



Association for
Protection of
Civil Rights

Branded as Bangladeshis: State Violence Against Bengali- speaking Muslims in India

Between May and July 2025, there was a sharp rise in the detention and forced removal of Bengali-speaking Muslims in several Indian states, including Maharashtra, Gujarat, Delhi, Odisha, Assam, etc. A report by Human Rights Watch found that hundreds—possibly over 1,500—people were targeted as “illegal Bangladeshi immigrants,” even though many had valid Indian documents like Aadhaar cards and voter IDs. These detentions often happened without a proper legal process. In some cases, people were even sent across the Bangladesh border by force. Many were denied legal help, and their families had no way to contact or locate them.

This crackdown appears to be driven more by religious and linguistic profiling than by genuine concerns about illegal immigration. Most of those targeted were poor Bengali-speaking Muslims, many of whom were Indian citizens. The report also suggests that these actions may be politically motivated, aimed at creating fear and division ahead of state elections. The situation raises serious concerns about violations of constitutional rights and basic human dignity, and it calls for immediate attention and oversight.

The following are the documented details of a few of such incidents, to begin tracing the larger pattern of Islamophobic targeting of Bengali-speaking Muslims in India.



S. No	Date & Location	Description	Source
1	Jan-July 2025 Raipur and Kondagaon, Chhattisgarh	Between January and July 2025, Chhattisgarh authorities conducted multiple operations targeting Bengali-speaking Muslim migrant workers, accusing them of being “illegal Bangladeshi infiltrators.” In Raipur, the police launched a large-scale drive named Samadhan in late January, detaining over 2,000 individuals, mostly from Muslim and Bengali-speaking communities, during early morning raids on labor colonies and settlements. Those detained were held in open grounds and makeshift centers without timely verification or legal access. In Kondagaon, nine construction workers from Nadia, West Bengal, were detained on July 12 under Section 128 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNSS) for allegedly failing to register locally. Despite possessing valid Aadhaar and voter ID cards, they were denied phone calls, legal aid, and contact with their families. A habeas corpus petition was filed in the Chhattisgarh High Court, and the detainees were released after confirming their Indian citizenship. Activists and political leaders, including MP Mahua Moitra, denounced the detentions as illegal and driven by religious and linguistic profiling rather than verified intelligence.	Mahua Moitra alleges illegal detention of Bengal workers in Chhattisgarh, police deny charge
2	May-July 2025 Jai Hind Camp, Vasant Kunj, Delhi	In May 2025, a civil court in Delhi ordered the disconnection of electricity in the predominantly Bengali-speaking settlement of Jai Hind Camp (Vasant Kunj) due to alleged power theft. Within weeks, residents—many Indian citizens with Aadhaar and voter IDs—found both electricity and water supplies abruptly suspended, heightening fears of eviction. Despite having undergone citizenship verification in December and presenting valid documents, residents believe they have been labeled as “Bangladeshis” by authorities. West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee publicly condemned the actions as discriminatory. On July 19, the Delhi court issued a temporary stay on eviction until August 8 and ordered the immediate restoration of utilities.	If we were Bangladeshi, we’d be evicted’: Delhi’s Jai Hind Camp residents say power, water cut; Bengal CM Mamata slams Centre
3	26 July, 2025 Chandan Nagar, Pune	A mob of 60–80 individuals linked to Hindutva groups forcibly entered the home of Kargil war veteran Hakimuddin Shaikh’s family, demanding proof of Indian citizenship and accusing them of being Bangladeshi nationals. Despite presenting valid documents like Aadhaar and PAN cards, the mob dismissed them as fake, while plainclothes policemen stood by without intervening. Male family members were taken to the police station and threatened with legal action if they didn’t comply. Initially, police denied the incident, but following public outrage and media coverage, an FIR was eventually filed against some of the perpetrators.	Mob enters house of Kargil War veteran’s kin, labels them Bangladeshis, asks for ID proof Pune News - The Indian Express

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4	July 2025 Goalpara, Assam	Assam authorities demolished over 3,400 homes of Bengali-speaking Muslims in five eviction drives, displacing hundreds of families. The campaign, framed as a crackdown on “illegal infiltrators” from Bangladesh, intensified after political changes in Dhaka in August 2024. In one example, 53-year-old Aran Ali, born in Assam, was evicted from his home in Goalpara district and forced to live on a patch of bare earth with his family. Despite holding documents and being Indian-born, Ali was labeled a ‘Bangladeshi’ and an encroacher. Rights groups argue these actions are not only illegal but timed to fuel religious sentiment ahead of the upcoming Assam elections in 2026, disproportionately targeting Bengali-speaking Muslims based on their religion and language.	Evictions and expulsions of Muslims to Bangladesh precede Indian state polls Reuters
5	June 25, 2025 Jhajjar, Haryana	On June 25, 2025, Delhi Police (Shalimar Bagh Station) raided a brick factory in Jhajjar, Haryana, and arrested 7 Bengali-speaking Muslim workers from West Bengal, some as young as 6 and 11 years old. Ajima, the wife of one detainee, told Maktoob that police claimed it was just a document check, but instead detained the men and subjected them to torture. Activist Kirity Roy said the detainees had been repatriated from Indian enclaves in Bangladesh in 2015. A letter to the NHRC stated they were denied food, medical care, legal aid, and had phones and money seized.	Bengali-speaking Muslims labelled as Bangladeshis, illegally detained and tortured by Delhi Police, allege activists
6	April- July 2025 Ahmedabad & Surat	Gujarat police detained over 1,000 people, 890 in Ahmedabad and 134 in Surat, in what Union Minister Harsh Sanghavi called the state’s largest operation against “illegal Bangladeshi immigrants.” However, according to Mirza Ikram Baig from APCR, the majority of detainees were not Bangladeshi; many were Indian citizens. Police conducted door-to-door nighttime raids, arbitrarily arresting people and ignoring valid documents when shown. Detainees were confined in makeshift detention facilities, including a football ground, with no proper shelter or sanitation. They were given food only once a day, often in a dehumanising manner, while their families, kept outside the perimeter, waited in the scorching heat without food, water, or information. Authorities insist they are investigating for fake documents.	In Ahmedabad, thousands labelled ‘Bangladeshi illegal immigrants’, detained; activists call operation illegal
7	June 2025 Birbhum, West Bengal	Delhi Police allegedly detained 6 rag-pickers from Birbhum (including pregnant women and minors), accused them of being Bangladeshi, and then pushed them across the border via BSF. Families filed habeas corpus petitions in the Calcutta High Court; detention and deportation occurred without verifying identities.	6 from Birbhum nabbed by Delhi cops, pushed into Bangladesh: Pleas in HC

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8	June 2025 Maharashtra	In Mumbai, at least 7 Bengali-speaking Muslim workers from West Bengal were detained and expelled to Bangladesh. They had valid identity documents; their legal citizenship status was ignored. Groups like Human Rights Watch flagged this as discriminatory profiling.	Targeting Marginalized Bengali Muslim Migrant Workers
9	June-July 2025 Odisha	Between June and July 2025, Odisha Police detained at least 447 Bengali-speaking migrants, mostly daily-wage workers from Birbhum, Murshidabad, and South 24 Parganas. These detainees were relocated to two holding centers: one at Black Diamond College of Engineering and Technology, and another at Surabhi Kalyana Mandap, where their identities were under scrutiny. Although 403 were later released, dozens remain in custody. According to reports, police rejected Aadhaar and voter IDs, demanding birth certificates and school records, documents that many poor migrants cannot produce. Ajimuddin Sheikh, 22, from Birbhum, was arrested during a 1 a.m. raid. Despite showing his Aadhaar and voter ID, police confiscated his phone and interrogated him over saved Bangladeshi contacts.	Bengal police verify 750 migrant workers detained across states Kolkata News - Times of India
10	July 2025 Gurugram, Haryana	Since July 16, 2025, police in Gurugram, Haryana, have carried out a series of targeted detentions of Bengali-speaking Muslim migrants, particularly from districts like Malda, Murshidabad, and Dinajpur in West Bengal. The detentions took place in working-class neighbourhoods such as Sector 66, with migrants being picked up from market corners, construction sites, or directly from their shanties. According to sources, those detained have been held in temporary centres at community halls in Badshahpur, Sector 10A, Sector 40, and Sector 1 in Manesar. Witnesses reported that many of those detained were not allowed to contact their families or retrieve their identity documents before being taken away. Santosh Mistiri, a mason from Malda, was among those detained. His wife, Sagori Sarkar Mistiri, recounted that Santosh was beaten by police officers, "hit with boots, kicked, and slapped" while in custody. When Sagori and her son-in-law went to inquire about him, they too were detained and interrogated separately. The family was held for two days before being released. Santosh's phone was taken and searched, and the police told them that only people with birth certificates from India would be released.	'We Came for Work, Now Afraid to Step Out': Branded 'Bangladeshi', Bengali Migrants Face Detention, 'Assault', 'Extortion' in Gurugram - TwoCircles.net , HARYANA: Police harassment and abuse of Bengali-origin Muslim migrant workers forces them to flee Gurugram - IndiaTomorrow

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11	May, 2025 Jaipur, Rajasthan	In Rajasthan, a state-wide police operation targeting Bengali-speaking Muslim residents led to widespread detentions beginning in early May 2025. In Jaipur alone, around 500-600 people were picked up from their jhuggi jhopdis early in the morning, around 7 a.m. According to several habeas corpus petitions filed in the Rajasthan High Court, entire families were taken without warning. One such case involves Zahid Ali, a 55-year-old resident of Naya Bagrana Kacchi Basti, whose son, daughter-in-law, infant grandson, and daughter-in-law's sister were detained from their home in JDA Colony, Paladi Meena on May 5. Despite possessing Aadhaar, voter IDs, ration cards, and residence certificates, the police refused to acknowledge their documents or provide any FIR or detention order. For days, Zahid Ali did not know their whereabouts and was only later informed (verbally) that they were suspected of being "illegal Bangladeshi nationals." The petitions state that no legal process was followed: no formal arrest, no access to counsel, and no judicial oversight, and in some cases, no access to documents, violating Articles 14, 21, and 22 of the Constitution. Most detainees were later released, but the fear and trauma remain deeply felt.	Habeas corpus petitions: Zahid Ali v. State of Rajasthan @ Rajasthan High Court, D.B. Habeas Corpus Petition No. 154/2025 Faizan v. State of Rajasthan @ Rajasthan High Court, D.B. Habeas Corpus Petition No. 155/2025 Shoaib v. State of Rajasthan @ Rajasthan High Court, D.B. Habeas Corpus Petition No. 156/2025 Mohammad Siraj v. State of Rajasthan @Rajasthan High Court, D.B. Habeas Corpus Petition No. 166/2025 Shabana Begum v. State of Rajasthan @Rajasthan High Court, D.B. Habeas Corpus Petition No. 185/2025 Ashok v. State of Rajasthan @ Rajasthan High Court, D.B. Habeas Corpus Petition No. 00008/2025 Yasmeen v. State of Rajasthan @ Rajasthan High Court, D.B. Habeas Corpus Petition No. 00011/2025 Rahmat Ali v. State of Rajasthan @ Rajasthan High Court, D.B. Habeas Corpus Petition No. 00012/2025
12	15 July, 2025 Gurugram, Delhi	Haryana Police allegedly detained 26 Bengali-speaking men from Assam in Gurugram's Sector 103, accusing them of being illegal Bangladeshi immigrants. 21 were taken on Sunday and 5 more on Monday. Eyewitnesses say the men were rag-pickers and had valid Indian documents, but were detained before they could fetch their ID cards. Five men were later released and returned to Assam, but 21 remain in custody. Residents claim no legal process was followed.	Bengali-speaking people from Assam detained in Gurugram by Haryana police, claim residents - The Hindu



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