



Thousands gathered at the border. Image Source: El Pais

In what appears to be a massive abusive of immigration procedures, dozens of fleeing Venezuelan migrants appeared to be openly violating regional migration laws, by crossing the border from Colombia into Ecuador, without holding a valid passport. The issue garnered greater attention when it was found out that local authorities were not raising any objections to the said practice.

In the events that led up to this stage, the region had witnessed hundreds of Venezuelans attempting to flee their home country's economic crisis and moving to neighbouring countries to start a new life. Many travelled by bus while many arrived on foot. So far, there were some regulations put into place regarding crossing the border near the town of Ipailas as per rules set by Ecuador's president - Lenin Moreno.

However, as tensions kept on mounting, various migrants decided not to follow the border regulations and started treading over the border, not bothered about the risk of detention. In what was already a poorly guarded border, the task for these desperate Venezuelans was not too difficult, after already having spent a considerable time in the freezing Rumichaca crossing. Some of the migrants in press statements highlighted their need for basic necessities such as money, shelter and food, and that they were crossing the border to get control over their lives again.

Some of the migrants, however, expressed intentions of legally migrating with their national identity cards and finding work and living permits in neighbouring countries such as Ecuador, Colombia or Peru. Yet, some of their ambitions faced the obstacle of increased immigration restrictions. Peru announced similar immigration policies to that of Ecuador and fortunately allowed young children and teenagers travelling with parents to enter the country without any passport or identity proof.

Over a million Venezuelans have also entered Colombia in the last fifteen months according to official reports, but Ecuador and Peru have also recorded similar migration figures.

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