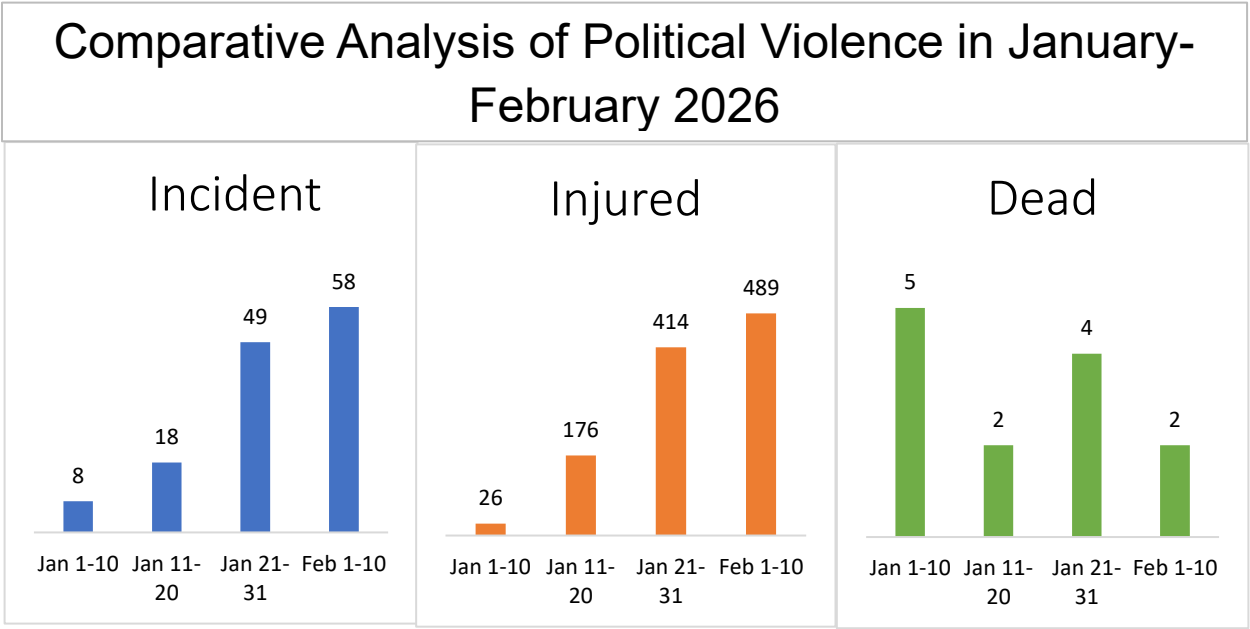
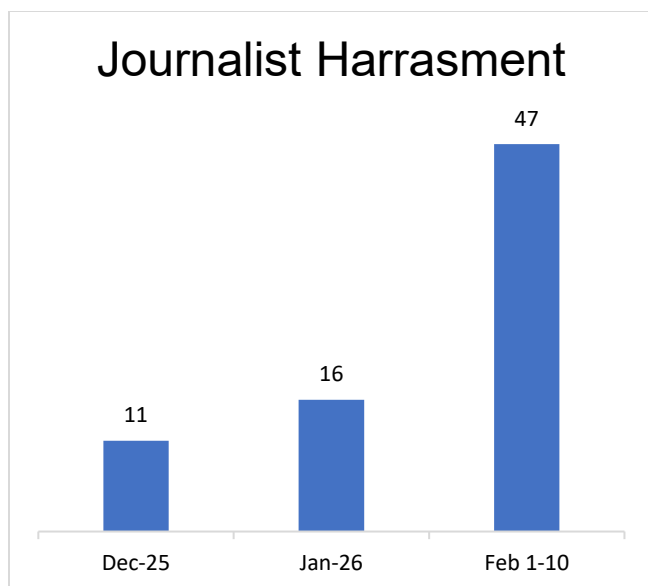


**Upward Trend in Political Violence and Harassment of Journalists ahead of the Election: Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) Expresses Concern**

According to the schedule announced by the Bangladesh Election Commission, the national parliamentary election will be held on 12 February 2026. As the election day draws nearer, the upward trend in political violence and casualties resulting from such violence continues. Based on reports published in the media, an analysis by the Documentation Unit of Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) shows that in the last ten days of January 2026 (21–31 January), 49 clashes occurred, leaving 414 people injured and 4 killed. In the first ten days of February (1–10 February), 58 incidents of violence were reported, in which 489 people were injured and 2 were killed.



In addition, an analysis of data in ten-day intervals for January 2026 shows that a total of 8 incidents of political violence occurred in the first ten days of January. These incidents resulted in 26 people being injured and 5 killed. In the following ten days, from 11 to 20 January, there were 18 incidents of violence, leaving 176 people injured and 2 killed. In the last ten days of January, from 21 to 31 January, a total of 49 incidents of violence occurred, in which 414 people were injured and 4 were killed.



Based on media reports, an analysis by ASK's Documentation Unit further shows that in December 2025, 11 journalists were attacked while carrying out their professional duties. In January 2026, this number rose to 16. In the first ten days of February 2026 alone, a total of 47 journalists were attacked. On 7 February, 21 journalists of the online news portal Bangladesh Times were picked up from their workplace and taken to an army camp. They were released after approximately two hours.

Overall analysis shows that compared to December 2025, a higher number of incidents of political violence occurred in January 2026. A comparative analysis of ten-day interval data for January and February 2026 indicates that incidents of political violence are continuously increasing. The number of casualties in these incidents is also rising. The increasing trend of political violence observed in January 2026 has remained unchanged in February. In other words, as the election approaches, the political arena is becoming increasingly violent. Alongside the rise in political violence, the rate of attacks on journalists is also showing an unchanged upward trend.

ASK expresses grave concern over the continuous increase in political violence and harassment of journalists. ASK calls upon all concerned parties to respect the rule of law. Article 32 of the Constitution of Bangladesh guarantees every citizen the right to life and personal liberty. ASK urges all relevant actors to conduct their activities with respect for the law and human rights. ASK expresses hope that in the upcoming national parliamentary election, the people of Bangladesh will be able to exercise their right to vote freely and safely.