

Bangladesh:

Interim Govt Fails Constitution Compliance Test on Fundamental Rights



Asian Centre for Human Rights

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ASIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

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1. Executive summary: About 89% journalists fearing assault during 2026 polls, free and fair elections in jeopardy

The Constitution of Bangladesh guarantees fundamental rights which are non-derogable by any law, and laws inconsistent with fundamental rights are void as per Article 26 of the Constitution.

Chapter III of the Constitution of Bangladesh provides a number of fundamental rights including equality before law under Article 27, prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, etc under Article 28, equality of opportunity in public employment under Article 29, the right to protection of law under Article 31, protection of right to life and personal liberty under Article 32, safeguards as to arrest and detention under Article 33, protection in respect of trial and punishment under Article 35, freedom of assembly under Article 37, freedom of association under Article 38, freedom of thought and conscience, and of speech under Article 39, freedom of religion under Article 41, among others.¹

Each of these fundamental rights has been violated by the Interim Government of Bangladesh headed by Dr Muhammad Yunus in the 16 months.

The equality before law and the right to protection of law under Article 27 and Article 31 of the Constitution of Bangladesh have been violated with the registration of cases against an unprecedented 5,19,089 persons including 80,353 named and 4,38,736 unnamed accused across 1,584 cases.² Thousands of people were arbitrarily arrested in fictitious cases and have no protection of the law while ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and 344 former Members of Parliament (MPs) were accused of attempting to kill one Aladul Islam, a garment worker, during a student-public protest against discrimination.³

The guarantees for equality and non-discrimination under Article 28 and equality of opportunity for all citizens in respect of employment or office in the service of the Republic under Article 29 of the Constitution of Bangladesh were violated given the forcible resignation of at least 49 teachers between 5 and 30 August 2024, dismissal of 99 trainee Sub-Inspectors⁴ and cancelling the examination slated for 14 November 2025 for the recruitment of 589 primary school teachers in Rangamati District Council.⁵

The right to life guaranteed under Article 32 of the Constitution of Bangladesh has become the most violated right under the Interim Government with the custodial death of 24 members of the Awami League between 4 August 2024 to 15 July 2025,⁶ extrajudicial executions of 40 persons from August 2024 to September 2025,⁷ and death of 88 persons in judicial custody from August 2024 to October 2025.⁸

The safeguards as to arrest and detention under Article 33 were trampled upon with the arrest of 44,472 individuals from 5 August 2024 to 3 September 2025 for their involvement in alleged fascism and denial of bail to 12,101 persons.⁹ Hundreds of people were arrested under the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2009 including the arrest of 244 Awami League activists as terrorists in September 2025 while about 16 persons, including Dhaka University Professor Sheikh Hafizur Rahman and Abdul Latif Siddique, a former minister who was later expelled by the Awami League, and journalist Manzurul Alam Panna were arrested for terrorism offences for participating at a discussion organized by *Mancha 71*, a platform that celebrates Bangladesh's independence from Pakistan in 1971.¹⁰ In Dhaka alone, 97 cases were registered under the Anti-Terrorism Act.¹¹

There is no protection in respect of trial and punishment as guaranteed under Article 35 of the Constitution of Bangladesh. The Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) delegations were denied visas by the Interim Government for a mission and trial observation of the former detained Members of Parliament. Former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and former Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal were sentenced to death and former Inspector General of Police Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun sentenced to five years imprisonment by Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal¹² in absentia without identifying the actual perpetrators on 17 November 2025. In fact, Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun became the approver and effectively self-incriminated himself which is a violation of Article 35(1)(4) of the Constitution of Bangladesh. The judgment has not been made public as on 10 December 2025 in clear violation of the Section 20(2A) of the International Crimes (Tribunal) Act¹³ which states that the judgment has to be provided on the date it is delivered i.e. 17 November 2025.

The right to freedom of assembly guaranteed under Article 37 of the Constitution of Bangladesh has been violated with respect to indigenous peoples, religious minorities and the Awami League, which remains a banned organisation. While Hindu monk Chinmoy Krishna Das Brahmachari remains in jail since 25 November 2024 for organising a peacefully rally of the minority Hindus on 24 October 2024 at Laldighi Maidan, Chittagong, and on 28 September 2025, three Marma indigenous youths were shot dead and 10 others were injured by the Bangladesh Army for protesting against the failure of the authorities to arrest the accused of gang-rape of a minor indigenous girl.¹⁴

There is no freedom of association guaranteed under Article 38 of the Constitution of Bangladesh for the Awami League as it was banned under the Anti-Terrorism Act in May 2025 despite the High Court of Bangladesh rejecting a writ petition in September 2024 seeking ban on the Awami League for the same alleged offences.¹⁵

The freedom of thought and conscience and of speech guaranteed under Article 39 of the Constitution of Bangladesh became the biggest casualty with the arrest, intimidation and other legal harassment of about 1,087 journalists between August 2024 and October 2025.¹⁶ The draconian the Cyber Security Act of 2023 continued to be abused with the arrest of 44 persons in 56 cases.¹⁷



The freedom of religion guaranteed under Article 41 of the Constitution of Bangladesh cannot be enjoyed by the religious minorities. During the Durga Puja in September 2025, about 18 attacks across 16 districts have left temples vandalized, idols mutilated and minority homes targeted.¹⁸ A total of 2,485 incidents of violence against religious and ethnic minorities occurred from 4 August 2024 to July 2025.¹⁹

Judiciary has become a handmaiden of the Interim government in clear violations of Article 22 of the Constitution relating to the separation of the judiciary and Article 96(2) of the Constitution relating to independence of judiciary through impeachment. At least 21 Supreme Court and High Court judges including Chief Justice of Bangladesh were removed through protests in clear violations of the procedure laid down under Article 96(2) of the Constitution. It is clear that the Interim Government of Bangladesh has created a lawless situation where there are no safety and security for the citizens.

With 89% of the journalists fearing assault during 2026 polls,²⁰ there are serious questions as to whether the Interim Government can ensure free and fair elections.

2. Equality before law and the right to protection of law

Article 27. All citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law.

Article 31. To enjoy the protection of the law, and to be treated in accordance with law, and only in accordance with law, is the inalienable right of every citizen, wherever he may be, and of every other person for the time being within Bangladesh, and in particular no action detrimental to the life, liberty, body, reputation or property of any person shall be taken except in accordance with law.”

By October 2025, about 5,19,089 persons including 80,353 named and 4,38,736 unnamed were accused in 1,584 cases while 344 former MPs were accused of attempt to murder one Aladul Islam, a garments worker.

৩৪৪ সাবেক সংসদ সদস্যকে আসামি করে মামলার আবেদন

নিজস্ব প্রতিবেদক ঢাকা

আপডেট: ০৮ জানুয়ারি ২০২৫, ২৩: ০৬ টি



The Constitution of Bangladesh guarantees equality before law and the right to protection of law under Article 27 and Article 31 of the Constitution of Bangladesh.

The Interim Government of Bangladesh has failed to ensure both equality before the law and the right to protection of law.

The scale of politically motivated cases under the Interim Government is unprecedented in Bangladesh's history. By October 2025, an unprecedented 5,19,089 persons had been implicated in politically motivated cases, including 80,353 named and 4,38,736 unnamed accused across 1,584 cases.²¹ These figures reveal a pattern of systematic state repression rather than isolated misuse of authority. Thousands of people were arbitrarily arrested in fictitious cases and have no protection of the law.²²

On 6 January 2025, the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka directed to investigate ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and 344 former Members of Parliament (MPs) for allegedly attempting to kill one Aladul Islam, a garment worker, during a student-public protest against discrimination.²³

Any student of administration of criminal justice is aware that 344 MPs cannot be part of a conspiracy for attempting to kill a garment worker while participating in protests along with thousands of others. The principle of command responsibility under Article 28 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court²⁴ also cannot apply to these 344 MPs with respect to the alleged use of force by any law enforcement personnel. However, since the attempt to murder case has been registered under the order of the Chief Judicial Magistrate, the police are duty-bound to investigate and actually summon each of the 344 MPs who have been accused in this complaint.

This case against 344 former MPs accused of hatching to murder one garment worker is not an exception. Across the country, such fictitious cases have been filed under the Interim government.

3. Non-discrimination and equality of opportunity in public employment

Article 28. Discrimination on grounds of religion, etc.

- (1) The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth.
- (2) Women shall have equal rights with men in all spheres of the State and of public life.
- (3) No citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth be subjected to any disability, liability, restriction or condition with regard to access to any place of public entertainment or resort, or admission to any educational institution.
- (4) Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from making special provision in favour of women or children or for the advancement of any backward section of citizens.

Article 29. Equality of opportunity in public employment

- (1) There shall be equality of opportunity for all citizens in respect of employment or office in the service of the Republic.
- (2) No citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, be ineligible for, or discriminated against in respect of, any employment or office in the service of the Republic.
- (3) Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from –
 - (a) making special provision in favour of any backward section of citizens for the purpose of securing their adequate representation in the service of the Republic;
 - (b) giving effect to any law which makes provision for reserving appointments relating to any religious or denominational institution to persons of that religion or denomination;
 - (c) reserving for members of one sex any class of employment or office on the ground that it is considered by its nature to be unsuited to members of the opposite sex.

At least 49 religious teachers were forced to resign, 99 trainee Sub-Inspectors belonging to Hindu minorities were dismissed while the examination scheduled for 14 November 2025 for recruiting 589 primary school teachers mainly from indigenous peoples by the Rangamati District Council was cancelled.



Indigenous candidates protesting against cancellation of examination for primary teachers

Article 28 of the Constitution of Bangladesh prohibits “discrimination against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth” and further empowers the State for “making special provision in favour of women or children or for the advancement of any backward section of citizens.”

Similarly, Article 29 of the Constitution of Bangladesh provides for “equality of opportunity for all citizens in respect of employment or office in the service of the Republic” and prohibits discrimination “on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, be ineligible for, or discriminated against in respect of, any employment or office in the service of the Republic”. Under Clause 3 of Article 29, it provides that the State can “(a) making special provision in favour of any backward section of citizens for the purpose of securing their adequate representation in the service of the Republic;” (b) giving effect to any law which makes provision for reserving appointments relating to

any religious or denominational institution to persons of that religion or denomination;” and “(c) reserving for members of one sex any class of employment or office on the ground that it is considered by its nature to be unsuited to members of the opposite sex”.

The Interim Government failed to ensure non-discrimination and equality of opportunity in public employment for the minorities and indigenous peoples and properly implement “*special provision in favour of any backward section of citizens for the purpose of securing their adequate representation in the service of the Republic*”.

After the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government, teachers from Hindu, Buddhist and Christian communities were forced to resign from their jobs. The Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council reported that at least 49 teachers were forced to resign between 5 and 30 August 2024.²⁵ Furthermore, as per verification done by the Rights and Risks Analysis Group, out of the 252 trainee Sub-Inspectors at the Bangladesh Police Academy who were dismissed from service, 99 trainees belonged to the Hindu religious minority communities.²⁶ No corrective measures have been taken by the Interim Government to restore the jobs.

In the Chittagong Hill Tracts region inhabited by indigenous peoples, primary education as a subject was assigned to the Hill District Councils of Rangamati, Khagrachari and Bandarban districts as part of the “*special provision in favour of any backward section of citizens for the purpose of securing their adequate representation in the service of the Republic*”. The recruitment of primary teachers in Rangamati District Council has been closed since 2022 and there are about 589 vacancies and the District Council scheduled the examination for 14 November 2025 for these vacancies. However, because of the protests of the illegal Muslim settlers against quota for the indigenous peoples, the examination has been postponed, thereby denying access to public employment.²⁷

4. Protection of the right to life and personal liberty

Article 32. Protection of right to life and personal liberty - "No person shall be deprived of life or personal liberty save in accordance with law".

Custodial death of 24 members of the Awami League, extrajudicial executions of 40 persons and death of 88 persons in judicial custody shows the violations of the right to life.



Awami League leader Nurul Majid Mahmud Humayun (75) chained and died while undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital

The right to life has become the most abused right under the Interim Government of Bangladesh with the right to life of political activists, detainees held without warrants, alleged criminals, and citizens caught in security operations being violated at will.

Between 4 August 2024 to 15 July 2025, at least 24 members of the Awami League were killed in custody.²⁸

In addition, at least 40 victims were extrajudicially executed from August 2024 to September 2025 under the Yunus-led interim government as per a report of Odhikar, a local human rights organization previously headed by Adilur Rahman Khan, Industries Adviser of the Interim Government. The number of extrajudicial executions appears to be worsening with 11 people killed from July to September 2025.²⁹

Further, 88 persons died in judicial custody from August 2024 to October 2025.³⁰

5. Safeguards as to arrest and detention

Article 33. Safeguards as to arrest and detention

“(1) No person who is arrested shall be detained in custody without being informed, as soon as may be, of the grounds for such arrest, nor shall he be denied the right to consult and be defended by a legal practitioner of his choice.

(2) Every person who is arrested and detained in custody shall be produced before the nearest magistrate within a period of twenty-four hours of such arrest, excluding the time necessary for the journey from the place of arrest to the Court of the magistrate, and no such person shall be detained in custody beyond the said period without the authority of a magistrate.

(3) Nothing in clauses (1) and (2) shall apply to any person—(a) who for the time being is an enemy alien; or (b) who is arrested or detained under any law providing for preventive detention.

(4) No law providing for preventive detention shall authorise the detention of a person for a period exceeding six months unless an Advisory Board consisting of three persons, of whom two shall be persons who are, or have been, or are qualified to be appointed as, Judges of the Supreme Court and the other shall be a person who is a senior officer in the service of the Republic, has, after affording him an opportunity of being heard in person, reported before the expiration of the said period of six months that there is, in its opinion, sufficient cause for such detention.

(5) When any person is detained in pursuance of an order made under any law providing for preventive detention, the authority making the order shall, as soon as may be, communicate to such person the grounds on which the order has been made, and shall afford him the earliest opportunity of making a representation against the order:

Provided that the authority making any such order may refuse to disclose facts which such authority considers to be against the public interest to disclose.

(6) Parliament may by law prescribe the procedure to be followed by an Advisory Board in an inquiry under clause (4).]

At least 44,472 individuals arrested for so-called fascism charges with 12,101 persons being denied bail while 97 cases registered under the 2009 Anti-Terrorism Act in Dhaka alone against the political opponents



Dhaka University Professor Sheikh Hafizur Rahman arrested for participating at a discussion organized by Mancha 71

Thousands of people have been arrested under the interim government on dubious criminal charges including murder and the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2009 in violation of Article 33 of the Constitution of Bangladesh. As per the data released by the Bangladesh Police after reviewing arrest and bail data from 5 August 2024 to 3 September 2025, a total of 44,472 individuals involved in so-called fascism were arrested, out of which 32,371 or about 73 per cent of those detained were granted bail while 12,101 persons remained in jail.³¹

The Anti-Terrorism Act of 2009 has been invoked against the Awami League and its students wing, Chhatra League activists randomly. The Dhaka Metropolitan Police stated in September 2025 that 97 cases were filed under the Anti-Terrorism Act related to illegal protests and programmes organised by the Awami League, its affiliates, and the now-banned Chhatra League in Dhaka alone.³² Across the country, similar cases under the Anti-Terrorism Act were filed against the Awami League and its students wing, Chhatra League activists.

In one instance in September 2025, about 244 activists of the banned were arrested in a single day while organising flash protests.³³

In another instance on 28 August, police detained 16 people, including journalists and academics, at a discussion organized by *Mancha 71*, a platform that celebrates Bangladesh's independence from Pakistan in 1971. Instead of arresting the disrupters, the police detained 16 participants in the event, some of them in their 70s and 80s including Dhaka University Professor Sheikh Hafizur Rahman, and Abdul Latif Siddique, a former minister who was later expelled by the Awami League and journalist Manzurul Alam Panna. The police complaint claims that those arrested had wanted to bring the fascist regime back. During a bail hearing on 29 August 2025, Panna was taken to court wearing a helmet, handcuffs, and a bulletproof vest like a criminal.³⁴

6. Protection in respect of trial and punishment

Article 35: Protection in respect of trial and punishment

“(1) No person shall be convicted of any offence except for violation of a law in force at the time of the commission of the act charged as an offence, nor be subjected to a penalty greater than, or different from, that which might have been inflicted under the law in force at the time of the commission of the offence....

(3) Every person accused of a criminal offence shall have the right to a speedy and public trial by an independent and impartial Court or tribunal established by law.

(4) No person accused of any offence shall be compelled to be a witness against himself.”

While Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) delegations were denied entry to Bangladesh despite repeated requests for a mission and trial observation, Michael Chakma, a victim of enforced disappearances, was sentenced to eight years rigorous imprisonment without any opportunity of hearing and former IGP Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun was sentenced based on self-incrimination in violation of Article 35(1)(4) of the Constitution of Bangladesh along with former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

In Bangladesh, there is no independence of judiciary and the constitutional guarantees for the independence of judiciary have been brushed aside. In fact, there are no protections against in respect of trial and punishment in Bangladesh.

Case 1: Bangladesh denies visas to Inter-Parliamentary Union delegations

The Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) Governing Council at its 216th session in Geneva on 23 October 2025 adopted a unanimous resolution against alleged human rights violations, threats and acts of intimidation, arbitrary arrest and detention, inhumane conditions of detention and lack of due process in proceedings against six arrested parliamentarians i.e. Saber Chowdhury, Fazle Karim Chowdhury, Habibe Millat, Asaduzzaman Noor, Mosharraf Hossain and Muhammad Faruk Khan.

More than 100 former parliamentarians, all members of the Awami League, are currently in detention in Bangladesh, facing multiple ongoing criminal proceedings while parliamentarian Mr. Nurul Majid Mahmud Humayun died in custody on 29 September 2025.

The IPU resolution stated that on two separate occasions, the independent trial observer mandated by the IPU to monitor the legal proceedings in these cases was unable to travel to Bangladesh, as the necessary visas were not granted on time and the repeated requests for support in facilitating visa delivery for an IPU delegation to travel to Bangladesh remain unanswered. Furthermore, it repeated requests for support in facilitating the preparations for an IPU mission, including the timely delivery of visas for an IPU delegation to visit Bangladesh, have thus far remained unanswered.

The IPU expressed deep concerns at the continued detention of Mr. Fazle Karim Chowdhury, Mr. Asaduzzaman Noor, Mr. Mosharraf Hossain and Mr. Muhammad Faruk Khan, in the light of the disturbing allegations of the appalling conditions of detention and the irreversible effects that these conditions are allegedly having on their health and the allegations of serious violations of the right to a fair trial in the proceedings against the six former parliamentarians, as well as about the nature and severity of the charges, some of which reportedly may carry the death penalty, and at allegations suggesting that the initiation and proliferation of criminal proceedings against former members of the Awami League may be politically motivated.

The IPU reiterated its wish to send a trial observer to monitor the upcoming court proceedings and a delegation to Bangladesh as soon as possible in order to meet with the authorities responsible for exercising legislative, executive and judicial powers, as well as with the prison authorities and any other institution, civil society organization or individual in a position to provide relevant information regarding the situation of the six former parliamentarians.

Case 2: Sentencing of Michael Chakma in the CHT to prevent appearing before International Crimes Tribunal



Michael Chakma sentenced to prevent appearing before the International Crimes Tribunal

On 8 October 2025, Michael Chakma, one of the victims of enforced disappearances, was sentenced to eight years rigorous imprisonment without any opportunity of hearing.³⁵

Since the registration of the case on 30 October 2007, Michael Chakma was never issued summons by the Rangamati District court that sentenced him. He was never cross-examined. He never had the opportunity to cross examine prosecution's witnesses. He was never required to take bail. He was not present on the date of framing of charges, announcing judgment holding him guilty and declaring quantum of punishment. In all these three dates, prosecution and the defence must be given equal opportunity of hearing to put forth their arguments. Michael Chakma was not required by the Rangamati District Court in the case at all from 2007 till he was kidnapped by the powerful Bangladesh Army personnel in April 2019, disappeared, kept at the infamous Ainaghar, and was released from the Ainaghar after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government in August 2024. Even after his release, Michael Chakma was never summoned by the Additional District Judge of Rangamati District Court in the case he was sentenced. Under the Bangladesh Criminal Procedure Code, an accused has to be present on the day of the sentencing.

Michael Chakma had filed a complaint before the International Crimes Tribunal, among others, accusing the head of the Directorate General of Forces' Intelligence to be behind his enforced disappearance.³⁶ Three former Directors of the DGFI i.e. Major General Sheikh Md. Sarwar Hossain, Brigadier General Md. Mahbubur Rahman Siddiqui and Brigadier General Ahmed Tanvir Mazahar Siddiqui were indicted for the enforced disappearances. As the process began to take the Bangladesh Army officers including former DGFI Chief into custody for enforced disappearances, the Rangamati District Court delivered an orchestrated judgment convicting Michael Chakma to prevent him from appearing as a witness before the International Crimes Tribunal.³⁷

Case 3: Sentencing of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and others by the International Crimes Tribunal

On 17 November 2025, former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and former Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal were sentenced to death and former Inspector General of Police Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun was sentenced to five years imprisonment by Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal in five separate charge i.e. abetting, inciting, facilitating, being complicit in, and failing to prevent crimes committed against civilians by law enforcement and armed cadres of the Awami League and its affiliates; command responsibility for the use of lethal weapons, helicopters, and drones; murder of Abu Sayed near Begum Rokeya University in Rangpur murder of six unarmed protesters in Dhaka's Chankharpul and six students at Ashulia in August 2024.³⁸

The trial and judgment violated every tenet of criminal jurisprudence. Apart from former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, former Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal and former



Former Inspector General of Police (IGP) Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun

Inspector General of Police Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun, the actual perpetrators whether police or Awami League cadres or mob were not identified, not named, not charged, not tried and not sentenced.

Former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and former Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal were tried in absentia which is a violation of international human rights standards, Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun became the approver and effectively self-incriminated himself which is a violation of Article 35(1)(4) of the Constitution of Bangladesh.

Section 20(2A) of the International Crimes (Tribunal) Act provides that “*A copy of Judgement under the seal and signature of the Registrar of a Tribunal shall be provided, free of cost, to the prosecution and the accused person on the date of delivery of the Judgement*”.³⁹

The judgment sentencing former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was delivered on 17 November 2025 but has not been made public as on 10 December 2025 in clear violations of the Section 20(2A) of the International Crimes (Tribunal) Act.

7. Freedom of assembly

Article 37. Freedom of assembly: Every citizen shall have the right to assemble and to participate in public meetings and processions peacefully and without arms, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interests of public order or public health.

The continued detention of Hindu monk Chinmoy Krishna Das Brahmachari under fabricated charges and killing of indigenous peoples on 19-20 September 2025 and 28 September 2025 for organizing peaceful protest shows the Interim Government's attitude towards freedom of assembly.

The constitutional guarantees for the freedom of assembly under Article 37 have been regularly violated by the Interim Government of Bangladesh in the case of indigenous peoples, Hindu minorities and the Awami League, as cited below:



- On 18 September 2024, the indigenous students organised 'March For Identity' at Khagrachari district in which over 40,000 indigenous peoples participated. The illegal Muslim settlers with the support of the Bangladesh Army thereafter organised attacks on indigenous peoples at Khagrachari and Rangamati district on 19-20 September 2024. In these attacks, at least four Indigenous persons i.e. Mr Dhana Ranjan Chakma, Mr Junan Chakma, Mr Rubel Tripura and Mr Anik Chakma were killed, at least 75 Indigenous Jumma people were seriously injured while at least 142 properties including Buddhist temples were looted, destroyed or set ablaze.⁴⁰



Indigenous peoples shot dead for protesting against gang-rape of indigenous girl at Guimara, CHT

- Hindu monk Chinmoy Krishna Das Brahmachari was arrested in a trumped-up sedition case on 25 November 2024 for organising a peacefully rally of the minority Hindus on 24 October 2024 at Laldighi, Chittagong and he remains in jail till date under various fabricated charges.⁴¹
- the Hindu minorities were attacked and their houses were burnt for organising a peaceful assembly on 22 November 2024 at Rangpur.⁴²
- indigenous students who were protesting in Dhaka on 15 January 2025 against the removal of a graffiti with the word “Adivasi” (indigenous) were brutally attacked by the Islamists.⁴³
- three Marma indigenous youths were shot dead and 10 others were injured on 28 September 2025 in firing by the Bangladesh Army while protesting against the failure of the authorities to arrest the accused of gang-rape of a minor indigenous girl on 23 September 2025.⁴⁴

8. Freedom of association

Article 38. Freedom of association

“38. Every citizen shall have the right to form associations or unions, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interests of morality or public order:

Provided that no person shall have the right to form, or be a member of the said association or union, if-

(a) it is formed for the purposes of destroying the religious, social and communal harmony among the citizens;

(b) it is formed for the purposes of creating discrimination among the citizens, on the ground of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or language ;

(c) it is formed for the purposes of organizing terrorist acts or militant activities against the State or the citizens or any other country;

(d) its formation and objects are inconsistent with the Constitution.”

The Awami League was banned under the Anti-Terrorism Act in May 2025 for the atrocities during the July 2024 but in September 2024, the High Court of Bangladesh had earlier rejected a writ petition seeking ban on the Awami League.



Since the Interim Government of Bangladesh banned all activities of the Awami League under the Anti-Terrorism Act until the International Crimes Tribunal completes the trial of the party and its leaders for atrocities during the July 2024 uprising through the Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025, there is no freedom of association of the Awami League and its affiliate organisations. All their activities, including any form of publication, publicity on mass media, online and social media, processions, meetings, rallies, and conferences will remain banned until the International Crimes Tribunal completes the trial of the leaders.⁴⁵ Earlier the Interim Government has banned the Chhatra League on 24 October 2024.⁴⁶ The Interim Government of Bangladesh even objected to the alleged activities such as distributing booklets by the Awami League leaders in New Delhi on 21 July 2025.⁴⁷



Protests against Interim Government

It is pertinent to mention that the High Court of Bangladesh had earlier rejected a writ petition seeking ban on the Awami League and cancellation of its registration for its alleged involvement in the killing of students and general people during the student-led mass upsurge.⁴⁸

The government of Bangladesh instead of appealing against the High Court judgement decided to ban the Awami League through executive order on the same grounds.

9. Freedom of thought and conscience, and of speech

Article 39. Freedom of thought and conscience, and of speech

39. (1) Freedom of thought and conscience is guaranteed.

(2) Subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interests of the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign states, public order, decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence—

(a) the right of every citizen to freedom of speech and expression; and

(b) freedom of the press, are guaranteed.

Between August 2024 and October 2025, about 1,087 journalists were targeted while 89% of the journalists fear assault during 2026 polls.



Former lawmaker Abdul Latif Siddique and journalist Manjurul Alam Panna

Under the Interim Government, freedom of opinion and expression of the journalists has been suppressed in an unprecedented manner. Between August 2024 and October 2025, about 1,087 journalists were targeted through arrests, intimidation or legal harassment.⁴⁹

The Interim Government continues to abuse the Cyber Security Act of 2023 and a total of 44 persons were arrested from August 2024 to October 2025 under 56 cases filed.⁵⁰ The Interim Government shows no intention to repeal this draconian Act.

The media landscape has become increasingly restrictive, undermining public access to unbiased information crucial for informed voting. If reforms were meant to bring an end to persecution of the journalists in Bangladesh, the Interim Government has failed abysmally. Consequently, as on 8 December 202, about 89% of the journalists feared assault during 2026 polls.⁵¹

10. Freedom of religion

Article 41: Freedom of religion

(1) Subject to law, public order and morality –

(a) every citizen has the right to profess, practise or propagate any religion;

(b) every religious community or denomination has the right to establish, maintain and manage its religious institutions.

(2) No person attending any educational institution shall be required to receive religious instruction, or to take part in or to attend any religious ceremony or worship, if that instruction, ceremony or worship relates to a religion other than his own.

During the Durga Puja in September 2025, about 18 attacks across 16 districts took place while a total of 2,485 incidents of violence against religious and ethnic minorities occurred from 4 August 2024 to July 2025.



Attacks on religious minorities in Bangladesh

The Hindu minorities continue to face violence from the Islamists across the country. During the Durga Puja in September 2025, about 18 attacks across 16 districts took place with the minority temples vandalized, idols mutilated, and minority homes targeted.⁵²

A total of 2,485 incidents of violence against religious and ethnic minorities occurred from 4 August 2024 to July 2025 is illustrative of the violence against religious minorities. These acts of violence included 2,442 attacks from August 2024 to June 2025⁵³ and 43 incidents during July 2025.⁵⁴ Out of these cases, the highest number of incidents of violence against minorities occurred between 4 August and 20 August 2024, with a staggering 2,010 cases. These attacks include arson, forced displacement, desecration of religious sites and physical assaults, creating an environment where minorities remain under constant threat.⁵⁵



11. Independence of judiciary

Article 22. Separation of Judiciary from the executive - The State shall ensure the separation of the judiciary from the executive organs of the State.

Article 96. Tenure of office of Judges

(1) Subject to the other provisions of this article, a Judge shall hold office until he attains the age of sixty-seven years.

(2) A Judge shall not be removed from his office except by an order of the President passed pursuant to a resolution of Parliament supported by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the total number of members of Parliament, on the ground of proved misbehaviour or incapacity.

(3) Parliament may by law regulate the procedure in relation to a resolution under clause (2) and for investigation and proof of the misbehaviour or incapacity of a Judge.

(4) A Judge may resign his office by writing under his hand addressed to the President.

At least 21 Supreme Court and High Court judges including the Chief Justice of Bangladesh were removed through protests even though Article 96(2) of the Constitution of Bangladesh provides that a judge cannot be removed from his office except by an order of the President passed pursuant to a resolution passed by the Parliament with two-thirds majority.



Judiciary weaponised by the Interim Government

Article 22 of the Constitution of Bangladesh provided for separation of judiciary from the Executive while this independence was secured through impeachment procedure under Article 96(2) for removal of the judges. A judge in Bangladesh cannot be removed from his office except by an order of the President passed pursuant to a resolution of Parliament supported by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the total number of Members of Parliament, on the ground of proved misbehaviour or incapacity.

These constitutional guarantees were murdered by the Interim Government as the judges were removed through public protests and without any proof of misbehaviour or incapacity.

At least 21 Supreme Court and High Court judges including the Chief Justice of Bangladesh were removed through protests.

On 10 August 2024, six judges of the Supreme Court including Chief Justice Obaidul Hassan and Justice M Enayetur Rahim, Justice Md Abu Zafor Siddique, Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim, Justice Md Shahinur Islam and Justice Kashefa Hussain were forced to resign following protests by the Anti-Discrimination Students Movement.⁵⁶

On 16 October 2024, 12 High Court judges were barred from judicial work because of the protests by the Anti-Discrimination Students Movement.⁵⁷

On 19 November 2024, three judges of the High Court Justice Salma Masud Chowdhury, Justice Kazi Reza-ul-Haque, and Justice AKM Zahirul Haque had to resign after the Anti-Discrimination Students Movement made allegations of corruption.⁵⁸

This removal of the Supreme Court and High Court judges through protest in violation of the Article 96(2) of the Constitution of Bangladesh had debilitating effects. There is no fear of the rule of law. It is the judges who have to fear the masses. Consequently, a lawless state has been created in Bangladesh by the Interim Government.

ANNEX 1: Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) Governing Council Resolution on Bangladesh on 23 October 2025



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

Bangladesh

Decision adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 216th session (Geneva, 23 October 2025)



Anti-government protesters display the flag of Bangladesh as they storm former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's palace in Dhaka on 5 August 2024. 000_36MP8RF © K M ASAD / AFP

BGD-16 – Saber Chowdhury
BGD-17 – Fazle Karim Chowdhury
BGD-18 – Habibe Millat
BGD-19 – Asaduzzaman Noor
BGD-20 – Mosharraf Hossain
BGD-21 – Muhammad Faruk Khan

Alleged human rights violations

- ✓ Threats, acts of intimidation
- ✓ Arbitrary arrest and detention
- ✓ Inhumane conditions of detention
- ✓ Lack of due process in proceedings against parliamentarians

A. Summary of the case

According to the complainants, the six former members of the Bangladesh Parliament named in the present case are victims of a revenge spree against prominent members of the ousted Awami League party, of which they were recognized figures. Mr. Habibe Millat was a member of parliament in the previous parliamentary term, which ended in January 2024, while Mr. Saber Chowdhury, Mr. Fazle Chowdhury, Mr. Asaduzzaman Noor, Mr. Mosharraf Hossain and Mr. Muhammad Faruk Khan were all sitting parliamentarians at the time of the dissolution of parliament in August 2024.

The complainants report that Mr. S. Chowdhury, Honorary President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), faces numerous charges – including sedition, conspiracy, unlawful assembly, use of explosives and multiple counts of murder – arising from incidents between 2015 and 2024. The complainants also

Case BGD-COLL-01

Bangladesh: Parliament affiliated to the IPU

Victims: Male majority members of parliament

Qualified complainants: Section I.(1)(a) of the Committee Procedure (Annex I)

Submission of complaints: October and November 2024

Recent IPU decision: February 2025

IPU mission(s): - - -

Recent Committee hearing(s): - - -

Recent follow-up:

- Communication(s) from the authorities: - - -
- Communication from the complainants: September 2025
- Communication to the authorities: August 2025
- Communication to the complainants: September 2025

state that due process has not been followed in the proceedings against him. More than 30 cases are still under investigation and key details are yet to be disclosed. A case has also been brought against him and his wife before the Anti-Corruption Commission, which is ongoing. On 5 October 2024, Mr. S. Chowdhury was arrested and brought to court the following day. Pictures and videos provided by the complainants and available on the internet show Mr. S. Chowdhury entering and leaving the court building with his physical integrity visibly at risk, with eggs, stones and blunt objects being thrown at him. The complainants report that, in this context, Mr. S. Chowdhury was hit on the head with a brick, resulting in severe trauma. On 7 October 2024, he was granted bail in six of the cases for which he had been detained. However, other cases, including at least seven for murder, remain pending, which could result in his re-arrest at any time. Upon his release, Mr. S. Chowdhury was immediately taken to a hospital to receive medical treatment for the injuries sustained in the court building the day before. Medical documentation confirms that he has sustained serious injuries requiring specialized treatment available only outside the country. However, due to his travel ban, he has been unable to access the medical care he needs. According to the complainants, in addition to the alleged politically motivated legal proceedings, Mr. S. Chowdhury's personal safety is under threat. The complainants report that his family residence was attacked and set on fire on 5 August 2024, with the assailants allegedly stating their intent to murder Mr. S. Chowdhury and his family.

Mr. F. K. Chowdhury, former member and president of the IPU Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians, was arrested on 12 September 2024 and has since reportedly been detained under harsh conditions. His specialized medical needs for heart disease, diabetes and kidney complications have allegedly been denied, leading to a severe deterioration in his health and placing his life in imminent danger. He has allegedly been subjected to psychological abuse, including humiliating media broadcasts, and his safety in prison is reportedly under threat by assassination plots attributed to political opponents. The complainants maintain that urgent medical treatment abroad is essential, as care in Bangladesh would expose him to additional risks, including mob violence. Mr. F.K. Chowdhury faces multiple criminal charges – among them murder, extortion and bribery – which the complainants describe as politically motivated and unfounded. His family home was attacked, employees were killed in politically driven violence, and social media campaigns have incited violence against him, his family and his legal counsel. Previous court appearances have been marked by violent mobs calling for his execution and attempting to physically assault him, raising serious concerns that future hearings will likewise endanger his life and security.

According to the complainants, Mr. Millat's residence in Sirajganj was attacked and set on fire during anti-government protests in early August 2024. His house was vandalized and set on fire on 4 August, looted on 5 August, and then set on fire again. Later that month, three murder cases were filed against him, alleging that he had ordered attacks on a protest march in Sirajganj in August 2024. In the subsequent months, additional proceedings were initiated in connection with events said to have occurred during his tenure as a member of parliament, including charges of extortion and murder. The complainants assert that these allegations are fabricated. Fearing for his safety, Mr. Millat is currently in exile.

According to the complainants, Mr. Noor was arrested without a warrant on 15 September 2024 and brought to court the following day in connection with a murder case. Since then, he has been detained in Keraniganj central prison without formal charges. He is accused in at least three separate murder cases brought following deaths during the anti-government protests in July and August 2024, along with several co-accused in each case. The complainants provided information on discrepancies in the cases, which had allegedly been ignored by the authorities. They also allege that the police have failed to provide any investigation reports detailing how Mr. Noor is connected to the crimes of which he is accused. Despite Mr. Noor's advanced age and severe health conditions, including heart disease, spinal degeneration, diabetes and asthma, all bail applications have been denied. He has also been denied the right to receive visits from his family and to make telephone calls. The complainants assert that Mr. Noor's health is worsening, and that without urgent medical intervention his life is at great risk. The complainants have also reported intense pressure to transport him to North Bengal for court hearings, despite repeated submissions to the court highlighting the serious risks that such a long road journey would pose, given his advanced spinal degeneration. Medical documentation already on record indicates that any further strain could result in permanent disability. Furthermore, he requires regular therapy to manage his pain but has been unable to access such treatment for several months.

Mr. Hossain was arrested at his residence on 27 October 2024 in connection with an incident that took place in 2022, despite reportedly having an alibi for the time of the alleged event. The complainants

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allege that Mr. Hossain has been charged without concrete evidence or due process. Both his initial bail application and a subsequent application, which included a request for medical care, have been denied. The complainants also report that Mr. Hossain suffers from Parkinson's disease, heart and lung disease and other serious conditions, and requires constant medical monitoring and physiotherapy. The prison facilities where he is being held lack the necessary infrastructure for his care, which has led to an alarming deterioration in his health. On 9 December 2024, the High Court granted Mr. Hossain bail. However, the Attorney General filed a motion to stay the bail order. On 19 December 2024, the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court upheld the stay, while ordering the authorities to ensure his medical care. According to the complainants, this order has not been implemented. Family members who have visited him in prison report that he has lost an alarming amount of weight and that his mobility has worsened. The complainants state that without urgent adequate medical intervention, Mr. Hossain's life remains at serious risk.

According to the complainants, Mr. Khan was arrested without a warrant on 15 October 2024, while undergoing physiotherapy at the Combined Military Hospital in Dhaka Cantonment. He was allegedly not allowed to collect his medication before being taken into custody. Despite his advanced age and health conditions, which include Parkinson's disease, hypertension and post-stroke complications, no adequate arrangements have been made for his care, all bail applications have been denied, and he remains in custody under harsh conditions. According to the complainants, Mr. Khan was initially arrested in connection with a murder case for an incident in December 2022 involving the death of a member of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party. The complainants assert that the case documents fail to establish a link between Mr. Khan and the crime of which he is accused. Additional charges have been brought against him in connection with deaths during the 2024 student-led protests. He has also been named in a case before the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT), where he and other former officials face unclear allegations. In this case, Mr. Khan and 13 other co-accused former government officials were brought before the ICT for a hearing on 18 November 2024. The defence lawyers reported that, despite several attempts to obtain clarification, no details of the specific charges against Mr. Khan had been provided. The same applied to all the cases brought against him, which has prevented Mr. Khan's legal team from adequately preparing his defence. The complainants also report that Mr. Khan's lawyers have been subjected to aggressive behaviour within the court premises.

The IPU has received reports indicating that more than 100 former parliamentarians, all members of the Awami League, are currently in detention in Bangladesh, facing multiple ongoing criminal proceedings. These detentions appear to have taken place under circumstances very similar to those described in the situations outlined above. Reports have also been received regarding the death of Mr. Nurul Majid Mahmud Humayun in custody on 29 September 2025. At the time of the dissolution of parliament in August 2024, he was a sitting member of parliament and Minister for Industry. It is also reported that several former members of parliament in detention have begun a hunger strike following the death of their fellow inmate.

In the context of ongoing efforts to maintain open channels of communication with the interim government, the IPU leadership has received assurances that the relevant national authorities remain fully committed to upholding the rule of law. However, on two separate occasions, the independent trial observer mandated by the IPU to monitor the legal proceedings in these cases was unable to travel to Bangladesh, as the necessary visas were not granted on time and the repeated requests for support in facilitating visa delivery for an IPU delegation to travel to Bangladesh remain unanswered.

B. Decision

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

1. *Notes with interest* the assurances provided by the interim government that the current administration in Bangladesh is committed to restoring the rule of law and addressing the numerous challenges it faces in this regard; and *regrets*, however, the absence of responses to the various formal communications and requests for information sent to the authorities since August 2024;
2. *Regrets also* that, on two separate occasions, the independent trial observer mandated by the IPU to monitor the legal proceedings in the present cases was unable to travel to Bangladesh owing to delays in the issuance of the necessary visas; *further regrets* that repeated requests for support in facilitating the preparations for an IPU mission, including the timely delivery of visas for an IPU delegation to visit Bangladesh, have thus far remained unanswered;

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3. *Reiterates its deep concern* at the continued detention of Mr. Fazle Karim Chowdhury, Mr. Asaduzzaman Noor, Mr. Mosharraf Hossain and Mr. Muhammad Faruk Khan, in the light of the disturbing allegations of the appalling conditions of detention and the irreversible effects that these conditions are allegedly having on their health; *recalls* that the State of Bangladesh has a heightened duty of care to take all necessary measures to protect the lives of these four former members of parliament since, by arresting them, it has assumed responsibility for their lives and physical integrity; *urges*, in this regard, the competent authorities to take all necessary steps to ensure the full enjoyment of their rights, in particular their right to life, as a matter of urgency, including considering allowing them to receive proper medical treatment from a doctor of their choice and releasing them on bail on humanitarian grounds on a case-by-case basis; and *requests* the competent Bangladeshi authorities to keep it informed of any measures taken in this regard;
4. *Remains deeply concerned* about the allegations of serious violations of the right to a fair trial in the proceedings against the six former parliamentarians listed in the present case, as well as about the nature and severity of the charges, some of which reportedly may carry the death penalty, and at allegations suggesting that the initiation and proliferation of criminal proceedings against former members of the Awami League may be politically motivated; *requests* in this regard, once again, the relevant authorities to provide official and detailed information on the facts justifying each of the charges brought against them; and *urges* the competent authorities to guarantee that these cases are handled fairly and independently, fully respecting international fair trial standards;
5. *Reiterates its wish* to mandate a trial observer to monitor the upcoming court proceedings in the present collective case; *calls on* the relevant authorities to extend their full cooperation to the IPU, including by ensuring timely communications and facilitating the issuance of visas to enable independent observation; and *wishes* to be kept informed of the dates of the trials when available and of any other relevant judicial developments in the case;
6. *Reiterates its wish* to send a delegation to Bangladesh as soon as possible in order to meet with the authorities responsible for exercising legislative, executive and judicial powers, as well as with the prison authorities and any other institution, civil society organization or individual in a position to provide relevant information regarding the situation of the six former parliamentarians; *tasks* the delegation with visiting those in detention; and *reiterates its hope* that the relevant national authorities will cooperate fully and that the mission will help to find satisfactory solutions to this case swiftly and in accordance with applicable national and international human rights standards;
7. *Recognizes* that the issues raised in the present case form part of the broader and complex situation in Bangladesh, which can ultimately be resolved only through the genuine and collective engagement of Bangladeshis themselves; *strongly urges* all relevant political actors to act responsibly and in good faith, and to engage without delay in an inclusive, credible and results-oriented political dialogue aimed at establishing a new social pact through participatory, transparent and non-violent means, in full conformity with the State's international human rights obligations; *calls on* the interim authorities to take all necessary measures to ensure the creation and preservation of conditions conducive to the holding of free, fair and transparent elections announced for early 2026, the outcome of which can be accepted by all stakeholders; *reaffirms* the readiness of the IPU to provide support to these efforts; and *requests* in this regard the competent authorities to communicate, at the earliest opportunity, official information on how such assistance can most effectively be provided;
8. *Recalls*, as stated in the IPU's [Universal Declaration on Democracy](#), that the "key element in the exercise of democracy is the holding of free and fair elections ... enabling the people's will to be expressed ... on the basis of universal, equal and secret suffrage so that all voters can choose their representatives in conditions of equality, openness and transparency"; and *expresses its firm hope*, therefore, that the interim authorities will take all necessary measures to ensure that candidates from all political parties, including the Awami League, and their supporters are able to fully exercise their fundamental right to take part in the conduct of public affairs, on an equal footing with other parties and their supporters;
9. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this decision to the relevant authorities of Bangladesh and the complainants;
10. *Decides* to continue examining this case.

(Endnotes)

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