

TRENDS OF VIOLENCE AND CONTESTATION IN NEPAL



APR-JUN 2018
SIXTH QUARTERLY REPORT

This is the sixth in a series of quarterly reports from the Nepal Peace Monitoring Project (PMP), covering the period from April to June 2018. 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.



GBV and personal disputes continue to be the main drivers of violent deaths.



90%

of contestation and protest linked to governance, politics and the economy



49

violent deaths attributed to GBV this quarter

Executive Summary

For the second quarter of 2018, the PMP recorded 776 incidents (561 of them violent and 215 non-violent incidents of protests, public contestation, or threats). A total of 112 people were killed in violence and 182 cases of rape/attempted rape recorded. This marks a slight decrease from the 789 incidents and 114 deaths in the previous quarter but an increase in rape/attempted rape by 9 percent.

As in the past, gender based violence (GBV) and personal disputes continued to be the main drivers of violent deaths, killing 49 and 33 people respectively. The most common forms of GBV were sexual assault with 194 and domestic violence with 41 incidents. Nine incidents related to abuse following dowry demands, in which five women were killed. In eight incidents women were attacked following accusations of witchcraft. Similarly, 17 cases of violence or discrimination against Dalits were recorded, injuring eight people.

The majority of non-violent contestation and public protests (90 percent) related to issues of governance, politics and the economy this quarter. The involvement of cadres of Communist Party of Nepal (CPN [Chand]) is suspected in violent activities and public protests, although the number of incidents recorded with their involvement fell by 29 percent in this quarter. As protests regarding the location of provincial capitals subsided, the second quarter saw a significant drop in incidents related to federal and local level restructuring (from 69 in Quarter One to 4 incidents in Quarter Two).

Four bandhs were recorded in Quarter Two. On May 5, CPN (Chand) declared a bandh in response to the arrest of several of its leaders and on May 13 declared another bandh, this time protesting the Indian Prime Minister's visit. On June 20 and 25, CPN (Chand) called for a bandh in Rasuwa and enforced an indefinite educational strike in Chitwan demanding the release of their cadres.

GBV Remains One of the Leading Causes of Violent Deaths

The PMP recorded 776 incidents (561 of them violent and 215 non-violent incidents of protests, public contestation, or threats) in Quarter Two. Violent incidents saw a slight increase by four percent (from 536 to 561) compared to the previous quarter while non-violent incidents decreased by 15 percent (from 253 to 215). The number of injuries due to violence, other than sexual assault, decreased by 20 percent (from 336 to 267) but the level of violent deaths only slightly decreased (from 114 to 112). GBV and disputes of personal nature remain the leading causes of violent deaths, killing 49 and 33 people in Quarter Two respectively (see Fig. 1).

Figure 1: Triggers of Violence Resulting in Fatalities

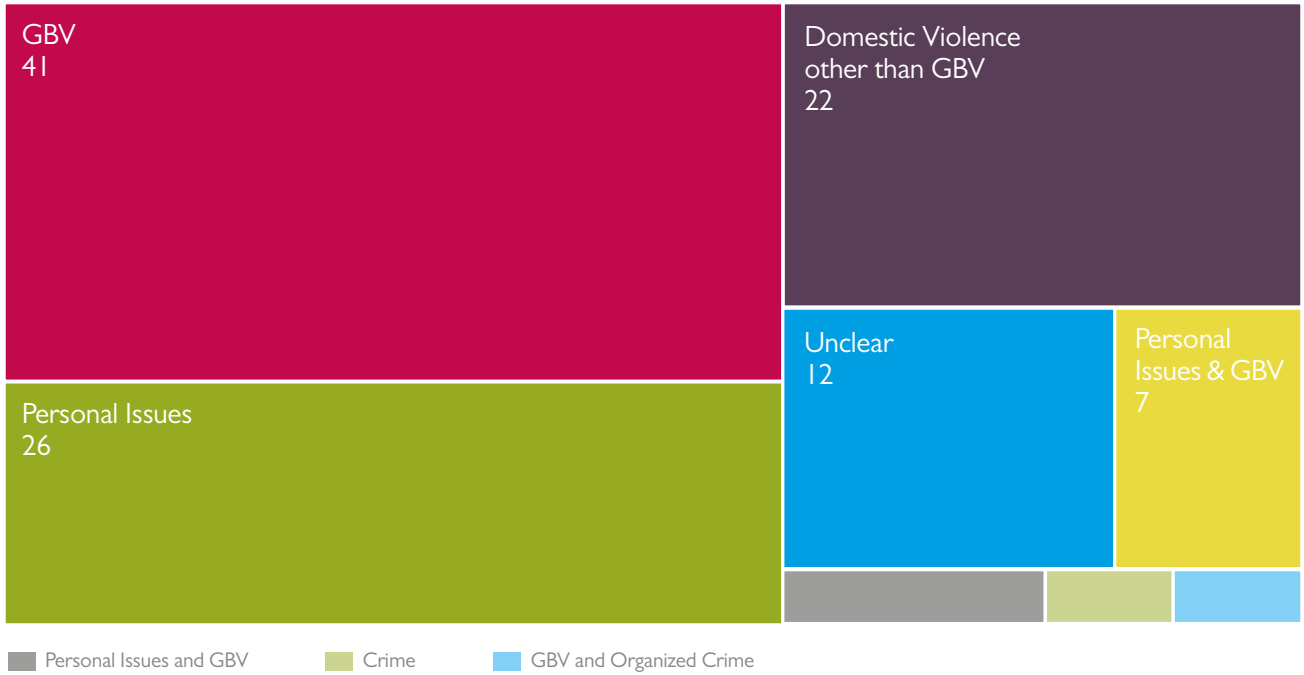
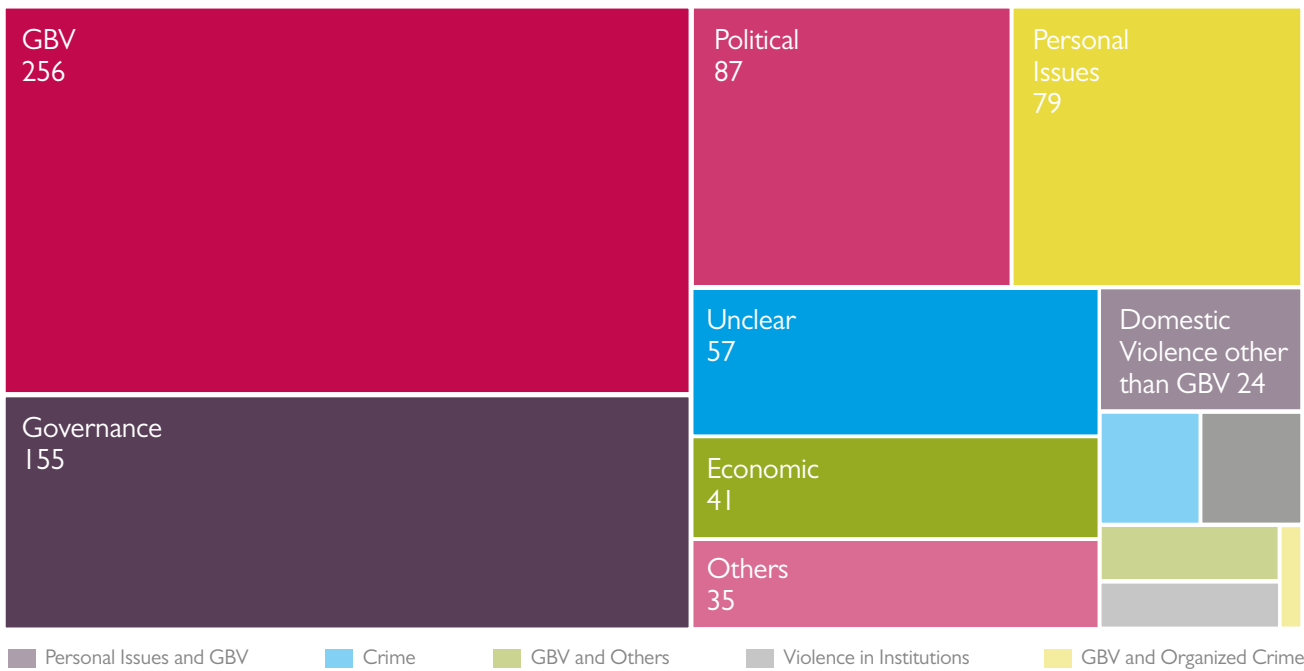


Figure 2: Triggers of Incidents



In comparison to the previous quarter, governance-related incidents increased by nine percent (from 142 to 155). Incidents mainly involved protests against the price hike of petroleum products, over the quality of education and fees, or demanding legal action on specific crimes. There was a sharp decline in reported incidents related to restructuring of provincial and local bodies, with a drop from 69 to 4 incidents in this category. Similarly, incidents related to political issues dropped by 40 percent (from 114 to 87), while the level of incidents related to economic issues remained roughly the same (with a minor drop from 43 to 41) (see Fig. 3 and 4).

Figure 3: Incidents and Their Impacts

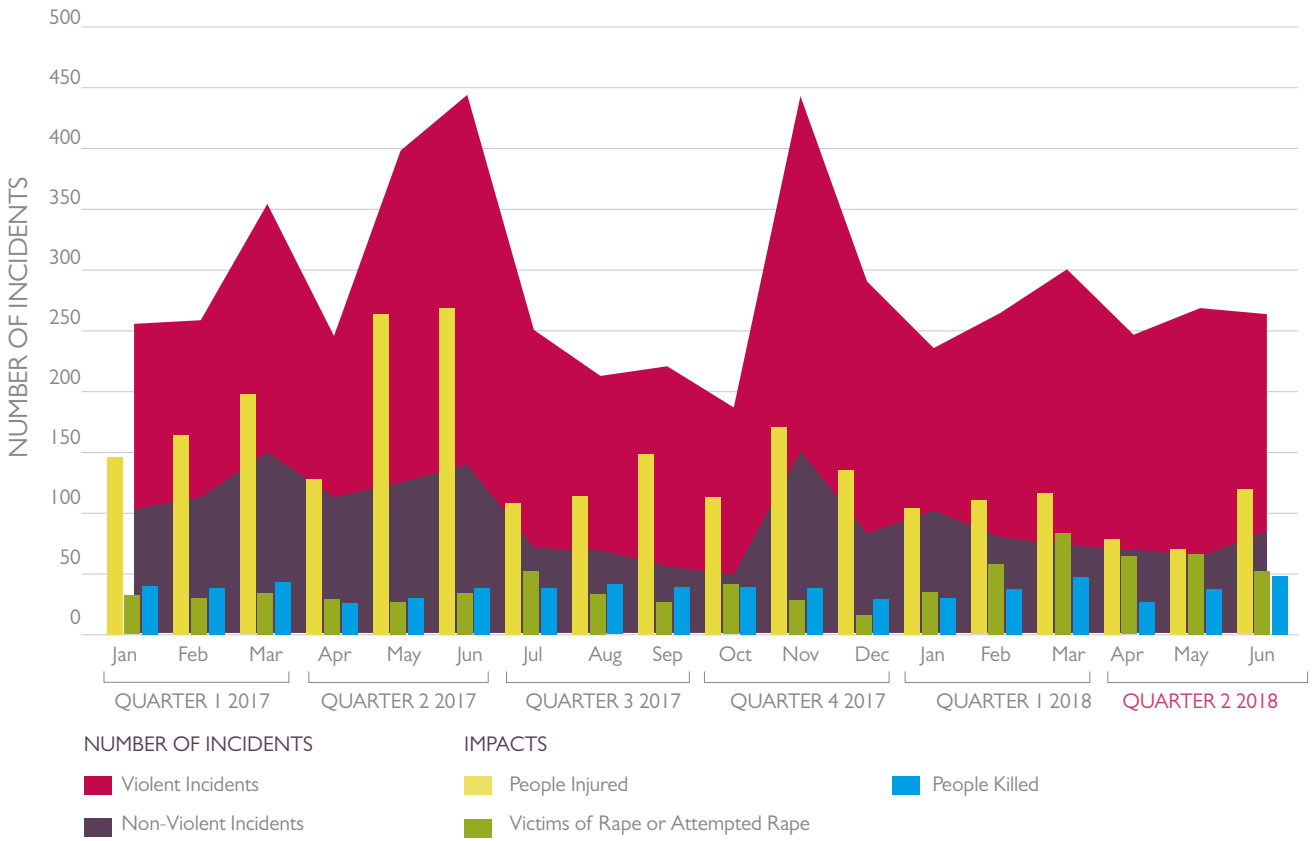
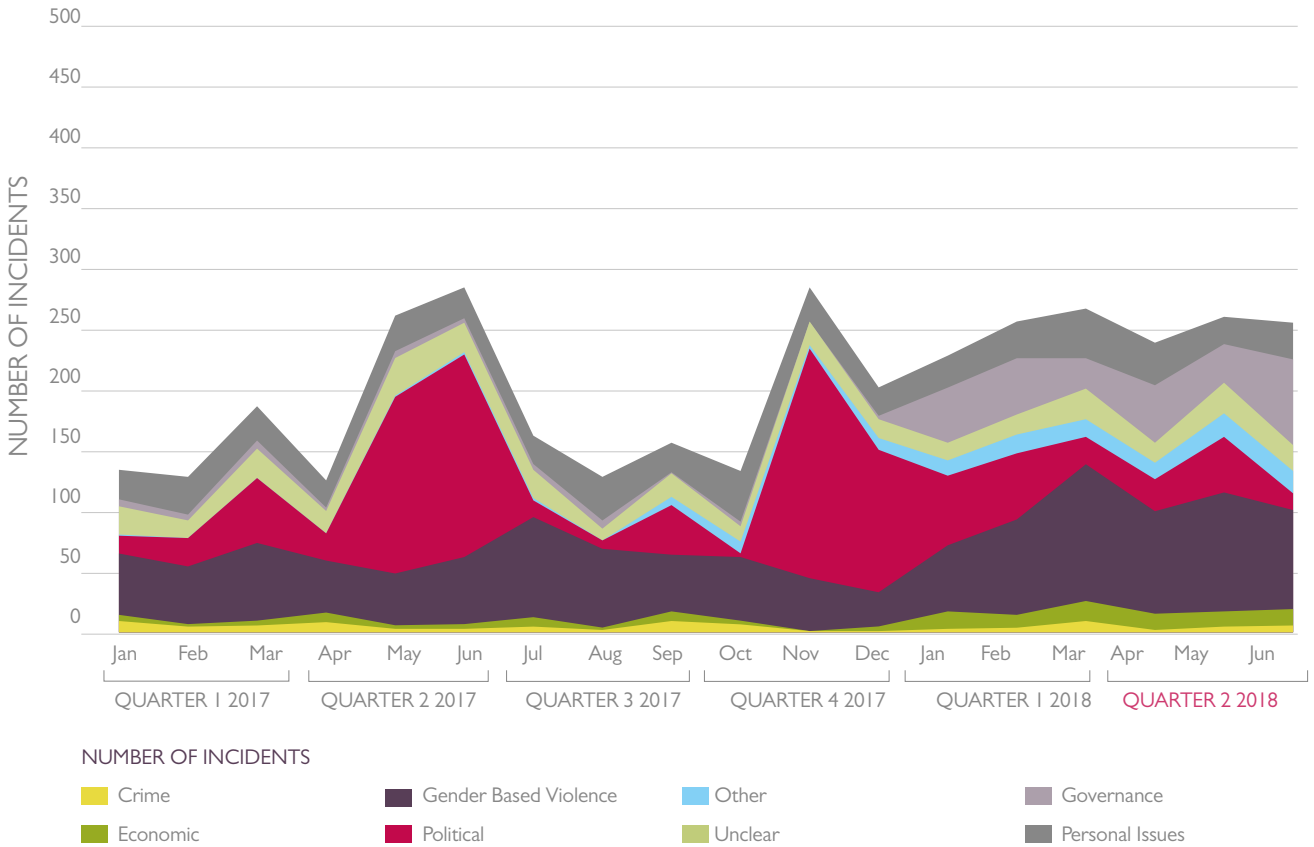
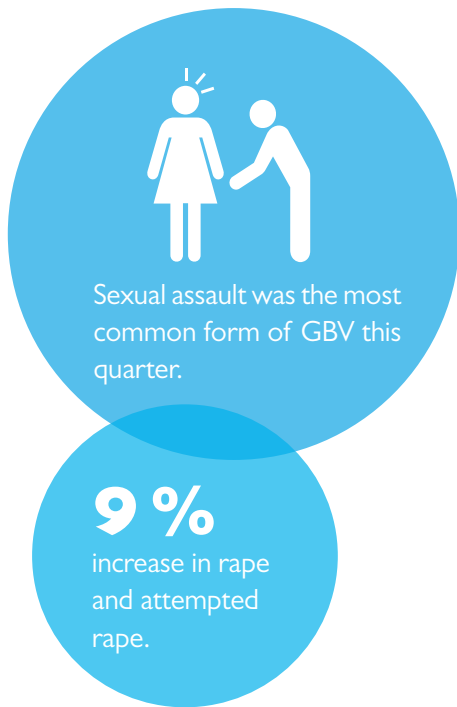


Figure 4: Triggers of Violent Incidents





Violence Against Women and Girls Compounded by Intimidation of Survivors

As in the past, GBV continues to be the main driver of violence recorded this quarter, with 279 incidents and 49 deaths attributed to GBV.¹ Sexual Assault was the most common form with 194 incidents including 182 cases of rape or attempted rape.² Young women and girls are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence and 145 of the victims recorded were below the age of 26. In seven cases of rape or attempted rape, the victims were women with disabilities. In 21 cases, the perpetrator was a family member. Children as young as 8 months old fell victim to this heinous crime.³ Two foreign nationals, including a high profile Canadian humanitarian worker, were arrested in Kathmandu on pedophilia charges.⁴ Similarly, two incidents of sexual assault against male children were recorded in Parsa and Rupandehi district.⁵

Of continuing concern are cases where victims of sexual assault face pressure not to report the crime. On April 11, the mother of a domestic helper in Sarlahi reported that her daughter was not only raped by the house owner but was threatened to revoke the complaint by his family, who claimed that the victim and her mother owed them money.⁶ In another incident in Damak, Jhapa police officers refused to support a woman attempting to report a rape and instead threatened her.⁷

Domestic violence (excluding dowry-related abuse) was the second most common form of GBV on record.⁸ This resulted in 41 incidents, 24 deaths, and 18 injuries this quarter. In addition, nine incidents of domestic violence related to disputes over dowry, with five women killed (see Box:1). Eight cases of GBV, injuring five women, followed accusations of witchcraft.

Box 1: Dowry System Taking the Lives of Young Nepali Women

Dowry system is a practice of giving gifts, money or property to the groom as well as his family from the bride's side. Even though the Social Customs and Practices Act of Nepal prohibits asking, taking or giving of dowry and it is a criminal offence to demand dowry.⁹ In some Nepali communities, dowry has become a social challenge, with some women mentally and physically abused for bringing less dowry than expected or no dowry at all upon marriage. In this quarter, the shameful practice of dowry took the lives of five women out of the nine incidents recorded. Four of the women who lost their lives were under 26 years. The incidents of dowry related abuse were recorded from Rautahat, Dhanusha, Parsa and Rupandehi districts in the Terai region.

In Parsa district, a 20 year old woman was killed by her in-laws on May 2, after her family refused to fulfil a dowry demand from the groom's family, for a bike.¹⁰ In a similar case, a 23 year old woman was found hanging at her in-laws home in Narakatiya of Brindaban Municipality -5 in Rautahat district on May 4.¹¹ Through investigation, it was found that the woman was mentally and physically abused by her in laws and her parents claimed that she was ultimately murdered for bringing inadequate dowry.

1 For the List of Reports Related to GBV see: <https://nepalmonitor.org/reports/>

2 According to the police data, last year 1480 cases of rape were recorded with four cases of rape reported everyday. Many of the cases of sexual violence go unreported as families are ashamed to speak up as well as victims are stigmatized by the society. See: [1,480 Rape Cases Last Year, Every Day](#)

3 On April 9, a father raped his eight month old daughter in Nawalparasi district. Similarly, on May 31, a three year old girl was raped by a 14 year old boy in Aathbiskot (municipality- 12) in Rukum district. See: [Father Held For Raping His 8 Month Old Toddler and 3 year Old Minor Raped In Aathbiskot Municipality- 3](#)

4 See: [Dutchman Arrested for Paedophilia](#)

5 See: [Arrested on Charge of Rape and Indian Citizen Arrested on Charge of Sexually Abusing the Boy Child](#)

6 See: [Rape Victim Threatened to Take The Complaint Back](#)

7 See: [Police Refuses to File Rape Case](#)

8 The majority of incidents of domestic violence go unreported unless it enters a severe form such as death.

9 See: [Dowry System A Curse](#)

10 See: [Woman Murdered Over Dowry](#)

11 See: [Police Detain Husband and Father-in-Law in Dowry Death](#)

Despite Legislation Untouchability Still Prevalent in Society

Dalits continue to be discriminated against despite existing laws outlawing the practice. Seventeen incidents were recorded in this quarter, eight of them involving physical violence against members of the Dalit community.¹² Eight people including children were injured in such attacks. Incidents include assaults on Dalits for touching a water tap or following physical contact with members of so-called 'upper caste'. On May 14, a Dalit was beaten by a family member of the former Chairperson of Godavari Village Development Committee (VDC) for touching their well. Instead of taking strict action, the victim was asked to reconcile by the municipal office.¹³ Similarly, on May 16, a 12 year old boy was severely beaten by a resident of Ishwarpur Municipality 12, Sukepur in Sarlahi district for touching tap water.¹⁴ On May 30, a Dalit family was assaulted on charge of touching a so-called 'upper caste'.¹⁵

Even Dalit members of the newly elected local units are not immune to such attacks. For instance, on June 5, a Dalit ward member of Naraharinath Rural Municipality- 9 in Kalikot district was brutally beaten and killed in her house by three women who accused her of having an affair with their father.¹⁶ Following the incident, on June 6, Dalit activists in Kalikot protested and demanded action against the accused.¹⁷



Of 155
governance
related incidents,
31 were violent.

Significant Decrease in Incidents Related to Federal and Local Restructuring But Rise in Governance-Related Protest

Issues related to governance, politics and the economy were the main triggers of protests this quarter with 155, 87, and 41 incidents recorded respectively (195 of them were recorded as non-violent protests, making up 90 percent of all non-violent contestation this quarter). Of the 155 governance related incidents recorded 31 incidents were violent, injuring 69 people. Governance-related incidents included protests against the price hike for petroleum products, protests against the government's decision to end syndicate in transportation system, protests against the government's ban on protesting in prohibited zones, and localized protests triggered by inefficiencies of public services, such as health and education or the justice system.

Protests against the government's decision on April 17 to end the syndicate system involved blocking highways and demonstrations in front of transportation management offices.¹⁸ On May 4, transportation entrepreneurs from various parts of the country, including Makwanpur and Banke districts, were arrested.¹⁹ In a meeting held on May 6, the transport entrepreneurs conveyed their commitment to support the government's effort to end transport syndicates.²⁰

12 For the List of Reports Related to Discrimination Against Dalits, see <https://nepalmonitor.org/reports/>

13 See: [Dalit Bashed for Touching Well Water, Municipal Office Offered Reconciliation](#).

14 See: [A Dalit Kid Beaten for Touching the Tap](#).

15 See: [Dalit Family Attacked Over the Issues of Untouchability](#)

16 See: [Dalit Ward Member Killed, Three Women Held](#)

17 See: [Protest Against "Murder" of Dalit Ward Member](#)

18 See: [Govt Decides Not to Register, Renew Transport Committees to End Syndicate](#)

19 See: [3 Arrested for Halting Transportation Service](#) and [6 Transportation Entrepreneurs Arrested in Banke](#)

20 See: [Govt, Transport Entrepreneurs Agree to End Syndicate](#)



CPN (Chand) declared a number of bandhs in response to the arrest of several of its cadres.

On May 2, five student unions of different political parties padlocked the headquarters of two membership organizations for private schools for an indefinite period of time demanding withdrawal of increase in tuition fees up to 30 percent.²¹

From June 2, the Nepal Oil Corporation increased the prices of aviation fuel, petrol, diesel and kerosene.²² Following the price hike, the Nepal Student Union (NSU), staged various protests across Nepal. Eleven people were injured in a clash between police and NSU members at a June 12 rally in Kaski district against the price hike of petroleum products.²³

On April 15, the District Administration Office (DAO) of Kathmandu banned demonstrations at Maitighar Mandala, a key spot close to the parliament and government ministries often used as an assembly point for protest rallies.²⁴ Demanding that the government lift the ban, Dr. Govinda K.C staged a silent protest on June 23.²⁵ On the same day, the cadres of Bibeksheel Sajha Party were arrested for protesting at Maitighar Mandala.²⁶ Despite the protests, on June 28, the Ministry of Home Affairs declared a ban on demonstrations and protests at most public places except at designated “public programmes and protest zones” with the order coming into effect from July 17.²⁷ The Supreme Court issued a stay order on July 16 against the government’s decision to ban demonstrations at Maitighar Mandala and other key places in Kathmandu, after a writ petition was filed on July 5, arguing that civil rights and freedom of expression are at the core of democracy and citizens have every right to express themselves.²⁸

Protests by various opposition parties were also recorded during the May visit of the Indian Prime Minister to Nepal with one banner reading “you’re welcome Modi ji but we have not forgotten the blockade”.²⁹ In another instance, protests opposed a remark made by an Indian Lawmaker from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on twitter, stating that Janakpur should be brought back to India. The remark had been made in the lead up to Modi’s visit to Nepal.³⁰

Similarly, the CPN (Chand) had also declared a bandh on May 13 against the government’s alleged ‘surrenderism to India’ with at least three incidents of arson and nine involving the use of improvised explosive devices (IED) recorded that day.³¹ This included a bomb placed at the Bhatbhateni supermarket in Bharatpur, Chitwan destroying the front part of the store.³² As response to these incidents, police arrested 30 cadres of CPN (Chand) from Kathmandu, for protesting against Indian Prime Minister’s visit. Previously, on May 5, CPN (Chand) declared a nationwide bandh after several key members of its leadership were arrested. On June 20 and 25, CPN (Chand) called for a bandh in Rasuwa³³ and enforced an indefinite educational strike in Chitwan³⁴ demanding the release of their cadres.

Their cadres were also involved in threatening mayors and local leaders and demanding extortion money or their resignation, as reported in the districts of Sankhuwasabha, Sarlahi, Sindhuli, Bajhang, and Salyan.³⁵

21 See: [Student Unions Padlock PABSON, NPABSON Offices](#)

22 See: [NOC Hikes Fuel Prices, Petrol, Diesel and Kerosene Up by Rs. 3](#)

23 See: [11 Injured in the Clash Between NSU and Police](#)

24 See: [Ban on Protest at Maitighar Mandala Anti-democratic, Says Dr. Govinda KC](#)

25 See: [Dr. KC Stages Protest at Maitighar Mandala](#)

26 See: [Bibeksheel Sajha Party Cadres Arrested](#)

27 This included seven places of Kathmandu, six places of Lalitpur and one place of Bhaktapur. In Kathmandu, the government declared Khula Manch, Tinkune Khula Charu (Tinkune), Bhuinkhel Chaur (Bhaganpau), playground (Pepsicola), football ground (Sano Gaucharan), open space in front of Social Welfare Council (Lainchaur)

and Siphul Chaur (Gaushala) as designated protests zones. See: [MoHA Designated Protest Zones in Valley](#)

28 See: [Declaration of Prohibited Zones Challenged at SC and SC Continues Stay Order Against Protest Ban](#)

29 See: [Bibeksheel Sajha Party Supporters Stage Demonstration Against Modi](#)

30 See: [NSU Protests Over Indian Lawmakers Janakpur Remark](#)

31 See: [Biplab Announced Nepal Bandh on Sunday](#)

32 See: [Bomb Explosion at Bhatbhateni Supermarket](#)

33 See: [Chand Called for Rasuwa Bandh for Today](#)

34 See: [Chand Followers Shut Chitwan Schools](#)

35 See: [Biplab announced Nepal bandh on Sunday](#). For a list of reports related to the activities of CPN (Chand) see <https://nepalmonitor.org/reports>



Out of the 87 political incidents recorded, in this quarter, cadres of CPN (Chand) were involved in 50 incidents of which 34 involved some type of violence including eight incidents of arson and 21 incidents involving the use or attempted use of IEDs. Compared to the previous quarter, this is a decrease by 29 percent (from 71 to 50). In another notable trend, cases related to the restructuring of provincial and local bodies decreased by 94 percent (from 69 cases to 4 cases) in this quarter.

Seven recorded incidents this quarter related to transitional justice. These involved protests by conflict victims against Bal Krishna Dhungel's early release and demanding justice for Ganga Maya Adhikari (see Box: 2). Representatives of conflict victims also rejected the first amendment bill on Enforced Disappearances Enquiry under the Truth and Reconciliation Act presented on June 29 by the cabinet.³⁶ According to conflict victim's organisations, the draft amendment to the transitional justice act was prepared without their consultation and did not address any of their four major demands; making public the status of those disappeared, honoring those killed, providing guardianship to victims' families, and bringing perpetrators to book. Also of particular concern was the fact that, in the current draft, perpetrators of grave human rights violations might get away with merely 'symbolic' sentencing and that 'reconciliation' could be accomplished without the full consent of victims.³⁷

Box 2: Transitional Justice

Protests Against Bal Krishna Dhungel's Release

On May 21, the Dillibazar prison office recommended that the Kathmandu District Administration Office waive the jail sentence of Bal Krishna Dhungel who was imprisoned for the murder of Ujjan Kumar Shrestha in 1998 by Maoist forces under his command.³⁸ On April 13, 2017 the Supreme Court ordered the Inspector General of Nepal Police to arrest Dhungel after a writ for contempt of court was filed on April 12, 2017.³⁹

Following the recommendation of an early release, on May 27, conflict victims and human rights activists organized a protest in Maitighar Mandala against it.⁴⁰ According to the demonstrators, Dhungel's release was an injustice to the conflict victims and an encouragement to impunity in the country. Nonetheless, on May 28 2018, the Republic day of Nepal, Dhungel was granted amnesty by the President.⁴¹

Ganga Maya's Hunger Strike Demanding Justice

From May 29, Ganga Maya started a hunger strike and decided to fast on to death, since she felt the government did not show any interest in delivering justice to her.⁴² On June 8, the victims of armed conflict staged a sit-in in front of the office of Human Rights Commission accusing it of easily letting perpetrators escape and putting more mental pressure on victims.⁴³

Ganga Maya Adhikari and her late husband Nanda Prasad Adhikari have long struggled for justice for the abduction and killing of their son, Krishna Prasad Adhikari of Phujel, Gorkha by Maoist rebels on June 6, 2004 in Chitwan.⁴⁴ Despite arrest warrants being issued against 13 accused persons, seven were released on bail and four are on general date and two remain at large. Even after the death of her husband Ganga Maya continued the fight for justice⁴⁵ and over the past 14 years she has been protesting through hunger strikes.

On June 17, a sit-in was held near the Prime Minister's Official residence in Baluwatar, demanding to save her life, immediate enforcement of the court verdict handed on the case relating to the murder of Krishna Prasad Adhikari and justice to all survivors of the conflict.⁴⁶ Following pressure from national and international human rights organizations, the main suspect of the murder, Chhabilal Poudel, surrendered to the Supreme Court on July 8 and was sent to Dillibazar prison.⁴⁷

36 See: [Victims Reject Draft Amendment](#)

37 See: [Conflict Victims Slam 'Symbolic Prosecuti](#)

38 See: [Republic day Pardon Recommended for Bal Krishna Dhungel Prosecution](#)

39 See: [Court to Govt: Arrest Murder Convict Bal Krishna Dhungel](#)

40 See: [Demonstration Against Recommendation of Pardoning Bal Krishna Dhungel](#)

41 See: [Prez Grants Amnesty to Murder Convict Bal Krishna Dhungel](#)

42 See: [Ganga Maya Begin Fast on to Death Strike](#)

43 See: [Sit-in Infront of Human Rights Commission's Office](#)

44 See: [Krishna Prasad Adhikari Murder Case: Hearing Put Off for 15th Time](#)

45 See: [Hearing on 2004 Krishna Prasad Adhikari Murder Case Today](#)

46 See: [Sit in Held Calling for Saving Ganga Maya's Life](#)

47 See: [Krishna Prasad Murder Main Suspect Surrenders](#)

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 to violence dynamics in Nepal. This includes strikes (bandh), 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](#).

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.

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Incidents of Gender Based Violence, Apr-Jun 2018



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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