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Migration, Identity, and Politics: A Comparative Study of Border Regions in India and Bangladesh

¹ Mijanur Ansary, ² Abdus Samad

^{1,2} M.A in Political Science, University of Kalyani, India

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Corresponding Author: Mijanur Ansary

Abstract

Migration in border regions is intricately related to issues of identity, citizenship, and political power; it is not only a demographic occurrence. This study looks at how migration, identity formation, and political processes interact in Bangladeshi and Indian border regions. It examines how migration patterns and identity politics are shaped by historical legacies, sociocultural ties, and governmental policies using a comparative method. The study focuses on how migration affects community ties, citizenship discussions, and electoral dynamics, particularly in

Bangladesh's neighboring regions including West Bengal and Assam. It makes the case that migration is both a politically created problem and a socioeconomic need. In order to garner support, strengthen identity boundaries, and obtain an electoral edge, political players frequently strategically define migration. As a result, migration in these borders becomes a complicated phenomenon where political narratives and economic realities collide, making it a key topic in current regional politics.

Keywords: Migration, Identity Politics, Border Studies, India, Bangladesh, Citizenship, NRC, CAA

1. Introduction

South Asian migration has its roots in historical changes, especially the aftermath of India's Partition and the start of the Bangladesh Liberation War. Millions of people were forced to relocate across freshly drawn borders as a result of these historic events, which also altered social identities and political boundaries. Because of this, the India-Bangladesh border has developed into a complicated socio-political area where memory, belonging, and displacement still have an impact on modern reality. The boundary is one of the world's most complex and permeable, extending more than 4,096 kilometers and cutting through villages, rivers, and even families. The strict divisions enforced by nation-states are frequently blurred by the close linguistic, cultural, and historical linkages that exist between Bangladesh and regions like West Bengal and Assam. The task of differentiating between "insiders" and "outsiders" is made more difficult by this cultural continuity, which heightens discussions about citizenship and identity.

Migration has taken center stage in political discourse in recent decades, especially in India, where it is often associated with concerns about resource competition, demographic shifts, and national security. Concerns regarding migration have been heightened by the emergence of identity-based politics, which frequently depict it as a danger to local cultures and economic stability. As a result, migration is framed within narratives of nationalism and exclusion rather than just being examined as a socioeconomic phenomena.

Bangladesh, on the other hand, takes a different stance on the matter, frequently disputing allegations of widespread migration and highlighting its accomplishments in domestic development. This disparity in accounts emphasizes how political objectives influence how the general public views migration. Bangladesh aims to depoliticize or externalize the issue of migration, whereas India tends to securitize and politicize it.

Furthermore, cross-border migrations have become more frequent due to environmental reasons like climate change, riverbank erosion, and flooding, which further complicates migratory dynamics. Because they make it difficult to distinguish between forced and voluntary migration, these factors pose a challenge to conventional policy methods. As a result, migration in the areas bordering Bangladesh and India needs to be viewed as a complex phenomena influenced by political tactics, socioeconomic circumstances, historical legacies, and environmental influences. In order to provide a comparative analysis of how migration affects identity formation and political processes in both countries, this study aims to critically evaluate these

characteristics.

2. Rationale of the Study

In the border regions of Bangladesh and India, migration has become a crucial problem that goes beyond population shifts to include issues of citizenship, identity, and political power. This study is significant because it attempts to critically analyze how migration is a politically created phenomena impacted by historical legacies and current state practices, in addition to being a socio-economic activity. Current migratory patterns and identity formation are still influenced by the historical events of the Bangladesh Liberation War and the Partition of India. These events institutionalized nationality and citizenship-based divisions while simultaneously fostering long-lasting cross-border ties. Because of this, border areas are now places where identities are continuously disputed and negotiated.

Migration has been more politicized in recent decades, especially in Indian areas like West Bengal and Assam, where it is frequently associated with security, demographic shifts, and electoral politics. Migration has become a major topic in public discourse as a result of this politicization, which has heightened discussions about inclusion and exclusion. Bangladesh, on the other hand, frequently disputes or minimizes these narratives, underscoring a difference in national viewpoints that calls for methodical comparison.

Additionally, the literature now in publication frequently addresses migration as a security or economic issue, but it hardly ever incorporates identity and political factors into a comparative framework. By combining these interrelated elements, this study fills that knowledge vacuum and provides a more comprehensive picture of migration in border regions. The necessity to provide information for policy-making is another reason for this research. The project aims to support more equitable, compassionate, and cooperative approaches to border governance by examining how migration is presented and handled in both nations. By doing this, it highlights the fact that migration is a complicated reality influenced by politics, society, and history rather than just an issue.

3. The Study's Objectives

- To examine the historical trends and stages of migration between Bangladesh and India, especially in light of the Bangladesh Liberation War and India's Partition.
- To investigate the linguistic, cultural, ethnic, and religious aspects of identity creation and transformation in border regions.
- To look into how ideas of citizenship, belonging, and exclusion are affected by migration in areas like West Bengal and Assam.
- To assess how state and non-state actors use and manufacture migration narratives for political purposes, especially in public discourse and electoral politics.
- To contrast Bangladesh's and India's administrative, legal, and policy approaches to border control and migration management.
- To investigate the socioeconomic factors that influence migration, such as geographical disparities, employment prospects, and poverty.
- To evaluate how environmental elements like river erosion, climate change, and natural disasters affect migratory patterns.

- To examine how migration affects community relationships, social cohesiveness, and regional stability.
- To make policy recommendations for more cooperative, humane, and balanced methods of managing migration between the two nations.

Together, these goals seek to offer a comprehensive and comparative view of migration in the India-Bangladesh borders as both a structural fact and a politically mediated issue.

4. Research Questions

In order to investigate the connection between migration, identity, and politics in the border regions of Bangladesh and India, the following major research topics serve as the study's compass:

- What historical elements have influenced the patterns of migration between Bangladesh and India?
- What effects do linguistic, cultural, ethnic, and religious elements have on the development and evolution of identities in border regions?
- In border areas like West Bengal and Assam, how does migration affect the construction of identities?
- How is migration politicized in India's electoral discourse?
- What are the main distinctions between Bangladesh's and India's approaches to border control and policy?
- How much do environmental and socioeconomic factors influence cross-border migration?
- How can bilateral cooperation between Bangladesh and India lessen conflict and enhance migration governance?

Together, these inquiries seek to offer a thorough and comparative understanding of migration as a socio-political phenomenon in the borders between Bangladesh and India.

5. Research Methodology

In order to investigate the relationships between migration, identity, and politics in the border regions of Bangladesh and India, this study uses a qualitative and comparative research methodology. Because it enables a thorough examination of intricate social and political phenomena that cannot be sufficiently captured by quantitative approaches alone, a qualitative design is especially appropriate for this study.

Academic books, peer-reviewed journal papers, government publications, census reports, and policy documents are among the secondary sources of data that the study mostly uses. A solid conceptual foundation has been established by critically evaluating important academic works on migration, identity politics, and border studies. In order to comprehend current political dynamics, reports and policy frameworks pertaining to citizenship and migration—such as those surrounding the Citizenship Amendment Act and the National Register of Citizens—have also been examined.

Approach to Analysis

The intricate interaction between migration, identity, and politics in the border regions of Bangladesh and India is examined in this study using a multi-dimensional analytical method. To offer a thorough grasp of the problem, the method combines historical, thematic, comparative, and interpretive techniques.

- First, the evolution of migration patterns is traced using a historical-analytical method, especially in relation to the Partition of India and the Bangladesh Liberation War. This illustrates how previous events continue to influence present circumstances and aids in placing modern migration within a larger historical context.
- Second, the study uses a theme analysis, concentrating on important aspects such border governance, citizenship discussions, identity building, and political mobilization. By critically analyzing scholarly literature and policy papers, these topics are investigated, making it possible to spot recurrent trends and inconsistencies.
- Thirdly, the two nations' differences and similarities are evaluated using a comparative analytical framework. Politically sensitive areas like West Bengal and Assam, where migration has major social and electoral ramifications, receive special attention. This comparison aids in illuminating the ways in which various political structures and policy decisions impact the creation of migration narratives.

The study also use discourse analysis to understand how migration is portrayed in public discussions, media narratives, and political speeches. This approach highlights how political actors portray migration as a socioeconomic necessity or a threat. The approach also considers social and environmental issues, such as poverty, employment opportunities, and climate-related displacement, to provide a more thorough interpretation. The study offers a critical and nuanced understanding of migration as both a structural reality and a politically mediated phenomenon by combining various approaches.

6. Theoretical Framework

6.1 Politics of Identity

A crucial framework for comprehending how migration affects social interactions, political conduct, and power structures is provided by identity politics. It emphasizes how people and groups frequently form political organizations based on common characteristics including ethnicity, religion, language, and culture. Migration introduces new populations into cultures that are already heterogeneous and historically layered, upsetting generally stable identity structures in the border regions of Bangladesh and India. The discussion of inclusion and exclusion is made more intense by this process.

The divide between "insiders" and "outsiders" becomes more contentious when migrants settle in places like Assam and West Bengal. Political rhetoric, legislative frameworks, and administrative practices actively form and reinforce these categories, making them more than just social constructs. In these situations, identity politics frequently result in the consolidation of majority or "indigenous" identities, sometimes against perceived immigrant populations. Increased social polarization, resource competitiveness, and sporadic war can arise from this.

Furthermore, issues of citizenship and legal recognition are intimately related to identity politics. Migrants are often placed in hierarchical categories, such as "legal," "illegal," "refugee," or "infiltrator," each of which has unique social and political ramifications. Access to rights, welfare, and political involvement are all determined by state policies and political goals, therefore these classifications are not impartial. As a result, legal methods institutionalize identity, exacerbating already existing differences.

The involvement of electoral politics is another crucial aspect. In order to bolster their vote banks, political parties frequently employ identity-based narratives that depict migration as either a humanitarian and economic necessity or a threat to national security and cultural identity. Depending on political goals, these narratives have the power to legitimize either inclusive or exclusive policies.

Additionally, communal experience and historical memory—especially those associated with relocation during past conflicts and migrations—have an impact on identity politics in border regions. Depending on the situation, these recollections continue to shape sentiments toward migrants today, either fostering skepticism or solidarity. As a result, identity politics not only explains how migration becomes a major topic in public discourse but also shows how power functions through the creation of social categories, proving that migration is more than just cross-border travel but also the continuous struggle for recognition, identity, and belonging in a politically charged setting.

6.2 Constructivism

According to the constructivist perspective, identities are constantly formed through social interaction, political discourse, and institutional practices rather than being fixed or natural. In the context of migration, this means that how migrants are portrayed in political and social narratives influences how they are perceived rather than just their presence.

For example, Bangladesh tends to convey migration narratives differently, often rejecting or reframing them, whereas India frequently frames migration through discourses of legality, security, and nationalism. These divergent viewpoints show how state actors create interpretations of migration in order to further their political agendas. Therefore, constructivism emphasizes how the media, laws, and political discourse shape public opinion and redefine national identity in reaction to migration.

6.3 Theory of the Borderland

The emphasis of borderland theory is shifted from borders as inflexible lines to borders as dynamic social places. It sees border areas as areas of interaction where identities, cultures, and economies converge and change. Shared histories, familial relationships, and regular cross-border interactions define borderlands in the context of Bangladesh and India. But these areas are also places of confrontation, monitoring, and control, where the government tries to impose its will and control mobility. Because of this dual character, there is a special setting where identities are still changeable and flexible. Depending on the situation, residents of these locations frequently manage several identities, including local, regional, and national.

This study emphasizes the importance of taking into account the lived realities of border communities in order to fully comprehend migration through the application of borderland theory. Borders are crucial places for examining the relationship between migration, identity, and political power because it shows how they both divide and connect.

Following August 5, 2024, Bangladesh's political landscape underwent a drastic change that has left policymakers in Delhi feeling "uncertain." After fifteen years of a steady and comfortable relationship, they suddenly had to negotiate a new temporary arrangement. The border has been directly impacted by this political unpredictability; "security alerts"

are raised along the borders of neighboring states whenever internal instability erupts within a country. The public is informed that the relationship is no longer as "friendly" as it once was by this increased militarization, or tightening of regulations. As a result, for those who frequently cross the border or live close to it, there is a psychological divide and an increased feeling of identity-based worry.

7. Historical Background of Migration's

7.1 The 1947 Partition

The demographic and political landscape of South Asia was drastically altered by the Partition of India, one of the biggest forced migrations in human history. Religious identity was the main factor in the partition of British India into India and Pakistan (including East Pakistan, which is now Bangladesh), which resulted in the mass migration of Muslims to Pakistan and Hindus to India.

The effects were complicated and long-lasting in the eastern region, especially in Bengal. Bengal's migration took place in numerous stages over a number of years, in contrast to Punjab's comparatively sudden movement. While Muslim populations moved in the opposite direction, many Hindu families relocated from East Pakistan to Indian states like West Bengal and Assam. However, social networks, economic factors, and land attachment caused many people to postpone migration, which resulted in ongoing cross-border migrations far into the 1950s and 1960s.

During this time, long-lasting migration and settlement patterns were established, refugee colonies were built, land ownership systems were changed, and early conflicts over identity and resources were created. As differences between "migrants" and "refugees" started to surface, it also set the stage for later political discussions on citizenship.

7.2 Formation of Bangladesh (1971)

Another major migrant wave into India was sparked by the Bangladesh Liberation War. Millions of people in East Pakistan were compelled to flee to neighboring Indian states, especially West Bengal, Assam, and Tripura, due to political repression, violence, and humanitarian crises. This exodus was more abrupt and crisis-driven than previous migration, putting tremendous strain on the infrastructure, administrative institutions, and local resources. After 1971, many refugees went back to the newly formed Bangladesh, but a sizable portion stayed in India, which contributed to long-term social and demographic shifts in border areas.

Debates on migration today are still influenced by the memory of 1971. It strengthened views of cross-border migration as a political challenge as well as a humanitarian imperative. The lines separating subsequent economic migrants from wartime refugees got increasingly hazy over time, making citizenship and identity problems more difficult. The combined events of 1947 and 1971 produced a historical migratory continuum that continues to influence current circumstances. In addition to changing population patterns, these migrations profoundly impacted the political, social, and identity frameworks of the border regions between Bangladesh and India.

8. Migration and Identity in Border Areas

In the border areas of Bangladesh and India, migration is closely linked to issues of exclusion, belonging, and identity. Migration actively modifies social identities and community boundaries rather than being a purely numerical

activity. As a result, the borderlands become places where identity is constantly disputed through legal frameworks, political discourse, and cultural activities.

8.1 Linguistic and Cultural Identity

Perceptions of migrants are greatly influenced by cultural and linguistic identity. The Bengali language, literature, and cultural customs that West Bengal and Bangladesh share foster a sense of continuity that frequently obfuscates national boundaries. Rigidly classifying someone as "foreign" or "native" is challenging due to cross-border kinship links and common cultural characteristics.

But in Assam, where language and ethnic diversity has long been a contentious problem, this dynamic is very different. Tensions over language, land, and political representation result from the perception of migrants, particularly Bengali-speaking minorities, as cultural outsiders. This contrast demonstrates how identity depends on context and is influenced by local histories and demographics.

8.2 Identity of Religion

Debates on migration are further complicated by religious identity. Migration is frequently viewed through a religious prism, which exacerbates division within the community. Political narratives frequently differentiate between "acceptable" and "unacceptable" forms of migration, classifying migrants according to their religious membership. Such framing reinforces community divisions by influencing public perception and policy orientation. Additionally, it turns migration from an economic or humanitarian problem into a moral and ideological one. In border societies, religious identification thus becomes a potent instrument for determining inclusion as well as exclusion.

The "communalization" of identity politics is one of the main features of the current crisis. The current government in Bangladesh claims that the narrative created in the Indian media about the state of minorities in Bangladesh is frequently either biased or overstated, especially in light of recent developments in the nation. A significant "identity crisis" has arisen along the border as a result of this circumstance. The Bangladeshi side views the migration across the border as "routine surveillance," while the Indian side frequently refers to it as a "religious exodus." A fundamental dilemma in the minds of common people is raised by this conflict between two conflicting narratives: Does a person's identity primarily stem from their citizenship or their religion? As a result, religious minorities living in border regions are subject to a type of dual pressure that crushes them.

8.3 Legal Identity and Citizenship

Citizenship has emerged as one of the most contested aspects of migration in India. Legal frameworks like the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA 2019) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC) have elevated questions of identity and belonging to the top of the political agenda. Concerns around exclusion, paperwork, and statelessness have also been raised by these regulations, which seek to differentiate citizens from non-citizens. The task of identifying residents has been especially difficult in places like Assam since many people who have lived there for a long time lack official documentation. As a result, identity is both socially and legally challenged.

Migration debates in border regions are inextricably linked to larger struggles over identity, power, and inclusion because of the intersection of legal identity with cultural and religious identities, which further complicates the issue. Citizenship becomes more than a legal status—it becomes a marker of recognition, rights, and political belonging.

9. The Political Dimensions of Migration

In addition to being a social and economic problem, migration in the border regions of Bangladesh and India is also a very political phenomena. It is a major issue in public discourse and governance since it affects state policy, electoral tactics, and foreign relations.

9.1 Electoral Politics in India

Migration has grown to be a very delicate election issue in India, especially in places like West Bengal and Assam. By appealing to worries about identity, security, and economic competition, political parties frequently employ migration narratives to motivate voters. Voting behavior may be influenced by the perception that immigrants pose a threat to local jobs, cultural identity, and demographic balance. At the same time, certain political parties might take a more welcoming approach, emphasizing the contributions of immigrants to the economy and humanitarian concerns. This dual method demonstrates how, depending on electoral goals, migration is strategically portrayed in various ways. Migration thus turns into a potent instrument for influencing public opinion and political objectives.

For voter lists, the Election Commission of India currently uses a specific, intense revision procedure called SIR (Special Intense Revision). This procedure entails a far more thorough and exacting examination of the electoral rolls than regular voter list updates. The main goal of this extensive modification is to make it possible for the Election Commission of India to concurrently register freshly qualified voters on the electoral registers and identify and eliminate fake voters, deceased voters, and those whose names appear in numerous constituencies.

The SIR (Special Intense Revision) process has become a contentious political and social issue in border states like West Bengal and Assam, going beyond the bounds of standard administrative practice. Although the Election Commission of India characterizes SIR merely as a revision mechanism, its profound impact—particularly in the contexts of West Bengal and Assam—is undeniably indisputable. Consequently, the following are the main causes of this controversy:

- **Preventing Infiltration from Adjacent Nations**

In the states of West Bengal and Assam, infiltration from neighboring countries has become a very delicate political problem. As a result, the working-class population experiences anxiety and dread anytime the SIR process entails door-to-door verification and thorough examination of voter lists since they believe it to be just the first stage of the NRC (National Register of Citizens). On the other hand, opposition parties often claim that a large number of "foreigners" have illegally entered the voter lists in border areas, especially in West Bengal. However, ruling parties claim that this procedure is being used to intimidate and try to deny legal inhabitants of the nation their right to vote.

- **The Public's Fear of Being Called a "D-Voter"**

In Assam, during the voter list revision conducted under this special intensive process, individuals exhibiting even the slightest documentary discrepancies regarding their citizenship are marked with a "D" (signifying "Doubtful Voter") next to their names. As a result, they lose their voting rights, are designated as "D-voters," and face protracted legal battles. Furthermore, the residents of West Bengal fear that if a similar process of identifying "suspects" through SIR were to be implemented in their state, it could precipitate massive social unrest. The underlying premise—that the absence of one's name from the voter list equates to a crisis of citizenship rights, and that this constitutes the first step toward an NRC-like exercise—lies at the very epicenter of this controversy.

- **The Fears of Marginalized Communities**

A significant portion of the India-Bangladesh border region consists of riverine landscapes and char (river island) areas. Consequently, due to factors such as floods, river erosion, or poverty, many marginalized individuals lack proper identity documents. Furthermore, when documents are subjected to rigorous scrutiny during the SIR process, many genuine Indian citizens face the risk of exclusion from the list due to spelling errors or a lack of documentation. This conflict—pitting 'administrative complexities' against 'citizens' rights'—renders the entire process controversial.

9.2 The Political Situation in Bangladesh

Bangladesh typically takes a cautious and defensive approach to migration to India, in contrast to India. Claims of widespread out-migration are frequently minimized or denied by the government, which emphasizes national sovereignty and highlights the country's consistent economic growth, advances in human development metrics, and growing job possibilities. According to this viewpoint, Bangladesh portrays itself as a nation of advancement rather than a destination for ongoing migration.

Diplomatic and strategic issues are directly related to this position. Significant out-migration may be officially acknowledged, which might attract international attention and bolster political narratives in India that depict migration as a threat to demographics or security. Internal political pressure could result from this acceptance, which would raise concerns regarding employment, governance, and resource distribution inside Bangladesh.

Furthermore, Bangladesh frequently implies that the issue is exaggerated inside Indian domestic politics for ideological or electoral reasons, framing migrant rhetoric as an externally produced story. Bangladesh can avoid open conflict while maintaining a strong diplomatic stance thanks to this strategy. In addition, it prevents migration from taking center stage and allows the nation to concentrate on bilateral cooperation in areas like trade, security, and regional development. This position does not, however, mean total disengagement. Through diplomatic channels, Bangladesh and India continue to work together on security and border control problems. As a result, its political stance demonstrates a well-rounded approach—publicly downplaying the migration problem while actively working together to preserve stable bilateral ties.

The quota movement in Bangladesh started as a student-led demonstration against the government employment reservation system, which set aside a sizable portion of positions for certain groups, such as the descendants of freedom fighters during the Bangladesh Liberation War. Students called for a more merit-based system, particularly those from the University of Dhaka. Despite Sheikh Hasina's government's first removal of quotas in 2018, further events brought the problem back, sparking fresh demonstrations. Concerns about unemployment, corruption, and democratic governance were raised as the movement grew into a larger anti-government demonstration. This bolstered opposition groups like the Bangladesh Nationalist Party and put political pressure on the ruling Awami League.

As a result, the nation entered a period of political change, with talks about establishing an interim or more neutral government to guarantee free elections. Driven by youth discontent about unemployment, problems with governance, and electoral concerns, the quota reform movement in Bangladesh eventually evolved into a larger anti-government revolt. Opposition groups like the Bangladesh Nationalist Party gained traction as protests grew more intense, posing significant challenges to the Awami League's long-standing control.

Creation of the New Government

A reformed or transitional government structure resulted from persistent public pressure. This construction was greatly impacted by popular mobilization, particularly student-led protests, and was not only the outcome of political processes. The change showed that a more competitive and negotiated political structure was replacing centralized one-party domination.

The New Government's Political Position

The following stances are typically represented by the new or transitional authority:

- dedication to electoral reform.
- Employment Policy Based on Merit.
- Democratic transparency.
- anti-corruption emphasis.
- Youth-focused policies.

9.3 Border and Security Management

One important aspect of the politics surrounding migration between Bangladesh and India is border management and security. Both nations' political changes have a direct impact on how borders are controlled, observed, and viewed by the local populace. India has taken a rather securitized approach to border management, especially in the delicate areas that border West Bengal and Assam. Controlling unlawful movement and addressing issues with illegal migration and national security are the goals of measures like border fencing, electronic surveillance, and greater security force deployment. Because domestic politics and border governance are closely related, these measures are frequently stepped up during times of political unpredictability, electoral activity, or increased security concerns.

In contrast, Bangladesh often prioritizes bilateral collaboration and diplomatic engagement when handling border disputes. Although it keeps its own security measures in place, it tends to prioritize communication and cooperation with India above excessive militarization.

However, there may be brief increases in border security and enforcement due to internal political developments, such as protests, policy changes, or changes in governance. In general, this region's border management strikes a compromise between diplomatic ties and security requirements. Stricter regulations affect border communities' daily life by limiting migration and economic activity, even though they may alleviate state concerns. Therefore, security measures influence social and political relations in the borderlands in addition to regulating migration.

10. Comparative Analysis: India Vs Bangladesh

Dimension	India	Bangladesh
Political Narrative	Migration as threat	Migration denial
Policy Approach	Restrictive (NRC, CAA)	Development-oriented
Identity Issues	Ethnic and religious tension	National identity cohesion
Border Management	Militarized	Cooperative but defensive
Electoral Impact	Significant	Limited

11. Discussion

In India's border regions, migration is heavily political and strongly linked to issues of nationalism, identity, and electoral rivalry. Migration is often framed under narratives of national security, cultural preservation, and demographic transition in areas like West Bengal and Assam. Migration is a major topic in political discourse since these narratives affect public opinion and policy decisions. Bangladesh, on the other hand, typically tackles the problem by portraying migration as an inflated or externally created narrative that is frequently connected to Indian domestic political ambitions. This difference in viewpoint is indicative of more general contrasts in state priorities: Bangladesh prioritizes growth, sovereignty, and diplomatic stance, whereas India prioritizes citizenship and regulation.

According to the study, migration is not intrinsically problematic. Instead, it becomes controversial when it is incorporated into electoral tactics and identity politics. Whether migration is viewed as a threat or as a socioeconomic necessity depends heavily on political players. Migration is turned into a potent narrative instrument that can rally support, uphold identity borders, or defend restrictive measures through political discourse, media representation, and policy frameworks.

Additionally, the results show that migration in border regions is a complex process impacted by sociocultural linkages, economic demands, and historical legacies. But these structural truths are frequently obscured by its politicization, which results in oversimplified and divisive interpretations. In order to comprehend migration in the context of India and Bangladesh, it is necessary to critically analyze the political narratives and power structures that define and govern it in addition to looking at movement patterns.

12. Recommendation

- Bolstering Bangladesh-India bilateral collaboration.
- Migration in election discourse should be depoliticized.
- Ensuring inclusive and compassionate citizenship laws.
- Encouraging regional economic growth in order to lessen the strain of migration.

13. Conclusion

The topic of migration between Bangladesh and India is intricate and multifaceted, influenced by political tactics, environmental constraints, socioeconomic circumstances, and historical legacies. Cross-border migration patterns have been established by historical events like the Bangladesh Liberation War and the Partition of India, and these patterns still have an impact on contemporary reality. Migration has a significant impact on identity, citizenship, and political discourse in border regions.

The study shows that migration is intricately linked to identity formation and political processes rather than just being a question of population movement. Migration is highly politicized in India, especially in places like West Bengal and Assam, where it is frequently framed in terms of citizenship, demographic change, and national security. Bangladesh, on the other hand, rejects or downplays stories of widespread out-migration while emphasizing prosperity and sovereignty. These contrasting methods show how different political perspectives are used to construct and understand migration.

However, the study emphasizes that structural factors, such as social networks, economic opportunity, and environmental issues like climate change and river erosion, are what motivate migration. However, political narratives that oversimplify and perhaps distort the problem for tactical reasons frequently overwhelm these underlying dynamics.

Therefore, addressing migration-related challenges requires a balanced and cooperative approach. Policies should prioritize human rights, ensure fair and inclusive citizenship frameworks, and avoid exclusionary practices that may lead to social conflict. Strengthening bilateral cooperation between India and Bangladesh is essential for effective border management and sustainable solutions. In conclusion, migration in the India–Bangladesh borderlands should not be viewed solely as a problem but as a shared regional reality that demands nuanced understanding, responsible political engagement, and collaborative policy responses.

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