

Explore use of snakes and crocodiles in border rivers, BSF tells units

Parts of the Bangladesh border are prone to floods and the topography makes it difficult to erect fences

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The field units of the **Border Security Force (BSF)** have been directed to explore the feasibility of using reptiles such as snakes and crocodiles in riverine stretches along the Bangladesh border to prevent infiltration and criminal activities, according to an internal BSF communication.

The “use of reptiles is in line with Home Minister Amit Shah’s directions”, the signal dated March 26 sent from the BSF headquarters to all field units along the Bangladesh border, said. “The feasibility of deploying reptiles (such as snakes or crocodiles) in

vulnerable riverine gaps is to be explored and examined from an operational perspective,” it said. *The Hindu* has seen a copy of the communication.

There was no response from the BSF.

A BSF official said, “Till now the directions on reptiles have not been implemented. The directions have come to explore the possibility of it. There are several challenges... how does one procure the reptiles and what impact it may have on the local population who live along the riverine stretches?”

The communication followed a February 9 meeting at the BSF headquarters in Delhi.

The BSF is the primary border-guarding force along the Bangladesh and Pakistan borders. Large parts of the eastern border with Bangladesh are prone to floods, and the topography makes it difficult to erect physical fences. Since these areas are densely populated, the “use of reptiles” may pose considerable risk to villagers on either side of the border, especially during floods.

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According to a March 17 report by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs, of the total 4,096.7 km border with Bangladesh, the government had approved the fencing of 3,326.14 km. Of this distance, 2,954.56 km has been fenced so far. Around 371 km of the total sanctioned border length is yet to be fenced.

Tough terrain

According to the 2024-25 annual report of the Ministry of Home Affairs, the India-Bangladesh border passes through difficult terrain such as hills, rivers and valleys, yet the BSF has been diligently performing its duty round the clock to curb illegal cross-border activities and illegal migration from Bangladesh.

“In order to prevent illegal migration and illegal activities, including anti-national activities from across the border, the Government of India has sanctioned phase-wise construction of border fencing illuminated by floodlights... The non-physical barrier will be in the form of technological solutions. Some problem areas such as riverine/low-lying areas, habitations close to the border, pending land acquisition cases and protests

by the border population, have slowed down the installation of fencing in certain stretches on this border,” the report said.

The March 26 communication added that border outposts in “dark/no-signal areas” should be identified.

“The Eastern Command is to map and identify border outposts (BOPs) located in dark zones lacking mobile network connectivity and furnish detailed inputs for further action,” it said. It further sought a detailed report regarding cases registered against villagers living in border areas.

BSF explores using snakes, crocodiles to stop infiltration along border
The field units of the Border Security Force (BSF) have been directed to explore the feasibility of using reptiles such as snakes and crocodiles in riverine stretches along the Bangladesh border to prevent infiltration and criminal activities, according to an internal BSF communication. | Video Credit: The Hindu

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