

Universal Periodic Review of Bangladesh:

Amnesty International's mid-term assessment of progress towards implementation of recommendations accepted at the third review

Contents

Introduction.....	1
Legislative changes and freedom of expression.....	1
Attacks against journalists/Enforced disappearance	2
Prohibition of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment.....	2
Extrajudicial executions.....	3
Impunity.....	3
Refugees	3
Recommendations	3
ANNEX 1	5
Key Amnesty International Documents for reference	5
ANNEX 2	6
Amnesty International's comments on progress made by Bangladesh towards accepted recommendations on issues of legislative changes, the right to freedom of expression, attacks against journalists, enforced disappearances, prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment, extrajudicial killings, impunity, and refugees accepted, at its third Universal Periodic Review in May 2018.	6

Introduction

This document provides Amnesty International's assessment of progress made by Bangladesh towards implementation of recommendations on issues of legislative changes, the right to freedom of expression, attacks against journalists, enforced disappearance, prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment, extrajudicial killings, impunity, and refugees accepted, at its third Universal Periodic Review in May 2018. It uses the matrix of recommendations provided by OHCHR after the review, with progress – or lack thereof – indicated by a traffic-light system of colour coding. Information used as a basis for the organization's conclusions is included as comments. Links to relevant Amnesty International documents on the situation in Bangladesh since the last review are also included for reference.

Legislative changes and freedom of expression

The Government of Bangladesh accepted recommendations to repeal or amend the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Act, redraft the Digital Security Act, and bring all legislations in line with international human rights law, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Bangladesh is a state party. Although Bangladesh repealed some provisions of the ICT Act, in October 2018, the government introduced the Digital Security

Act,¹ a draconian law with vague and overbroad provisions that are increasingly being used to stifle the right to freedom of expression in the country. The country had 433 prisoners under the Digital Security Act as of 11 July 2021, mostly held on allegations of publishing “false or offensive information” under Section 25. There has been a 21% year-on-year increase of the number of people detained under the law. As of 11 July 2021, the longest serving prisoner detained under the law has been in prison since 24 December 2018. Amnesty International has found a concerning pattern in which the authorities weaponized Sections 25 (publication of false or offensive information), 29 (Publication of defamatory information), and 31 (Offence and punishment for deteriorating law and order) of the Act to target and harass dissenting voices, including those of journalists, activists, and human rights defenders (HRDs). The actions contravene Bangladesh’s constitutional obligations and its commitment under the ICCPR.

Attacks against journalists/Enforced disappearance

At the last Universal Period Review, Bangladesh’s law minister Anisul Huq denied that enforced disappearance occurred in Bangladesh. He further said that in “many cases, the perceived victims had reappeared, proving the allegations of the so-called enforced disappearance false.”² In May 2020, the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances stated that it had at least 60³ open cases of enforced disappearance from Bangladesh in its database.

Bangladeshi photojournalist Shafiqul Islam Kajol was not seen for 53 days after he left his office on 10 March 2020, raising concerns about an enforced disappeared by the authorities. A case of disappearance was filed by his son on 18 March 2020, with the Chalkbazar police station in Dhaka. Instead of investigating into his suspected enforced disappearance, Shafiqul Islam Kajol was arrested under the Digital Security Act, 53 days⁴ into his disappearance. Despite assuring an unequivocal and no-impunity stance regarding the involvement of law enforcement agencies in abduction, Bangladesh still has not acceded to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons Against Enforced Disappearance.

Prohibition of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment

Bangladesh acceded to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment in 1998. The State party is due to submit an initial report within a year, but Bangladesh finally submitted⁵ its first report for review 20 years later, in July 2019. Amnesty International has documented allegations⁶ of torture and other ill-treatment against a cartoonist and a writer, who were detained in May 2020 under the country’s draconian Digital Security Act, for posting on Facebook satirical cartoons and comments on the Bangladeshi government’s response to Covid-19 pandemic. Bangladeshi writer Mushtaq Ahmed died languishing in prison without trial for 10 months, following his detention under the Digital Security Act in May 2020, for criticizing the Bangladeshi government’s response to Covid-19 pandemic. The government’s probe committee concluded that he died of natural causes, reportedly from a heart attack. He was denied bail at least six times.

Cartoonist Ahmed Kabir Kishore, who was arrested in the same case as Mushtaq Ahmed, was released a week after Mushtaq Ahmed died in prison on 25 February 2021. He told Amnesty International that he was forcibly disappeared from his Dhaka residence at least three days prior to the date in official records of his arrest. He added that both Mushtaq Ahmed and he were tortured in custody⁷ by one or more state security agencies. On 10 March 2021, Ahmed Kabir Kishore filed a case with the metropolitan sessions judge’s court in Dhaka, under the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention) Act – 2013, seeking redress.

¹Amnesty International, No Space for Dissent – Bangladesh’s Crackdown on Freedom of Expression Online (Index Number: ASA 13/4294/2021), 26 July 2021, [amnesty.org/en/documents/asa13/4294/2021/en/](https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa13/4294/2021/en/) p.4

² UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review* Bangladesh, 11 July 2018, A/HRC/39/12, para. 65

³ OHCHR, Bangladesh must end persecution of journalist, say UN experts, 26 May 2020, [ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25905](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25905)

⁴ Amnesty International, Bangladesh: Further information: Editor faces detention after disappearance, (ASA 13/2276/2020), 5 May 2020, [amnesty.org/en/documents/asa13/2276/2020/en/](https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa13/2276/2020/en/) pp. 1-2

⁵ UN Committee against Torture, Concluding observations on the initial report of Bangladesh, 26 August 2019, CAT/C/BGD/CO/1

⁶ Amnesty International, Bangladesh: Cartoonist tortured, writer dies in jail: Ahmed Kabir Kishore, (ASA 13/3800/2021), 8 March 2021, [amnesty.org/en/documents/asa13/3800/2021/en/](https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa13/3800/2021/en/) pp. 1-2

⁷ Amnesty International, No Space for Dissent – Bangladesh’s Crackdown on Freedom of Expression Online (Index Number: ASA 13/4294/2021), 26 July 2021, [amnesty.org/en/documents/asa13/4294/2021/en/](https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa13/4294/2021/en/) p.6

Extrajudicial executions

A 2019 report by Amnesty International documented allegations of enforced disappearance and extrajudicial executions associated with Bangladesh's anti-narcotics drive in 2018. The report also documented allegations against law enforcement agencies of fabricating evidence⁸, particularly, witness statements after each incident. At least five witnesses, whose testimonies were recorded by law enforcement agencies at the site of killing, told Amnesty International that they were taken to the spot after the incident, shown a situation, and asked to describe what they saw. They said they could not refuse police requests to act as witnesses fearing harsh consequences. Security forces have taken signatures, names, phone numbers and personal details of the witnesses.

Impunity

Amnesty International has documented allegations of torture and other ill-treatment, enforced disappearance, and arbitrary detention committed against people solely for criticizing the government and other powerful people, as part of exercising their right to freedom of expression. The most common form of violation documented was the arbitrary detention of individuals under the Digital Security Act, under which at least 433 people remained in prisons of Bangladesh as of 11 July 2021. It further documented that almost 50% or 97 out of 199 cases that appeared for trial at the Cyber Tribunal in Dhaka between 1 January 2021 and 6 May 2021, were dismissed for lacking merit and evidence.

People have been picked up by members of security forces, held for months without disclosure, and subsequently charged under the Digital Security Act. A writer, Mushtaq Ahmed (see above) died languishing in prison for 10 months without trial, simply for criticizing the government's response to Covid-19. A cartoonist who was detained in the same case as the writer, said they both were tortured while in the custody of one or more state security agencies. Security forces enjoy impunity as the allegations of arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances and extrajudicial executions against them have not been promptly and impartially investigated.

Refugees

Bangladesh is host to nearly one million Rohingya refugees since August 2017. This is one of Bangladesh's major humanitarian contributions, in a region where many other countries have refused to welcome refugees. A UN resolution on the "Human Rights Situation of Rohingya Muslims and other Minorities in Myanmar" was adopted at the 47th session of the UN Human Rights Council in July 2021. The resolution called on the international community to provide humanitarian assistance until the Rohingya refugees can return to Myanmar. In January 2020, Bangladesh committed⁹ to provide Rohingya children with access to education in the Myanmar curriculum. Yet, no education programme had been introduced as of August 2021. In the meantime, since December 2020, the country has relocated nearly 18,000 Rohingya refugees to Bhashan Char, a remote silt island at the Bay of Bengal, amidst concerns¹⁰ about their safety and right to freedom of movement between the island and the mainland Cox's Bazar. Amnesty International documented¹¹ allegations of sexual abuse on the island by security officials, but the authorities refused to carry out a prompt and impartial investigation into the allegations. The island is off limits to everyone including human rights groups and journalists without prior permission, giving rise to grave concerns about independent human rights monitoring.

Recommendations

Amnesty International calls on Bangladesh to:

- Repeal the Digital Security Act unless it can be promptly amended in line with international human rights law, including the ICCPR to which Bangladesh is a state party;

⁸ Amnesty International, Bangladesh: Alleged extrajudicial killings in the guise of a 'war on drugs', 4 November 2019, [amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2019/11/bangladesh-killed-in-crossfire/](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2019/11/bangladesh-killed-in-crossfire/)

⁹ Amnesty International, Bangladesh: Rohingya children get access to education, 28 January 2020, [amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/01/bangladesh-rohingya-children-get-access-to-education/](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/01/bangladesh-rohingya-children-get-access-to-education/)

¹⁰ Amnesty International, Bangladesh: Halt relocation of Rohingya refugees to remote island, 3 December 2020, [amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2020/12/bangladesh-halt-relocation-of-rohingya-refugees-to-remote-island/](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2020/12/bangladesh-halt-relocation-of-rohingya-refugees-to-remote-island/)

¹¹ Amnesty International, "Let us speak for our rights" – Human rights situation of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, (ASA 13/2884/2020), 14 September 2020, [amnesty.org/en/documents/asa13/2884/2020/en/](https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa13/2884/2020/en/) p.12

- Ensure public participation, including members of the press, in drafting any legislation and policy related to cyber space, before they are approved by the cabinet or passed at the parliament;
- Draft legislation or incorporate provisions within existing laws to provide an effective remedy and adequate reparations for human rights violations, including undue restrictions of the right to freedom of expression and breaches of privacy;
- Promptly, thoroughly, impartially, independently and transparently investigate the allegations of arbitrary arrest, torture and other ill-treatment, and enforced disappearance of individuals, documented by Amnesty International and other human rights organizations;
- Ensure that a full, independent, prompt, and impartial investigation of all alleged extrajudicial killings is carried out, and where sufficient admissible evidence exists, ensure that those suspected of responsibility are prosecuted in fair trials, without resorting to the use of the death penalty;
- Ensure that investigations are conducted independently and impartially, and are not assigned to the authorities alleged to have committed the human rights violation;
- Ensure decisions related to Rohingya refugees are clearly detailed in a consultation-based, publicly accessible, transparent, and rights-respecting policy document, which outlines a framework of representation of Rohingya refugees in order to protect their human rights, including limited to access to education, livelihood, healthcare, justice, freedom of expression, peaceful assembly;
- Ensure safety and protection of existing Rohingya refugees on the island including their right to freedom of movement between island and mainland and that any relocation of the refugees within Bangladesh is voluntary and based on informed consent;
- Ensure that journalists, representatives of the UN, civil society organizations, including donor and humanitarian agencies and human rights organizations, have unfettered access to Bhashan Char island, to independently assess conditions;
- With the support of the international community, ensure that the children of the Rohingyas and host communities are provided with teachers and infrastructure, to enable them to access timely education;
- Respect the principle of non-*refoulement* by ensuring that Rohingya refugees are not transferred to any place, including their country of origin, where they may be at risk of serious human rights abuses and violations;
- Submit a mid-term report on its progress towards all accepted recommendations and use the Item 6 General Debate to update the Human Rights Council.

Amnesty International calls on UN Member and Observer states to:

- Raise concerns with Bangladesh on the ongoing crackdown on the right to freedom of expression online, and attacks against journalists, artists, students and activists, in the form of enforced disappearance, arrest, indefinite detention, torture, and ill-treatment, solely for peacefully exercising their human rights; and encourage the implementation of the above recommendations;
- Encourage Bangladesh to implement, as a matter of urgency, the recommendations the authorities accepted at its third Universal Periodic Review with regards to legislative reform and efforts to protect and promote the right to freedom of expression;
- Hold Bangladesh to account for its obligations and commitments as a member of the Human Rights Council, including the specific voluntary pledge to “preserve freedom of the press and promote the constructive role of civil society, and print, electronic and social media, in the promotion of human rights at all levels,” as well as its obligation to cooperate with the Special Procedures;
- Explore ways to provide technical assistance and exchange of good practices to draft legislation or incorporate provisions within existing laws, to provide an effective remedy and adequate reparations for human rights violation, including undue restrictions on the right to freedom of expression and breaches of privacy;
- Work with Bangladesh’s government to develop a publicly accessible, transparent, and rights-respecting policy document, which outlines a framework of representation of Rohingya refugees in order to protect their human rights, including access to education, healthcare, justice, and the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and movement;
- Offer technical assistance and expertise in developing a policy that ensures refugee representation;
- Continue and increase international humanitarian aid, cooperation and assistance, particularly in areas of education, vocational training, and livelihood, for both Rohingya refugees and Bangladesh’s host community who have been affected by the influx of refugees;
- Encourage Bangladesh to submit a mid-term report on its progress towards implementation of accepted recommendations and to update the Human Rights Council in the Item 6 General Debate.

ANNEX 1

Key Amnesty International Documents for reference

Bangladesh: No Space for Dissent – Bangladesh’s Crackdown on Freedom of Expression Online (Briefing)
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa13/4294/2021/en/>

Bangladesh: End crackdown on freedom of expression online (Press Release)
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/07/bangladesh-end-crackdown-on-freedom-of-expression-online/>

Bangladesh: Engineer arrested for Facebook post: Shahnewaz Chowdhury (Urgent Action)
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa13/4236/2021/en/>

EDITOR FEARED VICTIM OF ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE (Urgent Action)
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa13/1980/2020/en/>

Bangladesh: Let us speak for our rights: Human rights situation of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh (Briefing)
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa13/2884/2020/en/>

Bangladesh: Halt relocation of Rohingya refugees to remote island (Press Statement)
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2020/12/bangladesh-halt-relocation-of-rohingya-refugees-to-remote-island/>

Bangladesh: Rohingya children get access to education (Press Release)
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/01/bangladesh-rohingya-children-get-access-to-education/>

Annual Report 2020: Bangladesh
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/asia-and-the-pacific/south-asia/bangladesh/report-bangladesh/>

Killed in crossfire (Briefing)
4 November 2019
Index: ASA 13/1265/2019
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa13/1265/2019/en/>

Bangladesh: Alleged extrajudicial killings in the guise of a ‘war on drugs’ (Press Release)
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/11/bangladesh-killed-in-crossfire/>

ANNEX 2

Amnesty International’s comments on progress made by Bangladesh towards accepted recommendations on issues of legislative changes, the right to freedom of expression, attacks against journalists, enforced disappearances, prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment, extrajudicial killings, impunity, and refugees accepted, at its third Universal Periodic Review in May 2018.

Key	Red = no progress towards implementation
	Orange = partial implementation
	Green = implemented

Recommendation	Position	Full list of themes	Assessment/comments on level of implementation
Theme: A41 Constitutional and legislative framework			
<p>147.68 Review all existing and proposed legislation relating to freedom of expression, both online and offline, to ensure that it fully complies with the relevant international standards (Ireland);</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 147</p>	Supported	<p>A41 Constitutional and legislative framework D43 Freedom of opinion and expression</p> <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - general - media 	<p>Partially implemented</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bangladesh has repealed Section 54, 55, 56, 57 and 66 of the Information and Communication Technology Act. However, the Digital Security Act introduced in October 2018 expanded some of the provisions taken out from ICT Act into several sections in DSA with punishment up to life imprisonment. • Cosmetic changes were made to the Digital Security Act before it was finally introduced in October 2018. • Bangladesh had at least 433 prisoners under the Digital Security Act as of 11 July 2021, mostly held on allegations of publishing “false or offensive information” under Section 25. • The country had 358 prisoners under the Digital Security Act exactly one year ago on 11 July 2020. • The longest serving prisoner detained at least until 11 July 2021 under the law has been detained since 24 December 2018. • Amnesty International has found a concerning pattern in which the authorities weaponized Sections 25 (publication of false or

			<p>offensive information), 29 (Publication of defamatory information), and 31 (Offence and punishment for deteriorating law and order) of the Act to target and harass critical voices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to the country's Department of Prison, Bangladesh had 185 prisoners under Section 25, 162 persons under Section 29 and 163 persons under Section 31 as of 11 July 2021. One prisoner may have been implicated in multiple charges.
<p>148.3 Enforce constitutional provisions safeguarding freedom of expression, including by amending section 57 of the Information and Communication Technology Act and relevant provisions of the draft Digital Security Act (Australia);</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12/Add.1 - Para. 1</p>	Supported	<p>A41 Constitutional and legislative framework D43 Freedom of opinion and expression</p> <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - general - media 	<p>Partially implemented</p> <p>Section 57 of the Information and Communication Technology Act has been repealed. However, the Digital Security Act introduced in October 2018 expanded Section 57 of the ICT Act into several sections with punishment up to life imprisonment.</p>
<p>148.13 Review and amend the laws that restrict freedom of expression, such as section 57 of the 2006 Information and Communication Technology Act (Mexico);</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12/Add.1 - Para. 1</p>	Supported	<p>A41 Constitutional and legislative framework D43 Freedom of opinion and expression</p> <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - general - media - human rights defenders 	<p>Partially implemented</p> <p>Section 57 of the Information and Communication Technology Act has been repealed. However, the Digital Security Act introduced in October 2018 expanded Section 57 of the ICT Act into several sections with punishment up to life imprisonment.</p>
<p>147.71 Ensure democratic space for all political actors, including the implementation of domestic laws, without restrictions on the exercise of the rights to freedom of expression and of peaceful assembly (Switzerland);</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 147</p>	Supported	<p>A41 Constitutional and legislative framework D43 Freedom of opinion and expression D44 Right to peaceful assembly</p> <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - general - media - judges, lawyers and prosecutors 	<p>No Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cosmetic changes were made to the Digital Security Act before it was finally introduced in October 2018. • Bangladesh had at least 433 prisoners under the Digital Security Act as of 11 July 2021, mostly held on allegations of publishing "false or offensive information" under Section 25. • The country had 358 prisoners under the Digital Security Act exactly one year ago on 11 July 2020.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The longest serving prisoner detained at least until 11 July 2021 under the law has been detained since 24 December 2018. • Amnesty International has found a concerning pattern in which the authorities weaponized Sections 25 (publication of false or offensive information), 29 (Publication of defamatory information), and 31 (Offence and punishment for deteriorating law and order) of the Act to target and harass critical voices. • According to the country's Department of Prison, Bangladesh had 185 prisoners under Section 25, 162 persons under Section 29 and 163 persons under Section 31 as of 11 July 2021. One prisoner may have been implicated in multiple charges.
<p>147.7 Bring legislation into conformity with the obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights by repealing restrictive provisions that limit the rights of journalists, human rights defenders and civil society organizations to freedom of expression (Latvia);</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 147</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<p>A41 Constitutional and legislative framework D43 Freedom of opinion and expression H1 Human rights defenders</p> <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - general - media - human rights defenders 	<p>No Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cosmetic changes were made to the Digital Security Act before it was finally introduced in October 2018. • Bangladesh had at least 433 prisoners under the Digital Security Act as of 11 July 2021, mostly held on allegations of publishing “false or offensive information” under Section 25. • The country had 358 prisoners under the Digital Security Act exactly one year ago on 11 July 2020. • The longest serving prisoner detained at least until 11 July 2021 under the law has been detained since 24 December 2018. • Amnesty International has found a concerning pattern in which the authorities used Sections 25 (publication of false or offensive information), 29 (Publication of defamatory information), and 31 (Offence and punishment for deteriorating law and order) of the Act to

			<p>target and harass critical voices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to the country's Department of Prison, Bangladesh had 185 prisoners under Section 25, 162 persons under Section 29 and 163 persons under Section 31 as of 11 July 2021. One prisoner may have been implicated in multiple charges.
Theme: B51 Right to an effective remedy			
<p>147.89 Investigate all cases of murder and violence against journalists and bloggers and bring suspected perpetrators to justice (Slovakia);</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 147</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<p>B51 Right to an effective remedy B52 Impunity A47 Good governance</p> <p>Affected persons: - media</p>	<p>No Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photojournalist Shafiqul Islam Kajol was not seen for 53 days after he left his office on 10 March 2020, raising concerns that he was forcibly disappeared by the authorities. A case of disappearance was filed by his son on 18 March 2020. Instead of investigating into his suspected enforced disappearance, Shafiqul Islam Kajol was arrested under Digital Security Act, 53 days into his disappearance. • Bangladeshi writer Mushtaq Ahmed died languishing in prison without trial for 10 months, after he was detained under the Digital Security Act for criticising the Bangladeshi government's response to COVID-19 pandemic. The government's probe committee concluded that he died of natural causes, reportedly from a heart attack. He was denied bail at least six times. He should not have spent a single minute in prison let alone his final ones. • Cartoonist Ahmed Kabir Kishore, who was arrested in the same case as Mushtaq Ahmed, was released a week after Mushtaq Ahmed died in prison. He told Amnesty International that he was forcibly disappeared from his Dhaka residence at least three days prior to the date in official records of his arrest. He also said that both

			<p>Mushtaq Ahmed and he were tortured in custody of one or more state security agencies. On 10 March 2021, Ahmed Kabir Kishore filed a case with the metropolitan sessions judge's court in Dhaka, under the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention) Act – 2013, seeking redress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bangladesh has not acceded to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons Against Enforced Disappearance or the OP-CAT.
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Theme: B52 Impunity

<p>147.77 Protect human rights defenders and journalists from harassment by combating impunity and ensuring the prompt and impartial investigation of all violations against human rights defenders (Netherlands);</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 147</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<p>B52 Impunity H1 Human rights defenders D51 Administration of justice & fair trial</p> <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - media - human rights defenders 	<p>No Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A July 2021 briefing by Amnesty International found out that journalists, photojournalists, cartoonists, musicians, human rights defenders, entrepreneurs, teenage students and a farmer have been subjected to a wide range of human rights violations, including enforced disappearances, arbitrary detentions, torture and other ill treatment. • In one case Bangladeshi writer Mushtaq Ahmed died languishing in prison without trial for 10 months, after he was detained under the Digital Security Act for criticising the Bangladeshi government's response to COVID-19 pandemic. • Photojournalist Shafiqul Islam Kajol was not seen for 53 days after he left his office on 10 March, raising concerns that he was forcibly disappeared by the authorities. A case of disappearance was filed by his son on 18 March 2020. Instead of investigating into his suspected enforced disappearance, Shafiqul Islam Kajol was arrested under Digital Security Act, 53 days into his disappearance. • Labour rights activist Ruhul Amin, 35, has been detained at least three times between
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			<p>April 2018 and October 2020 for organizing protests against the Bangladeshi government's decision to shut down state-owned jute mills. He was last arrested on 26 February 2021 for posting on Facebook a call to protest in front of Bangladesh's National Parliament, the death of Bangladeshi writer Mushtaq Ahmed in prison. He was accused of attempting to deteriorate law and order under the Digital Security Act. He faces up to 7 years in prison if convicted.</p>
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Theme: D22 Extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions

<p>147.8 Promptly implement the recommendations accepted in the second cycle of the universal periodic review, on extrajudicial executions, and enforced disappearances, and against torture (France);</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 147</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<p>D22 Extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions D25 Prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment D32 Enforced disappearances D33 Arbitrary arrest and detention A26 Cooperation with the Universal Periodic Review (UPR)</p> <p>Affected persons: - persons deprived of their liberty</p>	<p>No Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 2019 report by Amnesty International documented allegations of enforced disappearance and extrajudicial executions associated with Bangladesh's anti-narcotics drive in 2018. The report also documented allegations against law enforcement agencies of making up evidence, especially witness statements after each incident. At least five witnesses interviewed by Amnesty International have said that they were involuntarily taken to the spot after the incident. • Photojournalist Shafiqul Islam Kajol was not seen for 53 days after he left his office on 10 March 2020, raising concerns that he was forcibly disappeared by the authorities. A case of disappearance was filed by his son on 18 March 2020. Instead of investigating into his suspected enforced disappearance, Shafiqul Islam Kajol was arrested under Digital Security Act, 53 days into his disappearance.
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Theme: D25 Prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment

<p>148.12 Enhance efforts to prevent cases of torture and enforced disappearance and to prosecute perpetrators (Italy);</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<p>D25 Prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment D32 Enforced disappearances B52 Impunity</p> <p>Affected persons:</p>	<p>No Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bangladesh has not ratified the International Convention for the Protection of All
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<p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12/Add.1 - Para. 1</p>		<p>- persons deprived of their liberty - disappeared persons</p>	<p>Persons from Enforced Disappearance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photojournalist Shafiqul Islam Kajol was not seen for 53 days after he left his office on 10 March, raising concerns that he was forcibly disappeared by the authorities. A case of disappearance was filed by his son on 18 March 2020. Instead of investigating into his suspected enforced disappearance, Shafiqul Islam Kajol was arrested under Digital Security Act, 53 days into his disappearance. • A 2019 investigation into allegations of extrajudicial executions, Amnesty International found out that all of them were subjected to enforced disappearances lasting between one day to month than a month before they were killed.
<p>147.80 Ensure effective protection of the lives and security of human rights defenders and journalists against human rights violations, including enforced disappearance, torture and extrajudicial killings (Republic of Korea);</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 147</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<p>D25 Prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment D32 Enforced disappearances H1 Human rights defenders</p> <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - judges, lawyers and prosecutors - human rights defenders - disappeared persons 	<p>No Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A July 2021 briefing by Amnesty International found out that journalists, photojournalists, cartoonists, musicians, human rights defenders, entrepreneurs, teenage students and a farmer have been subjected to a wide range of human rights violations, including enforced disappearances, arbitrary detentions, torture and other ill treatment. • In one case Bangladeshi writer Mushtaq Ahmed died languishing in prison without trial for 10 months, after he was detained under the Digital Security Act for criticising the Bangladeshi government's response to COVID-19 pandemic. • Photojournalist Shafiqul Islam Kajol was not seen for 53 days after he left his office on 10 March, raising concerns that he was forcibly disappeared by the authorities. A case of disappearance was filed by his son on 18 March 2020. Instead of investigating into

			his suspected enforced disappearance, Shafiqul Islam Kajol was arrested under Digital Security Act, 53 days into his disappearance.
Theme: D26 Conditions of detention			
<p>147.84 Consider measures to accelerate trial process with a view to reducing pending cases and the number of pretrial detainees as well as safeguarding their basic rights (Malaysia);</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 147</p>	Supported	<p>D26 Conditions of detention D31 Liberty and security - general D51 Administration of justice & fair trial</p> <p>Affected persons: - persons deprived of their liberty</p>	<p>No Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More people are imprisoned under Bangladesh's Digital Security Act than those who have been released. Bangladesh had at least 433 prisoners under the DSA as of 11 July 2021 with the longest serving prisoner being detained since 24 December 2018, according to the country's Department of Prisons. There were 358 prisoners under the law exactly one year ago. • Bangladeshi writer Mushtaq Ahmed died languishing in prison without trial for 10 months, after he was detained under the Digital Security Act for criticising the Bangladeshi government's response to COVID-19 pandemic. The government's probe committee concluded that he died of natural causes, reportedly from a heart attack. He was denied bail at least six times. He should have spent a single minute in prison let alone his final ones. • Cartoonist Ahmed Kabir Kishore was arrested in the same case as Mushtaq Ahmed. He suffered from high levels of blood sugar during his incarceration as he lacked timely access to insulin medication that he required to control diabetes. He was eventually released on bail after 10 months in pretrial detention, only a week after his friend writer Mushtaq Ahmed died on 25 February 2021. • Photojournalist Shafiqul Islam Kajol was denied bail 13 times before he was released on bail on 25

			December 2020, after seven months in pretrial detention. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many people detained under the Digital Security Act suffered detention for various periods even before their cases appear for trial.
Theme: D42 Freedom of thought, conscience and religion			
147.67 Protect freedom of expression in media, politics and religion, and work with civil society to address concerns regarding section 57 of the Information and Communication Technology Act (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland); Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 147	Supported	D42 Freedom of thought, conscience and religion D43 Freedom of opinion and expression Affected persons: - media	Partially implemented <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bangladesh has repealed Section 54, 55, 56, 57 and 66 of the Information and Communication Technology Act. However, the Digital Security Act introduced in October 2018 expanded some of the provisions taken out of the ICT Act into several sections in the DSA with punishment up to life imprisonment. • Cosmetic changes were made to the Digital Security Act before it was finally introduced in October 2018. • Bangladesh had at least 433 prisoners under the Digital Security Act as of 11 July 2021, mostly held on allegations of publishing “false or offensive information” under Section 25. • The country had 358 prisoners under the Digital Security Act exactly one year ago on 11 July 2020. • The longest serving prisoner detained at least until 11 July 2021 under the law has been detained since 24 December 2018. • Amnesty International has found a concerning pattern in which the authorities weaponized Sections 25 (publication of false or offensive information), 29 (Publication of defamatory information), and 31 (Offence and punishment for deteriorating law and order) of the Act to target and harass critical voices. • According to the country’s Department of Prison, Bangladesh had 185 prisoners under Section 25,

			<p>162 persons under Section 29 and 163 persons under Section 31 as of 11 July 2021. One prisoner may have been implicated in multiple charges.</p>
<p>147.74 Continue efforts to protect freedom of expression and freedom of religion or belief for all citizens and residents, and to support civil society participation (Poland);</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 147</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<p>D42 Freedom of thought, conscience and religion D43 Freedom of opinion and expression D45 Freedom of association</p> <p>Affected persons: - general</p>	<p>No Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cosmetic changes were made to the Digital Security Act before it was finally introduced in October 2018. • Bangladesh had at least 433 prisoners under the Digital Security Act as of 11 July 2021, mostly held on allegations of publishing “false or offensive information” under Section 25. • The country had 358 prisoners under the Digital Security Act exactly one year ago on 11 July 2020. • The longest serving prisoner detained at least until 11 July 2021 under the law has been detained since 24 December 2018. • Amnesty International has found a concerning pattern in which the authorities weaponized Sections 25 (publication of false or offensive information), 29 (Publication of defamatory information), and 31 (Offence and punishment for deteriorating law and order) of the Act to target and harass critical voices. • According to the country’s Department of Prison, Bangladesh had 185 prisoners under Section 25, 162 persons under Section 29 and 163 persons under Section 31 as of 11 July 2021. One prisoner may have been implicated in multiple charges. • Two folk musicians were charged with the vague and overbroad provision of hurting religious sentiment under the Digital Security Act. According to Bangladesh’s Department of Prison, as of 11 July 2021 at least 40 persons were detained under

			Section 28 of the Act, which stipulates up to 10 years in prison for “hurting religious values or sentiment.”
Theme: D43 Freedom of opinion and expression			
147.65 Take effective measures to ensure that the press can work free from the oppression by instances of censorship, threats, physical assaults and killings (Slovakia); Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 147	Supported	D43 Freedom of opinion and expression Affected persons: - media	No Progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An analysis of print and online news by Amnesty International shows that more than 100 journalists have been sued under Bangladesh's draconian Digital Security Act between January 2019 and July 2021, and at least 40 of them were arrested. • A July 2021 briefing by Amnesty International found out that writers, journalists, photojournalists and cartoonists have been subjected to a wide range of human rights violations, including enforced disappearances, arbitrary detentions, torture and other ill treatment. • In one case Bangladeshi writer Mushtaq Ahmed died languishing in prison without trial for 10 months, after he was detained under the Digital Security Act for criticising the Bangladeshi government's response to COVID-19 pandemic. • Photojournalist Shafiqul Islam Kajol was not seen for 53 days after he left his office on 10 March, raising concerns that he was forcibly disappeared by the authorities. A case of disappearance was filed by his son on 18 March 2020. Instead of investigating into his suspected enforced disappearance, Shafiqul Islam Kajol was arrested under Digital Security Act, 53 days into his disappearance.
148.14 Review and redraft the proposed Digital Security Act to ensure online freedom of expression (Norway); Source of position: A/HRC/39/12/Add.1 - Para. 1	Supported	D43 Freedom of opinion and expression Affected persons: - general - media - human rights defenders	No Progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cosmetic changes were made to the Digital Security Act before it was finally introduced in October 2018.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bangladesh had at least 433 prisoners under the Digital Security Act as of 11 July 2021, mostly held on allegations of publishing “false or offensive information” under Section 25. • The country had 358 prisoners under the Digital Security Act exactly one year ago on 11 July 2020. • The longest serving prisoner detained at least until 11 July 2021 under the law has been detained since 24 December 2018. • Amnesty International has found a concerning pattern in which the authorities weaponized Sections 25 (publication of false or offensive information), 29 (Publication of defamatory information), and 31 (Offence and punishment for deteriorating law and order) of the Act to target and harass critical voices. • According to the country’s Department of Prison, Bangladesh had 185 prisoners under Section 25, 162 persons under Section 29 and 163 persons under Section 31 as of 11 July 2021. One prisoner may have been implicated in multiple charges.
<p>148.15 Redraft the Digital Security Act in line with international norms and standards for freedom of expression (Sweden);</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12/Add.1 - Para. 1</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<p>D43 Freedom of opinion and expression</p> <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - general - media - human rights defenders 	<p>No Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cosmetic changes were made to the Digital Security Act before it was finally introduced in October 2018. • Bangladesh had at least 433 prisoners under the Digital Security Act as of 11 July 2021, mostly held on allegations of publishing “false or offensive information” under Section 25. • The country had 358 prisoners under the Digital Security Act exactly one year ago on 11 July 2020. • The longest serving prisoner detained at least until 11 July 2021 under the law has

			<p>been detained since 24 December 2018.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amnesty International has found a concerning pattern in which the authorities weaponized Sections 25 (publication of false or offensive information), 29 (Publication of defamatory information), and 31 (Offence and punishment for deteriorating law and order) of the Act to target and harass critical voices. • According to the country's Department of Prison, Bangladesh had 185 prisoners under Section 25, 162 persons under Section 29 and 163 persons under Section 31 as of 11 July 2021. One prisoner may have been implicated in multiple charges.
<p>147.66 Take prompt and effective measures to ensure that freedom of assembly and expression extends in practice — both online and offline — to all people, media, civil society and political parties, throughout the upcoming election campaign and beyond (Canada);</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 147</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<p>D43 Freedom of opinion and expression D44 Right to peaceful assembly D7 Right to participation in public affairs and right to vote</p> <p>Affected persons: - media</p>	<p>No Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cosmetic changes were made to the Digital Security Act before it was finally introduced in October 2018. • Bangladesh had at least 433 prisoners under the Digital Security Act as of 11 July 2021, mostly held on allegations of publishing “false or offensive information” under Section 25. • The country had 358 prisoners under the Digital Security Act exactly one year ago on 11 July 2020. • The longest serving prisoner has been detained since 24 December 2021. • Amnesty International has found a concerning pattern in which the authorities weaponized Sections 25 (publication of false or offensive information), 29 (Publication of defamatory information), and 31 (Offence and punishment for deteriorating law and order) of the Act to target and harass critical voices. • According to the country's Department of Prison, Bangladesh had 185

			<p>prisoners under Section 25, 162 persons under Section 29 and 163 persons under Section 31 as of 11 July 2021. One prisoner may have been implicated in multiple charges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour rights activist Ruhul Amin, 35, has been detained at least three times between April 2018 and October 2020 for organizing protests against the Bangladeshi government's decision to shut down state-owned jute mills. He was last arrested on 26 February 2021 for posting on Facebook a call to protest in front of Bangladesh's National Parliament, the death of Bangladeshi writer Mushtaq Ahmed in prison. He was accused of attempting to deteriorate law and order under the Digital Security Act. He faces up to 7 years in prison if convicted.
<p>147.73 Safeguard freedoms of political expression and association, without reprisals, censorship, intimidation or restrictive legal action, and that Bangladesh safeguard the independence of media (New Zealand);</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 147</p>	<p>Supported</p>	<p>D43 Freedom of opinion and expression D45 Freedom of association</p> <p>Affected persons: - media</p>	<p>No Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cosmetic changes were made to the Digital Security Act before it was finally introduced in October 2018. • Bangladesh had at least 433 prisoners under the Digital Security Act as of 11 July 2021, mostly held on allegations of publishing “false or offensive information” under Section 25. • The country had 358 prisoners under the Digital Security Act exactly one year ago on 11 July 2020. • The longest serving prisoner has been detained since 24 December 2021. • Amnesty International has found a concerning pattern in which the authorities weaponized Sections 25 (publication of false or offensive information), 29 (Publication of defamatory information), and 31 (Offence and punishment for deteriorating law and order) of the Act to target and harass critical voices.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to the country's Department of Prison, Bangladesh had 185 prisoners under Section 25, 162 persons under Section 29 and 163 persons under Section 31 as of 11 July 2021. One prisoner may have been implicated in multiple charges.
<p>147.70 Guarantee freedom of expression in the Digital Security Act (France);</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 147</p>	Supported	<p>D43 Freedom of opinion and expression D46 Right to private life, privacy</p> <p>Affected persons: - media</p>	<p>No Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cosmetic changes were made to the Digital Security Act before it was finally introduced in October 2018. • Bangladesh had at least 433 prisoners under the Digital Security Act as of 11 July 2021, mostly held on allegations of publishing "false or offensive information" under Section 25. • The country had 358 prisoners under the Digital Security Act exactly one year ago on 11 July 2020. • The longest serving prisoner has been detained since 24 December 2021. • Amnesty International has found a concerning pattern in which the authorities weaponized Sections 25 (publication of false or offensive information), 29 (Publication of defamatory information), and 31 (Offence and punishment for deteriorating law and order) of the Act to target and harass critical voices. • According to the country's Department of Prison, Bangladesh had 185 prisoners under Section 25, 162 persons under Section 29 and 163 persons under Section 31 as of 11 July 2021. One prisoner may have been implicated in multiple charges.
<p>147.69 Take effective measures to ensure freedom of expression and end all assaults on journalists and human rights defenders, as well as ensure that the proposed Digital Security Act is in line with</p>	Supported	<p>D43 Freedom of opinion and expression H1 Human rights defenders</p> <p>Affected persons: - general - media</p>	<p>No Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cosmetic changes were made to the Digital Security Act before it was finally introduced in October 2018.

<p>international standards (Estonia);</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 147</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An analysis of print and online news by Amnesty International shows that more than 100 journalists have been sued under the DSA between January 2019 and July 2021, and at least 40 of them were arrested. • Bangladesh had at least 433 prisoners under the Digital Security Act as of 11 July 2021, mostly held on allegations of publishing “false or offensive information” under Section 25. • The country had 358 prisoners under the Digital Security Act exactly one year ago on 11 July 2020. • The longest serving prisoner has been detained since 24 December 2021. • Amnesty International has found a concerning pattern in which the authorities weaponized Sections 25 (publication of false or offensive information), 29 (Publication of defamatory information), and 31 (Offence and punishment for deteriorating law and order) of the Act to target and harass critical voices. • According to the country’s Department of Prison, Bangladesh had 185 prisoners under Section 25, 162 persons under Section 29 and 163 persons under Section 31 as of 11 July 2021. One prisoner may have been implicated in multiple charges.
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Theme: G5 Refugees & asylum seekers

<p>147.164 Continue efforts to host the forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals until they voluntarily return to their homeland in safety, security and dignity (Yemen);</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 147</p>	Supported	<p>G5 Refugees & asylum seekers</p> <p>Affected persons: - refugees & asylum seekers</p>	<p>Implemented</p> <p>Bangladesh continues to host nearly one million Rohingya refugees. More than 740,000 of them arrived after 25 August 2017.</p>
<p>147.165 Continue to pursue strong efforts bilaterally as well as internationally and with help and assistance from the</p>	Supported	<p>G5 Refugees & asylum seekers</p> <p>A3 Inter-State cooperation & development assistance</p> <p>Affected persons: - refugees & asylum seekers</p>	<p>Partially implemented</p> <p>A UN resolution on the “Human Rights Situation of Rohingya Muslims and other</p>

<p>international community, for the sustainable resolution of the Rohingya crisis (Azerbaijan);</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 147</p>			<p>Minorities in Myanmar” was adopted at the 47th session of the UN Human Rights Council in July 2021. The resolution called on the international community to provide humanitarian assistance until the Rohingya refugees can return to Myanmar. Bangladesh called on the international community to play a visible and effective role at ensuring that Rohingya refugees can return home with security and dignity. The international funding which secured 72 to 75% of the annual appeal in the first three years declined to 65% in 2020.</p>
<p>147.166 Continue to work with international partners and Myanmar to find a sustainable solution that enables those displaced to return home voluntarily, safely and with dignity (New Zealand);</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 147</p>	Supported	<p>G5 Refugees & asylum seekers A3 Inter-State cooperation & development assistance</p> <p>Affected persons: - refugees & asylum seekers</p>	<p>Partially implemented</p> <p>A UN resolution on the “Human Rights Situation of Rohingya Muslims and other Minorities in Myanmar” was adopted at the 47th session of the UN Human Rights Council in July 2021. The resolution called on the international community to provide humanitarian assistance until they can return to Myanmar. Bangladesh called on the international community to play a visible and effective role at ensuring that Rohingya refugees can return home with security and dignity. The international funding which secured 72 to 75% of the annual appeal in the first three years declined to 65% in 2020.</p>
<p>147.167 Continue to hold constructive dialogue with Myanmar and make efforts to implement the bilateral agreement, aiming at steady and rapid repatriation of refugees (Japan).</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 147</p>	Supported	<p>G5 Refugees & asylum seekers A3 Inter-State cooperation & development assistance</p> <p>Affected persons: - refugees & asylum seekers</p>	<p>No Progress</p> <p>The conditions in Myanmar are not conducive for the “safe, dignified, voluntary and sustainable” returns of the Rohingya refugees. Rohingya people in Bangladesh overwhelmingly wish to return home when it is safe for them to do so. Crucially, they have a right to participate in the decisions that affect them. Accountability is an essential component of these conditions. Even before the coup, the</p>

			circumstances in Myanmar were anything but conducive to those conditions. Returns must follow the principle of non-refoulement which is binding upon all states.
148.22 Continue improving Rohingya refugees' conditions and investigating allegations of abuses and human rights violations against them in accordance with international standards (Holy See); Source of position: A/HRC/39/12/Add.1 - Para. 1	Supported	G5 Refugees & asylum seekers A3 Inter-State cooperation & development assistance D51 Administration of justice & fair trial Affected persons: - refugees & asylum seekers	Partially implemented Bangladesh is host to nearly one million Rohingya refugees. In Bangladesh, the Rohingya men, women, and children found a second chance at life. The country in January 2020 committed to provide Rohingya children with access to education in Myanmar curriculum. The education programme has not been introduced as of August 2021. The country has relocated nearly 18,000 Rohingya refugees since December 2020 to Bhashan Char, a remote silt island at the Bay of Bengal, amidst concerns about their safety and right to freedom of movement between the island and the mainland Cox's Bazar. Amnesty International documented allegations of sexual abuse on the island by security officials. Instead of commissioning a prompt and impartial investigation into the allegations, the authorities vehemently refused .

Theme: H1 Human rights defenders

147.76 Guarantee the security of human rights defenders (France); Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 147	Supported	H1 Human rights defenders Affected persons: - human rights defenders	No Progress Human rights defenders are often demonised, harassed, intimidated and arrested for organizing movements. On 26 February 2021, Labour rights activist Ruhul Amin posted on Facebook a call to protest against the death of writer Mushtaq Ahmed in prison. Police arrested him on charges of "attempting to deteriorate law and order" under the DSA. He faces up to seven years in prison if convicted.
147.23 Ensure that police officers are adequately trained and instructed to investigate reports of harassment, attacks and death threats against journalists, media workers, human rights defenders and activists and ensure the protection of those under threat in accordance with international human rights law (Finland); Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 147	Supported	H1 Human rights defenders A43 Human rights policies A54 Awareness raising and dissemination A53 Professional training in human rights Affected persons: - media - human rights defenders	

<p>147.78 Ensure that human rights defenders, journalists and civil society have a safe and enabling environment and can operate freely without fear of reprisals (Norway);</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 147</p>	Supported	<p>H1 Human rights defenders D43 Freedom of opinion and expression D45 Freedom of association</p> <p>Affected persons: - media - human rights defenders</p>	<p>On 28 May 2021, police arrested Shahnewaz Chowdhury, an engineer and rights defender for a Facebook post where he shared his personal opinion that was critical about a power plant in his area.</p>
<p>147.75 Publicly commit to ensuring that journalists, bloggers, human rights defenders and civil society organizations are able to carry out their activities without fear of surveillance, intimidation, harassment, arrest, prosecution or retribution (Austria);</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 147</p>	Supported	<p>H1 Human rights defenders D46 Right to private life, privacy D43 Freedom of opinion and expression</p> <p>Affected persons: - media - human rights defenders</p>	<p>Human rights groups said that in some cases they have been denied permission to host peaceful assembly. The government has curtailed operations of local human rights organizations such as Odhikar under laws such as the “Foreign Donations (Voluntary Activities) Regulation Act 2016”.</p>

Theme: A24 Cooperation with special procedures

<p>149.19 Issue and implement a standing invitation to all special procedures (Czechia);</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 149</p>	Noted	<p>A24 Cooperation with special procedures</p> <p>Affected persons: - general</p>	<p>No Progress</p> <p>Despite noting the request to cooperate with special procedures, no progress has been made with regards to implementing a standing invitation to all special procedures.</p>
<p>149.20 Respond positively to pending visit requests by special procedure mandate holders of the Human Rights Council and consider extending a standing invitation to all mandate holders (Latvia);</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 149</p>	Noted	<p>A24 Cooperation with special procedures</p> <p>Affected persons: - general</p>	<p>Partially implemented</p> <p>With exception of accepting visits by the UN Special Rapporteur on Myanmar since the last UPR, Bangladesh has not granted visits to any other requests made by the Special Procedures. There are at least 17 pending visit requests and five other requests that were not followed up.</p>

Theme: A41 Constitutional and legislative framework

<p>149.46 Revise media laws, in consultation with civil society, to decriminalize “defamation” and “hurting religious sentiment”, and limit proposed extended jail terms for these offences (United States of America);</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 149</p>	Noted	<p>A41 Constitutional and legislative framework D42 Freedom of thought, conscience and religion D43 Freedom of opinion and expression</p> <p>Affected persons: - media</p>	<p>No Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cosmetic changes were made to the Digital Security Act before it was finally introduced in October 2018. • An analysis of print and online news by Amnesty International shows that more than 100 journalists have been sued under the DSA between January 2019 and
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			<p>July 2021, and at least 40 of them were arrested.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bangladesh had at least 433 prisoners under the Digital Security Act as of 11 July 2021, mostly held on allegations of publishing “false or offensive information” under Section 25. • The country had 358 prisoners under the Digital Security Act exactly one year ago on 11 July 2020. • The longest serving prisoner detained at least until 11 July 2021 under the law has been detained since 24 December 2018. • Amnesty International has found a concerning pattern in which the authorities weaponized Sections 25 (publication of false or offensive information), 29 (Publication of defamatory information), and 31 (Offence and punishment for deteriorating law and order) of the Act to target and harass critical voices. • According to the country’s Department of Prison, Bangladesh had 185 prisoners under Section 25, 162 persons under Section 29 and 163 persons under Section 31 as of 11 July 2021. One prisoner may have been implicated in multiple charges.
<p>149.45 Decriminalize defamation and include it in the Civil Code in accordance with international standards, and take steps to create an independent broadcast licensing authority (Estonia); Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 149</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>A41 Constitutional and legislative framework D43 Freedom of opinion and expression Affected persons: - general - media</p>	<p>No Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amnesty International has found a concerning pattern in which the authorities weaponized Sections 25 (publication of false or offensive information), 29 (Publication of defamatory information), and 31 (Offence and punishment for deteriorating law and order) of the Digital Security Act to target and harass critical voices. • According to the country’s Department of Prison, Bangladesh had 185 prisoners under Section 25,

			<p>162 persons under Section 29 and 163 persons under Section 31 as of 11 July 2021. One prisoner may have been implicated in multiple charges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cases against six out of 10 individuals analysed by Amnesty International featured criminal defamation charges, where the complainant was either a law enforcement official or someone else other than the person said to be defamed. In those cases, the authorities also included assumption that social media posts by the individuals were “about to” deteriorate law and order. Satire and criticism were treated as false, offensive or derogatory information under the law. • In one case, a famer, who cannot read or write, was initially implicated with defamation charges under Bangladesh’s draconian Digital Security Act. However, after failing to corroborate any evidence against the farmer of using a digital platform, police on 15 April 2021 charged him for defamation under Bangladesh’s Penal Code 1860. If convicted, he faces up to two years in jail.
<p>149.49 Repeal the Information and Communication Technology Act (2006), as amended in 2013, or modify the Information and Communication Technology Act to bring it in line with international law and standards (Greece);</p> <p>Source of position: A/HRC/39/12 - Para. 149</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>A41 Constitutional and legislative framework D43 Freedom of opinion and expression</p> <p>Affected persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - general - media 	<p>Implemented</p> <p>Bangladesh has repealed Section 54, 55, 56, 57 and 66 of the Information and Communication Technology Act and therefore, amended the ICT Act provisions that were mostly used in contravention of international human rights law.</p>