

**POLITICAL VIOLENCE**

**06** KILLING **311** INJURED

**RELIGIOUS MINORITIES FACED**

**04** CASES OF VIOLENCE

**CUSTODIAL DEATHS**

**06** CUSTODIAL DEATHS

**MOB VIOLENCE**

**10** KILLING **06** INJURED

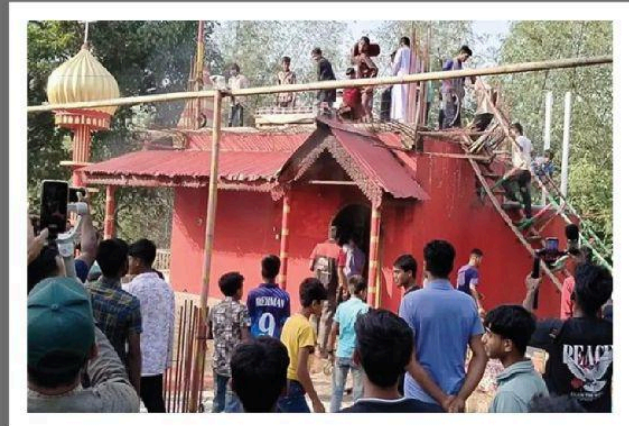
**JOURNALISTS FACED**

**11** CASES OF VIOLENCE

The human rights situation in Bangladesh during April 2026 reflects a continuation of violence, restrictions on civil liberties, and institutional weaknesses, with notable shifts in patterns compared to the previous month.

Political violence remained widespread, with 38 incidents resulting in 6 deaths and 311 injuries, indicating frequent large-scale clashes with relatively lower fatalities. Attacks on religious minorities were fewer in number. Still, they were marked by severe destruction, including 35 cases of vandalism and one fatal incident, most notably the killing of Pir Abdur Rahman Shamim in Kushtia following allegations of Quran desecration, where his shrine was also attacked and set on fire.

Custodial deaths persisted, with six reported cases across prison facilities and law enforcement operations.



*Pir Abdur Rahman (65), also known as Shamim, was beaten and hacked to death following allegations of Quran desecration in Kushtia on 11th April.*

**LYNCHING PIR IN MAZAR**

Mob violence remained a major human rights concern throughout April 2026, with multiple incidents resulting in deaths, injuries, and widespread destruction. One of the most significant incidents occurred in Kushtia's Daulatpur upazila, where Pir Abdur Rahman Shamim (65) was beaten and hacked to death following allegations of Quran desecration. The violence escalated after an old video resurfaced on social media, allegedly showing him making offensive remarks about the Quran. An enraged crowd attacked his darbar sharif, carrying out extensive vandalism and arson despite police presence in the area. The incident demonstrated how allegations spread online can rapidly trigger collective violence, while law enforcement agencies often fail to prevent escalation in time.

**ARRESTS FOR EXPRESSION**

April 2026 witnessed a noticeable increase in arrests related to online expression and alleged defamation, raising growing concerns over freedom of opinion in Bangladesh. At least seven individuals were arrested under the Cyber Security Ordinance and Section 54 for social media posts allegedly insulting the Prime Minister, political leaders, government representatives, or hurting religious sentiment. Several of those arrested were students, political activists, or online content creators. Human rights activists have expressed concern over the expanding use of cyber laws to criminalize speech and suppress dissent, particularly as the number of such cases has risen compared to recent months.

**ATTACK ON JOURNALISTS**

Journalists continued to face physical attacks, intimidation, and institutional pressure in April 2026, reflecting the fragile condition of press freedom in the country. A total of 11 incidents involving journalists were recorded, affecting at least 37 media workers, alongside attacks on press clubs and the arrest of a journalist. Reporters were assaulted while covering political confrontations, targeted inside police stations, and attacked by local criminal groups. In separate incidents, press clubs in Chuadanga and Khulna were vandalized, highlighting threats not only to individual journalists but also to media institutions.

## 1. Overview

The human rights situation in Bangladesh during April 2026 reflects a continuation of violence, restrictions on civil liberties, and institutional weaknesses, with notable shifts in patterns compared to the previous month. Political violence remained widespread, with 38 incidents resulting in 6 deaths and 311 injuries, indicating frequent large-scale clashes with relatively lower fatalities. Attacks on religious minorities were fewer in number. Still, they were marked by severe destruction, including 35 cases of vandalism and one fatal incident, most notably the killing of Pir Abdur Rahman Shamim in Kushtia following allegations of Quran desecration, where his shrine was also attacked and set on fire. Custodial deaths persisted, with six reported cases across prison facilities and law enforcement operations.

### Comparison of February, March and April 2026

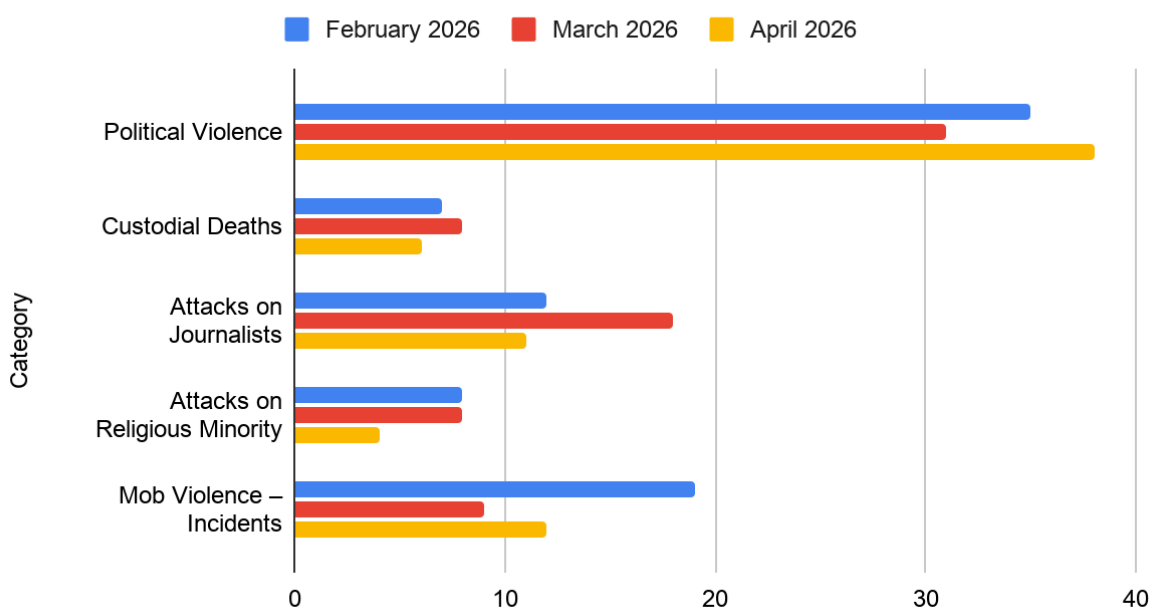


Figure: Comparison of the number of incidents in the past three months

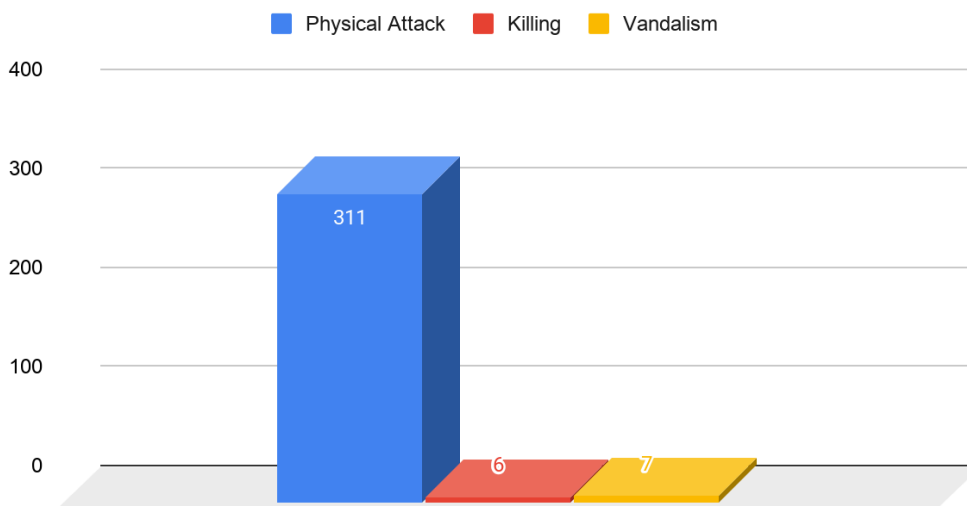
Freedom of expression remained under pressure, with journalists facing physical attacks, intimidation, and institutional obstacles. At the same time, freedom of opinion saw increased restriction, as the use of the Cyber Security Ordinance and related laws led to multiple

arrests over alleged defamation and online speech. Mob violence continued to be a major concern, resulting in 10 deaths and widespread property damage. Overall, law enforcement responses remained largely reactive, with limited evidence of effective prevention or accountability.

## 2. Political Violence

Political violence in April 2026 remained widespread, with 38 recorded incidents resulting in 6 deaths and 311 injuries. Although the number of fatalities is relatively less than in March 2026, the high number of injured individuals indicates that clashes were frequent and often large in scale. A total of 7 incidents of vandalism were also reported, suggesting that the political clash extended beyond direct violence to include damage to property and infrastructure.

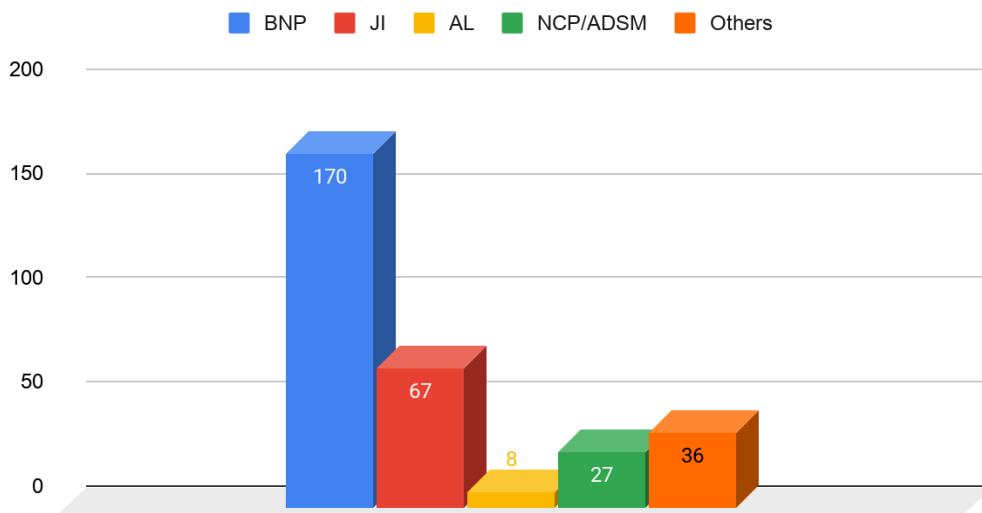
Political Violence - April 2026



The distribution of violence by political affiliation shows that violence against BNP members was the highest, affecting 170 individuals, most in clashes involving Jamaat-e-Islami or intra-party conflicts. Violence against Jamaat-e-Islami members accounted for 67 individuals, while the National Citizen Party (NCP) recorded 27. In comparison, violence

against Awami League members affected 8 individuals, and other groups accounted for 36. This pattern indicates that the impact of political violence was heavily concentrated among opposition groups, particularly in intra-party clashes and local power struggles over resources, influence, and organizational control.

Political Violence by Group - April 2026



Key incidents include:

On April 12, [Emon alias Alex Emon, the mastermind of the 'Alex Group', was killed in](#) a clash between two groups over the dominance of a teenage gang in the Rayerbazar intellectual area of Mohammadpur police station in the capital. Police have also arrested three people in this incident.

On April 25, [two people were killed and four others were injured in a clash between two BNP factions](#) over paddy harvesting in Khulna's Terkhada upazila. The incident took place at around 7:30 am in Madhupur of Madhupur union of the upazila. The deceased farmer's name is Md. Nur Alam (55). He is the son of Ikram Sheikh of Madhupur. Md. Hizmullah Sohel Rana (40) died while undergoing treatment at Khulna Medical College Hospital.

On receiving information, the police reached the spot and brought the situation under control. It is learnt that the police are conducting a drive to arrest the attackers.

On April 23, a man named [Mohan Sheikh \(65\) was killed and at least 30 people were injured](#) in a clash between two factions of the local BNP in Jhenaidah's Shailkupa district over dominance of the two youth party leaders. The incident took place at around 10:30 am on Thursday in Madhoppur village of Manoharpur union no. 9 of the upazila. Police reached the spot on receiving information and brought the situation under control.



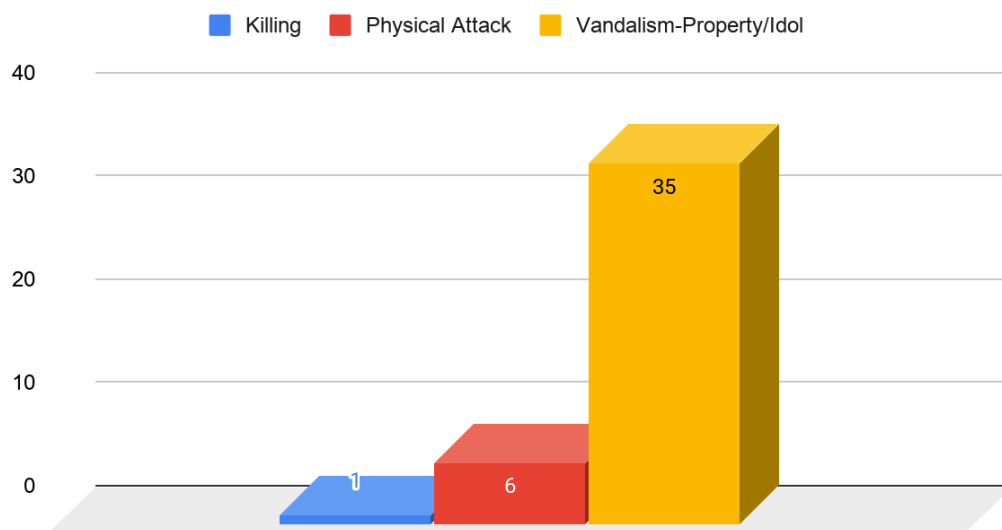
The pattern of violence suggests that the political clash in April was less about targeted killings and more about sustained clashes, often involving large groups and resulting in significant injuries. These conflicts appear to be driven by local rivalries, organizational fragmentation, and competition over economic and political control rather than ideological differences. Despite frequent deployment of law enforcement personnel to control situations, there is little indication of effective deterrence or long-term resolution.

In conclusion, political violence in April 2026 remained deeply entrenched, with a shift toward high-intensity clashes causing mass injuries rather than fatalities. This trend reflects ongoing instability within political structures and highlights the need for stronger preventive mechanisms and accountability.

### 3. Violence Against Religious Minorities

Violence against religious minorities in April 2026 was relatively limited in terms of the number of incidents but significant in severity and impact. A particularly grave incident occurred in Daulatpur Upazila, where a pir (Spiritual guide) was beaten and hacked to death following allegations of Quran desecration. During the attack, the Darbar Sharif was also vandalized and set on fire, reflecting both lethal violence and targeted destruction of a religious site. Overall, a total of 4 incidents were recorded during the month, resulting in 1 death and 6 physical attacks. However, the most striking aspect was the scale of vandalism, with 35 reported cases involving temples, idols, houses, and other properties.

Violence Against Religious Minorities - April 2026



On April 11, [a pir named Abdur Rahman \(65\), also known as Shamim, was beaten and hacked to death](#) following allegations of Quran desecration. The incident took place at “Shamim Baba’s Darbar Sharif” in the Darogar Mor area of Philipnagar Union. According to local sources and police, tensions escalated after a video circulated on social media showing the pir making allegedly offensive remarks about the Quran. Despite police presence at the scene, an agitated crowd attacked the Darbar Sharif, carrying out extensive vandalism and

arson. During the attack, the pir and three others were severely assaulted and later taken to the Upazila Health Complex, where he was declared dead. [Law enforcement officials stated that they were outnumbered and unable to control the situation in time.](#)



Another significant incident occurred in Rangpur city on April 10, where [violence spread into a Hindu-majority area following the killing of Jubo Dal leader Rakib Hasan \(20\)](#). Later that night, a group of around 40–50 individuals attacked the Daspara area, damaging at least 20 shops and about 10 houses belonging largely to Hindu residents. Victims reported vandalism, threats, and a sense of insecurity, forcing some businesses to close. Police deployed additional forces and stated that investigations into both the murder and the subsequent attack were ongoing, though no immediate arrests were confirmed.

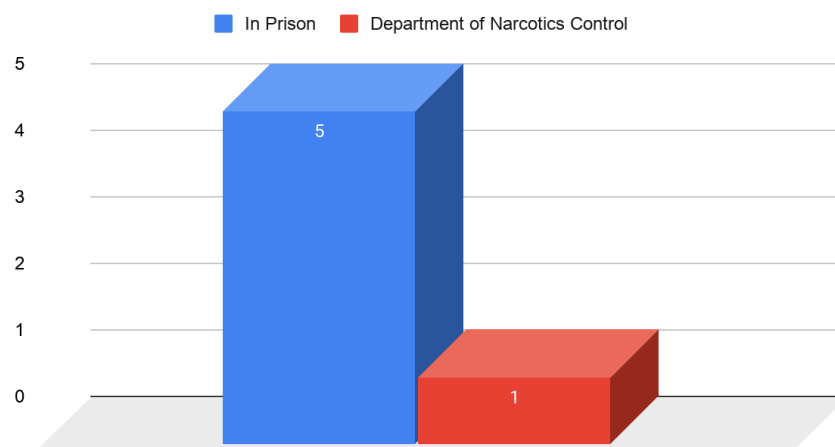
The attacks were directed not only at individuals but also at religious sites and community assets, suggesting an intent to intimidate and destabilize minority populations. The high number of vandalism cases relative to the total incidents shows that individual events often involve multiple acts of destruction, affecting entire areas rather than isolated targets.

In conclusion, despite the relatively low number of recorded incidents, the scale of damage and the occurrence of a fatal attack underscore the persistent risks faced by religious minorities and the urgent need for stronger preventive and protective measures.

#### 4. Custodial Deaths

Custodial deaths continued to be a matter of concern in April 2026, with a total of 6 reported deaths. Among these, 5 occurred in prison custody, while 1 death was reported under the Department of Narcotics Control, indicating that such incidents are not limited to traditional detention facilities.

Death in Custody - April 2026



Ziaul Haque (55), a [detained Awami League leader, died](#) while undergoing treatment after falling ill in Jamalpur District Jail. He was transferred to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital, where he later died.

[On April 12, an accused man named Akubbar Mollah died during a Department of Narcotics Control \(DNC\) raid in Magura](#), sparking family allegations of a fatal beating while officials claim he fell ill. The incident led to a local mob attacking DNC staff and vehicles, though police noted that preliminary reports suggest a physical struggle occurred during the arrest.

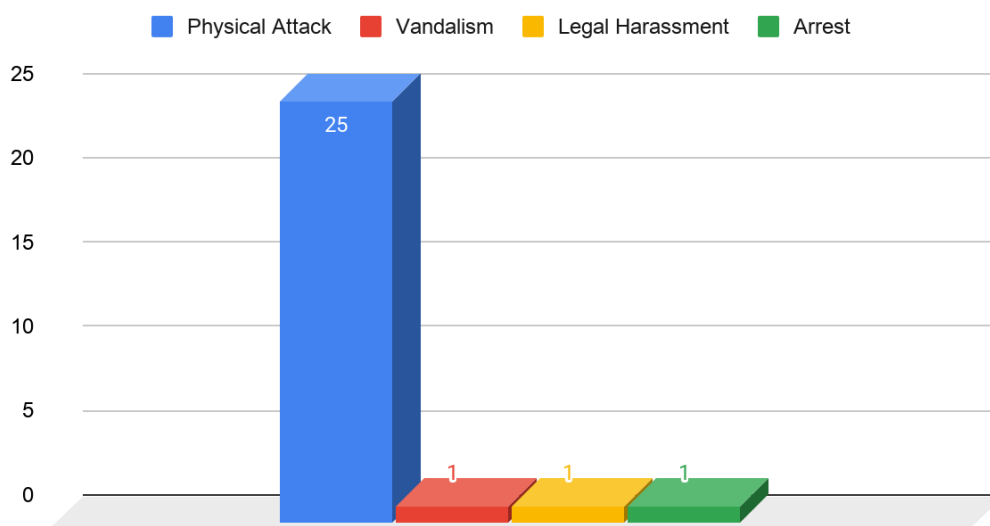
The recurring incidents of deaths in custody raise persistent questions about detention conditions, access to medical care, and the overall treatment of detainees. Recent deaths of Awami League leaders in prison have further intensified these concerns. Additionally, the inclusion of a death under the Department of Narcotics Control (DNC) expands the scope of the issue, suggesting risks across multiple law enforcement agencies.

## 5. Freedom of Expression

### 5.1 Violence Against Journalists

A total of 11 incidents targeting journalists were recorded, involving 37 cases of physical attacks. In addition, there were 2 incidents of vandalism targeting press clubs, and 1 reported arrest of a journalist.

Violence Against Journalists - April 2026



On April 23, [several members of the Dhaka University Journalists' Association were allegedly assaulted by Chhatra Dal activists](#) inside Shahbag Police Station while covering a confrontation between student groups. The attack left multiple journalists, including Sifat, Liton, and Khalid, injured and hospitalized at Dhaka Medical College Hospital for treatment.



On April 6, [journalist Sohrab Hossain was wrongfully arrested in Cumilla](#) due to an erroneous court warrant and detained for 18 hours. He was released after a judge confirmed the mistake, leading Hossain to file a formal complaint against the court official responsible for the error.

On April 25 and 26, separate attacks were carried out on journalists at the [Darshana Press Club in Chuadanga](#) and the [Khulna Press Club](#) by a drug trafficking gang and local miscreants, respectively. Both incidents involved forced entry and physical assaults on reporters, including Abdul Hannan and Md. Tarikul Islam, resulting in injuries and protests from the media community.

These incidents indicate that journalists continue to face both direct physical threats and institutional pressures. The incidents in two press clubs represent these attacks not only on individuals but also on media institutions, further contributing to an environment of intimidation. The arrest of a journalist adds another dimension, suggesting the use of legal mechanisms alongside physical violence.

## 5.2 Arrests for Expression

Beyond attacks on journalists, the use of the Cyber Security Act 2026 and Article 54 increased significantly this month. At least six individuals were arrested under different legal provisions related to freedom of expression, including four under the Cyber Security Act, one under the Anti-Terrorism Act, and one under Article 54. The arrests were linked to allegations of “defaming” or using inappropriate language against the Prime Minister and family members, government representatives, or hurting religious sentiment.

On April 2, [police arrested a young man named Shaon Mahmud \(35\) in Srinagar, Munshiganj](#), on charges of insulting the Prime Minister on Facebook. Police said he was later arrested under the Anti-Terrorism Act. Police claimed that anti-government and anti-state posts were found on his Facebook ID at various times.

On April 7, [police arrested Abdullah Al Mamun in Pirganj Upazila of Thakurgaon for allegedly insulting four top BNP leaders](#), including the Home Minister, on social media Facebook. Police filed a case against Mamun under the [Cyber Security Act](#).



Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DB) has arrested [content creator AM Hasan Nasim on charges of blackmailing Parliament Chief Whip Nurul Islam Moni](#) on April 18. He was arrested at his home in the capital's West Agargaon area this evening. DB Chief Additional Commissioner Shafiqul Islam said that Hasan Nasim was arrested based on specific allegations. Later, the DB produced him in court on Saturday after showing him arrested in a Cyber Security Act case filed at Gulshan Police Station.

On April 5, [police arrested a Jamaat activist named Bibi Sawda for posting anti-government writing in facebook](#). Law enforcement agencies detained her from a house on Adarsh Academy Road in Ward No. 6 of Bhola Municipality. Later, she was sent to jail by the court under Section 54 of the Penal Code. [On 7th April, Bhola District Judicial Magistrate Saurabh Roy \(Mithu\) granted her bail.](#)

On April 22, police arrested a college student named Shakil Ahmed in Debiganj, Panchagarh, on charges of [posting an 'objectionable post' on the social media platform Facebook](#) with a picture of Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's daughter, Jaima Rahman. He was arrested in the wake of a case filed against Shakil Ahmed under the Cyber Security Act at Debiganj Police Station by Chilahati Union BNP Joint General Secretary Mostafizur Rahman alias Samrat.

On April 24, [police arrested a college student named Nishad Islam on charges of posting objectionable posts on the social media platform Facebook about State Minister for Water Resources and Panchagarh-2 MP Farhad Hossain Azad. Abdus Salam](#), senior joint convener of Debiganj Sadar Union Jubo Dal, filed a case under the Cyber Security Act. The police showed him as arrested and sent him to court in that case.

The pattern of arrests and legal actions in April 2026 reflects an increasing use of legal mechanisms to control online speech and political expression. Compared to previous months, cases involving allegations of “defamation,” offensive remarks, or criticism of political leaders rose noticeably, generating concern among human rights activists and free

speech advocates. The repeated use of the Cyber Security Act, the Anti-Terrorism Act, and Article 54 against individuals over social media activity suggests an expanding tendency to criminalize online expression. Although authorities have defended these actions as necessary for maintaining public order and protecting reputations or religious sentiment, the growing reliance on such laws points to a shrinking space for dissent and digital freedom of expression.

## 6. Freedom of Assembly

Freedom of assembly faced significant challenges in April 2026, with reports of violent attacks on gatherings and forceful police action against demonstrators. Incidents during the month raised concerns over the safety of marginalized groups and the handling of peaceful protests by law enforcement agencies.



On April 10, [Azadi Andolan members beat up several people in front of the National Museum in the capital's Shahbag area, calling them homosexuals.](#) Every Friday, transgender and homosexual people gather in front of the Shahbag National Museum. A group of people attacked them in a planned manner. In the attack carried out under the banner of the 'Azadi Andolan' that evening, a group of people who were gathering was physically attacked by

calling them 'homosexuals' and 'transgenders'; at the same time, there was an incident of sexual harassment of women. Several people were injured in this. When the victims went to the police station, [the police did not assist them in filing an FIR.](#)



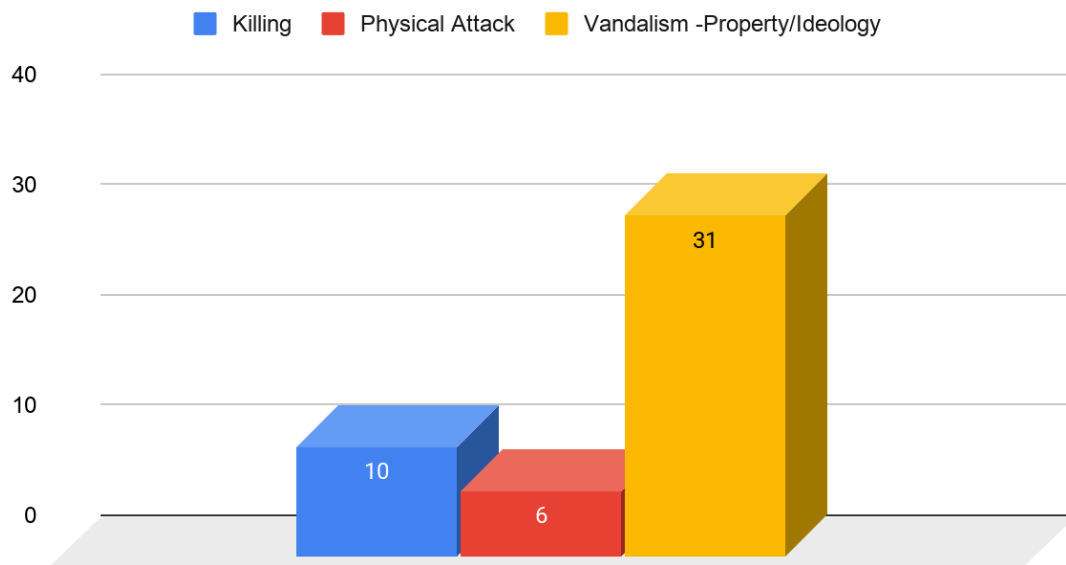
On April 27, police baton-charged a protest by candidates for the post of assistant teachers at a government primary school in Mirpur, Dhaka. [At least 5 people were injured in the incident.](#) The protesters had been holding a sit-in protest on the road in the area since 12 noon, demanding an appointment and promotion to the post of assistant teacher.

The protesters had been blocking the road since 12 noon. Senior police officials gave them 10 minutes to move off the road in the afternoon. However, when they did not leave the road within the stipulated time, the police baton-charged them and dispersed them.

## **7. Mob Violence**

Mob violence remained a serious concern in April 2026, with 12 recorded incidents resulting in 10 deaths and 6 injuries. In addition to direct violence, there were 31 cases of vandalism associated with mob actions, indicating widespread destruction alongside physical harm.

## Mob Violence - April 2026



We mentioned about [Abdur Rahman Shamim \(65\), a pir was beaten and hacked to death in Daulatpur, Kushtia](#), following allegations of Quran desecration. Tensions escalated after an old video resurfaced on social media, allegedly showing him making offensive remarks, which triggered public outrage. [So far, four people, including one accused in the case, have been arrested.](#)



Following the murder of a Jubo Dal leader in Rangpur city on April 11, attacks and vandalism have been reported on houses and shops in Hindu-dominated areas. Following the death of local youth Rakib Hasan due to drug dealing, a group of 40-50 people armed with sticks and country-made weapons attacked a Hindu neighborhood around 8 pm. [At least 20 shops and the gates, windows and tin fences of about 10 houses were damaged.](#) Police said that the police and intelligence agencies are working jointly and efforts are being made to arrest the accused quickly.

[Two people were killed and one seriously injured in a beating in Manikganj](#) on April 16 over the alleged murder of a missing child. The two deceased were identified as Pannu Mia (45), an easy-bike rider from Bonparil village, and his brother Fazlu Mia (28). Pannu Mia's son, Nazmul (20) was seriously injured in the incident.

## **8. Conclusion**

The human rights landscape in April 2026 demonstrates a complex but persistent pattern of violence and institutional challenges in Bangladesh. While certain indicators, such as political killings, appear lower than in the previous month, the rise in injuries, vandalism, and mob-related fatalities suggests that violence remains deeply embedded in both political and social contexts. The continued targeting of religious minorities, alongside large-scale destruction of property, highlights ongoing vulnerabilities within minority communities.

At the same time, the increasing use of legal mechanisms to control speech, particularly through the Cyber Security Ordinance, the Anti-Terrorism Act, and Section 54, points to a narrowing of the space for freedom of expression. Journalists continue to face both physical and institutional pressures, further weakening the environment for independent reporting. Custodial deaths across different agencies also raise serious concerns about detention conditions and oversight.

Overall, the trends observed in April indicate not a reduction, but a transformation like human rights violations—shifting from isolated incidents toward more widespread, collective, and institutionalized forms. Without stronger accountability, preventive measures, and safeguards for fundamental rights, these patterns are likely to persist and further undermine the rule of law and public confidence in state institutions.