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Human Rights Watch Urges Halt to Bengali Muslim Deportations

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Human Rights Watch has criticized recent deportations of Bengali Muslims from several Indian states, alleging the actions violate due process and international law. The group claims that many individuals, many of whom are low-income migrant workers, are being expelled without proper legal verification or documentation.

In a statement released on July 24, 2025, Human Rights Watch (HRW), an international non-governmental organization focused on human rights advocacy, accused authorities in several states, Assam, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan, of

rounding up Bengali Muslims and forcibly handing them over to border personnel. The organization claims that more than 1,500 men, women, and children were deported to Bangladesh between May 7 and June 15, including around 100 Rohingya refugees from Myanmar, according to figures cited by the Border Guard Bangladesh.

Elaine Pearson, Asia Director at HRW, stated that “India’s ruling party is fueling discrimination by arbitrarily expelling Bengali Muslims from the country, including Indian citizens.” HRW noted that the affected individuals are often denied the right to verify their citizenship status or to access legal recourse before being deported. In some cases, border security forces allegedly coerced individuals into crossing the border, using threats or physical force.

HRW said it had conducted interviews with 18 individuals in June 2025, including victims of deportation, their family members, and relatives of those who remain missing. The organization claims it submitted its findings to India’s Ministry of Home Affairs but did not receive a response.

Under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), both of which India is a party to, the government is obligated to prevent discriminatory expulsions and uphold the legal rights of all individuals, regardless of ethnic or religious identity. HRW argues that these deportations fall short of these obligations and compromise India’s global standing on human rights.

The statement also raised concerns about the erosion of India’s legacy as a refuge for the persecuted. By singling out Bengali Muslims and Rohingya refugees without a fair process, HRW argues, the state risks undermining both its domestic legal standards and its international commitments.

Though national security and immigration control are legitimate concerns, the importance of adhering to lawful procedures remains essential. Any breach of protocol, especially in cases that involve potential statelessness or family separation, merits scrutiny, particularly when international law is involved.

While the government has not yet officially responded to the claims, the issue is expected to draw further attention both domestically and abroad. As global institutions call for transparency and due process, the responsibility lies with national authorities to uphold

constitutional protections and ensure that no citizen or refugee is deprived of legal rights without just cause.