Bangladesh Media Monitor

# Safety Tracker Report: October 2026

Monthly monitoring report of the professional safety of journalists

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## Summary

As part of the regular work of Bangladesh Media Monitor's Safety Tracker, BDMM monitored obstruction of journalists in their professional duties, physical assaults, legal harassment and other violent incidents across the country in October 2026. During the month, at least 25 named media workers and 2 media institutions (the printing press of the Daily Amar Desh and the Facebook page of Asia Post) came under direct attack in 24 separate incidents while carrying out professional duties. The Safety Tracker records only incidents linked to media outlets, journalists and news work. Other attacks on journalists, such as land disputes or personal disputes, are not included. The information was collected from news published by recognised media outlets and from open sources through relevant keyword searches on Google, as well as from BDMM's District Media Observers and direct accounts from affected journalists. Observations from BDMM Watch on the wider media environment, which are outside the Safety Tracker count, are presented separately in Section 10. As in previous months, October showed that the working environment for journalists in Bangladesh remains risky and, in some cases, fatal.

Of the 24 incidents recorded, journalists were directly beaten, attacked with weapons, abducted and tortured, or killed in 13 (54.2%), and direct force was used in 15 (62.5%). These included a fatal incident in Netrokona, where a journalist was shot dead. In the last part of the month (25 to 28 October), 37.5% of all incidents (9) took place within just four days. The incidents took place in 15 districts across 7 divisions. The concentration of physical and fatal attacks was much higher in peripheral districts, upazilas and border areas (54.2% of incidents) than in the capital Dhaka (29.2%) and the divisional cities (16.7%).

Alongside journalists who were physically assaulted, members of their families also faced direct physical abuse, attacks and threats of abduction. The incidents also included detention by law enforcement agencies, filing of cases, interrogation and seizure of personal devices, which raise serious concerns about the professional safety and freedom of journalists. Gathering information in the field has become especially difficult for district-level journalists outside Dhaka and the divisional cities.

**Table 1: October 2026 at a glance**

| Indicator | Figure |
|---|---|
| Total incidents recorded | 24 |
| Named media workers affected | 25 (all men) |
| Media institutions affected (premises/platforms) | 2 |
| Journalists killed | 1 (Netrokona) |
| Other media staff injured | 1 (security guard at Amar Desh press) |
| Incidents of direct bodily harm or death | 13 (54.2%) |
| Incidents involving direct use of force | 15 (62.5%) |
| Geographic spread | 15 districts in 7 divisions |
| Incidents in peripheral districts, upazilas and border areas | 13 (54.2%) |

| Indicator | Figure |
|---|---|
| Period of highest concentration | 25 to 28 October: 9 incidents (37.5%) |
| Different media outlets affected | More than 24 |
| Cases filed against journalists | 4 (in 3 incidents) |
| Incidents linked to drug-related coverage | 5 (20.8%) |
| Force incidents in the evening or at night | 8 of 15 |
| Duration of entry ban at Biman headquarters | 21 days (6 to 27 October) |
| Hostile public statements by influential figures (BDMM Watch) | 3 |

## 1. Statistical Analysis of Attacks on Journalists

In October 2026, the Safety Tracker recorded 24 incidents of violence, intimidation, legal harassment and professional obstruction. The table below groups them into 8 main categories:

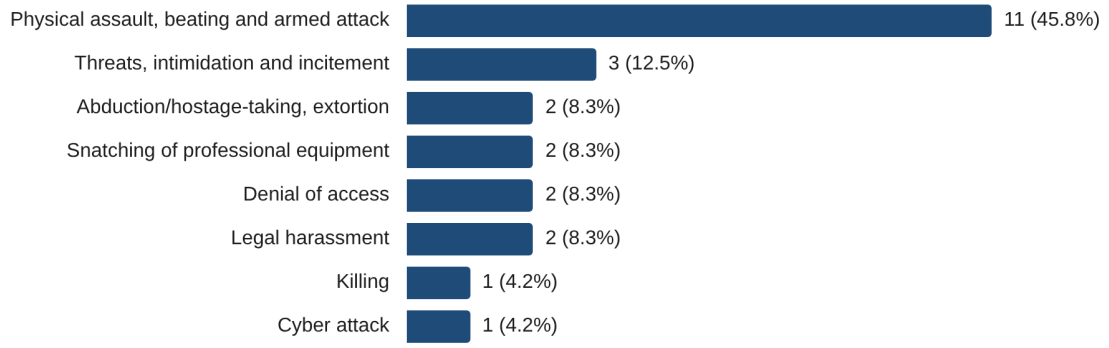
**Table 2: Incidents by type of attack**

| Type of attack | Incidents | Percentage | Brief description |
|---|---|---|---|
| Physical assault, beating and armed attack | 11 | 45.8% | Attacks with machetes, cleavers and hockey sticks; mob beating; attack by intern doctors; journalists beaten with rods at a Jhenaidah college, then handcuffed and arrested in an extortion case; two crude bombs thrown from a motorcycle at the Daily Amar Desh printing press in Tejgaon |
| Threats, intimidation and incitement to violence | 3 | 12.5% | Threat to the resident editor of Channel 24 in Chattogram; call at a religious gathering to beat journalists; death threat to a special correspondent of Aalap |
| Abduction/hostage-taking with torture, extortion | 2 | 8.3% | Journalist held hostage, beaten and forced to transfer money by mobile banking in Halishahar; abduction, torture, a Tk 1 crore extortion demand and recording of an objectionable video in Tongi |
| Snatching of professional equipment | 2 | 8.3% | Attempt to break a Star News camera at the Pongu Hospital; police snatched an Ittefaq journalist's phone and pushed him in Mirpur |
| Denial of access | 2 | 8.3% | Journalists blocked from and removed from a Dhaka court; 21-day entry ban at Balaka, the Biman headquarters (6 to 27 October) |
| Legal harassment | 2 | 8.3% | Case against a Khola Kagoj reporter in the cyber tribunal; Tk 2 crore defamation case against Zoombangla |
| Killing | 1 | 4.2% | Journalist Lutfuzzaman Alif Fakir shot dead in Durgapur, Netrokona |

| Type of attack | Incidents | Percentage | Brief description |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cyber attack | 1 | 4.2% | Cyber attack on Asia Post's Facebook page after its report series on DNCC tenders |
| **Total** | **24** | **100.0%** | **BDMM Safety Tracker, October 2026** |

**Figure 1: Incidents by type of attack**

October 2026, 24 incidents in total




The initial classification shows three notable patterns.

**First,** when four categories are combined (fatal shooting, direct beating and armed wounding, abduction and torture, and beating with rods followed by arrest), journalists suffered direct bodily harm or death in 13 incidents (54.2%). If the police pushing in Mirpur and the crude bomb explosion at the printing press are added, incidents involving direct use of force rise to 62.5% (15 incidents).

**Second,** in 3 incidents (12.5%), journalists' information-gathering devices were directly targeted: an attempt to snatch a mobile phone at Rajshahi University, an attempt to break a broadcast camera at the Pongu Hospital, and the snatching of a mobile phone by police in Mirpur.

**Third,** in 3 incidents (12.5%), large-scale financial pressure or demands were seen: cash looting and extortion through mobile banking in Halishahar, a Tk 1 crore extortion demand in Tongi, and a Tk 2 crore defamation case in Manikganj. In contrast, in Jhenaidah, the journalists themselves were arrested on a counter-allegation of extorting Tk 50,000.

## 2. Gender Breakdown of Affected Journalists

Of the 25 affected journalists named in the records, all 25 (100.0%) were men and none (0.0%) were women. In the high-risk settings where most attacks took place in October 2026, particularly investigations into drug trafficking and smuggling in districts, upazilas and border areas, returning home late at night after work, and field-level political clashes, all named victims were male media workers.

## 3. Most Affected Media Outlets and Platform-Based Risk

### 3.1 Most affected media outlets

In October 2026, more than 24 different print, television and online outlets were affected by attacks and harassment. Because some single incidents involved representatives of more than one outlet, and some journalists represent more than one organisation, the number of incidents and the number of affected staff were counted separately for each outlet. By number of incidents, three national dailies were jointly the most affected: ***Daily Ittefaq***, ***Daily Amar Desh*** and ***Daily Samakal***.

Outlets with more than one staff member affected in a single incident include ***Star News***, ***Zoombangla.com*** and the IP TV channel ***Rupashi Bangla***. The table below shows brief figures for the six most affected outlets:

**Table 3: Six most affected media outlets**

| Media outlet | Incidents | Affected staff or institutional target | Related incidents and harm |
|---|---|---|---|
| Daily Ittefaq | 2 | 2 | Faridganj correspondent Md. Mohiuddin left bleeding; Head of Multimedia Fakhrul Islam's phone snatched and he was pushed by police in Mirpur |
| Daily Amar Desh | 2 | 1 person + 1 institution | Cleaver attack on correspondent Hafizur Rahman in Sarishabari; crude bombs thrown at the main gate of the printing press in Tejgaon on the night of 25 October, injuring a security guard |
| Daily Samakal | 2 | 2 | Mainul Islam Raju injured at Rajshahi University; Masum Lumen attacked in Gaibandha |
| Star News | 1 | 2 | Reporter Md. Sahanur Islam and video journalist Kazi Jewel harassed and their camera nearly broken at the Pongu Hospital |
| Zoombangla.com | 1 | 2 | Correspondent Saiful Islam and the editor named as accused in a Tk 2 crore defamation case filed by an NCP leader in Manikganj |
| Rupashi Bangla (IP TV) | 1 | 1 (killed) | Correspondent Lutfuzzaman Alif Fakir shot dead in Durgapur, Netrokona |

Apart from these six, other outlets affected in single incidents include Dainik Janabani, bdnews24.com, Agamir Somoy, The Daily Star, Channel 24, Daily Inqilab, NTV, risingbd.com, Daily Purbodesh, Daily Gramer Kagoj, Daily Protidiner Kagoj, Daily Sangbad, Daily Khola Kagoj, Asia Post (Facebook page), Daily Kalbela, Daily Protidiner Bangladesh, Bangla-71, Daily Shyamol Sylhet, Sylhetview24.com and Aalap.

### 3.2 Breakdown by platform

The table below shows how the 25 named journalists are spread across types of media:

**Table 4: Affected journalists by type of media**

| Type of media | Affected journalists | Percentage | Related outlets |
|---|---|---|---|
| Print newspapers (including multimedia/photo departments) | 14 | 56.0% | Janabani, The Daily Star, Samakal (1), Agamir Somoy (1), Inqilab, Purbodesh, Gramer Kagoj and Protidiner Kagoj, Sangbad, Ittefaq (2), Khola Kagoj, Kalbela, Protidiner Bangladesh, Shyamol Sylhet |
| Online news portals and IP TV | 6 | 24.0% | bdnews24.com, Aalap (1), Bangla-71 (1), Zoombangla.com, Sylhetview24.com and IP TV Rupashi Bangla |
| Satellite television | 3 | 12.0% | Star News (2), Channel 24 (1) |
| Dual media (print and TV / print and online) | 2 | 8.0% | Amar Desh and NTV (1), Samakal and risingbd.com (1) |
| **Total** | **25** | **100.0%** | |

### 3.3 Risks for multimedia and visual journalists

In at least 7 incidents (29.2%), multimedia correspondents, photojournalists, video journalists or journalists filming or photographing at the scene were attacked. Recording evidence of confrontations at the scene is creating hostility among the parties involved, which is turning into phone snatching and attempts to break cameras.

This is consistent with the second pattern in Table 2, where journalists' cameras and phones were directly targeted in 3 incidents (12.5%). Attacks while filming weapons being hidden at Rajshahi University, a clash at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital, and a factional political clash in Magura suggest that collecting visual evidence at the scene was a significant source of risk for journalists in October.

## 4. Attacks on Campuses and Institutional Premises

On 4 October, between 8:00 and 8:30 pm, an attack took place on the Rajshahi University (RU) campus. According to a detailed report by Ajker Patrika, following a dispute over Facebook posts and comments between the assistant cultural affairs secretary of the Rajshahi University Central Students' Union (RAKSU) and M Ahsan Habib, vice-president of the RU unit of Chhatra Dal, at least 10 Chhatra Dal leaders and activists gathered in front of Ziaur Rahman Hall in a procession, carrying cleavers, machetes, hockey sticks, iron pipes and baseball bats. When journalists tried to film the weapons being hidden in the presence of the proctor and the tense situation, the journalists were attacked with weapons. bdnews24.com's Arifuzzaman Korban, Agamir Somoy's Jahidul Islam (serious head injury), The Daily Star's Noor Ahsan Mridul and Daily Samakal's Mainul Islam Raju were seriously injured.

According to later news reports, the university administration announced it would file a case and formed an inquiry committee. It suspended the studentship of four people, including three Chhatra Dal leaders and activists, and the Chhatra Dal central committee expelled three members. News reports also said the proctor admitted failing to control the attack, and allegations were raised that CCTV footage of the scene was deleted.

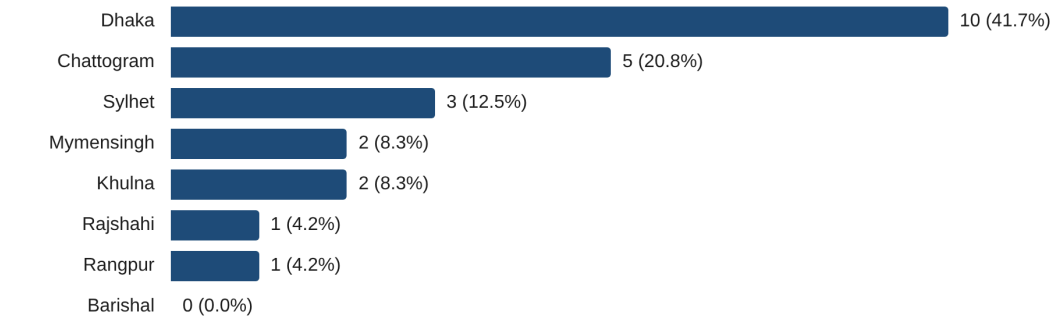
Beyond university campuses, attacks also took place on the premises of other educational institutions and medical colleges. On 26 October, at Jhenaidah Government Nurunnahar Women's College, Aritra Kumar Kundu, district correspondent of Daily Protidiner Bangladesh, and Habibur Rahman Rubel, correspondent of Bangla-71, were beaten with rods while collecting information on irregularities in the sale or smuggling of bricks from the college boundary wall. They were later arrested in handcuffs in a Tk 50,000 extortion case filed by Principal Bijon Kumar Sarkar. In the same month, at the Pongu Hospital (NITOR) in Dhaka, two Star News journalists faced abusive behaviour from doctors and an attempt to break their camera, despite having the director's permission. On 28 October, two journalists were injured in an attack by intern doctors while filming a clash in front of the operation theatre on the fifth floor of Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital. They were Nibendu Talukdar, multimedia reporter of Sylhetview24.com, and Reza Rubel, photojournalist of Daily Shyamol Sylhet.

## 5. District-Level Risk Analysis

In October 2026, 24 incidents took place in 15 districts across 7 of the country's 8 divisions. Only Barishal division recorded no incident. By division, Dhaka recorded the most with 10 incidents (41.7%), followed by Chattogram with 5 (20.8%), Sylhet with 3 (12.5%), Mymensingh with 2 (8.3%), Khulna with 2 (8.3%), Rajshahi with 1 (4.2%) and Rangpur with 1 (4.2%).

**Figure 2: Incidents by division**

October 2026, 24 incidents in total




Eleven incidents (45.8%) took place in the capital Dhaka and the divisional cities. In contrast, 13 incidents (54.2%) took place in peripheral district towns, upazilas, border areas and industrial suburbs. Although 7 incidents took place in Dhaka, none involved the death of a journalist or a serious physical attack. Incidents in Dhaka included denial of access, police interference, obstruction by doctors, death threats, a cyber attack and crude bombs thrown at a printing press.

In contrast, 10 of the 13 incidents in peripheral and regional areas involved direct physical assault, injury with sharp weapons, abduction and torture, or fatal shooting. In Dhaka and the divisional cities, serious physical injury or torture occurred in 3 of the 11 incidents.

**Table 5: Districts where journalists were attacked, October 2026**

| No. | District (Division) | Incidents | Affected journalists |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Dhaka (Dhaka) | 7 | 4* |
| 2 | Gazipur (Dhaka) | 2 | 2 |
| 3 | Chattogram (Chattogram) | 2 | 2 |
| 4 | Chandpur (Chattogram) | 2 | 1 |
| 5 | Rajshahi (Rajshahi) | 1 | 4 |
| 6 | Jhenaidah (Khulna) | 1 | 2 |
| 7 | Sylhet (Sylhet) | 1 | 2 |
| 8 | Manikganj (Dhaka) | 1 | 2** |
| 9 | Netrokona (Mymensingh) | 1 | 1 |
| 10 | Jamalpur (Mymensingh) | 1 | 1 |
| 11 | Sunamganj (Sylhet) | 1 | 1 |
| 12 | Moulvibazar (Sylhet) | 1 | 1 |
| 13 | Gaibandha (Rangpur) | 1 | 1 |
| 14 | Magura (Khulna) | 1 | 1 |
| 15 | Lakshmipur (Chattogram) | 1 | 1 |
| **Total** | **15 districts (7 divisions)** | **24** | **26** |

*Of the 7 incidents in Dhaka, journalists affected by the court access restriction (more than 50 journalists) and the Biman entry ban (several beat journalists) are not counted individually. The Amar Desh printing press and the Asia Post page are counted as institutions. **Manikganj includes the named correspondent and the Zoombangla editor (not named). The district total of 26 is therefore 25 named journalists plus 1 unnamed editor.

## 6. Attackers and Political Links

### 6.1 Rate of political involvement

Two statistical bases are used to measure the involvement of political figures or party organisations in attacks on and harassment of journalists: first, the percentage of all 24 recorded incidents; and second, the percentage of the 18 incidents in which the attacker could be identified. The table below shows both:

**Table 6: Political links of attackers**

| Political link of attacker | Incidents | Share of all 24 incidents | Share of 18 identified incidents |
|---|---|---|---|
| Political link (direct + indirect) | 6 | 25.0% | 33.3% |
| No political link (non-political parties) | 12 | 50.0% | 66.7% |
| Unidentified miscreants or cyber/criminal groups | 6 | 25.0% | Not applicable |
| **Total** | **24** | **100.0%** | **100.0% (18)** |

In other words, one in four recorded incidents had a political link, and in incidents where the attacker was identified, one in three had a political link.

## 6.2 Context of political and electoral rivalry

According to BDMM's incident records, the incidents with political links took place in several kinds of settings:

**Table 7: Context of incidents with political links**

| Context | Place and date | Details (as alleged) |
|---|---|---|
| Campus student politics | Rajshahi University, 4 October | RU Chhatra Dal leaders and activists alleged to have attacked four journalists with locally made weapons |
| Internal party conflict | Shalikha, Magura, 15 October | Jasim Uddin of Daily Gramer Kagoj and Protidiner Kagoj injured while filming a clash between two BNP factions |
| Local election rivalry | Faridganj, Chandpur, 20 October | Ittefaq correspondent Md. Mohiuddin attacked after announcing himself as a prospective mayoral candidate in the upcoming municipal election; he alleged that a former president of the municipal Chhatra Dal and others attacked him |
| Legal action by a political leader | Manikganj, 26 October | Tk 2 crore defamation case by the NCP district organising secretary after a report on alleged embezzlement in the name of providing jobs |
| Threat by a person with a political background | Chattogram, 7 October | A former joint convener of the city Swechchhasebak Dal, described as a criminal on the CMP list, alleged to have threatened the resident editor of Channel 24 |
| Indirect political link | Jhenaidah, 29 October | Second extortion case against jailed journalist Aritra Kundu, filed by a contractor reported to be close to a senior local BNP leader |

These incidents show that field journalists faced risks in all three settings: campus politics, internal party conflict and local election rivalry. Journalists' safety in areas with active local rivalry ahead of the upcoming municipal elections needs close monitoring in the coming months.

### 6.3 Types of actors involved

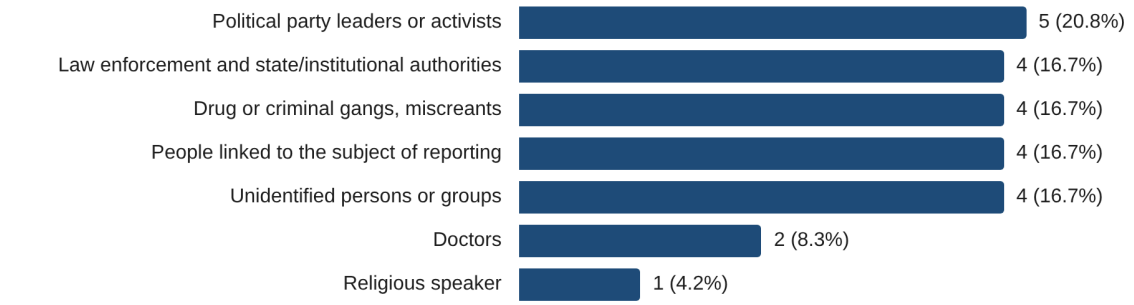
Beyond the political and non-political division, each incident was placed in one category based on the main actor involved, as described in BDMM's incident records. This classification is based on allegations by victims or in news reports. It does not mean that the responsibility of any party has been proven.

**Table 8: Incidents by type of actor involved**

| Type of actor | Incidents | Percentage | Incidents included |
|---|---|---|---|
| Political party leaders or activists | 5 | 20.8% | RU, Magura, Faridganj, Manikganj (defamation case), Chattogram (Channel 24) |
| Law enforcement and state/institutional authorities | 4 | 16.7% | Dhaka court, Biman headquarters, Darus Salam police in Mirpur, Jhenaidah government college |
| Drug or criminal gangs, miscreants | 4 | 16.7% | Sunamganj (drug dealers), Tongi (Kalbela correspondent abducted), Tongi (Inqilab correspondent), Halishahar |
| People linked to the subject of reporting | 4 | 16.7% | Lakshmipur (local businessmen), Gaibandha (trade fair), Aalap (dismissed morgue assistant), Khola Kagoj (former upazila health officer) |
| Unidentified persons or groups | 4 | 16.7% | Netrokona, Sarishabari, Amar Desh printing press, Asia Post |
| Doctors | 2 | 8.3% | Pongu Hospital (NITOR), Osmani Medical |
| Religious speaker | 1 | 4.2% | Religious gathering in Matlab Uttar, Chandpur |
| **Total** | **24** | **100.0%** | |

**Figure 3: Incidents by type of actor involved**

October 2026, 24 incidents in total (based on allegations in BDMM incident records)




This classification shows that the sources of risk in October were varied. No single type of actor was linked to much more than a fifth of all incidents. Notably, law enforcement, state and institutional authorities and doctors together were involved in 6 incidents (25.0%). These are actors from whom journalists should be able to obtain information and access. In Table 6, the

Jhenaidah incident is counted as an indirect political link, but here it is placed under institutional authorities as the main actor involved.

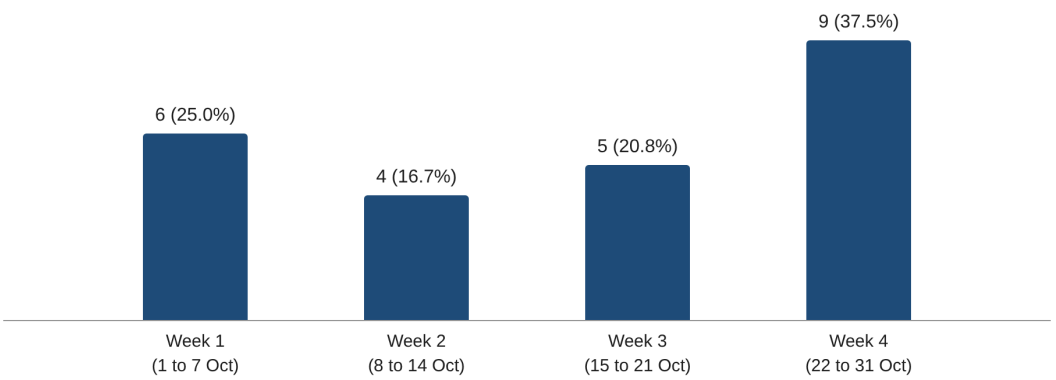
# 7. Time and Topic Analysis

## 7.1 Weekly trend

The weekly timeline shows 6 incidents in the first week of the month (1 to 7 October) and 4 in the second week (8 to 14 October). In the third week (15 to 21 October), including the killing in Netrokona, the number rose to 5, and in the fourth week (22 to 31 October) it reached the month's highest at 9. Notably, all incidents in the fourth week took place **between 25 and 28 October: 37.5% of the month's incidents (9) within just four days**. On 26 October alone, 4 incidents were recorded: two journalists beaten and arrested in Jhenaidah, the Kalbela correspondent abducted in Tongi, a defamation case filed in Manikganj, and a cyber attack on Asia Post's Facebook page.

**Figure 4: Weekly trend of incidents**

October 2026, 24 incidents in total




## 7.2 Risk by reporting topic

The table below shows what kind of news journalists were gathering or publishing when they were attacked (topic/beat analysis):

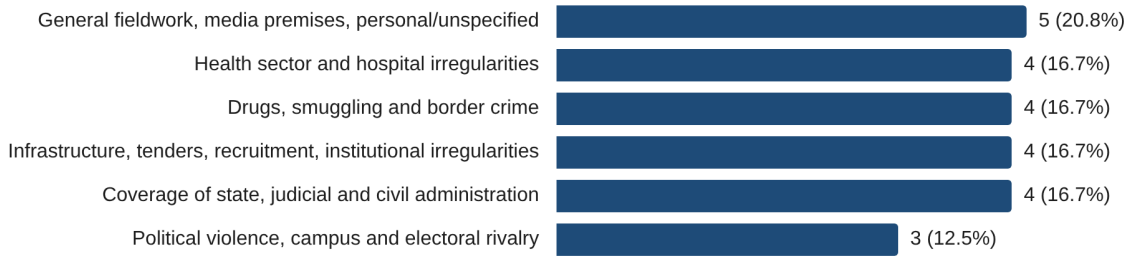
**Table 9: Risk by reporting topic**

| Reporting topic | Incidents | Percentage | Type of risk and key observations |
|---|---|---|---|
| Health sector and hospital irregularities | 4 | 16.7% | Attempt to break a camera at the Pongu Hospital; cyber tribunal case filed by a former upazila health officer of Sreemangal; attack by intern doctors at Osmani Medical; death threat after an investigative report on the Suhrawardy Hospital morgue |

| Reporting topic | Incidents | Percentage | Type of risk and key observations |
|---|---|---|---|
| Drugs, smuggling and border crime | 4 | 16.7% | Shooting death in Netrokona; journalist hacked in Dowarabazar, Sunamganj, after publishing anti-drug news; abduction and torture in Tongi to stop news on drugs, mugging and terrorism; incitement at a religious gathering over coverage of an anti-drug drive. The victim's family in Jhenaidah also alleged a link to an earlier report on drug involvement of local DB police |
| Infrastructure, tenders, recruitment and institutional irregularities | 4 | 16.7% | Road works in Lakshmipur; Asia Post's series on the DNCC tender syndicate; alleged embezzlement in the name of providing jobs; irregularities in the sale of bricks at a Jhenaidah college |
| Coverage of state, judicial and civil administration | 4 | 16.7% | Blocked access to a remand hearing at a Dhaka court; 21-day entry ban at Biman headquarters; news on electricity connections at the Gaibandha trade fair; footpath eviction drive in Mirpur |
| Political violence, campus and electoral rivalry | 3 | 12.5% | Alleged armed attack by Chhatra Dal leaders and activists at RU; filming a clash between two BNP factions in Magura; attack linked to a mayoral candidacy in Faridganj |
| General fieldwork, media premises and personal/unspecified | 5 | 20.8% | News gathering in Tongi; returning home late at night after work in Sarishabari; news gathering in Halishahar; crude bombs at the Amar Desh printing press; threat to the resident editor of Channel 24 |
| **Total** | **24** | **100.0%** | |

**Figure 5: Incidents by reporting topic**

October 2026, 24 incidents in total




Of the 19 incidents with a specific topic, 16 (66.7% of all incidents) were equally divided among four topics: health, drugs and smuggling, infrastructure and tenders, and state administration. This shows that reporting on irregularities, corruption and crime was a major area of risk this month.

## 7.3 Attacks during news gathering and reactions after publication

The incidents can be grouped into three types by timing: attacks or obstruction at the scene while gathering news; attacks, threats, cyber attacks or cases that came as a reaction after a report was published; and incidents where a direct link to news work is not clear.

**Table 10: Incidents by timing in relation to news work**

| Type | Incidents | Percentage | Incidents included |
|---|---|---|---|
| During news gathering (at the scene) | 12 | 50.0% | Lakshmipur, Dhaka court, RU, Pongu Hospital, Biman, Tongi (Inqilab), Gaibandha, Halishahar, Magura, Jhenaidah*, Osmani Medical, Mirpur |
| Reaction after publication | 7 | 29.2% | Sunamganj, Tongi (Kalbela), incitement at a religious gathering, Khola Kagoj, Asia Post, Zoombangla, Aalap |
| Direct link to news work unclear | 5 | 20.8% | Netrokona, Sarishabari, Channel 24, Faridganj, Amar Desh printing press |
| **Total** | **24** | **100.0%** | |

*The Jhenaidah incident took place during news gathering, but the victim's family alleged a link to a previously published report.

Attacks at the scene were mainly physical or aimed at equipment, while reactions after publication mostly took the form of threats, cyber attacks and lawsuits. However, 2 of the 7 post-publication incidents (hacking in Sunamganj and abduction and torture in Tongi) turned into serious physical attacks, and both were linked to anti-drug reporting.

## 7.4 Time of day

Of the 15 incidents involving direct force, 8 (53.3%) took place in the evening or at night and 6 (40.0%) during the day. The time of one incident is not known. Most serious attacks with sharp weapons or firearms, including the month's only killing, took place in the evening or at night. A notable exception was the hacking of the Inqilab correspondent in Tongi at 9:00 am.

**Figure 6: Time of day of incidents involving direct force**

15 incidents involving direct use of force

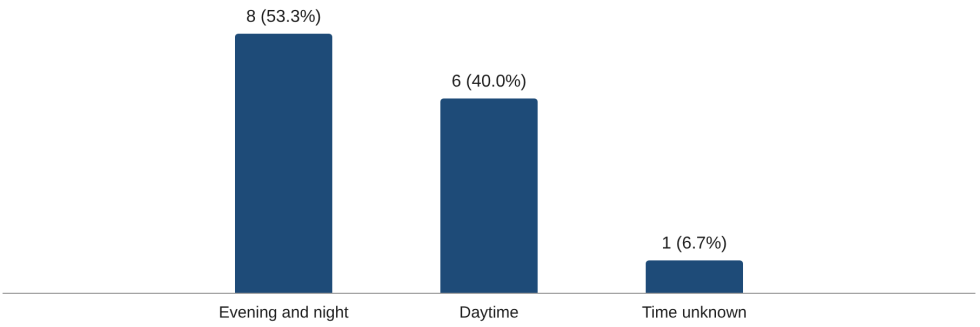


Table 11: Time of incidents involving direct force

| Date | Place | Time | Incident |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4 October | Rajshahi University | 8:00 pm | Attack on four journalists with locally made weapons |
| 11 October | Sarishabari, Jamalpur | 3:00 am | Attack while returning home after work |
| 12 October | Gaibandha | Night | Attack at the trade fair gate |
| 15 October | Durgapur, Netrokona | 8:15 pm | Shot dead |
| 18 October | Dowarabazar, Sunamganj | 8:00 pm | Hacked by drug dealers |
| 25 October | Tejgaon, Dhaka | Night | Crude bombs thrown at the printing press |
| 28 October | Sylhet | Night | Attack by intern doctors |
| 28 October | Mirpur, Dhaka | Night | Phone snatched and journalist pushed by police |
| 1 October | Chandraganj, Lakshmipur | Afternoon | Beaten by local businessmen |
| 9 October | Tongi, Gazipur | 9:00 am | Hacked with sharp weapons |
| 15 October | Shalikha, Magura | Afternoon | Attacked while filming a clash |
| 20 October | Faridganj, Chandpur | Morning | Left bleeding after an attack |
| 26 October | Jhenaidah | Daytime | Beaten with rods, then handcuffed and taken to the police station |
| 26 October | Tongi, Gazipur | 2:00 pm | Abduction, torture and Tk 1 crore extortion demand |
| 14 October | Halishahar, Chattogram | Unknown | Held hostage, beaten and money extorted |

# 8. Legal Action and Accountability

## 8.1 Use of legal action against journalists

Table 2 shows 2 incidents of legal harassment. However, when incidents in other categories are included, 4 cases were filed against journalists or media outlets in 3 incidents in October. Two cases were filed against the same journalist in Jhenaidah.

Table 12: Cases filed against journalists

| Place and date | Journalist(s) concerned | Type of case and complainant | Status |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sreemangal (Moulvibazar), 25 October | Ehsanul Haque, Moulvibazar district staff reporter, Daily Khola Kagoj | Case in the cyber tribunal; complainant is the former Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer of Sreemangal Upazila Health Complex | Filed after several reports on irregularities; human chain held demanding withdrawal |

| Place and date | Journalist(s) concerned | Type of case and complainant | Status |
|---|---|---|---|
| Jhenaidah, 26 October | Aritra Kumar Kundu and Habibur Rahman Rubel | Extortion case; complainant is the college principal | Arrested in handcuffs after being beaten; in jail |
| Manikganj, 26 October | Zoombangla.com editor and district correspondent Saiful Islam | Tk 2 crore defamation case under Sections 499, 500 and 506(2) of the Penal Code; complainant is the NCP district organising secretary | C.R. case in the Manikganj Sadar Cognizance Court |
| Jhenaidah, 29 October | Aritra Kumar Kundu | Second case: alleged Tk 10,000 extortion demand from a contractor | Court rejected bail, allowed one day of questioning at the jail gate, and ordered the password of his seized phone to be given to police |

The Jhenaidah incident needs particular attention. The journalists who were physically attacked were themselves arrested on extortion charges, and a second case was filed against one of them while he was in jail. Aritra's father alleged that they were deliberately framed because of an earlier report on local DB police involvement in drugs. The order to give police the password of the seized phone also raises questions about the confidentiality of a journalist's sources. Cases on defamation, cyber and extortion charges put financial and legal pressure on journalists and may discourage reporting.

## 8.2 Action taken after incidents and accountability

Based on BDMM's incident records and news reports, the table below shows incidents where follow-up action is known:

**Table 13: Action taken after incidents**

| Incident | Follow-up action | Type of action |
|---|---|---|
| Attack on four journalists at RU | Administration announced a case and formed an inquiry committee; studentship of four suspended; Chhatra Dal expelled three (according to news reports) | Institutional and organisational discipline |
| Killing of journalist in Netrokona | One person arrested (according to news reports) | Arrest |
| Journalist hacked in Sunamganj | One person arrested | Arrest |
| Journalist held hostage in Halishahar | Two people arrested | Arrest |
| Attack on journalist in Gaibandha | Accused person arrested on the morning of 13 October | Arrest |
| Phone snatched by police in Mirpur | Darus Salam police station OC apologised; phone returned; the police member involved expressed regret | Apology |

| Incident | Follow-up action | Type of action |
|---|---|---|
| Entry ban at Biman | Lifted after 21 days, on the afternoon BDMM published its report | Decision withdrawn |
| Crude bombs at the Amar Desh press | Case filed with police | Case |
| Death threat to Aalap journalist | General Diary (GD) filed at Mirpur police station on 28 October | GD |
| Call to beat journalists at a religious gathering | Legal notice on 25 October demanding an apology within seven days | Legal notice |
| Case against Khola Kagoj journalist | Human chain demanding withdrawal of the case | Public protest |
| Journalists beaten in Jhenaidah | The attacked journalists were arrested; bail rejected; second case filed | Action against the victims |

This shows that arrests were reported in at least 4 incidents (Netrokona, Sunamganj, Halishahar and Gaibandha), and institutional disciplinary action in one (RU). In two incidents involving state bodies (Mirpur and Biman), the authorities apologised or withdrew their decision. In Jhenaidah, however, action was taken against the journalists who were attacked. No information was found on follow-up in the remaining incidents; their progress should be tracked in future reports.

## 9. Specific Trends

### 9.1 Drug-related reporting: a connected risk

The issue of drugs came up repeatedly across different types of incidents in October. In 5 incidents (20.8%), there was a direct or alleged link to drug-related news or coverage of anti-drug operations. These include the month's only killing, one hacking and one abduction with torture.

**Table 14: Incidents linked to drug-related coverage**

| Incident | Type | Link (according to available information) |
|---|---|---|
| Netrokona, 15 October | Shot dead | News reports said the journalist wrote about drug trafficking on social media |
| Dowarabazar, Sunamganj, 18 October | Hacked | Attacked by drug dealers for publishing anti-drug news |
| Matlab Uttar, Chandpur, 19 October | Incitement to violence | Call to beat journalists, accusing them of not reporting the positive side of an anti-drug drive |
| Tongi, Gazipur, 26 October | Abduction and torture | Threatened not to publish news on drugs, mugging and terrorism |
| Jhenaidah, 26 October | Beaten and arrested | Victim's father alleged they were framed because of an earlier report on local DB police involvement in drugs |

In addition, on 26 October the Inspector General of Police linked journalists' reports to not receiving money from drug dealers (see Section 10.1). Drug-related journalism is therefore under pressure from two sides: violence from drug gangs and public criticism of coverage.

### 9.2 Early warning signs and repeat targets

In at least two incidents, the journalists were already known to be at risk. According to BDMM's District Media Observer in Netrokona, Lutfuzzaman Alif Fakir, who was killed, had been hacked by miscreants on 10 November last year at the Teribazar Ghat area of the Someshwari River. In Jhenaidah, Aritra Kumar Kundu had filed a General Diary earlier in October, fearing that he might be framed in a false case. In both cases, serious incidents followed an earlier attack or a formal complaint about a threat. This shows the need for protective measures based on journalists' earlier complaints and GDs.

### 9.3 Leaders of journalist organisations and journalists working for several outlets

At least three of the affected journalists hold leadership positions in local or professional journalist organisations: Mohammad Hafizur Rahman, general secretary of Dhanbari Press Club (Sarishabari); M A Motaleb Bhuiyan, general secretary of Dowarabazar Upazila Press Club (Sunamganj); and Fakhrul Islam, president of MRA and Head of Multimedia at Ittefaq (Mirpur). At least three affected journalists also work for more than one outlet: Hafizur Rahman (Amar Desh and NTV), Masum Lumen (Samakal and risingbd.com) and Jasim Uddin (Daily Gramer Kagoj and Protidiner Kagoj). For district and upazila journalists working for several outlets, institutional support and responsibility after an attack can be harder to establish.

## 10. The Wider Media Environment: BDMM Watch Observations

Beyond the 24 Safety Tracker incidents, BDMM Watch observed several developments in October that affected the environment for journalism. These are not included in the figures above, but they are relevant to understanding the overall picture for the month.

### 10.1 Hostile public statements by influential figures

Between 19 and 31 October, within 13 days, influential figures from three different spheres (religious, law enforcement and political) made hostile public comments about journalists or media outlets.

**Table 15: Hostile public statements about journalists or media outlets**

| Date | Speaker | Statement | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| 19 October | Islamic speaker Dr. Syed Muhammad Enayetullah Abbasi | At a religious gathering in Matlab Uttar, Chandpur, called journalists "the worst" and said they should be beaten | BDMM statement on 20 October; legal notice on 25 October |

| Date | Speaker | Statement | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| 26 October | Inspector General of Police (IGP) Md. Ali Hossain Fakir | At an event in Chawkbazar, said some journalists report the police as ineffective when they fail to get money from drug dealers | Police Headquarters said the remark was made inadvertently; on 27 October BDMM called for withdrawal and an apology |
| 31 October | Rashed Khan, political assistant to the Prime Minister | Posted a video on social media tearing a copy of Amar Desh, saying two of its reports damaged his reputation, and questioned who funded them | No formal response recorded |

BDMM noted in its statements that such remarks by influential figures in public forums can endanger the safety of grassroots journalists. In the same month, the Daily Amar Desh faced three different kinds of pressure: an attack on its correspondent in Sarishabari, crude bombs at its printing press in Tejgaon, and public criticism by a government office holder.

## 10.2 Access to state institutions

From 6 October, journalists were barred from entering Balaka, the headquarters of Biman Bangladesh Airlines. According to Biman's public relations officer, the ban was imposed on the direct instruction of the managing director. On 25 October, Boishakhi Television reporter Partha Rahman and Ekattor Television senior reporter Rashed Anis were turned away at the main gate when they went to seek comments on disruptions to Saudi Arabia-bound flights and passenger hardship. Aviation reporters said they had been unable to get comments from officials for about 20 days. On 27 October, BDMM published a report on the ban having lasted 21 days, and Biman lifted the ban the same afternoon.

Earlier in the month, on 3 October, journalists were blocked from entering a Dhaka court during the remand hearing of Major (Retd.) Akhtaruzzaman. Both incidents are examples of limited access to public-interest information at state institutions. The lifting of the Biman ban shows the effect of monitoring and public reporting.

## 10.3 Lengthy legal processes and long-term impunity

**Table 16: Lengthy court and investigation processes**

| Matter | Progress in October | Background |
|---|---|---|
| Case against three journalists at the International Crimes Tribunal | On 25 October, Tribunal-2 extended the deadline for the investigation report to 5 January 2027 | Bhorer Kagoj editor Shyamal Dutta, former Ekattor TV editor-in-chief Mozammel Babu and former chief reporter Farzana Rupa have been in jail in this case since 24 August; they are accused of provocative questions at a press conference on 14 July 2024 |

| Matter | Progress in October | Background |
|---|---|---|
| Sagar-Runi murder case | The High Court gave the task force six more months; the progress report is due by 29 April 2027 | Journalist couple Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Runi were killed on 11 February 2012; the case remains unresolved after more than 14 years |
| Jhenaidah journalist Aritra Kundu | Bail rejected on 29 October; questioning at the jail gate allowed; second case filed | In jail in an extortion case after being attacked while gathering news |

On one side, journalists face long detention and repeated extensions of investigation deadlines in cases against them. On the other, investigations into serious crimes such as the killing of journalists remain unresolved for more than a decade. Together, these trends raise questions about the position of journalists in the justice process.

## 11. Overall Observations

- Direct force was used in 62.5% of the 24 incidents recorded in October 2026, and one journalist was killed. He had also been attacked a year earlier.
- Attacks were more severe in peripheral districts, upazilas and border areas than in the capital. Ten of the 13 incidents there involved direct physical or fatal attacks.
- Most incidents involving force (8 of 15) took place in the evening or at night.
- The sources of risk were varied: political leaders and activists, law enforcement and institutional authorities, criminal gangs, doctors and people linked to the subject of reporting were involved in different incidents.
- Drug-related journalism was one of the most serious areas of risk, with a link to drugs found in 5 incidents.
- Journalists filming or photographing at the scene were at particular risk, and cameras and phones were directly targeted.
- Incidents were heavily concentrated in the last part of the month, especially 25 to 28 October. Hostile public statements by influential figures came in the same period.
- Some incidents led to arrests, apologies or withdrawn decisions. However, in Jhenaidah the journalists who were attacked were jailed, and long-running cases such as the Sagar-Runi murder remain unresolved.

## Appendix: Full List of Incidents, October 2026

The 24 incidents recorded by the BDMM Safety Tracker, by date:

**Table 17: Incidents in October 2026**

| No. | Date | Place | Affected (media outlet) | Brief description |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 Oct | Chandraganj, Lakshmipur | Ismail Hossain (Dainik Janabani) | Obstructed and beaten by local businessmen while gathering news on road works |
| 2 | 3 Oct | Dhaka | Journalists at the court | Blocked from and removed from the remand hearing of Major (Retd.) Akhtaruzzaman |
| 3 | 4 Oct | Rajshahi University | Arifuzzaman Korban (bdnews24.com), Jahidul Islam (Agamir Somoy), Noor Ahsan Mridul (The Daily Star), Mainul Islam Raju (Samakal) | Alleged attack by Chhatra Dal leaders and activists with locally made weapons; attempt to snatch phones |
| 4 | 6 Oct | Pongu Hospital, Dhaka | Md. Sahanur Islam and Kazi Jewel (Star News) | Abusive behaviour by doctors and attempt to break a camera despite the director's permission |
| 5 | 6 to 27 Oct | Balaka, Dhaka | Journalists covering Biman | 21-day entry ban at Biman headquarters |
| 6 | 7 Oct | Chattogram | Kamal Parvez (Resident Editor, Channel 24) | Threats and intimidation |
| 7 | 9 Oct | Tongi, Gazipur | Maruf Hossain (Daily Inqilab) | Attacked with sharp weapons by miscreants lying in wait while gathering news |
| 8 | 11 Oct | Sarishabari, Jamalpur | Mohammad Hafizur Rahman (Amar Desh and NTV) | Attacked at night while returning home after work |
| 9 | 12 Oct | Gaibandha | Masum Lumen (Samakal and risingbd.com) | Attacked while returning from news gathering at the trade fair |
| 10 | 14 Oct | Halishahar, Chattogram | Md. Abul Hossain (Daily Purbodesh) | Held hostage while gathering news, beaten, cash looted and money extorted by mobile banking |
| 11 | 15 Oct | Durgapur, Netrokona | Lutfuzzaman Alif Fakir (Rupashi Bangla IP TV) | Shot dead by miscreants |
| 12 | 15 Oct | Shalikha, Magura | Jasim Uddin (Gramer Kagoj and Protidiner Kagoj) | Attacked while filming a clash between two BNP factions |
| 13 | 18 Oct | Dowarabazar, Sunamganj | M A Motaleb Bhuiyan (Daily Sangbad) | Hacked by drug dealers for publishing anti-drug news |
| 14 | 19 Oct | Matlab Uttar, Chandpur | Journalists in general | Call at a religious gathering to beat journalists |

| No. | Date | Place | Affected (media outlet) | Brief description |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 15 | 20 Oct | Faridganj, Chandpur | Md. Mohiuddin (Daily Ittefaq) | Left bleeding after an attack following his announcement of a possible mayoral candidacy |
| 16 | 25 Oct | Sreemangal, Moulvibazar | Ehsanul Haque (Daily Khola Kagoj) | Cyber tribunal case after reports on irregularities |
| 17 | 25 Oct | Tejgaon, Dhaka | Daily Amar Desh (printing press) | Two crude bombs thrown from a motorcycle; one exploded |
| 18 | 26 Oct | Jhenaidah | Aritra Kumar Kundu (Protidiner Bangladesh) and Habibur Rahman Rubel (Bangla-71) | Beaten with rods while collecting information on college irregularities, then handcuffed and arrested in an extortion case |
| 19 | 26 Oct | Manikganj | Saiful Islam and the editor (Zoombangla.com) | Tk 2 crore defamation case |
| 20 | 26 Oct | Tongi, Gazipur | Mohiuddin Ripon (Daily Kalbela) | Abducted in daylight, tortured, Tk 1 crore extortion demand and objectionable video recorded |
| 21 | 26 Oct | Dhaka | Asia Post (Facebook page) | Cyber attack after the second part of its series on DNCC tenders |
| 22 | 28 Oct | Sylhet | Reza Rubel (Shyamol Sylhet) and Nibendu Talukdar (Sylhetview24.com) | Attacked by intern doctors while filming a clash at Osmani Medical |
| 23 | 28 Oct | Mirpur, Dhaka | Fakhrul Islam (Daily Ittefaq) | Phone snatched and pushed by Darus Salam police while covering a footpath eviction drive |
| 24 | 28 Oct | Dhaka | Dipu Sikder (Aalap) | Death threats after an investigative report on a hospital morgue; GD filed |