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ELECTORAL VIOLENCE AND SECURITY OF RELIGIOUS MINORITY IN BANGLADESH

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Electoral Violence and Security of the Religious Minority in Bangladesh

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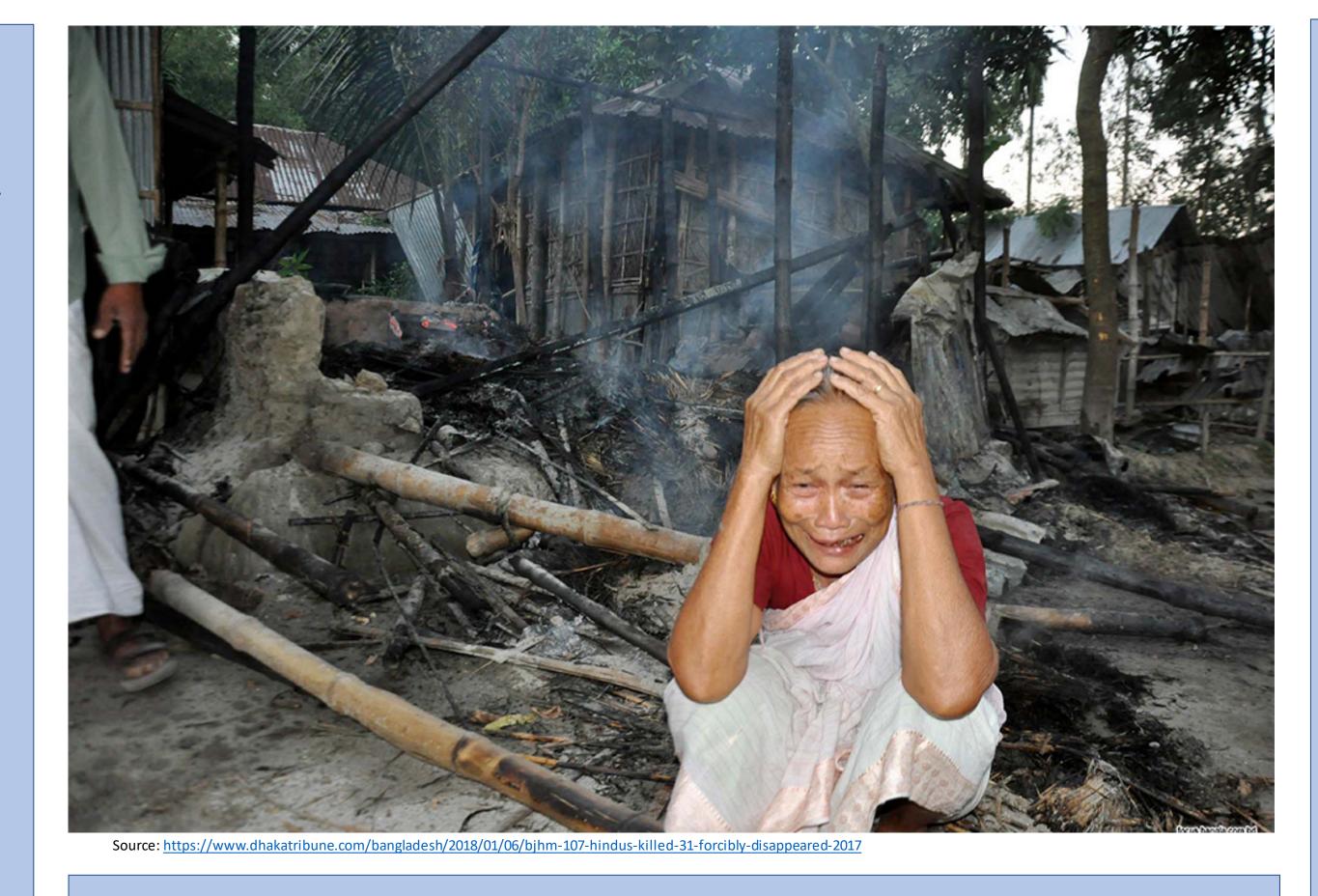Department of Politics and Government

Research Question

- How can we address the security of religious minority in context of electoral violence in Bangladesh?

Background

- Electoral violence against the religious minority is a recurring phenomenon in Bangladesh.
- Minority voters (11%) play a significant role in elections (Chowdhury, 2010).
- They are frequently victims of targeted violence, including rape, arson, riot.
- Recurring violence creates fear among minorities and contradict the human security principle of freedom from fear (UNDP,1994).

Theoretical Context

- Critical Constructivism: acknowledge change, social dimension and subjective reality.
- Tension in social sphere constructed from social and cultural factors.

Source: https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/2018/01/06/bjhm-107-hindus-killed-31-forcibly-disappeared-2017

Human Security, Religious Minority and Election Violence

- Major Violence: National Election, 2001
- Culture of impunity makes election violence a recurring phenomenon.
- State's failure to control violence over time perpetuates distrust among minorities about the state.
- Migration of religious minorities from Bangladesh is closely related with election violence (Sen,2011).
- Violence poses threat to exercise citizen's right to voting and brings the question of human security in context of electoral violence.

Literature Review

- Electoral violence denotes acts of threats, coercion, intimidation, physical or psychological harm perpetrated in election process (Islam, 2015).
- Perception about minority voting pattern makes them target of electoral violence (Chowdhury, Macdonad).
- Rise of tension between two major religious groups for social and historical reasons has impact on the process (Arefin, Chowdhury, Riaz)
- Existing literature though acknowledges minority violence in elections but give little attention on the human security aspect of it.

Conclusion.

- Effective legal and administrative setup is needed to prevent the electoral violence.
- Addressing the tension between major religion in social sphere can help to ensure the security of religious minority in electoral violence.
- It is important to consider the psychological factors of violence when considering human security.