

## BANGLADESHI INFILTRATION: PROBLEMS FOR INDIA & HOW TO TACKLE THE SAME?

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### Dictionary Meaning

Infiltration is the action of entering or gaining access to an organization or place surreptitiously, especially in order to acquire secret information or cause damage.

### International (Political) Scenario

Infiltration is the movement through or into an area or territory occupied by either friendly or enemy troops or organizations. The movement is made, either by small groups or by individuals, at extended or irregular intervals. When used in connection with the enemy, it infers that contact is avoided<sup>1</sup>. In intelligence usage, placing an agent or other person in a target area in hostile territory. Usually involves crossing a frontier or other guarded line<sup>2</sup>.

Methods of infiltration are: black (clandestine); grey (through legal crossing point but under false documentation); and white (legal).

### THE ISSUE

Bangladeshi infiltration poses various socio-economic-legal issues to us, specifically in the North-East States of India. Since most of the Bangladeshi population in India is illegally migrated and most of them are engaged in low paying, unregulated, low end jobs such as construction workers, housemaids, rickshaw pullers etc. As a result, documenting and monitoring the movement of this population is very difficult. Besides, their contribution to the State exchequer is nil.

Some of the major problems poses to India by the Bangladeshi infiltration are;

1. Changing the demographic structure of the region, which is resulting in friction between the communities.
2. Excessive strain on the limited resources and job opportunities.
3. Increasing the crime rate in the region, resulting immense pressure on the

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\* Founder, Lex-Warrier Foundation.

<sup>1</sup> American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition. (2011). Retrieved February 2, 2017 from <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/infiltration>

<sup>2</sup>*Id.*

already inefficient law enforcement agencies.

4. Contribution of the Bangladeshi's to the economic development of the region is very negligible.
5. Similarly the growing population of these immigrant Bangladeshis is putting immense pressure on the social development schemes.

Since, no records or methods to trace these illegal immigrants, they also create a threat to the national security that, they form part of the terrorist organisations functioning against India.

## **THE SOLUTION**

### **Regulate the Entry:**

In the present scenario, it is practically impossible for our forces to completely stop the infiltration from Bangladesh to the Border States of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and West Bengal. The ultimate reason for the same is Bangladesh itself. So what is the solution?

Though, there are various legislations in India dealing with foreigners, refugees etc. they are all applicable to the nation as a whole. In my opinion, Bangladeshi infiltration shall be treated as an individual issue and specific legislation shall be introduced to address this

problem, and major focus of said legislation shall be as follows;

### **Work permit**

Since, most of the infiltration from Bangladesh is occurring through the absorbent border between India and Bangladesh; it is practically not possible for our forces to monitor each and every patch of land in the border areas. Thus, the best way to control the issue of Bangladeshi infiltration is to legalize and regulate the border crossing. It will also reduce the strain on the security forces.

The Government of India may come up with specific guidelines to regulate the border crossing from Bangladesh, where the Government will permit the entry of Bangladeshis to India only for a limited period and limited purpose (restricted work permit) plus additional restrictions shall be imposed on the free movement of such immigrants.

In other words, such an immigrant from Bangladesh may be permitted to continuously stay in India only for a limited period; for eg. 1 Year; and they shall be permitted to undertake only certain categories of jobs, where there is a shortage of sufficient native Indian workers.

Similarly, there shall be a roster of all the immigrants containing all details of the

immigrants including his/her photo, and Biometric identification. All such details shall be available digitally and all Police Stations across the country shall have access to said database.

Further, the immigrants shall be permitted to stay in only one location during the work permit and he/she shall not be permitted to move out of said location without the written permission of the appropriate authority. Besides, all such immigrants shall personally report to identified Police Station in the specific locality, where the immigrant is permitted to stay and work.

### **Sponsorship**

Similarly, we should be adopting the concept of "Sponsorship", as practiced in Gulf countries that, if a Bangladeshi wants to come and work in India, such a Bangladeshi National should have an Indian sponsor, whom we (Government of India) can hold liable for any illegal activity done by the Bangladeshi immigrant.

In my opinion this will prevent the migration of Bangladeshi nationals to India to a great extent. Further, sponsor should be responsible for presenting the Bangladeshi immigrant to the nearest police station for frequent verification. In other words, any action done by

the Bangladeshi immigrants in India, the sponsor shall also be held responsible. Strict penal provisions shall be introduced in this regard.

### **Citizenship**

Necessary steps may be taken to identify immigrants from Bangladesh, who are staying in India after March 25, 1971, and they should be differentiated on the basis of the Citizenship acquired by them as well as non-citizenship.

Bangladeshi immigrants, who are in India after 1971 and are unable to prove their status of citizenship acquired via legal routes should be, granted "immigrant work permit" with all the strict restrictions imposed. The immovable assets which these people may have acquired in this period of time should be confiscated. No immigrants from Bangladesh shall be permitted to acquire any immovable property in India.

Since, we didn't bring these issues to Bangladesh during 1970's it is not practically possible for us to deport those to Bangladesh, as the Government of Bangladesh may deny the responsibility of these people.

Similarly, it shall be made mandatory to those children born in India after 1971 to the immigrants from Bangladesh to register such

birth. If the parents of such a child who has acquired Indian citizenship through proper channel shall be permitted to acquire Indian Citizenship. Rest shall be placed under “immigrants under work permit”.

### **Adoption of Bangladeshi immigrants**

Necessary steps may be taken by the Government of India to regulate the adoption of Bangladeshi immigrants by Indian citizen.

### **Taxation**

Higher level taxation shall be imposed on the immigrants from Bangladesh, who are permitted to stay here on work permit.

Additionally, on periodic interval they shall renew their work permit.

**If we do not take necessary action as early as possible, there may be a situation in the coming future that, in certain parts of Indian territories, specifically in certain parts of North-East States of India that, these illegal immigrants will become majority in population and the same will lead to various socio-economic and legal problems. These issues can be effectively handled if strict implementation of above mentioned points in the North-Eastern States of India, especially in West Bengal.**

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### PREFERRED CITATION

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