

# TRENDS OF VIOLENCE AND CONTESTATION IN NEPAL

# 5



JAN-MAR 2018  
FIFTH QUARTERLY REPORT

This is the fifth of a series of quarterly reports from the Nepal Peace Monitoring Project (PMP). The PMP uses a methodology similar to Nepalmonitor.org's alert and mapping system, with a focus on gathering data on violence and political contestation. The PMP's goal is to improve our understanding of violence in Nepal to better respond to it and promote peace.



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**142**  
increase in  
governance  
related  
incidents



**14%**  
decrease in  
incidents from  
previous quarter



**95%**  
increase in  
incidents rape or  
attempted rape

## Executive Summary

From January to March 2018, the PMP recorded 789 incidents (536 violent and 253 non-violent), 14 percent less than the previous quarter. There was an overall decrease in violent incidents, however the number of fatalities increased by 7 percent. Two important trends were witnessed this quarter; a spike in gender based violence (GBV), and a rise in governance related issues.

GBV was the main driver of violence in this quarter, with 251 incidents from a total of 536 violent incidents. The incidents doubled from 125 in the last quarter. The trend of pressuring victims to reconcile with the perpetrators continues to be of significant concern. At times, police officers and elected local officials have been found to be involved in suppressing the prosecution of the crimes. There is therefore an urgent need to build the capacity of the newly elected local representatives, as members of municipal judicial committee to handle such cases appropriately.

Following the successful completion of the 2017 elections, there was a drop in political violence. However, the first quarter of 2018 saw a rise in governance related incidents. There were 142 recorded, in addition to disputes over the location for provincial capitals and municipal centers (69), and violence and protests from cadres of the Communist Party of Nepal, led by Netra Bikram Chand (71).

## Violent Incidents and Injuries Decrease While Fatalities and GBV Increase

The first quarter of 2018 saw an overall decrease in violent incidents of 14 percent (from 639 to 536 incidents) and a fall in non-violent incidents of 13 percent (from 290 to 253). The overall decrease in incidents can be attributed to a drop in political violence and protests, following the successful completion of the 2017 elections. However there was a rise in protests regarding governance related issues (142 incidents). The number of injuries occurring in violent incidents (apart from sexual assault) also decreased from 418 to 336 (19 percent).

Despite the overall drop in recorded incidents, cases of gender based violence (GBV) rose sharply. Cases of rape or attempted rape increased by 95 percent (from 86 to 167). The number of violent deaths also increased, from 106 to 114, with GBV (46) and personal disputes (37) being the leading causes as in the past (see Figure 1 and 2).

**NUMBER OF INCIDENTS**

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**IMPACTS**

- Violent Incidents
- Non-violent Incidents
- People Injured
- Victims of Rape or Attempted Rape
- People Killed

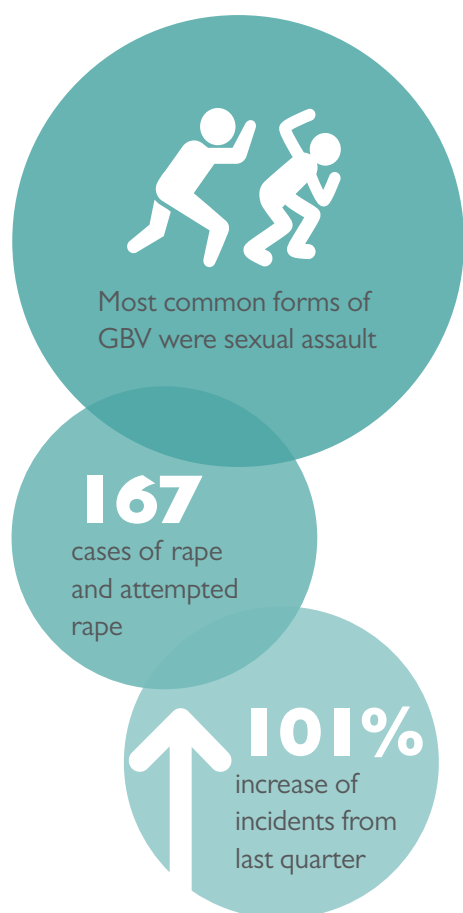
| Quarter        | Month | Violent Incidents | Non-violent Incidents | People Injured | Victims of Rape or Attempted Rape | People Killed |
|----------------|-------|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| QUARTER 1 2017 | Jan   | 135               | 65                    | 65             | 15                                | 20            |
|                | Feb   | 135               | 60                    | 85             | 15                                | 20            |
|                | Mar   | 185               | 130                   | 130            | 20                                | 25            |
| QUARTER 2 2017 | Apr   | 140               | 45                    | 40             | 15                                | 15            |
|                | May   | 165               | 190                   | 210            | 15                                | 20            |
|                | Jun   | 165               | 255                   | 215            | 20                                | 25            |
| QUARTER 3 2017 | Jul   | 90                | 110                   | 15             | 30                                | 20            |
|                | Aug   | 80                | 60                    | 25             | 20                                | 25            |
|                | Sep   | 65                | 80                    | 65             | 10                                | 20            |
| QUARTER 4 2017 | Oct   | 45                | 60                    | 60             | 15                                | 20            |
|                | Nov   | 185               | 235                   | 95             | 15                                | 20            |
|                | Dec   | 100               | 145                   | 45             | 5                                 | 15            |
| QUARTER 1 2018 | Jan   | 115               | 45                    | 10             | 15                                | 10            |
|                | Feb   | 80                | 100                   | 15             | 25                                | 15            |
|                | Mar   | 100               | 150                   | 35             | 30                                | 20            |

**NUMBER OF INCIDENTS**

| Month    | Personal Issues | Governance Related | Unclear | Other Triggers | Political Triggers | Economic Triggers | Crime | Gender Based Violence |
|----------|-----------------|--------------------|---------|----------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------|-----------------------|
| Jan 2017 | 10              | 5                  | 10      | 5              | 10                 | 5                 | 5     | 10                    |
| Feb 2017 | 10              | 5                  | 10      | 5              | 10                 | 5                 | 5     | 10                    |
| Mar 2017 | 15              | 10                 | 15      | 5              | 15                 | 5                 | 5     | 15                    |
| Apr 2017 | 10              | 5                  | 10      | 5              | 10                 | 5                 | 5     | 10                    |
| May 2017 | 20              | 15                 | 20      | 5              | 50                 | 5                 | 5     | 10                    |
| Jun 2017 | 25              | 20                 | 25      | 5              | 60                 | 5                 | 5     | 15                    |
| Jul 2017 | 15              | 10                 | 15      | 5              | 30                 | 5                 | 5     | 20                    |
| Aug 2017 | 10              | 5                  | 10      | 5              | 10                 | 5                 | 5     | 10                    |
| Sep 2017 | 15              | 10                 | 15      | 5              | 10                 | 5                 | 5     | 15                    |
| Oct 2017 | 20              | 15                 | 20      | 5              | 10                 | 5                 | 5     | 15                    |
| Nov 2017 | 30              | 30                 | 30      | 5              | 180                | 5                 | 5     | 20                    |
| Dec 2017 | 20              | 20                 | 20      | 5              | 80                 | 5                 | 5     | 10                    |
| Jan 2018 | 15              | 15                 | 15      | 5              | 40                 | 5                 | 5     | 20                    |
| Feb 2018 | 20              | 20                 | 20      | 5              | 30                 | 5                 | 5     | 25                    |
| Mar 2018 | 25              | 25                 | 25      | 5              | 30                 | 5                 | 5     | 40                    |

**NUMBER OF INCIDENTS**

- Personal Issues
- Governance Related
- Unclear
- Other Triggers
- Political Triggers
- Economic Triggers
- Crime
- Gender Based Violence



## The inaction of police and local officials extends even to crimes committed in broad daylight.

## Police Mishandling Sexual Assault Cases and GBV Continues

GBV was the main driver of violence in the first quarter of 2018. A total of 251 incidents were documented, an increase of 101 percent from last quarter. The most common forms of GBV were sexual assault, (177 incidents including 167 cases of rape and attempted rape), and domestic violence (47 incidents).<sup>1</sup> Five cases related to allegations of witchcraft. GBV constituted 40 percent of fatalities, with 46 deaths, an increase of 64 percent from last quarter. March witnessed particularly high levels of GBV, with 114 incidents, including 79 cases of rape or attempted rape.

Of particular concern, remains the pressure put on victims to reconcile with the perpetrators, often with the collusion of police officers and elected local officials. This quarter, four particularly egregious cases lead to public outcry against the blatant violations of the victim's rights.<sup>2</sup>

In one incident, police officers refused to register a complaint of a 22 year old woman who was gang raped in a hotel on January 25 in Durbar Marg, Kathmandu, pressuring her to reconcile with perpetrators.<sup>3</sup> Following the failure of police to register the victim's complaint, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) formed a panel on January 31, to investigate the crime.<sup>4</sup> In a similar incident, only a few days later, a 14 year old girl was gang raped in Itahari, Sunsari district on December 31, 2017 and was forced to reconcile with the perpetrators at a local police station.<sup>5</sup> On February 6, 2018, the Ministry of Home Affairs, after an internal investigation, suspended the Superintendent of Police and Inspector for mishandling the case.<sup>6</sup>

The inaction of police and local official extends even to crimes committed in broad daylight. On March 8, an 18 year old woman was dragged, beaten and tortured for six hours in front of a crowd of onlookers in Devkaliya village of Ghodaghodi Municipality-5, Kailai. She had been accused of being a witch by a local shaman.<sup>7</sup> The police refused to register the case and suggested to the victim's family to settle the case in the village (see Box: An 18 Year Old Woman). And on January 20, three people from a higher caste vandalized the area where a Dalit man was performing the death rites of his father.<sup>8</sup> Again due to political pressures, the victim was persuaded to reconcile with the perpetrators. These incidents show the urgent need to build the capacity of newly elected local representatives and members of the proposed judicial committees at municipal levels, in order to handle such cases appropriately in future.

<sup>1</sup> Of the 168 victims of rape or attempted rape, 138 were below the age of 26.

<sup>2</sup> For another case, see: [11 Year Old Girl Raped, Suspect Absconding](#).

<sup>3</sup> See: [Police HQ Probes Officers for Refusing Rape Victim's Complaint](#)

<sup>4</sup> See: [NHRC Panel to Probe Durbar Marg Gang Rape Case](#)

<sup>5</sup> See: [Itahari Gang Rape: Preparation afoot to Suspend SP, Inspector](#)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> See: [Girl Beaten on Allegation of Being Witch](#)

<sup>8</sup> See: [Case Filed Against Untouchability](#)

## An 18 Year Old Woman Accused of Witchcraft Beaten and Tortured in Public

On March 8, while the nation celebrated the 108<sup>th</sup> International Women's Day, an 18 year old woman was accused of witchcraft, then dragged, beaten and tortured for six hours in public in Devkaliya village of Ghodaghodi Municipality- 5, Kailali.<sup>9</sup> Instead of intervening, a crowd of onlookers watched the woman being tortured and took videos of the incident on their mobile phones. The police suggested to the victim's family to settle the case within the village and refused to register a case against the perpetrators. Only after pressure from human rights organizations and the NHRC was a complaint registered at the District Police Office.<sup>10</sup> On March 15, six persons involved in the assault, including the self-proclaimed shaman, were arrested and their names made public by the police in Kailali.<sup>11</sup>

On March 12, the mayor of Ghodaghodi municipality, who is believed to have been involved in pressuring the family to reconcile with the perpetrators, was attacked by an unidentified group at his house at Sukhkhad Bazar, Kailali. He was attacked with a khukuri and sustained severe injuries on his head and bullet injuries on his legs and waist.<sup>12</sup> On the same day, three cadres of the Communist Party of Nepal- Chand (hereafter: CPN) were arrested for their involvement in the attack (see also Section: CPN Continues).<sup>13</sup>



## Following the Completion of Elections, Governance Related Protests Rise

While there was a drop in political violence following the completion of the elections in 2017, governance related incidents increased to 142 incidents. The majority of the incidents were non-violent protests, including demands to improve local conditions (air pollution, pest control), student protests over education quality and fees, demands of salary increases, local protests over legal action on specific crimes, and conflict among newly elected local representatives.

69 cases relating to the restructuring of provincial and local bodies were also recorded.<sup>14</sup> Mostly these incidents were protesting the choice of provincial capitals. In Dhankuta for example, locals enforced a general strike to demand Dhankuta be declared the capital of Province 1.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, both Nepalgunj and Dang locals demanded that the capital of province 5 be located in their districts.<sup>16</sup>

In one incident, 28 people were injured at Silgadhi on January 20, during a protest which demanded that Dipayal in Doti district be named the capital of Province 7.<sup>17</sup> And on February 15, 30 people were injured in a protest in Rautahat district against the decision to shift the office of Brindaban Municipality from Bishrampur to Chamanpur (see Map: Federal and Local Restructuring).<sup>18</sup>

9 See: [Girl Beaten on Allegation of Being Witch](#)

10 See: [Govt Team in Kailali to Inquire About Witchcraft Torture Case After a Week](#)

11 See: [6 Made Public in Kailali Witchcraft Torture Case](#)

12 See: [Unidentified Group Attacks Ghodaghodi Mayor Mamata Chaudhary](#)

13 See: [3 Chand-Led Maoist Cadres Held for Attacking Mayor Chaudhary](#)

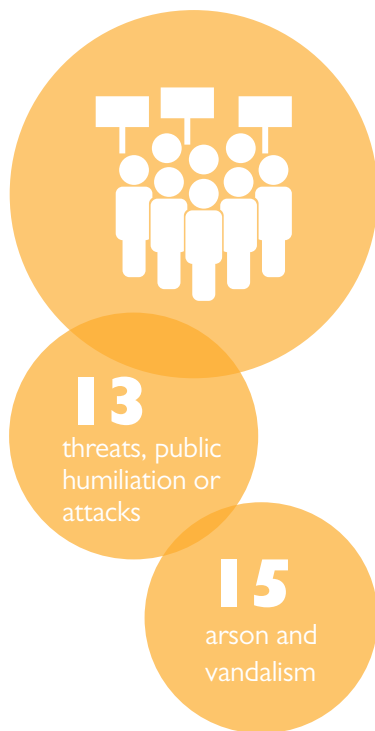
14 Protests related to the location of provincial capital or shift of municipality offices or district headquarters were witnessed in 22 districts, including 14 incidents in Dhankuta, 13 in Parsa, 12 in Doti, 3 each in Rukum, Dang, Dolpa, and Dhanusha, 2 each in Bara, Gorkha, Jumla, and Kathmandu, 1 each in Banke, Bhaktapur, Dadeldhura, Kavre, Ilam, Makwanpur, Pyuthan, Rautahat, Rupandehi, Saptari, and Sunsari

15 See: [Locals Enforce Banda in Dhankuta Demanding Provincial Capital](#)

16 See: [Local Protest in Nepalgunj Demanding Provincial Capital and Provincial Capital Protest: Indefinite Strikes at Dang](#)

17 See: [24 Protesters and Four Police Personnel Injured in Clash at Silgadhi](#)

18 See: [More than 30 injured in Clash](#)



## CPN Continues to be Involved in Violence and Intimidation

Even after their failed attempt to disrupt the elections in 2017 with the widespread use of IEDs, cadres of the CPN, continue to be involved in incidents of violence and protests across the country. The PMP recorded 71 such incidents in the first quarter of 2018.<sup>19</sup> These include threats, public humiliation or attacks on elected representatives and local officials (13), arson and vandalism, mostly on the eve of the People's War anniversary, (15), and several incidents recorded during bandhs and educational strikes called by the CPN to protest the arrest of their cadres.

In three incidents in Dolpa, Kalikot, and Chitwan, cadres of CPN publically humiliated local officials accused of misappropriating funds, by smearing black soot on them.<sup>20</sup> On February 6, cadres of the CPN vandalized the house of the suspended Director General of Inland Revenue Department (IRD) in Budhanilkantha, who was accused of embezzling 10.2 billion rupees.<sup>21</sup> The chief of Koshi rural municipality was also attacked by CPN cadres, who were later arrested on March 7. The chief was attacked for refusing to pay a demanded amount of money to the CPN.<sup>22</sup> In at least nine districts, the CPN issued letters to local elected representatives threatening them to resign or face the consequences.<sup>23</sup> The letters were often issued in the name of the CPN's purported own 'parallel local government'.

On March 12, the mayor of Ghodaghodi municipality, Kailali was severely injured when attacked by an unidentified group at Sukhkhad Bazar. In connection with the attack, three cadres of the CPN were subsequently arrested.<sup>24</sup> The mayor was seemingly attacked for financial misconduct and shielding perpetrators from prosecution (see Box: An 18 Year Old Woman).<sup>25</sup> Observers note the mayors refusal to pay a 'forced donation' to the CPN might have played a role in the attack too. On March 17, the CPN declared a bandh in Kailali district to press for the release of the arrested cadres.<sup>26</sup>

A total of 14 incidents of arson, especially targeting Ncell towers, and 18 incidents involving the use of IEDs were perpetrated by CPN cadres across Nepal<sup>27</sup> around the anniversary of the 'People's War'.<sup>28</sup>

On February 18, police arrested 32 cadres of the CPN who were in Morang to attend a public program of the party's youth wing.<sup>29</sup> Police also seized 10 cars and took 293 cadres into custody. Demanding their release, the CPN declared a nationwide bandh on February 20, during which 12 bus passengers were injured by a petrol bomb,<sup>30</sup> and CPN cadres were arrested for enforcing the bandh in several districts.<sup>31</sup>

The pattern of incidents shown above indicates that even after the CPN declared an end to its campaign to disrupt the elections with the widespread use of IEDs in 2017, they continue to engage in disruptive and violent activities.<sup>32</sup>

19 For the List of Reports Related to the Activities of CPN led by Netra Bikram Chand see: <https://www.nepalmonitor.org/reports/>

20 See: [National Park Officer Smeared with Black Soot; District Health Chief Misbehaved by CPN Cadres and Teacher Misbehaved](#)

21 See: [Chand Led Maoist Cadres Vandalize Suspended IRD Chief Sharma's House](#)

22 See: [Four Cadres Held for Attacking Elected official](#)

23 Letters were sent to local authorities in following districts: Salyan, Parsa, Surkhet, Kalikot, Makwanpur, Sindhuli, Sarlahi, Sankhuwasabha and Okhaldhunga

24 See: [3 Chand-Led Maoist Cadres Held for Attacking Mayor Chaudhary](#)

25 Ibid

26 See: [Kailali Declared 'Bandh' Today by Biplav Led Communist Party](#)

27 See: [Assailants Attack Ncell Towers](#)

28 The CPN led by Netra Bikram Chand continues to 'celebrate' the People's War Day to mark the beginning of the armed revolution started by the erstwhile CPN-Maoist on February 13, 1996.

29 See: [32 Cadres of CPN Arrested](#)

30 See: [Chand-Led CPN Cadres Hurl Bomb at Moving Bus, Dozens Injured](#)

31 See: [2 Biplav Cadres Arrested](#) and [2 Chand Cadres Arrested from Salyan While Enforcing Bandh](#)

32 See: [Biplav Maoists Claim Responsibility for all Pre Poll Blasts](#)

# The Nepal Peace Monitoring Project

The Nepal Peace Monitoring Project (PMP) is a joint initiative by Collective Campaign for Peace (COCAP)|NepalMonitor.org and The Asia Foundation, with the support of Canada's International Development Research Center (IDRC). Building on the NepalMonitor.org platform, the PMP focuses on violence and contestation, with a view toward improving our understanding of, and response to, violence and conflict in Nepal. The PMP also provides an instrument to measure progress against Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Targets 16.1 (reduction of all forms of violence and related death rates) and 5.2 (elimination of violence against women) in Nepal.

The PMP monitors:

**Violence:** any incident involving the intentional use of physical force against another person or group that results or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, or other forms of physical harm to persons or damage to property.

**Non-violent contestation:** demonstrations, protests or other types of non-violent events that involve collective action and may be of potential significance for violence dynamics in Nepal. This includes strikes (bandha), hunger strikes, padlocking and other forms of political protest. Incidents involving intimidation and threats but no direct physical violence are also tracked.

The PMP uses a broad range of information sources, including national and district-level newspapers (from 25 districts), and reporting from police, human rights organizations, international agencies, civil society organizations, and citizens directly. For each incident, the PMP collects detailed information on the following variables: time and location of the incident, form of the incident, weapons used, reported cause/motive of the incident (political competition, land dispute, communal tensions, crime etc.), affiliations of perpetrators and victims, human impacts (broken down by gender and age) and damage to property.

For more information on methodology, please refer to the coding handbook [here](#).

For a guide to how to download the database click [here](#).

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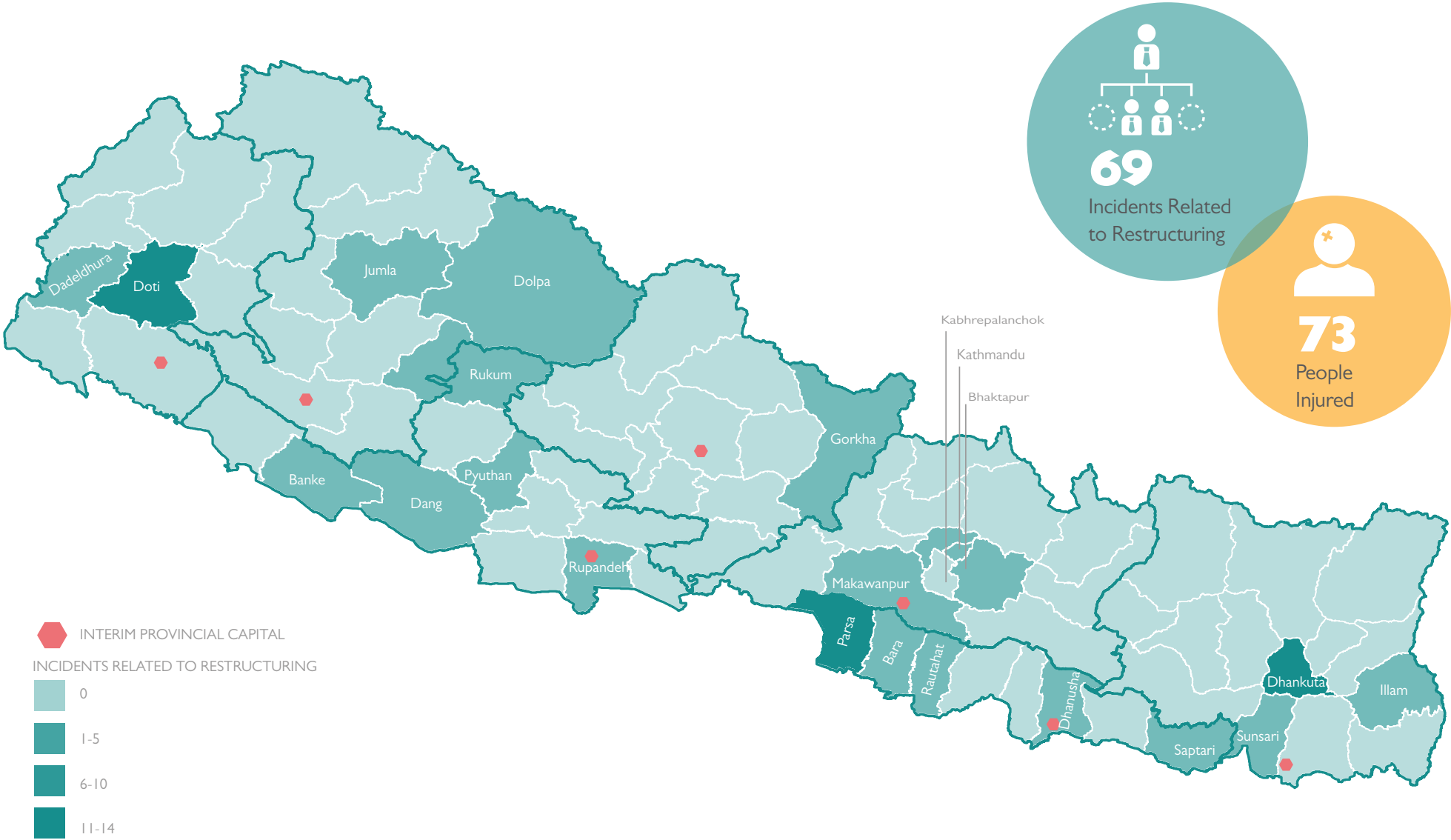
Collective Campaign for Peace (COCAP) is a national network of peace and human rights nongovernmental organizations in Nepal, registered since 2002 with the Government of Nepal as a nonprofit.

NepalMonitor.org is a COCAP protection and conflict prevention initiative, supported by pbi.

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# Incidents Related to Federal and Local Restructuring, Jan-Mar 2018



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# Incidents of Gender Based Violence, Jan-Mar 2018



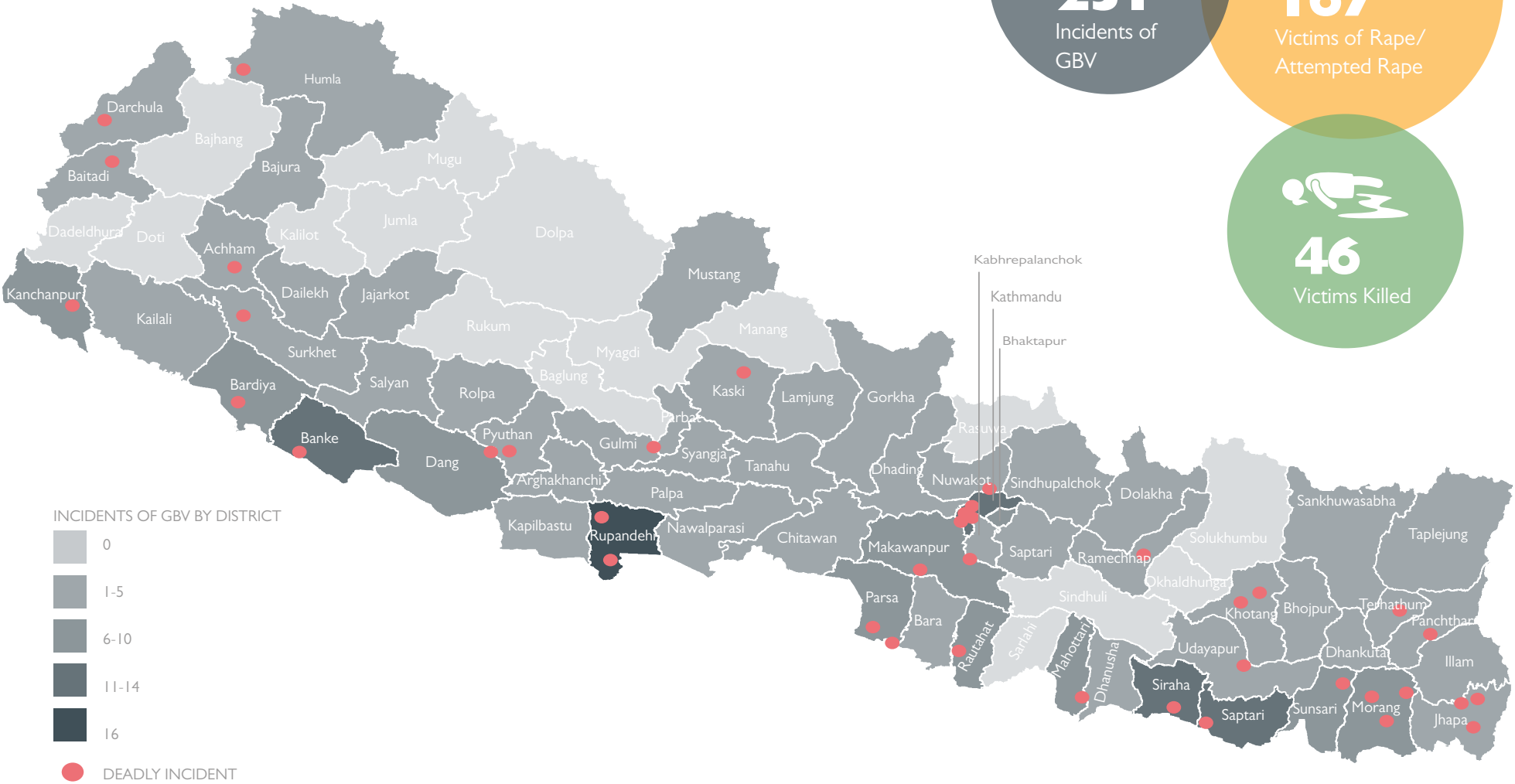
**251**  
Incidents of GBV




**167**  
Victims of Rape/  
Attempted Rape



**46**  
Victims Killed



Based on number of cases documented by NepalMonitor.org from sources in the public record. Actual figures likely to be higher.

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