miraj Hossain (26) were shot and killed during a Joint Forces drive at Chand Udyan in Dhaka. The Joint Forces claimed that there was an exchange of fire between the Joint

⁷⁹Samakal, 2 January 2025; <https://samakal.com/chittagong/article/273269/>

⁸⁰Prothom Alo, 14 January 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/district/8azlq9ert7>

⁸¹Prothom Alo, 1 February 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/district/5yjjd1kdii>

Forces and miscreants when the former launched an operation at Chand Udyan, based on the information that a group of miscreants were preparing to mug people there. During the operation, the Joint Force arrested five individuals with arms from the spot and rescued the bodies of Juman and Miraj Hossain.⁸²

35. **Between January and March 2025, a total of eight persons were reportedly killed extra-judicially. Of these eight people, one was killed by the police, two by DB Police, one by the Bangladesh Air Force and four were killed by the Joint Force. It is also alleged that among the eight killed, two were tortured to death, three were shot to death and three were beaten to death.**

Torture and Degrading Treatment by Law Enforcers, Custodial Deaths and Lack of Accountability:

36. Despite the fall of Hasina's authoritarian rule, the torture and degrading treatment of citizens by law enforcers continues. During the reporting period, there were allegations against law enforcement agencies of efforts to protect the accused belonging to their own forces. In Chittagong, the Panchlaish Police Station struck off former Officer in Charge of Kotwali Police Station of Chittagong, Nezam Uddin's name from a case regarding the shooting of protesters during the July-August uprising. On 6 January, when activists of BNP's volunteer wing, Swechhasebak Dal handed him over to the police, the police let him go.⁸³
37. This reporting period was also marked by alleged involvement of law enforcers in the abduction of a businessman⁸⁴, 'case trade'⁸⁵ (extortion under threat of including names in ongoing investigations), beating of a plaintiff in the police station⁸⁶, arresting and imprisoning an innocent person who shared the same name as the actual accused person⁸⁷, taking bribes from the relatives of the accused from court custody⁸⁸, and filing a trumped-up drug case⁸⁹, among other unlawful activities.

⁸²Manabzami, 22 February 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=149485>

⁸³Amar Desh, 8 January 2025; https://images.dailymardesh.com/cropped-images/image_sl2_row1_date_08-01-2025_edition_1_page2_121351_105462.jpg

⁸⁴Prothom Alo, 30 March 2025; <https://epaper.prothomalo.com/Home/ShareArticle?OrgId=303cdca9bc7&eid=1&imageview=0&epdate=30/03/2025&sedId=1>

⁸⁵Jugantor, 9 March 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/country-news/926771>

⁸⁶Jugantor, 14 March 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/index.php/country-news/929026>

⁸⁷Prothom Alo, 26 March 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/district/447kwu1ad1>

⁸⁸Jugantor, 2 March 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/law-justice/923368>

⁸⁹Jugantor, 2 March 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/country-news/901755>

38. On 12 January, a seminar entitled “Establishing a People-friendly, Accountable and Professional Policing System: Aspirations of the Students” was held at Dhaka University. A survey regarding police service was published during the seminar and revealed that 78 percent of respondents, who were students, had to either pay a bribe or experience harassment while seeking police service.⁹⁰
39. On 3 January, Nurul Islam, a medicine trader from Konabari, Gazipur was picked up from his pharmacy by Sub-Inspectors Hanif, Abul Kashem and Utpal. Later, they threatened to implicate him in an arms and murder case if he did not give them BDT 500,000. When Nurul Islam’s relatives told the police that they were unable to pay 500,000, the police reduced the sum to BDT 200,000 to let Nurul go. However, after the police were given BDT 200,000, instead of releasing him, they sent him to court. When the news of the incident was published in the media, the Gazipur Metropolitan Police Commissioner withdrew Sub-Inspectors Hanif, Abul Kashem and Utpal and assigned them to the Police Headquarters, but did not take any action against the Officer in Charge of Konabari Police Station, Nazrul Islam, who the Sub Inspectors told Nurul Islam had instructed them.⁹¹
40. On 25 January, a day labourer called Milon Bepari died while DB Police was conducting an anti-drug drive in Zajira, Shariatpur District. His family alleged that he died from torture in DB custody.⁹²
41. On 13 March, three constables of Faridganj Police Station in Chandpur led by Sub-Inspector Khokon, reportedly blinded and tortured a Chhatra Dal leader named Shawon Kabi Riza.⁹³

Enforced Disappearance:

42. The Sheikh Hasina regime established secret detention centres across the country to unlawfully detain political opposition, dissenting voices or so-called ‘militants’. The most notorious of these is the Joint Interrogation Centre (JIC), popularly known as “Aynaghar”, run by the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI). On 12 February, the Chief Adviser (CA) of the Interim Government (IG) visited the DGFI-run secret detention centre at Kachukhet and RAB-run secret detention centres in Uttara and Agargaon in Dhaka. During his visits, some of the victims of these detention centres accompanied him. The operators of these centres used to abduct critical voices

⁹⁰Prothom Alo, 12 January 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/q48bft4tjb>

⁹¹Jugantor, 14 January 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/country-news/903405>

⁹²Samakal, 27 January 2025; <https://samakal.com/whole-country/article/277490/>

⁹³Manabzamin, 16 March 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=152586>

against Hasina and AL, and detain and torture them in tiny cells.⁹⁴ However, evidence of torture in these 'Aynaghars' were mostly removed before the CA's visit. The preliminary report of the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances revealed that after the fall of Hasina on 5 August, the DGFI Director General (DG) tried to conceal the crimes committed by his predecessors and applied his powers to provide impunity to the perpetrators.⁹⁵ As well as the DGFI, other security forces also showed a tendency to destroy evidence regarding their criminal engagements.⁹⁶ On 22 September 2015, RAB-2 picked up pregnant Rozina Begum Rebi from Cox's Bazar and detained her in an 'Aynaghar', along with her, 11-year-old daughter Noori Ali Afsana. Though Afsana was released later on, she never came to know of her mother's whereabouts. A 17-year-old boy was picked up from Rangunia in Chittagong and was tortured for days in an 'Aynaghar' until he lost his sanity.⁹⁷ Another 'Aynaghar' was revealed in the Bogura Police Lines, which was used to detain people and torture them physical and mentally. Many of those who were detained in the Bogura Police Lines were killed and their bodies were disappeared.⁹⁸ Sheikh Hasina formed a group of high-level officers from the Army and the police, to execute enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings. This group included Sheikh Hasina's Security Affairs Adviser, Major General (Retired) Tarique Ahmed Siddique; former Director General (DG) of Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI), the former defence and security adviser, Lieutenant General (retired) Md. Akbar Hossain; former DGS of the DGFI, Major General (Retired) Md Saiful Abedin, Lieutenant General (Retired) Md Saiful Alam, Lieutenant General (Retired) Ahmed Tabrej Shams, Major General (Retried) Hamidul Haque; former Director of Counter Terrorism Intelligence Bureau (CTIB) of the DGFI, Major General (Retired) Mohammad Tousef-ul-Haque; former Additional Director General (Operations) of Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), former Director of the National Security Intelligence (NSI) and former DG of the National Telecommunication Monitoring Centre (NTMC), Major General (Retired) Ziaul Ahsan; former DGS of Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) and former Inspector General of Police (IGP), Dr. Benazir Ahmed and Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun; former Additional IGP and former CTTC chief Monirul Islam; former DIG and former CTTC chief, Md Asaduzzaman

⁹⁴Samakal, 13 February 2025; <https://samakal.com/bangladesh/article/280529/>

⁹⁵ "Unfolding the Truth", An Interim Report, Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearance, Section 4, Page 32.

⁹⁶Naya Diganta, 21 January 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/national/906253>

⁹⁷Samakal, 13 February 2025; <https://samakal.com/bangladesh/article/280529/>

⁹⁸Jugantor, 13 March 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/index.php/national/928222>

and former Additional Commissioner and former DB chief, Mohammad Harunor Rashid. This group was directly ordered by Hasina to execute enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings. The political opposition, whom Hasina considered to be a threat, and those with dissenting voices against the government were targeted for enforced disappearances, as was revealed following the investigations of the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances.⁹⁹ A Human Rights Watch report revealed that Sheikh Hasina had suggested killing Brigadier General (Retired) Abdullah Aman Azmi as well.¹⁰⁰ A killing squad led by Major General (Retired) Ziaul Ahsan committed the enforced disappearance of former BNP Member of Parliament M. Ilias Ali and killed him afterwards. The killing squad threw his body into the Jamuna River. RAB official Sergeant Taherul Islam revealed this information while delivering a confessional statement under Section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 before the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT).¹⁰¹ On 6 January, the ICT issued an arrest warrant against Sheikh Hasina and her aides involved in enforced disappearances.¹⁰²



Chief Advisor Dr. Muhammad Yunus visited secret detention centers known as 'Aynaghar'. Photo: Samakal 13 February 2025

43. On 4 March, the Chairman of the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances, Justice Moinul Islam Chowdhury remarked that there is a low possibility that the 330 individuals who are still disappeared would be found.¹⁰³

⁹⁹Amar Desh, 31 January 2025; <https://eamardesh.com/2025-01-31>

¹⁰⁰Manabzamin, 29 January 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=146254>

¹⁰¹Jugantor, 7 January 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/bnp/900321>

¹⁰²Prothom Alo, 6 January 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/ed9ubyaemg>

¹⁰³Manabzamin, 5 March 2025; <https://m.mzamin.com/news.php?news=151078>

44. During the reporting period of January to March 2025, no cases of enforced disappearance were reported.

Freedom of Media:

45. Incidents of cases filed against journalists and acts of repression against them were recorded during this reporting period. While the AL and its affiliated organisations were involved in acts of repression against the media during the Sheikh Hasina regime, BNP and its affiliated organisations are now allegedly assuming the role of their political counterparts from the AL in repressing the media.
46. On 3 February, miscreants attacked eight on-duty journalists in Lakshmipur and Shariatpur Districts. Of the victims, Sohagh Khan Sujan from Samakal, who was stabbed in Shariatpur, was admitted to a hospital with severe injuries.¹⁰⁴



Medical clinic owner Nuruzzaman Sheikh, along with others, attacked Samakal's district correspondent with knives and hammers in front of the District Commissioner's office, over the publication of an article about Shariatpur Sadar Hospital. Photo: Samakal 4 February 2025

47. On 2 February, Sujan Mahmud, Rajibpur correspondent of Kholakagoj, in Kurigram District was severely injured as Joint Convener of BNP's Rajibpur Upazila unit, Anowar Hossain Nevi and activists of BNP's affiliated organisations attacked him for publishing a news article. Sujan was later admitted to the Rajibpur Upazila Health Complex.¹⁰⁵
48. On 5 February, three journalists were injured as BNP men attacked them when they were performing their professional duties at the Supreme Court

¹⁰⁴Samakal, 4 February 2025; <https://samakal.com/bangladesh/article/278920/>

¹⁰⁵Jugantor, 4 February 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/tp-bangla-face/912490>

premises. Of the three injured journalists, Javed Akhter, ATN News Senior Journalist was injured severely.¹⁰⁶

49. On 27 March, a group of miscreants led by a leader of JCD's Barishal unit Sohel Rari, attacked photojournalist N. Amin Rasel from Dainik Barishal Mail and Moniruzzaman, a staff reporter from the local daily newspaper Mukhapatra, when they were performing their professional duties in front of Barishal District Court. They beat the journalists and vandalised a camera and two of their mobile phones. They also snatched cash from the journalists. Afterwards, the miscreants set fire to a motorbike at the main gate of the Court building.¹⁰⁷
50. In 1997, a government-formed commission submitted their report recommending the formation of a "National Broadcast Commission" and for setting guidelines to ensure autonomy of Bangladesh Betar (Radio) and Bangladesh Television. Odhikar filed a Writ Petition at the High Court Division of the Supreme Court on 17 August 2000, seeking a rule for the enforcement of the commission's recommendations. After a primary hearing of the Writ Petition, the High Court Division issued a rule on 19 November 2000. The rule had questioned why an order will not be given to implement the commission's report along with the recommendations it provided. On 26 February 2025, a hearing on the rule had begun in the Court of Justice Mohammad Ullah and Justice Fayed Ahmed at the High Court Division.¹⁰⁸
51. **From January to March 2025, 47 journalists were injured, 10 were assaulted, one was arrested, one newspaper office was attacked and five were threatened for carrying out their professional duties.**

State of Ready-Made Garment Workers:

52. Workers' discontent continued in the Ready-Made Garment (RMG) sector during the first quarter of 2025.¹⁰⁹ There are allegations of deliberate efforts to destabilise the RMG sector, which is the top remittance-earning sector in the country. It is alleged that a section of the RMG industry owners, including BEXIMCO Group who were part of the oligarchy unfairly patronised by the deposed authoritarian regime, are actively instigating tension in this sector. These oligarchs have reportedly looted and siphoned off large amounts of money out of the country, leaving the banking sector and the national

¹⁰⁶Samakal, 6 February 2025; <https://samakal.com/bangladesh/article/279240/>

¹⁰⁷Jugantor, 28 March 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/country-news/935124>

¹⁰⁸Information collected by Odhikar

¹⁰⁹Manabzamin, 6 January 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=142849>

economy in general heavily vulnerable.¹¹⁰ To execute their plan to sabotage this crucial sector of the economy, these oligarchs have established a network and employed people to organise blockades, demonstrations, arson attacks and other forms of sabotage.¹¹¹ Labour leader Jolly Talukder, the Vice-President of Trade Union Centre remarked that oligarchs linked to the deposed authoritarian regime are organising manifold attempts to destabilise the RGM sector.¹¹² Due to this planned unrest, by mid-February, 119 garment factories were shut down. Among these, 40 factories are in Ashulia and Gazipur, 36 in Narayanganj, and three in Dhaka Metropolitan. Additionally, during the same period, 1,147 adverse incidents occurred in garment industry areas. These incidents include 52 cases of arson, 75 cases of vandalism, 239 cases of road blockades, three cases of looting, 778 strikes, and 11 cases of theft.¹¹³

53. During this time, workers organised protests, rallies, and road blockades to demand salary increments, payment of due wages, and reopening of factories, as well as to oppose worker layoffs and sexual harassment of female workers. Workers were attacked by Jubo Dal leaders and activists. The number of active RMG factories under BGMEA¹¹⁴ in Dhaka and Chittagong is 2,107. As of March 29, owners of 2,098 factories had distributed Eid bonuses. March salaries were paid by 99% of the factories, some covering the full month's wages and others only half. However, nine factories failed to provide Eid bonuses on their last working day, and workers of factories belonging to TNZ Group received neither salary nor bonuses.¹¹⁵
54. On 17 January, workers from DIRD Composite Textile Limited, a garments factory in Gazipur, staged protests demanding the payment of seven months' overdue wages and other dues. Workers reported that for seven months, factory authorities had failed to pay their provident funds, service benefits, and salaries, leaving them starving due to lack of money. Despite several promises from owners, the payments were not made.¹¹⁶ On 22 January, workers in the Sarabo area of Gazipur city, staged protests demanding the reopening of 16 closed factories in Beximco Industrial Park, and resorted to vandalising and setting fire to over fifty vehicles on the Chandra-Nabinagar Road. When journalists were gathering information, they were attacked by

¹¹⁰Jugantor, 18 February 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/tp-firstpage/918100>

¹¹¹Ibid

¹¹²Ibid

¹¹³Jugantor, 18 February `2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/tp-firstpage/918100>

¹¹⁴Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association.

¹¹⁵Samakal, 30 March 2025; <https://samakal.com/bangladesh/article/287985/>

¹¹⁶Jugantor, 18 January 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/country-news/904895>

the workers, leaving three journalists injured.¹¹⁷ On 18 March, Rumi Akter Asha, a female worker of Protita Trade Agency, a garments factory in Siddhirganj, Narayanganj, was beaten and falsely accused of theft when she asked for three months' overdue wages.¹¹⁸ On 23 March, during a sit-in programme in front of the Labour Building in the capital demanding the payment of dues and bonuses, a garment worker named Ramprasad Singh died after falling ill.¹¹⁹ On 24 March, in the Bhannara area of Kaliakair Upazila under Gazipur District, local Jubo Dal leader Moniruzzaman and his supporters attacked protesting workers after being instigated by the factory owners, injuring ten workers.¹²⁰ On 25 March, garments workers from TNZ Apparels Limited, Apparels Plus Eco Limited, and several other factories in Gazipur marched towards the Secretariat from Dhaka's Labour Building to demand the payment of salaries which were three months overdue, Eid bonuses as well as other dues. The police intervened by charging at the workers with batons and firing tear gas shells, dispersing the protest and injuring a large number of people including police officers.¹²¹ On 29 March, workers blocked roads and protested after Standard Stitch Oven Factory authorities in Konabari of Gazipur laid off 101 workers.¹²²



Workers protest in Gazipur demanding unpaid wages. Photo: Jugantor 18 January 2025

¹¹⁷The Daily Star, 22 January 2025; <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/beximco-workers-protest-turns-violent-gazipur-3805986>

¹¹⁸Jugantor, 20 March 2025; https://epaper.jugantor.com/storage/2025-03-20/2/link_img_second_ed_1742436265_4.jpg

¹¹⁹Manabzamin, 24 March 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=153807>

¹²⁰Samakal, 24 March 2025; <https://epaper.samakal.com/nogor-edition/2025-03-24/7/7297>

¹²¹Manabzamin, 26 March 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=154090>

¹²²Samakal, 30 March 2025; <https://samakal.com/bangladesh/article/287985/>



Police clash with garments workers demanding their salaries and allowances in front of the Secretariat in Dhaka. Photo: Daily Star 25 March 2025

Restrictions on and Violence against Differing Religious Views:

55. During this reporting period, extremists obstructed religious activities, as well as threatened and carried out attacks and act of vandalism against individuals with differing religious views in various parts of the country.
56. On 8 January, during the annual Urs (death anniversary of a Sufi Saint) at a saint's shrine in Mymensingh town, a group of madrasah students attacked the venue vandalising the stage and chairs. Later that night, they attacked the venue again, damaging parts of the shrine.¹²³ On February 12, Madhupur Lalon Sangha organised a cultural event in Tangail's Madhupur to commemorate the 134th death anniversary of Fakir Lalon Shah. However, the event was stopped due to objections and resistance from the local Hefazat-e-Islam group.¹²⁴ On February 21, at the annual Urs gathering of the late Baul Abdur Rashid Bayati in Singair, Manikganj, local BNP leader Mithu and his associates assaulted devotees and obstructed the event, leading to its cancellation.¹²⁵ On February 24, when Abdul Quddus, Divisional President of Hizb-ut-Tawheed hosted a feast at his home in Pirgachha for local dignitaries and intellectuals, Nur Alam, the local President of JI threatened to stop the event. Abdul Quddus informed local JI leaders and administration about the matter. On February 25 in Rangpur, JI leaders and activists allegedly attacked, vandalised, looted and set fire to the homes of Hizb-ut-Tawheed organisers and members.¹²⁶

¹²³Samakal, 11 January 2025; <https://samakal.com/whole-country/article/274816/>

¹²⁴Samakal, 12 February 2025; <https://samakal.com/whole-country/article/280460/>

¹²⁵Samakal, 22 February 2025; <https://epaper.samakal.com/nogor-edition/2025-02-22/2/6243>

¹²⁶Manabzamin, 2 March 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=150575>

Death Penalty and Human Rights:

57. The criminal justice system under the Interim Government retains the death penalty. In the past three months, the lower courts have sentenced a significant number of accused individuals to death. Despite the availability of alternative punishments, the lower courts continue the trend of imposing the maximum penalty. Due to the slow pace of appeal hearings, inmates sentenced to death continue to await execution in condemned cells for years. In 2003, a lower court sentenced Ibrahim Ali, a rickshaw-van driver, to death in a murder case filed at Batiaghata Police Station, Khulna. Ibrahim Ali stated that he was falsely convicted in the case because he could not afford a lawyer. After being sentenced to death by the lower court, Ibrahim Ali remained in a condemned cell. With the help of a fellow inmate, he filed an appeal and in 2017, the High Court acquitted him. However, Ibrahim's release order did not reach the prison for seven years, resulting in him remaining in prison. Seven years later, Ibrahim learned about a helpline from television, and contacted it. Following this, he was released from Jessore Central Jail on 8 February 2025.¹²⁷
58. **From January to March of this year, lower courts in Bangladesh sentenced a total of 24 individuals to death.**

Mob Violence:

59. Lack of trust in law enforcement agencies and the judicial system is widespread. This perceptibly triggers a significant increase in the incidents of mob killing. Most mob killings occur on suspicion of theft. Even individuals with psychosocial or cognitive disabilities are not spared from this violence.
60. On 25 January, a man named Selim Shah was beaten to death by a mob on suspicion of theft in Bhandaria Upazila in Pirojpur District.¹²⁸ On February 7, a man named Zahir Uddin Bechu who had a psychosocial disability, was killed in a mob beating on suspicion of theft in Kabirhat Upazila, Noakhali District.¹²⁹ On February 28, in Shariatpur Sadar Upazila, three individuals were killed in a mob beating while attempting to flee after committing a robbery on a vessel used for transporting sand in the Kirtinasha River. One of the deceased was identified as Ebadul Bepari¹³⁰. On March 2, in Char Fashion

¹²⁷Prothom Alo, 11 February 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/district/bpb91i22gv>

¹²⁸Samakal, 26 January 2025; <https://samakal.com/whole-country/article/277410/>

¹²⁹Manabzamin, 9 February 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=147776>

¹³⁰Prothom Alo, 1 March 2025; <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/local-news/xn6s6rv9rm>, Prothom Alo, 2 March 2025,

Upazila of Bhola District, a man called Shahjahan was accused of theft, dragged from his home by neighbours, and brutally beaten. His hands and legs were broken, and his eyes were gouged out¹³¹.

61. **Between January and March, 33 individuals were killed in mob beatings.**

Repressive Cyber Security Act:

62. Despite the fall of the authoritarian Sheikh Hasina regime, all repressive laws, including the Cyber Security Act, 2023 (CSA) introduced by the fallen regime, remain in effect. On January 21, the IG's Law Adviser, Asif Nazrul said the formalities for repealing the CSA by the Ministry of Law were complete. Once the pending tasks, which are left with the Ministry of Information Technology are completed, the law will be repealed. The government has prepared a draft of the Cyber Protection Ordinance (CPO) to replace the CSA. However, the approved draft of the CPO reflects elements of the controversial CSA. The proposed CPO is perceived as a regulatory and surveillance tool with regards to freedoms of speech, expression, organisation, and media.¹³²

63. In September 2024, the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs announced a decision to swiftly withdraw cases filed under the CSA. Subsequently, on February 11, the Law Adviser said cases filed for expressing opinions would be withdrawn after February. Despite the IG's promises to repeal the CSA and withdraw cases, cases under this law continue to be filed.

64. On 30 March, following the publication of a news article, Nesar Ahmed, who is a member of Kalyani Union Parishad, filed a case under the CSA against Abdul Quddus Sarkar, the Upazila Correspondent of the daily Sangbad; Harun-or-Rashid Babu, the News Editor of the daily Notun Shopno; journalist Shaheen Mirza, and two others in Pirgachha, Rangpur.¹³³

65. On 23 February, a case was filed under the CSA against Nahid Hasan, a member of the Shilpi Kalyan Trustee Board in Chilmari, Kurigram for allegedly offending 'religious sentiments'.¹³⁴

<https://epaper.prothomalo.com/Home/ShareArticle?OrgId=2305fabaef&eid=1&imageview=0&epe date=02/03/2025&sedId=1>

¹³¹ Samakal, 2 March 2025; <https://samakal.com/whole-country/article/283429/>

¹³² Kalbela, 1 January 2025; <https://www.kalbela.com/ajkerpatrika/khobor/152124>

¹³³ Samakal, 2 April 2025; <https://samakal.com/whole-country/article/288236?sfnsn=wa>

¹³⁴ Prothom Alo, 24 February 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/district/1r1vzdkolu>

Right to Assembly:

66. During this reporting period, police had obstructed peaceful meetings, assemblies, and processions organised by political parties and various groups raising demands. Moreover, there were incidents of attacks on opponents carried out under the banner of students-citizens and BNP activists.
67. On 26 January, in Fulgazi of Feni District, a group of miscreants led by Zia Haider Nasir, President of Anandapur Union unit of BNP, attacked and vandalised the venue of an anniversary event organised by a blood donation organisation named "Agrohi Raktodata Swechchasebi", because local BNP leaders had not been invited.¹³⁵
68. On 16 January, being informed that a protest march by students, representing ethnic minority groups, was headed towards the Ministry of Home Affairs, the police set up barricades in front of the Shikkha Bhaban to stop them. When the students tried to break through the barricades, the police had used water cannons, sound grenades, tear gas and batons to disperse the protesters.¹³⁶



When a group of protesters under the banner of 'Aggrieved Students and Public' tried to move towards the Secretariat, the police dispersed them. Photo: Prothom Alo 16 January 2025

69. On 26 January, 'Ebtedayee' (primary-level educational institutions under the madrasa board) madrasah teachers marched towards the Chief Adviser's office with a six-point demand, including the nationalisation of their madrasahs. Police stopped them at Shahbagh. Clashes had erupted when the teachers tried to break through the police barricades. The police used water cannons, sound grenades, and baton charges to disperse the teachers, injuring 30–40 people.¹³⁷

¹³⁵ Manabzamin, 18 January 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=146039>

¹³⁶ Manabzamin, 17 January 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=144474>

¹³⁷ Manabzamin, 27 January 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=145940>



Police are seen baton-charging Ebtedayee madrasa teacher and using water cannons. Photo: Bangla Tribune 26 January 2025

70. On 2 February, AL activists in Gopalganj launched an attack on the police and vandalised police vehicles, when the police obstructed them from distributing leaflets. The incident left eight people injured, including five police personnel¹³⁸
71. On 20 March, BNP activists attacked a human chain programme organised by JI against extortion, injuring four participants.¹³⁹
72. On 24 March, Abdul Hannan Masud, the Joint Chief Coordinator of the newly formed National Citizen Party (NCP) was attacked along with several others, by BNP activists in Hatia Upazila under Noakhali District. The attack occurred after Abdul Hannan Masud concluded a street rally and initiated a procession, which was met with a counter-procession from BNP activists.¹⁴⁰



NCP leader Abdul Hannan Masud injured in an attack. Photo: Prothom Alo 25 March 2025

¹³⁸ Jugantor, 3 February 2025; https://epaper.jugantor.com/storage/2025-02-03/2/link_img_second_ed_1738547666_8.jpg

¹³⁹ Prothom Alo, 21 March 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/district/58ge75gags>

¹⁴⁰ Manabzamin 26 March 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=154085>

Prisons and Human Rights:

73. Prisons of the country are still struggling with corruption and mismanagement. During this reporting period, prisoners were subjected to torture and ill-treatment. On 2 January, at the Manikganj District Jail canteen, three prison guards – Rafiqul Islam, Kohinur, and Zahid Hossain – tortured a detainee named Raju Mondal over an argument about fruit prices. Injured Raju Mondal was admitted to a government hospital in Manikganj.¹⁴¹ On 3 March, seven detainees – Sude Alam, Prakash Lal, Anwar, Mohammad Alam, Syed Alam, Nurul Amin, and Latif – were tortured under the leadership of jailer Abu Musar over allegations of stealing chickpeas at Cox’s Bazar District Jail.¹⁴²
74. Prisoners had also died in prison during these three months. On 30 May 2022, a prayer meeting at the home of Manikganj District BNP President Afroza Khan Rita to commemorate the death anniversary of former President Ziaur Rahman, was attacked by Awami League activists. After Hasina’s fall on 5 August 2024, a case was filed at Harirampur Police Station on October 29 regarding this incident. On the same night, Nitya Sarkar was arrested from his home, beaten, and handed over to the police.¹⁴³ He was sent to Manikganj District Jail in connections with matter and on 3 January he died at the Dhaka medical College Hospital. In another incident, on 9 February, AL leader Akhtar Shikdar, who was detained in Khulna District Jail, was declared dead after he was taken to Khulna Medical College Hospital.¹⁴⁴
75. **In the three months between January and March, it was reported that 19 individuals died in prison due to ‘illnesses’.**

Policy of Aggression and Human Rights Violations along Indo-Bangladesh Border

76. The Sheikh Hasina-led authoritarian government, was openly backed by the Indian ruling class. The Indian authorities have been continuously questioning the mass uprising that ousted Hasina and led to the formation of the interim government. They have also been making targeted statements about Bangladesh's internal affairs. On 7 March, during a weekly briefing, the

¹⁴¹ Jugantor, 2 February 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/country-news/911450>

¹⁴² Jugantor, 14 March 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/tp-city/928666>

¹⁴³ Samakal, 5 January 2025; <https://samakal.com/whole-country/article/273715/>

¹⁴⁴ Prothom Alo, 9 February 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/district/xqzjjs01bc>

Indian Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal criticised the Interim Government that was formed on 8 August.¹⁴⁵

77. Firstly, Jaiswal expressed India's concern over the alleged persecution of Hindus and other religious minorities in Bangladesh.¹⁴⁶ His statements aligned with reports from certain Indian media outlets, which published fabricated and baseless news about attacks on Hindu minorities from 8 August onwards. However, independent fact-checking organisations in Bangladesh, such as Rumor Scanner, debunked the Indian claims, as did the BBC and Al Jazeera.¹⁴⁷ For instance, a video circulated online claiming that Muslims in Bangladesh had raped and killed Hindu women and children, was found by Rumor Scanner to actually be footage of a stampede at a religious festival in India, repurposed for anti-Bangladesh propaganda.¹⁴⁸
78. Secondly, Jaiswal stated that India was worried about the 'deteriorating' law and order situation in Bangladesh, alleging that convicted extremists were being released from prison.¹⁴⁹ However, the Indian ruling class has provided refuge to the former authoritarian Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in India, violating the extradition treaty between the two countries. Despite calls for her extradition to face the mass killing charges against her in Bangladesh, she remains in India with a special status given by the Indian authority. Rather than extraditing a person accused of mass killing and crimes against humanity, India has provided her with a travel document to allow her overseas travel by obtaining a visa from any country.¹⁵⁰ From India, Sheikh Hasina has reportedly communicated with party leaders, recorded and circulated conversations, and participated in virtual meetings, delivering provocative and baseless statements aimed at destabilising Bangladesh.¹⁵¹ Additionally, fugitive leaders of the AL have taken refuge in various Indian cities, including West Bengal.¹⁵² From there, they are allegedly involved in

¹⁴⁵ Kalerkantho, 8 March 2025; <https://www.kalerkantho.com/online/national/2025/03/08/1489541>

¹⁴⁶ The Daily Star, 8 March 2025;

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/diplomacy/news/india-wants-inclusive-polls-bangladesh-3841856>

¹⁴⁷ Rumor Scanner, 19 April 2025; <https://rumorscanner.com/fact-check/muslim-girl-killed-hindu-girls-rape-and-murder-in-bangladesh/146441>, BBC News, 18 August 2024, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cx2n8pzk7gzo.amp>, Al Jazeera, 9 August 2024; <https://www.aljazeera.com/amp/program/newsfeed/2024/8/9/misleading-reports-of-attacks-on-bangladesh-hindus-circulates-in-india>

¹⁴⁸ Prothom Alo, 14 January 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/ps9txo9y9e>

¹⁴⁹ Kalerkantho, 8 March 2025; <https://www.kalerkantho.com/online/national/2025/03/08/1489541>

¹⁵⁰ New Age, 15 October 2024; <https://www.newagebd.net/post/politics/247780/>

¹⁵¹ The Daily Star, 7 February 2025; <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/stop-hasina-making-false-remarks-3817666>

¹⁵² Jugantor, 7 March 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/tp-firstpage/925498>

conspiracies to disrupt Bangladesh's law and order.¹⁵³ Jaiswal's remarks and Sheikh Hasina's activities appear to align in this regard.¹⁵⁴

79. Thirdly, Jaiswal emphasized that Bangladesh's next election should be inclusive and participatory.¹⁵⁵ Surprisingly, however, the Indian ruling class had previously backed the controversial and one-sided national elections in Bangladesh in 2014¹⁵⁶, 2018¹⁵⁷, and 2024¹⁵⁸, which kept Sheikh Hasina in power. This support contributed to the collapse of Bangladesh's electoral system, the establishment of authoritarian rule, and widespread human rights violations, for which the Indian authorities bear significant responsibility.¹⁵⁹
80. In the past, Bangladesh had refrained from protesting against India's unfair actions or statements due to the submissive foreign policy of the authoritarian AL regime, causing compromise to the protection of borders and geographic integrity, the safeguarding of sovereignty and citizens' security. However, the Interim Government's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has protested Jaiswal's remarks, considering them as interference in Bangladesh's internal affairs.¹⁶⁰ It is worth noting that the Indian ruling class unconditionally supported the Hasina-led authoritarian government to ensure that their interests were served during her tenure.¹⁶¹
81. During her 15-and-a-half years of rule, Sheikh Hasina signed 20 agreements and 66 Memoranda of Understanding with India, including secret deals for illegal border fencing, granting India access to Chittagong and Mongla sea ports, transit agreements, allowing Bangladesh land to be used as a corridor in the name of railway treaties, and other controversial treaties compromising the interests of Bangladesh. Additionally, during her rule, Bangladesh became the fourth-largest remittance source for India, with over one million Indian

¹⁵³ Jugantor, 7 March 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/tp-firstpage/925498>

¹⁵⁴ Kalerkantho, 8 March 2025; <https://www.kalerkantho.com/online/national/2025/03/08/1489541>

¹⁵⁵ Daily Star, 8 March 2025;

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/diplomacy/news/india-wants-inclusive-polls-bangladesh-3841856>

¹⁵⁶ Before conducting the controversial and farcical 2014 National election, almost all political parties of Bangladesh decided to boycott it. At that time, the then Indian Foreign Secretary Sujata Singh visited Bangladesh and succeeded to convince Jatiya Party to join the election. Members of the Jatiya Party are now in the government (Ministers of the current government) and at the same time are the opposition in Parliament, which has made peculiar and inactive parliament.

<http://www.dw.com/bn/নির্বাচন-না-হলে-মৌলবাদের-উত্থান-হবে/a-17271479>

¹⁵⁷ Anandabazar, 26 May 2018; <https://www.anandabazar.com/national/sheikh-hasina-said-various-pending-issues-between-india-and-bangladesh-1.805857>

¹⁵⁸ Prothom Alo, 16 March 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/politics/1w0z1a73m5>

¹⁵⁹ Manabzamin 18 May 2024; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=110355>

¹⁶⁰ Samakal, 13 March 2025; <https://samakal.com/bangladesh/article/285322/>

¹⁶¹ Amar Desh, 10 January 2025; <https://eamardesh.com/2025-01-10>

nationals working illegally in Bangladesh and transferring significant amounts of foreign currency to India.¹⁶²

82. Sheikh Hasina handed over the information technology sector to businesspeople, politicians, and Indian companies closely associated with her family. All internet and social media data were stored on servers provided by Indian companies, including data from individuals, organisations and national security entities, posing a threat to Bangladesh's national security.¹⁶³
83. For decades, India has been depriving Bangladesh of its rightful share of water from the cross-border rivers during the dry season. Out of the 54 shared rivers between the two countries, India has been withdrawing water illegally from at least 51 rivers.¹⁶⁴ This has caused an alarming reduction in river flow even before the dry season begins, potentially leading to disruptions in Bangladesh's agricultural production in the upcoming irrigation season, along with severe environmental consequences. Some once-mighty rivers have now turned into narrow canals.¹⁶⁵
84. Experts and research institutions fear that India might use the flow of shared rivers as a political tool against Bangladesh during the following irrigation seasons.¹⁶⁶ Experts suggest, alongside exerting political and social pressure on India, Bangladesh should take the complaints to international forums to secure its rightful share of water.¹⁶⁷ Although the Ganges Water Treaty remains valid for another year, India has already stopped providing water to Bangladesh in contravention of the treaty.¹⁶⁸
85. For Bangladesh, signing the Teesta Water Sharing Agreement is critically important to secure water rights. However, the Indian government has not finalised this agreement with Bangladesh. Instead, India has built illegal dams upstream of the Teesta River, withdrawing almost all the water and leaving only a minimal flow.¹⁶⁹ Since 2022, India has been obstructing the withdrawal of water from the Kushiya River in the Sylhet region.¹⁷⁰ Additionally, India is dumping hazardous waste into seven border rivers, including the Feni and Titas rivers.¹⁷¹

¹⁶² Amader Shomoy, 03 July 2018 ;

<https://www.amadershomoy.com/bn/2018/07/03/594047.htm#gsc.tab=0>

¹⁶³ Amar Desh, 10 February 2025; <https://eamardesh.com/2025-02-10>

¹⁶⁴ Amar Desh, 24 January 2025; <https://eamardesh.com/2025-01-24>

¹⁶⁵ Amar Desh, 24 January 2025; <https://eamardesh.com/2025-01-24>

¹⁶⁶ Amar Desh, 24 January 2025; <https://eamardesh.com/2025-01-24>

¹⁶⁷ Amar Desh, 24 January 2025; <https://eamardesh.com/2025-01-24>

¹⁶⁸ Amar Desh, 24 January 2025; <https://eamardesh.com/2025-01-24>

¹⁶⁹ Amar Desh, 24 January 2025; <https://eamardesh.com/2025-01-24>

¹⁷⁰ Amar Desh, 24 January 2025; <https://eamardesh.com/2025-01-24>

¹⁷¹ Amar Desh, 24 January 2025; <https://eamardesh.com/2025-01-24>

86. The Farakka Barrage has caused disastrous consequences to the Padma River basin. During the monsoon season, India opens the sluice gates of the Farakka and Gazoldoba Barrages, artificially creating floods in Bangladesh and violating international laws, for which no remedial measures have been initiated.¹⁷²
87. Alongside India's political and economic aggression, illegal activities by their Border Security Force (BSF) have gone beyond all limits, with killings, torture, and other forms of repression.
88. In Maheshpur Upazila of Jhenaidah District, BSF had occupied and used to control a 5-kilometer stretch of the Kodla River along the border. After Sheikh Hasina fled to India on 5 August, BGB took a firm stance against any illegal activities of BSF at the border and reclaimed the 5-kilometer stretch of the Kodla River from BSF occupation.¹⁷³ Additionally, the Indian ruling class has created tensions at various borders by constructing barbed wire fences and other infrastructures.¹⁷⁴ The aggressive behaviour of the BSF has forced the local residents and the BGB to join hands to form mass resistance against the BSF.¹⁷⁵
89. During this reporting period, BSF personnel have continued to kill¹⁷⁶ and torture¹⁷⁷ Bangladeshis. They have even entered Bangladeshi territory and attacked farmers while they were working, leaving them injured.¹⁷⁸ On 7 January, at the Chunarughat border in Habiganj district, BSF and Indian locals killed a Bangladeshi citizen named Zahur Ali and took his body.¹⁷⁹ On 8 January, at the Mashimpur border in Bishwambhar Upazila, Sunamganj, BSF shot a Bangladeshi youth named Saidul Islam¹⁸⁰. On 7 February, at the Shibganj border in Chapainawabganj, BSF tortured a Bangladeshi farmer named Rafiqul Islam while he was irrigating his farmland¹⁸¹. On 7 March, at the Bhitargarh border in Panchagarh district, BSF shot a Bangladeshi citizen named Mohammad Al Amin¹⁸². On 28 February, at the Kasba border in

¹⁷² Amar Desh, 24 January 2025; <https://eamardesh.com/2025-01-24>

¹⁷³ BanglaTribune, 6 January 2025; <https://www.banglatribune.com/country/880469/>

¹⁷⁴ Jugantor, 14 January 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/country-news/903139>

¹⁷⁵ Samakal, 10 January 2025; <https://samakal.com/bangladesh/article/274597/>

¹⁷⁶ The Daily Star, 8 January 2025; <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/crime-justice/news/youth-shot-dead-bsf-sunamganj-border-3795241>

¹⁷⁷ Daily Observer, 14 February 2025; <https://www.observerbd.com/news/512186>

¹⁷⁸ Manabzamin 16 February 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=148640>

¹⁷⁹ Prothom Alo, 7 January 2025; <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/6hmqk831xn>

¹⁸⁰ Jugantor, 10 January 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/tp-news/901478>

¹⁸¹ Dhaka Tribune, 7 February 2025; <https://bangla.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/92123/>

¹⁸² New Age, 8 March 2025; <https://www.newagebd.net/post/Country/259619/>

Brahmanbaria district, BSF shot and killed another Bangladeshi citizen named Al Amin¹⁸³. On 16 March, at the Maheshpur border in Jhenaidah district, BSF inhumanely tortured a Bangladeshi citizen named Faruk Hossain. Later, believing him to be dead, they tied a rope around his neck and dragged him near the Bangladesh border before abandoning him¹⁸⁴.

90. On 18 February, a bilateral Director-General level meeting was held in Delhi between BGB and BSF. During the meeting, the BGB emphasised that criminals at the border should be apprehended and punished under existing laws, but shooting someone simply for crossing the border is inhumane. This issue is highly sensitive for Bangladesh. In response, the Indian side said, "BSF always tries to avoid such incidents, but sometimes organised criminal groups become so aggressive that firing becomes unavoidable."¹⁸⁵ Previous records reveal that Bangladeshi children and teenagers, who were shot and killed by BSF, had no reason or opportunity to act aggressively against BSF. BSF has consistently made false promises and maintained its "shoot-to-kill policy," legitimising the killing of Bangladeshi citizens at the border under the pretext of countering 'criminal activities'. Although both countries agreed at various high-level meetings and BGB-BSF Director General level conferences, to avoid the use of lethal weapons, the commitments have not translated into action from India's end, perceptibly due to directives from the Indian ruling class endorsing BSF's killing of Bangladeshis.¹⁸⁶
91. **From January to March 2025, six Bangladeshis were killed and nine were injured by BSF. Among those who were killed, three were gunned down and three was tortured. Among the nine who were injured, three were shot and six were tortured.**

Violence against Women:

92. Between January and March 2025, widespread violence against women occurred across the country. Lack of the social security nets for victims and the country's dysfunctional judicial system contribute to why most of the perpetrators of violence against women go unpunished, leaving victims deprived of justice.

¹⁸³ Samakal, 1 March 2025; <https://samakal.com/whole-country/article/283190/>

¹⁸⁴ Jugantor, 9 March 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/country-news/930041>

¹⁸⁵ The Daily Star, 11 March 2021, <https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/strategically-speaking/news/indias-message-border-killings-loud-and-clear-it-or-lump-it-2058325>

¹⁸⁶ New Age, 22 February 2025; <https://www.newagebd.net/post/foreign%20affairs/258505>

Rape:

93. Between January and March 2025, numerous cases of rape were reported. A woman was even mugged and raped.¹⁸⁷ Several, who were children¹⁸⁸, were also killed after being raped. Some of the victims committed suicide after being raped.¹⁸⁹ In one case, a child was gang-raped, and her father fell ill and passed away upon hearing the news.¹⁹⁰ In another instance, the father of a victim was murdered as he declined to withdraw a case filed in connection with the rape of his daughter.¹⁹¹ Allegations were also reported against the police for releasing detained rapists in exchange for bribes, and for refusing to file cases against rapists.¹⁹²
94. Widespread allegations of rape were reported against leaders and activists of the then-ruling AL party. Currently, similar allegations are emerging against leaders and activists of BNP¹⁹³ and its affiliated organisations. On 8 January, in Nangalkot Upazila of Comilla District, a group of miscreants led by Jubo Dal leader Mohsin Mia abducted two women, gang-raped them, and threatened to release videos of the assault on Facebook.¹⁹⁴ On 16 March, in Godkhali under Jhikargacha Upazila of Jessore District, a young woman visiting the area was gang-raped by four leaders and activists of JCD, including Al Mamun Hossain, the General Secretary of JCD's Godkhali Union unit. Police arrested all four of the accused.¹⁹⁵
95. Although a High Court bench directed authorities to take necessary steps to prevent arbitration or settlements in rape cases, many allegations of rape are being settled through arbitration, allowing influential local figures and political leaders to profit significantly from such illegal arbitration.¹⁹⁶
96. On 5 January, in Muradnagar Upazila of Comilla District, a six-year-old child was raped by a miscreant named Babul. In this case, community leaders imposed a penalty of beating the perpetrator with a shoe six times and a fine of BDT 5,000 payable by the rapist. The victim's family did not accept the arbitration, but the leaders forcibly handed over BDT 5,000 to the child's

¹⁸⁷ Samakal, 8 February 2025; <https://samakal.com/bangladesh/article/283018/>

¹⁸⁸ Jugantor, 29 January 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/country-news/922831>

¹⁸⁹ Samakal, 10 March 2025; <https://samakal.com/whole-country/article/284766>

¹⁹⁰ Samakal, 11 March 2025; <https://samakal.com/whole-country/article/284874/>

¹⁹¹ Manabzamin, 13 March 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=152237>

¹⁹² Jugantor, 27 January 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/crime/908958>

¹⁹³ Samakal, 23 January 2025; <https://samakal.com/chittagong/article/276941/>;

<https://samakal.com/whole-country/article/285834/>

¹⁹⁴ Jugantor, 13 January 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/country-news/903050>

¹⁹⁵ Prothom Alo, 16 March 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/district/ecnyboyeqi>

¹⁹⁶ Prothom Alo, 9 March 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/district/tbk43lx6em>

grandmother and threatened her that if the family went to the police, they would be forced to leave their home.¹⁹⁷

97. On 6 March, in Magura, a student of grade three was raped by her sister's father-in-law, Hitu Sheikh when the girl went to visit her sister. The child was taken to Dhaka for medical care in a critical condition, but passed away on 13 March at the Combined Military Hospital in Dhaka. Her rape sparked nationwide protests, and after the news of her death, angry citizens set fire to the rapist's house in Magura.¹⁹⁸
98. On 8 March during International Women's Day, a child was raped in a forest in Sreepur Upazila, Gazipur District. The perpetrator, a man named Arman, recorded the incident on his mobile phone and sent the video clip to three of his friends.¹⁹⁹ On the same day, in Sadar Upazila of Thakurgaon District, a student of grade five was raped by a teacher named Manik.²⁰⁰
99. On 17 March the Interim Government decided in principle to amend several provisions of the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act, 2000 to expedite the trial of rape cases. The amendments include a provision for the court to proceed with rape case trial based on medical certificates and circumstantial evidence without requiring DNA reports, if the court deems it possible. Strict punishments for false cases were also included in the proposed amendment. Furthermore, the draft amendment proposes the establishment of special tribunals for the separate trial of rape cases where the victim is a minor.²⁰¹
100. **A total of 257 women and children became victims of rape in the last three months. Among them, 54 were women, 150 were girls below the age of 18, while the age of 53 female individuals was unknown. Of the number of women who were raped, 21 were victims of gang rape and two had committed suicide. Out of the 150 girls, 15 were victims of gang rape, eight were killed after being raped, and one committed suicide.**

Sexual Harassment:

101. Between January and March 2025, incidents of harassment and sexual abuse of women were reported. Women across different social and professional backgrounds were subjected to sexual harassment, particularly by members of teenage gangs who targeted women of various ages at schools and colleges,

¹⁹⁷ Manabzamin, 18 March 2025; <https://m.mzamin.com/news.php?news=152891>

¹⁹⁸ Samakal, 14 March 2025; <https://samakal.com/bangladesh/article/285405/>

¹⁹⁹ Samakal, 8 March 2025; <https://samakal.com/whole-country/article/284470>

²⁰⁰ Prothom Alo, 10 March 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/crime/tzbe7gf31u>

²⁰¹ Jugantor, 18 March 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/index.php/tp-lastpage/930455>

and on streets.²⁰² In one instance, an individual protesting such an incident was even killed by teenage gang members.²⁰³ In Muradnagar, Upazila of Comilla District, a man named Jamir Hossain (42) sexually assaulted eight young girls of different ages. When a guardian of one of the girls went to Jamir's house to report the incident, Jamir and his relatives attacked the guardian. When the victims' guardians tried to file a case at Muradnagar Police Station, Officer-in-Charge Zahidur Rahman suggested arbitration instead of filing a case and attempted to distort the facts. Left with no other option, the guardians reported the issue to the Debidwar Army Camp, forcing the Officer-in-Charge to accept the case.²⁰⁴

102. **Between January and March 2025, a total of 12 women and children were victims of sexual violence. Of them, two committed suicide, one was killed, eight were assaulted, and one was victimised due to stalking/sexual harassment. Furthermore, six men were injured while protesting incidents of sexual harassment.**

Dowry-Related Violence:

103. Between January and March 2025, violence against women due to dowry demands was witnessed. Women were subjected to severe abuse, including one having her head shaved²⁰⁵ (as a form of shaming), being beaten,²⁰⁶ strangled to death²⁰⁷, or set on fire²⁰⁸, leaving them critically injured. Some of the women who were victims of murder and violence were pregnant.
104. On 4 March, in Feni Sadar Upazila, a housewife named Marjahan Akter Jhumur was subjected to torture by her husband, Sayedur Rahman Touhid and his family members over demands for dowry. On 15 March, Marjahan passed away while undergoing treatment at Chittagong Medical College Hospital. The police arrested Marjahan's father-in-law, Mohammad Sahab Uddin, in connection with the incident.²⁰⁹

²⁰² Jugantor, 3 January 2025; https://epaper.jugantor.com/storage/2025-01-03/2/link_img_second_ed_1735871137_21.jpg

²⁰³ Jugantor, 3 January 2025; https://epaper.jugantor.com/storage/2025-01-03/2/link_img_second_ed_1735871137_21.jpg

²⁰⁴ Manabzamin, 13 March 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=152226>

²⁰⁵ Amar Desh, 17 March 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/tp-bangla-face/930112>

²⁰⁶ Naya Diganta, 15 March 2025; <https://www.dailynayadiganta.com/bangladesh/country-news/4i7PJ0O7WdJy>

²⁰⁷ Jugantor, 6 February 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/index.php/tp-bangla-face/913399>

²⁰⁸ Jugantor, 24 March 2025; <https://www.jugantor.com/country-news/933338>

²⁰⁹ Manabzamin, 17 March 2025; <https://mzamin.com/news.php?news=152769>

105. A total of 14 women were subjected to dowry-related violence in the first three months of 2025. Among them, eight were killed, five were physically abused, and one committed suicide due to dowry demands.

Human Rights Violations on Rohingya's

106. Rohingyas continue to enter Bangladesh in order to save themselves, as fighting persists between Myanmar's military junta and armed rebel groups in Arakan State.²¹⁰ Most of them are crossing into Bangladesh through Bandarban's Naikhongchhari, Ghumdhum, Tumburu, Jamchhari, Lebuchhari, Alikadam, and Pashchimkul border areas, the hilly regions, as well as through Teknaf's Hoikyang and Hnila areas.²¹¹
107. On 5 January, 36 Rohingyas – men, women, and children – entered Bangladesh by crossing the sea and reaching Teknaf's Marine Drive area. Mohammad Alam, who had been drifting in the sea for four days, stated that the Arakan Army was carrying out atrocities in their village near Nashang, east of Akyab. To save themselves, they attempted to enter Bangladesh five days earlier in a wooden boat. However, when the boat's engine failed, a trawler towed them in and handed them over to the BGB.²¹²
108. Another Rohingya, Zaher Alam, mentioned that their area consists of five Muslim villages. The Arakan Army raided these villages, forcibly recruiting Rohingya and providing them with military training before sending them to fight against the Myanmar Army. Those who refused to join face repression.²¹³
109. On 10 January, 58 Rohingya entered Bangladesh through Bandarban's Alikadam Budichong area, where they were detained by the BGB.²¹⁴ According to the Advisor to the Ministry of Home Affairs, Lieutenant General (Retired.) Mohammad Jahangir Alam Chowdhury, approximately 60,000 Rohingya refugees have entered Bangladesh.²¹⁵
110. On 28 February, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi visited the Rohingya refugee camps in Ukhiya, Cox's Bazar. During his visit, Rohingya leaders sought international cooperation, particularly from the UN,

²¹⁰ BBC, 21 September 2024; <https://www.bbc.com/bengali/articles/c4g5zkd2g3no>

²¹¹ Samakal, 7 March 2025; <https://samakal.com/bangladesh/article/284192/>

²¹² Dhaka Tribune, 22 March 2025;

<https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/nation/376941/rohingya-laden-boat-sinks-while-attempting-to>

²¹³ Samakal, 5 January 2025; <https://samakal.com/whole-country/article/273779>

²¹⁴ Voice of America, 11 January 2025; <https://www.voabangla.com/a/7933334.html>

²¹⁵ Naya Diganta, 1 March 2025;

<https://www.dailynayadiganta.com/bangladesh/national/RLko5URxAGBi>

to ensure security and suitable living conditions in Myanmar's Rakhine State before their repatriation.²¹⁶

111. The complications around the Rohingyas' repatriation originate primarily from a controversial Agreement signed by the Awami League government. This Agreement was backed by the Government of India. In December 2017, Bangladesh and Myanmar signed a repatriation deal titled 'Physical Arrangement for Repatriation of Displaced Persons from Rakhine State'.²¹⁷ Attached to the Agreement was a five-page form that required extensive generational information and documentations. It contained stringent conditions that Rohingya refugees found nearly impossible to fulfill.
112. The Agreement includes 32 clauses and three sub-clauses, all of which allow Myanmar to protract the repatriation process. Moreover, there is no clear timeline in the Agreement as to when the identification process will begin and end. Before the Agreement was signed on 7 December 2017, in an official statement, India's Ministry of External Affairs remarked that a 'systematic verification' must be conducted to confirm that the Rohingyas in Bangladesh were actually Myanmar citizens. The Agreement, which was signed within days of India's official reaction, seemingly reflected India's stance on the Rohingya question.²¹⁸
113. Perceivably, India pressured the then Awami League government to sign the deal which was biased towards Myanmar, effectively institutionalising the long-term Rohingya crisis.²¹⁹
114. The recent funding crisis has led to the shutting down of more than a thousand education centres in the Rohingya refugee camps, with over 2,500 more expected to close soon. There are currently more than 4,000 educational centres within the camps. If all of them are forced to shut down, the education of over 400,000 Rohingya children will be left uncertain.²²⁰

²¹⁶ Prothom Alo, 28 February 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/district/isnmulkzg4>

²¹⁷ The Financial Express, 16 January 2025; <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/national/bd-myanmar-finalise-physical-arrangement-for-repatriation-of-rohingya-within-two-years-1516110911>

²¹⁸ Amar Desh, 14 March 2025; <https://eamardesh.com/2025-03-14>

²¹⁹ Prothom Alo, 15 March 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/district/g6xg71wuvr>

²²⁰ Prothom Alo, 15 March 2025; <https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/district/g6xg71wuvr>

Recommendations:

1. Members of law enforcement agencies involved in extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, torture, and inhumane treatments during the AL regime and after, must be brought to justice.
2. The Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention) Act, 2013 must be enforced, and the directives of the High Court and Appellate Division in the 2003 case *BLAST vs. Bangladesh* must be followed to stop torture in the guise of remand. The government must ratify the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention Against Torture.
3. Specific laws must be adopted to prevent enforced disappearances, and those involved in enforced disappearances must be brought to justice. The Government must pay reparation to the families of victims.
4. Allegations of irregularities, negligence, and corruption, against prison officials must be investigated, and legal action must be taken. All forms of human rights violations, including torture and abuse of prisoners, must be stopped.
5. Freedom of expression and media independence must be ensured at all levels. All harassment cases filed against journalists and human rights activists must be dropped. Incidents of attacks on journalists and human rights activists must be thoroughly investigated and must be brought to justice.
6. All repressive laws, including the Special Powers Act, 1974, the Anti-Terrorism Act, 2009 and the Cyber Security Act, 2023, must be repealed immediately.
7. Violence against women and children must be curtailed, and perpetrators must be swiftly prosecuted and punished. Arbitration of incidents of violence against women, including rape, must be stopped, and the police must properly investigate these criminal cases to ensure women's access to justice. Laws must be amended to include court-mandated definitions of sexual harassment and stalking, and the definition of rape need to be revised.
8. The Interim Government must put pressure on India to stop all forms of human rights violations, including killings and torture of Bangladeshi citizens by the BSF, and ensure reparation for victims. India must adhere to border-related agreements and Memoranda of Understanding between the two countries. India's dominance and aggressive behavior towards Bangladesh must stop.

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Notes:

1. Odhikar seeks to uphold the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the people.
2. Odhikar documents and records violations of human rights and receives information from its network of human rights defenders and monitors media reports.
3. Odhikar conducts detailed fact-finding investigations into some of the most significant violations, with assistance from trained local human rights defenders.
4. Odhikar is consistent in its human rights reporting and is committed to remain so.