

## ON THE BORDER

That tree where we would often  
Hold flag meetings  
Was rooted in the border land of  
Hindustan  
But slightly bent like a hunch back,  
All the branches, or say, the whole tree  
Leaned over to Pakistan

The sun would Cast its rays  
In such a way that  
The whole shade in turns  
Fell on the other side only  
Patrolling Pakistani Rangers<sup>1</sup>  
Would some times find repose there.

We too, at times, when unwatched  
By the Rangers  
Would go and sit there hesitantly  
And the very next day  
A protest note for  
Trespassing two yards!

I had to reprimand  
My border men for sitting under  
The shadow of our own tree

And one day the dispute  
Was solved by one gentleman

Sparing the roots and  
Half my trunk in my border ,  
He chopped off the branches  
Whose shade had neither  
Pakistan nor Hindustan writ on it-  
And flung them into my land

A few days later  
When the Bn was moving to a new place and  
Just as I was handing over the charge  
Of the Border Pillars to the next Commander,

I saw  
Tender new shoots  
Had started to appear  
On that  
Excised and mutilated stump!