

Bangladesh border fencing and India's security needs: Time for address the big challenge

F. [firstpost.com/opinion/bangladesh-border-fencing-and-indias-security-needs-time-for-address-the-big-challenge-13857607.html](https://www.firstpost.com/opinion/bangladesh-border-fencing-and-indias-security-needs-time-for-address-the-big-challenge-13857607.html)

January 29, 2025



India's Border Security Force launches 'Ops Alert' along Bangladesh border

Recent developments at the India-Bangladesh border have prompted significant diplomatic friction between the two countries. Dhaka has expressed "deep concern" over the ongoing border fencing activities carried out by New Delhi. These measures, which include the construction of barbed wire fences, the installation of border lighting, and the implementation of various technical devices and cattle fences, are described by India as necessary to secure the border.

In response, Bangladesh's most senior diplomat was summoned by the Indian government, which emphasised that these actions align with the existing agreements and protocols between the two nations. In this light, the issues that need to be analysed include the rationale behind the border fencing work, the escalation of illegal immigration into India since the interim government came to power, the laws governing the illegal immigrants in India, and the possible way forward.

Diplomatic Responses

The escalation in tensions on the border has coincided with a period of heightened instability in bilateral relations, particularly following the formation of a caretaker regime in Bangladesh led by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus after the ousting of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in August. In a formal meeting, Bangladesh's acting High Commissioner, Mohammad Nural Islam, was summoned to the Ministry of External Affairs

in New Delhi, where he was informed that India's security measures, including the fencing initiatives, are fully in accordance with the established bilateral protocols and agreements between India and Bangladesh. Additionally, India reaffirmed its commitment to upholding the security of the region by tackling cross-border criminal activities, smuggling, trafficking, and other forms of illicit movement that have traditionally plagued the frontier.

The Rationale Behind

The question that arises is the underlying rationale for the border fencing initiative undertaken by India. While the Indian government frames the border security measures as essential for maintaining national security, particularly in combating illegal immigration, there is a growing concern in Bangladesh regarding the humanitarian implications of such measures.

You May Like

The escalation of illegal immigration, which has been a significant issue since the formation of the interim government in Bangladesh, remains a central point of contention in the dispute. This issue is further compounded by the lack of clear legal frameworks governing the status of illegal immigrants within India and the associated risks for both countries.

The illegal immigrants in India are governed under a combination of the Foreigners Act, 1946; the Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939; the Passport Act, 1962; and the Citizenship Act, 1955. None of these legislations provide a specific definition, as all these categories are broadly categorised as foreigners, exposing them to the risk of deportation and criminal charges for unauthorised entry.

Legal and Humanitarian Issues

The issue of illegal immigration into India, particularly from Bangladesh, has become a contentious topic in recent years. The Indian government's legal approach to managing illegal immigrants, most notably through the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) of 2019, has exacerbated tensions between the two nations. The CAA, which provides a pathway to citizenship for non-Muslim refugees from Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, has sparked protests and diplomatic criticism from Bangladesh.

Conclusion

Going forward, the importance of diplomatic dialogue and adherence to bilateral agreements in managing border security issues between India and Bangladesh needs to be revisited. While the necessity of securing borders is acknowledged, the implementation of measures such as fencing must be carefully balanced with the legal and humanitarian responsibilities of both nations. A collaborative approach to border security that includes transparent communication and joint efforts to address cross-border challenges could provide a more sustainable solution to the current impasse.

Abhinav Mehrotra is an assistant professor and Biswanath Gupta is an associate professor at OP Jindal Global University. The views expressed in the above piece are personal and solely those of the authors. They do not necessarily reflect Firstpost's views.

More from Opinion

[How a 'transactional' Trump can be a good news for West Asia](#) [Why India should have a 'sin tax' on ultra-processed foods](#) [DeepSeek debate: Here's why I'm pessimistic about India's place in AI race despite a slew of recent announcements](#) [A pragmatic, pro-middle class budget that will boost consumption and drive demand](#)

Tags

[Bangladesh](#) [India](#)

End of Article