

Half-Encounters in UP

During the period under review, police forces in Uttar Pradesh shot at and injured at least 10 alleged ‘cattle smugglers’, in seven separate instances across the state. The victims in each case were Muslims, who sustained bullet injuries in the leg before being ‘apprehended’ by police officials in the presence of media.

These 10 shootings, known as ‘half encounters’ in local parlance, were in addition to at least 15 other similar shootings we have documented so far this year, all in Uttar Pradesh. It is widely alleged that many, if not most, such shootings are staged by police, usually against individuals already in their custody.

Since 2017, when the BJP’s Yogi Adityanath assumed charge as the state’s Chief Minister, UP Police has shot and killed over 190 individuals—disproportionately Muslims—in such alleged staged ‘encounters’, as part of his ‘[thok do](#)’ (knock down) policy, purportedly to curb crime. By April 2023, they were also [reported](#) to have injured 5,046 individuals in ‘half-encounter’ shootings not resulting in death.

‘Half-encounters’ reported since May included:

- 11 June, 2024 (Hafiz Ganj, [Brailley](#), Uttar Pradesh): Police fired at an alleged “cattle smuggler” who sustained bullet injury in leg.
- 16 June, 2024 ([Azamgarh](#), Uttar Pradesh): Police fired at an alleged “cattle smuggler” who sustained bullet injury in leg.
- 19 June, 2024 ([Muzaffarnagar](#), Uttar Pradesh): Police fired at an alleged cattle smuggler, who sustained a bullet injury in his leg.
- 20 June, 2024 ([Mathura](#), Uttar Pradesh): Police fired at two alleged ‘cattle smugglers’ who sustained bullet injuries in the leg.
- 25 June, 2024 ([Kanpur](#), Uttar Pradesh): Police fired at an alleged cattle smuggler, who sustained a bullet injury in his leg.
- 28 June, 2024 ([Rampur](#), Uttar Pradesh): Police fired at two alleged ‘cattle smugglers’ who received bullet injury in the legs.
- 30 June, 2024 ([Khushinagar](#), Uttar Pradesh): Police fired at two alleged ‘cattle smugglers’ who received bullet injury in the legs.