



HUMAN RIGHTS SUPPORT SOCIETY (HRSS)

D-3, # 3rd floor, Plot # 2, Nur-Jehan Tower, 2nd Link Road, Bangla Motor, Dhaka-1000,
Bangladesh. E-mail: hrssbd14@gmail.com, Web: www.hrssbd.org

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Human Rights Situation in Bangladesh – 2024 **HRSS Human Rights Monitoring Report**

After 53 years of independence, the people of Bangladesh have yet to fully reap the benefits of true freedom. In 2024, concepts like equality, human dignity, social justice, democracy, and human rights still seem like distant dreams for many in the country. Particularly until August 2024, the human rights situation reached a terrifying and deeply concerning low. Despite Bangladesh's constitutional obligations and commitments under international law to protect human rights, the state saw not only a significant deterioration but also alarming crises in crucial areas like the rule of law, democracy, voting rights, freedom of expression, assembly, and social security throughout the year.

The year 2024 began with another unacceptable and controversial election marred by violence, reminiscent of the disputed and flawed elections of 2014 and 2018, during which many people were denied the opportunity to vote. The situation further escalated in June 2024, when an anti-discrimination student movement erupted in response to the High Court's declaration of the government's 2018 directive to abolish quotas as illegal. The government responded the protest with extensive crackdowns during July and August, resulting in thousands of injuries and deaths among students and civilians. Incidents of baton charges, tear gas, sound grenades, water cannons, shootings, enforced disappearances, killings, arrests, false charges, and harassment became daily occurrences.

Furthermore, during the protests, the past-government imposed an internet blackout and declared a state of emergency, leading to widespread massacres. Members of the ruling Awami League and its affiliate organizations, including its youth and student wings, joined state forces in these violent attacks. Amidst the unrest, public outrage culminated in a mass uprising. On August 5, after the autocratic Prime Minister fled the country, triggering widespread looting, chaos, attacks on homes and private establishments, minority attack, extrajudicial killings, mob violence, harassment, and extortion. Law and order broke down across the nation, with rampant politically motivated attacks. Notably, members of the Awami League and supporters of Sheikh Hasina's government became specific targets.

Subsequently, on August 8, an interim government led by Nobel laureate Dr. Muhammad Yunus took charge, facing severe challenges in restoring order. The administration struggled with non-cooperation from the civil administration and law enforcement agencies, pushing the country into further disarray. Even during this period, human rights violations continued unabated and remain till now.

On January 7, 2024, Bangladesh held its 12th parliamentary elections, which were boycotted by the BNP and most opposition parties. Following the pattern of the flawed elections in 2014 and 2018, this election, too, was conducted without opposition parties and saw widespread violence, clashes, killings, vandalism, arson, and looting across most districts of the country. Despite these events, the majority of Bangladesh's population abstained from voting. January



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also witnessed intensified efforts to suppress political dissent through politically motivated cases, arrests, and restrictions on public assemblies. During this month, at least 18 people were killed, and no fewer than 1,464 were injured in 553 incidents of "political violence."

In February and March, intra-party conflicts within the ruling Awami League and its student wing, the Chhatra League, resulted in further violence. Peaceful rallies were disrupted, opposition figures were arrested, and law enforcement officials engaged in extrajudicial actions. Freedom of expression continued to be stifled, journalists faced attacks, and incidents of torture and killings of innocent Bangladeshis along the borders persisted. Additionally, violence against women and mob killings remained rampant.

Universities and educational institutions became hotspots for unrest during this time, as Chhatra League's violent activities on campuses escalated. Protests by students and teachers gained momentum in response to incidents of sexual harassment and rape in various educational institutions, highlighting the ongoing crisis of safety and accountability within the country's academic settings.

In April, the misuse of the Cyber Security Act and a series of attacks on journalists led to a significant deterioration in the human rights situation in Bangladesh. Over 20 journalists were injured in an attack during the oath-taking ceremony of the newly elected committee of the Film Artists' Association at the FDC (Film Development Corporation). Additionally, in Madhukhali, Faridpur, young laborers working on school construction were accused of arson at a temple out of suspicion. This led to an attack that resulted in the deaths of two workers and injuries to several others. Subsequent protests by locals were met with police action, including rubber bullets, causing further injuries. Such incidents posed a serious threat to the country's communal harmony.

In May, electoral and political violence continued alongside arrests, attacks on rickshaw pullers in the capital, Chhatra League violence on university campuses, deaths in government custody, and mob lynchings of innocent individuals. During this month, at least 26 people were killed, and no fewer than 1,339 were injured in 170 incidents of political violence and 139 cases of electoral violence.

June saw alarming levels of violence against women and children. A total of 173 women and girls were subjected to various forms of abuse. Among them, 57 were victims of rape, including 40 children under the age of 18. Furthermore, 15 women and girls were gang-raped, seven were killed after being raped, and two committed suicide due to their ordeal. These statistics reflect the worsening state of gender-based violence and the lack of adequate protections for vulnerable populations in the country.

In July, Bangladesh witnessed the deadliest crackdown in its history as authorities deployed police, RAB, Ansar, SWAT, BGB, and the military to suppress protests. The use of lethal weapons and unlawful force demonstrated a severe disregard for the right to life, as well as a failure by law enforcement officials to uphold both domestic and international human rights obligations. During this time, beatings, tear gas, sound grenades, water cannons, shootings,



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enforced disappearances, killings, arrests, false charges, and harassment became routine. The government also imposed an internet blackout and declared a state of emergency, leading to widespread massacres. Members of the ruling Awami League, along with its youth and student affiliates, actively participated in the violence.

On August 5, facing intense student and public protests, Sheikh Hasina fled to India, marking the end of her authoritarian rule. For approximately 80 hours, the country remained without a functioning government, plunging into chaos. On August 8, an interim government led by Nobel laureate Dr. Muhammad Yunus assumed power and began efforts to restore stability. However, widespread violence targeting minority communities—many perceived as supporters of the previous regime—ensued. Reports of homes being destroyed, temples attacked, and personal assaults surfaced nationwide, alongside politically motivated retaliatory actions and pervasive anarchy.

In September, ethnic tensions in Khagrachari and Rangamati escalated into clashes and arson, resulting in six deaths and over a hundred injuries, creating an atmosphere of fear in the hill tracts. Worker unrest in Ashulia, Savar, Gazipur, and Narayanganj led to police shootings, leaving one worker dead and several injured. Multiple shrine attacks were also reported, further aggravating tensions.

October saw the murder of journalist Swapan Kumar Bhadra, vice-president of Tarakanda Press Club, and Dipto TV broadcast officer Tanzil Jahan Islam Tamim. Several miscreants physically assaulted court personnel during legal proceedings. Discontent grew among tea and restaurant workers due to police actions against their protests. Alongside continued killings of innocent Bangladeshis by Indian border forces, attacks by Myanmar's border guards intensified, displacing approximately 40,000 Rohingyas, who fled into Bangladesh seeking refuge.

In November, communal intolerance surfaced as clashes erupted near the Chittagong court over demands for the release of former ISKCON leader Chinmoy Krishna Das Brahmachari. Foreign media coverage of his arrest and the associated attacks on minority communities drew criticism for potentially fueling tensions. Meanwhile, the central office of the Jatiya Party was vandalized and set on fire. Shameful incidents also occurred in courtrooms, including the assault of a lawyer and egg-throwing at a judge. On Shaheed Noor Hossain Day, individuals suspected of being Awami League members were beaten and handed over to police in front of the party's central office. Violent protests in colleges and universities resulted in 225 injuries across at least 12 incidents.

December saw 14 incidents involving India's Border Security Force (BSF), resulting in six deaths, one injury, and 112 arrests. At least 10 people were killed, and 758 injured in 98 cases of political violence, most stemming from infighting among BNP-affiliated organizations. Student movements against discrimination also faced violent repression, leading to injuries and fatalities among participants. Clashes between two factions of Tablighi Jamaat claimed four lives and left 110 injured in at least two incidents.



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Based on reports published in 12 national media outlets in Bangladesh and data collected by the Human Rights Support Society (HRSS), the following information has been revealed in the 2024 Human Rights Observation Report.

July-August Mass Uprising:

Regarding the anti-discrimination student-people movement, information gathered from victims' families, eyewitnesses, hospitals, and national newspapers confirms the deaths of 1,013 individuals so far. Furthermore, based on credible data from media, hospitals, and other sources, it is estimated that the death toll is at least 1,200. Among the deceased are students, laborers, journalists, professionals, law enforcement members, children, women, and supporters or activists of various political parties. At least 136 children and 13 girls or women have lost their lives in the movement. The nationwide uprising has resulted in at least 30,000 injuries. Thousands of students and civilians have lost limbs or eyes, with over 600 people losing vision in one or both eyes. There are allegations of enforced disappearances involving at least 13 coordinators and individuals associated with the movement, as well as numerous cases of unlawful detention.

In connection to the movement, at least 270 journalists were injured, threatened, arrested, or harassed while carrying out their professional duties, and 6 journalists were killed. From July 17 to August 4, over 950 cases were filed nationwide, implicating more than 600,000 people, with at least 12,000 individuals arrested. Following Sheikh Hasina's departure from the country, more than 500 police stations, outposts, and government infrastructure were attacked, vandalized, or set on fire. Additionally, at least 1,000 houses, vehicles, and businesses were attacked, vandalized, set on fire, or looted. During this period, at least 65 attacks on minority communities were reported, resulting in injuries to at least 61 individuals. Furthermore, 15 temples, 228 homes, and 240 shops or businesses were vandalized, looted, or set on fire.

Election Violence:

Election Violence	
781 Incident	2538 Injured
	43 Killed



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The 12th National Parliamentary Election and the 6th Upazila Parishad Election in Bangladesh were conducted amidst boycotts by opposition parties and reluctance from citizens to cast their votes. These two crucial elections in Bangladesh's history set records for low voter turnout. Additionally, no unlawful activities were left uncommitted in these elections.

Alarming, in 2024, at least 781 incidents of election-related violence were reported, resulting in the deaths of at least 43 individuals, injuries to at least 2,538, and the vandalism or looting of at least 820 homes and businesses. Among the 43 fatalities, 39 were leaders, activists, or supporters of the Awami League.

Since the announcement of the 12th National Parliamentary Election schedule on November 15, 2023, nearly every district in the country has witnessed clashes, violence, killings, vandalism, arson, and looting. In at least 752 incidents of election-related violence, 17 people lost their lives, and at least 2,534 were injured. Over 100 individuals suffered gunshot wounds, and more than 450 homes and businesses were vandalized, set on fire, or looted. Additionally, over 100 vehicles were vandalized or set ablaze. In January 2024 alone, 12 individuals were killed, 11 of whom were supporters, leaders, or activists of the then-ruling Awami League. Within three months of the 12th National Parliamentary Election, the phased 6th Upazila Parishad Election saw at least 203 incidents of violence nationwide, resulting in 17 deaths, injuries to at least 1,004 individuals, gunshot wounds to over 20, and vandalism, arson, or looting of more than 350 homes and businesses.

Political Violence:

Political Violence	
1407 Incidents	1180 Killed
	7051 Injured

This year, alarmingly, at least 1,180 people were killed, and at least 7,051 were injured in political violence. Centering on the July-August movement, at least 1,013 people lost their lives, and approximately 30,000 individuals were injured. Most other



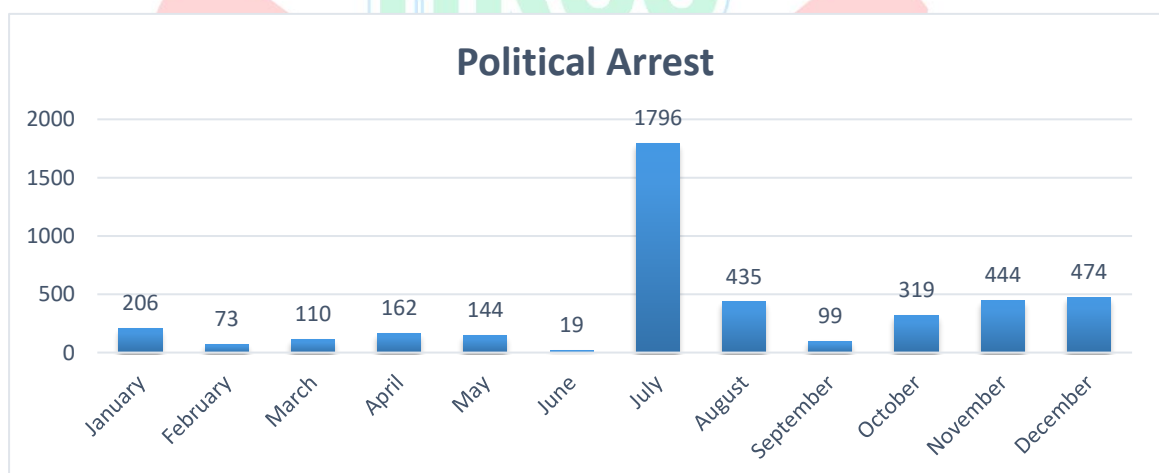
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incidents of political violence stemmed from clashes between the Awami League and BNP, as well as internal conflicts within these parties over dominance.

Political Case		
1383 Number of Case	case filed against	66095 Identified
		654809 Non identified

Additionally, at least 15,520 political leaders, activists, and supporters were arrested by law enforcement agencies, the majority being from BNP-Jamaat and Awami League. Simultaneously, political activists were named in at least 1,383 cases, listing at least 66,000 individuals by name and accusing another approximately 660,000 as unidentified. Moreover, at least 704 opposition meetings and rallies were disrupted by law enforcement and ruling Awami League leaders and activists. Clashes during these events resulted in injuries to at least 30,000 people, and at least 6,000 individuals were arrested in connection with rally-related incidents.

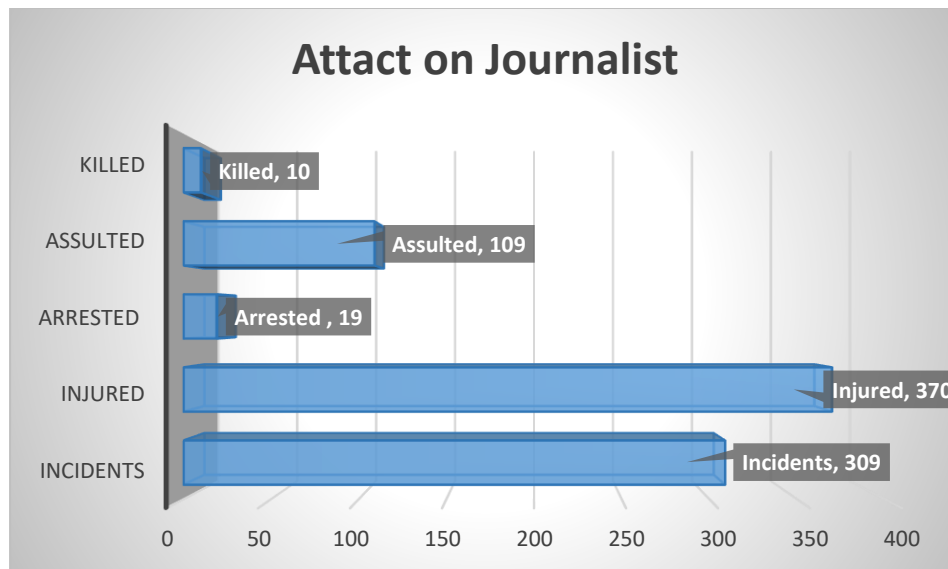




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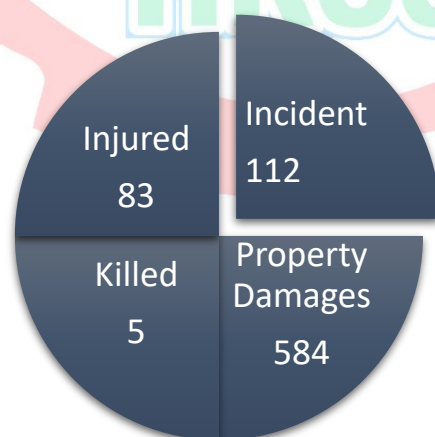
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Attack on Journalist:



This year, at least 308 attacks resulted in 726 journalists being killed, tortured, or harassed. Among them, 10 journalists were killed, at least 459 injured, 59 assaulted, 45 threatened, 19 arrested, and 134 faced legal cases. During movements involving students and the public, at least 270 journalists were injured, threatened, arrested, or assaulted while on professional duty, with 6 journalists killed. Alarming, under the Cyber Security Act 2023, 32 cases were filed, leading to the arrest of 21 individuals and accusations against 79 others.

Attack on Minority:



At least 112 attacks on minority communities, 5 people were killed, 83 injured, and damage was inflicted on 28 temples, 31 idols, 284 homes, 240 shops, and business establishments.

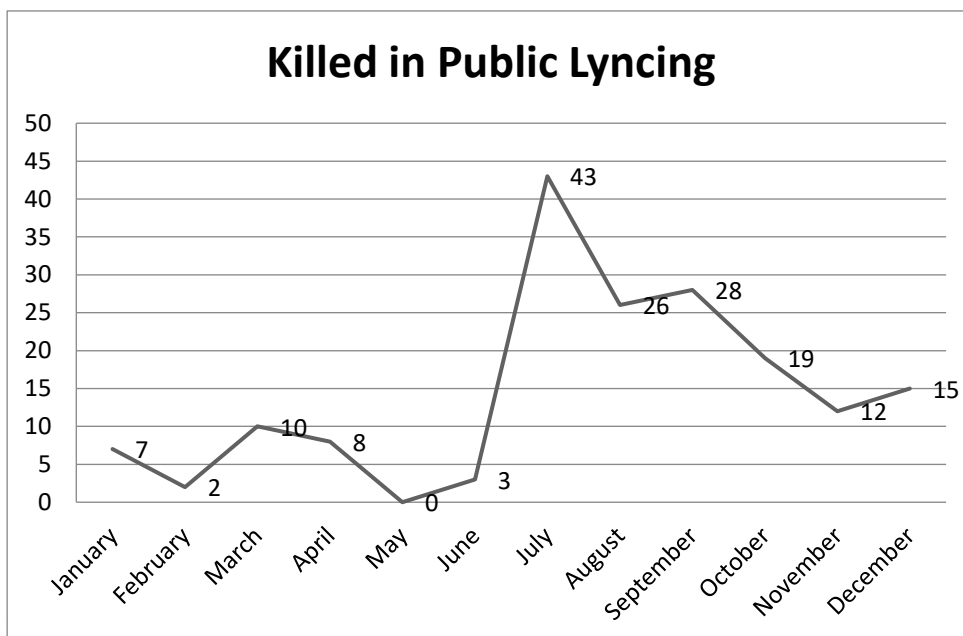


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Public Lynching:

It is concerning that at least 173 people were killed and 88 injured in 201 mob lynching incidents.



Workers' Rights:

In 609 cases of labor exploitation, at least 439 workers were killed, including 240 by law enforcement gunfire, and 595 were injured. Due to unsafe working conditions and the absence of protective equipment, 168 workers died in workplace accidents. In 13 incidents of domestic worker abuse, 9 workers were killed, and 4 were injured. Furthermore,

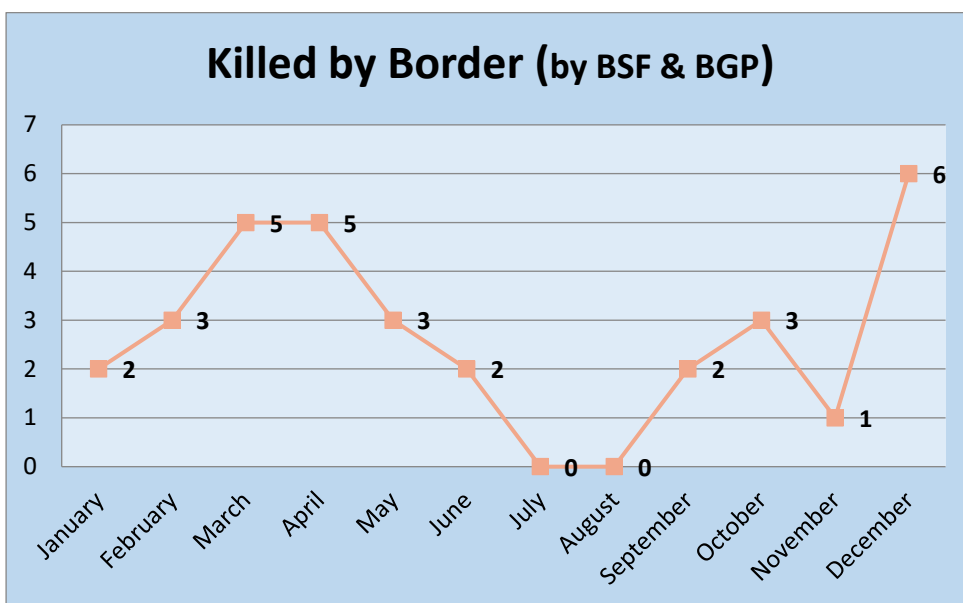
Border Violence:

The Indian Border Security Force (BSF) was involved in 57 attacks, resulting in 26 Bangladeshi deaths, 25 injuries, 47 gunshot wounds, and 158 arrests. Additionally, the bodies of 9 Bangladeshis were recovered from the Indian border. Along the Myanmar border, 17 attacks by the Myanmar Border Guard Police (BGP) and Arakan Army led to the deaths of 6 Bangladeshis, injuries to 25, gunshot wounds to 13, and the arrest of 74 individuals.



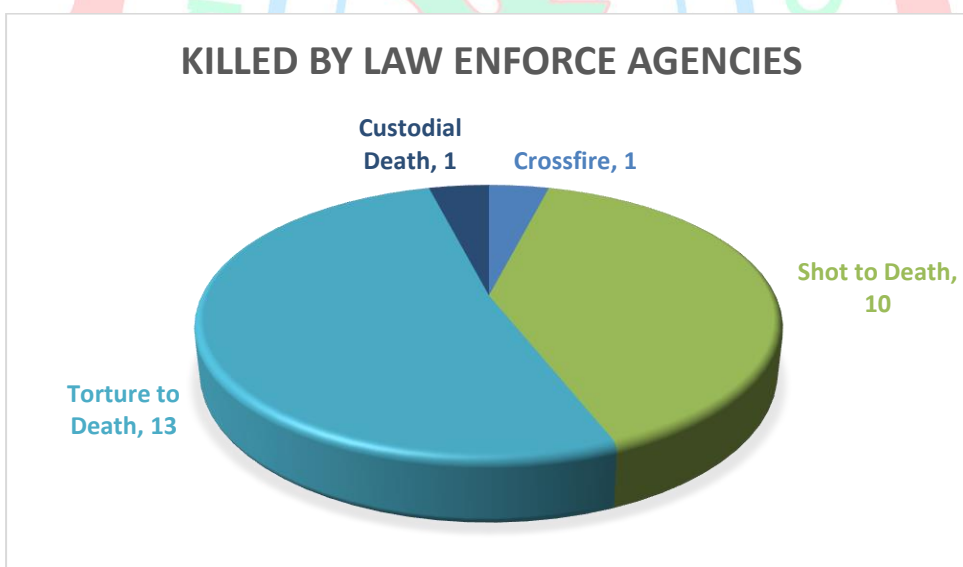
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Monthly statics of Killed by BSF and BGP

Extrajudicial Killings:



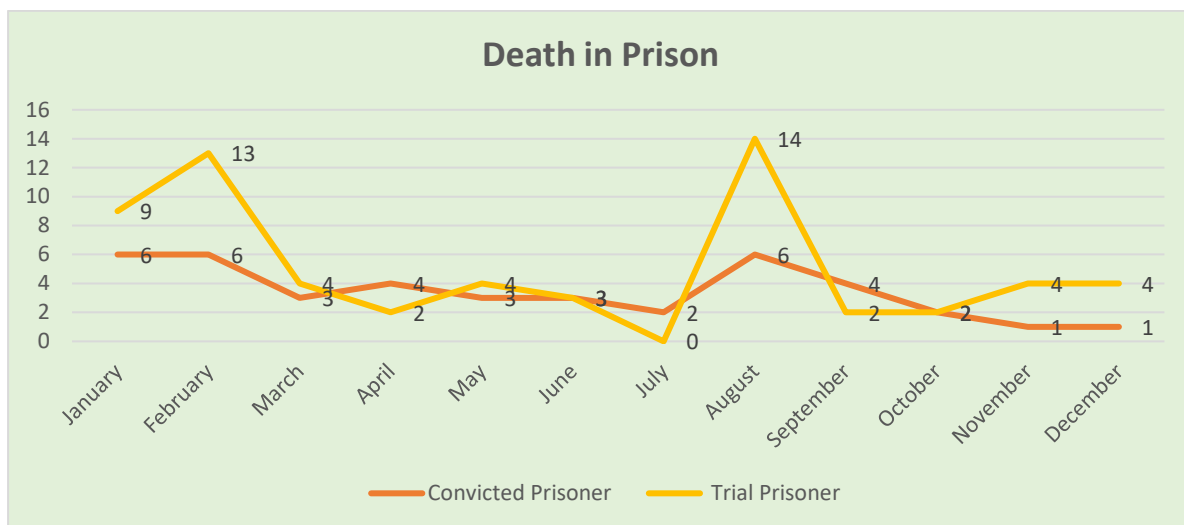
In 2024, at least 25 extrajudicial killings were reported by law enforcement, including 1 under the guise of "crossfire/shootout," 13 from torture, and 10 from gunfire. One person died in custody. Among killings associated with mass uprisings, 510 (76%) deaths occurred due to police violence, and 63 (9%) were attributed to other law enforcement agencies. Over 85% of these deaths were caused by police and other security forces.



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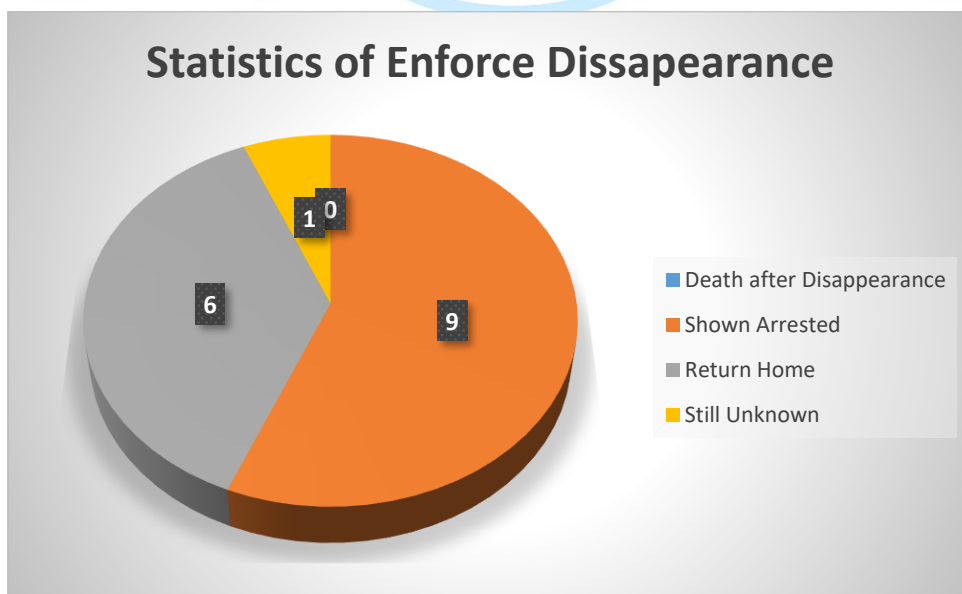
Prison Death:



101 individuals died in prison custody, including 41 convicted prisoner and 60 trial prisoners.

Enforce Disappearance:

According to victims, their families, eyewitnesses, and national daily reports, at least 16 people were forcibly disappeared this year. Of them, 9 were later shown as arrested, 6 were released, and we could trace update of 01.

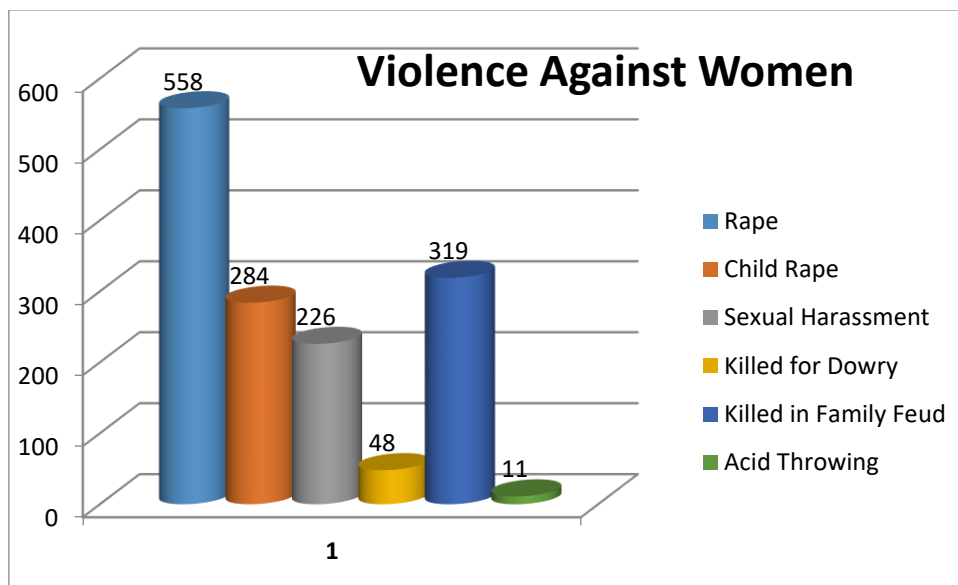




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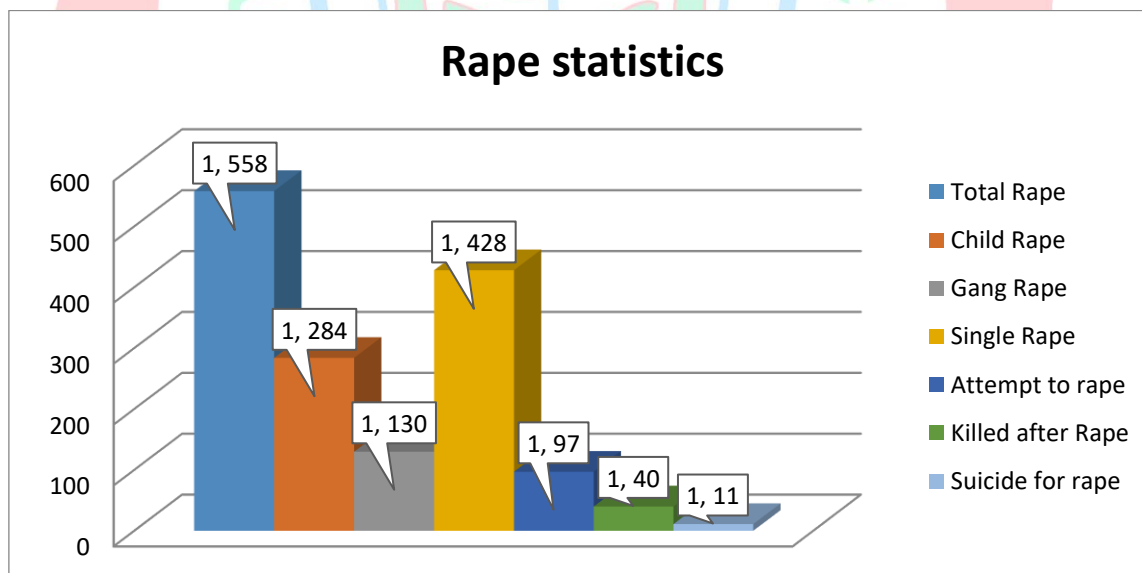
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Women Rights:



In 2024 Total 558 women and children were victim of rape where 284 were minors (under 18). 226 girl and women were sexually harassed and 48 killed for dowry. 319 killed in family feud and 11 were victims of Acid throwing.

Rape:



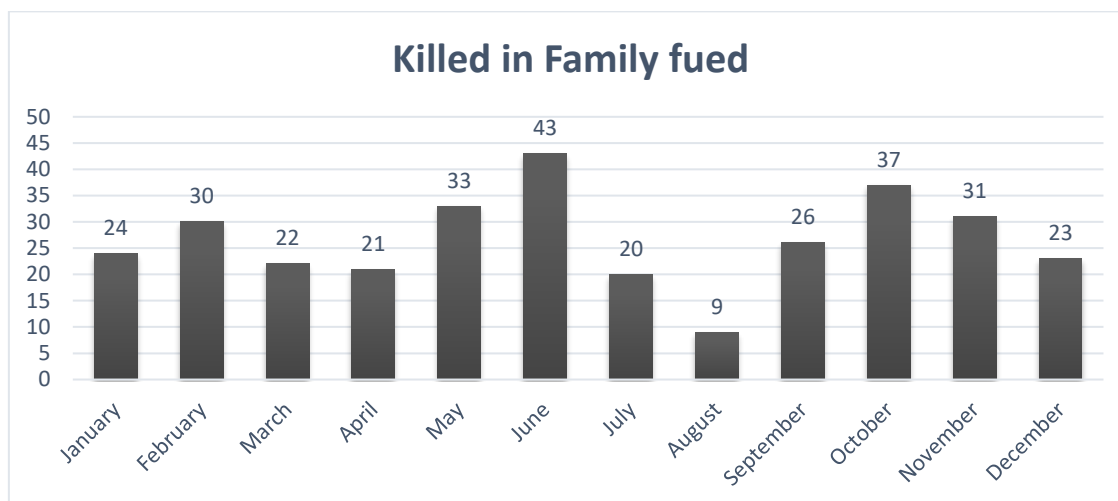
In 2024, 1,498 women and girls were subjected to violence. Among them, 557 were raped, with an alarming 284 (51%) being minors. Disturbingly, 130 (23%) were gang-raped, and 40 were killed after being raped, including 22 children. Additionally, 11 rape survivors died by suicide. A total of 322 women and children faced sexual harassment, with 130 being children.



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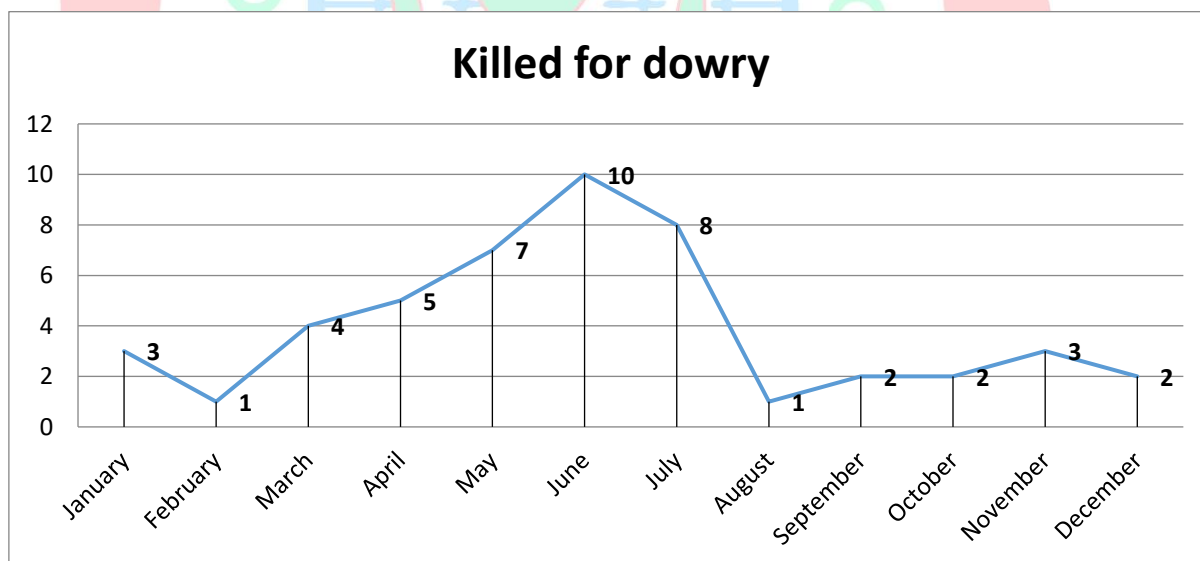
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Domestic Violence:



Domestic violence incidents resulted in the deaths of 319 women, injuries to 74, and 127 suicides. Monthly analysis shows at least 9 women killed in every month where the highest killed in June.

Dowry:



Dowry-related violence claimed the lives of 48 women, with 32 physically assaulted and 6 committing suicides.

Acid Attack:

Acid attacks affected 13 women. It is deeply troubling that at least 4,300 children were subjected to abuse this year, with 662 deaths and 3,714 experiencing physical and psychological harm. The July-August protests led to the deaths of 136 children and injuries to at least 3,000 others.



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