

## India NHRC asked to help Bangladeshi trafficking victims

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/177213/india-nhrc-asked-to-help-bangladeshi-trafficking-victims>

ManabAdhikarSuraksha Mancha, a human rights group based in the Indian state of West Bengal, has served a letter to the chairman of the Indian National Human Rights Commission informing that Indian police and border personnel were treating trafficking victims as criminals.

In the letter to ManavAdhikarBhawan, the Indian NHRC chairman, the rights group MASUM on Saturday also said that the Indian authorities, including police and Border Security Force, were not at all interested in initiating a proper investigation to know whether the people, including women and children, who crossed the border from Bangladesh to India, were the victims of human trafficking or not.

Referring to a case filed with the Hemnagar coastal police station on March 5 under the Foreigners Act, MASUM said that BSF arrested Fazeela Begum of Bagerhat in Bangladesh along with her children Mohammad Riyaz, 17, and RabayaAkhter, 13, Kohinoor Bibi of Bagerhat with her children ZakiyaAkhter, 9, and Md. Firdos Islam and Halima Bibi of Satkhira when they attempted to enter India from Bangladesh

Later, a magistrate sent them to the Dum Dum Central Correctional Home for a 14-day in jail custody.

As per MASUM fact-finding, Fazeela Begum and Kohinoor Bibi were apprehended along with their children, who are minors.

Citing another case filed with the Swarupnagar police station, MASUM said that BSF arrested SulataSarkar, 30, of Jashore along with her minor children, SandeepSarkar, 8, and two-and-a-half-year-old SaptarshiSarkar when they were entering India from Bangladesh on May 4.

The arrested were produced before the Basirhat judicial magistrate court on the following day and they were sent to the Dum Dum Central Correctional Home for 14-day in jail custody.

In this case, the age of the minors is 8 and 2.5 years, respectively, and yet an FIR was registered against them. The letter said this approach was a violation of the Indian Penal Code.

According to a 2012 office memorandum of the Indian Home Affairs Ministry, if women and children victims are discovered without a valid passport or visa, they must be repatriated to their country of origin through diplomatic channels.

Till the repatriation, they must be kept in an appropriate children's home, or 'Ujjawala' home.

Kirity Roy, the secretary of MASUM, alleged in the letter that police or BSF personnel or the relevant court never attempted to initiate any investigation to confirm whether these Bangladeshi people were the victims of human trafficking or not.

Additionally, the victims were kept in the correctional home, it said.

Under these circumstances, MASUM requested the urgent intervention of the Indian NHRC to bring justice to the victims by taking the necessary actions against the police or BSF personnel.

It urged the Indian rights watchdog to ensure the victims, including children, should be immediately repatriated to their respective countries and the criminal charges against them must be withdrawn at the earliest.

The rights group said that the victims, including children, should be transferred to an appropriate home from the Dum Dum Central Correctional Home at the earliest.

**NHRC holds a meeting to formulate  
draft national policy for PwD**

The National Human Rights Commission held a meeting of the core group on disabilities. The agenda of the meeting was to discuss the draft national policy for persons with disabilities. Chairing the meeting, NHRC member Dnyaneshwar M Mulay emphasised that disability has socio-psycho-politico-cultural dimensions. The Commission will deliberate upon all the points and come up with a relevant document which will be sent to the Government.