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Press Release

Human Rights Situation in Bangladesh: Report for May 2026

Bangladesh's human rights situation in May 2026 passed through various challenges and concerns. Incidents related to political activities, law and order, freedom of expression, the safety of women and children, and the border situation affected the overall human rights condition of the country.

Observations indicate that throughout the month, allegations of clashes, violence, and administrative interference were raised in different places centering on political programs, meetings, rallies, and processions. These incidents have created concerns regarding citizens' constitutional rights and the environment for democratic participation.

Concerns also continued regarding freedom of expression and media freedom. Allegations were received of various forms of harassment and pressure related to expressing opinions on social media and raising issues of public interest. At the same time, incidents of attacks on journalists, threats, and obstruction in carrying out professional duties have once again raised questions about independent journalism and the security of the media.

Regarding the law and order situation, incidents of murder, mob violence, extortion, attacks on shrines, and other violent crimes appeared concerning for public safety. In particular, the human rights situation of women and children remained highly alarming. Incidents of rape, sexual harassment, domestic violence, killings of women, and child abuse continued. Violence against women and children in both online and offline spaces emerged as a serious challenge to social security and human protection.

In addition, tensions and conflicts occurred in various places centering on workers' movements to realize their legitimate demands. Some incidents that could undermine religious and social harmony were also observed throughout the month, causing concern for social stability.

The security situation of civilians in border areas also remained worrying. Incidents of shootings, torture, detention, push-ins, and casualties at the border further highlighted concerns regarding the human rights and security of border populations in the two neighboring countries.

A matter of concern is that, over the past three months, information has emerged indicating the deaths of more than 600 children nationwide due to various limitations in the treatment and vaccination management of children affected by measles symptoms, shortages of medical facilities, and inadequacies in healthcare services. At the same time, weaknesses in road management during Eid-ul-Adha, deficiencies in traffic control, and reckless driving by drivers resulted in various road accidents that claimed the lives of approximately 300 people, giving rise to concern.

Overall, the human rights situation in May 2026 has once again highlighted the necessity of protecting citizens' rights, establishing the rule of law, ensuring good governance, and strengthening institutional accountability. Impartial investigations into every incident of human rights violations, effective remedies, and the protection of civil liberties and security are essential for the country's democratic and humanitarian progress.

Based on news reports published in 16 national media outlets of Bangladesh and information collected by the Human Rights Support Society (HRSS), the following findings emerged in the Human Rights Monitoring Report for May 2026:



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Political Violence:

In May, at least 5 people were killed and 289 others were injured in a minimum of 64 incidents of political violence. Most of these violent incidents were linked to struggles for dominance, political rivalries and attacks, intra-party conflicts, and extortion. Compared to April, both the number of incidents of political violence and the number of casualties decreased. In April, 6 people were killed and 533 others were injured in 98 incidents of political violence.

Among the 64 incidents of violence recorded in May, 18 incidents of intra-party conflict within the BNP resulted in at least 114 injuries. In 10 clashes between BNP and Jamaat, 49 people were injured and 1 person was killed. In 14 clashes between BNP and the Awami League, 72 people were injured and 2 people were killed. In 2 clashes between BNP and NCP, 2 people were injured, while 11 clashes between BNP and other political parties left 27 people injured. In addition, 25 people were injured in 7 incidents involving various political parties. Furthermore, 2 members of the UPDF were killed in 2 separate incidents.

Of the 5 people killed, 1 was a BNP member, 1 was a Jamaat member, 2 were members of the Chittagong Hill Tracts-based political party UPDF, and 1 was an ordinary woman.

Among these incidents, 6 clashes involving campus-based student organizations resulted in 15 injuries. Of these, 2 incidents involving Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal and Islami Chhatra Shibir left 2 people injured, while 4 incidents involving Chhatra Dal, other student organizations, and general students resulted in 11 injuries.

SL	BNP – BNP	Incidents	Injured	Killed
1	BNP – Jamaat	18	114	
2	BNP – Awami League	10	49	1
3	BNP – NCP	14	72	2
4	BNP – Other Parties	2	2	
5	Among Other Parties	11	27	
6	UPDF – Other Parties	7	25	
7	BNP – BNP	2		2
Total		64	289	5

Attacks on Political Party Activists

In addition, in at least 5 incidents of attacks by miscreants on leaders and activists of political parties, at least 7 people were injured and 1 person was killed. At least 11 political leaders and activists sustained gunshot injuries. Furthermore, across the country, 8 incidents related to domination, land grabbing, political violence, and extortion resulted in clashes, attacks, looting, vandalism, and arson targeting at least 134 houses, business establishments, and party offices.



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Harassment and Persecution of Journalists

It is concerning that, during this month, at least 78 journalists were subjected to harassment and persecution in 39 separate incidents. Among them, at least 42 journalists were injured, 18 were assaulted or humiliated, and 9 received threats. One journalist was arrested, while 8 journalists were accused in 2 separate cases. On 21 May, two journalists were injured in gunfire used to disperse a local blockade following an alleged attempted rape of a child in Bakalia, Chattogram. On 7 May, police arrested Jiten Kumar Barua, district correspondent of the Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) and Somoy Television in Khagrachhari, in connection with five cases filed after 5 August 2024.

Mob Violence and Lynching

During the month, at least 31 people were killed and 68 others were injured in 66 incidents of mob violence and lynching. On 3 May, local residents in Nagarkanda Upazila of Faridpur beat to death a young man named Hannan Sheikh (35) after spreading a rumor that he had run over multiple people with a truck. On 9 May, residents in the Bagchala area of Kaliakair Upazila, Gazipur, carried out a mob beating against three individuals accused of cattle theft, resulting in the deaths of all three at the scene. Additionally, on 17 May, in Asannagar village of Alamdanga Upazila, Chuadanga, a young man named Dudu (22) was brutally tortured and beaten to death on allegations of stealing a van. Reports indicate that hot water was poured on his body before he was killed.

Violence Against Women and Children

In May, at least 305 women and girl children were subjected to violence and abuse. Among them, at least 83 were victims of rape, of whom 57 (70%) were children and adolescents under the age of 18. It is particularly alarming that 17 women and girl children were victims of gang rape, while 6 victims were murdered after rape, including 4 children. A total of 76 women and girl children were subjected to sexual harassment or abuse, including 42 children. As a result of domestic violence, 63 women were killed, 31 were injured, and 45 women died by suicide. In addition, dowry-related violence resulted in 3 deaths, 4 injuries, and 1 suicide. Furthermore, one woman was injured in an acid attack. On 19 May, in the Pallabi area of Mirpur, Dhaka, a 7-year-old child, Ramisa Akter, was allegedly raped and murdered by having her throat slit by a tenant of a neighboring apartment, Sohel Rana (30). On 3 May, in Faridpur, a 7-year-old child named Airin Akter Kabita was reportedly strangled to death after an attempted rape. On 22 May, in Naogaon District, a housewife named Rehana (20) was allegedly beaten to death by her husband and mother-in-law for failing to provide dowry money. On 30 May, in Islampur, Jamalpur, a woman named Akhia Akter (28) was injured after an acid attack carried out late at night.

Violence Against Children

It is also concerning that, in May, at least 215 children were subjected to abuse and violence. Among them, 56 children lost their lives, while 211 children suffered physical and psychological abuse.

Furthermore, during the past three months, at least 600 children reportedly died across the country due to mismanagement and shortages in vaccination, as well as inadequate access to advanced medical



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treatment for measles-related symptoms. On 27 May, six newborn babies died simultaneously at Ad-din Medical College Hospital in Moghbazar, Dhaka, allegedly due to mismanagement and deficiencies in healthcare services.

Freedom of Expression

This month, incidents of interference with freedom of expression increased significantly. During the month, at least 06 people were arrested and 7 cases were filed in at least 11 incidents. At least 12 people were accused in these cases. Among them, 1 person was arrested for posting on Facebook criticizing Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, 6 people for criticizing leaders and activists of the ruling party BNP, 2 people on allegations of hurting religious sentiments and making derogatory remarks, and 1 person on other issues. On the other hand, 12 people were accused in 5 separate cases under various sections of the Cyber Security Ordinance-2025.

Obstruction of Meetings and Assemblies

This month, several incidents of interference by law enforcement agencies in the exercise of the right to peaceful assembly were observed. According to available information, during the period, law enforcement agencies and activists of the ruling party directly or indirectly obstructed at least 10 meetings and assemblies, as a result of which organizers were compelled to postpone, disperse, or cancel their scheduled programmes.

Such interference created clashes and disorderly situations, and at least 41 people were injured, including political activists, students, workers, and ordinary passersby. On 17 May, a clash occurred between police and students at Dhaka University of Engineering and Technology (DUET) in Gazipur over the appointment of a new Vice-Chancellor, in which at least 25 people, including police personnel, were injured.

Killings and Torture at the Border

In May, in 06 incidents along the India-Bangladesh border, 04 people were killed and 20 people were injured in attacks by the Indian Border Security Force (BSF), among whom 03 sustained gunshot injuries. In addition, 14 people were detained. The BSF pushed in at least 166 people into Bangladesh through different border areas of the country.

On 09 May, two Bangladeshis, Md. Mursalin (20) and Nabin Hossain (55), were killed by gunfire fired by the BSF at the Indian border in Kasba, Brahmanbaria. In addition, on 14 May, a Bangladeshi youth named Khadimul Islam (25) was killed by BSF gunfire at the Amjhol border in Hatibandha Upazila of Lalmonirhat.

On the other hand, 3 people were killed and 1 person was injured in landmine explosions planted along the Bangladesh-Myanmar border. In addition, 18 people were detained by the Arakan Army in 4 incidents. On 24 May, three locals named Leyara (41), Ongkemon (50), and Chingka Ong (40) were killed in a landmine explosion allegedly planted by the Arakan Army in the Ghumdhum area of Naikhongchhari along the Bangladesh-Myanmar border.

Religious and Minority Persecution

It is concerning that, this month, 5 people were injured in at least 03 attacks on minority communities, while 6 houses were attacked and vandalized and 1 incident of land grabbing occurred.



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On 4 May, in Ratia Rajapur village of Sarankhola, Bagerhat district, an attack, vandalism of houses and furniture, and looting took place against a minority (Hindu) family headed by Robin Dhali following a dispute over land. During the incident, 5 female members of the family were assaulted by the attackers.

In addition, attacks occurred on 2 shrines (mazars) in Kushtia and Dhaka, during which several people were injured. On 14 May at midnight, an attack was carried out with sticks and iron pipes on the shrine of Hazrat Shah Ali (R.) in Mirpur, Dhaka, during which several devotees and visitors of the shrine were injured.

Extrajudicial Killings (Deaths in Custody/Torture/Shooting/Crossfire)

According to news published in various media outlets, information collected from victims' families, and HRSS records, on 18 May, a fisherman named Aminur Rahman Gazi (45) was shot and killed by Forest Department personnel while collecting crabs in the Shatomukhi Canal area of the Khulna Range of the Sundarbans. Aminur Rahman was a resident of the No. 9 Sora area of Gabura Union in Shyamnagar Upazila, Satkhira.

In addition, on 13 May, a young man named Al Amin (26) died after jumping into the Brahmaputra River while attempting to flee during an anti-narcotics operation conducted by the Department of Narcotics Control (DNC) in Jamalpur.

Deaths in Prison Custody

This month, at least 7 accused persons died in prisons across the country. Among them, 4 were convicted prisoners and 3 were under-trial detainees. Of the deceased, 1 was affiliated with the Awami League and 6 belonged to other categories. On 19 May, Debashish Chowdhury, an accused in the July-August murder case and an inmate of Chattogram Central Jail, died after suffering a heart attack. However, the deceased's family alleged that Debashish Chowdhury died due to torture inside the prison.

In addition, on 25 May, Abdul Latif, former Public Prosecutor (PP) of the District Judge Court and adviser to the District Awami League, died while under treatment during his detention in Satkhira District Jail.

Deaths in Attacks by Miscreants and Unidentified Bodies

In May, a total of 28 unidentified dead bodies were recovered. Among them, 6 had their throats slit, 5 bodies bore injury marks on different parts of the body, and 5 bodies were recovered in a decomposed condition. In addition, the number of bodies recovered due to other causes or under unknown circumstances was 12.

Furthermore, 130 dead bodies were recovered in 122 incidents of attacks by miscreants. Among them were 17 women, 8 persons with political identities, 25 businesspersons, 3 students, 20 day labourers and workers, and 59 other youths and elderly persons of various identities.

Worker Abuse

In May, at least 20 workers were killed and at least 130 workers were injured in 57 incidents of worker abuse. In addition, due to unhealthy working environments and the lack of protective equipment for workers, at least 41 workers died in workplace accidents. On 15 May, the body of a



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worker named Yunus Mia (40) was recovered from a warehouse of a plastic waste factory in Kamalbagh, Chawkbazar, Dhaka. At that time, injury marks were found on his body and head.

Cases and Arrests

According to available information, at least 23 cases were filed in connection with various incidents of violence and political events that occurred during this period. In these cases, 405 persons were named as accused and approximately 932 others were made unidentified accused. In addition, during the same month, at least 331 persons were arrested in a total of 212 incidents involving political and other matters.

Among those arrested were at least 246 leaders and activists of the Awami League, 64 of the BNP, 12 of Jamaat-e-Islami, and 9 members of the National Citizen Party (NCP). During the same period, special operations by joint forces were conducted across the country to maintain the law and order situation. In these operations, more than 1,935 persons were arrested. According to relevant sources, a large portion of those arrested were leaders and activists of the Awami League, Jubo League, Swechchhasebak League, and the banned Chhatra League, as well as members of various extremist organizations.

To establish the rule of law, strengthen the democratic process, and protect human rights in the country, coordinated initiatives are required at all levels of the state and society. It is essential to create an inclusive environment through constructive dialogue with political parties, civil society, journalists, human rights organizations, and conscious citizens, so that the law and order situation can be strengthened and the fundamental and constitutional rights of the people can be effectively ensured.

If issues such as mob lynching and mob violence, political tensions, and interference with freedom of expression are not addressed, the human rights situation may deteriorate further. Therefore, HRSS calls upon the government to take more accountable and responsible measures to protect human rights and, at the same time, urges all citizens, media professionals, civil society, and human rights organizations to play a more vocal and active role.