

5 GENDER EQUALITY



10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



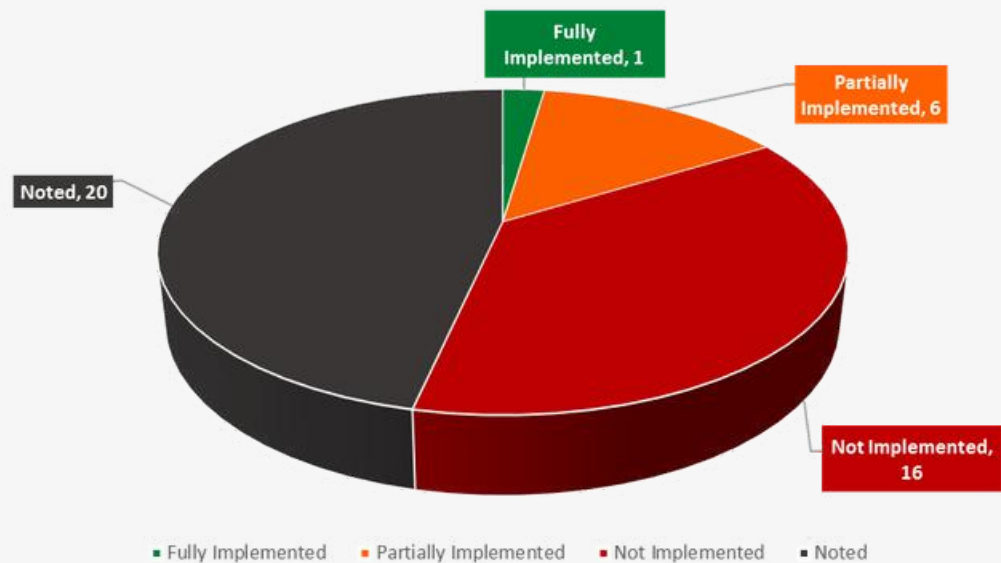
HUMAN RIGHTS FORUM BANGLADESH (HRFB)

SEPTEMBER 2018 - SEPTEMBER 2021

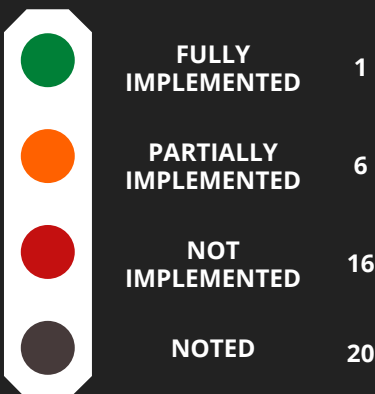
THREE YEARS AFTER UPR 2018: WHERE ARE WE?

ASSESSMENT REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF UPR RECOMMENDATIONS

CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS



IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF UPR RECOMMENDATIONS



PREPARED BY

HUMAN RIGHTS FORUM BANGLADESH (HRFB)

Email: hafb.20@gmail.com

Website: <https://hrf-bd.org/>

RECOMMENDATIONS RECEIVED IN UPR 2018

147.7 BRING LEGISLATION IN CONFORMITY WITH THE OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS BY REPEALING RESTRICTIVE PROVISIONS THAT LIMIT THE RIGHTS OF JOURNALISTS, HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS, AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS TO FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND FREE SPEECH (LATVIA)

147.8 PROMPTLY IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATIONS ACCEPTED IN THE SECOND CYCLE OF THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW, ON EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTIONS, AND ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES, AND AGAINST TORTURE (FRANCE)

147.22 ENSURE SECURITY FORCES ABIDE BY RELEVANT NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS IN COUNTERING CRIMINAL AND EXTREMIST ACTIVITIES (AUSTRALIA)

147.23 ENSURE THAT POLICE OFFICERS ARE ADEQUATELY TRAINED AND INSTRUCTED TO INVESTIGATE REPORTS OF HARASSMENT, ATTACKS AND DEATH THREATS AGAINST JOURNALISTS, MEDIA WORKERS, HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND ACTIVISTS AND ENSURE THE PROTECTION OF THOSE UNDER THREAT IN ACCORDANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW (FINLAND)

147.54 PROMPTLY AND THOROUGHLY INVESTIGATE ALL ALLEGATIONS OF EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTION OR ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE AND BRING THOSE RESPONSIBLE TO JUSTICE (SWITZERLAND)

147.65 TAKE EFFECTIVE MEASURES TO ENSURE THAT THE PRESS CAN WORK FREE FROM THE OPPRESSION BY INSTANCES OF CENSORSHIP, THREATS, PHYSICAL ASSAULTS, AND KILLINGS (SLOVAKIA)

147.66 TAKE PROMPT AND EFFECTIVE MEASURES TO ENSURE THAT FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY AND EXPRESSION EXTENDS IN PRACTICE — BOTH ONLINE AND OFFLINE — TO ALL PEOPLE, MEDIA, CIVIL SOCIETY, AND POLITICAL PARTIES, THROUGHOUT THE UPCOMING ELECTION CAMPAIGN AND BEYOND (CANADA)

147.67 PROTECT FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN MEDIA, POLITICS AND RELIGION, AND WORK WITH CIVIL SOCIETY TO ADDRESS CONCERNS REGARDING SECTION 57 OF THE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ACT (UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND)

147.68 REVIEW ALL EXISTING AND PROPOSED LEGISLATION RELATING TO FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, BOTH ONLINE AND OFFLINE, TO ENSURE THAT IT FULLY COMPLIES WITH THE RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS (IRELAND)

147.69 TAKE EFFECTIVE MEASURES TO ENSURE FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND END ALL ASSAULTS ON JOURNALISTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS, AS WELL AS ENSURE THAT THE PROPOSED DIGITAL SECURITY ACT IS IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS (ESTONIA)

147.70 GUARANTEE FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN THE DIGITAL SECURITY ACT (FRANCE)

147.71 ENSURE DEMOCRATIC SPACE FOR ALL POLITICAL ACTORS, INCLUDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DOMESTIC LAWS, WITHOUT RESTRICTIONS ON THE EXERCISE OF THE RIGHTS TO FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND OF PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY (SWITZERLAND)

147.72 CONTINUE TO INVEST IN INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES FOR ITS LARGE YOUTH POPULATION, WITH A VIEW TO ENSURING A BETTER STANDARD OF LIVING (INDIA)

147.73 SAFEGUARD FREEDOMS OF POLITICAL EXPRESSION AND ASSOCIATION, WITHOUT REPRISALS, CENSORSHIP, INTIMIDATION OR RESTRICTIVE LEGAL ACTION, AND THAT BANGLADESH SAFEGUARD THE INDEPENDENCE OF MEDIA (NEW ZEALAND)

147.74 CONTINUE EFFORTS TO PROTECT FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF FOR ALL CITIZENS AND RESIDENTS, AND TO SUPPORT CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION (POLAND)

147.75 PUBLICLY COMMIT TO ENSURING THAT JOURNALISTS, BLOGGERS, HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS, AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS CAN CARRY OUT THEIR ACTIVITIES WITHOUT FEAR OF SURVEILLANCE, INTIMIDATION, HARASSMENT, ARREST, PROSECUTION, OR RETRIBUTION (AUSTRIA)

147.89 INVESTIGATE ALL CASES OF MURDER AND VIOLENCE AGAINST JOURNALISTS AND BLOGGERS AND BRING THE PERPETRATORS TO JUSTICE (SLOVAKIA)

147.79 ENSURE A FREE, FAIR, AND INCLUSIVE GENERAL ELECTION, WITH FULL PARTICIPATION OF ALL PARTIES, AND INCREASE EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN DEMOCRACY (JAPAN)

148.3 ENFORCE CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS SAFEGUARDING FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, INCLUDING BY AMENDING SECTION 57 OF THE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ACT AND RELEVANT PROVISIONS OF THE DRAFT DIGITAL SECURITY ACT (AUSTRALIA)

148.12 ENHANCE EFFORTS TO PREVENT CASES OF TORTURE AND ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE AND TO PROSECUTE PERPETRATORS (ITALY)

148.13 REVIEW AND AMEND THE LAWS THAT RESTRICT FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, SUCH AS SECTION 57 OF THE 2006 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ACT (MEXICO)

148.14 REVIEW AND REDRAFT THE PROPOSED DIGITAL SECURITY ACT TO ENSURE ONLINE FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION (NORWAY)

148.15 REDRAFT THE DIGITAL SECURITY ACT IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL NORMS AND STANDARDS FOR FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION (SWEDEN)

148.16 THOROUGHLY INVESTIGATE EXTRAJUDICIAL KILLINGS, ABDUCTIONS AND FORCED DISAPPEARANCES TAKING PLACE WITHIN LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES, WHILE ALSO ENSURING THAT THE PERPETRATORS ARE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE (SWEDEN)

148.17 INVESTIGATE ALL ALLEGATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS BY THE POLICE AND SECURITY FORCES AND TAKE LEGAL STEPS SO THAT THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES, CUSTODIAL TORTURE AND EXTRAJUDICIAL KILLINGS ARE HELD ACCOUNTABLE (NORWAY)

149.33 ENSURE THAT THREATS AND VIOLENCE AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS, AND IN PARTICULAR WOMEN DEFENDERS AND LGBTI DEFENDERS, BECAUSE OF THEIR WORK OR PERCEIVED OR ACTUAL GENDER IDENTITY, ARE EFFECTIVELY PROSECUTED AND DO NOT GO UNPUNISHED (BELGIUM);

149.36 ABOLITION OF THE DEATH PENALTY (BENIN) (PORTUGAL) (CZECHIA)

149.37 ADOPT THE LEGISLATION ABOLISHING THE DEATH PENALTY AND ESTABLISH A MORATORIUM ON ALL PENDING EXECUTIONS (SLOVAKIA)

149.38 REDUCE THE NUMBER OF CRIMES TO WHICH THE DEATH PENALTY APPLIES AS A STEP TOWARDS EVENTUAL ABOLITION OF THE DEATH PENALTY (AUSTRALIA)

149.39 ENACT A MORATORIUM ON THE USE OF THE DEATH PENALTY WITH A VIEW TO ABOLISHING IT (HOLY SEE)

149.40 INTRODUCE A MORATORIUM AS A FIRST STEP TOWARDS FINAL ABOLITION OF THE DEATH PENALTY (AUSTRIA)

149.41 ESTABLISH A MORATORIUM ON EXECUTIONS AS A FIRST STEP TOWARDS THE ABOLITION OF THE DEATH PENALTY (BELGIUM)

149.42 ESTABLISH A MORATORIUM ON THE DEATH PENALTY AS A FIRST STEP TOWARDS COMPLETE ABOLITION OF THIS PRACTICE (ITALY)

149.43 ESTABLISH A MORATORIUM ON THE DEATH PENALTY WITH A VIEW TO ITS ABOLITION (CHILE)

149.44 CONTINUE THE PROCESS OF EDGING OUT THE DEATH PENALTY WITH A VIEW TO TOTALLY ABOLISHING IT (NAMIBIA)

149.45 DECRIMINALIZE DEFAMATION AND INCLUDE IT IN THE CIVIL CODE IN ACCORDANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS, AND TAKE STEPS TO CREATE AN INDEPENDENT BROADCAST LICENSING AUTHORITY (ESTONIA)

149.46 REVISE MEDIA LAWS, IN CONSULTATION WITH CIVIL SOCIETY, TO DECRIMINALIZE "DEFAMATION" AND "HURTING RELIGIOUS SENTIMENT", AND LIMIT PROPOSED EXTENDED JAIL TERMS FOR THESE OFFENCES (UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)

149.47 EXPAND ITS DEMOCRATIC SPACE ONLINE AND OFFLINE IN WHICH OPPOSITION POLITICIANS, JOURNALISTS, HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS, AND OTHER CIVIL SOCIETY MEMBERS CAN OPERATE FREELY AND WITHOUT FEAR FOR THEIR LIVES, AND TO THIS END REVISE SECTION 57 OF THE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ACT AND AMEND THE FOREIGN DONATION REGULATIONS ACT (CZECHIA)

149.48 ENSURE THAT HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS AND JOURNALISTS CAN EXERCISE THEIR RIGHTS WITHOUT FEAR, INTIMIDATION AND HARASSMENT BY REDRAFTING THE PLANNED DIGITAL SECURITY ACT, AND REPEALING OR AMENDING ALL LAWS THAT VIOLATE THE RIGHTS TO FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, ASSOCIATION AND PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY, INCLUDING THE PROVISIONS OF THE PENAL CODE RELATED TO DEFAMATION AND SEDITION, THE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ACT (IN PARTICULAR SECTION 57), AND THE FOREIGN DONATIONS (VOLUNTARY ACTIVITIES) REGULATION ACT, IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW (GERMANY)

149.49 REPEAL THE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ACT (2006), AS AMENDED IN 2013, OR MODIFY THE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ACT TO BRING IT IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL LAW AND STANDARDS (GREECE)

149.50 REPEAL ALL LAWS AND POLICIES THAT RESTRICT THE ACTIVITIES AND RIGHTS OF ITS CITIZENS AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING THE INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 2006 AND THE FOREIGN DONATIONS REGULATION ACT OF 2016 (NETHERLANDS)

149.52 STRENGTHEN MEASURES TO PREVENT, INVESTIGATE, AND HOLD SECURITY FORCES ACCOUNTABLE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND ABUSES, INCLUDING PROVIDING AN UPDATE ON INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE ALLEGED DISAPPEARANCES OF MIR AHMED BIN QUASEM AND AMAAN AZMI (UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)

149.53 END IMPUNITY BY CONDUCTING THOROUGH INVESTIGATIONS AND CRIMINAL PROSECUTIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND ABUSES AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS, JOURNALISTS, BLOGGERS AND LGBTI (GERMANY)

ASSESSING THE STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATIONS

EXTRAJUDICIAL KILLINGS, CUSTODIAL TORTURE AND DEATH

The practice of extrajudicial killing which is allegedly carried out by the Law Enforcement Agencies (LEA) is very alarming in Bangladesh. According to Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) documentation, there were 760 victims of extrajudicial killings from September 2018 to September 2021. In response to the allegations of the extrajudicial killings, the government has barely taken any significant actions. The so-called enquiry reports are also kept confidential and not made publicly available.

While there exists a high number of allegations of custodial torture and death in Bangladesh, following the enactment of the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention) Act 2013, from 2013 to 2019, only 18 cases have been filed under this Act. It has been evinced that a large number of people refrain from filing cases under this Act due to threat or for fear of possible further reprisal.

Case Story: Sinha Mohammad Rashed Khan

On 31 July 2020, **Major (retired) Sinha Mohammad Rashed Khan** was shot dead by inspector Liaqat Ali at a police check-post in Shaplapur, Baharchora Union, Teknaf, on his way back from Teknaf to Cox's Bazar. 13 LEA officers and security forces, alleged to be primarily involved, were arrested and removed from active duty. Sinha's position of being an ex-army official resulted in the case to receive proactive attention from the state and led to a sharp drop on the number of extrajudicial killings the following months.

Case Story: Ahmed Kabir Kishore

After being in prison for 10 long months, **Cartoonist Ahmed Kabir Kishore** was granted bail in March 2021. [[The Daily Star, 4 March 2021](#)] On his release, he underwent several treatments for the physical & mental torture he faced in prison by the members of Law Enforcement Agencies. He later filed a complaint of torture in the Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Court against them. However, the inquiry by the Police Bureau of Investigation and the 3-member medical board found no evidence of torture on Kishore's body. It seemed that the mental torture that he faced was not taken into account in this inquiry. [[The Daily Observer, 17 November 2021](#)]

Success Story

Ishtiaq Hossain Johnny

The first ever successful judgment under the Act was received in favour of **Ishtiaq Hossain Johnny**, who was a victim of custodial torture and death. The case was filed in 2014 and after more than 6 years of judicial process pulled by his brother, the judgment saw light even after he was threatened by local goons and politically influential people. He was also offered a huge sum of money to withdraw the case but he stayed resilient. [[The Daily Star, 9 September 2020](#)]

In this judgment, the court imposed a life sentence to each of the 3 LEA officers and ordered to pay BDT 200,000 to Johnny's family.

However, an appeal has been filed against the judgment which is currently awaiting hearing in the High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh.

ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE

Although the Government refuses to acknowledge or even recognise that enforced disappearances occur in Bangladesh, [UNCAT, 'Concluding Observations (07 August 2019)] multiple cases evince the existence of enforced disappearance to be persistent in the country. According to news and the claims of the family members, the members of opposition parties, journalists, bloggers, etc., are mostly the ones who are disappeared.

September 2018 - September 2021



17 Missing

There are currently no significant initiatives to amend or introduce any new laws or other policy measures to address enforced disappearances. The nature of the incidents as well as authorities' failures to identify the perpetrators or locating the disappeared persons immediately indicates a systemic practice rather than sporadic acts of any criminal groups or individual state actors.

Case Story: Missing Persons

Michael Chakma, a leader of the United People's Democratic Front (UPDF), a political party of indigenous peoples based in CHT, and the central General Secretary of the United Workers' Democratic Front (UWDF), was reported missing from 9 April 2019.

On 2nd June, 2021, 3 men named as **Mohammad Noman**, a businessman; **Mohammad Nasim**, a madrasa student and **Shahidul Islam**, an imam of a mosque went missing after a group of people introducing themselves as the members of police force picked them up from Araihasar in Narayanganj.

Till date, they are still missing. [*Our Time*, 28 June 2021]

The government's repeated stand on negating the acknowledgement of the term '**Enforced Disappearance**' in the existing legal system of Bangladesh does not make the offence in itself non-existent.

DEATH PENALTY

Despite repeated recommendations in last three cycles of UPR, there is currently no indication that the Government intends to call for a moratorium on the imposition of death penalty. Presently, around 15 different laws have death penalty as the maximum punishment for various offences.

Bangladesh has re-introduced the provision of death penalty through amendment in the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act, 2000 in October 2020.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, THOUGHT AND PRESS

The uses of the Digital Security Act (DSA) 2018 has been seriously impeding the activities of civic groups, rights organisations, and intellectuals, thereby shrinking the space for free-thinking. Prior to its enactment, Bangladesh received recommendations during the UPR session in 2018 to not pass such a law as under the auspices of increasing digital security, selective provisions under the draft version increased the chances of misusing the law by restricting certain activities of the journalists and civil society in the digital space. However, the law was enacted a month after the review in October 2018.

Case Story: Dipti Rani Das

On 28 October 2020, **Dipti Rani Das** was arrested under the DSA 2018 over a Facebook post on charges of "hurting religious sentiment" and "advancing to deteriorate law and order". She was detained at a developmental (correctional) facility in Rajshahi. Since her detention, she has been denied bail three times. Although on 11 May 2021 the High Court of Bangladesh granted her bail, the order was stayed through an appeal by the deputy commissioner of Dinajpur, rendering her to be languishing at the facility for over a year [*The Daily Star*, 25 November 2021].

The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated the situation as the journalists, free thinkers are being arrested indiscriminately for posting opinions on social media about the Government's alleged inadequate response to the pandemic.

Case Story: Mushtaq Ahmed

On 5 May 2020, RAB-3 picked up and detained writer **Mushtaq Ahmed along with Cartoonist Ahmed Kabir Kishore**, for posting cartoons on Facebook and comments critiquing the Bangladeshi government's response to COVID-19 pandemic. His bails were denied at least 6 times [[The Daily Star, 24 June 2020](#)]. Mushtaq reportedly died of a heart attack in prison on 25 February 2021. The following day, the two-member probe committee formed by the Gazipur district authorities reported that his death was natural [[The Business Standard, 8 March 2021](#)]. However, there were also allegations that Mushtaq Ahmed died in jail as a consequence of the mental and physical torture [[The Daily Star, 6 March 2021](#)].

600 INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT AGAINST JOURNALISTS

53 Incidents of torture, harassment or threat by law enforcement agencies

72 Incidents of harassment, threat or attack by ruling party or its affiliates

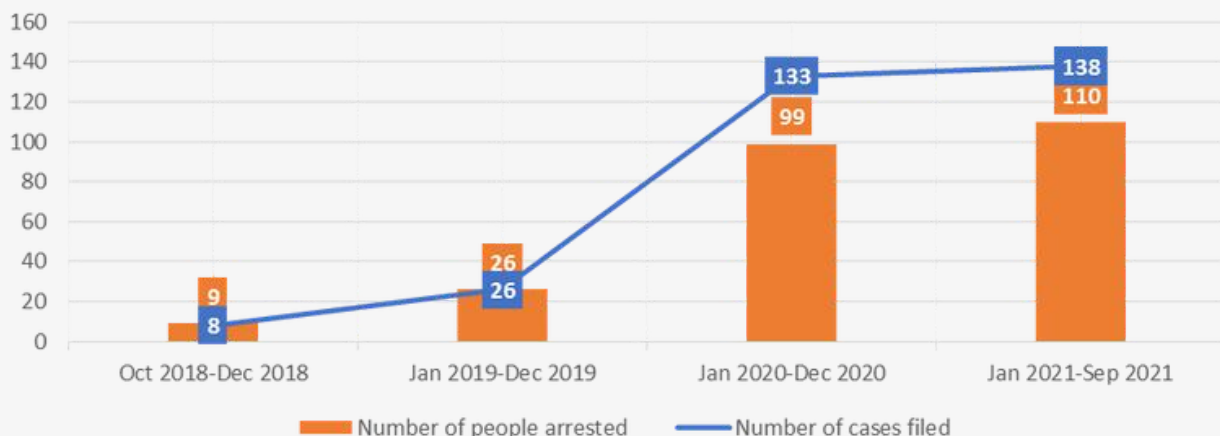
177 Cases filed by individuals on published news reports

Prothom Alo (a Bangla newspaper) journalist **Rozina Islam** was arrested under the colonial-era **Official Secrets Act 1923** because of collecting COVID-19 related information from the health ministry in 2021 [[The Daily Star, 23 May 2021](#)].

Journalist **Shafiqul Islam Kajol** was missing for 53 days after a case was filed against him under the **Digital Security Act, 2018** from 10 March 2020 to 3 May, 2020 [[The Daily Star, 30 August 2020](#)]. Later he was found in Bangladesh-India border and arrested under DSA 2018. After several denials, he got bail and released from the jail.

Ariful Islam, a district correspondent of the English newspaper 'Dhaka Tribune' had reported some of the irregular activities of Kurigram Deputy Commissioner, Sultana Pervin. Consequently, in the early hours of 14 March 2020, his house was raided following which, he was beaten and taken to the Deputy Commissioner's office in Kurigram. A mobile court was set up there, which sentenced him to 1-year imprisonment on charges of possession of marijuana and alcohol [[Dhaka Tribune, 14 March 2020](#)]. Ariful later alleged that he was tortured in their custody [[BDNews24, 27 November 2021](#)]. The SC dismissed a leave to appeal petition, filed by one of the Executive Magistrates, Nazim Uddin, that challenged the trial proceedings of the case [[The Daily Star, 8 March 2021](#)].

Cases under Digital Security Act 2018



The Chittagong-based journalist **Golam Sarwar** was found after missing for nearly four days. He was brutally tortured while he was in the confinement [[Dhaka Tribune, 2 November 2020](#)].

According to ASK's Documentation, from October 2018 to September 2021, a total of 305 cases have been filed under the DSA 2018 where at least 244 people, including online and cultural activists and journalists, have been arrested.

It is quite unfortunate that the submission of the probe report of Sagar-Runi case has been delayed for the 83rd time [[The Daily Star, 25 November 2021](#)].

On the other hand, five years after the murder of publisher Faisal Arefin Dipan and blogger Avijit Roy, the court finally delivered its long-awaited judgment in February 2021 against eight members of the banned militant group Ansar Al Islam. Six other cases involving the killings of secular bloggers, writers, and LGBT rights activists are either awaiting a verdict or are under trial. In those cases, police have already submitted charge sheets [[The Daily Star, 11 February 2021](#)].

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY AND ASSOCIATION

Opposition parties and other groups were allegedly refused permission several times to hold public gatherings, rallies, etc. In several instances, the LEAs and supporters of the ruling party used force to disperse the peaceful protesters or opposition party activists [[The Daily Star, 9 December 2020](#)].

A very recent incident shows that at the founding anniversary of BNP, the police beat the BNP activists with sticks while they were going to attend a discussion meeting at the party which severely violates their constitutional and political right to conduct peaceful rallies and processions [[NewAge BD, 02 September 2021](#)].

SECTION 144 IMPOSED **66** TIMES

On 20 September 2021, 160 Union Parishad (UP) elections were held across the country in which the ruling party Awami League's nominated chairman candidates in 43 UPs in Bagerhat, Chattagram and Khulna got elected uncontested before the polls. In Bagerhat, Awami League candidates had no competitors in 38 out of 66 UPs. In the remaining 28 UPs, Awami League candidates competed against the rebels of their own party. A similar scenario had been observed in the first phase of the previous UP elections. On 21 June, voting took place in 204 UPs where 28 chairmen won unopposed.

January to September 2021

34 people have been **killed**
more than **2220 injured**
in election-related violence.

The incidence of vote-rigging, political clashes between leaders and contesting candidates, supporters, vandalism of election camp, arrests under previously filed or fictitious cases, while others, were common in the local and national elections in the country.

According to ASK's statistics, between September 2018 and September 2020, a total of 8749 were injured and 108 people died in political clashes in 839 incidents. From October 2020 to September 2021, further 5038 people were injured during political clashes.

The trend of uncontested local government elections and parliamentary by-elections in recent years have a far-reaching negative impact on the country's democratic culture. This is creating apathy among the voters and eligible candidates for politics and elections [[ASK Press Statement, 21 September 2021](#)]

HRFB RECOMMENDATIONS

- Immediately and fairly investigate all allegations of violations of human rights by state agencies, – including extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearance, custodial torture and death, negligence– and bring those responsible to the book through proper legal process;
- Ensure justice by establishing an independent commission to conduct investigations in all the incidents of enforced disappearance, abductions and extrajudicial killings till now; State agencies to comply with the High Court directives when detaining or arresting any person;
- Immediately repeal the Digital Security Act 2018 in consultation with relevant stakeholders;
- Respect citizens' right to peaceful assembly and association. Do not use force during any peaceful assemblies;
- Ensure that the religious and ethnic minorities has the right to practice their own belief, faith and rituals adequately, including taking measures to provide them with security, and ensure justice through fair investigation against those involved in the instances of communal attack and violence.

ABOUT HRFB

Human Rights Forum Bangladesh (HRFB) is a coalition of 20 human rights and development organisations working for the promotion and protection of human rights in the country.

HRFB MEMBERS



© HUMAN RIGHTS FORUM BANGLADESH (HRFB)

Secretariat Details

Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK)

Address: 2/16, Block-B, Lalmatia, Dhaka - 1207, Bangladesh

Phone: +88-02-810 0192, 810 0195, 810 0197

Fax: +88-02-810 0187

Email: ask@citechco.net

Website: www.askbd.org