



“Study on Present Socio-economic Condition of Newly Migrated Indian Citizens from Bangladesh Territory under LBA, 2015”

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***Abstract:** An unfortunate outcome of India's 1947 historical partition was the creation of enclaves in both India and Bangladesh (the then East Pakistan). Due to terrible mockeries of historical and political fate, the sparse population of these enclaves was compelled to live in 'no man's land' as 'nowhere people' for a lengthy 67 years after India's independence and partition. Until June 2015, when India and Bangladesh signed the historic Land Boundary Agreement (LBA), these unfortunate people were unreasonably denied access to basic services, rights, opportunities, and government support for their primary living. By virtue of the LBA, 2015, 51 Bangladeshi enclaves inside Indian territory and 111 Indian enclaves inside Bangladeshi territory were transferred to the other nation with effect from midnight of July 31, 2015. As per the press release issued by the Ministry of*

External Affairs, Govt. of India, 922 people, out of the total 38,521, from the erstwhile Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh chose to relocate to the Indian mainland retaining their original Indian citizenship. On the other hand, all 14,863 inhabitants of the former Bangladeshi enclaves inside India chose to change their citizenship to become Indian citizens and to remain in India. Almost nine years had elapsed in the interim. The current socioeconomic status of these unfortunate Indian citizens, who recently emigrated to the Indian mainland under LBA, 2015, deserves examination and assessment. It is imperative to ascertain whether the primary concerns raised by these migrated Indian citizens have been properly addressed following the terms of implementation of the LBA, 2015. Could these newly migrated Indian citizens be able to live up to the same standard and status of living as their fellow nationals? To resettle these migrated Indian citizens, the Indian Govt. established three Permanent Rehabilitation Clusters in Haldibari, Mekhligunj, and Dinhata under the Coochbehar District of West Bengal. A thorough study was conducted through an extensive field survey in each cluster. The research was carried out utilizing primary and secondary data obtained through empirical analysis of field surveys and literature reviews. Collected data were analyzed by using computer software and interpreted. The outcome of the project pinpointedly revealed the real present socio-economic situation of the migrated Indian citizens newly resettled on the Indian mainland.

Keywords: *International Border, Enclaves, Land Boundary Agreement (LBA), Exchange of Enclaves, Permanent Rehabilitation Clusters.*

1. Backdrop of the study

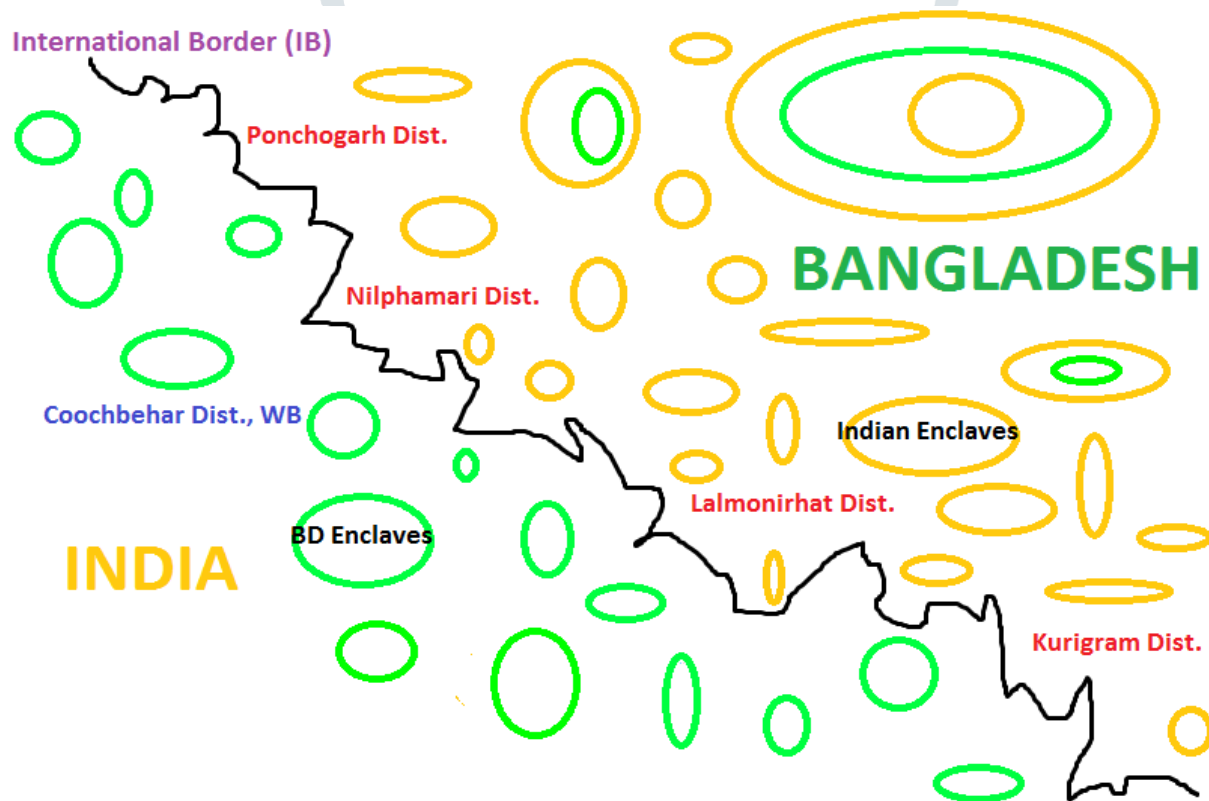
Not too distantly, just over eight years ago, there were some splinters of territory within independent Bangladesh and India, where the nation's independence defined its people differently, leading to the establishment of a distinct class of "stateless people" within these two adjacent countries. One gloomy morning, the nation was split in two, with the hearts of a segment of the marginalized population living in terrible consequences due to the construction of a porous border that effectively stole many of their best years, leaving them as "enclaves' people" exclusively.

These people were victimized by living in 'no man's land' as 'nowhere people' for 67 years following India's independence and partition, even though they had no responsibility for their terrible fate. This was because of the terrible mockery of historical and political destiny. This unfortunate group consisted of over 50,000 inhabitants of the erstwhile enclaves of India and Bangladesh.

Enclaves, also known as exclaves (Chhitmahal in Bengali), are areas of one country's territory that are entirely encircled by the territory of another nation and fully cut off from their home country's mainland. More precisely, the territory is totally surrounded by a foreign state and is geographically isolated from its mainland. "From the point of view of the state in which it is located, it is termed as an enclave and the state to which it belongs is an exclave" (Schendel, 2005). But for the context of the undertaken study, two terms enclave and exclave are used synonymously. Enclaves existed throughout history and were especially common in Western Europe, but it's fascinating to note that the majority of them were located in India and Bangladesh in the recent past. Enclaves

were discovered in India and Bangladesh in three distinct physical configurations, such as '1st-order enclave'; '2nd-order enclave' or 'counter-enclave' (*i.e.* enclave within an enclave) and '3rd-order enclave' or 'counter-counter enclave' (*i.e.* an enclave laying within a counter-enclave). According to the Report of the India-Bangladesh Joint Field Inspection, 51 exchangeable enclaves of Bangladesh inside India and 111 exchangeable Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh had been located, with the exception of one non-exchangeable enclave of Bangladesh inside Indian territory (*Report, 1996*). These included a few '2nd-order enclaves' or 'counter-enclaves' as well as a '3rd-order enclave' or 'counter-counter enclave' (*i.e.* a Bangladeshi enclave surrounded by an Indian enclave, which itself surrounded by another Bangladeshi enclave). 53,384 people living in all of these 162 exchangeable enclaves in India and Bangladesh (*MEA, Exchange of Enclaves between India and Bangladesh, 2015*). All of these pieces of Bangladesh inside India were located in the District of Coochbehar under the State of West Bengal; whereas in Bangladesh, these pieces of India were spread across four districts under the Rangpur Division: Lalmonirhat District had 59, Ponchogarh District had 36, Kurigram District had 12, and Nilphamari District had 4 (*Jugantor, 2015*).

A map of enclaves within India and Bangladesh is shown below under Figure 1:



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Figure – 1 : Map of Enclaves

The inhabitants of these fragmented areas within the two nations were forced to endure an inhumane state of being stateless for nearly seven decades without any assistance or support from the state on either side for long 67 years after India's independence and partition till the historic Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) between Bangladesh and India was signed in June 2015, ending the unfortunate people's lengthy exile in enclaves.

As per LBA, 2015, 51 Bangladeshi enclaves inside India and 111 Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh were theoretically transferred to the other country with effect from midnight of 31 July 2015. As per the press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India, 989 people, out of the total 38,521, from the erstwhile Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh chose to relocate to the Indian mainland and collected travel passes for resettlement in India; although 922 people from the erstwhile Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh were actually relocated to the Indian mainland retaining their original Indian citizenship (*Release, 2015 Nov., 20*). All these newly migrated Indian citizens have been resettled in three 'Permanent Rehabilitation Clusters' set up by the Indian Govt. at Haldibari, Mekhligunj, and Dinhata under Coochbehar District of West Bengal. On the other hand, all 14,863 inhabitants of the former Bangladeshi enclaves inside India chose to change their citizenship to become Indian citizens and to remain in India. The exchange of enclaves between India and Bangladesh was widely anticipated to resolve land boundary disputes between the two neighboring countries and, more importantly, to improve the social status and living conditions of the residents of these enclaves, who, through an unfortunate turn of events, had been living without a national identity and without ever experiencing or knowing the standard of living enjoyed by their neighbors who lived nearby.

The LBA, 2015's execution and results present us with many interesting questions. What actual effects has the LBA, 2015 had on the lives of newly migrated Indian citizens from the former Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh? How are they managing to make ends meet and obtain means of subsistence in the Indian mainland as real Indian citizens in the Indian mainland? How much has their way of life changed from being true Indian citizens on the Indian mainland? After nearly nine years of the 2015 LBA's implementation, what are the living conditions and employment opportunities for these newly migrated Indian citizens? How far is actually implemented in the rehabilitation packages that the Indian Govt. offered to these migrated Indian citizens as the deal of execution of LBA, 2015? To what extent are the rights of these migrated Indian citizens, relocated in three Permanent Rehabilitation Clusters on the Indian mainland, security to live, freedom of expression and worship, and other fundamental rights protected?

Meanwhile, nearly nine years have gone by since the LBA, 2015 was put into effect. In order to address the aforementioned relevant inquiries, a comprehensive research study was essentially required to evaluate and analyze the current socioeconomic standing of the recently relocated Indian citizens from former Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh who were resettled in the Indian mainland.

2. Review of Existing Literature

Former Indian and Bangladeshi enclaves are of course now contiguous parts of either country after the LBA, 2015 was implemented. However, until 67 years after India's independence and partition, these small patches of land were only fragmented parts of India and Bangladesh, totally cut off from the mother state and encircled by the other nation. Numerous historical, political, and geographic factors led to the emergence of these enclaves. Undivided India was never a one-state nation. There were so many princely states within the Indian

subcontinent, which neither the Mughals nor the British could bring under their direct control. On the other hand, it had been evident that the imperial rulers often allowed semi-autonomous Zamindari estates or princely states to grow in the frontier areas to ensure security in the far-flung areas. Throughout the Middle Ages, especially during the Mughal era, there were so many detached territories in the Indian subcontinent belonging to one Raja or Zamindar, surrounded by the territories of others' jurisdictions. Thus, the origin of most of the enclaves in India and Bangladesh can be traced to the relics of the pre-colonial era. On the Indian side, enclaves were found only in the District of Coochbehar of the state of West Bengal, which were formerly under the ruling jurisdictions of the Maharaja of Rangpur. On the other hand, enclaves were found only in a small and narrow section of the northern boundary of Bangladesh within its present Districts of Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Nilphamari and Panchogarh. These areas were under the jurisdiction of the King of Coochbehar during the Mughal period. Thus, there is a lengthy historical background to the creation of these enclaves, dating back to the Mughal Emperor Shahjahan and the Coochbehar Estate King Raja Pranarayanana. Raja Pranarayanana occupied a certain portion of territory within the Mughal territory by defeating Mughal Emperor. Thus, the King of Coochbehar ruled over some portions of lands that were completely surrounded by lands belonging to the Mughal Empire. Similarly, Mughals also wrested some portion of territory within the Coochbehar Estate, which later came under the rule of the Maharaja of Rangpur (*Studyacer, 2010*). So, these territories were geographically separated from the Coochbehar and Rangpur Estates, ruled by one emperor within the jurisdiction of the other's Estate. Before India gained independence and was divided, the King of Coochbehar owned the Indian enclaves that are now part of Bangladesh. Similar to this, before India's independence and partition, the Maharaja of Rangpur owned the areas that were once Bangladeshi enclaves but are now part of India. By the late 17th century, the Mughals, capitalizing on the palace tension of Coochbehar, waged several invasions in the Kingdom and annexed three of its southern districts namely Kakina, Kazirhat and Fatehpur (*Rabbani, 2005-06*). The disputes between the Mughals and the King of Coochbehar continued until 1713, when a treaty was signed between the two. Under the treaty, Coochbehar ceded those three districts and in addition, it also lost its sovereignty over three further districts of Boda, Patgram and Purvabhag. These districts were not integral areas, but rather contained pockets of other zamindari that remained under the sovereignty of Coochbehar estate. Likewise, there were some pockets of land within the territory of Coochbehar belonging to Boda, Patgram, and Purvabhag (*Rabbani, 2005-06*). This led to the emergence of several enclaves inside India and Bangladesh. In this context, some advocate otherwise. According to an unverified popular legend, these slices of land were used as stakes in card or chess games or other gambling centuries ago between two regional kings, the Raja of Coochbehar and the Maharaja of Rangpur. There was also hearsay about the origin of these enclaves that if some of the local Raja entered the neighboring territories for recreation or hunting as royal guests and pitched tents in some places, that area was given to him as a mark of honour or to strengthen their friendship. "In 1947, when the British finally left India after almost two centuries, they created two countries, India and Pakistan, out of one. In order to partition the country, they brought in a lawyer, Cyril Radcliffe, to demarcate the boundary between India and what was to become Pakistan, who demarcated the India-Pakistan border in straight lines

cutting across territories” (*Butalia, 2002*). The fact that the two Estates of Coochbehar and Rangpur chose not to join either India or Pakistan at the time of Independence also played a significant role in the process of creation of these enclaves. In 1949, Coochbehar joined India and in 1952, Rangpur chose to be part of Pakistan. “What posed a problem was the fact that over the time, they had been conquering each other's territories” (*Kaur, 2002*). The culmination of these incidents led to the establishment of Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh and vice versa. Governmental endeavour to ‘de-enclave’ was first manifested through Nehru-Noon Agreement in 1958 through the exchange of enclaves between India and the then Pakistan, but the matter was then hanged for a Supreme Court case in India. With reference to said 1958-Agreement, negotiations were resumed after East Pakistan became an independent country as Bangladesh in 1971. The Indira-Mujib Treaty of Friendship signed in 1974 intended to resolve all land boundary disputes between India and Bangladesh, who shared 4,096.7 km long porous border. Both nations were able to reach an agreement on the LBA, 1974 to find a final solution to the challenging problem of border demarcation with three exceptions pertaining to : (i) Exchange of enclaves; (ii) Settlement of adverse possession; (iii) Undemarcated land boundary of approximately 6.1 kms. in three sectors, viz. Daikhata-56 in West Bengal, Muhuri River–Belonia in Tripura and Lathitila-Dumabari in Assam (*MEA, Land Boundary Agreement Protocol between India and Bangladesh, 2011*).

Exchange of enclaves redrawing of the international boundary and to maintain the status quo of adverse possessions, India required a constitutional amendment according to Article 368 of its Constitution. Although Bangladesh duly ratified said agreement, but India then failed to pass the necessary constitutional amendment in its Parliament to ratify said agreement. Following the signing of the Monomohan-Hasina Land Boundary Agreement in September 2011, the Govts. of India and Bangladesh declared their desire to resolve the dispute by exchanging 162 enclaves and giving enclave residents the option to choose their nationality. In India, the 119th Constitution Amendment Bill, 2013 was put forward to give effect to this proposed land exchange, but India again failed to pass the necessary constitutional amendment in its Parliament (*Encyclopedia, 2010*).

The people living in these enclaves had endured a terrible fate for nearly seven decades, but in May 2015, their wretched fate was finally ended when India's Parliament passed the 119th Constitutional Amendment, ratifying the Land Boundary Agreement with Bangladesh. Immediately thereafter, 111 Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh (covering an area of 17,160.63 acres) and 51 exchangeable Bangladeshi enclaves inside India (covering an area of 7,110.02 acres) (*MEA, India-Bangladesh Land Boundary Agreement, 2015*) were exchanged between the two countries by virtue of historic Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) accorded between the Govt. of Republic of India and the Govt. of Peoples’ Republic of Bangladesh on 6th June, 2015 with only one exception. Dohogram-Angarpota, the twin Bangladeshi Enclave situated in Mekhligunj Block under Coochbehar District of West Bengal, India, covering a total area of 18.68 sq. kms. with a combined population of around 20,000 has not been exchanged and it still remains as an integrated part of Bangladesh as per resolution adopted through LBA, 1974, although it is completely surrounded by Indian territory.

Accordingly, under the terms of the LBA, 2015, 51 exchangeable Bangladeshi enclaves inside India would henceforth be regarded as own lands of India; whereas 111 Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh would henceforth

be classed as own lands of Bangladesh. Consequently, 51 Bangladeshi enclaves inside India and 111 Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh were theoretically transferred to the other country with effect from midnight of July 31, 2015.

3. Objectives of the Study

The undertaken study was comprehensibly conducted with the following focused objectives:

1. Assessment of the level of satisfaction with their decision to choose citizenship under the LBA, 2015, among migrated Indian citizens from erstwhile Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh.
2. Assessment of the satisfaction levels of the migrated Indian citizens about the exchange deal and rehabilitation packages offered to and so far implemented for them.
3. Assessment of the present socio-economic condition of the migrated Indian citizens resettled at the three Permanent Rehabilitation Clusters in the Indian mainland.
4. Assessment of the extent to which migrated Indian people are granted some essential fundamental rights, such as the freedom of expression and religion, and the guarantee of a secure place of residence, in each of the three Permanent Rehabilitation Clusters.

4. Area of the Study

For the purpose of the undertaken study, I chose all the three 'Permanent Rehabilitation Clusters' established by the Indian Govt. at Haldibari, Mekhligunj, and Dinhata under Coochbehar District of West Bengal for permanent rehabilitation of the newly migrated Indian citizens who came from erstwhile Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh.

5. Materials and Methodology

A thorough review of the literature and extensive field survey on a stratified random sampling basis served as the foundation for building the study's main framework. Based on primary and secondary data gathered from a variety of sources, including literature reviews and empirical analysis of field survey data, the study's goals were achieved. Personal interactions, interviews, group discussions, and well-structured questionnaire responses were the methods employed in the field survey to gather the data for the empirical analysis. Literature survey data were collected from the Coochbehar District Administration, Border Security Force (BSF), Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India, other Govt. reports, reports of the concerned NGOs, reports of the previous researchers, reports of electronic and print media, published papers in Journals, published articles in Newspapers, internet sources, etc.

Collected data were compiled and analyzed using standard statistical techniques with the help of computer software and were represented by various cartographic techniques. Compiled analysis of data had been interpreted appropriately to find out the specific objectives of the undertaken study.

6. Field Survey and Sample Selection

In two phases during April and June, 2022, I extensively surveyed all three Permanent Rehabilitation Clusters established by the Indian Govt. in Haldibari, Mekhliganj and Dinhata Blocks under the Coochbehar District of West Bengal for resettlement of the migrated Indian citizens from erstwhile Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh, details of which are given below under Table – 1 :

TABLE 1: Details of Permanent Rehabilitation Clusters established for the migrated people from erstwhile Indian Enclaves inside Bangladesh visited during the field survey

Rehab Cluster visited	No. of Buildings in the Cluster	Total No. of Flats in the cluster	No. of families residing in the cluster	No. of persons residing in the cluster	Name of Erstwhile Indian Enclaves wherefrom they were migrated	Religion of the Migrated Indians	No. of persons interacted with
1. Haldibari Rehab Cluster	13	104	103	487	Dohola-Khagrabari, Balapara-Khagrabari, Najirganj, Salbari	All Hindus	52
2. Mekhliganj Rehab Cluster	07	56	46	207	Banskata, Lotamari, Kharkharia, Gotamari Chhit, Kajaldighi	All Hindus except one	23
3. Dinhata Rehab Cluster	08	64	58	246	Dohola-Khagrabari, Balapara-Khagrabari, Chhota Garal Jhora I & II, Dashier Chhora	Mixture of Hindu & Muslim	28
Total No. of persons interacted with during the field survey							103

I thoroughly surveyed all three Permanent Rehabilitation Clusters established by the Indian Govt. for the resettlement of the migrated Indian people who came from erstwhile Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh and interacted with a total of 103 migrated people of different ages, genders and religions, the categorical details of them are given below under Table – 2 and 3:

TABLE 2: Age and Gender-wise classification of the migrated Indians from erstwhile Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh resettled at the Permanent Rehabilitation Cluster in the Indian mainland interacted with :

<i>Age group of people interacted with</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Above 75 years	01	00	01

Above 60 to 75 years	05	05	10
Above 45 to 60 years	23	09	32
Above 30 to 45 years	25	08	33
Above 20 to 30 years	12	05	17
15 to 20 years	06	04	10
Total	72	31	103

TABLE 3: Religion and Gender-wise classification of the migrated Indians from erstwhile Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh resettled at the Permanent Rehabilitation Cluster in the Indian mainland interacted with:

<i>Religion-wise people interacted with</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Hindu	59	27	86
Muslim	13	04	17
Total	72	31	103

Data collected from field surveys through personal interaction, group discussion and questionnaire survey were subsequently systematically arranged and analyzed and rationally interpreted to achieve the objectives of the undertaken study.

7. Observations and Findings

As per LBA, 2015, 111 Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh and 51 exchangeable Bangladeshi enclaves inside India were exchanged between India and Bangladesh. Accordingly, 51 Bangladeshi enclaves inside India and 111 Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh were theoretically transferred to the other country with effect from midnight of 31 July 2015. Given that the corresponding countries have already taken possession of these enclaves, such an exchange of territories essentially represents a move from a de facto to a de jure condition. The LBA, 2015 Protocol gave the residents of these enclaves the freedom to select their nationality at will. They would be entitled to all the privileges of citizenship of the state in which they choose to reside if they chose to remain in their country of origin by changing their citizenship (for example, if an Indian enclave resident inside Bangladesh chose to remain in Bangladesh as a Bangladeshi citizen). On the other hand, they would also receive all the advantages of mother-state citizenship in the relevant mainland if they chose to relocate to their mother state (for example, if an Indian enclave resident inside Bangladesh decided to relocate to the Indian mainland). Such individuals will be provided with sufficient rehabilitation packages on the mainland of the concerned mother state. According to the press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India, 989 people, out of the total 38,521, from the erstwhile Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh chose to relocate to the Indian mainland and collected travel passes for resettlement in India; although 922 people from the erstwhile Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh were actually relocated to the Indian mainland retaining their original Indian

citizenship (MEA, *Exchange of Enclaves between India and Bangladesh*, 2015). On the other hand, all 14,863 inhabitants of the Bangladeshi enclaves in India chose to change their citizenship to become Indian citizens and to remain on Indian territory (MEA, *Exchange of Enclaves between India and Bangladesh*, 2015).

Following their relocation to the Indian mainland, the migrated Indian citizens underwent temporary rehabilitation in three Enclaves Settlement Camps (also known as Enclaves Rehab Camps) located in the Coochbehar District of West Bengal at Haldibari, Mekhligunj, and Dinhata Blocks. These camps featured tin-made kaccha rooms for the occupants. During the year 2020, these migrated Indians were permanently rehabilitated in three Permanent Rehabilitation Clusters constructed at Haldibari, Mekhligunj and Dinhata Blocks under Coochbehar District of West Bengal, India. Depending on how many migrated Indians were rehabilitated in each cluster, each of these clusters was made up of several two-story pukka buildings (made of brick and concrete). Each such building consisted of eight identical flats with two bedrooms, a kitchen and a toilet. A migrant family consisting of up to nine individuals was assigned one flat and one isolated cow-rearing house in each cluster. In the cluster, two apartments were allocated to migrant families with over nine members. The Indian Govt. supplied certain basic food items, such as rice, mustard oil, kerosene, salt, milk, and pulse, to these displaced people while they were living in Enclave Settlement Camps at no cost to them, along with free electricity for their apartments. However, the government withdrew the free provision of basic food supplies and free energy once they were moved to Permanent Rehabilitation Clusters.

During the field survey, the migrated Indians from the former Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh were questioned why they had decided to resettle on the Indian mainland. They responded that India is a larger nation and significantly more economically powerful than Bangladesh. They undoubtedly believed that India offered far superior medical and educational facilities in addition to a plethora of career options. Their decision to relocate to the Indian mainland was based on their perception of a much brighter future for their children, much better employment opportunities for themselves and superior medical support there.

During my fieldwork, I observed that the Indian citizens who had relocated from the former Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh had obtained their voter ID cards and Aadhaar cards in order to prove their citizenship in the Indian mainland. They were receiving free rations for their families' nutrition because they duly got Ration Card from the Indian Govt. A significant number of migrated Indian citizens residing in three Permanent Rehabilitation Clusters already got Swastha Sathi Card from the Govt. for their cashless medical treatment. Many of the migrant population from the former Indian enclaves also received Job Cards from the Indian Govt., entitling them to participate in the 100-day work program of the Govt. However, the Indian Govt. had not yet secured any permanent employment opportunities for them on the Indian mainland. Since then, the Govt. has neither reserved any job position for them nor has it started any other employment opportunities for them. People who had moved from former Indian enclaves faced numerous difficulties getting their children admitted to Indian schools and colleges because no special reservations had been granted to them.

A significant number of migrated Indians from erstwhile Indian enclaves within Bangladesh felt uncertain about their choice to move to the Indian mainland. They had their own habitat lands, land for cultivation, cattle, etc. in

the former Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh, where they resided for several generations. If and when they needed bread and butter, they could even relocate to Bangladeshi land. They claim that since moving to the Indian mainland, they have had very little opportunity to locate suitable employment and they are now 'landless' as well as 'jobless' in the Indian mainland. Before moving to the Indian mainland, many of them were unable to even sell the property they had in their former Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh.

To assess the level of the present economic condition of the migrated Indian citizens residing in three Permanent Rehabilitation Clusters, the information relating to educational levels, occupational types and patterns, levels of income, levels of savings, possession of electronic items, possession of cattle and livestock, possession of vehicles have been considered, collected and analyzed for assessment. Analyzing the information gathered from the field survey, it is observed that a large number of migrated Indians residing in Permanent Rehabilitation Clusters set up by the Indian Govt. are illiterate. Among literates, most of them are educated up to primary or upper primary level. The bulk of the migrated Indians are employed either as Toto drivers or as daily laborers in agriculture on other people's land or as daily-rated helpers of Meson in the nearby urban locality, earning an average income of Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 3,000 per head per month. This has left these migratory Indians with a remarkably low social position. These resettled Indians have very little saved. While some of them own Motor Cycles and Totos (a battery-powered, three-wheeled slow passenger transport vehicle), many of them own cattle and other animals as well as Bicycles. Therefore, the overall economic condition of the migrated Indians residing in Indian Govt.'s constructed Permanent Rehabilitation Clusters is considerably miserable. Accordingly, the majority of these relocated Indians are classified as having an income level "below the poverty line" (BPL).

During my field survey, I identified two top most problematic issues of the migrated Indians from erstwhile Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh. The largest problem identified was the dearth of work opportunities on the Indian mainland. Since then, the Indian Govt. has not created any job reservations for the migrated citizens from the former Indian enclaves, nor has it started any alternative employment opportunities for them. Even after moving from erstwhile Indian enclaves, migrated Indians still faced several obstacles while trying to have their children admitted to Indian schools or colleges because no reservations had been set for their children's admittance. The issue of disposal of their unsold properties in former Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh was the second significant issue that the migrated Indians had noted. Many of them could not sell their properties in the former Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh before relocating to the Indian mainland due to lack of time. They had high hopes that the Govts. of Bangladesh and India would move appropriately to dispose of their unsold properties in erstwhile Indian enclaves within Bangladesh, but neither Govt. has yet to take any concrete steps to address the issue.

8. Conclusions and Suggestions

It was evident that 922 Indian citizens residing in erstwhile Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh opted to retain their original nationality of Indian citizenship and migrated to the Indian mainland from Bangladesh. Even though the Indian state had not yet provided the rehabilitation packages to the extent that they expected, they

chose to keep their original Indian citizenship and moved from Bangladesh to the Indian mainland, believing that at the time of applying for citizenship under LBA, 2015, they would have greater security for peaceful living, better opportunities for employment, and fearless freedom of worship and expression.

The migrated Indians from the former Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh are currently enjoying security for their peaceful existence, freedom of speech and expression, and other fundamental rights on Indian soil as Indian citizens, and they can practice their religion without fear, as was observed during my field survey. They are content with their decision to become citizens of India, but they are not at all pleased with the livelihood options and rehabilitation packages the Indian Govt. has so far put in place for them. Throughout the field survey, they voiced their repentance on the grounds that the Indian Govt. treated the migrated Indians from former enclaves equally to other Indian citizens in terms of the range of livelihood opportunities.

It is strongly recommended that the Indian Govt. should create particular job reservations and/or secure alternative employment opportunities for the relocated enclave Indians from Bangladesh, in order to improve their current living conditions. Additionally, it is sturdily advised that the Indian Govt. should take the necessary steps to ensure that the children from former enclaves have easy access to schools and colleges on the Indian mainland. The Indian Govt. should take the necessary action, through negotiations with the Govt. of Bangladesh, to dispose of the unsold properties of the migrated Indians from the former Indian enclaves that still remain unsold in Bangladesh.

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