

India expelling ethnic Bengali Muslims to Bangladesh without due process: HRW

DHAKA : Indian authorities are forcibly expelling ethnic Bengali residents, mostly Muslims from West Bengal state, to Bangladesh without basic due process, said Human Rights Watch said on Wednesday.

"Indian authorities are cruelly dumping families into Bangladesh or leaving them stranded at the border, ignoring their basic human rights," said Meenakshi Ganguly, deputy Asia director at Human Rights Watch, reports UNB.

"The government should stop unlawfully expelling people, ensure procedural safeguards, engage with Bangladeshi authorities to verify citizenship, and end this dismaying animosity toward Muslims."

Bangladeshi border guards have reported that since June 1, 2026, they have foiled 21 attempts by the BSF to push more than 200 people, including children, into Bangladesh's border districts.

The chief minister of India's West Bengal state, Suvenud Adhikari, who took office after the Hindu-majoritarian Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won the March elections, said that the government under his "detect, delete and deport" policy had detained hundreds of "Bangladeshi infiltrators" and forced nearly 5,000 people "to go back."

Human Rights Watch interviewed nine peo-

ple who witnessed Indian border security troops bring groups of people to the border at night and push them through cuts in the barbed wire fencing into Bangladeshi territory.

In several cases, Indian border guards eventually allowed people to return after the Bangladesh border force denied them entry, it said in a statement.

Just ahead of March elections in West Bengal, India's election commission had carried out a hurried and controversial revision of voter lists that dropped over nine million names, triggering threats of detention and deportation, said HRW.

A flawed and discriminatory citizenship verification process in Assam state in 2019 had already left over 1.9 million people stateless and thousands of Bengali-speaking residents of the state have been held in detention centers, while many were expelled unlawfully.

The BJP chief minister in Assam, Himanta Biswa Sarma, has repeatedly lashed out at Bengali-speaking Muslims in the state, calling them "illegal immigrants." Recently he said: "We take them to a convenient location near the border, and literally push them across the border. Now, such an atmosphere has been created in Assam that several illegal Bangladeshis have started going back on their own."