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3.1.1. Capacity and integrity

As reported in the 2024 EUAA COI report Bangladesh – Country Focus, the Bangladeshi police force is led by the Inspector General of Police (IGP)188 and is organised into various units based on district, metropolitan area, and specialisation.189 As of early 2024, there were over 200 00 police officers190 but both women191 and minorities were underrepresented.192

The police faced integrity issues and political influence in selection procedures, favouring candidates aligned with the ruling party for recruitment,193 postings and promotions.194 Influential individuals have also been able to impact crime investigations and their outcome.195 Sources reported on the police lacking equipment and training,196 but there were also integrity issues hampering the implementation of those skills that were available within logistics, human resources, and technology.197 Police officers reportedly demanded bribes to file a report,198 and there were cases of police staff being involved in crimes such as robbery,199 drug trade, 200 and rape.201 Disciplinary action was rarely taken,202 and irregularities negatively impacted public trust,203 and deterred many from approaching the police.204 Some surveys suggested that the police was perceived as the least trusted205 and most corrupt public institution.206

In the absence of a general victim or witness protection mechanism,207 (except for some provisions for victims and witnesses of trafficking in human beings208) victims, witnesses and their family members have faced threats, harassment and assault by offenders for filing complaints,209 and have refrained from testifying in court fearing for their or their family members' safety.210 In 2023, Arafat Reza Jaan, research associate at the Centre for Peace and Justice at BRAC University, stated that those living in rural areas were particularly discouraged to seek justice due to fear of reprisals from influential community members.211

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