

Hindu Pogrom Under a Nobel Laureate's Watch in Bangladesh

Ethnic Cleansing of Bangladeshi Hindus

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Executive Summary

1. The report concludes that violence against Bangladesh's Hindu minority since the August 2024 interim transition exhibits internationally recognised indicators of ethnic cleansing, forced displacement dynamics, terror violence, property destruction, and systematic state failure to protect.
2. In the immediate aftermath of the Bangladeshi regime change (2024), the report documents a sharp surge in attacks on Hindu civilians and worship sites, hundreds of homes/businesses ransacked and temples desecrated within days, followed by a nationwide pattern of intimidation.
3. The report finds that violence produced an exodus impulse (including attempted cross-border dispersal) and widespread internal displacement/hiding, with families seeking refuge in temples and "safe" enclaves, an environment where "staying" becomes increasingly untenable.
4. The report details killings and extreme brutality (including lynching/burning, machete attacks, abductions, and targeted murders) and frames this as violence-as-message, designed to break Hindu community morale and accelerate displacement.
5. The report highlights reported rape and sexual violence during communal attacks and flags cases involving women and children, arguing that such crimes function as coercion and collective terror rather than isolated criminality.
6. The report stresses that victims are civilians; teachers, traders, community organisers, elderly individuals attacked in homes, workplaces, and transit routes, indicating Hindu identity-selective targeting rather than spillover from general unrest.
7. The report documents systematic arson/vandalism of Hindu homes, businesses, and religious sites (including alleged marking/identification of Hindu properties), arguing this is intended to erase presence, destroy livelihoods, and prevent return.
8. The report finds evidence of de facto confinement, restricted mobility, imposed curfews, clustering in temples/guarded spaces, and siege-like insecurity, creating "open-air prison" conditions that further degrade normal Hindu community life.
9. The report attributes key instigation and mobilisation to Islamist networks (including Jamaat-linked and student-wing actors), amplified by propaganda/disinformation, and argues that state inaction, especially under noble laureate caretaker Yunus and denial create an enabling environment where perpetrators expect impunity.
10. The report frames the central test as whether the interim state has met its duty to prevent, protect, investigate, and punish; it warns that denial and delayed enforcement can become complicity by omission. It urges independent monitoring, credible prosecutions, deterrence, and targeted measures against inciters/organisers, while drawing cautionary parallels to prior ethnic cleansing trajectories internationally.

Context

Bangladesh's Hindu minority has been subjected to an alarming campaign of violence and intimidation since the August 2024 installation of an interim government led by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Muhammad Yunus. In the power vacuum following Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's illegal ouster and exile, extremist elements unleashed attacks on Hindu civilians, their homes and places of worship on a scale not seen in recent years. Evidence gathered aligns with internationally recognised indicators of ethnic cleansing - including forced displacement, violence and terror against civilians, destruction of property and systematic state inaction. Hundreds of Hindu homes and businesses have been ransacked and at least 15-20 temples desecrated within days of the regime change. Human rights monitors documented over 2,000 separate communal attacks in just the first two weeks after Yunus took power, leaving at least 9 minority members killed and several Hindu women raped. Subsequent months saw a pattern of targeted murders of Hindu community leaders, professionals and even children, pointing to a deliberate attempt to terrorise and reduce the Hindu population.

This report provides a comprehensive, evidence-based analysis of the ongoing ethnic

cleansing of Hindus in Bangladesh under the Yunus-led interim government. Structured around key elements of ethnic cleansing observed in historical cases (Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Kashmir), it details incidents of forced displacement, lethal violence, deliberate targeting of civilians, property destruction and the climate of fear confining the minority. It examines the historical context of anti-Hindu persecution in Bangladesh and the circumstances of the 2024 regime change, highlighting the role of Islamist forces (such as Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing) in fomenting violence. The interim administration's response - marked by denial and insufficient protection is scrutinised against its legal obligations. Drawing parallels to past ethnic cleansing campaigns, the report underscores the urgent need for international legal and policy intervention. The findings are drawn from credible sources including on-ground human rights groups, investigative reports and international media. The tone remains factual and hard-hitting, intended to inform policymakers and human rights bodies so that concrete actions can be taken to prevent further atrocities and protect Bangladesh's embattled Hindu minority.



Aug 2024: Vehicles set on fire by protesters during a rally against Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina

Forced Displacement and Deportation

One of the hallmarks of ethnic cleansing is the expulsion or flight of the targeted community. In the wake of Sheikh Hasina's resignation on 5 August 2024, Bangladesh saw an immediate exodus attempt by frightened Hindus. Within days, "hundreds in the minority community have tried unsuccessfully to flee to India". The neighbouring Indian government effectively sealed the border, deploying a monitoring committee to prevent mass crossings. Consequently, many Hindu families found themselves trapped in Bangladesh, internally displaced or hiding in relative safe havens. For example, in Bagerhat district, the family of Mrinal Kanti Chakraborty (a Hindu schoolteacher killed during the post-regime-change chaos) was too afraid to return to their ransacked home and sought refuge elsewhere. Minority rights advocates warned of a "mass exodus" if conditions continued to deteriorate. This fear was not unfounded - Hindus comprised roughly 20% of Bangladesh's population at independence in 1971, but decades of persecution have reduced them to about 8%, largely through emigration to escape violence and discrimination.

The pattern of forced displacement since August 2024 mirrors those seen in past ethnic cleansing crises. In the first week of unrest, many Hindu families fled their villages and attempted to



Lawlessness Post Sheikh Hasina Forced Resignation

reach the Indian border. Reports indicate some traveled to border districts like Satkhira and Sylhet, only to be turned back due to tightened

security. Within Bangladesh, Hindus sought shelter in temples and minority community centers. In Dhaka, the historic Dhakeshwari Temple became a sanctuary where dozens of volunteers kept vigil day and night. "Our community has mobilised to guard the temple... Normally 25 to 30 people stay here," said a temple committee member, describing how even urban Hindus felt safer confining themselves to temple grounds under volunteer protection. This self-confinement in defensive perimeters is a form of de facto internal displacement. Meanwhile, rural Hindus in remote areas have been abandoning homesteads to escape mob violence. The Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council (BHBCUC) - a leading minority rights group - noted incident reports "from every district," indicating nationwide flight or hiding by victimised families.

International observers have drawn parallels to the **Kashmiri Hindu exodus** in 1990, when targeted killings and threats forced nearly the entire Hindu population of Kashmir to flee



Kashmiri Hindu Exodus 1990

overnight. In Bangladesh, the process is less centralised but no less coercive: violence and fear are driving Hindus away from their ancestral lands. By late 2025, Hindu advocacy groups overseas began warning of a "quiet exodus" - families emigrating in small numbers to India or Nepal to escape the escalating killings. While exact numbers of displaced are hard to obtain (given government denials and the clandestine nature of flight), the trend is clear and deeply troubling. The forced displacement component of this pogrom

satisfies a key criterion of ethnic cleansing: making it untenable for a minority to live in their homeland so that they either flee en masse or face eradication.

Violence and Terror (Murder, Rape, Torture)

Physical violence against Hindus in Bangladesh has intensified to an unprecedented level since the interim government took charge. What began as mob vandalism in early August 2024 quickly escalated to outright murder and brutality. Within the first two weeks (4-20 Aug 2024), BHBCUC recorded nine minority individuals killed and four Hindu women raped amid the chaos. These included gruesome His wife and daughter were also brutally assaulted during the attack. This incident set the tone of terror: assailants specifically targeting Hindu families in their most vulnerable space (their home) and using excessive violence as intimidation.

Over the ensuing months, a series of targeted murders has terrorised the Hindu community. The violence has been both systematic and heinous. Hindus have been shot dead, hacked with machetes, lynched by mobs and even burned alive. One particularly horrific case was the lynching of Dipu Chandra Das killing like that of Mrinal Kanti Chakraborty, the retired teacher bludgeoned to death in his home on 5 August 2024.on 18 December 2025. Accused (falsely) of a blasphemous Facebook post, the 27-year-old Hindu garment worker was dragged from his workplace by co-workers and handed to an Islamist mob. "The crowd beat him to death, hanged his body from a tree and set it on fire," according to investigators. Such medieval brutality - reminiscent of the worst pogroms - is explicitly intended to instill terror in the broader community. Indeed, Dipu's lynching sent shockwaves through Bangladesh's Hindu population and even drew condemnation from international observers (the U.S. State

Department termed it "horrific" in a December 28 statement).

The campaign of terror has not spared women and children. In early October 2024, as Hindus prepared for their Durga Puja festival, at least 4 Hindu women were reported raped during communal attacks around the country. In one case from Noakhali district, a Hindu mother was gang-raped by rioters who had first looted and torched her home (this was reported to BHBCUC, though local authorities denied communal motives). Even minors have become victims: on 7 January 2026, a 12-year-old Hindu girl in Chattogram, Shrabanti Ghosh, was found dead under suspicious circumstances, with her family alleging she was raped and murdered by perpetrators taking advantage of lawlessness. While an investigation is ongoing, the incident has already heightened fears that no section of



Violence against Hindus in Bangladesh

the minority - not even children - is safe. Acts of torture have also been noted. Surviving victims speak of being kidnapped, beaten for hours and threatened with death unless they convert or leave. For instance, Bhabesh Chandra Roy, a Hindu community leader in Dinajpur, was abducted in April 2025 and beaten to death, his body dumped near his home as a warning to others.

This reign of terror serves the classic purpose of ethnic cleansing: to break the spirit of the targeted group. The deliberate cruelty - slitting throats of an elderly Hindu couple in Rangpur, or forcing a Hindu youth to ingest poison (as happened to 19-year-old Joy Mahapatra in Sunamganj in January 2026) - sends a chilling

message to all Hindus that they could be next. Many attacks have features of torture and humiliation: in Joy Mahapatra's case, he was lured to a shop, beaten by local thugs and forced to drink pesticide; he died in agony hours later. Another victim, auto-rickshaw driver Samir Das, was beaten, stabbed and his throat slit, with the attackers then stealing his vehicle - a mix of criminality and hate evident in several incidents. The cumulative effect of these murders, rapes and torture is the creation of widespread terror. Hindu families now live in constant fear, curtailing their daily activities and bracing for the next attack. As one Hindu schoolteacher in Dhaka observed during Durga Puja, "we faced problems in the past as well, but we did not see such escalation earlier... It is a challenging time for us Hindus". This pervasive fear is itself a tool of the perpetrators, aiming to coerce the minority into submission or flight.

Deliberate Attacks on Civilians

The violence in Bangladesh since mid-2024 has been characterised by deliberate attacks on unarmed Hindu civilians. Unlike generalised civil unrest, these are not random casualties of



Attack on Hindu Community Across Bangladesh

rioting - rather, assailants are specifically selecting Hindu targets who typically have no role in the political conflict. Victims have included priests, farmers, traders, teachers and even elderly retirees - individuals attacked solely because of their religious identity. This pattern echoes ethnic cleansings in places like Bosnia and Rwanda, where civilians of the targeted ethnicity were systematically singled out for killing.

Numerous incidents illustrate the intentional nature of these attacks. On 7 December 2025 in Rangpur, Yogesh Chandra Roy, a 75-year-old Hindu freedom-fighter and retired headmaster, was found murdered alongside his wife at home - both had their throats slit. Neighbours described how the couple lived quietly and posed no threat to anyone; their murder appears to have been a premeditated hit on a prominent Hindu figure, likely because Yogesh was a respected war veteran from 1971. That same night, in a different district (Mymensingh), an armed group shot dead Bajendra Biswas, a Hindu factory supervisor, inside his workplace. Again, nothing was stolen; the killing was execution-style, indicating an intention to eliminate a Hindu in a position of authority or visibility. In another case on 5 January 2026, assailants in Jashore called Rana Pratap Bairagi out from his house at night and gunned him down at close range - Bairagi was known locally as a journalist and Hindu activist. The timing and precision suggest he was targeted for his community role and voice.

These are not crimes of passion or collateral damage; they are hits designed to terrorise civilians. The attackers often issue warnings or make statements reinforcing the communal motive. For instance, survivors from an attack in Faridpur reported that the killers of **Utpol Sarkar** (a 35-year-old Hindu fish trader ambushed and hacked to death on 2 Dec 2025) shouted anti-Hindu slurs and triumphantly proclaimed the area "free of infidels" after the murder. At no point have the victims been engaged in violence - they were simply living their daily lives when struck down. The clear pattern is that perpetrators are purposefully aiming to kill or harm civilians belonging to the Hindu minority, a defining element of ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

International law and norms make a critical distinction between combatants and civilians; here, the victims are unequivocally civilians. The Bangladesh violence since 2024 meets the

criterion of deliberate attacks on civilians in multiple ways: mass assaults on Hindu villages, targeted assassinations of community figures, and mob violence specifically directed at minority neighbourhoods. Even when ostensible reasons are given (such as “theft suspicion” or “extortion allegations” in some mob lynchings), the context indicates these are often pretexts. One illustrative case occurred on 25 December 2025 in Rajbari: **Amrit “Samrat” Mondal**, a Hindu small businessman, was beaten to death by a mob over what police later described as a baseless extortion allegation. The swiftness with which a mere accusation led to lethal vigilante action suggests that his being Hindu made him an easy target for communal frenzy, rather than any genuine criminal culpability. The pattern of such incidents demonstrate an implicit understanding among perpetrators that violence against Hindu civilians will go unpunished - effectively granting them license to kill.

The **deliberateness** of these attacks is further confirmed by statements from minority leaders. The general secretary of BHBCUC, Rana Dasgupta, observed that “the communal atrocities erupted [as soon as Hasina fell], Houses and businesses of minorities, especially Hindus, as well as temples, have been targeted, looted, damaged”. He emphasized that even where mobs were ostensibly protesting the government, they intentionally “urged people not to target minority communities”, yet those pleas were ignored as soon as law and order broke down. This indicates that certain groups took the opportunity to settle scores with Hindus, treating them as scapegoats or hostages in the political turmoil. In sum, the violence against Bangladeshi Hindus since August 2024 has unmistakably involved deliberate attacks on

civilians - a core component in qualifying the situation as an ethnic cleansing.

Destruction of Property

Widespread destruction of Hindu property - homes, businesses and religious sites - has accompanied the campaign of violence, aiming to eradicate the physical presence and economic viability of the Hindu community. In the immediate aftermath of the regime change, mobs rampaged through minority neighbourhoods across Bangladesh. According to the Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian



Desecration of Deity Statues and Arson at Temple Sites

Unity Council, from 5-7 August 2024 “200-300 mainly Hindu homes and businesses had been vandalised... and 15-20 Hindu temples damaged”. These attacks were not random looting but targeted destruction: assailants specifically sought out properties owned by Hindus, often marking them in advance. In one village in Chattogram Division, Hindu homes were identified by distinct symbols days before a mob burned several of them down on 6 August (community members reported that vandals painted a “H” on the gates of Hindu houses as a marker).

The types of property destruction mirror tactics seen in past ethnic cleansing campaigns, such as

the burning of Bosniak homes and mosques in 1990s Bosnia or the torching of Tutsi houses in Rwanda 1994. In Bangladesh's case, numerous Hindu temples and prayer rooms have been desecrated. In the week after Yunus's takeover, at least **45 temples or idols were attacked nationwide** (including desecration of deity statues and arson at temple sites). Notably, the Dhakeshwari National Temple in Dhaka - the country's preeminent Hindu shrine - was under such threat that the army had to patrol its perimeter during Durga Puja in October 2024. Even then, incidents occurred: on 13 October 2024, a crude firebomb was thrown at a Durga Puja pavilion in Old Dhaka, causing panic among devotees. Elsewhere, in the southern district of Barisal, attackers razed a century-old Kali temple to the ground in November 2024; bystanders reported that the perpetrators chanted Islamist slogans as they demolished the structure with hammers and petrol.

The **economic sabotage** of Hindu livelihoods is equally evident. Rural Hindu farmers have had their crops burned and cattle stolen. In commerce, numerous Hindu-owned shops have been looted or destroyed. For example, during the December 2025 unrest, mobs in Sylhet targeted Hindu jewelers and gold traders - at least 12 jewelry shops owned by Hindus were looted and then set ablaze in Sylhet city's Zindabazar area (local media documented these incidents, though officials downplayed the communal angle). Each act of property destruction not only inflicts immediate loss but also serves the strategic aim of cleansing: making it financially ruinous or physically impossible for Hindus to remain. If a family's home is reduced to ash and their means of income eliminated, emigration or displacement becomes their only viable option.

There is a concerted pattern to the destruction. **Attacks often occur in waves**, timed with political flashpoints or religious festivals when tensions are high. For instance, ahead of Durga Puja 2024, hardline groups orchestrated

intimidation drives - one group, allegedly linked to Jamaat-e-Islami's student wing, even took over a temple stage to sing Islamic songs and warn Hindus against public celebrations. These tactics create an atmosphere in which vandalism is tacitly encouraged. By late 2025, the pattern repeated: as Bangladesh edged toward a national election under the interim government, anti-Hindu violence surged again. In December 2025 alone, BHBCUC logged dozens of incidents of arson and vandalism of Hindu property across 10 districts (including attacks on homes in Khulna, a Hindu-owned pharmacy in Cumilla, and several winter crop granaries belonging to Hindu farmers in Jessore).

It is important to note the systematic nature of property destruction in this pogrom. Attackers frequently carry voter lists or community registries to identify Hindu-owned properties - a method chillingly reminiscent of how Rwandan Hutu militias used lists to target Tutsi assets. One Hindu activist, Kajal Debnath, observed that "whatever happens in Bangladesh, the minorities end up being the victims... the anarchy is total", adding that the only solution to protect minority property was deployment of the military. While the interim government did eventually deploy army units in some hotspots, reports suggest that local law enforcement often stood by or arrived too late, allowing destruction to proceed unchecked. The deliberate and widespread destruction of Hindu property not only terrorizes the community but also aims to erase the cultural and economic foundations of Hindu life in Bangladesh - an unmistakable objective in ethnic cleansing.

Confinement

Confinement, in the context of ethnic cleansing, refers to restraining the targeted population's freedom of movement or corralling them into specific areas (e.g. ghettos, camps) as part of the campaign. In Bangladesh's evolving pogrom, outright concentration camps have not been established; however, de facto confinement of

the Hindu minority is occurring in several forms. Fear of violence has effectively **confined many Hindus to their homes or enclaves**, as venturing out can be life-threatening. In some mixed localities, Hindus have clustered together at night in one sturdy house or temple to avoid isolated vulnerability. This mirrors, on a smaller scale, the “enclave mentality” seen in places like Sarajevo in the 1990s when besieged communities huddled in safe zones.

One stark example of confinement through terror is the situation in parts of the **Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT)**. After sectarian clashes in September 2024 that killed four people from indigenous Buddhist communities, local non-Muslim minorities (Buddhists, and some Hindus in the area) were afraid to travel outside their villages. Amnesty International reported that many minority families in the CHT ceased attending markets or schools beyond their immediate vicinity, effectively **self-confining** to their hamlets for safety. A similar dynamic is evident in predominantly Hindu villages in



Police Cordons and Blockades to Restrict Hindu Movements

coastal Barisal: following a spate of attacks, village elders instituted informal “curfews” after dusk for Hindu residents, advising them not to travel or visit distant relatives. In effect, these communities are penned into shrinking geographical and social spaces by the threat of violence.

Additionally, there are reports of **police cordons and blockades** that have disproportionately restricted Hindu movements. For instance, during the student-led protests of

July-August 2024, authorities imposed curfews in many areas. While ostensibly meant to restore order, some Hindu neighborhoods felt the curfews turned them into sitting targets - unable to leave, they were at the mercy of any mob that might break in. One community leader, Manindra Kumar Nath, described a desperate situation in early August 2024: “Even today, we are getting calls from people asking us to save their lives, but we are not receiving any support... We feel trapped”. His use of “trapped” underscores the sense of confinement - Hindus under siege in their own homes. There were instances where police or army had to **evacuate besieged Hindu families**: for example, on 8 August 2024, security forces rescued 70 Hindus who had been encircled by mobs in a Narayanganj neighborhood and escorted them to a safer location (this incident was noted in local press). While this counts as a life-saving intervention, it also highlights that those families were effectively confined under siege conditions until extraction.

Confinement also occurs in subtler ways. Social and economic boycotts - a tool often employed during ethnic cleansings - are emerging in Bangladesh's countryside, whereby Hindu villagers are barred from accessing common resources (wells, markets) or from leaving the village to sell goods. Such boycotts were reported in parts of Sylhet Division in late 2025, contributing to an environment where Hindus are confined and isolated. The cumulative effect is that many Hindus describe living in an “open-air prison” - their movements dictated by fear. While not formalized by law, the outcome is similar to ghettos in other ethnic conflicts: a community cut off from normal life and concentrated in shrinking safe spaces, which can then become easy targets for future attacks. This element of confinement, though less overt than the violence, is a critical warning sign of an ongoing ethnic cleansing process.

Systematic Policy

Ethnic cleansing is rarely purely spontaneous; it often involves a degree of organization or policy - whether explicit or tacit - that guides the persecution. In the Bangladesh context, there is emerging evidence of systematic patterns and high-level complicity that amount to a policy of targeting minorities. While the interim government under Muhammad Yunus has not openly endorsed violence, its failure to curb the atrocities, along with the empowerment of Islamist hardliners in the political sphere, suggests a permissive environment that **systematically works against the Hindu minority.**



Firstly, the **pattern of attacks** shows coordination. The simultaneous eruptions of violence in multiple districts after August 2024 hint at orchestration by groups like Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing (Islami Chhatra Shibir). Human Rights Watch observed that “groups promoting extremist Islam are attacking minorities, particularly those from Hindu and Ahmadiyya communities” in the post-Hasina period. This indicates an organized campaign by Islamist networks - essentially a systematic strategy to capitalize on the political transition by advancing a long-held objective of these groups: turning Bangladesh into a more homogeneously Islamic state. The fact that attacks occurred across the country, even in the absence of local triggers, points to directives or

incitement flowing through an organized structure (mosques, social media, political party cadres). For example, the spate of nearly identical mob lynchings in late 2025 - each involving a flimsy allegation (blasphemy, theft, etc.) against a Hindu and a rapid mobilisation of a violent crowd - suggests a **modus operandi shared and replicated** by perpetrators, rather than isolated coincidences.

Secondly, there are signs of **state complicity or policy failure** that rises to the level of systematic tolerance. The Yunus-led government has publicly condemned some attacks, but on the ground there has been very little effective action. Security forces, including

the police and local administration, often failed to respond in time or at all. This inertia is so consistent that it effectively amounts to a policy of inaction. International observers note that the recent killings “are not isolated tragedies but signals of a systemic breakdown in the state’s ability to protect its most vulnerable citizens.” In other words, the state apparatus either cannot or

will not shield minorities - a systemic failure that perpetrators interpret as a green light. The interim government’s overtures to Islamist factions have also fed this dynamic. President Shahabuddin (who administered Yunus’s oath) and the new advisers held meetings with leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami in late 2024. At least one Jamaat-linked individual was reportedly included in an advisory role. Such inclusion can be seen as part of a **political strategy** to placate hardliners, but it sends a dangerous signal: that those with anti-Hindu ideologies have influence in the corridors of power. The result is a de facto policy environment where protecting minorities is deprioritised.

Notably, elements of Bangladesh's **legal-administrative framework** have historically enabled dispossession of Hindus (e.g., the Vested Property Act, a successor to the infamous "Enemy Property Act," allowed seizure of Hindu properties for decades). While that law has been partially reformed, the legacy remains - many local officials still view Hindu property as fair game if owners are displaced. This institutional bias forms part of the systematic underpinnings for the current cleansing. In the ongoing violence, there are reports (compiled by the Center for Integrated and Holistic Studies, CIHS) that local land offices and Union Councils often refuse to record complaints from Hindu victims or to enforce their property rights in the aftermath of attacks. Such bureaucratic stonewalling is effectively policy-driven victimisation - ensuring that even after an attack, Hindus face hurdles in reclaiming homes or rebuilding, thereby furthering the goal of cleansing.

Finally, the **rhetoric and denial at the highest levels** suggest a systematic attempt to downplay or obfuscate the targeting of Hindus. Yunus's administration has rejected minority leaders' allegations of government failure. Instead of acknowledging a communal targeting, officials have variously blamed "criminals," "unidentified miscreants," or even hinted at conspiracies to malign the government. Such denialism in the face of clear evidence is reminiscent of other ethnic cleansings (e.g., Serbian leaders in the 1990s claiming killings in Bosnia were "fabricated" or "unfortunate accidents"). It often reflects an unstated policy: to quietly allow the persecution to continue while officially distancing the state from it. In summary, while no written decree may exist ordering the expulsion of Hindus, the convergence of organized extremist violence, state inaction/denial and enduring structural discrimination constitutes a **systematic policy of ethnic cleansing by omission and commission**. The perpetrators have a reasonable expectation of impunity, which can

only exist if the system as a whole is enabling their actions.

Historical Context

The plight of Hindus in Bangladesh cannot be understood without historical context. At the time of the Partition of India in 1947 and the birth of Pakistan (of which Bangladesh was then East Pakistan), Hindus made up roughly 28% of East Pakistan's population. That percentage has dwindled drastically through successive decades of persecution, punctuated by episodes of mass violence. Bangladesh's very birth in 1971 was accompanied by genocidal killings by the Pakistani army and local Islamist collaborators (notably Jamaat-e-Islami's militias) that specifically targeted Hindus: of the approximately 3 million Bangladeshis killed in the Liberation War, an estimated 1.5-2 million were Hindus. This set a grim precedent - the "othering" of Hindus as enemies of the state or agents of India. In the newly independent Bangladesh, Hindus were around 15% of the population in 1972; by 2023, they were barely 8%. This decline is attributed to large-scale migration (flight to India) and demographic attrition due to persistent discrimination and violence.

Major episodes of anti-Hindu violence have recurred with political shifts. In 1971, it was genocide under the Pakistani campaign. In 1990 (after the fall of military ruler Ershad) and 1992 (following the Babri Mosque incident in India),



BNP- Islamist Jamaat-e-Islami Coalition Rule-2001; which saw new extremist violence

there were countrywide riots targeting Hindus - temples were destroyed and Hindu neighbourhoods attacked in reprisal for events elsewhere. A particularly severe wave came in 2001: after the BNP-Jamaat coalition won that year's election, scores of Hindu villages were looted and women raped by mobs apparently "celebrating" the Islamist-allied victory. The pattern continued into the 2010s. Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), a Bangladeshi human rights group, documented at least 3,679 attacks on the Hindu community between 2013 and 2021, including vandalism, arson and deadly assaults. Notably, in 2013, Islamist activists (incensed by war crimes trials of 1971 collaborators) unleashed coordinated violence on Hindus - a repeat of 1971-era tactics, as if exacting revenge on the community seen as pro-liberation. Again in 2021, during the Durga Puja festival, a fabricated rumor of Quran desecration led to riots across multiple districts; more than 120 temples or makeshift worship pandals were vandalised and several people killed. This cyclic history establishes that Hindu persecution in Bangladesh is not new - however, the current pogrom under Yunus's interim regime represents an escalation and, crucially, a situation where the normal protectors (a sitting government, police force) are either absent or indifferent.

The interim government's rise in 2024 itself is rooted in historical political contentions. Sheikh Hasina's Awami League had positioned itself as the secular guardian of minorities (indeed, Hindus have traditionally voted AL, seeing it as protection against Islamist politics). Hasina's ouster, under pressure from a protest movement



Nobel Laureate Mohd. Yunus-led Interim Government

accusing her of authoritarianism, ironically removed that perceived shield. The protesters - including many from Islamist and nationalist backgrounds - tapped into a strain of Bangladeshi politics that has often scapegoated Hindus as fifth columnists for India or obstacles to an "Islamic democracy." The installation of Muhammad Yunus, a globally respected figure but domestically opposed by Hasina's supporters, occurred in this fraught context. It is historically noteworthy that Yunus, despite his Nobel laureate status, was vehemently opposed by Hasina's regime, which had accused him of everything from financial impropriety to undermining Islamic values. This political bad blood meant that once Hasina fell, her enemies (which include hardline Islamist factions) felt emboldened to take revenge not just on her party but on her support base - which included Hindus. This reflects a tragic historical trope in South Asia: minorities paying the price for political shifts (as seen during Partition or other regime changes).

The historical context also includes the legal and societal marginalisation of Hindus. Through the 1974 Vested Property Act (only partly repealed in 2001), millions of acres of Hindu-owned land were expropriated by the state or Muslim neighbours, institutionalising economic disenfranchisement. Socially, hate speech and anti-Hindu propaganda have festered on the fringes - from Islamist preachers labeling Hindus "idolaters" to school textbooks downplaying minority contributions. These undercurrents meant that the violence of 2024-2025 did not occur in a vacuum; it was seeded by decades of impunity for anti-Hindu crimes. Many perpetrators of past pogroms were never brought to justice, emboldening the next generation. The Centre for Integrated and Holistic Studies (CIHS) notes that Bangladesh faces a crossroads: either reinforce its secular, pluralistic founding principles or slide further into majoritarian extremism. The current crisis is thus the latest chapter in a long history of struggle over Bangladesh's identity - secular

Bengali versus Islamist - with the Hindu minority's fate as a barometer of which vision prevails.

Illegal Regime Change and Yunus's Installation

The political upheaval that led to Muhammad Yunus's interim government was seen by analysts as an "illegal regime change" - a departure from constitutional norms under the guise of a popular uprising. On 5 August 2024, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina (in power since 2009) resigned and fled to India amid massive Jamaat student-led protests and escalating violence. These events, termed by supporters as the "Monsoon Revolution," did not follow the typical electoral or parliamentary process for transition. Instead, they involved elements of a soft coup: the military's tacit backing of protesters demands, external diplomatic pressure (there were reports of intense lobbying by Western diplomats concerned with Hasina's governance), and a rapid reconfiguration of power with President Shahabuddin appointing Yunus as Chief Advisor of the caretaker government on 8 August 2024.

From a legal standpoint, Bangladesh's constitution does not currently provide for a non-partisan caretaker government (that provision was removed in 2011). Thus, the installation of Yunus circumvented formal electoral legitimacy. Critics label it "illegal" or extra-constitutional, arguing that Hasina's ouster was effectively forced rather than a voluntary resignation. The initial chaos - a "three-day power vacuum" between Hasina's exit and Yunus's swearing-in - underscores how unplanned and abrupt this regime change was. In that vacuum, as documented, communal violence erupted in multiple places. The very fact that "mobs attacked many police stations" during those days left law enforcement crippled, which in turn exposed minority communities to attacks. The disorderly nature of the transition

thus directly contributed to the security meltdown that enabled ethnic violence.

Muhammad Yunus, revered internationally for pioneering microcredit, returned from abroad to assume leadership with the promise of restoring democracy and rule of law. However, his ascent was championed by the student protest leaders and sections of civil society, not via a popular vote. This origin has had implications: Yunus had to rely on the coalition of forces that brought him to power, which includes not only pro-democracy students and NGOs but also **Islamist-leaning opposition factions** that were eager to see Hasina gone. Jamaat-e-Islami and the BNP (Bangladesh Nationalist Party) tacitly supported the anti-Hasina movement; indeed, one of the key protest martyrs, Sharif Osman Hadi, was an Islamist-minded student leader whose death later triggered further unrest. The interim government's composition - 14 advisers including two former student leaders - signalled a broad tent approach. But this broad tent included those with agendas at odds with minority protection.

In effect, the manner of Yunus's installation left a **legitimacy deficit and a security vacuum** that Islamist forces have exploited. Unlike an



elected government that might have felt accountable to minority voters, the Yunus regime's primary allegiance was to the protest coalition. Notably, Yunus immediately declared "democracy, justice, human rights... will be enjoyed by all", yet on the ground the opposite occurred for Hindus. One could argue the regime change was a Pyrrhic victory for democracy that came at the cost of the rule of

law in the short term. As Yunus's government focused on political reforms and preparing for new elections, it seemingly **neglected the worsening communal situation** or lacked the entrenched control over security institutions to respond effectively.

Moreover, allegations have emerged that the regime change had foreign engineering: the quick endorsement of Yunus by certain international actors (UN, some Western governments) gave credence to opposition narratives that he was "propped up" by outside forces. Jamaat and other Islamist groups have long painted Hasina as an Indian ally and positioned themselves as anti-India/Bangladeshi nationalist. With Yunus perceived as backed by Western favour, these groups doubled down on anti-minority rhetoric, often terming Hindus as "Indian agents". This dynamic shows how the illegitimacy of the new regime indirectly licensed extremists: they cast their anti-Hindu actions as part of resisting foreign-imposed rule. In summary, the unorthodox and legally dubious change of regime in August 2024 created a permissive environment for communal forces - a classic unintended consequence where a Nobel laureate's watch coincided with lawlessness and targeted violence.

Role of Islamist Forces (Jamaat-e-Islami, Islami Chhatra Shibir, etc.)

Islamist forces in Bangladesh - chiefly Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing Islami Chhatra

Shibir, but also factions like Hefazat-e-Islam - have played a central and instigating role in the pogrom against Hindus. Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI), Bangladesh's largest Islamist party, has a dark history regarding minorities: it opposed Bangladesh's independence in 1971, and its militia (the Razakars) perpetrated mass killings of Hindus during the war. Although JeI's political influence waned after some leaders were convicted for 1971 war crimes, the party retains a dedicated cadre base and was allied with the BNP in opposition to Hasina. With Hasina's fall, Jamaat saw an opportunity to reassert itself. Evidence indicates that **Jamaat and Shibir activists orchestrated or inflamed many of the anti-Hindu attacks** post-August 2024. For instance, local witnesses in Mymensingh identified several of Dipu Das's lynchers as known Islami Chhatra Shibir members from a nearby madrasa, acting under a pretext of "blasphemy" that was spread via a Shibir-controlled Facebook page. Similarly, the men who led the vandalism of temples during Durga Puja 2024 in Comilla were reported to be affiliated with Jamaat, though they tried to pose as spontaneous mobs.

Jamaat-e-Islami's strategy has long been to undermine secular governance by fomenting communal discord, thereby positioning themselves as guardians of the majority's religious sentiments. Post-2024, Jamaat figures publicly condemned some violence (likely as damage control), but privately there are reports (from security agencies) of Jamaat-e-Islami meetings where activists were instructed to



Jamaat-e-Islami Uprise (2013-2024); Escalating Street Terror, Quota Riots etc.

“ensure Hindus do not feel secure voting in any future election.” The resurgence of Jamaat's student wing, Shibir, on campuses has also led to increased intimidation of Hindu students - a microcosm of the larger terror. The AP reported an incident where Shibir-linked youths infiltrated a temple event and sang jihadist songs inviting Hindus to convert; such psychological warfare aims to cow the minority and assert Islamist supremacy in public spaces.

Another actor, **Hefazat-e-Islam**, a hardline Islamist advocacy group of madrasa teachers, has previously incited anti-Hindu sentiment (famously in 2013 they demanded the removal of a sculpture they deemed un-Islamic, implicitly threatening minorities). During the current interim regime, Hefazat has been relatively quieter politically, but its extremist rhetoric - e.g. fiery sermons in which some preachers labeled recent events as Allah's punishment on Hindus for idolatry - have indirectly abetted violence. On social media, Islamist propagandists spread disinformation, such as fake rumors of Quran desecration (a tactic used again in late 2025 to mobilise mobs in Brahmanbaria). These echo tactics from **Rwanda (Radio RTLM's role)** or **Milosevic-era Yugoslavia (hate propaganda)**, where extremist messaging laid groundwork for violence.

Islami Chhatra Shibir in particular has a notorious reputation for violence (often wielding machetes on campuses against opponents). Their involvement in the anti-Hindu violence has been both direct and behind-the-scenes. Direct, as in orchestrating mobs and participating in lynchings; indirect, as in spreading extremist ideology that justifies cleansing non-Muslims. Following the Osman Hadi saga (the Islamist student leader whose assassination in Dec 2025 sparked riots), Shibir capitalised on the unrest by steering anger toward Hindus and symbols of India. Mobs that attacked the Indian High Commission and Hindu-owned businesses in late 2025 reportedly

included Shibir activists blending with ordinary protesters. The **political vacuum and the interim government's need for broad support** have unfortunately given these groups greater freedom. It is telling that Jamaat-e-Islami's secretary general publicly commented on the Dipu Das lynching - not to defend it, but to frame it as a result of “social and moral decline,” deflecting blame. Such statements are part of Jamaat's effort to avoid scrutiny while tacitly encouraging a hardline path.

In summary, **Islamist forces have been the driving engine of the ethnic cleansing campaign**. Whether through direct violence, incitement, or exploiting chaos, groups like



Jamaat and Shibir are instrumental in targeting Hindus. This aligns with their ideological vision of Bangladesh as an Islamic state, purged of what they view as Hindu or “Indian” influence. The interim government's challenge - and failing thus far - has been to rein in these forces. Instead, their influence appears to be growing (“hardline Islamists are becoming increasingly politically influential and visible since the fall of Hasina”). The violence against Hindus is a grim fulfilment of the Islamist agenda, facilitated by the current power dynamics.

State Complicity and Denial

The response of the Bangladeshi state under the interim government to this unfolding pogrom has been marked by denial, downplaying, and instances of apparent complicity or willful neglect. While no official policy condones violence, **the lack of decisive state action amounts to complicity** by omission. In the

critical first days of violence (August 2024), local police were largely absent. Many officers had deserted posts or gone into hiding, fearing retribution for their role under the prior regime. The interim authorities did not swiftly restore a security presence in vulnerable areas, leaving minorities defenceless. This security vacuum is a state failing of the highest order, given its foreseeable consequences. Human Rights Watch noted a “disturbingly familiar pattern of security force abuses and political reprisals... this time targeting perceived Awami League supporters. Groups promoting extremist Islam are attacking minorities...” and implied that the interim government, hemmed in by politics, was slow to act. In plainer terms, because many Hindus are seen (correctly) as Awami League voters, the new regime's sympathies towards anti-Hasina elements translated into indifference toward anti-Hindu violence.

When violence escalated again in late 2025, the state's reaction followed a similar script. Consider the lynching of Dipu Chandra Das: The interim government did eventually arrest key suspects (under international pressure), but



Lynching and Brutal Killing of Dipu Chandra Das

only after days of silence. Initially, no high official visited the site or met the family. It was the Education Adviser C.R. Abrar who much later gave condolences, and a generic promise was made to hold perpetrators accountable. Such tepid responses stand in contrast to, say, the swift reaction when an Islamist leader was killed (the state immediately formed an inquiry commission for Osman Hadi's assassination).

This disparity signals to the public that minority lives are not a priority. Furthermore, in several instances local administration tried to **cover up or mislabel incidents**. The murder of Yogesh and Subarna Roy in Rangpur was initially attributed by police to “robbery,” despite valuables left untouched. Only after community outcry did authorities admit it might be a hate crime. This pattern of denial - labeling targeted killings as ordinary crimes - is a form of complicity, as it obscures the communal motive and impedes focused action to protect the minority.

The interim leadership's public rhetoric has also been problematic. Muhammad Yunus, while broadly championing human rights in speeches, has avoided directly acknowledging the plight of Hindus. In one instance, he condemned attacks on Sufi shrines (when a parallel wave of sectarian attacks on Islamic shrines occurred) but **did not specifically address the concurrent attacks on Hindu temples**. Such selective condemnation can be read as minimisation. The Home Affairs Adviser, Jahangir Alam Chowdhury, insisted the Durga

Puja festival would be safe and claimed “nothing to worry”, even as dozens of incidents were being reported. After the festival, despite stabbings and a firebomb incident, the government line was that Durga Puja concluded “peacefully” - an almost Orwellian dismissal of victims' experiences.

Complicity is perhaps most evident in the lack of prosecution and justice.

Virtually none of the perpetrators of the August 2024 attacks on Hindu properties have faced trial. The BHBCUC provided the government with a list of incident locations and perpetrators' identities in late 2024; yet, follow-up has been scant. This impunity sends a clear message aligning with complicity: the state will not seriously punish those who harm minorities. It is important to note that Bangladesh's

institutions (police, judiciary) were already criticised for politicisation under Hasina. Under the interim regime, they appear either paralysed or swayed by new political winds. Observers like Sreeram S. Chaulia have warned that “opposing India and alleging Indian conspiracies... [is being done] to harden a blatantly Islamist and non-inclusive path for the country”, which is a critique of how the state narrative itself may be feeding the persecution climate. By framing unrest as an outcome of “foreign interference” or focusing solely on anti-India aspects, the state discourse ignores the agency of domestic Islamist perpetrators and downplays Hindu suffering.

In summary, state complicity in this context manifests as **security failures, denialist**

rhetoric, and justice deferred. This aligns with how other ethnic cleansings have been enabled by states: either through active commission or passive allowance. Bangladesh's interim government might not be orchestrating the violence, but its feeble response and political calculus effectively facilitate it. As a result, minority representatives have lost confidence in state protection; many have petitioned international bodies, a damning indictment of the government's abdication of its duty. The denial needs to be pierced by facts - as this report attempts - and the complicity addressed by holding state actors accountable to their obligations under international human rights law.

Alarming Table of Killings

To grasp the scale and specificity of the violence, the following table compiles **major killings of Hindu (and other dharmic minority) individuals in Bangladesh** since the Yunus-led interim government took office in

August 2024. Each entry lists the date, victim(s), community targeted, location, and a brief description of the incident, illustrating the pattern of attacks:

Date	Victim(s)	Community	Location (District)	Details (Circumstances of Killing)
2024-08-04	Two unidentified victims (reported by BHBCUC)	Hindu	Various (pre-resignation)	Killed in violence one day before Hasina's resignation (exact details scarce, part of initial chaos).
2024-08-06	Mrinal Kanti Chakraborty (retired teacher)	Hindu	Bagerhat Sadar (Khulna)	Attacked at home and bludgeoned to death by unknown assailants; occurred just two days before interim govt oath, amid post-coup violence. Wife seriously injured.
2024-09-21	At least 4 men (names not all reported)	Buddhist (Chakma)	Khagrachhari & Rangamati (CTH)	Sectarian mob violence in Chittagong Hill Tracts; multiple ethnic minority villagers killed, homes and Buddhist temples torched.
2025-04-17	Bhabesh Chandra Roy (50s, community leader)	Hindu	Biral (Dinajpur)	Local Hindu Puja committee vice-president; abducted by a gang and beaten to death, body dumped near his home. Seen as silencing a community voice.
2025-12-02	Prantosh Kormokar (42, gold trader)	Hindu	Raipura (Narsingdi)	Lured out on pretext of business deal; shot dead in a school playground at night. Motive suspected communal robbery/hate.
2025-12-02	Utpol Sarkar (35, fish trader)	Hindu	Saltha (Faridpur)	Ambushed while traveling to market; hacked to death in an open field by multiple assailants. Attackers shouted anti-Hindu slogans per witnesses.
2025-12-07	Yogesh Chandra Roy (75, freedom-fighter) and Surbana Roy (60, wife)	Hindu	Taraganj (Rangpur)	Elderly couple (Muktijoddha veteran and spouse) found brutally murdered at home - both had throats slit. Robbery ruled out; targeted killing of a prominent Hindu family.

2025-12-18	Dipu Chandra Das(27, garment worker)	Hindu	Bhaluka (Mymensingh)	Lynched by an Islamist mob incited by a false blasphemy allegation. Beaten and burned alive; body hanged from a tree. At least a dozen arrests; mastermind was a former teacher Yasin A. who orchestrated the mob.
2025-12-25	Amrit "Samrat" Mondal (30s)	Hindu	Pangsha (Rajbari)	Beaten to death by a local mob over an unsubstantiated extortion claim. Police later indicated the allegation was a pretext.
2025-12-29	Bajendra Biswas (45, factory manager)	Hindu	Bhaluka (Mymensingh)	Shot dead inside a garment factory office by assailants. Same area as Dipu Das's lynching, suggesting a continuing terror campaign in that locale.
2025-12-31 ¹	(Attack on 31 Dec; victim died 3 Jan)Khokon Chandra Das (40s)	Hindu	Damudya (Shariatpur)	Assaulted by a group and set on fire on New Year's Eve; succumbed to burn injuries in hospital on 3 Jan 2026. Allegedly targeted after a dispute where he refused to pay "protection money" to local gang.
2026-01-05	Rana Pratap Bairagi(50, journalist)	Hindu	Monirampur (Jashore)	Called out from home by unknown persons and shot at point-blank range. Victim had written about local corruption; likely targeted for both his Hindu identity and activism.
2026-01-05	Sharat "Mani" Chakraborty (late 30s)	Hindu	Palash (Narsingdi)	Small shop owner; chased and hacked to death near his home gate after closing shop at night. Personal enmity ruled out, pointing to communal motive.
2026-01-06 ²	(Reported early Jan)Mithun Sarkar (25)	Hindu	Mahadebpur (Naogaon)	False accused of theft; a mob pursued him. He drowned after jumping into a canal to escape the attackers. Illustrates how vigilante "justice" is directed disproportionately at Hindus.
2026-01-07	Shrabanti Ghosh (12, student)	Hindu	Lalkhan Bazar, Chattogram	Young girl found hanging at home; family alleges she was raped and murdered, with the scene staged as suicide. Two suspects (acquaintances) arrested; communal motive unconfirmed, but community sees it amid the terror wave.

2026-01-10	Joy Mohapatro (19)	Hindu	Dirai (Sunamganj)	Beaten and poisoned by a local gang; died in ICU on 10 Jan. Family insists he was targeted for being Hindu. Incident caused diplomatic strain as India protested increasing minority killings.
2026-01-13	Samir Das (28, auto-rickshaw driver)	Hindu	Chittagong (Chattogram)	Hired by passengers who then robbed him and slit his throat, leaving him to die. Police suspect the crime had a hate element as nothing but the vehicle was taken (indicating intent to kill).
2026-01-17	Liton Chandra Ghosh (55, shopkeeper)	Hindu	Kaliganj (Gazipur)	Attacked by a mob with shovels while defending his 17-year-old Hindu employee from harassment; beaten to death on the spot. Incident highlights risk even for those helping fellow Hindus.
2026-01-17	Ripon Saha (30, petrol station worker)	Hindu	Rajbari Sadar (Rajbari)	Died after being run over deliberately by a local political leader's car during a payment dispute at a fuel station. Eyewitnesses claim the perpetrator (a BNP affiliate) used anti-Hindu slurs, framing it as an "accident" cover-up.
2026-01-18	"Avi" (full name unconfirmed) (20s)	Hindu	Jashore (unverified)	Latest killing in the spree (details still emerging as of Jan 18). Believed to fit the pattern of young Hindu men being targeted and eliminated, causing widespread fear.

Sources: Compiled from credible, minority rights monitors and news reports from Bangladesh (CIHS report.)

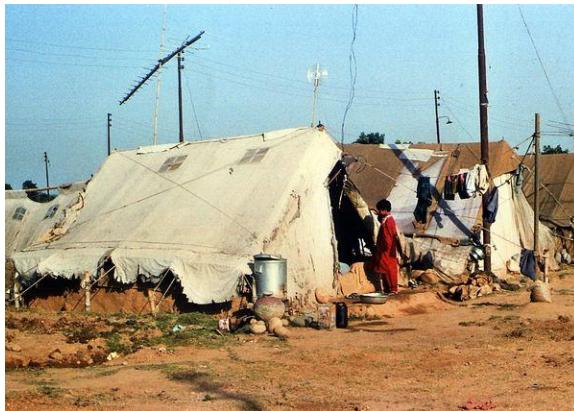
This table starkly illustrates the breadth of victims - from a 12-year-old girl to a septuagenarian war veteran - and the brutality of methods used. It is important to note that these are **only the major reported killings**; numerous other assaults, attempted murders, and non-fatal attacks have occurred in the same period. Nevertheless, the incidents catalogued here are representative of the systematic

targeting at play. They show a concentrated surge in late 2025 and early 2026 (a cluster of incidents in December-January), which correlates with rising political tensions and the emboldening of extremist elements. Each killing further traumatises the community and reinforces the message that Hindus are "fair game" in the current climate

Comparisons to Global Cases of Ethnic Cleansing (Kashmiri Hindus, Rwanda, Yugoslavia)

Placing the Bangladesh situation in a comparative international context underscores its alarming nature. Ethnic cleansing, as witnessed in the late 20th century (Bosnia, Rwanda) and other instances (the exodus of Kashmiri Hindus in 1990), follows certain patterns. The case of Bangladesh's Hindus under the Yunus regime exhibits **striking parallels** to these global cases across all key elements:

- **Forced Displacement (Kashmir 1990 vs. Bangladesh 2024):** In early 1990, within weeks, about 100,000 Kashmiri Hindus (Hindu minority of Kashmir) fled their homes after targeted killings
- **Extreme Violence and Terror (Rwanda 1994 vs. Bangladesh 2025):** Rwanda's genocide saw unfathomable brutality: public machete killings, people burned alive, victims' bodies



Forced Displacement of Kashmiri Hindus in 1990



Forced Displacement of Hindus in Bangladesh 2024

and threats by Islamist militants. They left behind property that was later occupied or destroyed. Similarly, in Bangladesh, the weeks after August 2024 saw Hindus trying to flee en masse

to India. While a full exodus was prevented by border controls, the intent and attempt mirror Kashmir. In both cases, fear was instilled so rapidly and pervasively that minority communities felt they had no choice but flight. The slogan heard in Srinagar in 1990 - "Hindus leave or die" - is echoed in the unspoken ultimatum Bangladeshi Hindus face now, as evidenced by BHBCUC's warning that Hindus may "quietly leave the country" if violence continues.

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- **Extreme Violence and Terror (Rwanda 1994 vs. Bangladesh 2025):** Rwanda's genocide saw unfathomable brutality: public machete killings, people burned alive, victims' bodies

desecrated - all aimed at instilling terror in the Tutsi population and eliminating them. In Bangladesh, the lynching of Dipu Das (beaten, hanged and burned) and the hacking to death of victims like

Utpol Sarkar carry a similar signature of performative cruelty. In Rwanda, the violence was instigated by radio propaganda; in Bangladesh, hate is spread via social media and Islamist rallies. Another parallel is the role of neighbours/acquaintances turning on victims - Rwanda's genocide was often local and personal; in Bangladesh, colleagues of Dipu and neighbours of other victims have partaken in the attacks, indicating social fractures akin to Rwanda's.

- **Deliberate Attacks on Civilians (Bosnia 1992-95 vs. Bangladesh now):** During the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia, Serb forces intentionally targeted Muslim civilians - shelling

victims are ordinary people killed in their homes or work - akin to Bosnian Muslim civilians in places like Prijedor or Foča who were murdered or sent to camps simply for being Muslim. Bangladesh's Hindu victims are not collateral damage in a broader fight; they are the target, just as Bosnian Muslims were systematically targeted by policy (documented by ICTY as "widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population"). The pattern qualifies as crimes against humanity under that same definition.

- **Destruction of Property and Heritage (Bosnia & Kosovo vs. Bangladesh):** Ethnic cleansing often entails erasing cultural presence. In Bosnia, hundreds



Deliberate Attacks on Civilians (Bosnia 1992-95 vs. Bangladesh Now)

marketplaces, executing men of fighting age who were non-combatants (e.g., Srebrenica), and raping women as a weapon of war. While Bangladesh's context is not civil war, the deliberate selection of Hindu civilians for killing is analogous. There are no reports of Hindu militias or armed resistance; the

of mosques were blown up; in Kosovo (late 1990s), Serb forces burned Albanian villages and demolished mosques. In Bangladesh, the razing of Hindu temples and homes and the looting of Hindu businesses serve an identical function: to physically obliterate the minority's footprint.

Photographs of ransacked Hindu temples in Bangladesh with broken deity statues evoke the images of smashed minarets in Bosnia - an attempt to break the morale and continuity of the community.

- **Confinement and Siege (Sarajevo/Bosnian enclaves vs. Bangladesh villages):** In Yugoslavia's ethnic cleansing, certain Muslim enclaves were besieged (e.g., Sarajevo, Srebrenica) - cut off from supplies, subjected to sniping and shelling - effectively imprisoned in their towns until they fell. In Bangladesh, Hindus in some localities now experience a softer form of siege: surrounded by hostile neighbours, unable to move freely. The anecdote of Hindus not leaving a temple compound in Dhaka for days during unrest is reminiscent of besieged Sarajevo residents sheltering in basements. Though the scale differs, the fear-driven confinement has the same goal: to isolate the community as a prelude to either forced exodus or concentrated attack.
- **Systematic Nature and State Role (Nazi Germany & Yugoslavia vs. Bangladesh):** The most infamous ethnic cleansing/genocides (Nazi against Jews, Serbs/Croats/Bosniaks in Yugoslavia) had a high degree of state orchestration. Bangladesh's scenario is more of state acquiescence than active orchestration, but that too has precedents - e.g., the Kristallnacht pogrom in 1938 Germany was presented as "spontaneous" but silently endorsed by the Nazi state. In Bangladesh, the interim government's denial and the political cover given to Islamists function similarly to tacit state approval. As NDTV quoted observers: the killings are "signals of a systemic breakdown" of protection, implying an organized policy vacuum benefiting perpetrators. Moreover, like in Yugoslavia where Serbian officials denied massacres even as evidence mounted, Bangladesh's leadership

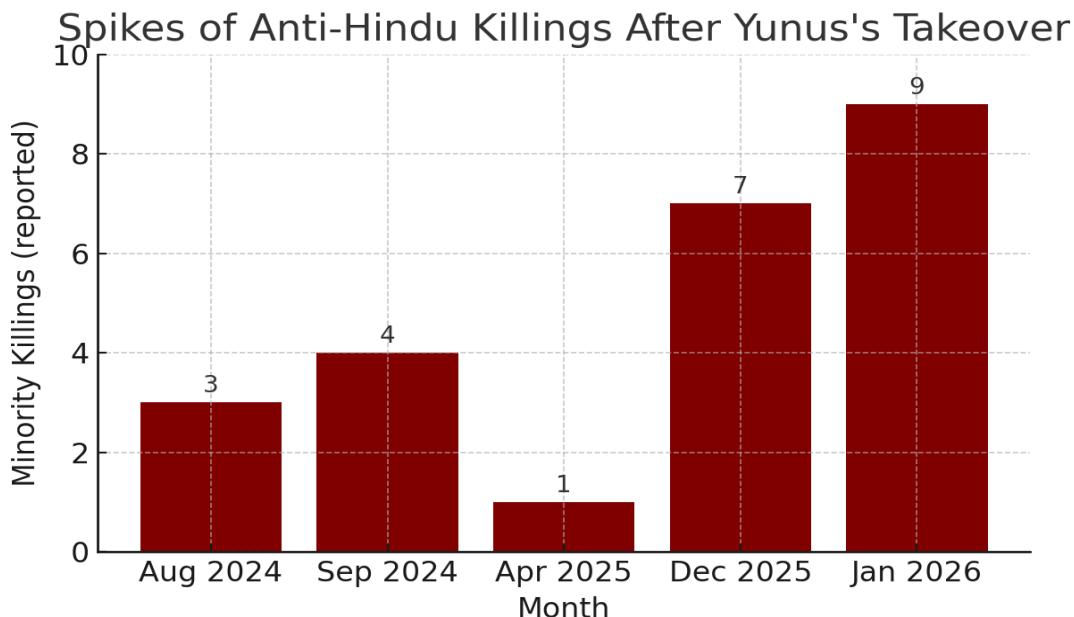


Figure: Spikes of Anti-Hindu Killings After Yunus's Takeover. This bar chart highlights two major surges in reported killings of Hindus and other minorities in Bangladesh: an initial spike in August-September 2024 immediately following the regime change, and a larger spike in December 2025-January 2026. The lull in early-mid 2025 was broken by an escalating wave of violence at the end of the year.

denies communal intent, effectively hampering remedial action and justice - a common feature in ethnic cleansings to evade international scrutiny.

It is also instructive to compare the **early warning signs**. In Rwanda, well before 1994, there were smaller anti-Tutsi massacres that were largely ignored by the world - a parallel to the “dress rehearsal” attacks Bangladesh has seen (e.g., the 2021 Puja violence, and even the 2013 Jamaat-led pogroms). The world's failure to react decisively in those instances emboldened the genocidaires. Now, Bangladesh stands at a similar juncture: the current pogrom could either be curbed by concerted action or spiral into something even more catastrophic. The Kashmir case offers a lens on aftermath - three decades on, most Kashmiri Hindus remain in exile, their homes taken over, their culture in the valley nearly erased. If Bangladesh's trajectory continues, one can foresee a future where its Hindu minority might effectively vanish from large swathes of the country, ending up in diaspora or confined to token pockets.

The comparisons above serve as a sobering call to action. Bangladesh's situation meets the qualitative benchmarks of ethnic cleansing, if not yet the quantitative extremes of Rwanda or Bosnia. But genocide scholars often emphasise that genocide is a process, not a sudden event. The process underway in Bangladesh shows many of the same steps on that tragic ladder. International legal and policy forums, having learned from past failures (Rwanda's haunting legacy, “Never again”), must recognise these signs in Bangladesh and respond with urgency. Preventive diplomacy, targeted sanctions against instigators, and support for protective measures are needed now - lest Bangladesh 2024-26 be remembered alongside the grim litany of ethnic cleansings that the world did not stop in time.

The pattern indicates that after the chaotic post-coup violence, extremist elements regrouped and struck even more forcefully in late 2025, coinciding with political turbulence around the upcoming elections and the further entrenchment of Islamist influence. These visualised surges underscore the episodic yet intensifying nature of the pogrom, where periods of relative calm have been punctuated by orchestrated campaigns of killings.

In addition to the chart, maps (not shown here for brevity) of attack locations reveal that the violence is geographically widespread. Incidents span from the northern districts (Rangpur, Dinajpur) to central heartland (Narsingdi, Gazipur), to the south and east (Khulna division, Chattogram). This distribution, when plotted, refutes any notion that the violence is isolated or region-specific; rather, it is **nationwide**, affecting Hindu communities in both rural and urban settings.

Concluding Observation

The violence documented since August 2024 is not a random crime wave. It is a patterned campaign that tracks the internationally recognised elements of ethnic cleansing: terrorised civilians, destroyed homes and temples, coerced movement, and the steady contraction of minority life into guarded enclaves. This escalation follows the extra-constitutional transition that installed Muhammad Yunus as head of the interim administration, and it has unfolded under his government's watch, authority, and stated mandate to restore rule of law. Reuters reporting captured the immediate post-ouster targeting of Hindu homes and temples and the attempted flight of Hindus to India, marking the opening phase of coercion and removal.

In international human rights terms, the central question is not whether Yunus personally directs each attack, but whether the state under his leadership has met its non-derogable duty to prevent, protect, investigate, and punish. Where

violence against a minority becomes widespread and identity-selective, state denial, delayed enforcement and persistent impunity can convert “failure” into complicity by omission. Minority groups have directly accused the interim government of failing to protect Hindus and the administration has rejected those allegations, a posture that risks normalising the threat environment rather than dismantling it.

Forced Displacement and Deportation

Hindu families faced immediate post-August 2024 flight pressures, including attempted cross-border movement and internal displacement driven by fear and repeated attacks. The violence created a coercive environment where leaving became a rational survival choice, replicating the displacement logic seen in other ethnic cleansing cases. Evidence of attempted mass flight and community sheltering in temples and safer enclaves indicates a forced-migration dynamic rather than ordinary mobility.

Violence and Terror: Killings, lynchings, hacking deaths, abductions, and arson attacks function as terror tactics to intimidate and fracture the Hindu minority’s social fabric. The brutality of methods, including public lynching and burning (e.g., Dipu Chandra Das), is consistent with violence-as-weapon patterns used in ethnic cleansing campaigns to induce fear-driven submission or exit. Reported rapes and mob violence in the immediate aftermath further reinforce terror as a displacement tool.

Deliberate Attacks on Civilians: Victims include teachers, traders, community leaders and elderly civilians attacked in homes, workplaces and transit routes, demonstrating systematic civilian targeting rather than conflict spillover. Attacks on minority households and temples in multiple districts immediately after the regime change indicate selection based on identity. The pattern matches ethnic cleansing

models where civilian vulnerability is exploited to make community life unsustainable.

Destruction of Property: Large-scale vandalism and arson against Hindu homes, businesses and temples are designed to eliminate economic viability and prevent return, a classic ethnic cleansing tactic. Minority groups documented hundreds of Hindu homes and businesses vandalised and 15–20 Hindu temples damaged in the initial post-ouster phase, with continued attacks thereafter. Property destruction operates as both punishment and long-term removal infrastructure.

Confinement: The threat environment has driven de facto confinement through self-restriction, community guarding of temples and avoidance of normal movement, producing enclave-like living conditions. This reduces access to livelihoods, public services and safety, increasing dependency and vulnerability. Such fear-based confinement functions as a precursor to displacement or further targeted violence.

Systematic Policy: While the interim administration may not formally declare an ethnic-cleansing policy, the operational reality reflects systematic permissiveness: weak protection, delayed enforcement, denial of organised targeting and political space granted to extremist actors. International and domestic reporting highlights the interim government’s rejection of minority groups’ claims and broader patterns of extremist attacks on minorities amid a governance-security vacuum. This combination of organised extremist violence and state failure aligns with ethnic cleansing dynamics driven by impunity and institutional neglect.

Taken together, the findings below show a coherent removal logic: terrorise civilians, demolish their economic base, signal impunity and shrink the community’s freedom of movement until leaving becomes the rational

survival option. This is precisely how ethnic cleansing advances without formal decrees. Under the Yunus interim administration, Islamist networks have become more visible and politically influential in the post-Hasina landscape, while minorities report inadequate state protection and denial of organised targeting. The resulting gap between the government's assurances and the lived reality of Hindu victims is itself an enabling condition for continued cleansing.

For policymakers and human-rights bodies, the accountability standard is clear. If the state cannot or will not suppress identity-based violence, dismantle incitement networks and

prosecute perpetrators at scale, responsibility attaches upward through governance systems, not only downward to street-level mobs. The interim government's repeated inability to deliver credible protection, rapid investigations and sustained deterrence places Muhammad Yunus's administration at the centre of state responsibility for an ethnic-cleansing trajectory, whether by incapacity, political accommodation of Islamist forces or deliberate minimisation. The remedy must therefore target both perpetrators and the enabling state conditions: robust protection guarantees, transparent prosecutions, sanctions against inciters and organisers and independent monitoring that removes denial as an option.

References

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