

# CGS PEACE REPORT

*an initiative of BPO*

CGS  
CENTRE FOR  
GENOCIDE  
STUDIES  
UNIVERSITY OF DHAKA



Volume 2, Issue 4  
July-August 2018



**Crime and Violence in  
Bangladesh:**  
An analysis from BPO

**Global Overview on  
Sports Violence**

**Sports and Peacebuilding**

**Understanding Electoral  
Violence through  
Micronarratives:  
Feni and Satkhira**

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*an initiative of*  
**BPO- Bangladesh Peace Observatory**



**Volume 2, Issue 4**  
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## From the Editor's Desk

Few now remember that international sports in modern times or marathon, for instance, had its roots in the legendary run of the Greek soldier cum messenger, Pheidippides, from the battlefield of Marathon to Athens, a distance little over 25 miles, to announce the defeat of the Persians at the Battle of Marathon in 490 BC. The legend also narrates that after exclaiming "we have won!," Pheidippides collapsed and died. The legend was not lost or, as some critics would maintain, reformulated and brought to life when the modern Olympics began in 1896, mainly to recall the glory of ancient Greece if not to highlight the defeat of the non-West. Indeed, an incident related to violence and marred in bloodshed became a sporting event! But the birth of marathon is hardly an exception.

Gladiators, who were engaged in violent confrontations with other gladiators, wild animals and condemned criminals, also found themselves engaged in sports, entertaining audiences in the Roman republic and Roman empire, only to be discouraged and outlawed following the rise of Christianity. To this may be added the sport of bullfighting, which incidentally is still the 'national game' in Spain. The sport involves, albeit within certain norms, the public subduing, immobilizing, even killing the bull. The brutality of bullfighting, however, made the sport illegal in most countries, save Spain, Portugal, parts of southern France and some Hispanic American countries.

The violent birth of sports is not limited to the West alone. Indeed, the prehistoric practice of Kungfu, Karate, Judo, Kenjutsu, Sumo, Taekwondo, or Lathial in many parts of Asia had their origins related to conflicts and violence, although these have now become sports. The only noticeable difference from the 'games' of the gladiators and bullfighting found in the West would be the 'defensive' nature in the age-old Asian sporting practices.

But the distinction between the West and non-West, if any, got blurred and has now taken a universal character, albeit at the behest of the West, insofar as sports violence is concerned, indeed, with violence getting transferred from the players to the spectators or supporters. On this, I guess Nietzsche was right in saying, "He who fights with monsters should look to it that he himself does not become a monster. And when you gaze long into an abyss the abyss also gazes into you." Reference could also be made to Nandy's *Intimate Enemy*: "If there is the non-West which constantly invites one to be Western and to defeat the West on the strength of one's acquired Westernness - there is the non-West's construction of the West which invites one to be true to the West's other self and to the non-West which is in alliance with that other self." The enemy outside otherwise becomes the enemy within! Or, to make it more explicit, the supporters internalizes the pain and sufferings of the players and vice versa. This, however, becomes

deadly when the 'supporters' cease to be individuals and start acting as a group or nation. As Nietzsche would warn us: "Madness is something rare in individuals – but in groups, parties, peoples, ages it is the rule." In fact, the amount of passion that goes into sports and the violence that takes place from time to time, both verbal and physical, is nothing less than madness!

I have always marveled at the way eleven players, whether in soccer, cricket or field-hockey, represent and symbolize the nation or the country. So intense is the symbolization that often a loss or inversely a win results in violence and that could be between rival supporters or against the country's own players for not playing up to the expectation. In fact, in some games, cricket, for instance, matches between India and Pakistan are deemed as 'wars,' and a loss is perceived as a national shame! Now why should the whole population of the country suffer, which often includes suicide, if eleven members cannot deliver a victory? One cannot help remembering here the 'Football War' between Honduras and El Salvador in 1969. This, of course, has to do with the internalization of the enemy, with nation and nationalism playing havoc in the minds of the people.

But such 'national' or 'territorially-defined' games are often unfair. Take the case of the cricket match between Sri Lanka and India, for instance. India produces eleven players from a population of 1.3 billion while Sri Lanka's eleven players come from a population of only 20 million. Not so different would be the case between India and Bangladesh. It is befitting that this is being overcome by holding post-national cricket matches, indeed, in the form of Indian Premier League (IPL) and Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) with national and international players playing not against one another but together in the same team, although one must quickly add here that the supporters suffer from a new form of territoriality and localization, which too can be unhealthy and turn violent!

Territoriality alone, however, is not at fault. Some countries have actively promoted certain sports, which are nationally justifiable but not when the same game is made international and played in the Olympics. Take the case of basketball. Not all countries would have an abundance of seven foot tall players! I can immediately think of the West African Pygmies in Cameroon, for instance, whose men average 4 feet 11 inches tall, while American men average 5 feet 9 ½ inches tall. The latter has an advantage of almost one foot height if they ever choose to play basketball against one another, and that again we are talking of 'average' only. Pygmies or Bantus would have a hard time getting a seven footer in their respective basketball teams. There is certainly a way out and this could be found in the wrestling and boxing sports, where there are provisions for lightweight, middleweight, and heavyweight. The same can be done in basketball by having categories

based on heights to make the game a fairer one at the international level. Unfair games can have socio-psychological consequences on humans, not all of which are healthy.

But I guess this is nothing compared to betting, gambling, doping, racism, and sexism that have marred sports in recent times. I remember the time when Ben Johnson won the 100-metre race at the Seoul Olympics in 1988. Johnson was profusely praised by the Canadian media and the public and called 'a Canadian hero' but soon became 'a migrant from Jamaica' or 'a Jamaican' when he lost the title after he failed the doping test. Not so different is the case with France winning the 2018 FIFA World Cup with 80 percent of the team members having African roots and 50 percent Muslims. Indeed, a substantial population of the country, predominantly white and Christian, celebrated the victory, while engaging in racism, xenophobia and Islamophobia.

Under the above circumstances, which are certainly spread around the world, and with the state sponsoring activities in sports, Bangladesh could not remain immune from sports violence. Indeed, hysteria, fanaticism, suicide, depression, betting, corruption, hooliganism, and now riots among villagers in Bangladesh supporting the arch-rivals Brazil and Argentina, as it had occurred in the last World Cup, indicate that national sports are bound to face an ominous future. The challenge will be to contain the violent trend in sports in contemporary times and make sports free from violence in Bangladesh and beyond.

**Imtiaz Ahmed**  
Director, CGS

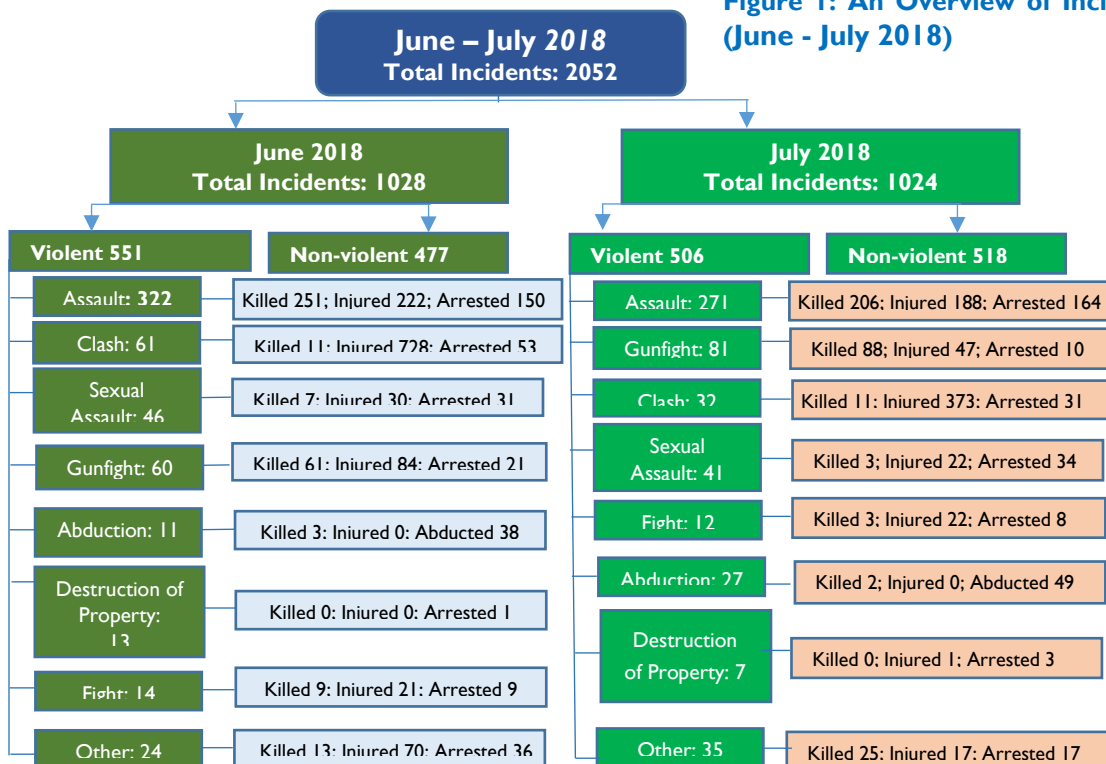
# Crime and Violence in Bangladesh: An Analysis from BPO

## Part A: Violence Update: (June 2018- July 2018)

The Bangladesh Peace Observatory (BPO) brings together different streams of publicly available data on violence using news reports from prominent national dailies. From June to July 2018, BPO

recorded 2052 violent<sup>1</sup> and non-violent<sup>2</sup> incidents all over the country. **Figure 1** segregates these incidents into some general categories by type of violence.

Figure 1: An Overview of Incidents (June - July 2018)



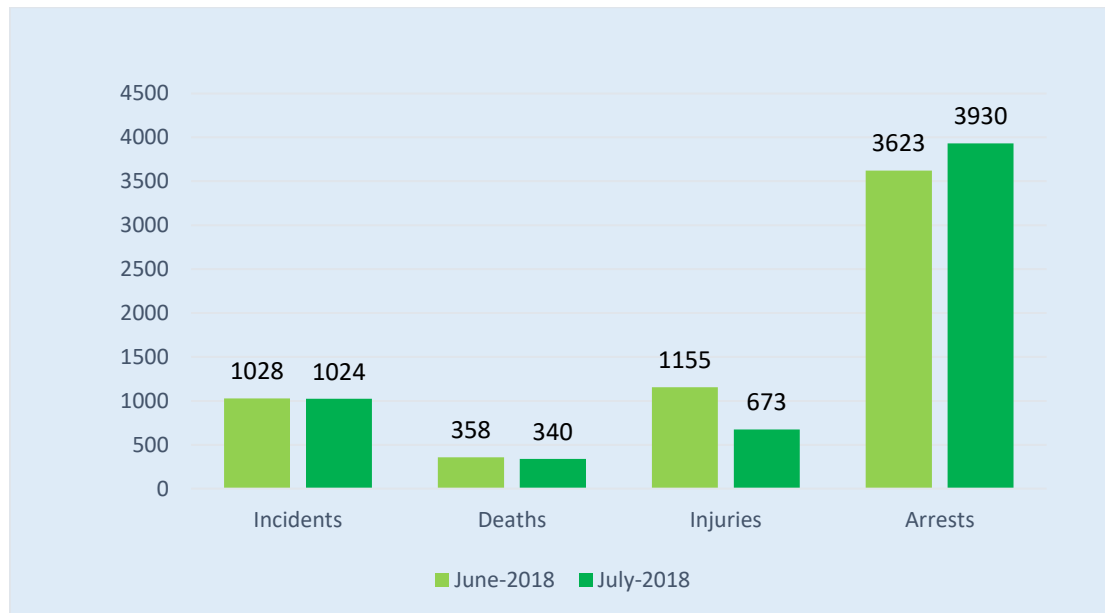
<sup>1</sup> **Violent Incident:** According to BPO Codebook: The reported incident involved the intentional use of physical force by an individual or group against another individual or group, in a manner that resulted or could have resulted in death, injury or any other form of physical harm to persons or property.

<sup>2</sup> **Non-violent Incident:** According to BPO Codebook: The reported incident did not involve the intentional use of physical force by an individual or group against another individual or group, in a manner that resulted or could have resulted in death, injury or any other form of physical harm to persons or property, e.g. Arrest, Peaceful Protest, Rescue and Recovery.

According to BPO data, the number of incidents is on the rise in recent months in Bangladesh. The combined frequency of incidents during April-May 2018 was 1575 which has increased by 30 percent in June-July 2018. The incidents during June-July were mostly of arrest. For instance, the number of arrests was 78 percent higher from April-May 2018 to June-July 2018

(4240 to 7553). During June-July 2018, a total of 698 deaths were reported while in April-May 2018, a total of 653 deaths were reported. On the other hand, the number of reported injuries was less by 152 in June-July 2018 (1828) than April-May 2018 (1980). The figures below (**figure 2, 3**) of the BPO data for the months of June-July 2018 shows the continuation of the trend.

**Figure 2: Comparative analysis of Incidents (June- July 2018)**

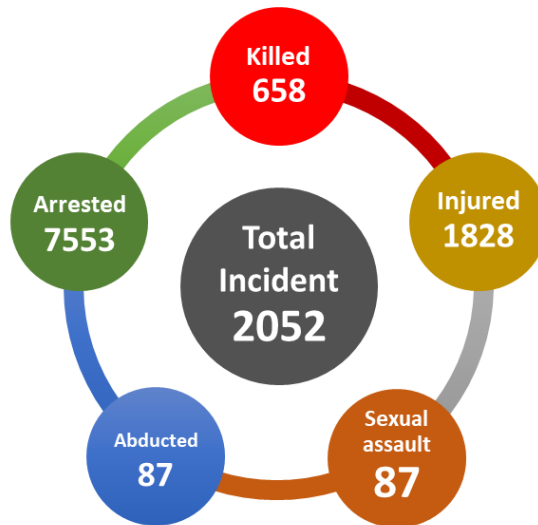


One of the key reasons for this high frequency of incidents is Bangladesh Government's continued nationwide anti-narcotics drive against drug peddlers, dealers, and abusers which began in May 2018. Nevertheless, the number of

operation has decreased in June-July 2018 than May 2018. Though the number of reported deaths has reduced, the number of arrests has increased alarmingly in June-July 2018.

Still, in June-July 2018, a total of 141 gunfight incidents were recorded in which 149 people were killed and 131 were injured (**Figure 4**).

**Figure 3: Consequences of the violent incidents (June-July 2018)**



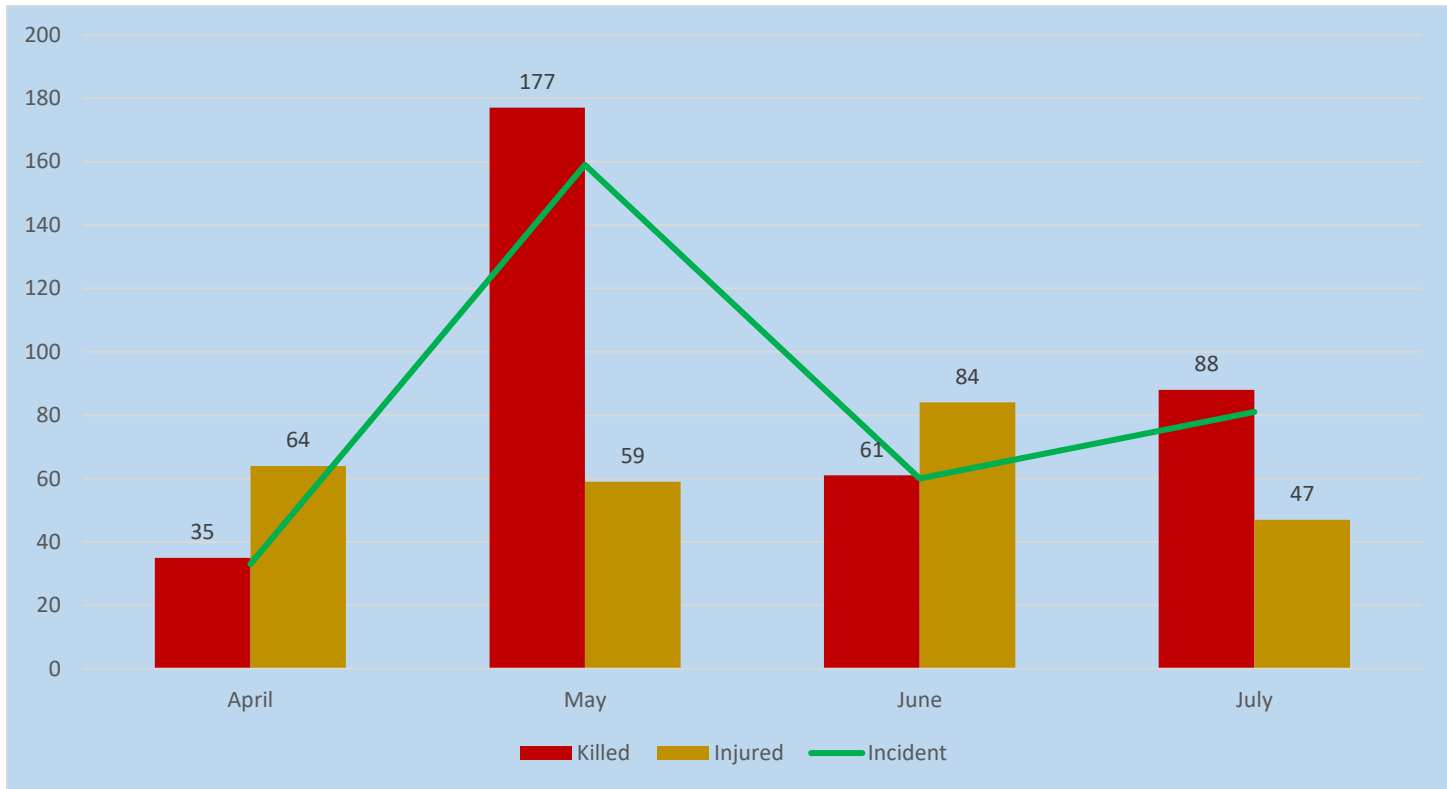
**Figure 4: Total Gunfight occurred (June-July 2018)**



The figure below (**Figure 5**) indicates the continued trend in gunfight and its consequences. The graph makes it clear that May 2018 was the critical month when the war on drugs in Bangladesh began indicating a drastic rise of incidents by 405.71 percent in terms of fatality than the

previous month (April 2018). In June, although the number of incident, death and injury followed a downward slope, still the number of death remained higher than May when the gunfights began to occur frequently.

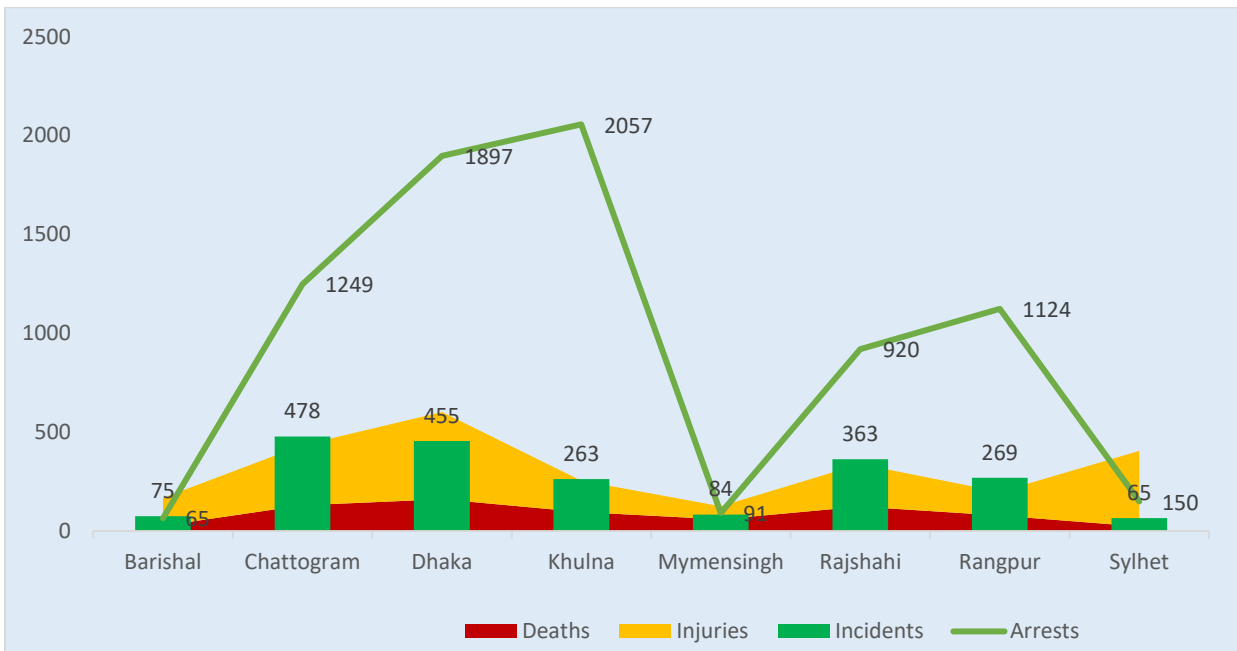
**Figure 5: Trends of Gunfight in April-July 2018**



A divisional distribution of incidents during this period as mentioned in **figure 6** indicates that Chittagong division is at the top in terms of recorded incidents. But Dhaka division is mostly affected by the count of deaths and injuries. According to BPO data, 455 incidents in Dhaka occurred in which 161 people were killed, 441 injured, and 1897 arrested. Notably, Sylhet division which stands at the lowest by incidents is the second in terms of recorded injuries. On 16 June 2018, more

than 200 people were injured in a clash among villagers over a dispute in collecting money for *Tarabih* (special prayer during Ramadan) in the district of Habiganj. Surprisingly, Khulna division which comes fifth by incident prevalence has the highest recorded arrests. A total of 2057 people were arrested in this division. Special drives of law enforcement agencies against drug peddling and anti-terrorism contributed to the increase in arrests for this particular division.

**Figure 6: Bi-Monthly Divisional Distribution of Incidents (June-July 2018)**



## Part B: Incidents Recorded by BPO on Sports Violence

The notable history of the Olympic Games, a big franchise in the sports arena, set apart an attempt at peacebuilding among the participating countries. On the other hand, there are incidents of violence too in the sports world. They exist in two forms; player violence and supporters or fan violence. Two major theories root the causes of violence in sports. One theory holds that humans have an instinct for violence, developed during a time when early human ancestors had to resort to violence and aggressiveness to survive and reproduce. Another theory deals with the sociological aspects of violence in sports, stating that sports are "mock battles" which can become actual battles due to their competitive nature.<sup>3</sup>

The FIFA World Cup is often termed as the 'Greatest Show on Earth' because of its unparalleled popularity and far-reaching impacts over people around the globe. The FIFA World Cup 2018 hosted by Russia showed an extraordinary racial and social amicability. For example, the demographic statistic of World Champion, France had 33% White and 52% Black players. Also, 33% of the players were Muslim.<sup>4</sup>

Though Kabaddi is the national sport of Bangladesh, football and cricket are considered to be the most popular sports. This is reflected by the fact that most of the violent incidents recorded by BPO related to sports were associated with either Cricket or Football. During the FIFA World Cup 2018, the fan based violence was rampant in Bangladesh. According to a news of the Daily Purbokone (Chittagong), three Brazil supporters were stabbed to injury by an Argentina supporter in Chakoria, Cox's Bazar over the defeat of Argentina in Football World Cup.<sup>5</sup> The classic rivalry in cricket such as India vs Pakistan and England vs Australia generated news of illegal betting among some notorious groups. The present day IPL (The Indian Premier League) or BPL (The Bangladesh Premier League) or Super Cup tournaments have become a Gambling Board to the general people mostly aged between 18-40 years. In one of the reported news, a schoolboy was stabbed to death by miscreants over a

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<sup>3</sup> Salamone, Frank A. (2000). *Society, Culture, Leisure and Play*. Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America. pp. 273–4. ISBN 9780761816256.

<sup>4</sup> *Hail to You* (2018). "[World Cup 2018] France Team: 33% White, 52% Black, 33% Muslim." Accessed: 20 August 2018. Available at:

<https://hailtoyou.wordpress.com/2018/06/11/world-cup-2018-france-squad-33-european/>

<sup>5</sup> Daily Purbokone (2018).

[http://www.edainikpurbokone.net/content/2018/2018-07-02/zoom\\_view/12w.jpg](http://www.edainikpurbokone.net/content/2018/2018-07-02/zoom_view/12w.jpg),

[http://www.edainikpurbokone.net/content/2018/2018-07-02/zoom\\_view/10o.jpg](http://www.edainikpurbokone.net/content/2018/2018-07-02/zoom_view/10o.jpg)

dispute of gambling money of cricket in Rangpur.<sup>6</sup>

The BPO recorded a total of 37 incidents of sports related violence from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017 till 30<sup>th</sup> August 2018.

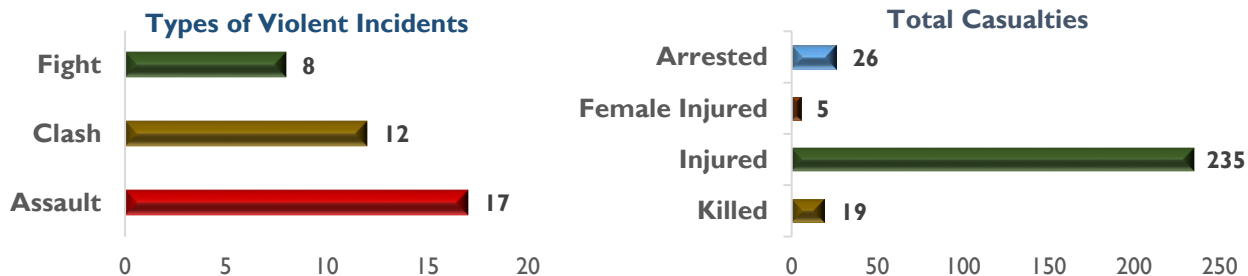
From the reported incidents, it was found that the violence took the forms of fighting or clash among the group of supporters of different teams, assault by one group over another, personal attacks and so on. These incidents resulted in deaths, injuries and arrests. (Figure 7).

Nowadays, people especially the youth groups form their opinions based upon the information of social media portals/ TV channels/ news portals, and these often carry rumors, fake news which might lead

to in-fight or attacks on oppositions. The highest number of incidents has been recorded in Dhaka which is shown in the divisional distribution of incidents (Figure 8). Dhaka is the most populated division with country's best available facilities of accessing information. Therefore, diversities of opinions among people can also prevail in this part of the country.

The major doer groups of the violent incidents belong to the age group of 18-35 years and the target groups also belong to the same age group (Figure 9). This cluster of the population could be termed as the youth who have the tendency to react upon impulsion turning any friendly rows into violent incidents.

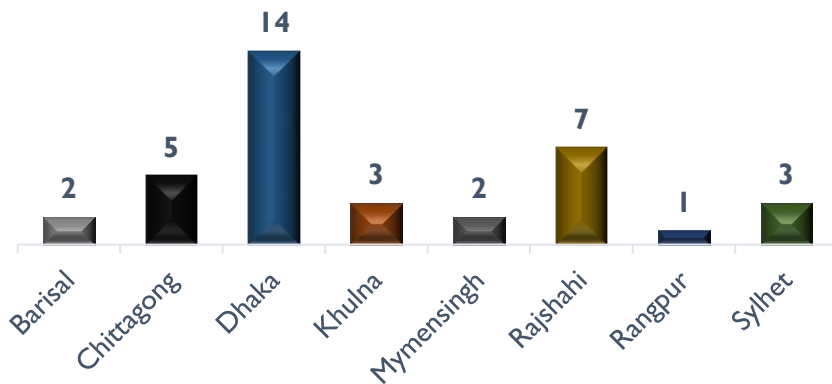
**Figure 7: Types and Consequences of Sports Violence (January 2017- August 2018)**



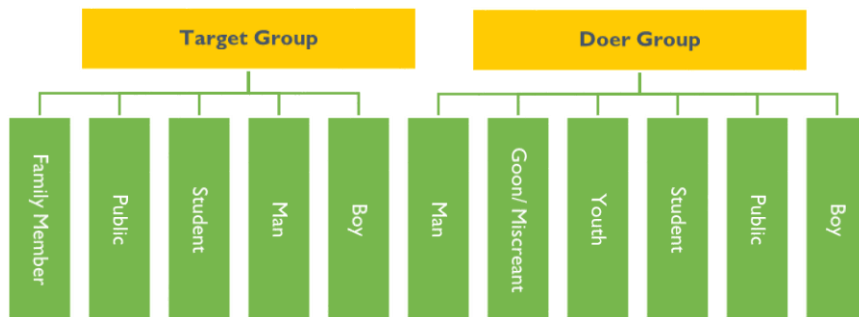
<sup>6</sup> The Daily Karatoa (2018). "A schoolboy was murdered over the dispute of gambling money of cricket at Badarganj (Badarganje cricket bajir taka niye donder jere school shikkharti nihoto)." Accessed: 16 August 2018. Available

at:  
[http://www.ekaratoa.com/2018/06/13/12/details/12\\_r12\\_c2.jpg](http://www.ekaratoa.com/2018/06/13/12/details/12_r12_c2.jpg);  
[http://www.ekaratoa.com/2018/06/13/11/details/11\\_r7\\_c2.jpg](http://www.ekaratoa.com/2018/06/13/11/details/11_r7_c2.jpg)

**Figure 8: Incidents by Division (January 2017- August 2018)**



**Figure 9: Incidents by Doer and Target Groups (January 2017- August 2018)**



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# Global Overview on Sports Violence

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## Part A: Sports Violence in Modern History

The first incident of sports violence in recorded history dates back to AD 532 in Constantinople where a chariot racing rivalry triggered a riot historically known as the Nika Riot. Violence during the riot and subsequent revolution<sup>7</sup> caused the death of 30,000 people and at least half of the city burned down to ashes.<sup>8</sup> In modern time, sports violence crosses boundaries

of space and time where fans can engage in violence in a remote location from the sports venue. Numerous number and types of sports violence occur all over the world every now and then. Sports violence nowadays includes conflicts that may occur between players, and it also includes conflicts that arise from one or a combination of the following:<sup>9</sup>

1. Player:	One engaged in a sport experience.
2. Coach:	Volunteer or paid leaders of sport teams.
3. Referee/official:	Those who regulate game, contest situations.
4. Fan/spectator:	Those who observe practices, games or contests either in person or through media.
5. Volunteer:	One who serves in a number of roles to help support a sport delivery system and include helpers at events, board members, coaches, parent representatives.
6. Administrator:	An individual or group of individuals having direct or indirect authority over the sport environment.
7. Parent/ guardian/ family:	Those related to a player or players.
8. Adult role model:	Coaches, teacher, recreation leader, athletes, or anyone who has direct or indirect influence on a player.
9. Business associate:	One involved in investing, donating, or supporting the sport with a monetary exchange.
10. Criminal:	One who breaks rules to the extent that he/she may be brought up on charges of that action.
11. Terrorist:	One who commits crimes for the purpose of giving exposure to a particular ideology, issue of concern, or grudge.

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<sup>7</sup> The Nika Revolt was a devastating riot that took place in early medieval Constantinople, in the Eastern Roman Empire.

<sup>8</sup> *War History Online* (2016). "The Nika Riots: Sports Riots that Nearly Toppled an Empire." Accessed: 16 August 2018. Available at:

<https://www.warhistoryonline.com/featured/nika-riots-sports.html>

<sup>9</sup> Lynn Jamieson, Thomas Orr - *Sport and Violence\_ A Critical Examination of Sport* (2009, Butterworth-Heinemann) P 6

Besides the actors concerned, different countries have different issues which trigger sport violence in their respective society. Few examples are:<sup>10</sup>

<b>Australia</b>	Development of strong ties with neighborhood clubs causes strong rivalries that can result in taunting, intimidation, fights and vandalism between rival team fans.
<b>Israel</b>	Close connection of sport to the ideology of Zionism creates stress in soccer.
<b>England</b>	Hooligans en masse create problems for overcrowded facilities.
<b>United States</b>	War between parents of players result in injury and death.
<b>Thailand</b>	Youth Thai-boxing results in exploitation and gambling.
<b>Canada</b>	Hockey violence occurs due to intentional injury.
<b>South America</b>	Rabid fans identify with player's win-loss records to the extent that players have been killed after major contests.
<b>South Africa</b>	Apartheid caused this country to be banned from international activity until this practice ended.
<b>China</b>	Controversies regarding talent identification at an early age and regulatory issues involve close scrutiny from the international community.

Apart from these observations, there are also shreds of evidence of different kind of direct violence which results in victimization of people who are not associated with sports. For example, researchers at Lancaster University in the UK studied family violence during the World Cups in 2002, 2006 and 2010, and found a 26% rise in domestic assaults when England won or drew, and a 38% jump when the team lost. Domestic violence incidents were up by 11%

the day after an England match – win or lose – suggesting a carry-over effect, too.<sup>11</sup> History of sports violence suggests that the escalation of violence often victimizes the most celebrated personality too. For example, Colombian footballer Andres was gunned down with six bullets by an angry fan ten days after scoring an own goal<sup>12</sup> against the USA in the 1994 FIFA World Cup tournament hosted by America.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Ibid P 19

<sup>11</sup> *The Conversation* (2018). “Whether teams win or lose, sporting events lead to spikes in violence against women and children.” Accessed: 18 August 2018. Available at: <http://theconversation.com/whether-teams-win-or-lose-sporting-events-lead-to-spikes-in-violence-against-women-and-children-99686>

<sup>12</sup> A goal in football scored by a player inadvertently stroked or deflecting the ball into their own team's goal.

<sup>13</sup> *The Sun* (2018). “How Colombian player Andres Escobar was gunned down after own goal destroyed their 1994 World Cup dreams – and his brother fears it could happen AGAIN.” Accessed: 18 August 2018. Available at: <https://www.thesun.co.uk/world-cup-2018/6682111/colombian-football-player-andres-escobar-gunned-down-after-own-goal/>

Again in 2002 FIFA world cup, reportedly, two people died and 73 people including 18 policemen were injured in Moscow due to the subsequent riot triggered by Russia's defeat against Japan.<sup>14</sup> In case of Olympics, there have been historical moments of unprecedented violence and security concerns. For example, the student movement in Mexico in 1968 started from a street fight between high school students after a football game. The Mexican students marched on the roads in order to draw attention to the suffering of thousands affected by the Olympic setting and the funds spent by the government. On 2 October 1968, 10 days before the opening of the Summer Olympics in Mexico City, police officers and military troops opened fire upon a crowd of unarmed students. According to government sources, four people were killed and 20 were wounded.<sup>15,16</sup> The next

Olympic in 1972 experienced one of the most devastating incidents in sports history. During the 1972 Munich Olympic Games, armed Palestinians kidnapped and killed 11 Israeli athletes in protest against Israeli aggression in Gaza and West Bank. After this watershed incident, on 27 July 1996, bombing by a single homemade pipe bomb in the Centennial Olympic Park, near the main sites of the Olympic Games in Atlanta killed one person and injured 112.<sup>17</sup> Apart from these big games- league matches, qualifying rounds, club matches, local games, and institution-based tournaments of each type of sports has incidents of violence triggered by diverse factors resulting in death, injury, and financial loss. The spread of sports riot in modern times has become a global phenomenon consequently from the biggest show on earth to local games are at risk of violent incident.

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<sup>14</sup> *The Guardian* (2018). "Two die in Moscow World Cup rioting." Accessed: 20 August 2018. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/football/2002/jun/10/worldcupfootball2002.sport25>

<sup>15</sup> *National Public Radio* (2018). "Mexico's 1968 Massacre: What Really Happened?" Accessed: 20 August 2018. Available at: <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=97546687>

<sup>16</sup> Czula, R., 1978. The Munich Olympics assassinations: a second look. *Journal of Sport & Social Issues* 2 (3), 19–23.

<sup>17</sup> *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (2018). "Atlanta Olympic Games bombing of 1996." Accessed: 19 August 2018. Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/event/Atlanta-Olympic-Games-bombing-of-1996>

## Part B: Sports Violence in South Asia

**India-Pakistan Rivalry:** To India and Pakistan, cricket is usually one of the fewest of things these two countries can agree upon. Very few sporting events are capable of stirring such heated passions than the match between India and Pakistan. Sometimes matches have previously been opportunities for diplomacy or to swap friendly remarks.<sup>18</sup> Billed as the world's biggest sporting rivalry, India-Pakistan cricket matches are some of the most watched television broadcasts. In 2011, Cricket World Cup semi-final attracted an average audience of nearly 135 million in India alone.<sup>19</sup> Over the last decade, the two nations' sporting relationship has turned into political confrontation. Following the Mumbai attack in 2008, which was

blamed on Pakistan-based militant groups, India canceled their 2009 tour of Pakistan.<sup>20</sup> Since then India has refused to play bilateral cricket with Pakistan.<sup>21</sup> This rivalry also spreads among the supporters. In 2017, six police officers were injured as rival cricket fans clashed after Pakistan beat India in the Champions Trophy. Two people were arrested for affray.<sup>22</sup> According to Asian Cricket Council, Asia Cup 2018 has been moved from India to the United Arab Emirates over Pakistan's refusal to cross the border as relations simmer between the arch-rivals.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> *Live mint* (2017). "It's not just cricket: India-Pakistan rivalry transcends sport." Accessed: 15 August 2018. Available at: <https://www.livemint.com/Sports/hURElxmE5F4XgEISNMns6l/Its-not-just-cricket-IndiaPakistan-rivalry-transcends-spo.html>

<sup>19</sup> *Hindustan Times* (2011). "135 mn saw World Cup final: TAM." Accessed: 14 August 2018. Available at: <http://www.hindustantimes.com/135-mn-saw-World-Cup-final-TAM/Article1-683623.aspx>

<sup>20</sup> *CNN* (2017). "India vs. Pakistan: World's biggest sporting rivalry resumes." Accessed: 18 August 2018. Available at: <https://edition.cnn.com/2017/06/02/sport/india-pakistan-cricket-biggest-rivalry/index.html>

<sup>21</sup> *The Times of India* (2017). "Can't force India to play bilateral series against Pakistan: ICC." Accessed: 18 August 2018. Available at:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/sports/cricket/news/cant-force-india-to-play-bilateral-series-against-pakistan-icc/articleshow/60518531.cms>

<sup>22</sup> *BBC* (2017). "India v Pakistan cricket fans clash in Leicester." Accessed: 18 August 2018. Available at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-leicestershire-40324089>

<sup>23</sup> *Geo TV* (2018). "2018 Asia Cup shifted to UAE amid India-Pakistan cricket row." Accessed: 20 August 2018. Available at: <https://www.geo.tv/latest/190471-2018-asia-cup-shifted-to-uae-amid-india-pakistan-cricket-row>

**Attack on Sri Lankan Cricket Team:** A bus carrying Sri Lanka cricket team was attacked by militant group in Lahore in 2009<sup>24</sup> with a striking resemblance of 2008 Mumbai attacks. They were smartly dressed, carried ammunition in backpacks and were armed with automatic weapons and grenades.<sup>25</sup> At least eight people were killed and eight wounded, including seven Sri Lankan players, which had driven cricket and most other international sports out from Pakistan for years.<sup>26</sup> The memory of 2009 has motivated unprecedented levels of security and safety for both the stars of the game and also it was a major embarrassment for Pakistan. The attack also demonstrated the of political

instability of Pakistan. Some militant groups were banned in Pakistan after the attack.<sup>27</sup> Pakistan authorities also tried to find the alleged involvement of LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) with the attack, but Sri Lanka has always denied any responsibility for the tragedy.<sup>28</sup>

**The Rise of the Afghan Cricket Team:** Afghanistan Cricket Federation is formed by Afghan refugees in 1995. In 2001 the country acquired affiliate membership of the ICC.<sup>29</sup> Afghanistan began its cricketing journey on the world stage in 2008. In 2010, the country played in its first major international tournament, the World Twenty 20.<sup>30</sup> In 2017 the team was granted the full

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<sup>24</sup> *Dawn* (2017). "8 years ago today: Attack on the Sri Lankan cricket team." Accessed: 22 August 2018. Available at:

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1317979>

<sup>25</sup> *The Telegraph* (2009). "Sri Lankan cricketers injured in terror attack in Pakistan." Accessed: 21 August 2018. Available at:

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/cricket/international/srilanka/4931796/Sri-Lankan-cricketers-injured-in-terror-attack-in-Pakistan.html>

<sup>26</sup> *The Express Tribune* (2017). "2009 bus attack hero hails 'brave' Sri Lanka team." Accessed: 20 August 2018. Available at: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1535453/what-a-brave-nation-bus-attack-hero-ready-to-welcome-sri-lankan-cricket-team-after-8-years/>

<sup>27</sup> *Pakistan Observer* (2011). "JUD NOT INCLUDED IN REVISED LIST." Accessed: 18 August 2018. Available at:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20151208051335/http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=123885>

<sup>28</sup> *Aljazeera* (2009). "Pakistan hunts cricket attackers." Accessed: 20 August 2018.

Available at:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2009/03/200933224218906301.html>

<sup>29</sup> *Cricket Europe* (2016). "A Timeline of Afghanistan Cricket." Accessed: 20 August 2018. Available at:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20120921043117/http://www.cricketeurope4.net/CRICKETEUROPE/GENERAL/TIMELINES/afghanistan.shtml>

<sup>30</sup> *The Citizen* (2016). "The Rise, And Rise, Of The Afghan Cricket Team." Accessed: 21 August 2018. Available at: <http://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/newsdetail/index/5/7294/the-rise-and-rise-of-the-afghan-cricket-team>

membership of ICC with Test Status.<sup>31</sup> The achievement marks another high point as the team emerged from refugee camps in Pakistan, having been displaced

by the fighting in their own country. The team surmounted obstacles such as terrorism, displacement, and war with courage which received global accolades.

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<sup>31</sup> *The Telegraph* (2017). "Ireland and Afghanistan granted Test status after becoming 11th and 12th full ICC members." Accessed: 20 August 2018. Available at:

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/cricket/2017/06/22/ireland-afghanistan-eligible-play-test-cricket-becoming-11th/>

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## Sports and Peacebuilding

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Sports at national and international levels are proved to have a role at unifying (dividing too) people across race, gender, ethnicity, and age. The big events like the 'Greatest Show on Earth' bring together many people as well as contribute to the host country's socio-economic trends.

Impact of sports may be seen both in collective form or individual form. Frequently the national sporting team becomes the symbol of a nation's unity and pride. Some iconic sporting individuals might have a huge influence in their hometown or in the country. Very recently we saw Imran Khan, the former World Cup-winning Pakistan Cricket Team captain, becoming the President of Pakistan through the national general election. Their social influence sometimes is far too great for normal comprehension. For example, in 2007, Ivory Coast's legendary football player Didier Drogba plead to rebel groups for a cease-fire. It

ended the five-year-long civil war when the rebel group put down their arms.<sup>32</sup> The players representing their country also can build their case to the international community about the pressing concerns of their nation. Sports also bring together the nations who were involved in war previously or have a sour history.

Sports can be used to fulfill the goal to achieve peace. It can build relationships and connect individuals to communities. Sports can also serve as a communication platform and create a space for dialogue, if not peace during periods of distress of a nation.<sup>33</sup> A similar attempt was initiated in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) region in Bangladesh. The CHT Development Facility encouraged sports activities for the youth with an intention to divert them from the violent activities in a post-conflict CHT. It is also working with the girls to engage them in physical activities.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> *Aljazeera* (2013). "Didier Drogba and the Ivorian civil war." Accessed: 14 August 2018. Available at:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/footballrebels/2013/03/201336105035488821.html>

<sup>33</sup> *United Nations* (n. d.). "Sport and Peace Social Inclusion, Conflict Prevention and Peace-Building." Accessed: 14 August 2018. Available at:

[https://www.un.org/sport/sites/www.un.org.sport/files/ckfiles/files/Chapter6\\_SportandPeace.pdf](https://www.un.org/sport/sites/www.un.org.sport/files/ckfiles/files/Chapter6_SportandPeace.pdf)

<sup>34</sup> *UNDP Bangladesh* (2018). "Sports for Peace: Scoring Goals, Engaging Youth." Accessed: 13 August 2018. Available at: [http://www.bd.undp.org/content/bangladesh/en/home/operations/projects/crisis\\_prevention\\_and\\_recovery/chittagong-hill-tracts-](http://www.bd.undp.org/content/bangladesh/en/home/operations/projects/crisis_prevention_and_recovery/chittagong-hill-tracts-)

Players also help to raise social awareness about some of the critical issues like breast cancer, climate change, gender discrimination, racism and so on. National Football League (NFL) players of the USA wore pink armbands during a match as they have a partnership with the American Cancer Society to raise awareness about breast cancer.<sup>35</sup> Globally recognized sports personnel are considered as a good media for channeling messages about climate change. Popular Italian athlete Fiona May is working for spreading messages of Climate change and its effects.<sup>36</sup> Bangladeshi prominent cricketer Mashrafe Bin Mortaza has been appointed as UNDP's (United Nations Development Programme) Goodwill Ambassador to address the youth of the country as an inspirational figure to the youth of Bangladesh.<sup>37</sup> Sport

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development-facility/sports-for-peace--scoring-goals--engaging-youth-.html

<sup>35</sup> *The Washington Post* (2016). "The NFL has high school athletes thinking pink, but where are the proceeds going?" Accessed: 13 August 2018. Available at:

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/sports/high-schools/the-nfl-has-high-school-athletes-thinking-pink-but-where-are-the-proceeds-going/2016/10/19/3771768c-8fe1-11e6-a6a3-d50061aa9fae\\_story.html?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.f6175d2eac19](https://www.washingtonpost.com/sports/high-schools/the-nfl-has-high-school-athletes-thinking-pink-but-where-are-the-proceeds-going/2016/10/19/3771768c-8fe1-11e6-a6a3-d50061aa9fae_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.f6175d2eac19)

<sup>36</sup> *United Nations Climate Change* (2016). "Accelerating Climate Action through Public Awareness." Accessed: 14 August 2018. Available at:

<https://unfccc.int/news/accelerating-climate-action-through-public-awareness>

<sup>37</sup> *The Daily Star* (2016). "Mashrafe made UNDP's goodwill ambassador." Accessed: 13

and physical activities are major sectors that can challenge with the active participation of both men and women, the stereotypes, and discrimination towards women. Acknowledging these possibilities the Beijing Platform for Action provided policy recommendations about women and sports and in 2004 the International Olympic Committee created a Women and Sports Commission with a purpose to monitor the participation of women in Olympics and decision-making process. This idea has been widely adopted and has been the part of many sports-related policy decisions.<sup>38</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime aims to prevent the drug abuse and crime among youths by using sport as per the Doha Declaration.<sup>39,40</sup>

August 2018. Available at:

<https://www.thedailystar.net/backpage/mashrafe-made-undps-goodwill-ambassador-576451>

<sup>38</sup> *United Nations* (2017). "Women, gender equality and sport." Accessed: 14 August 2018. Available at:

[https://www.un.org/sport/sites/www.un.org/sport/files/ckfiles/files/Women%20and%20Sport%20\(Women%202000%20and%20Beyond\)%20web.pdf](https://www.un.org/sport/sites/www.un.org/sport/files/ckfiles/files/Women%20and%20Sport%20(Women%202000%20and%20Beyond)%20web.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> *United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention* (2002). "Using sport for drug abuse prevention." Accessed: 13 August 2018. Available at:

[https://www.unodc.org/pdf/youthnet/handbook\\_sport\\_english.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/pdf/youthnet/handbook_sport_english.pdf)

<sup>40</sup> *UNODC* (n. d.). "Crime prevention through sports." Accessed: 15 August 2018. Available at:

Sport is an important tool to fight racism though we commonly see the incidents of racism in sports. The racial and ethnic identity of players or even fans can put them into embarrassing situations despite their allegiance to the special team. The black sportsman in USA rugby team or Asian fans of a European soccer team sometimes are victims of racism in some form. Certain sports are considered to be suitable for some ethnic groups in countries like the USA, South Africa.<sup>41,42,43</sup>

Finally, the impact of not being involved in sports is also a significant factor in today's

society. Youths and children who are the most likely participant in sports-related activities are increasingly getting dependent on computer games. Apart from social isolation they also develop many physical disorders, such as obesity and other mental illness.<sup>44,45</sup> Though computers and technology helps to develop the cognitive areas of the human mind<sup>46</sup> but it is also taking away all the benefits of real-world sports.

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<http://www.unodc.org/dohadeclaration/en/topics/crime-prevention-through-sports.html>

<sup>41</sup> *The Washington Post* (2017). "Sports are not a sanctuary from racism. They are a reflection of society." Accessed: 13 August 2018. Available at: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/sports/sports-are-not-a-sanctuary-from-racism-they-are-a-reflection-of-society/2017/05/05/d012fbfa-3198-11e7-8674-437ddb6e813e\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.2a85230844d1](https://www.washingtonpost.com/sports/sports-are-not-a-sanctuary-from-racism-they-are-a-reflection-of-society/2017/05/05/d012fbfa-3198-11e7-8674-437ddb6e813e_story.html?utm_term=.2a85230844d1)

<sup>42</sup> *NZ Herald* (2016). "Rugby: Racism row escalates with call for South African rugby to be placed in "quarantine"." Accessed: 12 August 2018. Available at: [https://www.nzherald.co.nz/sport/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=4&objectid=12055493](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/sport/news/article.cfm?c_id=4&objectid=12055493)

<sup>43</sup> *The Guardian* (2004). "25% of Asian football fans face racism." Accessed: 14 August 2018. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2004/sep/25/race.football>

<sup>44</sup> *Developmental Psychology at Vanderbilt* (2014). "Effect of Video Games on Child Development." Accessed: 14 August 2018. Available at:

<https://my.vanderbilt.edu/developmentalpsychologyblog/2014/04/effect-of-video-games-on-child-development/>

<sup>45</sup> *National Center for Biotechnology Information* (2009). "Effect of Addiction to Computer Games on Physical and Mental Health of Female and Male Students of Guidance School in City of Isfahan." Accessed: 12 August 2018. Available at:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3905489/>

<sup>46</sup> *Developmental Psychology at Vanderbilt* (2014). "Effect of Video Games on Child Development." Accessed: 14 August 2018. Available at:

<https://my.vanderbilt.edu/developmentalpsychologyblog/2014/04/effect-of-video-games-on-child-development/>

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## Success Stories of Sports in Bangladesh

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### Female Football team:

Bangladesh is improving gradually in women's football. Despite huge social, cultural, and religious barriers, paucity of resources and organizational supports, the rise of women football came into light in 2011 through the Bangamata Begum Fazilatunnesa Mujib Gold Cup organized by the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education.<sup>47</sup> The tournament was recently recognized by the Guinness book of world records for the highest number of participants nationwide. The tournament involves more than a million young female footballers from around 64,000 schools every year. The women football team brought laurels for the country in the last couple of years. SAF U-15 championship is the recently winning title in 2018. The girls won the inaugural championship of SAF U-15 in 2017. AFC U-14 girl's regional championship was also won by them in 2016 and 2017 respectively.<sup>48</sup> As a result of the initiatives of the government, young talents are emerging through school football. Some districts dominated in the selection of players for the national squad.

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<sup>47</sup> *Dhaka Tribune* (2018). "Rise of the Bangladesh girls." Accessed: 13 August 2018. Available at: <https://www.dhakatribune.com/sport/football/2018/01/04/238019>

<sup>48</sup> *The Daily Star* (2018). "Setting Their Goals High." Accessed: 16 August 2018. Available at: <https://www.thedailystar.net/supplements/nati>

Rangamati, Khagrachari, Satkhira, Jessore, Narayanganj, Mymensingh, and Tangail dominated in the selection of women football player. The girls who played critical roles in women's football are from ethnic minorities who comprise only 2% of the total population.<sup>49</sup> At present two women, footballers of Bangladesh are playing in the Indian women's league for Sethu football club of Tamil Nadu.<sup>50</sup>

### Female Cricket team:

In November 2011 Bangladesh women's national cricket team got both ODI (One Day International) and T20 status. Recently they became the champion in Asia Cup women's T20 (held in Malaysia in June 2018) defeating India by three wickets. Bangladesh women's national cricket team also confirmed their participation in the forthcoming 2018 ICC Women's World Twenty20 by becoming the champion in qualifier tournament

on-builders-tomorrow/setting-their-goals-high-1535266

<sup>49</sup> *ibid*

<sup>50</sup> *Goal* (2018). "Sabina Khatun is Bangladesh's gift to Indian Women's League." Accessed: 16 August 2018. Available at: <http://www.goal.com/en-in/news/sabina-khatun-bangladesh-indian-womens-league-iwl-sethu/7ic15omlv725lw454uzr1moze>

defeating Ireland by 25 runs (held in the Netherlands in July 2018).<sup>51</sup>

But the path was not so easy. They have 20% winning record from the 35 ODIs they have played since 2010.

Bangladesh Cricket Board controls the women's wing of cricket. The women's wing authority reportedly confessed of the lack of funding and proper guidance. A comparison between salaries of Bangladeshi and Indian women cricketer substantiates this circumstance. In first-class cricket, Indian women cricketer gets 12,500 Rupees as match fee whereas Bangladeshi women cricketer get 600 taka only.<sup>52</sup> But immediately after the victory in Asia cup T20 the highest graded player is now getting 50,000 taka per month.

### **Role of RMG in sportswear:**

Bangladesh emerges as a key player in the Ready Made Garments (RMG) sector since 1978. After China, Bangladesh is the second largest garment exporter worldwide. The RMG industry has been playing a key role in empowering the

country and the people, particularly the female section, of Bangladesh. This empowerment comes more precisely in terms of generating income which in turn brings solvency in the families and consequently contributes a lot in strengthening the economy. The strength of the economy has a positive correlation with the status of peace of a country.

Although Bangladesh's presence in the global sportswear market is not significant it is worth \$270 billion. Some factories export sportswear items to renowned retailers and brands like Adidas and Puma but currently, China and Vietnam are dominating the global sportswear market.<sup>53</sup>

However, Bangladesh proved their potential in the sportswear segment, in both fashion and sports functional wear. Now the country's local markets are preparing themselves for the global market by expanding their facilities and factories, and already export a few million jerseys during different occasions.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> *The Daily Star* (2018). "Women seal T20 qualifiers title." Accessed: 17 August 2018. Available at: <https://www.thedailystar.net/sports/bangladesh-cricket/women-seal-t20-qualifiers-title-1605637>

<sup>52</sup> *The Daily Star* (2018). "We cannot continue to neglect Bangladesh women's cricket." Accessed: 15 August 2018. Available at: <https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/perspective/we-cannot-continue-neglect-bangladesh-womens-cricket-1593991>

<sup>53</sup> *RMG Bangladesh* (2017). "Apparel exporters gear up to make sportswear." Accessed: 14 August 2018. Available at: <http://rmgbd.net/2017/05/apparel-exporters-gear-up-to-make-sportswear/>

<sup>54</sup> *CPD RMG Study* (2017). "Apparel exporters gear up to make sportswear." Accessed: 14 August 2018. Available at: <http://rmg-study.cpd.org.bd/apparel-exporters-gear-make-sportswear/>

## Benefits from Sports Event

### Economic Growth

Sports events boost economic growth of a country mainly by tourism. Sports market of Bangladesh earns around 40 to 43.5 million U.S. dollar every year.<sup>55</sup> Sports events provide job opportunities for national people. Around 10,000 million Bangladeshi people are directly involved in sports related work. Another, 8800 are involved in sportswear and retail sector.<sup>56</sup>

### Social Growth

Bangladesh Women Cricket teams' recent achievements encourage other girls to take cricket as their profession, which was unthinkable in the past.<sup>57</sup> Many sports person and team also contribute to society through their charitable foundations or join sporting clubs and boards to nurture the future generation. For instance, Mashrafe Bin Mortaza (Cricketer) is Good Will ambassador for youth in Bangladesh.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> *Scribd* (n.d.). "Report on Sport and Leisure Product Market in Bangladesh." Accessed: 14 August 2018. Available at: <https://www.scribd.com/document/293950261/Report-on-Sport-and-Leisure-Product-Market-in-Bangladesh-docx>

<sup>56</sup> *ibid*

<sup>57</sup> *Dhaka Tribune* (2018). "Anatomy of women's cricket in Bangladesh." Accessed: 17 August 2018. Available at: <https://www.dhakatribune.com/sport/cricket/2018/06/21/anatomy-of-women-s-cricket-in-bangladesh>

<sup>58</sup> *The Daily Star* (2016). "Mashrafe made UNDP's goodwill ambassador." Accessed: 17 August 2018. Available at: <https://www.thedailystar.net/backpage/mashrafe-made-undps-goodwill-ambassador-576451>

### Personal Growth

Any sport event is related to physical activities which is good for health and mental growth. Sports models and events also inspire youth to be active and participative in future games.<sup>59</sup> National events like, Youth Games is an initiative to spread sporting spirits in the youths of Bangladesh.<sup>60</sup> Even general people try to buy sports gear and play that game during popular sport event.

### National Unity

Sports provide a platform for people to come together and support their country. International events like the ICC World T20 in 2014 serve as a point around which to rally and demonstrate national pride and unity.<sup>61</sup> Along with national pride comes city pride. There is certain togetherness, a certain camaraderie that total strangers can achieve simply by virtue of living in the same city and rooting

<sup>59</sup> *Bleacher Report* (2015). "12 Ways Sports Make a Positive Impact." Accessed: 14 August 2018. Available at:

<https://bleacherreport.com/articles/2347988-12-ways-sports-make-a-positiveimpact#slide5>

<sup>60</sup> *Dhaka Tribune* (2017). "First ever Bangladesh Youth Games begins Monday."

Accessed: 16 August 2018. Available at: <https://www.dhakatribune.com/sport/athletics/2017/12/17/first-ever-bangladesh-youth-games-begins-monday>

<sup>61</sup> *Wikipedia* (2014). "2014 ICC World Twenty20." Accessed: 18 August 2018.

Available at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2014\\_ICC\\_World\\_Twenty20](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2014_ICC_World_Twenty20)

for the same team; BPL elucidates the perspective.<sup>62</sup> The most beautiful thing about any sports event is that it offers pure and unadulterated joy to all.

### **Sports Equipment and Marketing Industry**

Bangladesh is a sports loving country but the growth of sports equipment and marketing industry is not substantial. A study depicts that within 2021 Bangladesh would become an emerging global sportswear market. In 2016, the sportswear and equipment market of

Bangladesh produced goods worth 266 million U.S. dollars and the estimated value of this sector for 2021 is worth 427 million U.S. dollars.<sup>63</sup> Bangladesh has to import latest sports gear and equipment for attaining high performance. But sports gear like electronic scoring targets in shooting cost millions of Bangladeshi taka (for example, a 50-metre electronic scoring target costs BDT 15,17,733) which is not affordable for any sports federation.<sup>64</sup> This indicates that Bangladesh has to go a long way in sports equipment market.

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<sup>62</sup> *Bangladesh Cricket Board* (n.d.). "BANGLADESH PREMIER LEAGUE." Accessed: 16 August 2018. Available at: <http://www.tigercricket.com.bd/category/domestic/bangladesh-premier-league/>

<sup>63</sup> *Statista* (n.d.). "Production value of sportswear and outdoor apparel in Bangladesh from 2012 to 2021 (in million U.S. dollars)." Accessed: 17 August 2018. Available

at: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/744390/sportswear-and-outdoor-apparel-production-value-bangladesh/>

<sup>64</sup> *The Daily Star* (2018). "Time to take sports seriously." Accessed: 14 August 2018. Available at: <https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/economics/time-take-sports-seriously-1585750>

Besides these, there exists a number of initiatives to promote and provide a platform for improving the sport industry in Bangladesh. For example, Hub Bangladesh is a conference to bring together all the stakeholders of Bangladesh sports industry and give them a platform to network and develop.<sup>65</sup> Institutions like Bangladesh Kriya Shikkha Protishtan (BKSP)<sup>66</sup>, Jessore University of Science and Technology (JUST), and National Sports Council (NSC) registered

national federations or associations<sup>67</sup> offer programmes on Physical Education, Sports Science, Sport Management and long/ short term training for different categories of sports in Bangladesh. Also, the government regularly organizes (often in collaboration with national and international stakeholders) sports talent hunts, exchange programmes, and boot camps to enhance capacities of Bangladeshi sportsmen and sportswomen.

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<sup>65</sup> *Yo Bangladesh* (2017). "Sports Hub Bangladesh 2017 in Dhaka." Accessed: 18 August 2018. Available at:

<https://www.youthop.com/bd/conferences/sports-hub-bangladesh-2017-dhaka>

<sup>66</sup> Previously known as Bangladesh Institute of Sports

<sup>67</sup> The NSC- registered national federations or associations are: Bangladesh Football Federation, Bangladesh Volleyball Federation, Bangladesh Hockey Federation, Bangladesh Weightlifting Federation, Bangladesh Amateur Boxing Federation, Bangladesh Karate Federation, Bangladesh Badminton Federation, Bangladesh Wrestling Federation, Bangladesh Bodybuilding Federation, Bangladesh Squash Racket Federation, Bangladesh Chess Federation, Bangladesh Women Sports Association, Bangladesh Cycling Federation,

Bangladesh Handball Federation, Bangladesh Basketball Federation, Bangladesh Billiard and Snooker Federation, Bangladesh Deaf Sports Association, Bangladesh Roller Skating Federation, Bangladesh Amateur Athletics Federation, Bangladesh Taekwon-Do Federation, Bangladesh Gymnastics Federation, Bangladesh Kho-Kho Federation, Bangladesh Judo Federation, Bangladesh Carom Federation, Bangladesh Tennis Federation, Bangladesh Golf Federation, Bangladesh Table Tennis Federation, Bangladesh Shooting Federation, Association of Sports Medicine, Bangladesh Rowing Federation, Bangladesh Kabadi Federation, Bangladesh Swimming Federation, Bangladesh Archery Federation, and Bangladesh Cricket Board. (Source: Banglapedia)

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# Understanding Electoral Violence through Micronarratives: Feni and Satkhira

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Centre for Genocide Studies (CGS) recently conducted a study on a number of districts in Bangladesh in order to collect 'life stories' or micronarratives related to electoral violence. The following is a

## Part A: Feni District

Feni district is located in the southeastern part of Bangladesh administrative division of Chittagong. As of 2015, the district's estimated population stood at 1,437,371, making it the ninth-most populous district in Chittagong division. Feni was part of greater Noakhali. The administrative hub of the district is in Feni Sadar, in the central part of the district. The original name of the district was Shamshernagar, which served as a sub-district under the district of Noakhali until 15 February 1984. The district consists of six sub-districts: Sonagazi, Fulgazi, Parshuram, Daganbhuiyan, Chhagalnaiya and Feni Sadar.<sup>68</sup>

The district has three parliamentary constituencies. In the 10<sup>th</sup> parliamentary

representation of the life stories. Out of the selected number of districts, micronarratives from Feni and Satkhira are highlighted here.

election in 2014, the Grand Alliance<sup>69</sup>, ruling party in Bangladesh led by Bangladesh Awami League (BAL), got 2 seats and the remaining one is held by an independent MP. In the previous two parliamentary elections: 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) got all the 3 seats.<sup>70</sup>

This district is located in between Dhaka and Chittagong, the later is known as the port city and also the second most important region of the country specifically for business and economy. The district also shares border with India. Therefore, the district has a geo-strategic and economic importance and has always been considered to be a critical zone for influence and dominance by the contesting

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<sup>68</sup> Sultan, Tipu (2012). "Feni District". In Islam, Sirajul; Jamal, Ahmed A. *Banglapedia: National Encyclopedia of Bangladesh* (Second ed.). Asiatic Society of Bangladesh.

<sup>69</sup> 14 Party Alliance is a coalition government in Bangladesh that formed in 2008 and consisted of the Bangladesh Awami League, Jatiya Party, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal- JASAD,

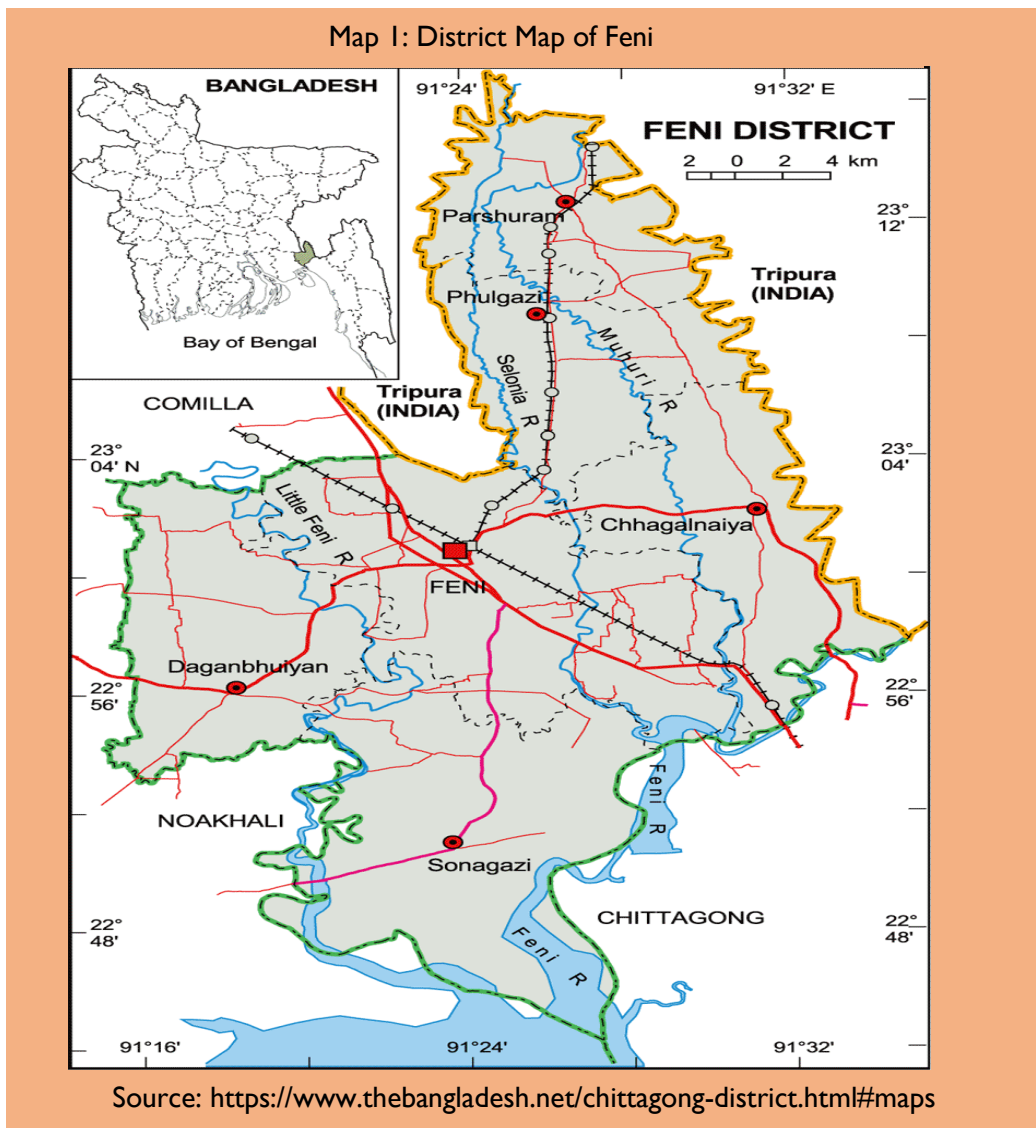
Workers Party, Liberal Democratic Party and nine other parties.

<sup>70</sup> Official Website of Bangladesh Parliament (n. d.). "List of Members of Parliament". Accessed: 31 May 2018. Available at: <http://www.parliament.gov.bd/index.php/en/mps/members-of-parliament>.

political parties. The seats to the national parliament have traditionally been monopolized by a single party. Consequently, change in party positions results in violence which is used as revenge taking mechanisms by the winning parties

against the oppositions and the supporters after each election.

The narratives from Feni reflect the prevalence of violence of varying types and degrees in different elections, both at the national and local levels.



“Conflicts over power exist among the political groups and those lead to incidents and violence such as murder, destruction of properties, deadly attacks on oppositions etc. I am talking about Joyal Hazari’s period. Political conflict, conflict in the political groups, sharing of power, repression etc. were serious during that time... Student politics is more violent and problematic and violent incidents in different forms mostly happen in student politics...Political environment was violent and conflicts were rampant during 80s and 90s. But people used to go to the election centers. Now situation has changed as single party dominated everywhere. Things are controlled in such a way that people are not able to go to the election centers because of fear and unwillingness... On the other hand, opposition parties have nothing to do except waiting for the right time and opportunity.”

**MD. Owaliullah Bhuiyan, Dagonbhuiyan, Feni**

“Feni was violent from the period of Jatiyo Party...There was always severe conflict between Hajari and BNP government. Fighting, killing, murdering were daily matters at the time...Before the 1996 election, there were serious problems and incidents. Conflicts and disturbance are normal in every election. They used arms. There was direct violence. Proxy votes were high at the time. I myself saw this. Political riots and turmoil happened suddenly...In 2014, political parties were not able to come in the field. Police were silent and did nothing.”

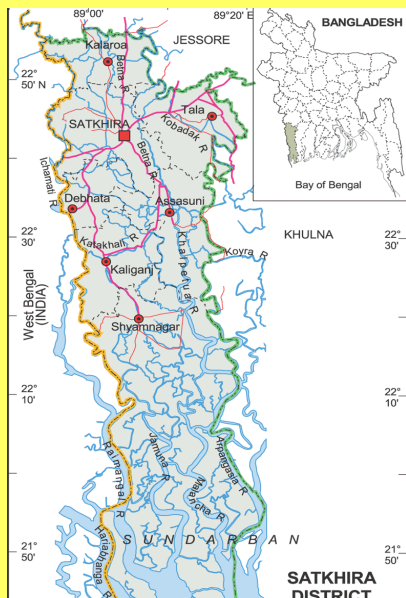
**Anwar Hossain, Feni Sadar, Feni**

“I first gave vote in 1996 and worked as a polling agent in 2001 election. I also worked as a presiding officer in 2013 union level election. Working as a polling agent was quite risky and I faced several assaults and attacks during my duty from ruling party workers. They forcefully entered into the vote centre and took the ballot papers through verbal threat and they casted the votes for their candidate in 2013 union level election. I clearly remembered that a local chairman named Anowar created problems and tried to break into the vote centre during ballot paper counting...I also saw that political workers used to fight with long thick chains and injured the members of opposition brutally in the 2001 pre-election time. These incidents mainly happened in the Number One Sindurpur Union in 2001, which is traditionally known as the area of former Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia...The violence comes in cycles with regime change with the winning party taking revenge upon the opponent.”

**Khuku Rani, Raghunathpur Union, Feni**

## Part B: Satkhira District

Map 2: District Map of Satkhira



Source:

<https://www.thebangladesh.net/sirajganj-district.html#maps>

Satkhira is a district in southwestern Bangladesh and is part of Khulna division. It lies along the border with West Bengal, India. It is on the bank of the Arupangachhia River. Satkhira district has an area of 3817.29 km. It is bordered to the north by Jessore district, on the south by the Bay of Bengal, to the east by Khulna district, and to the west by 24 Pargana district of West Bengal, India. The region is home to many ancient buildings and temples and famous for Sundarbans and shrimp production. The district consists of two municipalities, seven upazilas, 79 union parishads, eight thanas (police station) and 1436 villages.<sup>71</sup>

In the national parliament, the district has four constituencies which are currently held by members from the ruling Grand Alliance, following the 10<sup>th</sup> national election. In the 9<sup>th</sup> national election, BAL got two seats and Jatiya Party (JP) got two seats.

In the 8<sup>th</sup> national election, there were five constituencies and Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami (BJI) got three seats while BNP and JP shared the remaining two seats.<sup>72</sup> Differences of political ideologies among the people are significant in the area and having border with India gives this area a different dynamic in politics. According to the narratives collected, the support base of BJI and BNP is strong in the district. But now the ruling BAL and allies is trying to establish dominance and hence violence is prevalent in pre-election and post-election time.

<sup>71</sup> Amirul Ashraf (2012). "Satkhira District". In Sirajul Islam and Ahmed A. Jamal. *Banglapedia: National Encyclopedia of Bangladesh* (Second ed.). Asiatic Society of Bangladesh.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

“Guns’ blazing, bikes’ honking etc. are very common during the election time in our area. But party faction, fighting, violence etc. are more common in the local elections than in the national elections...I voted the first time in 1991 election. But the 2014 election made me disappointed since the pre-election violence was more intense and rampant and those continued throughout the whole year. We saw fighting, bloodsheds, arson attacks, damaging of properties, violent demonstrations etc. frequently during that time. Sometimes they destroyed the roads and made canals there and also cut trees to block the roads which were the worst things to me. In the pre-election time most of the Awami League supporters were in hiding due to fear of attacks from the BNP-Jamaat activists but in the post-election time, the opposite happened since no BNP-Jamaat supporters could stay at home...Many of the opposition activists died in cross-fires with RAB and Police...The minority communities have to face tough times during the election time. For example, after the 2001 election, many houses of the Hindu families had been attacked and demolished allegedly by the party who lost in the election. But we never got any real investigative reports regarding those incidents...In recent times people are in great fear about their lives since killing got escalated and none care about the safety of the general people.”

**Md. Younus Ali, Kolaroa, Satkhira**

“Since I belong to the Hindu community, the Jamaat-Shibir activists accused me as an Awami League supporter and made derogatory comments to me when they were in power... I voted in the 2001 election where I found serious anarchy in the polling center...After the election, the house of one of my friends named Shanchita had been attacked and looted by the miscreants and finally, they were forced to move to India...From 2001 to 2005 many Hindu families migrated to India and many made matrimonial relationship in India as precautionary measures in the time of crisis...In our area, both drugs and arms entered through the Indian border. Police have taken many measures but couldn’t do much. Jamaat is well organized as a party and they also have weapons to terrorize people and they are popular mostly among the women. But at present they are weak and all the people have become the supporters of Awami League...We are safe now but we are afraid regarding the next election.”

**Shopna Rani, Koikhali, Satkhira**

“In our locality, elections are always violent...Elections are linked with financial interests and hence local elections become more eventful than national elections. Local Chairman and Member are corrupt, they embezzle all the money from the allocations of different social welfare programs such as old age benefits, food for education etc. Many of them possess houses and assets in the neighboring country, India. There were widespread violent incidents during the last national election. The BNP-Jamaat alliance tried hard to stop the election. They destroyed roads, bridges etc. People had no way of moving and going to work. Many of the families passed those days in starvation...Clashes between different political parties, death rows etc. are common incidents in the pre-election time. Vote rigging is frequently seen in both the local and national election here and violence is common. The minority communities are often attacked after the election and this became a trend here.”

**Laila Parvin, Tala, Satkhira**