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8.2.2. Violence after the fall of the former government

There is a long history of radical Islamists targeting Hindus and Buddhists in Bangladesh.835 In the aftermath of the former government's fall, there were widespread attacks against Hindu homes, businesses, and places of worship, as well as properties of other minorities.836 Homes and businesses were vandalised, looted and torched.837 Physical assaults also took place and lead to at least one death, according to UN OHCHR.838 Indian state media sensationalised some news on attacks against Hindus,839and reportedly 'exaggerated' the issue, which840 alongside fake news on 'massacres',841 increased tensions.841

Many Bangladeshis stereotypically associate Hindus with the Awami League,842 and in the aftermath of the former government's fall, most attacks against Hindus were reportedly carried out due to this perceived political connection.843 Nevertheless, UN OHCHR reported on the violence not only being rooted in political biases, but also in religious and ethnic biases in intersecting motives.844 Prothom Alo reported on most attacks being carried out during 'victory processions' after the former government's fall.845 Some attacks were carried out by local members and supporters of BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami.846 In addition to Hindus, members of the Ahmadiyya community, Christians, and indigenous people experienced attacks,847 in overlapping motives such as political revenge, religious and ethnic discrimination, personal disputes and localised communal conflicts. 848There were also reports of violent mobs forcing headmasters and teachers to resign,849 some of whom were Hindus.850 According to a minority rights organisation, at least 49 minority teachers had been forced to resign as of 31 August 2024. 19 of them had been reinstated.851

In 2024, ASK recorded 147 incidents of violence against religious minorities,852 and, most incidents (81) occurred in August.853 This month, hundreds of homes and businesses were attacked, leaving two people dead and 44 injured. Hindus faced most attacks (against 168 homes, 96 business centres and 6 places of worship, two deaths and 20 injured), but the Ahmadiyya community also faced violent attacks (against 156 homes, 6 places of worship and 22 people injured). Moreover, ASK recorded attacks against properties of Christians and indigenous people.854 Other sources, however, reported on a larger number of attacks in the aftermath of the former government's fall.855 The Bangladesh Hindu Bouddha Christian Unity Council reported 1 769 attacks and acts of vandalism against minorities taking place in the

period 4–20 August 2024. The police investigated these cases and stated that the majority (1 234 cases) had a political background.[856] Prothom Alo mapped violence in the period 5–20 August 2024 and reported on at least 1 068 homes and businesses of the Hindu minority being damaged, and 22 places of worship being attacked. In at least 506 instances, the owner of an attacked property had been involved in Awami League politics. Most attacks were reported in Khulna Division, where at least 295 homes and businesses were destroyed, but attacks took place across the country, in places such as Rangpur, Mymensing, Rajshahi, Dhaka, Barishal, Chattogram and Sylhet. Prothom Alo also recorded two deaths of Hindus, and described how two Hindu men had been beaten and killed in two separate incidents.[857] UN OHCHR reported that most attacks took place in rural and 'historically tense' areas such as Thakurgaon, Lalmonirhat, and Dinajpur, but also reported on incidents taking place in Sylhet, Khulna and Rangpur, and on attacks against places of worship of Hindu, Ahhmaddiyya, Buddhist and Christian communities taking place 'across several regions' in 5–15 August 2024.[858] Local minority groups reported even more incidents (at least 2 000), as well as nine people of minority communities being killed in communal violence in August 2024.[859] Netra News investigated the nine alleged killings and reported that there was not a clear religious motive behind them.[860] There were also reports of several Sufi shrines being vandalised in the aftermath of the former government's fall[862] and such attacks have reportedly continued with 80 shrines being vandalised by Islamic fundamentalists as of January 2025, according to the Global Sufi Organisation.[863]

In response to the violence, the interim government increased security around Hindu temples and neighbourhoods.[864] Nevertheless, Hindus interviewed by UN OHCHR and media described a persistent feeling of insecurity.[865] Hindus have been protesting in several large demonstrations in different parts of the country, including in Dhaka, demanding protective minority laws, a ministry for minorities, and a special tribunal to handle 'acts of oppression' against minorities.[866] Meanwhile, TIB reported on a lack of 'effective initiatives to identify, verify, and investigate allegations of violence against religious minorities, indigenous people, marginalized communities, and those with dissenting opinions.[867] On 22 May 2025, a village of a Hindu minority group (Matua) was looted and torched by four men, following the killing of a local leader of a BNP wing (Krishak Dal) by unknown assailants. Despite police presence, the village's male inhabitants reportedly went into hiding after the attack.[868]

In the period September–December 2024, the monthly average of incidents of religious violence recorded by ASK decreased to about 10 events (from 81 in August), and all incidents targeted Hindus, except for the death of one Ahmadiyya person in November 2024 and 17 indigenous homes being attacked in one incident in December 2024.[869] A Hindu representative of the International Society of Krishna Consciousness stated in December 2024 that the situation had improved and referred to the interim government as cooperative.[870] In January–April 2025, ASK recorded between one and three instances of religious violence each month.[871] Odihkar reported on two attacks against a Sufi shrine in Mymensingh on 8 January 2025 and an attack carried out by Jamaat-e-Islami against homes of Hizb-ut-Tahrir members in Rangpur on 25 February 2025.[872]

Anti-Indian and anti-Hindu sentiments have reportedly intensified,873 as Hasina fled to India and as India has expressed concern of Hindu community's security in Bangladesh.874 Tensions intensified further as a Hindu monk was arrested in November 2024,875 on sedition charges for 'insulting' the Bangladeshi flag during a protest action in Chattogram. 876As he was denied bail on 26 November 2024,877 hundreds of his supporters clashed with security forces, causing the death of a Muslim lawyer.878 Indian politicians expressed concern after the event,879 and the Bangladeshi consulate in the Indian state of Tripura was attacked by protesters.880 The consulate attack sparked anti-India protests across Bangladesh.881 The monk was denied bail again on 2 January 2025.882 The hearing was reportedly held 'amid tight security' with heavy security personnel around the court building.883 As of May 2025, 40 people had reportedly been arrested in connection to the violence on 26 November 2024.884

More information on minorities is available in section 6.3. Chittagong Hill Tracts.

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