## Mobility across Borders and Continuums of Violence

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## Introduction

UmraBewa, a 45 year old widowed lady from District-Cooch Behar, West Bengal was brutally gunned down by one Border Security Force jawan in her own residence on 11 October 2014 at night. The concerned BSF jawan not only killed her with savage brutality but also tried to destroy the evidence of murder committed by him. The police of Dinhata Police Station also did not take any step against the aforesaid BSF Jawan in spite of receiving written complaint from the son of the victim. UmraBewa had gone to relieve herself in the middle of the night, when the jawan broke through her house and thereafter fired at her.

FelaniKhatun, a fifteen-year-old girl was shot at the dawn of 7 January 2011, while she was climbing over the barbed wire fence at the border in the vicinity of Choudhuryhat (in Coochbehar district, India) and Phulbari (in Kurigram district, Bangladesh). The girl’s father crossed over the barbed wire fence but Felani’s clothes got stuck in the same. Her body was hanging upside down from the fence and was handed over to the Border Guards Bangladesh (BGB), the Bangladeshi security force only after thirty hours.

KhukuliKhatun an eighteen-year student of class X of HadaparaRangiarpota High School. She was the only girl studying in class X, in her village Hatkhola of Chapra Block in Nadia District of West Bengal, an instance which itself signifies her courage and resilience. All other girls, of her age in her village, had dropped out from formal education. On 20 November 2008 she had an argument with a BSF jawan M. Silva Kumar of the 42nd Battalion and she was shot at point blank range by the jawan. The bullet tore her stomach and came out through her back. According to Khukuli’s dying statement the jawan was in an inebriated state and had tried to molest her which led to a scuffle and resulted in him shooting at her in the stomach. On hearing the gunshot, her family members and other villagers had rushed for her rescue. The killer and two of his fellow jawans threatened the mob that they would fire again, if anyone dared to rescue injured Khukuli. Subsequently the killer and his accomplices escaped on their bicycles, the guns still pointed at the mob.

These cases serve as an illustration to several other cases that go unreported and unnoticed. These are not simply cases of conflict between BSF and the local community. These are symbolic of reactionary moments of sovereignty threatened states that have consigned its security in the hands of uniformed armed men. Khukuli challenged the violence perpetuated and condoned within the patriarchal structure and was killed in the process. Felani dared to trespass the border between the two nations and her dead body hung over the barbed wire, symbolically representing the victory of sovereignty over its alleged transgression.[[1]](#footnote-2) The case of Felani was posited in a way that it seemed that the protectors of the border were trying to prevent instances of illicit entry of people or goods into the sovereign state, suggesting that they were only doing their duty. Violence is therefore justified in the interest of the sovereignty of the state. Instances of violence- whether its Felani or Khukuli need to be seen in the context of the challenges they pose to the nexus of state and patriarchy. Their perceived challenge to these structures put them in vulnerable situations to the extent that it cost them their lives.

Women’s bodies are symbolically projected to represent the boundaries of the nation as well as reproducers of the nation. Ironically, women who are seen as markers of the territorial space of the nation are also seen as the property of nation, therefore in need of defence and protection from the patriotic sons (Mostov 1995). While the patriotic sons are expected to protect their mothers, wives and daughters, they may deem it right to invade feminine spaces of another nation if it restricts their sovereignty in any manner. This relationship between women and the nation is underlined by the danger of exclusion and the pressures to conform to national cultures and values. They are seen as the bearers of cultural values by virtue of being the markers, bearers and reproducers of the nation.Therefore, mobility of women across borders is often a much contested issue, because they are perceived as not only transgressing the political nation, which they seemingly embody and represent but also social norms and codes of conduct. Through their mobility, women challenge the notion of rootedness. They challenge the androcentric notion of settlement, guided and established by the male breadwinner, by going back and forth the border and by pursuing their aspirations and desires through this mobility. Both state and non-state actors inflict violence on these women.

The trajectory of violence in the lives of women engaging in cross-border mobility can be plotted along a continuum where the border becomes one moment and site of violence in a series of violent experiences. In this context, the paper will discuss the experiences of violence in the lives of Bangladeshi women in Correctional Homes in Kolkata. Their narratives suggest that perpetrators and sites of violence change but violence persists in their life in a continuum, with the Indo-Bangladesh border as central to their experiences of violence. This paper will focus on the violence experienced by these women before crossing the border, while crossing the border to come to India, during their stay in India and while returning to Bangladesh; coupled with emotions of fear, anxiety and shame and how they navigate through all this.

## Continuums of Violence

This paper looks at violence in two ways, first, as violence which is inherent in the androcentric statist ideology of exclusion and second, as violence which is manifested through the normative practises of the family, state and society. These two understandings are not mutually exclusive and are closely tied to each other. The modern state is a gendered state with power and security as its cornerstones (Mohsin2004). Gender inequality is inherent in the militarist security ideology and practices of a militarised state and society.Banerjee and Basu Ray Chaudhury (2011, xvii) observe, the border is a ‘site where this contest over inclusion and exclusion is played out every day’ and in turn ‘becomes a zone of endemic violence where masculinity is privileged’. Moreover, the state is based on an exclusionary model where the border separates the citizens from the foreigners. The border, therefore, becomes a symbolic axis between us/them, insider/outsider, here/there, citizen/foreigner. It is also representative of a power relation that is intrinsically patriarchal. For its survival, it is important for the modern state to maintain boundaries of us and them and constitute processes of ‘othering’ through hegemonic practises of exclusion. Border control becomes central to this ideology. Pickering (2012, 29) points out, “border control is understood to comprise highly selective and complex performances of state power staged at multiple locations through technologies of selection, detention, deterrence, expulsion and pre-emption, involving a range of state and non-state actors.” Hegemonic practices of ‘othering’ coupled with technologies of border control create situations of vulnerability for the most marginalized groups. The citizens become complicit in the violence which ensues as a result of this border control, for it is in the name of their protection that these systems of control are initiated. AnupDhar succinctly explains this:

“A more complicated understanding of the binaries Us/Them would entail an appreciation ofthe complicity of Us, even if implicit, in structures of violence closest to home. Maybe, notovert acts of violence. But complicity in the somewhat covert flow of violence, the silent,almost surreptitious survival of violence, violence sustained in the ‘rule of order’, violencesustained in everyday life, which in other words, is the everyday life of violence—violence infamily, home, workplace, school—violence in the individual, in peers, in groups—in communities,in institutions—in the state, judiciary, army—violence in our very survival.” (Dhar 2004, 64)

Violence, since it is inherent in and perceived as necessary for our very survival, attains a certain kind of legitimacy and hence is considered normal and necessary. Several institutions work together for the survival of the ‘us’ against ‘them’. To ensure this, the family and society work as close aides of the state. The family, the ‘community’, the market and the state constitute a pervasive and interactive system for legitimising violence (Mathur 2004, 53). Consequently violence is weaved in the everyday life of the ‘us’ and ‘them’. Kannabiran (2005, 3) aptly points out, “It is within the realm of the normal, the routine, that violence against women is deeply embedded, and it is because the greatest part of violence against women is the violence of normal times that it carries with it the guarantee of impunity irrespective of penal, punitive or constitutional safeguards. Sudden conflagrations of violence, seemingly inexplicable upsurges, must then be understood in the context of this steady, ever present violence of normal times.” This nuanced understanding of violence explains the brutal killings of Felani, Umran and Khukuli. As mentioned earlier, these killings need to be seen through anxieties of the state and the way cultures of violence are woven through the everyday practises, which are extremely gendered. The experiences of women and men who engage in extra legal cross border movements are significantly different. (Pickering 2011, 1)

Experiences of violence faced by women at the borders are significantly marked by sexual violence. Their body is perceived as overtly sexualised and easily available. Kannabiran (2005, 4) points out that, “Sexual terrorism is always part of larger political projects that hinge on the absolute appropriation of women’s bodies.” Therefore, violence for them becomes both a stimulus as well as deterrent to mobility. Experiences of violence from the time they are born create situations, which necessitate their movement from one place to another to look for a safer environment. Violence in various forms at the border constitutes a moment in this continuum of violence that they are constantly trying to escape. Their survival from violence becomes linked to the citizen’s survival and the latter’s complicity in the survival of violence.

Violence inflicted on women may not be directly at the border as a physical, geographical site but is induced by its exclusionary and inherently violent nature. Border crossing neither begins nor ends with the extra legal crossing of a territorial border (Pickering 2011) it is not merely political or geographical space but ramifies itself into a normative socio-cultural space. What kind of subjectivities does this multi headed hydra known as the border create? How does it further marginalise women and create situations of vulnerability? In turn, how do women subvert these situations of vulnerability and create safe spaces for themselves? These are some of the questions through which this paper will navigate.

## Indo-Bangladesh Border and Violence

India has been increasingly focusing on militarized and violent border control practices along the country’s eastern border with Bangladesh. Large expenditures are being made towards increasing the number of troops, fencing the border and establishing technologies of control and surveillance.[[2]](#footnote-3) The arbitrary and ruthless nature of border killings and arrests has been on the rise (Mittal 2011), indicating the anxiety of the Indian state to maintain its sovereignty[[3]](#footnote-4) and protect it from ‘illegal’ intrusions, which are often associated with terrorism. There have been innumerable instances of ruthless border killings by Indian border forces of unarmed local residents found around the border, assumed to be infiltrators.[[4]](#footnote-5) It has been estimated that approximately 1,000 people have been killed by the BSF over a period of 10 years.[[5]](#footnote-6) There have been no prosecutions for such killings. A detailed account of the violence that exists along the 2000 km long border that Bangladesh shares with West Bengal can be found in [“‘Trigger Happy’: Excessive Use of Force by Indian Troops at the Bangladesh Border,](http://www.hrw.org/node/94641)” a 81-page report published by Human Rights Watch.[[6]](#footnote-7) The civilian population on both sides pays the price of the indiscriminate use of brute force by India’s border guards. The same report mentions that during an official visit to Bangladesh in September 2010, Raman Srivastava, Director General of the BSF, responded to Bangladesh’s complaints that the BSF were killing “innocent, unarmed” Bangladeshi civilians by saying: “We fire at criminals who violate the border norms. The deaths have occurred in Indian Territory and mostly during night, so how can they be innocent?”[[7]](#footnote-8) Such responses and these killings have further jeopardized Indo-Bangladesh relations, apart from taking a toll on the everyday lives of people who live at the border and those who have lost family members because of indiscriminate use of force by the border security force. On one hand there are increased modes of surveillance and control and on the other provisions are made to allow easy access to the other side of the border. For instance, gates are provided through the fencing to facilitate access of villager to their lands beyond the fences. The fields without fencing are often misunderstood by children, especially young boys as an extended playground, who are then caught by BSF and handed over to the judiciary for trial under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2000 (Sanjog 2011, 30). Hence, it is evident that the Indian state itself has to make certain provisions to accommodate the needs of the people who stay in and around this not-so-strategically designed border.

The paranoia around fencing and border killing brings forth the insecurities of India with regard to its borders. This paranoia is further demonstrated by India’s implementation of various criminal acts on people crossing the border ‘illegally’ without valid documents.Agents who facilitate the process of crossing the border illegally often smuggle these people in (Paul and Hasnath 2000, 268-276). Often these smugglers also play the role of a trafficker. There is an array of well-networked agents in India and Bangladesh. There are recruiters, travel agents, brokers etc. who constitute an entire ‘industry’ that thrives on the ‘illegal’ flow of people from one side of the border to another (Paul and Hasnath 2000, 268-276). It is thus difficult to say who has been smuggled and who has been trafficked. Women and children who are identified as being trafficked are sent to government run shelter homes under provisions of sub-section 4 of section 17 of The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 and those who are identified as migrants without legal documents are processed under the criminal justice system and are either imprisoned under section 14 of the Foreigners Act 1946 or provisions of the Passports Act 1967.

## Narratives of Violence

Bangladeshi women in Correctional Homes in Kolkata, participants of my doctoral research,crossed the border and came to India, either to escape multiple situations of vulnerability, were in search of a livelihood or had aspirations of a better life. Under various circumstances they were arrested by the police in India under section 14 the Foreigners Act 1946 for entering the country without valid documents. Section 14states that a person arrested under this Act could be sentenced for imprisonment up to five years and is also liable to pay a fine. The research participants, who were in the average age group of 18-22 years, were generally imprisoned for two years along with a fine amount.

A number of them had worked as child labourers, were married in their early teenage, some of them experienced violence in their marital lives, their husbands had either deserted them or married another woman. So for most of these women, initially, crossing the border, was a matter of moving from a vulnerable and violent situation in the hope of finding a better space for themselves.Rina, who was 21 years old had divorced her husband because he was addicted to drugs and moreover, she had not consented to the marriage. She said, “My parents married me off when I was really young…I didn’t want to get married…but didn’t have the courage to say this in front of my mother…this is why I am still upset with my parents…I try to stay aloof from everyone. So I decided to come to India for sometime…also because I needed money to raise my child.”

The majority of the research participantsstated that their relationship with their husband had been severed because he either deserted them and remarried or was violent, or they themselves chose to walk out of their marriages as their family members had forced them into them. Sidney Ruth Schuler and Farzana Islam (2008),through a survey conducted in 2002 in six rural villages in Bangladesh found that an extremely high proportion of women believed that husbands’ use of violence against their wives was acceptable. However, they point out that though many of them had resigned themselves to a certain level of violence they did not condone it and often suggested harsh punishment of varying degrees for the perpetrators of such violence.The purpose behind elucidating this is not to foreclose the possibility of any resistance or expression of agency by women in Bangladesh or India; it is to present the research participants’ broader socio-cultural context, in which various subjectivities emerged.

Conditions of domestic violence, severing of relationships and the subsequent deepening of economic crisis necessitated certain mobility for the research participants. Any hope of a better life was promptly embraced. This hope often came in the form of traffickers who promised jobs in another city in Bangladesh or India. Women who started working in a garment’s factory in Dhaka or other cities in Bangladesh reckoned a certainPia as their co-worker and confidante who put forth the possibility of going to India. The spectre of Pia seemed to be present in a number of narratives of the research participants who had been trafficked. Pia seemed to be the principal organiser of the journey that they would make to India. Thereafter, a number of her associates guided the research participants to various destinations in India. It was much later that the latter realised they had been sold to brothel owners. The garments’ factories in Bangladesh, which are often seen as the way to empowerment of women proved to be the source site of violence. Further, Siddiqi (2000,L-16) points out that by entering the public space of work, as per the acceptable social norms of behavior, they had already exposed themselves to the dangers of sexual vulnerability and thereby put themselves at the risk of losing the honor embodied in their reputation. Safina, a 21-year-old unmarried girl said,

“I went to Dhaka and started working in the garments business, I earned some money…sent some of it home and spent some as well…there were a lot of problems at home and I tried to sort them out…I got into a lot of trouble…this friend of mine, I know her well, I was very fond of her, she told me Nazma it is very difficult here, come with me…I asked her where, she said somewhere else where we would be paid a lot of money…I asked what kind of work I would have to do and she said never mind the work, just come with me…she asked me if I trusted her and I said all right, and then I got everything ready and came to the border with her and she brought me here and made me wait at the sealdah station and made some money arrangements with this man who was there…and then there was this man who asked me my name…I told him my name…and he told me that I’m in a lot of trouble…I asked him what it was…and he told me that I had been sold off…I asked him how he found out…he said that he was one of them, said that he didn’t want my life to be ruined…I escaped after I heard him say those things…they started looking for me…I arrived at a police station, I surrendered myself”

At the time of this journey some of the women realised the ploy that the traffickers were using and tried to escape. Nargis, a twenty-two-year old widow, who had been in a shelter home in Kolkata for two years and then in a correctional home for two years said,

“I knew there was something wrong…when I was sitting in the train with this dalal he was being very nice to me…He offered me an apple…I could sense that there was something behind his apparent good behaviour so I told him I want to go back…He then told me that once someone gets on this path they do not return…I tremble even when I think of him now…Didiwhy did he say that one cannot return…is it true?”

Unlike Nargis, many women who managed to escape the clutches of the traffickers found themselves to be further victimised by the Border Security Forces jawans. Twenty-year-old Reshmi said,

“The BSF caught me…kept me in their camp for a night…they kicked me in my stomach. I was not conscious after that. I had to be admitted to the hospital. It’s been two years and three months…some parts of my body still ache because of the rape and beating from the BSF…they wronged me, raped me and tortured me.”

Though the agents of violence were changing, violence itself continued to have a looming presence in the lives of the research participants.

On their arrival in Kolkata, most of them were either arrested from the railway station itself or found themselves in confined rooms of a brothel. There were only few who reached their destination to work as a domestic help and were later arrested from various locations. In the instance that they found themselves in a brothel they took a few days to come to terms with this reality and then a number of them succumbed to the exploitation. Instances of abuse by the brothel owner, police and the customers were a routine affair. Khushi, 17-year-old girl was first trafficked within Bangladesh for organ trade and then after a few years to Pune, India for sex trade, said,

“The police raped me…they raped me in the room in which I was staying in the brothel…this was a year after I arrived at the brothel…we used to be locked up in the rooms and were not allowed to go out…I cried and asked aunty why she did this with all the girls…and then I got beaten up very badly.”

Though over a period of time they learnt to bargain for themselves in the brothel and resist the physical and sexual abuse, they still did not have access to the money that they earned. They would call up their family members telling them that they were working in a garment’s factory in Dhaka. They knew that if their family members found out that they were working in a brothel, they would have to face a lot of humiliation and insult. However, they always worried about the psychological and physical violence they would have to face if their family found out that they were working in a brothel. Contact with the family was terminated once they were arrested and later imprisoned.

Some of the research participants, like ShamoliKhatoon, who refuse to succumb to the exploitation,were arrested from the brothel itself while others were arrested when they were trying to escape from the brothel.Shamoli said,

“They sold me for 60,000…they took me to a brothel…the women there told me that they will not give me any money but I could stay there…they wanted to keep me to make me do kharabkaaj…I begged them and told them that I will not do any kharabkaaj…in the evening around 5 they got me arrested.”

Violence was to follow both in the prison as well as the courtroom and various other institutions of the criminal justice system. Bangladeshi women were often scorned in the prison for leaving their country and coming to India only to add to the prison population. They were perceived as sexually aggressive and violent in comparison to the Indian woman who did not pose many administrative challenges. The Bangladeshi women were unable to meet their family members because they had no visitors. Their family members feared arrest and did not come to meet them in the prison. This apart, there were multiple hierarchies amongst the prisoners. The Bangladeshi women occupied the lowest level in this hierarchy. They would often perform chores for the Indian women who would then provide them with some benefits in the form of clothes, extra food or some cosmetics. Besides, there were women who were labelled as ‘pagol’ and were at the receiving end of violent behaviour both from the warders as well as the other inmates. They often had few friends and did not get adequate medical attention. With each passing day their depression seemed to get more acute. One of the participants told me about a woman who would often get hysterical in the cell and all the others would be scared of her and move to one side. Some would try to wrestle with her ‘to get her back to her senses’. When this particular woman would come to speak to me I could have never imagined her getting hysterical or violent. The scenario and context in which she spoke me made her ‘perform’ in a certain way and in another way in front of the other inmates.

Women who were labelled as ‘pagol’ often faced a lot of moral policing from the other inmates. For instance, I quote an observation from my field notes:

“When Nargis came out of the cell she did not have an orna. Just then all the girls started shouting“aye aye tor orna ta kothay”.Nargis ran out of the cell covering her chest with her arms and said that it was hanging outside to dry. She went to the clothesline outside the cell and put the orna around her.” (18 May 2011)

Bangladeshi women would engage in moral policing on each other so that they could uphold the image of a ‘good’ Bangladeshi woman in India. While they thought that it was important to question the prison administration, they thought it to be equally important to project the image of a moral Bangladeshi woman to preserve the maansanmaan of their desh. Despite all their efforts, the prison administration often hurled a number of abuses on them. I quote again, an instance from my field notes:

“These Bangladeshis are like beggars. They only know how to fight and abuse each other. These are very dangerous women,”said the warder to the male guard responsible for the female ward, who started laughing. The latter took a look at the jackfruit tree and asked the warder if they cook and eat that. The warder said no they didn’t because who would pluck them from the tree. The male guardreplied, “Why don’t you tell these Bangladeshis girls to do it. I am sure they are adept at climbing tree. Anyways they are so uncivilised.” (18 May 2011)

Such perceptions often added to the struggles of the research participants who tried to reconcile with the complete absence of contact with the outside world.

Prior to returning home there was another hurdle they had to cross with regard to ‘protecting’ their maansanmaan; i.e. the Border Security Force. There were several rumours, stories and information about BSF raping and torturing the Bangladeshi women before they were finally asked to run to the other side of the border to Bangladesh. Due to a lack of a formal process of handover, the Bangladeshi prisoners are often taken to the border in the middle of the night and asked to run across to the other side in Bangladesh. The research participants heard some of these stories from the prison staff or police who had accompanied the released Bangladeshi women to the border or through communication with women who had been released and had returned to India only to be imprisoned again. They had heard that the BSF often forced sexual favours from women before letting them at the border to go back to Bangladesh. In the initial conversations the research participants would often be extremely anxious about being raped on their way back as this would imply losing whatever little honour they had remaining with them. Their narratives with regard to sexual favours for the BSF shifted over time. They began laughing and joking about it saying how a few minutes of sex would ultimately lead them to the much desired freedom. This can be analysed at two levels- first, that with time their trust in the researcher became stronger and they felt safe to say what they felt without the fear of being judged and second, they had begun to understand the inevitability of the process of going back which involved an unpleasant exploitative interaction with the BSF. These narratives need to be seen in the context of systemic oppression faced by the research participants. Women’s security in India and Bangladesh is jeopardized, threatened and their lives and dignity are at great risk, on a daily basis from the likelihood of sexual assault to domestic violence in public and private spaces. This threat diminishes women’s capacity and ability to exercise their fundamental freedoms. Their vulnerability tends to increase in a place that is not very familiar to them. In such places it becomes important to preserve one’s own integrity as well as reinvent oneself to take charge of the new conditions of survival.

An important shift in the research process was a shift in their narratives from ‘violence’ to ‘love’.As a feminist researcher, the researcher went to the prison to understand their experiences of violence through their narratives, but they preferred to talk about their experiences of love in the prison. They challenged the researcher’s intentions to hear their stories of violence and established through their narratives that it was a certain idea of love and being in love in prison that helped them go through their everyday life. They tried to silence their memories of violence and did not want to think about it anymore.Thus, despite fractured relationships with their husbands and violent marriages, the women prisoners still longed for relationships. Love and intimacy in the prison was one of the ways in which these young women fulfilled roles they believed were destined for women, reassuring themselves of their identity as women, and simultaneously expressing their desires in a voice they had suppressed in circumstances of forced and unhappy, violent marriages.

A discussion about resistance should not lose focus of the materiality of the violence and injustice these women faced in their day-to-day lives. This discussion should not in any way be misconstrued as an exercise in romanticizing the experiences of these women or belittling the depth of the love they feel. As Abu-Lughod (1990, 42) points out, all forms of resistance should allow us to get at the ways in which intersecting and often conflicting structures of power work together, and they should not be seen as signs of human freedom but as telling us more about forms of power and how people are caught in them. The Bangladeshi women prisoners’ construction of love seems to be one more intersection.

## Conclusion

In this paper, we have seen how violence survives in the life of the research participants on a continuum. The survival of violence gets linked with the survival of the traffickers, the brothel owners, warders, prison administration as well as the BSF. Each of these stakeholders violate the bodies of the research participants not only physically and/or emotionally but also by their existence in the system against undocumented cross border mobility. As already pointed out, along with them, the citizens also become complicit in this survival of violence. Brutal killings of Umra, Felani, Khukuli are not single-handed offences committed by some errant BSF jawans. It is a manifestation of a system, which breeds on violence for its survival. It is a culmination of the continuum of violence that the research participants throw light on through their narratives. It is through these brutal killings that the violence of the everyday life, so neatly woven into institutions and practises, comes to the forefront to jolt the individual conscience.

Also, the research participants’ experiences of violence need to be seen in the context of their challenge to the norms instituted for women by the family, state and society. These norms may be historically or territorially located in the social, legal and political relations and structures in India and Bangladesh. Their narratives highlight the specific ways in which the research participants interacted with the various social and institutional borders and boundaries that they were confronted with.Their so-called deviations from normative modes of behaviour put them in situations of extreme vulnerability as it was perceived to challenge the nexus of state and patriarchy, premised on the control of female mobility and through it her sexuality. Through all these experiences of marginality and violence, the research participants showed grit and determination to survive, to take control of their lives and to move on. Through a shift in their narratives from violence to love they suggest an alternative to the violence of survival by adopting love as their premise for survival.

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1. According to the Memorandum of Understanding and related treaties signed between India and Bangladesh, if citizens of the two countries illegally cross the border, it would be considered trespass and as per law those persons should be handed over to the civilian authority.  However, we have repeatedly noticed that India has been violating treaties, shooting at anyone seen near the border or anyone trying to cross the border, which is a clear violation of international law and human rights. - See more at: <http://odhikar.org/violations-in-the-border-area/#sthash.4GRsyqwr.dpuf> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Refer to: India, P. T. o. (2013) 'Arrests of illegal migrants on Indo-Bangladesh border rises: BSF', Business Standard and Service, I. A. N. (2014) 'India intensifies vigil along border with Bangladesh', NDTV [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. It is not unknown that these anxieties over ‘illegal’ migration are closely associated with religious identities. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Human Rights Watch. 2010. "Trigger Happy": Excessive Use of Force by Indian Troops at the Bangladesh Border. New York. P. 5 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. <http://kashmirwatch.com/opinions.php/2014/05/21/india-suppresses-bangladesh-on-teesta-river-issue.html> accessed on 5 June 2014 at 3:30 pm

   <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/libertycentral/2011/jan/23/india-bangladesh-border-shoot-to-kill-policy> accessed on 5 June 2014 at 3:30 pm [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. ibid, n.3 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. ibid, n.3 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)