



Violence, Repression and Pressure Against Journalists During the Interim Government: Bangladesh Media Monitor Safety Tracker Report

Bangladesh Media Monitor regularly records any incidents involving journalists under its 'Safety Tracker.' Despite limited capacity, this work continued during the tenure of the interim government (August 8, 2024 – February 16, 2026). This report presents detailed documentation of incidents affecting journalists during that period.

According to Bangladesh Media Monitor's observations, more than 243 journalists were affected in 119 separate incidents during the interim government's rule. While online news portals were granted registrations without adequate regulation, the government led by Dr. Muhammad Yunus demonstrated a profound failure to control the repression imposed upon journalists.

During this period, in at least 10 incidents, 32 journalists were detained, arrested, or forced to undergo legal accountability under cases filed against them, including abductions carried out by individuals identifying themselves as members of law enforcement agencies. Notably, on February 7, 2026, twenty-one media workers, including an office assistant of Bangladesh Times, were taken by the Bangladesh Army due to content critical of Army Chief Waker-uz-Zaman. They were transported to a temporary army camp near the airport, where all their personal devices were confiscated. Bangladesh Media Monitor observed that this was the first recorded instance of such a large number of journalists being taken from a newsroom simultaneously by the military. Additionally, the detention procedure and case filed against journalist Anis Alamgir generated widespread concern and raised questions about the neutrality of the interim government. In four other incidents, at least five journalists faced legal cases or threats of legal action due to their reporting.

During this government's tenure, seven journalists were found dead, murdered, or died by suicide. They were Ali Mahmud, Rana Pratap Bairagi, Imdadul Haque Milon, A.S.M. Hayat Uddin, Bibhuranjan Sarkar, Swarnamoyee Biswas, and Md. Asaduzzaman Tuhin. Among them, Bibhuranjan Sarkar and Swarnamoyee Biswas died by suicide under separate circumstances. The body of journalist Ali Mahmud of Daily Dinkal was recovered from a washroom at the National Press Club. The remaining individuals were victims of murder.

Physical attacks represented the highest category of violence against journalists. In 38 separate attack incidents, more than 79 journalists were affected while collecting, producing, or publishing news. During this period, attacks occurred on the offices of Prothom Alo and The Daily Star in Dhaka. On December 18, 2025, at least 28 to 30 journalists and staff were trapped inside the buildings. Attackers vandalized and set fire to the premises, forcing journalists to seek refuge on rooftops. They were rescued after four hours with assistance from the Bangladesh Army and Fire Service. Veteran journalist Nurul Kabir of New Age also reported physical assault. Following the attacks, The Daily Star suspended publication for the first time in its 35-year history (excluding scheduled holidays), while Prothom Alo halted publication for the first time in its 27-year history. The Business Standard also suspended publication that day.

The highest number of journalists injured in single-day attack incidents was recorded on January 26, 2026, and February 6, 2026. On January 26, at least ten journalists



were injured in a violent attack by local criminals in the Pachdona area of Narsingdi after refusing extortion demands. On February 6, during coverage of a police operation against ‘Inquilab Mancha’ at InterContinental intersection, law enforcement officers acted aggressively toward journalists. Bangladesh Media Monitor documented that at least ten journalists were attacked by law enforcement personnel on that day.

Attacks during news coverage were also frequent. At least 32 incidents involved attacks by law enforcement agencies and political party activists, affecting more than fifty journalists. In addition to physical violence, journalists were subjected to verbal abuse. During the first ten days of November 2025 alone, three incidents resulted in at least nine journalists being attacked. On election day, February 12, 2026, attacks against journalists intensified significantly, with at least nine journalists injured.

Journalists also faced threats both online and offline due to their reporting. During the interim government period, more than 35 journalists were threatened in 15 separate incidents. These threats included death threats and threats of being burned alive.

Journalists were also dismissed from employment due to pressure from influential actors, sometimes without formal explanation. Bangladesh Media Monitor documented at least 10 journalists being dismissed in three separate incidents. One notable case involved allegations against Hasnat Abdullah, former convener of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement and current NCP leader and Member of Parliament, in connection with the simultaneous dismissal of five media workers from Somoy TV. The dismissed workers were Omar Faruk, Md. Ariful Sajjad, Kamal Shahriar, Debashis Roy, and Bulbul Raja. Additionally, three journalists were dismissed following controversy surrounding a question-and-answer session at a press conference held by the Cultural Affairs Adviser.

In eight additional incidents, at least 15 journalists were affected. On February 6, 2026, Daily Sun photojournalist Tanvin Tamim was threatened with accreditation cancellation by the Bangladesh Cricket Board via email for taking photographs from the President’s Box. In response, sports journalists boycotted the final match of the Indomitable Cup. Furthermore, significant pressure on media organizations was observed. On January 17, 2026, the Facebook page of fact-checking organization The Descent was unpublished due to false copyright claims. Additionally, the Mymensingh Divisional Administration revoked the publishing authorization of 11 local newspapers. The Bangla edition registrations were canceled. Internet access to the BD Today dot net news portal was also blocked.

At the beginning of its tenure, the government permitted the re-broadcast of Diganta Television and allowed the republication of Amar Desh newspaper, declaring support for media freedom. The Ministry of Information, under the advisory government, also approved several online news portals, including The News, Voice of Leaders, Deshkal News, BD CrickTime, Dhaka Mail, Khela dot com, Mirror News, and others. Notably, two online portals under the US-Bangla Group—Dhaka Mail and Khela—were approved simultaneously. However, concerns remain regarding the transparency of approvals and the journalistic standards of several approved portals. Additionally, licenses were granted for Next TV to NCP leader Arifur Rahman Tuhin and for Live TV to former member of the National Citizens’ Committee Arifur Rahman.



Bangladesh Media Monitor

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