

5.2. Enforced disappearance and extrajudicial killings

As reported in the [2024 EUAA COI Report: Bangladesh – Country Focus](#), Bangladesh has ‘a long, dark history of enforced disappearance’, and before the power-shift it had not ratified the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CED).³⁷¹ Sources accused the previous government of using enforced disappearance as a method to suppress dissent and spread fear³⁷² and undermining the political opposition.³⁷³ There were reports of law enforcement carrying out extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances on the order, or with tacit approval,³⁷⁴ of the highest offices of the state.³⁷⁵ Victims of enforced disappearance included opposition party leaders and supporters, alleged militants, and seemingly ordinary people. They were abducted by men in plainclothes claiming to represent law enforcement agencies.³⁷⁶ Meanwhile, family members of victims were put under surveillance,³⁷⁷ or were threatened and harassed for seeking justice.³⁷⁸ More information on enforced disappearances under the former government, and involved actors, is available in sections [1. The student protests](#), [3. Impact on law enforcement](#) and in the [2024 EUAA COI Report: Bangladesh – Country Focus](#).

Soon after its installation, the interim government ‘made commitments to pursue accountability for torture, extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances, and ensure human rights protections’, as reported by Human Rights Watch.³⁷⁹ On 27 August 2024, the interim government set up an inquiry commission on enforced disappearance ‘to identify and find the people who were forcibly disappeared by various intelligence and law enforcement agencies’ under the former government.³⁸⁰ More information is available [2.4. Accountability efforts](#) and arrests and [3.1. Law enforcement under the previous government](#).

On 30 August 2024 Bangladesh ratified the CED.³⁸¹ However, enforced disappearance is not a recognised crime in domestic law.³⁸² Local human rights organisations Odhikar and ASK did not record cases of enforced disappearance under the interim government.³⁸³ In the period 9 August 2024–March 2025, however, Odhikar recorded 20 cases of extrajudicial killings by law enforcement agencies. These cases include nine people being tortured to death, seven shot to death, three beaten to death.³⁸⁴ In the period September 2024–May 2025, ASK recorded 25 extrajudicial killings, also including several cases of death by physical torture.³⁸⁵ Both organisation attributed most killings to the joint forces and the police, but also recorded cases involving the DB, the RAB, the navy, the Department of Narcotics Control, the coast guard, and the air force.³⁸⁶

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