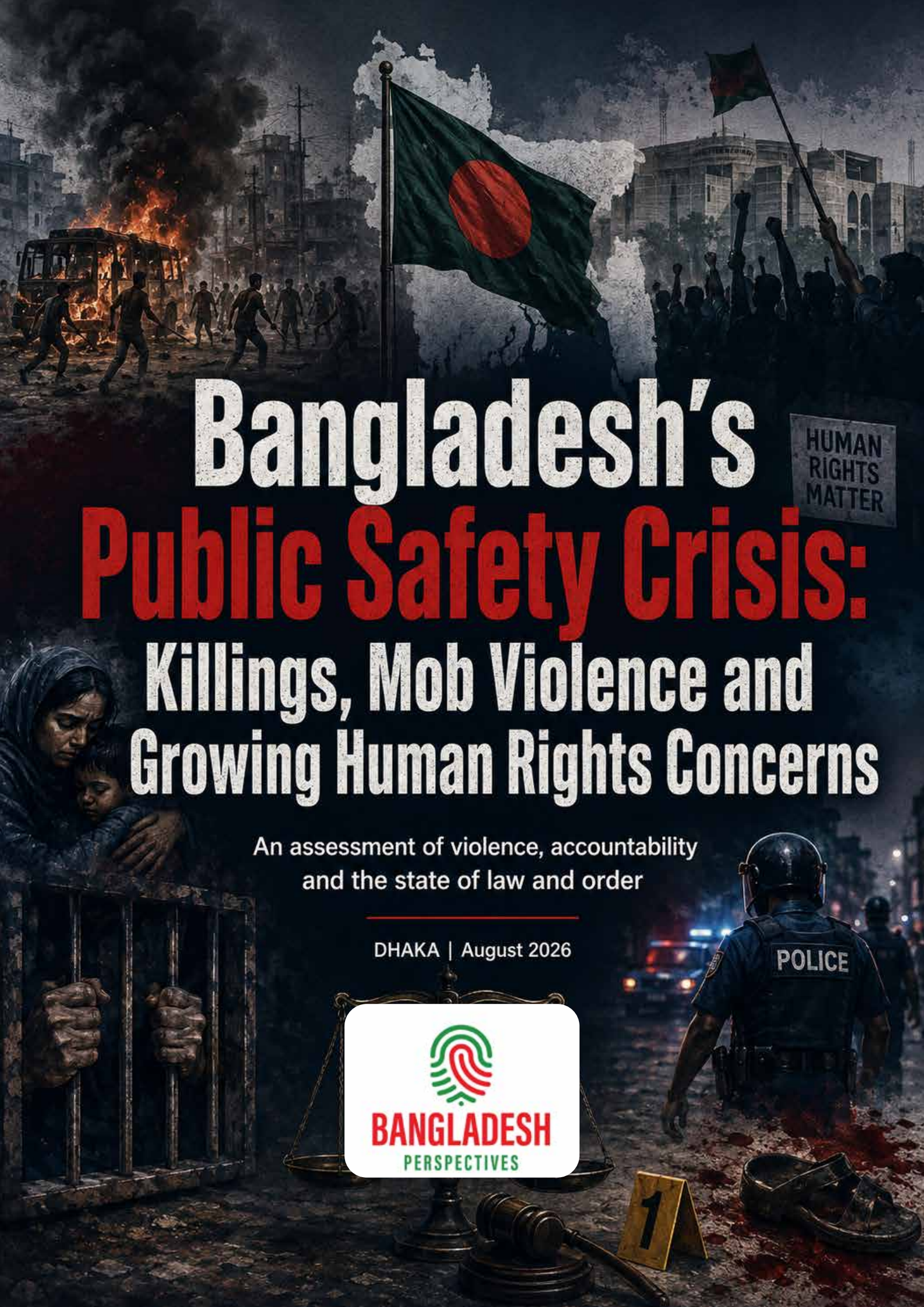




Bangladesh's Public Safety Crisis: Killings, Mob Violence and Growing Human Rights Concerns

An assessment of violence, accountability
and the state of law and order

DHAKA | August 2026



AT A GLANCE

Indicator	Figure	Period / note
 Murder cases filed	2,076	January-July 2026
 Average murder cases per month	~296	
 Murder cases, May-July	934	
 Political violence incidents	400	
 Killed in political violence	77	
 Injured in political violence	2,974	
 Killed in mob beatings	134	
 Women raped	400	
 Rape victims subsequently killed	37	
 Deaths in jail custody	71	

The human-rights figures are compiled by **Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK)**, while the murder figures cited here are based on Bangladesh Police Headquarters data reported in the latest coverage. ASK says its monitoring covers multiple categories of rights violations.



MORE THAN 10 MURDER CASES A DAY

Police data cited in recent reporting show that **2,076** murder cases were filed between January and July.



MONTHLY FIGURES:

	January	:	287
	February	:	250
	March	:	317
	April	:	288
	May	:	310
	June	:	326
	July	:	298



That works out at approximately

296

murder cases every month, or around **9.8** cases a day across the seven-month period.



The May-July period was particularly significant.

Police records show

934

murder cases were filed during those three months, averaging

MORE THAN 10 CASES A DAY.



It is important to distinguish between a murder case being filed and a confirmed death occurring on that particular day. The statistic measures cases recorded by police, not a real-time daily death count.



THE SECOND THREAT: MOB JUSTICE

Perhaps one of the clearest indicators of a public-safety problem is the persistence of mob violence.

ASK recorded **134** deaths from mob beatings between January and July 2026. Dhaka division accounted for **50** of those deaths, followed by Chattogram with **31**.

MOB VIOLENCE, JAN–JUL



134 killed



50 — Dhaka division



31 — Chattogram



17 — Khulna



12 — Rajshahi



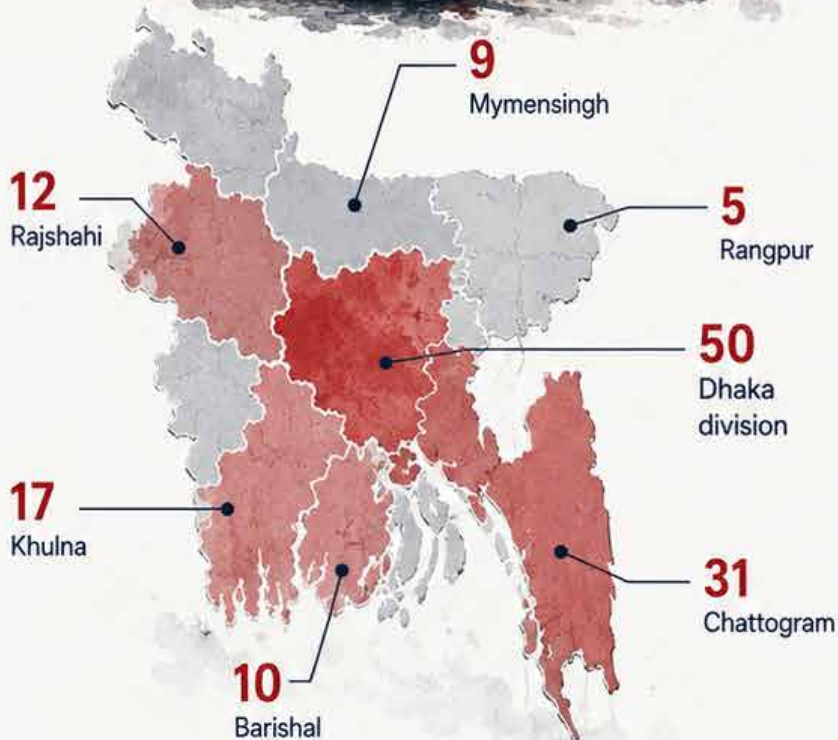
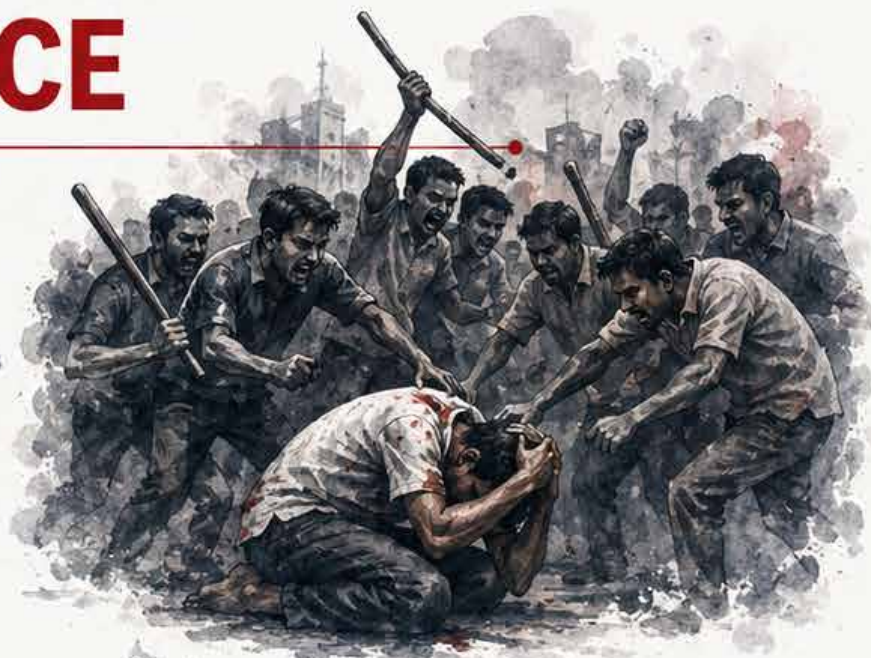
10 — Barishal



9 — Mymensingh



5 — Rangpur



The figures raise a fundamental question about the rule of law: **when citizens believe they can punish alleged suspects themselves, what happens to the authority of the police and the courts?**



Mob violence is not simply another crime statistic.

It can represent a breakdown in public confidence in formal justice mechanisms.



POLITICAL VIOLENCE REMAINS A MAJOR FACTOR

Political conflict is another significant source of casualties.

ASK documented **400** incidents of political violence between January and July, leaving at least **77** people dead and **2,974** injured.

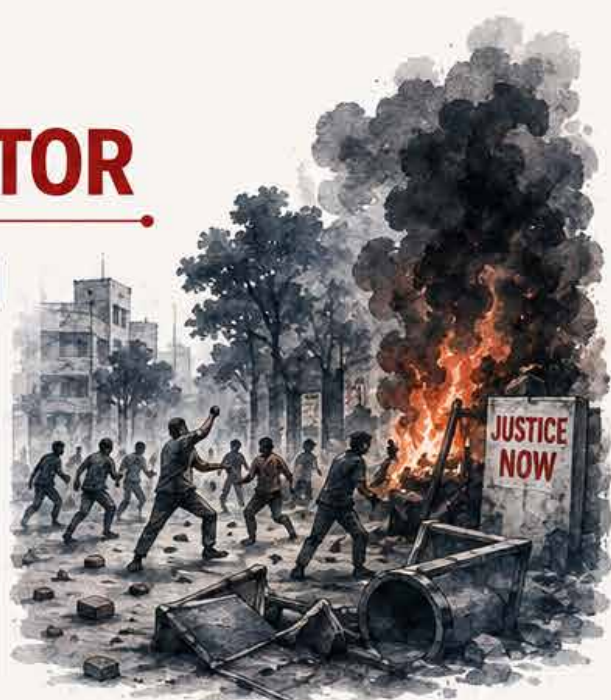
400 INCIDENTS



77
killed



2,974
injured



That means an average of more than **57** people were injured every week in politically linked violence during the seven-month period.



The violence has included clashes between political groups as well as internal disputes.



This is particularly significant in a country where political affiliation has historically been closely connected to access to power, influence and local networks.



WOMEN AND CHILDREN AMONG THE MOST VULNERABLE

Public safety concerns extend beyond political violence and homicide.

ASK recorded **400** rape cases between January and July, including **37** victims who were subsequently killed.



July alone saw at least **81** rape cases.

Children and adolescents represented a substantial proportion of those victims. According to ASK's July figures,



9 victims were below six years old



18 were aged seven to 12



16 were aged 13 to 18



The figures illustrate another dimension of the security challenge: protection from violence **inside communities and homes**, not simply protection from political unrest or street crime.



DEATHS IN CUSTODY

Another area requiring scrutiny is deaths in jail custody.

ASK reported **71** deaths in jail custody during the first seven months of 2026. In July alone, **10** inmates died, including seven people being held on remand and three convicted prisoners.

DEATHS IN JAIL CUSTODY



71

deaths in jail custody

Jan–Jul 2026

10

deaths in July 2026



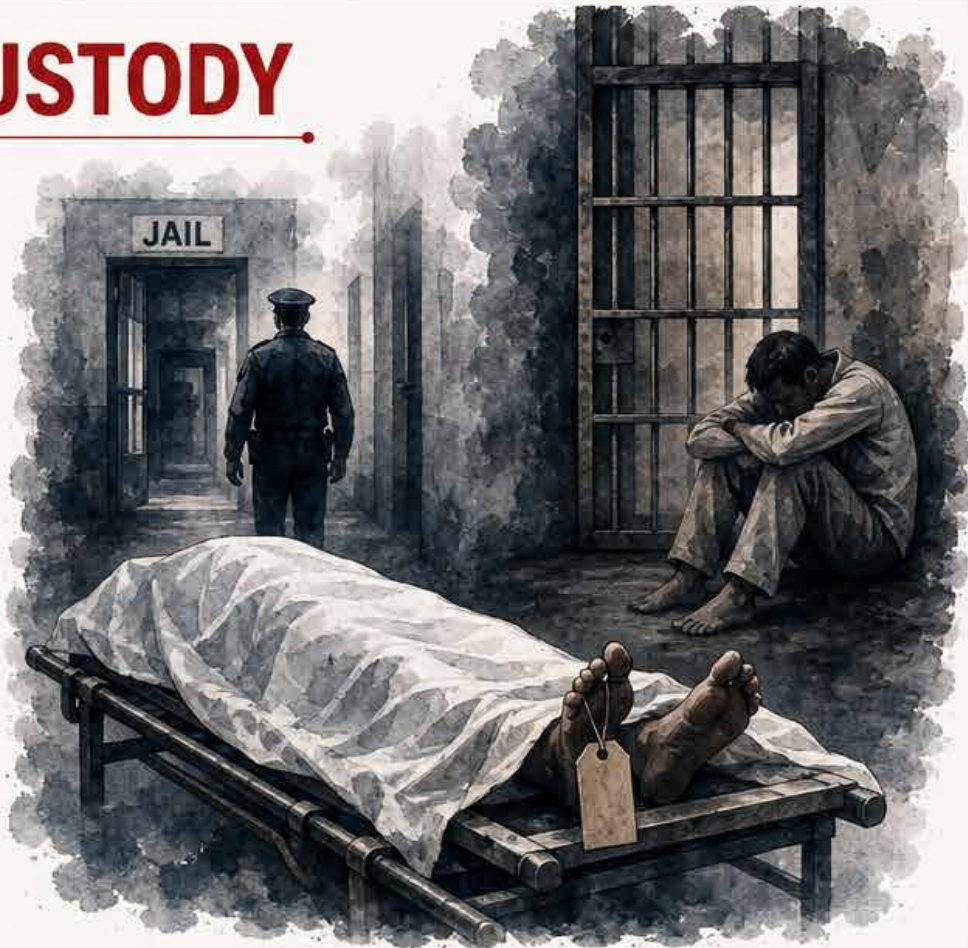
7

people on remand



3

convicted prisoners



Deaths in custody do not automatically establish wrongdoing by authorities. But each case **raises questions** about medical care, detention conditions, access to lawyers and the duty of the state to protect people in its custody.



Independent investigation and transparent reporting are therefore central to **maintaining public confidence**.

WHAT IS DRIVING THE VIOLENCE?

There is no single explanation.



Political competition — Disputes over influence, leadership and political control can turn into physical confrontation.



Illegal weapons — The circulation of firearms can increase the lethality of otherwise localized disputes.



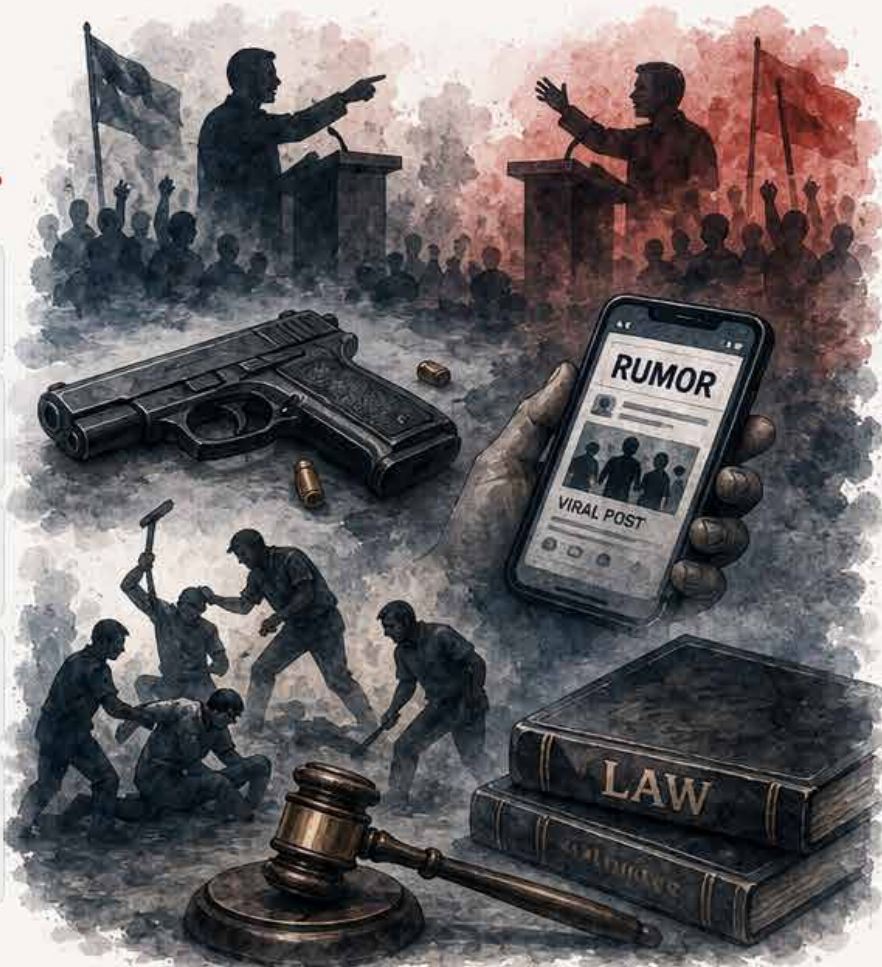
Mob mentality — Rumours, social-media claims and public anger can rapidly turn allegations into violence.



Family and local disputes — Personal conflicts can escalate into serious assaults and killings.



Weak deterrence — Where citizens believe the likelihood of arrest, prosecution or conviction is low, the deterrent effect of the law can weaken.



THE BIGGER HUMAN RIGHTS PICTURE



The violence recorded in 2026 comes after a period of severe political upheaval.



Human Rights Watch has previously highlighted the difficulty faced by Bangladesh's interim authorities in maintaining law and order following the 2024 political upheaval, while also documenting concerns about arbitrary detention, mob violence and attacks by non-state groups.



Human-rights monitoring groups continue to document violations across multiple categories, including political violence, mob killings, violence against women and children, deaths in custody, attacks on journalists and violence affecting religious minorities.



The implication is significant.

The challenge facing Bangladesh is not simply whether the number of murders rises or falls from one month to the next.



It is whether the state can consistently establish that violence will be investigated, perpetrators will be prosecuted and citizens will not need to rely on political connections, private force or mob justice for protection.

THE ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTION



The authorities say law enforcement agencies are continuing to investigate crimes and arrest suspects.



But the continuing level of violence raises a broader question: is enforcement keeping pace with the scale of the problem?



For an elected government, public security is one of the most basic expectations of citizens.



The figures suggest that this remains a serious test.



2,076
murder cases.



134
deaths from
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77
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2,974
people injured in
political violence.



400
reported
rape cases.



71
deaths in
custody.



These numbers come from different datasets and should not be combined into a single measure of crime. But taken together, they point to a persistent pattern of insecurity.



WHAT WOULD IMPROVEMENT LOOK LIKE?

1.



Faster and impartial investigations —

Major killings and politically sensitive cases need credible investigations that can withstand public scrutiny.



2.



Stronger action against mob justice —

Authorities need to make clear that allegations of crime do not give private citizens the right to punish suspects.



3.



Protection of women and children —

Cases involving rape and violence against minors require effective investigation, victim protection and timely trials.



4.



Accountability in custody —

Deaths in police or prison custody should be independently investigated, particularly where allegations of neglect or abuse arise.



5.



Political neutrality in policing —

Law enforcement must be able to act against violence regardless of the political identity of those involved.



6.



Better public data —

Regular, transparent publication of crime statistics would allow the public to judge whether the situation is actually improving.



SAFER COMMUNITIES. STRONGER INSTITUTIONS. A JUST BANGLADESH.

THE **BOTTOM** LINE



Bangladesh's current security challenge cannot be reduced to one headline or one murder case.



The available data show persistent lethal violence, mob killings, political clashes, sexual violence and deaths in custody.



For ordinary citizens, the question is ultimately straightforward:



Can the state guarantee that disputes will be settled by law rather than by violence?



The answer will depend not only on how many arrests are made, but on whether the institutions responsible for justice can restore confidence that the law applies equally to everyone.



DATA NOTE

Murder figures in this report refer to cases filed, not necessarily confirmed deaths occurring on the same day.

Human-rights figures are monitoring estimates compiled by ASK from documented cases and media reports. They should therefore be treated as reported incidents rather than a comprehensive census of every violation in Bangladesh.





BANGLADESH
PERSPECTIVES